



Laconic Review of Contributions of Sarkin Gobir Gwadabawa Muhammad Zayyanu (Descendant of Sheikh Usman Bn Fodiyo) in the Development of Islamiyya Education in Gwadabawa Local Government, Sokoto State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study presents a concise review of the contributions of Sarkin Gobir Gwadabawa Muhammad Zayyanu, a descendant of Sheikh Usman Bn Fodiyo, to the development of Islamiyya education in Gwadabawa Local Government, Sokoto State, Nigeria. It explores his pivotal role in advancing Islamic education by establishing, supporting, and sustaining Islamiyya schools, which have become critical centers for Quranic and Islamic studies in the region. The paper highlights his efforts in promoting accessibility to quality education, fostering community involvement, and addressing challenges faced by Islamiyya institutions. Additionally, it examines the socio-religious impact of his contributions on the community, emphasizing the continuity of the intellectual and spiritual legacy of Sheikh Usman Bn Fodiyo. Through a qualitative analysis of historical records, interviews, and existing literature, the study underscores Sarkin Gobir Muhammad Zayyanu's enduring influence on Islamic education and its role in shaping the moral and educational fabric of Gwadabawa.

Keywords: *Qur'an, Contribution, Sarkin Gobir Muhammad Zayyanu, Gwadabawa, Islamiyya, School.*

Introduction

Islamic education has long been a cornerstone of societal development in Northern Nigeria, rooted in the intellectual and spiritual traditions of the Sokoto Caliphate. This legacy, established by Sheikh Usman Bn Fodiyo in the 19th century, continues to influence contemporary education systems, particularly Islamiyya schools, which combine Quranic studies with modern knowledge. Within this framework, the contributions of key figures, such as Sarkin Gobir Gwadabawa Muhammad Zayyanu, have played an instrumental role in sustaining and advancing Islamiyya education in Gwadabawa Local Government, Sokoto State.

Sarkin Gobir Muhammad Zayyanu, a descendant of Sheikh Usman Bn Fodiyo, has carried forward the Caliphate's intellectual heritage by dedicating himself to the promotion and development of Islamiyya education. His efforts have focused on ensuring that Islamic knowledge remains accessible to the community, fostering moral and spiritual development, and enhancing the educational infrastructure within Gwadabawa. His initiatives have not only preserved the Islamic tradition but have also provided avenues for youth empowerment and community growth in an era of evolving educational demands.

This study seeks to provide a laconic review of his contributions, analyzing the impact of his efforts on the establishment, support, and sustainability of Islamiyya schools in the region. It explores the challenges he addressed, the strategies he employed, and the outcomes of his work in shaping the educational landscape. By examining his role, this paper aims to shed light on the enduring influence of descendants of the Sokoto Caliphate in maintaining and developing Islamic education in Northern Nigeria.

Background of Sarkin Gobir Gwadabawa Muhammadu Zayyanu MFR:

Muhammadu Zayyanu was born into a prestigious family, being the son of Sarkin Gobir Abdurrahman Gwadabawa and a descendant of Shehu Danfodiyo, a renowned reformer in Hausaland¹. Despite his elite lineage, Muhammadu's upbringing emphasized knowledge acquisition over privilege. His father enrolled him in Islamic school, where he boarded and developed qualities like piety, humility, and empathy². Muhammadu's education continued at Elementary school in 1943, where he attended both Islamic and Western schools. He later attended Middle school Sokoto (now Nagarta College Sokoto) from 1946 to 1952, alongside notable figures like Alhaji Garba Takardawa and Alhaji Aliyu Kangiwa. After graduating, he received a one-year training at Northern Clerical Training College Zaria (now Ahmadu Bello University) in 1953.³

His career began in 1953 as an employee of Sokoto Native Authority's Department of Works. In 1954, he became the Sardaunan Chimmola, leading for 14 years, and participated in federal politics as a House of Representative member under the Northern People's Congress platform. Notably, he was appointed District Head of Tangaza in 1968 and later transferred to Gwadabawa as the 7th Sarkin Gobir. A well-traveled individual, Muhammadu visited countries like Saudi Arabia, England, America, Egypt, and Niger Republic. Unfortunately, he passed away on June 20, 2013, after returning from medical treatment in Dubai. Muhammadu was honored with the MFR award by President Olusegun Obasanjo in 2002, recognizing his distinguished contributions.⁴

Sarkin Gobir Gwadabawa Muhammadu Zayyanu Daily Activities

Sarkin Gobir Muhammadu Zayyanu began his day by waking up his household for morning prayer, followed by a visit to the mosque. After Subh prayer, he remained at the mosque until sunrise, then returned home with a few companions. His daily schedule typically consisted of:

- 8:30 am: Held court, receiving subjects and attending to their needs in simple attire, sitting on the floor alongside them.
- Afternoon: Retired for a siesta (1 pm - 2 pm) in his western wing room.
- 2 pm: Performed Zuhr prayer at the mosque.
- After Zuhr: Resumed palace duties.
- Late afternoon: Visited his farms (Tungar Tudu or others) after Asr prayer.
- Evening: Continued palace business until Magrib.
- 11:30 pm: Bid farewell to his subjects, closed his court, and performed his nightly prayers before retiring to bed.

Notably, Muhammadu Zayyanu was known for his humility and accessibility, always welcoming dialogue with his subjects without intermediaries. His simple attire and preference for sitting on the floor reflected his humble nature. He was often seen carrying a bag containing Arabic books and a Tasbih chain, emphasizing his devotion to learning and prayer⁵.

Features about Sarkin Gobir Gwadabawa Muhammadu Zayyanu

Sarkin Gobir Muhammadu Zayyanu, born to Abdurrahman Jatau and Fatimatu of the Fulani clan, possessed distinct physical and personal characteristics. Physical features of Muhamad Zayyanu include: Fair complexion, average height, moderate build (neither overweight nor underweight). While, personality traits include: Known for his humility, often walking without assistance, even during illness, devout, regularly attending mosque prayers, reserved and soft-spoken, preferring to listen rather than speak extensively, exceptional intelligence, evident in academic excellence (consistently topping his class), effective people management skills⁶.

¹ B.M, Ayama., Takaitaccen tarihin Masarautar Gwadabawa. Sokoto: Kalenjeni Printing Press Sokoto, 2018, P, 12

² Y., Sarkin Gobir., A brief account of Gwadabawa Semi-Emirate/ Metropolitan district: Yesterday and today. *Frontiers of knowledge Journal Series International Journal of Social Sciences*,4(1) 2021, Pp, 1- 35.

³ Y. Sarkin Gobir, The role of traditional hegemony in community development: A case study of Gwadabawa district, Sokoto state, Nigeria (1931-1968). *Frontiers of knowledge Journal Series International Journal of Social Sciences*,4(1), 2021, Pp, 35-51.

⁴ Y. Sarkin Gobir, Brief citation on Sultan Muhammadu Tambari (1924-1931): the latest Sultan from Atikawa house. *International Journal of Art and Humanity Science*,8(2), 2021, Pp, 6-9.

⁵ Sarkin Gobir, Brief citation on Sultan Muhammadu Tambari (1924-1931): the latest Sultan from Atikawa house. Pp, 4-5

⁶ Sarkin Gobir, The role of traditional hegemony in community development: A case study of Gwadabawa district, Pp,36-39.

Overall, Muhammadu Zayyanu embodied a unique blend of physical dignity and intellectual acumen, earning him widespread respect⁷. Sarkin Gobir Muhammadu Zayyanu was a true leader and peacemaker, known for his harmonious relationships with his relatives, which fostered a peaceful atmosphere within both his immediate and extended family. As the leader of ATIKAWA, he strengthened bonds among the various houses of Atiku, promoting unity and cooperation.⁸

His key family relations were a testament to his commitment to building strong relationships. For instance, his son's marriage to the daughter of Sarkin Sudan Kontagora encouraged unity through inter-family marriages. He also enjoyed close associations with notable individuals like Jabo, Dimbiso, Fajaldu, Takatuku, Adiya, and others (Jabo, 2008). Muhammadu Zayyanu's inter-house connections were equally impressive, with interactions with prominent houses such as:

- House of Sarkin Kabin Silame
- House of Caliph Ahmadu Rufai (recognized by Sarkin Kabin Umbaru SGobir)
- House of Sarkin Kabin Yabo Muhammadu Maiturare
- House of Sarkin Rabah⁹.

But his influence didn't stop there. He also had strong international connections, with people from Sudan regularly visiting his palace, demonstrating his far-reaching impact. Overall, Muhammadu Zayyanu's amiable nature and inclusive approach to family relationships created a tranquil and respectful atmosphere among his relatives and beyond. His legacy serves as a shining example of effective leadership and relationship-building. Interestingly, Muhammadu Zayyanu's leadership was not an isolated incident. His family had a history of producing notable leaders, including his son, Sarkin Gobir Muhammadu Lawal, who succeeded him. The family's contributions to the region's development are still celebrated today¹⁰.

Relationship between Shehu Usman Danfodiyo and Sarkin Gobir Muhammad Zayyanu

Sarkin Gobir Muhammad Zayyanu is from the famous Atikawa, the family of Sheikh Usman Danfodiyo. Muhammad Zayyanu genealogy runs like this: Muhammad Zayyanu Bn Sarkin Gobir Gwadabawa Abdurrahman, Bn Sarkin Musulmi Muhammad Maiturare, Bn Sarkin Musulmi Amadu, Bn Sarkin Musulmi Abubakar Atiku, Bn Sheikh Usman Danfodiyo (May Allah have mercy upon them all)¹¹. Shehu Usman Danfodiyo and Sarkin Gobir Muhammad Zayyanu are connected through family ties and shared ideals. Muhammad Zayyanu is a direct descendant of Sheikh Usman Danfodiyo, with a genealogy that traces back to the renowned Islamic leader. This biological connection is complemented by their shared passion for spreading Islamic knowledge and promoting positive change¹².

Shared Values and Legacy

Sheikh Usman Danfodiyo was a pioneering figure in Hausaland, seeking to bring about Islamic reform through teaching, learning, and jihad. Similarly, Sarkin Gobir Muhammad Zayyanu established a school, Madrisa, in Gwadabawa Local Government, aimed at teaching the Quran and Shariah to people of all ages and backgrounds. This alignment of values and actions underscores the strong bond between the two figures.

Education and Reform

Both Shehu Usman Danfodiyo and Sarkin Gobir Muhammad Zayyanu recognized the power of education in driving reform. Sheikh Danfodiyo sent learned scholars to towns and villages to teach the Quran and prophetic Sunnah. Likewise, Muhammad Zayyanu's Madrisa school was established on the ideals of Sunnah, promoting Islamic education and values¹³. Their shared commitment to Islamic principles and community development has left a lasting impact on Hausaland and beyond.

⁷ Sarkin Gobir, The role of traditional hegemony in community development: A case study of Gwadabawa district, Pp, 36-39

⁸ U.S.B Jabo., Takaitaccen tarihin Sarkin Gobir: Alhaji Muhammadu Zayyanu (MFR) da Masarautar Gwadabawa. 2008, P, 22

⁹ Jabo., Takaitaccen tarihin Sarkin Gobir: Alhaji Muhammadu Zayyanu (MFR) da Masarautar Gwadabawa. 2008, P, 22

¹⁰ Y. Sarkin Gobir, A brief account of Gwadabawa Semi-emirate/ Metropolitan district: Yesterday and today. *Frontiers of knowledge Journal Series International Journal of Social Sciences*,4(1), Pp,1- 35.

¹¹ Jabo., Takaitaccen tarihin Sarkin Gobir: Alhaji Muhammadu Zayyanu (MFR) da Masarautar Gwadabawa. 2008, P, 22

¹² Jabo., Takaitaccen tarihin Sarkin Gobir: Alhaji Muhammadu Zayyanu (MFR) da Masarautar Gwadabawa. 2008, P, 24

¹³ Jabo., Takaitaccen tarihin Sarkin Gobir: Alhaji Muhammadu Zayyanu (MFR) da Masarautar Gwadabawa. 2008, P, 24

The connection between Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo and Sarkin Gobir Muhammad Zayyanu serves as a testament to the enduring legacy of Islamic scholarship and reform in the region.¹⁴

Establishment of Madrisatunnurul Aulad by Sarkin Gobir Gwadabawa Muhammad Zayyanu

Islamic education, rooted in Islamiyya Islam, serves as a guiding force to protect humans from straying and misguidance. Its primary objectives include:

1. Cultivating a society that realizes human potential
2. Nurturing spiritual and physical well-being
3. Fostering a harmonious relationship with God and fellow humans
4. Promoting responsible stewardship of the world and its resources

Islamic education aims to produce individuals who serve God and refrain from harming others¹⁵. It integrates all aspects of human life, including mental, emotional, physical, psychological, and social development, within an Islamic framework. The Quran emphasizes humans' role as viceroys, entrusted with caring for the world. In line with this responsibility¹⁶, 19th-century reformer Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo advocated for Islamic values through teaching, migration, writing, and exhortation. Following in his footsteps, Sarkin Gobir Muhammad Zayyanu, a descendant of Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo, endeavored to establish a school in Gwadabawa Local Government Area, Sokoto State, Nigeria. This institution aimed to provide Islamic education to the Muslim community, aligning with the principles of the Sokoto Caliphate. Albeit, Islamic education focuses on holistic development and responsible stewardship, Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo's legacy inspires future generations, as well, Sarkin Gobir Muhammad Zayyanu's efforts continue the tradition of Islamic education and reform¹⁷.

Islamiyya schools or madrisa are nowadays avenues for blooming Islamic education, culture, knowledge, and practice. They produced students that propagate Islam, well -cultured, and knowledgeable. In his zeal, the Sarkin Gobir Gwadabawa Muhammad Zayyanu intended to follow the footsteps of his forefathers, for the purpose of ensuring that his subjects and children are learnt, in an attempt to ensure proper upbringing in his society though culturing the younger ones according to Islam, he come up with an Islamiyya school called Madrisatunnurul Aulad Gwadabawa Local Government Area. Muhammad Zayyanu Sarkin Gobir established an Islamiyya Education school at his residence (Kanwuri). The school was founded amidst repugnant by the society (dominant with Zaure system of learning), and people who are resistance to altering the status quo; therefore, he faced challenges, but remained steadfast. Around 1996, after preceding search for well -groomed Tajweed teachers, Sarkin Gobir found Izala teachers, initially Malam Yusuf Abubakar, but the school was headed by Malam Audi Lumu. Sarkin Gobir Muhammad Zayyanu ensured that the transfer of Malam from his initial teaching place to serve at Madrisatunnurul Aulad. Later, other teachers such as Malam Aliyu Sharu were involved. Due to developments, more than 300 married women, 500 youngsters have been enrolling in the school. Sarkin Gobir allocated his house permanently for the school to thrive and shielded it from public attack. The school has five classes, an office, field; therewith, classes are equipped then with chairs, and blackboards for easy learning activities to trend¹⁸. The Madrisatunnurul Aulad school uses a uniform specifically for married women, and another different one for younger ones as well. Some of the past and present teachers of the school are:

- Late Mal. Audi Lumu
- M. Yusuf Abubakar
- M. Aliyu Umar Sharu
- M. Baharu Muhammad
- Malam Dan Takarawa
- M. Nura
- Hawwau Muntari
- Suwaiba Bashir
- Zainab Abdullahi
- Maryam Murtala

¹⁴ Jabo., Takaitaccen tarihin Sarkin Gobir: Alhaji Muhammadu Zayyanu (MFR) da Masarautar Gwadabawa. 2008, P, 25

¹⁵ HP, Daulay & Tobroni. Islamic education in Indonesia: A historical analysis of development and dynamics. *British Journal of Education*, 5(13), 2017, Pp, 109-126.

¹⁶ N. Saquib, etal, Health benefits of Quran memorization for older men. *SAGE Open Medicines*, 2017, Pp, 5:1-7.

¹⁷ Sarkin Gobir, The role of traditional hegemony in community development: A case study of Gwadabawa district, Pp,36-39.

¹⁸ Sarkin Gobir, The role of traditional hegemony in community development: A case study of Gwadabawa district, Pp,36-41

Some of the old students of include the followings;

- Malam Mikailu Abubakar
- Malam Yusuf SGobir
- Moyi Zayyanu
- Shehu S. Gobir
- Buhari Tukur Abdulrahman
- And many more

Presently, the school is progressing amidst challenges. It is still serving the role as an avenue for teaching and learning to the younger ones, married women, and adults about Qur'an, recitation, memorization, and Qur'anic memorization competitions. During, the morning period the school is being used to teach community children on western education. The school is used as freely by the Madina Academy School (due to shortage of space being faced by Madina Academy at its main campus)¹⁹.

The Madrisa as center for Tajweed and Qur'anic memorization

The act of reciting and memorizing the Qur'an in sound manner is after activity that is well revered in the Sokoto Caliphate, Sokoto Sultanate, and Sokoto State as well.²⁰ In the tradition of Sokoto State, culminated from the Sokoto Caliphate, children are enrolled at Qur'anic schools or homes at younger age, children or adults bestowed with Qur'anic memorization or recitation or teaching (and learning) are revered among the peers²¹. This is indeed showing the relevance and position of Qur'an to Muslims²². Prophet Muhammad SAW said "The most superior among you are those who learn the Qur'an and teach it"²³. Thus, the strive done by Sarkin Gobir Muhammad Zayyanu in establishing an Islamic school that teaches Qur'an is a move to catalyze the spread of Allah's word and encourage its teaching and learning²⁴. This is the strive to help in guiding the Muslims, as the Qur'an is the first Islamic source teachings directing Muslims²⁵. Verily, Qur'an is a tool for civilization descended for the benefit of the whole world. Qur'an is a complete guidance from God Almighty in order to lead mankind to the exemplified deeds that are rewarded with Heaven by Almighty Allah²⁶ However, the Almighty Allah has reiterated the significance of memorization and recitation of Qur'an in And We have indeed made the Qur'an easy to understand and remember (or receive admonition.²⁷

... So, compete in good deeds...²⁸.

Scholars regard the importance of Qur'an in the past and present and future. Muslims (both commoners and teachers) are expected to drive teachings from the Qur'an, that in turn lead to progress of any society that sticks to values and rules enjoined by the Qur'an. The responsibility for protecting the Qur'an was taken by Allah Almighty. He consequently provided his servants with ability to memorize and read the Qur'an, so that teachings are implemented (Altine, 2019).

And when We have recited it to you, then follow it recital.
Then it is for Us to make it recital²⁹

In this vein, the Almighty has confined the soul of Sarkin Gobir Gwadabawa Muhammad Zayyanu with the love and great enthusiasm for Qur'an, learning, and development of his district in this regard. Sarkin Gobir might have obtained that elicitation being a person who had spent his childhood as a boarding student at Quranic school, and due to his frequent visitations to Qur'anic memorization competitions been carried out in Sokoto State. Therefore, established an Islamiyya Education school in his house for that matter. The school or Madrasa (Islamiyya) is devoted to teaching and

¹⁹ Sarkin Gobir, The role of traditional hegemony in community development: A case study of Gwadabawa district, Pp,36-41

²⁰ Z. Altine Methods and importance of Quranic hifdh (memorization): An Islamic perspective. *EAS Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies*, 1(5), 2019, Pp, 288-296.

²¹ A.A Bala., & H.A. AINU. The role of Shyakh Uthman Bn Fodiyo in teaching and Da'awah activities towards the spreading the Sunnah and Combating Bid'ah in the Bilad Al-Sudan. *International Journal of arts and Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(8), 2018, Pp, 34-38.

²² Altine Methods and importance of Quranic hifdh (memorization): An Islamic perspectives. Pp, 288-296.

²³ Altine Methods and importance of Quranic hifdh (memorization): An Islamic perspective. Pp, 288-296.

²⁴ Altine Methods and importance of Quranic hifdh (memorization): An Islamic perspective. Pp, 288-296.

²⁵ UA Rohmad, & Fthah.. Juz'i method: The technique of speeding up the Islamic Centre bn Baz. *International Journal of Social Science and Human Research*, 5(6), 2022, Pp, 4083-4095.

²⁶ Rohmad, & Fthah.. Juz'i method: The technique of speeding up the Islamic Centre bn Baz. Pp, 4083-4095.

²⁷ Qur'an, 54:17.

²⁸ Qur'an, 5:49

²⁹ Qur'an, 95:18-19.

learning Qur'an and other Islamic sciences using the modern style, contrary to the traditional Almajiri or Zaure schools that are prevalent in Hausaland. The school created by Sarkin Gobir Muhammad Zayyanu is named as Madrisatunnurul Aulad, vested with the responsibility of producing students carefully learnt in Qur'an and shall be able to recite the Qur'an with Tajweed. Therefore, Sarkin Gobir had to take several measures in ensuring that effective teachers were posted (provided) to the school. Thereafter, the school on many occasions hosted meetings, preparations, implementation, and closing of Musabaqah for Gwadabawa Local Government. This was possible because, the governments are trusting the school based on merits, and considering the need for the public and communities or wealthy individuals to contribute in development of their people and communities, instead of leaving the bulk on the governments of the day. On many occasions Madrisatunnurul Aulad had emerged victorious and represented the Gwadabawa Local Government at the state level. Particularly, the school does the followings:

- Hosting of Qur'anic memorization competitions
- Hosting of participants for the competition that are coming from villages and schools in Gwadabawa Local Government
- Hosting of prize-giving ceremonies at the halt of Musabaqah
- Camping of winners in order to properly represent Gwadabawa at state level
- However, other impacts achieved by the role of Muhammad Zayyanu Sarkin Gobir Gwadabawa in establishing the school include the following statements:
- Sustaining the Qur'anic memorization competitions over the years despite little support from the local governments during his reign (1974-2013).
- Boosting of Tajweed education and practice across Gwadabawa Local Government (irrespective of sects of the members of the districts). The school resulted in encouraged learning of Tajweed among Izala adherents (Sunni) and Tariqah adherents. Some were incited to travel to other cities to learn sound recitation. This has led to proliferation of memorizers and reciters in Gwadabawa
- Producing candidates representing Gwadabawa at state level competition
- Encouraging pervasiveness of Qur'anic memorization and recitations and learning, especially among girls and women (who were behind before the emergence of the school).³⁰

Madrisatunnurul Aulad as Center for Women Empowerment

Islam us never betrayed or discriminated against women folk. Islam has historic values of women entrepreneurs, in turn, empowering them socially, economically, and diverse -wise. Likewise, the Sokoto Caliphate has noticed history characterized with upliftment of women diverse –wise. Seeking for wealth is a tradition that has been in the history of Islam and humankind from the time immemorial. Islam does not forbid seeking for wealth through trading, working, enterprises, etc, because through the wealth materials needed for worshiping God Almighty are provided, such as food for getting healthier in order to worship, construction of schools, construction of mosques, helping the needy, helping the orphans, etc³¹. Therefore, wealth is significant in Islam, Almighty Allah reiterated:

Then when the (Jumu'ah) prayer is ended, you may disperse through the land, and seek the Bounty of Allah (by working, etc ...) ³².

In explaining the piety or righteousness, Allah Almighty said

.....and gives his wealth, to the orphans, and the poor, and the wayfarer, and to those who ask, and set slaves free....³³

Verily, gatherings of women had helped lot in Islamic development. Khadijat (RA), the wife of the prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the mother of the ummah had been a great historic entrepreneur who utilized her wealth and experience in profiting the course of Islam. The school established by Sarkin Gobir Gwadabawa Muhammad Zayyanu had been performing the role of empowering women folk (married, girls, and widowed) by training them on various entrepreneurship skills. Some of the entrepreneurship activities include, soap making, Vaseline making, sewing, etc ³⁴ The attempted impacts of the school in that regard are:

- Promoting women empowerment
- Diffusion of ideas and skills among women folk, because for example specialists were brought in from Sokoto to teach the women students and non-students

³⁰ Sarkin Gobir, The role of traditional hegemony in community development: A case study of Gwadabawa district, Pp,36-41

³¹ A.A. Islahi, Shehu Uthman Dan Fodio and his economic ideas. MPRA paper No 40916, 2008, P, 22

³² Qur'an, 62:90

³³ Qur'an, 2: 177.

³⁴ Jabo., Takaitaccen tarihin Sarkin Gobir: Alhaji Muhammadu Zayyanu (MFR) da Masarautar Gwadabawa. 2008, P, 25

- Helping the women folk to learn how to sell and buy things and commodities
- Empowering the poor ones among them
- Provision of market, because women gatherings aid buying and selling among them. These objectives are in tandem with the features of entrepreneurship cured good virtues such as earnings, Innovations, growth, improved quality of life, education, and strength among others.³⁵

Role of Madrisatunnurul Aulad in Emancipation through Education

We (Muslims) are the last to come, but the forefront on the Day of Resurrection, and the first people to enter Paradise, although the former nations were given the Scriptures before us and we after them. Allah gave us the guidance of truth that they have been disputing about. This (Friday) is the Day that they have been disputing about, and all the other people are behind us in this matter: The Jews' (day of congregation is) tomorrow (Saturday) and the Christians' is the day after tomorrow (Sunday)''³⁶

He continued saying Allah SWT says:

O mankind! reverence your Guardian-Lord, Who created you from a single person, created, of like nature his mate, and from them twain scattered (seeds) countless men and women....³⁷

Certainly, Islam gives both man and woman equal rights or it makes them equally duty-bound, to acquire knowledge. The prophet S.A.W is related saying "Seeking knowledge is a duty upon every Muslim (man and woman). This points to the fact that; women have a role to play in seeking and divulging knowledge. Noteworthy, the examples of recognition of female sex by Islam are numerous and so are the women's contributions to the success of Islam. Parable, the first martyr in Islam was the woman Sumayya, who died in the course to uphold Islam. She served as a role model to other Muslims to uphold their religion in thick or thin³⁸.

In this vein, Sheikh Usman Danfodiyo's struggle was with a view to change the situation to the guidance of Islam, that can only be actualized through learning, teaching, admonition, on the course of Islam. He and his adherents taught both males and females without discrimination. During that era, Muslims were taught about Qur'an and other related sources of Sharia. Certainly, the act of teaching all, signifies the importance of women, as girl's education³⁹; and ⁴⁰ The act of reviving the tenets of Islam that were taught during the reign of Sokoto Caliphate was imitated by Sarkin Gobir Muhammad Zayyanu by establishing a school that cater for educating all, including married women and adult, a school that was termed as first of its kind in the Gwadabawa Local Government Area, Sokoto State, Nigeria. This is a step to encourage women's education, Islamic education development in Gwadabawa Local Government or District as well, a once part of Sokoto Caliphate. Women have the most important quest for education (learning and scholarship) because they are the most vulnerable and are impactful in upbringing the young ones (Farid, 2005; Bashar, 2019). Education as a tool for development and growth of individuals, societies, nations, and civilizations, is a right to people irrespective of being a Muslim⁴¹. Infect, all people irrespective of their types are called to be educated, so that they can have the ware withal to submit to Islam⁴²; and⁴³. The Madrisatunnurul Aulad established by Sarkin Gobir Gwadabawa Muhammad Zayyanu served as vast avenue for women to learn their religion, marital counseling, and other beautiful Islamic cultures. The school was coined as the initial (first) major school of its type that admits married women folk despite the repugnant attitude of the community members at the inception. With the passage of time, deliberate stand and support by the Sarkin Gobir Gwadabawa Muhammad Zayyanu as a leader had encourage the school to stand. The school aimed to:

³⁵ Jabo., Takaitaccen tarihin Sarkin Gobir: Alhaji Muhammadu Zayyanu (MFR) da Masarautar Gwadabawa. 2008, P, 25

³⁶ A. Inda, & M.T Qasim, An appraisal of the nature, level and forms of Da'awah activities in Taraba state Nigeria. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*,20(12), 2015, Pp, 100-105.

³⁷ Qur'an, 4:1

³⁸ A. A Abu Shehab, Women, Islam and modernity. Submitted for award of master of Philosophy, London School of Economics, University of London. 1992, Pp., 9-10.

³⁹ K.S, Chafe., The state and economy in Sokoto Caliphate: Policies and practices in the Metropolitan districts (180-1903 AD). A PhD Thesis submitted at Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Nigeria., 1999, Pp, 22-34

⁴⁰ B. Abubakar, Historical Origin of Tajwid and Tahfidh in Sokoto State and the Role of Musabaqah (Qur'an Recitation Competition) Towards its Development. *Sarcouncil Journal of Education and Sociology*, 2(1), 2023, Pp, 1-7

⁴¹ T. Javed., Effect of classroom environment, motivation and teacher feedback on academic achievement of secondary school students in Pakistan. PhD Thesis Submitted at Mohi-UD-DIN Islamic University, Pakistan., 2017, Pp, 23-33

⁴² A., Abba, I.B Jumare., and S.S Aliyu., Sultans of Sokoto: A biographical history since 1804. Kaduna: Arewa House, Centre for historical and Research, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Kaduna., 2017, Pp, 2-7

⁴³ K.T. Batagarawa & A.G. Yahaya. Women and Da'awah activities in Katsina Metropolis. *Attarbiawiy: Malaysian Online Journal of Education*,4(2), 2020, Pp, 148-155.

- Provide convenient learning avenue for women (married and relations)
- Provide a model for others to imitate
- Provide and organized modern style of learning contrary to the Olsen Almajiri system
- To produce teachers among the women folk
- Ultimately, the many objectives of establishing the school were achieved such as the following:
- Produced many graduated women in Islamic sciences
- Produced learnt women that can substitute male teachers (such as Malama Zainab, Suwaiba Bashir, Hadiza Muntari, etc)
- Inculcated the culture of Hijab wear among members of the Gwadabawa District
- Nowadays, women are taught in the day, and night, all due to modelling provided by the Madrisatunnurul Aulad amidst a repugnant society.

Madrisatunnurul Aulad as Center in Girls and Boys' Education

Islam does not discriminate among children or youngsters in their right to education, and seeking knowledge⁴⁴. Thus, the Madrisatunnurul Aulad established by Sarkin Gobir Gwadabawa Muhammad Zayyanu served as a learning hub for boys, and girls. It has one-time been the most populated Islamiyah school in Gwadabawa Local Government Area, Sokoto State, Nigeria, serving to inculcate knowledge, and character in students for the development of the society and getting favors of the hereafter. The school objectives in this vein are:

- Teaching students on Qur'anic recitation and memorization
- Teaching students about Sunnah (the life of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, such as Arba'una Hadith, Bulugul Maram, Muwadda, etc)
- Teaching students about Sirah (Hidayatul Nurul yaqin)
- Teaching of Tahzib
- Teaching of fiqh (Al-Akhdari, Ishmawi, Iziyya, Muqarrattauhid)
- Teaching about oneness of Allah
- Teaching students about dress code by imbibing uniform clothing system
- Teaching students some form of western education (basics)⁴⁵.

Achievement and Challenges of the school

The entire education system of the country has performed a lot of wonders; certainly, objectives were achieved despite the challenges. The school had achieved the following:

- Encouraging of women in Islamic education in Gwadabawa Local Government Area
- Encouraging girl and boys in Islamic education in Gwadabawa Local Government Area
- Encouraging the growth of Quranic recitation competitions and Tajweed activities
- Producing many Huffaz from the school, a f serving to help others imitate (it was the first major Tajweed school in Gwadabawa that flourishes)
- Inculcating the use of Hijab wear among members of the society
- Encouraging Sunnah activities within Gwadabawa Local Government Area.

However, challenges facing the school are significant. Some of the challenges such as poor funding (from government and parents) are important need interventions. The school is now battling with poor remuneration, poor enrollment of students by the parents, and insufficiency of teachers. Suggestions for interventions against the challenges of the school were: It is important that every parent make flexible payment for their wards to help properly run the school. Governments should provide more teachers and remuneration, so that teachers can work effectively. Wealthy individuals should give a helping hand in providing money and materials to the school.

Conclusion

The contributions of Sarkin Gobir Gwadabawa Muhammad Zayyanu to the development of Islamiyya education in Gwadabawa Local Government, Sokoto State, stand as a testament to the enduring legacy of Sheikh Usman Bn Fodiyo's intellectual and spiritual tradition. Through his visionary leadership, dedication, and commitment to Islamic education, Sarkin Gobir Muhammad Zayyanu has significantly impacted the growth and sustainability of Islamiyya schools in the region.

⁴⁴ A. Chonitsa & AC Adila. (2024). Implementation of Halal lifestyle for the young generation of Indonesian Muslims perspective Adinugraha. *Indonesian Journal of Halal Studies*,1(1), 1024, 31-39.

⁴⁵ Jabo,. Takaitaccen tarihin Sarkin Gobir: Alhaji Muhammadu Zayyanu (MFR) da Masarautar Gwadabawa. 2008, P, 25

His efforts in establishing educational institutions, fostering community involvement, and addressing the challenges faced by these schools have not only enhanced access to Islamic knowledge but also strengthened the moral and educational foundation of the community. By blending the rich heritage of traditional Islamic teachings with contemporary educational needs, he has contributed to the empowerment of the youth and the preservation of Islamic values in an ever-changing world.

This review underscores the importance of leadership in advancing educational initiatives and preserving cultural and religious legacies. Sarkin Gobir Muhammad Zayyanu's contributions highlight the role of descendants of the Sokoto Caliphate in sustaining and expanding the intellectual and spiritual framework laid down by Sheikh Usman Bn Fodiyo. As such, his work serves as an inspiration for current and future generations to continue prioritizing education as a means of societal and religious development.

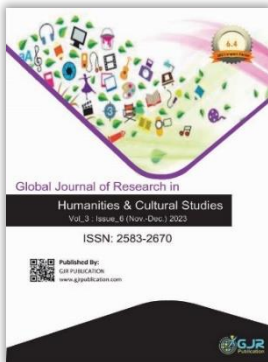
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