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Lecturers' And Students' Acceptance Of Using Technology-Based Teaching AIDS (TTAs) When Teaching Ulum Hadith During The Covid-19 Pandemic

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Article History	Abstract
<p>Article Submission 21 January 2022</p> <p>Revised Submission 30 March 2022</p> <p>Article Accepted 15 June 2022</p>	<p>The COVID-19 Pandemic poses new challenges to those who intend to adopt a new teaching norm based on online learning. Some of the mediums involved in technology-based teaching aids (TTAs) are <i>Google Meet, Google Classroom, Zoom Meetings, Microsoft Teams</i> and <i>Webex Meeting</i> by CISCO. This study aims to examine the acceptance of lecturers and students on the use of TTAs during the Ulum Hadith course at several Institutes of Higher Learning (IHL) in Northern Malaysia. This qualitative design study only examined the implementation of online learning involving the Ulum Hadith course. Data were collected through interviews, observations and document analysis. The study sample comprised 13 lecturers, who acted as the main informants and 18 students from three IHL pursuing the Ulum Hadith course. Findings indicate a variety of TTAs were used during the teaching and learning sessions in order to attract the attention and active involvement of students during the pursuit of the Ulum Hadith course. Lecturers and students had a positive outlook towards TTA based on the increased frequency of TTAs used during the COVID-19 pandemic compared to before that period. Hence, it is suggested that lecturers should frequently update themselves on the latest developments in TTA so that the learning process occurs smoothly even though the world is presently faced with some challenging circumstances.</p> <p>Keywords: Teaching aid; e-Learning; Institution of Higher Learning; Ulum Hadith.</p>

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Introduction

Teaching aids (TAs) comprise teaching media or visual aids as well as its related materials that are used during a teaching session. The education world, especially in this pandemic era, has moved towards online Teaching and Learning (T&L) that uses various existing applications (Gunawan et al., 2020). Thus, it is easy to understand why TAs are important to the T&L process, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Maximum online use of TTAs by lecturers in the form of learning portals, websites, *YouTube*, video conferencing and mobile applications, can help create an effective interactive teaching process (Haron et al., 2020). Syed Hassan et al. (2020) stated that the purpose for applying modern technology in Hadith education, among others, is to expedite the Ulum Hadith T&L process. This is evident when students learn a particular hadith and easily gather information pertaining to it by carrying out searches using current technology. The use of TTAs in student-centred teaching and learning of Ulum Hadith is intended to facilitate students when acquiring knowledge and mastering pertinent skills, which is known as virtual learning or cybergogy. Although numerous studies have revealed the advantage of using TTA technology, however, the technology is being used at a moderate scale. The use of TTAs among Ulum Hadith lecturers (Syed Hassan et al., 2020) is at a moderate scale although they have a positive perception of TTA's use. Hence, the presence of this technology will have an impact on the preparation of TTAs by Ulum Hadith lecturers when expediting the online T&L process.

Problem Statement

The unstable COVID-19 infection rate has caused periodic changes in the way the education process is implemented. This situation requires self-adaptation and good preparation for a smooth online learning process. Some of the challenges and issues in using online learning technology are poor internet access in some areas, financial constraint due to increased internet access fees, lack of information regarding the latest applications as well as unattractive online applications used during T&L activities (Abdullah & Amran, 2021). Other factors that play a role are a less conducive home environment, a lack of TTA equipment (Tawyer et al., 2021), students who are unprepared, and parents who are uncooperative during online T&L activities (Magesvaran, 2021). Moreover, online learning does not appeal to students who are kinaesthetic learners. These types of students actually learn well through experience and physical participation in classroom activities. They are able to remember things well when trying hands-on activities for the first time. This leads to a lack of constructive interaction between lecturers and students, which than affects the online T&L process with the lecturer failing to determine the student's understanding or problems (Abd Rahman & Aris, 2021).

Literature Review

3.1 The Online Learning Concept

Online learning continues to expand and plays an important role in education in Malaysia. The term "online" refers to an activity that involves a certain technological device or equipment that is connected to an internet network (Amiruddin et. al, 2014). Muhammad et al. (2016) stated that online learning is the use of various technology-based devices or equipment that are connected to an education website. Naveed et al. (2017) stated that online learning has expanded rapidly due to several advantages, such as flexible learning, internet accessibility and cost effectiveness. T&L becomes more flexible when choosing a study location because students do not have to go to the campus to study or attend classes (Abdullah & Amran, 2021).

Online learning is the basis for the expansion of information technology and communication (Fauzan et al., 2019). Suharyanto et al. (2016) mentioned that the implementation of online T&L allows lecturers to enhance students' interest in communicating outside lecture hours. The combination with technology provides better time management for students who use this teaching method (Gajanan, 2020). This phenomenon shows that prompt transformation in the education world can help online T&L (Rusdiana et al. 2020). In the Malaysian context, the majority of IHL have been using technology as an important medium for T&L even before the COVID-19 pandemic

struck but on a minimum scale. For example, the use of GOALS in USIM and MyGuru in UPSI (Amiruddin et. al, 2014). With the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, all IHL have maximised the use of technology during T&L sessions.

3.2 Technology-based Teaching Aids (TTAs)

The education industry uses current technology, such as digital video conferencing platforms, namely *Google Meet*, *Google Classroom*, *Zoom Meetings*, *Microsoft Teams* and *CISCO Webex Meeting*, during this pandemic (Kuppusamy & Norman, 2021). Mobile devices such as tablets, laptops and smart phones have been maximally used as they play an important role in the online T&L process.

i. Google Meet

Google Meet is a video conferencing and digital software that is often used in teaching. This Google product has undergone improvements over time in terms of use and maintenance. Before the advent of Google Meet software, other software, such as Google Hangouts and Google Chat, have been widely used since October 2019, however, Google has since terminated the old version of the service and replaced it with new software, namely Google Meet (Magesvaran, 2021).

The maximum use of Google Meet software can increase students' interest in the study of hadith. This is evidenced from the diverse forms of T&L. Lecturers can directly share the screen containing the lesson's contents with students during lectures. In addition, lecturers will be able to see students participating in real-time during their lecture sessions. Thus, the lecturer can effectively use the questions and answers as well as discussion methods with students without these students becoming bored (Saad et al., 2020).

ii. Google Classroom

Google Classroom is one of Google's products. This software is known as the Learning Management System (LMS), which was adapted based on website 2.0, for managing an effective T&L process and saving costs. This software can increase students' interest in the study of Ulum Hadith through a combination of various elements of effective delivery, such as designing exercises or worksheets, two-way online discussions and marking student's assignments and exams in a paperless mode (Henukh et al., 2020).

The technique for using the Google Classroom software should be linked to other software in order to be more effective and efficient. Among the uses of the Google Drive software is for manage training, Gmail software for information delivery and communication between lecturers and students and Google Calendar is for scheduling online lecture sessions (Rusdiana et al., 2020).

iii. Zoom Meetings

Zoom Meeting is a video-centred communication software, which can be accessed using various platforms, such as iOS, Android and certain websites. This makes it easier for lecturers and students to use of the Zoom Meeting software by using only smartphones and laptops (Fitriyani et al., 2020). The Zoom Meeting software was created in 2011 by Eric Yuan, who specializes in technology and hails from San Jose, California in the United States. Since the COVID-19 pandemic struck, many teachers and lecturers have extensively used this software to ensure that the T&L process is managed more effectively. Besides that, some of the other advantages are that lecturers can make video recordings of two-way presentations with a video display of the lecturer in front of a Power Point screen with attractive illustrations (Wan Hassan et al., 2020). This will help save the lecturer's time and attract the student's interest to watch the video recording with greater frequency in order to increase the student's understanding of the Ulum Hadith course.

iv. Microsoft Teams

Microsoft Teams is a software developed by Microsoft and has a variety of uses that has attracted students' interest during lecture sessions in Ulum Hadith courses. Students can easily access exercises and notes from lecturers. This software is available through MS Office, which is

available in Microsoft 365. Lecturers can effectively manage the T&L process by using this software beginning with the scheduling of lecture sessions to the delivery of study content documents to students (Nawi & Umi Hamidaton, 2020).

v. CISCO Webex Meeting

CISCO Webex Meeting is a communication software released by CISCO System. This software was created in 1995 by Subrah Iyar and Min Zhu, who are technology specialists from Milpitas, California in the United States. The software can be used via a laptop through browser websites such as Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox, while smartphones can use it by downloading applications from Google Playstore or App Store (Taib et al., 2019).

vi. Mobile Device

Some of the devices or tools that play an important role in the online T&L process are tablets, laptops, internet networks and smartphones (Iftakhar, 2016). Lecturers and students need to master pertinent skills by taking the opportunity to use these mobile devices during the T&L process in line with the development of contemporary digital technology.

3.3 Ulum Hadith

Ulum Hadith is a method used by hadith scholars to determine the criteria for classifying hadith and for attaching values to the position of the Hadith narrator (Salih, 1997; Deraman et al., 2010). This method allows one to identify the position of a hadith by studying the personality traits of the narrator, the number of narrators of a particular Hadith as well as the validity of the Hadith text that will be used as evidence or in arguments pertaining to faith or Syariah matters (Abadi, 2011). Abdul Halim, A. et al. (2019) asserted that Ulum Hadith is the science of tools or filters of information used in the study of Hadith. It is also important for the Muslim community to know the status and position of the Hadith being studied as to whether it is a Hadith that has been accepted or rejected, namely if it is *sahih*, *hasan* or *dhaif*.

Ulum Hadith is a course offered in several IHL that provide study programs in the field of Islamic Studies with the aim of exposing students to the methods and formula used in identifying a Hadith genuinely belonging to the Prophet SAW and to determine whether the Hadith has been accepted or rejected. Moreover, Soroni et al. (2018) stated that the Ulum Hadith discipline, or *mustalah al-Hadith*, is a field of knowledge that must be well understood and mastered by those who want to seriously engage in the field of hadith. This study focuses on lecturers' and students' acceptance of the use of TTA in the T&L process due to the COVID-19 pandemic that is plaguing the world today.

Methodology Of The Study

This study aims to discuss various TTAs used by lecturers during online teaching of the Ulum Hadith course. This qualitative design study involved data collection techniques that use observation, semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Online interview sessions involving all informants were conducted through the Google Meet application and the sessions were recorded, while observations were conducted by attending online lectures. This study employed the probability sampling or purposive sampling technique on the entire population of students and lecturers involved in the Ulum Hadith course. Participants in this study comprised 8 hadith lecturers who taught Ulum Hadith courses in three PIHL, namely KUIPs in Perlis, UniSHAMS in Kedah and KITAB in Penang. Meanwhile, 18 PIHL students acted as informants in this study. They were selected according to the recommendations of their lecturers, which was based on whether they were excellent, average and poor grade students based on their achievement in the Ulum Hadith course. Data obtained were analysed using the ATLAS.ti version 8 software to compile themes related to the use of TTA technology when teaching of the Ulum Hadith course.

Findings And Discussions

5.1 Informant's Demographics

Lecturers: Educational Background and Teaching Experience as a Lecturer

This study found that most lecturers were involved in various fields of study. Each of their specialties were recognised by local and foreign universities. Some of their fields of study focused on the Quran, Hadith, Arabic, Sharia and Usuluddin. Four lecturers had a Doctor of Philosophy Degree, while seven lecturers had a Master's Degree and two lecturers had a Bachelor's Degree. Most of them possessed a certificate of study at the bachelor's degree level from several foreign countries, such as Madinah (Saudi Arabia), , as well as Cairo (Egypt). Overall, 13 lecturers (informants) were involved in this study.

Teaching experience is very important in ensuring that the readiness to implement online T&L is at a high level. Findings show that seven informants have 1 to 10 years of teaching experience, while six informants have more than 10 years of teaching experience. Findings also show that lecturers with 1 to 10 years of teaching experience used their technology skills to the maximum compared to those who had more than 11 years of teaching experience. Informants with less than 10 years of teaching experience showed more interest and easily used technology for teaching, while informants with more than 11 years of teaching experience preferred to use the traditional teaching approach and found it difficult to adapt to changes to online learning. Results of the analysis of the interviews with informants are as follows:

Table 1. Informant's Lecturers towards Educational Background and Teaching Experience

IHL	Informant (Lecturer)	Educational Background	Teaching Experience (Year)
KUIPs	1	PhD in Qur'an & Sunnah Studies, IIUM	10
	2	Master's in al-Quran and al-Hadith, IIUM	14
	3	PhD Islamic Studies (Hadith), UKM	28
	4	Master's in al-Quran and al-Hadith, IIUM	6
	5	Bachelor of Hadith and Islamic Studies, Islamic University of Madinah	3
UniSHAMS	6	Master's in al-Quran and al-Hadith, UniSHAMS	7
	7	PhD of Usuluddin (Hadith), Al-Azhar University	29
	8	PhD of Usuluddin (Hadith), Al-Azhar University	14
	9	Master's in al-Quran and al-Hadith, IIUM	10
KITAB	10	Master's in al-Quran and al-Hadith, IIUM	18
	11	Master's in al-Quran and al-Hadith, IIUM	8

12	Master's in al-Quran and al-Hadith, IIUM	8
13	Bachelor of Sharia, Islamic University of Madinah	18

Student Informants

Six students from each IHL (KUIPs, UniSHAMS and KITAB) were selected for the interview sessions. Two of the students had performed excellently, two performed moderately and two performed poorly during their Ulum Hadith course. Overall, there were 18 student informants.

5.2 Technology-based Teaching Aids (TTAs) Used in Teaching the Ulum Hadith Course in IHL

This study had examined TTAs that are commonly and frequently used by lecturers to attract students to follow their lessons during the Ulum Hadith course. The TTAs used include the technological TTAs that are mainly used in the T&L sessions. TTA is an important element used for streamlining the T&L process.

Findings based on observations found that throughout their teaching stint, lecturers often used Power Point slides as the main teaching material, besides other supporting materials such as video presentations, advertisement excerpts, and short dramas. All the TTAs used by the lecturers were intended to help provide students an understanding of whatever content they aimed to deliver. The lecturers stated that they tried to diversify the TTAs in order to attract students to follow his lessons. They argued that adding the use of TTAs in online learning as a new norm in teaching that had led them to spend more time planning lessons and online collaborative tasks (Ballew, 2017). The following interview and observation data show the TTAs used by lecturers when implementing student-centred T&L. Results of the analysis from the informants are as follows:

Table 2. Technology-based Teaching Aids (TTAs) Used in Online Teaching in IHL

Type of TTAs	KUIPs	UniSHAMS	KITAB
Online software	Google Meet	Google Meet	Google Meet
	Google Classroom	Google Classroom	Google Classroom
	Cisco Webex Meeting	YouTube	Zoom Meeting
	Zoom Meeting	Zoom Meeting	Microsoft Teams
	Facebook Live Closed Group		

Students' Acceptance of Technology-Based Teaching Aids

According to all the informants, the response and acceptance of students to the use of TTA technology by lecturers was positive. This can increase students' interest in Ulum Hadith courses. The evidence based on the results of analysis of the informants is as follows:

Table 3. Students’ Acceptance of Technology-Based Teaching Aids

Item	KUIPs	UniSHAMS	KITAB
Frequency of Using TTAs	Before the Pandemic: Low	Before the Pandemic: Moderate	Before the Pandemic: Low
	During the Pandemic: High	During the Pandemic: High	During the Pandemic: High
Students’ Acceptance	Positive Increase in interest	Positive No need to be present at the campus	Positive Creative and Optimum
Challenges in Using TTAs	Students do not open the camera	Student’s interaction	Level of preparedness of IHL
	Poor internet access	Unsatisfactory attendance of students	Financial constraints for full subscriptions
	Poor focus	Limited skills in technology	Worrying state of students’ level of understanding
	Lack of creativity	High costs	
	Student’s motivation needs to be enhanced	Poor internet access	

Findings indicate that the frequency of using TTA technology saw a change in patterns before and during the Covid-19 pandemic era. Most IHL used online learning more often during the pandemic than before the pandemic. In the case of students’ acceptance, they were of the view that the use of online learning is positive and can increase students’ interest in pursuing Ulum Hadith courses. Lecturers can use this method to interact with students without conducting face-to-face lectures on campus. Some students were of the view that some lecturers perform optimally and creatively when utilizing TTAs. In addition, among the challenges of online learning are students not activating the laptop or computer camera during T&L sessions, limited internet access, poor focus, lack of creativity, low motivation, unsatisfactory student attendance, limited technological skills due to the age factor, high maintenance costs, the ability to prepare and provide by IHL and financial constraints when applying for full subscriptions. All these challenges need to be reduced or overcome in order to ensure that the student’s interest and ability can be enhanced in order to effectively master the Ulum Hadith course.

5.3 Discussions

Based on the findings of this study, the educational background of the study’s informants regarding TTA technology has had an impact on the ability to manage online learning. Most lecturers are able to apply digital technology in line with the development of 21st Century Learning (PAK-21) and the Industrial Revolution 4.0 (IR 4.0). The highest educational qualification and achievement among the lecturers was the Doctor of Philosophy degree. This factor tends to enhance the quality of teaching in the Ulum Hadith course, while the teaching experience of lecturers can help to expediate the implementation of online T&L. Besides that, when lecturers familiarize themselves and integrate online T&L technology, the time consumed for organising the teaching plan or course outline, can be reduced. These findings are in line with the findings of Kuppusamy & Norman (2021), which found that young lecturers with 1 to 10 years of teaching experience are more common and possess technological skills compared to those with 11 years or more of teaching experience.

Nevertheless, Kayalar (2016) found that the younger generation of lecturers are more technologically literate despite a lack of teaching experience, while lecturers with more than 25 years of teaching experience strive to adapt to new technologies. Ketut Sudarsana et al. (2019) found that the use of online T&L technology can improve the quality of lecturers by producing innovative learning techniques that provide the best experience and can motivate students to learn and improve their performance (Umairah et al. 2020). Haggag (2019) confirmed that virtual learning in the lecture room enhances autonomy in a student-centred collaborative learning environment. Zahra et al. (2020) showed that the willingness of lecturers to conduct online T&L sessions was a problem-solving initiative in the learning process during the COVID-19 pandemic era.

Furthermore, the use of TTAs also influences the implementation of the online T&L process. Informants have used various TTAs for the purpose of attracting students' interest, in addition to helping to launch the T&L process. These findings are consistent with Syed Hassan et al. (2020), who stated that the selection and use of TTAs in the T&L of Ulum Hadith courses is influenced by the topics discussed, content of the lessons presented and its impact on student learning. In regard to online learning, this study found that most lecturers had used digital video conferencing platform applications, such as *Google Meet*, *Google Classroom*, *Zoom Meetings*, *Microsoft Teams* and *CISCO Webex Meeting*, during this pandemic. However, there are several other applications that provide an advantage but are only sparingly used. This depends on current needs, the ability to provide full subscription by IHL and innovations practiced by lecturers that are consistent with the development of digital technology in PAK-21.

It is suggested Ulum Hadith T&L methodology will attract the interest of students and have a strong impact if combined with contemporary technology applications. For example, the use of TTA technology, such as Power Point slides that are usually used by lecturers and students, has proven its effectiveness by taking the input from classic Hadith scriptures in Arabic and inserting them into Power Point slides and later presenting them traditionally in the T&L process. The use of unlimited technology can help students to more easily and effectively pursue the Ulum Hadith course.

Conclusion

Lecturers' and students' acceptance of online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic has been positive. However, efforts for better and more effective improvements should be seriously considered to ensure that online learning can be better implemented in the future. The readiness and commitment of lecturers and students is crucial to ensure that T&L activities in this new norm can be properly implemented for the common good.

It is also suggested that Ulum Hadith lecturers need to possess the necessary knowledge and skills to use digital technology, especially for teaching Ulum Hadith courses. This is because the use of TTAs and information technology, such as the internet and other multimedia materials, can encourage students to be actively involved in T&L and further influence the implementation of TTAs in the T&L of Ulum Hadith courses offered by IHLs. Online learning is not a new trend in the world of education. The Covid-19 pandemic has created awareness among the public on the importance of this approach so that the learning process is implemented smoothly. It is undeniable that our society needs time to prepare for such an approach. Hence, it is everyone's responsibility to take the initiative and familiarize oneself in the use of devices such as laptops and mobile phones. These skills are important criteria when facing future challenges.

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