

## INTEGRATION OF SOCIAL SCIENCE EDUCATION INTO THE *MADRASAH* CURRICULUM: NEEDS AND PROSPECTS

BY

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### Abstract

A Madrasah is religious educational institution that trains students in Arabic and Islamic education. It also plays important role in offering educational services to the poor in all the states of Nigeria. This school has strived a lot to contribute its educational quota to the well being of the states. Therefore, reforming the curriculum of the Madrasah to meet the contemporary demands of Nigeria has been a policy challenge and long overdue, a research needs to conducted in this area. Of what relevance will it be if social sciences education are accommodated into the curriculum of the Madrasah?. Although majority of the stakeholders are of the opinion that, integrating social sciences into the curriculum will not only enhance the supply of Arabic and Islamic Studies scholars but also make the education service of the *Madrasah* effective in developing both spiritual and technical capabilities of their students for the development of the nation. This researcher has to provide suitable and achievable answers to these questions: How is this visible and what is to be put in place to achieve this great vision. The researcher provided answers to these questions and gave valuable recommendations for possible implementation to enhance the productivity of the madrasah as a viable institution to contribute its quota to the development of Nigeria in this 21st century.

**Keywords:** Social Science education, *Madrasah* curriculum, productivity.

### Introduction

For several centuries, the intellectual activities of the Muslim community in Osun state *Madrasah* schools have been largely limited to literature, religious studies, and a few social science subjects lacking a tradition of scientific pursuits. As a result, there is a lack of awareness about the increasing importance of knowledge in physical, biological, mathematical, technical, science and economics.

In the contemporary landscape a very serious and vulnerable scenario has arisen, wherein Arabic education find themselves at a crossroad facing challenges from western ideologies and innovatives on one hand and threats from fundamental elements on the other. This complex challenge has given rise to multiple pressing issues and thought provoking inquiries that confront today's Arabic scholars.

Among these pertinent questions, is the challenge of harmonizing faith with both cherished traditions and advancement of science. The urgency required to address the educational deficit knowledge and its integration into the curricula of Madaaris becomes paramount. In the light of this imperative, the following discourse endeavours to shed light on the significance of incorporating social science education within these Arabic schools. By doing so, it aspires to take a modest stride towards alleviating backwardness in the realm of social science education within the religious institutions.

The recognition accorded the acquired knowledge presupposes that Islām is not just a religion but a way of life that also requires some basic knowledge that would make life worth living especially in the area of *mu'amalat*

In its definition of what Mu'amalat connotes, the book 'the Boko Haram tragedy' a publication of Islāmic Education Trust (2009) sees mu'amalat as

/Those areas related to the collective life of society such as agriculture, healthcare and medicine, politics, administration and management, technology, education, defence and society, transportation, communication, and every other aspect of life outside prescribed worship (p.12)

This essentially means that, Islām has taken care of both the religious and the social aspects of life and both are compulsory for every Muslim to acquire. The growth and development in learning during the early period of Islām also manifest in the involvement of many scholars in the works of translation. Among them also was an original contributor, Hunayn bin Ishaq (809-873 C.E.), a Christian-Arab who did not only translate the works of Galen, Plato, Aristotle and Ptolemy but was also credited to have written thirty-one books. Other translators include Yahya bin al-Bitriq (815 CE), Thabit bin Qurrah (836-901 CE), Quata bin Luqa, etc. While writing on the contributions of Islām to knowledge in the world, Yusuf and Abdur-Rahim, (2004) show a catalogue of achievements in many of these citadels of learning.

For instance, on the eve of the British occupation of Egypt, Al-Azhar University had 7,600 students and 230 professors. In Cordova; the number of students on enrolment in the department of theology was well over 11,000 as late as 9th century. Equally providing references on library development, Yusuf and Abdur-Rahim mention *Maktabah al-Fatimiyyin* (Fatimid Library) Cairo, in Egypt that had stock of books in various aspects of Islām including the *Qur'an*, *Ahādith*, *Tafāsīr*, *Fiqh* etc numbering 2 millions and Darul-Hikmah in Cairo established by Hakim bin Amr-Allah had 40 sections with each having an average of 18,000 books on religion, sciences, arts, grammar etc. Fafunwa (2004, 42) corroborates this assertion when he writes that:

for centuries, scholars have realised that Arabic as a language and Islām as a religion have contributed substantially to world civilisation and culture. It was Islām that revived the human pursuit of science and it was through the Arabs and not the Romans that

the modern world achieved light and power through science.

Other prominent areas where Islām contributed is in the aspect of Arab philosophy which has a very considerable influence upon the universities of Paris, Oxford and Northern Italy, and upon Western European thoughts generally. Of equal importance were the giant strides made in the field of science among which are Mathematics, Physic, Economics and Chemistry etc. In Mathematics for instance, Muslims were reputed to have introduced Arabic numerals with the Muslim Mathematician by name Muhammed Ibn Musa, being the first to use decimal notation and to give digits the value position (Fafunwa, 2004). Other areas of their contributions to Mathematics include great advances in geometry, invention of Algebra, and the development of spherical trigonometry like the sine, tangent and cotangent. Development in physics includes the invention of the pendulum and the advancement of the world's knowledge in optics.

They were also said to have dominated the field of astronomy by building several observatories, constructing many types of astronomical instruments which are still in use today and working out the angle of the ecliptic as well as the procession of the equinoxes. Citing further their contributions, Fafunwa mentions the Muslims' discoveries in Chemistry which included many new substances like potash, silver nitrate, corrosive sublimate, nitric and sulphuric acid. These are few of the tremendous achievements in Arabic/Islāmic education until the introduction of a new alternative system of education by the colonialists that sought to replace the role of *Madaris* and separated state from religion (Uzma, 2003). A critical look at Hasan's work shows the trend of Arabic/Islāmic education when the religion was at the peak of its ascendancy. The same could not be said of the religion when Islām came under the authority of secular states as is presently the case in Nigeria.

The Umayyad era witnessed further development in this respect as the scope of the syllabus was enlarged to accommodate the study of Grammar, History, Geography and law. The Aghlabid dynasty, based in North Africa also became popular with the establishment of the Qayrawan University in Fez, Morocco. From this University were Ibn Khaldun, Ibn Al-Khatib, Al-Bitruji, Ibn Harazim, Ibn Maymoun, Ibn Wazzan and Gerbert (d. 1003). Egypt was said to enjoy prominence as the country of the famous al-Azhar University in Cairo established by the Fatimids. Other colleges established in Egypt were Rambiyyah, Nasariyyah and Salahdiyyah. It is on record that Al-Azhar attracted brains like Ibn Haytham (d. 1039), who became renown as the author of *Al – baytul – muzlim* or camera obscura (a dark room) which is the prototype of the modern day photographic camera (Hasan, 2001).

Muslim in Spain also witnessed the same development in educational system as institutions began to spring up in Cordova, Seville, Malaga and Granada. Examples include Alhambra of Granada, Mosques of Cordova and Seville as well as Medinat al-Zahra, near Cordova all which held sway as centres of learning. These schools were reputed to have produced great minds like Ibn Sina (D. 1037), author of *Qānūn fī-Tibb* (Canon of medicine), Ibn Rushd, Ibn Al- Sayigh and Ibn Bajja. Basra (Iraq) could equally boast of scholars like Al- Khallil Ibn Ahmad (Philosopher) and Sibawaih, a renowned Arabic Grammarian. In West Africa, Sankore Mosque in Timbuktu was reputed to enjoy

full accreditation status as a university based in West Africa. It goes without saying that all these universities earned reputation for intensive research, teaching and publications using Arabic as the medium of instruction and learning. (Hasan, 2001).

While discussing the wider dimension of development witnessed in learning during this period, Fafunwa (2004) makes ample reference to the ninth and tenth centuries as the beginning of the efflorescence of learning in these countries. He says that 'at least a century before the Western world thought of establishing higher centres of learning, the Muslim world had established such institutions in Basra, Kufa, Baghdad, Cairo and Cordova' claiming that these institutions began as religious Schools located in mosques, and later developed into universities.

Owoyemi and Akanni say this development enhance the relevance of the twin subjects which culminated in their inclusion as part of courses taught in various universities in the country. The authors also look at the trends of Arabic and Islamic Studies in South-west Nigeria which they say began at the mosque prior to the arrival of the colonial masters and how the western system of education posed great challenges to its survival. The challenge thrown by this new system of education led to reform efforts embarked upon by the duo of Shaykh Adam Abdullah Al-Aluri and Shaykh Kamalideen who established modern Arabic and Islamic schools based on Western model. They (i.e. the authors) also listed the curriculum in operation in those schools. They went further to write that other Yoruba Scholars of Arabic and Islamic Studies followed suit by establishing similar schools in other parts of Yorubaland. They argue that the level of patronage of those schools was why some tertiary institutions in Southwest Nigeria decided to mount Arabic and Islamic Studies programmes in their respective domains.

Owoyemi and Akanni expose the readers to the curriculum contents of Arabic and Islamic Studies and show their interconnectivity with other subjects in the secular world as well as how products of the twin subjects have utilised the opportunities provided by the subjects to reach the pinnacle of their careers in various fields. The authors thereafter wrote on the importance of the courses to the world and enumerate vista of opportunities that abound by learning the two courses. They draw examples from the University of Exeter in England where graduates of Arabic and Islamic Studies could offer career in various fields ranging from public affairs consultancy to journalism, translation and public relations jobs among others. They equally make ample historical references to Nigeria where the holders of certificate in the twin discipline have made progress as chief justices, professors, secretaries to the government and University Vice-Chancellors among others.

Oloyede (2012) divides the products of Modern Arabic/Islāmic schools in Southwest Nigeria into two broad service outcomes which are the traditional and the conventional. The former according to AbdulRahmon (2008) seems focused 'on rendering some purely private missionary services such as non-formal teaching, preaching, conduct of religious rites and private legal/theological advisory services' while 'the latter has served as 'a vehicle by which Arabic reached several parts of the world'.

AbdulRahmon (2012), goes further to say that those who go conventional succeed with the active involvement of the Orientalists where study of the twin disciplines is dictated by career opportunities like Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Arabic

language and literature, B. A. in Islamic Studies, B. A. in translation in Arabic, B. A. in Middle Eastern Studies, and so on. For the products who go traditional therefore, they found it convenient to be self-subsistent in all areas of Islamic related disciplines. Bidmos (2018) also looks at it from another angle by making some classification of the products of Madrasah system into the conservatives and the progressives. He is of the opinion that while 'the conservatives' among the products are usually contented with the knowledge they acquired from the Madaris, the 'progressives', on the other hand, usually proceed for further studies either in universities in Nigeria or outside the country.

He goes further that while the conservatives prefer to seek employment with the I'dadiyyah or Thanawiyyah certificates obtained from these modern schools, the 'progressives' are usually not in a hurry to pursue material comforts. Defining the word 'progressive' on the other hand, Bidmos (2018) says they are products of the Madaris who have become active players in such fields as medicine, public administration, tertiary institution, teaching, lecturing, architecture, mass media, etc., and see the conservatives as those who are serving as Imams, preachers on radio and television, etc.

This is particularly so where such products also have O' level results in West African School Certificate Examination or Senior Secondary School results. Average products of the Modern Arabic Schools always see those courses (i.e. journalism, engineering) as elitist and do not usually go for them. Personal observation shows that many of those who rose through ranks in their various fields but began as products of the Modern Arabic and Islamic Schools did not attend public secondary schools.

They sat for their WASCE and SSCE from home. So, to further their education, there is every tendency that they would prefer to make their career in their primary constituency which is Arabic and Islamic Studies as well as Shariah law. This work undoubtedly opens the eyes of its readers to an aspect that has not received wider acclaim as a result of people's perception about it in this part of the world. Its relevance to the present study therefore cannot be quantified. However, it leaves some gaps one of which is that being a journal article, the scope of the work is too narrow to accommodate the comprehensiveness of the work under study.

## Research Questions

The following research questions are raised as the foundation upon which the needs for the integration of social sciences into the Madaaris curriculum is built upon. This include:

- i. What are the perceptions of the Muslim Arabist on the integration of *Madaaris* curriculum to include social sciences education?
- ii. What is the level of understanding of the proprietors of these *Madaaris* on the integration of their curriculum to include social science education?
- iii. How can the *Madaaris* curriculum in Osun state be repositioned to accommodate social sciences education courses?

## Methodology

### Research Design

This study used the descriptive research design to investigate the inclusion of science cum social science education into the Madaaris curriculum and its effects on their products in some selected Modern Arabic schools in Osun State, Nigeria.

### Target Population

The target population centered on some progressive products from selected Modern Arabic schools in Osun State, Nigeria.

### Sample and Sampling Technique:

A total number of six standard *madaaris* were selected in Osun state. The researcher involved only pure Arabic schools that have been in existence for at least ten years with appreciable number of graduates that are highly ranked in different sectors in Nigeria. One hundred and twenty (120) questionnaires were distributed. The Questionnaire titled "Integration of Social Science Education into the Madaaris Curriculum. (ISSEMC)" comprised two sections. Section A contains Personal Information i.e. Bio-data of the respondents while section B were constructed on statements relevant to the Arabic Schools. The statements in the section are constructed on a four- point like scale (Strongly agreed, Agreed, Disagreed and Strongly Disagree). Interviews were also conducted with some individuals such as Arabic schools proprietors, Islamic scholars and artisans that are products of the institutions.

### Interview

Proprietors were selected for oral interview in order to collect comprehensive data about their institutions.

## Findings and Discussions

### Perceptions of the Muslim Arabist in Osun State on the Integration of Social Sciences education into the *Madāris* Curriculum (Modern Arabic/Islāmic Institutes) Curriculum.

S/N	ITEM	Valid No/%	SA (%)	A (%)	SD (%)	D (%)	REMARK
1	Modern Arabic and Islamic Schools in Osun State are avenues for teaching Islamic spiritual values	120 (100)	-	120 (100)	-	-	Agreed
2	Modern Arabic and Islamic schools in Osun State are avenues for teaching Islamic moral values	120 (100)	-	120	-	-	

				(100)			Agreed
3	Modern Arabic and Islamic schools in Osun State are avenues for training Islamic scholars	120 (100)	120 (100)		-	-	Agreed
4	Modern Arabic and Islamic schools in Osun State are avenues for teaching and learning Arabic language.	120 (100)	-	120 (100)	-	-	Agreed
5	Modern Arabic and Islamic schools in Osun State do serve as preparatory ground for training people to:						
	(i) be enlisted into Military and paramilitary services	120 (100)	50	-	70		Disagreed
	(ii) become Administrators						
	(iii) become Broadcasters						Disagreed
	(iv) become Lawyers/Judges	120 (100)	40		80	-	Disagreed
	(v) become Medical Doctors						Disagreed
	(vi) become Nurses	120 (100)	30		90		Disagreed
	(vii) become Librarians						
	(viii) become Engineers	120 (100)	35		85		Disagreed
	(ix) become Accountants	120	20		100		Disagreed
	(x) become Architects	(100)		-			
	(xi) become Secretary/typists	120 (100)	20		100		Disagreed
			-				Disagreed



		120 (100)		30		90	Disagreed  Disagreed  Disagreed
9	Modern Arabic and Islamic schools in Osun State are training grounds for students to become spiritual consultants	120 (100)	70		-	50	Agreed

Findings show that majority of the respondents agreed that Modern Arabic Schools in the region are avenues for training Islamic scholars. Without doubt, preaching is one of the four predominant areas commonly known as sources of empowerment in the Modern Arabic and Islamic school's curriculum, as operated in southwest Nigeria. Others are teaching, writing and officiating at public functions. Two verses from the Qur'an assign the duties of preaching in Islam to two categories of people; one for the Muslim *ummah* in general and the other for those who went through training before they begin their proselytisation activities. The first group of these Muslims are described in *Sūratu Āli 'Imrān*

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ  
عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ

You are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind,  
enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and  
believing in God. (Q3:110)

Findings further show that majority of the respondents were of the view that Modern Arabic schools in Osun State do not serve as preparatory grounds for training people to be enlisted into the Military and paramilitary services. Military services are the Army, Naval and the Air Force while the paramilitary services would refer to those



engaged in the service of the Police, Customs and Excise, Immigrations, Criminal Investigation Department, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps among others.

This result is amazing as the Arabist in the region could not have envisaged the Modern Arabic and Islamic schools with primary aims of training ‘Mallams’ to see their products enlisted in the military and paramilitary establishments with the certificate of those schools. To an average Muslim of southwest Nigeria therefore, Modern Arabic and Islamic Schools are to teach spiritual and moral values and has nothing to do with military and paramilitary services. While this position was right, the Muslims may not be acquainted with the fact that Islam is not just a religion but a way of life that has enough provisions for all aspects of human endeavour the issue of security inclusive. In other words, Islam is not unmindful of the concept of security in whatever form with its numerous references drawn from the Qur’an. One of the verses is in *Suratun-Nūr* where Allah promises the Muslims:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا  
اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن  
بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا وَمَن كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ  
هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

Allah has promised those among you who believe and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession in the land, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practise their religion which He has chosen for them. And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear if they worship Me and do not associate anything with Me. But whoever disbelieved after this, they are the rebellious. (Q4:55)

Two reasons can be given on why the Muslims in the focused region are not aware of this fact. One is that the contemporary composition and configuration of the Nigerian State with secular orientation such that did not at inception see Islam more than a mere religion, the same orientation harboured by average Nigerians particularly Yoruba irrespective of their status as either Muslims or non-Muslims. To the average Nigerian therefore, Modern Arabic and Islamic Schools cannot be relevant as an educational system that seems pole apart from western education to which they are accustomed. Contemporary efforts of many Muslim activists are however gradually changing this narrative as there are awareness that baring Arabic as the language of instructions, many of the subjects taught in those schools fall within the field of humanities that are recognised for admission into tertiary institutions to build careers.

Similar finding also showed that majority of the respondents were of the opinion that these schools do not serve as preparatory grounds for training people to become administrators. This result is also not surprising in view of the earlier assertion that the aims and objectives as well as in the curricula are tailored towards spiritual and moral development alone and therefore have no bearing with being an administrator. Rather, the all-encompassing attributes of Islam as a religion and a way of life shows the injunctions of Allah as contained in *Suratul-An’am* thus:

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَمٌ أَمْثَلُكُمْ مَا فَرَّطْنَا  
فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ

There is not a moving creature on earth, nor a bird that  
flies with its two wings, but are communities like you.  
We have neglected nothing in the Book, then unto their  
Lord they (all) shall be gathered.)(Q6:38)

In view of this, the issue of administration for instance has its reference in the  
Qur'anic injunction that instructs man to establish governance on earth as in *Suratul  
Baqarah* where Allah informs the Angels on this assignment thus

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً...

And (remember) when your Lord said to the angels:  
"Verily, I am going to place (mankind) generations after  
generations on earth." (Q2:29)

History of Islam shows an administrative template introduced by the Prophet  
Muhammad (SAW) himself when he arrived Madinah as he also became the first  
administrator of the nascent Islamic State. This template is being followed by successive  
generations of Muslims wherever the religion is adopted as a system of administration.  
Therefore, Yoruba Muslims in Southwest Nigeria did not notice this historical fact also  
indicates inadequate level of awareness of the capabilities of these schools to be  
recognised as catalysts for the production of good administrators if well positioned.

Further result reveals that majority of the respondents believed that these  
institutions do not serve as preparatory grounds for training people to become  
broadcasters. This result is however surprising as it shows a possible pre-determined  
mindset that could not perceive the essence of broadcasting to Islam as a religion. While  
the concept of professional training in broadcasting and the roles of the modern media for  
doing so may be missing in those schools, campaign for the spread of Islam to all parts of  
the world in what is known as *da'wah* is nothing short of broadcasting which is a central  
element in the propagation of the religion.

The same roles were played by early Yoruba Muslim missionaries popularly  
known as *al-Majiri*, the corrupt pronunciation of *al-muhajirun* (those who migrate for the  
purpose of *da'wah*). Prominent among them was a fiery missionary popularly known as  
*Ko kewu ko beere* who traversed the entire Yorubaland during his lifetime (Gbadamosi,  
1978). The inability of Muslims in Yorubaland of Southwest Nigeria to see this  
proselytisation effort as a potential tool for the development of Islamic-oriented  
journalism and broadcasting for that matter may be reason for their negative response to  
this question item.

Another finding indicated that majority of the respondents were of the opinion  
that Modern Arabic and Islamic schools in Southwest Nigeria do not serve as preparatory  
grounds for training people to become lawyers/judges. This result is equally surprising  
given the fact that the *Shariah* (Islamic Law) forms an integral part of Islam as a way of  
life. The Glorious Qur'an talks on justice in *Suratul-Maidah* where Allah says;

...اعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَى...

Be just, that is nearer to piety (Q5:8)

This presupposes that mechanism and procedures for the administration of justice as a universal concept is also expected to be provided. Perhaps the assumption of the respondents would be that the Modern Arabic and Islamic Schools in the region are not structured to train students to become lawyers and judges. The thinking along this line perhaps may also be advanced that since the legal system in operation in the South-west Nigeria is not Shariah based, training the Muslims for this purpose may not be necessary or that given the objectives of the schools and their known products, the schools are not capable to prepare their students for future career in law. As the data analysis shows, only very few respondents are aware that some subjects taught in the Modern Arabic/Islamic Schools have greater impact on their products when admitted to pursue Shari'ah law related degree courses in tertiary institutions.

Result also shows that majority of the respondents agreed that the Modern Arabic and Islamic schools in Southwest Nigeria do not serve as preparatory grounds for training people to become medical doctors. This result is not unexpected also because to the Muslim community, the objectives of the schools under study do not involve anything that has to do with medicine. The actual fact however, is that majority of these schools had gone through Islamic history and saw the tremendous achievements of early Muslim scholars in sciences (Masudul Hasan, 2001) and intimate them by teaching their students science subjects that could facilitate their ambition to study medicine and other para-medical courses. The courses include Mathematics (ar-riyadhiyat), Biology (ilmul hayat), Chemistry (kimiyah), Physics (al-fiziyyah) and Geography (jugrafiyyah) among others.

Language is one of the barriers that hinder the students of these schools from sitting for these subjects at the West African School Certificate Examinations and Senior School Certificate Examinations like their counterparts in the western-oriented schools. This result therefore indicates that majority of the respondents were unaware of this fact, which might have influenced the result. Probably the same thing applied, which further indicates that majority of the respondents agreed that Modern Arabic and Islamic schools in Southwest Nigeria do not have what it takes to train people to become nurses. This result is also expected for the reasons explained above.

Further finding reveals that, majority of the respondents agreed that, these schools do serve as preparatory grounds for training people to become librarians. To those who understand the comprehensiveness of Islam, although taking into account the librarianship as a course does not form part of the subjects taught in those schools just like their sister schools with western-orientation.

This also informs why cataloguing of books and arrangements of many of these libraries always lack professional touch. It is noteworthy however, that the culture of keeping books is not alien to Islam as this was the case in early Islamic history citing the Fatimid dynasty in Egypt as one case study in the establishment of libraries (Masudul Hasan, 2001). Studies have even shown that majority of the contemporary local mosques in Yorubaland follow this step in their little ways by having small shelves where Islamic books particularly the Glorious Qur'an are kept. Experience of this researcher as a product of these schools indicates that many of the products of these schools do possess volumes of books which shows the influence of Islam on knowledge acquisition on their lives even as students. This indicates that these Schools do stimulate the interest of their students in librarianship as a course of study at tertiary institutions.

Finding also revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that Modern Arabic and Islamic schools in Southwest Nigeria do not serve as preparatory grounds for training people to become accountants. This shows similar result as a result of the Euro-centric perception that Arabic and Islamic Schools are not more than training grounds for the production of Mallams who have nothing to contribute to the development of the society outside Arabic and Islamic Studies.

Similar finding showed that majority of the respondents agreed that Modern Arabic and Islamic schools in Southwest Nigeria do not serve as preparatory grounds for training people to become architects. This result is equally not surprising for similar reasons advanced earlier. Findings also indicated that majority of the respondents agreed that Modern Arabic and Islamic schools in Southwest Nigeria do not have what it takes to train people to become secretary/typists; a result that could not have been otherwise.

Result also revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that Modern Arabic and Islamic schools in Southwest Nigeria are training grounds for students on vocational activities. That this result is positive still shows that Muslims in Southwest Nigeria value the importance of vocational activities in building a virile society and the roles of the schools in this regard. Two factors account for this position. One is the Yoruba value for hardwork and the other is the Islamic principle that corroborates it. Yoruba's value for hardwork can be found in many of their common parlanges one of which is '*Isé l'ògùn isé*' (work is an antidote to poverty).

Similar findings revealed that respondents agreed that manpower include capacity to be employed as engineers. This result is expected as one of the basic needs of the Community for the development of the Society. Engineering as an aspect of technology is basic in the lives of man and this was why it became one of the areas of interest to early Muslim engineers. These include Abbas ibn Firnas (9<sup>th</sup> century), Ibn al-Haytham, the 11<sup>th</sup> century Iraqi scientist, father of optics and experimental physics who was considered as the 'first scientist', Abu Rayhān al-Bīrūnī, the 11<sup>th</sup> century pioneer of experimental mechanics as well as al-Jazari, the 13<sup>th</sup> century civil engineers among others (Masudul Hasan, 2001). Modern Arabic and Islamic schools in Southwest Nigeria do not serve as preparatory grounds for training people to become engineers. This result also is not surprising as it still confirms the lack of connectivity between the primary objectives of those Schools with any career in engineering for that matter. It also indicates inadequate knowledge of the Muslims in Southwest Nigeria that, even though the primary focus of these Modern Arabic and Islamic Schools is on Islamic spiritual and moral values, they teach some courses in sciences as earlier discussed.

The Muslim Community as stakeholder in the development of the Southwest Nigeria and relying on the Islamic precept of participating to community development in the field of engineering makes the need for this profession important.

Some of the products that fall into the category of the traditional or the conservatives are those who established similar schools and are therefore self-employed by becoming proprietors of the Modern Arabic and Islamic Schools themselves like Shaykh Mustafa Zugloul, the founder of Darud-Da'wah Wal-Irshad, Isolo, Lagos; Shaykh Moshood Ramadan Jubril of Markazas-Salam, Ojokoro, Lagos and Shaykh Musa Yahya Agboola who established Dar ulFalalah, Amukoko, Lagos. These products are graduates of Arabic Training Centre, Agege, Lagos. Similar products of other modern

Arabic schools who belong to this category abound everywhere in Yorubaland and even beyond.

There have also been catalogue of achievements on the part of many products of these schools who are termed as the ‘conventional’ or ‘progressives’ in many fields of human endeavour in Nigeria. While Arabic and Islamic education form the foundation of their success, further academic and administrative prowess they gained are based on the supplementary courses they underwent.

This category who are employed into civil or public service have reached the pinnacle of their careers as teachers in the primary, secondary and the tertiary institutions. One can cite a good number of these products of Madrasah education like Professors R. D. Abubakre and Ishaq Oloyede, both products of Markaz, Agege Lagos who rose to become Vice-Chancellors of al-Hikmah University, and the University of Ilorin respectively, Professor Amidu Sanni who graduated from Nahdatul-Arabiyyah, Ibadan and was the Vice-Chancellor of Fountain University, Osogbo.

Few among other numerous distinguished Arabic/Islamic Studies teachers who passed through the same educational system include Professor K. A. Balogun (Professor Emeritus, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye), Professor Lakin Akintola, Dr. Barihi Adetunji (retired) Dr. A. A. Akanni, an Associate Professor of Islamic Studies at the Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye and the University Chief Imam as well as Professor I. A. Musa of Islamic Studies Department at the University of Lagos and the University Chief Imam. The table below shows the list of products of some of these Institutes who have become University professors showing their names, their alma mater, the university where they are employed and year of their professorial chairs.

It is remarkable to note that many among these products did not pass through the four walls of secondary schools. They either sat for General Certificate in Education (GCE) O’ Level as private students to meet the requirements needed for admission into the university or enrolled in the Certificate/Diploma programme of the University of Ibadan which had been scrapped. The levels attained by these scholars have endeared them to many up-coming scholars who see them as models worthy of emulation.

To this end, making these giant strides in both Arabic and Islamic Studies as academic disciplines and good planning are all that is needed to make the twin subjects more relevant in contributing to national development in Nigeria in various ways as mentioned above. Eulogising the achievements of the pioneer proprietors of these schools for their efforts at producing the above students, Bidmos (2018) says he discovered some previous efforts in the field which they improved upon through their own hard work, creativity and resourcefulness.

The success of their restructuring initiatives/efforts has manifested in the quantum and quality of the products of such Madaris, most of whom are now making waves in all aspect of human life including the academia, politics, commerce, mass media, judiciary and religion, among others. Again, the different roles currently being played by the products of those Madaris constitute another pointer to the relevance and significance of the Madrasah system to all aspects of human life in Nigeria.

From the point of making career in vocational studies, one of the few examples is Dr. Abdussalam Mosobalaje Abdussalam who was also the eldest son of the founder of



Ma'had Elekuro, Ibadan and her product who presented the Arabic/Islamic School certificate of his alma mater for admission into the Khartoum University, Sudan and was enrolled in the department of Agriculture. Dr. Abdussalam had a brief spell as a Technical Quality Manager for Rajehi Farm in Saudi Arabia. A Ph.D. holder in Agriculture from University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, he is currently on the payroll of the Osun State University as a lecturer.

However, majority of the respondents disagreed that Modern Arabic and Islāmic Schools in Southwest Nigeria have assisted and still assisting in contributing to the development of manpower in the civil and public service as military and paramilitary officers. This result may not come as a surprise because many Muslims in the Southwest Nigeria could not correlate modern Arabic and Islamic Schools with Military/Paramilitary jobs. This, to some extent is pardonable in view of the general perception in this part of the world that the goal of Modern Arabic/Islamic Studies is only to train Imams, missionaries, and teachers and other jobs that are relevant to spiritual and moral values.

The truth of course is that by record, many products of these schools are enlisted into various formations in both military and para-military services even with their 'Idadiyyah Thanawiyyah certificates. These include the Directorate of Islamic Services where many products of the Modern Arabic/Islamic students have reached the pinnacle of their careers. Examples are Brigadier-General Sulaiman Yekini and Lt. Col. Muhammad Buseri Danesi both of whom are retired and were products of Ma'had ta'limul Arabiyy, Owo (Oseni & Abdussalam, 2008); as well as Col. Salman Agboluaje (rtd) who graduated from Ma'ahad al Arabiyy al-Islamiy, Elekuro, Ibadan among others (personal interview with Baasunu, 2020). All other additional qualifications they later obtained were built upon the foundation of Arabic/Islamic Studies certificate they obtained from these Modern Arabic/Islamic Schools.

A research through many of the schools however indicated that so many of these products have made their mark as administrators in many fields of human endeavour. Typical example is Professor Ishaq Oloyede who was a product of Markaz Ta'limul Arabiyy, Agege and is currently the Registrar of the Joint Admissions and Matriculations Board. He was for eight years the Vice Chancellor of the University of Ilorin, a co-secretary of the 2014 National Conference and the current Secretary-General of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs.

Others include Professor R, D, Abubakre, a former Vice-Chancellor, Al-Hikmah University, Kwara State, Professor Jamiu Sulaiman, former Deputy Vice Chancellor, Kwara State University, Malete-Ilorin and Dr Kola Roheem, a staffer at the West African Examinations Council. The contributions of Emeritus Professor, Kamaldeen Balogun to Olabisi Onabanjo University is also apposite as an incorruptible administrator in various managerial capacities while serving.

This is climaxed by his recent appointment as the first Emeritus Professor of the University and currently serving as the Chairman Governing Council Mashood Abiola polytechnic, Abeokuta. Others include Professor K.K. Olosu who was the product of Kharashi Memorial Arabic Secondary Schools, Ibadan and was a former Chairman, Oyo State Pilgrims Welfare Board as well as late Shaykh Luqman Busairi who also held the same post after him. All these personalities among numerous others were products of Modern Arabic/Islamic Schools of Southwest, Nigeria.

There are others who as administrators have also contributed their quotas and given good account of themselves. These are Alhaj Abdul Hamid Jumuat, the former Acting Provost of Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo and Professor Abdul Hamid Adekilekun, who is the former Provost, Osun State College of Education, Ila-Orangun. The knowledge of God-consciousness and fine moral character they learnt through the Madrasah educational system brought to bear in their activities as administrators in their various managerial positions. These are just typical examples of many others who rose to become public figures in Nigeria and became proud ambassadors of Islam.

Though there are few journalists who are Muslims that have made their mark in the industry and have projected the image of Islam like Femi Abass, Liad Tella, Professor Sulaiman Osho and others, they are neither into broadcasting nor are products of these Modern Arabic and Islamic Schools. Notwithstanding, there is a case of Bade Ojoade and Late Alhaji Ariyayo who were staffers of Broadcasting Corporation of Oyo State and passed through the Modern Arabic and Islamic Schools.

However, notwithstanding this problem, one can still cite a typical example in Justice Haroun, a retired Justice at the Shariah High Court, Ilorin who is a product of Ma'had Ta'limul Arabiyy, Owo (Oseni & Abdussalam, 2008). Another remarkable achievement of one of these schools is that of Hameed Onikosi, a product of the defunct Sulaiman College of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Ososa who recently got to the pinnacle of his career as a doctorate degree holder in Civil and Islamic law. AbdulLateef Bashir a product of Zulikha Abiola School of Arabic & Islamic Studies, Abeokuta, now a lecturer in the Faculty of Law, Crescent University, Abeokuta.

For example, the data for those who have made their mark in allied medical profession are available. For instance, there is a product of Ma'had Elekuro Ibadan who gained admission to Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt to study Pharmacy with the certificate obtained from the school. His name is Abdul-Rasheed Zakariyyah, now a pharmacist working in Qatar (personal interview with Baasunu, 2020). Another example is Alhaji Monsur Abdus-Salam, also a product and son of the founder of Ma'had Elekuro Ibadan who also gained admission to Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt to read Microbiology with the certificate obtained from the school. There are yet some others who passed through this Madrasah system and used it as a launch-pad to achieve success in other secular subjects.

One of such products is Nasir Tanimowo, a professor of Geography at the Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomoso, Oyo State (Adebimpe, 2021). This is an indication that knowledge in whatever field is universal. The only barrier is the language of instruction, the gap which the government can fill by designing a short term course for language instruction; in this case, English for Nigeria.

### 5.3 Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusively, it is high time that all the stakeholders of the *Madaaris* system of education join hands together and have the same mission and vision as regards integration of these social sciences courses into *Madaaris* curriculum so as to meet their counterparts in the system as far as standard education is concern. Also the recommendations go thus:



- (i) The academic programme of the Arabic and Islamic Institutes should be all encompassing through proper integration of the ‘western-oriented’ courses and let these reflect in their objectives and curricula.
- (ii) There should be provisions for teaching staff of the Institutes to undergo constant training in the areas of pedagogy, teaching materials and instructional materials
- (iii) Public spirited Muslims should be encouraged to assist the schools on funding and facilities
- (iv) Staff of the schools need standardised working conditions that will guarantee their welfare as these would improve their productivity
- (v) Parents and guardians need to be sensitised on the importance of Arabic and Islamic education through which their children and wards would enjoy the benefits of the two worlds: here and the hereafter
- (vi) Government at all levels should see the Arabic Institutes as potential avenues for serious empowerment by giving them full support in funding, provision of facilities and by recognising the certificates they issue to their products for employment purposes as well as for future educational advancement.

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