

SUPPORTING MODERN TEACHING IN ISLAMIC SCHOOLS

Pedagogical Best Practice for Teachers

Edited by Ismail Hussein Amzat



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9 Enhancing Professionalism in Teaching Islamic Studies through Employment of Adequate Instructional Resources

Jamiu Abdur-Rafiu, U. A. Ajidagba and Yunus Aliyu

Introduction

Instructional resources (IR) constitute an integral aspect of instructional delivery. In the teaching of any given subject, a prospective teacher would require some aids that would be employed to facilitate his or her teaching. Thus, IR are referred to as teaching aids; these are materials and equipment that serve as vehicles which are channelled with ease to their destination. The instructional strategies usually employed by teachers—providing structured context, asking and responding to questions, arousing curiosity and giving information—have all been incorporated into programmes delivered by media ranging from books, charts and other visual materials to electronics, such as television projectors and computers.

Media can be defined as a unique presentation of modes which fulfil a unique psychological function or a combination of various elements, which results in a particular mode of communication. Educational media thus refers to all relevant materials utilised by a teacher during the instructional process to facilitate teaching and learning and for the purpose of making the contents of the instructions more practical and understandable (Ogbaji, 2017).

For effective instruction, there must be appropriate instructional media for a particular topic, which will provide a high degree of interest for both teachers and students. With the effective and appropriate use of instructional media, the students thought processes will develop and continue because this will bring students' interests into the lesson. By the use of these IR, the students' facility of learning will develop (Umar, 2010).

Islamic studies could be viewed as the totality of learning experiences which centre on the relationship between man and his Creator and between man and his fellow men. It is a medium for transforming and effecting national all-around development (Abdur-Rafiu, 2014). Islamic studies as a subject or course of study revolves around studying the principles and doctrines of the Islamic religion. It is a subject that is studied at all levels of education. However, every subject being taught at all levels has strategies, techniques and apparatuses suitable for its teaching.

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In addition, Kumar (2012) was of the view that the effectiveness of an educational process is not improved merely by the introduction of technology into it but rather a function of human skills of employing the technology, as well as the hardware and software components of technology. Kumar (2012) described the teacher as a system with four broad functions, as illustrated in the following diagram.

1. **Planning:** This implies the establishment of objectives, preparation of units and schedule of training, etc.
2. **Organising:** It connotes the arrangement of the learning resources, utilisation of IR, etc.
3. **Leading:** It includes motivation, encouragement and provision of stimuli to the students in the teaching-learning process.
4. **Controlling:** It revolves around assessment, feedback and regulation so as to realise the objectives optimally.

The aforementioned functions of a teacher are, however, germane to teacher professionalism. Hence, to enhance professionalism in teaching, teachers need to be conversant in these functions. An Islamic studies teacher needs to be acquainted with the knowledge, uses and significance of IR. It actively assists the learners to apply more accurately what has been learnt. It is against this backdrop that this study was carried out to expound on the role of IR in teaching and learning Islamic studies with a view towards the enhancement of professionalism in the subject.

Methodology

An analytical method was employed. Information was sourced from textbooks, empirical field studies and electronic sources.

Review of Related Literature

Concept of and Importance of IR

IR as a concept revolve around materials needed in the teaching-learning situation for the purpose of facilitating the situation and achieving the instructional objectives. More so, the concept has attracted the interests of various educationists who have expounded on its essence and essentials.

Amuzu (2018) noted that IR include people, events, places or materials that are used to enhance learning, usually by simplifying a difficult situation or making uninteresting learning attractive for learning. It could be noted from the foregoing facts that the spectrum of personnel, materials and facilities that are designed, arranged, adopted and applied during the teaching-learning situation in order to make the teaching interesting to the learner and facilitate the realisation of teaching objectives are referred to as

IR. A professional teacher, therefore, needs to be conversant in the resources that are suitable for the subject matter he or she teaches.

Adoption of IR in teaching has a profound effect on the performance of the teacher and the achievement of the pupils. This could be corroborated with the findings of various empirical studies. For instance, Eny, Djamiah, Haryanto, and Baso (2013) developed a Model of Creating Instructional Materials Based on the School Curriculum for Indonesian Secondary Schools. Their findings showed that there was correlation between the usage of instructional materials and students' academic performance. The study revealed that both teachers and students subscribed to the fact that appropriate instructional materials are good enough to be used in the teaching and learning process.

They also stressed that instructional materials which are based on the curriculum and students' needs may increase students' learning outcomes and obtain the purpose of the school curriculum. Instructional materials are the basic tools upon which the quality of education being provided to the children in schools is determined. They help in not only simplifying learning but also in making learning practical, effective and understandable to the learners, as well as helping the students to maintain a flexible classroom environment (Onyia, 2013). Perhaps this might be why Eny, Djamiah, Haryanto, and Baso (2013) concluded that IR used by the teachers constitute significant factors that influence good learning outcomes.

Adelodun and Asiru (2015) examined the role played by IR in enhancing students' performance in the English language. Their findings showed that there is a significant relationship between the use of instructional materials and the performance of high-achieving students in the English language. They, however, recommended that teachers should always make use of IR because they arouse students' attention during the instructional process. IR enhance the memory level of the students. Adelodun and Asiru (2015) emphasised that the talk-and-chalk method alone cannot lead to a successful pedagogy, and as such, the teacher needs to apply instructional media so as to stimulate the teaching-learning process.

Bisiriyu (2016) investigated instructional materials as correlates of students' academic performance in senior secondary schools. He found that students taught with instructional materials performed better than those taught without instructional materials. He posited that for successful implementation of any educational programme, there is a need for the provision of adequate IR, as IR give room for the extension of the range of experience available to learners, thereby making the learning experience richer.

In her study, Alabere (2017) evaluated the use of instructional materials in teaching English language as a second language among secondary school students. The study revealed that the performance of the secondary school students taught with the use of teaching materials was better than those taught without the use of instructional materials. Koech (2017) also studied IR used in teaching and learning in public pre-schools in Kenya. His

main recommendation was that there is a need to use a variety of IR that are cheaply available within the school environment. Ogbaji (2017), while assessing teachers' perceptions of the utilisation of instructional materials in teaching social studies, found that teachers perceive instructional materials as necessary for effective teaching and learning.

The use of IR is especially important and relevant because some topics that appear abstract would be concretised through the use of instructional media. Adoption of IR makes the teacher arouse many senses in learners and brings them into complete involvement in the learning situation. A multiple approach through hearing, seeing, touching, smelling and tasting makes for a more complete understanding of the lesson (Amuzu, 2018).

Classifications of IR

IR have been categorised into various categories. However, the five categories that have been adopted in this work are presented as follows:

1. **Audio Media:** These are IR that mostly appeal to the sense of hearing. Examples of these IR are programmes or software such as audiotapes, records (long or short play), on-the-air broadcasts from radio boxes, telephonic and mobile systems of communication and audio CDs (Abolade, 2004). Practically, in the present time, most especially with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, many institutions of learning are closed, and most institutions resorted to e-learning. Thus, lessons and lectures are recorded in the form of audio for the consumption of learners. Audio channels clarify and supplement the visuals (Kumar, 2012).
2. **Visual Media:** Are teaching and learning devices that mostly appeal to the sense of seeing only. They can be sub-categorised into projected and non-projected visuals. The projected visuals require electricity for projection—e.g., films, slides, transparencies using their projectors. The non-projected ones do not need a light source—e.g., pictures, maps, globes, posters, realia and so on. Visuals contribute more to learning than audio channels (Kumar, 2012).
3. **Audio-Visual Media:** This refers to those instructional materials which provide the students with the opportunity of seeing and hearing at the same time. For example, educational television and closed-circuit television. Audio-visual aids improve the quality of the message; they impart audio and visual dimensions (Kumar, 2012).
4. **Community Resources:** These are human and non-human resources that are within the reach of both teachers and learners. Examples of community resources for Islamic studies include *masjid* (mosques), *madaris* (Qur'anic schools) and other historic places.
5. **Resource Persons:** These are professionals and experts in their various disciplines. These include chief imams, veteran Islamic teachers, renowned educationists, administrators, etc. A resource person can be

invited into the classroom to come and give a lecture on any topic that is related to what the teacher has taught or will teach to his/her students. A resource person can be from an immediate environment of the student. In that case, the resource person is called a community resource person. If he or she comes from afar, he or she is simply called a resource person.

Principles Guiding the Selection and Effective Utilisation of IR in the Islamic Studies Classroom

According to Umar (2010), before selecting resources for a classroom presentation, there are some factors that are to be considered, such as subject matter or topic, instructional objective, suitability, content accuracy, availability, size of the class, costs, teachers' capability and, lastly, operating facilities:

1. **Subject Matter or Topic:** The first thing for a teacher of religious education to do is to be familiar with the scheme of work from where the topic to be taught will be taken.
2. **Instructional Objective/ Objective Specification:** The first thing is to find an answer to the question, "What is it that one is trying to achieve?" What one set out to achieve should be considered. That is, what do you hope to achieve by using the media/medium?
3. **Suitability/Optimum Fit:** Is the information contained in the media appropriate to the age, ability and characters of learners? One needs to consider the interest of the learners. No one instructional material is best for all purposes and at all times to all learners. So, choose instructional materials that are appropriate to instructional tasks and that can benefit as many learners as possible
4. **Content Accuracy:** The teacher needs to consider whether the information contained therein is correct or not. The content must be authentic, valid and should contain current information or the latest ideas.
5. **Technical Quality:** That is, how accurate is the hardware that contains the information it is supposed to bear. For instance, a picture to be used should be clear and visible. Likewise, the electrically operated teaching materials such as slides, radios, videos and television should ensure technical accuracy so as to facilitate the realisation of the instructional objectives.
6. **Availability:** The case of purchasing, borrowing or producing educational media is of topmost consideration. It will be unreasonable to select the media that are not within your reach. It is of no use selecting materials that are not available in your school or environment for either purchasing or borrowing. The teaching aids to be used by the teacher must be readily available.
7. **Size of the Class:** The number of learners in a class will determine to an extent the type of media to be utilised. If the learners are large in number, then bold visuals or projectors are to be used.

8. **Cost:** One needs to consider the cost vis-à-vis the utilisation benefit. The teacher should also consider his or her purse or that of the school.
9. **Teacher's Capability:** The teacher should ensure that he or she is capable of manipulating effectively the material or equipment selected for teaching.
10. **Operating Facilities:** There is a need to ensure that the facilities for operating the selected media for classroom instruction are available and functional.
11. **Duration of the Lesson:** The time allocated to a particular subject also determines which aid a teacher will choose. If the time allocated to the subject is too small, it may not be advisable for the teacher to use teaching aids that will require a longer period.
12. **School Location/Environmental Conditions/Constraints:** The location of the school is another important factor which determines the selection of IR. The reason is that there are some teaching aids which require the use of electricity, and where electricity is not available, it may be difficult to use such teaching aids.
13. **Multi-media Presentation:** Wise and creative use of a variety of media at different levels of lesson development can be effective in achieving various instructional objectives. This allows for a variety of learners to be reached easily. However, too many instructional media that are not well coordinated and methodologically presented can create confusion in the classroom.
14. **Preparation and Preview:** It is important for the teacher to prepare himself/herself well in advance if the instructional media must be effectively utilised.
15. **Evaluation:** Instructional media needs to be evaluated in terms of suitability to the objectives, appeal to the learners, cost-effectiveness and learner-achievement level. After the presentation, the teacher needs to review if the materials have been used effectively (Adedeji, 2000).

Selected Islamic Studies Topics and the Relevant IR

It is pertinent to note the following points when preparing for instructional media, as suggested by Kumar (2012):

- a. Simplified line drawings are more effective than shaded drawings and elaborate figures
- b. A visual should be made to scale in order to aid visual perception of relative sizes
- c. Colour, dramatic presentations, special effects and humour are good motivators to catch a learner's attention
- d. Action should be shown the way the learner would see it if he or she were actually there and doing the job
- e. Liberal use of titles, questions and other printed words can improve teaching effectiveness

- f. Printing and visual cueing direct the attention of the learner effectively
- g. The audio channel with commentary and sound effects, etc., should be used as an interjection on the pictorial channel rather than in a continuous form parallel to it
- h. Use of upper- and lower-case letters in running text and for cue points is better than writing all capitals
- i. Text on a computer screen should be big enough to be legible from two metres away
- j. Use boldface, easily readable type letters and colour

Once all the principles are considered before the Islamic studies teacher sets out for a lesson, it is not impossible that his/her lesson will be quite fruitful. Practical instances are however presented here.

Islamic studies in schools encompasses various branches and divisions. These are broadly categorised into the following:

- a. The Qur'an
- b. Hadith
- c. Tahdhib (Moral Teachings)
- d. Tawhid (Creeds)
- e. Fiqh (Jurisprudence)
- f. Mu'amalat (Human Transactions)
- g. Tarikh (Historical Development of Islam)

Thus, the appropriate IR for topics in each of these branches are illustrated in Table 9.1:

Improvisation of Instructional Materials

To improvise means to substitute for the real thing. It involves using locally available materials as substitutes for the original or factory-made ones. Substitutes are made from available materials when the real equipment is not available or too costly. Improvisation requires a grateful and dynamic teacher to improvise a lot of things. For instance, a battery is suitably substituted for electricity. With a paper machine technique, many instructional materials can be improvised. A lot of materials are available in our environment for improvisation. Some of these production materials are old newspaper type, balloon, x-ray films tracing paper, cardboard and plywood, cardboard, etc.

The objectives of improvisation are as follows:

- a. To make available materials that are not costly but effective
- b. To produce durable materials that can stand the test of time
- c. To ensure that learning is possible without the original instructional materials

Table 9.1 Branches and divisions of IR

<i>Parts/Section/ Branch/Content</i>	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Human and Material Resources for Teaching</i>
QUR'AN	Students should be able to - read Qur'anic surah correctly with Tajwid, - recite the Surah from memory, - render the translation of the Surah, - deduce the lessons contained in the Surah and - apply the lessons to daily life.	- Resource persons—e.g., Hafiz (professional Qur'anic memoriser), Qari' (professional Qur'anic reciter) - Audio media—e.g., tape recorder, cassettes, recorded recitations - Visual media—e.g., cardboard containing texts, flashcards, projectors, CDs - Audio-visual media—e.g., video, television programmes, computers - Realia—e.g., copies of the Glorious Qur'an
Hadith	Students should be able to - read Arabic text of a given Hadith, - identify difficult words and give their correct pronunciations, - memorise the Hadith, - enumerate the lessons contained in the hadith and - apply the lessons of the hadith to daily life.	- Human resources—a specialist in the field of Hadith - Audio media e.g., tape recorder, cassettes, recorded ahadith - Visual media—e.g., plastic boards, cardboard, flashcards - Audio-visual media—e.g., video, television programmes, computers - Realia—e.g., hadith textbooks, etc.

(Continued)

Table 9.1 (Continued)

Parts/Section/ Branch/Content	Objectives	Human and Material Resources for Teaching
TAHDAHIB (Moral Teachings)	Student should be able to - identify the meaning of certain Qur'anic verses and - identify the implications of those verses.	- Human resources—e.g., people with characters worthy of emulation in the community - Audio media—e.g., tape recorder, cassettes, recorded Qur'anic and ahadith excerpts on morals - Visual media—e.g., charts, posters, containing hints on morals, still pictures - Audio-visual media—e.g., video, television programmes, computers, dramatisation of the events portraying morals, demonstrations, television/videos - Realia—e.g., textbooks on morals
TAWHID	Students should be able to - state the existence of created things in which indicate the existence of the Creator and - identify the indications of the existence of Allah and His attributes as the Creator in the light of Al-Qur'an 56.57–56.62, etc.	- Human resources—e.g., specialists in the field of Tawhid - Audio media—e.g., tape recorder - Visual media—e.g., charts depicting some natural phenomenal (e.g., sun, moon, stars, rivers, mountains, rotation of the earth seasons) still pictures, film/film strips - Audio-visual media—e.g., video, television programmes, computers - Realia—e.g., textbooks on Tawhid
IBADAT (Worship)	Students should be able to - recall what <i>Ibadah</i> is. - describe what is a <i>rak'ah</i> in salat, - identify how to amend salat and - demonstrate how to replace such rak'ah.	- Human resources—e.g., jurists - Audio media—e.g., tape recorder - Visual media—e.g., charts, still pictures, film/film strips, calendars, programmed instruction - Audio-visual media—e.g., video, television programmes, computers, demonstration - Realia—e.g., textbooks on <i>Fiqh</i>

MU'MALAT (Human Transaction)

- Students should be able to
- explain what is meant by *Amanah* and
 - quote the meaning of Q.5 V.1 and the hadith.

- Human resources—e.g., jurists, scholars of Hadith, exegetes
- Audio media—e.g., tape recorder
- Visual media—e.g., Charts, still pictures, film/film strips, calendar etc.
- Audio-visual media—e.g., video, television programmes, computers, demonstration
- Realia—e.g., textbooks on *Fiqh*

TARIKH (HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT)

- Historical development of the life of the prophet and the leadership of the four orthodox caliphs
- The spread of Islam
- Contributions of Muslims to world civilisation

- Resources persons historian—e.g., historians
- Audio media—e.g., tape recorder
- Visual media—e.g., charts, slides still pictures, film/film strips about battles of badr, uhud and some Islamic conquests, calendars
- Audio-visual media—e.g., video, displays, drama/demonstration television programmes, computers, demonstrations
- Realia—e.g., textbooks on *Fiqh*

Importance of Improvisation

1. It will boost the ego or morale of the teacher and bring out the interesting skills in him or her.
2. It makes learning more realistic because it deals with things within the local environment. A resourceful teacher can use improvised materials to make teaching and learning more meaningful and remodel imported teaching aids to suit his or her local conditions.

Skills for Improvising IR

The skills for improvising IR as suggested by Lawal (2010) are as follow:

1. **Mechanical Manipulation:** This allows one to draw, sketch, cut, glaze and paint if need be.
2. **Reflective Thinking:** This allows one to think fast but critically about alternative resources in case of scarcity and their suitability.
3. **Gathering:** This puts one at an advantage to 'scout around' for relevant materials to be put together to produce improvised material.
4. **Locating Information:** This is a demonstration of currency as regards source(s) of information and materials that could be useful for prompt and easy development of the improvised teaching aids.
5. **Observation:** This concerns the alertness that could help to regularly discover the need for improvisation.
6. **Planning:** This concerns the ability to recognise the need for improvisation and work towards it systematically. It facilitates the successful production of the materials.
7. **Problem-Solving:** It is the "mother of all the skills." This is because it is that which encompasses all other skills. Good use of this skill increases the chances of producing useful and relevant improvised instructional materials.
8. **Organising:** This is closely related to the skill of planning. It depicts the teacher's ability to put everything being developed into proper shape for eventual use.
9. **Controlling Situation:** This is the skill that assists the teacher in managing a crisis situation that has to do with limited or scarce IR. With this skill, the teacher will not unnecessarily panic.

Summary of the Study (Novelty)

Professionalism requires the demonstration of high skills and expertise in a specific profession. Thus, professionalism in teaching Islamic studies would demand an Islamic studies teacher to be an embodiment of the wherewithal required to make teaching delivery efficient and effective. Part of these requisites is the knowledge of the principles guiding the selection and utilisation of relevant IR for teaching the subject matter.

It is on this premise that the present study was carried out. We are able to present, herein, the explanation of the essence and essentialness of IR, forms of IR, the principles guiding selection and utilisation of IR and some examples of relevant IR that could be adopted by Islamic studies teachers to enhance goal achievement and promote professionalism in teaching Islamic studies. The roles of IR have been extensively expounded upon globally, particularly by educationists and educational technologists. What makes the present study different and unique is its approach to explaining how directly IR and media could be applied to teaching Islamic studies.

The researchers are able to point out in this chapter that the notion that some aspects of religious studies, particularly Islamic studies, could be taught in abstraction should be disenchanted. Relevant IR ranging from audio, visuals, audio-visuals, print, projected, non-projected media, community resources and human resources are all resources that could be applied in teaching all aspects of Islamic studies. Some of the ways in which being cognizant of the essence of IR would improve the teaching performance of teachers in Islamic studies include the following:

- a. Effective utilisation of IR is vital for encouraging and facilitating students learning.
- b. Through the utilisation of IR, subject content can be more carefully selected and organised.
- c. Through the utilisation of IR, subject content can be delivered in a well-organised, consistent, specific and clear manner.
- d. The utilisation of IR can make instruction much more interesting and enjoyable.
- e. Effective utilisation of IR makes classrooms interactive and cooperative.

Conclusion

It has been revealed in the study that there is a profusion of IR, which can be used by Islamic studies teachers to enrich their teaching performance in Islamic studies. This would afford them considerable opportunities to make their teaching more effective and efficient. Some of the IR identified in the study includes audio, visual audio-visuals media, print media, chalk and chalkboard, graphic materials, realia, still pictures, models and mock-ups, audio media, overhead projectors, slide projectors and filmstrips projectors, film projector and video player/projector and multi-media presentation. An Islamic studies teacher is therefore expected to key into the principles elucidated herein so as to enhance professionalism in his or her teaching activities.

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