



## **Challenges and Strategies for Enhancing Islamic Education through the Hausa Language in Niger State, Nigeria**

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**Submitted: 19 April 2026**

**Accepted: 19 Juni 2026**

**Published: 22 Juni 2026**

### **Abstract**

This study examined the challenges and strategies for enhancing Islamic education through the Hausa language in Niger State, Nigeria. A descriptive survey design was employed involving 196 teachers selected from Islamic schools within the Kontagora Emirate Council. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The findings revealed that the major challenges affecting the use of Hausa language in Islamic education include the lack of standardized Hausa Islamic textbooks across schools and the poor translation of Islamic materials from Arabic into Hausa, which often leads to distortion of meaning. The study further found that the provision of digital Hausa Islamic resources, such as audio materials, videos, and mobile applications, as well as the development of standardized Hausa-language textbooks, are key strategies for improving Islamic education. The study concludes that strengthening Hausa-language educational resources and promoting standardized instructional materials can significantly enhance the effectiveness of Islamic education in Niger State. It is therefore recommended that government agencies and religious organizations collaborate to support the development and dissemination of quality Hausa-language Islamic educational materials.

**Keywords:** Hausa Language, Islamic Education, Challenges, Strategies.



## **INTRODUCTION**

Language plays a fundamental role in human communication, knowledge transmission, and cultural preservation. In educational settings, language serves not only as a medium of instruction but also as a tool for facilitating learners' understanding of concepts and values. According to Catoh and Bivan (2019), language enables individuals to communicate ideas, beliefs, emotions, and cultural experiences effectively. Similarly, Abdullahi et al. (2023) describe language as a structured system of communication that supports social and religious interactions. In the context of education, the use of learners' familiar language can significantly enhance comprehension and learning outcomes.

Hausa is one of the most widely spoken indigenous languages in Nigeria and serves as a primary means of communication among millions of people in Northern Nigeria, including Niger State. Beyond its communicative function, Hausa has become an important medium for cultural transmission and religious learning. The widespread use of Hausa among Muslim communities provides a strong foundation for its utilization in Islamic education. Previous studies have shown that the use of indigenous languages in educational settings contributes positively to students' understanding and academic achievement (Alhasan et al., 2025; Wushishi et al., 2016).

Islamic education is an educational process aimed at developing individuals' spiritual, moral, intellectual, and social capacities based on the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith. Audia and Agil (2024) define Islamic education as a continuous effort to shape individuals' character and behavior in accordance with Islamic values. Effective Islamic education requires learners to understand religious concepts accurately, making language an essential component in the teaching and learning process. The theory of

mother-tongue-based instruction suggests that learning becomes more meaningful when educational content is delivered through a language familiar to learners.

Despite the strategic role of Hausa language in Islamic education, several challenges continue to hinder its effective utilization. These include inadequate policy support, limited availability of Hausa-language instructional materials, insufficient standardization of Islamic educational resources, and the growing preference for English in formal education. Such challenges may reduce the effectiveness of Hausa as a medium for transmitting Islamic knowledge. Although previous studies have examined indigenous language education and Islamic education separately, limited empirical research has specifically investigated the challenges and strategies related to the use of Hausa language in enhancing Islamic education in Niger State, Nigeria.

This study was motivated by the need to address this research gap and to provide evidence-based recommendations for improving the use of Hausa language in Islamic education. Specifically, the study sought to: (1) examine the challenges affecting the influence of Hausa language on Islamic education in Niger State, and (2) assess strategies for improving the use of Hausa language in promoting Islamic education in the state.

#### Research Questions

1. What are the challenges affecting the influence of Hausa language on Islamic education in Niger State?
2. What strategies can be adopted to improve the use of Hausa language in promoting Islamic education in Niger State?

## **METHOD**

Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. According to Mwendwa and Gori (2019), the use of descriptive surveys refers to an approach of collecting information through asking questions and it allows selection of a representative sample of participants that will be involved in the study, and the findings of the study applied to the larger population. The target population for this study was 423 Mualim (Teachers) from 87 Islamic Schools (Madarasah) in Kontagora Emirate Council. 196 respondents were used as sample size for the study based on the recommendation of Researcher Advisors (2006) Table for selection of sample size.

A self-designed questionnaire of 14 items tagged “Problems and Prospects of Hausa language on Islamic Education Questionnaire (PHOIEQ)” was used to collect data for the study. The instrument will be structured based on the objectives and research questions of the study. A four points rating scale with a response mode of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) with numerical value of 4, 3, 2 and 1 was used for this section of the instrument. The respondents were requested to indicate by ticking (√) in the appropriate boxes, the responses applicable to the items. Content and face validity of the instrument were established through experts judgment. Three experts in related fields to the study were requested to scrutinize and offer useful suggestions on each item of the instrument, these experts checked the clarity, comprehensiveness and appropriateness of the instrument and their corrections, observations and modifications were incorporated in the final draft of the instrument. The instrument reliability index yielded 0.82 using Cronbach’s Alpha method.

Descriptive statistics of frequency counts and simple percentage were used to analyze the bio-data of the respondents while mean score and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. However, for

the purpose of this study, when the mean score of an item was higher than 2.50, the item was regarded as agreed by majority of the respondents. On the other hand, when the mean score of an item was less than 2.50, the item was regarded as disagreed by majority of the respondents.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research Question One: are the challenges to influence of Hausa language on Islamic education in Niger State?

Table 1: Opinions of Respondents on the Challenges to Influence of Hausa Language on Islamic Education in Niger State

S/N	Item Statements	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
1	Shortage of Hausa language textbooks for teaching Islamic Studies affects its influence on Islamic education.	3.28	0.78	Agreed
2	Poorly translated Hausa Islamic materials from Arabic, leading to distortion of meaning affects its influence on Islamic education.	3.35	0.80	Agreed
3	Lack of standardization of Hausa Islamic books across different schools in Niger State.	3.54	0.65	Agreed
4	Many Islamic studies teachers are not proficient enough in written Hausa to prepare lesson notes which affect its influence on Islamic education.	3.26	0.73	Agreed
5	Lack of policy explicitly supporting Hausa as a medium for Islamic education affects its influence on Islamic education.	2.79	0.72	Agreed

6	Poor monitoring and supervision of Hausa language instruction affects its influence on Islamic education.	2.84	0.62	Agreed
7	Limited access to printed or digital Hausa Islamic resources affects its influence on Islamic education.	3.00	0.61	Agreed
Grand Mean		3.15		Agreed

Table 1 shows responses of the respondents on the challenges to influence of Hausa language on Islamic education in Niger State. It revealed that all the item statements stated were all agreed upon as challenges to influence of Hausa language on Islamic education in Niger State. This was because; they all had a mean score which were higher than the instrument scale mean of 2.50. The table also shows that item fourteen, which focused on lack of standardization of Hausa Islamic books across different schools in Niger State, had highest mean score. This was followed by item thirteen which centered on poorly translated Hausa Islamic materials from Arabic, leading to distortion of meaning affects its influence on Islamic education. Item seventeen which focused on poor monitoring and supervision of Hausa language instruction affects its influence on Islamic education, had the least mean score from the item statements stated in Table 1. With the grand mean of 3.15 which was higher than the instrument scale mean of 2.50; this indicated that majority of the respondents agreed with all the item statement stated above as challenges to influence of Hausa language on Islamic education in Niger State.

Research Question Two: What are the strategies for improving the use of Hausa language to promote Islamic education in Niger State?

**Table 2: Opinions of Respondents on Strategies for Improving the Use of Hausa Language to Promote Islamic Education in Niger State**

S/N	Item Statements	$\bar{X}$	SD	Remark
8	Government and religious organizations should jointly develop standard Hausa language textbooks for Islamic education.	3.33	0.69	Agreed
9	Existing Arabic Islamic texts should be officially translated into simple and accurate Hausa for use in Islamic schools.	3.16	0.75	Agreed
10	Digital Hausa Islamic resources (audio, video, mobile apps) should be created and distributed free to Islamic schools.	3.40	0.81	Agreed
11	Hausa Islamic curriculum committee should be established at the state level to ensure standardization across all local government areas.	3.04	0.74	Agreed
12	Regular workshops and refresher courses should be organized for Malamai (Islamic teachers) on effective Hausa language teaching methods.	3.29	0.63	Agreed
13	A dedicated state budget line should be allocated for developing and distributing Hausa Islamic education materials.	3.26	0.66	Agreed
14	Community sensitization campaigns should be conducted to convince parents that learning Islam in Hausa does not reduce	3.13	0.69	Agreed

	religious authenticity.			
Grand Mean		3.23		Agreed

Table 2 shows responses of the respondents on the strategies for improving the use of Hausa language to promote Islamic education in Niger State. It revealed that all the item statements stated were all agreed upon as strategies for improving the use of Hausa language to promote Islamic education in Niger State. This was because; they all had a mean score which were higher than the instrument scale mean of 2.50. The table also shows that item twenty one, which focused on digital Hausa Islamic resources (audio, video, mobile apps) should be created and distributed free to Islamic schools, had highest mean score. This was followed by item nineteen which centered on government and religious organizations should jointly develop standard Hausa language textbooks for Islamic education. Item twenty two which focused on Hausa Islamic curriculum committee should be established at the state level to ensure standardization across all local government areas, had the least mean score from the item statements stated in Table 2. With the grand mean of 3.23 which was higher than the instrument scale mean of 2.50; this indicated that majority of the respondents agreed with all the item statement stated above as strategies for improving the use of Hausa language to promote Islamic education in Niger State.

### **Discussions**

The findings revealed that the lack of standardized Hausa Islamic textbooks and the poor translation of Islamic materials from Arabic into Hausa constitute the most significant challenges affecting the use of Hausa language in Islamic education in Niger State. This finding supports the Mother Tongue-Based Education theory, which emphasizes that instructional effectiveness depends on the availability of high-quality learning materials in

the learners' familiar language. When educational resources are inconsistent or poorly translated, learners may experience difficulties in understanding religious concepts accurately.

The findings are consistent with the studies of Olagunju (2022) and Garba and Umar (2025), who reported that inadequate indigenous-language educational resources remain a major obstacle to educational development in Northern Nigeria. However, the present study extends previous research by specifically examining how these challenges affect Islamic education in Niger State. This demonstrates that language-related barriers not only affect general education but also influence the transmission of Islamic knowledge and values.

The study further revealed that the provision of digital Hausa Islamic resources and the development of standardized Hausa-language textbooks are among the most effective strategies for enhancing Islamic education. This finding is supported by Wushishi et al. (2016), who argued that the use of Hausa language as a medium of instruction improves students' academic performance. In contemporary educational settings, digital learning resources can further increase accessibility to Islamic knowledge, particularly among younger generations who are increasingly engaged with digital technologies.

The novelty of this study lies in its empirical examination of both the challenges and improvement strategies associated with the use of Hausa language in Islamic education within Niger State. While previous studies have primarily focused on indigenous language education or Islamic education separately, this study integrates both perspectives and provides evidence-based recommendations for strengthening Islamic education through the effective utilization of Hausa language.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study investigated the challenges affecting the influence of Hausa language on Islamic education and the strategies for improving its utilization in Niger State, Nigeria. The findings revealed that the major challenges include the lack of standardized Hausa Islamic textbooks, poor translation of Islamic materials from Arabic into Hausa, limited access to Hausa-language instructional resources, and inadequate institutional support. These factors hinder the effective use of Hausa language as a medium for teaching and learning Islamic education.

The study further found that the development of standardized Hausa-language textbooks, the provision of digital Islamic learning resources, and continuous professional training for Islamic studies teachers are essential strategies for enhancing the use of Hausa language in Islamic education. Therefore, strengthening educational resources and institutional support for Hausa language can contribute significantly to improving the quality and effectiveness of Islamic education in Niger State..

## **Recommendations**

In line with the research findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were made:

1. Niger State Government and religious organizations in the state should jointly develop standard Hausa language textbooks for teaching and learning of teaching and learning of Islamic education.
2. Niger State Government in collaboration with Islamic Non-Governmental Organizations and philanthropists should create and distribute free digital Hausa Islamic resources (audio, video, mobile apps) to Islamic schools in the state.

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