

INNOVATION IN TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH IN THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ISLAMIC STUDIES IN EKITI STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Driving innovation is an important aspect of a successful teaching and learning in the universities. A lecturer who cannot engage in innovation cannot contribute to a meaningful growth in a given society. The paper examines the aims and objectives of Islamic Studies, the relevance of Islamic Studies in Nigeria, clarification of major concepts, different technological advancements in Nigeria and genesis of Islamic Studies in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Findings reveal that Islamic Studies is facing a lot of challenges in Ekiti State universities in term of low number of lecturers, inadequate instructional materials, enrollment of students and language barrier on the parts of students and lecturers. Our recommendations include constant use of internet to download the latest materials on Islamic Studies, employment of more qualified lecturers to teach Islamic Studies, locally provision of more teaching aids and other instructional materials, and creation of awareness to the parents, guardians and wards on the importance of Islamic Studies and the need to study it.

Keywords: Driving, Innovation, Sustainable, Growth, patronage

Introduction

Wherever Islam goes, the study of the rudiments of the religion follows it. The essence of this is to allow those who embrace the religion to practice it according to the tenets of the religion. The study of Islam has been in existence in Nigeria since the introduction of the religion in the country in the 11th century through trade (Badruddeen 2023). Some authors opine that the date is earlier than this. It started as a Qur'anic School in the different towns and villages in Nigeria. It graduated to Islamic Religious Knowledge in both primary and secondary schools. The current formal system of Islamic Studies in Nigeria Universities is dated back to 1961 with the introduction of B.A. Arabic and B.A. Islamic Studies in the University of Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Next to it was Ahmadu Bell University in 1963/1964 (Oniye 2024:3). Today, many universities across the length and breadth of the Nigeria have introduced Islamic Studies as part of their academic programmes (Bala 2023: 61). The major problem is that many private universities own by

non Muslims in Nigeria are not interested in the introduction of the programme. This may be as a result of religious differences or low patronage of the programme.

Research Methodology

The researcher made use of qualitative research methodology. Qualitative research consists of collecting and analyzing non-numerical data (Bhandari 2020). Information was collected from textbooks, journals, internets, handbooks, Dictionaries, Ḥadīth and Qur'ān. Critical analysis was made on our findings. Through this, the researcher was able to get the authentic information needed for this write up.

Aims and objectives of Islamic Studies

The aims and objectives of Islamic Studies in the public and private universities in Nigeria according to the National Universities Commission (2014: 221) include:

- Acquaintance of students with comprehensive descriptions of Islam as a religion and a way of life of a Muslim
- Make the students understand Islam as a culture and civilization of Islam
- Describing Islam to the students based on its original sources, especially the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth.
- Enable a rigorous scholarly to solve the problems of contemporary communities in Nigeria
- Placing Islam in the context of other world religious traditions that are available in Nigeria.

The learning outcome

The expected learning outcome of a graduate of Islamic Studies in Nigeria university as itemized by the National University commission (2014:221-222) include:

1. Provide students with adequate knowledge of Islam as a religion and total way of life in every ramification.
2. Deep knowledge of Islam as a culture and civilization of a Muslim.
3. To acquire the knowledge of the geneses of Islam and its sources such as Qur'ān, Ḥadīth and other sources of Islamic Law.
4. Acquisition of the knowledge of the contemporary Muslim Communities across the continents with special emphasis on Nigeria, being the study area.
5. Acquaintance with the knowledge of the tradition of Islam in relation with other world religious traditions with focus on the ones which are in existence in Nigeria.

6. A graduate of Islamic Studies is expected to be competent in identifying and solve different Islamic problems of current and if possible incoming generations of Muslim Communities, most especially, Nigeria.
7. The acquired knowledge should make him competent in comparing Islam with other religions in Nigeria. The most important of them in Nigeria are Christianity and Africa Traditional Religion.
8. He should be able to appreciate Islam as a religion like other world religions.
9. He should be able to develop the attitude of tolerance within and without Islam, especially in Nigeria that is a multi religious society.
10. Acquisition of positive inter-personal attitude and behaviour.
11. He should be morally sound and be a good ambassador of Islam.
12. His approach and methods to issue should be better than the people who are trained outside the university.

It is when a university graduate of Islam Studies is able to perform the outlined functions that he or she is recognized as a good scholar of Islamic Studies in his or her society. His or her contributions to the world in term of delivering lectures, writing of articles and solving contemporary world problems and other learning outcomes make him a good product of Islamic Studies.

The relevance of Islamic Studies in Nigeria

Today, Nigeria is facing a lot of challenges ranging from the farmers and herdsmen, kidnapping and assassination, political instability, insecurity leading to displacement of many Nigerians, increment of petroleum problem price crises, theft, rubbery, and religious intolerance, most especially among the Muslims and Christians who are the most popular religious adherents in the country. These call for their education in terms of studying Religious Studies, especially Christian Religious Studies and Islamic Studies in the Nigeria universities. The most unfortunate thing is that parents, guardians and their wards are no longer interested in this subject. They prefer other subjects whom they think are more lucrative than Islamic Studies. The reasons why they have to allow their children, especially the Muslims to study Islamic Studies in the tertiary institutions include the followings as enumerated by Eilafe institute (n.d.):

1. **Spiritual growth:** Through the studying of the sources of the Shari'ah like the Qur'an and the Şunnah, Al-Ijmā', Al-Qiyās and other sources of Islamic Law, a student of Islamic Studies gradually develops closeness to Allah and deepen his knowledge about the tenets of Islam and His relations with human beings and other creatures. Closeness to Allah as mentioned in many verses of the Qur'an includes Qur'an 2:286,

Qur'ān 50:16 and Qur'ān 96:19. The importance of closeness to Allah is emphasized in Ḥadīth 7405 of Sahih al-Bukhari where Allah says that He is more close to us than our closeness to Him (Sunnah.com).

2. **Guidance for his daily activities:** It moulds his activities to the extent that he is seen as a role model in his community. His way of life is linking to that of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) as it is contained in the Qur'ān 33:21 which says that the best example of human relation is in Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). Sending of guidance to man is also contained in Qur'ān 2:38. Five of the sent Prophets are known as Ulul 'Azm (Prophets of determination). They are Prophets Nuh (Noah), Musa (Moses), Ibrahim (Abraham), Isa (Jesus) and Muhammad (Yelvi, Adona and Sospita 2024:41).
3. **Understanding the core beliefs of Islam:** These are five pillars of Islam which are faith (Iman), prayer (As-Salat), fasting (sawm), alms given (Zakāt), and pilgrimage (Ḥajj) (Balogun and Faleem 2024: 316-327). These are contained in one Ḥadīth of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) as stated in the Sunnah. Com (n.d.). Al Qur'ān is regarded as the book of guidance (Qur'ān 2:2, 17:9).
4. **Community Building:** This is a means of contribution of one's quota to the development and growth of one's community. His active participation in Islamic activities of his community will erase some of the old beliefs such as 8 and 40 days burial ceremony especially in Yorubaland, Nigeria. Islam wants the Muslims to participate actively in one's community development. He should be the vanguard of good things and eschews all bad activities (Qur'ān 3:104).
5. **Cultural and Historical appreciation:** Islamic Studies opens one's eyes and mind to the contribution of Islam in the various disciplines and fields of Islam. It tells the Muslims about the culture of Islam which in most cases are derived from the Islamic Law. Different motivating stories and reasons for the revelation of certain chapters and verses of the Qur'ān are even narrated.
6. **Interfaith Dialogue:** This is very important as far as Nigeria is concerned where we have two major opposing religions-Islam and Christianity. Their opposition to each other is mostly recorded during election. Since Nigeria is a multi-religious society, his dialogue with them can reduce interfaith crises in Nigeria.
7. **Ethical conduct:** Islamic Studies places a lot of importance to the conduct and behaviour of Islamic Studies graduates wherever they are. What a person that is not in the discipline would do that would not attract criticism cannot be done by him. The discipline makes him an embodiment of good conduct.
8. **Social Justice Advocacy:** The discipline trains him to be just in all ramifications to himself, the Muslims and everybody in the society. That is why the position of

sensitive responsibility is entrusted to the person in that discipline. The most important of this is the safekeeping of their money.

9. **Community Building:** whenever the society becomes rotten, the specialist in the field of Islamic Studies would be called upon to come and help them savage it.

Clarification of major concepts

Innovation

The Merriam Webster Dictionary (n.d.) sees innovation as a new idea, method, and device. Jain (2023a) says that innovation is a process of about new ideas, methods, products, services, or solutions that have sufficiently great positive effects and value. He opines that innovation is driven multiple factors such as curiosity, creativity, and the desire for development. He asserts that innovation can happen in different ways and sectors such as in business, science, technology, social sectors, or public services. The outcome of innovation includes economic growth, social progress, improved quality of life, and sustainable in all ramifications in a given society. He itemizes the followings as the most important components of innovation.

1. **Creativity and ideas:** Creativity is the ability to generate new ideas or solution to a given problem in the sector that one belongs. It can happen in the academic or non academic sector. It is an important instrument for effective teaching and learning, especially in the developing economy. The bringing and acceptance of new ideas lead to rapid growth of a given country.
2. **Culture of innovation:** Culture according to Oxford Learner's Dictionaries (n.d.) includes customs and beliefs, art, way of life and social organization of a particular people or society. jain (2023a) states that the culture of innovation consist of values, attitudes, and behaviour that promote a lot of things such as curiosity, taking of risks on a particular issue, collaboration with other people, and experimental on a given matter. Allowing the culture of innovation in a given establishment or country paves way for rapid growth and advancement. It is a good tool for academic development in the Nigerian universities.
3. **Resources and infrastructure:** The provision of adequate resources in kind and cash by the concern sector are essential ingredients for innovation.
4. **Leadership and vision:** Good and visionary leadership is very essential for innovation. A leader needs to provide enabling environment for innovation. The leader should not kill the morale of an innovator. All forms of encouragement should be given to him.
5. **Feedback and adaptation:** Feedback is an essential issue in innovation. It can come from the students, management, parents or guardian. It encourages the concerned

lecturer to engage in additional positive innovation. The innovation has to be accepted by the leadership otherwise it would discourage the concerned lecturer.

6. **Effective risk management:** Innovation involves a lot of risks and uncertainty. If it is successful, the concerned person should be praised. If otherwise, he should not be condemned but encouraged to try again.

Technology

Technology according to Collins Dictionary (n.d.) is the methods, systems, and devices which are the result of scientific knowledge that people are using for practical purposes. It is a branch of knowledge that associates with the creation and use of technical method, instrument, or process and their connection with life, society, and the environment. The inferent is drawn from different subjects like industrial arts, engineering, applied science and pure science. Merriam Webster Dictionary (n.d.) sees it as a manner of accomplishing a task that a person is facing by using technical processes, methods, or knowledge. It is method, system, or devices which problems are solved in Islamic Studies. However, before this method can be used, the scholar concerned must have discovered that there is no solution to such a problem in the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. The use of technological innovation can be categorized under Al-Qiyās (Analogical Deduction) and to some extent Al-Ijmā' (The Consensus of Opinion).

Types of Technology

There are different types of technology depending on historical invention and application and the type of problem that each of them solves. These include mechanical technology, medical technology, industrial and manufacturing technologies, and a host of others. Each of them solves a problem (Study.com).

Characteristics of Innovation

Jain (2023b) identifies the following importance of technological innovation:

1. **Improves quality of life:** It improves the quality of life of an individual in particular and the society at large. It also improves teaching and learning in a given institution of higher learning.
2. **Economic Growth and Competitiveness:** It is a major driver of economic growth and competitiveness in a given society.
3. **Enhance Efficiency and Productivity:** It drives improvements in one's efficiency and productivity in teaching and learning activities.
4. **Addressing Social Challenges:** It plays a very important role in addressing complex societal challenges of which academic institutions are part and parcel.

5. **Scientific and Technological Advancement:** It drives different discoveries that enable researchers to have breakthroughs and increase progress in various field such as Islamic Studies and many other programmes in the universities.
6. **User Empowerment and Engagement:** It empowers individuals and increases the experiences of the concerned people.
7. **Sustainable Development:** Technological innovation is very important in achieving sustainable development in a given goal.

Growth

Growth according to Cambridge Dictionary (n.d.) is the process of developing or increasing in size. Studocu (n.d.) itemizes different characteristic of growth to include the followings:

1. It follows a particular order.
2. It is gradual and continuous process.
3. The rate varies from an individual to the other.
4. It is influenced by a lot of factors such as generic, environmental conditions, nutrition, physical health, emotional well-being and social interactions.

Different technological advancement in Islamic Studies

1. Using of internet to acquire information for teaching and learning of Islamic Studies.
2. Writing of textbooks and journals.
3. Using of mass media to source information.
4. Improvising instructional materials for teaching and learning of Islamic Studies.
5. Training and retraining of lecturers of Islamic Studies. Aside the university in which one belongs, Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) has taken over the responsibility of training interested lecturers to Doctor of Philosophy level with adequate money given to them in tranches. The body do sponsor lecturers to conferences, home and abroad.
6. Provision of laptops and digital display devices.
7. Practical demonstration of Islamic injunctions.
8. Addition of important Islamic principles.
9. Designation of certain buildings for the study of Islamic Studies.
10. Gathering and systemic teaching and learning of Islamic Studies.
11. Graduation ceremony for motivation of people to learn the subject.

Geneses of Islamic Studies in universities in Ekiti State

Ekiti State is one of the 36 states in Nigeria. It was created in 1996 (Balogun 2025: 431).

There are six major universities in the State. These are:

1. Ekiti State Univerity, Ado Ekiti (EKSU).
2. National Open University, Ado Ekiti Study Centre

3. Bamidele Olomilua University of Education, Science and Technology, Ikere Ekiti (BOUESTI).
4. Afe Babalola University, Ado Ekiti (ABUAD).
5. Federal University of Oye Ekiti (FUOYE).
6. Federal University of Technology and Environmental Sciences (FUTES), Iyin Ekiti.

At present, numbers 1-3 of these universities are offering Islamic Studies as a programme.

Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti (EKSU)

The Ekiti State University was established as Obafemi Awolowo University in February, 1982 and formally inaugurated on March 30, 1982. By 1985, its name was changed to Ondo State University, Ado Ekiti and re-changed to University of Ado Ekiti in November, 1999. It was changed to Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti in 2011 (Ekiti State University n.d., Babatola 2016).

. Initially, Islamic Studies programme did not stand alone when the Religious Studies unit was created in 1983 in the University. As at then, the University had the Department of Religious Studies and Philosophy. Students had the option of studying Religious Studies or Philosophy or combining them together. By 1986, Religious Studies and Philosophy were made different Departments. The Department of Religious Studies started running undergraduate degree programme in Religious Studies alone. Later, four different programmes were introduced in the Department. These were Religious Studies, Christian Religious Studies, Arabic and Islamic Studies, and African Traditional Religion. At present, the Department is running three major programmes. These are B.A. Christian Religious Studies, B.A. Arabic Studies, and B. A. Islamic Studies (Faculty of Arts, Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti n.d.). The university has produced many graduates up to Doctor of Philosophy level in Islamic Studies. Some of those who obtained their Doctor of Philosophy in Islamic Studies in the University are Professor Raheem Adejoro Mustapha who is the current Director of the National Open University, Ado Ekiti Study Centre and the present King of Afin Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria, Dr. Makajuola Akande Kareem who is the present Commissioner for Regional Development and Intergovernmental Affairs in Ekiti State, Nigeria, Dr. Miftau Olusola Bello who is a Senior Lecturer in the Department, Dr. Tajudeen Makaju Faleemu who is a Lecturer 1 in the Department and the researcher, Dr. Yisa Olorunda Balogun who is an Associate Professor in the Department of Liberal Arts at Bamidele Olomilua University of Education, Science and Technology, Ikere Ekiti (BOUESTI), Nigeria.

National Open University, Ado Ekiti Study Centre

The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) was established in 1983. It currently has 108 Study Centres across the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria as well as the Federal Capital

territory, Abuja (National Open University of Nigeria n.d.). It is stated in the Faculty of Arts, second edition of undergraduate students' Handbook for 2022-2027 that the University operates open and distance learning education system. B.A. Islamic Studies programme was introduced in the University in 2004 (National Open University of Nigeria 1 and 244) and Ado Ekiti Study Centre started in 2008 and Dr. (now) Prof. Raheem Adejoro Mustapha as its pioneer Director. The University has only recorded two undergraduate and 1 at master level since inception in Ekiti State's Study Centre.

Bamidele Olomilua University of Education, Science and Technology, Ikere Ekiti (BOUESTI)

The former College of Education, Ikere Ekiti, was upgraded to a fully fledged University on October 16, 2020. The National University Commission approved (NUC) that the University should start with 45 degree programmes on March 31, 2021. These programmes excluded Islamic Studies. The maiden matriculation ceremony of the University was held on October 6, 2021. The University Commission approved additional 33 programmes which include B.A. Islamic Studies to the University in June, 2023, bringing the total number of programmes approved for the University to 78. Islamic Studies was placed in the Department of Liberal Arts including B.A. History and Internal Studies, and B.A. Religious Studies. The University was ranked as the most outstanding University of Education in Africa on March 24, 2023 (Bamidele Olomilua University of Education, Science and Technology, Ikere Ekiti, n.d.). The award was given at the University of Rwanda, Kigali by Global Skill Hub, United Kingdom, Lion Outreach, United States and Africa Project Against Suicide (Johnson 2023). Currently, there are five full time lecturers and three students for the programme. One is in part one and other two are in part two. The low number of students for the programme may be as a result of the newness of it and lack of the awareness of the programme in the institution. The university celebrated its first convocation ceremony on Saturday, March 8, 2025.

Findings

There are no adequate lecturers for Islamic Studies programme in the two of the three universities that are offering Islamic Studies as a programme in Ekiti State. We have just five full time lecturers for Islamic Studies at Bamidele Olomilua University of Education, Science and Technology, Ikere Ekiti and six for undergraduates and postgraduate students at Ekiti State University, Ado Ekiti. The National Open University is across the length and breadth of Nigeria. It has enough lecturers.

The instructional materials, multimedia and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in EKSU and BOUESTI are not enough. A lot of useful textbooks, journals, laboratories, films, recordings, charts designs, and other forms of multimedia could not be found in the institutions. The whole world has been digitalized through the use of Information

Communication Technology (Muhammed, Ahmad and Imam 2021). The lecturers and students have to rely in most cases on internet for necessary and current information on Islamic Studies which are not enough in the institutions. Where available, they are confined to certain areas of the institutions. The case is different in the National Open University whereby both lecturers and students make effective use of internet and other materials. Low enrollment of students in the institutions. It could be said that many students are not in Bamidele Olumilua University of Education, Science and Technology, Ikere Ekiti because of its newness. Ekiti State University is an old University yet the institution is recording low enrollment of students yearly. Likewise the National Open University, Ado Ekiti Branch. The low attention given to Islamic Studies by both Muslims and non Muslims has actually affected the enrollment of candidates to the programme (Adenigba and Hassan 2023:56). Many parents, guardians and wards are not interested in studying Islamic Studies. They prefer other programmes which they think are more lucrative than Islamic Studies (Lawal and Solarin 2022: 105). Such programmes include medicine, engineering courses and accounting.

Lack of interest of those in the position of authority to encourage the study of the programme. This is more common to the people of the opposing religion who are in the position of authority.

The education of the parents, guardians and wards on the importance of Islamic Studies is yet to yield fruitful results. It is unfortunate that most of the Muslim leaders in Ekiti have no children who studied or are studying Islamic Studies at the higher institution level.

The impress that is being given to the Head of Department where this programme resides is inadequate to purchase necessary materials for the programme.

Many of the lecturers and students have language challenge. A lot of them do not understand Arabic language. They cannot consult books and other instructional materials written in Arabic language for information. This has prevented them from getting information from those materials. The same thing is applicable to English language (Abubakar, Nafees, Dorlor and Aji 2023: 59; Musa, Umar, Ishiaku and Labbo 2018: 378-379). However, this is far better than the former. Those who understand the two together are very few.

Inadequate teaching methodology of a lecturer may affect the rate of absorption of his course by the students. It can also cause undue wastage of time and lack of interest in the cause by the students. Application of modern and adequate methods enhance and influence their positive performance in his or her course (Muammad (2018: 232).

Recommendations

Based on our findings, the following recommendations are hereby made:

- Employment of more qualified lecturers in Islamic Studies to teach the programme.

- ▶ Constant use of internet to get relevant and current information on Islamic Studies to teach the students.
- ▶ The lecturers should find time to write textbooks to teach the students. The issue of publication of journals are mostly for the promotion of lecturers. The students have no access to most of these journals. Most of the journals are not on the curriculum of the students.
- ▶ Creation of more awareness on the importance of Islamic Studies to the parents, guardians and the wards. It is through the studying of the programme that we can eradicate or reduce the social vices in our society. It will also increase the enrollment of students in the programme.
- ▶ More money should be voted for instructional materials and training and retraining of the lecturers of Islamic Studies for improved performance of academic activities of the students.
- ▶ The lecturers and students should find ways and means of improving their Arabic or English language depending on the one they have deficiency. This will increase their access to information on Islamic Studies.
- ▶ Lecturers who understand Arabic well should Endeavour to translate Arabic books written on Islamic Studies into English Language. This would allow students and lecturers to gain access to important information written in Arabic.
- ▶ Lecturers should pay more attention to the teaching of the students than other Islamic activities outside lecturing. There is nothing wrong in participating in the Islamic activities outside but they should not allow them to jeopardize their lecturing and other activities in the institutions where they are employed as lecturers.
- ▶ Most of the students lack adequate knowledge of the languages of Islamic Students. Hence the lecturers need to improve their methods of teaching.
- ▶ Adequate recognition should be given to teaching profession in Nigeria to motive people to develop interest in getting employed as teachers.

Conclusion

It would be inferred from our discussion that innovation in terms of teaching and learning of Islamic Studies is of great importance to the teachers, students, Muslim Community and the entire human race. It is through innovation that many scholars have been able to develop their different communities. A lot of things that were not in existence during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) are found in different Muslim Communities in particular and countries of the world. The use of internet is an innovation. Using of prayer mats and other communication gadgets by the Muslims are due to invention through innovation. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is reported to have said that “if somebody

innovates something which is not in harmony with the principles of our religion, that their thing is rejected.” (Sunnah. Com). Innovation is of two kinds- the bad innovations which are rejected in the above *Ḥadīth*. These include addition or subtraction from the rakaat of the five daily prayers, having sexual relationship through anus, marriage of the same sex and marrying more than four wives at the same time. The good innovations include using of modern communication gadgets in the mosque, building of ultra-modern mosques, improving teaching aids, using of Information and Communication Technology and a host of others.

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