

Principles of Online Learning Assessment: A Literature Review Between Western Education Theory and Islamic Education Theory

Arief Ardiansyah✉, Thoriq Al-Anshori, Zuhkriyan Zakaria, Bagus Cahyanto

Universitas Islam Malang, Indonesia

Universitas Islam Malang, Indonesia

Universitas Islam Malang, Indonesia

Universitas Islam Malang, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

Purpose – The right assessment strategy can reduce the number of academic dishonesties during online learning in the pandemic era. Academic dishonesty is a problem considered normal but has a detrimental impact on the development of a nation. Therefore, instructors need to know the principles of assessment that can reduce the number of academic dishonesties in universities.

Methods – This study uses a qualitative approach with a literature study technique. This literature comes from several online assessment books, articles, handbooks, and others. The procedure used in this study involves selecting a topic, developing themes, selecting problems, searching for literature in the database, and selecting and evaluating literature based on these problems.

Findings – The results of this study are in the form of online learning assessment principles that can be applied in designing assessment activities. First, design a student-centered assessment that includes self-reflection. Second, design and include grading rubrics for assessing contributions to the discussion and assignments, projects, and the collaboration itself. Third, include collaborative assessment. Fourth, encourage students to develop skills in providing feedback. Fifth, use assessment techniques appropriate to the context and learning objectives. Sixth, design an assessment that is clear, easy to understand, and guaranteed success in the online environment. Seventh, ask students for input on how the assessment is carried out.

Research implications – This study contributes to the development of literature regarding the online learning assessment process, especially in universities.

Originality/value – Future research should be able to test these online learning assessment principles to find empirical evidence of their effectiveness.

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CONTACT: ✉ arief.ardiansyah@unisma.ac.id

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Introduction

During this COVID-19 pandemic, all countries are struggling to develop effective learning models. The online learning model is one of the most commonly applied alternatives (Desrani et al., 2021; Donitsa-Schmidt & Ramot, 2020; Kidd & Murray, 2020; Sen-akbulut et al., 2022). Over time, this learning model raises several problems. The lack of direct interaction between instructors and students (Arnold, 2012), plus the fast-paced and independent characteristics, has triggered a series of crises in the quality of online education itself (Harati et al., 2020). Academic honesty is one of the most common types of learning behavior deviations.

At the university level, academic dishonesty in cheating and plagiarism has become a widespread issue for students. Guangul et al., (2020) reported that 19 out of 20 teachers mentioned that the issue of violating academic integrity was their main concern. Technology advances allow students to "cut and paste" other people's work and buy test papers online, trace articles or websites, and send answers to other students via cell phones and other devices (Peterson, 2019). So that the learning outcomes they achieve are not completely reliable because many other variables contaminate their learning assessment results (Ghanbari & Nowroozi, 2021).

If this academic dishonesty is not followed up immediately, this can become a boomerang for education stakeholders. Academic dishonesty can cause concerns that lead to the degradation of academic quality for both students and institutions (Heriyati & Ekasari, 2020). In the long run, it will affect their attitudes and work ethic in the future (Mohd Salleh et al., 2013), hinder the quality of education modernization, which leads to the problem of deterioration of education nationally (Chen et al., 2020). Therefore, it is time for faculty members, administrators, and regulatory bodies to take the necessary steps to preserve the academy by eradicating academic dishonesty and producing graduates with integrity (Marshall & Varnon, 2017).

Many articles discuss strategies that can be used by faculty members, administrators, and institutions to overcome the problem of academic dishonesty. One strategy that is always discussed in these articles is the assessment strategy used in online learning (Holden et al., 2021; Jones & Sheridan, 2015; Mahabeer & Pirtheepal, 2019; Poullet et al., 2016; Peterson, 2019). Appropriate assessment design has long been considered a panacea for preventing plagiarism (Jones & Sheridan, 2015). Assessment activities that cannot engage students actively, and assessment techniques that are outdated and cannot stimulate higher-order thinking processes, can lead to acts of cheating and plagiarism (Ashworth et al., 1997). One way to minimize cheating and plagiarism is to use varied assessment techniques rather than relying on only one model (Poullet et al., 2016). An appropriate assessment of academic results can determine the quality of education and learning. Education scholars highlight student assessment

strategies as an important element in maintaining the quality of education (Mahabeer & Pirtheepal, 2019).

However, the reality on the ground, faculty members and administrators encounter challenges and difficulties in developing methods that adequately assess student learning in online learning environments while maintaining aspects of academic honesty (Holden et al., 2021). The findings of several studies indicate that although academics in universities apply various assessment practices, the best practices have not been revealed in general (Mokhtar et al., 2016). Therefore, this study aims to reveal the principles of assessment that can minimize the opportunity for fraud that can be applied in various assessment practices used by instructors in universities.

Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with a library method that examines various data relating to the research topic. The procedure used in this study involves selecting a topic, developing themes, and selecting problems (George, 2008). The other steps involve planning, searching the library in the database, and selecting and evaluating the library based on these problems.

The literature that is the main reference is a book from Palloff, R. M., & Pratt, K. entitled *Assessing the Online Learner: Resources and Strategies for Faculty, Building Online Learning Communities Effective Strategies for the Virtual Classroom, and The Virtual Student: A Profile and Guide to Working with Online Learners* (1st Edition) with a study in the book *Hadza Walidi*. In addition, this research is supported by many journal articles, handbooks, and others from Science Direct, Google Scholar, Eric Database, and others. The technique used presents various theories related to the themes and problems sought, namely the principles of effective online learning assessment for Islamic education students.

Result and Discussion

1. Principles of Effective Online Learning Assessment

(McMillan, 2018) and (Dick et al., 2015) argue that assessment should be integrated and consistent with instructional design. They identified several characteristics of classroom assessment, namely learner-centred, teacher-centred, mutually beneficial, formative, context-specific, ongoing, and well applied. Continuity between them is a necessity, which is conceptually Islamic education called *tahdzibun nafs* (Anshori, 2021). Although these principles were originally developed and applied to face-to-face learning, the same principles apply to online classes. However, how do these ideas take shape when they transform into an online learning environment? Here are some guidelines for assessing students in online classes: (1) Design a learner-centered assessment that includes self-reflection, (2) Design and include grading rubrics for assessing contributions to discussions and assignments,

projects, and the collaboration itself, (3) Include collaborative assessment through the upload of publicly viewable papers, along with student-to-student comments, (4) Encourage students to develop skills in providing feedback by providing good feedback guidelines and setting an example of what is expected, (5) Use assessment techniques appropriate to the context and aligned with the learning objectives, (6) Design a clear, easy-to-understand assessment and guaranteed success in the online environment.

We will now explore each of the above principles.

1.1 *Design a Learner-Centered Assessment that includes self-reflection*

When the learning process changes, the assessment process should also change. In the online learning environment, Sharkey & Weimer (2003) explain the importance of empowering students in the learning process and the assessment. Empowerment can take the form of students' responsibility for their learning activities, such as (1) discussion, (2) participation in collaborative activities, and (3) self-reflection as an important assessment model.

The reflective process that should be included in online learning provides the basis for student-centred assessment. Learners should be rewarded for self-reflection, which should be incorporated into designs for online learning. Students should be asked to reflect on their progress at least twice during a semester — in the middle and at the end of the semester. This reflection or muhasabah concept is also applied by adherents of tarekat and Sufi teachings because it is a fairly helpful way to identify oneself (Sakandari, 2005).

In online learning, instructors can use the Critical Incident Questionnaire (CIQ) developed by Brookfield (2017) to guide students to reflect on their learning progress over several periods. This questionnaire is usually given at the closing session of each weekly discussion or the end of each learning unit. Question items from CIQ are as follows:

Table 1. Critical Incident Questionnaire Items

No.	Question Items
1	In what class moments did you feel most involved with the various activities during the week?
2	At what class moment did you feel most alienated from the various activities this week?
3	What actions or actions did someone (instructor or student) take in class this week that you found most encouraging and helpful?
4	What actions or actions did a person (instructor or student) take in class this week that you found the most annoying and confusing?
5	What surprised you the most in class this week? (This includes your reactions, something other people do, or whatever catches your eye.)

On another occasion, Abu Hamid al Ghazali guided students in reflecting on their spiritual learning progress (Al Ghazali, 2014). This reflection can be done in the middle or at the end of the learning period. Instructors can create a questionnaire based on the following items:

Table 2. Al Ghazali's Reflection Questionnaire Items

No.	Question Items
1	In which class moment did you listen to yourself more than the teacher you admired most?
2	In which class moment did you listen more to the teacher you admired most than yourself?
3	Under what conditions can you no longer listen to any criticism or suggestions?
4	Can you immediately apply Islamic law or the syara' commandments that you have learned?
5	Which one works for you? Listen to the teacher's stunning explanations and can touch you or see the teacher's exemplary good behavior firsthand?

Every collaborative activity included in online learning should contain a reflective component. At a minimum, students are asked to reflect on their participation in the activity and contribution to the group. In addition, asking students to reflect on a process or activity allows them to evaluate the activity and provides the instructor with very important formative and summative information that can be combined into future assignments. Considering that collaboration between students and instructors is very influential in realizing collaborative activities that can reflect various learning activities in everyday life, especially morals (Asy'ari, 1995).

1.2 Design and Include an Assessment Rubric

This section discusses the principles of designing and incorporating grading rubrics to assess contributions to discussions and assignments, projects, and collaborations themselves. Rubrics help ensure the high quality of an assignment and assist students in understanding the assignment and assessment requirements. In addition, the rubric defines the spectrum of performance by providing categories that cover all possible outcomes for work, from basic to outstanding achievements (Palloff & Pratt, 2009).

As noted earlier, rubrics can also be used for self-reflection, enabling students to compare their work with the performance expectations defined in each category. Table 1 illustrates a rubric for assessment discussions in online classes.

Table 3. Rubric for Participating in Discussion

Criteria	Skoring			
	Nonperformance (0 points)	Basic (1 points)	Proficient (2 points)	Distinguished (3 points)
Include and apply relevant concepts, theories, or lecture materials correctly accompanied by quotes from the source	Does not explain concepts, theories, or relevant lecture materials properly accompanied by quotes from the source.	Summarizes relevant course concepts, theories, or materials. Rarely provide quotes.	Apply and analyze relevant course concepts, theories, or materials. Give frequent quotes.	Evaluate and synthesize relevant course concepts, theories, or materials. Always provide a quote.
Responding to fellow students, linking discussions with course concepts and providing substantive feedback.	Not responding to fellow students.	Responding to fellow students without linking the discussion to the relevant subject concepts. Provide feedback, but not substantive.	Responding to fellow students, linking discussions with relevant subject concepts. Often provides substantive feedback.	Responding to fellow students, linking discussions with relevant subject concepts, and always expanding dialogue through providing substantive feedback.
Apply professional, personal or other real-world experiences.	Not contributing professional, personal or other real-world experience.	Contribute some professional, personal or other real-world experience that may or may not be related to course content.	Apply professional, personal or other real-world experience.	Apply relevant professional, personal or real-world experiences and expand dialogue by responding to examples from peers.
Support opinions or arguments with relevant resources outside the assigned learning resources	Not building relevant arguments.	Building relevant arguments but with minimal resource support.	Always support arguments with additional resources.	Validate arguments with existing resources and support the learning of others through contributing additional resources.

The existence of a rubric can also make the instructor more valid and observant in collecting data. Given the validity in assessing or measuring is a must. The existence of data that is stored neatly can help instructors develop their potential, especially in the field of data management. Nasafi (1995) provides an interpretation of the fourth verse of Surah Al Alaq that if the validity is still not optimal, the solution is to increase writing, record data and so on.

1.3 *Include Collaborative Assessments.*

In this section, we discuss the inclusion of collaborative assessment through the public publication of papers and student-to-student commentary. Laal & Laal (2012) define collaborative learning as a learning method in which learners at various skill levels work together in small groups to achieve common goals. In a collaborative learning environment, students are challenged socially and emotionally as they listen to different perspectives, and they are required to articulate and defend their ideas. So they began to create a unique conceptual framework and not just depend on the textual framework alone. In a collaborative learning environment, too, students will learn how to interact with others so that communication skills are honed indirectly, choosing the best possible words and actions. In the end, students can adapt easily to all situations and conditions under the direction of the instructor (Zabidi, 1994).

Through these collaborative efforts, students reach a deeper level of understanding as they move from independence to interdependence, thereby strengthening the foundation of the online learning community (Palloff & Pratt, 2009). Collaboration also enables meaningful dialogue, which is critical to the discussion aspect of online learning. Through learning together in a learning community, students can broaden and deepen their learning experience, test new ideas by sharing them with groups, and obtain critical and constructive feedback. For example, they can learn many Islamic religious education materials and discuss social issues. Reviewing it requires broad insight and active participation among students in solving a problem because social problems are problematic and difficult to measure because of their complexity (Qoysi, 2001).

Online learning requires every instructor to be optimal in managing their learning and to be observant in measuring student achievement. Emotional touch is claimed to be less than optimal in this online learning, but that does not mean that online learning is underestimated. Through online learning, the seriousness of students is tested. Umar bin Hafidz (2000) stated that offline learning is not completely certain that students can absorb the cognitive and affective knowledge of the instructor, but what is the benchmark is the sincerity, both of the students and the instructor.

Assessing group projects is more challenging in an online learning environment, so establishing a guide for collaborative assessment can make this task easier. At the end of a collaborative activity, the instructor usually asks students to collect a self-assessment of their contribution and participation in an activity and a peer assessment. In addition, the instructor should recapitulate the final score for the lesson and follow up on students who do not take part in the lesson. Pallof & Pratt (2007) compiled question items that can be used to guide self-assessment as follows:

Table 4. Pallof & Pratt's Self-assessment Guidance Items

No.	Question Items
1	How well do I participate in my group? Am I a team player?
2	Am I making a significant contribution?
3	Do I share my workload?
4	How comfortable am I with the group process?
5	Do I feel comfortable expressing problems or concerns openly?
6	Do I provide substantive feedback to other group members?
7	How do I feel about the collaborative work produced by my group?
8	How well does the collaborative process contribute to my learning goals and objectives for this lesson?

On another occasion, Buthi (1995) and Awwamah (2013) suggested that in the preparation of question items that can be used to assess oneself are as follows:

Table 5. Buthi & Awwamah's Self-assessment Guidance Items

No.	Question Items
1	How well do I participate when I am in a bad mood in group work?
2	Did I make a blatant deviation?
3	Do I schedule activities in a day?
4	Which is more comfortable doing things in a group or alone?
5	If you have a problem, do you like to pour your heart out to your colleagues? Why?
6	Are you satisfied doing something with the help of a group?
7	If one group member stood out more than you, how would you feel?
8	Which is more optimal in terms of achievement? Do you work alone or with a group?

Using either the first or second item, the instructor could ask students to give letter grades for themselves and their peers—A (very good), B (good), C (fair), D (poor), and E (very low). Finally, the instructor can assign two grades to the assignment — one is a group score for the group's final product, and the other is an individual score assigned to each group member. A measurement based on trust in students has its advantages. Students are allowed to take advantage of their awareness to realize an attitude of confidence and feel valued for their existence. Thus, students' character is formed strongly because of the touch of the principle of trust (Ghuddah, 2001).

Peer assessment is a process in which experts evaluate the quality of scientific work to improve the work's quality and clarity (Rigby et al., 2018). Peer assessment has an important function in collaborative activities (Palloff & Pratt, 2009). In face-to-face classes, time constraints are often a barrier to the use of peer assessment. However, in an asynchronous learning environment, papers and assignments can be easily uploaded for viewing by other students (Perveen, 2016). Instructors can pair students up or put them into small groups to rate each other.

Table 2 shows an example of a feedback form that can be given to students to guide them in studying the papers of their other friends.

Table 6. Feedback Form for Peer Assessment

Criteria	Skoring			Reader Comments
	Weak	Satisfactory	Strong	
<i>Clarity</i> The writing is clear, and the importance of the message is visible.				
<i>Evidence</i> There is supporting research and citations				
<i>Organizing</i> Papers are organized and ideas flow well.				
<i>Mechanics and APA Style</i> Contains few or no mechanical and grammatical errors and is well-formatted				
<i>Effectiveness</i> The product is overall effective and satisfactory and demonstrates mastery of the topic.				

To use this form effectively, the instructor can provide examples of papers that have been graded using the form. Instructors can also provide practice with feedback to students on how well they did their peer assessment.

1.4 Encouraging Students to Develop Ability to Give Feedback

Instructors can guide students to develop the ability to provide feedback by giving them guidance on how to put this into practice. Typically, in a constructive learning environment, peers often provide perspective on whether their peers have an essential contribution to their learning community. Therefore, a learning environment that can stimulate collaborative activities should include peer evaluation in the assessment process. These activities can be from responses to discussion questions, assessments of papers, projects from colleagues, Etc. This

activity can also train them to interact with others so that affective abilities are also honed (Zarnuji, 1981).

However, students do not always understand how to give good feedback. Consequently, instructors need to provide guidelines for students to support them in developing these skills. This guide is expected to overcome problems and doubts by using feedback from students as part of an assessment tool. Palloff & Pratt (2003) provide guidelines for providing feedback for students:

Table 7. Palloff & Pratt's Feedback-Giving Guidance Items

No.	Guidance Items
1	Do not give feedback spontaneously. Prepare in advance.
2	Before you start typing, think about what you want to say. Organize your ideas and make sure they are arranged logically and systematically.
3	Take some notes before writing an online message. It helps you understand what you need to say.
4	Use short paragraphs. It encourages you to express yourself in minimal words.
5	Make sure the other person will understand your message. After typing a message, try reading it a bit more aloud.
6	Cite only a few essential sentences that adequately summarize the message, and leave your comments afterward.
7	Just saying that you agree with something will not add much to the conversation. Why not tell people why you agree? You can state several reasons why you feel that way. In this way, you will appear like a wise person who thinks carefully about things and takes all the facts into account.
8	Make sure your message is written professionally and not rude to avoid insulting those who will read it and accidentally offending other group members.

Given the diversity of students with complex thoughts, sometimes some advice that has been widely used becomes useless because it does not touch the spiritual realm (Al Muhasibi, 1998). Al Muhasibi revealed that in providing feedback to students, many things need to be considered, such as:

Table 8. Muhasibi's Feedback-Giving Guidance Items

No.	Guidance Items
1	Pay close attention to the situation and condition of the class in general before giving feedback, especially regarding their psychological condition
2	Arrange ideas by paying attention to cognitive, psychomotor, and affective aspects
3	If the learning process is delivered indirectly, such as online, then avoid things that make it easy for them to plagiarize
4	Prepare small notes to control what you say to be valid and scientifically justifiable
5	Use simple language or dialogue so that students readily absorb it
6	Try to use subtle expressions so as not to hurt the feelings of students

The instructor can act as a good feedback model. Because the tone, frequency, and way of delivering feedback will be captured and followed by students. Instructors can upload the final draft of the paper on the discussion board for feedback from students. Instructors can also add feedback to individual papers using the Track Changes feature in Word, taking great care to keep feedback supportive, neutral, and professional. The instructor can also allow students to start using Track Changes together, and in the final reflection of the lesson, the instructor can ask them how useful this has been for them. Through this modeling, they are taught new skills to transfer to other assessment activities in learning.

1.5 Use Effective Assessment Techniques

Assignments and assignments are not only relevant to the learning objectives of the field of study. However, they are also relevant to the real-life of students, making them more involved and active in collaborative activities (Jonassen, 2011). Educators should have other assessment strategies apart from tests, quizzes, and rote exercises. While these assessments help assess some aspects of online learning, they should not be the primary assessment instrument. Various assessment techniques should be applied to assess student performance effectively. Collaborative activities in online learning, whether discussions or group projects are best assessed using collaborative instruments. For example, educators can establish collaborative group work forums and collaborative problem-solving activities in an Islamic Religious Education class. In comparison, assessments in tests and quizzes are applied to ensure whether individual students master the essential facts, concepts, or principles in the assignment. Thus, these assessment activities will align with learning objectives, problem-solving in the field of study, and mastery of essential competencies.

The above concept is in line with the opinion of Athiyah (2009) and Qoysi (2018), who suggest that a teacher should pay attention to aspects of life as a whole to give students academic meaning. Atthiyah stated that an adequate assessment technique is based on educational principles (tarbiyyah) and not just teaching (ta'lim).

1.6 Designing Effective Assessments for Online Learning Environments

Mastery of academic competence from a field of study to ensure that the technique is in line with learning objectives is an essential prerequisite for an educator in developing effective assessment techniques in the field of study. Various techniques to assess student learning in online learning are highly recommended. Gaytan (2005), through his article, summarizes several practical techniques for conducting assessments in an online environment as follows:

Table 9. Gaytan's Techniques for Online Assessment

No.	Guidance Items
1	Use controlled testing: considering the difficulty of maintaining academic integrity in online learning—plagiarism, copying, identity verification, educators are expected to be able to observe each student's work. Some software (Turnitin, SmallSEOtools, Copyscape) can help check the similarity of one paper against other papers to ensure there is an element of plagiarism (a plagiarism checker). Instructors are encouraged to obtain pictures and signatures of all students enrolled in online learning at the initial on-campus meeting. In addition, online educators are encouraged to conduct on-campus exams to monitor, compare signatures, and answer student questions. Online exam software applications such as GoogleForm, Testmoz, ProProfs, and others can be used in cases where campus exams cannot be conducted as they are currently.
2	Maintain communication with students while providing adequate feedback. Immediate, ongoing, and detail-oriented feedback helps them understand the material and apply what they have learned more effectively.
3	Create a learning environment full of dynamic interactions. Interaction has a dramatic effect on learning achievement. High interaction can improve learning through performance tests, grades, and satisfaction.
4	Modification of traditional assessment. Traditional assessment techniques such as essay tests, provocative discussion questions, learning through projects, problem-solving, and collaboration can be adapted for online learning.
5	Use alternative assessment techniques. The first alternative assessment technique, authentic assessment, is used when measuring student performance under the same conditions in the real world. The second technique, performance assessment, is used when students produce a product or activity in the context of the learning process. A third technique, portfolio assessment, is used when student work is documented to show progress, processes, and final products. In the context of online learning, educators can take advantage of E-portfolio software such as Google Docs, E-Portfolio, Masonry, and others.

It should be noted that online exams should be administered as take-home exams, as students are likely to use books or other sources to answer the exams. Creating a condition that resembles real-world activities can create an authentic assessment. Therefore, educators should not ask students to solve problems by using memorization because they will enter the working world

Online exams can be carried out with a close book to provide opportunities for students to monitor themselves so that a sense of responsibility, honesty, and self-maturity arises. However, ideally, it should not be used as the primary benchmark in the evaluation. It could be by dividing the percentage that has been adjusted to the situation and environmental conditions of students in general. The sincerity and sincerity of the students' intentions and goals will be tested to measure this model. Instructors are also allowed to occasionally test the sincerity and sincerity of students' intentions (Ghazali, 2014; Anshori, 2021).

1.7 Ask for input from students

Feedback from students is sometimes constructive regarding how the assessment should be conducted. Learner-centered teaching strategies lead to student involvement in directing their assessment process (Bachman, 2000). In constructivist learning environments, involving students in the development of assessments helps them move from the role of learner to that of a reflective practitioner (Palloff & Pratt, 2009). Through reflective questioning, collaboration, feedback, and experience, students begin to reflect on their learning process. However, there are some doubts about the quality of input and the role of students in determining the assessment process to be carried out. However, recent research states a significant correlation between the assessments made by students and material experts on teaching materials developed by other students (Khosravi et al., 2021).

Asking students for input in the assessment process can create a learning circle that supports their development as learners. Teachers can involve students in assessment design when the desired learning outcomes are (1) increased sense of community, (2) increased self-directed learning, self-efficacy, and discovery, and (3) improved problem-solving skills.

Conclusion

This study discusses the principles for changing assessment during online learning. The principles are a collection of several theories that have been proven effective in increasing student learning activities. Applying these principles to the instructor's assessment strategy can reduce the level of academic dishonesty for students. In addition, we have learned about the best ways to conduct online assessments and the various activities we can incorporate into online classroom assessment schemes. This paper also explains the principles of implementing practical online assessments by combining the views of online assessment theory from the west and the books of middle eastern scholars. The critical principles of online assessment discussed in this paper include designing student-centered assessments, building varied activities-based learning, using various measurement techniques, valuing student contributions in learning activities, using rubrics as a guide for expected performance and a basis for self-assessment, provide feedback on assessments and assignments, and solicit input from students about the assessment process to be undertaken.

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