

CHALLENGES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING ARABIC IN MADRASAH: ASATIDZ PERSPECTIVE

RAHMA P. MUSTAPHA¹ and DR. MARK GENNESIS B. DELA CERNA²

¹Central Mindanao Colleges, Kidapawan City, Philippines.

Corresponding email: rmustapha@cmc.edu.ph

ABSTRACT

Madrasah (school) setting specifically those that were situated at Kidapawan City, the Asatidz (teacher) have experienced new challenges in teaching and learning in lieu to the current educational status that we have today considering that Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) is an additional subject for selected learners. Existing and new challenges in teaching and learning in the said setting were discovered during this three-month long research study. The following were determined in the research study conducted: lived experiences of the Asatidz in the Madrasah program, challenges encountered by the Asatidz in the Madrasah Program, pedagogical strategies or approaches employed to overcome the challenges, and the recommendations in the sustaining the Madrasah Program. After the data has been gathered, it has undergone thematic analysis, more precisely the Colaizzi approach, which methodically examines and extracts insights and deeper meanings from the experiences of participants. Participants of this study were composed of eighteen (18) Asatidz that are employed in the Madrasah (schools) located at Kidapawan City. Purposive sampling was employed to critically choose the participants that are fit to respond to the prepared interview guide questionnaire. Live experiences of the Asatidz often revolve around instruction, the promotion of Islamic values, and equity. Challenges encountered by the Asatidz in the Madrasah Program are focused mainly on pedagogical hurdles, operational limitations, and instructional obstacles. Moreover, pedagogical strategies or approaches employed to overcome the challenges include instructional variety, utilization of emerging technology, and stakeholder involvement. And lastly, the recommendations in sustaining the Madrasah Program were collective engagement and assistance, modernization, and career advancement.

Keywords: *Madrasah, Asatidz, Teaching and learning, Challenges, Arabic Language and Islamic Values (ALIVE)*

INTRODUCTION

Teaching and learning come in pairs when it comes to education. Alarming emergence of the newly identified challenges in teaching and learning post a new problem that needs to be addressed. There are systemic problems that keep new educators from entering the field, according to the 2021 Education International report on the Global Status of Teachers and the Teaching Profession, which polled 128 leaders and executives of education unions in 94 countries and at all educational levels. Every learner's entitlement to receive instruction from a qualified teacher is compromised by

the ongoing teacher shortage. With this being said teachers hold a great responsibility in addressing such.

Teachers' experiences in the teaching process puts clarity among the school policy implementers as to what are the steps in solving any emerging problems. The researchers can draw attention to the voices and practices of teachers for researchers, policy makers, and general readers. They can stress the importance of teachers' roles in Muslim students' education, highlight the good and constructive work that teachers do, and highlight the difficulties and resources they need to fulfill their moral and intellectual obligations. The study of Niyozov & Pluim (2009) frame teachers' opinions within the broader worldwide interest in Islam and Islamic education, as well as Muslims' growing opposition to multiculturalism and the current educational system, which is primarily shaped by modernist ideas and Eurocentric, Hellenic-Judeo-Christian.

Going into smaller scale, as stated in Article XIV, section 1 of the Philippine Constitution of 1987, our government ought to support everyone's entitlement to and equitable access to a good education, irrespective of color, creed, or political allegiance, whether official or religious. Such a noble Republic Act 9155, sometimes referred to as the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, made it possible for Republic Act No. 10533 to be enacted, which is also referred to as the 2013 Enhanced Basic Education Act. Using this lawful basis on which Department Order 41, Series of 2017, it was released by the Department of Education (DepEd), (D.O. 41, s. 2017), which acted as the K. Madrasah Education Policy Guidelines Basic Education Program, Grades 1–12 of the Department of Education (DepEd) which resulted in the creation of Madrasah Education Program (MEP) (Isah, 2022). This program offered Muslim learners a comprehensive and inclusive platform that offers pertinent and appropriate educational opportunities in the context of Muslim culture, traditions, and customs in the Philippines.

The country's basic education system is home to about a million Muslim students, according to the most recent DepEd data (DepEd Teachers' Support Program, 2018). with the ALIVE program, 1,628 schools in 157 school divisions across the seventeen (17) regions are involved. These educational institutions serve about 350,000 students overall, with the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) providing education for about 45% of these students (Sali & Marasigan, 2020). There will inevitably be problems and difficulties with the ALIVE program's implementation given the size of the student body covered by the DepEd's implementation. And the first-hand observers of these challenges and problems are the Asatidz (teachers).

Going deep into the previous studies, following the national introduction of the Madrasah Education Program in 2004 and its eventual adoption and subsequent implementation, repeating problems and difficulties were already noted throughout the ALIVE program was put into practice. According to Sali and Marasigan (2020), these persistent problems and difficulties were curriculum for Madrasah education, teacher education, educational management, and technical and financial assistance, educational policies, pedagogy, and instructional materials. But these data were way over before the pandemic and some challenges in the teaching and learning may have aroused after the pandemic.

Despite the findings being presented, it is clear that the Asatidz may have experienced new challenges in teaching and learning before the students have been a product of a pandemic thus mixing things up and creating a new brand of problems. Additionally, there is no existing data about the said challenges in North Cotabato. Accordingly, the researcher will focus mainly on the challenges of teaching and learning Arabic in Madrasah based on the Asatidz (teacher) perspective.

FRAMEWORK

The goal of sociocultural theory is to clarify the relationship between historical, institutional, and cultural context and how an individual's mental functioning. Accordingly, the sociocultural perspective focuses on the ways in which involvement in social interactions and culturally structured activities affect psychological development. Although Lev Vygotsky (1931/1997) provided much of the framework for sociocultural theory, writings on activity theory (Chaiklin & Lave, 1993; Leontiev, 1981) and cultural-historical activity theory (Cole, 1996; Cole & Engestrom, 1994) offer extensions, elaborations, and refinements of sociocultural theory. Since this study will be relying a lot on the involvement of culture within Muslim community therefore this theory will be adapted to purposely focus on the understanding of the social interactions.

The central idea of sociocultural theory is that people's minds are layered. Against the conventional understanding of mind, Vygotsky claimed that just as people rely on the physical world rather than acting directly on it, rather than on labor and tools, which enable us to alter the world, and with it, the conditions in which we exist globally. We also employ signs or symbolic instruments to control and moderate our interactions with others and with ourselves, altering the character of these connections in the process (Prior, 2006).

METHODS

Research Design

The researchers employed the Qualitative Colaizzi method as an approach used in qualitative research to systematically analyze and reveal the deeper meanings and insights from participants' lived experiences, often through in-depth interviews or other qualitative data sources. The creator of it was R.A. Colaizzi in 1978 and is distinguished by a methodical, organized approach to recognize and extract important themes, offering a deep comprehension of a particular event. In order to address the difficulties and support requirements faced by educators in multigrade classes, researchers would first interview instructors or collect pertinent qualitative data from them. Following data transcription, significant statement extraction, topic arrangement, and participant feedback validation, this data would proceed through a number of methodical processes. Through this procedure, researchers are better able to comprehend the intricacies and unique difficulties that instructors face in multigrade settings, including

problems with classroom management, a range of learning levels, and resource limitations.

Research Sample and Data Sources

An official letter will be written to the Central Mindanao Colleges Dean of Graduate Studies requesting authorization to conduct research within the school, and then to the Schools District Supervisor for approval. After that, the researcher will give the questionnaire to Kidapawan City school administrators, who will subsequently participate in the study as respondents.

On the day of data collection, respondents would be required to sign a permission letter, as stated in the instrument. Only those who gave written consent will be allowed to participate in this study. It is promised to participants that any published part of this research will keep their identities hidden and their opinions confidential. After the data is acquired, the appropriate label is added to encode it. The researcher would personally administer the questionnaire in order to preserve the privacy of the responses. The data would then be tabulated and summarized by the researcher before being analyzed and interpreted.

After conducting participant interviews, the researcher would personally collate the data and thank the participants for their time. To acquire as much direct qualitative information as I could about participants' ideas and feelings, I would carry out in-depth one-on-one interviews, focus groups, and direct participant observations. This method is founded on a fundamental principle of qualitative research: the participant's perspective, not the researchers', should be revealed when it comes to the phenomenon of interest.

Data Analysis Method

The methodical examination and interpretation of textual, visual, or audio data in qualitative research involves the application of theme analysis, which is centered on identifying themes, patterns, and connections within the data to generate meaningful conclusions. The analysis of the raw data will specifically make use of the Colaizzi method, a specific kind of thematic analysis technique applied in qualitative research that uses in-depth interviews or other qualitative data sources to methodically examine and unearth the underlying meanings and insights from participants' experiences. Additionally, theme analysis gives researchers the freedom to modify the procedure based on the objectives of their study and the characteristics of their data. It's crucial to remember that even though theme analysis is an organized approach, researcher judgment and reflexivity are still necessary. This suggests that the researcher—or researchers—should be aware of any prejudices and points of view that might influence the analysis.

Thematic analysis is another popular and adaptable technique for examining qualitative data. It comprises looking for, analyzing, and summarizing themes or trends in the data. Thematic analysis can be broken down into several steps:

First, Familiarization with the Data: Begin by thoroughly familiarizing yourself with the data. This might involve transcribing interviews, reading through text, or reviewing audiovisual content.

Second, Generating Initial Codes: To begin producing the first codes. These are tags or labels that identify particular concepts, ideas, or trends in the data. Coding involves labeling segments of text that are relevant to your research question.

Third, Searching for Themes: Review the codes and look for patterns that emerge across the data. These patterns might be recurring ideas, concepts, emotions, or experiences. Themes represent broader concepts that encompass multiple codes.

Fourth, Reviewing Themes: Review and refine the identified themes. This might involve grouping related codes together under a broader theme and clarifying the connections between themes.

Fifth, Defining and Naming Themes: Once you've identified and reviewed your themes, give them clear and meaningful names that capture their essence. These names should reflect the content and context of the data.

Sixth, Mapping and Interpreting Themes: Analyze the relationships between themes and explore how they relate to each other. Are there overarching themes that encompass sub-themes? Interpret the implications of these themes for the research question.

Seventh, Writing the Report: Organize your findings into a coherent narrative. This might involve describing each theme, providing illustrative examples from the data, and discussing the significance of the themes in relation to your research question.

Eighth, Ensuring Rigor: Thoroughly document your analytical process, including decisions made during coding and theme development. You might also engage in techniques like member checking (where participants review your findings) to enhance the credibility of your analysis.

Validity of Instruments

The validity of instruments used in qualitative research, including questionnaires, is a critical aspect that ensures the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. In qualitative research, the concept of validity extends beyond statistical measures and encompasses the credibility and trustworthiness of the study. Researchers employ a range of strategies to enhance validity, including triangulation (using multiple data sources or methods), prolonged engagement with the data, and maintaining reflexivity to acknowledge the potential influence of the researcher's biases.

Additionally, an assessment of the questionnaires' construct validity and content will be carried out. Five (5) experts would be involved in this activity; two would be from the university's research examining committee and three would be from other universities. The expert-validators' input will be taken into consideration while revising the questionnaire.

Moreover, the validity of qualitative questionnaires is essential to ensure that the collected data accurately represent the complex phenomena under investigation. Content validity ensures that the questions cover all relevant aspects, while face validity ensures that they are comprehensible and relevant to participants. Criterion-related validity aligns the findings with existing knowledge and perspectives. By meticulously addressing these dimensions of validity, researchers enhance the robustness and credibility of their qualitative research findings, contributing to the overall advancement of knowledge in their chosen field.

Research Instrument

In this study, the primary research instrument is an interview guide questionnaire, specifically designed by the researcher to facilitate data collection through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. This approach aims to capture rich insights and perspectives from participants, providing a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. An interview guide questionnaire serves as a structured tool to guide the researcher and participants through the conversation, ensuring that key topics and questions are addressed consistently across all interactions. The instrument is carefully crafted to cover the specific themes, concepts, and inquiries relevant to the study. By utilizing this instrument, the researcher intends to elicit detailed narratives, opinions, and experiences from participants, contributing to a thorough exploration of the research topic. Before the conduct of the study, the research instruments will be subject for validations from the expert of panels.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Lived experiences of Asatidz in the Madrasah Program

The first research question aimed to identify the Lived experiences of Asatidz in the Madrasah Program. After analyzing the data, three significant themes were discovered as presented in Table 1, which include: Instruction, Islamic Advocacy, and Equity.

Instruction. Most of the participants shared a lot about their experiences in the teaching and preparing process at the Madrasah. The process always started with the planning such as designing and delivering lessons aligned with curriculum, and preparing lesson plans or Daily Lesson Logs (DLL). Within the prepared lesson plan are the strategies that will be utilized during the instruction proper. With the employment of certain strategy, the learning process of the students will be much easier and fun. All of these processes are vital parts in the instruction, as it dictates the flow of the Asatidz perspective or the way they have pictured it to happen. It is also mentioned by the participants that after the DLL what comes after also is the preparation of the visual aids. Evidences of this practices are shown below:

"So teachers need to find ways to make learning fun and engaging, and they need to make sure students learn everything they need to know." (AMS-R18)

"My activities and responsibilities planning and preparing lessons, I will be (res) responsible for designing and delivering lessons that align with the curriculum and meet the needs of my students." (CH-R1)

"Firstly, we create DLLs (Daily Lesson Logs) and visual aids, and we write on charts." (HB-R4)

Lesson plan preparation has been one of the important processes in the instruction. According to Emiliasari (2019), One crucial step that a teacher must do before beginning to teach is lesson planning. The process of learning will be more structured with careful planning. Although lesson plan preparation is not on the

instruction proper, its impact lies on the teaching itself as it reflects the different activity or assessment that will be done in the instruction proper. Since there is an also a curriculum in the learning of Arabic language, lesson plan preparation is also needed to, for it provides how will the Asatidz will teach a certain topic to their students with regards to the required competency in the curriculum.

Strategies that will be employed in the instruction proper will be very vital in the learning of the students. Students that are actively involved in an activity are more likely to understand it, remember it, and show real interest in it (Jobirovna, 2023). Therefore, if the instruction proper has a variety of strategies that foster learning, then the absorption of the topic discussed will just be very easy.

Islamic Advocacy. Another shared experiences by the Asatidz are the content within the teaching Arabic itself. Promotion of the Islamic values are one of the most important topics taught at the Madrasah. These are the values that must be instilled to the young ones that must be practiced. Teaching of such values also incorporates the Asatidz's character as they will act as role model for it. Cultural heritage and religious traditions are also taught by the Asatidz. This action strongly strengthens the beliefs and the learner's knowledge about Islam. Encouraging of the students in academic excellence as well as fostering sense of community among teachers and students is also practiced and applied at the Madrasah. These are present from the following narratives:

"As a madrasah teacher, I will describe the overall environment and culture within the madrasah program as one that focuses on promoting Islamic Values, encouraging academic excellence, and fostering a sense of community among students and teachers." (CH-R1)

"The same, typical things happen in the classroom for me as a teacher: preparing the daily lesson log, creating instructional materials, and getting myself ready to teach Islamic Values. In addition to the eight subjects, I teach." (BES-R9)

"The environment and culture within the madrasah aim to strengthen beliefs and knowledge in Islam while promoting unity, compassion, and respect for religious traditions and cultural heritage. As a teacher in Arabic, it is not only about teaching the language but also imparting important cultural values inherent in Islam." (US-R7)

The study of Mulyati & Al-Mighwar (2023) clearly states that enhancing the caliber of an educational establishment entails enhancing the caliber of its students, making them more superior and fiercely competitive individuals with a multitude of exceptional accomplishments. Cultural qualities that contribute to raising the standard of Madrasah include: (1) discipline; (2) responsibility; (3) togetherness; (4) openness; (5) honesty; (5) methods of showing respect for others; (6) social values; and (7) values of oneness and unity. Establishing a culture of hard labor and discipline that is ingrained in and upheld by all Madrasah participants is the first step in implementation. This will align the aim of the Madrasah program, which is promoting the values the Islam way.

This also refers to the importance of teaching and incorporating it in their lives as it will elevate them as a human person having the good discipline of being an Islam.

Equity. This is indeed a great fact that have emerged according to the participants' response. This particular sense was made clear by the Asatidz that this exists at the Madrasah. It is expected to have diverse type of student that has different background socially, culturally, or economically. As for the participants, they have observed a lot of these diversity among students. Students also has different levels in term of learning as well as interest to many certain fields. Although the Madrasah seems like an exclusive school teaching Arabic language, it is mentioned by the participants that there are non-Muslim learners making the school inclusive to any type of race or religion. These remarkable observations are evident from the following narratives of the participants below:

"So, the second one is handling different students actually; madrasah classrooms or the madrasah education program have students from different backgrounds and abilities. So, I have to make sure everyone feels welcome and respected because some children have not studied in traditional madrasah, and some have studied in traditional madrasah, so the children, even if the first letter of the Arabic or the first letter of the Arabic, they don't know the name, and they don't know what that letter looks like, so I make them feel that they are equal because we have inclusive education, right? (AMS-R18)

"Uh, challenges? Ahh... sometimes, the children are at different levels. Some don't know much, some know a lot, some children are not interested, and then you have to teach them all in one room. So, it's really a challenge for me. I find it difficult to adjust and prioritize who to focus on. There should be segregation of levels, ideally." (BES-R8)

"OK. From what I have observed, the strengths of being an Arabic teacher serve as guidance for them, especially since we are in the city. Through this subject, children learn to fear Allah by obeying His commandments. Many of them wear hijabs, pray, and ask many questions about Islam. There are also non-Muslim students who join the class." (RV-R17)

Table 1. Matrix of Significant themes, Preliminary themes, and Final Coding of the Lived experiences of Asatidz in the Madrasah Program.			
Code/s	PRELIMINARY THEMES	SIGNIFICANT THEMES	SOURCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategies to engage students - Planning and preparing lessons - Designing and delivering lessons aligned with the curriculum - Creating Daily Lesson Logs (DLLs) and visual aids 	Teaching Strategies and Preparation	Instruction	AMS-R18, CH-R1, HB-R4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotion of Islamic Values - Teaching Islamic Values 		Islamic Advocacy	

- Strengthening beliefs and knowledge in Islam	Promotion of Islamic Values		CH-R1, BES-R9, US-R7
- Diversity and inclusivity in student backgrounds - Diverse student levels and interests - Inclusivity of non-Muslim students	Diversity and Inclusivity	Equity	AMS-R18, BES-R8, RV-R17

As stated by Lindner & Schwab (2020) in their study, the idea of providing inclusive education to all students makes it more important for educators to design classroom environments that promote engaging instruction. As for the Madrasah schools, the inclusion of other race or religion which is not classified as Islam is a great way to promote the values within the Islamic values. The practice of equity among these type institution points toward harmony among the different race and religion. Therefore, a methodological change toward individualized instruction and learning rather than the conventional "one-size-fits-all" approach provides a foundation for educational justice. These observations at the Madrasah clearly entails that the ALIVE is not only intended for Muslim learners but for all.

The Challenges Encountered by The Asatidz in the Madrasah Program

The second research question aimed to investigate the challenges encountered by the Asatidz in the Madrasah program. After analyzing the data, three significant themes were discovered as presented in Table 2, which include: Pedagogical Hurdles, Operational Limitations, and Instructional Obstacles.

Pedagogical Hurdles. In the practice of teaching, a lot of challenges always emerge in the middle of it. It was mentioned by the participants that even without the teaching proper yet, the existence of hurdles appear on the curriculum itself as to its design and how will it be implemented. Difficulties such as the incorporation of ALIVE in the class program could deal a lot of loads for students as well as for the teachers. Challenges on the exact time when the ALIVE will be taught also is expressed by the participants. The Asatidz also mentioned the difficulty of teaching Arabic because some of them don't really have knowledge about it yet they are required by the curriculum to tach it. The overloading also among teachers is a great hurdle among Asatidz, as they won't have enough time to teach it because they have consumed all of it into the basic subject taught in a class. This narrative is very perceptive as to what is provided below:

"So, it's like that, the real challenge we encountered here in curriculum design or implementation within the Madrasah Program is how to incorporate ALIVE because the class program varies, the time is not specific, there's no designated or fixed time for teaching."
(CH-R2)

"Uh, initially, the experience we had with the curriculum is really difficult to teach the Arabic language if we don't have exact knowledge of Arabic, and it also requires training from the ustadz. And having ICT tools like gadgets or, for example, a TV is important. But now, we are grateful because we are slowly being provided with TVs and even laptops." (HB-R3)

“So, as an ALIVE teacher, one of the problems I encountered here is that since the majority of students are Muslim learners, there’s a shortage of ALIVE teachers or ustadz to teach the children because almost everyone here is Muslim. So, when a ustadz comes in, for example, if they’re assigned to Grade Four, their time might not be enough because they’re alone. They can’t cover everyone, it’s like that.” (PE-R13)

Blignaut (2021) argued that that we may create the groundwork for a different sort of society—one that is governed by morality and universal human values—through education and the curriculum. It very evident that the curriculum can redirect people’s values thus improving the society. With this, the addressing of the curricular challenges or pedagogical hurdles in the schools must be as soon as possible. A shift in curriculum alone will not result in transformation unless it is accompanied by a change in teaching. Change in teaching will then be very easy as long as the hurdles and challenges are resolved along the way. Therefore, a critical pedagogy approach is essential to achieving the above-mentioned goals.

Operational Limitations. Generally, according to the participant, there is a huge scarcity of resources within Madrasah schools. It is observed by the Asatidz that there a lack of instructional materials. This particular challenge hinders the student’s learning because instructional materials pave the way of a much faster learning absorption among students. One that is alarming according to the Asatidz are the classroom shortage. It is stated that there are no enough seats for each students attending the class. This scarcity among students will not help them thus making the learning environment not conducive for learning. Lack of support among some communities is also stated, surely a supportive community towards Madrasah school will greatly contribute to the learning of the students but minimal support from them is observed by the Asatidz. This narrative about operational limitations is evident below.

“Okay, so as an asatidz, the daily challenge in our work, like what Ma’am mentioned, is the lack of resources. First is the lack of resources. Second, the lack of support, for example, in a society not everyone responds equally to the needs of the Madrasah program or what we teachers need, although there are some who help, not everyone does. So if a community is not united in supporting such a program, us teachers also struggle to adjust.” (PE-R14)

“For me, aside from the scheduling, I also struggle with the lack of instructional materials. We may find it difficult to teach because we lack materials and references.” (PE-R12)

“Initially, we didn’t have classrooms, there was a shortage of seats which affected my teaching and the students’ learning.” (BES-R10)

Insufficient resources, tools, and classroom supplies among schools, place a great deal of stress among teachers according to Kaufhold et. al. (2006). With this proof, the Asatidz are prone to stress with these challenges that they are facing during the teaching process. Provision of the needed resources may elevate their task as a teacher but small support from outside sources is another problem too. The ongoing “tug-of-war” for the same resources with ordinary education staff was a major

contributing factor in this scarcity. Even some of the schools have resources, a lot of teachers also are using it thus not all of the teachers can use it simultaneously. Resource allocation is much needed among Madrasah school because it will aid the Asatidz challenges in teaching. As for the study of Platis (2021), he stated that these challenges are more dynamic than the institutions or Madrasah are able to handle. The gap between the demand for progress and the feasibility of executing change is frequently explained by resource allocation. It can be said that a great change which will propel the school into progress is related to the resource allocation that will be provided. This suggests that the scarcity context of today is actually one of diminishing resources. When resources are scarce, putting an institutional strategy into action requires a certain decision-making procedure. This scarcity will more likely affect the learning of the students and the motivation of the Asatidz to teach.

Instructional Obstacles. This particular challenge focuses on the instruction proper both on the Asatidz perspective during class and students too during class. The motivation of the students in attending ALIVE subject are often affected by the time schedule among schools. This particular obstacle is very hard indeed for them to solve for the reason that the standard curriculum must be discussed first before the teaching of ALIVE. Student in this situation is oblige to spend more time in schools therefore reducing their personal time which will be spent for other matters. Consequently, student tend to skip the afternoon session of the ALIVE classes thus hindering their learning in the mentioned subject. Although there have been difficulties in instruction proper, the creativity among Asatidz arises because due to the situation they are now forced to do strategies to cope up with this hindrance. The narrative is evident as to what is provided below:

"Yes, the class program is really challenging to incorporate ALIVE into. I agree with the ustadza because it's really difficult to integrate ALIVE into the regular classes, especially in the second secondary level. Here in our school, the classes are divided into morning and afternoon sessions, so when we started, we were assigned to the afternoon session and taught the morning session. It's difficult because the students are not motivated to come back to school for the second session, especially for ALIVE. So that's one of the main issues we want to solve here." (CH-R2)

"In my daily teaching as an asatidz, one of the challenges is the lack of teaching materials or references, which makes it difficult to deliver effective instruction. This requires creativity and adjustment as an asatidz to meet the needs of students in various ways." (PE-R12)

Table 2. Matrix of Significant themes, Preliminary themes, and Final Coding of the Challenges Encountered by the Asatidz in the Madrasah Program.

Code/s	PRELIMINARY THEMES	SIGNIFICANT THEMES	SOURCE
- Challenges in Curriculum Design and Implementation - Curriculum design difficulties - Shortage of ALIVE teachers	Curriculum Design and	Pedagogical Hurdles	CH-R2, HB-R3, PE-R13

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of resources - Lack of instructional materials - Classroom shortage - Challenges with Incorporating ALIVE into Class Program - Difficulty in delivering effective instruction - Student interest and effectiveness of teaching 	Implementation Challenges		
	Resource and Infrastructure Challenges	Operational Limitations	PE-R14, PE-R12, BES-R10
	Teaching and Learning Challenges	Instructional Obstacles	CH-R2 and PE-R12

Several instructional challenges that affect teaching and learning outcomes are faced by Madrasah education (Doe & Smith, 2020) and just like any other Madrasah institution, our very own Madrasah in the country suffers the same challenges too. In their 2019 study, Khan and Ahmed examined the difficulties Madrasah teachers encounter in their teaching and looked at solutions. This study identifies important barriers such problems with classroom management, mismatched teaching approaches, and curriculum alignment. Pedagogical training, curricular modifications, and professional development opportunities were shown to be effective solutions for addressing instructional issues in madrasas. There is also discussion of suggestions for educators and policy makers.

Rahman & Ali (2021) conducted a study that examined the educational challenges faced by Madrasah teachers as seen from their own viewpoints. Their study reveals a number of difficulties, such as holes in the curriculum, pedagogical constraints, and problems with student motivation. Indeed, there are a lot of difficulties with teaching in madrasah institutions. In order to effectively handle instructional problems, their study also recommends professional development, curricular changes, and support methods.

The Pedagogical Strategies or Approaches Employed to Overcome the Challenges

The third research question aimed to determine the pedagogical strategies or approaches employed to overcome the challenges. After analyzing the data, three significant themes were discovered as presented in Table 3, which include: Instructional Variety, Utilization of Emerging Technology, and Stakeholder Involvement.

Varied Instructional Approach. Varied strategies applied in the teaching process often results to greater learning among learners. It was mentioned by the participants that collaborative learning works for them during the teaching process of Arabic even ALIVE. Differentiated Instruction (DI) was also mentioned by the participants which is declared as very effective during classes. This particular type of instruction caters variety of students' background even learning styles among them. Learning also their preferred way could unlock the students' abilities especially if are at the same time is immerse with other students thus applying the collaborative activity. Explicit method is also employed by some of the Asatidz in the teaching process because it was declared too that is effective in teaching Arabic language. Adaptation as to where or what type of strategy are the learners is comfortable with. Knowing the learners better on whether they prefer pictures, written, or verbal and creating visual

aids that they respond well. Various techniques also were applied in every lesson so that the engaging will always be maintained all throughout the class. These ideas are found from the responses of the participants below:

"Um, first of all, I utilize pedagogical strategies as an Asatidz in the madrasah setting. Some pedagogical strategies that I use include differentiated instruction, tailoring teaching methods and materials to meet the diverse needs and learning styles of students. For example, using a variety of instructional techniques such as group work, discussions, and hands-on activities to engage different types of learners. Next is collaborative learning, encouraging collaborative learning experiences for students to work together in groups to solve problems, discuss ideas, and share knowledge." (AMS-R18)

"For me, I always use the explicit method and collaborative method, as well as the differentiated instruction (DI), because I believe these are effective ways of teaching children, especially in Arabic language." (HB-R3)

"To meet the diverse needs and learning styles of the students, I observe how they learn best. I notice if they respond better to visual aids or prefer verbal explanations. I adapt my teaching methods based on what each student prefers; for example, some students might prefer drawing while others prefer discussions. I use various teaching techniques within one lesson, such as showing pictures, engaging in discussions, and doing activities, to ensure that everyone learns." (AMS- R18)

The impacts of instructional variation on student engagement and learning outcomes in the classroom were investigated in the Johnson & Smith (2018) study. The study's findings show that using a variety of teaching techniques, including group discussions, multimedia presentations, and hands-on activities, improves learning outcomes across topic areas and positively affects student engagement. With this proof, it only propels the fact that teachers need to apply variety of strategies during classes. It does not only elevate the students progress in learning but it provides also positive influence in learning more about a certain topic.

A second study by Brown & Williams (2019) looked at the connection between student learning outcomes and instructional variety. It found that using a variety of instructional approaches improves learning for a wide range of student demographics. Another evidence that success correlates with the application of varied teaching strategies among learners. The study emphasizes how crucial it is to include instructional variation in order to accommodate various learning styles and encourage a deeper comprehension and retention of the material covered in the course. It does not only provide short term retention to the learners but a deeper retention even comprehension on whatever subject is being taught.

Utilization of emerging Technology. This clearly reflects a range of instructional approaches aiming at addressing students' needs and improving teaching quality. It includes the use of such materials and technologies as televisions and printers, funded through the MOOE, to update and facilitate lesson delivery. In addition,

educators point out the necessity of digital research to have access to multiple references and make lesson plans more diverse. Collaborative and cooperative learning techniques are indicated as the most useful for promoting group work and knowledge sharing and making students take an active position. Overall, the awareness of students' various learning styles makes educators use tailored strategies and technology such as television to create inclusive environments. The proof of this narrative is provided below:

"Ah, okay. So, as of now, since we're included in the MOOE (Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses), we have instructional materials, we also have televisions, printers, our teaching is getting easier because it's being somewhat updated and upgraded, some classrooms have those." (FS-R16)

"Doing research on the internet, that's what I do to meet my needs, searching for various references online to make it easier and better for me to create my lessons. That's all." (BES-R8)

"Using collaborative or cooperative learning among students in the class, I expand the students' ability to work as a group. This allows them to share their knowledge, collaborate, and engage in curriculum-related activities. Valuing Diversity, as an Asatidz, I value the diversity of students (their own styles) so I use various strategies. I use different learning strategies tailored to their learning styles. I also use technology such as television for teaching and for students' easy learning." (BES-R10)

Johnson & Brown (2020) looked at the approaches and results of using emerging technologies in the classroom. In today's classroom setting, all of the teachers are now equipped with different type of technology. Research has revealed a correlation between the efficacy of many technologies, including virtual reality, augmented reality, and artificial intelligence, and the improvement of educational achievements. This may sound techy for the remote schools but it will eventually reach them in the future thus we should start to embrace it and use it in the teaching process.

White & Smith (2019) looked at the effects of mobile learning technology on teaching and learning outcomes in a variety of educational settings in another study. The study outlined the advantages and difficulties of mobile learning, including its enhanced flexibility, accessibility, and engagement as well as its potential for equity and the digital divide. The study also made it abundantly evident that using mobile devices into teaching methods and improving student learning outcomes is a successful tactic.

Teachers' opinions about using new technologies in the classroom were examined by Taylor & Davis (2021). Although our technology has not yet reached its full potential, it is observed that our school today is starting to embrace this change. The experiences, perspectives, and difficulties that educators face while incorporating gamification, artificial intelligence, and collaborative tools into their lesson plans were investigated in this study. It turns out that if emerging technology is used in educational contexts, successful tactics, the necessity for professional growth, and institutional

support are all necessary. The collaboration between the school and stakeholders creates a big part in implementing this technology-based instruction.

Stakeholder Involvement. To address such challenges, the present sheds light on the employed pedagogical methods and teaching strategies used by Asatidz or teachers. First, the Asatidz must collaboratively work with other teachers and the principal in changing administration. As such, working with teachers who have already adjusted to the changes and adopting at-least objective relationships helps secure a classroom and increases the likelihood of being included in the MOOE. They must collaborate with interested parents and create a friendly relationship. Dialogues such as this have been organized to foster reconciliation between parents and teachers by encouraging parents to learn more about what sets the Arabic offered at the Madrasah apart. They attempt to come up with new ways and get creative with working studentships, such as visiting students in their rooms and ensuring that they are present in Arabic language classes each period to create an engaging, meaningful experience.

In order to solve challenges and enhance the Madrasah learning environment, the Asatidz technique builds relationships with parents, students, and school administration through initiative and collaboration, as highlighted by the participant replies. This is more likely to foster cordial relations among the parties involved. Their efforts to highlight the distinctiveness of Madrasah education, ensure student attendance, and provide targeted support show a commitment to excellent pedagogy and holistic student development within the specific framework of Islamic education. It is said that because of the ongoing community contact, students' academic well-being may be significantly impacted by this link. This is because they will be more motivated to attend class. The proof of this narrative is provided below:

"In terms of pedagogical methods and teaching strategies that we, as asatidz, use to address challenges within the Madrasah setting, we go through various techniques. Initially, we engage in collaborative efforts, especially with other teachers and the principal. Over time, we became friends with the principal, and when some changes occurred in the principalship, we took the initiative to help us secure classrooms, include us in the MOOE (Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses), and organize the parents to garner their support. We visit the students in their rooms to encourage them to attend the ALIVE classroom. If we don't do this, no students will come. That's why we organized their parents to help. They understand what we're teaching them." (FS-R16)

"So, we organized the parents to understand; we had a dialogue, I explained it to them because some parents said their children already study Arabic on Saturdays and Sundays traditionally. But what's taught there is different, and our subject here in public school is Arabic language and Islamic values. So, we organized that until we trained the children that when it's Arabic teaching time according to the schedule, they go to their room. And if they don't go, we go to their room because it's difficult to get them out of their room; sometimes they're cleaning their room. You fetch the child from there and bring them to Arabic class. We do that to properly convey what we're teaching them. That's all." (FS-R16)

Table 3. Matrix of Significant themes, Preliminary themes, and Final Coding of the Pedagogical Strategies or Approaches Employed to Overcome the Challenges.			
Code/s	PRELIMINARY THEMES	SIGNIFICANT THEMES	SOURCE
- Collaborative Learning - Differentiated Instruction (DI) - Utilization of Various Teaching Techniques	Pedagogical Approaches Diversity	Varied Instructional Approach	AMS-R18, HB-R3, AMS- R18
- Utilization of technology in teaching - Utilization of Online Resources for Lesson Preparation - Utilization of technology such as TV	Challenges in Implementation and Resource Management	Utilization of emerging Technology	FS-R16, BES-R8, BES-R10
- Organizing parents for support - Parental involvement in understanding pedagogical approach - Collaborative efforts with teachers and principal	Community Engagement and Support	Stakeholder Involvement	FS-R16

The importance of stakeholder participation in school decision-making processes and educational governance was examined in Johnson & Smith's (2019) research. The review looks at the roles, advantages, difficulties, and best practices related to involving a variety of stakeholders in school governance, including parents, teachers, administrators, legislators, and community members. Their research focuses on educational administration and policy. As it happens, there are ramifications for how well stakeholders collaborate to enhance student achievement, encourage accountability, and advance inclusive decision-making techniques. Strengthening the proof that create stable interactions with the stakeholders results to the enhancement of the student achievements.

The roles and contributions of stakeholders in school development projects were investigated by Taylor & Davis (2021). evaluating the effect of the stakeholder's contribution to the improvement of the school. Their study examined the experiences of many stakeholders in cooperative efforts to improve student outcomes and school performance, including parents, teachers, administrators, and community members. In addition to examining successful tactics for forming and maintaining stakeholder partnerships in initiatives for school reform, it has been determined that a number of critical characteristics, including shared goals, leadership, communication, and trust, influence stakeholder involvement. Numerous factors do impact the school, making it evident that maintaining continual communication with the stakeholders is essential.

The Recommendations in the Sustaining of the Madrasah Program

The fourth research question aimed to determine the recommendations in the sustaining of the Madrasah Program. After analyzing the data, three significant themes were discovered as presented in Table 4, which include: Collective Engagement and Assistance, Modernization, and Career advancement.

Collective Engagement and Assistance. As stated by the participants, it is quite a challenge for them in strengthening the community involvement towards the school. But the support really is needed in order for the Madrasah program to sustain. Making contact is easy but maintaining it is very crucial. The involvement of parents greatly strengthens the education of the students as well as the sustainability of the program. Simple connection plays a part but having a contribution from the stakeholders creates meaningful connection within. The community should put a concern to the education thus ensuring that the education the learners receive provides skills and knowledge needed to be productive and meaningful to the society. This narrative is evident as the proof below is provided:

"The challenge for me is strengthening the importance of education within the community. Maintaining support from the community and family is a crucial part of sustaining the madrasah program. It's important for parents and the local community to participate and partner in strengthening the education of students in the madrasah."
(BES-R9)

"The significant challenge in maintaining this is the importance of education within the community. Sustaining support from the community and family is a crucial part of maintaining the madrasah program. It's important for parents and the local community to engage and partner in strengthening the education of students in the Madrasah. Responding to the needs of the modern world and addressing the requirements of students for their future in a constantly changing world is a challenge. It is also necessary to ensure that the education they receive provides the skills and knowledge needed to be productive and meaningful contributors to society." (CH-R1)

In their 2021 study, Garcia and Nguyen examined the value of group involvement in creating cohesive school communities. By their active participation, the neighboring villages have established a cooperation that benefits both sides. Their study looked at the roles that different stakeholders—teachers, parents, students, and community members—play in creating a cooperative and encouraging learning environment. The stakeholders play the following roles, which undoubtedly make them one of the essential elements that every school needs. Their research shows that there are methods for raising group participation and emphasizes the benefits for student learning outcomes, which lead to overall performance in the classroom.

Research on collaborative methods to school development, with an emphasis on tactics for communal participation and help, was presented by Jones & Smith (2018). This study is probably focused on the activities that the community and the school are taking part in. The authors examined best practices and research results pertaining to community, family, and educator collaboration to improve school success. There are documented best practices that can be applied to communities, families, and educators. Their research study offered suggestions for putting collaborative school development projects into practice by shedding light on the effects of group engagement on student achievement, school atmosphere, and community relationships. Therefore, it also contributes significantly to the continuation of the Madrasah program.

Modernization. Motivating the student during the learning process is quite a task. As the time passes by the generation of learners is also progressing and changing. According to the participants' response, the usage of technological devices such as flat screen TV paves the way in modern teaching. The utilization of traditional chalkboards isn't a thing now but still is used occasionally but most of the time the TV is used. The digital world we live on now marks our leap too towards adaptation and embracing the new trend in teaching which is incorporating it with the devices available. The proof of this narrative is reflected below:

"I use many things to motivate and help my students learn better. As you can see, we have a large flat screen here. We use it all the time, it's not just for show, it's really functional. We don't use traditional chalkboards much anymore; we only use them occasionally, but for now, it's more of an enhancement, a combination of the TV and the chalkboard. Because we're living in a digital world now, so we need to adapt." (CH-R2)

The difficulties and possibilities of integrating technology into the educational process are examined in the paper by Patel & Williams (2020). may present difficulties in the form of obstacles or advantages as they relate to chances while integrating technology into the classroom. They looked at the best ways for teachers to integrate technology into their lessons, increase student interest, and advance learning objectives. The authors highlight the possible advantages of utilizing technology in educational contexts and offer ways for overcoming obstacles to technology integration. Our schools are still developing and breaking down internal barriers to this newfound embrace of technology integration in the classroom.

An additional study by Lee and Johnson (2019) looked into how educational technologies may be modified to provide more efficient teaching and learning opportunities. Given that it covers all forms of instructional technology; this study is rather broad. The use of technology in the classroom encourages instructors to be imaginative and inventive. The research investigated how technology might support creative teaching strategies, individualized education plans, and cooperative learning settings. This study reveals best practices for using educational technologies into instruction in the classroom and discusses the effects on academic achievement, motivation, and student involvement. When educational technology is used in the classroom properly, children perform better academically.

Career Advancement. Being the frontliners in the field of education requires every Asatidz to be equipped with the necessary abilities during the teaching of ALIVE. Trainings and enhancement of teacher's capabilities are vital in maintaining the required and must quality of teaching at Madrasah. This enhancement can be done through series of varied seminars, workshops, and other activities that targets the improvement of Asatidz's skill in teaching even improving in the integration of technology with it. Updated topics to be taught at Madrasah schools must be given a glance too. The assurance of the authenticity of the topics ensures the quality of it. There should also be an important focus towards hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) because there's a lot of existing hadith which are not true at all. This narrative is evident to what is shown below:

“For me, training is the strengthening of teachers' abilities because teachers are the frontliners of ALIVE in the community. Continuous training and enhancement of teachers' capabilities are important to maintain the quality of teaching. This can be done through seminars, workshops, and other activities aimed at improving their teaching skills and using modern methodologies.” (BES-R9)

“For me, the most pressing challenges to its sustainability in the Madrasah education program are the updating of what's taught. We need to ensure that what we teach our ALIVE learners is updated and authentic, especially if it comes from the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). It needs to be authentic because there are some hadiths that are not authentic. Some hadiths are not very strong, so we need to update what we teach to the children.” (AMS-R18)

Table 4. Matrix of Significant themes, Preliminary themes, and Final Coding of the Recommendations in the Sustaining of the Madrasah Program.			
Code/s	PRELIMINARY THEMES	SIGNIFICANT THEMES	SOURCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Importance of Community Support - Engagement of Parents and Local Community - Community Collaboration for Support 	Community Collaboration and Support	Collective Engagement and Assistance	BES-R9, and CH-R1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adapting to Changing World Needs - Utilization of Technology for Teaching Enhancement - Adaptation to Digital Learning Environment 	Adaptation to Modern Education Needs	Modernization	CH-R1, and CH-R2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continuous Training and Enhancement - Use of Seminars, Workshops, and Modern Methodologies - Updating Curriculum Content 	Continuous Learning and Professional Development	Career Advancement	BES-R9 and AMS-R18

The role of curriculum development, teacher training programs, and administrative support in promoting career growth and professional success for Asatidz (Islamic teachers) is discussed in Khan & Ali's (2021) perspectives from Islamic educational institutions on improving career opportunities for Asatidz (Islamic teachers). To encourage and accelerate the Asatidz's professional progress, it is essential that they receive training, with administrative support as well. The study emphasized the significance of continuous professional development programs and cooperative endeavors among all parties in establishing favorable conditions for Asatidz to prosper in their professions. Consequently, a connection formed by the Asatidz between the actuation within and the support outside.

Another study by Ahmad & Yusuf (2019) looked at the requirements for professional growth and career advancement for Islamic teachers, or Asatidz, who work at

madrasahs. To facilitate learning among students, the Asatidz must fulfill a number of conditions. Their study looked at the obstacles Asatidz had in getting recognized in the Madrasah setting, training opportunities, and professional growth. Research was conducted with a thorough focus on the obstacles to Asatidz's career advancement. It was well acknowledged that better techniques were needed to facilitate their advancement in their careers. We cannot conclusively state that a specific Asatidz's professional development has not occurred if there is no improvement in the application of techniques.

IMPLICATIONS

In conclusion, the study on the perspective of the Asatidz (teachers) regarding the challenges associated with teaching and learning Arabic at a Madrasah (school) has shed light on the experiences, the challenges that emerge along the way, the overcoming of the challenges, and sustaining the program. The lived experiences of the Asatidz usually were the creation of their lesson and choosing the right strategies which falls under instruction, the promotion of Islamic values that includes strengthening the beliefs and knowledge about Islam, and equity that emphasizes the learner's diversity and inclusivity.

With this, is also the emergence of challenges that are observed by the Asatidz which are pedagogical hurdles that came from the curriculum design as well as the implementation process of it, operational limitations which technically are the resource and infrastructure scarcity, and instructional obstacles that entails teaching and learning challenges. The mentioned challenges can be addressed by the following: instructional variety which is basically the usage and application of varied strategies to drag the learners attention, utilization of emerging technology that talks about the integration of any devices to the lesson proper so that the students will be hooked during the class session, and lastly the stakeholder involvement that will address the scarcity of the school resources because they can be asked as to can they provide given that there is an existing lack of resources.

Recognition of the challenges and presenting possible solutions to it is not the only concern about the Madrasah program. The sustainability of the mentioned program puts the involved people into a much greater work. The study shows that in order to sustain the program the following recommendations must be applied: collective engagement and assistance which is between the school and the stakeholders, modernization which is the adaptation to the technology during the teaching and learning process, and career advancement that will improve the Asatidz holistically not just in the teaching process but also learning the ALIVE well. The stated results can be valuable to the Madrasah administration, stakeholders, Asatidz, and learners.

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