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INFLUENCE OF ISLAMIC STUDIES LITERACY ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SAKI, OYO STATE, NIGERIA.

By

¹ABDUL GANIYU SALMAN SEBUTU, Ph.D ²BIBIRE, ABDULKAREEM SANNI &
³YAHYA, SHAYKH AHMAD

¹Department of Arts Education, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.
abdulgannissebutu@gmail.com ; +2348033701971

²State Universal Basic Education Board, Kwara State, Ilorin, Nigeria.
sannibibire@gmail.com +2349038606649

³Department of Religions, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.
yahya.as@unilorin.edu.ng ; +2348063378618

Abstract

Ability to read and write is of great importance in teaching and learning process as mentioned in the first revelation to the holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W). As a result of this, this study investigated the influence of Islamic Studies literacy on academic performance of Junior Secondary School students in Saki, Oyo State, Nigeria. The purposive sample technique was used to select three hundred and ninety Islamic Studies students and thirty five Islamic Studies teachers as samples. Relevant data were collected from the respondents, using a carefully designed questionnaire. Three hypotheses were formulated for the study, and data collected were tested through the use of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Statistics. The study revealed among others that, there was significant relationship between Qur'anic school and performance of students in Islamic Studies. Therefore, the researcher recommended that, students should attend Islamiyyah School as well as participate in Islamic activities, such as Quranic competition, Islamic lectures, as it would impact positively on their in Islamic Studies.

Keywords: Islamic Studies, Literacy, Academic Performance, Junior Secondary School, Students

Introduction

Literacy is traditionally regarded as the ability to read and write. (Merriam-Webster 2014). The inability to do so is called illiteracy or analphabetism'. (Oxford Dictionary, 2017). Islam is a religion that is concerned with literacy. When the Qur'an was revealed, the first word was *iqra'* meaning 'read', 'learn', 'understand'. In a cave, outside makkah, the angel Jibril squeezed Prophet Muhammad's chest and demanded that he should read. The Prophet replied, I am unable to read and write, as stated in the Holy Qur'an;

Read! In the name of your Lord, who has created (all that exists). He has created man from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood). Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous, Who has taught by the pen, He has taught man that which he knew not (Qur'an 96: 1- 5).

This implies that Prophet Muhammad never learned to read or write before the revelation, but he did understand the importance of literacy. Although the majority of the Arabs at the time were illiterate, they possessed a powerful and eloquent love for words. Arabs were masters of the spoken word - poetry, storytelling and memorizing genealogies (Aisha, 2009). Aisha, 2009 further explained that, God asks the believers to read, seek knowledge, contemplate the universe and its wonders and give thanks. Consequently, from day one, Islam has encouraged literacy and education. Reading through Qur'an, God repeatedly emphasizes the importance of education and indeed literacy.

As far as this study is concerned, Islamic Studies literacy is better understood through religious literacy. Therefore, religious literacy is the knowledge of, and ability to understand religion (Wikipedia, 2017). Diane (2018) defined religious literacy as: the ability to discern and analyze the fundamental intersections of religion and social, political, cultural life through multiple lenses.

According to Ahlul Bayt Digital Islamic Library Project (1995 - 2018), the all-round development of various branches of knowledge pertaining to physical and social phenomena, as well as the process of logical argumentation for justification of Islamic doctrine and deduction of Islamic laws (*ahkam*) with reference to Qur'anic injunctions and the prophetic tradition which is indebted to Islam's notion of '*ilm*' meaning (knowledge or literacy).

Islam is a way of life for the Muslims, not simply a belief. In order for a Muslim to grow up living his life in the Islamic way, he must learn and practice Islam from a young age. When a child is young, he is the most impressionable and absorbs knowledge, just as how it is taught. A quote from Al Gazali explained that, a child 'is a trust (placed by God) in the hands of his parents, and his innocent heart is a precious element capable of taking impressions'. When a child is born, he starts learning about life and everything around him. Information is absorbed like a sponge (Azzhra, 2013). Providing Islamic education allows the right knowledge of Islam to be taught to children. Parents or grandparents may not have 100% knowledge or correct information as they may not have gone to classes formally for all aspects of Islam (Azzahra, 2013).

For children attending secular primary schools, or teens attending secular secondary schools, they hardly have any contact with Islam in any part of their lives in, or after school. To keep Islam close to the hearts of our children, sending them for Islamic education (madrasahs) at weekends, for a few hours in a week, puts Islam into their minds. Throughout their school week, they will be able to keep in mind the teachings from their Madrasah over the weekend. (Azzahra, 2013).

Balogun (2015) vividly discussed the factors that militate literacy in the study of Islamic education. According to Balogun (2015), factors affecting the Study of Islamic Education are as follows:

- i. Poor methods of teaching ;
- ii. Islamic Studies is put under the category of minor subjects in the curriculum;
- iii. Divorcing Arabic from Islamic studies in the curriculum ;
- iv. Inadequate incentives for Islamic studies teachers;
- v. Orientation of the subject toward examination success;
- vi. The tutor shows little concern on the subject;
- vii. Inadequate and insufficient Islamic studies text books ;
- viii. Insufficient constrain revision of the syllabus;
- ix. Inadequate and unequal allocation of periods;

Equally, Badmus (2003) observed that, authorities show little concern and obviously, there are little support from the Ministry of Education shouldered over the teaching of Islamic Studies in various schools. Teaching materials are not adequately supplied expect chalk board, papers, and the Islamic Studies teachers are not sent to attend refresher courses or rather organize one for them, which is the usual norm in other subjects areas.

Many subjects apart from Islamic Studies have adequate textbooks which guide them and direct their teaching respectively. However, the teaching of Islamic Studies lapses in this lack of important instrumentation, the little methods the Islamic Studies teachers learned in their previous teachers college or colleges of education are found to be less effective in the present day's system of effective teaching and learning. Therefore, these teachers due to unavailability of Islamic Studies textbooks find it difficult to

know what to inculcate on the memory of the pupils. Based on this, many teachers do run away from the subject and those who remain predominantly teach the subject theoretically (Balogun, 2015).

Among the challenges facing the study of Islamic Studies in secondary schools is the lukewarm attitude of parents to Islamic Studies as a discipline. More than anything else, the absence of parents' attention affects the hitherto interest of most Islamic Studies students. Some parents do not encourage their children in learning Islamic Studies to the extent that, as most parents do not supplying those educational materials relating to Islamic Studies to their children. Worst still, some parents prefer that their children offer science subjects rather than art subjects (Balogun, 2015).

With the multitude of faith within a given country and around the globe at large, religious scholarship has become an increasingly important tool for understanding the world around us, the role of religion in our lives, and the impact it has on the way we interact with one another (McGill 2018). Religion is therefore perceived by different personalities in different perspectives. Owing to the fact that religion plays vital roles in social life, bounding people together, explaining the human predicament, helping to control social behaviour and providing individuals with emotional support in the uncertainties of life. Meanwhile, the Federal Government of Nigeria set up an Advisory Council on Religious Affairs (ACRA) in 1987 to co-ordinate the efforts of the different religious bodies in the country, with a view to emphasizing the factors which lead to mutual understanding and co operation Lawal (2015).

Statement of the Problem

The recent trend has shown a great diversity of opinion among Islamic Studies scholars of our contemporaries (which could only be traced back to their respective rudimentary knowledge of the teachings of Islam). Deepening once interest in sharing thoughts with others and in shedding lights to the cause of the confusing diversity among our scholars, therefore, requires the need to research on Islamic Studies literacy among junior secondary school students of Saki West Local Government Area to be precise.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the influence of Islamic Studies literacy on academic performance of junior secondary school students in Saki West Local Government Area, Oyo state.

Specifically, it finds out the:

- i. Influence of Islamiyyah school on academic performance of Islamic Studies students.
- ii. Influence of Qur'anic school on academic performance of Islamic Studies students.
- iii. Influence of parents' Islamic knowledge on academic performance of Islamic Studies students.

Research Questions

This study answered the following research questions:

- i. Does Islamiyyah school have any influence on academic performance of Islamic Studies students?
- ii. Does Qur'anic school have any influence on academic performance of Islamic Studies students?
- iii. Does parents' Islamic knowledge have any influence on academic performance of Islamic Studies students?

Research Hypotheses

H₀: There is no significant relationship in the influence of Islamiyyah school and academic performance of students in Islamic Studies.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship in the influence of Qur'anic school and academic performance of students in Islamic Studies.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship in the influence of parents' Islamic knowledge and academic performance of students in Islamic studies.

Methodology

A descriptive survey method was adopted in this study. A descriptive survey method is useful in finding out meaning and understanding of present and past situation. Therefore, it is deemed fit for carrying out this study because, it gives the researcher an opportunity to have direct encounter with the teachers, who are in every working day have contact with their students; and as such, familiar with them and know better the level of their literacy in his/her subject (Islamic Studies). The population of this study consists of all Islamic Studies teachers and students in Saki, Oyo state, Nigeria. while the target population were Islamic Studies teachers and students from thirty two junior secondary school (32) in Saki. Meanwhile, a purposive sampling technique was used to select three hundred and ninety Islamic Studies students and thirty five Islamic Studies teachers in thirty two junior secondary schools Saki. A carefully designed questionnaire was the instrument used to carry out the study. The questionnaire is made up of three sections A, B & C. Section A items were used to test hypothesis 1; **Ho₁:** There is no significant relationship between the influence of Islamiyyah school and performance of students in Islamic Studies. Section B items were used to test hypothesis 2; **Ho₂:** There is no significant relationship between the influence of Qur'anic school and performance of students in Islamic Studies. While section C items were used to test hypothesis 3; **Ho₃:** There is no significant relationship between the influence of parents' Islamic knowledge and performance of students in Islamic studies. The validity of the instrument was confirmed by content validity. The experts in Test and Measurement in the Faculty of Education University of Ilorin were given a copy of the questionnaire for their wise suggestions, and of course, corrections were carried out based on their observations and suggestions in all aspects that need to be corrected. Based on this assessment, the instrument was adjudged valid as it covers the main area of interest in this study.

Result

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between Islamiyyah school and performance of students in Islamic Studies.

Table 1: Islamiyyah School and Islamic Students' Academic Performance

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Df	Cal r-value	P-value	Decision
Islamiyyah School	163	2.20	.67	161	.520	.009	Ho ₁ Rejected
Islamic Students' Academic Performance	163	5.20	.68				

*Significant $P < .05$

Table 1 shows the calculated r-value of .520 while p-value (0.009) is less than the significance level (0.05) for 161 degrees of freedom. Therefore, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between Islamiyyah school and performance of students in Islamic Studies is rejected. The findings revealed that there was significant relationship between Islamiyyah school and performance of students in Islamic Studies.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between Qur'anic school and performance of students in Islamic Studies.

Table 2: Qur'anic School and Islamic Students' Academic Performance

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Df	Cal r-value	P-value	Decision
Qur'anic School	163	2.71	.69	161	.536	.000	Ho ₂ Rejected
Islamic Students' Academic Performance	163	5.20	.68				

***Significant $P < .05$**

Table 2 shows the calculated r-value of .536 while p-value (0.000) is less than the significance level (0.05) for 161 degrees of freedom. Therefore, the hypothesis which stated there is no significant relationship between Qur'anic school and performance of students in Islamic Studies is rejected. The findings revealed that there was significant relationship between Qur'anic school and performance of students in Islamic Studies.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between parents of Islamic knowledge and performance of students in Islamic Studies.

Table 3: Parents Islamic Knowledge and Islamic Students' Academic Performance

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Df	Cal r-value	P-value	Decision
Parents' Islamic Knowledge	163	2.93	.56	161	.572	.002	Ho ₃ Rejected
Islamic Students' Academic Performance	163	5.20	.68				

***Significant $P < .05$**

Table 3 shows the calculated r-value of .572 while p-value (0.002) is less than the significance level (0.05) for 161 degrees of freedom. Therefore, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between parents Islamic knowledge and performance of students in Islamic Studies is rejected. The findings revealed that there is significant relationship between parents Islamic knowledge and performance of students in Islamic Studies.

Discussion

The first findings shows that there is significant relationship between Islamiyyah school and performance of students in Islamic Studies. This findings tallies with the finding of Balogun (2015) who posited that students from Islamiyyah school perform excellently well in Islamic Studies with decent behavior.

The second findings of this study revealed that there is significant relationship between Qur'anic school and performance of students in Islamic Studies. The study is similar to Fernandez (2005) who posited that there was statistically significant relationship between Qur'anic school and performance of students in Islamic Studies.

Also, the summary on the Table 3 shows that there is significant relationship between parents' Islamic knowledge and performance of students in Islamic Studies. The study is similar to Alokun et al (2013) illiteracy of the parents could have negative effect on the learners' academic and religious performance. He further stated that care-free attitude of the parents in practicing and teaching Islamic education at homes through which the children can imitate contribute negatively to students' academic performance.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it has been concluded that the students that attend Islamiyyah school are familiar with most of the Islamic Studies topics they teach them at school and have never scored less than 40% in Islamic Studies exams. Also, they can read at least the first ten Hadith of annawawi's collection off hand familiar with some aspects of fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) before they were being taught in class.

However, the students learnt the correct recitation of some chapters in Qur'anic school and the attendance of Qur'anic school improves their knowledge. In addition, ability to recite the glorious Qur'an correctly improves speaking of English and with the knowledge of the Qur'an, they can differentiate between a Quranic verse and other Arabic texts.

So also, the students are taught by parents how to spell and read Arabic text before they are enrolled in madrasah and parents assist the students in doing Islamic Studies assignment at home.

Recommendations

From the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Parents with adequate knowledge of Islam should cultivate it by teaching their children so that their children would have background knowledge of Islam.
- ii. Students should attend Islamiyyah school as well as Islamic activities such as Quranic competition, Islamic lectures, as it has impact on their in Islamic Studies.
- iii. Islamic religious education should be made compulsory to Muslim children.
- iv. Government should organize workshops, seminars and refresher courses for the teachers so as to acquaint them with the modern methods of teaching and different ways of motivating the students. Teachers should be motivated by the government in order to discharge their duties effectively.

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