

Attitudes of Students towards Learning Islamic Education in Tertiary Institutions

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Abstract

Islamic Education is among many subjects that are taught in many of our tertiary institutions. Is a subject that is integrated with the Devine Messages (Qur'an and Hadith). Hence is believed to be the type that deal with all aspects of human life. It therefore encourages Muslim to face the reality in all their dealings as it challenges the negative attitude exhibited by Muslim students in the process of acquiring Islamic Education. It is in these respects that, the paper examines the meaning and significance of Islamic Education, the negative attitude of students towards obtaining Islamic Education as well as the factors responsible for that negation. For instance, majority of the students are learning Islamic Education on commercial basis not intrinsically motivated. This is because the subject was earlier based on the system of secularism; most of the students that are pursuing Islamic education are not rooted in Arabic language as they are with English language because the official language of governance in Nigeria is English. Finally, the paper provides conclusion and recommendations.

Keywords: *Students attitude, Islamic education and Tertiary institutions*

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Background to the Study

It is very essential to have an idea on what the term “attitude” stands for in a paper like this. Naturally, attitude is human experiences that are attached to feelings, effective responses, sensation process, satisfying ness or annoyance to which human qualities influence an individual's thought, interest and behaviour. Individual are concerned about things that are of special interest to them. An individual may experience concern about different set of problems differently from others. Hence, it is expected to find out in this write-up different feeling of the youth of tertiary institution toward learning of this importance subject. But attitude can be change as a young person gain greater understanding of particular object. Naturally, people vary in their attitudes and usually a person reacts to any situation according to his established attitude toward it. In the case of negative attitudes which is unfavorable as this paper, speaks and maintians by the following as a writer maintained

“...this attitude is totally negative and does not favouran activity or situation; it does not encourages positive participation in an activity. The students withdraw from such activity or situation. Negative attitude encourage lost of interest and using any means to keep away from” (Ibrahim2005)

Referenced to the above the learning of Islamic education in our tertiary institutions is viewed with different attitudes by the students. It is in line with the above that the paper investigates the situation and find out the factors responsible so as to highlight some suggestions for the possible solutions

Meaning and Significance of Islamic Education

Islamic Education is a subject or course of study taught in our formal school system right from primary level up to the tertiary institutions. It combined spiritual knowledge and secular system of education (i.e. Islam and Education) Hence, Islam is defined as the religion of Allah (the most high) which he sent to mankind through His chosen Messengers from the time of creation to the time the last version of Islam reveled to prophet Muhammad (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) through Angel Jibril (peace be upon him) (kaura 2015). In another version, Islam refers to what prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) received from Allah through Angel Jibril (PBH), and which he taught the Muslims who accepted his call within the span of 23 years of his Messengerhood he spent between Makkah and Madinah. (kaura 2015). Education in general terms means the ability to acquire literacy and proficiency through learning, schooling, acculturation and instructions which sometimes leads to a ward of a certificate normally acquired through both formal and informal systems. However, education is used in the present contest to mean kind of learning at formal level of education leading to an award of certificate. Therefore the two concepts i.e. Islamic and education joined together refers to a kind of learning in Islamic sciences along with modern science that will lead to award of a certificate in Islamic study such of B-A (Islamic studies) and Diploma in Islamic studies. (kaura 2015).

The main sources of knowledge in Islam is Qur'an and Hadith of the prophet (PBUH) which regarded as the primary sources, while commentaries by the Muslim scholars on the Qur'an and Hadith serve as secondary sources. This is why, Haqq-A (1979) states that; the Islamic knowledge is the kind of knowledge as expressed in the Qur'an and Sunnah of the prophet (PBUH). For this therefore, it needs to be stressed that Islamic education as a process of intellectual and spiritual training of man does not confine itself to the study of the text of the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the prophet (PBUH) rather it studies all aspects of life including various scientific disciplines, which help improve spiritual as well as material well being of man.

The episode that has happened when the prophet (PBUH) sent Mu'az bn Jabal to Yemen as a governor also explained comprehensively the meaning of Islamic education. The prophet asked him, how will you decide case brought before you? He (Mu'az) replied I shall decide it according to the book of Allah. (He) the prophet said, if you did not find it in the book of Allah? (He) Mu'az replied then I shall decide it according to the Sunnah of Allah's messenger; He prophet said if you did not find it in the Sunnah of Messengers? (He) Mu'az replied I shall exercise My own personal judgment without any hesitation. (He) the prophet of Allah patted on the chest of Mu'az and said Praise be to Allah who has caved the messenger of Allah to do what pleased the messenger of Allah (Abu Dawud).

It is based on the above that acquisition and imparting knowledge is highly recommended to all Muslims for the grooming of individual in order to facilitate the balance growth and total personality of man's spiritual, intellectual, rational, self-feeling and bodily senses. All the training imparted to a Muslim must be such that faith is infused into the whole of his personality and create an emotional attachment to Islam, so that he will be steadfast in the injunction of the Glorious Qur'an. The Sunnah makes him abiding to the Islamic system of value willingly and joyfully. This will lead him to the realization of his status as Allah's vicegerent on earth (Khalifatullah). (Al-Naqib 1978)

The Muslim jurists asserted that education should instill piety and self or soul purification in individual as a means of penetrating the deep mysteries of the universe which serve as part of the aims and objectives of Islamic education in order to produce men who have faith as well as piety and become knowledgeable in different fields, Islamic education inclusive (Al-Naqib 1978).

Conceptually, education in Islam is that which poster a deeper awareness, to see Islam in every subject of study, to see the truth and accept it, to see the manifestation of Allah's attributes and their translation in the reality of things in the universe. In this respect, social and natural science with humanities are of the same value and served the same purpose when taught properly. Just like Islamic education each subject will make the learner's heart feels the greatness of Allah and consequently fear and loves Him. It is essential part of Islam to incorporate the inculcation of faith and spirit of Islam in the manner described above (Ibrahim 2014)

Negative Attitude of Students towards Learning Islamic Education and the Factors Responsible

The major aims for teaching Islamic education in schools is to raise man to his ultimate goal in life and as a matter of introducing students the way of conducting their daily affairs in a morally accepted manner. Unfortunately, the reverse is the case as most students who are learning Islamic education nowadays are said to be nominal, that is when their utterances and actions are measured by Islamic teachings, as such most of them fail. In this regard, it becomes an area of interest, considering the negative attitude of students towards learning Islamic education in tertiary institutions.

Galadanci (1977) discussed in great detail, the basic ideas and goals of Islamic education. He defined the aims and concept of Islamic education as follows:

The aims of Islamic education is to form person who will be good and worship Allah as he deserved to be worshipped, who will use the knowledge to enjoy people (ya' nur bil ma' ruf) on earth and utilize it in accordance with Allah's law in the service of belief and according to its scheme.

From the above statement, the system of Islamic education in our school must realize three things:

- (i) Every Muslim must seek for knowledge so as to know his creator (ii) obey his laws as revealed to the Noble prophet Muhammad (SAW) (iii) worship him and fulfill the religion's obligation as stipulated in the Qur'an and Hadith.
- (ii) This statement is supported with a Qur'anic injunction where Allah (the most high) states

Allah bears witness that (none has the high to be worshipped but he), and the angels and those having knowledge (also give this witness) (He always) maintains his creation in justice (None has the high to be worshipped but He) the Almighty the all wise (3:18)

Now contrary to the above, most of the students who are learning Islamic education in the tertiary institution do not recognize Islam in accordance with its concept. This way Yabo (2002) opined that:- Majority of those graduating from our educational institutions today could be found worthy in learning by passing the prescribed examinations but are not equally found worthy in character as we always claim. Hence, when employed in the public or private sector services engaged in all sorts of fraudulent activities.

Among what has been observed which is responsible for the above negative attitude is that, Islamic education was earlier based on a system of secularism which is very unfortunate, because secularism as a social system which is meted with many immoralities as a result of which many students fall into behaviors of neglecting Islamic concepts.

Lack of Understanding Arabic Language by the Students

Most students of Islamic education are not familiar with the Arabic language as they are with English because the official language of governance in Nigeria is English. Therefore, they feel that, no need of learning Arabic language and one cannot understand Islamic education properly until he knows Arabic language.

Lack of Practicing what they are Learning in the lecture Halls

Very few of the students learning Islamic education in our tertiary institutions into practice what they theoretically learn in lecture hall Queb (1979) supported this statement where he stated that:

We in most part of Muslim World do not resort to Shari'ah nor do our life Governing laws up it. Our lives on the whole are not patterned to Allah's curriculum which comprises beliefs, duties of worship, work, feeling, conducts, politics, economics, sociology etc. In fact it encompasses life and the hereafter in one self contained discipline but our concept and approaches, or feelings and thought, our morals and mode of behaviour are not derived from Islam. The vast of it has reached us from every conner of the world where Islam is unknown and not believed in.

It is in this respect that most of the students are learning Islamic education on commercial basis not intrinsically motivated.

Deviant Behaviour and Examination mal-practice Exhibited by the Students towards learning Islamic Education.

These are other negative attitude displayed by the students in the process of learning, whereby some students do not care to attend classes regularly; some do not do the assignment or test at the right time, some they even involve themselves in cheating, stealing and giraffing in the exams.

An interview conducts with the chairman examination committee of the college where he explained that:

It is mentioned in the rules and regulation of the exams that each Student should have 75% of attendance before sit for the exams and he should write test or assignment before the exams, but unfortunately to some of our students that they are not abiding by these guidelines to the extent that some are not attending classes, some they even involve themselves in the examination malpractice. The report of the malpractice of 2016, shows that more than 10 students who are learning Islamic education caught with examination malpractice which is very unfortunate for a student who is offering Islamic education and involve in this negative attitude, whereas Abu

Hurairah reported that the prophet (SAW) says:- Whoever connive for cheating us he is not among of us (Muslim) The above Hadith prohibits any act of cheating, stealing, giraffing during the exams and consider all these as fraudulent activities that Muslim students should be avoided.

Conclusion

The paper highlighted the meaning and significance of Islamic education. It discussed the negative attitude displayed by the students in the process of learning as well as factors

responsible, whereby through the discussion of the topic it was found out that western culture and environmental influences had serious effect in the students negative attitude towards the subject, in the sense that environment of students (schools and homes) is not favorable to Islam and acquisition of its knowledge. For instance males and females are learning in the same environment by means of co-education which is not ideal in the Islamic system of education.

Recommendations

In order to address the challenges mentioned above and improve the positive attitude of students towards the Islamic education in the tertiary institutions, the following recommendations are offered

1. Students of Islamic education should be encouraged to put into practice what they have learnt in theory. They should be made to understand the knowledge without practice (in Islamic perspective) is nothing. Qur'an quotations and Ahadith of the prophet (SAW) explained this in details
2. Student should be encouraged or be helped to have an intrinsic motivation for the course. This is so because interest in particular area makes the individual to develop a positive attitude towards it. And not student to offer the course as remedy or alternative because they do not get what they needed.
3. Specific and frequent lectures should be held or organized in order to keep students informed on the dangers and implication of marrying western cultures, especially those are directly and explicitly against Islam, its principles and teachings
4. Students should make to understand that Arabic language is a vehicle through which one can fully understand Islam Arabic language in my view should be made prerequisite qualification for Islamic education into our tertiary institutions, for all students wishing to read Islamic education.
5. Lastly, the environment of the students (school and homes) should be made to be favourable to Islam and acquisition of its knowledge. In this respect, things that hinder morality should as much as possible be eliminated or reduced to the minimum degree, e.g. the female learning environment should be separated from male as in the case of secondary schools where female are learning alone without male combination.

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