

A Comparative Study of Social Media Engagement for Learning Arabic Among Lower Secondary School Students

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Received: 2 February 2026

Received in revised form: 8 March 2026

Accepted: 9 March 2026

Published: 10 March 2026

ABSTRACT

In Malaysia, Arabic language is among the languages offered and commonly taken by lower secondary school students, where Standard Secondary School Curriculum (KSSM) and Integrated Dini Curriculum (KBD) are among the curricula offered. With the evolving development of social media use for language learning, there are lacking number of studies on its use for Arabic language learning among lower secondary school students. The use of traditional approach and teacher-centred learning in Arabic language has persisted for many years, despite the rapid shift towards digitalised learning. This study aims to investigate the statistically significant differences of social media engagement for learning Arabic among lower secondary school students according to KSSM and KBD curriculum. The engagement has been measured across three patterns, namely Critical Cognitive, Social Interactive and Active Language Use. This study applied the quantitative approach using the cross-sectional survey design. An online questionnaire has been distributed to 364 lower secondary school students in Kuala Lumpur, which has been analysed through the independent samples t-test. Results showed that there are no statistically significant differences in social media engagement for learning Arabic between the two types of curricula. This study emphasises the need to encourage the social media engagement for learning Arabic among students regardless of their curriculum, as both types require support for social media as a complementary mode of language learning.

Keywords

Social media engagement; Arabic language learning; Lower secondary; Standard Secondary School Curriculum; Integrated Dini Curriculum

Introduction

Social media initially has been mainly used for communication purposes. Ever since the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of social media has encompassed more functions including online learning and e-commerce. As mentioned by Kemp (2024), 83.1% of the population in Malaysia use social media, which indicates its importance and crucial influence. Empirical studies have also shown the positive benefit of social media use in encouraging motivation for language learning (Zhou, 2021). On the other hand, Arabic language, which is a widely used language in Malaysia for religious learning, has been maintaining the traditional ways as its learning mode, mainly limited to teachers' face-to-face lectures (Zaki et al., 2024). Arabic language is also offered as formal learning through different types of curricula, including Secondary School Curriculum (KSSM) and Integrated Dini Curriculum (KBD) (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2018; Mohd et al., 2025). Contrary to the English language, which has incorporated social media as its mode of learning, Arabic is left far behind, where students receive little to no exposure of social media engagement for learning Arabic, despite its significant potential (Maryam et al., 2025).

Social media has been proven in studies on its effectiveness and reliability as a tool for English language learning (Dahti & Abdulsalam, 2025; Irawan et al., 2025; Pokhrel, 2025). With variety features to maintain learning consistency such as easy to access, unlimited opportunities for interaction, and enriched learning experience, students will be able to engage with Arabic language in more efficient approaches (Bella et al., 2025; Rahman et al., 2025). For instance, study by Milah et al. (2025) stated the use of TikTok, YouTube and Instagram as social media platforms offering visually appealing elements, interactivity and context-based contents. These features allow more enhanced retention of authentic language application in real life settings. However, study by Asbulah et al. (2020) showed the lower level of engagement for Arabic language learning outside classroom in comparison with inside classroom. This is also

supported through the study by Maryam et al. (2025) on the underutilised use of social media for Arabic language learning, emphasizing the minimal exposure and low participation level among students. As Arabic language is usually perceived more ‘foreign’ than English language in terms of daily usage, constant exposure through non-formal learning is needed to boost students’ motivation to be more engaged with Arabic language learning.

It is vital to evolve from the traditional ways of learning Arabic language, following the needs of digital learning among lower secondary school students, who are among the generation with early exposure to digitalisation (Yasin, 2025). In ensuring an effective learning framework can be enhanced, understanding the needs for each different category of students is needed. KSSM involves basic Arabic learning, while KBD involves slightly advanced Arabic learning (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2018; Mohd et al., 2025), where the difference of level may affect the patterns of social media engagement. Studies by Baili et al. (2025) and Bella et al. (2025) recommended a well-structured and proper guidelines on the use of using social media for Arabic language learning. This calls the need to understand the patterns of engagement and its relation lower secondary school students, which are the subject for this study. This study aims to explore the statistically significant differences between the social media engagement among Kuala Lumpur lower secondary school students across the different types of curriculums, namely KSSM and KBD. The result of this study is expected to inform the educators, content creators and policymakers on the social media engagement across curriculums, in order to determine the strategical approach for module development and effective complementary learning approaches.

Literature Review

Social Media in Language Learning

Through globalization, teaching and learning have increasingly shifted toward digitalization, including in the field of Arabic language education. Information and knowledge can now be accessed easily through technology, particularly through social media platforms. The influence of social media is especially significant among students who are still in the process of acquiring language skills. Yang (2023) stated that individuals are greatly impacted by social media, particularly modern youth living in a new media environment, who tend to develop deeper and stronger relationships with digital media. According to DataReportal (2025), there were approximately 5.66 billion social media user identities worldwide by October 2025, highlighting the extensive global reach of these platforms.

Previously, social media was commonly viewed as a disruptive element in formal education, often associated with reduced academic focus and increased distraction. Valdez et al. (2020) found that students have expressed worries regarding obstacles, such as time management challenges, poor computer and communication technology (ICT) proficiency, and inadequate technology support at particular higher education establishments. Students' lives in general have been shown to be significantly impacted by internet usage. However, recent literature reflects a major paradigm shift, positioning social media as a social search engine and a space for radical authenticity. Generation Z is increasingly moving toward systems that provide rapid and visually engaging content, as evidenced by their preference for social media platforms over more established services such as Google. This trend suggests deeper shifts in digital consumption patterns rather than mere convenience (Goldman, 2024).

For younger generations, particularly Generation Z and Generation Alpha, platforms such as TikTok and Instagram have increasingly replaced traditional search engines for academic exploration and informal language learning. These platforms support vocabulary development, pronunciation practice, and exposure to authentic Arabic content. Ding and Ismail (2025) further reported that TikTok has emerged as a microlearning platform, where brief and engaging videos facilitate rapid information acquisition across various subject areas, including language learning.

Furthermore, the informal nature of content on these platforms supports learner-centered practices by encouraging exploration, creativity, and self-directed learning in Arabic language acquisition (Ding & Ismail, 2025). Learners can engage with native speakers, religious lectures, short storytelling videos, and daily conversational content, which enhances listening and speaking skills. While this transformation demonstrates the growing relevance of digital platforms in Arabic language learning, most existing studies continue to focus on general trends in developed countries, with limited attention to Arabic learners in non-Arab and developing contexts, such as Southeast Asia. This indicates a significant research gap that warrants further investigation.

Theoretical Foundation of Social Media Learning

Social media learning is primarily grounded in the theories of Social Constructivism and Connectivism. In contemporary educational contexts, Social Constructivism emphasizes the active involvement of students in learning through strategies that support schema activation, scaffolding, idea exploration, and knowledge sharing within interactive online and face-to-face communities. This approach also encourages learners to comment, ask questions, reflect, review, and communicate meaningfully with peers in real-world and digital social settings (Abdelwahab, 2022). Through such interactions, learners construct knowledge collaboratively and develop deeper conceptual understanding.

Connectivism, introduced by Siemens (2008), conceptualizes learning as a process of forming connections among multiple information nodes and networks that support both synchronous and asynchronous learning. According to Siemens (2008, as cited in Kropf, 2013), knowledge exists within digital systems and is accessed through participation in interconnected networks. In this perspective, learning extends beyond individual cognition and is embedded within technological and social infrastructures.

Combining Social Constructivism and Connectivism positions learning as a socially mediated and network-based process. Social media platforms operationalize these theories by facilitating discussion forums, content sharing, peer feedback, and collaborative projects, thereby enhancing learner engagement and interaction. Moreover, learning can occur anywhere and at any time. Students embrace and use Facebook and WhatsApp for both official and informal learning activities since they are popular social media platforms (Suci et al., 2022). Through digital networks, learners can access information from diverse sources, evaluate its credibility, and disseminate useful knowledge within their social communities (Kropf, 2013).

While social media promotes collaboration and connectivity, it also presents challenges, including information overload, superficial engagement, and the risk of misinformation, which may hinder meaningful learning. Therefore, balancing the benefits of social media with critical evaluation skills and ethical guidance is essential to ensure effective and responsible educational outcomes.

Patterns of Students' Engagement in Social Media Learning

The perception of social media in education has shifted from viewing it as a mere distraction to recognizing its potential as a supplemental instructional tool that can enhance student engagement and academic performance. This shift underscores the growing significance of social media, as its use for teaching and learning has increased substantially over time (Mlambo, 2026). Student engagement generally refers to the degree of students' behavioral, emotional, and cognitive involvement in learning activities (Fredricks et al., 2004). Behavioral engagement includes active participation in learning tasks, emotional engagement refers to students' interest and motivation, while cognitive engagement involves deeper learning processes such as critical thinking and problem solving.

In the context of social media learning environments, engagement can be reflected through several observable dimensions, including active participation, sustained interest, critical thinking, and language application. These elements represent different aspects of behavioural, emotional, and cognitive engagement that are particularly relevant in digital and collaborative learning environments.

Active Participation and Sustained Interest

Active participation and sustained interest are among the significant patterns of social media engagement to look through in measuring the effectiveness of language learning. The interactive features of social media allow learners to be more directly engaged towards Arabic content from diverse sources. A study by Milah et al. (2025) stated TikTok as a platform to support active participation and enhance students' interest for Arabic language learning. In addition, Safitri and Tari (2025) also supported the authenticity and relatability of social media contents in increasing their language learning interest on social media. Barrot (2021) further mentioned the significant role of social media among language learning scholars, given its flexibility, accessibility and popularity among users across different backgrounds.

Studies indicate that integrating platforms such as TikTok and Instagram into formal instruction can significantly boost students' learning motivation and participation. For example, Mayasari et al. (2025) reported that structured social media integration led to a 78% increase in student motivation, accompanied by measurable improvements in test scores. Similarly, students in subjects such as Chemistry and Sociology demonstrated academic gains of 15–25% when exposed to social-media-enhanced learning environments. A study from Usup and Purwaningsih (2024) stated these platforms are interactive, students may connect with classmates and express themselves, which increases their engagement in the learning process.

These findings suggest that short-form educational content and microlearning strategies align well with adolescents' digital consumption patterns and cognitive processing styles. Social media platforms offer innovative content delivery approaches, such as interactive images and concise videos, which simplify complex concepts and make learning more accessible and engaging (Mayasari et al., 2025).

Other studies have also highlighted the role of social media in enhancing students' participation in learning activities. Babayev (2025) found that language learners participate in debates and conversations about the target language they wish to learn, join various groups, and follow hashtags. Language learners actively used social media platforms to access supplementary learning materials and interact with peers outside the classroom. Similarly, Liu et al. (2022) reported that social media for students is to engage with their mentor and engage in collaborative learning, online social settings and social websites offer a more expansive communication platform. Social media environments encourage collaborative learning and increase students' willingness to participate in academic discussions.

The growing popularity of “StudyTok” and educational content creators further reflects students' preference for concise, visually engaging, and easily accessible learning resources. Through short instructional videos, often under 60 seconds, learners can grasp complex concepts in manageable segments, promoting sustained behavioral and emotional engagement. Sitorus et al. (2024) reported that short-form videos, interactive features, and relatable presentation styles were cited by 85% of respondents as key factors contributing to the high engagement of StudyTok content. This “hook” factor encourages repeated interaction with learning materials, thereby strengthening learning continuity.

Critical Thinking and Language Application

Critical Thinking, where students cognitively engage with content on social media with critical manners as an input, which in return provided opportunities for language application as an output are among the important patterns of social media engagement to be discussed. A study by Pang (2022) supported this claim by addressing the importance of social media in enhancing critical thinking engagement among learners. Hishamuddin et al. (2023) also mentioned the promotion of higher order thinking skills among students through strategic social media use. On top of that, study by Safitri and Tari (2025) reported that diversity in language learning materials including content sharing on practical conversation, grammars and vocabulary allow students to have a tailored learning experience according to their pace and preferences. Social media contents also enhance learning retention, empowering students' language acquisition (Karnawati & Framesti, 2025).

In both the KSSM and KBD contexts, microlearning has been shown to support revision, self-paced learning, and informal knowledge acquisition. These strategies emphasize lifelong learning and the development of skills relevant to the workplace, aligning with the national Education Blueprint 2015–2025 (Abdul Halim & Luanan, 2024). The integration of social media and digital platforms within both KSSM and KBD streams presents opportunities to enhance student motivation and performance, particularly through microlearning and personalized content delivery.

Despite these benefits, several challenges remain. Disparities in teacher digital competence, instructional quality, and platform suitability continue to pose barriers to effective implementation. In KBD contexts, curriculum adaptation to align with the Malaysian national education system complicates integration, as teachers often struggle to understand new curriculum content and syllabus requirements (Husaini et al., 2018). Moreover, critics argue that excessive reliance on fragmented microlearning may limit opportunities for deep conceptual understanding, critical thinking, and long-term knowledge retention.

Contributing factors include students' language deficiencies, unclear instructional rules, variable content quality, and challenges in language adaptation (Abdul Ghani, 2020). These issues underscore the need for balanced instructional design that combines microlearning with structured, reflective, and in-depth learning activities, emphasizing both efficiency and cognitive depth.

Arabic Learning in KSSM and KBD

Student language performance in Arabic can be measured across four primary domains: listening (Istima'), speaking (Kalam), reading (Qira'ah), and writing (Kitabah). Studies have highlighted significant disparities in these skills between the KSSM (Standard) and KBD (Specialized) streams. According to Siregar (2025), many students experience difficulties in Arabic writing, while Ismail and Nik Yusoff (2022) reported that even KBD students struggle to comprehend and effectively use the Form Four Arabic textbook.

Speaking proficiency is a crucial component of Arabic language learning; however, research by Al Khresheh et al. (2020, cited in Fauzi & Siti Rahmawati, 2025) found that many students face difficulties in pronunciation, natural speech production, and confidence when speaking Arabic aloud. These challenges are further intensified by the lack of objective and systematic assessment methods to evaluate students' progress in speaking skills. Several challenges have been identified in the assessment of students' speaking skills, particularly in language learning contexts. One major issue is the subjectivity and variability in assessment practices, as many evaluations lack clear and consistent criteria, which may lead to different interpretations and scoring among teachers (Qizi, 2024). In addition, time constraints within classroom settings often limit opportunities for teachers to conduct thorough speaking practice and assessment, thereby affecting students' ability to develop and demonstrate their speaking proficiency (Abrori, 2024).

Psychological factors also play a significant role, as students may experience anxiety, fear of making mistakes, or low self-confidence when speaking, which can negatively influence their performance during assessment (Halim et al., 2025). Furthermore, the lack of sufficient resources, including suitable teaching materials and adequate training for teachers, can hinder the implementation of effective and reliable speaking assessment strategies (Yimer & Regassa, 2025).

Comparative studies on the KSSM and KBD highlight clear differences in student performance that reflect their curricular aims and learner backgrounds. KSSM Arabic, as a mainstream curriculum, focuses on developing basic communicative skills and foundational literacy in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This approach is consistent with the objectives outlined in the Curriculum and Assessment Standard Document (DSKP) for Arabic in Malaysian secondary education (Sektor Kurikulum Pendidikan Islam dan Bahasa Arab (SKPIBA), 2020). In contrast, KBD is a specialized curriculum implemented in religious schools (SABK), with a stronger emphasis on religious knowledge and deeper engagement with Arabic as both a language and a medium of instruction.

These differences in curricular orientation may influence how students engage with supplementary learning resources such as social media platforms. Students from different curricular backgrounds may demonstrate different motivations, learning strategies, and patterns of digital engagement when using social media for language learning. Therefore, comparing KSSM and KBD students provides an important context for understanding variations in social media engagement in Arabic learning.

Challenges in Arabic Language Learning

Arabic language learning in non-Arab contexts such as Malaysia faces several pedagogical challenges. Previous studies have reported that students often experience low motivation, limited exposure to authentic Arabic communication, and difficulties retaining vocabulary and grammatical structures (Abdul Ghani, 2020). Language anxiety also affects students' willingness to speak Arabic in classroom settings, particularly when they fear making grammatical errors in Nahw and Sarf (Al Khresheh et al., 2020).

Limited exposure to authentic listening materials and real-life communication contexts further constrains students' opportunities to practice the language meaningfully. Rahimi et al. (2024) emphasized that students can develop effective listening abilities when they are consistently exposed to diverse auditory materials, such as conversations,

interviews, news broadcasts, songs, dramas, and films. However, such exposure is often limited in traditional classroom settings.

In addressing the gaps, these challenges highlight the need for alternative learning approaches that can increase student engagement and provide authentic language exposure. The patterns of social media engagement including active participation, sustained interest, critical thinking and language application shall be further investigated in understanding students' level of engagement with Arabic language learning and tackling issues related to them. These findings are needed, given the vital role of social media platforms, which provide multimedia content, interactive communication opportunities, and access to native speakers, offering vast potential supplementary tools for enhancing Arabic language learning.

The literature indicates that social media has emerged as a significant tool in modern learning environments, offering opportunities to enhance student engagement, interaction, and language practice. In the context of Arabic language learning in Malaysia, students often face challenges such as limited authentic exposure, low motivation, and difficulties in language application. Social media platforms may serve as supplementary learning spaces that support more interactive and flexible learning experiences. Given that Arabic is taught through two different curricular pathways, namely KSSM and KBD, differences in curricular focus may influence how students engage with social media for learning. However, limited research has examined these differences, highlighting the need to investigate patterns of social media engagement among students from both curriculum streams.

Research Objectives/Questions

The research objective of this research is:

1. To examine differences in social media engagement for Arabic language learning between lower secondary students following the KSSM and KBD curricula.

The research question of this research is:

1. Is there any statistically significant difference in Arabic language learning between lower secondary students following the KSSM and KBD curricula?

Hypothesis

H₁: There is a significant difference in social media engagement for Arabic language learning between lower secondary school students following the KSSM and KBD curricula.

Methods

Research Design

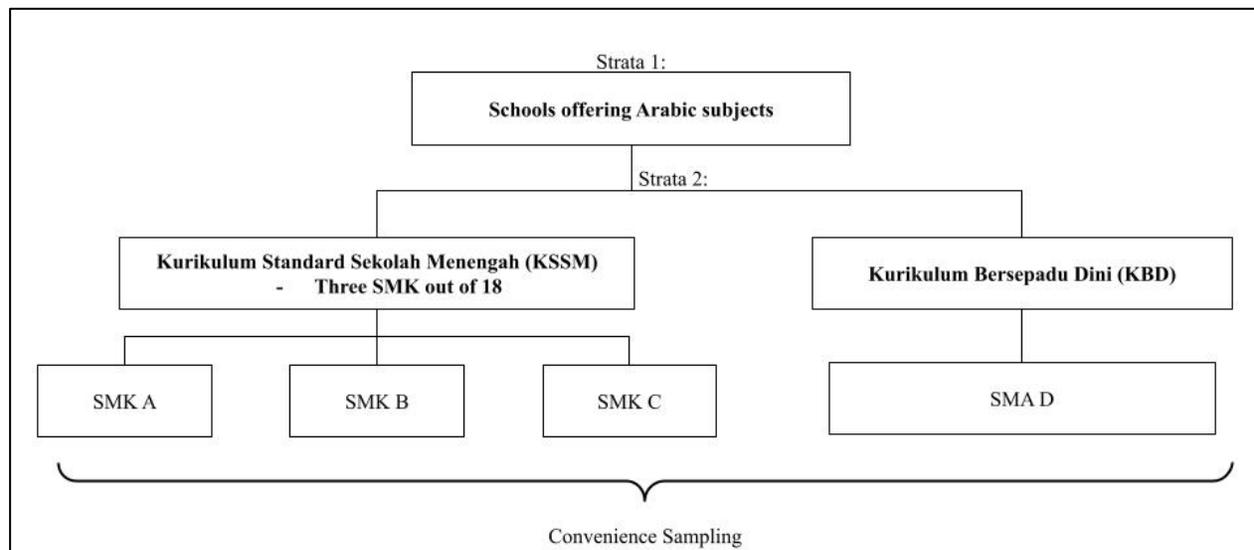
This study employed cross-sectional ex-post facto design, in which no experimental manipulation on the construct is involved, and the data were collected through a self-developed questionnaire as post-occurrence observation. This quantitative study uses cross-sectional survey as its method, where the data collected through the questionnaire responses were analysed at the same time. This method is used in fulfilling the needs of this research, where a high number of responses are needed for data generalisation, fitting the nature of social media as a platform with a massive number of users. Questionnaire has been chosen as the instrument for this study, given its function as a structured method to collect and summarize data from a huge number of populations. The questionnaire was administered online, as this approach is simpler and more convenient for lower secondary school students, since it does not require them to be present at a specific time and place.

Samples and Population

A total of 954 lower secondary students constituted the population of this study. These students were enrolled in selected schools across different districts in Kuala Lumpur as of 31 March 2025. Lower secondary school students in this study refers to Form One, Form Two and Form Three students, with age ranging from thirteen to fifteen years old. 551 students are from KSSM curriculum, while 403 students are from KBD curriculum. The four selected schools were located in three districts, namely Bangsar Pudu, Keramat, and Sentul, and offered Arabic language under the KSSM and KBD curricula. Based on a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence level, a minimum sample size of 300 students was determined using the Raosoft sample size calculator (Raosoft, Inc., 2004).

This study employed both stratified sampling and convenience sampling. The first level of stratification was based on the two types of curricula being compared, namely KSSM and KBD. The second level of stratification involved schools representing each curriculum type, including government national schools and a semi-government religious school. These schools were selected and stratified to examine whether there were statistically significant differences between them. Within the four selected schools, the final respondents were identified through convenience sampling. Figure 1 illustrated a summary of the sampling method.

Figure 1
Summary of Sampling Method



Research Instruments

A self-developed questionnaire was used to fulfil the research objectives. The questionnaire was divided into four constructs, which are the patterns of social media engagement for learning Arabic derived from the literature review. The four constructs were Active Participation, Sustained Interest, Critical Thinking, and Application. Section One comprised eight items related to the respondents' demographic background. Section Two comprised 24 items divided into the four constructs, with six items allocated to each construct. In total, 32 items were included in the questionnaire. A frequency-based Likert scale was used to measure the items in each construct, ranging from "Never" to "Always." The questionnaire was also translated into Malay language to ensure easier comprehension of the items, as the majority of the respondents were native Malay speakers.

Each item under the four constructs was validated through content validation involving four experts from the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM). Two lecturers had expertise in Arabic language, while the other two were experts in Instructional Technology. The degree of relevance used for evaluation was rated as (1) Poor Match,

(2) Moderate Match, and (3) Perfect Match. All items obtained a content validity ratio of 1.0, indicating that the requirements for content validity were fulfilled. Therefore, all items in the instrument were deemed valid.

For questionnaire reliability, a pilot test was conducted among 44 lower secondary school students taking Arabic language. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of each construct. The results of the reliability analysis are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test

Construct	Numbers of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Active Participation	6	0.71
Sustained Interest	6	0.84
Critical Thinking	6	0.84
Application	6	0.74

Data Collection

To determine the population size of the study, a request was submitted to Education Department of Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur, through which the enrolment numbers of lower secondary students taking Arabic in Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan (SMK) were approved and provided. For the semi-government school, the population size was obtained from the Ministry of Education's official website.

The main instrument used to address the research question was a 32-item questionnaire distributed to lower secondary school students. The process of obtaining approval for questionnaire distribution involved three levels: approval from the Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM), followed by approval from the Education Department of Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur, and finally approval from each respective school. The questionnaire was distributed via an online link to ensure efficiency in data collection and accuracy in analysis.

Data Analysis

Inferential statistical analysis was conducted, whereby an independent samples t-test was employed to determine whether there were statistically significant differences in social media engagement for learning Arabic between the two types of curricula undertaken by lower secondary school students in Kuala Lumpur. The t-test was used to examine differences based on the collected data.

Initially, the questionnaire was developed based on four constructs derived from relevant literature, namely Active Participation, Sustained Interest, Critical Thinking, and Application. However, following hypothesis testing, the validity of each construct was further examined using exploratory factor analysis (EFA). The results of the EFA loaded the items into three distinct constructs, which subsequently affected the organisation of the analysis. The independent samples t-test was then refined and conducted using these three validated factors: Critical Cognitive, Social Interactive, and Active Language Use.

Results

The results of the independent samples t-test were used to answer the research question of this study. The analysis was conducted based on the 24 items in the questionnaire, with six items allocated to each of the four constructs derived from the literature review. A frequency-based Likert scale was used for each item, ranging from 1 (Never), 2 (Rarely), 3 (Sometimes), 4 (Often), to 5 (Always). A summary of the results is presented in Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2
Group Statistics for Social Media Engagement Based on School Curriculum

Construct	Curriculum	n	M	SD
Critical Cognitive	KBD	163	2.73	0.99
	KSSM	201	2.91	0.85
Social Interactive	KBD	163	2.29	0.89
	KSSM	201	2.36	0.87
Active Language Use	KBD	163	2.66	1.00
	KSSM	201	2.63	0.97

For the Critical Cognitive engagement, students from KSSM curriculum (M=2.91, SD=0.85) showed slightly higher engagement with comparison to students from KBD curriculum (M=2.73, SD=0.99). This result indicates slightly higher engagement in cognitive-based-activities among KSSM students which include maintaining focus, analysing and evaluating Arabic language content they engage with on social media.

For Social Interactive engagement, students from KSSM curriculum again showed slightly higher engagement (M=2.36, SD=0.87) compared to students from KBD curriculum (M=2.29, SD=0.89). This result suggests slightly higher interaction-based-activities among KSSM students, including commenting, sharing and discussing Arabic language content with other social media users.

For Active Language Use, both groups showed very similar means, with KSSM students reported 2.63 as the mean score (SD=0.97) and KBD students reported 2.66 as the mean score (SD=1.00). This result indicates the similar acts involving Arabic language practices and applications across social media and real-life settings.

Table 3
Results of Independent Samples t-Test

		Independent Samples t-Test								
		Levene/s Test for Equality of Variances			t-Test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Critical Cognitive	Equal variances assumed	7.717	.006	-1.833	362.000	.068	-0.17690	.09649	-0.3666	0.0128
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.804	319.925	.072	-0.17690	.09807	-0.3699	0.0161
Social Interactive	Equal variances assumed	0.150	.699	-.678	362.000	.498	-0.06264	.09238	-0.2443	0.1187
	Equal variances not assumed			-.677	343.957	.499	-0.06264	.09256	-0.2449	0.1197
Active Language Use	Equal variances assumed	0.902	.343	.271	362.000	.787	0.02805	.10351	-0.1754	0.2315
	Equal variances not assumed			.270	341.885	.787	0.02805	.10386	-0.1754	0.2315

The first pattern of social media engagement is Critical Cognitive. Equal variances are not assumed as the Levene's Test shown is ($p = .699$). The interpretation of the result showed no statistically significant difference, with $t(319.93) = -1.804$, $p = .072$. However, between KSSM and KBD, a slight difference can be seen, with the former showing a higher level of engagement than the latter.

The second pattern of social media engagement is Social Interactive. Equal variances can also be assumed as the Levene's test is ($p = .343$). The interpretation of the result also showed no statistically significant difference, with $t(362) = -.678$, $p = .498$. Similar levels of mean are also shown between KSSM and KBD students.

The third pattern of social media engagement is Active Language Use. Equal variances are also assumed with Levene's test showing ($p = .343$). The interpretation of the result also showed no statistically significant difference, with $t(362) = .271$, $p = .787$.

Discussions

Based on the results, the discussions are categorised based on the three validated patterns of engagement. In general, there is no statistically significant difference between the two types of curricula, KSSM and KBD, with all p -values for all three patterns exceeded the conventional alpha level of .05. Therefore, the hypothesis (H_1) is rejected.

The first pattern of engagement to be discussed is Critical Cognitive, where no statistically significant differences is reported between students following KSSM and KBD curricula. This result suggests that regardless of curriculum type, Arabic language remains a language that is commonly learned but not widely and critically discussed among students. Lack of language skills and vague instructional rules due to teachers' struggle in understanding the advancement of curriculum may be contributing factors (Abdul Ghani, 2020; Husaini et al., 2018). Low skills among educators in enhancing higher order thinking skills among students may also be a reason, related back with the Middle East traditional learning culture for Arabic language learning, where self-explorations among students are limited. As mentioned by Abdelwahab (2022) in his study, approaches to encourage students to participate actively through commenting, asking questions, doing reflections and communicating is essential to support students' active involvement. Mayasari et al. (2025) also supported the structured use of social media may enhance students' learning motivation.

The next pattern is Social Interactive, also reported no statistically significant differences between both curriculums. Curriculum type, basic or advanced they are, in general require support and encouragement from educators. This is aligned with the essence of Connectivism theory mentioned by Siemens (2005), where forming connections within the virtual realm is needed. For instance, tasks and activities using social media during Arabic language learning may allow students to be more familiar and open to online collaborations with other users. This is in line with the study by Usup and Purwaningsih (2024) and Sitorus et al. (2024), which further mentioned the potentials of social media platforms for interactive and collaborative learning. It is important to provide exposure and allow chances for the students to match the nature of social media with learning, which includes effective communication among social media users to enhance Arabic language learning journey. Aligning with the study by Goldman (2024), the mere use of social media for convenient purposes such as casual communication shall be shifted into a better maximised potential for Arabic language learning. Without proper guidance, students may only be exposed to the negative sides of social media such as concentration deficit and academic disruption, as mentioned by Alfatih et al. (2024).

The third pattern to discuss is Active Language Use. Similar to Social Interactive, this pattern also has a similar level of means between the two curricula. This may be due to reason mentioned in study by Abrori (2024), where time constraints in classroom limits the practical use of language. Active language use includes the real-life application of Arabic language skills such as writing, reading, speaking and listening. Social media allows these language skills to be actively practiced, given its nature for convenient use anywhere and anytime, inside and outside the classroom (Yadav, 2021). All these language aspects need a simplified and realistic approach such as language practice with native speakers, watching conversations of native speakers, and collaborative use with other social media user regardless language ability. As mentioned by Mayasari (2025), incorporating social media for learning is proven to boost students' motivation by 78%. Study by Ding and Ismail (2025) also supported TikTok as among the social media

platforms befitting this purpose. The similar levels of language use between learners regardless of curricula shows that there are no distinct differences in language practices among students, hence similar approaches are needed.

Conclusion

To conclude, this study has investigated the statistically significant differences for patterns for social media engagement between two different curricula offered for Arabic language lower secondary schools' students, namely KSSM and KBD. The findings analysed through independent samples t-test has revealed that there are no statistically significant differences for social media engagement for learning Arabic between KSSM and KBD, with regards to three patterns of engagement, which are critical cognitive, social interactive and active language use. Overall evaluation across the patterns of engagement also reported Social Interactive engagement recorded the lowest mean scores as compared to the other patterns of engagement. This indicates that students are more likely to personally engage with Arabic content through passive acts rather than open interactions.

These results provide insights that different types of curricula may not be an influencing aspect of social media engagement for learning Arabic. Hence, encouragement and empowerment of Arabic language may be performed similarly across these two curricula. Learning approaches and pedagogy may incorporate social media learning regardless of curricula they are in.

This study also reveals the significant role of educational institutions in empowering social media as complementary learning for Arabic language. Educators, content creators and policymakers shall work together in ensuring the maximised benefits and potentials to enhance critical cognitive engagement, social interactive engagement and active language use among KSSM and KBD students.

Limitations and Future Studies

Along with its contribution, there are also limitations within this study, which may require more extensive future research. As this study only included selected schools in Kuala Lumpur, the generalisation of the data may not be accurate to represent the lower secondary school student's community taking Arabic language. Hence, future research may explore other different states as well. In addition, the patterns of engagement may also be further explored through mixed-method approaches, where more specific patterns of engagement can be discovered. Interviews using open-ended questions can be conducted among lower secondary school students to understand the specific needs and preferences that they may have when learning Arabic language through social media. Inquiry-based-discussions within focus groups are also recommended in collecting a broader accumulated opinions on students' interactivity while engaging with Arabic language on social media. This information may allow a better tailored development of framework for social media as complementary learning.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Acknowledgment

We would like to extend heartiest appreciation to IIUM Imtiaz Scholarship for providing us the funds needed throughout the completion process of this article.

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