



Research Article

Influence Of Islamic Civilization History On Secondary School Students' Understanding Of Cultural Diversity In National Value Classes In Zamfara State, Nigeria

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Abstract. This study examined the influence of Islamic Civilization History on secondary school students' understanding of cultural diversity in National Values Classes in Zamfara State, Nigeria. With Nigeria's diverse ethnic and religious landscape, fostering tolerance and civic responsibility among students remains a key educational objective. Grounded in the Cultural Transmission Theory, the research explored how integrating Islamic historical and ethical teachings into classroom instruction can enhance students' intercultural awareness and moral development. Employing a descriptive survey design, the study involved 370 Upper Basic III students selected through a multi-stage sampling technique from public and private schools across three Local Government Areas. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed with descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and t-tests. Findings revealed that Islamic Civilization History is moderately to highly integrated into National Values Classes, significantly influencing students' understanding of cultural diversity ($r = 0.421$, $p < 0.05$). Exposure to Islamic historical content positively affected students' attitudes toward

cultural tolerance ($t = 3.97, p < 0.05$), and a strong correlation was observed between students' knowledge of Islamic Civilization History and their appreciation of multicultural values ($r = 0.486, p < 0.05$). The study concludes that embedding Islamic historical narratives within National Values Classes fosters empathy, respect, and social inclusivity among students. Effective teaching strategies, adequate instructional resources, and teacher competence are critical in translating historical knowledge into positive attitudes. The findings underscore the importance of incorporating Islamic Civilization History into value education curricula to nurture culturally sensitive, morally grounded, and socially responsible individuals in Zamfara State and similar multicultural contexts.

Keywords: Cultural diversity, Islamic Civilization History, Moral education, National Values Classes, Social tolerance

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria's rich mosaic of over 250 ethnic groups and diverse religious beliefs underscores its status as a prominent example of cultural pluralism in Africa. In the northern region, particularly Zamfara State, Islam has profoundly influenced societal norms, education, and intergroup relations. The historical trajectory of Islamic civilization in Nigeria, especially during the Sokoto Caliphate, underscores a legacy of knowledge dissemination and cultural integration (Badruddeen, 2023). In contemporary Nigerian education, National Values Classes aim to instill civic virtues, ethical conduct, and an appreciation for the nation's diverse heritage. However, the integration of Islamic historical perspectives into these curricula remains underexplored. Islamic civilization, with its emphasis on knowledge, tolerance, and community cohesion, offers a unique lens through which students can better understand and appreciate cultural diversity. The study of Islamic civilization history offers deep insights into how religion, education, and culture interact to shape moral values and social coexistence. Scholars consistently emphasize that Islamic civilization has long promoted knowledge, tolerance, and unity values that are essential in building mutual respect and cultural understanding in diverse societies (Abubakar, 2021; Nasir, 2022).

Historically, the growth of Islam in Northern Nigeria, particularly during the Sokoto Caliphate, played a pivotal role in spreading literacy, scholarship, and moral consciousness. These developments fostered peaceful coexistence and strengthened communal integration across ethnic lines (Badruddeen, 2023). Ahmed and Sulaiman (2020) note that Islamic education emphasizes justice, compassion, and appreciation of diversity virtues that align closely with the objectives of Nigeria's National Values Education curriculum. Such values are rooted in the Qur'an and Hadith, which encourage humanity to recognize and respect differences as a divine design (Qur'an 49:13). Integrating lessons from Islamic civilization into National Values Classes can therefore deepen students' appreciation of cultural pluralism, patriotism, and moral responsibility. In recent years, educationists have underscored the importance of value-oriented instruction that connects historical, moral, and civic learning (Ogunyemi & Lawal, 2022). Yet, limited empirical studies have examined how Islamic historical perspectives directly influence students' understanding of cultural diversity in Zamfara State, a region deeply influenced by Islamic culture and scholarship. This gap highlights the significance of the present study, which seeks to explore how the

historical and ethical teachings of Islamic civilization can strengthen civic education and promote cultural tolerance among secondary school students.

However, research has shown that the inclusion of Islamic historical content in school curricula can significantly shape students' moral reasoning, cultural awareness, and civic orientation. In Nigeria, various studies have highlighted the uneven incorporation of Islamic Civilization History in formal education programs. While the national curriculum recognizes moral and civic values as key educational goals, many schools do not explicitly integrate Islamic historical perspectives into their teaching of National Values Education. This inconsistency has been attributed to factors such as inadequate teacher preparation, curriculum limitations, and lack of instructional resources (Nweke, 2024). Similarly, Alghamdi (2020) observed that in Muslim-majority learning contexts, students who were exposed to Islamic Civilization History demonstrated a higher understanding of cultural coexistence and historical empathy compared to those who were not. Several studies have further confirmed that learning about Islamic Civilization History positively influences students' understanding of cultural diversity. Fakhruddin (2025) reported that students who studied Islamic civilization through participatory learning approaches such as group discussions, storytelling, and project-based tasks showed improved attitudes toward multiculturalism and religious tolerance. This finding aligns with Rahmawati's (2024) study in Indonesia, which revealed that integrating Islamic values into social and moral education enhances students' appreciation of diversity, respect for differences, and cooperative behavior in mixed cultural settings.

Moreover, Dauda (2025) found that when Islamic moral teachings and civilizational narratives are linked to civic education, students demonstrate stronger tendencies toward peaceful coexistence, empathy, and communal harmony. Furthermore, some researchers caution that mere exposure to Islamic historical facts does not automatically foster tolerance. The pedagogical approach, teacher competence, and contextual understanding of students play decisive roles in determining the educational impact (Nasir, 2022). Consequently, it is not only what is taught from Islamic Civilization History that matters, but also how it is taught and related to students' lived experiences. Finally, existing empirical literature underscores a clear relationship between Islamic historical instruction and students' social development. However, most studies have been conducted outside Zamfara State or in higher educational contexts, leaving a research gap concerning secondary school students and the National Values curriculum. This study, therefore, seeks to fill that gap by examining how the teaching of Islamic Civilization History influences students' understanding of cultural diversity and tolerance within the context of secondary education in Zamfara State, Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

This research is grounded in the Cultural Transmission Theory, which explains how cultural beliefs, moral values, and social practices are conveyed across generations through key institutions such as the family, religion, and education. Originally developed by Cavalli-Sforza and Feldman (1981), the theory emphasizes that learning within a cultural setting is not limited to cognitive development but also

involves internalizing shared norms and behaviors that sustain social cohesion. In the context of this study, teaching Islamic Civilization History within National Values Classes serves as a mechanism for transmitting Islamic moral principles, intellectual traditions, and ethical standards to secondary school students in Zamfara State. According to Mesoudi (2021), cultural transmission fosters a deeper understanding of collective identity and promotes social harmony by helping learners connect their individual experiences with broader societal values. This aligns with the core objectives of Nigeria's National Values Education, which seeks to build responsible citizens who appreciate cultural diversity and coexist peacefully despite religious or ethnic differences. The historical lessons from Islamic civilization including its emphasis on scholarship, tolerance, justice, and respect for other cultures can therefore serve as a foundation for fostering intercultural awareness and civic responsibility among students.

Consequently, studies have underscored that embedding cultural and historical knowledge within the curriculum enhances students' appreciation of diversity, empathy, and moral reasoning (Al-Mashaqba & Al-Khawaldeh, 2022; Ibrahim & Haruna, 2023). These perspectives affirm that education informed by cultural heritage not only strengthens moral formation but also builds bridges of understanding between communities. In this regard, Cultural Transmission Theory provides a relevant analytical lens for this study, as it elucidates how integrating Islamic Civilization History into classroom instruction can influence students' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors toward cultural diversity in Zamfara State, Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Cultural Transmission Theory, which provides insight into how values, traditions, and social norms are passed down across generations through institutions such as religion, education, and family life. Originally proposed by Cavalli-Sforza and Feldman (1981), the theory highlights that education plays a vital role in sustaining cultural continuity and moral development by embedding shared beliefs within learners. Within this context, the inclusion of Islamic Civilization History in National Values Classes acts as a means of transmitting moral teachings, intellectual legacies, and ethical principles derived from Islamic heritage to secondary school students in Zamfara State. Mesoudi (2021) further explains that cultural transmission extends beyond the learning of facts; it involves shaping attitudes, fostering empathy, and nurturing an understanding of collective identity. This aligns with the aims of Nigeria's National Values Education, which emphasizes civic responsibility, tolerance, and appreciation for cultural and religious pluralism. The study of Islamic Civilization History characterized by ideals of scholarship, justice, compassion, and mutual respect can, therefore, provide a foundation for helping students recognize and value the richness of Nigeria's diverse society.

Consequently, scholarly works reinforce this view, demonstrating that integrating historical and cultural knowledge into classroom instruction enhances learners' intercultural competence, moral awareness, and social empathy (Al-

Mashaqba & Al-Khawaldeh, 2022; Ibrahim & Haruna, 2023). These findings affirm that education, when rooted in cultural and religious heritage, can promote peaceful coexistence and social cohesion among young people. Consequently, Cultural Transmission Theory serves as a fitting theoretical lens for this research, as it explains how the teaching of Islamic Civilization History can shape students' understanding, appreciation, and attitudes toward cultural diversity in Zamfara State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

National Values Education in Nigeria is intended to nurture moral integrity, civic responsibility, and cultural understanding among students. However, in many secondary schools within Zamfara State, these goals remain only partially achieved, particularly in helping learners appreciate cultural diversity and historical interconnectedness. Although Islamic Civilization History provides a rich foundation for promoting tolerance, unity, and intellectual growth, its potential contribution to value education has not been effectively explored or integrated into the existing curriculum. Consequently, many students possess limited knowledge of Islam's contributions to world civilization and insufficient appreciation for the multicultural nature of Nigerian society. The rising cases of social intolerance, ethnoreligious conflicts, and moral decline among youths in Zamfara State have raised questions about the effectiveness of the current educational framework. Teachers often rely on theoretical approaches in National Values Education, neglecting the use of historical and cultural narratives from Islamic civilization that could inspire greater civic awareness and mutual respect.

Furthermore lack of qualified teachers, inadequate teaching materials, and weak pedagogical strategies further hinder the meaningful incorporation of Islamic Civilization History in classroom instruction. These shortcomings collectively affect students' capacity to internalize values that foster social harmony, moral discipline, and peaceful coexistence. Despite the recognized role of Islamic education in shaping character and moral reasoning, little empirical evidence exists on how exposure to Islamic Civilization History influences students' understanding of cultural diversity and civic responsibility. This gap highlights the urgent need for a scholarly investigation to examine how integrating Islamic Civilization History into National Values Classes can enhance students' perspectives on cultural tolerance and intergroup relations in Zamfara State.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the extent to which Islamic Civilization History is incorporated into National Values Classes in secondary schools in Zamfara State.
2. To determine the influence of Islamic Civilization History on students' understanding of cultural diversity in National Values Classes.
3. To explore the relationship between students' exposure to Islamic Civilization History and their attitudes toward cultural tolerance and coexistence.

Research Questions

1. To what extent is Islamic Civilization History integrated into National Values Classes in secondary schools in Zamfara State?
2. How does learning about Islamic Civilization History influence students' understanding of cultural diversity in National Values Classes?
3. What is the relationship between secondary school students' exposure to Islamic Civilization History and their attitudes toward cultural tolerance and coexistence?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between the extent of Islamic Civilization History integration in National Values Classes and students' understanding of cultural diversity.
2. Exposure to Islamic Civilization History has no significant influence on students' attitudes toward cultural tolerance in National Values Classes.
3. There is no significant correlation between students' knowledge of Islamic Civilization History and their appreciation of cultural diversity. (Null Hypothesis)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design, which is suitable for examining existing educational practices, opinions, and relationships among variables without manipulation. The design provided an effective framework for investigating how the teaching of Islamic Civilization History influences students' understanding of cultural diversity within National Values classes in Zamfara State. As noted by Creswell and Creswell (2018), survey designs help researchers collect data from large populations to describe patterns and relationships in natural settings. The population of the study comprised all Upper Basic III (UBS 3) students enrolled in public and private junior secondary schools across Zamfara State, totaling 24,512 students (Zamfara State Ministry of Education, 2024). From this population, a sample size of 370 students was selected using the Research Advisors Table (2006), which provides statistically valid sample estimates based on population size and confidence levels.

A multi-stage sampling technique was used to ensure fair representation across the state's educational zones. First, three Local Government Areas (LGAs) were randomly selected, followed by the random selection of four schools per LGA. Within each school, students were selected through stratified random sampling to ensure gender balance and inclusivity. The study employed a structured questionnaire as its main instrument for data collection. The instrument was divided into two sections: demographic information and items measuring students' knowledge of Islamic Civilization History, appreciation of cultural diversity, and attitudes toward inter-cultural tolerance. A 4-point Likert scale (ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree) was used to capture respondents' opinions. To ensure validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by experts in Educational Foundations, Islamic Studies, and Measurement and Evaluation, whose feedback guided its refinement.

Reliability was established through a pilot test conducted on 30 UBS 3 students outside the study area. Using the Cronbach Alpha method, a reliability coefficient of

0.87 was obtained, indicating a high degree of internal consistency, as recommended by Tavakol and Dennick (2011).

Data were collected with the assistance of trained research assistants after obtaining official permission from school authorities and informed consent from participants. Respondents were assured of confidentiality and the voluntary nature of their participation. The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean, and percentage were used to summarize responses, while Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) and t-test were applied to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance using SPSS (version 25). Ethical standards were strictly followed throughout the study, ensuring respect for participants' rights, data confidentiality, and research integrity.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics Analysis for answering research questions

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis of the Extent of Islamic Civilization History Integration in National Values Classes

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	Teachers regularly include Islamic Civilization History topics when teaching National Values Education.	3.46	0.58	High
2.	Lessons on Islamic Civilization History help link moral values with civic education.	3.38	0.64	High
3.	Islamic Civilization History is emphasized in the school curriculum and classroom discussions.	3.29	0.67	High
4.	Textbooks and instructional materials for National Values contain examples from Islamic civilization.	3.11	0.71	Moderate
5.	Teachers use stories of Islamic scholars and leaders to explain concepts of justice and tolerance.	3.45	0.63	High
Total		3.34	0.65	High Extent of Integration

The analysis reveals a high extent of integration of Islamic Civilization History into National Values Education, with an overall mean of 3.34. Teachers frequently incorporate related topics, link moral and civic values, and use examples from Islamic scholars. However, textbooks and instructional materials show only moderate integration, indicating the need for better curriculum support.

Table 2: Descriptive Analysis of the Influence of Islamic Civilization History on Students' Understanding of Cultural Diversity

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
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1.	Exposure to Islamic Civilization History helps me respect people from other cultures.	3.63	0.54	High
2.	I have learned from Islamic Civilization History that peaceful coexistence is important in society.	3.57	0.57	High
3.	Understanding the teachings of Islamic civilization has made me more tolerant of other religions.	3.49	0.59	High
4.	My attitude toward classmates from different cultural backgrounds has improved due to lessons on Islamic civilization.	3.41	0.62	High
5.	The study of Islamic Civilization History encourages mutual respect and peaceful dialogue among students.	3.60	0.52	High
Total		3.54	0.57	High Influence

The analysis in Table 2 shows a high influence of Islamic Civilization History on students' understanding of cultural diversity, with an overall mean of 3.54. Students reported that studying Islamic civilization enhances respect for other cultures, tolerance of different religions, and peaceful coexistence. It also positively shapes their attitudes toward classmates from diverse backgrounds and promotes mutual respect and dialogue. Overall, Islamic Civilization History significantly fosters cultural awareness and harmony among students.

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis of Students' Exposure to Islamic Civilization History and Their Attitudes Toward Cultural Tolerance

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remark
1.	I can identify important contributions of Islamic civilization to world knowledge and culture.	3.71	0.49	High
2.	Learning about Islamic civilization helps me appreciate cultural differences in Nigeria.	3.65	0.53	High
3.	Knowledge of Islamic Civilization History teaches me to value cultural harmony and unity.	3.73	0.46	High
4.	I believe that Islamic Civilization History promotes understanding and acceptance of diversity.	3.56	0.59	High
5.	The more I learn about Islamic civilization, the more I appreciate people of different traditions and beliefs.	3.47	0.61	High
Total		3.62	0.54	High Positive Attitude

The analysis in Table 3 indicates a high positive attitude among students toward cultural tolerance as a result of their exposure to Islamic Civilization History, with an overall mean of 3.62. Students strongly agree that learning about Islamic civilization enhances their appreciation of cultural diversity, understanding of unity and harmony, and acceptance of different traditions and beliefs. Overall, exposure to Islamic Civilization History significantly promotes cultural awareness, respect, and tolerance among students.

Testing Hypotheses

Table 4: Relationship Between the Extent of Islamic Civilization History Integration in National Values Classes and Students' Understanding of Cultural Diversity

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-cal	r-crit	Decision
Integration of Islamic Civilization History	370	3.42	0.61	0.412	0.195	Ho Rejected
Students' Understanding of Cultural Diversity	370	3.55	0.58			

The result in Table 4 shows a significant positive relationship between the extent of Islamic Civilization History integration in National Values classes and students' understanding of cultural diversity. With a calculated correlation coefficient ($r\text{-cal} = 0.412$) higher than the critical value ($r\text{-crit} = 0.195$), the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected. This indicates that greater integration of Islamic Civilization History in teaching significantly enhances students' understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity.

Table 5: Influence of Exposure to Islamic Civilization History on Students' Attitudes Toward Cultural Tolerance

Groups	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
High Exposure Students	185	3.61	0.57	368	3.97	1.96	Ho Rejected
Low Exposure Students	185	3.25	0.63				

The result in Table 5 reveals a significant influence of students' exposure to Islamic Civilization History on their attitudes toward cultural tolerance. The calculated t-value ($t\text{-cal} = 3.97$) exceeds the critical t-value ($t\text{-crit} = 1.96$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0). This means that students with high exposure to Islamic Civilization History (Mean = 3.61) demonstrate more positive attitudes toward cultural tolerance than those with low exposure (Mean = 3.25).

Table 6: Correlation Between Students' Knowledge of Islamic Civilization History and Their Appreciation of Cultural Diversity.

Variable	N	Mean	SD	r-cal	r-crit	Decision
Knowledge of Islamic Civilization History	70	3.48	0.59	0.486	0.195	Ho Rejected

Apprecia tion of Cultural Diversity	3 70	3.67 54	0.
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The result in Table 6 indicates a significant positive correlation between students' knowledge of Islamic Civilization History and their appreciation of cultural diversity. The calculated correlation coefficient ($r\text{-cal} = 0.486$) is greater than the critical value ($r\text{-crit} = 0.195$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0). This implies that increased knowledge of Islamic Civilization History strongly enhances students' ability to appreciate and value cultural diversity.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study investigated the influence of Islamic Civilization History on secondary school students' understanding of cultural diversity within National Values Classes in Zamfara State, Nigeria. The findings provide compelling evidence that exposure to Islamic historical content plays a significant role in shaping students' intercultural awareness, moral reasoning, and attitudes toward social tolerance. The discussion is structured around the study's research questions and corresponding hypotheses. The descriptive analysis revealed that Islamic Civilization History is moderately to highly integrated into National Values Classes, with an overall mean score of 3.34. This suggests that teachers incorporate historical topics, narratives of Islamic scholars, and examples of moral leadership into lessons, linking moral values to civic education. Testing the first hypothesis demonstrated a significant positive relationship between the degree of integration and students' understanding of cultural diversity ($r = 0.421$, $p < 0.05$). Thus, the more extensively Islamic historical content is embedded in classroom instruction, the better students understand and appreciate cultural diversity. These findings are consistent with Alghamdi (2020), who reported that students exposed to Islamic historical perspectives displayed higher intercultural empathy and awareness. Similarly, Abubakar (2021) emphasized that knowledge of Islamic civilization enhances moral reasoning and civic responsibility, fostering respect for diverse ethnic and religious communities. Nevertheless, Nasir (2022) notes that integration alone is insufficient unless accompanied by interactive and context-sensitive teaching methods.

The analysis of students' exposure to Islamic Civilization History showed a strong positive effect on attitudes toward cultural tolerance ($\bar{X} = 3.62$). The second hypothesis, which assumed no significant influence, was rejected, with the computed t-value ($t = 3.97$, $p < 0.05$) indicating a statistically meaningful effect. Students who engaged with Islamic moral and historical narratives exhibited higher empathy, inclusiveness, and commitment to peaceful coexistence. This outcome aligns with Fakhruddin (2025), who found that participatory learning methods in Islamic Civilization Studies promote multicultural respect and cooperative behavior. Rahmawati (2024) similarly observed that embedding Islamic values in social and moral education enhances students' appreciation of diversity and strengthens their ability to interact harmoniously with peers from different backgrounds. These findings underscore the importance of experiential and reflective teaching approaches in shaping tolerant attitudes.

The study found a significant positive correlation between students' knowledge of Islamic Civilization History and their appreciation of cultural diversity ($r = 0.486$, $p < 0.05$). This indicates that students with a deeper understanding of Islamic historical contributions are more likely to respect cultural pluralism and demonstrate inclusive social behaviors. Consequently, the third hypothesis, which suggested no correlation, was rejected. These results corroborate the work of Ahmed and Sulaiman (2020), who argue that Islamic education fosters recognition of human differences as a divinely intended aspect of life, encouraging respect and tolerance. Dauda (2025) also highlighted that connecting Islamic historical narratives with civic education promotes communal harmony and empathy. However, Nasir (2022) cautions that knowledge alone does not guarantee attitudinal change; pedagogical strategies and contextual relevance remain crucial to translating historical understanding into meaningful social behaviors.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that learning about Islamic Civilization History significantly enhances secondary school students' understanding of cultural diversity in National Values Classes in Zamfara State. Students who engaged with Islamic historical content showed greater tolerance, empathy, and respect for peers from varied ethnic and religious backgrounds. The findings also highlight that the effectiveness of such learning is shaped by teaching methods, teacher expertise, and contextual application, rather than mere exposure to historical information. Integrating Islamic historical narratives with moral and civic lessons enables educators to foster students' appreciation for multiculturalism, encourage social harmony, and strengthen civic responsibility. Consequently, including Islamic Civilization History in National Values Classes not only broadens students' historical awareness but also nurtures culturally sensitive, morally grounded, and socially inclusive individuals capable of contributing positively to a diverse society.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Education policymakers should ensure that Islamic Civilization History is explicitly incorporated into National Values Classes to enhance students' appreciation of cultural diversity and moral principles.
2. Secondary school educators should be trained in strategies for effectively conveying historical and cultural lessons that promote empathy, tolerance, and civic responsibility.
3. Schools should adopt interactive instructional approaches, such as group discussions, storytelling, and project-based activities, to make Islamic historical content more meaningful and relatable to students.
4. Schools should be equipped with adequate teaching materials including textbooks, multimedia tools, and culturally relevant case studies to facilitate the effective delivery of Islamic Civilization History lessons.
5. Collaboration with parents and local communities should be encouraged to reinforce the lessons of cultural understanding and ethical conduct beyond the classroom.

6. Subsequent studies should investigate the long-term effects of teaching Islamic Civilization History on students' intercultural attitudes, civic behavior, and social cohesion across different Nigerian regions.

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