DANZARIA Nasir

Evaluation and Assessment in Islamic Studies Education Using Information Communication Technology in Nigerian Schools

DANZARIA Nasir

Education Resource Center, Ministry of Education Katsina State, Nigeria/ Department of Educational Foundations, Federal University Dutsin-ma, Katsina State, Nigeria

07037687228 - ndanzaria@yahoo.com

Abstract

The paper discusses evaluation and assessment in Islamic Studies education using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Nigerian schools. It discusses the concept of evaluation to education, measurement, testing and assessment, evaluation and assessment processes in Islamic studies education, functions of evaluation, evaluation and assessment in Islamic studies education using ICT and challenges of evaluation and assessment using ICT. The paper concluded that using ICT in evaluating and assessing Islamic studies education will support the teaching and learning of the subject. The paper recommends that Islamic studies teachers should support the method of teaching that is practical, activity-based, experiential and Information Technology (IT) supported and that ICT tools should be made available by the government to various schools across the nation to ensure its availability and usage.
Keywords: Evaluation, Assessment, ICT and Islamic studies.

Introduction

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) are tools with which modern society can be fundamentally built. Integrating ICT into teaching and learning processes, is, therefore, becoming inevitable, and it depends to a large extent on teacher's familiarity with ICT as learning tools. It is paramount on Islamic studies teachers to learn the use of ICT tools in teaching and learning process and as a means for evaluation and assessment, to cope with the demands and challenges of the modern society. Islamic studies teachers should note the need to meet the global challenges of instructional delivery using Information and Communication Technology (ICT), online resources and web application packages because they are very helpful in improving teacher's performances and resourcefulness. It was observed that many Islamic studies teachers who are teaching in both urban and rural schools were assessing and evaluating their students/subject through the traditional method of memorization and the use of paper and pencil. Many of the teachers were not even conversant with most of the ICT tools used in teaching and learning processes, such as the computer and internet services. The use of ICT in evaluation and assessment in Islamic studies will accelerate teaching and learning processes. That is why Dellit (n.d) argued that it is evident that the application of ICT in education would accelerate and improve learning on several fronts, from basic skills, problem-solving, information management, work habits, motivation, establishing life-long learning habits and concepts development.

The use of ICT by Islamic studies teachers in teaching and learning process and in particular, during evaluation and assessment, can assist them in receiving feedback from their students immediately which will assist in determining the worth or otherwise of the set goals and objectives of Islamic studies. This has been emphasized in (NERDC, 2012), that Islamic studies teachers can evaluate and assess their teaching and learning processes by obtaining feedback through emails, Facebook, Twitter, and Short Message Service (SMS) from their students, and

doing so, can allow them to be able to assess and evaluate the learners via ICT. The use of the ICT tools in teaching and learning reduces stress from the part of the teachers and serve as a motivator for student's learning. This is the views of Dole, Bloom & Kowalske (2015) as cited in Danzaria & Kangiwa (2018) who argued that, unless a new pedagogy that encompassed Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is put to use in our schools, students will increasingly continue to become bored, unmotivated and consequently, teachers become stressed during classwork. These new pedagogies that are expected to encompass ICT, requires changes in the interaction between students and their teachers, teaching and learning strategies, and evaluation and assessment. Islamic studies teachers should endeavour to adopt the use of ICT in evaluation and assessment which has no doubt come to stay in Nigeria. The adoption of Computer Based Test (CBT) for the entrance examination into higher institutions which is being organized by the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) in Nigeria, is a great measure in ensuring the use of ICT in evaluation and assessment of various subjects at our institutions of learning, Islamic studies inclusive. This paper examines evaluation and assessment in Islamic studies education in Nigerian schools using Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

The Concept of Evaluation about Education

There are so many definitions of evaluation. Grace (2010) defined evaluation as the process of establishing the extent to which the objectives of a programme have been achieved. Thus, evaluation is a judgemental procedure or process, aimed at decision making. Doll (1992) as cited in Grace (2010) also defined evaluation as a broad and continues effort to enquire into the effects of utilizing educational content and process to meet clearly with defined goals. Okam (1998) opined that evaluation is qualitative and is used as a collective term for those appraisal methods that do not depend on measurement, including qualitative and quantitative descriptions of pupil's behaviour and value judgment about the desirability of the behaviour.

Banks (1977) as cited in Okam (1998) regards evaluation as an aspect of instruction having the purpose of developing precise and objective information about the instructional process to:
   a. Assess the effectiveness of instruction;
   b. Determine the accomplishment of instructional goals;
   c. Provide feedback about the instructional process; and
   d. Provide information on the decisions to be taken about pupil's progress, instructional goals and curriculum changes.

Assessment, Measurement and Testing

Assessment and measurement are very often used interchangeably with evaluation. According to Grace (2010), assessment, measurement, testing and evaluation are closely related. Assessment is a process that shows whether changes have occurred in a student's behaviour. The changes revealed through the use of assessment is then given a value by quantifying the procedures that can be referred to as measurement. On the other hand, measurement is a means of determining whether a particular objective or competency have been achieved. It, therefore, refers to the determination of the actual educational outcomes and comparing them with intended outcomes as expressed in the objectives of a programme. Measurement gives a quantitative value to the change in student's behaviour. Testing refers to the use of instruments for measuring achievement. Testing and measurement are devices used in collecting information relevant for assessment and evaluation. Therefore, evaluation is the process of giving value judgement based on information obtained through testing and measurement.

Okam (1998) stated that in the strictest sense, evaluation is not synonymous with either assessment or measurement in the area of curriculum evaluation. 'Assessment' and 'Measurement' constitute part of the evaluation process; 'evaluation' is not necessarily 'measurement' or 'assessment'. In a simpler language, 'assessment' seeks to answer the

question as to whether the change has occurred in the learner as a result of teaching-learning situation and in which direction, while 'measurement' seeks to allocate scores in terms of numbers to the performance of a pupil, say 30%, 59%, 80% etc. Thus, measurements are quantitative descriptions of achievements in terms of test scores., while evaluation is a qualitative description of a pupil's behaviour. Therefore, evaluation is a term that is much more comprehensive and inclusive than either 'assessment' or 'measurement'.

Processes of Evaluation and Assessment in Islamic Studies Education

Education from the Islamic studies perspective is concerned with acquisition and development of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values intrinsic in the Islamic studies curriculum, and therefore, has to cope with the relevant application of a wide range of evaluation procedures to ensure the achievement of instructional objectives. According to NERDC (2012), an Islamic studies teacher should assess at regular intervals of students' progress to help improve the students' performance, and the assessment should involve the three domains of learning i.e cognitive, psychomotor, and effective to expose learners to new knowledge, skills, values and attitude. The knowledge, skills, values and attitudes acquired according to Kartowagiran and Maddini (2015) are what is going to be useful in the life of an individual student or as part of his society, and they involve the utilization of the learning outcome within and outside the classroom. The outcome may be about faith and worship that will guide students on their religious practices in daily life. Some of the processes involved in evaluating and assessing Islamic studies education include:

    a. Determination of instructional objectives which according to Okam (1998) is considered as the determination of what to be evaluated. This always has priority in the evaluation processes, it implies that no evaluation device should be selected until the purposes of the evaluation have been carefully defined.

    b. Selection of evaluation technique in the Islamic studies education in terms of the purposes to be served. The technique which is most suitable or appropriate for evaluating the aspect of pupil's behaviour should be selected for use, i.e in terms of accuracy and convenience of the technique. As to Okam (1998), no single evaluation technique is adequate for appraising pupil's progress towards all of the important outcomes of instruction, because most evaluation techniques are rather limited in scope, but can be used in terms of accuracy and convenience.

    c. Evaluating the result to reflect the components of cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. Evaluating the cognitive component can be done by analyzing and synthesizing the results of daily quizzes and tests. Evaluating the affective component can be done through observing the discipline, honesty, diligence and politeness of students in and out of the classroom. Evaluating the psychomotor component can be done by analyzing and grading students' progress report, port-folios and assignments (Kartowagiran & Maddini, 2015).

    d. Evaluating the impact of the instructional process component covering the internalization and implementation of religious values in the form of belief, attitude and behaviour (Kartowagiran & Maddini, 2015).

Functions of Evaluation

In education generally, evaluation and Assessment perform certain functions. According to (NTI/NCE/DLS,2000) evaluation and assessment perform the following functions.

    1. **Instructional functions:** These relate to those ways in which evaluation helps to improve the quality of activities in the classroom such as: Encouraging good study habit among students; increasing motivation of the students through feedback; provision of entry behaviour (previous knowledge) of the students; determining the extent of objectives attained; feedback on areas of students strength and weaknesses and; feedback on areas of teachers strength and weaknesses;

2. **Administrative functions:** These relate to those ways in which evaluation helps the school administration in making a decision which affects the whole school such as Classification of students in terms of their abilities and interest e.g Science, Technical, Art; Placement of students into Grades suited for their characteristics; Selection of persons and curriculum materials and; Awarding certificate to individuals.
3. **Guidance Functions:** These relate to those ways in which evaluation helps in guiding the learner in making a decision which includes: Vocational guidance; Diagnosis of students' learning difficulties to ensure his proper educational development; Helping students to solve social and personal problems.
4. **Research Functions:** These relate to how evaluation helps in determining the effectiveness or otherwise of methods and materials employed in a programme such as: Determining the effectiveness of instructional methods; Determining the effectiveness of instructional materials; Determining the effectiveness of a new curriculum; Determining the learner's characteristics and factors influencing learning.

For Eze (2016), the following are identified as functions of evaluation in different subjects, Islamic studies inclusive:

a. **Discovery:** Evaluation enables the teacher to discover the student's area of weaknesses and strengths. This aspect or function of evaluation brings to the teacher the knowledge of areas that requires greater concentration and more efforts.
b. **Absorption:** Evaluation also serves the purpose of employment and recruitment to different ministries and organizations which helps the employer to recruit the best among others. Also, evaluation gives room for the absorption of students into universities and other higher institutions through a process known as Post Universities Matriculation Examination (PUME).
c. **Informative:** The findings from the data gathered during the evaluation process provides useful information to examination bodies or agencies responsible for conducting examinations, which will facilitate decision making regarding the curriculum and its elements.
d. **Change:** The outcome of evaluation provides the basis for positive development and modification of the curriculum. This change provides a database of information regarding pedagogical processes to be used in the teaching and learning processes.
e. **Better ways of Learning:** Evaluation provides better ways of learning through showing student's productive pathway to learning, and hence, it ensures good guidance and counselling of students by the teachers.

Information Communication Technology (ICT) in Education

ICT stands for Information and Communication Technology. It involves all technologies used in the manipulation and communication of information concerned with the storage, retrieval, manipulation, and transmission of digital data. Computers are some of the gadgets of ICT and are widely used by teachers, administrators, parents, politicians, and the general public because they usually reduce the time needed to accomplish a given set of objectives (Reeves, 1998) as cited in Gill (2017). According to Reeves (1998) as cited in Gill (2017) computer-based cognitive tools such as databases, spreadsheets, communication software etc., have been intellectually developed to function as intellectual partners in promoting critical thinking and higher learning order. ICT roles in education cannot be overemphasized because they provide the learner with fast and searchable access to vast amounts of information. ICT also supports a broader range of educational objectives including independent learning, communication skills and collaboration with others (Hunt, 2004) as cited in Gill (2017). Idowu and Esere (2013) expatiated that ICT- driven education is an electronic mode of knowledge sharing and transmission, which may not necessarily involve physical contact between teacher and student. Children's understanding and learning can be assessed using technology by using various strategies and allows for continuous evaluation of the classroom lessons, Minstrell and Hunt

(2004) as cited in concept to the classroom (n.d). Dawes (2001) as cited in Ghavifekr, Kunjappan, Ramasamy & Anthony (2017) stated that new technologies (ICT) have the potential to upkeep education across the curriculum and deliver opportunities for efficient teacher-student communication in a variety of ways not possible before. According to Jenkins (1999) as cited in Gill (2017) ICT changes teaching and learning processes through its potential as a source of knowledge, a medium to transmit a medium content, a means of interaction and dialogue and provide flexibility to learners that are denied by traditional process and strategies of teaching and learning.

According to Danzaria and Kangiwa (2018), in Nigeria many programmes were introduced to improve digital learning, that is the use of Information and Communication Technology in the country at schools and colleges across the nation. Such programmes include (a) Digital Awareness Programme (DAF), which is a special intervention programme in Nigeria to address the digital information knowledge gap in the country, especially among the teeming youth. The strategy of this programme was meant to expose schools and colleges to Information and Communication (ICT) (b) School Knowledge Centers (SKC): The Universal Service Provision Fund (USPF) design the (KSC) project to promote the demand and adoption of ICT in public schools in Nigeria to create 21st-century skills. Teachers and students are trained on how to use ICT for teaching and learning with the objectives of increasing ICT literacy among students and teachers and to facilitate ICT application in teaching and learning (c) Schools Connect Nigeria and (d) School Access Programme (SAP).

Evaluation and Assessment in Islamic Studies Education Using ICT

There is a need for evaluation and assessment of what is taught in Islamic studies at various schools in Nigeria through using ICT. The use of ICT in evaluation and assessment in Islamic studies have been emphasized in the National Policy on Education (2013) where it was stated that to fully realize the goals of education and gain from its contributions to the national economy in Nigeria, the government shall take necessary measure among other things to ensure that teaching become practical, activity-based, experiential and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) supported.

Islamic studies curriculum in Nigeria is designed in such a way that students will get basic Islamic education that will help them to become ideal Muslims who will be useful in their community and to play their role in sustainable national development and to inculcate in them the habit of critical thinking. The curriculum is designed to suit the contemporary needs of Muslim children in a changing and developing Nigeria in the 21st century. Therefore, modern teaching resources and approaches should be used in Islamic studies to facilitate the effective implementation of the curriculum, such as software, web sites, electronics and television-based resources (NERDC, 2012). These modern teaching resources required the use of ICT tools in the evaluation and assessment processes that should be conducted in line with the stated instructional objectives.

The ICT tools comprise of computers – desktop and laptop, video devices, digital camera, digital photocopy machine, audio and video devices, DVD player, multimedia projector etc. Using these tools in Islamic studies will save teachers' and student's time and are friendly. That is why Lin (2018), opined that the use of educational technologies - ICT for student assessments and evaluation saves time, makes the learning process more comprehensive and friendly, offer fast feedback, among others.

Challenges of using ICT in Evaluation and Assessment

Using ICT in education generally posed some challenges in teaching-learning processes including evaluation and assessment especially to developing World. As to Rotherham and Willingham (2009), the first challenge is the cost involved in using ICT. A rich assessment goes beyond multiple-choice testing and includes measures that encourage greater creativity,

collaboration and show how students arrived at answers. Such measures, however, cost more money than policymakers have traditionally been willing to commit to assessment.

The second challenge is delivery challenges. Delivering these assessments in few settings is very hard because most of these assessments are technology-based, and therefore, ICT tools in schools will require a substantial upgrade where available while in some schools they need to be installed or provided. As to Idowu and Esere (2013), the challenges include:

a. Resistance to change from traditional pedagogical methods to more innovative, technology-based by academics and students;
b. Inadequate ICT infrastructure such as computer software and hardware bandwidth;
c. Inadequate ICT qualified personnel;
d. The cost of the equipment;
e. The political will on the part of government; and
f. Lack of necessary infrastructural facilities.

Conclusion

The paper is on evaluation and assessment in Islamic studies education using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Nigerian schools. It discusses the concept of evaluation, assessment, measurement and testing, processes of evaluation and assessment in Islamic studies education, functions of evaluation, evaluation and assessment of Islamic studies education using ICT and challenges of evaluation and assessment using ICT. It is hoped that using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the evaluation and assessment of Islamic Studies education will support the implementation of the National Policy on Education in ensuring that teaching has become practical, activity-based, experiential and Information Technology (IT) supported, and also to meet the demands of the Islamic studies curriculum in Nigeria which aimed at helping the students become ideal Muslims and to inculcate in them the habit of critical thinking and to suit the contemporary needs of Muslim children in a changing and developing Nigeria in the 21st century.

Recommendations

Based on what is discussed above, the following recommendations were offered:

a. Islamic studies teachers should support the government initiatives on the method of teaching that is practical, activity-based, experiential and Information Technology (IT) supported;
b. ICT tools should be made available by the government to various schools across the nation to ensure its availability and usage;
c. Islamic studies teachers should be given more training through workshops and seminars on the application of ICT in assessment and evaluation by either the government or non-governmental organizations.

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