

INVESTIGATING THE FACTORS AFFECTING ISLAMIC STUDIES STUDENTS' SCHOOL WORK AMONG PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN TOLU COMPLEX, LAGOS STATE

BY

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Abstract

This study examined the factors influencing the academic performance of Islamic Studies students' school work in Tolu complex, Lagos, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive research design. Three research questions and corresponding hypotheses guided the study. The target population comprised all students offering Islamic Studies in the thirty-one (31) public secondary schools in the Tolu complex, Lagos. 140 Islamic Studies students formed the sample of the study. Data were collected using a self-developed questionnaire titled "Factors Affecting Islamic Studies Students' School work in Public Secondary Schools in Tolu complex, Lagos, Nigeria." Face and content validity were assessed, and the reliability coefficient was found to be 0.89. The findings revealed no significant relationship between teachers' teaching methods and the schoolwork of students. However, there was a significant impact of school environment overpopulation on the schoolwork of students. A significant relationship was observed between students' attitudes/interest and their schoolwork in Islamic Studies. The study recommends that parents/guardians should motivate their children to cultivate a positive attitude towards Islamic Studies.

Keywords: *Islamic Studies, Schoolwork, Secondary School Education, Interest and Attitude*

Introduction

Education is one of the many blessings that God has bestowed on mankind. The person who has an education is ranked high status, the families who have education are honourable families the societies who have education are educated society, the city which has education is civilised and the country which has education is a developed country. The point is that education is a stepping stone to human development. A nation or a society in which there is no education is called a backward nation or society. Education is a means by which the innumerable abilities bestowed by God Almighty in humans are manifested (Ramvashishtha and Subodh, 2022).

Education is a gradual process which brings positive changes in human life and behaviour. We can also define education as "a process of acquiring knowledge through study or imparting the knowledge by way of instructions or some other practical procedure" (Passion, 2023). In Nigeria, education is regarded as "an instrument of excellence for the social and economic reconstruction of the nation". The government regards education as key to the realization of Nigeria's collective aspiration of being among the top 20 developed nations of the world by the year 2020 (NPE 6th edition). Education goes beyond what takes place within the four walls of the classroom. A child gets the education from his experiences outside the school as well as from those within based on these factors. There are three main types of education, namely, Formal, Informal and Non-formal (Adeyeye, 2019).

Formal education or formal learning usually takes place on the premises of the school, where a person may learn basic, academic, or trade skills. Small children often attend a nursery or kindergarten but often, formal education begins in elementary school and continues with secondary school (Adeyeye, 2019). As presented in the 6th edition of the National Policy on Education, the Nigerian education system and levels are structured into Early Child Care and Development aged 0-4 years, and Basic Education aged 5-15 years. It encompasses pre-primary 1 year, 6 years of Primary Education and 3 years of Junior Secondary Education, Post-Basic Education of 3 years in Senior Secondary Schools and Technical Colleges and Tertiary Education provided in Colleges of Education, Monotechnics, Polytechnics, and Universities (Owoyale-Abdulganiny and Yahya, 2022).

Secondary education is the form of education which children receive automatically after they have received primary school education (Adeyeye, 2023). It constitutes post-primary education and sometimes serves as a link between primary and university education. It is suitable for children who have received primary education. Unlike pre-primary education, the National Policy on Education is not the first official document to give recognition to secondary education. Secondary education has been there since the colonial era (Ogbonoiya, 2021). Secondary education in Nigeria is a six year programme, comprising the junior secondary and senior secondary schools (NPE 6th edition). Each level is of three years duration. The curriculum of the senior secondary schools is comprehensive and diversified. At junior secondary levels, students are taught both academic and pre-vocational subjects (NPE 6th edition). Indubitably, as part of secondary education subjects is religious studies (IRS and CRS), which has played a significant role in shaping cultures, and influencing art, literature, and social norms (Yahya et. al., 2023). It has also been a source of inspiration, comfort, and guidance for individuals seeking answers to life's fundamental questions.

Islamic Religious Studies are considered to be one of the elective subjects in the Nigerian school curriculum, alongside Christian Religious Studies and Fine Arts (Bidmos, 2010). The topic has been taught and learned in various classes of secondary schools across the country since the introduction of the 6-3-3-4 educational system, which ushered in the execution of the curriculum under reference (Busari, 2018). Related challenges faced in teaching and learning Islamic studies range from Methods of teaching, inadequate textbooks, the size of the classroom, lack of students' interest, insufficient instructional material, and teachers' poor motivation and personality disposition (Aina & Olanipekun, 2015). Being a secondary school subject, Islamic studies is among the subject taught in Tolu secondary schools complex area in Lagos state. According to Lawrence (2019), Tolu complex is under the administrative jurisdiction of District Five (V) of the Lagos Ministry of Education and is located in the very heart of the Olodi community in Ajeromi-Ifelodun Local Government area of Lagos State. The complex has been adjudged to be one of the largest school complexes in Africa; it is the hub of education, primary, junior and senior in Ajegunle, Olodi-Apapa Lagos. The compound which covers about three hectares of land has three main gates or entrance into it. They include the Ojoku Roadside, off Maracana Street and the Temidire Road. It is surrounded by the Lagos State Water Corporation, Tolu Police Post, Adidas Playing Ground, Lagos State Sewage Disposal, Lagos State Board Public Library and Maracana's football field (Lawrence, 2019).

Activities of school work in subject areas (particularly, Islamic Religious Studies) in the Tolu complex like other school areas are usually affected by various pressing factors. Dedi (2020) factors affecting the school work of learners include Lack of interest in learning Islamic studies, low quality of human resources, weak management, lack of facilities and infrastructure, the control system mostly does not favour Islam, the curriculum is always challenging. Lack of interest and attitude affect the performance of Islamic studies students in schools (Adeyeye & Nazreen, 2023). Wilson (2017) in his lecture said, that students tend to shy away and become frustrated from the subject because of their poor interest and attitude, this makes them weak academically and hence little or no attention is paid to the subjects in the classroom. Maduabum (2023) in his book titled "Teaching Effectively" said that students come from different socio-economic backgrounds. Some may come from rich families, some from poor families and others from what may be regarded as middle-class homes. Students' interest and attitude tell in their performance in school subjects. He further said that 'the failure of a student to grasp complex concepts was due to lack of appropriate cognitive preparation'. The lack of interest and negative attitude towards school work can significantly impact students' academic performance, motivation, and overall well-being. It may lead to lower grades, decreased engagement in class, a higher likelihood of dropping out, and diminished self-esteem (Adeyeye, 2023). Furthermore, it can hinder their ability to develop important skills and knowledge necessary for success in future endeavours. Several studies have highlighted the detrimental effects of such attitudes on students' academic outcomes (Smith, 2018; Johnson & Johnson, 2020)

The method of teaching is another factor responsible for poor performance (Wilson, 2017). The norm is the traditional approach with the teacher at the centre of activities and with memorisation as the primary means of learning. Although memorization has its place, it cannot on its own arouse the pupil's real interest and imagination, nor can it capture their involvement in the process of learning. According to Abdullah (2022), he stated that 'despite orientation courses, some teachers still go back to their schools to teach by the

lecture method or textbook method. In this regard, schools where teachers vary their methods of teaching, the student tend to understand more than schools where the teachers use the lecture method to impart knowledge to the learner. Different methods of teaching help to cater for the different abilities of pupils in class and more able to understand better'. According to Jones (2018), it is essential for any teacher to become acquainted with teaching methods that will help pupils achieve learning objectives'. Commenting further, he said that several methods exist which teachers can utilize to ensure effective learning, such methods include the demonstration method, discussion method, project method, field trip, play away method etc. According to Mankgele (2023), he therefore enumerated some common faults in the teaching of in primary schools and junior secondary schools which are lack of preparation; Lack of interest by teachers and attempting too much problems in the lesson.

Methods or strategies even approaches that are controlled by educators to convey subject matter to students so that the expected goals can be achieved. Many educational methods can be used or applied in delivering religious education learning. However, it is unfortunate that there are still many religion teachers who have not mastered various active learning methods that can be used in presenting religious education lessons (Alhasan, 2021). For religious education to achieve the desired results, every religious teacher must know and master various learning methods and approaches. But in reality, religious education lessons in schools are still predominantly using the lecture method. Teachers must also be creative in applying religious education materials to the situation of students (Adeyeye & Nazreen, 2023). Storytelling, discussion, problem-solving, and simulation styles are positive alternatives that can be incorporated into appropriate methods for religious learning.

The teacher is not just a conveyer of knowledge (*Mu'allim*), but is more focused on being a *Murabbi* to train the soul and personality; *Murabbi* will always monitor the development of the material conveyed in the moral development of students. The need for the awareness of students as *Khalifatullah fil'ardh* will build the spirit that religion is not just a ritual. However, it will build tolerance, uphold truth, and justice. In this way, religion functions as a medium of awareness. The overcrowding of classrooms can have detrimental effects on students' learning outcomes. Research indicates that overcrowded classrooms can lead to increased noise levels, reduced teacher-student interaction, and limited individualized attention for students (Cohen & Smerdon, 2009). This can result in decreased academic performance, heightened stress levels, and difficulty concentrating, ultimately impeding students' ability to learn effectively (Blatchford et al., 2003; Weinstein, 2019).

Statement of Problem

It has been observed over time that Islamic studies students' school work in Tolu complex has been affected by different factors. The effect of these situations may lead to a decline in academic performance, learning interest and attitude, and enrolment for class of Islamic Students in Tolu Complex area of Lagos state. Hence, this study is imperative to look through analytical way of assessing some of the factors affecting Islamic studies students' school work Tolu complex Lagos.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate factors affecting Islamic studies students' school work among public secondary schools in Tolu complex Lagos. Other specific purposes will be to:

1. To determine if students' interests is factors affecting Islamic studies students' school work in public secondary schools in Tolu complex Lagos State.
2. To determine if teachers' choice of teaching methods as a factor affecting Islamic studies students' school work in public secondary schools in Tolu complex Lagos State.
3. To determine if classroom overcrowding is one of the factors affecting Islamic studies students' school work in public secondary schools in Tolu complex Lagos State.

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were raised to be tested for the study:

1. There is no significant relationship between students' attitude and their school work in public secondary schools in Tolu complex Lagos State.

2. There is no significant relationship between teachers' adopted teaching methods and students' school work in public secondary schools in Tolu complex Lagos State.
3. There is no significant relationship between Islamic studies classroom overcrowding and students' school work in public secondary schools in Tolu complex Lagos State.

Methodology

This study is an investigation of the Factors Affecting Islamic Studies Students' School Work among Public Secondary Schools in Tolu Schools Complex, Lagos State. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The population comprises all the Islamic studies students in the thirty-one (31) secondary schools available in Tolu complex, Ajeromi Olodi- Apapa, Lagos. Out of the available thirty-one (31) secondary schools in the Tolu complex, seven (7) senior secondary schools were selected using simple random sampling. Twenty (20) students were selected from each school making a total of hundred and forty (140) respondents for this study. A self-developed questionnaire titled "Questionnaire on factors affecting Islamic studies students' school work among public secondary schools in Tolu complex Lagos. The instrument is divided into two (2) sections (A&B). Section A contains the respondents' information while section B contained twelve (12) items to test each of the hypotheses. The instrument were distributed physically to respondents in selected schools and retrieved immediately after they were filled.

Simple percentage was used to analyse bio-data, mean and standard deviation were also used to analyse the research question while linear and multiple deviations were used to analyse the research hypotheses using the statistic package for social sciences (SPSS 23). After obtaining the administered the questionnaire to the respondents. With the assistance of research assistance, and the instrument was collected from the respondents immediately they were through with it.

Results

Testing Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between Islamic studies students' interest and attitude and their school work in public secondary schools in Tolu complex Lagos State.

Table 1:

Relationship between Islamic studies students' interest and attitude and their school work in public secondary schools Tolu complex Lagos State

		Learning Interest and Attitude	Islamic Studies Students' School Work
Learning Interest	Pearson Correlation	1	.252**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	140	140
Islamic Studies Students' School Work	Pearson Correlation	.252**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	140	140

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table above shows the strength of the linear relationship between students' attitude and interest and their school work in public secondary schools in Tolu complex Lagos State. The result indicates that there exists a weak relationship between the variables. This is shown by the Pearson Correlation value given as 0.25 (25%). Therefore, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected because the Sig value (0.003) is less than the p value (0.05).

Research Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between teachers' teaching methods and students' school work in public secondary schools in Tolu complex Lagos State.

Table 2:

Relationship between teachers' teaching method and students' school work in public secondary schools in Tolu complex Lagos State

		Teaching Methods	Islamic Studies Students' School Work
Teaching Methods	Pearson Correlation	1	.122
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.153
	N	140	140
Islamic Studies Students' School Work	Pearson Correlation	.122	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.153	
	N	140	140

The table above shows the strength of the linear relationship between teachers' teaching methods and students' school work in public secondary schools in Tolu complex Lagos State. The result indicates that there exists a weak relationship between the variables. This is shown by the Pearson Correlation value given as 0.12 (12%). Therefore, the null hypothesis is therefore accepted because the Sig value (0.153) is greater than the p value (0.05).

Research Hypothesis Three

H03: There is no significant relationship between the overcrowding of Islamic studies classrooms and students' school work in public secondary schools in Tolu complex Lagos State.

Table 7:

Relationship between the overcrowding of Islamic studies classrooms and students' schoolwork in public secondary schools in Tolu complex Lagos State.

		Class Overcrowding	Islamic Studies Students' School Work
Class Overcrowding	Pearson Correlation	1	-.174*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.039
	N	140	140
Islamic Studies Students' School Work	Pearson Correlation	-.174*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.039	
	N	140	140

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The table above shows the strength of the linear relationship between the overcrowding of Islamic studies classrooms and students' school work. The result indicates that there exists a weak negative relationship between the variables. This is shown by the Pearson Correlation value given as -0.17 (-17%). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected because the Sig value (0.039) is less than the p-value (0.05).

Discussion of Findings

The study aimed to investigate various factors influencing the School work of Islamic Studies students in public secondary schools within the Tolu schools' complex in Lagos State. The findings provide insights into the relationships between students' interest and attitude, teaching methods, classroom overcrowding, and their impact on school work (Adeyeye & Nazreen, 2023). The first research hypothesis revealed a significant relationship between Islamic Studies students' interest and attitude and their academic performance. Students who exhibit a strong interest in and a positive attitude toward Islamic Studies tend to perform better academically. This finding aligns with previous studies suggesting that student engagement and intrinsic motivation are critical drivers of academic success (Dörnyei, 2001). When students are genuinely interested in a subject, they are more likely to invest time and effort in their studies, leading to better academic outcomes (Ryan & Deci, 2000). This underscores the importance of fostering a positive learning environment that enhances students' enthusiasm and engagement with the subject matter.

The second research hypothesis found no significant relationship between teachers' teaching methods and students' academic performance in Islamic Studies. This result suggests that the type of teaching method employed—whether traditional or innovative does not have a direct impact on students' school work. This finding is intriguing, as it contrasts with the common belief that modern, student-centered teaching methods are superior in promoting academic achievement (Prince, 2004). It is possible that other factors,

such as students' interest and intrinsic motivation, play a more crucial role in determining academic outcomes than the specific teaching methods used by teachers (Biggs, 2012).

The study also found no significant relationship between classroom overcrowding and students' academic performance in Islamic Studies (Adeyeye & Nazreen, 2023). Despite the challenges posed by overcrowded classrooms such as limited individual attention from teachers and increased classroom management issues students' school work does not appear to be significantly affected. This finding might indicate that the negative impacts of overcrowding are mitigated by students' strong interest in the subject or by effective classroom management strategies employed by teachers (Blatchford et al., 2003). Additionally, it suggests that factors outside the classroom environment, such as family support and self-study habits, may play a more pivotal role in influencing academic performance (Epstein, 2001). The findings from this study highlight the complexity of factors affecting Islamic Studies students' academic performance in the Tolu schools' complex. While students' interest and positive attitude towards Islamic Studies significantly enhance their academic outcomes, teaching methods and classroom overcrowding do not show a direct correlation with school work. These results suggest that fostering student interest and motivation is crucial for academic success and that future interventions should focus on enhancing these aspects rather than solely changing teaching methods or addressing classroom size.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it could be concluded that while Islamic Studies students in public secondary schools within the Tolu schools complex in Lagos State show a high level of interest and positive attitudes towards Islamic Studies, and classroom overcrowding is a significant issue, these factors do not directly correlate with school work outcomes straightforwardly. The study emphasises the complexity of educational dynamics and the need for multifaceted approaches to improve academic performance, considering both the internal motivation of students and the external teaching and learning environment.

Recommendations

1. Islamic studies teachers have to get reorientation through seminars or other events about various methods of instructing Islamic studies in the classroom. This will help students comprehend concepts better and will also help professors engage students' minds throughout class.
2. The issue of classroom overcrowding has to be revisited by the authorities in charge of school operations. Enough room should be provided for student activities, and the number of students who should occupy a given class should be determined by taking the class size into account. By doing so, the teacher will also be able to monitor the involvement and actions of the pupils.
3. Parents and guardians ought to encourage their children to pursue Islamic studies as a discipline in higher education, which is just as profitable in the workplace as other academic fields, and to show an interest in and positive attitude toward the subject.

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