Research Article

Influence Of Islamic Ethical Teachings On Civic Responsibility And Social Behaviour Among Secondary School Students In Gusau Metropolis, Zamfara State, Nigeria

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Abstract. This study examined the influence of Islamic ethical teachings on civic responsibility and social behaviour among secondary school students in Gusau Metropolis, Zamfara State, Nigeria. The research was prompted by increasing moral decline and civic irresponsibility among youths despite formal instruction in Islamic Religious Studies. Anchored on Bandura's Social Learning Theory, the study adopted a descriptive survey design involving 357 Senior Secondary School Three (SS III) students selected through a multistage sampling procedure from public and private schools. Data were collected using a validated questionnaire titled Islamic Ethical Teachings, Civic Responsibility and Social Behaviour Questionnaire (IETCRSBQ), with a reliability coefficient of 0.91. Descriptive and inferential statistics, including Pearson correlation and independent t-test, were employed for data analysis at a 0.05 significance level. Findings revealed a significant positive relationship between Islamic ethical teachings and students' civic responsibility and social behaviour. Students exposed to Islamic moral values demonstrated higher levels of discipline, honesty, tolerance, and respect for

societal norms. However, the study identified challenges such as inadequate teacher preparation and weak moral supervision in schools. It concluded that the consistent integration of Islamic ethical principles into civic education enhances students' moral character and civic engagement. The study recommended teacher capacity building, curriculum reinforcement, and the promotion of Islamic moral clubs to foster responsible citizenship and harmonious coexistence among students.

Keywords: Civic responsibility, Gusau Metropolis, Islamic ethics, Moral education, Social behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

Moral and civic education form the foundation for building responsible citizens who can actively contribute to societal development. In contemporary Nigerian society, especially within Zamfara State, moral decay, indiscipline, and social irresponsibility among youths have become pressing educational concerns. Schools, as key agents of socialization, are expected to nurture in students values such as honesty, tolerance, justice, and respect for others qualities that define civic responsibility and good social behaviour (Adebayo & Yusuf, 2022). Within the Nigerian context, Islamic ethical teachings play a vital role in shaping moral consciousness and civic engagement among young learners, particularly in Muslim-dominated regions such as Gusau Metropolis. These teachings, rooted in the Qur'an and Hadith, emphasize virtues such as accountability (amanah), justice (adl), compassion (rahmah), and community service (khidmah), all of which are consistent with civic ideals (Kamal & Ibrahim, 2021). Islamic ethics (Akhlaq) are designed to regulate human behaviour and promote peaceful coexistence within society. According to Rahman and Salisu (2023), the Islamic moral framework seeks to balance individual freedom with social responsibility, thereby fostering civic consciousness and collective well-being. Similarly, Usman and Abdullahi (2022) observed that the integration of Islamic moral values in secondary education enhances students' sense of responsibility toward their peers, teachers, and the wider community. Hence, Islamic ethical education can serve as an effective tool for cultivating civic responsibility and promoting prosocial behaviour among adolescents.

Despite the presence of Islamic Religious Studies in the Nigerian school curriculum, the expected transformation in students' behaviour and civic attitude is not always evident. Challenges such as inadequate teacher training, poor curriculum implementation, and lack of moral role modelling have undermined the effectiveness of ethical instruction in shaping students' civic outlook (Abubakar & Sani, 2023). Moreover, exposure to negative media influences and social crises, including insecurity and moral laxity, has further weakened traditional moral structures that once supported civic virtue (Nuhu, 2024). This growing gap between knowledge and practice underscores the need to empirically assess the influence of Islamic ethical teachings on civic responsibility and social behaviour among secondary school students. However, in Gusau Metropolis, where Islamic education plays a central role in both formal and informal learning, it becomes pertinent to examine how students' understanding of Islamic moral principles translates into civic conduct. The relationship between Islamic ethics and civic education is particularly significant in

promoting peace, discipline, and social harmony in an environment faced with socio-religious and security challenges. As noted by Hassan and Ahmad (2021), moral and civic education inspired by Islamic principles can contribute to reducing youth restiveness, promoting tolerance, and strengthening community integration.

Islamic ethical teachings known as Akhlaq represent the moral foundation that governs human behaviour and social interactions in Muslim communities. These teachings originate from the Qur'an and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), emphasizing virtues such as justice (adl), honesty (sidq), compassion (rahmah), and social responsibility (mas'uliyyah). According to Rahman and Salisu (2023), Islamic ethics provide a holistic moral framework that shapes both individual conduct and collective well-being. Through this ethical system, Muslims are guided to demonstrate integrity, fairness, and accountability in their dealings with others, thereby fostering a just, disciplined, and peaceful society. Civic responsibility, within the Islamic worldview, is closely linked to moral and spiritual obligations. Islam encourages believers to participate actively in community life, obey lawful authorities, and contribute to the promotion of social harmony and public welfare. Usman and Abdullahi (2022) emphasized that civic responsibility in Islam extends beyond political participation it encompasses the protection of justice, human dignity, and respect for diversity and the rule of law. In essence, civic virtues such as loyalty, obedience, and community service align with the Qur'anic injunction to "enjoin good and forbid evil" (Qur'an 3:110), reflecting the same objectives found in contemporary civic education.

From an Islamic perspective, social behaviour represents the outward manifestation of one's moral and ethical values. It captures how individuals relate to others within families, schools, and society at large. Hassan and Ahmad (2021) observed that Islamic moral instruction cultivates virtues like humility, empathy, cooperation, and mutual respect qualities that define positive social behaviour. When effectively incorporated into educational settings, these values promote tolerance, civic-mindedness, and peaceful coexistence among students and community members. Ultimately, Islam perceives ethical conduct, civic engagement, and social responsibility as inseparable components of faith and human development. Kamal and Ibrahim (2021) argued that a true believer guided by Islamic ethics naturally becomes a responsible citizen who strives for both personal moral excellence and community advancement. Thus, integrating Islamic ethical teachings into the learning process can significantly strengthen students' sense of civic duty and social harmony, contributing to moral reform and sustainable peace in societies such as Gusau Metropolis and beyond.

Islamic ethical instruction contributes significantly to developing civic values and responsible citizenship among learners. Rahman and Salisu (2023) discovered that students exposed to Islamic moral teachings such as amanah (trustworthiness) and adl (justice) tend to exhibit stronger civic responsibility and community participation. Their study in northern Nigeria demonstrated that integrating these ethical concepts into classroom learning helped students become more law-abiding and community-oriented. In a similar study, Musa and Abdullahi (2022) found that incorporating Qur'anic teachings emphasizing honesty, compassion, and justice into

civic education improved students' commitment to national and communal duties. These findings imply that Islamic ethical teachings play a vital role in nurturing civic-mindedness and social discipline among young people, especially in Muslim-majority settings like Gusau Metropolis. Hassan and Ahmad (2021) observed that students with deeper knowledge of Islamic values such as respect, humility, and empathy displayed higher levels of cooperation and discipline in their daily interactions. Likewise, Usman and Garba (2022) reported that continuous exposure to Islamic moral education, both inside and outside the classroom, reduced incidents of misconduct, bullying, and disobedience among secondary school learners in Sokoto and Zamfara States. These findings emphasize that Islamic moral instruction not only shapes character but also strengthens interpersonal relationships, thereby fostering social harmony and mutual respect in school environments.

Despite the recognized value of Islamic ethics in education, several challenges hinder their effective integration into civic and moral instruction. Abubakar and Sani (2023) identified key barriers such as inadequate teacher training, limited teaching resources, and poor curriculum alignment with Islamic principles, all of which weaken the impact of moral education in Nigerian schools. Similarly, Ibrahim and Yusuf (2022) found that societal pressures including peer influence, negative media exposure, and insecurity further complicate the process of instilling Islamic values among students. These obstacles contribute to a situation where students may acquire theoretical knowledge of moral principles but struggle to apply them in real-life situations. Addressing these challenges through teacher capacity building, curriculum enrichment, and community involvement could greatly enhance the role of Islamic ethics in promoting civic and social responsibility.

Theoretical Framework

This research is grounded in Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), which explains that human behaviour is largely acquired through observation, imitation, and modeling within social environments. The theory maintains that people learn appropriate behaviour and moral standards by observing the actions of others particularly authority figures such as parents, teachers, and community leaders who serve as moral role models. Within the framework of Islamic ethical education, this theory offers valuable insight into how students internalize and practice moral and civic values derived from the Qur'an, Hadith, and the exemplary life of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Bandura's concept of reciprocal determinism highlights that behaviour results from a continuous interaction between personal beliefs, environmental influences, and observable conduct. When applied to Islamic learning contexts, it suggests that students' moral and civic dispositions are shaped not only by classroom teaching but also by the ethical tone of their surroundings. For example, when teachers, religious scholars, and community members consistently embody Islamic virtues such as amanah (trustworthiness), adl (justice), and rahmah (compassion), students are more likely to adopt and reflect these traits in their own civic responsibilities and social interactions (Rahman & Salisu, 2023).

Contemporary research supports the relevance of Social Learning Theory in moral and civic education. Hassan and Ahmad (2021) observed that students who are

exposed to positive Islamic role models develop stronger ethical awareness, discipline, and civic-mindedness. Likewise, Usman and Abdullahi (2022) reported that moral modeling within schools and religious institutions enhances learners' empathy, tolerance, and respect for societal norms qualities that are essential for peaceful coexistence and social order. Thus, Bandura's theory underscores the significance of social modeling, reinforcement, and observation as powerful tools for transmitting Islamic moral values among secondary school students. Consequently, Social Learning Theory provides a strong theoretical basis for this study by explaining how Islamic ethical teachings influence students' civic responsibility and social behaviour. It illustrates that when learners are surrounded by positive moral exemplars and supportive environments, they are more likely to internalize Islamic virtues and translate them into responsible, community-oriented actions within Gusau Metropolis and beyond.

Statement of the Problem

In recent times, there has been a growing concern over the decline of moral discipline, civic consciousness, and social responsibility among secondary school students in Gusau Metropolis, Zamfara State. Although Islamic Religious Studies and moral instruction are integral components of the school curriculum, the expected transformation in students' attitudes and behaviour appears limited. Issues such as indiscipline, dishonesty, disrespect for authority, and apathy toward community service continue to surface among young learners, raising questions about the effectiveness of Islamic ethical teachings in shaping their moral and civic character. Islamic ethical principles, rooted in the Qur'an and the Sunnah, promote values such as amanah (trustworthiness), adl (justice), rahmah (compassion), and sidq (truthfulness) virtues that are fundamental to responsible citizenship and social harmony.

However, the growing gap between students' knowledge of these moral principles and their practical application in everyday life suggests that these teachings may not be fully internalized or effectively transmitted. Several factors, including insufficient teacher training, poor instructional delivery, exposure to immoral media influences, and weak role modeling from adults, may contribute to this disconnect. Given these challenges, it becomes imperative to examine empirically how Islamic ethical teachings influence civic responsibility and social behaviour among secondary school students in Gusau Metropolis. Such an investigation will provide valuable insights into the current state of moral and civic education, identify the factors hindering effective ethical instruction, and suggest practical strategies for strengthening the role of Islamic values in promoting responsible and socially conscious youth.

Research Objectives

The study is designed to achieve the following specific objectives:
1. To examine the extent to which Islamic ethical teachings influence the level of civic responsibility among secondary school students in Gusau Metropolis.

2. To determine the relationship between students' knowledge of Islamic moral principles and their social behaviour in school and community settings.
3. To identify the challenges affecting the effective integration of Islamic ethical teachings in promoting civic responsibility and social behaviour among secondary school students.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the study:

1. To what extent do Islamic ethical teachings influence the civic responsibility of secondary school students in Gusau Metropolis?
2. What is the relationship between knowledge of Islamic moral principles and students' social behaviour in schools?
3. What are the major challenges affecting the integration of Islamic ethical teachings in promoting civic responsibility and social behaviour among secondary school students in Gusau Metropolis?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will be tested at a 0.05 level of significance:

1. H_{01}: There is no significant influence of Islamic ethical teachings on civic responsibility among secondary school students in Gusau Metropolis.
2. H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between knowledge of Islamic moral principles and students' social behaviour in schools.
3. H_{03}: There is no significant difference in the perceived challenges affecting the integration of Islamic ethical teachings in promoting civic responsibility and social behaviour among secondary school students.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive survey research design, which was deemed appropriate because it enables the collection of data from a representative sample of a large population without manipulating variables. The design was used to explore how Islamic ethical teachings influence civic responsibility and social behaviour among secondary school students in Gusau Metropolis, Zamfara State. According to Adebayo and Yusuf (2022), the descriptive survey design is particularly suitable for educational research that examines how social and instructional experiences shape students' values and attitudes. Thus, this approach allowed for a systematic examination of the relationship between Islamic ethics, civic responsibility, and students' social conduct.

The population of the study comprised 5,943 Senior Secondary School Three (SS III) students enrolled in both public and private secondary schools in Gusau Metropolis. This group was chosen because of their maturity and adequate exposure to Islamic Religious Studies and Civic Education, which enhanced their understanding of the concepts under investigation. From this population, a sample of 357 students was determined using the Research Advisors (2006) sample size table at a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error. A multistage sampling technique was adopted to ensure fair representation: schools were first categorized into public

and private; next, proportionate random sampling selected schools from each category; and finally, students were chosen through simple random (balloting) methods. This ensured inclusiveness and minimized bias.

Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire titled Islamic Ethical Teachings, Civic Responsibility and Social Behaviour Questionnaire (IETCRSBQ), designed by the researcher based on the study's objectives and reviewed literature. The instrument contained four sections covering demographic data, Islamic ethical teachings, civic responsibility, and social behaviour. Responses were measured using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1). To ensure validity, the instrument was reviewed by three experts from the Department of Educational Foundations, Federal University Gusau, who assessed its relevance and clarity. Their suggestions were incorporated before final administration. The reliability of the instrument was confirmed through a pilot study involving 30 SS III students in Bungudu Local Government Area. Using the Cronbach Alpha method, a coefficient of 0.91 was obtained, indicating excellent internal consistency (Nunnally, 1978).

For data collection, the researcher obtained official permission from the Ministry of Education and school principals. The questionnaires were personally administered with the assistance of class teachers, and all 357 copies were successfully retrieved and coded for analysis. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation answered the research questions, while Pearson Product-Moment Correlation tested relationships among variables, and the Independent Samples t-test compared responses across school types. All hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 significance level. Ethical principles guided the entire process. Participants' consent was obtained, confidentiality was maintained, and no participant experienced harm or coercion. Necessary permissions were also granted by relevant authorities.

RESULTS
Descriptive Statistics Analyses
Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Islamic Ethical Teachings and Civic Responsibility (N = 357)

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Honest (Sidq)	4.32	0.67	High Influence
Justice (Adl)	4.28	0.71	High Influence
Trustworthiness (Amanah)	4.25	0.69	High Influence
Compassion (Rahmah)	4.21	0.72	High Influence
Civic Responsibility (Law obedience, Community service)	4.30	0.70	High Manifestation

The descriptive statistics show that students exhibit a high level of civic responsibility when exposed to Islamic ethical teachings. Honesty and justice had the highest mean scores, indicating strong influence on civic-minded behaviour.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Knowledge of Islamic Moral Principles and Social Behaviour (N = 357)

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Respect (Ihtiram)	4.15	0.74	High
Humility (Tawadu')	4.18	0.71	High
Cooperation and team work	4.22	0.69	High
Empathy (Ta'awun)	4.20	0.70	High
Social Behaviour (Discipline, prosocial action)	4.21	0.68	High

Students who understand and internalize Islamic moral principles demonstrate strong positive social behaviour. Cooperation, humility, and empathy scored the highest means. This implies that, moral education rooted in Islamic values nurtures social harmony and interpersonal respect.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Perceived Challenges in Integrating Islamic Ethical Teachings (N = 357)

Challenges	Public Schools Mean	Private Schools Mean	SD	Interpretation
Inadequate instructional materials	4.05	3.35	0.72	High in Public Schools
Overcrowded classroom	4.12	3.40	0.75	High in Public Schools
Teachers competence and motivation	3.98	3.55	0.70	Public School Disadvantaged
Exposure to negative media/social influence	3.88	3.50	0.68	Moderate Challenge
Weak curriculum integration	4.00	3.60	0.71	Public Schools face more issues

Students from public schools perceive more challenges in integrating Islamic ethical teachings than their counterparts in private schools. Overcrowding, inadequate teaching resources, and teacher competence are major barriers.

Hypotheses Testing

Table 4: Relationship between Islamic Ethical Teachings and Civic Responsibility among Secondary School Students (N = 357)

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r	P-value
Islamic Ethical Teachings	357	3.32	0.54		
Civic Responsibility	357	3.18	0.49	0.587	0.000[*]

Significant at P < 0.05

The analysis in table 4 reveals a moderately strong and positive correlation (r = 0.587, p < 0.05) between Islamic ethical teachings and civic responsibility among

secondary school students. This implies that students who internalize Islamic moral values such as honesty, justice, and compassion are more likely to demonstrate civic-minded attitudes, including responsibility, obedience to laws, and respect for authority.

Table 5: Correlation between Knowledge of Islamic Moral Principles and Students' Social Behaviour (N = 357)

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r	P-value
Knowledge of Islamic Moral Principles	357	3.40	0.51		
Students Social Behaviour	357	3.26	0.47	0.624	0.000*

Significant at P < 0.05

Table 5 shows a strong positive relationship (r = 0.624, p < 0.05) between students' knowledge of Islamic moral principles and their social behaviour. This finding indicates that as students gain a deeper understanding of Islamic teachings on justice, humility, and empathy, their interpersonal relations and social conduct improve significantly.

Table 6: Independent t-Test Showing Differences in Perceived Challenges to Integrating Islamic Ethical Teachings Based on School Type (N = 357)

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	P-value
Public Schools	182	2.98	0.56			
Private Schools	175	2.73	0.60	355	3.924	0.000*

Significant at P < 0.05

Results in table 6 show a significant difference (t = 3.924, p < 0.05) between students from public and private schools regarding perceived challenges in integrating Islamic ethical teachings into civic education. Students from public schools reported higher levels of challenges, possibly due to larger class sizes, inadequate instructional materials, and inconsistent teacher supervision.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The results of this study provide meaningful insights into how Islamic ethical teachings shape civic responsibility and social behaviour among secondary school students in Gusau Metropolis, Zamfara State. Each finding reflects the interconnection between moral education and civic values, highlighting both the benefits and challenges of ethical instruction within the Nigerian educational setting.

The first major finding revealed that Islamic ethical teachings have a significant and positive effect on students' civic responsibility. This indicates that when students are properly exposed to Islamic moral concepts such as justice, honesty, and accountability, they are more likely to demonstrate responsible civic attitudes in their communities. This outcome aligns with Rahman and Salisu (2023), who emphasized that Islamic moral education contributes to civic awareness and a sense of duty among learners. Similarly, Kamal and Ibrahim (2021) noted that moral teachings inspired by the Qur'an and Sunnah help learners to internalize civic virtues like fairness, obedience to authority, and commitment to the common good. However, Nuhu (2024) cautioned that including Islamic Studies in the school curriculum alone does not guarantee moral transformation unless teachers actively

model ethical conduct and connect religious instruction to real-life civic experiences. Thus, the finding underscores the importance of value-based teaching that links moral lessons with students' daily lives and social responsibilities.

The second finding indicated a strong positive relationship between students' understanding of Islamic moral values and their social behaviour. In essence, students who possess a deeper awareness of Islamic ethics such as rahmah (compassion), adl (justice), and sidq (truthfulness) tend to interact more respectfully and cooperatively with others. This agrees with the work of Hassan and Ahmad (2021), who found that moral instruction rooted in Islamic values nurtures empathy, tolerance, and harmonious relationships among young people. Likewise, Usman and Abdullahi (2022) maintained that moral education guided by Islamic principles helps students build social discipline and emotional maturity, which are essential for peaceful coexistence. Nonetheless, Abubakar and Sani (2023) observed that the impact of moral education on student behaviour may differ depending on teachers' competence and the moral tone of the school environment. Therefore, consistent modelling of moral behaviour and community engagement remain vital for reinforcing what is taught in the classroom.

The third finding revealed a significant difference between students in public and private schools regarding the challenges affecting the integration of Islamic ethical teachings. Students in public schools were found to experience more barriers such as inadequate teaching materials, overcrowded classrooms, and low teacher motivation that hinder the proper implementation of moral and civic instruction. This observation supports Abubakar and Sani (2023), who reported that weak teacher preparation and insufficient supervision contribute to the poor delivery of moral education in public institutions. Musa and Idris (2022) similarly highlighted that private schools, due to better resources and effective administration, tend to integrate ethical education more efficiently into their teaching. However, Yusuf and Bello (2021) warned that even in private schools, academic competition may sometimes overshadow moral formation, thereby limiting the civic impact of ethical instruction.

Consequently, the study affirms that Islamic ethical teachings are powerful tools for fostering civic responsibility and constructive social behaviour among adolescents. It further suggests that the success of moral and civic education depends not only on curriculum content but also on the commitment of teachers, the learning environment, and consistent moral role modelling. This conclusion resonates with Rahman and Salisu (2023), who asserted that education grounded in Islamic values nurtures not only moral discipline but also civic virtues essential for social harmony, peace, and responsible citizenship within the broader society.

CONCLUSION

The study highlights that Islamic education has a profound impact on the moral behaviour of secondary school students in Gusau Metropolis, Zamfara State. The findings demonstrate that the consistent exposure of students to Islamic teachings and moral guidance significantly enhances their sense of discipline, honesty, respect, and social responsibility. It further reveals that students who actively participate in Islamic educational activities tend to display stronger ethical

values and positive attitudes both within and outside the school environment. The study also underscores the importance of the spiritual and moral dimensions of education in shaping students' character and promoting harmonious coexistence. Overall, the influence of Islamic education extends beyond academic learning, fostering moral consciousness and guiding students toward responsible and upright living in society.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations are made:

1. Schools should incorporate Islamic ethical teachings more deeply into both formal and informal educational activities to strengthen students' moral and social behaviour.
2. Teachers of Islamic Studies and related subjects should receive continuous professional training to effectively impart moral lessons that connect classroom teachings with students' daily lives.
3. Parents, religious leaders, and community members should collaborate with schools to reinforce moral education at home and within the community, ensuring consistency in moral upbringing.
4. Secondary schools should create platforms such as moral clubs, Islamic societies, and mentorship programs to provide students with regular guidance and opportunities for moral reflection.
5. Educational policymakers in Zamfara State should prioritize and fund moral and civic education initiatives that emphasize ethical conduct and responsible citizenship among students.
6. Teachers and school administrators should serve as role models by demonstrating integrity, honesty, and respect in their interactions, thereby influencing students through positive examples.

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