Overcoming Arabic Learning Barriers in MI Muhammadiyah Tambaksari Blora: SDGs-Oriented Approaches

Widodo[1], *Armin Nurhartanto*[2], *Alberto Emmanuel Conti Morales*[3]

[1,2]Department of Islamic Studies, Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Muhammadiyah Blora, Jawa Tengah, Indonesia

[3]Department of Islamic Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, Indonesia, and Subdireccion De Educprimaria Educación Primaria Y Secundaria, Mexico

[1]widodoblora4@gmail.com, [2]arminnurhartanto@gmail.com, [3]aaecm2019@gmail.com

Abstract

Objective: This study aims to identify barriers in Arabic language learning at MI Muhammadiyah Tambaksari, Blora and to propose practical solutions to improve learning effectiveness in a rural madrasah context. **Theoretical framework:** The study is grounded in SDG 4 (Quality Education) within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, emphasising inclusive, equitable, and sustainable primary education as an analytical lens. **Literature review:** Previous studies report challenges in Arabic learning related to media, motivation, methods, and teacher competence, but rarely connect these issues to sustainability and global education frameworks. **Methods:** This research uses a qualitative descriptive case study approach, with data collected through observations, interviews, and document analysis, and analysed using descriptive qualitative techniques. **Results:** The findings reveal several key barriers to Arabic language learning at MI Muhammadiyah Tambaksari Blora, including limited learning media, low student motivation, insufficient lesson hours, mismatched teacher educational backgrounds, and the lack of a supportive Arabic language environment. These factors are interrelated and collectively reduce the effectiveness of Arabic language instruction, particularly in developing balanced language skills. **Implications:** The study recommends SDGs-oriented strategies such as interactive media development, varied teaching methods, teacher competency improvement, time optimisation, and supportive language environments to enhance learning quality. **Novelty**: This study is novel in applying SDG 4 to link local Arabic learning problems with sustainable and inclusive education, offering a context-sensitive model for rural Islamic primary schools.

Keywords: arabic language learning, problems, alternative solutions, sdgs, islamic education.

INTRODUCTION

Arabic plays a pivotal role in Islamic education systems worldwide, particularly within primary-level religious institutions where foundational linguistic and religious competencies are established. In the Indonesian context, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) serves as a critical stage for introducing Arabic not only as the language of the Qur'an and Hadith

but also as a medium for developing early literacy, cognitive skills, and moral formation [1]. Consequently, the effectiveness of Arabic language instruction at the elementary level has significant implications for both educational quality and long-term learning sustainability.

In recent global educational discourse, language education at the primary level is increasingly linked to broader development agendas, especially those emphasising inclusive, equitable, and quality education. These principles are strongly reflected in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 4, which underscores the importance of foundational learning, learner-centred pedagogy, and qualified teachers [2]. Within this framework, Arabic language learning in Islamic primary schools should be viewed not merely as a subject-based instructional activity but as an integral component of sustainable education that supports students' holistic development and educational equity.

Despite its importance, empirical evidence suggests that Arabic language learning in Indonesian madrasahs continues to face persistent challenges, especially in rural and semi-rural settings. MI Muhammadiyah Tambaksari Blora exemplifies these conditions, where students' academic achievement in Arabic remains relatively low and learning motivation is limited. Such challenges indicate systemic issues related to instructional quality, pedagogical relevance, and learning environments [3]. From an SDGs perspective, these issues are closely associated with disparities in educational quality and access, which remain central concerns within SDG 4.5 on educational equity.

Previous studies on Arabic language education in Indonesia have extensively examined learning difficulties from pedagogical, psychological, and institutional perspectives. Research has identified factors such as limited teacher competence, inadequate learning media, and low student motivation as dominant barriers to effective learning. While these studies contribute valuable insights, they tend to approach Arabic learning challenges in isolation from broader educational development frameworks. As a result, the potential alignment between Arabic language education and sustainability-oriented educational goals remains underexplored [4].

Moreover, existing literature rarely situates Arabic language learning within the conceptual framework of sustainable education. Most studies emphasise instructional techniques or curriculum implementation without critically engaging with global educational agendas such as SDG 4, which highlight inclusivity, teacher capacity building, and supportive learning environments. This reveals a conceptual gap between Arabic language pedagogy research and the evolving discourse on education for sustainable development, particularly in the context of Islamic primary education [5].

Addressing this gap, the present study adopts an SDGs-oriented perspective to examine Arabic language learning barriers at MI Muhammadiyah Tambaksari, Blora. By integrating local educational challenges with the principles of sustainable and inclusive education, this research moves beyond descriptive analysis of learning difficulties. Instead, it offers a framework for understanding Arabic language learning as part of a broader sustainable education ecosystem [6]. The study aims to contribute both empirically and conceptually by demonstrating how SDG-aligned approaches can inform context-sensitive solutions for improving Arabic language education in Islamic primary schools in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Arabic Language Learning in Islamic Primary Education

Arabic language learning in Islamic primary education plays a foundational role in shaping students' religious literacy, linguistic competence, and cognitive development. At the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) level, Arabic is introduced not only as a religious language but also as a basic communicative tool that supports reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and early writing skills. Several studies emphasise that Arabic learning at the

elementary stage should prioritise meaningful exposure, contextual usage, and gradual skill development rather than a grammar-heavy approach that may overwhelm young learners [7].

However, Arabic language instruction in Islamic primary schools often encounters structural and pedagogical constraints. These include limited instructional time, a lack of age-appropriate learning materials, and teaching methods that are not aligned with students' developmental characteristics [8]. As a result, Arabic is frequently perceived as a difficult and abstract subject, leading to low learning motivation and suboptimal learning outcomes, particularly in rural madrasahs.

Barriers to Arabic Language Learning in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah

Previous research has consistently identified multiple barriers affecting the effectiveness of Arabic language learning in Indonesian madrasahs. These barriers can be broadly categorised into internal and external factors. Internal factors include students' low motivation, limited prior exposure to Arabic, and cognitive readiness. External factors encompass teacher competence, instructional strategies, availability of learning media, and institutional support [9].

Studies focusing on teacher-related factors highlight that many Arabic teachers at the MI level rely on traditional, teacher-centred methods, emphasizing memorization and translation rather than interactive and communicative learning. Inadequate professional training and limited access to pedagogical innovation further exacerbate these challenges [10]. From an institutional perspective, insufficient learning facilities and minimal integration of contextual or culturally relevant content contribute to disengaged learning environments.

While these studies provide important insights into the nature of learning barriers, they predominantly adopt a problem-identification approach. Less attention has been given to how these barriers relate to broader educational quality issues or how they can be addressed through sustainability-oriented educational frameworks [11].

Sustainable Development Goals and Quality Education

Education has been internationally recognised as a central pillar of sustainable development, as articulated in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education). SDG 4 emphasises inclusive and equitable access to quality education, effective learning outcomes, and the importance of qualified teachers and supportive learning environments [12]. Within this framework, language education at the primary level is viewed as a critical foundation for lifelong learning and social inclusion.

Key targets under SDG 4, such as SDG 4.5 (eliminating disparities in education) and SDG 4.c (increasing the supply of qualified teachers), are highly relevant to the context of Arabic language learning in madrasahs [13]. Rural and faith-based educational institutions often face greater challenges in meeting these targets due to resource limitations and uneven teacher development opportunities [14]. Consequently, aligning Arabic language education with SDGs principles requires a shift from isolated pedagogical interventions toward more holistic and sustainable educational strategies.

SDGs-Oriented Approaches in Language Education

SDGs-oriented approaches in language education emphasise learner-centred pedagogy, inclusivity, contextual relevance, and sustainability of learning processes. In primary education, this translates into teaching strategies that accommodate students' developmental stages, promote active participation, and foster positive learning experiences [15]. Language learning is not only assessed in terms of academic achievement but also in relation to students' well-being, engagement, and long-term educational trajectories.

In the context of Arabic language learning, an SDGs-oriented approach encourages the integration of interactive methods, culturally relevant content, and supportive classroom environments. Teacher capacity building is also a crucial component, as educators play a central role in translating sustainability principles into classroom practice. By adopting such approaches, Arabic learning can contribute to broader educational goals, including reducing learning disparities and enhancing the overall quality of Islamic primary education [16].

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological approach to explore barriers to Arabic language learning experienced by students in grades 3, 4, and 5 at MI Muhammadiyah Tambaksari, Blora, Indonesia. The phenomenological approach was chosen to understand participants' lived experiences and perceptions of Arabic learning within a natural classroom context. The study was conducted over one academic semester in the 2024–2025 school year and was guided by SDG 4 (Quality Education) within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, emphasising inclusive, equitable, and sustainable primary education [17].

Participants were selected using purposive sampling and included the madrasah head, the Arabic language teacher, and students from grades 3, 4, and 5. This selection was intended to capture multiple perspectives on Arabic language learning barriers, particularly from institutional, instructional, and learner viewpoints [18]. The research site was chosen because it represents the typical challenges of Arabic instruction in a rural madrasah setting.

Data were collected through methodological triangulation, consisting of in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Interviews focused on learning difficulties, instructional practices, and student engagement. Classroom observations examined teacher–student interactions, teaching strategies, and learning dynamics during Arabic lessons. Document analysis included lesson plans, learning schedules, assessment records, and institutional documents related to Arabic language instruction [19]. These data collection procedures were designed to reflect key SDG 4 indicators, particularly instructional quality and inclusive learning environments.

Data analysis followed a descriptive qualitative procedure involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The analysis aimed to identify patterns of Arabic learning barriers and interpret them using an SDG 4–oriented lens, with particular attention to issues of educational quality, inclusivity, and teacher capacity. Trustworthiness was ensured through data triangulation, prolonged engagement, and ethical procedures, including informed consent and confidentiality [20].

Table 1. Research Methodology

Aspect	Description
Research Approach	Qualitative
Research Design	Phenomenological
Research Site	MI Muhammadiyah Tambaksari Blora, Indonesia
Participants	Madrasah head, Arabic teacher, students (Grades 3–5)
Sampling Technique	Purposive sampling
Data Collection Methods	In-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis
Data Analysis Technique	Descriptive qualitative (data reduction, display, conclusion drawing)
Analytical Framework	SDG 4 (Quality Education)
Research Duration	One semester (2024–2025 academic year)
Ethical Considerations	Informed consent, confidentiality, and research ethics compliance

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Arabic Language Learning Problems

Observations and interviews have revealed several main problems in Arabic language learning at MI Muhammadiyah Tambaksari, Blora.

Limitations of Learning Media

Findings from classroom observations and in-depth interviews indicate that one of the major barriers to Arabic language learning at MI Muhammadiyah Tambaksari Blora is the limited use of learning media. Arabic instruction in grades 3, 4, and 5 relies predominantly on textbooks and whiteboards, with minimal integration of interactive or visual learning resources. This condition restricts students' opportunities to engage actively with learning materials and limits the variety of instructional strategies employed in the classroom.

Interviews with the madrasah head revealed that financial constraints constitute the primary reason for the lack of diverse learning media. Although the importance of engaging and age-appropriate instructional media is well recognised by school stakeholders, limited budget allocation necessitates reliance on existing conventional resources. This situation reflects a structural challenge commonly faced by rural madrasahs, where access to educational resources remains uneven [21].

From an educational perspective, the limited availability of learning media has a direct impact on students' learning motivation and comprehension. Observational data show that students tend to lose interest during lessons and experience difficulty understanding Arabic vocabulary and sentence structures when instruction is delivered through monotonous methods. These findings are consistent with previous studies indicating that inadequate learning media significantly hinder student motivation and learning outcomes in Arabic language education at the MI level [22]. Furthermore, research has demonstrated that the use of appropriate and varied learning media can enhance students' engagement, motivation, and comprehension of Arabic learning materials [23].

Viewed through the lens of SDG 4 (Quality Education) within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the limitation of learning media at MI Muhammadiyah Tambaksari Blora highlights broader issues related to educational quality and equity [24]. SDG 4 emphasises the provision of effective learning environments and adequate educational resources to support meaningful learning outcomes. The findings of this study suggest that insufficient learning media not only affect instructional effectiveness but also contribute to disparities in educational quality between urban and rural educational institutions [25].

Accordingly, overcoming media-related barriers in Arabic language learning requires SDGs-oriented solutions that prioritise contextual innovation and sustainability. Rather than relying solely on high-cost technological tools, madrasahs can adopt creative, low-cost, and contextually relevant instructional media that support learner-centred and inclusive education. Such approaches align with the principles of sustainable education by enhancing instructional quality while remaining responsive to institutional constraints [26].

Lack of Student Motivation

The findings indicate that low student motivation constitutes a significant barrier to Arabic language learning at MI Muhammadiyah Tambaksari, Blora. Interview data reveal that most students perceive Arabic as a difficult and monotonous subject, which negatively affects their willingness to engage in learning activities. Among the 30 students interviewed, 23 identified Arabic as the most challenging subject, suggesting a widespread perception of difficulty and low learning confidence.

Further analysis shows that this low level of motivation is closely related to instructional practices employed in the classroom. Arabic lessons are predominantly delivered through teacher-centred and lecture-based methods, with limited opportunities for interaction, practice, or creative engagement. Such approaches are less compatible with the developmental characteristics of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students, who require active, experiential, and enjoyable learning experiences to maintain attention and interest.

From an SDGs perspective, this condition reflects challenges in achieving SDG 4 (Quality Education) within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in relation to learner engagement and inclusive learning processes. SDG 4 emphasises the importance of effective learning experiences that support students' participation and motivation as key components of educational quality. When learning methods fail to accommodate students' needs and learning styles, the sustainability of learning outcomes is compromised [27].

These findings align with previous research indicating that monotonous instructional strategies and limited variation in material delivery contribute to decreased student motivation in Arabic language learning. Therefore, addressing motivational issues requires SDGs-oriented pedagogical approaches that prioritise interactive, student-centred, and contextually relevant learning methods. Such approaches not only enhance students' motivation but also contribute to more inclusive and sustainable Arabic language education at the primary level [28].

Lack of Time Allocation

The findings indicate that limited time allocation constitutes a significant barrier to effective Arabic language learning at MI Muhammadiyah Tambaksari, Blora. Arabic instruction is allocated only two hours per week, which is insufficient to support comprehensive language skill development at the primary level. Teachers reported that the restricted instructional time limits opportunities for guided practice and meaningful student engagement, particularly in productive language activities.

As a result of this constraint, instructional time is largely devoted to explaining basic concepts and conducting reading-based exercises, leaving limited space for interactive learning and skill reinforcement. Consequently, the development of the four core Arabic language skills, maharah al-istima' (listening), maharah al-kalam (speaking), maharah al-qira'ah (reading), and maharah al-kitabah (writing) is uneven. Classroom observations indicate that instruction tends to prioritise reading and writing skills, while listening and speaking receive minimal attention due to time limitations.

From the perspective of SDG 4 (Quality Education) within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, insufficient instructional time undermines the provision of effective and meaningful learning experiences. SDG 4 emphasises not only access to education but also the quality and effectiveness of learning processes that enable students to acquire relevant competencies. When instructional time is inadequate, learning becomes fragmented, and the sustainability of learning outcomes is compromised [29].

These findings suggest that addressing time allocation constraints requires SDGs-oriented instructional planning that optimises available learning time through integrated skill instruction and more efficient pedagogical strategies. Rather than increasing lesson hours alone, adopting learner-centred and integrative approaches may help maximise learning effectiveness within existing time constraints, thereby supporting more balanced and sustainable Arabic language learning outcomes [30].

Diverse Teacher Competencies

The findings reveal that teacher competency represents a critical challenge in Arabic language learning at MI Muhammadiyah Tambaksari, Blora. The madrasah employs only

one Arabic teacher, whose educational background is in Islamic religious education rather than Arabic language education. This mismatch between academic background and teaching assignment affects the teacher's mastery of subject-specific pedagogical approaches required for effective foreign language instruction.

As a consequence, Arabic language teaching tends to rely on generalised instructional methods commonly used in other subjects, without sufficient consideration of the distinctive characteristics of foreign language learning. Such practices limit students' exposure to communicative activities, pronunciation practice, and contextual language use, which are essential for developing comprehensive language skills. Previous studies have similarly noted that teachers without specialised training in Arabic language education often face difficulties in applying appropriate methodologies and designing engaging language learning activities [31].

From the perspective of SDG 4 (Quality Education) within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, this issue is closely related to SDG 4.c, which emphasises the availability of qualified and professionally trained teachers. The findings indicate that teacher qualification and subject alignment are essential determinants of instructional quality in Arabic language education [32]. Addressing this challenge requires sustainable strategies such as targeted professional development, pedagogical training, and institutional support to enhance teacher capacity in line with SDGs-oriented education.

Lack of Language Environment Support

Another significant barrier identified in this study is the limited support of a conducive Arabic language environment. Arabic is used exclusively within formal classroom instruction, while opportunities for students to practice the language beyond instructional hours are minimal. This restricted exposure limits students' ability to internalise vocabulary, pronunciation, and basic communicative patterns learned during lessons [33].

In contrast to Indonesian or Javanese, which benefit from strong environmental reinforcement in students' daily lives, Arabic lacks authentic usage contexts outside the classroom. As a result, students have fewer opportunities to engage in meaningful language practice, which hampers the development of listening and speaking skills. From an SDGs-oriented perspective, this condition reflects challenges in creating supportive and effective learning environments, a core principle of SDG 4 (Quality Education) [34].

These findings suggest that enhancing Arabic language learning outcomes requires the creation of a supportive language environment that extends beyond formal instruction. SDGs-oriented strategies, such as integrating simple Arabic expressions into daily school routines or establishing language-rich school cultures, may help foster sustainable and inclusive learning environments [35]. Such approaches align with the broader goal of improving educational quality by promoting continuous and contextual language exposure.

Alternative Solutions

Based on the analysis of the problems found, the researcher formulated several alternative solutions that can be applied to increase the effectiveness of Arabic language learning at MI Muhammadiyah Tambaksari, Blora:

The development of Interactive Learning Media

The first recommended solution involves the development of interactive learning media at an affordable cost to enhance the quality and inclusivity of Arabic language learning. This approach is aligned with SDG 4 (Quality Education) within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which emphasises the provision of effective learning resources and supportive learning environments, particularly in resource-limited

educational settings [36]. The proposed interactive media are designed to increase student engagement, improve comprehension, and support sustainable instructional practices.

Picture Word Cards

Picture-based word cards are proposed as a visual learning medium to support Arabic vocabulary acquisition. By combining images with Arabic words, these cards help students associate meaning with lexical items more effectively, thereby facilitating memory retention. The use of simple materials such as cardboard allows the media to be produced at low cost and reused in various interactive activities, including language games and group exercises.

Interactive Flannel Board

The interactive flannel board is recommended as a participatory learning medium that enables students to actively manipulate words and images during Arabic lessons. This medium encourages hands-on engagement and immediate feedback, making abstract language concepts more concrete for elementary-level learners. Its interactive nature supports learner-centred instruction and contributes to a more inclusive and engaging classroom environment.

Simple Audio Media

The utilisation of simple audio media, such as smartphones or basic audio devices, is proposed to support the development of listening and pronunciation skills. Exposure to correct Arabic pronunciation and short dialogues helps students improve phonological awareness and speaking accuracy. From an SDGs-oriented perspective, the use of easily accessible audio technology represents a sustainable strategy to enhance instructional quality without requiring advanced or costly infrastructure.

Application of Varied Learning Methods

The second proposed solution involves the application of varied and learner-centred instructional methods that align with the developmental characteristics of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students. This approach is grounded in SDG 4 (Quality Education) within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which emphasises effective, inclusive, and engaging learning processes [37]. The use of diverse instructional strategies is intended to address low student motivation and enhance learning sustainability by accommodating different learning styles and cognitive needs at the primary level.

Singing Method

The singing method is proposed as an instructional strategy for introducing Arabic vocabulary and basic sentence structures through simple and memorable songs. Integrating music into language learning helps create a positive emotional learning environment and facilitates easier memorisation. This method supports student motivation and engagement, contributing to more enjoyable and inclusive learning experiences.

Language Game Method

Language games, such as word guessing, role-playing, and interactive quizzes, are recommended to promote active student participation in Arabic lessons. These activities encourage meaningful interaction, reduce learning anxiety, and foster collaborative learning. From an SDGs-oriented perspective, game-based learning supports inclusive pedagogy by engaging students with varying levels of ability.

Storytelling Method

The storytelling method is suggested to contextualise Arabic vocabulary and expressions within simple and age-appropriate narratives. Through stories, students are exposed to language use in meaningful contexts, which supports comprehension and retention. This

method aligns with SDG 4's emphasis on effective learning processes that enhance students' cognitive and linguistic development.

Demonstration Method

The demonstration method involves the use of physical movement, gestures, and visual cues to support students' understanding of Arabic vocabulary and sentence structures. By linking language input with physical actions, this method helps make abstract linguistic concepts more concrete and accessible for young learners. Such experiential learning approaches contribute to inclusive and supportive learning environments, as promoted by SDG 4.

Improving Teacher Competencies

The third proposed solution focuses on strengthening the professional competence of Arabic language teachers as a key factor in improving instructional quality. This strategy is explicitly aligned with SDG 4 (Quality Education), particularly SDG 4.c, which emphasises the availability of qualified and professionally trained teachers within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals [38]. Enhancing teacher competence is viewed as a sustainable approach to addressing pedagogical limitations and ensuring long-term improvement in Arabic language learning at the primary level.

Learning Methodology Training

Arabic teachers are encouraged to participate in professional training programs focused on Arabic language teaching methodologies that are appropriate for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students. Such training aims to strengthen teachers' understanding of learner-centred, communicative, and age-appropriate instructional approaches, enabling them to design more engaging and effective Arabic lessons.

Learning Media Development Workshops

Workshops on the development and utilisation of creative learning media are proposed to enhance teachers' pedagogical skills. Through these workshops, teachers can learn to design low-cost, interactive, and contextually relevant instructional media that support students' engagement and comprehension. This initiative contributes to improving instructional quality while remaining consistent with sustainable and inclusive education principles.

Professional Learning Community

The establishment of a professional learning community among Arabic teachers at the MI level within the sub-district is recommended to facilitate collaborative learning and knowledge sharing. Such communities enable teachers to exchange experiences, discuss instructional challenges, and disseminate effective teaching strategies. From an SDGs-oriented perspective, collaborative professional networks support continuous teacher development and institutional capacity building.

Advanced Study and Certification Programs

Teachers are also encouraged to pursue advanced academic studies or enrol in relevant professional certification programs in Arabic language education. This long-term strategy aims to strengthen subject-matter expertise and pedagogical competence, thereby contributing to the sustainability of quality Arabic language instruction. Supporting teachers' professional advancement aligns with SDG 4.c by ensuring that educational improvements are grounded in qualified human resources.

Optimisation of Learning Time

The fourth proposed solution focuses on optimising the limited instructional time allocated to Arabic language learning through more efficient and integrative pedagogical

strategies. This approach is aligned with SDG 4 (Quality Education) within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which emphasises effective learning processes and meaningful learning outcomes rather than the mere extension of instructional hours [39]. Optimising learning time is viewed as a sustainable strategy to enhance instructional quality within existing curricular constraints.

Integrated Subjects

Integrating Arabic language learning with Islamic Religious Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam) and other relevant subjects is proposed to increase students' exposure to Arabic without adding formal lesson hours. Through cross-subject integration, Arabic vocabulary and expressions can be reinforced in meaningful contexts, supporting more efficient and holistic learning experiences. This strategy contributes to sustainable learning by maximising existing instructional time.

Extracurricular Program

The establishment of Arabic language extracurricular activities is recommended to provide students with additional opportunities to practice Arabic beyond regular classroom instruction. Extracurricular programs create informal and flexible learning spaces that support student engagement and reinforce language skills, particularly listening and speaking. From an SDGs-oriented perspective, such programs contribute to inclusive learning opportunities that accommodate diverse student interests and learning needs.

Project-Based Learning

The implementation of project-based learning is proposed as an instructional approach that enables students to learn Arabic through meaningful, context-rich activities. By engaging in projects that integrate language use with real-life contexts, students can develop multiple language skills simultaneously while fostering collaboration and critical thinking. This approach supports SDG 4's emphasis on effective and relevant learning outcomes and enhances the sustainability of Arabic language learning within limited instructional time.

Language Environment Creation

The fifth proposed solution emphasises the creation of a supportive Arabic language environment within the madrasah to extend students' exposure to Arabic beyond formal classroom instruction. This strategy is aligned with SDG 4 (Quality Education) within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which highlights the importance of effective and inclusive learning environments that support continuous learning [40]. Establishing a language-rich environment is viewed as a sustainable approach to reinforcing Arabic language acquisition through habitual and contextual use.

Vocabulary Display

The installation of Arabic vocabulary displays in various areas of the madrasah is proposed to create an Arabic-rich visual environment. By regularly encountering Arabic words in corridors, classrooms, and communal spaces, students are exposed to continuous linguistic input that supports vocabulary retention and familiarity. This strategy enhances incidental learning and contributes to a supportive learning environment without requiring additional instructional time.

Daily Arabic Program

The implementation of a daily Arabic program is recommended to integrate simple Arabic expressions into routine school activities, such as greetings, prayers, and basic classroom instructions. This program encourages habitual language use and helps students associate Arabic with everyday communication rather than solely academic tasks. From an SDGs-oriented perspective, embedding Arabic into daily practices supports inclusive and sustainable learning processes by normalising language use across the school environment.

Arabic Language Club

The establishment of an Arabic language club is proposed as an informal learning space where students can practice Arabic outside regular lesson hours. Through conversational activities, games, and collaborative tasks, the club provides opportunities for meaningful language use, particularly in listening and speaking. Such extracurricular initiatives support student engagement and autonomy while contributing to equitable access to language practice opportunities, consistent with the goals of SDG 4.

Solution Implementation

The successful implementation of the proposed solutions requires a strong and sustained commitment from all madrasah stakeholders, including school leaders, teachers, and students. From an SDGs-oriented perspective, particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education) within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, implementation should be viewed as a continuous and adaptive process aimed at improving instructional quality, inclusivity, and sustainability rather than as a one-time intervention [41]. Accordingly, the implementation of the proposed solutions is structured into several interrelated stages.

Preparation stage

The preparation stage involves the socialisation of the proposed programs to all members of the madrasah community to ensure shared understanding and collective commitment. This stage also includes the identification and preparation of necessary resources, such as learning media, instructional materials, and teacher readiness. Effective communication and stakeholder engagement at this stage are essential to foster ownership and support for SDGs-oriented educational initiatives.

Implementation Stage

The implementation stage is carried out gradually, prioritising solutions that are simple, low-cost, and easy to apply before moving toward more complex interventions. This phased approach allows the madrasah to manage limited resources effectively while ensuring that instructional improvements are implemented sustainably. Gradual implementation also enables teachers and students to adapt to new learning strategies and media without disrupting ongoing instructional activities.

Monitoring and Evaluation Stage

The effectiveness of the implemented solutions is assessed through systematic monitoring and periodic evaluation. This stage focuses on examining changes in learning processes, student engagement, and instructional practices rather than solely on short-term outcomes. Continuous monitoring aligns with the principles of SDG 4 by ensuring that educational improvements contribute to meaningful and sustainable learning outcomes.

Adjustment and Improvement Stage

Based on the results of monitoring and evaluation, instructional strategies and implementation approaches are adjusted to address emerging challenges and feedback from teachers and students. This adaptive stage ensures that the solutions remain contextually relevant and responsive to the evolving needs of the madrasah community. Continuous refinement of strategies reflects a sustainability-oriented approach, emphasising long-term improvement in Arabic language learning quality.

CONCLUSION

This study identified key barriers to Arabic language learning at MI Muhammadiyah Tambaksari Blora, including limited learning media, low student motivation, insufficient instructional time, mismatched teacher competencies, and the absence of a supportive Arabic language environment. These interconnected challenges negatively affect the

quality and sustainability of Arabic language learning at the primary education level. Viewed through the lens of SDG 4 (Quality Education) within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the findings highlight broader issues related to instructional quality, inclusivity, and teacher capacity in rural Islamic primary schools. Addressing these challenges requires approaches that go beyond technical classroom interventions and instead emphasise sustainable and context-sensitive educational strategies. Accordingly, this study proposes SDGs-oriented solutions that include the use of affordable interactive learning media, the application of varied learner-centred teaching methods, the strengthening of teacher competencies, the optimisation of limited instructional time, and the creation of a supportive Arabic language environment. These strategies are designed to be feasible within existing institutional constraints and to support long-term improvement in Arabic language learning. Overall, this study demonstrates that integrating SDGs principles into Arabic language education provides a viable framework for enhancing learning quality and equity in madrasahs. Future research is encouraged to further examine the effectiveness of these SDGs-oriented strategies across different educational contexts and through longitudinal or mixed-method approaches.

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Author Contribution

Widodo designed research framework; Armin Nurhartanto collected and analyzed data; Alberto Emmanuel Conti Morales guided methodology and SDGs integration; all authors discussed results, wrote manuscript, and approved final submission.

Conflicts of Interest

All authors declare no conflict of interest.

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