

ISSN: 1119-7749

Vol. 5, No. 1, 2000

ADEDEJI  
نقائس

# Journal of The Nigerian Association of Teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies

Address: Dept. Of Curriculum Studies,  
University of Lagos,  
Akoka - Yaba.  
Nigeria.

NATAIS

ISSN 1119-7749

© JOURNAL OF THE NIGERIAN ASSOCIATION OF  
TEACHERS OF ARABIC AND ISLAMIC STUDIES

Address  
Department of Curriculum Studies  
University of Lagos, Akoka – Yaba  
Nigeria.

Vol. 5 No.1, May, 2000

Typesetting and Cover design  
By Muslih Bidmos  
B2 Highrise, Unilag, Akoka

Printed by:  
SHEBIOTIMO PUBLICATIONS  
72 Araromi Street, Ijebu-Ode, Nigeria

### SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Nigeria	₦ 250.00	Excluding postage
Africa	\$ 12.00	Including postage
Asia	\$ 12.00	Including postage
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### A NEW DISPENSATION.

This edition of NATAIS marks the beginning of a new era in the life of the Journal. The distinctive feature of the new dispensation is setting a standard to the level of a credible academic journal by means of featuring articles that are not only products of highly experienced researchers but that are also a manifestation of freshness, originality and significant contribution.

The new dispensation derives its impetus from the combination of the Globalization syndrome and the spirit of preparation for the new Millenium. Since Nigéria in this scenario can neither afford the luxury of teaching any subject just for its own sake nor stand the risk of remaining in the comity of consumer nations, the twin disciplines of Arabic and Islamic Studies must be redefined and be focused with a view to establishing their developmental relevance and competence. Thus, NATAIS is poised to articulate the mission and the vision of the twin disciplines of Arabic and Islamic Studies through well researched and duly assessed articles in response to the challenges of the new millenium.

**Dr. M. A. Bidmos**  
Editor - in - chief

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## **A Critical Examination Of The Relevance Of Instructional Materials to The Teaching And Learning Of Islamic Studies.**

***Luqman Lekan Adedeji***

### **Introduction.**

The task of Islamic education, according to Zaki, quoted in Balogun, is to introduce the full spectrum of knowledge to a person in a manner and with an attitude that keeps his or her fitra pure, seasoned and complemented.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, Islamic studies could be defined as the totality of learning experiences which centre on the relationship between man and his Creator, and between man and his fellow men. Islamic studies is equally seen as a medium for transforming and effecting national development and this justifies its necessity for all round development.

It is, therefore, not enough that a teacher knows the content of the subject but ability to transfer such to the cognitive level at which the learner operates. To facilitate the above, the curriculum is based on appropriate participative and exploratory method of teaching. This involves the use of instructional materials. The National Policy on Education (1981 Revised) stresses that instruction should be concept centred, activity based and work related. In essence, the development of manipulative skills of the learners requires the use of materials. Giving credence to the above, the humanistic approach to psychology (Allport, Mashow, Rogers, etc.) is of the view that children are capable of actively participating in, and influencing their own behaviour as they interact with the environment. The environment in this context refers to instructional materials, which simply defines as materials used in the process of instruction.

### **The Relevance of Instructional Materials.**

A teacher who teaches without any materials to assist him drive home his point, or engage his learners in any active participation, has not only contravened the National Policy, but really exerted his energy with hope of little effect. Richmond, quoted in Adeleye, puts the relevance more succinctly, thus,

They make learning more meaningful, focusing pupils interest and attention, stimulation of learning, encourage expression, help visualization and provision of a sensory contact with realities.<sup>2</sup>

Islamic studies, like any other subject, could not be effectively taught in abstraction. Adeleye, opines that "a good teacher of religious studies in general, and Islam in particular, should not teach any lesson without teaching materials". According to him, "doing this can be compared with a woman who prepares a delicious stew without salt in it".<sup>3</sup> In the same vein, a teacher of Islamic studies who uses instructional materials to supplement his teaching will help enhance quick and creative thinking, sharpens students imagination and thus help the learners to be spontaneous and enthusiastic. This subsequently removes rote learning, since the learners of Islamic studies are geared towards seeing, hearing, touching, feeling and experiencing. Lemu gives the summary of the importance as follows:

- (a) The making of some points clearer;



- (b) The imprinting on the student's mind a sort of visual image, and
- (c) Addition of variety to teacher's method and stimulation of learner's attention interest.<sup>4</sup>

However, there is no gain saying the fact that Allah does not require any material before He creates. His instrument lies within two letters "K + N (kun)" i.e. "Be!", and it will be. Having said this, Qur'an is fully in support of teaching with instructional materials, as exemplified by the following, among others: "And He taught Adam all the names (of everything), then He showed them to the angels and said. "Tell Me the names of these if you are truthful"<sup>5</sup>. One could infer from the above that real objects were shown to the Angels before Allah asked them to respond. Similarly, the story of Musa and Khidr narrated in Qur'an 18:60-82, the teacher (Khidr) passed the instruction to the learner (Musa), at each point with the use of instructional materials such as ship, boy and wall, which are real objects. In addition, Angel Jubril, instructs Maryam "Grieve not, your Lord has provided a water stream under you . . . shake the trunk of date-palm towards you . . . eat and drink and be glad"<sup>6</sup>. Lastly, "And your Lord taught the bees to build its cells in hills, on trees and in men's habitations"<sup>7</sup>.

Moreover, educational technology has changed the traditional roles of teachers through the acquisition and use of skills, resources and procedures for improving instruction. The value of educational technology lies in its ability to actively assist the learners, learn better, understand deeper, retain longer and apply more accurately what has been learnt, compared with other approaches. The relevance of instructional materials to the teaching and learning Islamic studies is inestimable, if it actively assist the learners to apply more accurately what has been learnt. This could be hinged on the fact that the content of Islamic studies is meant to be applied and internalized. According to Howard & Andrew, "the day when a teacher had only his voice and black board, chalk and large sets of books to aid him and his work has long passed".<sup>8</sup> Islamic studies teachers should therefore, respond to this new challenge.

#### Classification of Materials Suitable for Teaching Islamic Studies.

According to Adeleye, "Proper use of the media, can make the presentation of learning events more vivid, lively and interesting in a way to facilitate the mastery of the content".<sup>9</sup> In other words, reasons for using instructional materials include:

- i to reinforce verbal and visual messages;
- ii to focus attention;
- iii to motivate interest;
- iv to provide source of information and authority;
- v to save teacher's preparation time;
- vi to provide experiences not otherwise available, and
- vii to elucidate verbal concepts.

However, the materials include:

A. Non-Projected Materials: These are materials that need no projection. Such include pictures, maps, charts globes, posters, specimens, etc.

- i Pictures: These are pictorial materials which appeal to the sense of sight and

do not require light source for showing. They are non-projected visual materials which enhance understanding. They are readily available, easily applied and cheap to make; and no special machinery, or equipment is required for display. Suitable for topics like Salat, Hajj, etc.

- ii Charts: A chart is a combination of pictorial, graphic, numerical or verbal materials designed to present a clear visual summary of an important process, or a set of relationships, e.g. tabular charts; for topics like order of Salat, structure of the Qur'an, etc.
  - iii Audio-aids: These are teaching and learning devices that mostly appeal to the sense of hearing. They include records, record players and tape recorders. Islamic studies teacher will find audio-tapes most useful especially in the teaching of Quranic text, Adhan, Iqamah, etc.
  - iv Visual aids: These are teaching and learning devices that could be seen. They include real objects, maps, etc.
- B. Projected Materials: These are materials containing information which can be projected on the screen via electricity. They include films, slides, film-strips and transparencies, using their projectors.
- i. Audio-Visuals: The term refers to those instructional materials which provide learners with audio and visual experiences by appealing to the hearing and seeing senses at the same time. Suitable to teach topics like Hajj, ablution, Salat, battles, etc.
  - ii. Hardware: This is the classification of all machines or equipments used in the instructional process. They include: the projectors television sets, tape recorders, etc., and they are all helpful in the teaching and learning Islamic studies.
  - iii. Software: This classification consists of all materials used with the machines. They are the real carrier of knowledge or information. These include films (of the battles of Badr, Hud, etc.), tapes (where the Quranic chapters were recorded), and transparencies.

Meanwhile, an important beginning point in the use of non-projected materials is to specify the objectives of using them. This could be to teach simple facts, identification task, concepts, procedure or an attitude. Through guide study, questions could be generated to trigger off interesting discussions. Questions could be initiated by the learners or teacher. However, there are three stages which the use of materials should follow. Stage one is before the lesson, where the teacher provides the relevance of the materials to the lesson, conceives how to use them, the likely questions from the learners and a plan of how to tackle them.

Stage two involves the presentation of the lesson where the teacher uses the materials to illustrate, explain and clarify concepts, theories or principles. Here, the teacher assesses how the materials being used are influencing learners' reactions – attentiveness, eagerness, curiosity, as expression of understanding of the purpose which the materials serve.

The last stage is after the presentation, where the teacher reviews how far the materials



have been used effectively. Here the teacher assesses the extent to which the learners are able to answer questions based on the materials used.

#### Factors Guiding Selection of Materials

A medium of instruction must be selected on the basis of its potentials for implementing stated objectives. Therefore, a teacher of Islamic Studies, must take the following into consideration, when selecting materials:

- i. Since human beings learn through their senses, materials that appeal to one, or more of the senses must be selected;
- ii. Materials should suit the individual differences in learners;
- iii. The teacher should know the characteristics of the materials selected before using them, as well as the availability of required resources;
- iv. Accuracy of the content of the materials should be established, in terms of relevance to the topics, before use;
- v. Cost: the materials selected should be cost effective, i.e. is the item worth what it costs in terms of the educational product derivable from its use, or would some less expensive materials produce similar results?
- vi. Availability: some of the most suitable materials geared to the right level and within a reasonable cost may not be available when needed. The teacher, should, therefore, improvise in such a situation.
- vii. Technical Quality: is the technical quality acceptable, readable, or sound audible?

It should be noted that the use of instructional materials focuses on why, how and when we use them and the teachers are equipped with such orientation during their professional training. The dynamism of knowledge should spur a teacher acquaint himself with modern materials which will give Islamic studies a new outlook and relevance to the modern world. Muhammed contends that, 'the most frequently used instructional materials by the teachers were chalkboard, teacher's guide and text books'.<sup>10</sup> According to him, charts, maps, etc. were used once in a while. This does not portend a good image for the subject that requires the use of flannel board, film projector, tape recorder, radio and television, for instruction. Therefore, if the situation has to be redeemed, the Islamic studies teacher needs to recognize the fact that no aspect of the subject could be taught effectively in abstraction. Having said this, he needs to be creative and dedicated. A poet, quoted in Bidmos, aptly describes the role of a teacher vis-a-vis the progress of the individuals as well as that of a nation as follows:

"It is on his shoulders others rise to glory:

He is nothing but a ladder for climbing the mountain."<sup>11</sup>

#### Recommendations.

Meanwhile, the following recommendations could be useful to the teachers and policy makers.

- i. NATAIS, in collaboration with notable Islamic organizations should set up functional centres where relevant instructional materials could be designed, produced, evaluated stored and retrieved. Such centres should equally be set up in higher institutions.



- ii. Ministries of Education should organize workshops, seminars, etc. on the use of sophisticated instructional materials and production of less complex ones.
  - iii. Provision of extra allowance should be considered for teachers of Islamic studies, to enable them obtain the necessary materials like their counterparts in science. They should also be equipped with knowledge of setting up resource centres in their schools and provision of necessary materials.
  - iv. The teacher should consider the use of natural resources where available because nothing equals seeing, hearing, manipulating, feeling, smelling and tasting real things.
- Materials should be used as aids not as substitute for the teacher and conducive classroom environment should always be created before use.

#### Conclusions.

It has been pointed out in this paper that no aspect of Islamic studies be taught in abstraction. An Islamic studies teacher who teaches without any material to assist him drive home his point, engages in a futile exercise. This is because the content of the subject is meant to be applied and the use of instructional materials facilitates accurate application of what has been learnt.

The classification of instructional materials according to the paper, include visual materials, such as radio, record player, tape-recorded materials; audio-visual materials such as television, cinema, video, tape recorder and television.

The paper recommended among others that NATAIS, in collaboration with Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs in Nigeria, should set up functional centres where instructional materials could be designed, produced, evaluated stored and retrieved.

Lastly, the paper advised the teachers to make use of modern technology as a way of promoting the image of the subject and making it relevant in the new millennium.

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