



Trends in the Development of Quranic Education in Badari Ward, Ilorin, Nigeria, 1900 – 2009

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Abstract. This work examines historical development of education in Badari, Ward Ilorin 1900-2009. The study shows that traditional or indigenous education formed the bedrock of education in Nigeria and Badari Ward in Ilorin not an exception. Qur'anic education however was latter enforced in the area to provide Islamic learning to the youths in the area. This was in accordance with the Islamic norm in Ilorin community generally. Gradually, western education was brought to Ilorin Community and Badari Ward with some initial apathy because of the fear of religious contamination. In addition to the fact that secular education was championed by the colonial administration. Later, secondary and higher educational institutions were established in that area. As a result, this study makes use of primary and secondary sources of historical studies. It is suggested that more works need to be done in this area. Thus, educational transformation of the Badari Ward in Ilorin, 1900-2009 cannot be over emphasised.

Keywords: Traditional Education, Qur'anic Education, Colonial Administration, Badari Word, Higher Education.

1. Introduction

The study of the history of education and development in Badari Ward shall remain incomplete without adequate understanding of the informal or indigenous type of education which existed in the areas before the arrival of other forms of education. Thus, education in Nigeria before the advent of Islam laid emphasis and focus on learning by doing. More importantly, the apprenticeship method, a process whereby the young males and females were entrusted to their master craft men and women to learn major skills and trades, was in fact part and parcel of education under consideration. It was in line with this development that Fafunwa, in one of his works talked of an informal or

indigenous education as being as old as man himself. He stated further on education thus:

In Old African Society the purpose of education was clear: functionalism was the main guiding principle. African society regarded education as a means of an end and not an end in itself. Education was generally for an immediate induction into society and a preparation for adulthood. (Fafunwa, 1974:15).

Therefore, education before the coming of Qur'anic type, was not only in the training of the intellect or the method of acquiring means of livelihood but went above this to improve the lives of the people and provided such facilities which enhanced the development of the people and provided such facilities which enhanced the development of the young citizens to develop physically and have due respect for the societal norms and values to ensure continuity. Truly, respect for elders was viewed as the best types of education. Furthermore, culture and education were highly prized. In such a setting as Badari Ward, the major function of education was to sustain and ensure continuity of life and culture by way of transmitting from one successive generation to another. (Eze, 1979: 21). In addition, Otonti Nduka, says that:

Education may be regarded as the process of transmitting the people's culture at least part of it, from one generation to the next. Before the arrival of western education, the Nigerian peoples had their own educational systems, particularly educating the younger one from different community. With the arrival of the British new elements was introduced, western formal education. Then there came about which culture should be transmitted from one generation to the next (Otonti Nduka, 1982:4).

The people were involved in a variety of educational activities which included agriculture, local crafts and trades. Whatever may be the major criticism of this informal type of education in Badari Ward and even elsewhere, it must be stated that it was the earliest form

of education not only that, because it also achieved what it purported to achieve within the setting. More importantly, it was a pivot upon which other forms of education revolved and ensured continuity and progress.

Another scholar, Peters R. S. has described education as initiation into activities or modes or thought and conduct that are worthwhile, Peters R. S. (1972, p. 55).

1.1 Geographical Location of Ilorin

Ilorin is located on latitude 8° 35' East. Ilorin is the capital of Kwara State, about 400 kilometres from Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory of Nigeria. The city has tropical climate of wet and dry seasons. Generally, the elevation of the land in the western part ranges from 273m to 333m (900ft to 1,100ft) above the sea level. According to the 1991 census, the population of the city stood at 804,334. Likewise, before 1967 when Kwara State was created, Ilorin was the headquarters of the defunct Ilorin province. The city has cosmopolitan centre comprising different ethnic groups. The city has often been described as a miniature of Nigeria because of its homogenous characteristics. The dominant language is Yoruba but there are many groups such as the Hausa, Fulani, Nupe, Gobirawa, Baruba and so on. The complexity of the city is reflected in the spatial arrangement of wards prevalent in the area. In addition, wards are occupied by different language groups in the city. Hence, the Yoruba are located around Idi-Ape area, Balogun Alanamu area, Balogun Ajikobi area, Okelele and Adeta areas of the city respectively. The Hausa are located in Balogun Gambari ward and the Fulani in the Balogun Fulani area. (Yahaya E., 2018: p. 32).

1.2 Qur'anic Education in Badari Ward in Ilorin up to 1900

We cannot discuss Qur'anic education in Badari Ward during this period without tracing the origin of Islam in Ilorin. Although, there are divergent opinions concerning this development. One view suggests that the origin of Islam was traceable to *Oke-Suna* area in Ilorin. In the same vein, Islam was believed to have been established about one hundred years before the coming of Shaykh Alim and Aare Afonja. It may be noted that *Sunna* (tradition of prophet) from which *Oke-Sunna* was derived suggested that the people who settled there between 1770-1800 practiced *Sunna*. (Adam Abdullahi, 1986: 61-62). Thus, *Oke-Sunna* may be regarded as one of the major areas of Islam in Ilorin and Badari Ward not an exception.

Following this development therefore, Muslim preachers amongst such was Solagberu, played major roles as teachers demonstrating to their students how to perform ablution and mentioned the *adhan* (call to prayer). They also introduced pupils to the recitation of the Qur'anic verses. Thus, Qur'anic education during this period was crude as this was neither widely done nor expertly managed. The language of instruction was Hausa which was difficult for the Yoruba to decipher. (Aliy-Kamal, 1984: 37).

The composition of the Qur'anic education was about three stages but two stages were perhaps discernible. The first was the Qur'anic school which was often referred to as primary, *Ilm* which could be referred to as the secondary and post *Ilm* which might be called post-secondary. In all the three stages, sessions were held in the *Muallim's* house either in his personal verandah or parlour. In some cases, mosques or shades or trees were used as *Ile-Kewu* (Qur'anic school).

The teachers would then listen and correct pupils reading as they worked on. At this level, Qur'anic studies started with the reading of chapter one and the 30th *hizb* (part) from the Qur'anic from below upward. The teacher had to write the Qur'anic chapter on *Walaa* (wooden slate) which was polished with leaves called *ewe-ipin*. Whereas *tadaa* (ink) was used with *qalam* (pen) to write the slate. The singing method called the *Ologere* formed the bulk of the learning activities and at the same time a stage in Qur'anic learning. (Jimoh, 1971: 38-39).

Pupils were introduced to *aditu* levels. Here, learning how to recognize the Arabic letters which are twenty-eight vis-à-vis formation of syllables with vocalization were the major learning activities of the pupils. They were exposed to four vowels, namely, *fathah* (*Woseli-Oke*), *Kasra* (*Woseli-Isale*), *Rufua*, *Damure* and so on.

The second stage similar to the secondary level was the *Ilm* or *Ilimiyah*. To qualify for this stage, students must have been graduates of primary level and they must have mastered and acquired high skills. From here, they studied types of subjects like *figh* and *Tawhid* (Islamic jurisprudence); *Hadith*, *Sirah* (biography of the holy prophet); *Nahw* (grammar) Sarf (morphology); *Adab* (Arabic literature); *Tafsir* (Qur'anic exegesis). Others include *al-Balaghah* (Rhetoric); *al-Rud* (prosody); *al-Tajwid* (phonetics of the Qur'an) and *al-Aqaid* (scholastic theology) were learnt. At this level, students enjoyed the privilege of nominating any teacher because a single *Muallim* could not make knowledge of all subjects available.

1.3 Quranic and Modern Arabic Schools in Badari Ward Ilorin

There are many Quranic and modern Arabic schools in Badari Ward. Amongst these are the following; Ita-Amodu Quranic School was the first school in Badari Ward established in 1850. Ile Kewu-Alabi Owo was founded in 1915 by Alfa Aliyu. This school produced many Quranic teachers which included Raji Akano Ile-Akumaju, Amori Ile-Agbo to mention just a few. Ile Olowo-Opon Quranic School was founded in 1920. Madrasatul Ahabul Mustapha was established in 1959. Madras at Hamshudeen was opened in 1960 by Shehu Ahmad Folorunsho. Mahad Islamic school was built

in 1960. In 1964, Quranic School Agbo-Oba was established by Sulaiman Bani. (Oral Evidence, 2025). Adabiyya Quranic and Islamic School was established in 1975. Nurudeen Islamiyyah was established in 1982. In addition, Ile-Eleko Yangan Quranic School was opened in 1987. (Oral Evidence, 2025). Madrasatul Ta'biudeen Ile-Olopa was founded in 1984. Similarly, Maddrasatul Bashirudeen Ile Iya Oba was built in 1984. In 1986, Madrasatul Darul Hudal Ile Akumaju was established. Jamuiyyat Su'adai Ile-Agbo was established in 1994. In 1997, Fadhlul Lahi Islamic and Arabic School Ile-Segi was established to cater for the Islamic learning of the pupils. (Oral Evidence, 2025).

Table 1: Quranic and Modern Arabic Schools in Badari Ward, 1850-1997

Name of Institution	Year Founded	Proprietor
Ita-Amodu Quranic School	1850	Muhammed Awwal
Ile-Kewu Alabi Owo	1915	Alfa Aliyu Asileke
Madrasatul Dawatul Islamiyyah Ile Olowo-Opon	1920	Alhaji Sulaiman Olowo-Opon
Madrasatul Ahabul Mustapha	1959	Alhaji Amin
Madrasatul Hamsudeen	1960	Shehu Ahmad Folorunsho
Mahad Islam	1960	Shaykh Salihu Imam
Quranic School Agbo-Oba	1964	Sulaiman Bani
Adabiyyah Quranic and Islamic School	1975	Amuda Abubakar
Nuruden Islamiyyah Ile-Lasoju	1982	Alfa Yusuf Ayinla
Madrasatul Ta'biudeen Ile-Olopa	1984	Alhaji Buhari Imam
Madrasatul Bashirudeen	1984	Association
Madrasatul Darul Hudah Ile-Akumaju	1986	Alhaji AbdulGaniy Salaudeen
Quranic School Ile-Eleko Yangan	1987	Alhaji Yusuf
Jamuiyyat Su'adai School of Arabic and Islamic Studies Ile-Agbo	1994	Alfa Hamza Uthman
Fadhlul Lahi Arabic and Islamic School Ile-Segi	1997	Muhammed Awwal AbdulKareem
Alahu Lateef Quranic School Ile-Abese	2002	Alfa Sulaiman

Source: Yahaya E., 2025

2. Introduction of Western Education and Initial Colonial Educational Efforts in Badari Ward Ilorin

The coming of the various Christian Mission into Nigeria has been documented. However, it should be stated that the first to arrive Nigeria were the Wesleyan Methodists who settled at Badagry in 1842. They were followed immediately by the Church Missionary School in December, 1842, the American Baptist Mission in 1853 and finally Roman Catholic Missions in 1860s. They started to build churches where they preached and won converts and schools where they taught these converts the rudiments of Christian life and Western civilization. Majority of the early Christian Missionaries that operated in Nigeria were British and they worked hand in hand with the administration stationed in Lagos to introduce western culture mainly British within the country. (Ayande, 1966:4).

The study notes that one of the major problems which emanated from the Christian Mission education was anti-intellectualism enshrined into the missionary

educational system. Thus, the foreign missions refused to promote education above the primary school level among their converts, except perhaps in Yorubaland. Apart from the fact that missionary effort was a modest one, it was not geared at promoting secondary education which from the proselytization perspective was repetitious and very likely to turn the natives into materialistic and intellectually arrogant set of people. (Osoba and Fajana, 1980:571).

As early as November 1901, Lugard mentioned that the main aim of his educational programme was to emphasize Islamic basis of the traditional emirate systems which he deemed necessary to his administrative way of ruling the northern territory. Not only that, he was interested in protecting the north from the alleged corrupting activities of the western educated elites of both the Lagos Colony and Southern Nigeria in particular. However, Lugard's promises in this regard did not yield any result. The Lugardian policy for education in Northern Nigeria created a great gap between Muslim emirates and their non-Muslim counterparts from the South. As a matter of fact, in that administrative territory called Northern

Protectorates, Lugard armed with his sectional weapon through colonial policy tried to separate education for the Muslims and the so-called pagan sectors of the population.

The establishment of a school at Nassarawa in Kano culminated into the expansion of secular type of education in Northern Nigeria. Pupils for the school were reported to have been enrolled by force from majority of the emirates. As the register of school showed, Ilorin had six pupils in the school by December, 1913. (Danmole, 1980:170-171). Thus, while the colonial government continued to initiate reforms in the administration of the emirate, the development of secular education was also pursued. Hence, in the development of secular education in Ilorin and Badari by the colonial administration, attention was first and foremost paid to the training of teachers and Mallams who could then serve as teachers for the government schools in Ilorin. A provincial school was opened in Ilorin, this school was expected to provide the much-needed personnel for the Native Authority. Despite this, the introduction of secular education was not popular in Ilorin, even through Emir Shuaib (1915-1919) and other prominent men in the town later showed interest. (Danmole, 1984:84-107).

3. Response to Western Education in Ilorin

The origin of Western education in Ilorin can be traced to 1914, for that was the year when Mr. H. H. Arnetts arrived Ilorin province so as to open a provincial school in the town. One of the first major problems which H. H. Arnetts had to contend with on his arrival was how to get staff for such a school. Thus, he set up a class of local Mallams, some of whom had earlier on got some education from Nassarawa in Kano and had since returned home by 1914. Among these Mallams reputed to have imbibed and received Western type of education and training were Alfa Adio, who was trained in Kano, Mallam Ibrahim of (Isale-Oja), Mallam Musa (from Keffi) Mallam Saliu Yahaya Awodi and Alfa Muhammed Wosin. Language was a major problem at the initial stage because most of the Ilorin Mallams could hardly speak Hausa, while the head Mallams did not understand Yoruba. However, with these teachers under the vigilance of Mr. H. H. Arnetts, the school started. But no building was put in place until 1915 when a mud house with a thatched roof was completed. This school had fifteen local Mallams as students and was opened in 1915. However, only ten students completed their student. (Hermon-Hodge, 1929:254).

The curriculum centred on the teaching of such subjects as Arithmetic, Reading, Qur'an, Geography, General Knowledge, Writing, Hygiene and Drawing. (Nak: Ilor Prof, 1915). Western education was very unpopular with the people of Ilorin then as parents refused to send their children to school. Their refusal originated from suspicion that Western education could turn their children against Qur'anic education. Not only that, they feared that their children could be enlisted into the army through force to fight World War of 1914-1918. Perhaps this was why the Emirs were asked to contribute children so as to fill the vacancies in schools. Therefore, suspicion often followed Western education among Muslims and Ilorin in particular during the colonial period. It has been mentioned that the Yoruba Muslims particularly in Lagos were not antagonistic to Western education *per se* but were very suspicious about the kind of education their children would receive, especially from the Christian missionary schools. There were numerous complaints that pupils were jeered and disgraced publicly in the town. Several cases were reported in which efforts were made to burn down schools. This general apathy was very likely to have influenced the attitude of the pupils and many of them took to absenteeism from schools in Ilorin.

So deplorable was the situation that the Department of Education in its Annual Report for 1920 referred to Ilorin as the most disheartening centre of our work. The report elucidated further that:

Complaints were frequent that school boys were molested and jeered at in the town. More than one attempt was made to burn down the compound. Needless to say, education was no more popular with the pupils. Absentees were the rule rather than exception; boys were continually running away, and no one would attend sick parade if he could possibly help it. (Hermon-Hodge, 1921:255).

Thus, it could be mentioned that one fundamental factor which perhaps led to the early rejection of Western education centred on conversion. This issue worsened Muslims attitudes, especially the people of Ilorin towards Christianity and Western education which the later championed and controlled. (Gbadamosi, 1967:105ff).

Furthermore, Gbadamosi mentions that a crucial factor in the Muslim attitude to the provision of Western Education was their unpleasant experience of the instruction provided at these schools. Their pupils were being drilled in Christian Religions Instruction, this drill was intentional "our desire" it is said, "is to get as much as we can of our religion into the Muhammedan scholars before they leave school (Gbadamosi, 1967: 105).

By 1925, the Ilorin Muslims responded favourably to Western education. The growth and the percentage of pupils available in the provincial school attested to the fact that Western education had become popular among all the categories of Ilorin Muslims. Forty-six percent of the pupils were children of or relatives of native administration officers, thirty-one percent children of *Talakawa* (the impoverished), sixteen percent children of Mallams and seven percent wards of traders. What might have encouraged this interest was the availability of employment opportunity in the Native Administration and high position accorded Mallams in the Western type of schools established by the colonial government.

4. Primary Schools in Badari Ward

Baboko Primary School was opened in 1949. It was started by the Native Authority as a boarding school to cater for both boys and girls in Badari ward and its surroundings. (Baboko Primary School File). In 1954, Oke-Aluko Primary School was established. The school was founded by Alhaji Kaure as a community

school with 25 boys, 4 girls on enrolment. Ansarul Islam Primary School Oke-Aluko was established on the 1st January, 1956. The school took off with 45 pupils. It was primarily established to give secular and Islamic learning to pupils. (Adekilekun, 1989:65). ECWA Primary School was built in 1962. This school served many people in the area and particular, the community where the school was located, facilitated the existence of the school in area. For instance, many people within the community and outside the community benefited from the school among them was Mohammed Amosa Aluko. Lakadri Nursery and Primary School was established in 1984. (Oral Evidence, 2025). Adetunji Nursery and Primary School was founded in 1997. Taohed Nursery and Primary School was established by the Taoheed Muslim Women Association in 1978. The school had an initial pupils intake of 34 but the population of students now is 250. Bunmi Harmony Nursery and Primary School was established to provide qualitative education for the children: Pearls International School was established in the year 2008 while Kiddies International Nursery and Primary School was located at Oja-Iya in 2009.

Table II: Primary Schools in Badari Ward, 1949-2009

Name of Institution	Year founded	Proprietor
Baboko Primary School, Badari Ward	1949	Government
Oke-Aluko Primary School	1954	Community
Ansarul Islam Primary School Oke-Aluko	1956	Voluntary Agency School
ECWA Primary School Oke-Aluko	1962	ECWA Mission
Taoheed Nursery and Primary School	1978	Muslim Women Association
Lakadri Nursery and Primary School, Agbo-Oba	1984	Private
Adetunji Nursery and Primary School	1997	Private
Kiddies International Nursery and Primary School	2009	Private

Source: Yahaya E., 2025

5. Secondary Schools in Badari Ward Ilorin

Shaykh AbdulKadir Secondary School Ilorin formerly known as Ilorin Teacher College was founded in 1953 as a four-year grade II Higher Elementary College for holders of middle four certificate. The primary aim of establishing the college was to train teachers as well as all round men and women and to further educate children in primary schools. The foundation stone of the college was laid by late Oba AbdulKadir 1919-1959. Perhaps, this informed the changing of the name to Shaykh AbdulKadir Secondary School in 1992 after the grade II programmes have been phased out. The Junior Wing of the Shaykh AbdulKadir Secondary School was built in 2006. Government Day Secondary School Oke-Aluko was founded to satisfy the yearnings and aspirations of our children. It is a co-educational secondary school. In 1983 the state government established the secondary school as a day school in Badari Ward. The school was officially opened in January, 1984. (Jimoh, 1994:516).

Odo-Okun Senior Secondary School was commissioned by then military administrator, Colonel Ogar in 1997. The first principal of the school was Mrs. N.F. Jatto while the vice-principal then was F.O. Jimoh. The Junior Wing of the secondary school was created in the 2006 as a result of the increase in students' population. This was in line with the policy of the Federal Government reform in educational development. The Waziri Junior Secondary School was established in the year 2006. The principal of the school is Alhaji A. Bashir.

6. Badari Efforts in Secondary Education

The Badari Ward embarked on expansion programme in secondary education through the formation of wards. For instance, it was instrumental to the formation of different wards in the area. These included Magajingeri, Baboko, Wara Osin, Egbejila which coalesced into Magajingeri Development Association for the purpose of enhancing the educational development of the areas. Alhaji Toyin Abdul served as the secretary. They used their human and materials resources to organize summer classes for students in different schools in Badari Wards. More importantly, Badari ward later single handedly confined the summer scheme exercise to its domain because of expansion. Apart from the fact that this noble objective remains within the ward, it has also contributed significantly to intellectual development of the people. This legacy is sustained on yearly basis in the areas.

Table III: Secondary School in Badari Ward, 1953-2006

Name of Institution	Year founded	Proprietor
Ilorin Teacher College now Shaykh AbdulKadir Secondary school	1953	Government
Government Day Secondary School Oke-Aluko	1984	Government
Odo-Okun Senior Secondary School	1997	Government
Odo-Okun Junior Secondary School	2006	Government
Waziri Junior Secondary School	2006	Government

Source: Yahaya Elias, 2025

7. Higher Education in Badari Ward Ilorin

Kwara State had no tertiary institution during its conception in 1967. But serious action would have been used to establish one considering the penchant for education of the people. By end of the Nigerian Civil War in 1970, the action to establish Kwara State College of Technology became realistic particularly in 1972 with full hope of making it a University. The Kwara State College of Education was later established in 1974. The second College of Education was established in Oro in 1982. While the third College of Education which had bias for Technical Education was established in Lafiagi in addition to College of Arabic and Islamic Legal Studies in 1992 in Ilorin. (Kwasu Academic Brief, 2008: 2).

After many aborted attempts to established Kwara State owned University failed, further attempt where made in 1991 and 2003. This led to the constituting technical committees to established one. Thus, Kwara State University remaining the 34th amongst the state universities and 95th that was endorsed by National Universities Commission (NUC). It started academic activities in December 17, 2009. (My Kwasu Departmental Hand Book, 2022 – 2026: p. 1) A monumental achievement was recorded in the educational development of tertiary education in February, 1972 when Kwara State College of Technology was established. It was a first tertiary institution in the state. The college was later renamed Kwara State Polytechnic. Alhaji A. A. Ayinla was the second registrar of the institution. The Kwara State College of Education has been functioning as a teacher training institution since its establishment in 1974. The college has improved tremendously with the development of ICT-based programmes.

The University of Ilorin was founded in 1976. The then Vice-Chancellor and registrar of the institution were seconded from University of Ibadan to start the University. Alhaji A.O.A. Alao took over the affairs of the University in 1985 as the registrar.

Table IV: Higher Education in Badari Ward Ilorin, 1972-1976

Name of Institution	Year Founded	Proprietor
Kwara State College of Technology now Kwara State Polytechnic	1972	State Government
Kwara State College of Education	1974	State Government
University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria	1976	Federal Government
Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria	2009	State Government

Source: Yahaya E., 2025

8. Conclusion

The discussion has shown that Quranic education formed the bed-rock of education and learning in Badari Ward. This transformed into Western education with earlier resistance and apathy toward its introduction. This transformed into its acceptance

later. However, between 1949 to 1997 there were 8 primary schools in Badari Ward. In 1953 to 2006, efforts were made in the area to build secondary schools which resulted into establishing 5 secondary schools in the area. The society also clamoured for the need of the establishment of tertiary education which led to the establishment of 3 Higher Institutions in the

area. Kwara State College of Technology now Kwara State Polytechnic. However, the State College Education and Federal University in Ilorin were founded in 1974 and 1976 respectively. This educational achievement led to the transformation of the area through the provision of the manpower development of the area and Nigeria in general. In addition, by the year 1991 and 2003, frantic efforts were made by the stakeholders of education in the area under discussion, Ilorin to look into enabling edicts and committees to establish as state university. Thus, by the year December, 2009, the university became realistic, thus, making it possible to have two universities, one federal and one state. Having said this, the place of Badari in the Development of Education in Ilorin, 1900-2009 cannot be over emphasized.

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