

The Effect of Using Islamic Education Related Websites on King Faisal University Students' Achievement in Methods of Teaching Islamic Education Subject

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at investigating the effect of using Islamic Education related websites on the King Faisal University students' achievement in methods of teaching Islamic Education subject. It attempted to answer the following question:-What is the effect of using Islamic Education related websites on students' achievement in methods of teaching Islamic Education Subject compared with conventional method? To answer the question of the study, sixty female students in Islamic Education Department, Education Faculty were randomly chosen in the first semester of the academic year 2009/2010. The participants of the study consisted of two assigned sections. The experimental group was taught by using Islamic Education related websites; while the control group was taught according to the conventional method (Lecture Method). The researcher prepared achievement test as the instrument of this study. To establish the validity for the test, the method of content validity was used. Means and standard deviations were computed to compare means of the two groups on the pre and post tests of Islamic education competences. Analysis of covariance ANCOVA was computed to detect any significant differences between the two groups on the Islamic education competences. The results revealed that the achievement of the students in the experimental group significantly improved.

Keywords: using Islamic Education related websites, achievement, electronic learning, Islamic Education, teaching.

INTRODUCTION

With the recent and rapid increase in Internet technology and online participation, the opportunity for computer-mediated education has increased. Since the first online course that was offered several years ago, there has been a significant increase in the availability of online strategies, which offer an unprecedented opportunity to students to learn (Milliron, 2004).

Consequently, students can now receive course credit with technology support. What was once a social, face-to-face learning experience has become a computer-mediated learning experience. Using the Internet technology, students and professors can converse through a variety of forums, including e-mail, online discussion forums, bulletin boards and web pages (Richter, 2001).

According to Richter (2001), online web based teaching takes different modes that range from conventional tasks using online resources (links to information online) and tools (e.g. dictionaries, machine translation, etc.) to freestanding online courses, simulations, games and virtual worlds (composed of online information, activities, computer-mediated communication and assessments).

By moving from one mode to another, choices need to be made in the initial conceptualization phase about what the online instruction strategy should achieve. If the objectives of the online instruction strategy are to achieve deep learning, how will it be used? How do we cater for different learner types and levels of learning? (Vargo, 1997).

Consequently, it is expected that each mode has its specific features and students' attitudes toward the learning process in each mode might be affected by some factors (Randall, 2001). For example, students' prior experience in using the Internet might affect students' attitudes toward using online instruction. Milliron (2004) claims that any technology has to prove that it will ultimately improve or expand learning, engage and explore all aspects of technology, good, bad or indifferent.

The sophistication of multimedia technologies nowadays gives a great challenge to educators in order to continuously play significant roles in the borderless globalization of information era. This challenge should not be regarded as a threat but should be accepted as a great reward to education world, which is able to produce an amazing result if the tools are used correctly and wisely (Wan & Kamaruzaman, 2009).

The development of internet and web technologies have significantly assisted teachers and students in the process of teaching and learning. In Islamic Education, the use of these technologies are now accepted and sometimes, used by Muslim educators (Tamuri et.al., 2010). So, one of the challenges facing the Arab world now is that the topics of Islamic education is still taught in the traditional way (lecturing), whether at university or school, despite the availability of modern technology, which can be used in teaching. Therefore, the study attempts to shed light on the modern method of teaching that can be used in teaching one of the most important subjects in the Arab and Islamic world, through investigating the effect of using Islamic Education related websites on the King Faisal University students' achievement in Islamic Education Subject.

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

In the late sixties of the last century, the idea of the establishment of the Internet appeared in the United States, to serve military purposes, and then quickly, as a result of the accession of

American institutions and universities it became a global network which was used in various areas of life. It contributed significantly on the growing information explosion. One key factor that helped in the spread of the Internet so quickly was vast abundance of sources of information and direct and indirect communication, where individuals from different countries of the world were able to communicate with each other through e-mail (E-mail) and to communicate the written (Relay-chat) and video conferencing (Video-Conferencing) and others, in addition to the speed and ease of access and exchange information and ensure their dissemination. It represents a means of communication they are multi-directional (David & Daniel, 1997).

Donatti, et.al. (2000) Points to increase the importance of the Internet in the educational process day after another because they provide teachers by the latest developments in the area of their competence in the world through scientific articles, lesson plans, and provide students with sources of non-specific information that strengthens their learning of the material of study. Donatti et.al. (2000) shows that the use of the Internet in education solves replace Conventional teaching methods and means, but they offer additional benefits for students and advanced culture, mission and highlight the importance of basic education through the promotion of self (Self-Learning) of the students (Caplan, 2005). There are many studies indicated that the use of the Internet to integrate with the process of teaching and learning standard that may lead to effective learning for students (Chen et. al. 2001).

In the literature, some researchers showed a piece of evidence of the success of using online materials. For example, Doucette (1994) explains the use of multimedia as a new technology which will allow students to learn at their own pace while being sensitive to the various learning styles. He found (a) high completion rates, (b) increased student demand for courses using the new technology, and (c) increased number of faculty members unwilling to return to classroom-based instruction. Riddle (1993), cited in Gayton and Slate (2002-2003), utilized multimedia in an elementary classroom. She found that the use of multimedia tools (a) enhanced students' development of ideas, (b) increased students' motivation level, (c) increased peer collaboration, and (d) increased satisfaction level because students were proud of their work.

McDonald (2002) emphasized that there are many benefits to using online distance learning environments: online education is available "anyplace, anytime" for global communities of learners based on shared interests. She claims that "online education with its group-based instruction and Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) provides an opportunity for new development and understanding in teaching and learning" (p. 11). McDonald concluded that CMC encourages collaborative learning by not providing cues regarding appearance, race, gender, education or social status bestowing a sort of anonymity to participants.

A study completed by Devlin and James (2003) in Australia concluded that the impact of multimedia and educational technology could provide some indication of improved student learning. In investigating the impact of purposefully generated open access tests, Thelwell (2000) finds an evidence of improved student motivation and modified student study behavior through increased revision. In light of the previous studies, it can be said that the use of online instruction has many benefits for education. However, one may wonder whether achieving these benefits is linked with students' experience in using the Internet.

Many studies investigated the relationships between students' attitudes towards using online instruction and students' experience in using the Internet. Experience with the Internet was investigated

because research has documented the relationship between experience and user acceptance of technology in general (Koohang, 1989). The more experience a user has with technology, the more he or she tends to accept it. Therefore, user's acceptance may in turn promote learning.

Koohang and Durante (2003) tested learners' perceptions toward Web-based distance learning and gave attention to some variables, including learners' experience with the Internet to find whether these variables are significant factors in learners' perceptions towards the Web-based distance learning. They found that there was a significant difference among levels of learners' experience with the Internet and their perceptions towards the Web-based distance learning activities. Their study also showed high positive learners' perceptions toward Web-based learning.

Recently, Koohang (2004) again investigated users' perceptions toward e-learning by giving attention to the variables of prior experience with the Internet and amount of time the e-learner spent on the e-learning courseware to do his/her assignments. The study found out that users' prior experience with the Internet and the amount of time users spent on e-learning were significant factors. Consequently, subjects with more prior experience with the Internet had significantly higher positive perceptions toward e-learning.

Tamuri et. al. (2009) conducted a study aimed to examine the application Islamic websites in the process of teaching and learning the Islamic Education. The main focus of this survey was on six main aspects of the websites for teaching and learning process, i.e. appropriateness of content, application of multimedia, cognitive development, elements of constructivism and flexibility in teaching and learning and self learning. Based on the teachers' evaluations and responses towards the contents of the websites, the researcher selected ten Islamic websites which were consistent with the contents of Islamic Education subject at the secondary school level. Then, by using standard forms of evaluation, 20 students from various back ground were selected to evaluate all the websites. The study found that most of the websites were useful for the students in the process of teaching and learning and they could use the websites for various purposes of teaching and learning. From the analysis, it was found that four websites had high means (3.68-4.06) and the other six websites were at the moderate level (3.24-3.57).

Hamzah and Embi (2009) attempted in their study to investigate the impact of technology change in Malaysian Smart Schools on Islamic Education teachers and students. This study was trying to understand all aspects of the change process in Smart Schools and to understand the problems of students and teachers as they endeavor to improve learning and teaching in Smart Schools. Following the implementation of the Smart School pilot projects in the Malaysian secondary schools, this study is aimed at suggesting an approach that can be used to incorporate the use of computers and ICT in Islamic Education by taking into consideration the views, experiences, expectations and needs of the teachers and the students themselves.

In examining the new initiative of Smart Schools, a grounded theory approach was used in the early phase of the study as this approach is suitable for this relatively new field where little research has been done. This research began with the use of focus groups as a means to gain knowledge of respondents' views, perceptions and attitudes about Smart Schools.

This study found that the use of computers was the core feature of the change phenomenon in Smart Schools. Islamic Education teachers and students were hardly coping with the task of incorporating the use of new technology in their teaching and learning. Many barriers and obstacles in using

new technology were reported by Islamic Education teachers and students. The most important barriers identified in this study are the lack of computers and available resources, lack of training, shortage of time and the pressure of a heavy syllabus and examination-centered learning.

The main purpose of Wan and Kamaruzaman (2009) study is to discuss the use of multimedia in teaching and learning process. In this paper, the researcher shared their experience in teaching Islamic Studies in Taylor's University College, Subang Jaya, and Selangor, Malaysia using multimedia as beneficial tools in enhancing learning process. In Islamic education, human's achievement in Information Communication Technology (ICT) is a sign of knowledge achievement that need to be used to find the truth. Hence, in order to guide students towards the truth and simultaneously to make the teaching and learning process enjoyable, researcher had used various multimedia tools. Among them are PowerPoint slides, video clips, mind map and internet. As a result, students found that Islamic Studies subject is very interesting and entertaining and it can be proven that it is not impossible to transform a dry and plain subject to be a fun and interactive lesson.

The objective of Wan and Kamaruzaman (2009) study is to determine the effectiveness of the techniques and strategies in teaching Islamic education from the African teachers' perception. The data was collected from a questionnaire survey that was distributed among 83 teachers from Timbuktu and Gene, Mali and Nigeria. There were five educational techniques and two educational strategies that were effective in teaching and learning Islamic education. In addition, the information and communication technology (ICT) contributed to the improvement of the teaching and learning processes. Information and communication technology may be used as a medium in teaching and learning to develop more creative thinking in the educational process. Moreover, the media was a form of teaching aids which assisted teachers in the teaching by providing them with tools to illustrate some points or processes as well as supporting long distance educational system. There was a positive perception of the teachers in terms of five educational techniques and two educational strategies of teaching and learning in the classroom. Therefore, African teachers have improved their ability to apply more effective strategies and techniques in their teaching. Future studies should be improved on the Islamic education in terms of the effective and integration between technique and strategy teaching and learning in the classroom.

Based on the above review of literature, we can say that students' use of online instruction plays a valuable role in the success of this kind of instruction and their achievement. After all, the promise of the future lies not only in technology, but in people's ability to use, manage and understand technology (Dugger and Satchwell, 1996). Therefore, this study comes to explore the effect of using Islamic Education related websites on the King Faisal University students' Islamic Education competences achievement.

METHODOLOGY

Subjects of The Study

The target population of the study was the King Faisal female students of Islamic Education. Two sections were chosen randomly of the third level that were learning methods of teaching Islamic Education Subject. They were divided into an experimental group consisting of 32 students and a control group consisting of 28 students. The experiment started on the first of November and ended on 30th of January during the second semester of the academic year 2009-2010.

Instrument of The Study

For the purpose of the study, achievement test in methods of teaching Islamic Education Subject has been used. This thirty-item test was prepared by the researcher to cover the Competences of teaching Islamic Education. The general purpose of this instrument was to compare the achievements of the two groups on the pre- and post tests. The test measured the students' ability to the following objectives; (1) recognizing the concept of Islamic Education and its characteristics, (2) recognizing how to plan for teaching Islamic Education lessons, formulate behavioral objectives and distinction between characteristics and elements of the daily plan and quarterly and annual pelan, (3) recognizing the characteristics of teaching Islamic education methods, and (4) recognizing the Content elements of the Islamic education curriculum.

Table 1 is a table of specifications that shows the distribution of test questions according to the objectives:

Table 1: Distribution of Test Questions According to The Objectives

Objectives	Questions	Total
1. Recognizing the concept of Islamic Education and its characteristics.	q28	1
2. Recognizing the how to plan for teaching Islamic Education lessons, formulate behavioral objectives and distinction between characteristics and elements of the daily plan, quarterly and annual plan.	q1, q2, q3, q4, q5, q6, q7, q8, q9, q10, q11, q12, q21, q24, q25, q26, q29, q30	18
3. Recognizing the characteristics of teaching Islamic education methods.	q16, q17, q18, q19, q20, q22, q23	7
4. Recognizing the Content elements of the Islamic education curriculum	q13, q14, q15, q27	4
Total		30

Validity of The Test

To establish the validity for this test, the researcher used the method of content validity. Comments and criticism on the original draft of the test were solicited from 12 experts from Saudi universities.

Material of The Study

The researcher selected meaningful online websites from the Internet that can fulfill the teaching goals and that are - hopefully - interesting from the learners' point of view.

Design of The Study

The study employed the quasi-experimental design. The researcher used an experimental and a control group with 32 subjects in the first one and 28 in the other. The experimental group was taught through using Islamic Education related websites, while the control group was

taught through the conventional way (lecture method). The two groups were pre-post tested by an achievement test.

The study consists of two variables; one independent variable, and one dependent variable. The independent variable of the study was using Islamic Education related websites. The dependent variable was Islamic Education competence achievement.

Statistical Treatment

Means and standard deviations were computed to compare means of the two groups on the pre and post tests of Islamic education competences, and the analysis of covariance ANCOVA was computed to detect any significant differences between the two groups on the Islamic education competences.

RESULTS

The question was: Is there any difference between the mean scores of the experimental group following using Islamic Education related websites and those of the control group following the conventional instruction in the Methods of teaching Islamic Education Subject Achievement?

To answer this question, and to test the significance of these differences between the adjusted mean scores of both groups on Islamic education competences in the post-test, the ANCOVA statistical procedure was computed as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Results of ANCOVA between The Two Groups on The Methods of Teaching Islamic Education Subject Achievement

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	6259.823 ^a	2	3129.911	234.229	0.000
Intercept	191.006	1	191.006	14.294	0.000
PRE	6114.203	1	6114.203	457.560	0.000
GROUP	337.881	1	337.881	25.285	0.000
EHm	761.760	57	13.363		
Total	232653.465	60			
Corrected Total	7021.493	59			

R Squared = 0.892 (Adjusted R Squared = 0.888)

The results of Table 2 indicate that the F value of (25.285) is significant at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). This means that students' Islamic education competences achievement on the post-test was improved due to the treatment in favor of the experimental group which was taught by using Islamic Education related websites, where the adjusted mean scores of the experimental group was (63.550), while the adjusted mean scores of the control group was (58.778) as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Adjusted Means and Standard Errors of Both Groups on The Post-test of Islamic education Competences Achievement

GROUP	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Experimental	63.550 ^a	0.647	62.254	64.846
Control	58.778 ^a	0.692	57.392	164_60

Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: PRE = 54.96.

DISCUSSION

The results related to the question of the study indicated that there was a statistically significant difference at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the mean scores of the experimental group and that of the control group on the post-test regarding methods of teaching Islamic education competences achievement. The analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was also carried out at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). This difference was in favor of the experimental group since the adjusted mean scores of the experimental group (21.906) was higher than the adjusted mean scores of the control group (18.360).

These results in favor of the experimental group are expected because the researcher believes that the Islamic education competences improvement is probably due to the characteristics of the Internet strategy where all members work individually. The use of Internet technology tends to make the students more interesting so it creates motivation. Moreover, computers can give a new role to teaching materials. The internet helps students to control the pace of the learning and make choices in what and how to learn. The use of computer technology is reported to improve self-concept and mastery of Islamic education competences.

The results of the question were in line with the findings of Maimun et. al. (2010), Tamuri et. al. (2009), Hamzah and Embi, (2009), and Wan and Kamaruzaman (2009) whose results provided evidence for the positive effectiveness of using Islamic Education related websites on teaching Islamic education competences. However, the findings of Suda-Dunn (2003) and Gonzalez (2005) did not provide evidence for the positive effectiveness of using Islamic Education related websites on language skills due to the sample size, these studies should be replicated with a bigger sample size.

The use of the Internet to learn the methods of teaching Islamic education subject enabled the students of the experimental group to obtain additional information a modern and diverse subject that have been studied, and helped to provide the students the source of additional and head of the information enabled them which follow the latest developments in the science of methods of teaching Islamic education subject.

This led to the exchange of information that was obtained between the students, which reduced the time needed to get it and understand. As well as the presence of the excitement and thrill of the diversity in methods of presenting this information, and this led to the improvement and development of the learning process and facilitated it for the students, because, the improvement of the students' learning level may lead to improve the rate of the subject recall. And because many of the students had an additional information on the topic of the lecture, they were able

to organize and use them when answering the test questions. This led to the students excellence in the experimental group in the achievement test than the students of the control group. The recent entry of the Internet to the community in various fields, including the field of education and the desire of students to look at it and identify the various applications and how to obtain the required information, and as a result to the interesting and exciting method of learning that the students were taught by it, and managed through access to information. This has made their attitudes toward learning evolve in a positive article about what it was before the use of the Internet. And as a result to the excellence of the students' achievement in the experimental group, this led to the evolution of their attitudes towards the subject.

CONCLUSIONS

Through the search results I concluded that, the use of the Internet to learn the methods of teaching Islamic education subject has a positive impact on student achievement. We can use the Internet to provide the students with additional information to be complementary to the conventional lecture approach which may be useful in the educational process. The educational applications of Internet can be used in the teaching process. And the findings of the current study come in line with the theoretical and practical studies surveyed in the previous pages in which most of the studies provided evidence for the effectiveness of using internet in developing students' Islamic education competences achievement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Researchers should conduct similar studies on other classes at other levels and other subjects and aspects so that the generalizations could become more valid and widely applicable. It is recommended to provide colleges with enough materials and instruments to facilitate the use of Islamic Education related websites such as decreasing the number of students in each class, decreasing the load of teaching among lecturers, and increasing the number of computers and availability of net laboratories. Holding meetings, seminars and workshops through which they train teachers or lecturers on how to implement a successful Islamic education competences lesson in accordance with using Islamic Education related websites. Using the Internet to provide the students with additional information in the Islamic Education Subjects. And using the Internet after the completion of the usual lecture.

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