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The Role of E-Learning in the Teaching and Learning of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

E-learning is a modern development and technological achievement in different areas of life. It is a phenomenon in which technological means are used to overcome the obstacles that prevent human being from reaching his educational and cultural goals. This paper looks into the concept of e-learning and its role and uses to both teachers and students of Arabic and Islamic Studies. The paper relies on descriptive research from survey on the relevance of e-learning in the teaching and learning process of Arabic and Islamic Studies. The study was carried out in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The population comprised of teachers and students of Arabic and Islamic Studies. Thus, a total of two hundred and fifty-eight (258) respondents were gathered and sampled using purposive sampling technique. The tool utilised to gather data was a five-point rating system. The researcher distributed copies of the five-point grading scale for structures. The Cronbach Alpha reliability formula was used to test the instrument's consistency and reliability, and the result was a reliability co-efficient of 0.76. The mean was used to examine the data. Findings revealed that e-learning among teachers and students of Arabic and Islamic Studies has been identified as an important factor that facilitate teaching and learning process of Arabic and Islamic Studies through the use of online discussion forum, virtual library, zoom cloud, quick mail block, video clips etc. The gap between knowledge acquisition and meaningful experienced are bridged. However, recommendations were made in relation to the unforeseen elements of technology.

Introduction

E-learning refers to the teaching and learning that occur with the use of computer. It is a term used for out classroom and in-classroom educational experiences via technology. According to Abdullahi (2013), e-learning comprises of all learning that occur in the computer. He refers to learning in the computer as online knowledge acquisition through CD-ROM. Some academics define e-learning as an online platform

for learning that occurs in a formal setting and makes use of a range of multi-media technologies (Al Rawash *et al*, 2021).

Computer software and hardware support this system either offline or online. In the view of Samri *et al.*, (2014), a personal computer is usually used for delivery training of computer-based learning related to e-learning. The coming of technology and its impact on teaching and learning has enhanced the role of teachers and also enhanced the active participation of students who process information from different sources.

Today, through the use of e-learning, learning activities are digital enabled together with its assessment in online learning. In online learning, Deliberate Learning Management System (DLMS) is now required in most of the higher institutions of learning. The founder of e-learning, Bernad Luskin, asserts that for e-learning to be successful, the letter "E" must be interpreted broadly. He determined that, in addition to the usual national meaning of "electronic," the letter "e" should also be read to imply "excising," "energetic," "enthusiastic," "emotional," "extended," "outstanding," and "educational" (Ogunbote and Keshinro, 2012).

In the view of Basu (2001), e-learning and technology is computer related technology used to process, manage, store and transmit data and thus, enhancing man's technical and social process. Examples of e-learning materials and tools include: Computers, compact discs, digital video discs, satellites communication, internet, telephone, cameral, electronic mails, virtual library, e-book, e-journal, CD-ROM/DVD, online database and web-based resources (Ogunsipe, 2012).

E-learning is a widely used, practical, and accepted teaching and learning method today. Nor Fariza *et al.*, (2010) claim that internet forums are frequently used to link people who typically share interests in order to enable them to share and exchange knowledge and ideas. They even go so far as to say that using the asynchronous nature of online discussion forums, the online forum as a component of e-learning is described as a web-based application that has been extensively used to bring processes of hypothesizing, purposeful discussion, reflection, creative thinking, persistence, and cooperation.

Literature Review

The Influence of Arabic Language on the Teaching and Learning of Islamic Studies

Islamic Studies is the study of Islam as a religion and way of life. It has been a subject of study for over ten centuries in Nigerian primary and secondary schools. It is also part of the liberal arts programme offered at undergraduate and post-graduate levels in Nigerian Universities for Centuries. Since Islamic primary sources are in Arabic Language, it explains why proficiency in the language becomes necessary to the proper understanding and competency in Islamic Studies discipline.

Arabic is the language of original Arabs who are the inhabitant of al-Jazirah, al Arabiyah (Abdus-Salam and Adetunji, 2022). As soon as Islam arrived in Nigeria, Arabic education began to take hold there. At that time, Arabic instruction took place in Madrasas (Qur'anic Schools), which were either housed in mosques, the homes of the teachers, or beneath trees where students would sit on mats or benches. In those schools, the Qur'an was the main textbook and the curriculum because, Muslims used Arabic language in all aspects of their ibadah (ritual/worship). In this manner, the teaching and learning of Arabic and Islamic Studies started in Nigeria with the introduction of Islam and through gradual development the twin subjects are absorbed into the educational system of the country (Adigun, 2007).

Muhammad (2009) asserts that the Qur'anic verses, which were memorized by rote in the houses of Arabic and Islamic Scholars, served as the foundation for the teaching of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Nigeria. Beginning with the Bagdad (Arabic Alphabets), the scholars read Qur'anic passages aloud while his students imitated him, helping them to memorize them. The goal of Arabic and Islamic education, which was gradually introduced into Northern Nigeria around the fourteenth century, was to help students memorize and be able to recite the Qur'an. The identification of alphabets and their corresponding sounds,

followed by the construction of syllables with vowels, and finally writing, are the next steps once an Islamic or Arabic scholar is pleased with his students' memorization of the verses of the Qur'an. The next step after completing this is to comprehend the significance of the Qur'an that students have memorized. To accomplish this, the Qur'an is translated for them. Other areas of instruction, such as Hadith, Fiqh, Arabic literature, consisting of Arabic grammar, poetry, and rhetoric, are incorporated in the learner's training at this stage of the Qur'anic verse translation process.

The high caliber of Arabic and Islamic Studies instruction and learning persisted, according to Fafunwa (1982), until the British arrived in Nigeria in the middle of the 19th century. Every Muslim, according to Lemu (1986), should learn to read, write, and speak Arabic because it is the official language of worship in Islam and the language in which the holy Qur'an was revealed. In fact, the history of Arabic education in the Islamic world, and especially in the Arab world has been connected to the history of the expansion of Islam, according to Adeyemi (2017). This is one of the explanations for why Nigeria's elementary Arabic schools, where Arabic and Islamic Studies are taught concurrently, are known as Qur'anic schools.

The knowledge of Arabic and Islamic Studies is so broad today because to the development of information and communication technology (ICT), where e-learning is the norm, that it can be thoroughly covered during classroom courses. This emphasized the value of e-learning, which is frequently utilized nowadays to link people who typically share interests in order to foster knowledge sharing, exchange of information and ideas via online discussion forum, virtual library, zoom cloud, quick mail block, video clips for knowledge acquisition.

The Role of E-Learning in the Teaching and Learning of Arabic and Islamic Studies

Around the world today, e-learning is one of the most important instruments that can be used to achieve educational, economic, social, political and cultural development. It cannot be divulged from the modern-day society. It has rapidly been brought to use in various areas of human endeavors. Abdullahi (2013) asserts that education, learning, and knowledge generation have all been ongoing activities from the dawn of time. Between the 11th and the 14th centuries, Arabic and Islamic studies were first taught and studied in Nigeria (Fafunwa, 1974). However, the number and caliber of the educational strategies and resources available at the time were extremely constrained. The development of information and communication technology (ICT) has contributed significantly to the teaching and learning processes in the modern world. It is impossible to overstate the value of e-learning in improving instruction. The teaching-learning process is a method for systematically arranging the teacher, the student, the curriculum, and other elements in order to achieve pre-established goals and objectives. In terms of e-learning, Abdullahi (2013) listed the following 10 benefits for general education;

- The removal of time restrictions on learning for both students and teachers.
- The removal of geographic restrictions because students can sign on from any location.
- Regular engagement becomes possible, allowing for intelligent and original dialogue.
- Improving group collaboration enabled by ICT
- Innovative pedagogical methods can be applied
- It offers quick education distribution to underprivileged communities.
- It provides education while managing family and career obligations.
- It improves the global scope of educational services (UNESCO, 2009).
- It enables exactly enough education for workers in organisations, at precisely the right time.
- It can be applied to projects like literacy and health programmes (UNESCO, 2009).
- It enables just-in-time and adequate personnel organisational training.
- It can be applied to projects like literacy and health programmes.

From the above general role of e-learning in education, the role of e-learning in the teaching and learning of Arabic and Islamic Studies can be summarized into the following:

- Both the teacher and the students of Arabic and Islamic Studies benefit from the application of e-learning. In the care of the learner, he or she organizes the whole learning exercise in need. For instance, it would be impossible to fully cover Arabic and Islamic Studies within the constraints of classroom instruction. With the help of e-learning and e-library resources, these restrictions can be expanded to include all topic areas in order to meet and pique the interest, appreciation, and curiosities of schoolchildren and students. Many teachers and students of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Nigeria now uses e-learning to acquire and broaden their horizon by widening their knowledge in various areas such as: Arabic Studies, Fiqh Studies, Hadith Studies, Qur'anic recitation, tajwid, Core Islamic Sciences, history and development, philosophy, psychology and sociology of Islam, Islamic ethics, study of tafsir (Qur'anic exegesis), Islamic law, Islamic jurisprudence, Islamic theology, feminism and Qur'anic Studies, gender studies in Islam, Islamic economical and finance, Islamic morals and contemporary world. Arabic poetry, literature, Arabic grammar, Contemporary Arabic Prose, Substitution Morphology, Rhetoric, Prosody etc.

All knowledge in the above areas are now acquire through the use of the internet, computers (desktop, laptop, sophisticated phones), and other modern communication gadgets and devices to accomplish the task of teaching and learning in Arabic and Islamic Studies. With the above information, e-learning plays a crucial role in Arabic and Islamic Studies as it is;

- More effectively provide access to specific Islamic concepts, Arabic concepts, theory, experiences, observation, and research where relevant tools are incorporated.
- Giving teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies the chance to observe firsthand the proper application of knowledge in teaching and learning, which will boost their self-assurance in applying these tools in their own practice.
- Attending to the demands of students whose learning styles and preferences favour interaction and studying online.
- Enhancing access to colleagues and subject-matter experts in order to lessen the isolation of Arabic and Islamic Studies professors and students, especially those who live in rural locations or are teaching the science of tajwid.
- By removing barriers related to distance and time, ensuring that different students and teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies have equal access to high-quality courses, content, learning, experiences, and instructions.
- Encouraging more Arabic and Islamic Studies instructors to participate in ongoing professional development.
- Giving students and teachers remote access to Islamic instruments through computers and networks, enabling them to put theory into practise and carry out research that they might otherwise be able to.
- Providing feature work with the strong abilities and proficiency in the convergence of media necessary to flourish in the workplace of the twenty-first century.

Learning the Qur'an online has become very popular in the recent years. Hundreds of teachers and thousands of students around the world have entered this field, especially after witnessing the world deadly epidemics that forced people to leave their homes, or locked up and restricted movement such as Corona Virus epidemic. Thereafter, students around the world turned to study the Qur'an online instead of going out.

Also, teaching Arabic online has also gained wide popularity for the ease of study with native Arabic speakers and with specialized teachers obtaining the highest degrees of education only through a Computer Screen from a room in learner's home without bothering or paying expensive costs. Most

teachers offer these programmes free in order to earn the favour of God. Also, it is in the message of the Prophet that "the best of you is the one who learners and teaches the Qur'an". As a result of this, many digital programmes have helped by allowing students and teachers to listen and view easily and to interact with each other. All that is needed is a computer and a good internet. Many Qur'anic learning and all learning related to Arabic and Islamic Studies can be recorded. That is, most lessons are recorded for convenient time to benefit from them later or forward it to other close friends or relations to benefit same. There are so many free Arabic and Islamic Courses online designed to teacher basic Arabic, Arabic grammar, poetry, basic Islamic knowledge and Muslim beliefs. Studying Islamic Studies online free, enable students across the world to learn the true and beautiful teachings of Islam from the comfort of one's home, as a result of experts around the world with vast knowledge of Arabic Language and Islamic Studies.

Statement of the Problem

The coming of ICT with the introduction of e-learning and their captivating features such as the ability to browse, send and receive messages, download and upload materials, online discussion forum, virtual library zoon cloud, blended learning etc. have underscored the need for both teachers and students of Arabic and Islamic Studies to obtain these values. The availability and easy access to internet has brought down the overall cost of obtaining a fully functional e-learning process. Unfortunately, in Nigeria, these privileges therein have been challenged by certain problems such as the lack of readily available and functional e-facilities and adequate power supply to keep these facilities running thereby hampering the efficient process of the teaching and learning of Arabic and Islamic Studies using e-learning among students and teachers of the twin subjects.

Purpose of the Study

The problem in Nigeria is that most students and teaches of Arabic and Islamic Studies seems not to understand the value and effect of using e-learning in the teaching and learning processes. This is the reason this study become necessary to unfold the benefit of e-learning in the teaching and learning of Arabic and Islamic Studies in Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

RQ 1: To what extent has e-learning helped in the teaching and learning of Arabic and Islamic Studies?
R Q 2: What are the problems encountered in the course of e-learning of Arabic and Islamic Studies?

Research Method

Researcher sued descriptive survey to conduct this study. The study was carried out in Nigerian institutions of learning. The population comprised of Students/Teachers who participated in the e-learning process of Arabic and Islamic Studies. A total of 258 respondents were sampled using purposive sampling technique. A five-rating scale was the instrument used for data collection. Copies of the five-point rating scale were distributed by the researcher. The reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach Alpha formula and it yielded reliability co-efficient of 0.76. Data collected was analyzed using n=total number of responses, mean score and standard deviation. Results presented in tables 1 and 2.

Results

Research Question 1

To what extent has e-learning helped teachers and students of Arabic and Islamic Studies?

Table 1: *Mean Responses of Teachers and Students of Arabic and Islamic Studies on the extent e-learning has help them in the teaching and learning of Arabic and Islamic Studies.*

S/N	Impact of E-learning on the teaching and learning of Arabic and Islamic Studies	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	Help students and teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies to work as a team by relating to each other through online discussion forum.	258	4.56	.78
2.	Most students have their questions on any topic answered online.	258	4.29	.9
3.	Most students access their capability while meeting with their colleagues from different parts of the world.	258	4.20	.90
4.	Most students retrieve online materials for their academic work.	258	4.29	1.08
5.	There are constant Whatsapp groups for students and teachers.	258	4.25	.86
6.	There are e-libraries to use online	258	4.49	.68
7.	Most students often used their handset, portable device or visit the cyber café to browse Arabic and Islamic Studies materials.	258	4.56	.78
8.	Most teachers in Arabic and Islamic Studies teaching use e-materials in their teachings strategies to impact knowledge of Tajwid and Qur'an and others.	258	4.49	.68
9.	Many students and teachers at home also use e-learning facilities to successfully equipped themselves and acquire higher knowledge in Arabic and Islamic Studies.	258	4.25	.86
10.	Most teachers send their assignment to students by e-mails and zoom cloud.	258	4.29	1.08
11.	Many teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies engage in Deliberate Learning Management System (DLMS).			
12.	Virtual library are readily available for the teaching and learning of Arabic and Islamic Studies.	258	4.56	.78
13.	Life lessons and experiences are gathered online to teach students how to stand firmly on the basic principles of Islam.	258	4.25	.86
14.	Teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies upload their course materials on the e-learning platform for the benefit of students.	258	4.49	.68
15.	e-learning is very effective in the teaching and learning of Arabic and Islamic Studies.	258	4.29	1.08

With mean responses ranging between 4.20 and 4.56, the data in table 1 above demonstrated that both students and teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies generally agreed that e-learning had a positive impact on teaching and learning of Arabic and Islamic Studies by making what is learned and taught in the classroom more meaningful. This shows that e-learning aided them in increasing the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

Research Question 2

What are the problems encountered in the course of e-learning of Arabic and Islamic Studies?

Table 2: *Mean Responses of Students and Teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies on the problems they encountered during e-learning.*

S/N	Impact of E-learning on the teaching and learning of Arabic and Islamic Studies	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	Most offices have inadequate e-learning facilities.	258	2.90	1.3
2.	Lack of constant internet services and power supply.	258	4.38	.83
3.	Inadequate funding of Arabic and Islamic Studies programmes.	258	3.30	1.2
4.	Most students don't have laptop or computer as they visit the cyber café to browse Arabic and Islamic Studies materials at their inconveniences	258	4.23	.89
5.	Lack of sufficient amount to buy data regularly	258	4.26	.97
6.	Most teachers have no access to the internet in their offices.	258	3.74	1.11
7.	There are insufficient readily available computers for Arabic and Islamic Studies programme.	258	3.59	1.34

Results in table 2 above demonstrated that both Arabic and Islamic Studies students and instructors agreed that all the criteria stated were issues and difficulties they faced when engaging in online Arabic and Islamic Studies. Inadequate e-learning capabilities in offices and lecture rooms, with a mean response of 2.90, was regarded as the least problem they experienced. However, lack of consistent internet access and power supply, with a mean response of 4.38, was seen as the most serious concern.

Conclusion

In Tertiary Institutions, Arabic and Islamic Studies are taught and learned via e-learning, which has been recognised as a significant technology. E-learning facilities that are adequate must be set up in order for Teachers and Students to gain the necessary skills and to increase productivity in teaching and learning. Students must have access to computers, the internet, and a power source in order to benefit fully from online courses in Arabic and Islamic studies.

Recommendations

- Most offices and lecture rooms need adequate e-learning facilities
- Constant internet services and power supply should be provided
- There should be adequate funding of Arabic and Islamic Studies programmes
- Students should be provided with laptops or computer as they visit the cyber café to browse Arabic and Islamic Studies materials at their inconveniences.
- There should be provision of sufficient amount to buy data regularly
- Teachers need to have access to the internet in their offices
- There should be sufficient readily available computers for Arabic and Islamic Studies programme.

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