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PERCEPTION OF ISLAMIC STUDIES EDUCATION STUDENTS ON ARABIC RELATED COURSES IN FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN

S. S. ABDUL GANIYU & M. S. ABDULLAHI

Abstract

The researcher observed that quite a disturbing number of Islamic Studies Education students prefer to take English related courses from other unit as elective, where Arabic related courses are among the provided options. They have indicated that such students run away from Arabic related courses. On this note, this study investigated the perception of Islamic Studies Education students on Arabic related courses in the Faculty of Arts, University of Ilorin. A total number of one hundred and eighteen (118) Islamic Studies Education Students in the Department of Arts Education, University of Ilorin were adopted as sample for this study. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample. Questionnaire was carefully designed for the purpose of collecting relevant information from the respondents. Inferential statistic of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test two hypotheses the remaining one hypothesis was tested using Pearson product-moment correlation statistics. The finding showed that there was a significant difference on the impact of Arabic language and the studying of Islamic Studies Education. It was recommended that Islamic Studies Education students who are deficient in Arabic language should embark on Arabic language proficiency classes within and outside the campus, so as to overcome the challenges they might encounter in the Arabic related courses.

Keywords: Islamic Studies Education, Arabic, Related Courses, Faculty of Arts University of Ilorin

Introduction

The history of Arabic learning in all the Non- Arab Muslim communities is traceable to the advent of Islam in such places. Being the language of the scripture of Islam, Arabic as always been regarded as an integral part of Islamic learning (Al.ilorin, 1985). Scholars take Islamic Studies as an academic discipline and have also found numerous Arabic manuscripts useful. A very strong knowledge of Arabic is imperative for any specialist in Islamic Studies who really wants to go far in scholarship. In Nigeria and elsewhere Islamic scholars who have interest in Arabic manuscripts on Islamic jurisprudence, monotheism, Quranic exegesis, traditions, Islamic Historiography, philosophy, Sufism/ Asceticism and Ethics have done a great deal and made meaningful contributions, using the content of the work studied to prove that past and present Nigerian generations of Islamic Scholars are part of the world intelligentsia. (Balogun, 1967), (Abdullahi, 1984), (Hunwick, 1995) and (Abubakre, 2004).

Al Rashid (2016) Submitted that there can be no doubt that learning the Arabic language should be one of the top priorities. Indeed, it should be seen as one of the basic necessities for a person who wishes to study Islam. Likewise, the teaching of Arabic is equally a priority for those who wish to impart Islamic knowledge to others. This is especially the case when the student is young. The only reason of this is that the Arabic language is the language of Islam. The Qur'an was revealed in Arabic. Allah says:

Indeed, We have made it an Arabic Qur'an that you might understand. (Quran, 43:3)

Al-Rashid (2016) further explained that just as the Qur'an came to us in Arabic, the Sunnah of our Prophet (peace be upon him) came to us in Arabic as well. Both of these sources are Arabic in their wording, in their idioms, and in their meanings. Because of this, the people of knowledge have concurred that proper understanding of the sacred texts can only be realized in accordance with the dictates of the Arabic language as understood by the Arabs at the time the revelation took place.

More so, if a non Arab wishes to seek Islamic knowledge, he needs to learn the Arabic language and acquire a solid understanding of it. This will enable him to understand the meanings explained by the Qur'an and Sunnah with respect to Islamic Law. Once he is equipped with this ability, he will be able to carry out what the Qur'an and Sunnah command of him and shun what these two sources prohibit.

However, it must be admitted that acquiring an intimate and in-depth knowledge of Arabic is not a small task. It is difficult for the native speaker of Arabic, not to mention those who are not native speakers. A student who wishes to become fully knowledgeable in Islamic Studies should take into account the study of Arabic, as experience has shown, learning Arabic can take a considerable amount of time.

Emon (2015) opined that most languages, if they do not change with time, they either become obsolete, or dead in terms of their usage. It is as if their very survival depends on how these languages respond to the dynamic forces of change in the contemporary societies. This could make one wonder how the Qur'an in Arabic language has been preserved over so many centuries. Divine preservation of the Holy Quran from the time immemorial establishes the survival of its language till modern time. Allah in Quran 15:9 says 'We have, without doubt, sent down the message, and we will assuredly guard it.) As eternal as the Quran exists, the language of its revelation remains steadily important to learning of injunctions, attitudes, modesty, ethics, and personality the Quran preaches to the universe (from corruption)'; Qur'an, 15:9; "We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an, in order that ye may learn wisdom. Qur'an, 12: 2. Horton (2015) saw it that Arabic, like other languages is a medium of communication. It is not a sacred language as some believe. Though, with the rise of Islam, Emon (2015) added that Arabic shifted from a little-known tribal language to the lingua franca for the Muslim world. It was a prerequisite to scholarship and knowledge of it became a matter of the utmost seriousness. It is the language of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

In consideration of this fact, Al Rashid (2015) enlightened that the best approach for a non-Arabic speaking student is to pursue the study of the Arabic language in conjunction with the study of other Islamic disciplines in his own language. While developing his ability to understand the Arabic language, he can seek knowledge from the Qur'an and Sunnah and from the books written by scholars in theology, Qur'an commentary, hadith studies, Islamic Law, and various other fields that are available in a language he understands. These books might either be written in his native language or be translations of Arabic works.

He further encouraged Islamic Studies Education Students that If a student employs such an approach, he will benefit greatly, with the help of Allah. After some time, he will see that he has accumulated a body of knowledge that is not at all insignificant. When he reaches the desired level in his Arabic proficiency, he will be able to build upon the knowledge that he has already acquired by referring directly to the original Arabic source works. With such a background, this will not present any difficulty to him.

Statement of the Problem

One of the major problems is that a disturbing number of Islamic Studies Education students are not having interest in Arabic related courses; they instead see them as cumbersome and unnecessary courses. With this, such students will pay no attention to essence of Arabic language in studying Islamic studies education, and may act contrarily to the ethics of his/her profession owing to the initial lack of interest. Also, parents of the students do not help the situation because they do not send their wards to Islamiyyah schools at their tender age, which might enable them to have background knowledge of Arabic language. Hence, there has not been any write-up on perception of Islamic studies education students on Arabic related courses in Faculty of Arts, University of Ilorin. On account of this, the study was carried out.

Purpose of the Study

The specific purpose of this Study is to find out:

- 1) Interest of Islamic Studies Education students in Arabic related Courses.
- 2) Impact of Arabic language on learning Islamic Studies Education.
- 3) Correlational Relationship between Arabic language and Islamic Studies Education.

Research Questions

This study provided answers to the following research questions;

Do Islamic education students have interest in taking Arabic related courses?

Does Arabic language have impact on learning Islamic Studies Education?

Is there any Correlational relationship between Arabic language and Islamic studies Education?

Research Hypotheses

Based on the research questions, the following hypotheses were formulated

Ho1 - There is no significant difference on the interest of Islamic Studies Education Students and takings of Arabic related courses.

Ho2 - There is no significant difference on the impact of Arabic language and studying of Islamic Studies Education.

Ho3 - There is no significant relationship between Arabic language and the study of Islamic Studies Education.

Methodology

This study adopted descriptive research design. Research designs are procedures for collecting, analysing and reporting research in quantitative and qualitative researches (Abdulganiyu, 2007). The population of this study consists of all students of Department of Arts Education, University of Ilorin while target population were students of Islamic Studies Education in Department of Arts Education, comprises 100 level to 400 level students of 2016/2017 academic session. The study examined the perception of Islamic education students on Arabic related courses in Faculty of Arts, University of Ilorin.

Table 1.0 illustrated the target population of The Study.

S/no	Level of Students	Number of the students
1	100 level	47 students
2	200 level	43 students
3	300 level	18 students
4	400 level	10 students

The target population of the study comprises of Islamic Studies Education Students in Department of Arts Education from 100level to 400level. This target population was considered as the sample of the study because of the small size of the target population. Simple random sampling technique was adopted to select the sample. The instrument used in this study to collect data from the respondents was questionnaire. This questionnaire enables the Respondents to indicate their perception on the topic, by completing the Questionnaire with guided instructions. The instrument was designed in simple form using simple terms to avoid ambiguity. The questionnaire consists of three distinctive sections: -

Section A contained items used to test the first hypothesis: There is no significant difference on the interest of Islamic Studies Education Students and taking of Arabic related courses. Section B contained the items that were used to test the second hypothesis: There is no significant difference on the impact of Arabic language and studying of Islamic Studies Education.

While section C tested the third hypotheses: There is no significant relationship between Arabic language and the study of Islamic Studies Education.

To validate the instrument, the questionnaires were presented to the lecturers in Religions Departments, Arts Education Department, and experts in Test and Measurement in the University of Ilorin for vetting. Corrections and recommendations were effected before the questionnaire for pilot study was drafted. Reliability of the instrument, which is its stability, dependability and predictability, was carried out using Test-re-test statistical method to ascertain the reliability of the instrument for this study. This was done by administering the test to 30 Islamic Studies students in Department of Religion, Faculty of Arts, University of Ilorin within an interval of two weeks. The results that were obtained at both administrations were then correlated through the use of Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Therefore, the reliability of the instruments was established. The results indicate that the instrument is reliable for this study.

Results

Testing Hypotheses

Research questions 1 and 2 have corresponding hypotheses and were tested with the use of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistics while hypothesis 3 was tested with the use of Pearson product-moment correlation statistics with 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference on the interest of Islamic Studies Education Student and offering of Arabic related courses.

Table 2 ANOVA showing the difference on the Interest of Islamic Studies Education Students taking of Arabic related courses.

Source of Variable	df	SS	Mean Square	Cal value	F- Sig.	Decision
Between	2	1.568	.784			Ho ₁
			4.022		.002	Rejected
Within	115	22.425	.195			

*Significant $P < .05$

Table 2 shows the F-value calculated of 4.022, while p-value is .002. Since the p-value is less than the significant value of .05, therefore, the hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there was a statistically significant difference on the interest of Islamic Studies Education Student taking Arabic related courses.

There is no significant difference on the impact of Arabic language and the studying of Islamic Studies Education.

Table 3 ANOVA showing the difference on the Impact of Arabic Language and the Studying of Islamic Studies Education.

Source of Variable	df	SS	Mean Square	Cal value	F- Sig.	Decision
Between	2	3.06	1.53			Ho ₂
			4.990		.001	Rejected
Within	115	35.305	.307			

*Significant $P < .05$

Table 3 shows the F-value calculated of 4.990, while p-value is .001. Since the p-value is less than the significant value of .05, therefore, the hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there was a statistically significant difference on the impact of Arabic language and the studying of Islamic Education.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between Arabic language and the study of Islamic Studies Education

Table 4 Arabic Language and the Study of Islamic Studies Education

Variable	N	X	SD	df	Cal r-value	P-value	Decision
Arabic Language	116	3.25	.80	114	.773	.000	Ho ₁ Rejected
Study of Islamic Education	116	13.28	1.80				

*Significant $P < .05$

Table 4 shows the calculated r-value of .773 while p-value (0.000) is less than the significance level (0.05) for 114 degrees of freedom. Hence, the alternate hypothesis was upheld; therefore, there is significant relationship between Arabic language and the study of Islamic Education.

Discussion

Based on the results of the findings, it was discovered that:

There was a statistically significant difference on the interest of Islamic Studies Education students and offering of Arabic related courses. This finding is similar to the findings of Ishola (2008) who observed that when students have interest in Islamic Education, it would transform their interest into Arabic language. He went further to state that there is a strong relationship between the Study of Islamic Studies and the knowledge of Arabic language.

Al Rashid (2016) Submitted that there can be no doubt that learning the Arabic language should be one of the top priorities. Indeed, it should be sine qua non for a person who wishes to study Islam. Likewise, the teaching of Arabic is equally a priority for those who wish to impart Islamic knowledge to others. This is especially the case when the student is young.

Also, the study was revealed among others that there was a statistically significant difference on the impact of Arabic language and the studying of Islamic Studies Education. This finding is similar to the findings of Adesikeola (2015) who posited that there is positive significant impact of Arabic language on the study of Islamic Education. Meanwhile, Scholars of Islam have also found numerous Arabic manuscripts useful. A very strong knowledge of Arabic is imperative for any specialist in Islamic Studies, who really want to go far in scholarship. (Balogun, 1967), (Abdullahi, 1984), (Hunwick, 1995) and (Abubakre, 2004).

In addition, the study revealed that there is significant relationship between Arabic language and the study of Islamic Education. This finding is similar to the findings of Omabe (2006) who observed that there is significant relationship between Arabic language and the study of

Islamic Studies Education. This implies that the Relationship between Arabic and Islamic Studies cannot be overstressed, for the fact that the Holy Quran which is the first source of Islamic law was revealed in Arabic Language and this is applicable to the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh). Therefore to understand what Islam is all about through Islamic Studies, the knowledge of Arabic is Paramount to avoid misinterpretation of the Holy Quran and Hadith. Abdullahi (2005) opined that Arabic and Islamic Studies are two indispensable subjects as blood and water are indispensable to the body.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn. There was a significant difference on the interest of Islamic Studies Education Students and taking of Arabic related courses, some of the Islamic Studies Education students have no rudiment knowledge of Arabic Language and this scare them away from Arabic related courses. Also there was a statistically significant difference on the impact of Arabic language and the studying of Islamic Studies Education. Some Islamic Studies Education students are of the same view that Arabic language occupied an important position in Islamic Education. In addition, there is significant relationship between Arabic language and the study of Islamic Studies Education, Some Islamic Studies Education students strongly supported the Idea that Islamic Studies and Arabic language are inseparable.

Recommendations

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

1. Islamic Studies Education students who are deficient in Arabic language should embark on Arabic language extra moral classes in and outside the campus, so as to meet up with the challenges they might be encountering in the Arabic related courses.
2. Arabic language should be made one of the 'O' level requirement subjects for the candidate that aspires to study Islamic Studies Education.
3. Interested and qualified candidates should be given a chance by the university to study Islamic Studies Education and not to impose the course on them.

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