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Level of awareness about Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo among some private school students in Gwadabawa, Sokoto, Nigeria: A cross-sectional survey

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to assess the level of awareness, interest, and practice about Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo among some private secondary school students in Gwadabawa, Sokoto State, Nigeria, using a cross-sectional survey. The study utilizes a mixed-methods approach, utilizing both quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, to provide comprehensive insights into the effectiveness of such educational strategies. The findings revealed that, there is a poor level of knowledge about sokoto Caliphate, which might be due to poor implementation of curriculum or poor attention of students to the Islamic studies or related religious subjects been taught at schools. However, the study also shows that, with proper instruction and teaching, the students can develop a significant degree of awareness about Sheheshu and Sokota Calipahate. Therefore, this work serves as a foundational step for further studies aimed at improving cultural and historical education in the region, ultimately fostering a greater appreciation of local heritage among students.

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INTRODUCTION

Awareness is alternatively utilized with knowledge, and mostly go along with “interest” or “attitude” and in turn “practice.” Awareness is a set of perception or understanding about something as labelled by an individual or groups. The awareness is mostly influenced by knowledge obtained from classroom or experience obtained through life encounters. The higher level of awareness is more likely to stimulate people to act positively towards a given direction and as well to have positive (good) interest or curiosity (Alkanchi & Gokaru, 2024; Nguyen et al., 2024; Simpson, 2015). Therefore, in order to appreciate the Sokoto Caliphate, Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo (the founder of the Caliphate) and the Sokoto Caliphate literatures, it is significant to determine the level of awareness, interest, and practice of students. Students are taught at schools about a wide range of knowledge in order to change them morally and they are supposed to be well-abreast about the modern technologies allowing people to learn through electronic libraries and other educational gadgets; and as well students are expected to be in-touch with physical libraries to learn sciences, religion, sociology, history, and other fields (Ayama, 2018; Bala & Ainu, 2018). Therefore, they are expected to have acquired religious awareness, such as about Sokoto Caliphate in order to purposely shape their future (Abba et al., 2017).

Sokoto Caliphate is the last most important Caliphate that was invaded by the British colonialist in Western part of Africa. The Caliphate was initiated as a result of jihad struggle made by Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo. Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo was born in 1754 (in the Gobir State), in the family of scholars, and has attended several schools before delving into preaching, teaching, writing, and struggle. In 1804, Sokoto Caliphate was initiated as a result of migration of Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo from his hometown Dagel to Gudu, and a battle was ensured between Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo and the entourage of Sarkin Gobir (Hiskett M., 1973). Summarily, the Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo continued to teach, preach, learn, write, and depend his people against the wrongdoings of the Hausaland, and he had continued amidst huge resistance (Bala, 2018; Gokaru, 2017; Yusuf et al., 2021).

However, in the year 1808, the fall of Gobir state and other related states was noted, culminating to a vast state called Sokoto Caliphate or *Daular Usmaniyya* (spanning many parts of the Northern Nigeria, Niger Republic, Mali, Chad, and Cameroun) headed by a Caliph, under the Islamic provision (Gokaru, 2017;

Gokaru & Hamid, 2018). Meanwhile, the principles guiding the Sokoto Caliphate were Qur'an, Hadith, and other sources of Sharia. Islam as universal and encompassing religion contains all-guidance required by humans to prosper (Hamisu & Kumo, 2024; Zulfeqar S., 2024). Parable, Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo had written about purification, oneness of Allah, *Salah*. *Zakat*, Hajj, children right, human right, women empowerment, leadership, administration, psychology, mental health, rule of law, health, medicine, sociology, hereafter, industry, etc. The lessons contained in the legacy of Sokoto Caliphate should not be in vain; should be maximally utilized in our educational systems and day-today affairs (Dogon Daji, 2022; Hanafi & Jibril, 2024; Islahi, 2012; Mafara, 2009; Sarkingobir, 2021; Shareef, 2005; Sheriff & Altine, 2018; Yusuf et al., 2021).

The objective of this paper is to assess the level of awareness, interest, about Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo among some private secondary school students in Gwadabawa, Sokoto State, Nigeria, using cross-sectional survey. The research contributes to the understanding of cultural and historical awareness among youth by providing empirical data on the level of awareness and interest regarding Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo among private secondary school students in Gwadabawa, Sokoto State, Nigeria. By utilizing a cross-sectional survey methodology, the study highlights gaps in knowledge and engagement with important figures in Islamic history, thereby informing educators, policymakers, and curriculum developers about the need for enhanced educational initiatives. This work serves as a foundational step for further studies aimed at improving cultural and historical education in the region, ultimately fostering a greater appreciation of local heritage among students.

METHOD

This study was carried out at Sokoto state, Nigeria, particularly at Gwadabawa Local Government among selected private secondary schools. The study utilizes a cross-sectional survey design to collect data about awareness, interest, and practice of selected private secondary school students at senior secondary classes 1 to 2, each class was supposed to be fifty in number of students, therefore, five classes were involved. Two different types of structured questionnaires validated and tested for reliability through expert validation and pilot study were administered to each student in the affected classes, before and after imparting a two days' lessons. The instruments for the lesson included conventional lesson tools such as lesson plan, lesson note, whiteboard, marker, and questionnaire utilized for awareness or knowledge assessment. The second arm of the study involves a comparative historical approach, whereby, the Sokoto Caliphate and related literatures were searched through online and off-line junctures in order to analyzed the results initially obtained from the survey.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of Participants (Some Private Secondary School Students in Gwadabawa)

Table 1. Characteristics of participants (Some private secondary school students in Gwadabawa)

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Religion		
Islam	250	100.0
Tribe		
Huasa	138	55.2
Fulani	112	44.8
Age		
15-17	180	68.0
18-20	140	
Sex		
Male	110	44.0
Female	140	56.0

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the participants involved in this survey study. The participants are 44.8% Fulani, 55.2% Hausa; 15-17 years old constitutes 72.0%, and 18-20 years old constitutes 68.0%. 44.0% of the students are males, and 56.0% are females.

Awareness (Having Some Information About Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo)

Table 2. Awareness (having some information about Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo)

Parameter	Frequency	Percentage
Awareness (having some information about Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo)		
Yes	38	15.2
no	212	84.8
Do you know that?		
Shehu was a reformer	123	49.2
Aware about the towns or places of Shehu such as Dagel	42	16.8
Aware about some descendants of Shehu	12	4.8
None	73	29.2

In Table 2, awareness of participants about Shehu was revealed; therewith, 84.8% were having no knowledge (awareness) about Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo; and 15.2% have few with knowledge or awareness about Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo. 29.2% were unaware about details concerning Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo, 49.2% said submitted that "Shehu Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo was a reformer;" and 16.8% were able to list places of Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo such as Dagel, and 4.8% were able to list some descendants of Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo. Awareness is a kind of belief or knowledge obtained by a person either as a result of social learning or classroom learning. The impact of awareness is very huge, because it is a human property that incite an individual to carry out a practice or action or behavior (Simpson, 2015). That is why, the famous Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo during his *Tajdeed* (reformation of Islam) utilized the methods of creating awareness in order to change the public to the better by accepting the views and ethics of Islam obtained from Quran, Sunnah, and other sources of Sharia (Bala, 2014). Ali & Manga (2023) stressed that, Muslim scholars applied methods of educating the Muslims and resultantly mobilized them towards appreciation of the true religion of Islam (Gokaru, 2017). However, the finding here indicates that, there is poor awareness or knowledge about sokoto Caliphate, which might be due to poor implementation of curriculum or poor attention of students to the Islamic studies or related religious subjects been taught at schools (Liman, 2021). The poor knowledge is risking the young ones of losing the diverse, applicable, truthful, advantageous, simplistic, advantageous, etc lessons contained in Sokoto Caliphate legacy and its literatures (Kaura, 2009). From the Sokoto Caliphate, including the life of Shehu and disciples, lessons imparting knowledge of Qur'ran, Hadith, Sharia, Fiqh, medicine, education, health, sociology, agriculture, etc could be learnt. Astonishingly, many of the contributions of Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo and his contemporaries were translated in Hausa or English for easy appreciation, but our younger generations are paying less heed to tap benefits (Abba et al., 2017).

Interest About (Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo or Any Information About Him)

Table 3. Interest about (Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo or any information about him)

Interest about (about Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo or any related information about Shehu)	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	250	100.0
No	0	0.0

Table 3 shows the kind of interest of participants about Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo and Sokoto Caliphate, therewith, all of them (100.0%) were interested in knowing about Sokoto Caliphate and Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo as well. The significance of interest in stimulating someone to carry out actions could not be overemphasized. An interest is an internal force that may elicit a person to act positively. Parable, curiosity may be an example of interest to find out about something (Tsagem & Tambuwal, 2013). If people developed an interest in something, they are more likely to act in that direction indeed (Tsagem & Tambuwal, 2013). Therefore, an interest in Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo and Sokoto Caliphate, as revealed by participants in this study is a good omen that can be materialized (capitalized) to instigate the students (young ones) to learn more about Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo and Sokoto Caliphate in order to derive lessons and

benefit from Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo vast legacy of literatures. Many literatures called for use of teaching (curriculum delivery) and other forms of awareness or social marketing to incite people act positively (Hamisu & Kumo, 2024). Parable, Paramole & Folami (2020) stressed that, to convey *Da'awah* of Islam, the universal and mundane religion of the world, the use of varied approaches was important. Therewith, to convey Islam to people in Ojo, Lagos, Nigeria, various Muslim scholars applied the use of *Islamiyah* schools, and public lectures, to convey Islam, Therefore, if there is need to increasing awareness and curiosity or interest about Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo and Sokoto Caliphate, methods such as preaching, public lectures, curriculum delivery, *Islamiyah* schools, could be avenues for conveying Shehu's books and history as well. Inda & Qasim M. T. (2015) in this vein, retreated the vital forms of methods of delivery of *Da'awah* in Taraba, Nigeria, include, public lectures, *Tafsir*, seminars, educational summit, rural Da'awah, competition, etc. Therefore, using these methods will verily convey the Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo and Sokoto Caliphate more to the world especially among young ones.

Awareness About Shehu After Receiving Lessons in That Regards

Table 4. Awareness about Shehu after receiving lessons in that regards

Awareness about Shehu after receiving lessons in that regards	Frequency	Percentage
Identify the contributions of Shehu		
Yes	130	52.0
No	120	48.0
Identify some of Shehu's books		
Yes	130	52.0
No	120	48.0
Identify some of his places		
Yes	150	60.0
No	100	40.0
Identify a brief about Shehu's jihad		
Yes	136	54.4
No	114	45.6
Identify some Sokoto Caliphate literatures		
Yes	152	60.8
No	98	39.2
Identify resistance faced by Shehu's jihad		
Yes	172	68.8
No	78	31.2

Table 4 shows the effects of lesson delivered about Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo and Sokoto Caliphate. 52.0% were able to list the contributions of Shehu, 52.0% were able to identify some of Shehu's books, 60.8% were able to identify some places of Shehu, 54.4% were able to give a brief about Shehu's jihad, 60.8% were able to identify some of the literatures in Sokoto Caliphate, and 68.8 % were able to identify some resistance faced by Shehu's jihad. According to the findings revealed in this study, it shows that, an instruction involving lessons about Sokoto Caliphate and Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo has resulted into achievement of educational objectives and behavior change as well. This is in conformity with the several studies (Arghode et al., 2017). Albeit, some learning theories believed that, learning or behavior change occurs due to mind altering or actions in segregation; the constructive theory argue that learning occur due to combination of interaction involving mind and actions (Arghode et al., 2017). Therefore, in this vein, a method of classroom teaching about Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo and Sokoto Caliphate had elicited the responses of the students translated by their ability to have a certain level of awareness about Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo and Sokoto Caliphate. Therefore, if the Sokoto Caliphate history and studies will be properly incorporated and implemented in secondary school's curriculum, the tendency of youngsters to tap the advantageous lessons from the Caliphate will be very high. According to Simpson (2015), invariably knowledge incites people to actions. Thus, the knowledge about Sokoto Caliphate when taught properly to the students will serve as a stimulus that will elicit them to apply the useful lessons learnt in contemporary life (Adam, 2023; Sayudi & Boyd, 1974; Sokoto et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

The study reveals a low level of awareness about Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo and the Sokoto Caliphate among private secondary school students in Gwadabawa, Sokoto State, Nigeria. It suggests that with effective teaching, students can significantly enhance their understanding of these topics. Consequently, the

study recommends incorporating Islamic studies and the history of the Sokoto Caliphate into the school curriculum to foster appreciation of cultural and religious heritage. Future research should evaluate the impact of this curriculum integration on students' awareness and understanding, assessing changes pre- and post-intervention, exploring effective teaching methods, and examining students' perceptions of the relevance of these historical figures in their lives through a mixed-methods approach.

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