

# **Comparative Analysis of Public and Private School Students' Academic Performance in Islamic Studies in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria**

BIBIRE, Hassan Abdulkareem

*Kwara State Teaching Service Commission, Ilorin, Nigeria*

and

ABDUR-RAHMAN, Muhibudeen Aiku

*Nana Aishat Memorial College of Education, Ilorin, Kwara State*

## **ABSTRACT**

*Poor academic performance of students in Islamic Studies, particularly among public and private schools seems to be rampant and concerned to all and sundry. This paper investigated comparative analysis of public and private school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies in Kwara State, Nigeria. Causal-comparative research type known as "ex post facto" research method was used for this study. All ninety one (91) public and private senior secondary schools in Ilorin south constituted the population. Stratified sampling technique was used to select four public and private senior secondary schools. One hundred and sixty (160) senior secondary Islamic Studies students III were selected using simple random sampling technique. Students' academic performance test in Islamic Studies was used to determine their performance. The instrument was validated through face and content validity and reliability index yielded 0.68. Three hypotheses were postulated and tested using t-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that a significant difference existed between public school male and female Islamic Studies students' academic performance in Ilorin South. Based on the finding, it was recommended among others that only competent and trained Islamic Studies teachers should be allowed to handle the subject and not just a mere believer. It was also recommended that students, irrespective of their gender should be exposed to conducive environment in the teaching and learning of Islamic Studies in order to facilitate better performance.*

**Keywords:** Comparative analysis, Academic performance, Public schools, Private schools, Islamic Studies

## **Introduction**

Education is a potent factor in producing the manpower required for productive national development. Idowu (2002) described education as the pivot on which the wheel of education revolves and the legacy that the nation can bequeath to its citizens. Education is very basic and crucial for social, economic and technological development of any nation. The overwhelming poor students' academic performance, particularly in Islamic Studies has become very rampant and unbearable to all and sundry. The increase in the percentage of failure of students in this subject has drawn the attention of educators, government and parents on why Nigerian students fail Islamic Studies. In addition, the performance of students in

any academic task has been the concern of educators, parents and society at large. The primary concern of any educator entrusted with the responsibility of selecting students for any advanced training programme in a given field is the ability to estimate as accurately as possible the probability that such candidates will succeed or fail.

Performance according to Macmillian English Dictionary for Advanced learners (2002) is the standard to which someone does something such as a job or an examination. In line with this statement, Good (2003) submitted that academic performance is the knowledge obtained or skills developed in the school subjects which are usually designated by test scores or by marks assigned by teachers. He further described academic performance as a display of knowledge attained or skills developed in school subjects. Such performance is indicated by students' scores in class assessment as obtained in the school records.

In Nigeria, there are three examination councils for Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSCE). These councils are West African Examinations Council (WAEC), the National Examinations Council (NECO) and the National Business and the Technical Examinations Board (NABTEB). The councils are responsible for examinations of students' performance at the end of their senior secondary school education. They also enlighten the schools and students by identifying the area in which students perform excellently and where they perform weakly. This is done with a view to helping the schools sustain performance in the area of weakness and difficulty. These examination bodies assist curriculum experts to identify difficult or simple topic in the curriculum content as well as the learning experiences provided for students in schools because their examination results can provide great information for general curriculum review (Adebayo, 2004).

In another development, the major problems to the development of education in Nigeria, specifically in Kwara State is the persistent poor academic performance of students in the senior school certificate examinations conducted by West African Examinations Council and National Examinations Council. The level of performance of students in any subject depends largely on the amount of learning that has taken place in the subject (Oladosu, 1998). It has been observed that students' performance in any subject could be attributed to some factors. Buttressing this, Awore (2005) observed that one factor that undermines students' academic performance is the existence of anti-social behaviour. Anti-social behaviours in schools as explained by Malagun (2006) include cultism, examination malpractice, sexual immorality, truancy, among others. The involvement of students in any of these anti-social acts could count against their academic performance.

It has been observed that students' poor performance in Islamic Studies seems to have been attributed to some factors. Nwagwu (2002) opined that students learning were evaluated by their parents using their performance in public examinations to pass judgment on the school and the teachers. To them, the schools are to be staffed by good teachers and flooded with useful facilities and instructional materials. Government responsibilities include ensuring the availability of such

provision and making regular supervision for effective teaching and learning to take place. On the other hands, parents are charged with the responsibility of enrolling their wards in schools and adequate payment of their levies, while some parents complained of shortage of funds, teachers and infrastructures in the schools.

Besides, public schools are schools owned, administered and funded by the local, state or national/ federal government. In other words, public schools are controlled and managed by the public authority or agency (Okunloye, 2006). On the other hands, private schools are schools funded wholly or partly by students' tuition and administered by the private body. In other words, private schools are controlled by non-governmental organisation with governing board not selected by the government (Okunloye, 2006).

Among the subjects that learners are taught in Nigerian secondary schools is Islamic Studies. The ultimate goal and aim of Islamic Studies is the inculcation of moral and spiritual values in the minds of the learners in order to grow up and abide by the teachings of Qur'an and the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Islamic Studies have been defined by various scholars differently. According to Qosim (2008) Islamic Studies is a type of education which trains the sensitivity of learners in such a manner that their attitude to their actions, decisions and approaches to all kinds of knowledge are governed by the spiritual and deeply felt ethical values of Islam. Similarly, Ishaq (2009) submitted that Islamic Studies is an academic programme under which the doctrines, culture, history, law and ethics of Islam are taught. It can also be described as the totality of learning experiences centred on the relationship between man and his creator and between man and his fellow men. Meanwhile, Oladosu (2003) stated that the approved Islamic Religious Studies (IRS) syllabus is designed under the auspices of the West African Examination Council in 1968 and 1973 respectively. This is an indication that Islamic Studies has been one of the approved subjects in Nigeria secondary schools. The teaching of Islamic Studies in the school system aims at effecting significant positive changes in the learners. Consequently, the quality of one's education depends mainly on the nature of knowledge being disseminated and acquired (Adebayo, 2004).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Students' poor academic performance, especially in Islamic Studies seems to be rampant in the schools and it is not clear whether this is peculiar to public or private school students due to the inadequate facilities. It is observed is that the private schools tend to have adequate facilities to perform averagely in the subject, yet students' poor academic performance seems to be rampant in both internal and external examinations. This might be attributed to their non-chalant attitude towards the subject.

Many studies have been carried out by researchers on students' academic performance at various times, locations and area of interest in Nigeria such as Hassan (2004) who worked on the relationship between junior secondary school

students' academic achievement in English language and Social Studies in Niger State, Nigeria. Also, Yinusa (2006) carried out a study on the relationship between students' performance in English and Yoruba language in (SSCE) in Ogbomosho North Local Government Area of Oyo State and Yusuf and Adigun (2010) who examined the influence of school sex, location and type on students' academic performance.

To the best knowledge of the researcher, no study has been carried out on comparative analysis of public and private school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. This is the gap in knowledge; this study intends to contribute to.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to analyse public and private school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study intended to find out the differences between:

1. Public male and female students' academic performance in Islamic Studies.
2. Private male and female students' academic performance in Islamic Studies.
3. Public and private school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies.

### **Research Questions**

In this study three research questions were raised for the study.

1. Is there any difference between public school male and female students' academic performance in Islamic Studies?
2. Is there any difference between private school male and female students' academic performance in Islamic Studies?
3. Is there any difference between public and private school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested in the context of this study:

- HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant difference between public school male and female students' academic performance in Islamic Studies.
- HO<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant difference between private school male and female students' academic performance in Islamic Studies.
- HO<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant difference between public and private school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies.

### **Research Methodology**

Research type known as "ex post facto" research method was used for this study. The population of the study was all ninety one (91) public and private senior secondary school students in Ilorin South, out of which twenty eight (28) were public schools while sixty three (63) were private schools. The target population was the SSSIII Islamic Studies students in public and private secondary schools in Ilorin South. Meanwhile, One hundred and sixty senior secondary school three

(SSSIII) Islamic Studies students were randomly selected from eight (8) schools in the Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select four (4) public schools and four (4) private schools. Simple random sampling was adopted to select the sample. A researcher-designed questionnaire was used as research instrument. The questionnaire made up of three sections, A, B and C. Section A items were used to test hypothesis 1;  $H_{01}$ : There is no significant difference between public school male and female students' academic performance in Islamic Studies. Section B items were used to test hypothesis 2;  $H_{02}$ : There is no significant difference between private school male and female students' academic performance in Islamic Studies. While section C items were used to test hypothesis 3;  $H_{03}$ : There is no significant difference between public and private school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies. Face and content validity was done by experts in the field of test and measurement. Test re-test method was used to establish the reliability of the instrument. The two scores were correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). The coefficient of 0.76 was obtained which indicated that the instrument was reliable for the study.

### Hypotheses Testing and Results

**Hypothesis one:** There is no significant difference between public school male and female students' academic performance in Islamic Studies.

**Table:** Difference between Public School Male and Female Students' Academic Performance in Islamic Studies in Ilorin South, Kwara State

School Type	Gender	N	Mean Score	SD	Df	Cal.t	Crit.t
Public (80 students)	Male	48	56.72	12.22	158	2.03*	1.96
	Female	32	51.86	9.67			

\*Significant,  $p < 0.05$

The result in Table 1 shows that the calculated t-value is 2.03, while the critical t-value is 1.96. Since the calculated t-value is greater than the critical t-value, the hypothesis that stated that there is no significant difference between public school male and female students' academic performance in Islamic Studies is rejected. Hence, there is significant difference between public school male and female students' academic performance in Islamic Studies.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant difference between private school male and female students' academic performance in Islamic Studies.

**Table 2:** Difference between Private School Male and Female Students' Academic Performance in Islamic Studies

School Type	Gender	N	Mean Score	SD	Df	Cal.t	Crit.t
Private (80 students)	Male	52	60.76	7.21	158	2.17*	1.96
	Female	28	51.88	5.99			

\*Significant,  $p < 0.05$

The result in Table 2 shows that the calculated t-value is 2.17, while the critical t-value is 1.96. Since the calculated t-value is greater than the critical t-value, the hypothesis that stated that there is no significant difference between private school male and female students' academic performance in Islamic Studies is rejected. Hence, there is significant difference between private school male and female students' academic performance in Islamic Studies.

**Hypothesis Three:** There is no significance difference between public and private school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies.

**Table 3: Difference between Public and Private School Students' Academic Performance in Islamic Studies**

School Type	N	Mean Score	SD	Df	Cal.t	Crit.t
Private School	80	58.80	12.70	158	2.25*	1.96
Public School	80	53.25	10.66			

\*Significant,  $p < 0.05$

The result in Table 3 shows that the calculated t-value is 2.25, while the critical t-value is 1.96. Since the calculated t-value is greater than the critical t-value, the hypothesis that stated that there is no significant difference between private and public school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies is rejected. Hence, there is significant difference between public and private school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies.

## Discussion

The finding of this study revealed that significant difference exists between public school male and female students' academic performance in Islamic Studies. This finding supported the finding of Okunloye (2001) that a statistically significant difference exists between public school male and female students' academic performance in Islamic Studies.

Another finding of this study revealed that a significant difference exists between private school male and female students' academic performance in Islamic Studies. This finding is in line with Yusuf & Adigun (2010) who revealed that private male students performed excellently better than female students.

The last finding of this study revealed that significant difference exists between public and private school students' academic performance in Islamic Studies. The finding of this study corroborated with the finding of Okunloye (2006) that private

schools offer better and more qualitative facilities, quality staff, teaching and non-teaching and availability of equipment.

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher is of the opinion that there was significant difference between male and female public and private schools academic performance in Islamic Studies.

## **Conclusion**

The findings of this study have shown that school types predict performance of students in Islamic Studies. In general, students in private schools tend to perform better in Islamic Studies than their counterparts in public schools. In the same vein, gender also predicts academic performance of students in Islamic Studies. It was revealed that male students tend to perform academically better than their female counterparts in schools.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the research findings, it was recommended that:

- (i) Islamic Studies teachers should be given recognition and special incentives by the government as applicable to their counterparts in sciences and other fields of specializations.
- (ii) Government should organize periodic seminars, conferences and workshops for Islamic Studies teachers in order to enhance their performance while teaching.
- (iii) Islamic Studies students irrespective of their gender should be exposed to conducive teaching and learning environment so as to facilitate their better performance.
- (iv) Islamic Studies teachers and school should employ appropriate teaching methods in teaching the subject.

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