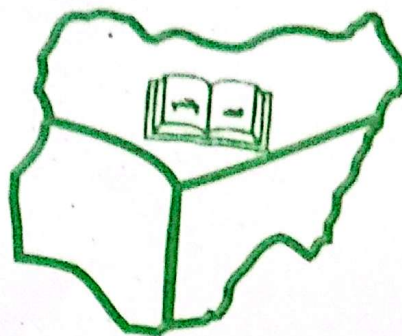


THE NIGERIA ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF
ARABIC AND ISLAMIC STUDIES (NATAIS)



ARABIC AND ISLAMIC LEARNING IN NIGERIA

33rd NATIONAL CONFERENCE

OF NIGERIA TEACHERS OF ARABIC
& ISLAMIC STUDIES IN NIGERIA
(NATAIS) IN IBADAN

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2015 C.E / 1437 A.H

Prof. Badmas .O. Yusuf
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TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT OF THE FACTORS INHIBITING IMPLEMENTATION OF UPPER BASIC SCHOOL ISLAMIC STUDIES CURRICULUM IN OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The strength of the upper basic education largely lies on the adequacy and implementation of the curriculum. In other words, the extent to which teachers disseminate the curricula content goes a long way to determine students' success in school subjects. On this note, this study was carried out to investigate teachers' assessment of the factors inhibiting implementation of Upper Basic Islamic Studies Curriculum in Oyo State. A descriptive method of research was employed in the study. All upper basic schools in Oyo State constituted the population for the study while the teachers teaching Islamic studies in the upper basic schools in Oyo State constituted the target population. Questionnaire was used to elicit information from the respondents. The findings revealed that factors inhibiting implementation of Upper Basic Islamic Studies Curriculum include policy related factor, teacher quality factor, students' factor, and societal factor. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended among others, that the policy makers, curriculum planners, designers and implementing bodies like NERDC, NCCE, NUC, NATAIS, Ministry of Education (state and federal) and teachers should assist in remedying the factors inhibiting implementation of Upper Basic Islamic Studies Curriculum. Also, seminars, workshops and symposia are to be organized for the teachers, students and parents so as to sensitize them on the importance of Islamic Studies and the prospects in effective implementation of Upper Basic Islamic Studies curriculum.

Introduction

The strength of the upper basic education largely lies on the adequacy of the curriculum. Whereas, the extent to which teachers disseminate the content of the curriculum goes a long way to determine students' success in school subjects. Upper Basic Education is a product of several attempts of the government at all levels to standardize education in Nigeria.

Education as process of cultural transmission and renewal involves formal and informal activities that can take place everywhere.¹ The system of 6-3-3-4, which refers to system of education where children are expected to spend six years in the primary schools, three years in junior secondary schools, three years in senior secondary schools and four years in the Universities, was a product of 1997 National Policy on Education (NPE). Some years later after this 6-3-3-4 system, a new 9 years Universal Basic Education (UBE) system was introduced to replace the first two levels of the 6-3-3-4 system. This therefore led to the change in the objectives, contents and organization of the basic education curriculum. Thus, new curriculum was developed to meet the UBE programme. The new curriculum is expected to be realigned to cater for National Economic Empowerment Development and Strategies (NEEDS), Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The 9 year UBE programme comprises of three stages. The first three years is lower basic level, the second three years is called middle basic level and the later three years is regarded as upper basic education.

Yusuf and Ajere² submitted that the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme is an educational programme aimed at eradicating illiteracy, ignorance and poverty. This assertion is in consonance with the declaration of the World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA) which was made in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990. The Article 1 of the WCEFA's declaration stated that every person- child, youth, or adult shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic needs. This declaration was re-affirmed at the summit for children which was also held in 1990. It stressed that all children should have access to basic education by the year 2000.

The world summit for children placed a lot of emphasis on raising the levels of female literacy. In a bid to achieve education goals, the Dakar World Education Forum was held as a follow-up meeting to the WCEFA where new sets of goals were set to be attained by the year 2015.

Religion plays important role in any society. It is a vehicle of unity, explaining human predicament, helping to control social behaviour and providing individuals with emotional support in respect to uncertainties of life.

Different religious practices exist in Nigeria. These include Islam, Christianity, traditional worship, and other religions. The different religions possess acclaimed divine books or messages which they strive to inculcate into their adherents in order for them to practice effectively the dictates of

their religion and as well incorporate the coming generations. Islam is a religion that specifically aims at human progress and shows the proper way of life. It covers every aspect of man's daily life-social, economic, political, cultural and academic.

Religious education can be described as those processes designed to induct each new generation into the attitudes, beliefs and the practices of religion or faith in order to promote the religion, and at the same time provide for the individual unifying centre for his life.

The role of Islamic Religious Studies (IRS) in the present day society cannot be overemphasized. IRS is one of the important subjects in the school curriculum at the primary, secondary and higher institutions of learning.

Islamic religious studies is one of the subjects that are recognized as core subjects in the upper basic level or classes but elective in senior secondary level Federal Republic of Nigeria.³ Ajidagba⁴ analysed the importance of Islamic religious studies as a discipline that helps to direct man's mind to the right use of scientific discoveries and inventions in modern days. He (Ajidagba)⁵ explained further that the subject will provide man with a spiritual balm needed for facing difficult challenges of the modern time.

Islamic religious studies trains humans' personality towards the best moral, social conducts, health attitude, self-discipline and self defence⁶. In accordance with the guidance of the Glorious Qur'an and practice of Prophet Muhammad, (PBUH), Islamic studies encourages man to grow up as a good law-abiding citizen who contributes to the national development and the well-being of the society. Allah says: "And do good as Allah has been good to you, and seek not mischief in the land, verily, Allah likes not the *mufsidun* (those who commit great crimes and sins; oppressors; tyrants; mischief-makers; corrupters etc) (Qur'an chapter 28 verse 77).

Considering the relevance of religious studies to individuals and the society at large, coupled with the government's efforts at actualizing this relevant purpose, the significance of what has been designed as curriculum for these religious studies cannot be relegated to the background. This is because of the role curriculum plays in the realization of education itself. Daramola⁷ defined curriculum as the sum total of all learning experiences organized by school in an attempt to prepare individuals for life. The definition given above by Daramola is a juxtaposition of both the traditionalists' and progressivists' viewpoints who viewed curriculum as subject, experience, child mastering of subject matter and human development.

In a broader sense, curriculum is also viewed as the planned experiences that are offered to the learners within the formal educational institutions, individually or collectively, under the guidance of the school for the inculcation of worthwhile knowledge, character development and skill acquisition.

In an attempt to improve the teaching and learning of moral and religious education, government ensures, through the various ministries of education, the production of suitable curriculum and training of teachers for the subject. This is because, the curriculum could not be implemented without the teacher and his/her teaching methods which are one of the crucial factors in the teaching and learning of Islamic religious knowledge.

Of all personalities involved in the development, implementation and evaluation of a curriculum, the teacher is almost the most important. An Islamic Studies teacher has a great influence on the lives of his/her students. He/she lays the foundation for the students' beliefs, attitudes and conducts which may remain with them for the rest of their lives. He/she motivates the students to learn what is considered a great responsibility. It must be noted therefore, that if teaching is to be improved through the progress and process of education, the teacher as one of the agents of curriculum implementation should not be underrated. Their assessment of the curriculum will therefore, be vital in analyzing the success of any educational programme. It is important to have adequacy of the Islamic Studies curriculum as assessed by the teachers to know the reasons responsible for their assessment in the way they do.

There are different categories of teachers teaching Islamic Religious Studies in Nigeria Upper Basic Schools in terms of qualification. These are teachers with B.A (Ed) Islamic studies, B.A (Islamic Studies), NCE or B.A plus PDGE. It is, however, important to note that most of the teachers expected in the upper basic schools are those graduate teachers with teaching qualifications such as the NCE teachers who specialized in I.R.S. Awoyemi⁸ posited that the trained and qualified personnel are very essential for the delivery of quality education. Qualification is an important factor in teaching and learning of any subject. Consequently, a number of researchers have revealed positive correlation between teachers' qualification and students' performance in school.

Teacher's qualifications have great influence on the assessment of the curriculum. This is because some researchers have stated that qualified teachers outperformed unqualified teachers. This assertion corroborates that of

Awoyemi ⁹ and Okunloye ¹⁰ that the knowledge of the contents of a curriculum is strongly bounded with the overall orientation of the content; and this can be achieved by the use of qualified teachers.

Similarly, a teacher's experience will help him/her to adapt and cope with changes in the educational programme as he/she would be in a better position to understand the curriculum and guide learners towards the desired goals. Experience is obtained through continuous and active participation of the teacher in the teaching/learning process over a period of time. This could therefore, assist the teacher in the teaching/learning process. It could also, assist the teacher in assessing the curriculum.

In support of this, Opeloyeru ¹¹ explained that the teacher is a circle that is rotated across group of students every year. This implies that experience, if obtained through continuous and active participation of the teacher yearly in the activities, gives way for the teacher's progress, promotion and correct conception of the curriculum.

Statement of the problem

Several researchers and writers have assessed various school subjects curricula at various levels of the Nigeria Education system and also at different localities. For instance, Ajidagba ¹² carried out an assessment of the National Senior Secondary School Islamic Studies curriculum, while Adegboye ¹³ studied teachers' assessment of the adequacy of Economics component of Junior School Social Studies curriculum in Ilorin. Furthermore, Ishaq ¹⁴ focused his study on Kwara State teachers' evaluation of the implementation of Arabic curriculum. Indeed, out of the aforementioned researchers, it was only Ajidagba ¹⁵ that assessed the Islamic Studies curriculum at the Post Upper Basic level (senior secondary level).

The present study is however, focused on teachers' assessment of the factors inhibiting effective implementation of Islamic Studies curriculum at the Upper Basic level in Oyo State which little or no attention, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, has so far been paid to. In addition, the locale of the study is also a significant factor as studies of this nature are scarcely available in the locality focused by the study. This is the gap which the study aims at filling.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine teachers' assessment of the factors inhibiting implementation of upper basic school Islamic studies curriculum in Oyo state, Nigeria

Research Questions

What are the teachers' general assessments of the factors inhibiting implementation of upper basic school Islamic studies curriculum in Oyo state, Nigeria?

Methodology

This study is descriptive in nature. It was carried out using the survey method of data collection. The sampling procedure for this study was multistage. Stratified, simple random and purposive sampling techniques were employed to select the respondents for the study. The study involved teachers in the Upper Basic School in three Senatorial Districts in Oyo State. A total of 180 questionnaires were administered to teachers taking Islamic Religious Studies in the Upper basic Schools across the selected schools in the state. Frequency counts and percentage were employed to analyze the data collected.

Results

The results of the study are presented in the table 1 as follow:

TABLE 1: Teachers' Responses to Questionnaire Items on Factors Inhibiting Implementation of Islamic Studies Curriculum in Upper Basic Schools

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
	Policy Related Factor				
1.	Government policy does not encourage the teaching of Islamic in secondary schools.	180 (180%)	Nil	Nil	Nil
2.	The status of Islamic Studies in the National curricula for upper basic schools inhibits the teaching and learning of Islamic in their schools.	150 (83.3%)	10 (5.5%)	20 (11.2%)	Nil
3.	The content of Islamic Studies curriculum negatively affects its effective implementation.	105 (58.3%)	39 (21.7%)	30 (16.6%)	09 (5%)

4.	The allotted number of periods for Islamic Studies on the school time table is not enough.	89 (49%)	60 (33%)	20 (11.2%)	11 (6.2)
5.	Teachers of Islamic Studies are provided with incentives.	20 (11.2%)	20 (11.2%)	101 (56.1%)	39 (21.7%)
	Teacher Quality Factor				
6.	There are not enough qualified Islamic Studies teachers in Upper Basic schools	160 (88.9%)	20 (11.2%)	Nil	Nil
7.	Instructional materials are adequately provided to teach Arabic in Upper Basic Schools	05 (2.8%)	Nil	170 (94.4%)	15 (2.8%)
8.	Teachers of Islamic Studies are poorly motivated to teach	120 (66.7%)	40 (16.7%)	20 (11.2%)	20 (11.2%)
9.	Teachers of Islamic Studies do not abide by the principles laid down in curriculum of Islamic Studies	25 (13.9%)	05 (2.8%)	120 (66.7%)	30 (16.7%)
10.	Islamic teachers' attitudes to teaching hamper implementation of Islamic Studies	40 (22.2%)	101 (56.1%)	29 (16.1%)	10 (5.6%)
	Students' Factor				
11.	Students' home background affects their attitudes towards learning Islamic Studies	180 (100%)	Nil	Nil	Nil
12.	Many students dislike Islamic Studies	180 (100%)	Nil	Nil	Nil
13.	Truancy of students hinders learning of Islamic Studies	180 (100%)	Nil	Nil	Nil
14.	Some aspects of Upper Basic school Islamic Studies are perceived difficult by the students.	50 (27.8%)	80 (44.4%)	40 (22.2%)	10 (5.6%)
	Societal Factor				
15.	Some parents discouraged their children from offering Islamic Studies	20 (11.1%)	20 (11.1%)	105 (58.3%)	35 (19.4%)
16.	Sufficient learning facilities are not provided for implementation of Islamic Studies curriculum in Upper Basic schools	160 (88.9%)	20 (11.2%)	Nil	Nil
17.	Recommended Islamic Studies textbooks are not available in the school library.	160 (88.9%)	20 (11.2%)	Nil	Nil

The table 1 revealed that the higher percentage of the teachers subscribed to the facts that policy related factor, teacher quality factor, students' factor, and societal factor are all factors inhibiting implementation of Islamic Studies curriculum in Upper Basic Schools in Oyo state.

Discussion of findings

It was found that the government and school policies inhibit implementation of Islamic Studies curriculum. This corroborates the submission of Abdur-Rafiu (2009) who noted that Islamic Studies is relegated to mere ELECTIVE subject. The time allocated for teaching the subject is very limited despite its wide scope in the syllabus.

The result of the study reveals that there is lack of man power in terms of qualified Islamic Studies teachers in the public secondary schools. The few qualified ones on the field cannot cope with the available vacancies in our schools. These findings are in line with Ajidagba (1998) and Abdur-Rafiu (2019) who submitted that teachers' qualities and qualifications constitute parts of the problems of teaching secondary school subjects.

The findings also revealed that insufficient teaching facilities (Instructional materials) for teaching and learning activities coupled with unavailability of relevant and standard textbooks are among the factors inhibiting implementation of Islamic Studies curriculum in Upper Basic Schools in Oyo state. Furthermore, parents and the society seem to have negative attitudes towards the subjects. This also inhibits the implementation of Islamic Studies curriculum in Upper Basic Schools in Oyo state.

It was also found that negative teachers and students' attitudes constitute parts of the factors inhibiting implementation of Islamic Studies curriculum in Upper Basic Schools in Oyo state. This conforms to Abdur-Rafiu (2009) who found that teachers and students' attitudes towards Islamic Studies are negative.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study investigated the factors inhibiting the implementation of Islamic Studies in Upper Basic schools in Oyo State. The data gathered through questionnaire revealed that school and government policies, teacher and student' attitude, lack of adequate facilities and negative societal dispositions to Islamic Studies constitute the identified factors inhibiting the effective implementation of Islamic Studies in Upper Basic schools in Oyo State. In line with the findings of the study, the following recommendations are put forward:

1. Government (Ministry of education) should make Islamic Studies a CORE subject instead of its present position of ELECTIVE/ OPTIONAL subject
2. More qualified teachers of Islamic Studies should be employed in the Upper Basic schools to ensure efficiency.
3. There should be provision of modern teaching facilities in order to promote effective teaching and learning activities.
4. Parents should endeavour to allow their wards to offer Islamic Studies in schools
5. In-service Education opportunity should be accorded to teachers of Islamic Studies so as to further their education in order to ensure efficiency
6. There is need for conduct of symposia and enlightenment for a parents, teachers and students on the importance of Islamic Studies in promoting moral values in the country.
7. There is a need to review the content of the present national curriculum for Upper Basic Islamic Studies

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