

**ISLAMIC STUDIES LECTURERS' ASSESSMENT ON THE ADEQUACY OF THE NIGERIA  
CERTIFICATE IN EDUCATION (NCE) ISLAMIC STUDIES CURRICULUM IN NORTH CENTRAL  
NIGERIA**

By

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**Abstract**

*Frequent and periodic curriculum assessment has been viewed as a potent exercise for improving basement for curriculum planning and implementation. The role of teachers in the curriculum assessment exercise cannot be underestimated. Teachers' are important factor to be taken into consideration when assessing curriculum because their opinion on curriculum assessment go to a large extent in determining the suitability of the curriculum. The study, therefore, assessed Islamic Studies Lecturers' opinion on the adequacy of the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) curriculum in north central Nigeria. The study involved 125 Islamic study lecturers from the s elected colleges of education in the region. Questionnaire was used to elicit needed data while interview was used to triangulate the information collected from respondents. The validity of the instrument was determined by given the draft to the expert in test construction and evaluation in the department of psychology FCT college of Education for face and content validity while the reliability of the instrument was determined by correlating the result of pilot study with the Ample-Edge Human Resource Development (AHRD), (2016:3) reliability level which stated that an instrument with a reliability coefficient of 0.75 - 0.80 is accepted for research purpose. The study revealed that Islamic Studies Curriculum The paper discovered that objectives and content of the curriculum are clearly stated, the contents are adequately consistent with the objectives, the contents are too cumbersome to teach, the hour allocated to teach contents are inadequate among others. It is concluded that the curriculum needs to be reviewed and recommendations were made to include: review of the curriculum objectives and contents as well, spreading to cover the currents challenges of unemployment and self-reliance*

**Keywords:** Assessment, Curriculum, Islamic Studies

**Introduction**

One of the major aspects of tertiary education in Nigeria is the training of the teacher; this is due to the fact that the quality of teachers produce in a country goes a long way in determining the extent to educational policies of government of that country can be successfully implemented. The minimum educational qualification for teaching in Nigerian basic schools is Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) 2014). Frequent and periodic assessment is a potent exercise which provides basement for curriculum planning and implementation. Similarly, the role of teacher in the curriculum assessment cannot be under estimated. The review of curriculum is not just happen in a vacuum but it occurs when events within and outside community prompted it. In order to put the NCE curriculum to meet the requirements or the need of the society, the current review takes into consideration the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which set to achieve 17 goals which includes:

- a) Eradication of extreme poverty and extreme hunger
- b) Achievement of universal basic education
- c) Promotion of gender equality and women empowerment.
- d) Reduction of child mortality
- e) Improving Maternal health
- f) Combating HIV/AIDs Malaria and other diseases.
- g) Ensuring environmental sustainability
- h) Development of global partnership for development to mention but a few (United Nations, 2016)

Another event that call for curriculum assessment is the United Nations' declaration "Education for All" (EFA) initiative. The initiative was a product of the millennium development goals and the agenda of sustainable development goal. The Goals of this initiative focus on:

- i. Expansion of early childhood care and education
- ii. Provision of free and compulsory primary/basic education for all
- iii. Promotion of learning and life skills for young age people and adults.

- iv. Increasing adult literacy by 50%.
- v. Achieving gender parity by 2005 and gender equality by 2015.
- vi. Improving the quality of education (unevoc.unesco.org, 2018)

Curriculum assessment sometimes is meant to measure the extent of the achievement and challenges in the curriculum implementation in the areas of the developments or uprising within the country. These include: illiteracy level which showed that 38% of the Nigerian population with aggregate number of 76000,000,000 are illiterates (Tribuneonlineng.com 7/9/2021), insufficient professional qualified teachers as those on ground are just 50% (guardian.ng 02/09/2021), inadequate supply infrastructure and instructional material across all level of educational system (guardian.ng 25/03/2021), unequal access to education, as a result of gender prejudice, socio-cultural misconceptions, socio-economic and insecurity factors, learner's academic achievement and quality of education received among Nigerian living in different parts of the country are differ and the learning of theories in Nigeria schools are promoted at the expenses of technical knowledge, vocational education and entrepreneurship skills, the report of competencies assessment conducted in some states in the country revealed that majority of the teachers failed assessment (Oladosu, 2008).

More importantly, is the programme of Federal government of Nigeria; National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS), it is an initiative, which targeted wealth creation, generation of employment, eradication of poverty and the reorientation of value (Princeville Ene, 2022 <https://www.walyben.com>).

In view of the above, education remains the only vital tool of transformation and formidable device to bring about Socio-economic, political, religious empowerment and skills acquisition. Therefore, all these formed central pole for this study.

### Objectives of the Study

In line with the above, the general objective of this study id to access the adequacy of NCE Islamic-Studies curriculum in North-central Nigeria. Specifically, the study addressed:

1. Clarity of the objective of the curriculum
2. The adequacy of the content of the curriculum
3. The consistency of the objective of the curriculum with the stated objectives
4. The adequacy of Lecture hours allocated to course contents of the NCE Islamic-studies curriculum

### Research Question

In line with the objective above, the following research questions were raised to be answered

1. How is the clarity of the NCE Islamic-Studies curriculum's objectives?
2. How is the adequacy of the NCE Islamic-studies curriculum's contents?
3. To what extents is the adequacy of the consistent of the contents of NCE Islamic-Studies curriculum with the stated objective of the curriculum's contents?
4. What is the adequacy of the contents of NCE Islamic-studies curriculum's contents with the Lecture hours allocated to course?

### Literature Review

An Islamic study is that aspect of Islamic education as mention in NCE Minimum Standard, (2020: 60) covered three units with three section and the unit and the section covered:

1. Guidance (*Hidaayat*):  
Section A: The Qur'an,  
Section B: The Hadith,  
Section C: Moral education (Tahdhib),
2. Islamic Jurisprudence (*Fiqh*):  
Section A: Belief (*Tawhid*),  
Section B: Worship (*Ibaadah*), and  
Section C: Human Transactions (*Mu'amalat*): Islamic law, Marriage, divorce, inheritance, Introduction to ICT, Introduction to Islamic Economic System, Business Transaction, Business & Contract Agreement, Share Farming and Islamic Cooperative Society.
3. Islamic Historical Development of Islam (*Tarikh*):  
Section A: The history of Prophet Muhammad (*Sirah*) and The four righteously guided Caliphs,  
Section B: The spread of Islam in West African and contribution of Muslim to the world (civilization): 60)

**Islamic Education Curriculum during Colonial Government**

With inception of Western Education in Nigeria couple with colonial activity, marked the declining of Islamic education because it was totally neglected by colonial mater. The Ajami system (using Arabic letter to write in mother tongue for official documents) which has being the official means of communications between the emirs of the states, Ulama' and other people before the colonial master was no more recognized officially. It is very obvious that British colony kill Islamic education system in Nigeria by aiding Western education system to the country by powering Christian missionary through provision of grants and aids to them, and any Muslim who attended Missionaries school were forced to study bible knowledge and in most cases, church conversion was a frequent prerequisite for admission (Badirudeen and Gidado, 2020).

More so at the beginning, no teacher are employed to teach Islamic studies and the Muslim did not have alternative than to allow their children to have modern education at the expense of their faith or to retain their faith and loose the opportunity of getting white cola job maintain high position in government or modern administration system and this resulted to the birth of private Islamic school and Muslim organisation such as Ansarudeen society of Nigeria who laid the foundation of first established primary school at Alakoro lagos in 1932 and this was followed by others (Adekileku 1986:22. Badirudeen 2011:24 & Ahmad and Rabi'u 2014:4). In the northern part of Nigeria the case, the British came face to face with northern emirate's legacy of Sokoto Caliphate established by great religious reformer sheik Usman dan Fodio (Badirudeen and Gidado, 2020).

The British government establish indirect rule through the emirate and the change in education came slowly with gradual establishment of view government school and teacher colleges for boys and later for girls. I order to make this school acceptable to the people of the north, an Islamic study is taught with fair traditional syllabus. The teachers employed to teach Islamic studies were mostly the product of traditional quranic schools, this syllabus emphasize the memorisation of Qur'an, Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh), the article of faith, an basic moral education. In furtherance, the British also founded old sharia law school in training of sharia court judges and Islamic law teachers as far back as 1933 and some of its graduant were given scholarship to study Aranbic, Islamic studies, and Islamic law at the university of London in the 1950s and 1960s (Badirudeen 2011:26).

**Islamic Studies Curriculum from Independence to Date**

Nigeria got independent on the 1st October, 1960 from British colonial master. But, because of her cultural and religious diversity, the syllabi for Islamic and Christian Education were designed by State and Federal Ministries of Education since 1950's. These syllabi prepared students for the subject in the West African Examinations Certificate (WAEC). English language remains the medium of instruction, in the case of Islamic Education there were no textbooks in English until about 1968 – 1970 (Fafunwa 2004). Similarly, Islamic studies and Arabic syllabi were designed by the West African Examination Council (WAEC) and came into use in 1968 and 1977 respectively. In the national policy on education 1977, 1981, 1895 & 2004, Islamic study is a core-subject in junior secondary school level and elective subject in senior secondary level. Arabic language and literature are currently offered as curse of study in colleges of education, polytechnics & universities in Ni geria. Nigeria certificate in education, diplomas and degrees are awarded in this disciplines.

**Methodology**

A descriptive survey methodology was adopted for this study because of its ability to identify the diverse views of lecturers on the adequacy of the NCE Islamic Studies Curriculum in North-central Nigeria, because it is used to assess, determine and report occurrence, event, situation or phenomenon the way they are. It allows the use of adequate and appropriate sample, which will lead to value judgement (Badirudeen 2011). The study involved Islamic Studies Lecturers in Colleges of Education in Nigeria using Purposive Sample Technique. There are fourteen (14) Colleges of Education in North Central, Two (2) are federally-owned Institutions, eight (8) are state-owned Institution while four (4) are privately-owned Institution (FRN List of Colleges of Education in Nigeria 2019 & Directory and search engine on NCCE 2016).

Questionnaire titled Assessment of the Adequacy of Islamic Studies Curriculum in North Central Nigeria Questionnaire (ASADISCINOCENQ) was developed and interview was used to triangulate gathered information from the questionnaire and were analysed. The instrument was tested on other Colleges of Education that did not participate in the study using test-retest method. Cronbach Alpha was used to determine the reliability of the instruments which gave rise to reliability co-efficient of 0.78. The instrument was therefore adjudged to reliable based on the position of Cronbach Alpha which stated that an instrument with reliability co-efficient ranging between 0.75-0.80 is appropriate for research purpose. Similarly, mean scores were used to analyse the research questions and the decision rule was that any item whose mean score ranges between from 1.00–2.99 equals to positive while those with mean scores that range from 3.00 and above are regarded as being negative.

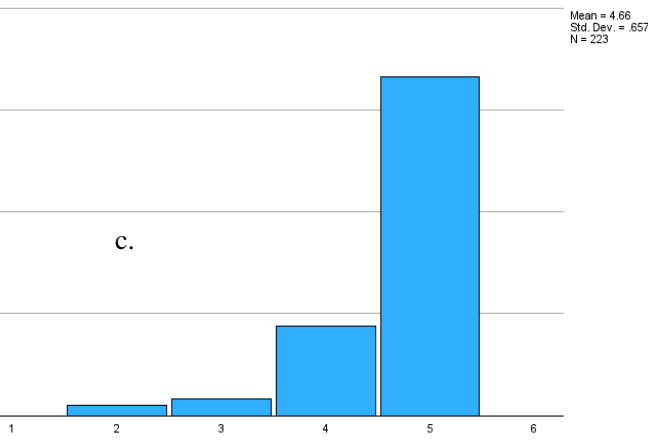
**Data Presentation and Analysis**

Responses of respondents on the clarity of NCE Islamic Studies curriculum

a.

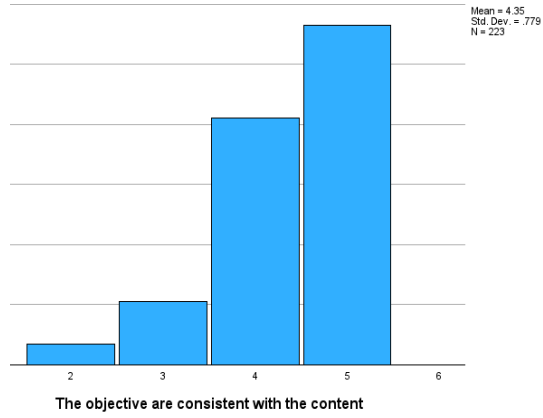
b.

Clarity of NCE Islamic Studies Curriculum



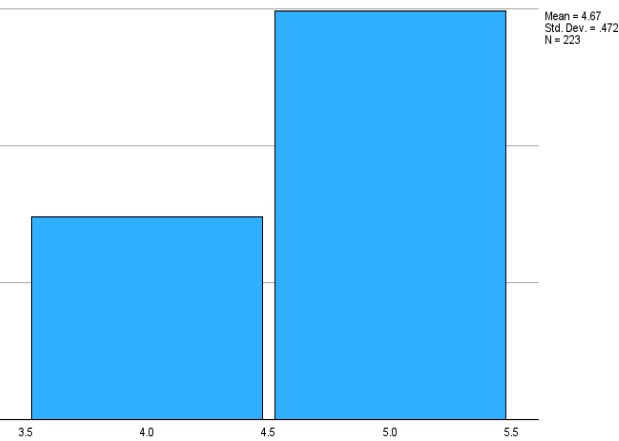
c.

The objective are consistent with the content

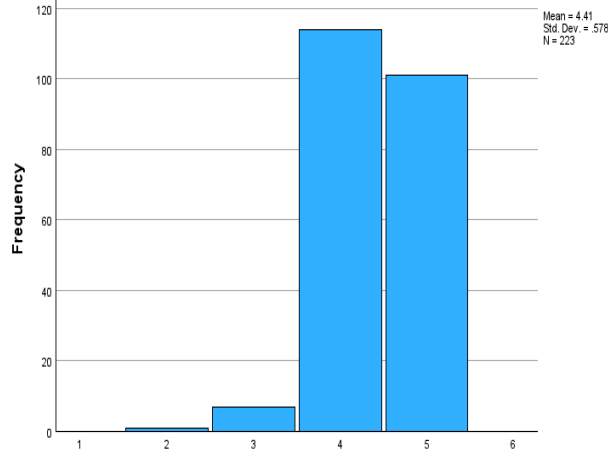


d.

The contents are consistent with the set objective



The lecturers relate the contents with the objectives with ease



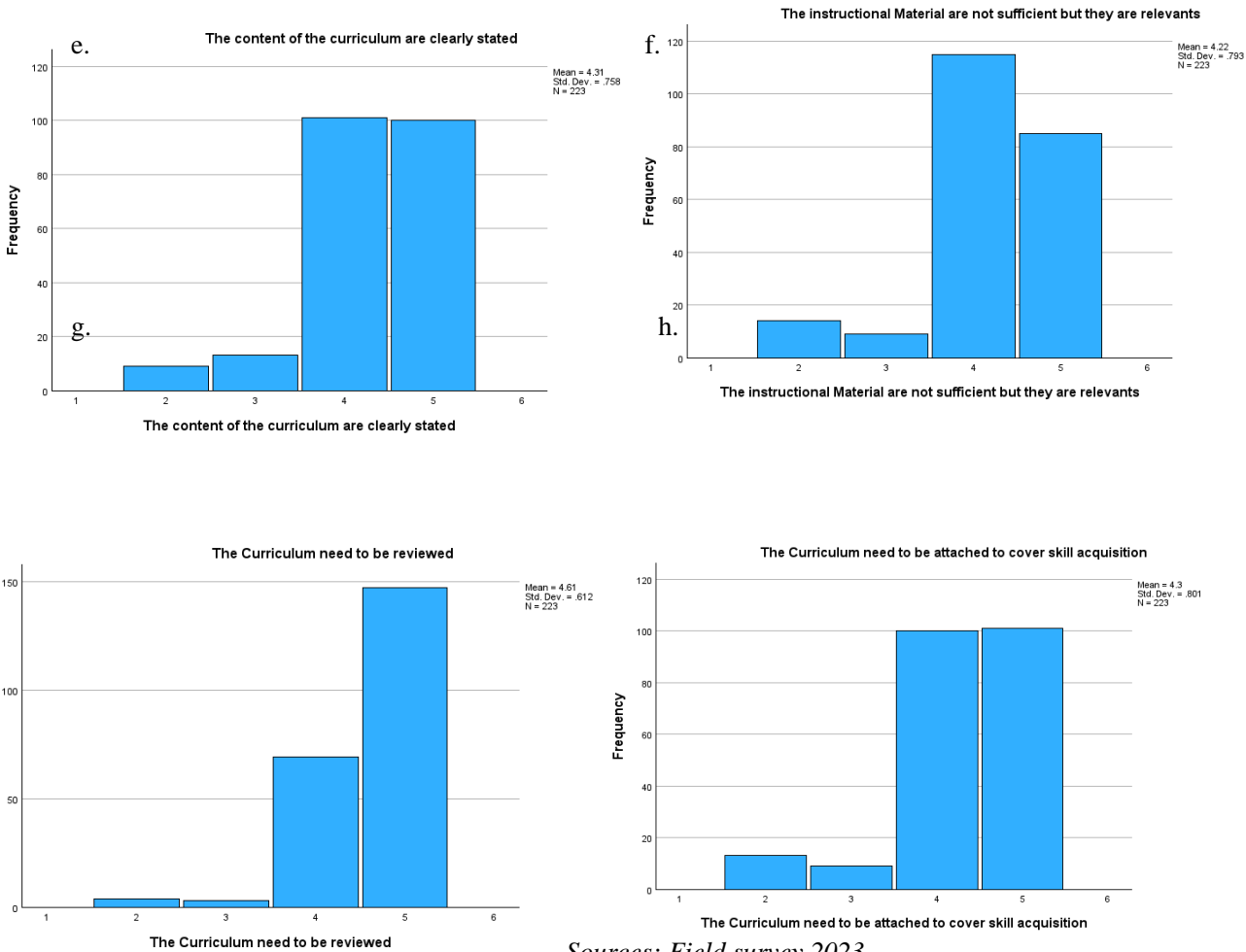
The contents are consistent with the set objective

The lecturers relate the contents with the objectives with ease

Sources: Field Survey 2023

The above histograms revealed the responses of respondents on the item related to clarity of NCE Islamic Studies curriculum. Item 1,2, 3, 4: a. The NCE Islamic Studies curriculum is well stated, b. the objective are consisted with the contents, c. the contents of the curriculum are adequately in line with the objectives, d. the lecturer relates the content with the objective with ease. The histogram above revealed that the majority of the respondents strongly agreed with these statements which reflect in figure a. above with mean score of 4.66 (std dev 657), b. with mean score of 4.36 (std dev.779), c. with mean score of 4.67 (std dev.472) and d. with mean score of 4.45 (std dev.578). By implication, it shows that the curriculum objectives of NCE Islamic Studies curriculum are adequate and clearly stated.

Histograms e, f, g, h below revealed responses of respondents on the clarity of the contents of Islamic Studies curriculum thus:

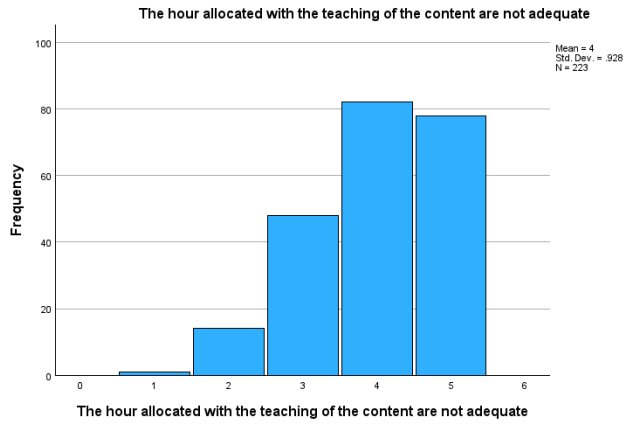


Sources: Field survey 2023

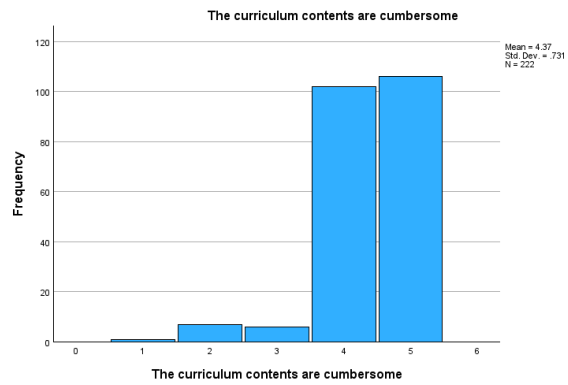
The Histograms above reflected the respondents’ responses on the adequacy of the contents of NCE Islamic studies curriculum. The mean score of respondents responses on the items were analysed through histogram e. the content of the curriculum are clearly stated, f. the contents are consistent with the objectives but the instructional material are not sufficient to teach the content, g. the curriculum need to be reviewed, h. the curriculum need to be attached to cover skill acquisition in entrepreneurship training, agriculture and computer science. This can be seen in histogram e. with mean score of 4.31 (std dev.758), f. with mean score of 4.22 (std dev.793), g. with mean score of 4.61 (std dev.612) and h. with mean score of 4.3 (std dev.801). These depicts that the content of the curriculum are adequate and clearly stated, but instructional material to teach it are not sufficient. Therefore, the curriculum also need review in the area of skill acquisition contents.

The histograms below analysed respondent’s responses on the adequacy of the planning and organisation of the NCE Islamic curriculum. Histogram I, j, k, and l revealed the respondents opinion on the planning and organisation of NCE Islamic Studies Curriculum

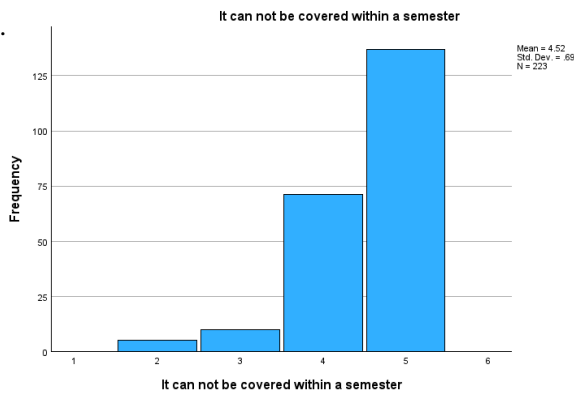
i.



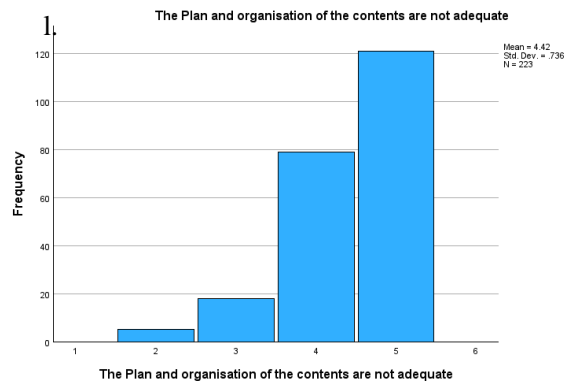
j.



k.



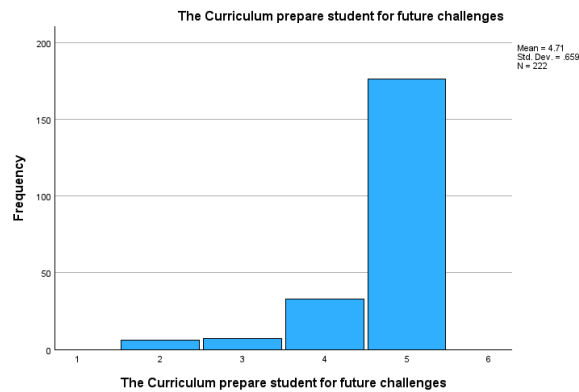
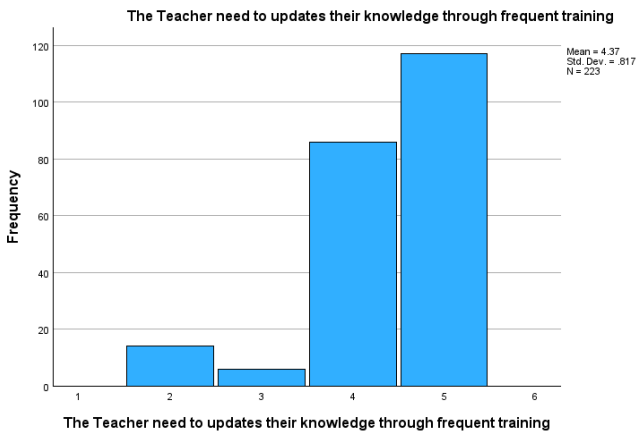
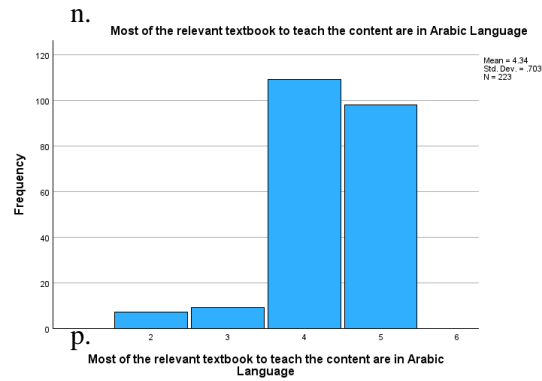
l.



Sources: Field survey 2023

The above charts showed respondents' responses on the planning and organisation of NCE Islamic Studies Curriculum. Histogram I, j, k, and l revealed that majority of the respondent agreed to the statements: i. the allocated hour to the teaching of the curriculum contents are in adequate, j. the curriculum content are cumbersome base on credit unit, k. the curriculum contents cannot be covered within a semester and l. the planning and organisation of the curriculum are in adequate. This can be seen from the histogram I, j, k, and l above which reflected mean score of 4 (std dev.928), 4.37 (std dev.731), 4.52 (std dev.69) and 4.42 (std dev.736). By implication, the planning and organisation of the curriculum are not adequate.

The chart below presented the analysis of the respondent's opinion on the adequacy of the NCE Islamic Studies curriculum on the side of the lecturers, students and instructional material oriented.



Sources: Field Survey 2023

The chart m, n, o, and p above reflected the opinion of the lecturers on the adequacy of NCE Islamic Studies Curriculum in the area of Availability, relevancy and languages of the textbooks for teaching the textbooks, the chart m, and n, depicted that majority of the lecturers agreed that the textbooks to teach some of these textbooks are adequate but not sufficient and the most common textbooks among them are in Arabic literature, this means not all Islamic lecturers can use some of these textbooks. The curriculum assessment under the training of the teachers and preparation of the students for future challenges showed that the teacher on ground need frequent training to update their knowledge while the curriculum need to be expand to other field of endeavour which can prepare the students for future challenges in the area of self-reliance and self-employment. The chart m, n, o, and p in the analysis indicated that the majority of the respondents submitted to the above statements with the mean score of 4.73 (std dev.485), 4.34 (std dev.703), 4.37 (std dev.817), and 4.71 (std dev.659). By implication, the curriculum needs sufficient and relevant textbooks both in Arabic and English language to teach the content of the curriculum, the teacher as implemental of the curriculum need frequent training to update their knowledge and the curriculum need to be review to capture entrepreneurship education. These will prepare the students against current economic situation of the country as well prepare them for other challenges in the area of self-reliance and employment opportunity.

**Discussion**

In the course of this study, it is discovered that Islamic Studies Curriculum objectives are adequate and well stated, these is observe from responses of respondents which shows that majority of respondents agreed with items posted to elicit their opinion on the objectives of the curriculum mean score of figure 1: a. 4.66 (std dev 657), b. with mean score of 4.36 (std dev.779), c. with mean score of 4.67 (std dev.472) and d. with mean score of 4.45 (std dev.578). By implication, it shows that the curriculum objectives of NCE Islamic Studies curriculum are adequate and clearly stated. These findings is correlated with study of Badirudeen (2011) which assess NCE curriculum, stating that the curriculum is clearly stated and these is also attested to by the majority of the interviewee among the lecturers who agreed that the objective are clearly stated.

On the clarity of the contents, the contents of the curriculum are adequately okay with the curriculum objectives. These

can be seen from the responses of the respondents which shows that the mean score of figure 2: e. 4.31 (std dev.758), f. with mean score of 4.22 (std dev.793), g. with mean score of 4.61 (std dev.612) and h. with mean score of 4.3 (std dev.801). These depicts that the content of the curriculum are adequately and clearly stated, and consistent with the objectives but instructional material to teach it are not sufficient. Therefore, the curriculum also need review in the area of skill acquisition contents. This is also in line with the majority of interviewee opinions which affirm the clarity and consistency of the contents with the objective of the curriculum but established the fact that the materials to teach the content of the curriculum are not enough. The reason for this is that the majority of the materials to teach these courses are written in Arabic language particularly the primary source and not all the lecturers are well grounded in Arabic language.

The finding of the study also revealed that the planning and organisation of the curriculum are not adequate which make the contents of the curriculum to be cumbersome for instance ISS 214 (Islamic philosophy) and 215 (Muslim thought) which appear to be 1 unit credit course each, now matched together to remain 1 credit unit instead of being 2 credit. The same applied to 124 (Teaching methodology) which happen to be 2 credit units which are presently matched with 217 previously 1 credit unit instead of being 3 credit units now reduced to 1 credit unit. The same thing applied to Tajwid I and ii (125 (1CU) and 224 (1CU)) which supposed to have given 2 credit because of the muddle-up but reduced to 1CU. More so, ISS 225 (Islam in West African) and 226 (The Role of some Muslim Organisation in the spread of Islam in Nigeria) that are elective with 1CU each now matched together to still remain 1CU instead of been 2CU. Finally ISS 221 (Islamic Personal law (Nikkah and Talaq) 2009 edition) which has been right from the previous review being agitating that the reduction of the course from 2CU to 1CU in 2012 reviewed was in adequate because of the wideness of the course. In the present review, the course is now matched with Islamic personal law of succession 227 (Mirath) which is 1CU on his own instead of been 3CU now, all is now 1CU.

Some of the interviewee mention that these reduction is due to the fact that the NCCE want to be on the same page with UNESCO standard while some are of the view that NCCE want to reduce the graduating point of the students, while some are saying because they want to introduce more courses like 325 (introduction to da'wah) and 214 (introduction to Islamic economic system) which is carved out of 211 (Zakat and Sawm (2012 edition)) and introduction to ICT (226). They are of the view that all these are un-call for because it reduces academic standard and it may lead to half-baked graduate because some contents will still remain hidden to students throughout their course of learning. Initially, there was agitation that some of these courses lecture hours need to be reviewed upward. Another argument is that the primary objective of the curriculum which targeted provision of man power to the nation rather than international has been defeated for targeting and placing UNESCO standards which is international need over and above national need which is local and peculiar to the need of Nigeria Muslim. The implication is that the students who graduated as NCE in Nigeria will not even withstand ordinary diploma students in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Qatar, Niger and other Muslim country of the world. The curriculum of NCE in Nigeria is design to prepare students that finish NCE in Nigeria to undergo their university degree in any university in the world particularly the Muslim countries. In a situation the student were not well groomed they cannot compete with their Muslim Students offering the same course in other Muslim Countries.

The outcome of the findings revealed that available textbook to teach the student are not sufficient because not all Islamic Studies lecturers are Arabic literate. Similarly, modern instructional materials are not adequately supplied, most of the time the lecturers improvise within their locality or teach astatically to the students and the role of instructional materials in teaching cannot be over emphasize, likewise the mother instructional material expose students to Islamic global world. When the use of instruction of modern age was inadequate, it means students will be ignorant of recent development in Islamic world while the lecturers will also be narrow in scope in term of exposé. By this, it means a dumb, deaf and blind Man trying to guide other blind Man, all of them will crumble into a ditch. It is also discover that the teachers because of inadequate funding, some of the lecturers cannot go for further study, attend conferences, training and workshop that would assist them to be up-to-date in their field of endeavour. If not, the intervention of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) that has been playing major role in assisting lecturers to do most of these things, the lecturers would have been incapacitated with their job. Finally, publication of books, journals, book of chapters and conference proceedings which could have been source of information to students and lecturers are also inadequately fund and publication in academics is a prerequisite to promotion. There is a popular slogan in academics that "you either published or perished". If not TETFUND that has been assisting on these issues, where will lecturers get fund to finance these out of the poor remuneration and motivation on the part of the owner of these colleges of education (Private, State and Federal government)?



## Conclusion

The paper discussed assessment of the NCE Islamic Studies Curriculum (2020 edition) among colleges of education in North Central Nigeria. The study involved 225 lecturers across selected colleges of education offering Islamic studies in the Zone. Questionnaire and interview were designed to elicit responses from respondents based on the topic assessment of adequacy of NCE Islamic Studies Curriculum in North Central Nigeria. Descriptive method is employed using mean score, standard deviation through histogram to analyse the information obtained were involved. The paper discovered that objectives and content of the curriculum are clearly stated, the contents are adequately consistent with the objectives stated, but the contents are too cumbersome to teach, the curriculum in the area of hour allocated to the teaching of the contents are inadequate therefore making the objective of preparing the students for future challenges to be inadequate. Likewise the lecturers' training and development are also inadequately funding. In view of the above, it is concluded that the curriculum is in adequate and need to be reviewed.

## Recommendations

Base on the above discussion, the following are recommended:

1. That the curriculum need to be reviewed base on objectives and contents
2. That the contents should be spread to cover the current challenges of unemployment and self-reliance
3. That the contents of the curriculum should be given adequate hour of teaching that the content should be separated out of muddle-up as it is in the present review
4. That adequate and relevant instructional material, textbooks and journals should be made available for the ease of the teachings and learning of the subjects.
5. That the lecturers should be properly funded to go for further training.

## Acknowledgements

All praises be to Allah for given me opportunity of conducting and completing this study. Peace and blessing of Allah be with our noble prophet Muhammad, his Companions, his Wives and Family (SAW). My deepest appreciation goes to **Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND)** for given necessary financial support for the accomplishment of this study. I pray to Allah (SWT) to continue to guide and direct the management of the TETFUND. Likewise my appreciation will be incomplete without thanking the FCT College of Education Zuba Management and Committee for Educational and Linkages for given me the opportunity to benefit from Institutional Based Research (IBR) of the TETFUND 2023, long life to TETFUND and long life to COE Zuba.

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