

# The Integration Of Traditional Islamic Education Schools With The Western Education Schools Model: A Case Study Of Azare Tsangaya Model Boarding Primary School

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*Abstract: The Azare Tsangaya Model Boarding Primary school was built by the Federal Government of Nigeria and commissioned on 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 2013. It aims at the integration of the traditional system of Qur'anic schools to the western model system of education. This study examined this school with a view to assess the success of the integration programme. Therefore, the researcher formulated an open minded questionnaire for both the traditional and model Tsangaya teachers to enable him gather the information required and a percentage method is used for the analysis. Twenty teachers drawn from both the Azare Tsangaya Model Boarding Primary School and other Qur'anic Schools in Azare town were used as sample for data collection. As of the time of this research work, the Azare Tsangaya Model School has admitted 200 students for two sessions and the school has infrastructures, like Hostels, Dining Hall, Clinic, Computer room, Staffroom, and many others. Furthermore, the school has ten teachers deployed from Katagum Local Education Authority and Directorate of Tsangaya Schools Bauchi. On the other hand, the school is facing the problems of funding, electric power supply, water supply and inadequacy of food. Finally, the result of the finding shows that most of the teachers are aware of the integration process and the Government has made various efforts to integrate the two systems. It was concluded that, the current integration drive should be seen as genuine and purposeful educational endeavor that must not only be supported, but should be incorporated within the mainstreams of our educational policies.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

The issue of 'Almajiri' has remained worrisome in the minds of the elites of northern Nigeria; this is because the practice has been a source of embarrassment to the region. In Hausa land, the term "Almajiri" could take any of the following two forms; any person irrespective of gender, who begs for assistance on the street or roams about from house to house in search of alms or food as a result of some deformity or disability or children between about the age of seven and fifteen who attend informal religious schools who equally roam about with the purpose of getting assistance or alms; or even a child who engages in some form of labour to earn a living.

The concept of 'Almajiri' came as a result of Prophet Muhammad's migration from Makkah to Madinah. According

to Muhammad (2010) the concept of 'Almajiri' education in Nigeria started in the olden days when the quest to acquire knowledge was prevalent, especially the Qur'anic knowledge by the Muslims. There were no laid-down procedures or channels to adopt in obtaining such, except the unconditional way of handing over wards to a supposedly teacher, known as Malam. It is this Malam that now enlist the children and the teaching of religious scriptures and way of life are introduced into the young pupils.

As part of the integration of the informal 'Almajiri' schools with the western Model, the Federal Government of Nigeria embarked on the construction of Modern Tsangaya schools all over Northern Nigeria. Three of such schools have been built in Bauchi State located at Kangere, Sade and Azare. This research examines the integration project using the Azare 'Tsangaya' Model Boarding Primary School as a case study.

## II. SPREAD OF ISLAM TO WEST AFRICA

Historians maintain that Islam had been introduced in Africa as early as the year 26 of the Islamic calendar "Hijrah" when caliph Uthman ordered Abdullah ibn Sa'ad to go on an expedition to Egypt in order to spread Islam. It is also on record that Islam came into West Africa through the activities of Arab traders who penetrated into the continent. Evidently, Islam reached the Savannah region of west Africa in the eight century, (Fafunwa, 2001). It first appeared in Kanem Bornu during the reign of Mai Humme Jilme who ruled the kingdom between the years 1085-1097.

Later it was brought into the heart of Hausa land in the early fourteenth century by traders and scholars who reached Kano during the reign of sarki Ali Yaji who ruled Kano between 1385-1449.

The introduction of Islam into west Africa and later into Nigeria marked the beginning of Qur'anic education in the area. This is based on the Islamic principle on the importance of seeking knowledge, which is an integral part of Islamic culture. This was clearly stated in the Holy Qur'an when the first revelation came and Angel Gabriel ordered the holy Prophet (S.A.W) to read. Initially, Islamic Education is centred on the study of the Holy Qur'an, which is the basis of Islam as a religion. Thus, Muslims of all ages; children, youth and adults, male and female were indiscriminately exposed to the study of the Holy Qur'an.

Qur'anic schools sprang up all over the vast area of Northern Nigeria, from Bornu in the extreme eastern part to Sokoto in the far west, from Hadejia in the far North down to Ilorin in the Southern border. It is worthwhile to mention that the study of the Holy Qur'an is not the only aspect of Islamic Education. It is considered the basic when the religion is later introduced in foreign nations outside Arabia that it became mandatory upon every Muslim male and female to learn to recite the Holy Qur'an especially in their daily prayers. Others areas of studies in different aspects of Islamic Education including Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), Hadith, Islamic law and Tafsir were later introduced.

However, it is very important to note that the study of the Holy Qur'an is the bases for Islamic Education upon which all other Islamic Education is built. It is also essential to mention the fact that the Holy Qur'an contains all the teachings of Islam such as the Islamic law. Jurisprudence, exegesis, the concept of worship between man and his creator, and the concept of inter personal relationship between man and his fellow man etc.

Although, the Western Model of Education has spread worldwide, yet traditional Islamic Education continued to have great influence among the Muslims in Africa. In fact the study of the Qur'an has become an essential part of the Muslims life, both male and female.

It is also important to ask the question; why so many children attend Qur'anic school, even though Modern Western Education is available. Perhaps it is the divine injunction which urged the Muslims to go in search of knowledge without restriction that may attribute to the zeal and the degree of seriousness involve in it.

The system is receiving an overwhelming popularity in Africa and that its general aims and objectives of Qur'anic

education may be the same throughout the Islamic World, yet the way the schools are organized and how they operate differ significantly from place to place.

## III. ISLAMIC EDUCATION SYSTEM IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

Qur'anic schools in Northern Nigeria operate for five (5) days from Saturday to Wednesday. Thursday and Fridays are considered free days for the students to do other things. Generally there are four sessions viz; early morning session which commences around 5:30am after the early Morning Prayer and continued till 7:00am. The second session begins around 9:00am to 12:00 midday. The third session normally begins after Zuhr prayer around 2:30pm and continues until 3:00pm when the school backs for Asr prayer. After the short break, the third session continues until 6:00pm. The fourth and the last session begins after the late evening prayer (Isha) around 8:00pm and continues until 10:00pm when the school finally close for the day.

It is very important to note that a study in traditional Qur'anic school is fulltime and that it is for at least ten hours in a day.

As far as the system is concern, it is strictly informal in nature. Students can enroll at any time of the year, unlike in formal school system where there is a specific time for enrolment. However, a kind of formality exists in the level of studies where students have to pass through two different stages on the basis of enrolment. First, are the very young children and new comers of all ages and sexes. These categories of students are exposed to the basic level of acquiring skills in reading and writing of Arabic alphabets before proceeding to the next level. The second category is presumably the second level. Here the students are exposed to the skill of reading and memorization of the Qur'anic chapters.

For the purpose of specialization and seniority, a kind of hierarchy exists in the system. The arrangement is done in a form of titles to portray scholars of different qualification, experience and ability in the system. The topmost position in Qur'anic Education which is equivalent to a University Professor is "GANGARAM" a scholar address with this title is a memorizer of the Holy Qur'an not only that, he also is equally good in other sectors of Islamic education as Islamic law, Islamic jurisprudence, Hadith, Qur'anic exegesis etc. in fact such a scholar is addressed as "MU TAFANNINUM" in Arabic which simple meant all round.

Next to 'Gangaram' is 'Gwani'. When an Islamic scholar is addressed with this title is simply meant that the person is not only a memorizer of the Holy Qur'an but also of eminence scholarship and knowledge of the whole script and also its explanation 'Tafsir' (exegesis). The person is also capable of writing down the text off head.

ALARAMMA, a person addressed with this title is regarded to have memorized the whole of the holy Qur'an.

'GARDI' a person addressed with this title is regarded as matured enough to take care of himself and can either be under an 'Alaramma' or on his own and he can be with 'Kolo' or not, he can be a memorizer of whole Qur'an or not.

'TITIBIRI' a person address with this title is a person within the age of 16 to 21, which he cannot be given the right of his own and he did not memorize the whole Qur'an.

'Kolo' a new admitted 'Almajiri' is addressed with this title and he must be under the supervision/care of an 'Alamma' or 'Gwani'.

The aforementioned names are the hierarchy and titles of the Islamic Education System in Northern Nigeria.

#### IV. INTEGRATION OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION WITH WESTERN EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

During pre-independence period, Muslim parents responded to the Christian evangelical nature of early public education process that interfered with the religious upbringing of their children. Concerned Muslim scholars, organizations and groups had initiated several integration projects by establishing their own separate religious and secular subject schools (Fafonwa, 1990) (Junaid, Dukku Umar, 2005).

Notable among these past attempts were the efforts of the Ansaruddeen Society of Nigeria in 1920's, the Jama'atul Nasril Islam and those of Malam Aminu Kano under the auspice of NEPU in 1950's. these desperate groups and individual attempts, were later galvanized by the Colonial Government in its responses to growing agitation by Muslim group which culminated into the establishment of post-elementary integrated school (Dahiru, 2011).

The first official attempt to put a halt on the practice of migrant Qur'anic Schooling system was started by Kano native authority as far back as 1959, when it warned about the street begging in the name of Islamic School. Qur'anic teachers were warned against taking their pupils to other towns without the approval of the village head or district head of targeted town (Abba, 1983).

Khalid (2002) lamented that since then (1959), it was in 1980 that States Governments in the Northern part of Nigeria began to express their concern about 'Almajiri' phenomenon, starting with clearing beggars from the street particularly the Kano State Government enacted an edict, tagged the Qur'anic School Registration in 1980 (after the June 1980 Mai 'Tatsine' crisis) and subsequently amended in 1988 to read; Qur'anic Schools Registration and Movement'.

Khalid (2002) further explained that, Sokoto State Government signed into law an edit regulating the movement of 'Almajiri' entitled "The Control of Juvenile Accompanying Qur'anic Malam's (Scholars) Adoptive Rules" and the State Government appointed a committee on control of migrants in 1986 in order to enable the Government to determine the needs of these children, provide such needs, to settle the children in their place of domicile so that they could under take studies in both Islamic and Western Education in their home and villages.

There are other similar efforts made to establish an integrated primary school in Zaria, in 1959, as the 'Nizamiyya' Islamic Primary School was established in 1960's (Umar, 2003).

Bunza (2009) and Dahiru (2011) stated that several Islamic Organizations started establishing Model Primary Schools from 1980's. Prominent among them were the Islamic

Education Trust (IET) Minna and Sokoto. The Islamic Trust of Nigeria, (ITN) Zaria. The Islamic Foundation, Kano. The Hudaibiyah Foundation, Kano. FOMWAN JIBWIS, and Da'awah Group of Nigeria, Kano.

The Federal Government intervention into the issue of Qur'anic school was first announced in March, 1977 and maintained this position ever since then, (Mahuta, 2009).

According to Sifawa, (2006) this is the reason why in September 1999, Universal Basic and Compulsory Primary Education Scheme (UBE) was launched with the aim of achieving the total enrolment of school age children into schools.

#### V. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S TSANGAYA SCHOOLS

The Federal Government kicked off the 'Almajiri' educational system in various parts of Nigeria, but official figures and available facts show a yawning gap in the level of implementation and generation of the schools.

The regulator of the sector, the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) declared that the new education concept, which integrates Qur'anic and Western Models of Education had successfully taken off in no fewer than 22 states of the Federation (leadership Newspaper 9<sup>th</sup> – Feb – 2014).

It was learnt that some of the schools listed under the scheme by UBEC were Arabic or Islamic Schools, which preceded the Almajiri schools. Although some of the schools have been completed, they were yet to begin full academic activities, leading to the massive infrastructure put in place lying idle.

According to Leadership Sunday (9<sup>th</sup> – Feb, - 2014) UBEC had classified the states into two categories those with functioning Almajiri schools and others where the projects are located but yet to begin academic activities. A breakdown of the details obtained from the UBEC, showed that academic activities have commenced in three Almajiri School's in Adamawa State, and three in Bauchi State. Edo, Ekiti, Gombe, Kebbi, Lagos and Taraba State each have one functional school, while Niger State has two, Jigawa State four, Kaduna five, Katsina three, Kano six, Kogi four, Kwara four, Kaduna five, Katsina three, Kano six, Kogi four, Kwara four, Sokoto and Taraba one, Kano therefore has the highest number of functional 'Almajiri' schools in the Country.

It was discovered that the Federal Government had completed the building of Tsangaya Model Boarding Primary School in Katsina, but it was yet to commence full operations (leadership Sunday 9-2-214).

The Federal Government through the Education Trust Fund built the 'Almajiri' Schools in Katsina, Batsari, Dutsinna and Funtua Local Government Areas of the State, which are managed by the Katsina State Universal Basic Education Board.

Although Katsina State has 5,000 'Almajirai' in Qur'anic Schools, only a few operate the Western and Islamic Education System. The Almajiri School in Dutsinna town, the headquarters of Dutsinna Local Government area has been closed after its completion.

In Kebbi State, the project has not taken off, but two schools in Birnin Kebbi, the state capital and another in Argungu Local Government have been completed. The schools with adequate infrastructure have remained closed since their completion two years ago and have become hiding places for criminals and reptiles. An official of the Kebbi state Universal basic Education Board said the schools cost the Federal Government through the ETF ₦ 164m. The Chairman of the Board, Alh. Haruna Dan Katsina Aliero, confirmed that the schools had been completed and were awaiting take off. In Ogun State, the Alaslatu College of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Oke – Efon, Abeokuta has been designated as the ‘Almajiri’ Model School. The second was established in 1967 by an Islamic Scholar, the Late Alhaji Ahmadu Rufa’i Akorode.

The situation is the same in Ekiti State were the Markaz Bn Jinaid, which has been in existence since February 2010, has been converted to an Almajiri School. According to its coordinator, Alh. Fojembola Doud Abubakar, the school was moved to its present site in Esun Ekiti in Ikole Local Government Area.

One of the ‘Almajiri’ schools in Kaduna State established in 2010 is named as the Umaru Musa Yar Adu’a Almajiri Bilingual Model Boarding Primary School and located on the outskirts of Zaria. It has 186 pupils and 13 teachers. The headmaster, Mallam Maisaratu Jibril, disclosed that the school gets its pupils from the State Government through the Education Secretaries at the Local Government Councils. Statistics from UBEC shows that the state has five Almajiri schools.

The schools in Borno State are yet to start full operation, as the state Government and the SUBEC said the Tsangaya schools operate under three (3) Models in the State. We have model one, which has to do with existing ‘Tsangaya’ that have accepted to be integrated, and these include the one in Mashimari, Maiduguri, which is called Goni Idris Tsangaya; and another one in Shehuri-north called Goni Suleman Tsangaya, and Tsangaya – Kura in Damboa Local Government, each of the Tsangaya are said to have more than 200 pupils. Goni Usman said his school has 16 teachers who run two shifts-morning and afternoon. He said those that are supposed to be Boarding Session are to continue reading till 9:30pm, but the school is yet to be open for us to run the boarding session for the 50 pupils.

The Federal Government ‘Almajiri’ Model School in Taraba State is located in Mutum Biyu in Gasso Local Government Area of the state.

In Gombe State, the three Almajiri schools are yet to commence academic activities. Though the schools building have been completed, they are yet to be put into use due to lack of basic equipment. The three ‘Tsangaya’ schools are located in Kwanki, Bajoga and Kwadan towns of the state. (Leadership Sunday 9/2/14).

In Plateau State, Leadership Sunday 9/2/14 could not find any ‘Almajiri’ school that was established by the Federal Government. However, a visit round the state capital showed that only informal Qur’anic schools could be seen in and around Jos, the state capital.

Zamfara State, (according to Leadership Sunday 9/2/14) which is said to have one of the highest population of

‘Almajiri’, is evidently enjoying the educational project, as the state has 4,331 students in the school, according to a 2012 report, with teaching staff members numbering over a hundred. According to the desk officer at the state UBEB, Malam Lawali Balarabe Gurbi, a total of seven ‘Tsangaya’ schools are present in the state and four of them are fully completed.

He added that the Federal Government has also supplied some computers, power generating sets, and some technical and vocational facilities.

The ‘Almajiri’ schools in Bauchi State were located in Azare, Sade, and Buzaye towns. They are to accommodate 100 pupils far session only.

Conclusively, according to Leadership Sunday Newspaper, the Federal Government effort to empower the children in the northern region through the ‘Almajiri’ programme that aims to take them off the street in becoming a mirage.

## VI. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The research examines the integration of traditional Islamic Education with the western education model; a case study of Azare Model Boarding Primary School built by the Federal Government of Nigeria and commissioned on 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 2013 with a view to find out the history of the establishment of the school, it’s infrastructure, teaching staff, students, feedings and problems. Simple percentage and frequency distribution tables were used in analyzing and discussing the results of the findings.

Based on the data collected from twenty teachers; made up of ten (10) from the traditional Qur’anic school teachers and ten (10) from the ‘Tsangaya’ Model Boarding Primary School in Azare town, the following information was obtained and hereby presented according to the research questions formulated for the study.

### RESEARCH QUESTION ONE: WHAT IS ISLAMIC EDUCATION AND HOW DID THE “ALMAJIRI” SYSTEM EVOLVE IN NORTHERN NIGERIA?

The issue of ‘Almajiri’ has remained worrisome in the minds of the elites of Northern Nigeria, this is because the practice has been a source of embarrassment to the region. The word ‘Almajiri’ is derived from the Arabic word “Almuhajir”, meaning an emigrant. It usually refers to a person who migrates from the luxury of his home to other places or to be a popular teacher in the quest for Islamic knowledge. It is hinged on the Islamic concept of migration which is widely practiced especially when acquisition of knowledge at home is either inconvenient or insufficient.

Imam Shafi’i is the greatest proponent of migration or seeking knowledge which he also extended even to business and a number of things. He likened it to a precious stone which he said is nothing unless it is mined and transported away from it soil. He summarized everything in two verses:

*“Emigrate from your home in quest of excellence, and travel, for in travel there are five benefits: relief from sorrow*



and earning a livelihood, then knowledge, good manners and friendship with the famous”.

Shafi’i himself was born in Gaza. He travelled almost the entire Middle East seeking for knowledge until he finally settled in Egypt. Usman Danfodio, who founded the Sokoto caliphate in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (A.D) travelled to Niger to learn from Sheik Jibril. Even nowadays the Islamic scholars in Zaria city still are receiving students from distant places like Mali, Cameroun, Chad, Central Africa, etc for learning.

During the pre-colonial era, the ‘Almajiri’ education system, originally called the “Tsangaya” was established under the Kanem-Borno Empire, one of the oldest ruling empires in the world extending from the frontiers of Northern Nigeria across the Chadian region up to the borders of Libya. It was established as an organized and comprehensive system of education for learning Islamic principles, values, jurisprudence and theology. It was replica of Islamic learning centres in many Muslim countries such as the ‘Madrasah’ in Paskistan, Malaysia, Egypt and Indonesia etc.

The system was funded by the state treasury and the state ‘Zakka’ funds, and was under the control of the emirs of the traditional government system that existed before the coming of the British. Since Islam encourages charity to a wayfarer and to a student of learning, the community as well readily supported these ‘Almajiri’ most of whom came from faraway places to enroll in the ‘Tsangaya’ schools. In return, the ‘Almajiris’ offered services such as laundry, cobbling, gardening, weaving, sewing e.t.c as charity to the community that contributed to their wellbeing; hence they gave the society what the society gave to them.

The ‘Almajiri’ system, though not funded was not over dependent on the state. The students were at liberty to acquire a vocational and occupational skill in between their Islamic lessons and so were involved in farming, fishing, well construction, masonry, production, trade, tailoring, small businesses etc. Many of them were the farmers of the northern Nigerian cotton and groundnut pyramids. They formed the majority of the traders in the commercial city of Kano. They were the leather tanners and leather shoe and bags makers in the old Sokoto Empire. The cap weavers and Tailors in Zaria city were said to be ‘Almajiri’. Thus they formed the largest percentage of the community workforce and made significant contribution to the economy of the society before the introduction to the economy of the society before the introduction of white collar jobs. After colonialization, they were recruited by the British as columbite and tin miners Jos city which was then under Bauchi province.

The system also produced the judges, clerks, teachers etc. and laid an elaborate system of administration in Northern Nigeria. They provided the colonial administration with the needed staff. The first set of colonial staff in Northern Nigeria was provided by the ‘Almajiri’ school and this went on for year. In fact, the ‘Almajiri’ system was a civilizing agent second to note, before they were gradually replaced, phased out & indeed abandoned.

‘Almajiri’ teachers and their pupils also freely provided their community with Islamic Education, in addition to the development of ‘Ajami’ i.e. adding and writing in Arabic alphabets. Prof. Fafunwa mentions that there were 6000 ‘Almajiri’ schools in Northern Nigeria through which writing

came to the North first before any other region. Based on this system, which is founded upon the teachings of Qur’an and Hadith, the then Northern Nigeria was largely educated with a complete way of life, governance, customs, traditional craft, trade and even the mode of dressing. The chronicles of the travellers said that the northern part of the territory was well organized, people were in walled cities, were literate and devout, while the southern part was characterized by wars, savagery, superstitious, butchery, akin to Conrad’s observations in ‘Heart of Darkness’. (fafunwa, 1990).

From the above assertion, one can understand that the ‘Almajiri’ system of education practiced in the Northern part of Nigeria has its basis in Islam and it contributed to the development of the region religiously, socially, economically and politically.

**RESEARCH QUESTION TWO: WHAT EFFORTS HAS THE GOVERNMENT DONE TOWARD INTEGRATING TRADITIONAL ISLAMIC EDUCATION SYSTEM WITH THAT OF WESTERN EDUCATION MODEL?**

The data collected to answer the above research question are presented below:

Responses	Traditional Qur’ani School Teachers		Azare ‘Tsangaya’ Model Boarding Primary School	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
YES	8	80	8	80
NO	2	20	2	20

Table 1: Result of responses on government offering any assistance to support Qur’anic Schools

From the above table 1, the response on whether or not the government is offering assistance to support Qur’anic schools shows that 80% of teachers among those teaching in modern and traditional Tsangaya schools are aware of the support that government offers, but 20% are not aware. And among the areas of assistance outlined by the respondents are:

- ✓ Provision of reading materials,
- ✓ Provision of accommodation
- ✓ Provision of food.
- ✓ Provision of teaching staff
- ✓ Provision of allowances.

Responses	Traditional Qur’ani School Teachers		Azare ‘Tsangaya’ Model Boarding Primary School	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
10	10	100	8	80
NO	0	0	2	20

Table 2: Result of responses on attempts to integrate Qur’anic schools with the formal education system

The respondents were asked if they were aware of attempts to integrate Qur’anic school with the formal education system and the result of the respondents are as given in table 2 above. Table 2 above, shows that 100% of the respondents from traditional Qur’anic schools are aware of the attempts made by the Government to integrate Qur’anic Schools with the western models. Similarly, 80 percent of the respondents from the Azare model Boarding Primary School confirmed being aware of the Government effort.

Thus, those who were aware identify some of the steps taken by Government in that direction which included:-

- ✓ The federal government of Nigeria has developed a new curriculum for the Tsangaya schools which covers both Islamic and Western subject.
- ✓ It provides infrastructures such as classrooms, toilet and staff room in few selected Qur'anic schools.
- ✓ The Government approved the deployment of staff from local education Authority to those schools.
- ✓ The government also approved the payment of the sum of five thousand Naira (N5,000) monthly to few selected Traditional Qur'anic school Teachers.

On the other hand, those that were not aware, they opined that the Government was not serious on the programme.

The results obtained from the data presented above shows that 80% of both the traditional Qur'anic schools teachers and Western model school teachers are aware of the assistance being offered by the Government in supporting Qur'anic schools but only 20% are not aware.

Based on the data presented on tables 1 and 2 above, one can conclude that various efforts were made by government toward integrating Islamic schools with the formal education system. Furthermore, it is obviously clear that majority of teachers in the Traditional Qur'anic schools were aware of these efforts. Many of them benefited in one way or the other. Classrooms and toilets were built in some of these Qur'anic schools while selected head teachers were being paid an allowance of five thousand Naira (N5,000) monthly.

**RESEARCH QUESTION THREE:- SINCE INAUGURATION ON 3<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER 2013, OF THE AZARE TSANGAYA MODEL BOARDING PRIMARY SCHOOL, HOW HAS IT BEEN OPERATING?**

Three (3) years after the Federal government kicked off the 'Almajiri' educational system in various parts of Nigeria, official figures and available facts showed a yawning gap in the level of implementation and operation of the schools.

The discussion here will only concentrate on the Azare Model Boarding Primary School, built in Azare, Katagum Local Government Area in Bauchi State.

Photo 1 below shows the main Entrance Gate of the School while Photo 2 shows a sign board close to the School and part of the wall round the school. The construction of the school and provision of other materials were funded by the Tertiary Education Trust Fund of the Federal Government of Nigeria. These Photographs were personally snapped by the researcher on 2<sup>nd</sup>/July/2015.

According to the school administrator (Headmaster) Malam Haruna Baffariya, the school was commissioned on 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 2013 by his Excellency, vice president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria Arch. Namadi Sambo.

The Headmaster disclosed that the school gets its pupils from the State Government through the Education Secretaries of the Local Government Education Authorities, adding that the school was mainly for male, while admission and learning are free of charge. He also added that the Federal Government only constructed the building, while the staff members and general operations are the responsibility of the State Government. He also disclosed that the school is running in two shifts morning and afternoon. The school has an enrolment of two hundred (200) pupils and ten (10) teachers.

The following table summarizes the infrastructure in the School.

FACILITY	NUMBER	PHOTOGRAPH
Entrance	1	I
Sign Board	1	II
Dining hall	1	III
Class in session	-	IV
Wall fence	1	V
Transformer	1	VI
Hostels	4	VII
Night recitation hall	1	VIII
Library	1	IX
Computer room	1	X
Classrooms	16	XI
Front verandah	-	XII
Class in session	-	XIII
Classes building	-	XIV

Table 3: Summary of infrastructure in the Azare Tsangaya Model Boarding Primary School

The school runs the western education system from Monday – Friday between 8:00am – 12:00pm (noon) while the Qur'anic education system operates from Saturday-Wednesday at 5:30-7:30am and from 2:00pm-4:00pm.

The school admitted only one hundred (100) students during the 1<sup>st</sup> Year of operation and another one hundred (100) students were admitted during the 2014/2015 session, thus, having a total enrolment of two hundred (200) pupils. The School has ten (10) teachers, six (6) were transferred from Katagum Local Education Authority as Model teachers while the other four (4) were posted from the Office of the Director Tsangaya Foundation Bauchi, Bauchi State.

The school offers subjects such as Qur'an, Arabic, Science, Computer Studies, English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Health Education and Vocational Studies.

Considering the fact that only three (3) of such schools were built in Bauchi State which has a population of over 4 million peoples and the other two are in the same conditions as that of Azare, one can see that there is much to be desired in the implementation of this laudable Government programme. The situation is the same all over the country as desired in the literature review.

From the above discussion, one can conclude that the claim by the Federal Government that it has built 'Almajiri' schools across Northern states in the country with the aim of providing integrated education that would comprise basic western education alongside Islamic Education as a means of reducing the level of illiteracy in the region is a mere political campaign issue.

**RESEARCH QUESTION FOUR: WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS HINDERING THE OPERATIONS OF THE AZARE MODEL TSANGAYA SCHOOL AND THE INTEGRATION OF THE TWO EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**

The integration of 'Almajiri' education could not have come and go like that, but hence there must be some problems and prospects encountered by the school. Here are among others, the problems encountered in the integration process.

One of the major problems encountered or faced by the students is the difficulties in the understanding of English language which is the general language of communication in the classroom. Another problem is the inadequacy in food given to the students where by the food given to the students is not enough most especially during breakfast, sometimes they are given only one "Akara" and a cup of tea. Moreover, the school has neither generator nor power supply from public power supply. The school has no standard kitchen but rather a temporary one made with zinc, even the toilets are not connected to any water supply. The clinic is there built but without any medical personnel and it is without dugs. Funds is another problem facing the school.

The main problems hindering the Azare Tsangaya Model Boarding Primary School can thus be summarized as follows:

- ✓ Lack of awareness.
- ✓ Difficulties in understanding English.
- ✓ Inadequacy of food.
- ✓ Lack of electric power supply.
- ✓ Lack of water supply.
- ✓ Poor funding.

## VII. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULT

From the findings, 100% of the respondents are teachers in both traditional and western Model Qur'anic schools.

The respondents unanimously agreed that "Tsangaya" school refers to a traditional method of acquiring and memorizing the glorious Qur'an in Hausa land where boys at their tender ages are sent out by their parents or guardian to other villages, towns or cities for Qur'anic Education under a knowledgeable Islamic scholar called Malam. They also opined that Traditional Tsangaya School has a long history of existence in Nigeria. It started in the Northern parts of the country, long before the advent of western education. It operated through the Qur'anic schools, whose main objective was to familiarize pupils with the tenets of the Qur'an and probably become Islamic scholars. The Qur'an has been the core-curriculum of this system of education since its inception because it plays a central role in the life of a Muslim spiritually, politically, economically and otherwise.

Findings show that 80% of respondents agreed that government is offering assistance to support Qur'anic schools by:

- ✓ Providing reading and writing materials to the students e.g. textbooks, biro/pencil.
- ✓ Providing accommodation like hostels and bathroom.
- ✓ Providing three meals to the students daily in the Azare Tsangaya Model Boarding Primary School even though not sufficient enough.
- ✓ Allowances are paid even to those who are teaching in the traditional Qur'anic schools. The government is giving some stated amount every month though not sufficient.

It was also found that 100% of the teachers teaching in traditional Qur'anic schools are aware of the attempts made by the government to integrate Qur'anic school to western Model system of education. While 80% of those teaching in the western model Tsangaya school are aware of the attempts.

From the above one can understand that there is awareness on attempts to integrate the Traditional Qur'anic School with the Western Model. However, the objectives and procedure of the programme is unknown, the objectives and procedure of the programme is unknown to them.

Findings from research question three, shows that the Azare 'Tsangaya' Model Boarding Primary School was built by the Federal Government and commissioned on 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 2013 by his Excellency the Vice President of Nigeria Arch. Namadi Sambo. It was opened with ten teachers, six (6) were transferred from Katagum Local Education Authority and four (4) from the office of the Director 'Tsangaya' schools Bauchi state. The school was started with 100 students in year one and another 100 students in year two, therefore, the school has 200 students now. The school is situated along Maiduguri Road about five kilometers from Azare Town.

The findings also show that the students are facing some problems like lack of enough water, power supply, toilets and medication.

The findings from the research also indicate that the major problems of the students are:-

- ✓ *Difficulties in Understanding English Language:* One of the major problems faced by the students of the western model Qur'anic school in Azare town is the difficulties in the understanding of English which is general language of communication in the classroom.
- ✓ *Inadequacy of Food:* Another notable problem is the inadequacy in food given to the students, where by the food given to the students is not enough most especially during breakfast, a times they are given only one "Akara" and a cup of tea.
- ✓ One very striking problem is how to synchronize the Qur'anic studies with the modern learning; it is a challenge in itself. Moreover, these Almajiri are brought from the grassroots, they never had formal education, how can you use modern tools and technologies to impart knowledge on this category of students. However, the major problems the school is facing include electricity and water, the school has neither generator nor connected to the public power supply while the clinic is there built but without medical personnel and provision for any medicine.
- ✓ *Lack of Accurate Awareness:* Whatever the case may be, one fact that contributes to the problems is lack of enlightenment, sensitization, advocacy and mobilization of all stakeholders. Since the reform/intervention programme is a change project and process, the significance of awareness and enlightenment cannot be over emphasized. This is very central to the success of the programme. The most important stakeholders are the traditional Qur'anic teachers (Alarammomi) and the parents, or the overall Muslim community. While the 'Alarammomi' (Qur'anic scholars) must be educated, enlightened and conscientized about the necessary or those changes, the entire Muslim community must be sensitized and mobilize to stand up to its responsibility of taking charge of supporting/participating in this process of change.



## VIII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This research is an attempt to investigate the integration project of informal Islamic Tsangaya Schools to modern Western Schools using the Azare Model Boarding Primary School in Katagum Local Government Area of Bauchi state as a case study.

This chapter contained a summary of findings, conclusions drawn based on the findings and recommendations offered towards the successful implementation of the integration of traditional Islamic Schools with the western model.

## IX. CONCLUSION

From the findings of the study, the following major conclusions can be made.

- ✓ From the data presented on tables I, II and III of chapter IV, one can understand that Government has made various efforts towards the integration of the traditional Qur'anic Schools with the formal system of education in Azare Town. One can also understand that most of the tradition Qur'anic teachers were aware of these attempts in which among benefiting from the monthly allowance of five thousand naira (N5,000.00) given by the state Government. Lastly, hostel, toilets and classrooms are among other that were built in Azare model Boarding Primary School.
- ✓ The claim by the Federal Government that it has built 'Almajiri' school at Azare with the aim of integrating the former system of education to the modern system can be considered as mere political campaign issue. The school is there built, and students are there enrolled, but there, so many problems that surrounded the programme for one reason or the other e.g difficulties in understanding English language, inadequacy of food, lack of awareness etc. just three schools in Bauchi State or one School in a senatorial district that has nine local government is not adequate to justify the claim by the Federal Government on Almajiri Schools.
- ✓ According to the Data obtained from chapter 4, it is clear that the Federal Government of Nigeria has made its efforts in building the Azare model Boarding Primary School, the infrastructures, teaching staffs, curriculum are there in the school, 200 students are there enrolled for 2014/13 and 2014/15 academic sessions.
- ✓ Based on the findings gathered, the Azare Model Boarding Primary School is facing the problems of lack of awareness from the community, lack of electric power supply from the public supply nor a generating power equipment. Funding is another problem facing the running of the school.

## X. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study and the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are hereby offered for the success of the integrati9on process.

- ✓ The current integration drive should be seen as a genuine and purposeful educational endeavor that must not only be supported, but should be incorporated within the mainstreams of our educational policies. The integration drive has the potency and promise of providing the kind of balanced a yearned for, and cherished by our community. Hence, the federal, state and Local Governments must give adequate attention to the programme and not to be used as a mere campaign issue to gain votes
- ✓ A baselines study should be conducted to determine the location, size, staff strengths, facilities and problems of the Qur'anic schools that are appropriate enough to be involved in the integration project.
- ✓ The Bauchi State Government should support and promote the already existing integrated schools, at Azare, Sade and Buzaye in terms of infrastructural development, staff recruitment training and development and other means possible.
- ✓ For the success of the implementation of the project, Bauchi State Government should initiate special teacher training and production programme. This should cover the two dimensions of quality and quantity. As for the former, it is necessary to have teachers that have an integrated training, to make them competent in the new dispensation. The latter case (quantity) is obvious because, the tendency for an exploded enrolment in the event of the flourishing of the programme cannot be ruled out.
- ✓ Massive and elaborate public enlightenment is required in order to sensitize and convince the general public as well as the proprietors and teachers of the Qur'anic on the importance of the introduction of modern discipline in the Qur'anic schools. Hausa films and radio programmes can be sponsored for this purpose.
- ✓ Proprietors and teachers of the Qur'anic schools need to be trained on basic teaching methods, administrative skills, school management and child management.
- ✓ Routine supervision and inspection is required to ensure the success of the integration project.
- ✓ Vocational education that provides skills related to occupations like carpentry, welding, farming etc. should be introduced for adolescents and adults attending the Qur'anic schools.

It is hoped that the implementation of these recommendations can help towards the integration of the traditional Islamic Schools with the Western System of education.

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