

The Role And Impact Of Pre-Colonial Education On The People Of Hausaland Prior To 1903 A.D.

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ABSTRACT: This study shows that prior to 1903 A.D. pre-colonial education was one of the priorities of the Pre-Colonial Nigerian Society, it was meant for moral inculcation, to make people of that age be able to form or influence a decision, differentiate the good and the bad as well as to guide members of the society to conform to societal values, norms and interests. It was consequent upon the conformity, implementation adoption and application into practice of such education found in operation for the avoidance of moral decadence many people were made morally sound. It is against this background our study justifies that the validity, relevance and impact of this education to the political, economic, social and traditional religious beliefs of the people of that ages, as an essential ingredient of life that cannot be left unstudied. The realization of its importance to life had made the implementation, adoption and practice of such education something unavoidable particularly in Hausaland, Yorobaland and Igboland respectively. The study has in the long run looked at the constructive efforts of the 19th century Sokoto Jihad, (Reformation), its contribution in the rapid spread and promoting intellectual activities and the establishment of centres of learning, and has also pointed out low-level of literacy, non-chelent attitude of the then existing traditional authorities, inappropriate means of record keeping and absence of writing culture as some of the challenges faced by this brand of education and has in the last suggested ways forward.

KEY WORDS: *Role, Impact, Pre-Colonial Education, Hausaland to 1903 A.D.*

I. INTRODUCTION

This study looks at the positive development associated with the teachings of indigenous and Islamic education respectively prior to the colonial conquest of Northern Nigeria; with particular reference to Hausaland. These pointed brands of education were part of the major ways of imparting knowledge. The study argues that pre-colonial forms of education found in operation had remarkably helped in inculcating sound morality, it was also found valid, crucial and significant to the political, social, economic, and religious life of the people of that ages. The acquisition and application of these types of education had helped in the elimination of moral decadence, as the people of that age could differentiate between rights and wrongs. In a nutshell, studies have rightly pointed out that people of that ages were found morally sound, with good sense of belongings, high level of discipline, attentiveness, loyal to their traditional authorities, more committed, responsive and responsible.

Pre-Colonial Types of Education Operated In Hausaland, With Reference to Katsina Prior to 1903 A.D: An Overview:

Adaralegbe posits that prior to the presence of the Europeans, Nigerian communities had their own systems of educating their children. This was through a system described as occupational or traditional education. The purpose of this education of the pre-colonial era was simple and pragmatic. In the first place, it was to make the young ones grow up in such a way that they will understand the norms and nature of the society into which they were born and in which they will live^{”1}. Furthermore, through traditional education children were to acquire knowledge, skills, and also develop the correct attitudes and values that would be needed not only for them to live in their local communities but also for them to be able to play their own role in and make their own modest contributions to society at large.

Adesina as well holds that the relevance and role of education in nation building is not an optional matter^{”2}. In other words, all societies for quite a long have instituted one form of an educational system or another. Studies have shown that nations have risen and fallen depending upon how seriously they have perceived the role of education in society. For Lugga the nature of the pre-colonial education found in operation in Hausaland particularly in Katsina involved some socio-cultural aspects. For example, when a child was born,

his first teacher was his mother, she taught him the art of drinking and walking. The child was as well taught to differentiate between appropriate language of address and that of abuse. Polite words were differentiated from those which were rude. In addition, the methods of discipline and control were part of such form of education. These forms of discipline at home included rebukes, ridicule and sometimes corporal punishment by the elder of the house to ensure conformity with the right attitudes and habits. Similarly, as the child grew initiation and ceremonies were held thereby indicating sex role and time for specific activities. Furthermore, folklores and tales were told to the child which helped in shaping his/her attitudes. Stories of illustrious sons of the community who had shown bravery and wisdom were told for the child to immitate³

The elders equally played role in educating and instilling discipline. As observed both ridicule and mockery and sarcasm from the group members were some of the methods of educating children. The older ones among the family members in Katsina Kingdom were to teach the young ones all the necessary skills and trade needed by such a society. However, such form of education was strictly utilitarian and meant to serve the immediate local needs of the community⁴. In addition, children practiced plays and games especially at night on their playground where songs were chanted and displays of physical fitness ensured. However, for such a society to ensure appropriate control of the conduct of the members, the period saw the use of supernatural powers to control such a conduct. In other words, members were advised to conform to the norms of the society or face wrath of the “god” i.e. *Bagiro* in *Hausa* or other lesser spirits called *Iskoki*. The fear of such ‘god’ was so much among the entire *Hausa*-Pagan Community of Katsina in particular. However, habits such as that of stealing, adultery, and telling lies were all abhorred by the ‘god’ and so a taboo for any community member. Similarly, this study showed that on moral discipline for example; any sort of an unwanted behaviour by a child towards an elder was a blame on his parents and family in general. A failure to conform to this form of education might lead to the smearing of the whole family’s name. The pre-colonial Katsina Emirate as a *Hausa* community placed great emphasis on character formation. For example, a girl of questionable integrity would be put to ridicule and subjected to various forms of embarrassment, if the husband discovered that her chastity had been freely violated. This may lead to disgrace on her entire family⁵. However, another aspect in this form of education had indicated that a thief was an outcast and stood the chance of being isolated from the community. This was because people dared not to go close to him and his family’s name smeared. These were observed as methods of social control which brought sanity to the pre-Islamic and colonial Katsina people.

In pre-colonial *Hausa* community there was no place for laziness and street begging. Some specific skills were taught to the youths by the younger ones. Similarly, in Katsina farming was compulsory for all members. The term ‘Education’ involves proper upbringing and acquisition of skills for survival. In this relation, it meant that every family was in possession of large agricultural land out of which every member of the compound was given a piece to cultivate. In other words, the role expected from married women was to contribute in ensuring proper upbringing of the children⁶. In view of the relevance and importance of education to moral, political, economic and social developments of society, Lawal argues that the level and potency of education in a society determines to a large extent its degree of transformation and progress⁷.

Islamic Religious Education and its Impact on Katsina Emirate

The religion of Islam had arrived through the activities of the Muslim *Dyula* (*Wangarawa*) merchants from the ancient West African Empire of Mali first to Katsina and then to Kano in the 14th century. Islam is not just a religion composed of a few rituals, but a complete way of life concerned with every facet of the life of its followers. Islamic education of this nature has its main contents: the study of the *Qur'an* from which other branches of learning derived. To a Muslim the *Qur'an* is “The sum of all that existed past, present and future, the whole “Universe”. However, Diop states that: revolving around the *Quran* are the various sciences including *Tafsir* (exegeses); *Hadith* (Prophetic tradition); *Fiqh/Madh* (*Penegyric/Eulogy*), *Nahaw* (grammar), serf (monopoly), *Balaghha* (rhetoric), *Hisab* (Mathematics), *falaq* (cosmology), *Tibb* (medicine) and others⁸.

Grove states that Islam seems to have been introduced as early as 1350A.D. (14thC.), and within the period of 150 years became fully established particularly in Katsina. Since then Katsina and Kano were linked to the outside world by trade-routes to Tripoli and Egypt, and by Pilgrim routes to Meccah. Grove further argues that majority of the people of Katsina are Muslims and Katsina is one of the greatest Muslim communities in Nigeria. Though, there is significant number of non- Muslims in the south and in the northern districts of the Emirate⁹. Non-Muslims are found here and there often living in hamlets with Muslims and outwardly behaving very much like them. However, studies revealed that at the time when Islam first came to Northern Nigeria, nomadic cattle-herdsman, the *Fulani* people were migrating slowly east from the direction of Senegal. Some of these *Fulani* became converted, others remained pagans¹⁰.

M.D. Suleiman states that Islam has a very articulated concept of history, Islam recognizes the belief in Spiritual Determinism i.e. the existence of Supernatural Being. In Islam, Almighty oversees the general affairs of human being. Islam occupied itself with mundane affairs (earthly activities) and other human's action towards Allah. Islam has laid down rules governing the aspects and activities of human's life, for example; on marriage, birth, death and other affairs of life¹¹. The religion of Islam has been built upon five fundamental pillars namely:- *Tashahud*, Prayers, *Zakkat*, Fasting and Pilgrimage (*Hajj*)

Ghulam stresses that the first of the five tenets of Islam is the testimony and pronouncing the words that: There is no God, but Allah and Prophet Muhammad is His Prophet and Messenger. If the words are properly pronounced without any mental reservations, they constitute the first major requirements for being a Muslim. However, of parallel importance is the solemn belief in a general resurrection in the final day of judgment and the belief in all Prophets of God and in the Scriptures of God i.e. *Al-Qur'anul Kharim* (A Holy Revealed Book of Allah). *Al-sallah*: (Prayers): The essential backbone of Islam, to pray five times daily in the prescribed manner, the first at dawn, the next is at high noon, then the afternoon, after sunset and finally at night¹². *Al-Siyam*: (fasting/Ramadan): This involves complete abstention from food and drink, from sunrise until sunset in the Month of Ramadan. *Al-Zakkah*: (Alms-giving): This involves to give out certain prescribed amount of money, produce or animals in kind or in cash from one's wealth, aimed at purifying the wealth as ordained by Islamic law, and *Hajj*: (Pilgrimage) performance of *Hajj* in Islam described as a commendable service which involves ability and sole intention to visit Mecca for the observation of prayers.

In addition, Islam has two main sources which include: *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah (Hadith)*: way of the prophet which comprises: his sayings, actions and tacit approval of things, said and done in his presence¹³. The Divine Book (*Holy Quran*), contains 114 *Surah* and 6,666 verses differently treating events concerning developmental stages of life ranging from birth, maturity and death. In other words, it includes activities conducted, to be conducted and how to conduct an activity in line with Islamic law. Furthermore, in view of the introduction, rise of Islam and its civilizations, Y.B. Usman argues that Katsina was a largely Islamized population in terms of norms, values and identity, whose rulers were also Islamised, but whose legitimacy as dynasty was based on the *Iskoki* belief system. A numerous and self-conscious Muslim intelligentsia existed¹⁴. The Islamic intellectual development fostered a growth in the size and influence of an Islamic intelligentsia (*Ulama*) throughout the kingdom. For example, 'Yandoto, situated in southern Katsina was a bastion of scholarship and learning, *Matazu* in particular had come to occupy a strong position in Katsina Emirate, other centres of Islamic learning included: the city of Katsina, *Kwani*, *Rugar Bede*, *Mani* and *Dan-ashita*. Furthermore, Y.B. in his studies identified *Masanawa*, *Gafai*, *Tsohuwar Kasuwa*, *Gambarawa*, and *Mai'adua* as centres of learning also. At *Masanawa* lived the descendant of Wali Abu Abdullahi *Masanah Albarnawa alkatsinawi* (1555 – 1667)¹⁵. The *Ulama* of these quarters were of diverse origins such as Borno, Yandoto, Mali, Wangarawa, Zandam and Senegambia.

The Emergence and Influence of Scholars in Hausaland Prior to 1804

The period witnessed the visit of Almaghili to Kano, such visit had consequently brought about the consolidation of the reform programme of the Emir of Kano: Muhammadu Rumfa for whom Almaghili was reported to have written two treatises for the Amir of Kano, these included: *Ta-jal-Dini'ima Yajib al-Muluk*, known as (The obligation of Princes), the legal and constitutional foundation for a proper Islamic government. The second publication is *Jumla Mukhtasara* which was on issues concerning conduct of the *Shari'a*/justice, anti-Islamic social practices reform of institutions and implementation of Islamic law¹⁶. However, on completing his mission in Kano, Almaghili left for Katsina where he sojourned for a while. In Katsina, Almaghili took up the noble profession of teaching. The essence was to raise the standard of learning in Katsina and to impart a new socio-political culture that might have helped in creating a formidable Islamic Kingdom, with well defined institutions which would help in creating the ideal Islamic society in Katsina. Almaghili, while in Katsina served as a judge, teacher, *qadi* and *mufti*. In addition, Katsina has been reported to have received towards the end of the 15th and beginning of the 16th centuries a significant number of scholars from Western Sudan. Prominent among the scholars included: Sheikh Umar, bin Aqit, and another notable scholar was al-sheikh al-tadhiki (known as Aida). However, documentary evidence revealed that it was in the 17th century Katsina began to produce its own class of intelligentsia. The class of these scholars included: Muhammad Dan-Masani, Muhammad bin-al Sabbagh, (Dan-Marina) who was highly credited for his commentary on the *Ishriniyat* of Alfa-zazi (Eulogy of the Prophet). Similarly, al-Sabbagh was reported to have compiled a book on education in which he outlined the curriculum of education and other branches of Islamic learning. He was reported to have written a poem in praise of Emir Karyagiwa of Katsina, for passing appropriate judgment on a person who claimed false prophetship in his domain.

In view of the famous scholars of Katsina, Lawal in his studies rightly observed that some of these scholars included: Muhammad b. Muhammad al-Katsinawi al-fulani (d.1741). Al-katsinawi's fame in the area of '*Ulum al-Asrar, al-awfaq and al-Jafr* (Divination) went beyond the borders of Bilad al-sudan to Egypt and al-Hijaz. Abdurrahman al-Jabarti had even described him as the cynosure, the theologian, the ocean of learning, the sea of knowledge, the unparalleled, the garden of science and disciplines, the treasury of secret and mysticism¹⁷. However, research revealed that most of his writings on astrology, astronomy and the science of secrets are extant in different libraries in the world, particularly in Cairo, London and recently some were found in the Northern History Research scheme of AhmaduBelloUniversity, Zaria.

Bugaje strongly argues that the most profound impact of Islam on Katsina included the fact that Islam gained ascendancy, pushing the pagan cults to the background. Furthermore, such spread of Islam had promoted the level of trade, towns and Islamic law also became established¹⁸. Similarly, Ingawa has pointed out that the wide spread of Islam and its acceptance in Katsina brought about changes both in ritual affairs of the people's social, political and economic spheres¹⁹. The last but not the least of the impact of Islam on Katsina is the gradual transformation of the socio-political and to some extent, the economic conditions of the people of Katsina and *Hausaland* in general. Thus, the centuries of old belief in the *Iskoki* religious system the dominant belief system found in *Hausaland*. With Islam in practice, traditional belief began to give way for a more Universal belief system i.e. (Islam)²⁰.

The 1804 Islamic Revolutionary Movement and its Impact on Katsina Emirate

For a better understanding of the principal causes and impact of the 1804 *Jihad* on educational development in Katsina Emirate, our area of study. It would be appropriate to examine the term "*Jihad*". Gumi states that "*Jihad*" could be examined from two perspectives, namely: the greater and lesser *Jihad*. The greater *Jihad* is an ability to control your self in accordance with Islamic law. On the other hand, the lesser *Jihad*: involves carrying a weapon for physical confrontation against the enemies of Islam. He further argues that the conditions upon which *Jihad* could be prosecuted include, the order of Muslim ruler, if the enemies launch the counter attack on Muslims' territory and to rescue captured Muslims from the hands of heathen²¹. Furthermore, Smith views the term '*Jihad*' as an important intellectual movement backed up with the philosophy of revolution, engineered by the need for Islamic revivalism, aimed at producing an ideal Islamic society. In any case, it is interesting to note that the 1804 *Jihad* was an Islamic revolution which attempted to transform a decadent society²².

Adeleye asserts that conventionally, racial, religious and political factors have been put forward as the principal causes of the *Jihad* by some scholars. In the first place, from tribal or ethnic perspective, it was argued that the *Jihad* was purely a *Fulani* military confrontation against the indigenous *Hausa* races. But if subjected to critical evaluation, it would be found that many *Fulani* joined the *Jihad* from a sense of racial or social solidarity does not warrant an ethno-centric explanation to the movement. This is because studies have shown that the supporters of the *Jihad* were both *Fulani* and non-*Fulani*²³. On religious grounds, the 19th century *Jihad* was also interpreted as important attempt at purifying Islamic *Sharia*. On the other hand, some scholars view it as hostility between Muslims and non-Muslims in *Hausaland*. Others argue that the *Hausa* rulers had been nominal Muslims as they were found mixing Islamic with un-Islamic practices, for example, devotion to *Bori* practices, cult sacrifices to rock, tree, superstitious beliefs and half hearted devotions. Therefore, with these practices in operation, it could be borne in mind that the aim of the movement was the purification of Islamic law. Furthermore, other scholars view the *Jihad* as a political revolution under the direction of Islamic reform²⁴.

On the materialistic point of view, the fundamental cause of the *Jihad* was the economic conditions of the people. For example, in Dan-fodio's work titled *Kitab-al-faq* the writer had expressed some grievances against the ruling classes. Among which were oppression, imposition of taxes on their subjects, *Jangali* (cattle tax), *Kudin Kasuwa* (market levy) and (individual levy) *Harajin Mutum*²⁵

In addition, other causes included misappropriation and possession of women as concubines. In any case, the study attempts to highlight the un-Islamic practices prevailed prior to the outbreak of the *Jihad* as the root causes of the 1804 *Jihad*. The last but not the least included the need for the development of women's education and their emancipation²⁷. Chafe opines that the outbreak of the 1804 *Jihad* for the purification of Islamic law had made Zazzau to fall in 1805, Katsina in 1806, and Kano in 1807²⁸. On the other hand, Y.B. Usman states that among the active supporters of the *Jihad* in Katsina were Mallam Muhammad Na-Alhaji, who was a highly respected scholar and others were Mallam Umarun Domyawa and Umarun Dalleji. In his analysis of the impact of the *Jihad* on Katsina, he also states that it resulted with the success of the *Mujahiddun*, for

example, two successive Emirs of Katsina were killed. Thereby, effective elimination of the institutions of the *SarkinKatsina*, the core of the Katsina *Sarauta* system²⁹. The *Jihad* in Katsina had further marked a process of incorporating Katsina into large political community whose central institution was the *Amirul-Muminin* represented in Katsina by an Emir. Another political impact was the appointment of one of the major leaders of Katsina's *Jama'a* (community) Malam Umarun Dallaji by the end of 1808 as the Emir of Katsina. He was delegated by *Amirul Muminin* with specific powers to administer Katsina Emirate. On the issue of administration and consolidation of power Y.B. Usman has further observed that the *Jihad* led to the establishment of an Islamic system of government made up of learned men in Katsina³⁰. In the first instance, a political treatise titled: *Usul as Siyasa* (Principles of Politics) was written by *Amirul-Muminum* Muhammad Bello for Katsina Emir Mallam Umarun Dalleji after 1806. In this work, Muhammad Bello states that among the responsibilities of the Emir were the provision of technical education, and training, agricultural and rural development, emergency food policy against hunger, building new towns and improving existing ones, building roads, bridges, mosques and markets and ensure proper maintenance of these structures³¹. Bugaje in his examination of its impact on Katsina asserts that as a result of the *Jihad* in Katsina, there was a transformation of community from fetish centered parochial into a cosmopolitan Islamic society with extensive trade links, complex political structure and well developed tradition of learning. He further claims that with the *Jihad*, Katsina grew into a city of learning, attracted scholars and students from the length and breadth of central and western *Bilad-al-sudan*. The examined profound impact of the *Jihad* on Katsina including political, economic, social and religious had equally led to the rapid development of education in Katsina under the central political control of the defunct Sokoto caliphate³². However, this important part of the study has carried out a discussion on the type of education that operated in pre-colonial Katsina, the arrival of Islamic religion in the 14th century through the activities of the Muslim *Dyula* (*Wangarawa*), emergence and influence of scholars in *Hausaland* before 1804. In the case of the 1804 Sokoto *Jihad*, the study highlights that Katsina was taken over by the *Mujahiddun* (*Jihadists*). Furthermore, the principal causes of the *Jihad* and its impact on educational developments were examined.

II. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study has examined the concepts of indigenous and Islamic education as parts of the pre-colonial types of education that operated prior to 1903.A.D. The study found that these two types of education were very crucial and had equally contributed in making the then existing mankinds highly disciplined, sober, hardworking and socially literates as regards to what they were expected to do and not to do through the inculcation of good behaviours. Similarly, the study, saw the introduction of the religion of Islam into *Hausaland* as the event of the 14th century, and as for the positive impact yielded that cannot be measured. Furthermore, the emergence and influence of Islamic scholars in *Hausaland* prior to the outbreak of the 1804 Sokoto *Jihad* had also generated a lot of positive developments to *Hausaland*, among others, there were massive attraction or influx of both scholars and disciples to learn and teach Islamic religion, moreover, comprehensive Islamic centres of leaning were set up in places like Katsina, Kano, Sokoto, Bauchi and Zaria to mention but a few. The last but not the least is the case of the 1804 Islamic revolutionary movement and its profound impact on the people's socio-economic, political, cultural and religious life.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Reinterpretation and reconstruction of the past historical events should be encouraged for the betterment of the contemporary society.
- 2) Non-challent attitude of the authority should seriously be delt with, for the understanding of the past and the present times.
- 3) Studying the ancient civilazations, socio-political, economic and cultural institutions should be encouraged and not be condemned for the existing generations to derive lessons from the past for the sake of knowledge, contrast and comparism.
- 4) Historical studies should have a proper place in each and every academic environment. Futhermore, it should be understood both culture and age are very vital and significant to historical scholarship. It is worthy to note that culture is not only valid to the condition and society that created it, but generally useful in understanding human society.

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