

# CURRICULUM INNOVATION AND PRACTICE OF *DA'WAH* OF *DARU-D-DA'WAH WAL-IRSHAD* IN LAGOS STATE

BY

OTUNUYI, Abdul-Hafeez Toluwalase  
Lagos State University of Education (LASUED)  
[otunuyiat@mocped.edu.ng](mailto:otunuyiat@mocped.edu.ng)  
08028357485

&

OTUNUYI, Ahmad Opeyemi  
Federal College of Education,  
Yola, Adamawa State, Nigeria  
[ahmadotunuyi@gmail.com](mailto:ahmadotunuyi@gmail.com), [otunuyi.ao@fceyola.edu.ng](mailto:otunuyi.ao@fceyola.edu.ng)  
08121452632

## Abstract

Globalization, digitalization and computerization are prominent features of the contemporary 21st century. *Da'wah*, like communication skill acquisition, education and knowledge dissemination, is no doubt, an integral aspect of Islam. Any society devoid of strategic and purposeful *da'wah* (proselytism) will definitely lose focus in capacity building as well as human/ capital development which may ultimately lead to moral decadence and spiritual pandemonium. Thus, considering the Islamic philosophy of *da'wah* with the practical realities in most Arabic and Islamic institutions in Lagos State, this study examined critically the observable loopholes with a view to removing the stigmatization and dogmatism in the *da'wah* industry. Critical analysis of one of the most prominent Arabic institutions in Lagos State (*Daru-d-Da'wah wal-Irshad*, Isolo) was investigated as a case study. The study findings, presumably, being anchored on divine guidance (Qur'an and Sunnah), would spur many Arabic and Islamic institutions into actions and provide watersheds in the *da'wah* industry.

**Keywords:** Curriculum innovation, *Daru-d-Da'wah Wal-Irshad*

## Introduction

The primary essence of man's creation, according to divine revelation, is *'ibaadah* (devotional worship – Q.51:56). To achieve this, man is duty bound to acquire knowledge in order to fulfill the necessary requirements that are attached to it. The Prophet, as well as all Muslims, was given specific directive in regards to *da'wah*, hence, making it mandatory for every Muslim faithful. The Qur'an instructs thus:

“O Apostle! Deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord, if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message, and Allah will protect you from the people; surely, Allah will not guide the unbelieving people” (Q.5:67)

Also, in a like manner, the Qur'an instructs thus:

“Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and engage them in meaningful dialogue in the best manner; surely, your Lord best knows those who go astray from His path, and He knows best those who are patient” (Q.16:125)

Reflections on the recurrent trends in and around various *Madaaris 'Arabiyyah wal-Islamiyyah* (Arabic and Islamic Institutions) in the contemporary Lagos society are quite revealing that while much had been achieved, lots of uncultivated opportunities are yet to be discovered, let alone explored in the *da'wah* industry. Most of such institutions are still held in stigmatization and dogmatism of the past generations. This study therefore aimed at investigating one of the most populous Arabic institutions in Lagos State, namely *Daru – d – Da'wah Wal-Irshad*, Isolo as the major focus of the study. Significantly, the study gave a priority attention to the following germane areas:

- i. A glimpse of *Daru-d-Da'wah Wal-Irshad* and its Founder.
- ii. Its Philosophy, Aims, Visions and Missions
- iii. Its Academic Curriculum and Implementation Strategies
- iv. Its Specific *Da'wah* Activities
- v. Factors Accountable for Stigmatization and Non-dynamism of *Daru-d-Da'wah Wal-Irshad* in Lagos State.

By and large, the reasons for stagnancy and non-dynamism of most of the *Madaaris Ahliyyah* of the contemporary Nigerian Society was analyzed and necessary solutions offered for apt scholarship and positive developments in the *da'wah* industry.

It is neither an overstatement nor gainsaying the fact that most of the contemporary private Arabic institutions, particularly in the study focus, are quite lagging behind in the areas of curriculum planning in such a way that most of the perennial issues of concern to Islam are adequately and appropriately captured to stem down the incessant tides of arguments in the society. For instance, it sounds quite absurd to note that most of the literature books that are taught in many of these *Madaaris* are either those of Iraq, Sudan, Saudi or Morocco which, most often, do not address the need of Lagos inhabitants, talk less of Nigerians at large.

### **A Glimpse of *Daru-d-Da'wah Wal-Irshad* and its Founder**

The Arabic institution, *Daru-d-Da'wah Wal-Irshad*, was founded in the early 70s by Shaykh Mustapha Zuglool Sanusi, an Ikirun indigene of Osun State, Nigeria. He schooled and acquired vast experiences in various disciplines of Arabic and Islamic Studies under the tutelage of Shaykh Adam Abdullah al-Iloriy (both of blessed memory) a prolific writer, great historian, an orator and a leading research fellow to whose credit a good number of publications, nationally and internationally, was attributed. Shaykh Zuglool, like his Mentor, Shaykh Adam Abdullah al-Iloriy, was a genius par excellence in Arabic scholarship and of the few frontiers in the *da'wah* industry of his time. Of prominence among his academic publications are:

- i. Women Between Veil And Nakedness (al-Mar'atu Bayna-Hijaab Wassufuur)
- ii. The Key To Hadith Terminology (Miftaahul-Hadith Fi Mustalih 'Ilmil-Hadith)
- iii. The Arabs Will Return To Palestine (Saya'uud al-'Arab Ilaa Filastin)
- iv. Blossom Flowers of The History of Yoruba Land (Azhaarur- Rubaa Fi Akhbaar Bilaadi Yoruba)
- v. Admirable Information About Africa Countries (Rawaayi'ul – Ma'luumaat 'An Aqtaar Ifriqiyyah)
- vi. Scientific Facts In The Miracles of Prophet Muhammad (al-Haqaiq at-Ta'rikhiyyah 'An Mu'jizaat an-Nabiyyi Muhammad)
- vii. Explanation on The Palestinian Issue (Al-Bayaan 'An Qadiyyati Filastin) among others.

## **Philosophy, Aims, Visions and Missions of *Daru-d-Da'wahWal-Irshad***

The philosophy, aims and objectives of *Daru-d-Da'wah Wal-Irshad* are best captured in her unique and divinely sourced motto and quite inspiring and *da'wah*-motivating anthem.

The school motto otherwise known as “*Shi'aarul-Madrasah*” reads thus:

“And let there be (arising) among you a nation inviting to (all that is) good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those are truly the successful (Qur'an 3 : 104).

Also, the *Daru-d-Da'wah* anthem reads thus:

### **Transliteration:**

*Fadaaru-d-Da'wah Madrasati # Wauhdihaa tahiyyaati*

*Wafi-l-layli wafil – bukraah # Litusbighani bikhayraati*

### **Translation:**

*Daru-d-Da'wah*, my School # I give her my utmost honour and reverence

All the day and all the night # I am really indebted to her for my accomplishments.

*Lanaa fihaa Rijaalaatun # Du'aatul – khayri wa-n-Nusrah*

*Hudaatu likulli man dalla # Bunaatul – Majdi wa-d-Dawlah*

*Daru-d-Da'wah* houses a host of Reputable Teachers (of substance) # who stand firmly and resolutely for *Da'wah* (Proselytism)

Guiding those that are lost # Building the people for good governance

*Falaa ahadun yunaawi'unaa #walaahadun yunaazi'unaa*

*Wamanhajunaa Kitaabu-Llah # wa SunnatuTaahaMasdarunaa*

None would ever dare to cross our way # and none would ever, in anyway, outsmart us

For al-Qur'an is our (formidable strength) syllabus # while Sunnah is our (watchword) unbeatable reference point.

*Jihaadul-Kufri risaalatunaa # Binaaul- 'izzi limallatinaa*

*Waraddu durrah mughtasabah # Lidawlatinaa wa'ummatinaa*

Our Mission is to cleanse the Society of infidelity # and build an enviable and sustainable empire for our Community.

Also, to reclaim our lost treasures # for the benefit of all and sundry.

*Wanahnu fi mujtama'in # bihi sawtul-kufri marfuu'un*

*Tukhawwifunaa watu'dhinaa #Dhihaabuhumu wassiba'un*

We are in a Community # engulfed in chaos and infidelity

Living restlessly in fear and tragedy # under tyrannical threat and persecution.

*Diyaaru Makkah Landanunaa # MadinatuTaaha Baarisunaa*

*Fadusturunaa Qur'aanunaa # Hayaatu Sahaabati Mawdatunaa*

Makkah (the Holy City) is our London # While Madinah (the Illuminating City) is our Paris

Qur'an is our Divine Constitution # just as the Prophet's Companions are our Model.

*Lanaa Lughatun qad baharah # bijawdatihaa qad ghalabah*  
*Lughaatil – gharbi qaatibatan # sanuhyihaa wa'in datharah*

We are blessed with a language, # unique, well embellished and superbly rich  
Than all languages of the Western World # ever shall we safeguard it from extinction.

It is quite evident from the above that the philosophy upon which *Daru-d-Da'wah* is based cannot be divorced from *da'wah* and knowledge dissemination which are key elements of good governance for societal developments.

### **Academic Curriculum of *Daru-d-Da'wah Wal-Irshad* and Its Implementation Strategies**

A nation's resources, no matter the quality and quantity, remain dormant until people with adequate and appropriate skills are engaged in transforming them to useful agents of national development (Akangbou, 1987).

Education, by principle and design, as enunciated in (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013), is supposed to serve as an instrument for national development and social changes but the contrast has often been the case owing largely to misplaced priorities in different quarters, particularly in the political and socio-religious realms in Nigeria.

As a necessary preamble, and with a view to assessing the academic curriculum of *Daru-d-Da'wah* objectively, it would not be out of context to bring to the fore the diverse perspectives of scholars on the germane areas that Arabic and Islamic Education should cover, if it must be relevant and meaningfully align with emerging trends in scholarship.

In this regard therefore, Boyle (2005) posits Islamic Studies as “Qur'anic Schooling” and “Islamic Education”, referring to both as a school which essentially focuses on the teaching of some courses like Religious Studies in addition to other secular subjects like English, Mathematics, Science, History etc. (Salako and Adepoju, 2016)

Also, of note in this regard, is the perspective of Rahim (1992) on this subject matter. According to Salako and Adepoju (2016), Rahim asserts that Islamic Studies or Islamic Education covers the entire system of traditional schooling from pre-school through university level.

Explicating further, Rahim (1992), submits thus:

“The curriculum in use included not only religious subjects but in addition, subjects like Philology, Grammar, Chemistry, Physics, Arithmetic, Algebra, and Geometry to mention but a few”.

It is equally on record that Bidmos (2008), in regard to Islamic Education, emphasizes that it is wrong to restrict Islamic Education to the teaching of worship and prayers alone. Hence, he unequivocally asserts thus:

“It is also wrong to assume that religion, especially Islam, is restrictive to intellectual pursuits or it is anti-Science”.

More interestingly and comprehensively, in their contribution to this subject matter, Salako and Adepoju (2016), reiterate that Islamic Studies is aimed at training the child's personality towards the best moral and social conduct, healthy attitude and self-discipline in accordance with the guidance of the Qur'an and Sunnah. Hence, Syed (2007) was quoted as having said:

“The aim of Islamic Education is character building. Growth and development of Islamic personality should be the final goal of any Islamic School. As Muslims, our educational aim is to

develop the personalities of our children to the end that they will be conscious of their responsibility to God (the Creator) and to fellow humans” .

On this premise therefore, this study, as reliably gathered from an oral investigation conducted with a designated staff member of *Daru-d-Da'wah Wal-Irshad* on the above subject matter, the researchers are most humble to report as follows:

- The *Madrasah*, as at the time of filing this report, has no clear-cut and standardized academic curriculum in use.
- It majorly based its academic activities on recommended textbooks (on subject by subject basis) from carefully selected authors on various disciplines.
- Findings revealed that most of the recommended literatures were domesticated originally in some of the institutions of the Arab countries like Saudi Arabia, Cairo in Egypt (Azhar University), Iraq, Morocco, Sudan etc.
- It is interesting to note that some of the publications of the Proprietor and a few of the works of the *Madrasah* teaching staff constitute part of the instructional materials that have often been used for academic purposes in the *Madrasah* over the years.
- The researchers however reliably gathered that work was on the top gear to produce an official documentation of well structured, home based academic curriculum for the *Madrasah* in due course.

Going by the analysis above therefore, it may be stated, without mincing words, that most of the *Madaaris Ahliyyah* of this contemporary society, particularly in Lagos State, is still within this confine in the *da'wah* terrain.

It is the candid belief of the researchers and absolute reality therefore, that if curriculum of *Madaaris Ahliyyah* is well structured in the true spirit of *da'wah*, all aspects of human development must be positively affected.

Buttressing this point, Fasasi (2020), reiterates further on the submission of (Akangbou, 1987) saying:

“As an agent of development and social transformation, the content of the education system has been designed to reflect the goals and aspirations of the nation. These are presented in the curricular and co-curricular activities, subject by subject, at all levels of the education system. They focus on knowledge and skill dissemination, acquisition and utilization”

At this juncture therefore, it could be asserted that effectiveness and efficiency of *da'wah* would reflect positively on the larger society if, and only if, it is well planned, purposely structured and tailored towards moderating human behaviour and ensuring that desirable and worthwhile objectives in tandem with the Qur'anic and Sunnatic guidelines are religiously pursued and actualized.

In his remarks, (Fasasi, 2020) corroborates the above position thus:

“Religious Studies are included in the curriculum of educational institutions at all levels and they have spiritual and moral contents which are meant to provide guidance on the process and the products of the educational institutions”

Ruminating on this submission of Fasasi (2020), it is quite expedient to challenge and beacon on all stakeholders in the *da'wah* industry, particularly the Proprietors and Management of privately owned Arabic and Islamic institutions to, as a matter of priority, review the curriculum status of their various institutions with a view to improving on the “PROCESS and PRODUCTS” of *da'wah* right from their domains to the larger society.

Significantly, in order to serve as a universal reference point, an equilibrium yardstick and balanced academic curriculum, the Qur'an admonishes Muslims, and of course, the practitioners of *da'wah*, thus:

“And thus We have made you a MEDIAN (just and balanced) COMMUNITY that you will be witnesses over the people and the Messenger (Prophet Muhammad) will be a witness over you. And We did not make the *qiblah* (direction of the Sacred Mosque in Makkah) which you used to face except that We might make evident who would follow the Messenger from who would turn back on his heels. And indeed, it is difficult except for those whom Allah has guided. And never would Allah have caused you to lose your faith (i.e. your previous prayers). Indeed, Allah is, to the people, Kind and Merciful” (al-Baqarah, Qur'an 2:143)

Analyzing critically the above cited verse, one could depict the essence of *da'wah* beyond mere calling into Islam, skill acquisition and knowledge dissemination; albeit, *da'wah* is all-encompassing of all these and many more.

Of special note, it could be deduced from this verse under examination that Muslims, especially the *da'wah* practitioners, are expected to live a more dignified life and inculcate the best exemplary characters within members of the society (Q.33:21). This, by extension, suggests the need to adopt the Qur'an and Sunnah as the most appropriate benchmark in the planning and implementation of academic curriculum for *da'wah* purposes at the various Arabic and Islamic institutions in the contemporary society.

It is in this direction that the National Policy on Education (2008), stipulates thus:

“Islamic education curriculum in basic schools has moral and ethical teachings such as child rights in Islam, child's responsibilities to Allah, relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims, human relations, environmental sanitation and social responsibilities” (Fasasi, 2020)

It is therefore definitely not of point to say that from divine sources (Qur'an and Sunnah), a standard academic curriculum devoid of any interpolation, contradiction or marginalization could be drawn and structured towards meaningful developments in all facets of life – be it political, economic, social, moral and religious.

By and large, if, truly and sincerely, all Muslims, the *da'wah* practitioners in particular, would see the *Ka'bah* beyond just a unifying direction for Salat, but as a desirable factor for unity and togetherness in designing a common curriculum (though with recognition of peculiarities of diverse communities and nationalities) for common goals, the better for *da'wah* and its numerous agents and the Society at large.

### **Curriculum Innovation and its Essentialist in Islamic Institutions**

Religious education, in general, and Islamic Studies, in particular, is meant to guide human behaviour. It is considered to be of great importance because it serves as a controlling agent for individual's utilization of knowledge and skills in any occupation and in any socio-economic and political affairs (Fasasi, 2020).

Premised on this submission, it must be stated in clear terms that curriculum is the bedrock of any purposeful academic planning due to the fact that the success or failure of any academic programme is hinged on its planning and structure.

A good and well-planned curriculum, according to scholars, necessarily passes through different stages. These among others include:

Phase 1: Planning

- i. Identify issue/problem/need

- ii. Form curriculum development team
  - iii. Conduct needs assessment and analysis
  - iv. State intended outcomes
  - v. Select content.
  - vi. Design experiential methods
  - vii. Produce curriculum product
  - viii. Test and revise curriculum
- <http://www.fao.org> assessed 14/07/2022 @ 3.10pm

Giving adequate attention to the enumerated points as above, teaching and learning would be less cumbersome while its intended outcome may not constitute an iota of threat or the least challenge to both the teacher and the learner. The fact being that a good planning begets a good and commendable implementation, all things being equal (Q.29:69).

### **Specific *Da'wah* Activities of *Daru-d-Da'wah Wal-Irshad***

As one the frontier institutions renowned for *da'wah* in Lagos State, *Daru-d-Da'wah Wal-Irshad*, apart from teaching and learning of different courses in Arabic and Islamic Studies in a formal and organized classroom environment, engages actively in many other *da'wah* activities. Of prominence among these are enumerated below:

- i. Termly - based academic programme designed in the following levels:
  - Tahdiriyyah: Preparatory Level (1 year)
  - I'daadiyyah: Basic Level (4 years)
  - Thanaawiyyah; Advanced Level (3 years)
- ii. Periodically based Hadith ath-Thulathaa'(Tuesday Retreat): A specially designed academic/educative session for internal and external audience and spectators across the world.
- iii. Yearly Tafsir (Qur'anic exegeses) held during the month of Ramadan.
- iv. Annual MawlidNabiyy (Prophet Muhammad's Birthday) Convention.
- v. Annual Hijrah (Islamic New Year) Symposium.
- vi. Yearly Haflah (Graduation Ceremony) for the I'daadiyyah and Thanaawiyyah Levels of 4 and 3 years respectively

It is worthy of note to state that all the itemized programmes above are *da'wah*-oriented, academically packed programmes for public enlightenment and orientation on issues of national interest and societal developments.

### **Factors Accountable for Stigmatization and Non-dynamism of *Madaaris Ahliyyah* in Lagos State**

1. Egoism/egoistic tendencies emanating from ostentation, self-centeredness, altruism and lack of spirit for teamwork
2. Dogmatism/ dogmatic reasoning often attributed to lack of self-esteem, inferiority complex, lack of exposure, and unnecessary adoration of some past heroes
3. Materialism, fetish and uncontrolled desires for ephemeral gains arising from lack of contentment with Allah's provisions
4. Shallow foresightedness, lack of vision and mission which often account for lack of succession plan
5. Deviation, misguided posterity due to permissive family culture

## Brief Explanation on the Five (5) points as stated above

It may be informative, regrettable though, that the lustful ego of supremacy as often claimed and sometimes displayed by some individual heads / founders of traditional Arabic and Islamic schools had drastically retarded the growth and development of such *Madaaris*.

Also, the dogmatic reasoning and erroneous notion of “this is how it used to be done and ever shall it remain unchallenged, unchanged” of many *Madaaris Ahliyyah* have done a great deal of disservice to *da'wah* rather than promoting the pristine Islamic values among the Nigeria citizenry, particularly in Lagos State.

In addition to the devastating menace of egoism and dogmatism, a host of the Management of *Madaaris Ahliyyah* has, in recent times, deviated from the core objectives of *da'wah* by their inordinate love of materialism, misplaced priority and lack of focus for a well projected developmental vision for their schools. Hence, concentrated efforts are mainly on *haflah* or *walimah* (graduation ceremony) at the expense of *da'wah* which supposed to be their primary concern.

At worst, the most disgusting, most loathsome and highly embarrassing of all these, is the lack of succession plans by most of the proprietors of private Arabic and Islamic schools which had hitherto resulted in chaos and unending pandemonium between the ‘competent’ and ‘incompetent’ successive heirs and or heads after their demise.

## Suggestions and Recommendations

1. The process and products of *da'wah* must be given a pride of place in academic planning and curriculum development if successful *da'wah* must be achieved. Therefore, there must be a synergy between the ‘process’ and the ‘product’ that the ultimate goal of *da'wah* could be realized.
2. There is an urgent need for the National Board for Arabic and Islamic Studies (NBAIS) to be more popularized in Southwest Nigeria; while proprietors and stakeholders of Arabic and Islamic institutions should adopt, as much as necessary, the Qur’an and Sunnah, and ensure their true reflection in the academic planning and curriculum development of various *Madaaris* in Lagos State, in particular, and Nigeria, in general.
3. *Da'wah* practitioners should be wary of injecting anti-Islamic doctrines and adulterated indoctrinations into the curriculum, lest the unsuspecting students, followers, and audience on social media, are misguided.
4. Both aspects of educational goals as enunciated in the National Policy on Education should be well-stressed and adequately captured in the academic curriculum of *Madaaris Ahliyyah* for the overall benefits of the Nigeria citizenry and the Muslim *Ummah* (Islamic Community) in particular.
5. There is dire need for collaborative efforts among Proprietors and Management of *Madaaris Ahliyyah* in order to enjoy mutual benefits and effect necessary checks and balances in the academic and administrative running of their individual institutions to achieve a common goal (Q.5:2).

## Conclusion

The length and breadth of this paper has critically examined the strength and weakness of a host of *Madaaris Ahliyyah* in Lagos State in regard to academic curriculum planning, its development and implementation; citing *Daru-d-Da'wah Wal-Irshad* as a major focus. The feedback from the core areas that were investigated indicated that tremendous achievements had, over the years, been recorded in the *da'wah* industry especially in the yearly production of hundreds of graduates from *I'daadiyyah* and *Thanaawiyyah* levels across various *Madaaris* in Lagos State. The study has however observed the wide lacuna that should be bridged in the *da'wah* industry in the 5 - point recommendation to facilitate monumental watersheds in the *da'wah* industry, that the numerous *Madaaris Ahliyyah* (Private Arabic and Islamic schools)



can actually compete favourably with their contemporary *Madaaris Hukuumiyyah* (Government owned public schools) in Nigeria and beyond.

## References

- Akangbou, S.D (1987). *The Economics of Education: An Introduction*. Ibadan: Shaneson C.I. Ltd.
- Al-Muntad al-Islami (2004). *Translation of Meaning of the Qur'an by Saheed International*, Jeddah. ISBN:9960-792-63-3
- Bidmos, M.A (2008). "Utilizing the Potentials of Islamic Education in Nation Building". University of Lagos Inaugural Lecture Series, University of Lagos Press, Akoka, Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria.
- Boyle, H.N (2005). *Qur'anic Schools: Agents of Preservation of Change*. New York. Routledge Falmer.
- Fasasi, Y.A (2020). *Islamic Education and Sustainable Development in Nigeria: Implications for School Managers. New and Emerging Perspectives on Science, Religion and Society; A Festschrift in Honour of Dr. Sulaiman Akorede Popoola (DL); R.I Adebayo, O. Agbolade, T.M.Salisu, A.A. Adebayo, C.F. Ojetunde (eds). Michael Otedola College of Primary Education (MOCPED). Department of Religious and Peace Studies, LASU. and National Association of Religious Scholars (NARES)*
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2008). *The New Secondary School Curriculum Structure*, Abuja: NERDC.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013). *National Policy on Education*, Lagos: NERDC.
- Rahim, A (1992). *Islamic History*. Islamic Publication Bureau, Mushin, Lagos, Nigeria.
- Salako, T.A and Adepoju, R.I (2016). "The Implications for the National Education Policy for Islamic Studies". *Journal of Religions and Peace Studies (JORAP)*. Vol.1, Number 1. Published by The Post-Graduate Committee, Department of Religious Studies, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State, Nigeria. ISSN: 2636-610X
- Shittu, M.A. (2001). *Arabic Language in Nigeria: Some Contributions of Shaykh Mustapha Zughlul Sanusi* in Religious Forum Academia
- Syed, I.B (2007). "Education of Muslim Children: Challenges and Opportunities". [www.islamfortoday.com/syed.htm](http://www.islamfortoday.com/syed.htm)(2007). Assessed on November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016