

**REGISTRATION OF ISLAMIC STUDIES STUDENTS IN WEST AFRICAN
EXAMINATIONS & NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR HIGHER
EDUCATION ADMISSIONS.**

BY

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Abstract

Islamic Studies like any other school subject is offered from the primary school through university education in Nigeria. Recently, registration of students for this subject in WAEC and NECO examinations has been very low. This has affected its enrollment intakes in university and other higher institution admissions. This paper delved into the reasons for this low registration and its consequential effects. The researcher used Ogun State Nigeria as a case study. 376 teachers were involved as respondents; these were teachers teaching Islamic Studies and other Muslim teachers who taught the students other subjects in the schools. Exploratory factor analysis was used to test construct and content validity of data collected after they had been reliably confirmed by Cronbach's Alpha reliability test. These were further subjected to confirmatory factor analysis using EQS. The study rounded up with path analysis which was more robust than multiple regression analysis. The study confirmed national policy on education, parental influence and search for job as variables which influenced students for not registering Islamic Studies in WAEC and NECO examinations. It was however established that if the subject was made marketable by enriching its curriculum from what it is presently, students would be motivated to register it in their final examinations and they would aspire to study it in the university and make significant contributions towards national development.

Keywords: Islamic Studies students, Waec / Neco Registration.

1.Introduction

Islamic Studies is a subject that is very essential at all the levels of education. Globally, it teaches the Islamic fundamentals which are a source of guidance, security and motivation for the child. Its teaching in the schools will help to promote better understanding of Islam in the world so as not confuse Islamic principles to terrorist activities and dealings. Its teaching will spell out the role of Muslims in the contemporary world to enable Muslims contribute significantly to world development in the area of using technology for development and reducing human stress and in maintaining global peaceful co-existence. The researcher tried to investigate the reasons why students were not willing to register this subject in WAEC and NECO examinations which could be a cog in the wheel of achieving these laudable tasks.

2. Background to the study

The major aim of teaching Islamic Studies world over, Nigeria inclusive is to adequately groom the children of today to become the teachers and future leaders of tomorrow. This is intended to promote multiculturalism, enhance economic development, encourage technological advancement and promote peaceful co-existence. But a situation where young children are not motivated to study the subject may make this aim to become an illusion.

Registration of Islamic Studies students in WAEC and NECO examinations in Southern Nigeria has been very low in recent years. This has somehow affected its intakes in university admission which has some consequential effects. Records show that immediately students pass the junior secondary school examinations, a large number of them who passed Islamic Studies at this level drop the subject when they get to the senior secondary level where they are supposed to register it in WAEC and NECO examinations. Students seemed not be interested in the subject any longer and they did not want to major in it after leaving the secondary school. This study tried to find out why this was so, more so, when it was observed that prior to this period; students' registration in WAEC examinations was quite high, impressive and encouraging but began to drop since around 1997.

3. Statement of the problem

The low number of students who registered for Islamic Studies in WAEC and NECO examinations recently has created great concerns and worries for the teachers teaching the subject. At a point, the job of those who teach the subject was threatened. A Comparison of the junior and senior secondary schools' enrollment figures of Islamic Studies students in Ogun State, Nigeria between 2005 and 2011 revealed a wide gap between the junior and senior schools enrollments.

Table 1.1. Total Enrollment Figures of the Junior and Senior schools' of Islamic Studies students in Ogun State, Nigeria between 2005 – 2011.

Zones	Junior Sec. Schools	Senior Sec. Schools
Ijebu	3234	1282
Remo	2913	873
Egba	3069	991
Yewa-Awori	3176	970
Total	12,392	4,116

4. Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study was to find out reasons why students were not willing to register for Islamic Studies in WAEC and NECO examinations and also to examine the implications of this low registration in WAEC and NECO examinations on higher education admissions and its consequential effects.

5. Research Questions

Attempt was made to answer the following research questions.

1. What subjects are students willing to register for at the senior school level?
2. What role does the government policy play in the choice of subjects of senior school students?
3. What role does WAEC or NECO play on the choice of subjects of senior school students?
4. What influence do the parents have on the choice of subjects of senior school students?
5. What role does job marketability play on the choice of subjects of senior school students?

6. Significance of the study

The study identified the reasons why registration of Islamic Studies students in WAEC and NECO examinations was low. It also pointed out that the present Islamic Studies curriculum is deficient and needs to be reviewed. It as well established the motivating factor responsible for students' registration of subjects in WAEC and NECO examinations.

7. Theoretical Framework

This study has been based on the theory of needs and motivation. Maslow defined need as a psychological deficiency that a person feels the compulsion to satisfy. This serves as motivation to influence a person's work attitudes, behaviours and choice. Maslow (1943) posited that all people have needs that they want to satisfy. He classified these needs into two namely primary and secondary needs. The primary needs he refers to as basic needs of life like food, water, sleep which deal with the physical aspects of behaviour. The secondary needs are psychological needs which are learned primarily through experience. These are cultural and individual needs like the desire for power, achievement, love and so on.

Today, to acquire any form of education is aimed at satisfying a need and this need is the end product of education which is gaining learning, vocation or skill for sustenance of oneself and one's dependants. Students' education cannot be easily detached from these needs and aspirations dictated by the society where they exist. These needs of the society serve as motivating vehicles for the form of education students acquire which have been grouped into

different subjects of study. Students' choices of subjects therefore are directed by these societal needs and aspirations.

Cherry (2013) defines motivation as the force that initiates, guides and maintains goal-oriented behaviours. It is what causes us to take action, whether to grab a snack to reduce hunger or enroll in college to earn a degree. The forces that lie beneath motivation can be biological, social, emotional or cognitive in nature. This study is based on this theoretical framework where Maslow's variables are replaced by *subject choice, government policy, WAEC/NECO influence, parents' influence and influence of job marketability* in order to identify de-motivating factors responsible for low registration of Islamic Studies students in WAEC and NECO examinations in Nigeria using Ogun State as study centre.

Education today is targeted at providing good jobs to citizens to sustain their livelihood and to also enable them make significant and meaningful contributions to the society where they live. The Nigerian and world education structure and curriculum content are tailored towards achieving this task whereby students would acquire educational skills that would make them self-reliant and dependent after leaving school. (NPE 2004, NERDC 2011, Noordin 2012)

This is not out of place in Islamic education for the Quran has said, "Do not forget your portion in the world but do good to others as Allah has done good on to you". (Al-Quran, Qasas; 28: 50). This corroborates the fact that while acquiring religious education, one should equally acquire educational skills to make one fend for him or herself in this world. If students did not have anything to motivate them in studying a particular subject, the tendency to study such subject would be very slim.

Registration of Islamic Studies students in WAEC and NECO examinations might not easily be detached from motivation in the sense that this is the level that would determine future course of students in the universities and their future prospects. This study therefore examined the motivating variables which de-motivated students from registering for Islamic Studies in WAEC and NECO examinations.

8. Literature Review

8.1. Islamic Studies as a subject

Islamic Studies consists of the study of Islam which encompasses everything from the different branches of Islam like Law, Languages, Medicine, Mathematics, Sciences, calculations, politics, economics, personal and interpersonal relationships as supported by the Quran, Hadith, and

others. With this broad view, students of Islamic Studies are required to be able to research, analyze and interpret varying sources of information in order to arrive at informed conclusions and build their own interpretations. They are also to have analytical and critical thinking skills necessary to generate probing theories and questions from time to time to meet the challenges of the contemporary period from the Islamic perspective. Bidmos (2008) posits that it is wrong to restrict Islamic Education to the teaching of worship and prayers alone.

8.2. Islamic Studies Curriculum Content

The present Islamic Studies curriculum in Nigeria consists of *Hidayah* (Guidance), *Fiqh* (Islamic Jurisprudence) and *Tarikh* (Historical Development of Islam). This curriculum seemed to focus mainly on the spiritual aspect of education because Islamic Studies curriculum reviewers at the inception of the 6-3-3-4 structure aimed at given students detail and comprehensive information that would enable them practice their religion even if they did not study it at any other level after this stage. They seemed not to consider creating avenues for Islamic Studies graduates to fill their quota in the labour market. This curriculum has been in use for decades. It emphasized spirituality at the expense of secularity and whereas Islamic Studies curriculum is to cater for both spiritual and secular aspects of a man's life.

An ideal content of Islamic Studies curriculum according to Saed (2004) is to contain Islamic *Fiqh* and Jurisprudence, Islamic history, Islamic Social Laws, sciences like Biology and Chemistry, Crafts and industries and vocational skills to mention a few.

Lik (2011) pointed out that Brunei programmes which integrated Islamic Studies with other disciplines such as literature, linguistics, English, geography and economics have expanded student horizons, thoughts and learning that they have become more articulate and versatile in diverse fields beyond purely Islamic Studies. The Indonesia experience as observed by Azra (2011) has aligned the historical and sociological study of Islam in realities with religious experiences. In Malaysia too, Islamic Studies has gone through a progression of phases from religious to linguistics, pragmatics and liberality. (Ibrahim Abu Bakar 2011).

There is a new development in the way Islam is being studied today in other parts of the world which is making Islamic Studies graduates relevant to their environment and making them contribute constructively to the development of their countries. A rich curriculum of any subject Islamic Studies inclusive is to prepare students for holistic development whereby the students would be useful to themselves and the society.

Islamic Studies became an examinable subject under West African Examinations Council (WAEC) in 1968 according to Lemu (2002). The senior secondary school is the last three years of a child at the secondary school and this level prepares the students for their future carrier and robust employment opportunities. This stage can be taken as the students' life determinant stage for whatever they would become in the future. Section 4, articles 6, (b) shows Islamic Studies as an elective subject at the senior secondary school level.

The West African Examinations Council (WAEC) and National Examinations Council (NECO) award senior certificate examination results and certificates to students at the end of the senior school. It is the result awarded at this level that students use to secure admission into the university. To gain admission into the university or other higher institutions worldwide, a credit is required in (WAEC) or (NECO) for the course of study. Students drop Islamic Studies in WAEC and NECO examinations because of its elective status. This has negative effect on the psyche of the students who see Islamic Studies as not being relevant to their course of study in the university and so did not see any need to register for it in WAEC or NECO examinations.

8.3. Parental Influence on students' choice of subject registration in WAEC and NECO examinations.

Parents want their children to enroll for subjects that would make it easier for them to get job and earn source of income. They have a feeling that studying Islamic Studies at whatever level might not be able to do this. Related researches conducted by Lawal (2003) and Azeez & Adeshina (2013) established the fact that parents encourage their children to choose subjects that would lead them to sciences and at the second option commercial studies.

Rosnani (2007) corroborated this view with the position that many graduates of Islamic Studies from the Middle East remained jobless and lacked initiatives to do anything except to rely on talks or sermons about individual worship rituals; focusing discussions on what their past *ulama* had taught them based on their time of existence which might not be relevant and applicable to today's happenings. He asserted that, the Islamic education institutions and their teachers had failed to bring the Islamic traditional sciences to bearings on other spheres of life because many of the graduates were not critical, creative, or original in their thinking. This situation is prevalent in Nigeria presently and needed to be corrected for Islamic Studies enrollment to be improved upon and the graduates to contribute meaningfully to the society.

8.4. Choice of subject selection by students and False Propaganda on Islam

Seyyed (1981) identified false propaganda on Islam as another factor which had adversely affected the teaching and learning of Islamic Studies. He believed that, Muslims were to some extent the targets of false propaganda, and that this problem has negatively affected the development and training of competent scholars in the field. A good example is the Boko Haram group (2014), fomenting troubles and crisis in the northern part of Nigeria under the guise of Islam. Their heinous and dastardly acts have been condemned by all and sundry, and even when their activities were observed to have political undertones, the media and the press both within and outside Nigeria did not desist to associate their criminal activities to Islam. This has painted Islam in bad image and students are running away from the study of Islamic Studies because they would not want to be associated with the subject and Boko Haram group.

It had been observed that attempts to meet up with the challenges of contemporary modern world served as propelling forces which made students register for some subjects in WAEC and NECO examinations. It was their opinion that Islamic Studies might not be able to satisfy these needs, hence their reason for not choosing it.

9. Location of the Study

The research focused on some selected government owned secondary schools and two semi-private secondary schools which were the Olabisi Onabanjo University International School, Ago-Iwoye and the Tai Solarin University of Education Secondary School, Ijebu-ode in Ogun State, Nigeria.

10. Research Methodology

Forty –two (42) secondary schools were selected; teachers of Islamic Studies and other Muslim teachers who teach other subjects in the schools were involved in this study. Questionnaire prepared was divided into two sections; section A contained the demographic information which included sex, religion, disciplines, teachers' religious background etc. Section B carried 30 item questions on registration of Islamic Studies students in WAEC and NECO examinations. The researcher used closed ended questions with multiple choice options from SD – Strongly Disagree to SA – Strongly Agree.

11. Analysis

A total of 400 teachers were given questionnaires to fill, 376 were returned fully filled while 24 could not be recovered. Teachers' demographic information revealed that 376 teachers fully

responded to the questionnaire. Twenty- six (26) of them (7 %) had between 1 and 5 years teaching experience while 350 (93 %) had between 6 and over 30 years teaching experience. 344 (92 %) were Muslims, 27 (7 %) were Christians, while 5 (1 %) did not indicate religion. Among them, 92 (25 %) had their major discipline in Islamic studies. The rest 284 (76 %) were majors in other disciplines who taught other subjects in the schools but were Muslims by religion.

Among the respondents, 161 (43 %) were males while 215 (57 %) were females. Six (6) of them (2 %) were Arabic Certificate holders; 59 (16 %) were Diploma Certificate holders; 62 (17 %) were National Certificate of Education (NCE) holders; 170 (25 %) were Bachelor's Degree holders; 52 (14 %) were Masters' Degree holders; and the rest 27 (7 %) had MPhil / PhD degree certificates.

12. Reliability of Data collected

Cronbach's Alpha was used to examine internal consistencies of the items involved in the instrument. The values ranged between .86 to .87 for individual items while the overall Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was .87. The value of .87 recorded was significant having met the minimum coefficient of .7. (Coakes & Steed 2001) and Pallant (2010).

13. Construct and Content Validity of data

Component factor analysis was used for the first set of the data to digest the manifest variables into their latent variables. This was to establish whether the items measured the variables they were supposed to measure loading according to used theory and whether the respondents responded well to the questions or not.

Principal Component Analysis was used for data reduction. Many variables were reduced to smaller ones that had direct influence on the variable measured. Other statistical measures which go along with Principal Component Analysis (PCA) are Kaiser- Meyer- Olkin Measure (KMO), Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (BTS).

The results recorded a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) of .85 while Bartlett's Test of Sphericity showed a p value of .001. For KMO and BTS, researchers like MacCallam and Strahan (1999); Mccroskey and Young (1979); Pallant (2010) have argued that the acceptable value should be .6 and above.

Hence, the instruments used satisfied the acceptable condition of (KMO) and (BTS) reflecting that the items measured the variable they were supposed to measure and that the respondents responded well to the items on the questionnaires. The result is presented in table 1.2. below:

Table 1. 2. Measure of Sampling Adequacy.

Kaiser- Meyer -Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.848
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity df.	435
Sig.	.000

The communality recorded for the data for individual items ranged between .6 and .7 except for items 1, 4, 7, 14, 15, 16, 20, 22, 25 and 29 which were below the value of .6. The minimum acceptable value recommended for communality is .6 and above by Costello and Osborne (2005). Out of the 30 items, 20 were within the value of .6 and above, this made the data acceptable for having two third within and above the value point. Most researchers have agreed that the acceptable value for eigenvalue should be 1 and above. The eigenvalue was above 1 resulting into a cumulative percentage of 57.0 loading on .50. The acceptable value for anti-image is .3 and above. All the items had between the values .6 and .9 for anti-image correlation. Therefore, the instrument satisfied the acceptable level for anti-image correlation. The statistical result for anti-image, communality and eigenvalues is presented in table 1.3 as follow:

Table 1. 3. Anti-image Correlation, Communalities and Eigenvalues of Teachers' Data.

S/N	Items.	Cronbach Reliab	Anti-image	Communality	Eigenvalue
1	Students prefer other subjects to Islamic Studies.	.87	.83	.46	6.41
2	Students choose Islamic Studies as last option.	.86	.84	.56	2.61
3	Islamic Studies is for Arts students.	.87	.70	.75	1.84
4	Students prefer science and commercial subjects to Arts.	.86	.85	.54	1.59
5	Students choose Islamic Studies as future carrier.	.86	.79	.62	1.33
6	Students are willing to study Islamic Studies in the university.	.86	.80	.60	1.16
7	Government policy favours studying Islamic Studies.	.86	.90	.51	1.09
8	Science and Commercial students are opportuned to offer Islamic Studies in SSS 3.	.86	.90	.59	1.03
9	Schools register students for Islamic Studies in WAEC and NECO examinations.	.86	.90	.66	.96
10	Students are encouraged to choose Islamic Studies in SSS 3.	.86	.86	.57	.88

11	Government policy supports teaching of Islamic Studies in SSS 3.	.86	.88	.69	.83
12	Adequate provision is made teaching Islamic Studies in SSS 3 in schools.	.86	.87	.59	.81
13	Subject categorization encourage students to register for Islamic Studies in WAEC.	.86	.88	.63	.75
14	WAEC conditions encourage students to register for Islamic Studies.	.86	.86	.47	.72
15	WAEC guidelines contribute to low admission intakes of Islamic Studies in universities.	.86	.90	.49	.68
16	WAEC guidelines encourage students to register for Islamic Studies in SSS 3.	.86	.77	.43	.67
17	Islamic Studies is necessary in university education.	.87	.84	.63	.63
18	Studying Islamic Studies is encouraged by WAEC and NECO examinations bodies.	.86	.90	.57	.61
19	Parents encourage their children to choose Islamic Studies in SS III.	.86	.90	.55	.56
20	Parents provide necessary materials for their children in Islamic Studies.	.86	.87	.54	.53
21	Parents encourage their children to study Islamic Studies in the university.	.86	.88	.55	.52
22	Parents attitudes encourage the teaching of Islamic Studies in schools.	.86	.77	.38	.50
23	To parents, children choosing Islamic Studies will deny them of other subjects.	.87	.74	.61	.48
24	To parents, Islamic Studies is not necessary for university admission.	.87	.77	.71	.45
25	Knowledge and skills acquired by Islamic graduates make them easily employable.	.87	.79	.50	.41
26	Islamic Studies curriculum imparts knowledge of manipulative skills and labour.	.86	.86	.57	.41
27	Students enroll for Islamic Studies to learn about their religion.	.86	.79	.58	.39
28	Students will enroll for Islamic Studies if the curriculum is attractive.	.86	.78	.61	.36
29	Available job opportunities nowadays favour Islamic Studies graduates.	.86	.84	.51	.34
30	Islamic Studies graduates are suitable for teaching only.	.86	.83	.59	.31

To extract meaningful items, the researcher decided to retain items with factor loading of .50 and above because according to researchers like (Stern 1996, Hai, Anderson, Tathamm, & Black 1998) the more the factor loading of an item is high, the more the item contributes to the factor. Therefore, the researcher eliminated any item that did not contribute significantly to the factor (>.50) or any item that loaded on two or more factors. From the initial pool of 30 items, this was reduced to 16 due to the fact that items with complex structures or items that did not contribute significantly to the factor were eventually discarded.

Rotated matrix with Kaiser Normalization was used to establish whether the instrument was valid or not. The acceptable level for rotation matrix is for the instrument to reach the value of .3. Thirty (30) items were prepared for the questionnaire and for the rotated matrix, 16 out of the 30 items reached the significant level of .3 with factor loading of 50 percent and above indicating that the items rotated well on varimax rotation. Table 1. 4, below shows the results of the rotated component matrix, anti-image correlation, eigenvalues and communalities of the data:

Table 1. 4. Results of Rotated Component Matrix, Anti – image, Eigenvalues and Communalities of Teachers’ Data

S/N	Items	Rotated Component Matrix.				Cronbach Alpha	Anti-image	Eigen values	Communalities
		Govt policy	Parents role	Subject choice	Mark etability				
1	Students prefer other subjects to Islamic Studies.			.58		.80	.81	4.13	.46
4	Students prefer science and commercial subjects to Arts.			.65		.79	.83	2.01	.45
5	Students choose Islamic Studies as future carrier.			.75		.79	.70	1.29	.63
6	Students are willing to study Islamic Studies in the university.			.74		.79	.72	1.01	.63
8	Science and Commercial students are opportuned to offer Islamic Studies in SSS 3.	.61				.77	.85	.98	.53
9	Schools register students for Islamic Studies in WAEC and NECO examinations.	.75				.78	.82	.82	.58
10	Students are encouraged to choose Islamic Studies in SSS 3.	.72				.78	.85	.75	.58
11	Government policy supports teaching of Islamic Studies in SSS 3.	.52				.78	.82	.70	.38

12	Adequate provision is made teaching Islamic Studies in SSS 3 in schools.	.52	.78	.87	.68	.49
19	Parents encourage their children to choose Islamic Studies in SS III.	.53	.78	.88	.63	.47
20	Parents provide necessary materials for their children in Islamic Studies.	.66	.78	.87	.59	.54
21	Parents encourage their children to study Islamic Studies in the university.	.70	.78	.82	.55	.57
22	Parents attitudes encourage the teaching of Islamic Studies in schools.	.63	.78	.84	.51	.47
27	Students enroll for Islamic Studies to learn about their religion.	.72	.78	.84	.49	.57
29	Available job opportunities nowadays favour Islamic Studies graduates.	.51	.78	.84	.45	.45
30	Islamic Studies graduates are suitable for teaching only.	.74	.79	.82	.35	.60

The researcher employed the eigenvalue of 1 and above to retain the factor and used scree plot to cross-check the result which enhanced the readability of the data. Moreover, the degree of inter-correlation among items reached the acceptable level of .2 to .4 (Pallant 2010). In summary, the instrument used for the study was suitable since it measured the variable targeted to be measured and satisfied all the conditions for internal consistencies and construct validity.

14. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

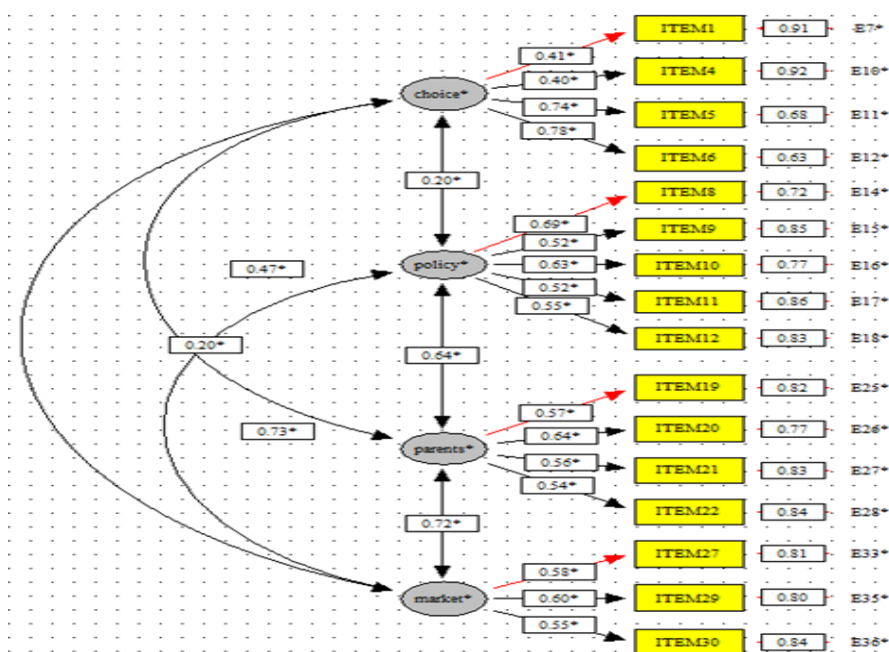
Thirty (30) items were contained in the scale of measurement. Sixteen (16) out of these items were finally extracted. The variables and domains observed *subject choice, government policy, parents' influence and the influence of job marketability* were subjected to confirmatory factor analysis using EQS 16 version.

The data recorded a Chi Square of 219.105 (df df), P value of .001, GFI of .929, AGFI of .902, CFI of .902, TLI of .880 and RMSEA of .057. The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) is a measure of fit introduced by Steiger and Lind (1980) according to Albright and Park (2009). The model of confirmatory factor analysis met this condition with its value of .057. Another index for comparative fit is Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) which according to Brown

includes a penalty function for adding freely estimated parameters. (Brown 2006: 85). The data met all these conditions. Although, the TLI is below .9 but Brown (2006) has argued that where the TLI is closer to .86 and RMSEA is closer to .06, the model should still be taken as reasonably good. This is considered good because the TLI recorded in this case is .880 which is above the recommended value of .86 by Brown.

Out of the four factors measured in this data, there is high correlation between *role of job marketability, the parents' role and government policy* on one hand, and there is high correlation as well between *the role of government policy, parents' role* on the other hand as it affected *choice of subject for WAEC / NECO registration*. This is presented in presented in path diagram in figure 1. 1. below:

Figure 1. 1 Teachers' Confirmatory Factor Analysis (Path Diagram)



This analysis suggested that the CFA replicates the results of Factor analysis and that the individual items psychometrically represented the latent variables thus successfully establishing confirmatory factor analysis of the data.

15. Path Analysis

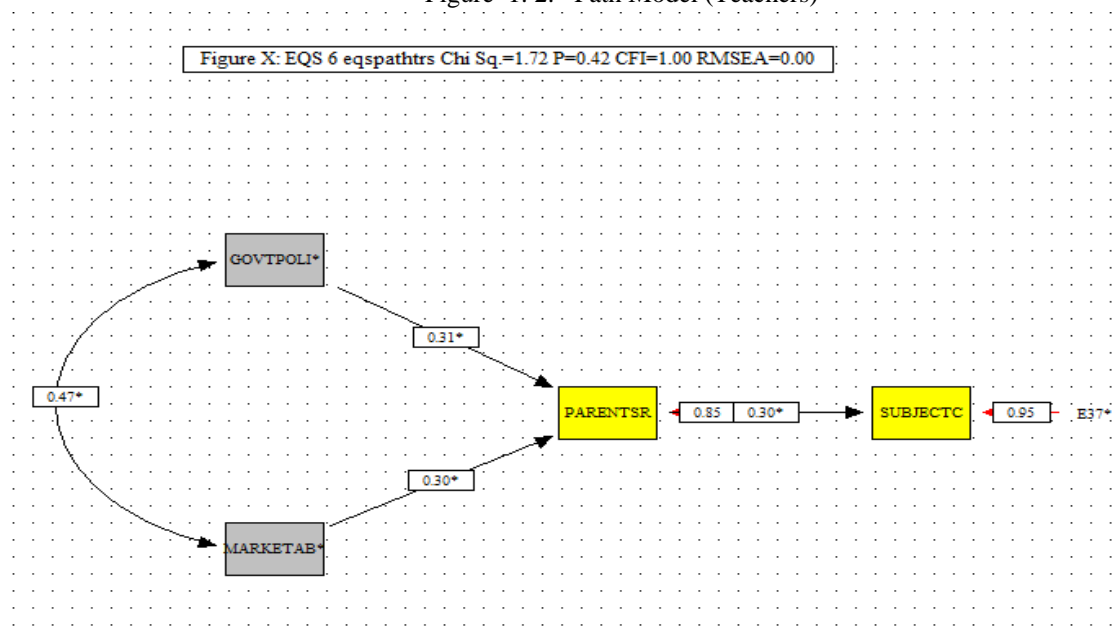
The researcher was interested in the propelling factor which was demotivating students from registering for Islamic Studies in WAEC and NECO examinations. Schumacker and Lomax

(2004) had suggested that where the path model is good, that is satisfying the standard conditions set by researchers, then the model supported the sample data and represented well the population.

Checking the assessment goodness of fit model for the sample data, using EQS 16 version, the chi-square recorded was 1.716 with CMIN of .860; Bentler –Bonett Normed Fit Index (NFI) recorded was 0.993; Bentler – Bonett Non Normed Fit Index (NNFI) score was 1.003; Comparative Fit Index score was 1.000; Bollen's Fit Index (IFI) recorded 1.001. Joreskog – Sorbom's Goodness Fit index (GFI) value was 0.998; also Adjusted of Goodness Fit Index (AGFI) value score was 0.989; TLI recorded was 1.003; RMR score was 0.012 and standardized RMR score was 0.015. The Root Mean –Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) an important aspect of model fit testing in path analysis recorded a significant value of 0.001.

The data met the acceptable conditions for path model analysis and is thus presented in figure 1. 2. below:

Figure 1. 2. Path Model (Teachers)



This finding confirmed that *government policy and job marketability* positively and statistically caused *parental influence* which eventually led to students' not registering for Islamic Studies in WAEC and NECO examinations. More specifically, government policy was related to job marketability.

Parental influence ($B = .31, p = .01$), ($r = .30, p = .01$) respectively was directly influenced by government policy and job marketability. Interestingly, parents' choice significantly and

statistically correlated with students' non registration of Islamic Studies in the two examinations. This finding amounted to the fact that the influence of parents on subject discrimination was launched on the students' not willing to register for Islamic Studies in WAEC and NECO examinations.

16. Discussions

16.1. Research Question 1: What subjects are students willing to register for at the senior school level?

The Nigerian education system aims to produce an individual who is intellectually and morally sound, who would be able to fend for himself. However, the Nigerian educational policy provides 60% quota for the science and technological education while 40 % quota is earmarked for the humanities and social sciences. (NPE 2004) It also categorized the subjects into compulsory and elective statuses at the senior school level. This development made the students aspire to choose subjects in the sciences and commercial areas in their WAEC and NECO examinations dropping non –compulsory subjects.

Unfortunately however, Islamic Studies has been grouped among those subjects in the humanities where 40 % has been earmarked. Secondly, Islamic Studies is not among the compulsory subjects, hence students register for compulsory subjects in their final year examinations thereby leaving those not compulsory among which is Islamic Studies. This has been one of the major factors responsible for students not willing to register for Islamic Studies in WAEC and NECO examinations.

One of the implications of the Islamic Studies elective status is that it has relegated the teaching of religious tenets to the background and it is portraying Islamic Studies as a subject which has no meaningful contributions to make in the society. Consequently, students do not take the subject serious and it has no effect on their social and moral life.

Another implication of the Islamic Studies elective status was that many students did not register for it in WAEC and NECO examinations and this has affected the admission intakes of Islamic Studies students in the university. For instance, the Tai Solarin College of Education 1993/94 admission of students in Islamic Studies was put at 45. In 1994/95 session, it dropped to 26 while that of 1995/96 session dropped to 18 and this figure has dropped to less than 10 in the following sessions. Also the admission enrollment for Islamic Studies students when the College transformed into a University of Education has been less to 5 in number. Presently, there are

3students in the final year 2013 / 2014 session. This seems not to augur well for Islamic Studies because this has resulted in acute shortage of Islamic Studies teachers at the secondary level.

The scientific and technological development which the country aspires to attain could become an illusion unless it is attached to great religious practices which Islamic studies will provide if given the prominence in the new structure as argued by Jemeelah (1982) and Bidmos (2008). This is because the irreligious and immoral people would continue to embark on short term projects that will not be commensurate with the money expended on them because of lots frauds. They would not even hesitate to destroy the already completed projects in the bid to cover up frauds. Perhaps in the opinion of the researcher, this has been one of the reasons why it has not been possible to attain the technological level which the country intended to achieve with the educational structure.

16.2. Research Question 2: What role does the government policy play in the choice of subjects of senior school students?

Government gives more recognition to sciences and commercial subjects in lieu of arts subjects. As a result, students preferred to be associated with government priorities, they preferred to register for compulsory, science and commercial subjects in WAEC and NECO examinations other than Islamic Studies. This finding has been corroborated by Lawal (2003), Azeez & Adeshina (2013).

16. 3. Research Question 3: What role does WAEC or NECO play on the choice of subjects of senior school students?

The recognized senior secondary school examinations bodies in Nigeria are West African Examinations Council (WAEC) and National Examinations Council (NECO). Following the classifications of subjects into compulsory and elective categories by the government education policy, these examination bodies too towed a similar line by making such classifications. This has portrayed some subjects as less important before the students among which is Islamic Studies. These examination bodies categorically stated some subjects that would be considered before they could issue out certificates to students. Islamic Studies is not among the subjects listed. This no doubt has negative effect on the psyche of the students who were forced to register some subjects which could make them get certificates from these examination bodies. They had no option than to drop Islamic Studies during registration for WAEC and NECO examinations because they had limited number of subjects to choose in these final examinations.

Hence the more reason why the number of students who registered for it in WAEC and NECO examinations has been very low and has kept decreasing over time.

16.4. Research Question 4: What influence do the parents have on the choice of subjects of senior school students?

Analysis showed that parents served as mediator between government policy and job marketability to the students' subject choice registration. Parents have been influenced by the educational policies and future prosperity which serve as motivating factors influencing students' choice of subject registration.

16.5. Research Question 5: What role does job marketability play on the choice of subjects of senior school students?

The ultimate goal of any educational objective or skill acquisition is to create employment opportunities for the trainee. This has been supported by Anour (1981), Rosnani (2007), Azra (2011). The national policy of education in Nigeria and worldwide is based on this premise. This policy however did not favour Islamic Studies. The fear of the future and the hope of securing good employments was a propelling force determining the choice of subjects students would register for in WAEC and NECO examinations because this is the examination that would determine the future as far as they are concerned.

Job marketability has been identified as a strong variable in this analysis. It has a direct influence on the parents who in turn influenced the choice of subjects their children and wards would register for. No parents would want his or her child register for a subject which would not guarantee the child any job in the future.

17. Conclusion

This study confirmed that very few students register for Islamic Studies in WAEC and NECO examinations because the Nigeria National Policy on education (2004 & 2012) makes Islamic studies elective at the senior school level. This resulted in low Islamic studies enrollments in the university. Job marketability was identified as the most influential variable. Government's intention is to give an educational programme that would enhance job marketability. Therefore, this study validates other views, Dean (2005), Rosnani (2007), Azra (2011), Lik (2011), Nordin (2012) and others that making Islamic Studies lucrative in terms of enhancing job marketability would boost the number of students to register for it in WAEC and NECO examinations, it

would boost the enrollment of Islamic Studies students in the university and enable them contribute significantly to the development of their environment.

18. Recommendations

Islamic Studies curriculum should be reviewed across board to accommodate topics of entrepreneurial skills which would enhance the use of skills by students. The proposed curriculum content should be expanded to accommodate entrepreneurial studies and topics like *Murabahah, Mudarabah, Musharakah, Ijarah, Takaful, Sukuk* and other Islamic business transactions which could make Islamic Studies graduates function well in today's Islamic Banks and Islamic financial institutions. Advance educational opportunities should be created for students in the universities to specialize in different branches of Islamic learning like Islamic philosophy, Islamic Economic system, Islamic Financial Theories, Islamic law, Islamic Banking etc. at the postgraduate levels. Also, computer appreciation courses should be added which will enhance their job marketability without necessarily compromising Islamic teachings and practices.

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