



## **PERSPECTIVES OF YOUTHS ON TAKING UP ISLAMIC STUDIES IN COTABATO CITY**

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### **Abstract**

This study aimed to determine the perspectives of youths on taking up Islamic Studies in Cotabato City. The study used descriptive research design, via Google survey questionnaire to gather data. It only has thirty (30) respondents due to the pandemic situation and not all who have the link sent had a positive response to that survey questionnaire. Based on the findings of the study, the study found out that the perspectives of youths in taking up Islamic Studies includes the importance of students' interest to the subject or program. Students really like Islamic studies program and didn't get bored easily. It is also important factor to have a teacher that show love and patience in teaching students. School environment for instance, their classroom, and faculty office and school library among other students may become a motivation and encouragement to them to excel in their studies. Parents' guidance and advice to finish their studies provides a vital strength that every student needs in order to be motivated most of the times because students knew that their parents are much happy to see them become successful someday and are always there for them. Quality education ensures positive environment to all students despite of culture differences and it also helps student to have chance to learn about Islamic studies. To become knowledgeable, it is important to have a better and quality education that would be a help in the future license examination and employability. Further, Peer influence solicit an important role also to the students, they could influence and lead them to do good things. Peer influence becomes the mirror of the students, what company they are among with will be a factor that could define their tomorrow since their friends have a lot

impact to their lives and studies. Community benefits driven of Islamic studies could help discipline students and to develop their religiosity and become a role model in their family and community to benefit us in this world and hereafter. The purpose of Islamic education is to achieve balanced growth in total human personality through the exercise of enthusiasm, rational intellect and feelings body sensitivity. The ultimate goal of Muslim education lies in the realization of its perfect submission to God, both in person, community and all humanity. The ultimate goal of Muslim education lies in the realization of its perfect submission to God, both in person, community and all humanity. The study concludes that there are existing great interests among students to take up Islamic Studies courses/program. They are willing and excited to learn Islamic Studies. They are also provided assistance by the teacher and by their parents with all means. In terms of Physical facilities, quality of education and peer influence, it all satisfies and met their needs. However, even challenges have occurred among others, it is necessary to sustain and develop more Islamic students for the benefit of Muslim community. Guided by the findings and conclusion of this study, the following are strongly recommended: First is the Department of Education may provide additional scholarship and allowance among the poor students that would enable them to study and fulfill their dreams. Second is the Local Government Units may provide safety assurance among school personnel and students since there are a lot of instances that might put their safety and lives to risk. Since majority of the people goes to school, it is necessary to impose and implement safety measures by all means. Third are the parents, teachers and community, may provide full support and cooperation among students particularly in their mental health and wellness. Provide also some motivation among them to ensure good performance in school. Lastly, to the schools that offering Islamic Studies Program it may serve as guide to the students to be more knowledgeable in their religion and may become a good individual that would sustain future Islamic Educators and benefit by others.

**Key words:** *Islamic education, character education in Islamic perspective, religious education.*

## INTRODUCTION

Today the number of higher education institutions in the Muslim countries offering Islamic Studies has increased to commensurate with the increase in the population and the value of a university education in terms of enlightenment and also economics in return. The development of Islamic education in Southeast Asia is tremendous and

receiving an overwhelming support from the community. Many governments support the establishment of Islamic educational institutions both financially and administratively.

Nowadays, many schools which are either being 'Islamic religious school' in its name or carrying out similar perspective receive strong support from the Muslim community. In Cotabato City, it is certainly flourishing and this system is gaining popularity. The term "Islamic Studies" as employed in this paper denotes the systematic study of Islam both as a religion (al-din) and as a civilization (al-hadarah) through the integration of the major disciplines of Usul al-Din (Islamic Theology), Shari'ah (divine law), Akhlaq (ethics), with dakwah (Islamic missionary work), Arabic language and its literature, Islamic history and undergraduate and postgraduate level in a university, faculty, institute, college or academy.

However, what are the factors perceived by the students in taking up Islamic studies program? Therefore, this study investigated the perceived factor in taking up Islamic studies program among the selected students who were enrolled in Islamic studies program in Cotabato City.

## METHODS

The study used descriptive method of research. This method of research is suitable to describe the perspective of youths in taking of Islamic Studies Courses.

The method is also appropriate in determining the perceived factors that influenced students' attitude/interest in taking up Islamic Studies Courses, the influence of teachers' traits in terms of approachable, capacitated and open-minded in teaching Islamic Studies, the school environment in terms of physical facilities, library holdings, and educational technology to the students' achievement and influence of the parents' support in terms of moral, financial and material to students' achievement, quality education, peer influence and community driven-benefits in taking up Islamic Studies.

The respondents of the study were the Islamic Studies students of Cotabato State University (CSU), Jamiat Cotabato and Shariff Kabunsuan College Inc., (SKCI).

The sample size of this study was thirty (30) regardless of what field of specialization they took. It only has thirty (30) respondents due to the pandemic situation and not all who have the link sent had a positive response to the survey questionnaire. The study used simple random sampling technique in selecting the respondents. In identifying the respondents included in the study, the researcher sought the list of Islamic students of CSU, Jamiat Cotabato and SKCI.

Simple random sampling (SRS) is a sampling method in which all of the elements in the population – and, consequently, all of the units in the sampling frame – have the same probability of being selected for the sample. (Ochoa, 2017)

The researcher used survey questionnaire via Google form to gather information needed to answer the specific problem in the study. The survey questionnaire was made up of eight parts. The perceptions of students on taking Islamic Studies Program were divided into eight parts; the first was to determine the students’ attitude/interest in taking up Islamic Studies. Second was to determine the Islamic teachers’ traits in terms of approachable, capacitated and open-minded. Third was on the school environment in terms of physical facilities, library holdings and educational technology. Fourth was on the influence of parents’ support in terms of moral, financial and material support in taking up Islamic Studies Program. Fifth was about quality education. Sixth was peer influence or pressure. Further, it determined the community driven benefits.

The following scale was used to describe the perspective of youths in taking up Islamic courses. A Likert scale assumes that the strength/intensity of an attitude is linear, i.e. on a continuum from strongly agree to strongly disagree and make the assumptions that attitudes can be measured. In addition to measuring statements of agreement, Likert scales can measure other variations such as frequency, quality, importance and likelihood. Likert scales are odd numbered scales. Now, at times there are situations when a respondent chooses the ‘Neutral’ option in a 5 point Likert scale. 4-point likert scale on which there is no neutral option. This is done in order to extract a specific response from the respondents.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section discusses the results and discussions of the study such as the reliability test and the descriptive analysis.

Table 1

### Descriptive Analysis for Students’ Attitude/Interest

Indicators/Measurement	SD %	D %	A %	SA %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Feels excited and interested about Islamic Studies.	15.2	3.0	21.2	60.6	3.27	1.098
Do get bored during Islamic period.	21.2	36.4	21.2	21.2	2.42	1.062
Really like Islamic studies program.	15.2	6.1	6.1	72.7	3.36	1.141
Learning new things in	12.1	12.1	36.4	36.4	3.03	1.015

Islamic is fun for me.						
Can easily catch-up Islamic lesson.	6.1	15.2	45.5	33.3	3.06	.864
Overall Mean	3.030333 – Agree					
Valid (N)						

Students’ Attitude/Interest

Table 1 depicts the descriptive analysis for Students’ Attitude/Interest variable. There are five (5) questions asked for the respondents to determine to what extent they agree or disagree on students attitude. For the first statement, “Feels excited and interested about Islamic Studies”, majority of the respondents strongly agree to the said statement with mean of 3.27. For the second statement, “Do get bored during Islamic period,” most of the respondents disagree with a mean of 2.42. As for the third statement, majority of the respondents strongly agree that they “really like Islamic studies program” with a mean of 3.36. Similarly, in the fourth statement, most of the respondents also agree that “Learning new things in Islamic is fun” with a mean of 3.03. Lastly, in the fifth statement, majority of the respondents strongly agree that they “Can easily catch-up Islamic lesson,” with a mean of 3.06.

According to De Vos, and Soens (2008), career attitude is considered important determinant of career success in the contemporary career era. Thus, those individuals with a good career attitude report higher levels of career satisfaction and perceived employability.

Table 2  
**Descriptive Analysis for Islamic Teachers’ Traits**

Indicators/Measurement	SD %	D %	A %	SA %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Provide time for consultation.	12.1	9.1	63.6	15.2	2.82	.846
Entertain students query regarding the subject matter.	12.1	6.1	60.6	21.2	2.91	.879
Show concerned to students future.	15.2	3.0	30.3	51.5	3.18	1.074
Show love and patience in teaching the students.	18.2	0.0	15.2	66.7	3.30	1.159
Recognize student’s achievement.	12.1	6.1	42.4	39.4	3.09	.980
Respect student’s ideas.	15.2	3.0	33.3	48.5	3.15	1.064
Open for suggestion and	15.2	3.0	36.4	45.5	3.12	1.053

recommendation.						
Discuss the topic clearly.	15.2	3.0	42.4	39.4	3.06	1.029
Relate the topic to daily life.	12.1	6.1	45.5	36.4	3.06	.966
Introduce innovative teaching approach and strategy.	12.1	9.1	39.4	39.4	3.06	.998
Overall Mean	3.075833 – Agree					
Valid (N)						

### Islamic Teachers' Traits

This part discusses the descriptive analysis for the Islamic Teachers' Traits as shown in Table 2. There are ten (10) questions asked for the respondents to determine to what extent they agree or disagree on Islamic teachers traits. Based on the result, majority of the respondents agreed that Islamic teachers provide time for consolations and entertain students' query regarding the subject matter (statement 1 and statement 2). Further, the respondents of this study mostly agreed that Islamic teachers show concerned to students future and show love and patience in teaching the students (statement 3 and 4).

Further, majority also of the respondents said that teachers recognize students' achievement, respect students ideas and they are open for suggestion and recommendation. In addition, most of the respondents also agreed that Islamic teachers relate their topic to a daily life, discuss the topic clearly and also the teacher introduce innovative teaching approach and strategy. Lastly, Islamic teachers' trait has overall mean of 3.0758, this means that respondents agreed on the statement pertaining to Islamic teachers traits. According to Aziz and Pangil (2017), personally traits were initial level of individuals and do provide the positive outcomes such as employability.

Table 3

### **Descriptive Analysis for School Environment**

Indicators/Measurement	SD	D	A	SA	Mean	Std. Deviation
<i>Satisfied with the....</i>	%	%	%	%		
Classroom	9.1	18.2	39.4	33.3	2.97	.951
Science Laboratory	15.2	33.2	33.3	18.2	2.55	.971
Computer Laboratory	15.2	18.2	45.4	21.2	2.73	.977
School Library	15.2	12.1	33.3	39.4	2.97	1.075
Gymnasium	12.1	27.3	42.4	18.2	2.67	.924
Faculty Room	15.2	6.1	45.5	33.3	2.97	1.015
Audio-Visual Room	12.1	18.2	51.5	18.2	2.76	.902

Chairs	12.1	12.1	48.5	27.3	2.91	.947
Ventilation	15.2	15.2	45.5	24.2	2.79	.992
Lighting	15.2	21.1	39.4	33.3	2.91	1.042
Overall Mean	2.821233 – Agree					
Valid (N)						

School Environment (Physical Facilities, Library Holdings and Educational Technology)

This part discusses the descriptive analysis for the school environment as shown in Table 3. There are ten (10) questions asked for the respondents to determine to what extent they are satisfied with the school environment specially in terms of physical facilities, library holdings and educational technology.

Based on the results, majority of the students were satisfied of the school classroom, science laboratory, computer laboratory, school library, gymnasium, faculty room, audio visual room, chairs, ventilation and also lightning.

Table 4

**Descriptive Analysis for Parents Support**

Indicators/Measurement	SD %	D %	A %	SA %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Provide guidance and advice to finish my studies.	15.2	6.1	21.2	57.6	3.21	1.111
Acknowledge good performance in my studies.	15.2	16.1	30.3	48.5	3.12	1.083
Provide allowance, expenses and extra money for my studies.	12.1	9.1	45.5	33.3	3.00	.968
Provide computer set and or laptop that are needed for my studies.	12.1	24.2	57.6	6.1	2.58	.792
Procured textbook for my subject.	9.1	24.2	54.5	21.1	2.70	.810
Overall Mean	2.921233 – Agree					
Valid (N)						

My Parents' Support (Morale, Financial and Material)

This part presents the descriptive analysis for parents support as shown in Table 4. There are five (5) questions asked for the respondents to determine to what extent they agree on parents support. Based on the result, majority of the respondents agreed their

parents provide guidance and advice to finish their studies and acknowledge good performance in their studies (statement 1 and statement 2). Parents also provide allowance for their studies, provide computer that are needed for studies as well as procured textbook as agreed by the majority of the respondents of this study.

According to Resource Conservation Theory, Hobfoll et al., (2003), pointed out that individuals will always strive to maintain and utilize resources that contribute to their successful employment and the more social psychological resources (e.g. support from parents and friends, and power) can result in a greater chance of their successful employment. As an important social network and capital resource, career social support may be highly influential in determining the success of college students' employment.

Table 5

**Descriptive Analysis for Quality Education**

Indicators/Measurement	SD %	D %	A %	SA %	Mean	Std. Deviation
The Islamic curriculum is well-organize and ready to implement to face modern challenges.	19.2	12.1	27.3	51.5	3.21	.992
The Islamic school are helpful to those people who do not have a chance to study in Madrasa.	12.1	3.0	27.3	57.6	3.30	1.015
The Islamic school ensure positive environment to all students despite of differences in tribes and culture.	9.1	6.1	30.3	54.5	3.30	.951
The Islamic education upgrade the educational standards geared to attain educational excellence.	12.1	6.1	45.5	36.4	3.06	.966
The Islamic educators in my schools are highly effective and efficient in teaching.	12.1	3.0	39.4	45.5	3.18	.983
Overall Mean	3.212133 – Agree					
Valid (N)						



Quality Education

This part presents the descriptive analysis for quality education as shown in Table 5. There are five (5) questions asked for the respondents to determine to what extent they agree on the quality education. Based on the result, in the statement 1, majority of the respondents agreed that the Islamic curriculum is well-organize and ready to implement to face modern challenges. In item 2, respondents agree also that the Islamic schools are helpful to those people who do not have a chance to study in Madrasa. Further, majority of the respondents agreed that the Islamic school ensures positive environment to all students despite differences in tribes and culture and their Islamic education upgrade the educational standards geared to attain educational excellence as can be seen in statement 3 and 4 respectively. Lastly, in statement 5, it is agreed by the respondents that Islamic educators in my school are highly effective and efficient in teaching.

The result of this study is consistent with Storen and Aamodt (2010) who stated that employability is regarded as an aspect of quality of higher education, or more precisely, the benefit and usefulness of the study programme for career and work tasks.

Table 6  
**Descriptive Analysis for Peer Influence**  
**N=30**

Indicators/Measurement	SD %	D %	A %	SA %	Mean	Std. Deviation
My peers could boost my self-esteem and nurture my confidence.	12.1	6.1	54.5	27.3	2.97	.918
My peers could help me in my school performance.	9.1	15.2	54.5	21.2	2.88	.857
My friends encouraged me to take Islamic Studies.	12.1	12.1	39.4	39.4	3.00	1.000
My friends could lead me to do good things as well.	12.1	3.0	42.4	42.4	3.15	.972
Peer influence could highly affect our behaviors.	9.1	9.1	51.5	30.3	3.03	.883
Overall Mean	3.01 – Agree					
Valid (N)						

### Peer Influence

This part discusses the descriptive analysis for peer influence as shown in Table 6. There are five (5) questions asked for the respondents to determine to what extent they agree on peer influence. Based on the result, in the statement 1 and 2, majority of the respondents agreed peers could boost students' self-esteem and nurture my confidence as well as could help students in their school performance. Moreover, in statement 3 and 4, most of the respondents agreed that friends encouraged students to take Islamic studies and could lead them to do good things as well. Lastly, in statement 5, majority of the respondents agreed that peer influence could highly affect students' behaviors.

Table 7  
**Descriptive Analysis for Community Benefits of Islamic Studies**  
**N=30**

Indicators/Measurement	SD %	D %	A %	SA %	Mean	Std. Deviation
The Islamic Studies could help discipline students.	15.2	0.0	18.2	66.7	3.36	1.084
The Islamic studies teach us to develop our religiosity to benefit us in this world and hereafter.	15.2	0.0	15.2	69.7	3.39	1.088
The Islamic studies students could be a role model in their community.	15.2	0.0	15.2	69.7	3.39	1.088
Islamic Education could deal with the overall development of the individual (e.g. spiritual, intellectual).	12.1	3.0	21.2	63.6	3.36	1.025
Overall Mean	3.378833 – Agree					
Valid (N)						

### Community Driven-Benefits of Islamic Studies

This part discusses the descriptive analysis for community benefits as shown in Table 7. There are five (5) questions asked for the respondents to determine to what extent they agree on community benefits of Islamic Studies. Based on the result, in the statement 1 and 2, majority of the respondents agreed that Islamic Studies could help discipline students and Islamic Studies teach us to develop our religiosity to benefit us in this world and hereafter. Moreover, in statement 3 and 4, most of the respondents agreed that Islamic Studies students could be a role model in their community and Islamic

education could deal with the overall development of the individual (e.g. spiritual, intellectual).

### **Summary of Major Findings**

The study found out that the perspectives of youths in taking up Islamic Studies includes the importance of students' interest to the subject or program. Students really like Islamic studies program and didn't get bored easily. It is also important factor to have a teacher that show love and patience in teaching students. School environment for instance, their classroom, and faculty office and school library among other students may become a motivation and encouragement to them to excel in their studies. Parents' guidance and advice to finish their studies provides a vital strength that every student needs in order to be motivated most of the times because students knew that their parents are much happy to see them become successful someday and are always there for them. Quality education ensures positive environment to all students despite of culture differences and it also helps student to have chance to learn about Islamic studies. To become knowledgeable, it is important to have a better and quality education that would be a help in the future license examination and employability. Further, Peer influence solicit an important role also to the students, they could influence and lead them to do good things. Peer influence becomes the mirror of the students, what company they are among with will be a factor that could define their tomorrow since their friends have a lot impact to their lives and studies. Community benefits driven of Islamic studies could help discipline students and to develop their religiosity and become a role model in their family and community to benefit us in this world and hereafter.

The purpose of Islamic education is to achieve balanced growth in total human personality through the exercise of enthusiasm, rational intellect and feelings body sensitivity. The ultimate goal of Muslim education lies in the realization of its perfect submission to God, both in person, community and all humanity.

### **Conclusion**

The study concludes that there are existing great interests among students to take up Islamic Studies courses/program. They are willing and excited to learn Islamic Studies. They are also provided assistance by the teacher and by their parents with all means. In terms of Physical facilities, quality of education and peer influence, they all satisfy and met their needs. However, even challenges have occurred among others, it is necessary to sustain and develop more Islamic students for the benefit of Muslim community.

### **Recommendations**

Guided by the findings and conclusion of this study, the following are strongly recommended:

1. The Department of Education may provide additional scholarship and allowance among the poor students that would enable them to study and fulfil their dreams.
2. The Local Government Units to may provide safety assurance among school personnel and students since there are a lot of instances that might put their safety and lives to risk. Since majority of the people goes to school, it is necessary to impose and implement safety measures by all means.
3. The parents, teachers and community, may provide full support and cooperation among students particularly in their mental health and wellness. They may provide also some motivation among them to ensure good performance in school.
4. The schools that offering Islamic Studies Program it may serve as guide to the students to be more knowledgeable in their religion and become a good individual that may sustain future Islamic Educators and benefit by others.

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