

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Revisiting Islamic History in Bangladesh's Alia Madrasah Education System

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Abstract

Background: Islamic history education occupies an important place in Bangladesh's Alia Madrasah education system, where it contributes to students' religious identity, moral formation, and understanding of Islamic civilization. However, concerns remain regarding curriculum content, teaching methods, teacher preparation, and students' critical engagement with historical knowledge.

Objective: This study aims to examine the current state of Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs in Bangladesh, with particular attention to curriculum structure, pedagogical practices, institutional influences, student engagement, and major challenges affecting effective teaching and learning.

Methods: The study adopts a literature-review-based qualitative approach. It reviews peer-reviewed journal articles, books, government reports, educational policies, academic theses, and institutional curriculum documents related to Islamic history education and the Alia Madrasah system. The collected literature is analyzed thematically under key areas such as curriculum design, teaching methodology, student worldview, teacher training, educational resources, and policy implications.

Findings: The review shows that Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs provides students with a strong spiritual and ethical foundation. The curriculum generally follows a chronological structure, covering the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the Rashidun Caliphate, major Islamic empires, and selected modern Islamic developments. However, the curriculum often emphasizes religious narratives more than broader socio-political, cultural, scientific, and intellectual contexts. Teaching practices remain largely lecture-based and dependent on rote memorization, limiting students' critical thinking and analytical engagement. The study also identifies outdated textbooks, limited teaching resources, insufficient teacher training, and slow adoption of interactive pedagogy as major challenges.

Keywords

Islamic history, Alia Madrasahs, Curriculum review, Pedagogical approaches, Teacher training

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1. Introduction

Islamic history education plays a pivotal role in shaping the intellectual, cultural, and religious development of students in Bangladesh, especially in the context of Alia Madrasahs (Momen & Islam, 2025a). As an integral component of the Islamic educational system in Bangladesh, Alia Madrasahs have a long-standing tradition of imparting religious education with a significant emphasis on Islamic history, among other subjects. The study of Islamic history in these institutions not only serves the purpose of preserving the rich heritage of the Muslim world but also aims at fostering religious values, identity, and cultural pride (Momen & Islam, 2025h). This section aims to provide an overview of the historical context of Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs, highlight its significance within the broader educational landscape, and present the objectives and research questions of the study.

Alia Madrasahs, or formal Islamic educational institutions in Bangladesh, have a deep-rooted history in the country's educational system (S. Hossain, 2025). They were initially established during the colonial era to provide Islamic education in a structured and systematic manner. The roots of the Alia Madrasah system can be traced back to the early nineteenth century, when the British colonial administration introduced the concept of state-sponsored Islamic education as a means to control the Muslim population and regulate religious teaching (Mahbubul & Al-Hasani, 2023). This system was officially institutionalized in 1829 with the establishment of the first Alia Madrasah in Bengal, which aimed to teach both religious and practical subjects (*Govt. Madrasah-E-Alia, Dhaka*, 2026). The curriculum in these early madrasahs was primarily focused on Islamic jurisprudence, theology, and basic Arabic language skills. However, over time, the inclusion of Islamic history as a central subject began to take shape, largely due to the growing need to instill a sense of religious identity and pride among students. By the late twentieth century, the Alia Madrasah system had expanded significantly, providing education to a large proportion of Muslim students across the country (M. A. Karim, 2018).

Islamic history, particularly the history of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the Rashidun Caliphate, and the subsequent Islamic empires, became central to the curriculum of Alia Madrasahs (Dr. Md. K. Hossain, 2025). This education is not only about conveying historical facts but also about nurturing moral and spiritual development in accordance with Islamic teachings. The historical narratives imparted in these madrasahs are intertwined with religious education, aiming to instill ethical values, a sense of belonging to the Muslim ummah, and a commitment to the preservation of Islamic traditions (Velly et al., 2025). In the contemporary context, Alia Madrasahs in Bangladesh continue to play a crucial role in educating a significant number of students, particularly in rural areas where access to formal schooling may be limited (Saiyara, 2022). The curriculum of these institutions, while adhering to traditional teachings, has gradually incorporated elements of modern education, with a focus on Islamic history, Arabic language, and other religious sciences. Islamic history is of paramount importance in Alia Madrasah education as it provides students with an understanding of the evolution of Islamic civilization, its contributions to science, art, literature, and governance, and its relevance to contemporary issues. Islamic history education in these institutions serves as a foundational element of the students' spiritual and intellectual development, ensuring that they develop a strong sense of religious identity and cultural pride (Momen & Islam, 2025b).

In the broader educational landscape of Bangladesh, Islamic history holds a unique position. While public schools focus on secular subjects, Alia Madrasahs offer an alternative that emphasizes religious

and historical knowledge rooted in the Islamic tradition (Roy et al., 2020). This distinction allows students to learn about the rich intellectual heritage of the Muslim world, from the golden age of Islamic civilization to its contemporary challenges. Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs also plays a crucial role in shaping students' worldviews. By learning about the various Islamic empires, their cultural and scientific achievements, and the role of Islam in world history, students are equipped with a deeper understanding of their religion and its impact on global affairs (Momen & Islam, 2025c). In a world where the narratives of Muslim communities are often marginalized or misrepresented, Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs helps to counter these misconceptions and provide students with a balanced and authentic perspective. Moreover, the study of Islamic history in these madrasahs goes beyond mere factual knowledge. It is intricately linked with the students' spiritual development. The historical narratives taught in these institutions are not just about events in the past; they are also moral lessons, illustrating the values of justice, integrity, and piety. By engaging with these narratives, students are encouraged to reflect on their own lives and the ethical challenges they face in the modern world. In addition, Islamic history education fosters a sense of unity among students. By learning about the shared history of the Muslim ummah, students develop a sense of solidarity with Muslims around the world, recognizing their shared heritage and collective responsibility. This aspect of education is particularly important in the current global climate, where political and religious divisions often create barriers between different communities.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to critically examine the current state of Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs in Bangladesh. Specifically, the objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To Assess the Current State of Islamic History Education in Alia Madrasahs
2. To Analyze the Teaching Methodologies Used in Islamic History Education
3. To Investigate the Impact of Islamic History Education on Students' Religious and Intellectual Development
4. To Identify Challenges and Limitations in the Teaching of Islamic History

Research Questions

The study will address the following research questions:

1. How is Islamic history taught in Alia Madrasahs in Bangladesh?
2. What are the challenges and limitations in the teaching of Islamic history?
3. How does Islamic history education impact the worldview of students in these institutions?

Islamic history education in Bangladesh's Alia Madrasahs plays a vital role in shaping the religious and intellectual landscape of the country's Muslim students. This section has provided an overview of the historical context of Alia Madrasahs, their significance in the broader educational framework, and the key objectives and research questions that will guide this study. By critically examining the current state of Islamic history education, the study will contribute to understanding the challenges faced by these institutions and provide insights into improving the teaching of Islamic history for future generations (Uyuni, 2020). The findings of this study will not only inform educational policy and practice but also help strengthen the role of Alia Madrasahs in shaping a more informed and spiritually grounded generation.

2. Literature Review

The literature review aims to critically examine the existing research and scholarly writings on Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs in Bangladesh. This section will explore the historical development of Islamic history education, key educational philosophies and pedagogies in the Alia Madrasah system, an analysis of the curriculum and pedagogy, the challenges and gaps in Islamic history education, and its impact on students' religious and intellectual development. This review will synthesize and evaluate the existing literature to provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject.

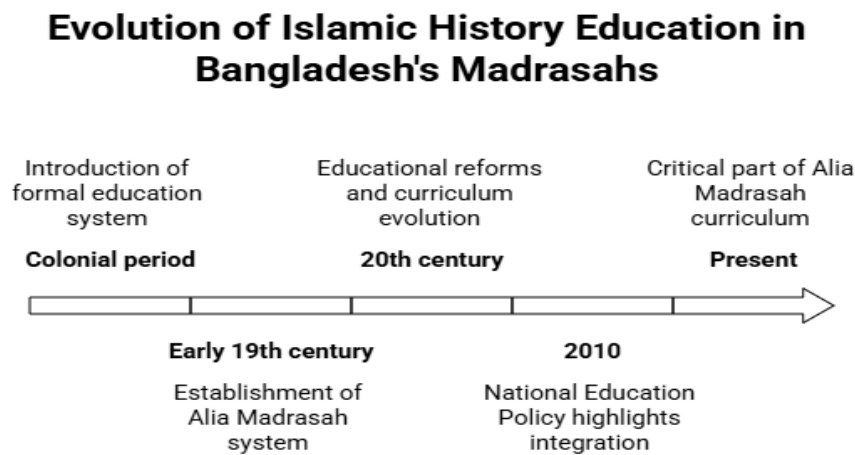


Figure 1: Islamic History in Madrasah Education

Historical Development of Islamic History Education in Madrasahs

Islamic history education has always been central to the madrasah system in the Muslim world, and Bangladesh is no exception. The roots of Islamic history education in Bangladesh's madrasahs can be traced back to the colonial period, where the British authorities introduced a formal education system that incorporated both Western and Islamic teachings (Momen & Islam, 2025d). Initially, madrasahs focused primarily on religious instruction, such as Quranic studies, Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), and Hadith. Islamic history, while significant, was often taught indirectly through religious texts and discussions, and was not considered as a distinct subject in the curriculum. With the advent of the Alia Madrasah system in the early 19th century, Islamic history began to gain more prominence in the educational framework. The establishment of Alia Madrasahs was part of a broader effort to provide structured Islamic education that could compete with the colonial education system. As the educational system evolved, Islamic history became more integrated into the curriculum, becoming an essential subject in the studies of Islamic jurisprudence and theology (M. Karim, 2018). In the 20th century, as educational reforms took place in Bangladesh, Islamic history continued to evolve within the madrasah system. The National Education Policy of 2010 highlighted the importance of integrating religious education with modern subjects (Bano, 2013). Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs expanded beyond the classical period of Islam and began incorporating more contemporary events, the history of modern Islamic movements, and the impact of colonialism on Muslim societies. Today, Islamic history is a critical part of the curriculum in Alia Madrasahs, offering students a deep understanding of the socio-political and religious contexts in which Islam has evolved. The curriculum not only covers the foundational periods of Islamic history, including the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the Rashidun Caliphate, the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties, and the history of the Ottomans, but it also delves into

modern Islamic history, including colonialism, independence movements, and contemporary Islamic thought (Mölder & Sazonov, 2021).

Key Educational Philosophies and Pedagogies in the Alia Madrasah System

The Alia Madrasah system in Bangladesh follows a unique set of educational philosophies and pedagogies that differentiate it from mainstream secular education. The primary philosophy guiding Alia Madrasah education is rooted in Islamic principles, aiming to foster a comprehensive understanding of Islam that integrates both religious and historical knowledge (Momen & Islam, 2025e). The pedagogical approach in Alia Madrasahs emphasizes rote memorization, recitation, and oral transmission of knowledge, especially in the earlier stages of education (Sabki & Hardaker, 2013). The curriculum in Alia Madrasahs places a significant focus on Islamic values, ethics, and religious teachings. Islamic history education, as a component of this curriculum, is taught in a manner that links historical events to moral lessons derived from Islamic teachings (Momen & Islam, 2025f). This method reinforces the importance of ethical conduct, social responsibility, and spiritual awareness among students. However, in recent decades, there has been a push to modernize the pedagogy within Alia Madrasahs. Educational reforms have encouraged the incorporation of interactive teaching methods, such as group discussions, project-based learning, and critical thinking exercises, alongside traditional methods. There is an increasing emphasis on student-centered learning, aiming to engage students in a deeper understanding of the material, rather than merely memorizing historical facts. In terms of Islamic history education, this shift towards modern pedagogies involves balancing the traditional approach of textbook-based learning with more contextual and critical discussions of history (Dube & Zheba, 2025). Teaching Islamic history is not just about transmitting factual information; it also involves fostering an understanding of the social, political, and cultural influences that shaped Islamic civilization (Islam, 2019).

Analysis of Textbooks, Teaching Strategies, and Educational Goals

The textbooks used in Alia Madrasahs for teaching Islamic history are typically compiled by Islamic educational boards, such as the Bangladesh Madrasa Education Board. These textbooks cover a wide range of topics, from the early Islamic period to the modern era, and are designed to provide students with a foundational understanding of the history of Islam. The content often includes biographies of key historical figures, events, battle histories, and Islamic state formation. One significant aspect of the curriculum is its emphasis on chronological learning. Students typically begin with the history of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his companions, progressing through the subsequent dynasties and empires (Maevskaya & Aga, 2021). The narrative often follows a linear progression from the early Islamic period to the modern era. However, this approach may fail to capture the complexities of Islamic history, including its diverse regional contexts and political developments. The teaching strategies employed in Alia Madrasahs largely rely on lecture-based delivery, where teachers present the material and students are expected to memorize and reproduce it (Maevskaya & Aga, 2021). In some institutions, discussion-based classes are conducted, allowing students to critically engage with historical narratives. However, such interactive methods remain limited in scope, and much of the history education remains focused on facts and dates rather than interpretation and analysis. The educational goals of Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs extend beyond merely imparting historical knowledge. These goals are rooted in the belief that understanding Islamic history is integral to shaping students' moral values and religious identity. The curriculum aims to instill a sense of

belonging to the Muslim community (ummah) and promote values such as justice, piety, and social responsibility. Moreover, it encourages students to understand Islam's role in shaping the global political landscape and scientific advancements.

Comparison of Islamic History Education in Alia Madrasahs versus Other Religious or Secular Systems in Bangladesh

When compared to secular education systems in Bangladesh, Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs tends to focus more on faith-based narratives and less on critical historical analysis. Secular education in the country, offered in government schools, places emphasis on historical objectivity, often focusing on the political, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of history, including colonialism, nationalism, and independence. Islamic history in these secular contexts is generally presented in relation to world history, without as much emphasis on religious interpretation (Kabir & Islam, 2017). In contrast, Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs is deeply intertwined with religious teachings. While both secular and religious systems share some common historical events (e.g., the Crusades, colonialism), Alia Madrasahs emphasize the spiritual significance of these events, focusing on their impact on Islamic identity and faith practices.

Challenges and Gaps in Islamic History Education

Despite the importance of Islamic history in Alia Madrasah education, there are several shortcomings that hinder the effectiveness of teaching in these institutions. One of the most significant issues is the lack of updated and comprehensive textbooks (Napitupulu, 2020). Many textbooks are outdated and fail to incorporate new historical research or diverse perspectives on Islamic history. This limits students' ability to critically engage with the subject matter and understand the historical complexities of the Muslim world. Another challenge is the insufficient training for teachers. While many teachers in Alia Madrasahs have deep knowledge of religious texts, they often lack formal training in pedagogy and modern teaching methods. This limits their ability to engage students actively and foster critical thinking. Teacher training programs in these institutions are often inadequate, and there is a need for more professional development opportunities to equip educators with the skills necessary to teach Islamic history effectively (Momen & Islam, 2025g). Additionally, curriculum implementation in Alia Madrasahs is often hindered by limited resources. Many madrasahs struggle to afford modern teaching tools, such as multimedia aids or interactive learning materials (AINURRIFQI, 2024). This reliance on traditional lecture-based methods means that students may miss out on more dynamic and engaging ways to learn about history.

The Debate on Modernizing Islamic History Teaching and Balancing Tradition with Contemporary Perspectives

A growing debate within the Alia Madrasah education system centers on how to modernize Islamic history teaching while maintaining traditional Islamic values. Critics argue that the curriculum needs to evolve to reflect the changing socio-political realities and provide students with a more global perspective on Islamic history (Suhendi, 2025). This includes addressing issues such as colonialism, empire-building, and Islamic contributions to science in ways that encourage critical reflection rather than blind acceptance of historical narratives. However, traditionalists within the madrasah system are wary of overhauling the curriculum, fearing that modernization could dilute the spiritual and religious objectives of the education system (Islam, 2012). As a result, there is a fine balance between preserving

Islamic traditions and incorporating modern educational approaches, and this tension is a significant challenge in the evolution of Islamic history education in Bangladesh's madrasahs.

Impact of Islamic History Education

Islamic history education has a profound impact on students' religious identity and intellectual development (Hamzah & Jusoh, 2025). By learning about the history of Islam, students are encouraged to reflect on their religious beliefs, values, and practices. The study of Islamic history fosters a sense of belonging to the Muslim ummah and helps students understand the rich cultural and intellectual heritage of Islam. Moreover, Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs also plays a key role in shaping students' intellectual development. The curriculum encourages students to consider the contributions of Islamic civilization to fields such as science, medicine, and philosophy, providing them with a broader understanding of their heritage (Febrian et al., 2024). However, there is still a need for more critical engagement with Islamic history to help students develop the skills of historical analysis and critical thinking. Islamic history education plays an important role in shaping students' perceptions of Islam and their socio-political views (Kasman, 2021). The narratives presented in the curriculum are not just historical facts but are intertwined with the ethical and moral teachings of Islam. As students engage with these narratives, they form ideas about justice, social equity, and the role of Islam in contemporary society.

Islamic history also shapes students' perceptions of Islamic governance, political authority, and the role of Islam in modern statecraft. This has a significant impact on their socio-political views, as students are exposed to historical accounts of Muslim rulers, empires, and their approach to governance. The study of Islamic history helps students form a connection between their religious beliefs and their understanding of the political landscape, both in the Muslim world and globally. This literature review has examined the development of Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs in Bangladesh, analyzing the curriculum, pedagogy, challenges, and impact on students. The integration of Islamic history into the educational framework of these institutions provides students with a foundation for understanding their religious and cultural heritage (Ainurrifqi, 2024). However, there are significant challenges related to outdated resources, teacher training, and the balance between modernizing the curriculum and preserving traditional values. Addressing these challenges will be crucial in enhancing the quality of Islamic history education and ensuring that it continues to play a central role in shaping the intellectual and spiritual development of students in Alia Madrasahs.

3. Methodology

Literature Review Cycle for Islamic History Education

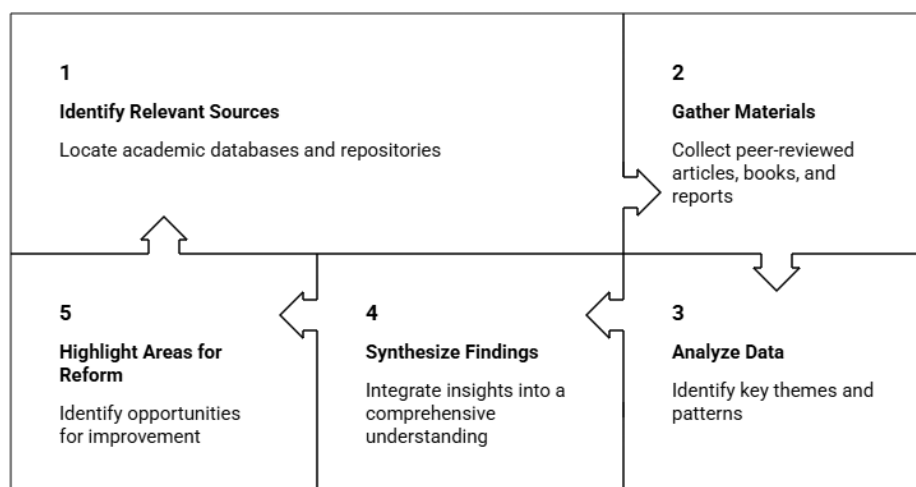


Figure 2: Methodology for this study

Review of Published Literature

The methodology for this study primarily involves a review of published literature to explore the current state of Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs in Bangladesh. This approach allows for an in-depth understanding of the subject by synthesizing existing research and scholarly work, without the need for primary data collection. The following outlines the scope of the literature review, data sources, and specific strategies for gathering and analyzing relevant materials.

Scope of Literature Review

The scope of the literature review will focus on a range of sources that provide critical insights into Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs. The review will cover studies and articles published between 1990 to the present, a period that reflects significant educational reforms in Bangladesh and the evolution of Islamic history education within Alia Madrasahs. The inclusion of this timeframe ensures that the review accounts for both historical perspectives and contemporary developments in the teaching of Islamic history.

The review will include the following types of sources:

1. **Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles:** These articles will provide scholarly perspectives on Islamic history education in Bangladesh, focusing on its pedagogical frameworks, curriculum design, and student outcomes. These sources are critical for understanding the theoretical and empirical studies conducted in the field, offering insights into the methods and results of previous research.
2. **Books:** Books on Islamic education, madrasah systems, and Islamic history will be incorporated to provide a broader context for the study. These texts often offer comprehensive analyses and more detailed explanations of the subject matter, including historical, cultural, and educational perspectives on the role of Islamic history in religious education.
3. **Government Reports and Educational Policies:** Official reports and publications from the **Ministry of Education** and other relevant governmental bodies will be included in the review. These sources provide valuable insights into the formal policies, curriculum frameworks, and educational reforms that have shaped the teaching of Islamic history in Alia Madrasahs. Reports

on the state of Islamic education in Bangladesh, particularly those relating to curriculum development and teacher training, will be vital for understanding the institutional context of Islamic history education.

4. **Academic Theses and Dissertations:** Theses and dissertations from graduate students in Bangladesh's universities and other academic institutions will provide in-depth research findings on the teaching of Islamic history in Alia Madrasahs. These sources often contain original research and comprehensive literature reviews, offering fresh perspectives and highlighting gaps in the current body of knowledge.

The study applied explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure the relevance and rigor of the reviewed literature. In terms of publication period, only sources published between 1990 and 2025 were included, as this timeframe captures the major educational reforms in Bangladesh and the contemporary evolution of the Alia Madrasah system; sources predating 1990 were excluded unless they held foundational historical significance. Regarding language, the review was restricted to materials published in English or Bengali, as these represent the primary languages of academic and policy discourse in Bangladesh, while sources in other languages were excluded due to accessibility and translation limitations. With respect to topical focus, only literature directly addressing Islamic education, madrasah systems, or educational policy and practice within the Bangladesh context was considered eligible; studies focusing on madrasah systems in other national or regional contexts without relevance to Bangladesh were excluded. Finally, concerning source type, peer-reviewed journal articles, government reports, official educational policy documents, and academic theses and dissertations were included as they meet established standards of scholarly credibility, whereas informal sources such as blog posts, opinion pieces, and non-peer-reviewed commentaries were excluded to maintain the academic integrity of the review.

Data Sources

To gather relevant literature, the study will rely on a variety of academic databases and national repositories:

1. **JSTOR and Google Scholar:** These platforms will be used to search for peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and conference papers related to Islamic history education. Both JSTOR and Google Scholar provide access to a broad range of interdisciplinary studies, including those related to religious education and pedagogy.
2. **Bangladesh-Specific Academic Repositories:** Databases and repositories specific to Bangladesh, such as Bangladesh Journals Online (BanglaJOL) and the National Digital Library of Bangladesh (NDLB), will be used to access research articles and reports focused on education in Bangladesh, especially those that address the Alia Madrasah system.
3. **National Educational Reports and Ministry Publications:** The Ministry of Education's official website and publications, including **annual reports** and **curriculum guidelines**, will be reviewed to understand the official stance on Islamic history education and its role in Alia Madrasahs. These documents often provide the most up-to-date and authoritative information on educational policies and reforms.
4. **Institutional Curricula and Madrasah Documents:** Curricular documents from various Alia Madrasahs will also be reviewed, either through institutional websites or reports obtained from

educational boards. These documents will help to analyze how Islamic history is structured and taught within the Madrasah system.

Review Process

The review process will involve the thematic analysis of the gathered literature. Key themes related to the challenges, pedagogies, curriculum, and impact of Islamic history education will be identified and analyzed to answer the research questions. The data will be categorized based on themes such as curriculum design, teaching methodologies, student engagement, and policy implications. By synthesizing these findings, the study will provide a comprehensive understanding of Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs and highlight areas for potential reform and improvement.

In summary, this methodology will ensure that the study draws from a broad spectrum of scholarly work and official sources, providing a well-rounded analysis of the current state of Islamic history education in Bangladesh's Alia Madrasahs.

4. Findings and Discussion

This section presents the findings from the review of literature and discusses key trends, pedagogical approaches, institutional and societal influences, and the societal impact of Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs in Bangladesh. The findings provide an in-depth understanding of how Islamic history is taught, the effectiveness of these methods, and their broader implications for students' religious, intellectual, and social development.

Curriculum Review

The curriculum in Alia Madrasahs for teaching Islamic history is primarily structured around textbooks prescribed by the Bangladesh Madrasa Education Board. These textbooks typically cover Islamic history from the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) through the major Islamic empires, such as the Rashidun Caliphate, the Umayyad Caliphate, the Abbasid Caliphate, and the Ottoman Empire, as well as modern Islamic history.

Key trends in these textbooks include:

1. **Linear Structure:** Islamic history is often presented in a chronological manner, starting from the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and proceeding through successive caliphates and empires. The textbooks typically cover pivotal events like the Battle of Badr, the expansion of the Islamic empire, the Crusades, the rise and fall of empires, and the colonization of Muslim-majority regions. The narrative tends to focus on the military and political aspects of Islamic history, which are sometimes presented as moral lessons illustrating the virtues of leadership, justice, and courage.
2. **Textbook Content:** The textbooks are heavily focused on the spiritual significance of historical events rather than their broader socio-political contexts. For example, the life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is presented as a model of virtue and leadership, with an emphasis on his interactions with his companions and the moral lessons that can be drawn from his life. Similarly, the caliphates and empires are described primarily through the lens of Islamic values, with little attention given to the economic, scientific, or cultural contributions of these periods.
3. **Limited Modern Perspective:** One of the significant trends in these textbooks is the limited coverage of modern Islamic history. While historical events such as the colonial period, independence movements, and post-colonial struggles are mentioned, the analysis of these events is often superficial. The textbooks tend to focus more on the historical narrative rather

than engaging with the political and economic challenges that have shaped the contemporary Muslim world.

4. **Use of Religious Narratives:** The textbooks are filled with religious narratives and Hadith (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad) to contextualize historical events. These religious texts are used to morally frame the actions and decisions of historical figures, placing an emphasis on piety and faith-based principles rather than political realism or materialistic considerations.

Strengths and Weaknesses in the Curriculum's Coverage of Islamic History

Strengths:

1. **Spiritual and Ethical Foundation:** One of the strengths of the curriculum is its emphasis on the spiritual and ethical lessons derived from Islamic history. The teaching of Islamic history in Alia Madrasahs provides students with a deep connection to their religious identity, reinforcing the principles of justice, honesty, and integrity that are central to Islam.
2. **Comprehensive Historical Overview:** The curriculum offers a comprehensive historical overview from the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to the present day, giving students a broad understanding of Islamic civilization and its role in world history.
3. **Promotes Islamic Solidarity:** The historical narratives in the textbooks are often designed to foster a sense of solidarity among Muslim students by highlighting the shared history and struggles of the Muslim ummah (community). This helps students connect their religious beliefs with historical events, reinforcing their sense of belonging to the broader Muslim world.

Weaknesses:

1. **Lack of Critical Analysis:** A significant weakness of the curriculum is its lack of critical engagement with Islamic history. The curriculum is often focused on rote memorization of historical facts and events, leaving little room for students to critically engage with the material or analyze historical events from multiple perspectives. This can result in a narrow understanding of Islamic history, limiting students' ability to think critically about their religious and historical heritage.
2. **Eurocentric Bias in Modern History:** Another issue with the curriculum is its minimal exploration of modern Islamic history and the impact of Western colonialism on the Muslim world. The textbooks often fail to provide a comprehensive account of the political, economic, and social consequences of colonialism, the rise of nationalism, and the formation of post-colonial states. This gap leaves students with an incomplete understanding of how Islamic history intersects with global history.
3. **Overemphasis on Religious Aspects:** While the religious and ethical lessons drawn from Islamic history are important, there is a tendency to overemphasize religious teachings at the expense of broader socio-political and cultural contexts. For instance, the scientific, mathematical, and philosophical contributions of the Islamic world are often overlooked, despite their significant impact on global civilization.

B. Pedagogical Approaches

Assessment of Teaching Methodologies

The pedagogical approaches used in Alia Madrasahs for teaching Islamic history are largely traditional in nature. The majority of the instruction follows a lecture-based model, with teachers presenting historical facts and students memorizing key events and figures. This method, while effective in terms of delivering factual knowledge, does not encourage deep engagement or critical thinking.

1. **Lecture-Based Learning:** The traditional method of teaching Islamic history in Alia Madrasahs is based on teacher-centered lectures, where the teacher is the primary source of information. Students are expected to listen attentively, take notes, and later memorize the material for exams. While this method is effective for covering a wide range of historical events, it limits opportunities for interactive learning and student engagement.
2. **Rote Memorization:** Rote memorization remains a central aspect of Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs. Students are often required to memorize historical dates, events, and narratives without a deep understanding of the context or causal relationships. This method may hinder the development of critical thinking skills and historical analysis.
3. **Discussion-Driven Learning:** In some Alia Madrasahs, there has been an effort to introduce more discussion-based teaching methods. Teachers encourage students to discuss historical events, debate perspectives, and engage in group activities. While this approach helps students develop critical thinking and communication skills, it is not yet widely implemented across all madrasahs.

Innovations and Reforms in Pedagogy

In recent years, there have been efforts to modernize pedagogy in Alia Madrasahs, particularly in the area of Islamic history education. Some madrasahs have adopted multimedia tools, such as projectors and audio-visual resources, to enhance students' understanding of historical events. Interactive teaching methods, such as group discussions, debates, and problem-solving exercises, are being introduced to encourage more student-centered learning. These reforms aim to move away from traditional methods and make Islamic history more engaging and relevant to students' lives.

However, the pace of these reforms has been slow, and many Alia Madrasahs still rely heavily on traditional pedagogies. The challenge remains in balancing traditional Islamic values with modern educational practices.

C. Institutional and Societal Influence

How Alia Madrasah's Educational Philosophy Influences the Teaching of Islamic History

The educational philosophy of Alia Madrasahs is deeply rooted in the Islamic tradition. These institutions view education as a means to impart religious knowledge and ethical values, and Islamic history plays a key role in this process. The philosophy emphasizes the importance of spiritual development, religious identity, and moral integrity, which influences the content and approach to teaching Islamic history. The institutional nature of Alia Madrasahs encourages a faith-based approach to education, where historical events are viewed through the lens of Islamic values. This influences the way Islamic history is taught, with a focus on moral lessons and ethical teachings derived from historical events. While this approach helps strengthen students' religious convictions, it can also limit their ability to engage with Islamic history in a critical and objective manner.

The Role of Government Policies and Islamic Organizations in Shaping the Curriculum

Government policies and Islamic organizations have played a significant role in shaping the curriculum of Alia Madrasahs in Bangladesh. The Ministry of Education oversees the curriculum and sets guideline guidelines for the inclusion of Islamic history in madrasah education. However, Islamic organizations, such as the Bangladesh Madrasah Education Board, also play a crucial role in defining the content of the curriculum. These organizations ensure that the curriculum aligns with Islamic values and the doctrines of mainstream Islamic thought. Government initiatives aimed at reforming and modernizing the madrasah system have been influential, but their success has been mixed. There is a push for

greater integration of secular subjects alongside religious education, including Islamic history. However, the success of these reforms often depends on **local interpretations** of Islamic teachings and the degree of resistance to modernization within individual madrasahs.

D. Student Perspectives and Societal Impact

Summary of Findings from Literature on Students' Engagement with Islamic History

Studies on students' engagement with Islamic history in Alia Madrasahs suggest that students generally have a strong emotional connection to the subject, often viewing it as a central part of their religious identity. Islamic history education fosters a sense of pride and belonging to the broader Muslim ummah. However, there is also evidence of students limited critical engagement with the material. Many students memorize historical facts and dates without fully understanding the social and political contexts behind these events.

Some studies also suggest that students in more progressive madrasahs, which employ interactive and student-centered methods, exhibit a higher level of interest and participation in discussions about Islamic history. These students tend to question historical narratives and explore different perspectives on events, indicating the potential benefits of modernizing pedagogy in enhancing engagement with the subject. The Broader Societal Impact of Islamic History Education on Students' Worldview, Religious Beliefs, and Social Behavior Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs has a profound impact on students' worldviews and religious beliefs. By learning about the shared history of the Muslim community, students develop a sense of solidarity with Muslims worldwide. This fosters a global perspective on Islam, reinforcing the idea that they are part of a larger Muslim community that transcends national borders. On a societal level, Islamic history education contributes to shaping students' social behavior and values. The moral lessons drawn from historical events often influence how students view issues such as justice, tolerance, compassion, and leadership. Islamic history education reinforces ethical principles that guide students' actions in their daily lives, encouraging them to adhere to the values of Islam.

However, the societal impact of Islamic history education can also be complex. In some cases, the emphasis on religious narratives can lead to a narrower understanding of global events and limit students' ability to engage with secular knowledge or diverse perspectives on historical issues. This highlights the need for a more holistic approach to Islamic history education that encourages both religious awareness and critical thinking.

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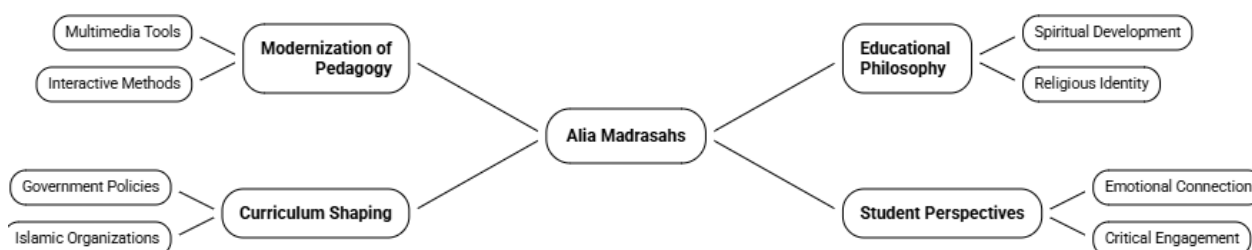


Figure 3: Comprehensive findings

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, while Islamic history education in Alia Madrasahs plays a crucial role in shaping students' religious identity and intellectual development, it faces challenges related to curriculum limitations, outdated pedagogical practices, and insufficient teacher training. By modernizing the curriculum, incorporating interactive learning methods, and investing in teacher training, the quality of education in Alia Madrasahs can be significantly enhanced. Further research, especially involving primary data collection and comparative studies, will be essential in understanding the real impact of these reforms and ensuring that Islamic history education continues to contribute positively to students' intellectual and spiritual growth.

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