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THE IMPACT OF FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS ON DA'WAH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN KANO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The propagation of Islam and community development is inseparable in the message of Islam. Da'wah as the first method used by all the Prophets/Messengers of Allah (SWT) to deliver the task of salvaging the Ummah from wrong direction to the path of peace and success. With da'wah a lot have been achieved in the history of Islam which continued to exist up to the present time. These giant efforts have continued to yield tremendous transformation in the number of Muslims and welfare services which Muslim organizations established. Kano State is one of the areas that attracted many migrant Scholars (Ulama') to propagate Islam which led to the emergence of many Islamic non-governmental organizations (INGOs). Before Islam and the activities of these Organizations people in some parts of Kano worshiped at Tsumburbura and other pagan shrines and a lot of offerings took place; to the extent that the welfare and development of the Ummah was neglected. This paper adopts qualitative method and discovered that, these organizations have been transforming the lives of people in the state not only in da'wah but also through many community services such as Mosques, Islamic schools, Mobile healthcare, accommodations for revertees, Ramadan welfare among others. However, some of these programmes are not properly documented and presented due to administrative lapses and lack of good accountability that will attract more supports/funds everywhere that would enhance their activities. It recommends massive awareness for more community services from these organizations, training and re-training for all the executives and patrons of these groups and good record keeping.

Keywords: *Islam, Da'wah, Islamic organizations, Community Development.*

Introduction

Islam is a religion that cares about all and it aimed at transforming lives of individuals and collective society. That is why; warnings have been given to prophets and messengers of Islam not to compel or force the followers of other faiths to accept its invitation (Da'wah). Looking at the history of Islamic *da'wah* and its development in the early period of Islam, it is enough to term Islam as a religion of community development, as it cares about the Muslims as well as the followers of other faiths. Serious attention has been given to improve and transform them religiously, politically and socially through social justice which had been demonstrated by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and his companions (Sahabah). Having this background in mind, Islam continue to flourish through migration (Hijrah) and Islamic invitation (da'wah) of some Muslim scholars moved to different localities to extend the words of Allah (SWT). This resulted into the emergence of Islam in Kano and other parts of Northern Nigeria. This paper discussed the efforts of some non-governmental organizations in extending Islam among Muslims in Kano and Nigeria at large.

The Arabic word *da'wah* means “an invitation” or “a call to share.” Therefore, *da'wah* in its essence merely means the conveyance of the message of Islam to people.

A Muslim who engages in *da'wah* either as a religious worker or a volunteer is called *al-daa'i*, plural *du'at* is saddled with the responsibilities to call people to Islam. A *daa'i* is thus a person who invites people to understand Islam through a dialogical process, and may be categorized in some cases as the Islamic equivalent of a missionary, as one who invites people to the faith, to the prayer, or to Islamic life (Salem,2016). *Da'wah* or Call towards Islam, is the means by which the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) spread the message of the Qur'an to mankind. After the Prophet, his followers or *Ummah* assume the responsibility of the *Da'wah* to the people of their times. Allah (SWT) says:

“Invite (people) to the path of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and argue with them in the kindest manner. Your Lord knows best who strays from His path and who are rightly guided” (Qur'an 16:125).

The above verse of the Qur'an directs that, people should call others to the religion of Islam through wisdom and kindness. *Da'wah* starts with educating people about the religion and inviting them to join it in order to witness more blessings and successful life in this world and in the hereafter. Enjoying success here involves worshiping Allah (SWT) as demonstrated by the Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) and demonstrated by his

companions and generation after generation. Also in a hadith of Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (RA), Prophet (Pbuh) said:

“He who sees something abominable amongst you should change it with the help of his hand. If he has no strength enough to do it, then he should do it with his tongue. And if he has no strength enough to do it, (even) then he should (abhor it) from his heart and that is the least of faith (Imaan)” (Imam Muslim Hadith vol.1. No.79).

Through *Da'wah*, *'al-da'i* is expected to show how Islam viewed the welfare of its followers starting with faith (*Imaan*) and to socio-economic aspect of life. People should not look at Islam as a religion of ‘begging’ but rather a ‘collective religion’, where both the rich and average Muslims will join hands to lift the living conditions of their fellow Muslims.

Charity, is an important way of bringing justice to society, thus has been preached by every religion of the world. And justice being the essence of religion, Islam has made charity obligatory and binding upon all those who embrace the faith, laying the greatest emphasis on the support of the needy and destitute members of society. It is thus a sacred duty of the affluent to give part of their wealth to fulfill the needs of deprived members of the community. The following verse of the Qur'an is often cited to encapsulate the Islamic idea of social welfare:

“It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards East or West; but it is righteousness to believe in Allah and the Last Day and the Angels and the Book and the Messengers; to spend of your substance out of love for Him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask; and for the ransom of

slaves; to be steadfast in prayers and practice regular charity; to fulfill the contracts which you made; and to be firm and patient in pain (or suffering) and adversity and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the God fearing” (Qur’an 2:177).

History of Kano

Kano State is a state located in North-Western Nigeria. Created on May 27, 1967 from part of the Northern Region, Kano state borders Katsina State to the north-west, Jigawa State to the north-east, and Bauchi and Kaduna states to the south. The capital of Kano State is Kano, and is the second largest industrial center in Nigeria (Nigeria Galleria, 2017).

The Hausa Kingdom of Kano was based on an ancient settlement of Dala Hill. While small chiefdoms were previously present in the area, according to the Kano Chronicle, Bagauda, a grandson of the mythical hero Bayajidda, became the first king of Kano in 999 CE, to 1063 CE (Nigeria Galleria, 2017). Muhammad Rumfa ascended to the throne in 1463 CE and reigned until 1499 CE. During his reign he reformed the city, expanded the Sahelian Gidan Rumfa (Emir's Palace), and played a role in the further Islamization of the city as he urged prominent residents to accept the religion (Islam). The Hausa state remained independent until the Fulani conquest of 1805 CE (Nigeria Galleria, 2017).

According to Nigeria Galleria (2017), the geographical location of the State lies between latitude 130⁰N in the North and 110⁰N in the South and longitude 80⁰W in the West and 100⁰E in

the East. It is made up of the following forty-four (44) local government areas. The total land area of the State is 20,760sq kilometers with a population of 9,383,682 (2006 provisional result).

History & Operations of Faith-based Organizations in Kano State

Faith-based organizations are religious affiliated groups of persons vowed to render voluntary developmental services to the humanity and society. Woldehanna et al (2005) extended the definition to a broader sense as:

FBOs are religious-based organizations, places of religious worship or congregations, specialized religious institutions and registered or unregistered non-profit institutions that have religious character or mission (Cited in Ogbe, 2017:24).

These organizations could best be identified through the following features: Religious base, Faith motivated, non-profitable ambition, voluntary membership among others.

The historical trace of their activity was linked to the earliest adoption of the religion in Nigeria (Ogbe 2017: 27), as people unite in the course of assisting each other through communal effort under the religious directives and influences. It later became clear when Uthman *bin Fodio* waged Jihad (Baiyeri, 2013:16) against the tyrant rulers of the Hausa land in the 1804 CE.; he succeeded in the establishment of Islamic State with much relation to *Qadiriyya* movement, which continued to the later period of the emergence of the *Tijjaniya* movement

supported by the Business men of the northern Nigerian states. The trend speed up with the arrival of the *Ahmadiyya* movement of 1914 (Is-haq, 215:8) and subsequent *Munazzamatu Fityanil Islam* of 1963 at Kano, that happen to be the first formal Islamic organization to have appeared in Kano as pointed by Mustapha:

... even though there is no any organization when it was established (Trans) (Mustapha,2007:29)

Thus the paper attempt to highlight only three non-governmental Islamic organizations in Kano; Viz *Munazzamatu Fityanil Islam*, *Jama'tul Wa'az Wal Irshad Islamic Tsamiyar Boka* and *Federation of Muslim Women Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN)*.

A. Munazzamatu Fityanul Islam

Munazzamatu Fityanul Islam was among the earliest faith-based organizations established in Kano State by the young Islamic Scholars of the *Tijjaniyya* Sufi Order on 15/11/1963 CE. / 28/6/1363 AH.; (Mustapha, 2007:8) under the chairmanship of young Shiekh *Mahmud Salga* (1933-2012 CE.) as he stated in Hausa language;

I was highly disappointed for the non-existence of any strong voice for the Muslims to express their views in Nigeria, at that time; that is why i focused to establish the organization (Trans.) (Mustapha 2007).

Even though *Sardauna* of Sokoto sought their consent to merge and advance his effort for the establishment of *Jama'atu*

Nasrul Islam, however, the members preferred to stand independently on their established organization (Mustapha 2007).

The organization was built to achieve the following objectives:

- i. Spreading of Islam to the non-Muslims communities
- ii. Advancing the awareness of the Arabic language for better understanding of the Islamic Religion,
- iii. Protect the status of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW)
- iv. Protect the status of the companions (*Sahabah*) of the Prophet(SAW)
- v. Protect the status of Scholars of the Juristic Schools (*As-habul Mazaahib*),
- vi. protect the status of the Saints (*Awliya'*) and their Sufi Orders,
- vii. Promote Islamic Education
- viii. Isolation from official participation in the political appears under the umbrella of the organization (Ibid: 13).

The organization did not rely on any foreign intervention from other country or organization, but rather depend on the contribution of its members and charitable donations from the wealthy philanthropist and other supporters, through which the organization sustain activities to date (Ibid: 18).

Right from the time of its establishment, the organization had achieved the following success as follows:

- i. Extension of the branches of the organization from its grass root to the various local governments of the Kano State.
- ii. Establishment of the modern Secondary School at *Gwammaja (Sheikh Tijjani Uthman Zangon Bare-bari Islamic secondary School)* (Ibid:39)
- iii. Opening of the one hundred and fifty-seven (157) *Islamiyya* schools for Islamic education
- iv. Supervision and managing of one hundred and forty-four (144) mosques within Kano State etc.
- v. Muslims population maximization with the conversion of about Four thousand nine hundred and seven (4,907) non-Muslims (Ibid: 40) through its activities.

Despite the above achievements and those not to have appeared; *Munazzama* encountered many challenges that hindered the smooth activities of the organization in various dimensions as follows:

The principle of the organization regarding the non-participation in to politics made it in ideological clash with those to have sought its support in political struggle, especially during the political campaign of the NEPU and NPC (Ibid :25-27)who finally marginalized the organization after the establishment of government, for its non-involvement in political struggle.

The organization got opposition from some organizations that shared common objectives, as a result of the ideological differences which existed between them, and had suffered

shortage of financial resources and transportation vehicle in conveying services and rendering activities to the Muslim communities.

B. Jama'tul Wa'az Wal Irshad Islamic Tsamiyar Boka, Kano State

Jama'tul Wa'az Wal Irshad is an Islamic faith-based organization formed for religious services with the name of "Islamic Foundation Student Association" in 1982, but later renamed to *Jama'tul Wa'az Wal Irshad Islamic Tsamiyar Boka*, (Muhammad,nd:1) situated at No. 3 *Tsamiyar Boka Hotoro Kano* state and was registered with the corporate affairs commission (CAC) on 9/5/2006 (Ibid).

The activities of the organization are: *Da'wah*, special courses and training, humanitarian services and developmental projects.

1. *Da'wah*; Islamic religious propagation served as the basic activity of the organization which is being carried on three (3) phases; *Da'wah* outings on weekly bases and pre-sermon preaching on Friday, three (3) days Islamic camping, two (2) weeks Islamic camping within and neighboring states of Kano. Members of the outing are normally composed of professionals of different fields willing to contribute in the course of Islam, such as Health personnel, Engineers, Pharmacist, and professional *Du'ats*, who are being accompanied with vehicles, commodities, Books and pamphlets, fertilizer, clothes and others to support their effort (Ibid).

2. Special intensive and refresher courses organised for the *Da'wah* personnel to equip them with necessary and modern strategies of preaching. Some are being trained on leadership and contemporary issues (especially among the Imams). Likewise, some converts are being offered intensive and short courses on basic Religious services.

3. Public lectures: This organization from time to time invites academicians and educationist to sensitize people on various aspects of Islam and contemporary issues.

4. Humanitarian services: some personnel of the organization are being sent to various Prisons to assist the inmates on different spheres of life such as counselling and financial assistance for the settlement of debt and food stuffs. Some patients at various Hospitals are being assisted with prescribed drugs and other required material for their health care. On the other side new converts, destitute, widows/orphans are being supported both financially and food stuff to sustain their living, especially during the *Ramadan* and *Sallah* occasions (Ibid).

5. Infrastructural projects and rehabilitation: the organization carry out some projects for the construction of Mosques, *Islamiyyah* Schools, Orphanage, Wells, Bore holes and rehabilitation of *Da'wah* centers at various localities timely.

The organization was able to score the following success in respect to the above listed activities in various localities within and neighboring towns of the state:

a. It employed permanent teachers posted to the areas of newly convert Muslims to teach them religious knowledge and other services.

b. Transportation vehicles were bought for the outings and those posted teachers to convey themselves to their respected areas of assignment.

c. Various *Islamiyyah* schools and *Da'wah* centers are built and rehabilitated by the organization

d. Educational transformation through, building of centers for intensive training to the new converts (Muhammad, 2017) and organizing of seminars and symposium for technical support on the strategies of *Da'wah* (for the preachers) and administrative techniques to the Imams.

e. Humanitarian support to the refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), especially those to have escaped from the central Africa numbered Eight hundred and thirty one people (831) and the victims of Boko Haram attacks from Borno, Yobe and Adamawa numbered three thousand one hundred and fifty three people (3153) (Muhammad, 2019).

f. Orphanage houses are administered by the organization to assist those who have lost their parents at younger age and the aged people.

g. Purchase of plots and construction of religious centers for religious services, such as the church proposed to be bought at *Gadar Tamburawa* for its conversion to mosque (Muhammad,2017)etc.

h. Muslims population maximization with the conversion of fifty thousand (50,000) people from various localities (Muhammad,2017).

In the cause of services and activities for the religious transformation, the organization due collaborate with other organizations to have strong power to approach their prospective targets; these include: of *Ta'awun alal-birri wa Taqwa*, *Ummuhatul Mu'minin* of GRA, *Jama'atu Nasril Islam* etc.

The activities of the organization are associated with some problems and obstacles that hinder speedy action of its services such as; limited resources and total dependence on the volunteers and wealthy philanthropist who are ready to support the activities both in cash and kind.

C. Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN)

Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN) is a faith-based non-governmental organization to consolidate Nigerian women for the purpose of solidarity to voice-out their interest and ensure Islamic religious awareness.

The association was established through the effort of some outstanding Muslim women who thought for the need of founding an umbrella organization to unite the Muslim sisters of Nigeria bounded on religious and sustainable development from different perspectives. It was registered with the corporate affairs on 12th October 1985 and was inaugurated at the Islamic

Education Trust at *Minna* Niger State on the stated objectives in their website (<http://www.fomwanng.com/>)

1. To create awareness among Muslim Women of the true teachings of Islam in the Qur'an and *Sunnah* and to encourage women to live in accordance with those teachings.
2. To improve the moral, educational and economic development of women through capacity building, seminars and empowerment programs.
3. To promote and propagate the cause of Islam in Nigeria and beyond.
4. To make positive impact on national matters both religious and secular with a view to safeguard the interest of Islam.
5. To unite and coordinate Muslim women's organizations in Nigeria so as to speak with one voice, by acting and making decisions together (Ibid).
6. To serve as liaison body between Muslim women and the Governments (Federal, State and local level) of Nigeria.
7. To improve the physical and emotional well-being of women through health programs, establishment of hospitals, clinics and counselling centres (Ibid).

The organization extended its branches to the thirty-six (36) states of Nigeria including Federal Capital Territory (FCT); hence Kano's branch started operation on 1986 and extended services to the forty-four (44) Local governments of the state through the establishment of branches to serve the respected women accordingly. Likewise the organization was able to achieve the following:

1. Establishment of *Tawal school of the Fomwan* having twenty classes to offer educational services at the level of Nursery, Primary School for both sexes and Junior Secondary School for female students alone. It further granted scholarship for some few less privileged girls at tertiary level.

2. Vocational assistance goes along with the establishment of the vocational center unit at the head office of the organization to ensure skill acquisition at all level of the women. Likewise, vocational acquisition programs are prepared at all the local offices to train women upon knitting, catering, and other domestic businesses (Fatima, aged, 46).

3. As for the medical dimension; the organization established *fomwan Clinic* at *Hotoro* and within the above mentioned School to assist on medical services to the women, especially anti-natal care, post-natal etc. They further move for health outreach in the community, especially on the cases of epidemic outbreak and medical awareness campaign on critical issues (Ibid).

On the other side, the activities of the organization meet up with some challenges along the line such as: Financial shortage; as their main source of income relied on the members' contributions and philanthropic donations, which may not suffice for the activities of the organization. There is other technical problem associated with the transportation while outing for *Da'wah*, awareness campaign and supervision; as such they

relied on the few private vehicles of the officials which may not be available all the time.

Analysis of the Impact of the Faith-based organizations in Kano State

The impact of the activities of these organizations and their likes could not be under rated, as it had greatly contributed towards the development of the *Da'wah*, society and its citizens in various perspectives:

Educationally; the activities add-up to the number of the formal educational learning centers in addition to those provided by government which cannot satisfy the need of the high population of people, as such; *Tawal* school of FOMWAN and the *Sheikh Tijjani Uthman Zangon Bare-bari* Islamic Secondary School together with their likes assisted in the educational certification at various level of the education (Nursery, Primary and Secondary). Furthermore; the highest percentage of the Islamic education in the state relied on the effort of these organizations, as they establish schools and provide teachers to impart religious knowledge to the people right from the elementary level to the secondary and tertiary level. Even though; government provides little through the Islamic Religious Knowledge (IRK) subject at formal schools alone which the periods allotted to the subject may not ensure the expected level. Likewise; symposium, conferences and seminars are being organized by these organizations to impart Knowledge and equip

those expected to jump in to the communities with new and simplest techniques of *Da'wah*.

Religiously; the organizations add-up towards religious awareness, as both the organization considered it first among the principle objectives hope to be achieved through the struggle. As such they organize *Da'wah* session on weekly, Monthly and occasional basis at Friday mosque through pre-sermon preaching, *Tafsir* preaching during the Month of Ramadan that at times being eared through the Radio. Television and Internet platforms to reach people at all the places.

Medically; the organizations dared to provide medical assistance through the establishment of Hospitals, Dispensaries and even occasional outings during the *Da'wah* sessions and epidemic cases to provide medical treatment and prescribed drugs to the destitute patients and weaker ones. They also set out for awareness campaign on special cases to save people from the danger of the cases and other important measures desired to be observed for safety and well being.

Vocationally; they also built vocational centers for skills acquisition to empower youth and women to reduce the level of poverty, joblessness and guard against the threats that might likely be caused by youth such as drug abuse, stealing and the rest of the dangerous behaviors.

Humanitarian services; the organizations build orphanage houses and refugees camps to assist the orphans and internally displaced people (IDPs) due to certain crises or other disasters

through the provision of food, shelter and other facilities to support their life. Similarly, they visit prisons to assist the inmate with financial supports to settle their debts and offer counselling services to enable them adopt healthy life when they are released.

Economically; they assist towards employment opportunities where they engage people to carry certain duties and assignments upon which they receive allowances, such as those employed to teach new converts or provide medical services and other activities to the beneficiaries. Furthermore, those imparted with vocational skills engage to certain business productivity that attracts economic advancement to the Kano State.

They served as voice to the voiceless as they go round to the remotest areas of the state that may not be accessible to the government easily; as such they observe what require much attention to assist on the best of their capabilities.

Conclusion

Faith-based organizations are group of persons organized under religious ties (Islamic or other Faiths) to venture out to the community and render voluntary services for the benefit and development of the citizens. The trend emerged in the Kano state of Northern Nigeria with the establishment of Munazzamatu Fityanul Islam, from which the rest follow to imitate the activity upon the distinct objectives of rendering services to help for the development of Islamic Da'wah and other developmental services.

These organizations joined the trend of government upon the provision of educational services, religious services, vocational, economical, medical and other humanitarian services to the citizens at different level of the society. Despite all the efforts and contributions provided by these organizations, there are certain problems associated with its services to the extent that some die-up at times due to the shortage of resources and other obstacles highlighted above.

Recommendations

The paper suggested the following measures to be adopted for the sustainable activities and developmental services of these organizations particularly in Kano State:

1. Collaboration; these organizations should collaborate with each other to face their common objectives with powerful approach.
2. Ideological differences should be understood, minimized and improve mutual unity.
3. Government should intervene to support up the activities of these organizations since their goals are towards ensuring well-being of the citizens.
4. Wealthy people shall adopt the habit of philanthropy through giving out certain percentage of their wealth to build up the community and Religion they belong to.
5. These organizations should update their strategies of services through joining the trend of technology to spread

their programmes; as many are observed to be offline and technologically backward.

6. Proper record keeping should be enhanced to champion the confidence of the people.

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