

**ASSESSMENT OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION FAIR ON RADIO LAGOS 107.5 FM, IKEJA,
NIGERIA**

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Abstract

Islamic education spread to the northern part of Nigeria in the early 14th century by traders and scholars in concordance with the tradition that the history of the teaching of Arabic and Islam throughout the Islamic world is the history of the spread of Islam which also spread to the southern Nigeria in the 17th century. Islam and Islamic education had been existing in Lagos state before the arrival of the Christian missionaries who brought western education. Islamic education contributed to civilization and spiritual/moral development of the people of Lagos state and it is also included in the school curriculum at all levels of education in Lagos State and Nigeria in general. As part of contributions to the development of Islamic education in Lagos State, Radio Lagos 107.5 F.M. located at Agidingbi Ikeja came up with an innovative programme tagged: "Islamic education fair" in 2018 where Private Muslim schools were invited to participate in series of activities such as Qur'an recitation competition, Islamic quiz competition and competition in various sporting activities among others. This paper therefore assesses the role of the media in promoting Islamic education by using 2018 and 2019 Islamic education fairs as a model. Descriptive method was used to analyze the data collected. Suggestion was given on the need to spread Islamic education through the mass media in the age of information and communication technology.

Keywords: Islamic education fair, Radio Lagos 107.5 F.M, Nigeria.

Introduction

Islam placed a high value on education and as the faith spread among diverse people education became an important channel through which to create a universal and cohesive social order. The Quran emphasized on the importance of knowledge in many verses even from the first five revelations in chapter 96:1-5 thus:

*Read in the name of your lord who created
He has created man from a clot of blood
Read, and your lord is the most beautiful
He has taught by the pen
He has taught man that which he knew not*

Furthermore, education has become one of the most powerful weapon known for reducing poverty and inequality in modern societies. It is the major form of empowerment and all other forms of empowerment such as social, political and economic empowerment can be accessed through education. It is also used for laying the foundation for a sustainable growth and development of any nation. (Agbabiaka, 2015).

Moreover, religion plays a significant role in history and society. Study of religion is essential to understanding both the nation and the world and the development and purification of the human soul. However, omission of facts about religion can give student the false impression that the religious life of humankind is insignificant or unimportant. Failure to understand even the basic symbols, practices and concepts of the various religion makes much of history, literature, art and contemporary life unintelligible. Knowledge of the roles of religion in the past and present promote cross-cultural understanding essential to democracy and world peace. (Agbabiaka 2015). Mojinyinola (2014) emphasized that healthcare givers (social workers, nurses, doctors, health educators etc) should help physically or mentally ill patient find meaning in their sufferings by allowing the patients to exercise their religious/spiritual belief or faith, meditate and pray according to their religious, or be prayed for, by their religious leaders (when they make such a request) and should also allow the patient to read their religious books.

Akinpelu (2005)Opined that the most important role of religion is supplying what science and technology has proved unable to give, the meaning and essence of living, and the ideal to live for. Most discussions on Islam on Radio Lagos 107.5 FM, Ikeja in general have focused on sermons, call to prayers and test for Islamic knowledge (Imoloniadini) which holds every Friday between 8:30a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

Numerous studies have examined religion, education and social media. The studies cover academic fields, religiosity, dawah methodology and challenges of social media on the youths and the society. For instance Ojo 2021; Samuel 2021; and Balogun explore the link between social media and Christian evangelization in the 21st century. Ethics of dawah on social media, abuse of social media by the Yoruba Muslim scholars and Islam and social media information in multi- religious society have also been explored (Kolawole 2021; Alawiye 2021; and Otunuyi 2021).

Furthermore, existing literature have not captured the relevance of Islamic education fair introduced by Radio Lagos 107.5 F.M. in 2018 to further promote Islamic education among students of private Muslim schools in Lagos State.

The current study attempted to bridge the gap in knowledge for the sake of universality of ideas and ideals and connectivity among students of private Muslim schools, which may also impact public schools through the Islamic education fair.

Islamic Education in Lagos State, Nigeria

Islamic education is the umbrella title for the totality of learning experiences and disciplines undertaken within the Islamic doctrinal framework (Ajidagba, 1998). This system of education had been well established in the pre-colonial period before western education.

The history of Islamic education has been the history of the spread of Islam because Islam goes to any place or community along with its own form of education (Fafunwa, 1974). Islam was first introduced to Bornu during the 11th century A.D. by the fourteenth century. It spread to Hausa land by the seventeenth century. Islamic schools of higher learning were complementing the Quranic schools in Kano and Kastina, with their tentacles spreading down south to Yoruba land including Lagos (Ibiyemi & Salako, 2021). The role of Islamic education in developing literacy in Nigeria cannot be over emphasized. Arabic, the language of the Quran became the official language that was used for administrative, communicative, diplomatic and legal purpose during the early Kanem Bornu and Sokoto empires (Lawal 2007). However, Fafunwa (1974) submits that the decline of Islamic education system in Nigeria started during the British colonization in the 19th century C.E and the introduction of English as the Nigeria official language. It was followed by the activities of European Christian missionaries and the introduction of western education as the only means of achieving knowledge in Nigeria.

In reaction to the above and in order to protect the Muslim faithfuls from being converted to Christianity, Muslim organizations like the Ahmadiyyah Movement of Nigeria established Ahmadiyyah College in 1948, Ansar-deen society of Nigeria established Ansar ud deen Grammar school in 1958 and Zumuratul Islamiyyah Society of Nigeria founded the Zumuratul Islamiyyah Grammar school Yaba in 1960 and a host of others established Muslims schools where Islamic education is taught along with conventional/western education till date. These schools were later taken and run by the government. In recent time, individuals and groups of people also established Muslim schools where Islamic education is taught in the conventional system to complement the already existing schools established by Muslim organizations that have been taken over by the government (<http://lagosschoolsonline>]

Islamic Educational Programmes on Radio Lagos 107.5 F.M.

S/N	NAME OF THE PROGRAMME	TIME/DAY
1	Adhan (call to prayer)	Times of solat (daily)
2	Wasi Idaji (Morning Sermon)	4:45a.m.-5:00 a.m. everyday
3.	Wasi Ale (Evening lecture)	10:45p.m.-11:00pm every day
4.	Imololadini (Knowledge is religion)	9:00a.m. – 9:30 a.m. every Friday
5.	Al Ansar ½ hour	9:30am – 10.00 a.m. every Friday
6.	Deen-li-Haqq (The True religion)	11.00am–11.30a.m. every Friday
7.	Alobo (Hajj Mabruur)	4.45p.m. – 5.00 p.m. every Friday
8.	Esin Ododo (True religion)	8.30 p.m.–9.00 p.m. every Friday
9.	Ona Alafia (Path of Peace)	9:00apm – 9:30 pm every Friday
10	Khutubah Jimoh (Friday Sermon)	9:30pm – 10.00p.m. every Friday
11.	Ona Ola (Path of Salvation)	10:00 p.m. - 10:30pm every day
12.	Eji Saari (It's time for Sabur)	4.00a.m.–6.30 a.m. Annual Ramadan programme
13	Islamic education fair annual programme	Every November

Discussion

Islamic education fair which Radio Lagos 107.5 FM started in November 2018 was with the objective of training Muslim students in Islamic morals. The first edition of the Islamic education fair took place in 2018 and 400 private Muslim schools in Lagos state participated in the two days programme. Primary and secondary school students participated in the programmes unlike the popular trade fair where goods and services were marketed and advertised. Islamic education fair took a different dimension by organizing Quran competition for students and quiz on current affairs which would develop the students spiritually, academically and morally. Prizes and gifts were given to schools that excelled in the competition.

The second edition of Islamic education fair took place in November 2019 and about 600 hundred primary and secondary schools from Lagos State participated in the programme while ten schools from Ogun State also participated.

In its quest to groom and nurture actively the talent and passion of Muslim children according to the tenet of Islam, the Lagos State Radio Service, has organised an Islamic education fair symposium (IEF) tagged “The Portrait of a total child” .

At the fair, which is the second edition, participants showcase their knowledge of Islamic studies and the Quran while parents listen to soul touching lectures from eminent scholars.

Speaking during the fair jointly organised by Radio Lagos and Eko FM, the General Manager of Radio Lagos, Mrs. Ayo Shotonwa said Islamic Education Fair is an initiative designed to celebrate Muslim children in Lagos and its environs.

According to her: “we seek to discover and groom formidable talents amongs our kids that will continue to advance the noble course of Islamic and work uprightly in service to Almighty Allah”. She continued: In Lagos State Radio Service, we do not want to limit ourselves to corporate social responsibility in the physical realm, we want to launch deep into the consciousness of man while at a very young age. She urged parents to hold enormous leverage on how they train their children for the betterment of society. She also advised parents to ensure their children are raised according to the dictate of Islam.

The guest speaker, National Missioner, Ansar-ur-deen Society of Nigeria and overseas, Imam Abdul-Rahman Ahmad in his lecture titled “The Role of Parents towards child upbringing” said: the greatest gifts a parent can bequest to a child is moral and proper upbringing noting that what makes people human is a good character. Children are trust that Allah has given to parent. They are born potentially as Muslim, it is the parent and environment that determines whether the potential will be activated or deactivated. He also lamented that the role of parenting is shouldered on schools nowadays. “Misconduct of children is blame on school. Parents have neglected the role of shaping the life of their children. He urged parents to provide a nurtture their children. The role of parenting is shouldered on schools nowadays. “Misconduct of children is blame on school. Parents have neglected the role of shaping the life of their children. He urged parents to provide a nurtured environment for their children right from the beginning of intimacy. It is the role of parents to nurture the purity of their child to maturity. He said, children reflect parental behaviour. Our children are mirrors, reflecting images of what happens around them. In addition to sharing genetic similarity with parents, they reflect the gestures, language and interests of the adults in their lives. (<https://guardian.ng>)

The second phase of the programme for 2019 is Quranic and quiz competition among the invited schools at both primary and secondary school level. The quiz questions covered Islamic ritual (fidh), Islamic history (sirah), Quran, Hadith and current affairs.

For the Quran memorization competition, there are panels of experts in Quran reading and memorisation whose task is to test the students knowledge in Tajweed and the portions of the Quran they are expected to have been committed to memory. As the students were given the portion of the Quran to read from memory, the expert/panels make necessary corrections where there is omission of any portion or incorrect pronounciatio. At the end of the competition, prizes were awarded to schools and individuals who excelled in the Quranic competition category and the Islamic quiz category. Islamic education fair could not hold in 2020 and 2021 because of the government regulation on COVID 19. (Yusuf, 2021)

Benefits of the Islamic Education fair

- Islamic education fair help in bringing out innate talents of the students and also help in overall development as the fairs test the student in Islamic quiz and current affairs and recitation and memorisation of the Glorious Quran with Tajweed.
- It improves and increases Islamic awareness among Muslim students
- It also creates awareness about the knowledge of the environment by participating in current affairs quiz competition.
- Create opportunity for collaboration among Muslim schools
- It is avenue for universality of Islamic ideas, ideals and for national and international connectivity among Muslim students and schools
- It is a form of diverse of unique teaching/learning methods outside the classroom environment.
- It provides experiences which are based on fundamental of Islam as embodied in the Holy Quran and Sunnah.
- It provide experiences in the form of knowledge and skills
- To produce students who has faith as well as knowledge in spiritual development (Ogundapo, 2021).

Conclusion

This paper examines Islamic education and the innovative efforts of (Radio Lagos 107.5 FM) in assessing Islamic education fair on Radio Lagos and the need to integrate it into Islamic Education programmes of public primary and secondary schools in the State. This paper highlights the importance of and study of religion to individuals and the society. It explores the role of Radio Lagos in dissemination of Islamic knowledge by revealing daily, weekly and yearly Islamic educational programmes on the Radio in promoting Islamic education. It is believed that students would gain a lot from the integration in terms of knowledge acquisition and there is high probability that it could enhance students' performance in their academics and practice of the religion of Islam.

Recommendation

The emergence of mass media has a great impact on changes in Islamic religious and religious learning methods in the conventional school system. The development of science and technology of social information has changed many things including the style and tradition of Islamic religious and religious learning methods and strategies. The emergence of modern communication technology has allowed media content pertaining to Islam and Muslim issues to be disseminated widely. However, when some Quranic verses were given thorough and careful thought, one find glimpses and ideas of technologies. In view of the Quranic encouragement for knowledge acquisition and investigation as contained in Quran chapter 55verse 33, it is recommended that:

- Muslim and Muslim schools in particular make use of information and communication technology to further the spread and promotion of Islamic education in order to be relevant in the ICT world.
- The initiative of Radio Lagos 107.5 FM on Islamic education fair should be embraced by other Radio stations and extended to television stations in enhancing the programme to reach out to significant number of Muslims and non-Muslims whom might benefit from the programme and have ideas and knowledge about Islam and its understanding to enhance peaceful co-existence among people of different religions.
- In addition to Islamic education fair, Muslim schools in Lagos state and Nigeria in general should also embrace Islamic education fair at individual school level as a form of extra-curricular activity at the end of every academic session with focus on familiarizing the students with Islamic ethics and culture within and outside the school environment for the promotion of Islamic cultures and ideals.
- Proprietors of private Muslim schools in Nigeria in collaboration with the supreme council for Islamic affairs should create a platform where their students are registered and share knowledge and ideas for the promotion of universality of Islamic ideas, ideals and connectivity.

Radio Lagos in addition to the already exiting programme on the Islamic education fair should integrate ideal dress culture among the male and female students and also include ICT educative programme that will impact them positively in technological advancement in order to be relevant in the global world.

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