School Variables and Secondary School Students' Academic Performance in Islamic Studies in Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract: This study investigated the influence of school variables (composition, ownership, mode, and location) on senior secondary school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies within the Senior School Certificate Examinations (SSCE) in Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria. Utilizing an ex-post facto design, data were collected from a stratified and randomly selected sample of SSIII students across 15 local government areas. The study employed a researcher-designed questionnaire and test items adapted from WAEC and NECO past examination questions. Data were analyzed using percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-test, and ANOVA. Findings revealed a generally poor level of academic performance in Islamic Studies. While school composition showed no significant influence, school ownership (private vs. public) and mode (boarding vs. day) significantly impacted performance, with boarding schools showing higher achievement. School location (urban vs. rural) did not significantly influence performance. The study concludes that school variables are significant predictors of students' academic performance in Islamic Studies. Recommendations include teacher training, provision of adequate facilities, standardized educational policies, and effective monitoring and supervision to enhance students' academic outcomes in the subject.

Keywords: Academic, Islamic Studies, Performance, School, Variables

Introduction

Every society has its own way of training its citizens. Education is a means through which a nation realises her developmental goals. It is a total way by which a nation presents, develops and transmits her values to her generations. It is considered as an agent of socialisation and stabilisation of economic importance as well as the influence of technological advancement and scientific orientation. The school is a social and learning agent that provides the environment which a child may be formally educated in order to

attain educational goals. Human beings have unlimited capacity to learn but may however be limited by the behavioural patterns and facilities in the immediate environment.

Education is the total process of human learning by which knowledge is cultivated, faculties trained and skills developed. Secondary schools not only occupy a strategic place in the Nigeria educational system, they are also the link between the basic and the tertiary levels of education (Ibraheem, 2008). Ashikhia (2010) posited that education at the secondary school level is supposed to be the bedrock and the foundation for higher education. It is an investment as well as the instrument that can be used to achieve a more rapid economic, social, political, technological, scientific and cultural development of a country. It is rather unfortunate that the secondary school students' performance in public examinations, particularly in English language, Mathematics and other subjects such as Islamic Studies, are not encouraging (Oloyede, 2012; WAEC, 2015).

According to Umar (2010), nature only provides raw materials in form of potentials but the environment determines the extent of development. The greatest legacy any nation can bequeath its citizenry is a sound and worthwhile education which should be meaningful and relevant to the socio-cultural needs of that nation. Presently, the education sector in Nigeria is one of the fastest growing industries. This is manifest in the number of basic, secondary and tertiary institutions that are continually springing up especially the private schools. The rapid growth and the expansion of educational institution, have serious implications for what goes on in the classroom (Jimoh, 2007). Adepoju (2006) stressed that religion is a vanguard for spreading moral and peaceful coexistence of people in any given society because it gives people a sense of purpose for their efforts and standard by which to assess the value of their behaviour and achievements. This is true because religion helps to promote spiritual and moral values in the family, society and nation. Religion provides moral foundation for every society (Edorhe, 2018). Religious Studies as a branch of knowledge is made up of studies about a certain religion or comparative religious studies. In the Nigeria Education System, learners are exposed to Islamic Religious Studies (IRS) or Christian Religion Studies (CRS) from basic to secondary school levels.

Over the years, a majority of students that sat for the West African Senior School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) and National Examinations Council (NECO) have been recording mass failure, not only in the area of their overall performance but also in core subjects such as English language, Mathematics, Sciences, and even in Islamic Studies. In Islamic Studies, the high spate of failure has been a dominant feature of the students' performance both in the public and private secondary schools. This could be deduced that there exists a vacuum in the quality of students produced and the required quality of individuals for various institutional needs of the country. In accessing the influence of the level of students' achievement in SSCE academic performance, it is necessary to consider some variables of the school as those instruments that could be tailored towards the level of students' academic performance, especially in the senior secondary school level of education.

The school variables such as school composition, school ownership, school mode and school location are deemed fit to influence students' academic achievements. Hence, the school variables remain important areas that should be studied and well managed to enhance students' academic performance. The issue of poor academic performance of students in Nigeria has been of much concern to the government, parents, teachers, and even students themselves. The quality of education not only depends on the teachers as reflected in the performance of their duties but also in the effective coordination of the school variables. It is believed that the school physical features have a form of relationship with students' performance in SSCE in terms of the school composition, ownership, mode and location. School composition in this study refers to schools based on gender difference such as school with male only, female only and mixed schools (co-educational). Hut (2002) revealed that public schools have not only established single-sex schools but have also established single-sex classrooms within co-educational schools since most of these modifications were adopted as a means to provide support to low achieving students; many of whom reside in urban settings.

Adepoju and Ogunrinade (2006), in their study of students' factors as correlates of academic achievement in junior secondary school Religious Studies, found that gender was not a significant contributor to academic performance in CRK. Proponents of single-sex instruction state that females benefit most from this type of instructional setting because the single-sex environment helps to reduce gender stereotypes students encounter in coeducational settings (Hut, 2002). He also stressed that opponents of single-sex instruction believe that accomplishments achieved in single-sex environments can be achieved in coeducational environments if the proper teaching strategies are employed.

School ownership is an important factor in school administration, funding, staffing, facilities, teaching of specific subjects and general standard of education (Okunloye, 2009). Schools in Nigeria are owned, managed and controlled by either the government or private individuals (Ishola, 2017). The schools owned by the government are referred to as public schools, while schools owned by private individuals are called private schools. Private and public secondary schools have been found to differ significantly in the quantity and quality of teachers, facilities, equipment and fund. The standard of education in public schools has, to some extent, been discredited because the products could not compete expectedly with their counterparts from high-flying private schools (Afolabi, 2005).

Afolabi (2005) stressed further that public schools are normally classified based on the available resources on ground such as classrooms and the number of teachers. However, there is no special criterion for the classification in private schools as those who patronise them have series of divergent objectives such as fluency of their wards in English language,

the ratio of students to teachers, school plants and premises, among others. Odewumi (2005) opined that the type of school children attend has a great influence on the way they learn and that there is no way one could compare public schools with private ones in terms of supply of instructional resources, organisation, planning, practical teaching and funding.

Another variable of interest in this study is school mode. Boarding school, according to Ahmed, Oliver and Danmole (2017), is a school where students are provided with accommodation to live in school hostel within the environment of the school during school term, while day school is a school where all the students go for studies and return to their homes after school hours. Both boarding and day schools could either be privately or publicly owned. Boarding schools could be full boarding or the mixture of both boarders and day students that attend the institution by day and return to their different houses after school hours.

Researches have shown that some children sent to boarding schools pass through a grief of the homesickness, and for some students it might prove to be scary to meet a whole bunch of new people (Paye, 2001). Ahmed (2017) stated that an important role is played by boarding schools in the development of learner's mind and personality. An environment of healthy competition with other classmates and peers is provided at boarding schools; the provision motivates children to improve their performance. The day scholars, on the other hand, live with their parents and do not come across with issues such as bad food, hostel ragging and home sickness but they surely do envy the freedom and independence of their hostel buddies (Abraham, 2015). It is believed that due to unsustainable home environment, the day scholars cannot study properly. In harsh weather conditions, the long distance to the school is another problem. Bad company is a common problem for both boarders and day scholars (Akomalafe & Olorunfemi, 2011).

School location is the environment where the school is located. The location of school can be classified into rural and urban areas (Umar, 2010). Urban area is the area where there are many people and there are social amenities and infrastructural facilities to make life comfortable for the people living in the area; rural area is the area with few population of people and they are no full social amenities and infrastructural facilities compared with those in urban area (Duruji, 2014). The ability to provide the masses access to education makes the government and private individuals site schools in both rural and urban areas. Nageri's (2012) findings revealed that the performance of the children who reside in rural areas or the slum areas of town and those who study in rural disadvantaged schools was significantly less than that of those children who lived in urban areas and studied in big schools. To complement this study, the present research examined school variables as they influenced students' performance schools with particular attention on Islamic Studies.

Statement of the Problem

A recent trend on secondary school students' academic performance in Nigeria is the issue of poor academic performance in external examinations such as the National Examinations Council (NECO), the West African Examinations Council (WAEC), National Business and Technical and Examination Board (NABTEB) and National Board for Arabic and Islamic Studies (NBAIS). Major concerns appear to have been centered on the quality of teachers and non-commitment of the students to their studies due to distractions that hamper learning. Little attention seems to have been given to the other school variables such as school categories, ownership, mode and location. The environment in which students learn such as classrooms, libraries, technical workshops, laboratories, play grounds, among others, are variables that influence students' learning and academic performance. Hence, learning environment remains an important area that should be studied and well managed to enhance students' academic performance.

Poor performance has become a source of concern to major stakeholders in the education sector in the country. Over the years, a majority of students that sat for the West African Senior School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE), National Examinations Council (NECO), National Business and Technical Examinations Board (NABTEB) and The National Board for Arabic and Islamic Studies (NBAIS) have been recording mass failure, not only in the area of their overall performance but also in core subjects such as English language, Mathematics, Sciences and even Islamic Studies and Arabic (Raheem, 2001). In Islamic Studies, the high spate of failure has been a dominant feature of the students' performance both in the public and private secondary schools in Nigeria (WAEC, 2015).

Academic performance, which is measured by the examination results, is one of the major goals of a school. Raheem (2001) argued that schools are established with the aim of stimulating knowledge and skills to those who go through them and behind all this is the idea of enhancing good academic performance. The poor academic performance of student in Islamic studies had in the past given a cause for concern for scholars and researchers and such variables that could tend to influence the students' performance. Therefore, it is pertinent to investigate school variables on studemts' academic performance in senior school certificate Islamic Studies.

Many studies have been carried out on the school variables and students' performance. Such studies include Lawal (2010) who studied factors affecting academic achievement of students in Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) in Christian Religious Knowledge in Ogun State, Nigeria. Duruji, Azuh and Oviasogie (2014) worked on learning environment and academic performance of Secondary school students in external examinations; a study of selected schools in Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria. Another study was carried out by Millard (2016) on student's variables and academic performance in Christian Religious Studies in Calabar Municipality, Nigeria. Harb, Nasr and El-Shaarwi (2006) investigated on impact of teacher interactive variables on students' performance in Islamic Studies in senior secondary schools in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

However, none of these and other studies known to the researcher were carried out on influence of school variables on students' academic performance in SSCE Islamic Studies in Ogbomoso, Nigeria. The research that closely related to this present study differs in scope and location. The present research focused the influence of school categories, ownership, mode and location on senior secondary school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies in Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria. Thus, this constituted a research gap, part of which the study filled.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of school variables on senior secondary school students' academic performance in Senior School Certificate Examinations (SSCE) Islamic Studies in Ogbomoso, Nigeria. Specifically, the study investigated:

- a. The general level of academic performance of senior secondary school students in Islamic Studies in SSCE.
- b. The influence of school composition on senior secondary school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies in SSCE.
- c. The influence of school ownership on senior secondary school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies in SSCE.
- d. The influence of school mode on senior secondary school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies in SSCE.
- e. The influence of school location on senior secondary school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies in SSCE.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised and answered in this study:

- 1. What is the general level of academic performance of senior secondary school students in Islamic Studies in SSCE?
- 2. Does school composition have influence on senior secondary school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies?
- 3. Does school ownership have influence on senior secondary school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies?
- 4. Does school mode have influence on senior secondary school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies?
- 5. Does school location have influence on senior secondary school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were raised to guide this study:

- HO₁: School composition does not significantly influence students' academic performance in SSCE Islamic Studies.
- HO₂: School ownership does not significantly influence students' academic performance in SSCE Islamic Studies.
- HO₃: School mode does not significantly influence students' academic performance in SSCE Islamic Studies.
- HO₄: School location does not significantly influence students' academic performance in SSCE Islamic Studies.

Methodology

This study examined the school variables and senior secondary school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies in Oyo State, Nigeria. An ex post facto design was adopted for the study. The population for the study comprised all the senior secondary school students in Oyo state, Nigeria. The target population consisted of all SSIII candidates that registered for WASSCE and NECO SSCE Islamic Studies in 15 Local Government Areas drawn from the three Senatorial Districts in Oyo state. Stratified sampling technique was used to select senior secondary schools based on the categorisation; ownership, school mode and school location across, while simple random sampling technique was used to select senior school three (SSIII) students that registered for Islamic Studies in SSCE from the sampled schools. A researcher-designed questionnaire and test items adapted from the WAEC and NECO past questions in Islamic Studies were used to collect data from the respondents. The percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to analyse the data collected for this study.

Results

The data collected were school variables on students' academic performance in Islamic Studies in Oyo State, Nigeria. The data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results are presented as follows:

Table 2: Demographic Data of the Respondents Involved in the Study

VARIABLES	Frequency	Percentage
School Composition		
Mixed Sch (Male & Female)	227	64.9

Single Sch (Female)	123	35.1
Total	350	100
School Mode		
Day	254	72.6
Boarding	96	27.4
Total	350	100
School Ownership		
Public Owned School	245	70.0
Private	105	30.0
Total	350	100
School Location		
Urban	249	71.1
Rural	101	28.9
Total	350	100

The results in Table 2 show that 350 respondents were engaged across all the sampled schools. In the same, out of 350 respondents, 227 (64.9%) were male and female respondents from mixed schools while 123 (35.1%) were female respondents only from single schools. It was shown that 245 (70.0%) of the respondents were from public schools while 105 (30.0%) respondents were selected from privately-owned schools in Ogbomosho, Oyo State. However, 224 (72.6%) respondents were sampled from day schools while 98 (27.4%) were from boarding schools respectively. The same table further revealed that 249 (71.8%) of the respondents were sampled from Urban schools while 101 (28.9%) respondents were sampled from rural schools.

Research Question One: What is the general level of academic performance of senior secondary school students in Islamic Studies in SSCE?

Participants' test scores on the Islamic Studies SSCE test were subjected to the mean statistics. The academic performance of Islamic Studies students in the objective tests was analysed using mean statistics with a benchmark score of 50% as shown in Table 3

	Table 3: General Level of Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School						
	Students in Islamic Studies in SSCE						
N	Minimum Maximum Mean of the Overall Standard						
	Scores	Scores	Scores	Deviation			
350	5.00	56.00	22.67	8.374			

The result in Table 3 indicates the students' academic performance in Islamic Studies in SSCE. As indicated in the table, the students' academic performance in Islamic Studies was low with a mean score of 23% considering the benchmark of 50%. This is a numerical indication that a majority of sampled Islamic Studies Students got marks that fell below average mark or benchmark.

Hypotheses Testing

Having examined the demographic data of the respondents involved in the study and research question, the researcher proceeded to test Null Hypotheses 1, and 2, 3, 4 generated using One-way ANOVA and t-test at 0.05 level of significance respectively.

Research Hypothesis One: School composition does not significantly influence Students' academic performance in SSCE Islamic Studies

Table 4: ANOVA Summary of the Variation in Students' Academic Performance in **Islamic Studies Based on School Composition**

Variables	Sum of	Df	Mean	F	Sig.	Remark
	Squares		Square			
Between	219.660	2	109.830	1.571	.209	Accepted
Groups						
Within	2425.554	347	69.895		•	
Groups						
Total	2447.214	349				

^{*}Insignificance at p>0.05

Table 4 shows the F-value of 1.571 with a p-value of .209 computed at 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value of .209 obtained is higher than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis which stated that school composition does not significantly influence Students' academic performance in SSCE Islamic Studies is accepted. This implies that there was no statistically significant variation in the academic performance in Islamic Studies of students from male only, female only and mixed schools.

Research Hypothesis Two: School ownership does not significantly influence Students' academic performance in SSCE Islamic Studies.

Table 5: T-test Showing the Influence of School Ownership on Students' Academic Performance in SSCE Islamic Studies.

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	dt	t-value	Sig.	Remark
Public	245	21.8449	7.9697	348	-2.849	.005	Rejected
Private	105	24.6000	8.9964				

[^] Sig. p< 0.05 (Rejected

The results in Table 5 reveal that the calculated t-value is -2.849 with 348 degree of freedom computed at 0.05 significant level. Since the calculated level of significance (.005) is less than the critical level of significance, Hypothesis 2 is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there was significant influence of school ownership (public and private school) on students' academic performance in SSCE Islamic Studies.

Research Hypothesis Three: School mode does not significantly influence Students' academic performance in SSCE Islamic Studies.

Table 6: t-test Showing the Influence of School Mode on Students' Academic **Performance in SSCE Islamic Studies**

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	dt	t-value	Sig.	Remark
Day	254	21.8933	7.70522	348	-2.821	.004	Rejected
Boarding	96	24.7708	9.67305				

Sig. p< 0.05 (Rejected

The results in Table 6 reveal that the calculated t-value is -2.821 with 348 degree of freedom computed at 0.05 significance level. Since the calculated level of significance (.004) is less than the critical level of significance, Hypothesis 3 is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there was significant influence of school mode (Day and Boarding school) on students' academic performance in SSCE Islamic Studies.

Research Hypothesis Four: School location does not significantly influence Students' academic performance in SSCE Islamic Studies.

Table 7: t-test Showing the Influence of School Location on Students' Academic Performance in SSCE Islamic Studies

Variables N N	Mean Std. Deviation	dt t-value	Sig.	Remark
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Urban	249	22.9920	8.3536	348	1.125	.261	Accepted
Rural	101	21.8812	8.4134				

Sig. p< 0.05 (Rejected)

The results in Table 7 reveal that the calculated t-value is 1.125 with 348 degree of freedom computed at 0.05 significance level. Since the calculated level of significance (.261) is higher than the critical level of significance, Hypothesis 4 is accepted while the alternative hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there was no significant influence of school location (Urban and Rural schools) on students' academic performance in SSCE Islamic Studies.

Discussion of the Findings

The finding of this study showed that there were more selected respondents from mixed schools which comprised male and female respondents with a total number of 227 compared to single schools where a total sum of 123 female respondents were selected. It could be inferred from this point that single schools were not many in the environment where the study was concentrated. In addition, it shows that there are more students offering Islamic Studies in the mixed schools than those in the single schools. The study also involved school mode where 254 respondents were sampled from Day schools and only 96 of the sampled respondents were from boarding schools. In the same direction, 245 respondents were sampled from government-owned schools while only 105 respondents were sampled from private-owned schools. Lastly, based on the school location, 245 respondents were sampled from urban schools compared to only 101 respondents selected from rural schools. The respondents from the sampled schools were given a equal opportunity of participating in the study and that was the reason why simple random sampling technique were adopted in the selection of respondents.

The findings of the study revealed that the students' academic performance in Islamic Studies in senior secondary schools was generally poor because a majority of the participants in the current study scored below the average mark or benchmark of 50%. Probably, this might be as a result of nonchalant attitude towards Islamic Studies arising from the sort of training received in their respective schools. This finding is supported by the findings of Raheem (2001) and Oloyede (2012) which affirmed that a majority of the students performed academically below the expected level.

More so, the finding of this study revealed further that there was no variation in students' academic performance in Islamic Studies on the basis of school compositions. In other words, the students' academic performance in Islamic Studies of students in male only, female only and mixed schools was almost the same. This finding is corroborated with the view of Plato that co-education creates a feeling of comradeship; he advocated the teaching of both the male and female sexes in the same institution without showing any discrimination in imparting education. Cone-Wesson and Ramirez (1997) study revealed that girls are also able to interpret facial expressions better than most boys and boys are more interested in movement than girls.

However, this finding contradicts the submission of Sadker and Sadker (2001) that single sex schooling increases students' achievement and interest. Sadker and Sadker (2001) draw a number of perspectives to support their claims about efficacy of the single sex schooling. The finding of the present study on school composition is also in contrast with the finding of Guarisco(2010) that sexual harassment is an unfortunate problem in coeducational environments. The finding of the present study does not also agree with the assertion of Adesehinwa and Amatobi (2013) who advocated for single school particularly for the female. It also disagrees with the study of Dauda (2016) who found that black students of both sexes performed better academically and behaviourally in single sex schools.

More so, it was found in the study that there was a significant influence of school ownership (public and private school) on students' academic performance in SSCE Islamic Studies. This finding tallies with that of the Odewumi (2005) that the school type of children determines their learning and assimilation patterns.

The finding of the study further indicated that there was a significant influence of school mode (Day and Boarding school) on students' academic performance in SSCE Islamic Studies in favour of boarding school. This perhaps might be as a result of stringent supervision and monitoring in the boarding schools. This outcome corroborates the finding of Abbas (2002) that parents, students and principals wanted the system of boarding to be retained because of the joint supervision and monitoring of the students by both parents and teachers. Jimoh (2004) and Glewe (2006) also supported this submission

Furthermore, the finding of this study revealed that that there was no significant influence of school location (Urban and Rural schools) on students' academic performance in SSCE Islamic Studies. This outcome does not tally with the findings of Aremu (2000) and Fullarton (2002) that there was a significant difference in academic performance of students in urban and rural areas. The outcome tended to negate the submission of Duruji, Azuh and Oviasogie (2014) that urban environment had high population density containing a high variety and beauty and common place views better for academic excellent compared to rural areas characterised by the low population density containing a low variety and isolated place views.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is then concluded that the general level of academic achievement of Students' performance in Senior School Certificate Islamic Studies was not encouraging and a majority of secondary school students performed below the average. In the same direction, it was also concluded that there was no variation in students'

academic performance in Islamic Studies on the basis of school compositions but there was a significant influence of school ownership (public and private school) on students' academic performance in SSCE Islamic Studies. In the same vein, there was significant influence of school mode (Day and Boarding school) on students' academic performance in SSCE Islamic Studies but there was no significant influence of school location (Urban and Rural schools) on students' academic performance in SSCE Islamic Studies.

Implication of the Findings

The implication of this study was that school variables were predictors of secondary school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies. From the findings, it was established that, composition of a school in term of mixed and single schools strongly had influence on the students' performance; the school mode, ownership and school location highly predicted the direction of the students' academic performance.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings of this study, it showed clearly that school variables have a great influence on the students' academic performance and the following recommendations were proffered for positive and effective students' academic performance in Islamic Studies, especially in senior school certificate examinations.

- 1. Islamic Studies teacher should combine the counselling roles with their pedagogical endeavour. This could be done by collaborating with the school counsellor through students monitoring in line with the expected behavioural change and academic performance.
- 2. Islamic Studies teachers in various schools should take cognisance of the school variables and endeavour to put in their best in motivating students to learn in any school they find themselves.
- 3. Islamic Studies teachers should make use of appropriate teaching methods and be more effective in the course of instructional delivery so as to motivate the students to develop positive attitudes towards learning the subject.
- 4. Islamic Studies teachers need to attend refresher programmes, workshops, seminars, symposia and conferences on how to develop and motivate effective study habits and positive attitudes and ways of improving their level of competence in Islamic Studies.
- 5. Government and proprietors of schools should ensure the provision of adequate and functioning facilities for all categories of schools (day, boarding, single, mixed, public and private schools). Academic environment should be made conducive.
- 6. Qualified Islamic Studies teachers should be recruited to enhance effective teaching and learning of the subject.

- 7. Government should also ensure standardised educational policy on the establishment of schools generally in order to prevent the establishment of substandard schools with poor funding and less qualified staff.
- 8. Government should also ensure effective monitoring and supervision of the school activities for quality education delivery.

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