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An Assessment of the Introduction and Spread of Islam in Bade Emirate, Yobe State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT
This paper fundamentally discussed the significance of Islam, especially of bringing change in to the life of human beings. It specifically examined the role of Islam in the development of Bade Emirate. It also assessed the roles played by various agents in the introduction and spread of Islam by examining: the role played by the trans-Saharan routes; the political conversation of the ruling elites who became influential in the promotion of Islamic learning and social integration among its community; the roles played by Muslim clerics; the development of traditional Quranic school system; and the contribution of Sufi orders. The paper also analysed the challenges faced: like the deep rooted nature of the pre-Islamic traditional beliefs and the historically gradual, often opportunistic, and sometimes conflicted nature of the Islamic expansion; as well as challenges to institutionalisation after its formal establishment. Qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection were used.
Keywords: Bade Emirate, Islam, Islamic learning

INTRODUCTION

Bade Emirate is one of the oldest established Emirates in Northern Nigeria, the second oldest, in Yobe State (Duchi, 2020). It came in to contact with Islam through Kanem-Borno since c. 1300. With the conversion of its ruler Mai Sale I in 1899, Islam became a state religion in 1904. Subsequently, the religion became well established and wide spread with the activities of its rulers and some agents, from the time of Mai Sale I to date. The religion came to impact greatly on the community, and its people. However, little is known about: the agents responsible for, and the factors that aided the introduction, and spread of the religion; the challenges encountered in the process; as well as the influence Islam exerted on Bade Community and its people. This paper was set to address this problem.

Islam in Bade Emirate

The comprehensive nature of Islam has made it the sole and divine religion concerned with the social, economic, and religious problems of man (Adam, 2016) thereby improving the society. (Jachilim, at el. 2023). As a value modifying factor for instance, it has impacted on the Nigerian traditional moral values

and also in shaping its history. Fundamentally, Islam was first introduced to Africa from Arabia in the 7th century. It gradually reached West African sub-region and Nigeria in particular through Kanem-Borno, and later Hausa land. Bade Emirate occupied a buffer zone between Kanem-Borno and Kano, and although Islam became a state region in 1904, five years after the conversation of its ruler Mai Saleh I in 1899, the religion was known to its people through contact with Kanem Borno, and the land beyond, even before this date (Duchi, 2020). A number of agents were responsible for its introduction and spread, who however encountered lot of challenges. Nonetheless, Islam had come to greatly impact on the Bade Community. This paper was an attempt at assessing the introduction, and spread of Islam in Bade Emirate. It also examined the agents responsible for that; the challenges encountered; and how it impacted on the Bade society.

Introduction and Spread of Islam

Islam was First introduced to Africa in the early 7th Century around (614-615), when an emissary went to Abyssinia, modern day Ethiopia on the instructions of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) to get protection from King Armah An-Najashi, following Muslims' prosecution by the Meccan authority (study.com, 2026). However, Egypt was Islam's first major point of contact through military campaign under Muslim soldiers which saw the religion spreading across North Africa, starting from 639 CE. By the 8th Century the region was largely incorporated in to the Muslim world. Berber tribes became receptive to the new faith and played crucial role in its further spread. From the 8th Century, Islam spread slowly through the Trans-Saharan trade routes with Muslim merchants from North Africa interacting with West African societies, bringing their faith, language, and Culture to areas like Senegal, Ghana, Mali, and Nigeria. The religion spread to the East African coast through the Red sea and Arabian sea routes. Coastal port cities such as Zeila in modern-day Somalia developed into key centers of Islamic activity by the 10th Century.

Although Islam reached West Africa in the 8th Century, however it's spread to modern states of Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali, and Nigeria was a gradual and complex process, which could be explained in three stages. In the First stage, African Kings contained Muslim influence by segregating Muslim communities. The second stage witnessed the rulers blending Islam with local traditions, as the population selectively appropriated Islamic practices. And finally in the third stage, African Muslims pressed for reforms in an effort to rid their societies of mixed practices, and implement Shariah.

Factors that aided the spread of Islam in West Africa

By the end of the 18th Century, Islam had spread southwards to the fringes of the forest belt. The spread was aided by a number of factors. Firstly, the nature of Islam as a religion accepting polygamy is to some extent related to traditional African religion of marrying more than one wife; its simplicity of doctrine and mode of worship, made it easily adaptable to the African communities. Secondly, the trans-Saharan trade network used by the Muslim traders from the Maghreb and the Sahara, where market centres were established and developed along major cities with its attraction, had drawn many people in to the religion, especially where the Muslim traders, initially converted the Kings, and assisted in their administration in the towns like Gao, Kano, in Kanem Borno. Thirdly, a closely related factor was, the activities of the Muslim clerics who established religious centres which attracted students , and who on the completion of their studies and training, returned to their homes to convert people, by engaging on lecture Missionary tours, serving as scribes and advisers to Kings, writing books on many aspects of the religion of Islam. Fourthly, the activities of the rulers had also greatly contributed. The rulers not only encouraged the trans-Saharan trade, and extended hospitality to traders and visiting Clerics, their conversion had become a matter of prestige among aristocracy. They also encouraged Islamic institutions, like Islamic taxation and legal systems, building of Mosques, and appointing Judges. Furthermore, the pilgrimages they under took, had a considerable spiritual effect, increasing their determination both to strengthen and purify Islam, and to spread it further. Fifthly, the Holy wars waged against infidels or lukewarm Muslims had helped in Islam reaching its climax. Sixthly, Islam also spread on to West Africa through inter-marriages.

Islam in Bade

Bade Emirate, comprising of two Local Government Areas of Bade and Jakusko, was one of the oldest established Emirates in Northern Nigeria. Bade's geographical location as the northern most buffer area

between Kanem-Borno and Sokoto Caliphate, two most powerful Islamic Kingdoms made it unique in the growth of Islam. The teaching of Qur'anic education and Islamic jurisprudence in Bade Emirate could be said to have started during the reign of Mai Saleh I (1897-1919). Islam was introduced to the Bade Emirate in Yobe State, Nigeria, through trade and diplomatic ties with the neighbouring Kanem-Borno Empire. There was however early limited influence dating back to the 14th Century, with significant achievements later made. Basically, the introduction and spread of Islam in Bade Emirate could be placed under three different periods. The First period when Bade came in to contact with Islam was as far back as C. 1300 with the establishment of Ngazargamu the capital of Kanem-Borno. The then Bade leader Dygana of Tagali, was said to have paid homage to the Mai of the Sayfawa at that time, and was given the title of Dugum. This evidence of early contact could be supported by the names of the early Bade rulers used by Muslims and Arabs like: Aji (1848-1897), Saleh(1899-1919), Suleiman(1919-1939). The second stage started in the early 18th Century when Islam was said to have been introduced to Bade through mutual relationship and understanding between Bade ruling class and Kanem-Borno Shehu, and was embraced by the ruling class but did not made it compulsory to their subjects. The third period started from 1893 when Rabdh over run Borno and one of his commandants Fadh-Allah was advancing further west, his forces reached Bade territory in 1899, then Mai Duna was the Mai of Bade had abdicated his throne, and Fadh-Allah summoned Duna's brother Saleh I from a village called Alagarno to ascend the throne. This event marked its spread steadily through the activities of its rulers who initiated and developed scholarly exchange and scholarship, and Rabih's conquest of Borno in the late 19th Century which further accelerated its adaptation (Duchi, 2020).

Agents responsible for the Introduction and Spread of Islam in Bade Emirate

From the time the Bade people first came into contact with Islam to date, a number of agents could be said to have been responsible for its introduction and spread in Bade Emirate. The prominent agents include its rulers, especially Mai Sale I (1899-1919). Firstly, he made Islam the state religion after his conversation to the religion. As stated earlier in this paper, it was during his reign that the teaching of Qur'anic education and Islamic jurisprudence started. His contributions to Islam could, indeed be much appreciated by recounting the efforts he made, particularly of seeking and bringing an Islamic scholar Abubakar Mustapha, from Damagaram, in present day Niger Republic. Before his time thou, early rulers like Dugum Dygana of Tagali made some efforts of visiting the Shehu of Borno, which initiated the formal coming into contact of the people of Bade, with Islam as early as the 14th Century. Again as early as the 18th Century, according to Duchi (2020), it was reported that, Islam was introduced into Bade Emirate through mutual relationships between the Bade ruling class and the Kanem-Borno Shehu who embraced the religion thou did not make it compulsory on their subjects. However, it was the foundation laid by Mai Saleh I for the promotion of Islam in all its aspects in Bade Emirate that, all his successors have been building upon. He was the First Mai of Bade to have showed commitment to the promotion of Islam among the Bade communities. Among other things, he built mosques for daily congregational and Weekly Jumma'a prayers, establishment of Tsangaya school making it compulsory for parents and their children to be enrolled. The encouragement and support given to ulama attracted my scholars especially from different parts of Northern Nigeria and Niger Republic, who came and settled in Bade land. These scholars established traditional Islamic schools and Islamic centres which attracted students who aided in the spread of the religion, and development of traditional Qur'anic school system which contributed to moral and religious training, (Kaku, 2026). The prominent scholars who taught, preached, and published books on different aspects of life include: Sheikh Muhammad Dan Jinjiri, Sheikh Muhammad Dodo, Malan Saleh Dan Maiganye, Sheikh Hassan Ibn Hassan, Sheikh Abdulkadir Attaliki, etc, (Ali, 2026).

Challenges in the Introduction and Spread of Islam

The introduction and establishment of Islam especially in Bade, an area with a deep history in the Kanem-Borno Empire, historically faced challenges ranging from culture, resistance to modernisation, and socio-economic, and security issues. Basically, there were the deeply rooted religious practices, which resisted the initial introduction of Islamic practices, (Musa, 2026). Furthermore, the British colonial system interrupted and challenged the established Islamic legal and administrative systems. Of recent, especially from 2003, Boko Haram insurgency had also caused significant social instability, which worsened

poverty, and created a security crisis that challenges the peaceful practice and propagation of mainstream Islam. There was also the problem of the early established traditional Tsangaya schools facing challenges of integration with Western education system. The system faced challenges especially in terms of lack of funding and welfare or poor condition of services for teachers and lack of formal support structures. There was again, the struggle for the Islamic system to adapt to the modern and new technological challenges and demands. Moreover, the internal ideological conflicts of different sects had made unification difficult.

Literature Review

A lot of works were written that are related and of great importance to this study. The works reviewed in this work include:

A.Y. Adam's (2016), 'Analysis of Islamic concept of Responsibility (Mas'uliyya) and its Role in combating corruption in Nigeria, examines the significance of Islam in bringing change to the life of human beings. It expresses Sharia as a means of establishing a complete order in human life, and in his society, ensures his safety and prosperity. It however laments that, corruption in Nigeria today as a socio-economic and political malady, has erodes this reality of sharia, and thereby leading to the inability of the country to safeguard the rights and needs of its citizens. The paper concludes by, recommending certain principles of Islamic concept of responsibility to be adhered to that would help in combating corruption, and thus draw benefits for its citizens. However, the paper does not discuss the introduction and spread of Islam in Bade, an aspect which this paper assessed

Jachilim et al's (2023), 'An assessment of the role of Islamic education in the development of Bade Emirate, Yobe State Nigeria', analyses the concept of Islamic Education as a process of imparting or acquiring knowledge, values, and skills that ideally contribute towards improving, particularly the learners and the society. The paper also explains the consequences of neglecting or misperceiving the importance of Islamic education, by explaining the damage inflicted by insurgents and terrorist groups, on the Nigerian society. However, the paper does not discuss the factors that aided the process of introduction and spread of Islam, which this paper discussed.

Duchi (2020), 'The Position of Bade Emirate in the promotion of Islamic learning, and social integration, 1946-2015', discusses the role played by Bade Emirate in promoting Islamic Education and social integration among its community, which it asserts starts from the reign of Mai Sale I (1899-1919), who among other things brought an Islamic scholar from Niger Republic to Gorgoram to teach Islamic education, lead prayers and handle other religious issues. It also examines the legacy of other rulers who eventually developed a strong Islamic scholarship and production of indigenous Islamic scholars. The paper also discusses the major transformation in Bade by Mai Umar Ibn Suleiman which made the emirate attractive and conducive for socialisation, becoming one of the most socialised emirates in Northern Nigeria today. The paper however, does not discuss the challenges of introduction and spread, which this study covered.

Google.com/search challenges in introduction and spread of Islam in Bade Emirate, discusses the key challenges in the introduction and spread of Islam in Bade which includes: the deep-rooted nature of pre-Islamic traditional beliefs and the historically gradual, often opportunistic, and sometimes conflicted nature of Islamic expansion. It also examines the gradual and protracted process, marked by several stages of introduction and dissemination, which faced limited early influence, and political and military influences. The paper likewise assesses external interference and conflict; as well as challenges to institutionalization after formal establishment. The paper however does not discuss the conditions that aided the introduction and spread of Islam in Bade, which this paper addressed.

Introduction and spread of Islam in Yobe State Google.com, examines how Islam spread to Yobe State by assessing the role played by different agents in the process. It expresses trans-Saharan trade routes as the main entry point for Islam in to the West African Savannah regions, including Kanem-Boron, where Muslim traders and scholars from West Africa established commercial links, paving the way for intellectual development and literacy based on the Qur'an. It also asserts that, the political conversation, especially of the ruling elite of Kanem-Boron in the 11th century especially of rulers like Mai Hume Jilmi

Ibn Salman, led to the declaration of his territory as an Islamic State and encouragement among the populace. The paper also examines the role played by the Muslim clerics of founding religious centres that attracted students, who in turn aided in the spreading of the religion; development of traditional Qur'anic school system which contributed to moral and religious training in Northern Nigeria, especially Yobe State long before the colonial era; and of the contribution of the Sufi brotherhoods like the Qadiriyya and Tijjaniyya in shaping Muslim identity in the region, including the area now known as Yobe. The paper does not however, discuss the challenges faced by the agents in the introduction and spread of Islam, which this study assessed.

Study.com's Introduction of Islam in Africa examines the various aspects relating to the introduction of the religion of Islam to Africa which includes the key historical aspects like : the initial spread especially the Hijra to Abyssinia- the modern Ethiopia around614-615 CE and the military expansion into Egypt in639; its spread across North Africa , and the Horns of Africa and its subsequent movement (through Trans-Saharan trade routes) in to West African by the 8th-9th Centuries to the East African coast; Factors contributing to the spread like trade routes; migration; tolerance and adaptability; and education. The paper further examines the impact of the religion on Africa like development of commerce; governance; literacy; culture and lifestyle. It also examines the major stages of the development of the religion.

Spice.fsi.standford.edu's The Spread of Islam in West Africa: Containment, Mixing ; and Reform from the 8th to the 20th Centuries examines the gradual and complex introduction and spread of Islam from 8th Century from North Africa to cover the region of West Africa. It explains the factors that aided in the spread. It broadly explainss the three stages of the spread. First containment –where the African kings contained Muslim influence by segregating Muslim communities; Second- Mixing , where rulers blended Islam with local traditions as the population selectively appropriated Islamic practices; and finally in the third stage, African Muslims pressed for reforms in the effort to rid their societies of mixed practices and implement Sharia.

Wasscehistorytextbook.com's Islam in West Africa: Introduction, spread and effects. The paper examines how Islam was first accepted by the Berbers of North Africa ; its spread in to the Western Sudan from the closing decades of the 10th Century starting from the regions of West of the Niger Bend (Senegambia, Mali), then in to Chad region and finally in to Hausa land. It also assesses the reasons for the spread of the religion in West Africa – like the nature of Islam; trade; Activities of Muslim Clerics and rulers; Holy War; Inter-marriage; and Scholars .The paper also examines the effects of the religion of Islam in West Africa.

www.google.com's Challenges of Introduction of Islam in Africa discusses the challenges faced in the process of the introduction of Islam especially in West Africa which includes ; Coexistence with the deeply entrenched traditional African religions, syncretism, and resistance from established Christian Communities in North East Africa, and later colonial disruption, adapting to diverse local cultures, and modern issues like extremist ideologies instability, and misinterpretations; and socio-economic factors, etc.

ResearchGate's Impact of Islam in Nigeria discusses how Islam impacted on Nigeria, which includes profoundly shaping Nigeria particularly in the North through the establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate, implementation of Sharia law and influence on education, culture, and governance, acting as a major unifying force across diverse ethnic groups.

Summary

This paper examined the introduction and spread of Islam in Africa, and especially in Bade Emirate. It also assessed the agents responsible for the introduction and spread of the religion in the Emirate, particularly its rulers, and scholars, and Muslim traders. It also analysed the challenges faced in the process like the deeply rooted traditional religious practices, and the factors that aided, as well as the impact of the religion on the Emirate.

Conclusion

The introduction and spread of Islam as a religion, especially to Bade Emirate had encountered a lot of challenges. However, the activities of its rulers especially by encouraging and supporting Islamic scholars, had led to the intensification, and promotion of the practice of the religion which came to impact

greatly on the Bade society. Nonetheless, a lot needs to be done, especially intensive teaching, and learning and research to counter the present challenges particularly of the misinterpretation of the teaching of the religion, which led to the emergence of a religious Sect with an ideology that caused insurgency which inflicted heavy damages on the Nigerian society as a whole. The authority should also monitor the activities of the teachers and preachers before things get out of hand. Efforts should also be made to empower the youth so that they would not become easy recruit for insurgency groups, especially because of poverty.

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