

# **Proliferation of Muslim Organisations in Nigeria: Implications for Muslims' Unity**

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## **Abstract**

The Glorious Qur'an, the Muslims' Holy Book encourages adherents of Islam to constitute themselves into groups for the purpose of enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. With this, a number of Muslim organizations are formed at all levels of human relations - local, national and international. In Nigeria, the number of these organizations is intimidating. This paper therefore examines the positive and negative implications of the great number of these Muslim organizations in Nigeria with a view to either encouraging or discouraging their continued existence. The first part of the paper gives the introduction after which the history and development of Muslim organizations in Nigeria were examined. Thereafter, a cross examination of selected Muslim Organizations in the country was undertaken. Then an appraisal of the activities and programmes of these organizations was done in the light of contemporary challenges. A conclusion was thereafter done after which some recommendations were offered.

## **Introduction**

The problem of leadership faced by the Muslim community shortly after the death of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAAS) had done irreparable damage to the religion of Islam. That had, therefore, left the office opened to many contenders; most of who thought leadership is a title a leader assumes rather than a process he executes. Though, the doom was initially averted with the appointment of Abu Bakr as the immediate successor of the Prophet, this problem of leadership re-occurred each time there was the need to appoint the leader of the *Ummah*. Eventually, the problem broke out into a civil crisis, which led to the disintegration of the Muslim community.

The situation could best be described as theologico-sectarian civil war. Each of the various warring groups and, in fact, individuals were not only giving wishful interpretations to the Holy Qur'an, but were also fabricating *Aḥadīth* (Prophetic traditions) to prove the *raison detre* of their ideologies, beliefs and practices. The situation became worse when peoples of different socio-cultural backgrounds embraced Islam. Each was interpreting Islam in her own

cultural context<sup>1</sup>, which did not agree with the teachings of Islam. That introduces a lot of innovations into the Faith.

Up to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, when Muslims not only have to live side by side with adherents of other religions, but also have to share with them the technological advancement of the modern age, the situation remains unchanged—Islam is no longer practised in the pristine form. Religion is no more the primary concern of the people. The structure of the one single community which the Prophet (SAAS) laboured to put in place for more than twenty-three years was thus not only divided into varying groups on personal interests, but was also demolished. Abdul was right therefore to observe that before the death of the Prophet, “the picture of the *Ummah* was complete but its future was not certain.”<sup>2</sup> Some people, however, looking at the situations of the Muslim community in which they live, felt that the system was inadequate and thus painfully unacceptable. They believed that Islamic theological thoughts, particularly when dealing with terrestrial realities, can only advance by reverting back to the Qur’ān and the *Sunnah*. They, therefore, called for a return to *Salaf*.<sup>3</sup>

In doing this, they made deliberate, organized and conscious efforts to build a more satisfying Muslim *Ummah* by floating one Muslim organisation or the other. Nigeria, harbouring a considerable number of Muslims, also experienced the formation of such Muslim organisations. It is three Muslim organisations in Nigeria that this paper seeks to critically examine with a view to bringing out the merits and demerits of the enormity in their number. We shall endeavour to put on a looking glass, which will reflect the conditions; past, present and future –of these organisations to see if their continued existence is worthwhile.

**History and Development of Muslim Organisations of Nigeria** Perhaps, the formation of Muslim organisations in Nigeria dates back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the “*EgbeKilla*<sup>4</sup> was formed in most parts of Yorubaland. According to historical facts, the name ‘*Killa*’, which is a corruption of the Arabic word *Qāla* (he said) was given to that group of Muslims in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, who wouldn’t see anything good in being Muslims and still participated in the traditional pagan festivals (like *Egungun*, *Oro* etc.), which was then a common practice. It is noteworthy that the group was named “*EgbeKilla*” because of the Muslim scholars’ attitude of saying *QālaAllāhta’ala* or *qālarasūl-Lah*(SAAS) whenever they quote a Qur’ānic verse or a tradition of the prophet.

The philosophy of this group of Muslims was, in the representative words of Doi “...not merely what Islam is but what a Muslim really looks like.”<sup>5</sup> To them, a Muslim should, in fact, look what he really is. Therefore, they distinguished themselves not only in practice but also in dressing. The group became so influential and strong that beside the traditional ruler, a Muslim ruler known as “*Oba Imale*” was also put in place. This was very typical of Abeokuta, where the group not only helped in building an ideal Muslim nation within the traditional Yoruba society, but also in winning into the fold of Islam, those non-Muslims, who wanted to be identified with the ‘elite’ group. The ‘society’ however, died naturally when the “*Oba Imale*” was deposed by the traditional ruler.<sup>6</sup>

Recent studies into the activities of Muslim women in Nigeria have also revealed the existence of an organisation floated by Nana Asmau in 1845 C.E. The organisation known as *Yaritaru*, drew its members from the various ethnic groups in the Hausaland. It was purposely put in place by Nana Asmau, the daughter of Shaykh Uthmān bn Fūdī to give leadership training and Islamic education to women of her age.

This period was closely followed by the era in which Muslim children were being converted to Christianity if they were to acquire secular/western education, which was brought into the country by the British Christian Missionaries. Besides these, some Muslim adults were themselves joining the Christian fold because of the social order and high standard of their living then, which they, wrongly believed, were missing among the Muslims and in Islam. In order to make Islam attractable to such minds however, a group of educated Nigerian Muslims, who saw no reason in renouncing their faith for social identity wrote and invited the *Ahmadiyyah* Movement, which was then a well-organised Muslim organisation throughout the world, to Nigeria.<sup>7</sup> This was in the year 1916. The Movement waved a great deal not in stopping further exit of Muslims from Islam, but also in bringing back some of those that had left the religion for another in search of social identity.

With the return of late Lawyer Basit Augusto from London in February, 1926, another Muslim organisation known as Islamic Society of Nigeria sprang up. It was founded primarily as an alternative to the *Ahmadiyyah* Movement, whose founder, they discovered, was excessive in his claims.<sup>8</sup> In December, that same year, the *Young Ansar-ud-Deen* Society, which later had a change of name to *Ansar-ud-Deen* Society of Nigeria, was also founded. By April, 1954, when the Muslim Students’ Society of Nigeria (MSSN) was

established to bring all Muslim students throughout Nigeria into closer union, a great number of Muslim organizations had been formed in the country.

The use of music for evangelism by Christians in Nigeria also threw another challenge of forming Muslim organisations that would use music to retain Muslim youths in the Islam to the Muslims. The Muslim organisations that sprang up from this challenge included Young Muslim Brothers and Sisters of Nigeria (YOUMBAS); *Jihad* Muslim Brothers and Sister of Nigeria (JMBROSIS) among others. When some Muslims, especially women, also started looking for solutions to their worldly problems elsewhere other than in Islam, some Muslim organisations were also floated for the purpose of assisting Muslims spiritually. Examples included the Qur'an Society of Nigeria and *Jamā'at Qur'ān lil-Islaha*, Agege.

There are some organisations established for the purpose of bringing together the various mystic groups that were at each other's throat in this country. Mention can be made of "Islamic Brotherhood on *Sūfism*". Mention should also be made of those formed to rally the Nigerian Muslim women round into one forum. The living example is the Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN).

Most of the recently-formed Muslim organisations however, are *Da'wah*-<sup>9</sup>based. They are primarily out to make converts and win souls for *Allāh*. Typical examples are found in the Universal Muslim Brotherhood in Ibadan, Center for Islamic Propagation, Abeokuta, *Nasrul-Lahi-l-Fath* Society Nigeria (NASFAT); *Fatihū Quareeb* Society of Nigeria (QUAREEB) and *Da'wah* Front of Nigeria among others. Perhaps, the formation of professional Muslim organisations like Nigerian Association of Teachers of Arabic and Islamic Studies (NATAIS) and Muslim Teachers Association of Nigeria among others should also be mentioned here. It is remarkable to note the existence of parent Muslim organisations such as Organisation of Muslims' Unity (O.M.U), *Jamā'atal Nasr al-Islām* (JNI) and *Najah* Association of Joint Muslim Organisations (NAJOMO). The Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) is, however, the highest ruling body of Muslim organisations in Nigeria today.

### **A Cross-Examination of Selected Muslim Organisations in Nigeria**

In a work like this, it is rather difficult if not impossible to mention all the Muslim organisations in Nigeria. Therefore, attempts shall only be made here to examine just a few of them. Such an effort will reveal rather than obscure. Thus, we shall briefly examine the *Ansar-ud-Deen* Society of Nigeria, the Muslim Students' Society of Nigeria, the Federation

of Muslim Women's Association in Nigeria and the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs. The selection of these organisations is representative in nature; while *Ansar-ud-Deen* Society of Nigeria represents the parent Muslim Organisations, the Muslim Students' Society of Nigeria (MSSN) represents the students' organisations and the Federation of Muslim Women's Association in Nigeria (FOMWAN) stands for the women organisations and the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) as the highest ruling association for Islamic Affairs in Nigeria.

### ***Ansaru-ud-Deen* Society of Nigeria**

Formed at Alhaji Alawiye's premises at No. 11, Balogun Street, West Lagos on the 21<sup>st</sup> December, 1923, by some young Muslim aspirants numbering about forty-two, the organisation known today as *Ansar-ud-Deen* Society of Nigeria, started as Young *Ansar-ud-Deen* Society. Its aims, among others, include:

- i. founding, building and maintaining of educational institution (in Nigeria);
- ii. encouraging literacy and intellectual pursuit among its members;
- iii. keeping and maintain a library for the use of members;
- iv. promoting the religious, moral, and tend to promote education; and
- v. eradication all forms of evils and corruption that have crept into Islam and to foster feelings of brotherhood among all members of the Muslim community.

The success of the society greatly lies in its educational pursuit. A great number of eminent personalities in different walks of life in Nigeria today had been produced through its educational/scholarship programmes. Mention can be made of late Prof. L.A.B. Balogun, a retired University Don; Mrs. S.O, Fadeyi, a retired Chief Suprintendent of Health; Mrs. Aduke Jinadu, a lady legal practitioner, Alhaja (Mrs) Nimota Dosunmu, Chief Nurse; Mr. AdisaDurojaiye, an Accountant among many others.

### **Muslim Students' Society of Nigeria (MSSN)**

Inaugurated at Methodist Boys High School, Lagos on 24<sup>th</sup> April 1954 with Bro. (now late Dr.) Lateef Adegbite as the first national President, the Society now has a membership that runs into millions across the country with members in almost all schools and at different educational levels in Nigeria; -Primary, post-primary and tertiary. The Society seems to be the largest religious organisation in Nigeria. Apart from bringing all Muslim students throughout Nigeria into closer union and inculcating in them, the true spirit of "Islamic

brotherhood” as well as “establishing an Islamic *Ummah* governed by the principles and rules of *Shari’ah*”, the aims of the Society largely reflect those of the *Ansar-ud-Deen* Society.

The Muslim Society of Nigeria (MSSN) organises Islamic Vacation Courses (IVC) bi-monthly to give Islamic knowledge and leadership training to its members. Schism has, however, caused it a great set-back in the last few decades.

### **Federation of Muslim Women’s Association in Nigeria (FOMWAN)**

An idea conceived in 1980, a national Islamic organisation purposely for bringing Nigeria Muslim Women, some of who already belonged to one organisation or the other together into a forum, materialised in the establishment of the Federation of Muslim Women’s Association in Nigeria (FOMWAN) in October, 1995. The Association is basically an amalgamation of Muslim Women Associations in the country, but it gives consideration for an individual to become a member. It has, in addition to the aims of other Muslim organisations, developing proper child-upbringing of Muslim children and provision of a forum for Nigerian Muslim Women’s view to be expressed at state, national and international levels as some of its aims and objectives. The Association publishes a magazine titled “*The Muslim Women*”

### **Nigeria Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA)**

Consequent upon the August, 1973 conference on Muslims’ unity in Nigeria held in Kaduna, the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs was formed with a view to bridging the gap between the northern and southern Muslims in the country. Members of the Council are drawn from individuals, communities and Islamic organisations. Anybody, who however, does not accept the finality of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAAS) cannot constitutionally be a member. Besides, whosoever becomes the Sultan of Sokoto constitutionally becomes the President of the Council. It aims among others at:

1. catering for and protecting the interests of Islam throughout Nigeria;
2. serving as a channel of contact with the Government of Nigeria on Islamic Affairs;
3. fostering brotherhood and co-operation among Muslims in Nigeria; and
4. ensuring uniformity in the observance of Islamic rites including festivals throughout the Federation of Nigeria.

It is noteworthy that the Council has succeeded to a greater extent in achieving its aims, but has failed in ensuring uniform observance of Islamic rites as demonstrated in the observance of *‘id-al-adhā* of 1995, 2001 and 2014.

## **Muslim Organisations in Nigeria: An Appraisal**

Our efforts in the last section of this paper have been revealing enough to allow for a critical study of these Muslim organisations in Nigeria. The first thing to be noted is that most of the organisations stemmed directly from the founders' various attempts to cope with the socio-cultural, psycho-political and religio-educational environments in which the Nigerian Muslims found themselves at one time or the other. That explains why some of the organisations categorically stated that their major aim was "to make Muslims take their proper place in the society where they were regarded as second-rate citizens because of their deficiency in secular education in spite of their being in the majority". This goes to show that goals are shaped by particular problems. One can therefore safely conclude that the Muslim organisations are not only reactions to the proselytising activities of the Christian Missionaries, but also an outcome of the current modern thoughts and response to modern tendencies of socio-cultural re-awakening.

However, deeper insights into the causes of the formation of these organisations from another angle lead one to another reasonable conclusion. Our study of some of the organisations has revealed that most of them share the same aims and objectives. To a large extent and except where attention is paid to some walks of life, the aims and objectives of one organization are a duplicate of another. Sentence structure in some cases is the only difference.<sup>12</sup> This tends to suggest that most of them could have arisen out of rivalry, most especially that there are also striking similarities between their names. The leadership tussles among some of the organisations also lend credence to this. The living witnesses are *Nasrul-Lahi-l-Fath* Society Nigeria (NASFAT) and *FatihūQuareeb* Society of Nigeria (QUAREEB), as well as the Muslim Students' Society of Nigeria (MSSN) and The Muslim Congress (TMC). Wherever or whenever any member of an organisation fails to achieve his aim of becoming a leader, he opts out to found his own, forgetting that leadership is a process by which a leader executes and not a title he assumes. It is also noteworthy that, that has greatly accounted for the ineffectiveness of most these organisations.

Another dimension to understanding the proliferation of Muslim organizations in Nigeria is to consider the rivalry between the executives and the missionaries of these organizations. More often than not the missionaries control and direct the affairs and activities of these Muslim organizations. They dictate who gets what and when he/she gets it. They hire and fire the missionaries at will. They even sanction the missionaries who in their estimation err.

They also determine the emoluments of these missionaries including the percentage from proceeds realized from soci-religious functions of the organizations and their members. These will not go down well with the missionaries. The consequence of this has manifested in recent times is the resignation of a good number of these missionaries from those organizations to found their own. A typical example is the resignation of the founding Chief Missionary of NASFAT, Alh Abdullah Akinbode, who resigned from the organization to found his own. Similar things are reported about other organizations. The direct consequence of this is the continued proliferation of Muslim organization without corresponding effects on the number and moral uprightness of Nigerian Muslims.

Again, most of these organizations end up not executing majority of their aims and objectives, especially those bothering on health, education and economic empowerment because they were founded out of rivalry and competition. Most of them as noted above want to play roles in education, health and economic lives of their members. Invariably, however, because of the way and manner they emerge more often than not, end up only addressing religio-spiritual needs of their members through *Asalatu* prayer sessions and night vigil prayers leaving behind the educational, health and economic needs. They give excuses of financial incapability for not attending to those objectives. Hence, Muslims who are members of these organizations still patronize the conventional and other religious organizations' educational and health services which were the reasons for founding these organizations in the first instance.

Closely related to this is the particularisation of these Muslim organisations to one city or the other. It is natural that when new claims were made by a person, the first set of believers would be members of his household, friends, colleagues and possibly clansmen. A typical example is found in the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAAS) whose first set of believers were Khadījat, his wife, 'Alī, his nephew, and Abūbakr, his bosom companion. This same thing had happened in the formation of Muslim organisations in Nigeria. Probably because the first set of members of these organisations were mostly of the same origin with the founder, the impact of the majority of the organisations are not felt outside the vicinity of their locations. The impact of *Ansarul-Islām* Society of Nigeria for example is not felt beyond Ilorin metropolis where it was founded. The probable reason for this is that the Society looks more or less the Association Old Students' Society of "*Markazal-Adabiyah*", an Arabic school founded by an Ilorin man, late Shaykh Kamaldeen in Ilorin town, and basically for Ilorin



indigenes. Other examples can be seen in *Nawair-ud-Deen* Society of Nigeria, (Abeokuta), *Nurud-Deen* Society (Ogbomosho), *Islahud-Deen* (Iwo) among others. The conclusion derivable from this however, is that it tends to encourage tribalism, which Islam condemns in the strongest terms.<sup>13</sup>The constitutional and conventional denial of non-indigenes to hold some key-posts in some of the organisations also leads credence to this view.<sup>14</sup>

Furthermore, each of these organisations has stickers indicating its name. It is not uncommon to see private cars and even commercial vehicles with stickers such as “*Ansar-ud-Deen* Family”, “*Da’wah* Family” “*Quareeb* Family” and *NASFAT*. These stickers advertise the organisations rather than propagate Islam. They also further divide the one single Muslim *Ummah* into “pseudo-families” rather than unite it.

It is also noteworthy that some of the organisations could have been formed for economic reasons. There is no denying the fact that some people had gained materially (in addition to spiritual benefit) from many of these organisations, while some also received various assistance from individuals, corporate bodies, government, and (embassies of) foreign countries. People, who wanted to enjoy the same benefits but could not possibly because they are ordinary members or do not have ‘god-father’, naturally float their own organisations, and that in effect, leads to the proliferation of these organisations in the country.

A critical study also reveals that the causes could have been ideological in nature. The Islamic consciousness created by the late *Imām* Khomeyni through his Islamic revolution in Iran as well as the Islamic awareness made by Ahmed Deedat of South Africa though his fruitful debates with non-Muslims in various cities had had great influence on many Muslims, especially the youths in Nigeria. While those, who share the idea of *Imām* Khomeyni are puritanical and forceful in their approach as to condemn other Muslims outside their pales as unbelievers, others who see Ahmed Deedat as a model would organise debates and symposia between Muslims and non-Muslims. Late Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaeda movement also has his own influence on the people. The gradual emergence and activities of the *Boko Haram* since 2009 and other sister movements are direct effects of this Movement in Nigeria. These sets of Muslims, who have the same goal seeing Islam triumph but believe in different means of achieving it, cannot, therefore, stay in the same ‘boat’ hence the formation of different organisations. We should also not forget that the ‘elderly’ Muslims too would form their own to suit their status and age; hence, the house is divided against itself.

Furthermore, in most cases, we observe that the founders of these organisations are representing themselves rather than representing the *Ummah*. Some of them speak their minds on national issues and claim to be speaking for the Muslims, whose minds they do not know or seek to know. The position of Alhaji Moibi Shittu, Secretary General, Ogun State Muslim Council on the *Shari'ah* controversy of the year 2000 did not, in any way, represent the minds of the Muslims in the State as he utterly spoke against the adoption of the Islamic legal system in the state when he features on programme on the Ogun State Television Station (OGTV) whereas at programmes organised by the Muslim Youths and well attended by prominent leaders like late Dr. Abdul Lateef Adegbite, in the State, the desire of the people to have *Shari'ah* was unequivocally stated.

It has also been observed that majority of these organizations engage in the same religious activities. For example, almost all Muslim organizations organize Pre-Ramadan and Ramadan lectures during the month of Ramadan, whereas they have been dormant all the year round before the commencement of Ramadan fast. Even when they do, they do it at the same time leaving Muslim faithful at dilemma of which of the programmes to attend. Invariably, these programmes often times have few attendees especially as the same set of Muslim leaders are invited as chairmen, guests of honour or even as audience.

We equally observe that some of the organisations are dominated by already educated people. They do not carry the 'rural' dwellers and uneducated segments of the society along with them. Most of their programmes are executed in the heart of the big cities while those in the villages do not enjoy the benefits of such programmes. A typical example can be seen in *Ansar-ud-Deen* Society of Nigeria and FOMWAN each of which is dominated by people of high caliber. In most cases, rural dwellers as well as uneducated people in the society are not aware of the existence of most of these organisations, which could have benefited them and to which they could also have contributed a lot.

On the other hand however, it is observed that the organisations have made meaningful contributions to the growth and development of Islam in Nigeria. Through their educational programmes, they have contributed to the development of man-power in this country. Many, who attended their school, be they primary, post-primary tertiary and even Arabic schools, have been found in the education, health, broadcasting, engineering, business and many other industries all over Nigeria.

The organisations have also established bookshops; health centres, hospitals, libraries and recreational centres in different towns of the country. The *Ahmadiyyah* hospitals in Lagos, Ogun (Ijebu Ode), Oyo, (Ibadan) and Imo State are pointers to this. Some of them have also established printing press and publishing companies. By employing workers into these establishments, they are not only contributing to the economic growth of Nigeria but also assisting in solving the unemployment problem in the country.

By confirming chieftaincy titles on their members and some notable Muslim figures in the society, these organisations have also helped in rescuing those ‘big wits’ among Muslims, who could have belonged to one social club or the other into the fold of Islam. Even though, such ‘chiefs’ and title holders often turn to be law-makers and law-givers in the organisations, that they were rescued from religiosity and liquid consumption (to some extent) shows that it is an achievement on the part of the organisations).

The preservation of Islamic culture through the efforts of these organisations is another remarkable achievement. Perhaps, if not through their activities, especially during the month of *Ramaḍān*, Islam would perhaps today only be known to a part of the University communities where Arabic and Islamic Studies are pursued and also to the traditional *Qur’ānic* Schools in Nigeria. The organisations sponsor programmes on Television stations, Radio stations and even publish articles in most of the Nigerian Dailies. Some of them publish magazines and newsletters to propagate Islam.

The Muslim organisations have also, through their existence, not only been of renewal of social identity for many, but have also been a course for those, who are in search of one. Some Muslims through their membership of one Muslim organisation or the other have intuitively received leadership training. This has often been of use to them in the day-to-day activities. In this way, the organisations are participating in training leaders of tomorrow for this country in addition to giving social identity to those, who see pride and dignity in being a ‘member’ of *Nawair-ud-Deen* or the ‘President’ of *Ansar-ud-Deen* as the case may be.

Finally, the organisations have also made some converts. For example, the total conversion of a Celestial Church of Christ, Odinjo, Ibadan to a Mosque as well as thirty-nine of its members to Islam based on the effort of Universal Muslim Brotherhood, Ibadan was widely reported in the Nigerian Dailies.<sup>15</sup>The leadership and members of a Cherubim and Seraphim Church, behind Primer Grammar school, Abeokuta was also converted into Islam through the

effort of *Istijabah* Prayer Group, Abeokuta. The leader of the Church had performed the holy pilgrimage to Makkah, through the Prayer Group.

### **Conclusion**

Undoubtedly, our effort so far in this paper has revealed that the Muslim organisations in Nigeria have contributed immensely to the socio-economic, religio-political and intellectual development of this nation. We have seen those factors that brought the organisations into existence and we have also seen how the Muslim leaders then responded to those challenging factors by founding these organisations. The fact now is how these organisations would work together to ensure unity among Muslims in the country. The Holy Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad (SAAS) are full of sayings calling towards the unification of the Muslims. The Qur'an says:

*And hold fast all together by the rope which God (stretches out for you) and be not divided among your selves. (Q 3:103)*

*Verily, this community of yours is a single community and I am your Lord and Cherisher, therefore serve me (and no other). (Q21:92)*

*Be not like those who are divided amongst themselves and fall into disputation after receiving clear signs. For them is a dreadful penalty (Q3:105).*

These and many other verses on the need for unity among Muslims abound in the Qur'ān. In order to achieve this much-desired unity as enjoined in the Qur'an therefore, we suggest that the leaderships of these organisations have a platform on which they meet regularly. This would help not only in making Muslims speak with voice, but also assist in getting rid of the racial discrimination, which is a canker-worm that has eaten deep into the fabrics of the Muslim organisation. This would also save most of the organisations from dying naturally as well as the case with many, which could not stand the test of time due to the competition for followership as well as membership.

We also want to postulate here that the permanence of the post of the President of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) to whoever becomes the Sultan of Sokoto does not augur well for Islam in Nigeria. We therefore suggest that the office be made open to whoever is considered qualified as there is no hierarchy in Islam. Otherwise, Muslim in the South would continue to consider such *Sultanic* president as the president of the Northern Nigerian Muslims only as was the case during the last political crises in Nigeria. We also suggest that the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs always come out with

one voice on matters affecting Nigerian Muslims in their religious, political, social and economic lives. Instead of individual members or leaders speaking their minds, let them speak the mind of Islam and that of Nigerian Muslims.

It should be noted also that the leadership of these organisations monitor the way stickers of their respective organisations are being given out. This becomes necessary considering the way occupants of vehicles having these stickers conduct themselves in the public. Such vehicles are at times, seen in front of drinking joints. At times, the drivers of such vehicles are reckless in their driving. Since these stickers are symbols of Islam, the leaders of the organisations would do well to educate their members on the need to conduct themselves in manner agreeable to Islam.

### **Notes and References**

It is to be noted that Islam does not frown at the tradition of any society in as much as the fundamental principles of the faith are not violated.

Musa Abdul, the Classical Caliphate Islam Institution, Lagos Islamic *publications Bureau*, 1988, p. 36

*Salafis* a technical term to denote the practices of the early orthodox Muslims, especially the first three generations of Muslims.

The word *Egbe* is a Yoruba word which means society. This society as far as we know existed in Abeokuta and Ile-Ife.

Abdul – Rahman 1. Doi Islam in Nigeria, Zaria: Gaskiya Corporation Limited 1984, p. 279.

History has it that when Queen Elisabeth visited Nigeria, she decided to pay a courtesy call to the then Alake of Egbaland who had gathered all his chiefs to receive the august visitor. Unfortunately for the Alake who dressed in the traditional outfit of a Yoruba king with a beaded crown in contrast to the “Oba Imale” who dressed in soldier – like uniform unto which the Queen was quite familiar, the Queen mistook him for the *Oba Imale* and thus accorded him all the honour and dignity that was due to the Alake as the paramount ruler. The Alake who had kept mute while the impalatable episode was on ordered that the dress/uniform of the *Oba Imale* be burnt immediately right there in the heart of the palace shortly after the departure of the Queen.

For details on how Ahmadiyyah Movement came into Nigeria, see I.A.B. Balogun: *Islam Versus Ahmadiyyah in Nigeria*, Lahore, S.A. Muhammad Ashraf 1977.

For details on the claims of Ghulam Ahmad who founded the Ahmadiyah Movement, see Abdul Hassan Ali Nadwi, *Qadianism: A Critical Study* Lucknow: Academy of Islamic Research and Publication 1979.

Da'wah is an Arabic word for evangelism.

Abdul Lateef Adekunle: *Selected Islamic Organisations in Nigeria (1916-1986)*. Ilorin, N.P  
Ramadan 1409, 11, April 1989 A.D.P. 202.

*Ibid.*

For example, compare the aims and objectives of these organisations as enumerated in *Selected Islamic Organisations in Nigeria .Ibid.*

See Qur'an 2:213; 10:19; 4:1; 49:13

Not until very recently, non-Egba indigenes could not become the National President of Nawair-ud-Deen Society of Nigeria only because it was (first) founded in Abeokuta.

For details, see "Why we joined Islam," *Daily Sketch*. 25<sup>th</sup> June, 1995 center Page.