

Beyond Specific Impression: The Development of Western Education in Toro District

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Abstract

In the context of colonial system of education there were chiefly improvised policies and procedures introduced for the purpose of effective vassalage and providing some services to the colonial government. Colonially introduced western education in most cases was short of the required amount and quality. Toro district is believed to be central in the training and retraining of diverse teaching personnel among them were those who served differently outside the schedule of their practice. The development of system of education there has been a source of contention to some people within the area as, they raised some questions as to: why, when, how and for who was it founded? At the moment, none of the available publications written about the history of education in northern Nigeria provided cogent information as answers to those questions. This is a negation of historical development of western education as it concerns Toro district of Bauuchi emirate in the then, northern province. The paper deals with background information about the development of western education in Toro district, as the second oldest school of its kind in northern Nigeria. Historical methods chosen and used in this study for its qualities. Moreover, the paper brought to light the British colonial government's collaborationism with the missions in carrying out their activities.

Introduction

Prior to the formal introduction of western education in Toro District, there were two systems of education: traditional and Islamic systems. This paper examines the genesis and nature of these education systems within the context of their relevance in pre-colonial Toro. This is followed by the gradual introduction of western education via the agency of native authority and Christian missionaries. The paper brought to light the government's collaborationism with the missions in training and retraining of teachers in a diverse society in northern Nigeria.

Early Education in Toro District

It is important at this juncture to comprehend the meaning of education in this context, so as to understand if the area in view had any strong educational practice much earlier before the coming of colonialists into the area or not.

Education has been severally defined by scholars who specialize in its theories and methods of operations. For this paper, education is regarded simply as the transfer of knowledge which brings about behavioural change. It has been identified as formal and informal based on its kind.¹ Informally, education is received outside of an organised or deliberate system while the formal being one that is carefully planned, organised and implemented.² The informal type of education as identified in Toro district has its sources which include the home and family, Islamic and Traditional religion as well as the structural entities in socio-cultural.³ The sources of formal education, on the other hand, are the pre-school institutions (day-care centres and kindergartens); primary, secondary schools, post-secondary schools such as polytechnics, colleges of education and universities.⁴ The earliest forms of educations in Toro District were not much different from what was found in most parts of northern Nigeria. These include the traditional and Quranic systems of education.⁵

The Traditional form of Education in Toro District

In Toro unlike the practice of Western education which was rejected by most of the communities despite the opportunity been created for them to have it early under the Bauchi native authority's government. The traditional forms of education in the area were widely practised and continues to be practised thereafter. Under this, a child started receiving his education right from home. It was from there that he began to acquire the community's values through The parents.⁶ This process of educating a child was a necessary part and consequence of personal connections or ties often for the realization of societal moral values.⁷

When a child attended age norm, the educational pattern in question then takes gender-specific.⁸ In this context mother then came in to assume responsibility for the bringing up of a girl child. This was the knowledge and skills of correct manner involving action and response to stimulation. She became careful with teaching her the art and skills of homemaking for future uses. Fundamental in this respect were the child caring and female craft.⁹

On the other hand, the education of a male child became a responsibility of the father from whom where the child learns the skills involved in providing for the household or family, protecting the family against any serious challenge as well as learning the family male craft. With all these, the children were brought up by adhering to the footsteps of their parents through the elderly ones concerning their professions and other social activities.¹⁰

As farming happened to be the prevailing economic activities, among the various communities of people there, children grew up with a reasonable amount of knowledge on that.¹¹ They were able to identify a suitable and more fertile land for a particular agricultural activity principally the propagation of crops for both subsistence and commercial purposes. Added to that was also their ability to locate all the farming activities such as clearing of the land, sowing the seeds, weeding, harvesting and storing of the harvested crops appropriately.¹² Even the Fulani and other communities who rear livestock among other job opportunities

brought up their wards with a sound knowledge acquired through this kind of education in the area.¹³

However, this has identified the existence of apprenticeship as a useful tool for passing knowledge of the family craft down to the children. It also involves children visiting the house of craft specialists, who were popularly known as a master craft for the acquisition of the needed technical knowhow.

From the foregoing explanation, one could see the way and manner that form of traditional education was practised in the District of Toro.

Early Qur'an Education in Toro District During and Beyond c.1750

From the days which predated the colonial presence in the whole northern Nigeria right from the eleventh century and beyond, people of northern Nigeria were overwhelmingly engaged in teaching and learning of Quranic education.¹⁴ This was due to the predominance of Islamic and trading activities by Muslim Merchants and scholars as migrants who travel around large area that came to formed part of present-day Nigeria and beyond usually with no common hindrance.¹⁵ The introduction of this form of education there did not predate the movements of the earliest Fulani as migrants among other people.

The Fulani groups in Toro district were said to be led differently but with common philosophy on education. Among them was a group of Musa Jokolle and his progeny Ardo Tirawho migrated from *Bagarmi* (Chad). The former is identified as a Muslim scholar, interpreter of Islam's sciences, he trained people in area of Islamic law or jurisprudence.¹⁶

The later Ardo Tira was concerned with the breeding of cattle. It has been said that, with the increasing number of their herds and the need for more pasture, they left Chad area eastward perhaps before 16th century A.D.¹⁷ In understanding this more better, it can be suggested that the presence of Fulani in Bagirmi kingdom around the present-day Chad republic, was around 15th century A.D.¹⁸ This Fulani community could have reached some parts of Bauchi mainly Toro and Kirfi in that 16th century A.D. This was part of the hey time of the Zaria kingdom when it was extending its powers across the length and breadth of some distant locations in the central part of Nigeria.¹⁹

When colonialists came into Toro to found their system of Western education, they did not consider it as Muslims were not their favourites. They struggled to incorporate only the pagans they found in the area, into learning of their culture through western schooling. This made the said education system to be a pagans affair till in the middle of 1936 when the major population in the area was allowed to take part in the said learning.

Those who learned Qur'anic especially from the pre-colonial system of Quranic schooling were employed to teach in the early established Western education schools. The Quranic schooling in Toro Area was early practiced under the shade of trees and in some ancient mosques as obtained in most parts of the then northern protectorate.²⁰

The Quranic education in Toro has now conformed to the contemporary practice of Islamic education, where some buildings have now been erected and reserved for this purpose. Today, in the same vein some parts of the district, have been using temporary centres such as primary, secondary schools and in some cases, mosques are used. Meanwhile, within the earliest Islamic education centres in Toro, the organizational setting of the teaching activity have Mallams with their scriptures as the authorities. Close to them were learners properly arranged for the learning to take effect. All the learners used wooden slates. Age and understandings by some individuals became factors that were found stimulating and rewarding. This perchance, means persons with those qualities were assigned to contribute towards facilitating the learning process.

The early Muslims in the district area of Toro were known for their commitment to the advancement of Islamic religious studies. They travelled to many places such as Zaria in search of Islamic knowledge. This, in turn, facilitated the process of establishing *Makarantunilliminaddini* in the area.²¹ The learning centres had beginners and those who were advancing more with their Islamic scholarship in attendance. Due to the successes of these people in the education in question, some of them became famous to the extent of being invited into *Soron Barnayi* at Bauchi to participate in discussions concerning some important matters. This was quite remarkable in the history of scholarship there.²²

At the early time before the emergence of the emirate system in the area, Islamic religion ethos was adulterated as most of the Muslims in the area deviated in most of their social conducts. Some of them were said to have cohabited with some women. They also indulged in alcoholism and *Zakkat* became a very difficult task among them.²³ This has been the leading factor that prompted Muhammadu Oho as a cley man, to engage seriously in a struggle for the spread of revolutionary principles in the area.

This educational systems has helped a lot in making the individuals placed in respectable positions by the different groups. They succeeded in cementing the communities by promoting reciprocity among them. For example, they administer punishment to any wrongdoing child and speak the truth where and whenever necessary without any divergence; all these became a peace offering.²⁴

More so, the kind of training children received then, were training on self-control, devotion; respect for other members of the community especially the elderly ones, assuming their responsibilities among other good practices. In this direction, it may be observed that imitation and instructions from elders came to form part of the basic methods of teaching and learning activities in Toro. As pointed out earlier, sex came to be a barrier in the training as the training of the girl child took a different form. Elderly women trained female children. This female training was mainly for the preparation of a good mother ship in the community. Under this kind of training, they were taught to be submissive to their fathers and male adult as a basis for teaching them indirectly how to be obedient to their life partner when the time comes.

Evaluation of Western Education In Toro District 1929-1960

The history of western education in northern Nigeria is perhaps, incomplete without mentioning Toro district. 1929 was an epoch in the educational history of northern Nigeria. It was the first time when western education was distinctively established in the said geopolitical region of the country. This was also part of the period identified with some traces of the colonial policy which declared pagans' areas with emirates as catchment areas for missioneries to cater to their western educational needs.

Administratively, Toro was a District under Bauchi province. It has not been argued for been a peaceful district area in most of the pre-colonial and colonial periods. It is of common physical attributes to the then Plateau province in the southern part of Bauchi emirate which were said to had once came to be under the district in view.²⁵

To justify that, the establishment of Old Bukur in Jos according to a chronicler on the history of Toro Hassan Umaru, was founded by one of the earliest leader of Toro (Ardo).²⁶

It may not be argued that, missionary dominance in some of the independent 'Pagan Districts then, made colonialists identified Toro as a potential area for the establishment of their kind system of western education.²⁷ This came to be seen as a personal triumph for the British government and also a counter-attraction to the mission dominance in propagating western education.

The system of education provided the colonialists with an alternative for making their presence felt by different people in different areas. Teachers College Toro a product of the system was the second teachers training centre to Katsina College.²⁸ It therefore, came to serve people from different provinces within the country through recruiting some of them as teachers, laborers for running some schools majorly in the pagan dominions.²⁹ It was also introduced following the insufficient or lacking of Western education institutions for the independent pagan districts or areas in Plateau, Bauchi province and other areas.³⁰

Although the system came to be altered from how it was made to be under its pioneering principle of 'Pagan in the emirate with the silence approval of the training of the missions' pupils or rather students at a low cost by the Native Administration.³¹

As it was, in the colonial period, Western education was regulatory in nature as it involves the issuance of official orders determined by colonial motives. This situation brought about different colonial practices of Western education in northern Nigeria. It should be noted that the aims of that Western education are identified in all its related policies and plan of work.³² The earliest and the then latest policy of Western education was established in 1925 just four years before the introduction of Western education into Toro district and three years after the recommendations of the Phelps-Stokes Commission was submitted to the government. The said policy provided a blueprint for the then government on how the educational practices were to be in the conquered areas. Allowed for the participation of private organisations in educational activities as well as the creation

of educational advisors by the colonial government were all part of its recommendations. The second one was that, Western education should be established in each of the so-called native areas and that its nature should be determined by the tradition, social organisation of the people there.³³

The policy further identified religion training as fundamental in addition to other moral training in giving a sound education to people.³⁴ More so, it proposed the creation of an educational section that will function in several ways among which is assisting the government of the day in making African to be dependent on them socially and economically.³⁵ It pointed out the nature of schools to be established by both government and non-governmental agencies and which were proposed to be treated equally if they function optimally.

The vernacular language was imposed by the British colonialists under the Bauchi native authority's government. Thus, the naming of the earliest western education centre in Toro District to a 'Vernacular and Vocational teachers training centre'. It was manned under the basic rules which were enshrined in the then, memorandum on educational policy in parts of British Tropical Africa.

Moreover, the policy provided for the practice of visiting teachers, to be responsible for coordinating some educational activities in line with the government directives. Not only that but also, Teaching of vernacular and technical or vocational education. Thus, the early name given to the defunct Teachers' Training college Toro (vernacular and vocational training centre).³⁶ This memorandum was the main thing that guided Western educational activities in Nigeria up to 1945. Even though, there was a 1926 code which succeeded only in classifying schools into grade A, B, C and D instead of creating rules that were to promote the effective performance of schools.³⁷

In Toro district area there was a more concentrated effort by colonial government to reach out to pagans within the Bauchi native authority and beyond. Converged them in the area thereby introducing a system of teachers' training for them alone. This was done at a time when western education was encouraged in the country and people were given confidence by both colonial government and the missionary societies to avail themselves with the opportunity of learning the new form of education.

Reverse was the case in Toro district where despite having "pagans" in the area, the government denied missions the right to found and administer western education in the area as it was the case early in some parts of the country.³⁸ This perhaps was contradictory and a resulted effect of sensibility of the then government on what was called religion non-interference in the emirates.³⁹ Moreover, been a system of Western education for the "Pagans" by 1936, the non-pagan community began to be involved in western educational activities in the area.⁴⁰ As reported in an interview by Hassan Umaru Toro one of the early children from muslim community in the area to be admitted into Gyamzo elementary training school which was a branch of the system. He said that, by 1936, there were involvement of some Muslims in sending their children to study western education in the area.

From what has been explained above, one may understand how the introduced system of education in Toro district shows a little compliance to some provisions of the principle of Western education of the time. This was because of the denial of missionary societies from having total access to the pagan communities by the colonial government in this part of emirate.

Within the system, Christianity was encouraged and succeeded to the detriment of the dominant groups.⁴¹ It in no little way promoted evangelism in the area leading to the conversion of people there in some case by even students from the teachers' training school Toro (Bushara).⁴² Therefore, the early pattern of educational practice in the area brought about the beginning of the terrible state to the known coexistence among the diverse people in the area. This may be identified as an experience that rarely happened in areas which had similar experiences as pointed out by Richard Morrock: "A third way in which differences are created is religious conversion. It became obvious from this paper that, Christian missionary activity was a pro-western value. It has said however that, when the conversion of a conquered people is only partial, it often becomes another form of "divide and rule."⁴³ This is especially true when converts are drawn largely from those seen as oppressed castes by the colonial government within their society or as was often the case where the new converts were segregated deliberately from their compatriots in compounds. In such cases, the converts usually side with the colonialists in the event of an insurrection".⁴⁴

Meanwhile, under the then native administration of Bauchi, it was in Toro district that for the first time faith was made to be a measuring factor and obvious means for accessing western education.⁴⁵ The kind of educational training introduced there was formally suggested for the independent pagan areas of some provinces not only for the people in Toro district alone. Unfortunately, the system could not maximally last throughout the era following the changed in colonial enthusiasm, which gives a new and creative idea that allowed Muslims to come into play. As stated early, this system of education was practically barred, very unusual in its form especially when compared with a succeeding circumstance, which continued up to independence and beyond. That significant and basic alteration continue thereby becoming an inevitable nature of the system in the 1960 independent period and beyond.

Conclusion

For the sake of clarity and to remove every form of ambiguity, from the findings of this study, the following important conclusions are drawn:

Firstly, it has been found that, indigenous system of education existed in this part of Northern Nigeria before the advent of the western system of education. It was very systemized as it is grouped into two strata based on how their practices appeared to be. Secondly, it has been found that, the system of Western education in Toro was founded by native authority government other than the missions as

been speculated in the area by some people. Thirdly, from what may be seen as contradictory, this study has found that, Western system of education in Toro district from its inception, aided the missionaries in rooting Christianity in the area which further separated the extant communities into smaller parts.

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2. Claudio Z. D. (1988). Formal, Non-Formal and Informal Education... pp.1-2
3. Oral interview with Hassan Umaru on 6th, June 2019 conducted in Toro inside his house which is located in Fadan Toro. The information sourced from an interview with Zubairu Yakubu (HardonZaranda) 8th June 2019 also contained the same explanation about the old Bukur which is part of the present Jos north local government area of Plateau state.
4. This has been justified by A.B. Fafunwa in his 1974 published work on the history of education in northern Nigeria p.17 mentioned that despite the existence of different groups of people in Africa. They all have the same traditional educational aims and objectives. Though, the procedure or process for attaining them was basically determined by the geographical, economic and overall social realities of each community, this introduced some unlikeness among them.
5. A.B. Fafunwa (1974); *History of education in northern Nigeria* p.18.
6. A.B. Fafunwa (1974); p.20
7. Oral interview with Hassan Umaru; 6th, June 2019.
8. Oral interview with Hassan Umaru; 6th, June 2019.
9. Oral interview with Muhammad Inuwa Imam age 65. The interview was held in the evening within the premises of central mosque Tilden Fulani on the 2ndDay of June, 2020.
10. Oral interview with Y. S. Mai-unguwaage 54; held at Federal Lowcost Toro, on 08th Day June 2019 around 10:00am.
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 20. Oral interview with Hassan Umaru; age 80 years; held on 6th Day of June 2019.
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 22. Oral interview with Hassan Umaru age 80years; held on 6th Day of June 2019.
 23. Oral interview with Hassan Umaru age 80years; held on 6th Day of June 2019.
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 33. A.B. (1976); p.124.
 34. A.B. (1976); p.124.
 35. Hassan Umaru. Fulanin Toro da Makwabtan; P20.
 36. A.B. (1976); p.126.
 37. From the period 1842 up to the period around early phase of 20th century, according to ABIONA, Immanuel Bamidele in his article titled: the Colonial Government and Western Education in Nigeria; the various missionary organizations in Nigeria run the education according to their respective philosophies, level of manpower available, as well as the availability of material and financial resources. During this period the colonial government was silent over the educational activities of the missions.
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 39. Oral interview with Hassan Umaru; 6th, June 2019.
 40. Oral interview conducted at Toro with Zubairu Yakubu (HardonZaranda); 8th June 2019.

41. Oral interview with Y. S. Mai-unguwa held at Federal Lowcost Toro, on 08th June 2019 around 10:00am.
42. R. Morrock (2006); Heritage of Strife: the Effects of Colonialist “Divide And Rule” Strategy Upon the Colonized Peoples. Guilford Press. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40401707> 30-10-2018 19:12 UTC; p.131 Assessed on 15-09-2018.
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44. Oral interview with Zubairu Yakubu, 65 years. The village head of Zaranda and a renown clegy man in Toro. 08-June 2019.

List of Informants

S/N	NAME	AGE	SEX	OCCUPATION	PLACE OF INTERVIEW	DATE OF INTERVIEW
1	Hassan Umar	80	M	Former District Head of Toro	In his residence at Toro Town	06th, June 2019
2	Zubairu Yakubu	65	M	The village head of Zaranda	In Toro Town	08 th June 2019
3	Muhamma d Inuwa Imam Tilde	65	M	Imam in one of the Tilde’s Mosque and civil servant.	Tilde Central Mosque.	08th June 2019
4	Yakubu Sabo Mai Unguwa	Aaround 57 years of age	M	Civil sevant	At federal low-cost toro.	3 rd June, 2020