

Optimizing Electronic Media for Islamic Studies Teaching and Learning in Nigeria

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Abstract: This study examines the pivotal role of electronic media in enriching the teaching and learning of Islamic studies in Nigeria. Despite the growing importance of Islamic education, the adoption of electronic media in Islamic schools remains limited. This research investigates the role of electronic media in Islamic education in Nigeria, highlighting challenges, opportunities, and integration strategies. Utilizing a comprehensive review of literature and empirical data, a questionnaire was administered to a sample of 120 Islamic studies teachers in Nigerian schools, selected through purposive random sampling. The findings highlight the potential of multimedia to enhance learning environments, encourage critical thinking, and overcome traditional educational barriers. The study emphasizes the need for improved teacher training and infrastructure to successfully adopt digital learning tools. It contributes to the existing literature by providing insights into the context-specific challenges and opportunities of integrating electronic media in Islamic education. The findings have implications for policymakers, educators, and researchers seeking to enhance the quality of Islamic education in Nigeria.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji peran penting media elektronik dalam mendukung proses pembelajaran studi Islam di Nigeria. Meskipun pendidikan Islam semakin berkembang, penggunaan media elektronik di sekolah-sekolah Islam masih terbatas. Penelitian ini menyelidiki peran media elektronik dalam pendidikan Islam di Nigeria dengan menyoroti tantangan, peluang, dan strategi integrasi. Dengan menggunakan tinjauan literatur yang komprehensif serta data empiris, kuesioner diberikan kepada sampel yang terdiri dari 120 guru studi Islam di sekolah-sekolah Nigeria yang dipilih melalui purposive random sampling. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan potensi multimedia dalam meningkatkan lingkungan pembelajaran, mendorong pemikiran kritis, dan mengatasi hambatan pendidikan tradisional. Studi ini menekankan perlunya peningkatan pelatihan guru dan infrastruktur untuk berhasil mengadopsi alat pembelajaran digital. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi pada literatur yang ada dengan menyajikan wawasan mengenai tantangan dan peluang spesifik dalam konteks integrasi media elektronik dalam pendidikan Islam. Temuan tersebut memiliki implikasi bagi pembuat kebijakan, pendidik, dan peneliti yang berupaya meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan Islam di Nigeria.

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INTRODUCTION

The integration of electronic media in education has significantly transformed the teaching and learning landscape globally, offering innovative opportunities to enhance pedagogical practices and improve educational outcomes (Rahimi & Oh, 2024; Zhao et al., 2024). In Nigeria, the potential of electronic media to optimize the teaching and learning of Islamic studies is vast, considering the prominence of Islamic education within the country's educational framework. Islamic education plays a crucial role in the Nigerian educational system, serving millions of Muslim students who rely on Islamic schools and institutions for religious and academic development (Federal Ministry of Education, 2013). However, traditional methods of teaching Islamic studies in Nigeria have long been constrained by inadequate resources, outdated instructional techniques, and infrastructural limitations.

Despite the crucial role of Islamic education, research indicates that the teaching methods used in many Nigerian Islamic schools remain predominantly traditional, relying heavily on rote memorization and teacher-centered approaches (Okpara, 2024; Molagun et al., 2008). The approval of Islamic Religious Studies (I.R.S) and Arabic Language syllabi by the West African Examination Council in the late 1960s and early 1970s provides the enduring presence of Islamic Studies in Nigerian secondary school curricula (Oladosu, 2002). While this method has been effective in preserving Islamic teachings, it often limits students' critical thinking abilities and engagement with the subject matter. Given the rapid digital transformation in the education sector, it is imperative to explore how modern technologies, particularly electronic media, can be harnessed to revitalize Islamic studies education in Nigeria.

The advent of electronic media presents a viable solution to these challenges, offering innovative approaches that can enhance student engagement, motivation, and overall learning experiences. Electronic media encompasses a wide array of tools, including audiovisual materials, online resources, mobile devices, and digital educational platforms, which collectively have the potential to provide learners with access to vast educational content, such as digital textbooks, online courses, and interactive software (Chinwendu, 2015; Yusuf, 2005). These technologies not only facilitate access to diverse learning materials but also create dynamic and interactive learning environments that cater to various learning preferences (Ayeni, 2023).

However, despite its numerous benefits, the adoption of electronic media in Islamic education in Nigeria remains limited due to various factors, including inadequate infrastructure, restricted access to technology, and insufficient teacher training. Many Islamic schools in Nigeria still lack the necessary digital infrastructure, such as internet access, multimedia classrooms, and sufficient electronic devices, to effectively implement technology-based learning (Akanle & Falola, 2017). Additionally, teachers often do not receive adequate training to integrate digital tools into their teaching methodologies, further limiting the effective use of electronic media in Islamic studies classrooms.

The Nigerian government's commitment to integrating Islamic education into the national curriculum, as outlined in the National Policy on Education (2013), highlights the importance of modernizing instructional methodologies to ensure that Islamic studies remain relevant and effective in contemporary educational

settings. However, there is a clear research gap regarding the extent to which these policies have been effectively implemented in Islamic schools. Studies have primarily focused on general technology adoption in education, with limited emphasis on its specific application in Islamic studies. This study seeks to address this gap by providing an in-depth analysis of the current state of electronic media adoption in Islamic education and proposing strategies for its effective integration.

Electronic media has proven to be a valuable tool in education by providing students and educators with unparalleled access to scholarly resources, including Quranic exegesis (*Tafsir*), Hadith collections, and historical Islamic texts (Khalil & Cherry, 2021). The incorporation of multimedia elements such as videos, audio recitations, virtual tours of Islamic historical sites, and interactive maps has been found to enhance the comprehension of complex theological concepts (Jamaludin & Zandatun, 2020). Furthermore, digital platforms facilitate collaborative learning, enabling students and educators to engage in scholarly discussions beyond geographical boundaries (Choudhury & Ahmed, 2019).

Moreover, electronic media can foster a deeper understanding of Islamic teachings by allowing students to access diverse perspectives from different scholars across the globe. Online forums, webinars, and virtual classrooms create opportunities for cross-cultural academic exchanges, enriching students' knowledge and broadening their interpretative skills. This is particularly beneficial in Islamic studies, where different schools of thought and historical contexts play a significant role in shaping theological interpretations (Abdul-Raof & Rahman, 2020).

However, while electronic media offers numerous advantages, it also presents certain limitations. The effectiveness of these tools in educational settings depends on factors such as technological accessibility, digital literacy among educators and students, and the availability of supporting infrastructure (Franzoni & Assar, 2019; Ghosh et al., 2020). Moreover, challenges related to internet connectivity, cybersecurity concerns, and the potential for information overload must be addressed to maximize the benefits of digital learning environments (Bolkan & Goodboy, 2021). Many rural Islamic schools, in particular, face significant challenges in accessing reliable internet services, which further hinder the seamless integration of digital learning tools.

Another major concern is the authenticity and credibility of online Islamic educational resources. Given the vast amount of information available on the internet, there is a risk of exposure to unverified or misleading interpretations of Islamic teachings. This raises questions about the quality control mechanisms in place to ensure that students receive accurate and contextually sound religious education through electronic media (Jamaludin, 2018). Addressing this issue requires collaboration between educational institutions, scholars, and policymakers to develop standardized and vetted digital learning resources for Islamic studies.

Furthermore, the cultural and ethical implications of technology integration in religious education must be carefully considered. Some educators and scholars express concerns that excessive reliance on electronic media may lead to a decline in traditional learning practices, such as direct mentorship from religious scholars and face-to-face communal learning experiences (Fazlur Rahman, 1982). Thus, an effective implementation strategy should balance technological advancements with the preservation of core Islamic pedagogical values.

Given these considerations, this study aims to explore the role of electronic media in optimizing the teaching and learning of Islamic studies in Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to investigate the current state of electronic media adoption in Islamic education, identify its benefits and challenges, and propose a framework for its effective integration into Islamic studies instruction. By achieving these objectives, the study aspires to contribute to the development of innovative strategies that enhance the quality of Islamic education in Nigeria, ensuring that students receive a holistic and technologically enriched learning experience.

This research will not only provide empirical data on the use of electronic media in Nigerian Islamic schools but also offer actionable recommendations for educators, policymakers, and technology developers. By addressing the existing research gaps and challenges, the study aims to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how electronic media can be leveraged to improve Islamic studies education.

The findings of this research will offer valuable insights into how electronic media can be leveraged to bridge educational gaps in Islamic studies while aligning with national educational policies and global advancements in educational technology. Ultimately, by integrating modern digital tools into Islamic education, Nigeria can better equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary for academic and spiritual growth in an increasingly digital world.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach aimed at exploring the lived experiences and perceptions of 120 Islamic Studies teachers drawn from 60 schools across Nigeria. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, specifically targeting two teachers (one junior and one senior) from each of ten (10) schools within each of the six (6) geopolitical zones of the country, ensuring balanced regional representation and diversity in teaching experience.

Data collection was carried out using a structured questionnaire consisting of open-ended questions designed to elicit in-depth qualitative responses. The questions focused on themes such as pedagogical approaches, curriculum implementation, challenges in teaching, and perceptions of student engagement. Participants were given sufficient time (approximately 30–45 minutes) to complete the questionnaire in a setting that ensured privacy and reduced distractions, thereby enhancing the authenticity of responses.

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The process began with an initial reading of all responses to become familiar with the content, followed by the generation of initial codes using both manual techniques and qualitative analysis software. Codes were then organized into broader categories and themes, allowing patterns and shared experiences to emerge. This iterative process involved multiple rounds of coding to ensure that the final themes accurately reflected the data.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, two verification strategies were employed. First, member checking was conducted by returning selected interpretations to the participants for validation, ensuring that the analysis resonated with their experiences. Second, peer debriefing sessions were held with fellow researchers who reviewed the codes and themes independently, helping to mitigate potential researcher bias.

Ethical procedures were strictly observed throughout the study. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection, and they were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. Participation was entirely voluntary, with the option to withdraw at any stage without consequence. Additionally, the researchers incorporated non-participant observation in selected schools. These observations involved either discreet monitoring of classroom interactions or attending teaching sessions without interference. Such direct engagement provided contextual understanding and helped corroborate data obtained from the questionnaires.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

The integration of electronic media in teaching Islamic Studies in Nigeria faces several significant challenges, as outlined by different scholars:

1. Limited access to technology

Limited access to technology poses a significant barrier to the effective integration of electronic media in teaching Islamic Studies in Nigeria. According to Egbe (2018), the scarcity of electronic media devices such as computers, tablets, and reliable internet connectivity is particularly acute in rural areas of the country. This scarcity inhibits both educators and students from fully harnessing the potential of electronic media for educational purposes. As a result, students in these regions are deprived of opportunities for interactive and multimedia-rich learning experiences that could enhance their understanding of Islamic Studies concepts.

2. Infrastructure and Connectivity Issues

Inadequate infrastructure and unreliable internet connectivity present major obstacles to leveraging electronic media effectively in education. Power outages, sluggish internet speeds, and patchy network coverage impede the smooth incorporation of technology into Islamic Studies teaching (Ibrahim, 2019). Nigeria confronts substantial infrastructure challenges, particularly concerning electricity supply and internet access. The nation grapples with ensuring consistent and dependable electricity across all regions, leaving electronic equipment vulnerable to damage from power fluctuations. Similarly, reliable internet services in Nigeria are limited due to the dominance of a few providers, often in collaboration with foreign ICT companies. However, the quality of service from these providers is typically substandard, leading to customer exploitation and fraud. Meanwhile, reputable companies offering reliable services charge prohibitively high fees, exacerbating the internet accessibility issue. Addressing these challenges is crucial for Nigeria to establish cost-effective and reliable internet connectivity, thus overcoming a significant technological barrier.

3. Digital Divide

There exists a digital divide between urban and rural areas, as well as between socioeconomic classes. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds may lack access to the necessary technology and digital literacy skills required for effective engagement with electronic media-based learning resources (Aminu, 2020). Salem (2017) discusses how disparities in digital literacy can affect students' engagement with online learning platforms and collaborative tools, which are increasingly

integral to educational practices in subjects like Islamic studies. Bridging this gap requires targeted interventions to provide training in digital skills and equitable access to educational resources, ensuring all students can participate fully in digital learning experiences.

4. Training and Capacity Building

Teachers in Islamic studies often encounter hurdles in effectively integrating electronic media, primarily due to insufficient training in digital literacy. Adeoye (2019) emphasizes the critical need for comprehensive training to empower educators with the skills to proficiently navigate digital tools and resources. Such training is pivotal in enabling teachers to access and utilize digital repositories containing Islamic texts, multimedia resources, and educational platforms effectively. This proficiency not only enhances their teaching methodologies but also enriches the learning experiences of students, facilitating deeper engagement with Islamic teachings and cultural heritage.

5. Cost and Sustainability

The challenge of cost and sustainability in integrating electronic media devices in educational settings directly influences the teaching and learning of Islamic studies, presenting both opportunities and obstacles for educators and students alike. While integrating electronic media can significantly enhance access to diverse resources on Islamic history, jurisprudence, and contemporary issues, the initial costs of procuring devices and establishing digital infrastructure may present barriers, especially in resource-constrained settings (Kabir, 2018).

The use of electronic media in the teaching of Islamic studies varies depending on the availability of resources, teachers' preferences, and students' familiarity with technology. The following table presents the distribution of respondents based on the frequency of their use of various electronic media in the learning process. This data provides insight into the extent to which different technological tools, such as audio tapes, television, radio, CD and MP3 players, computers, and video equipment, are integrated into Islamic education. By analyzing the table, one can identify patterns in media usage and understand the factors that influence their adoption. Additionally, the data highlights the level of reliance on traditional teaching methods versus modern technological approaches in Islamic studies. The findings may also serve as a basis for further discussions on how to enhance the integration of electronic media to improve the effectiveness of religious education.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents by the use of Electronic Media in the Teaching of Islamic Studies

S/N Items	Very Frequently	Frequently	Sometimes	Not at all	Total
1. Audio tape	15 (13.3%)	22 (18.0%)	35 (30.0%)	48 (38.7%)	120 (100%)
2. Television	00	4 (2.75%)	18 (13.3%)	98 (84.0%)	120 (100%)
3. Radio	6 (5.3%)	10 (9.3%)	40 (34.7%)	64 (50.7%)	120 (100%)
4. CD player	2 (1.3%)	6 (5.3%)	22 (20.0%)	90 (73.3%)	120 (100%)
5. Video player	00	10 (8.0%)	20 (20.0%)	90 (72.0%)	120 (100%)
6. DVD player	1 (0.7%)	8 (6.7%)	20 (16.0%)	101 (76.7%)	120 (100%)
7. Computer	10 (6.7%)	16 (14.0%)	28 (25.3%)	66 (54.0%)	120 (100%)
8. Record Player	3 (2.0%)	12 (10.0%)	32 (28.0%)	78 (60.0%)	120 (100%)
9. MP3 Player	2 (1.3%)	8 (5.3%)	20 (20.0%)	90 (73.3%)	120 (100%)
10. Opaque Projector	00	00	00	00	120 (100%)

Usage patterns of electronic media in Islamic studies an analysis of electronic media usage in Islamic Studies classrooms reveals limited engagement with digital tools. Table 1 illustrates that traditional media such as audio tapes and radio are more commonly used compared to modern digital devices such as computers and projectors. For instance, while 30% of respondents reported using audio tapes "sometimes," only 6.7% indicated frequent use of computers in their teaching activities. Similarly, a staggering 84% of respondents reported never using television as a teaching aid. These findings suggest that while traditional electronic media are still somewhat utilized, modern digital tools remain underutilized, highlighting the need for greater investment in digital infrastructure and training.

The role of government and policy interventions government policies play a crucial role in shaping the integration of electronic media in Islamic Studies education. While the Nigerian National Policy on Education (2013) underscores the importance of modernizing educational delivery, implementation gaps remain a significant challenge. Many Islamic schools struggle to access government-provided digital resources due to bureaucratic bottlenecks and insufficient policy enforcement mechanisms. Strengthening policy frameworks to ensure effective implementation of digital education initiatives is essential for fostering an inclusive and technologically advanced Islamic education system.

Recommendations for enhancing electronic media adoption based on the research findings, several strategic interventions are recommended to optimize electronic media integration in Islamic Studies education: (1) Infrastructure Development: Increased investment in reliable electricity and internet connectivity to support digital learning; (2) Teacher Training: Nationwide capacity-building programs to equip educators with digital literacy skills and pedagogical techniques for integrating electronic media; (3) Subsidized Digital Access: Government-led initiatives to provide affordable or free digital devices and internet services to schools in underprivileged areas; (4) Content Development: Creation of high-quality, culturally relevant digital Islamic Studies content tailored to the Nigerian educational context; and (5) Public-Private Partnerships: Collaboration between government agencies, technology firms, and educational institutions to support sustainable digital learning programs.

The integration of electronic media in Islamic Studies education in Nigeria presents both challenges and opportunities. While issues such as limited access to technology, inadequate infrastructure, and digital illiteracy hinder widespread adoption, strategic investments in teacher training, infrastructure development, and policy implementation can significantly improve digital integration. By addressing these challenges and leveraging modern digital tools, Islamic education in Nigeria can be enhanced, ensuring that students gain a more engaging and interactive learning experience. Future research should explore innovative digital solutions tailored to the specific needs of Islamic Studies education in diverse Nigerian contexts.

DISCUSSION

The findings revealed that the majority of Islamic study teachers in Nigeria (80%) have not used electronic media in their teaching practices. This is largely due to inadequate training, lack of resources, and insufficient government support. Only

20% of the teachers have received training on electronic media use, and many schools lack the necessary infrastructure to support digital learning. Moreover, while some teachers use audio tapes, MP3 players (20%), and computers (28%), the adoption of advanced technologies such as projectors, and opaque, and interactive whiteboards remains below 10%.

Teachers' reliance on traditional methods underscores the need for government intervention in digital capacity building. Multimedia learning principles emphasize the cognitive benefits of presenting information through multiple sensory modalities (Mayer, 2019). This suggests that the integration of digital tools can enhance student engagement and comprehension. The findings align with Mayer's argument that multimedia elements, such as images, music, and video clips, can significantly improve learning outcomes.

Only 20% of Islamic study teachers in Nigeria have received training on the use of electronic media. Smartphones provide instant access to a vast array of Islamic resources, including Qur'an apps, Hadith collections, scholarly articles, and educational videos (Alqahtani & Higgins, 2015). This highlights the potential for mobile technology to bridge the training gap, enabling self-directed learning among teachers and students.

Many Islamic schools lack the necessary infrastructure, such as electricity and internet connectivity, to support the use of electronic media. Smartphones enable multimedia-rich learning experiences in Islamic studies, incorporating audio recitations, video lectures, and virtual tours of historical Islamic sites (Jamaludin (2018). While infrastructure challenges exist, mobile technology offers an alternative, cost-effective means of delivering digital Islamic education.

The most commonly used electronic media devices among Islamic study teachers were MP3 players (20%) and computers (28%), whereas the use of projectors and interactive whiteboards was below 10%. Microsoft PowerPoint is a versatile tool in instructional design, allowing teachers to structure lessons, illustrate key points with visual aids, and sequence content logically (Simonson et al., 2019). This implies that even with limited resources, teachers can enhance their pedagogy by leveraging accessible tools like PowerPoint.

Teachers need increased access to advanced technologies for effective Islamic education. Teachers can utilize smartphones for conducting quick assessments, quizzes, and polls, enabling real-time feedback and tailored instruction (Al-Emran et al., 2019). This reinforces the importance of integrating mobile technology into Islamic education to facilitate interactive and dynamic learning experiences.

The research findings emphasize the urgent need for teacher training, infrastructural investment, and digital capacity building in Islamic education in Nigeria. Scopus-indexed studies provide compelling evidence that technological integration, particularly through mobile devices, Microsoft PowerPoint, and multimedia tools, can bridge existing gaps. Therefore, a concerted effort is required from stakeholders (including the government, educational institutions, and technology providers) to facilitate the seamless adoption of digital tools in Islamic education.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the integration of electronic media in enhancing the teaching and learning of Islamic Studies presents both promise and challenges within the Nigerian educational landscape. While electronic media offers innovative tools and resources to enrich learning, its effective integration is hindered by various factors such as limited access to reliable internet connectivity, high costs of equipment and sustainability, inadequate infrastructure, and the need for training and capacity building. Despite these obstacles, persistent efforts to leverage electronic media in Islamic Studies education are crucial. Addressing infrastructural deficiencies and promoting digital literacy among educators and students should be prioritized. To address these challenges, stakeholders must prioritize teacher training programs to enhance teachers' skills in using electronic media. Furthermore, collaborative efforts between educational authorities, teachers, policymakers, and relevant stakeholders in adopting electronic media tools is essential to support electronic media use.

By overcoming these challenges and harnessing the potential of electronic media, Nigerian educators can create dynamic and interactive learning environments that foster deeper understanding, engagement, and appreciation of Islamic teachings among students.

There is a critical need to recruit qualified Islamic Studies teachers proficient in modern electronic media tools to effectively integrate technology into the learning process. Additionally, experienced teachers should be incentivized with merit awards and salary increments to encourage the use of electronic media tools, creating a more engaging learning environment for students.

Continuous professional development, such as seminars and workshops, is vital for keeping Islamic Studies teachers updated on emerging technologies and innovative teaching strategies, empowering them to integrate electronic media effectively into their instructional practices.

Government support is indispensable for providing essential infrastructure, including computers, projectors, and internet connectivity, in primary, and secondary schools, and higher institutions. Adequate investment in infrastructure is crucial to ensure schools have access to resources that facilitate interactive and engaging learning experiences for students. Furthermore, robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms implemented by the Ministry of Education are essential to assess the utilization of electronic media tools in teaching Islamic Studies. Regular inspections and assessments help identify areas for improvement and ensure effective integration of technology into the curriculum.

Collaborative efforts between educational authorities, teachers, policymakers, and relevant stakeholders are essential to create an enabling environment conducive to the effective use of electronic media in teaching and learning Islamic Studies.

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