

STRUCTURE AND IMPACT OF MAKARANTUN 'ILMI IN NASARAWA STATE

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Abstract

Two broad types of traditional Islamic schools exist in specifically Nasarawa State. *Makarantun allo* which refers to schools where the emphasis is teaching the Glorious Qur'an particularly to the young children; and *Makarantun Ilimi* or *Makarantun Zaure* which is for older students who have graduated from the Qur'anic schools and who want to further Islamic education. In this stage, they study under one or more Malams depending on their level, type and depth of specialization. The core subjects embedded in the curriculum of *Makarantun 'Ilimi* comprise Glorious Qur'an exegesis (tafsir), traditions of Prophet Muhammad (*Hadith*), principles and rules of Islamic jurisprudence (*Fiqh* and *usul al-Fiqh*), theology (*'Ilm al-tawhid*), mysticism (*tasawwuf*), history (*sirah*), Arabic language and literature (*al-luggha* and *al-adab*), mathematics (*al-hisab*), medicine (*tibb*), and history (*tarikh*). This paper assesses the structure and impacts of Makarantun 'Ilimi in Nasarawa State and examine the ethics of Makarantun 'Ilimi system of education in Nasarawa State. The paper recommends strategies for improvement.

Introduction

The most distinctive feature that defines the *Makarantun 'Ilimi* in Nasarawa State is the scholars otherwise known as the '*ulama* due to their expertise in, and preoccupation with, religious, educational and legal affairs that constitute the broad ideological parameters of Islamic societies (Umar 2006). Historically, being a member of the *ulama* establishment entailed full-time engagement with matters of scholarship and piety (learning, teaching and preaching) that left little or no time for generating an income. The lack of regular income therefore made the *ulama* reliant on the goodwill and support of the Muslim community or an influential patron. Assurance of this support appears to have been a necessary condition for the development of the scholarship in many Hausa communities particularly in the pre-colonial Northern Nigeria (Balogun 1980).

Therefore, in those days, when a Muslim scholar arrived in an area, a mutually beneficial alliance was naturally struck between him and the ruling elite leading to the gradual integration of the scholar into the ruling elite in these areas. In return for the necessary permission, material comforts and assurances of personal safety and protection from their benefactors, the Islamic scholars deployed their mystic power, literacy skills and religious and judicial knowledge in the service of the state or influential members of the political establishment (Balogun 1980). This symbiosis between the Islamic scholars and the political class gave Islam and Islamic education the necessary footholds in Northern Nigerian cities and towns that subsequently became well-known for Islamic scholarship at different times. Scholars like Muhammadu Al-Maghili were known to have laid the framework for the establishment of Islamic legal and administrative systems in Kano and Katsina through their alliances with the political leadership in these areas (Clarke 1982). In Katsina, Al-Maghili also established an institution of learning at Gobarau that became a prominent centre of Islamic learning (Bugaje 1997).

There are two broad types of Islamic schools in Nasarawa State. *Makarantun allo* which refers to schools where the emphasis is teaching the Glorious Qur'an. The pupils use wooden slates and locally made ink. The slate is reusable, and all it requires is to wipe the slate clean and a new lesson can be written. This is the first stage of Islamic education, and in some cases, children are sent to teachers far away from their homes and parents. For older students who have graduated from the Qur'anic schools and who want to further Islamic education, the next stage is the *Makarantun 'Ilimi* or *Makarantun Zaure*. Here, they study under one or more Malams depending on their level, type and depth of specialization. The core subjects in the curriculum of *Makarantun 'Ilimi* comprise Glorious Qur'an exegesis (tafsir), traditions of Prophet Muhammad (*Hadith*), principles and rules of Islamic jurisprudence (*Fiqh* and *usul al-Fiqh*), theology (*'Ilm al-tawhid*), mysticism (*tasawwuf*), history (*sirah*), Arabic language and literature (*al-luggha* and *al-adab*), mathematics (*al-hisab*), medicine (*tibb*), and history (*tarikh*).

These two types of schools represent the old Islamic educational system, which are strictly traditional and completely private, with no formal funding usually from the State. The *Malamai* (Islamic teachers) took care of the education and spiritual development of the Muslims on behalf of the society and parents. The society and parents in turn took care of the *Malamai* through fees, *Zakkah* (Islamic tax), *Sadaqah* (offerings) and the *baitul mal* (public treasury). The society also took care of the children by giving them food, and offering them opportunities as house helps. This unique system did not exclude willing students even if they were poor; produced world class scholars in every field of Islamic knowledge, as it required little infrastructure and maintained social cohesion by promoting the interaction of the rich and the poor.

Makarantun 'Ilimi is the schools of higher learning where adult Muslims further their studies on different branches of Islamic education. It is the traditional center of learning which the grown up Muslim students attend after acquiring the basic knowledge and qualification from *Makarantun allo*. Hiskett observed that:

Above the elementary center were the centers of higher studies (*Makarantun 'Ilimi*). These are meant for the adults who, after attaining excellence in their elementary studies, further their studies in more advanced level. These were much more advanced institutions where Muslims who intended to take up profession, as scribes, theologians, Muslim magistrate or *Qadis* and so on did their training (Hiskett 55).

The traditional Islamic education at this level in Nasarawa State has its major objective of making a student to become more familiar with the knowledge of the Qur'anic exegesis (*Tafsir al-Glorious Qur'an*), the knowledge of the explanations on the *Hadith* of the Prophet, the knowledge of Islamic law and Jurisprudence (*'Ilm al-Fiqh*), the knowledge of the existence, uniqueness and attributes of Allah (SWT) (*'Ilm al-Tauhid*) etc. Studies towards the attainment of this objective is known among the Muslim communities of Nasarawa State as "*Karatun Sa ni*" which means knowledge leading to mastery or perfection for which the centers are also known as "*Makarantun Sa ni*" which is another name given to *Makarantar 'Ilmi* as a center for advance studies leading to perfection or specialization in particular branch of Islamic knowledge.

Background to Islamic Education

Education has played a central role in Islam since early times, owing in part to the centrality of scripture and its study in the Islamic tradition. Before the modern era, education would begin at a young age with study of Arabic and the Qur'an. Some students would then proceed to training in Tafsir (Quranic exegesis) and fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), which was

seen as particularly important. For the first few centuries of Islam, educational settings were entirely informal, but beginning in the 11th and 12th centuries, the ruling elites began to establish institutions of higher religious learning known as *Makarantun 'Ilmi* in an effort to secure support and cooperation of the religious scholars. 'Ilmi schools soon multiplied throughout the Islamic world, which helped to spread Islamic learning beyond urban centers and to unite diverse Islamic communities in a shared cultural project (Berkey, 2004). 'Ilmi schools were devoted principally to study of Islamic law, but they also offered other subjects such as theology, medicine, and mathematics.

Consequently, Islam has, from its inception, placed a high premium on education and has enjoyed a long and rich intellectual tradition. Knowledge (*'ilm*) occupies a significant position within Islam, as evidenced by the abound references to it in Islam's most revered book, the Qur'an. The importance of education is repeatedly emphasized in the Qur'an with frequent injunctions, which provide a forceful stimulus for the Islamic community to strive for education and learning. Such verses include among others:

God will exalt those of you who believe and those who have knowledge to high degrees" (58:11), "O my Lord! Increase me in knowledge" (20:114), and "As God has taught him, so let him write" (2:282).

Islamic education is uniquely different from other types of educational theory and practice largely because of the all-encompassing influence of the Qur'an. The Qur'an serves as a comprehensive blueprint for both the individual and society and as the primary source of knowledge. The advent of the Qur'an in the seventh century was quite revolutionary for the predominantly illiterate Arabian society. Arab society had enjoyed a rich oral tradition, but the Qur'an was considered the word of Allah and needed to be organically interacted with by means of reading and reciting its words. Hence, reading and writing for the purpose of accessing the full blessings of the Qur'an was an aspiration for most Muslims. Thus, education in Islam unequivocally derived its origins from a symbiotic relationship with religious instruction.

Aims and Objectives of Islamic Education

The Arabic language has three terms for education, representing the various dimensions of the educational process as perceived by Islam. The most widely used word for education in a formal sense is *ta'lim*, from the root *'alima* (to know, to be aware, to perceive, to learn), which is used to denote knowledge being sought or imparted through instruction and teaching. *Tarbiyah*, from the root *raba* (to increase, to grow, to rear), implies a state of spiritual and ethical nurturing in accordance with the will of God. *Ta'dib*, from the root *aduba* (to be cultured, refined, well-mannered), suggests a person's development of sound social behavior. What is meant by *sound* requires a deeper understanding of the Islamic conception of the human being (Al-Attas 1979).

Education in the context of Islam is regarded as a process that involves the complete person, including the rational, spiritual, and social dimensions. As noted by Syed Muhammad al-Naqib al-Attas in 1979, the comprehensive and integrated approach to education in Islam is directed toward the "balanced growth of the total personality...through training Man's spirit, intellect, rational self, feelings and bodily senses...such that faith is infused into the whole of his personality" (158). In Islamic educational theory knowledge is gained in order to actualize and perfect all dimensions of the human being. From an Islamic perspective the highest and most useful model of perfection is the prophet Muhammad, and the goal of Islamic education is that people be able to live as he lived. Syed Hossein Nasr wrote in 1984 that while education does prepare humankind for happiness in this life, "its ultimate goal is the abode of permanence and all education points to the permanent world of eternity" (7). To ascertain truth by reason alone is restrictive, according to Islam, because spiritual and

temporal reality are two sides of the same sphere. Many Muslim educationists argue that favoring reason at the expense of spirituality interferes with balanced growth. Exclusive training of the intellect, for example, is inadequate in developing and refining elements of love, kindness, compassion, and selflessness, which have an altogether spiritual ambience and can be engaged only by processes of spiritual training. Education in Islam is twofold: acquiring intellectual knowledge (through the application of reason and logic) and developing spiritual knowledge (derived from divine revelation and spiritual experience). According to the worldview of Islam, provision in education must be made equally for both. Acquiring knowledge in Islam is not intended as an end but as a means to stimulate a more elevated moral and spiritual consciousness, leading to faith and righteous action.

Structure of *Makarantun 'Ilimi*

Mosques were known to be the earliest center for the Muslim learning processes throughout the Muslim world. Such centers were maintained through ages. In *Lubab al-Madkhal* it is said that:

The teacher's place of teaching should be the mosque (*Masjid*) which is better than the home or the school. This is in order to ensure that all people benefit, since the mosque is their meeting point, unlike the home or the school which are attended only by those who want to read. This is also in conformity with the practice of the predecessors. May Allah be pleased with them (Abdullahi Ibn Fodiyo 57).

It is therefore clear from the above statement that mosques should be the seats of '*Ilmi* schools. However, in Nasarawa State, many traditional Islamic teachers preferred to teach in their houses or in some temporary structures like *zaure* or *rumfa* used for education of the children.

Teachers of *Makarantun 'Ilimi*

Teachers of the *Makarantun 'Ilimi* in Nasarawa State were not quite different from their counterpart in the *Makarantun allo*. Additionally, one teacher could manage students of both *Makarantun allo* and *Makarantun 'Ilimi* while in some cases, he might not. A teacher in the *Makarantun 'Ilimi* is a highly esteemed and reputable scholar who is considered to be an authority either in all the branches of Islamic education or in a particular branch for which he might have obtained certificate (*Ijazah* or *Ijazat*).

Ethics of Teachers of *Makarantun 'Ilimi*

The ethics and etiquettes of an ideal Islamic teacher of *Makarantun 'Ilimi* include the following: It is recommended that such a teacher should always be accessible to all people and should consider his seat as *majlis al-dhikr wal-'ilm* (seat of remembrance of Allah and learning). The Prophet (S.A.W) praised such a seat in one of his *Hadith* which he said:

The place of learning is indeed better than a thousand years' worship during which period one has not for a twinkle of the eye sinned against Allah (Muslim 482).

The knowledge acquired by the teacher of *Makarantar 'Ilimi* should warrant him cite support for issues he discussed, from the verses of the Glorious Qur'an, *Hadith* of the Prophet (S.A.W) and the practice of the companions (R.A). A scholar of *Makarantar 'Ilimi* must not pay due regard to and rely on customs simply because our predecessors accepted them, since they might have been negligent or absent minded or might have followed the bad custom by mistakes. A teacher of *Makarantar 'Ilimi* should therefore, clinch only to the generations referred by the Prophet (SAW) as the best of all the generations. If a scholar is well known and is an authority that many people refer, he should not get people used to referring to him alone. Rather, he should encourage people to go to other scholars to put their questions to

them. This is in order that he does not completely dominate their confidence such that, all their religious life would be based solely on his teachings since they know nothing of their religion except through him (Abdullahi Ibn Fodiyo 55).

Whenever a scholar leaves his house for the Mosque, he should be guided by the *Sunnah* of the prophet (SAW) and should avoid innovations in everything he does, and should show support for the *Sunnah* suppress innovation. He should aim at guiding the misguided, commanding people to do good and prohibiting them from doing evil (Abdullahi Ibn Fodiyo 56). A scholar of *Makarantar 'Ilimi* should conform himself to the four essentials of speaking which include:

1. It should be in response to a need.
2. The speaker should address the issue directly to the point
3. It should only be as long as it is necessary to achieve its purpose
4. The speaker should be selective in the words he uses (Abdullahi Ibn Fodiyo57).

Categories of Teachers in *Makarantun 'Ilimi*

Teachers in the *Makarantun Ilimi* in Nasarawa State could be categorized into two groups i.e. settled and mobile. It has been understood historically that the itinerant scholars otherwise known as mobile scholars were the brain behind the introduction of Islam and its tradition of education in Nasarawa State. It could therefore be rightly said that these itinerant scholars were the initiators of the advanced system of education for the adult Muslims in the State. Moreover, they imported the relevant books like *al-Mudauwanah al-Kubra* and some books on the commentary of *al-Mukhtasar al-Khalil* for advanced learning. So most of the teachers in the *Makarantun 'Ilimi*, particularly during the early periods were the visiting scholars. Their effort to impart knowledge to the indigenous students later gave rise to the settled teachers, who after acquiring basic knowledge from the visiting scholars, travelled to the already established centers like al-Azhar, Timbuktu, Agadaz and Fez to acquire more knowledge before they came back to settle at home and start imparting their knowledge to others (Mahmud 34-41). In this way, many more settled teachers established '*Makarantun 'Ilimi*' in different parts of Nasarawa State.

Students of *Makarantun 'Ilimi*

Students of *Makarantun 'Ilimi* in Nasarawa State were adult Muslims who are very much keen and zealous in mastering branches of Islamic education in order to conform to the divine and Prophetic instructions for the acquisition of knowledge (Q 96:1-5 and Ibn Majah 224). Scholars also of the opinion that Muslims should acquire knowledge even if it warrants travelling to china (Baihaqi vol. 3, P. 193, no. 1543), was probably what made the Muslims of the earlier generations to adopt the tradition of travelling from place to place in order to meet reputable scholars, so that they can acquire knowledge from them. Students in the *Makarantun 'Ilimi* in Nasarawa State used to travel from one scholar to another after acquiring basic knowledge at home.

Ethics of Students of *Makarantun 'Ilimi*

A student of *Makarantun 'Ilimi* should first start by purifying his intention in acquiring knowledge for the sake of Allah (SWT) and not for the purpose of gaining leadership or taking special reward for it, or for the desire to have his name mention among the names of the scholars. Abdullahi Ibn Fodiyo said: "if you learn anything, let its effect be seen in you in the form of your forbearance" (Abdullahi Ibn Fodiyo 93-94). A student ought not to deprive himself the opportunity to observe devotional services, because they are the means leading to the opening of the blessings of knowledge to him. Abdullah Ibn Fodiyo said: "learn whatever you like. However, Allah will not reward you until you practice (what

you have learnt)” (Abdullahi Ibn Fodiyo 96). A student of *Makarantun ‘Ilmi* ought to occupy himself with the business of learning continuously every day, including Friday because any break, no matter how short is detrimental to his studies. According to Abdul Hasan Al-zayyat in Abdullhi Ibn Fodiyo, he said:

If a student interrupts his studies even for one day, it is as though he has interrupted it for one year, and when he interrupts it for two days it is as though he has interrupted it for two years and if he interrupted it for three days, no benefit comes to him (Abdullahi Ibn Fodiyo 99)

Furthermore, a student should not abandon his studies except in case of legally acceptable excuse which makes it necessary. Friday is a day much blessed and he should therefore be quick to engage in the best of actions which is learning (Abdullahi Ibn Fodiyo 100). In summary, throughout the history of Islamic civilisation, Muslims have always travelled in search of knowledge following the scholar’s opinion to “seek knowledge even if it means going to China” (Baihaqi vol.3, 193, no. 1543). The Islamic educational system, even though similar, has been influenced by local culture, history and tradition throughout the Islamic world, particularly in in Nasarawa State.

Impact of *Makarantun ‘Ilmi* in Nasarawa State

Indeed, learning and seeking for education are considered as acts of worship in the Muslim tradition and a fulfillment of Allah’s commandments. The Prophetic Traditions are even more emphatic about knowledge. Several traditions of the Prophet (SAW) describe learning and wisdom as equal to worship, and also describes men of learning as successors to the prophets. According to Hasan al Basri, “The ink of the scholar is holier than the blood of the martyr” (Al-Suyuti 17).

Another *Hadith* said:

Allah ease the way to paradise for him who seeks for knowledge. (At Tirmidhi, vol. 5 no. 2646).

Again the Prophet (SAW) said:

Angels spread their wings for the seeker of knowledge as a mark of Allah’s approval of his purpose. (Abu Dawud, vol. 3, no. 3643).

Another *Hadith* said:

Whoever follows the road to knowledge Allah will show him the road to paradise (Ibn Majah, vol. 1, no. 223).

More so, the Prophet said:

Scholars are the heirs to the prophets (Ibn Hanbal, vol. 5, no. 2176).

However, with particular reference to the learning of the Glorious Qur’an, the Prophet said:

The best of you is he who learns the Qur’an and teach it (Bukhari, vol. 6, no. 5027).

Thus learning in Islam is viewed more as an act of worship than a process of acquiring wisdom and skills, and the teacher (Malam) is not just a mere functionary who draws salary either from the state or from a private organization. Far from that, he was a spiritual figure, a model to be emulated. The teacher was required not only to be a man of learning but also to be a person of virtue, a pious man whose conduct by itself could have an impact upon the minds of the young ones. It is not only what he taught that matters, what he does, the way he conducts himself, his deportment in class and outside, are all expected to conform to an Islamic ideal which his pupils could unhesitatingly accept and emulate. The *Makarantun ‘Ilmi* threw its gate wide open to rural folk. The system is manifestly continuous

with their cultural and religious tradition and at the same time in harmony with their dominant economic activity. There is no doubt about the fact that the traditional *Makarantun 'Ilmi* in Nasarawa State has produced highly knowledgeable Muslims.

Another fundamental impact of *Makarantun 'Ilmi* in Nasarawa State and perhaps elsewhere is the sustenance of social cohesion, assistance and cooperation. *Makarantun Zaure*, has two types of students- those whose parents lived in the same town, and those who came from other towns, usually the poorer rural areas, where there was shortage of teachers (*Malamai*). The students whose parents live in the town usually returned home, while the out-of-towners were either fed by the Malam or taken care of by the society. The older students earned income through trading or crafts e.g. Nail cutting, cap sewing, shoe shining, clothes washing, brick laying, labourers, etc. In those days there were no GRAs, the rich and the poor lived a symbiotic life in the same ward. The rich gave out *zakkah* and charity to their immediate neighbours, the poor (*talaka*).

The poor in each ward could look up to the rich in their midst for assistance, and generally felt they had a stake in the wealth of the rich, and their well-being. The rich could in turn look up to the poor for their security. Many Muslim children went through this system even if they did not go on to become *Malamai* themselves. Many went on to become leaders, craftsmen, business men etc. But whatever they became, they never looked down on the system, and they always respected the *Malamai*. And because the rich went to “school” with the poor, they were always accessible to them, whatever they became. Therefore, the teachers (*Malamai*) took care of the education and spiritual development of children on behalf of the society and parents, while the society and parents took care of the *Malamai*. The *Makarantun 'Ilmi* produced world class scholars in every field of Islamic knowledge as it required little infrastructure and maintained social cohesion by promoting the interaction between the rich and the poor. In addition, the *Makarantun 'Ilmi* develops the skills, aptitude and techniques required for organization and administration of a community (Malam Hamidu).

However, this study has also identified as an impact of Islamic Educational Institutions particularly *Makarantun 'Ilmi* that the economic and educational variables were themselves influenced and shaped the religious values and societal norms and customs. For instance, the behaviour of the host community which provide both the teachers and the students of *Makarantun 'Ilmi* with free shelter, feeding and, in the event of ill-health, free medication, can only be explained in terms of those religious and cultural values associated with *Makarantun allo* which encourage hospitality towards those on “sacred mission” and spending surplus resources on the needy and the less-privileged. The *Makarantun 'Ilmi* became a source of cheap labour for anybody that patronizes them, and the secluded urban woman may derive benefit from their services, but the man who built a school compound to accommodate the pupils or one who donates part of his residential house for similar purpose, along with he who gave them regular or occasional charity in the form of money, clothing and left over food, did it out of purely religious consideration. This attitude conforms to what Lubeck (274) describes as “the ethics and norms of status-honour” among the privileged members of the Muslim community which necessitated the Qur’anic students receive alms in the form of food and shelter.

Like any traditional Muslim society, *Makarantun 'Ilmi* in Nasarawa State has pervaded many sphere of life of the children that it remained the decisive reference point for all social and religious practices. In addition, the influence of the *Malamai* is overwhelming. They are the dominant social and religious critics and opinion moulders to the extent that government and politicians had to secure their allegiance and loyalty, during their campaigns and execution of some official programmes. Furthermore, the *Makarantun 'Ilmi* has impacted positively on the introduction, practice and development of advanced system of writing in Nasarawa State. Consequently, in those days, advanced system of writing not only grew in

quantity, it also developed in quality. As written Hausa literature began to grow through the early production of manuscripts, new Arabic script characters were created in order to express Hausa phonemes which had no Arabic equivalents (Philips 64). While some literate members of Muslim societies such as religious leaders wrote exclusively in Arabic, others wrote in Arabic as well and chose as the medium in relationship to the subject matter and intended audience.

Historically, Arabic was used in Muslim societies of Africa for communicating outside the ethnic group and for dealing with most theological, legal and broader historical issues. Advanced system of Arabic writing was often used for teaching purposes, especially communicating an understanding of Islam to non-literate members of the society (such as women, slaves, children, peasants etc) and to record and disseminate information deemed important to the society. Advanced Arabic system of writing was mainly used in those days to teach many educational programmes to many students. The writing generally falls in two major categories:

- 1) Religious poems intended for recitation,
- 2) Religious and secular prose and poems designed for keeping records such as family genealogies, historical accounts, advertisements and correspondences (Philips 66).

The use of literatures nowadays are very within and outside language areas, although, the numbers of users are not generally reflected in official government literacy rates. In many cases, in Nasarawa State today, the use of Arabic scripts is spreading, especially in the rural areas. Although a large volume of literature is emerging in the Roman script, Arabic scripts continues to be one of the major means of written communication in many Muslim societies in Nasarawa State, particularly in rural areas where local Qur'anic schools and *Makarantun allo and Makarantun 'Ilm* remain the primary educational institutions.

In summary, *Makarantun 'Ilmi* has left tremendous impact on the life of the people of Nasarawa State in the following areas:

- unity among the Muslims, hence there is a very strong sense of unity among the people of Nasarawa State.
- mode of dressing of the Muslim children and adults in the State.
- encourage literacy
- helped to spread civilisation, as Muslim adults travelled to other places, to learn from those places and brought back this knowledge to their various communities.
- sense of unity of belief, because prior to its advent there were many gods and goddesses who had many confusing function.

This in essence refuted the fact postulated by Nasir in his work "Islamic Schools, the Ulama, and the State in the Educational Development of Northern Nigeria" where he noted that:

While some *Ulama* seek engagement with the state and its modern structures, others prefer to maintain a distance in the hope that doing so will help them preserve the teachings and ideals of Islam. By operating exclusively religious schools that are neither recognised by nor linked to state educational bureaucracy, these *ulama* isolate the large number of school-age children they enroll from the modern infrastructure of polity and economy. Therefore, the large numbers of pupils reportedly 'out of school' are enrolled in these TQS. Since neither the state nor communities provide for the welfare needs of these children, they suffer social dislocation and economic deprivation. Growing into an adult life of exclusion and limited opportunities, products of these schools have in recent times been associated with socio-religious upheavals executed under the spiritual direction of some members of the *Ulama*. These traditional

religious schools have also provided the intellectual and recruitment base for what Danfulani (23) refers to as 'syncretistic and anti-establishment' Islamic movements. These movements blend Hausa folk beliefs and practices with selected parts of Qur'anic content to justify anti-development practices such as non-school enrolment, the rejection of immunisation programmes, and the denial of women's and children's rights. The latest manifestations of these movements are the *Boko-Haram* and *Kala Kato* upheavals that affected some northern states (Nasir <http://apad.revues.org/4092>).

In summary, Education in Islam is twofold: acquiring intellectual knowledge (through the application of reason and logic) and developing spiritual knowledge (derived from divine revelation and spiritual experience). According to the worldview of Islam, provision in education must be made equally for both. Acquiring knowledge in Islam is not intended as an end but as a means to stimulate a more elevated moral and spiritual consciousness, leading to faith and righteous action.

The system has many more features which makes it more appropriate for the rural agrarian communities. For example, although in the past, the *Makaraton allo* system did train people who later served as judges, scribes, teachers and other functionaries in the Native Administration, they did not, and still do not, as a rule, recruit people for employment. Hence, these schools do not alienate its graduates from their traditional occupations as the formal schools do. In essence, it has been observed that even those migrant adults who settled in the cities during the dry-season or those who settled for a period of one or more years in order to study the Qur'an did go back to their agricultural way of life after graduation. Flexibility of attendance is another feature of the 'Ilmi school system. Regular attendance, though required, is not rigidly enforced. This enables those whose economic and social commitments prevent them from maintaining regular attendance to attend school at their own time and convenience. Commenting on this flexibility, Bray *et al.*, (1986:80) stated that:

The Islamic system is in many respects far less dependent for its operation on specific administrative, institutional and organizational patterns. It also tends to be much more flexible and, as one scholar comments, has 'an admirable leisureliness'.

In conclusion, the Glorious Qur'an should continue to occupy the pivotal position in the syllabus of Islamic educational institutions in the State particularly 'Ilmi schools. Students should continue to be reared by scholars with the notion that in the Glorious Qur'an rests the final authority, and it is the Glorious Qur'an which rules over every matter in Islam. With this beacon in hand, they should be made to explore the various domains of knowledge and at every step seek its guidance. Every other subject taught, should merely help the students in having a better understanding of the Glorious Qur'an. All bases of belief and faith should be directly derived from this Word of God, which should be considered the ultimate standard and authority for all subjects.

Besides these mental pursuits, the character of the students should be moulded so that they profess a high calibre of moral conduct. They should be made to spend some time every day in the company of pious scholars, and urged to pay special attention to the injunctions of the Glorious Qur'an and *Hadith* which pertain to self-purification and character-building.

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