EFFECT OF GUIDED INQUIRY METHOD ON SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ATTITUDE AND PERFORMANCE IN ISLAMIC STUDIES IN KATSINA METROPOLIS

BY

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of the guided inquiry method on senior secondary school students' attitudes and performance in Islamic Studies in Katsina Metropolis. The study was motivated by concerns that conventional, teacher-centred instruction, which often relies on textbooks and chalkboard teaching, may not adequately address students' needs, interests and experiences. A quasi-experimental design was adopted. The population comprised 11,636 Senior Secondary II (SS II) Islamic Studies students from 12 senior secondary schools in Katsina State. Using simple random sampling, two intact classes comprising 98 students were selected from public secondary schools and assigned to experimental and control groups. Data were collected using the 40-item Islamic Studies Performance Test (ISPT) and the Islamic Studies Attitude Questionnaire (ISAQ). Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyse the data, and the hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 significance level. The findings showed statistically significant differences in performance and attitudes between students taught using guided inquiry and those taught using the conventional method. The study recommends that Islamic Studies teachers consider using guided inquiry and that the Ministry of Education provide workshops and seminars to support teachers in applying the method.

Key Words: Guided Inquiry Method, Conventional Method, Attitude and Performance

Introduction

Islamic Studies is taught at primary, secondary and tertiary levels in Nigeria. It combines religious and secular knowledge and aims to develop individuals with sound moral values who can contribute to society's socioeconomic development. Aliyu (2015) defines Islamic education as an approach that develops pupils' sensibilities so that their attitudes, actions, decisions and pursuit of knowledge are guided by Islamic ethical values. Teachers use different methods to teach Islamic Studies at the senior secondary level.

One method commonly used in secondary schools is conventional instruction. Imogen (2018) describes the conventional classroom as one based on face-to-face interaction between teachers and students. Also known as the traditional, expository or teacher-centred method, it typically involves the teacher presenting and explaining information to a class. Although this approach can

introduce and clarify concepts, reliance on teacher-centred instruction may limit students' active participation. This has led to interest in alternative approaches, including guided inquiry.

Akerson et al. (2017) describe guided inquiry as a student-centred, activity-based method in which the teacher guides learners through problem-solving activities to develop answers related to the lesson. In Islamic Studies, guided inquiry can provide opportunities for students to explore religious concepts, Qur'anic teachings and moral values through investigation and reflection. Connecting these ideas to real-life situations may support students' understanding and application of what they learn (Yusuf, 2020).

Students' attitudes towards a subject may be shaped by factors such as the quality of instructional materials, teachers' competence, opportunities to apply learning in meaningful contexts and the perceived relevance of assessments. Attitudes and beliefs are mental constructs that can influence how individuals think, feel and behave (Aliyu, 2015). Academic performance, meanwhile, is assessed against defined standards and can be expressed through scores, ranks or grades (Bakare, 2015). Examining both attitude and performance can therefore provide insight into students' responses to different teaching methods.

Statement of the Problem

Many Islamic Studies teachers continue to rely on conventional, teacher-centred methods. Alphonsus, as cited in Aliyu (2015), linked students' negative attitudes towards Islamic Studies partly to teaching methods that may be ineffective or inappropriate. The Chief Examiner's report cited in this study (WAEC, 2025) also identifies concepts related to fasting-including its types and recommended acts-as challenging for students. Aliyu (2015) similarly discusses the relationship between instructional methods and students' performance in Islamic Studies in Nigeria. When lessons rely predominantly on exposition, students may have fewer opportunities to participate actively and engage with the subject matter.

The present study therefore examines whether the guided inquiry method produces differences in senior secondary school students' attitudes towards and performance in Islamic Studies compared with the conventional method in Katsina Metropolis.

Objective of the Study

The study achieved the following specific objectives:

1. To examine the difference between the attitudes of students taught Islamic Studies using the guided inquiry method and those taught using the conventional method among senior secondary schools in Katsina Metropolis.
2. To determine the difference between the performance of students taught Islamic Studies using the guided inquiry method and those taught using the conventional method among senior secondary schools in Katsina Metropolis.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the difference between the attitudes of students taught Islamic Studies using the guided inquiry method and those taught using the conventional method among senior secondary schools in Katsina Metropolis?
2. What is the difference between the performance of students taught Islamic Studies using the guided inquiry method and those taught using the conventional method among senior secondary schools in Katsina Metropolis?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

H_o1: There is no significant difference between the attitudes of students taught Islamic Studies using the guided inquiry method and those taught using the conventional teaching method among senior secondary schools in Katsina Metropolis.

H_o2: There is no significant difference between the performance of students taught Islamic Studies using the guided inquiry method and those taught using the conventional method among senior secondary schools in Katsina Metropolis.

Methodology

The study adopted a quasi-experimental pretest–posttest non-equivalent control-group design because it involved intact classes. The target population comprised SS II students offering Islamic Studies in Katsina Metropolis. Official statistics from the Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance Office (2025) reported 11,636 students across 12 senior secondary schools in the study area. Two public schools were selected using the hat-and-draw method. One intact SS II class from

each school participated, giving a sample of 98 students. One class was assigned to the guided-inquiry group and the other to the conventional-instruction group. The schools were geographically distant to reduce contact between students in the two groups.

Two instruments were used: the Islamic Studies Performance Test (ISPT) and the Islamic Studies Attitude Questionnaire (ISAQ). The ISPT comprised a demographic section and 40 items developed from past WAEC and NECO examination questions. The ISAQ was adapted from Ibrahim's (2015) *Students' Attitude in Basic Science Scale*, with modifications to focus on Islamic Studies, and contained 20 items rated on a four-point Likert scale. Two PhD-level experts in Islamic Studies and Curriculum and Instruction at Al-Qalam University, Katsina, reviewed the instruments for clarity, relevance and appropriateness. Their suggestions were incorporated into the final versions.

The ISPT's test–retest reliability was assessed by administering it to 20 students and repeating the test two weeks later. Pearson's product–moment correlation, calculated using SPSS version 20, yielded a coefficient of 0.71. The ISAQ's internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a coefficient of 0.74. Descriptive statistics were used to answer the research question, and an independent-samples *t*-test was used to test the hypothesis.

Results

Research Question One: What is the difference between the attitudes of students taught Islamic Studies using the Guided Inquiry Method and those taught using the Conventional Teaching Method among senior secondary schools in Katsina Metropolis?

Table 1: Mean Rank Scores of Experimental and Control Groups

Groups	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Experimental	52	51.31	2668.00
Control	46	47.46	2183.00

Table 1 shows that the experimental group had a higher mean rank (51.31) than the control group (47.46), a difference of 3.85. This indicates that the experimental group ranked higher on the measured outcome than the control group.

Research Question Two: What is the difference between the performance of students taught Islamic Studies using inquiry method and those taught using conventional method among senior secondary schools in Katsina Metropolis?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviations of Performance of Students taught using Guided Inquiry Method and those taught using Conventional Method

Guided Inquiry Method	52	20.67	2.55	0.35
Conventional method	46	16.71	2.19	0.32

Table 2 shows that the experimental group had a mean score of 20.67 (SD = 2.55), compared with 16.71 (SD = 2.19) for the control group. The mean difference was 3.96 points. This indicates that students taught using the guided inquiry method scored higher on the measured outcome than students taught using the conventional method in the participating senior secondary schools in Katsina Metropolis.

Hypotheses

HO_1: There is no significant difference between attitudes of students taught Islamic Studies using guided inquiry method and those taught using the conventional teaching method among Senior Secondary Schools in Katsina Zonal Education Quality Assurance

Table 3 Summary of Mann Whitney U test between Attitudes Mean Ranks of Experimental and Control Groups

Group	N	Mean Rank	U	W	Z	P-value	Remark
Experimental	52	51.31	1102.0	2183.000	-0.672	0.03	SG
Control	46	47.46					

Significant at P≤0.05

Table 3 presents the Mann–Whitney U-test results, which show a statistically significant difference in attitude scores between the experimental and control groups ($p = .03 < .05$). Accordingly, the null hypothesis of no difference between the groups was rejected. The result indicates that students' attitudes differed between the two instructional groups. The direction of this difference should be reported using the groups' mean ranks or descriptive scores. Because each instructional

method was used in a different school, the difference cannot be attributed to the teaching method alone.

HO_2: There is no significant difference between performance of students taught Islamic Studies using guided inquiry method and those taught using conventional method among Senior Secondary Schools in Katsina Metropolis.

Table 4: Independent t-Test Analysis of Post-test Scores of Students taught using Guided Inquiry Method and those taught using Conventional Method

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal	p-value	Decision
Experimental	52	20.67	2.55	96	8.17	0.000	Accepted
Control	46	16.72	2.20				

Table 4 shows a statistically significant difference between the groups' post-test mean scores (t = 8.17, $p < .001$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected at the 0.05 significance level. Students in the guided-inquiry group scored higher than those in the conventional-instruction group, indicating a difference in post-test performance. Since the groups came from different schools and the analysis compared post-test scores, the result should not be attributed to the teaching method alone without accounting for possible school and pre-test differences.

Discussion of Findings

The findings for Hypothesis One showed a statistically significant difference in students' attitudes between the guided-inquiry and conventional-instruction groups. The direction of this difference should be confirmed from the groups' mean ranks or attitude scores before concluding that the guided-inquiry group developed a more positive attitude. Ahmed (2021) similarly reported that guided inquiry may support changes in students' attitudes, although such changes may require sustained exposure, reinforcement and motivation. The findings suggest that guided inquiry warrants further study as an approach to supporting positive attitudes and engagement.

The findings for Hypothesis Two also showed a statistically significant difference in post-test academic performance between the groups, with the guided-inquiry group scoring higher. This is consistent with Chukwudi (2020), who reported that guided inquiry supported deeper understanding than conventional instruction. Active participation in exploring concepts may

support learning; however, because the groups were drawn from different schools and the reported analysis compared post-test scores, school-level differences and pre-test performance should be considered when interpreting the results.

Conclusion

The study found a statistically significant difference in students' attitudes towards Islamic Studies between the guided-inquiry and conventional-instruction groups. The experimental group also achieved higher post-test performance scores than the control group. These results indicate differences between the groups, but they should be interpreted cautiously because each group came from a different school and the performance comparison did not account for pre-test scores. Confirm the attitude-score direction before concluding that guided inquiry produced more positive attitudes.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Higher institutions offering Islamic Studies should promote positive attitudes towards learning by providing teacher trainees with guidance on values-based and engaging instruction.
2. Islamic Studies teachers should consider using the guided-inquiry method to support students' understanding and academic performance.
3. Curriculum planners should provide guidance on incorporating guided-inquiry activities into the Islamic Studies curriculum.
4. The Ministry of Education should organise refresher workshops, seminars and conferences to help teachers use guided inquiry effectively and support students' learning and attitudes towards Islamic Studies.

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