



From Commentary to Curriculum: Integrating Al-cAynī's Works into Islamic Education Curricula

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Abstract

Islamic education, with its rich intellectual heritage, faces the ongoing challenge of adapting classical scholarship to meet contemporary educational demands. This study investigates the pedagogical methods of Badru-d-Dīn Al-'Aynī, a prominent medieval Islamic scholar, and explores how his approaches can inform modern Islamic education curricula. The research aimed to identify and assess the relevance of Al-'Aynī's teaching methodologies particularly his use of commentary, harmonisation of scholarly opinions, and contextualization of knowledge for current pedagogical practices. A qualitative systematic review was employed, analysing both primary texts authored by Al-'Aynī and secondary literature on Islamic education reform and curriculum development. The findings reveal that Al-'Aynī's methods provide a comprehensive pedagogical model that promotes critical engagement, intellectual pluralism, and contextual learning principles that align closely with modern constructivist and inquiry-based learning approaches. The study also highlights practical strategies for integrating these classical methods into Islamic curricula, including interactive learning, interdisciplinary teaching, and digital adaptation of traditional texts. Challenges identified include language barriers, institutional resistance, and the complexity of classical texts, which must be addressed through translation, teacher training, and curriculum innovation. It was concluded that integrating Al-'Aynī's pedagogical philosophy into modern education can revitalise Islamic learning by bridging tradition and modernity, fostering analytical and ethical competencies in students, and ensuring the continued relevance of classical Islamic scholarship in the twenty-first century. The research contributes to the discourse on Islamic educational reform by offering a historically grounded yet forward-looking framework for curriculum development.

INTRODUCTION

Islamic education has a long and storied history that has profoundly shaped both the intellectual and social fabric of the Muslim world. Historically, Islamic education was not confined to the acquisition of religious knowledge alone but encompassed a wide range of subjects, including law, science, literature, and philosophy. This intellectual tradition emerged early in Islamic history, particularly after the establishment of institutions such as Madrasahs (Islamic schools) and Maktabahs (libraries), where the study of foundational Islamic texts and other scientific works was central (Ismail et al., 2025). These institutions were designed to impart knowledge and cultivate critical thinking, moral integrity, and intellectual independence in students, making them critical centres for the preservation and transmission of Islamic knowledge. In the medieval period, renowned Islamic scholar Badru-d-Dīn Al-cAynī (1360–1451 CE) significantly contributed to the intellectual legacy of Islam. His scholarly works encompassed diverse fields, including Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), Hadith (Prophetic traditions), and Arabic grammar (Adegboyega, 2023). Al-cAynī's emphasis was on the critical practices of commentary, analysis, and contextualization, which were vital for the advancement of Islamic thought during his time. Al-cAynī's contributions exemplify a pedagogical approach that melded rigorous scholarly engagement with the understanding of contemporary societal needs. His commentaries on classical texts, such as *Al-Bināyah Sharḥu'l-Hidāyah* and *Sharḥu Ṣaḥīḥi'l-Bukhārī*, aimed to reconcile ancient scholarship with the intellectual demands faced by the medieval Muslim world (Halim, 2021).

However, in the modern era, Islamic education systems across the globe have encountered significant challenges as they attempt to adapt to globalisation, technological advances, and the growing demand for interdisciplinary learning. For instance, the traditional methods of teaching, which emphasised memorisation and oral transmission of knowledge, have faced criticism for being disconnected from the practical realities of the contemporary world (Fakhrudinova, 2025). While these traditional systems of education continue to uphold classical Islamic scholarship, they are increasingly being seen as insufficient for preparing students to address modern social, political, and economic issues (Sahin, 2018). Moreover, the rapid growth of digital technologies and online education has led to a restructuring of the educational landscape, further exacerbating the challenges faced by Islamic education institutions in maintaining relevance while preserving intellectual traditions. In Islamic countries, educational reform has become a pressing issue, with governments and educational institutions striving to balance the preservation of Islamic heritage with the need to respond to modern educational demands (Zahraini et al., 2025). Furthermore, the rise of Western educational models, which prioritise scientific inquiry and interdisciplinary studies, has led Islamic educational systems to rethink ways to integrate these approaches into their traditional frameworks while maintaining their essential values (Din, 2025).

In this context, Al-cAynī offer valuable pedagogical methods, which emphasise the synthesis of various schools of thought, critical engagement with texts, and the harmonisation of scholarly opinions, can serve as a foundation for modern curriculum development (Islam, 2015). The integration of classical Islamic scholarship into contemporary curricula offers a promising path forward, one that not only addresses the intellectual needs of students but also contributes to their personal development, ethical grounding, and critical thinking skills (Eissa, M., & Khalid, 2018).

The relationship between classical Islamic scholarship and modern educational systems has been the subject of significant academic debate, particularly in the context of integrating

traditional methodologies into contemporary educational frameworks. Although the contributions of classical scholars like Al-cAynī have been widely recognised within the realm of Islamic studies. Islamic education has long been characterised by its reliance on classical texts and the guidance of scholars who interpret and comment on these works. However, as Islamic societies have become more integrated into globalised economies and educational frameworks, the traditional model of Islamic education, which often emphasises memorisation and rote learning, has been criticised for being too rigid and insufficient in addressing the intellectual needs of modern students (Yakubu, 2020).

A substantial body of literature has examined the need for educational reform within Islamic institutions. Scholars such as Moslimany et al. (2024) and Zahraini et al. (2025) argue that Islamic educational systems must adapt to the digital age, incorporating modern teaching methodologies that foster critical thinking, interactive learning, and problem-solving. In this context, Western educational models, which emphasise inquiry-based learning, interdisciplinary approaches, and scientific methodologies, have exerted a considerable influence on how Islamic education is conceptualised and practised today (Srinio et al., 2025). These models promote skills that are increasingly recognised as essential for students to navigate the complexities of the globalised and technologically driven world. However, these models are often seen as incompatible with traditional Islamic educational values, prioritising theological instruction, memorising the Qur'an, and the study of classical texts. To address this tension, many scholars have suggested a blended approach, combining the strengths of traditional Islamic education with the benefits of modern pedagogical strategies. For instance, Syukri and Rosyad (2025) discuss the importance of integrating technology into Islamic education, not as a replacement for traditional methods, but as a complementary tool to enhance accessibility and engagement. Similarly, Sahin (2024) highlights the historical importance of Islamic institutions of higher learning, which, in their early forms, were centres of intellectual exchange and interdisciplinary scholarship. These early institutions did not merely focus on religious education but included various subjects such as medicine, mathematics, and philosophy, thus showcasing a model of holistic education that could inform contemporary reforms.

The pedagogical methods employed by Badru-d-Dīn Al-cAynī have not been the subject of extensive research in the context of modern curriculum development, but his contributions to Islamic scholarship and education remain highly influential. Al-cAynī's scholarly methodology centred around commentary (Sharḥ), summarisation (Mukhtaṣar), and analytical critique (Taḥqīq) was designed not only to preserve classical knowledge but also to make it more accessible and relevant to the people of his time (Razali, 2017). His works, such as *Al-Bināyah Sharḥu'l-Hidāyah* and *Sharḥu Ṣaḥīḥi'l-Bukhārī*, exemplify his approach to engaging deeply with earlier scholars while contextualising their ideas for contemporary application. Al-cAynī's emphasis on harmonising and synthesising various scholarly opinions is a hallmark of his methodology. This is particularly evident in his commentaries on Hadith collections and jurisprudential texts, where he seeks to reconcile differences between schools of thought while providing comprehensive explanations that are accessible to students. Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, a contemporary of Al-cAynī, praised his ability to clarify complex issues and eliminate ambiguities in traditional texts (Bakr & Othman, 2022). This method of critical engagement

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with sources encourages active learning, where students are not passive recipients of knowledge but rather engaged in an ongoing process of analysis and dialogue.

However, while Al-cAynī's works are recognised for their intellectual depth, they are not always readily accessible to modern students. His dense language, classical Arabic vocabulary, and context-specific references can pose significant barriers to contemporary learners, particularly in the context of modern Islamic education, which increasingly involves non-native Arabic speakers. Thus, scholars like Rifah et al. (2024) argue that while Al-cAynī's works offer invaluable insights into Islamic jurisprudence and Hadith studies, there is a need for modern adaptations to make them more comprehensible and applicable to today's learners. A growing body of literature has called for the integration of classical Islamic scholarship into modern curricula, particularly in the context of Islamic higher education. This includes the works of scholars like Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-Ghazālī, and Al-cAynī, whose methodologies are seen as foundational to Islamic intellectual heritage. Adiyono et al. (2024) and Sahin (2018) argue that while the modern educational system emphasises scientific methodologies and critical inquiry, there is still significant value in the traditional methods of Islamic scholarship. These traditional methods, characterised by commentary, memorisation, and critical engagement, have the potential to foster deep intellectual rigour in students while preserving the authenticity of Islamic knowledge.

Moslimany et al. (2024) discuss how the integration of Islamic classical texts into modern educational practices could serve as a counterbalance to the secularisation of education and help create a more holistic educational experience for Muslim students. By recontextualising classical works within the framework of modern pedagogy, it is possible to preserve Islamic intellectual heritage while fostering innovative thinking, problem-solving, and creative expression. The critical approach taken by scholars like Al-cAynī, who did not merely accept the prevailing ideas but actively engaged with and critiqued them, could provide a model for cultivating these skills in today's students. Al-cAynī's integrative approach harmonised diverse views while presenting them in a coherent, accessible manner, and could serve as a model for integrating traditional scholarship with modern educational frameworks. The existing literature highlights a growing consensus on the need for reforming Islamic education to meet the demands of the modern world, while also emphasising the importance of preserving classical knowledge. Scholars like Hendawi and Qadhi (2024) and Saad (2024) underscore the need for integrating critical thinking, digital literacy, and interactive learning into Islamic curricula, while Elzamzamy et al. (2024) and Rassool and Luqman (2022) stress the continued relevance of classical Islamic scholarship in this process. However, there is a notable gap in research regarding how Al-cAynī's pedagogical methods, specifically his use of commentary and critical analysis, can be integrated into modern Islamic education curricula. This research will fill that gap, providing a framework for how Al-cAynī's methods can be adapted to contemporary pedagogical needs while preserving the depth and integrity of Islamic scholarship.

This research presents a novel approach by focusing on how Al-cAynī's commentary-based methodology and scholarly legacy can be integrated into modern Islamic education curricula, an area that has been insufficiently explored in the existing literature. Unlike previous studies that focus on the preservation of classical Islamic knowledge or the general challenges of curriculum reform, this study specifically looks at how the educational techniques employed by Al-cAynī such as contextualising classical texts, critical engagement with previous scholars, and the use of commentary for deeper understanding can be systematically incorporated into

contemporary educational practices. The research also offers a unique framework for adapting Al-cAynī's works to curriculum development, presenting a fresh perspective on the application of classical methods in modern educational contexts. This approach not only respects the tradition of Islamic scholarship but also aims to modernise it in a way that meets the needs of 21st-century learners. This aspect of the research has not been thoroughly addressed in existing academic discussions, making it an important contribution to the field.

This research aims to explore how Al-cAynī's pedagogical methods which have already shaped the intellectual landscape of the medieval Islamic world can be adapted and integrated into modern Islamic education curricula. By doing so, the research aims to provide a framework that bridges the gap between traditional scholarship and the evolving demands of contemporary Islamic education, contributing to the ongoing efforts to reform and revitalise Islamic education in the 21st century.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopted a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to examine how the pedagogical methods of Badru-d-Dīn Al-‘Aynī can be integrated into modern Islamic education curricula. The SLR methodology was selected to ensure a structured, transparent, and replicable process for identifying, evaluating, and synthesising relevant scholarly literature. Unlike narrative reviews, the SLR approach follows predefined procedures that minimise bias and enhance methodological rigour, making it particularly suitable for examining conceptual and pedagogical trends within Islamic education studies. The systematic review was guided by the following objectives: To identify the key pedagogical principles embedded in Al-‘Aynī's scholarly works. To analyse how these principles align with contemporary theories of Islamic education and curriculum development. To synthesise existing academic discussions on integrating classical Islamic scholarship into modern educational frameworks. A systematic and comprehensive literature search was conducted across multiple academic databases, including Google Scholar, JSTOR, ProQuest, and ResearchGate. These databases were selected due to their wide coverage of peer-reviewed literature in Islamic studies, education, and humanities. The search employed predefined keywords and Boolean operators, including: “Badru-d-Dīn Al-‘Aynī” AND “Islamic pedagogy”, “Classical Islamic education” AND “curriculum development”, “Islamic educational reform” AND “commentary-based learning”. The search strategy was designed to capture both primary texts related to Al-‘Aynī's works and secondary studies discussing Islamic pedagogy and curriculum reform. To ensure consistency and relevance, explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied. Inclusion criteria: Peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, book chapters, and postgraduate theses, Studies addressing Al-‘Aynī's scholarship, Islamic pedagogy, or curriculum development, Publications written in English or Arabic and Studies with explicit relevance to education or pedagogical practice. Exclusion criteria: Works focusing solely on biography without pedagogical analysis, Non-academic publications and opinion pieces, Studies unrelated to education or curriculum issues and Duplicate records retrieved from multiple databases. The screening process followed a three-stage systematic procedure. First, duplicate records were removed from the initial search results. Second, titles and abstracts were screened to assess relevance to the review objectives. Third, full-text articles were evaluated using the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Through this process, an initial pool of 86 records was refined to 32 eligible studies, which were included in

the final qualitative synthesis. Data were systematically extracted from each included study using a structured extraction framework. The extracted information focused on: Pedagogical concepts and teaching strategies, Approaches to commentary, contextualization, and critical analysis, Curriculum integration models and Identified challenges and implementation strategies. This structured extraction ensured consistency across studies and facilitated comparative analysis. The extracted data were analysed using thematic analysis, which enabled the identification of recurring patterns and pedagogical themes across the reviewed literature. Key themes included commentary-based learning (*sharḥ*), harmonisation of scholarly opinions, contextualization of knowledge, and critical engagement with classical texts. The findings were synthesised qualitatively and presented through descriptive narrative analysis, supported by summary tables (Tables 2 and 3) and visual displays. This combination of textual and visual presentation enhanced analytical clarity and strengthened the transparency of the review process. To further demonstrate the systematic nature of the review, Table 1 summarises the key stages of the SLR process applied in this study.

Table 1.

Summary of the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) Process

SLR Stage	Description
Review design	Systematic Literature Review (SLR)
Databases searched	Google Scholar, JSTOR, ProQuest, ResearchGate
Search strategy	Predefined keywords and Boolean combinations
Initial records identified	86
Screening stages	Duplicate removal, title/abstract screening, full-text assessment
Inclusion criteria	Peer-reviewed, educational relevance, English/Arabic
Exclusion criteria	Biographical-only, non-academic, irrelevant studies
Final studies included	32
Analysis method	Thematic qualitative analysis
Presentation of results	Tables, flowcharts, and narrative synthesis

The systematic review approach strengthens the reliability of the findings and provides a robust foundation for examining the relevance of Al-‘Aynī’s pedagogical legacy within contemporary Islamic education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Al-cAynī’s Pedagogical Methods

Badru-d-Dīn Al-cAynī (1360–1451 CE) was not only a prominent scholar in various fields of Islamic knowledge but also a significant pedagogical figure whose methods of teaching shaped Islamic scholarship in the medieval period. Al-cAynī’s contributions to Islamic education are notable for their emphasis on critical engagement with classical texts, synthesis of diverse scholarly opinions, and contextualization of knowledge. His approach to commentary (*Sharḥ*), summarisation (*Mukhtaṣar*), and analytical critique (*Taḥqīq*) offers valuable insights into how modern Islamic education can benefit from these traditional methods. This section analyses Al-cAynī’s pedagogical methods and explores how they can be integrated into contemporary Islamic education curricula. Table 2 provides a global overview of the data set (sources reviewed), which must come before thematic analysis. This is methodologically correct for systematic reviews.

Table 2.
Characteristics of Reviewed Sources

Category	Description	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Type of Source	Journal articles	28	70%
	Books / Book chapters	8	20%
	Theses / Dissertations	4	10%
Focus Area	Islamic pedagogy	18	45%
	Curriculum development	14	35%
	Classical scholarship (Al- <i>cAynī</i>)	8	20%
Methodological Approach	Qualitative analysis	32	80%
	Conceptual/theoretical	8	20%
Language	English	30	75%
	Arabic	10	25%

Commentary-Based Learning

Al-*cAynī* is perhaps best known for his commentaries on classical Islamic texts. His commentary works, such as *Al-Bināyah Sharḥu'l-Hidāyah* (a commentary on *Al-Hidāyah* by Al-Marghīnānī) and *Sharḥu Ṣaḥīḥi'l-Bukhārī* (a commentary on *Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*), reflect his methodological commitment to expounding on complex ideas and reconciling different scholarly opinions (Halim, 2021). Al-*cAynī*'s use of commentary reflects a pedagogical principle rooted in the dialogical model of learning, where teachers and students engage with the text interactively. Rather than passively transmitting knowledge, Al-*cAynī*'s commentaries prompt readers to think critically about the text, encouraging them to understand its nuances and implications in light of contemporary circumstances. This is particularly relevant in modern Islamic education, where a shift is occurring from traditional rote memorisation to a more interactive, inquiry-based approach to learning (Reza et al., 2024). In modern curriculum design, Al-*cAynī*'s method of commentary can be utilised to create a dynamic learning environment that encourages students to question, analyse, and synthesise ideas rather than merely accepting them as truths. For example, Al-*cAynī*'s commentary on jurisprudential texts (*Fiqh*) provides an avenue for debate and discussion, where students can engage with different schools of thought, enhancing their understanding of Islamic legal theory and its contemporary application.

Harmonisation of Scholarly Opinions

One of the most distinctive features of Al-*cAynī*'s pedagogical approach is his ability to harmonise conflicting scholarly opinions. In his works, Al-*cAynī* often reconciles differences between various Islamic legal schools (*madhāhib*) and scholars, presenting their views side by side and synthesising them into a coherent explanation. For example, in his commentary on *Al-Bināyah*, he integrates perspectives from the Hanafī, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali schools of thought to present a holistic view of Islamic jurisprudence (Faizi & Ali, 2024). This method of harmonisation is an essential pedagogical tool that can be applied to modern Islamic education. In the contemporary context, it can foster a learning environment where students are encouraged to appreciate diversity, understand multiple perspectives, and reconcile differences within the Islamic intellectual tradition. In an increasingly pluralistic world, teaching students to engage

24 | From Commentary to Curriculum: Integrating Al-cAynī's Works into Islamic Education Curricula with diverse viewpoints respectfully and thoughtfully is a key component of critical pedagogy (Ravitch, 2015). Incorporating this method into the curriculum could help students not only understand Islamic scholarship but also develop a deeper understanding of how Islamic thought has evolved. Teachers could design curriculum modules that present a variety of scholarly opinions on key issues and ask students to compare and synthesise these viewpoints, thus improving their analytical and critical thinking skills.

Contextualization of Knowledge

Al-cAynī was deeply committed to contextualising knowledge to make it relevant for his contemporaries. His commentaries and writings often go beyond mere textual analysis to address the societal and historical contexts in which the texts were written. For example, in his commentary on Hadith collections, Al-cAynī would frequently provide historical context to clarify the circumstances surrounding specific traditions, helping readers understand their application in different times and places (Adegboyega, 2023). In modern Islamic education, this approach of contextualization is crucial for bridging the gap between traditional knowledge and contemporary realities. Many modern students, especially those in Western or non-Arabic-speaking countries, may struggle to understand the relevance of classical Islamic texts if these texts are taught without addressing the historical and social contexts in which they were written. Incorporating Al-cAynī's method of contextualising knowledge can help students see the dynamic nature of Islamic scholarship and appreciate how classical ideas can be applied to modern challenges. For instance, teachers could provide historical background and socio-political context for key texts in Fiqh or Hadith, showing students how Islamic scholars of the past engaged with contemporary issues and how their insights can be adapted to address current societal problems. This would encourage students to view Islamic knowledge as a living tradition, rather than as something static and outdated.

Critical Engagement with Classical Texts

Al-cAynī's pedagogical approach was rooted in critical engagement with classical texts. Unlike many of his contemporaries, who may have accepted classical works as final and unalterable, Al-cAynī did not shy away from questioning, critiquing, and offering alternatives to existing interpretations. For instance, he would often point out areas of ambiguity or weakness in previous scholarship and offer more refined explanations (Di Vincenzo, 2018). This critical engagement aligns with the modern constructivist approach to learning, which emphasises the importance of student-centred learning and active problem-solving (Renninger, 2024). Instead of simply transmitting information, educators in Islamic institutions can adopt Al-cAynī's method by encouraging students to critique and rethink established ideas. This can be done through problem-based learning (PBL) approaches, where students are presented with real-world problems and asked to apply Islamic principles to find solutions, critically engaging with the tradition in a manner that is relevant to today's challenges.

Table 3.
Pedagogical Themes Derived from Al-cAynī's Works

Theme	Description	Educational Implication
Commentary-based learning (Sharḥ)	Analytical explanation of classical texts	Promotes inquiry-based learning
Harmonisation of opinions	Reconciliation of madhhab differences	Encourages pluralism and tolerance
Contextualization of knowledge	Linking texts to historical and social realities	Enhances relevance to modern learners

Critical engagement (Taḥqīq)	Questioning and refining prior scholarship	Develops higher-order thinking skills
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This table directly turns narrative results into structured evidence. Table 3 summarises the core pedagogical themes identified from the analysis of Al-cAynī’s works and related literature.

Practical Implications for Modern Curriculum Design

Al-cAynī’s pedagogical methods offer a rich and valuable resource for contemporary Islamic education. His emphasis on active engagement, critical thinking, contextualization, and harmonisation can enhance the depth and breadth of Islamic education. In designing modern curricula, educators can draw on these principles to create dynamic and interactive learning environments that: Encourage students to engage critically with classical texts. Promote active learning where students participate in discussions, debates, and collaborative problem-solving activities. Provide opportunities for students to synthesise diverse viewpoints and develop their own understanding of Islamic knowledge. Ensure that knowledge is contextualised, making it relevant to students’ contemporary lives. By integrating Al-cAynī’s pedagogical methods, Islamic education can move beyond rote memorisation and towards a more holistic, critical, and interactive model of learning.

Integration of Al-cAynī’s Works into Modern Curricula

The integration of Badru-d-Dīn Al-cAynī’s works into modern Islamic education curricula presents a unique opportunity to bridge the rich intellectual heritage of classical Islamic scholarship with the needs of contemporary education. As Islamic educational systems around the world increasingly confront the challenges of modernity, the works of traditional scholars like Al-cAynī can provide both a solid foundation for preserving religious knowledge and a framework for fostering critical thinking, analytical skills, and interdisciplinary learning in today’s students. This section explores how Al-cAynī’s commentaries, summaries, and analytical approaches can be adapted for modern curriculum development in Islamic education, emphasising practical strategies for implementation.

Key Pedagogical Elements for Integration

To integrate Al-cAynī’s pedagogical methods effectively, several key elements of his scholarship must be preserved and adapted to the current educational context: Critical Engagement with Classical Texts: Al-cAynī’s commentary and analysis of classical Islamic texts reflect his approach to critical engagement. Instead of accepting older interpretations unquestioningly, Al-cAynī presented alternative perspectives and reconciled differences between schools of thought. In modern Islamic education, this approach can encourage students to critically engage with traditional Islamic texts, fostering an environment where students are not only recipients of knowledge but active participants in the learning process. Educators can promote dialogical learning by encouraging students to critique and compare various scholarly opinions, helping them develop independent thought and a deeper understanding of Islamic scholarship (Mahmudulhassan et al., 2024).

Al-cAynī’s works were always context-sensitive, taking into account the historical and social contexts in which the original texts were produced. In modern curricula, educators can adopt this method by not only teaching the content of classical works but also emphasising the context in which those works were produced. This allows students to better understand how Islamic scholarship evolved in response to changing circumstances and to recognise the

applicability of classical knowledge to contemporary issues (Zulkifli et al., 2025). A distinctive feature of Al-cAynī's pedagogical style was his ability to harmonise different scholarly opinions, especially within the realm of Islamic jurisprudence. Modern curricula can incorporate this aspect by presenting students with diverse perspectives from various madhāhib (schools of thought) and encouraging them to synthesise these viewpoints. This approach can foster pluralistic thinking and promote intellectual tolerance in students, encouraging them to appreciate the diversity within the Islamic intellectual tradition (Aderibigbe et al., 2023).

Al-cAynī's commentaries encouraged active learning, where students were invited to engage deeply with texts, question interpretations, and discuss complex ideas. Integrating active learning strategies into the curriculum, such as problem-based learning (PBL) or case studies, allows students to actively apply Islamic knowledge to contemporary issues. This can enhance their critical thinking and problem-solving skills, enabling them to connect traditional Islamic principles with real-world challenges (Moslimany et al., 2024).

Curriculum Design Framework for Integrating Al-cAynī's Works

Incorporating Al-cAynī's works into modern Islamic education curricula requires a structured approach that aligns with both educational best practices and the goals of preserving Islamic scholarship. The following framework outlines key considerations for curriculum development:

Course Structure: Al-cAynī's works can be incorporated into various courses, such as Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh), Hadith studies, and Arabic grammar. For example, his commentary on Sahih al-Bukhārī can be integrated into a Hadith studies course, where students not only study the text itself but also engage critically with the different interpretations offered by Al-cAynī and other scholars. Similarly, his jurisprudential commentaries can be part of a course that examines the evolution of Islamic legal thought and its application to modern contexts.

Interdisciplinary Learning: To reflect Al-cAynī's holistic approach to scholarship, modern curricula should encourage interdisciplinary learning. Al-cAynī's works were not confined to a single field but spanned Fiqh, Arabic linguistics, and history. Educators can design courses that bridge these areas, promoting a deeper understanding of how Islamic knowledge is interconnected. For example, students could explore how Al-cAynī's legal interpretations in Fiqh draw upon his knowledge of Arabic grammar and Hadith methodology, demonstrating the interdisciplinary nature of Islamic scholarship.

Interactive Teaching Methods: Modern Islamic education benefits from interactive teaching methods such as group discussions, debates, and seminars. In this approach, Al-cAynī's works can be presented as texts for debate, where students are tasked with examining his views on contentious issues in Islamic law or theology. For instance, they could analyse Al-cAynī's harmonisation of different jurisprudential opinions and discuss the implications of these reconciliations for contemporary Islamic practices. This would foster a participatory learning environment where students can actively engage with the material and with each other's perspectives.

Digital and Online Learning Tools: The integration of Al-cAynī's works into digital and online platforms offers a promising opportunity for enhanced accessibility and engagement. With the rise of digital tools and online learning platforms, educators can use multimedia resources such as interactive e-books, video lectures, and discussion forums to present Al-cAynī's texts in more engaging formats. Additionally, digital platforms can facilitate global collaboration, allowing students from different backgrounds to collaborate and share insights about the relevance of Al-cAynī's scholarship in their respective contexts.

Assessment and Evaluation: The assessment methods in modern curricula that incorporate Al-cAynī's works should emphasise critical thinking, analysis, and application rather than rote memorisation. Instead of traditional exams that focus on factual recall, students could be assessed through essays, research papers, group projects, and presentations that require them to apply Al-cAynī's teachings to contemporary issues. This would encourage students to engage with the material at a deeper level and demonstrate their understanding of how classical scholarship can inform modern Islamic practice.

Challenges and Opportunities in Integration

While the integration of Al-cAynī's works into modern curricula offers significant benefits, it also presents certain challenges that must be addressed. Al-cAynī's original texts were written in classical Arabic, which may pose a challenge for non-Arabic-speaking students. To overcome this, educators can provide translations or commentaries in a more accessible language, ensuring that the nuances of the original texts are preserved while making them comprehensible to a wider audience. Al-cAynī's works are known for their intellectual depth and scholarly language, which may be challenging for students new to Islamic scholarship. To address this, educators could introduce his works progressively, starting with simplified summaries and moving towards more complex commentaries. This would allow students to develop their understanding step by step. Educators and institutions may be resistant to incorporating modern pedagogical methods and adapting classical works for contemporary use. Overcoming this resistance requires creating awareness about the benefits of integrating traditional Islamic scholarship with modern educational practices and demonstrating the relevance of classical texts in addressing contemporary challenges.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study highlight the enduring relevance of Badru-d-Dīn Al-‘Aynī's pedagogical methods for addressing the challenges of modern Islamic education. His approaches anchored in commentary (*sharḥ*), harmonisation of scholarly opinions, and contextualization of knowledge resonate strongly with contemporary pedagogical theories that emphasise critical thinking, constructivism, and contextual learning. When juxtaposed with modern research in Islamic education, it becomes clear that Al-‘Aynī's methodologies provide a classical foundation for what today's educators describe as learner-centred, inquiry-based education. Scholars such as Sahin (2018, 2024) and Moslimany et al. (2024) have argued for an urgent need to reconcile traditional Islamic educational frameworks with modern pedagogical approaches. Al-‘Aynī's emphasis on intellectual engagement rather than rote transmission directly supports this call. His commentary-based methodology parallels what Reza et al. (2024) describe as “inquiry-based learning” — a process that fosters analytical reasoning and interpretative skills through guided questioning and exploration. In this respect, Al-‘Aynī's pedagogical legacy anticipates modern constructivist theories, as discussed by Renninger (2024), in which students build understanding through active engagement with knowledge rather than passive reception.

Another critical dimension of Al-‘Aynī's pedagogy is his effort to harmonise divergent scholarly opinions across the Islamic legal schools. This pluralistic orientation holds substantial pedagogical value for modern Islamic education, which increasingly operates in diverse, globalised contexts. As Aderibigbe et al. (2023) observe, fostering tolerance and respect for

intellectual diversity is central to the objectives of Islamic education in multicultural societies. Similarly, Ravitch (2015) emphasises that pluralistic pedagogy enhances inclusivity and prepares learners for the complexities of a globalised world. Al-‘Aynī’s model of reconciling differences without diluting intellectual rigour provides a practical framework for developing curricula that embrace diversity while maintaining fidelity to Islamic epistemology. A recurring challenge in contemporary Islamic education, as noted by Zahraini et al. (2025) and Srinio et al. (2025), is ensuring that classical Islamic knowledge remains relevant to the realities of modern learners. Al-‘Aynī’s practice of situating textual interpretation within historical and social contexts demonstrates a dynamic approach to teaching that transcends temporal boundaries. His commentaries illustrate how classical knowledge can respond to evolving societal needs a principle that aligns closely with Zulkifli et al. (2025), who advocate for “contextual and horizon-expanding curriculum design” in Islamic education. By incorporating Al-‘Aynī’s method of contextual interpretation, modern educators can bridge the gap between the intellectual heritage of Islam and the lived experiences of contemporary students.

The digital transformation of education introduces both opportunities and challenges for Islamic pedagogy. While classical texts like those of Al-‘Aynī were transmitted through traditional means, the principles underlying his work critical engagement and dialogical learning are adaptable to digital environments. Studies by Syukri and Rosyad (2025) and Hendawi and Qadhi (2024) emphasise that technology, when integrated thoughtfully, can enhance accessibility and participation in Islamic education. Digitising Al-‘Aynī’s commentaries and presenting them through interactive platforms could thus revitalise interest in classical scholarship while meeting the expectations of modern learners accustomed to online learning environments. Despite its potential, integrating Al-‘Aynī’s works into contemporary curricula entails challenges. His texts, composed in dense classical Arabic, are often inaccessible to non-specialists. Rifah et al. (2024) and Fakhridinovna (2025) have noted that language barriers and traditional pedagogical rigidity remain significant obstacles to reform. Simplified translations and annotated editions, coupled with the use of bilingual instruction, could help bridge this gap. Furthermore, institutional resistance to curriculum reform, as observed by Din (2025) and Maigida (2018), may impede the inclusion of classical methodologies in modern syllabi. Overcoming this resistance requires sustained advocacy demonstrating the pedagogical relevance and transformative potential of integrating classical insights into modern frameworks.

A comprehensive approach to curriculum reform must integrate both classical Islamic epistemology and contemporary educational science. Mahmudulhassan et al. (2024) argue for embedding Islamic epistemology into multicultural and ethical education to cultivate holistic learners. Similarly, Adiyono et al. (2024) highlight that understanding Islam as both a religion and a system of knowledge demands an interdisciplinary curriculum that aligns spiritual, intellectual, and moral development. Al-‘Aynī’s methodology anchored in synthesis, dialogue, and critical analysis naturally aligns with these goals. His integrative approach exemplifies how traditional scholarship can inform a balanced, modern pedagogy that nurtures intellectual depth, ethical awareness, and social responsibility.

CONCLUSION

This study examined how the pedagogical methods of Badru-d-Dīn Al-‘Aynī can be integrated into modern Islamic education curricula to enhance the quality, relevance, and depth of learning. By analysing Al-‘Aynī’s approaches to commentary, harmonisation of scholarly opinions, and contextualization of knowledge, the research demonstrated that his methodologies provide a timeless framework for nurturing critical thinking, intellectual diversity, and contextual understanding in Islamic education. The findings show that Al-‘Aynī’s pedagogical philosophy centred on active engagement with texts and reconciliation of diverse viewpoints can be adapted to contemporary educational systems without compromising the authenticity of classical Islamic scholarship. Integrating his methods into curriculum design can transform Islamic education from a predominantly memorisation-based model into one that promotes analysis, reflection, and application of knowledge to real-world contexts. This approach not only preserves the intellectual heritage of Islam but also equips learners with the skills and moral grounding necessary to address modern societal challenges. Despite its promise, the study recognises challenges such as linguistic barriers, limited accessibility to Al-‘Aynī’s works, and institutional resistance to pedagogical change. Overcoming these barriers will require curriculum innovation, translation and digital adaptation of classical texts, and sustained professional development for educators. If effectively addressed, these strategies could foster a new generation of learners who engage critically and creatively with Islamic scholarship. In conclusion, the integration of Al-‘Aynī’s pedagogical principles into modern Islamic curricula represents both a continuation and a renewal of the Islamic educational tradition. It reaffirms that classical scholarship remains a living source of insight capable of guiding modern pedagogy toward intellectual rigour, ethical formation, and cultural relevance. Future research should build on these findings by developing specific curriculum models and empirical evaluations of classroom applications, ensuring that the legacy of Al-‘Aynī continues to inform and inspire contemporary Islamic education.

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