



## The impact of British colonial education on northern Nigeria: the construction of a pro- British oriented society

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### Abstract

This paper examines that the British colonialism which is the process of socio-economic and political domination of Nigeria in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the subsequent domination of the area Northern Nigeria in 1903, by the British forces made the area under British colony (Sokoto Caliphate). The objective of the paper therefore, examines that the induced western education by the colonialist made society to accept foreign cultural and social domination. Historically, the Sokoto Caliphate that was founded by Othman Bn Fodio was meant for the purification of Islam and the practice of Islamic education in the administrative system of the caliphate for almost three decade. Thus, the introduced Roman script and English by the colonialist as an official language made the area later on to becomes a British oriented society. Another colonial officer, Captain Merrick, who had initially supported the continuation of the Arabic, later argued for dropping *Ajami* script a book of writing Arabic in Northern Nigeria in favor of Roman script. The introduction of Roman script, not only resulted in the gradual phasing out of *Hausa (Dominant Language in Northern Nigeria) Arabic* script, known as *Ajami*, but also brought about fundamental changes in the educational and cultural development of the Northern Nigeria. The newly introduced "*Boko*" meaning western education shook the very foundations of Islamic education and stunted the rapid development of adult literacy as well as the long established tradition of scholarly writings in Northern Nigeria.

**Keywords:** colonialism, western education, Islamic education, and pro-british oriented society

### 1. Introduction

This paper in the main handles the period from 1900 to 1960 in which British took over the political, economic and social control of the country and turned Nigeria into a subordinate nation. A part from this is the educational models instituted by the British colonialists and the residual impact of this education. It is in view of this objective, that this paper believes that the subsequent imposition of colonialism and colonial education in the Sokoto Caliphate (Present day Northern Nigeria) made the society to become a pro-British Oriented Society. (Abdurrahman 1202, p. 24).

### 2. Historical background of Northern Nigeria Educational System under British Rule, and its induced Educational System.

Nigerians belong to many different religions as well, but the vast majority identify with either Islam or Christianity. About 50 percent of the Nigerian population is Sunni Muslim; Muslims are most heavily concentrated in the northern savannas, where Islam first appeared between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries CE. Until the jihad of Usman Bn Fodio and the establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate, (Present day Northern Nigeria), in the early nineteenth century, The kings on that time, adopted elements of Islam in order to claim mystical powers and to build strong commercial and diplomatic ties with Islamic states in North Africa and the Middle East Since the nineteenth Century (Falola, and Martins 2008, p. 40) <sup>[5]</sup>.

From the historical argument, of this section of the paper, it is

important to examine the rise and fall of Sokoto caliphate meaning a whole region in Northern Nigeria in the early part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Caliphate which was founded by Usman Bn fodio in 1804 before the British conquest of the Sokoto caliphate in 1904, that is a whole Northern and some part of the southern Nigeria in the early part of the 19 century. The paper also examine the pre-colonial education especially the Islamic education system and some other traditional forms of education, which had existed prior to the advent of colonial rule and its education model. Usman Bn fodio was an Islamic scholar and a leader of the Islamic revolution that established the Sokoto caliphate in Northern Nigeria in the nineteenth century born in 1754 and educated in the Hausa state of Gobir a town in present day northern Nigeria by the late eighteen century. Bn fodio had developed a group of followers known as the community who subscribed to his vociferous calls for a purification of the political and religious make up of the region Northern Nigeria. Bn Fodio and his followers went with him and organized a revolution against the kings or rulers in Gobir a place in Northern Nigeria later in the year Bn fodio declared a jihad, or a holy war against the heretical Hausa rulers in Northern Nigeria whom he blamed with mixing religion and other forms of worship. The next decade Bn fodio followers toppled the Hausa feudal political entity in different size in most states in Northern Nigeria and replaced them with Fulani emirs a tribes groups in Northern Nigeria thus, bringing in to existence the might Sokoto Caliphate, which ruled the region for centuries, Bn Fodio continued to rule the Northern Nigeria up to 1917 when he died and the administration of the

Northern Nigeria previously known as Sokoto caliphate was shifted to his son Muhammad Bello (Falola and Heaton 2008, p. 8) <sup>[5]</sup>.

During the nineteenth century, the Islamic jihad of Bn fodio led to the establishment of the Sokoto caliphate. The caliphate was an expansive state that brought under one government all the Hausa in Northern Nigeria, and other former feudal political entity of Borno a state in North-eastern Nigeria territories. Also the caliphate took control of other feudal political entity that once been under the control of Oyo and the Jukun states, in the southeastern Nigeria respectively. Bn fodio and his successors were never able to implement the ideal Islamic state that they sought to build, they had nevertheless reconfigured the political and cultural land scape of Northern Nigeria towards a primarily identification with Islam by the time British colonial forces sacked Sokoto Caliphate in 1903 (Falola and Heaton 2008, p. 7) <sup>[5]</sup>.

The pre-colonial education system in Northern Nigeria was Islam that was the majority. In Northern Nigeria, Islam first appeared between the eleventh century and the fourteenth-century C.E. until the Jihad of Bn fodio and the establishment of Sokoto caliphate a present day states in Northern Nigeria. The Jihad of Bn fodio, which was dictated to purging the Northern Nigeria of what, it considered as 'mixed' Islam in an effort to recreate the perfect, pious society established under the leadership of the prophet Mohammad (PBUH), founder of the Islamic faith in the seventh century (Falola and Heaton 2008, p.15) <sup>[5]</sup>.

Islamic education system is the pre-colonial education system which had been in existing in Northern Nigeria formerly known as Sokoto Caliphate prior to the British conquest in 1903, and the subsequent establishment and consolidation of colonial rule, an Islamic educational system already existed. According to the argument, made by a renowned historian on the Sokoto Caliphate.

Last (2005) examined that, there had been the existence of a thriving and broad-based Islamic educational systems that also incorporated the teaching of European languages and new sciences in its core curricular. The Sokoto Caliphate present-day northern Nigeria recruited teachers, educational advisors and planners from Egypt, Tripoli and Ottoman Turkey to help in teaching and reforming the Islamic system of education in the Sokoto Caliphate Last. 2005, p. 24

This enduring legacy of Islamic religious education system from the Sokoto Caliphate of Northern Nigeria continued before and after the advent of British colonialism. By 1914, British colonial administrator in Northern protectorate Lugard who take over as Governor of Northern protectorate in 1914, following the amalgamation of Northern and southern Nigeria, Lugard claimed that there were 25,000 Quranic schools in Northern Nigeria with a total enrolment of 218,618 pupils (Garba 2012, p. 10) <sup>[7]</sup>.

These Qur'anic schools known as *Tsangaya meaning Islamic schools* and their students called *Almajirai* from the Arabic word, meaning *Almuhājir* or an immigrant, later enrolled in more advanced theological schools. The *madrasahs* where they studied Islamic Jurisprudence, Theology, History, Philosophy, Arabic Grammar and the Sciences. Under the British colonial administration, the system of Quranic schools was maintained in order to avoid destroying the social fabric

of the Islamic North the majority of the rural population was able to send their children to Qur'anic schools. Lugard not only acknowledged their existence, but also accorded them official status by paying monthly stipends to the teachers. However, things began to change after the consolidation of British colonial rule in Northern Nigeria, with the introduction of colonial education (Abdurrahman 2012, p. 24).

From the same argument pre-colonial education system in some part of southern Nigeria comprises developing the Childs physical skill, character, intellectual skills and sense of belonging to the community as well as inculcating respect for elders. It also comprised of giving specific vocational training and the understanding of the community cultural heritage, which also aimed at given employment to every member of the feudal political entity (Ozigi and Ocho 1981, p. 143) <sup>[9]</sup>. Meanwhile, pre-colonial education system in both Northern and southern Nigeria represent the type of education, which offered by the feudal political entity prior to the advent of colonial rule and British induced educational model. In most part of the Northern Nigeria apart from the existing Islamic education which became the basis as the socio economic and political lives of the people. In the case of pre-colonial education in Nigeria, boys were brought up to take what ever occupation their fathers engaged in, and in some cases, they were sent to others masters as apprentices to learn various vocations (Garba 2012, p. 9) <sup>[7]</sup>.

### 3. The Inception of Colonial Education in the administrative institutions of Northern Nigeria

The beginning of western education in Nigeria could be traced back to 1914, when the borders of the modern state of Nigeria were established in 1914, by the British colonial government. The British colonialist amalgamated both Northern and southern Nigeria to form a unified colonial state. Nigeria had been the creation of British colonial administrators but prior to British rule the diverse society ruled them selves as feudal political entity in different size (Falola and Heaton 2008, p. 61) <sup>[5]</sup>.

As British forces brought Nigeria under colonial rule in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early twentieth centuries. The colonial education begun in Nigeria when the bureaucracy and economies of colonial rule dictated that, a small class of English-speaking, European educated Nigerians were needed to hold lower-level positions in the government and in European business. These educated European elites enjoyed a higher standard of living than most Nigerians who were not attended the western school especially the Islamic masses, but they also found that their ability to rise to the level of their capabilities was obstructed by the racist ideologies of colonial rule. The educated elites viewed the Nigerians especially the Islamic masses in Northern Nigeria as culturally and intellectually inferior to Europeans. This unfavorable outcome was the result of British colonialism in Nigeria (Falola and Heaton 2008, p. 61) <sup>[5]</sup>.

It was these European educated elites that began to organize to pressure the colonial government for greater representation for Nigerians in their own governance and for an eventual end of colonial rule in Nigeria. The educated from both Northern and southern part of the country rather than the Islamic masses have championed the process of ending the colonial rule in

Nigeria (Falola and Heaton 2008, p. 62) <sup>[5]</sup>.

The introduction of western education in southern Nigeria could be traced in 1842, when the Christian missionaries arrived in the coastal area of the southern part of Nigeria and introduced western education. The aim of colonial education which was handled to the missionaries by the colonialist as given by the missionaries were to enable recipients to learn and read the bible in English and the local language, agriculture as well as training local school masters, catechists. Even though, the Christian missionaries major objective of establishing schools was *the* propagation of Christianity, their greatest legacy was their educational works and development of indigenous languages into writing (Ozigi and Echo 1981, p. 143) <sup>[9]</sup>.

#### **4. The Inception of Colonial Education in Northern Nigeria and Its Residual Impact**

Western education was introduced in Northern Nigeria in 1909. An important characteristic of this period was the emergence of Native administration in the area as an agency for educational requirement though necessary in the early phase of British over-rule in Northern Nigeria. First, priority was to be given to the intelligent native of the Mallams meaning teachers class who would be taught Roman characters for writing Hausa the major language, which is still being speaking in Northern Nigeria colloquial English, arithmetic and geography. Following their graduation from the western education schools. This colonial educated elites they might qualify for clerkships in Government and Native Administration offices and gradually replace the Native authority. This situation caused the social split during the colonial rule between the majority Islamic masses in Northern Nigeria who were Islamically educated (Garba 1202, p.10).

With this objective in view, the first colonial educational experiment in the Northern Nigeria was begun at Kano in the course of 1909. Early in that year, a beginning was made with the inauguration of a school for the sons of native's chiefs in the protectorates. All the Northern dignitaries, including the emirs, were persuaded to send their children. To aid this objective, the emirs in Northern Nigeria were persuaded to make an annual grant of f 1000 to this new institution from the funds of the recently constituted Native Treasury (Adeyinka 1971, p. 10) <sup>[2]</sup>. In the course of these years, these schools were expanded and their curricular rationalized to fit in harmoniously with the existing political and social systems. In due course the Kano schools, and the Survey schools catered for the entire Northern province (Fika 1938, p. 238).

Meanwhile the church missionary society had unsuccessfully applied for permission to establish a Christian missionary Centre, a dispensary, and a school at Kano an emir place located in Northern Nigeria. In Kano as in other Muslims emirates in Northern Nigeria, the British political staffs were quick to turn down the proposals of the Christian missionaries bodies. In regard to Kano a resident has summarized the reasons for rejection the proposals for extending missionaries activities in the emirates in Kano as elsewhere in the whole emirates in Northern Nigeria (Fika 1973, P. 236).

If the Missions [CMS] were permitted to establish itself in the city of Kano or in any other province in Northern Nigeria, I fear that there is only one possible view of such permission in

the eyes of the chiefs and the people of the region. That Government has broken its solemn promises publicly and repeatedly made that it will not interfere with their religious beliefs (Fika 1973, p. 236).

As it was Christian missions were forbidden to extend their work in to Kano emirate until 1929 when Dr. Walter Miller was permitted to establish a CMS Centre on a plot on the edge of the Sabon Gari Kano. The effect of this deliberate policy of excluding Christian missionaries was that western education in the Northern emirates expanded at a slow pace dictated by the Colonial Administration and this accounted for the relative lack of schools in the Northern Nigeria (Fika 1973, p. 237).

British colonial education led to social split in Northern Nigeria between the Islamic masses and the sons of the emirs and the few people who have attended western school. The fact was that British sponsored education was in fact cautiously pushed by the Native Administration and reluctantly received by the people. In the years of the development of western education, the British were pre-occupied with providing special training for the younger generation of the ruling families in the hope that they would have become progressive and enlightened by the time they attained high offices or chieftaincies. To this end, majority of the masses that were Islamically educated in Northern Nigeria could not be employed in the colonial government to serve for the administrative purpose (Fika 1973, p. 237).

At Kano and in newer schools elsewhere in the protectorate, active courses in civics and etiquette were introduced and senior British political officers called upon to instruct the pupils (Fika 1973, p. 237). Similarly in order that western schools would be less suspected in the eyes of the Muslims rulers and their subjects, religion occupied a prominent place in the curriculum of the Northern Nigerian schools for its sacred association in the working of Muslim Law, was also studied (Adeyinka 1971, p. 10) <sup>[2]</sup>.

From the foregoing, the nature of British educational objectives and their policy of enrolling the co-operation of the rulers did not make western education popular in Northern Nigeria. The problem here as elsewhere in the Islamic world was that Northern Nigeria had a scholarly and literary tradition of its own. This resulted in inevitable problems when the British tried to 'modernize' the society by grafting on to the Islamic system within a more or less Christian context (Fika 1938, p. 238).

British wishfully desired that some day attendance at the provincials schools would be a sine Quinone or at any rate a cause for priority in consideration for preferment among the ruling families. The ruling families had to contend with an ingrained prejudice or barely concealed hostility towards western education until 1940. The unpopularity of western education was equally pronounced in the whole emirates of Northern Nigeria (Fika 1973, p. 238).

It is important to note that, western education was still unpopular, and even the emirs in Northern Nigeria and the leading men showed little interest in it. Complaints were frequent that schools boys were molested and jeered, at the town. More than one attempt was made to burn down the school compounds needless to say education was no more popular with the pupils in the protectorates (Fika 1973, p. 238).

The kind of education introduced by the British government is known as western education in Nigeria in both North and Southern part of the country. In southern Nigeria the ever-growing proportion of children of school age stormed available primary schools created an impression and great eagerness in the missionaries and the colonial government that there were suitable pupils for secondary education (Imam 1202, p. 9).

The primary schools therefore, developed upper standard is often over ambitious programs. In Lagos, the colonial government under the control of Christian missionaries opened the first Grammar schools CMS in 1859. The united prebyseterian churches at Calabar build in 1895. What today would be described as a multi-lateral institution, including a catechist seminary, teacher Training College, grammar schools and Technical College? All in one, which later became Hope Waddell Institute. In 1890, on River protectorate gave it an annual grant in 1900, the new protectorate of southern Nigeria continued this assistance. The colonial government made attempts from the missionaries, their secondary education establishment, leaving them only with primary education. This attempts was resisted and in the end rejected, making the development of secondary education, a tripartite efforts of colonial government and private organizations or individuals in the southern Nigeria (Imam 1202, p. 9).

This was the situation of British colonial education in southern Nigeria. While as the Christian missionaries dominated the activities of education in southern part of Nigeria participated actively in the establishment and administration of secondary and primary schools (Imam 1202, p.9).

In 1916, there were 58 mission schools with an average of 933 pupils in attendance. The colonial policy of secondary education is properly planned, executed and encouraged, it could be useful to develop innate genius in the youth and enhance their capacity to stand by them selves. Following their graduation from the western education schools, established by the British colonial government under the control of Christian missionaries. Thus, secondary education could be used as investment that could yield rich productive dividends in a very near future, which could have far reaching effects on national development. Paradoxically, access to secondary schools in Nigeria created an avenue which the firms recruited staff largely and paid them better than other groups to push pen behind an office desk became the dream of an uneducated Nigerians especially the Islamic masses or those with traditional education in Nigeria (Adeyinka 1971, p. 10)<sup>[2]</sup>.

From the same argument, the introduction of colonial education in Northern Nigeria region was divided on the basis of religion. The Muslims, the Muslims felt, very strongly too, that western education was the key to white mans power or else they had become Christians and accepted the school as an activity of the church. With this belief, western education was vigorously resisted at first, secondary education development here was essentially by the colonial government and the emirs support was vigorously sought by the colonial government (Adeyinka 1971, p. 10)<sup>[2]</sup>.

Hansvicher was the first colonial teacher in Nasarawa School a city in Kano in present-day Northern Nigeria where the first

school was opened in Northern Nigeria for the various sons of the emirs and Mallams, meaning Teachers. The provincial schools in Kano, Sokoto, and katsina, alike were later established and by the end of 1915 there were provincial schools in all the twelve Northern provinces with an average attendance of 733, pupils with this measure, restricted expansion of school under the careful supervision pursued because of the long tradition of Islamic education in Northern Nigeria. Majority of the rural people did not send their children to western education schools from the inception of colonial education in Nigeria. It was the colonialist that compelled the emirs to send their children to the western schools. It was only few masses that were posed to send their children to colonial schools during the period of British colonial rule education in Northern Nigeria (Adeyinka 1971, p. 10)<sup>[2]</sup>.

As already explained that, in Northern region the pace of western education was very slow due to cultural and religious factors. Its expansion was therefore, tied, to the availability of qualified teachers and the extent of the need for western certificate personal education was free in most government and native authority to those unable to pay their fees. By 1958, there were 31 secondary Schools and 36 Teachers colleges, across the length and breath of the Northern region (Philips 2004, p. 66)<sup>[10]</sup>.

Within the immense growth in educational opportunities that has occurred, it can be observed, that the lower socio-economic status people in Northern Nigeria are still largely under represented within the upper reaches of Northern educational system due to social split among the people and other religious and cultural reason, which have dominated the society and any attempt to increase the proportional representation of lower status grouping conceived in terms of traditional criteria of status have been only moderately successful due to social split brought in the society by the British colonial education in Northern Nigeria (Philips 2004, p. 66)<sup>[10]</sup>.

The early schools functioned with scarcely any involvement by the colonial government at first, most of the colonial Schools which were under the control of Missionaries or the colonial government they operated curriculum centered on English, Religion, and Arithmetic called 3RS. This system however, changed in early 1880s particularly by the Educational Ordinance of 1882 when the colonial government assumed a major control of education from the missionaries (Philips 2004, p. 66)<sup>[10]</sup>.

As colonialism became firmly entrenched, British colonial government under Lugard began to see the advantage of adopting the Hausa language the most popular language being speaking in Northern Nigeria both as a regional lingua franca and a semi-official language. Hausa was used as a language of communication in official documents, missionary schools and translation of the Bible (Philips 2004, p. 59)<sup>[10]</sup>.

This arrangement worked well for Lugard until his successor, Captain Wallace, under the influence of the missionary Charles Henry Robinson, outlawed *Ajami* meaning Arabic script. The introduced Roman script and English as an official language. Another colonial officer, Captain Merrick, who had initially supported the continuation of the Arabic, later argued for dropping *Ajami* script a book of writing Arabic in

Northern Nigeria in favor of Roman script. The introduction of Roman script, not only resulted in the gradual phasing out of Hausa Arabic script, known as *Ajami*, but also brought about fundamental changes in the educational and cultural development of the Northern Nigeria. The newly introduced “*Boko*” meaning western education shook the very foundations of Islamic education and stunted the rapid development of adult literacy as well as the long established tradition of scholarly writings in Northern Nigeria. Historically, *Ajami* literature had played an equally important role in mobilizing for the *Hijrah* (migration) and for understanding how it should be conducted in accordance with the tenets of the *Shari'ah in 1903* (Abdullah 1971, p. 1).

Sokoto *jihad* leaders relied on *Ajami* in reaching the people and spreading political and religious doctrinal teachings. Abdullah Bn Fodio, second in command of the Caliphate administrative and religious hierarchy, was emphatic on the role *Ajami* literature played in this mobilization process. During that time, Bn Fodio, the founder of the Caliphate, travelled to the east and the west-calling people to the religion of God by his preaching and his *qasidas* in *Ajami* (Philips 2004, p. 66)<sup>[10]</sup>.

At that time the schools in the Sokoto Caliphate taught only in Arabic and used *Ajami* script to make many people become literate, a new educational system would have to be created if Northern Nigerians were to learn English instead. It also meant that the graduates of the 25,000 Qur'anic schools that Lugard found when he served as the Governor of Northern Nigeria would have to be re-educated before they could obtain employment with the colonial administration. (Philips 2004, P. 66)<sup>[10]</sup>.

Lugard drastic measure in replacing *Ajami* with Roman script was borne out of his ignorance of Arabic alphabets and its vowel system apparently. Lugard policy on Romanization of Hausa Arabic was consistent with the recommendations of Hans' Vischer, who was given an honorific title of “Dan Hausa” or “Son of Hausa” a major language that is still being speaking in Northern Nigeria. Ironically, the introduced Roman scripts have replaced *Ajami* Arabic script in 1909. At that time, Vischer was appointed by the colonial administration to reform the education system of Northern Nigeria. Some of his arguments in favor of Roman script included “the use of *Ajami* would mean the government would be spreading Islam. Also learning Roman script would be faster “to print Arabic with vowels (Crenshaw, etals 2003, p. 19).

The Structural approach to the role of colonial education in Northern Nigeria. The British educational models have created social split between the Islamic masses and those who have attended western schools during colonial rule 1909, in which the educated elites continue to expand their ranks even after the independence of the country in 1960. AS already explained that Northern Nigeria was dominated by Islamic tradition as a result of the existence of Sokoto Caliphate before its final collapse in 1903, and the subsequent imposition of British colonial rule.

The educated elites during the British rule, they were taught Roman characters for writing Hausa, Colloquial English, and arithmetic, Geography, and so on. Following their graduation from the western education schools. The educated elites were

employed as clerkships in Government and Native administration offices during colonial rule and even after the independence of the country. This group of educated elites enjoyed a higher standard of living compared to the larger segment of the society who are educated Islamically. (Falola and Heaton 2008, p. 5)<sup>[5]</sup> this unfavorable outcome of social split in Northern Nigeria was the result of British colonialism and its induced educational model in the area (Fika 1938, p. 237).

It was on this ground, that Northern Nigeria was fragmented around at least two groups of people: westernized elites and Islamic masses, which have attended Islamic school. In 1914, the British colonial administrator, Lugard amalgamated the Northern and Southern protectorates which is today Nigeria under a unified colonial government estimated that Northern Nigeria had 31, 313 Islamic schools with 205, 872 pupils. (Hubbard 2000, p. 27) by 1915, there were 12 western schools with average attendance of 781 pupils in Northern Nigeria (Hubbard 2000, p. 27).

Following the social split that was created as a result of British colonial rule in Northern Nigeria. The majority of the masses who were educated Islamically were not employed to work as clerkship in Government, teachers, administrators in the colonial Government administration. This can only serve as teachers or instructors in the Islamic schools during the British. This negative rivalry led to the low-income expenditure and low educational development in Northern Nigeria, which hindered the socio-economic and political progress of the region. This educated colonial elites continue to expand their rank and occupied important position of the white color jobs during the colonial and even after the independent of the country (Fika 1938, p. 238).

The most significant aspect of colonial education in this social split was that, the educated elites in Northern Nigeria became the pioneered of Nigerian independence from the British colonialist rather than the Islamic masses. These educated European elites; they also found that their ability to rise to the level of their capabilities was obstructed by the racist ideologies of colonial rule. The educated elites have sphere headed the process of ending colonial rule and dismantling colonial institutions by mobilizing other masses which facilitate the process of ending the colonial rule in 1960, in Nigeria (Falola and Heaton 2008, p. 61)<sup>[5]</sup>.

It is important to repeatedly explain that, within the immense growth in educational opportunities that occurred in Northern Nigeria the low socio-economic status people refuse to send their children to western education schools and wards due the misconception and their perception toward the modern education brought by the British colonialist masters. On the same argument, the emirs in the Northern part of the country were asked by the colonial government, to send their children to the western schools, to learn English, Arithmetic, social studies Religious knowledge and a lot of others courses (Falola 2008, p.129)<sup>[5]</sup>.

Because of the long tradition of Islam in Northern Nigeria that Islamic masses had refused to send their children to colonial school due to previous existing Islamic education and tradition that was already in the mind of the masses or other class of people in the Northern Nigeria at first. Western education have an effect on the behavior and beliefs of the graduates of

the western Schools who received their education in what has been called an "An African Middle class" many with tastes and values. The European educated population inhabited a cultural milieu influenced both by their religious roots and by the life style provided by their foreign education. Because European education was firmly linked to the Christian missions, most of the Nigerians who were educated in the European fashion also became practicing their culture and assimilated many of the values of nineteenth and Twentieth century ideas in their own life styles. Most of the Northern Nigerians societies practiced polygamy as a means of enhancing a family productive capacity, European educated elites tended to choose monogamous, marriage. Because their skills earned them coveted and relatively high paying jobs with the colonial administration or European trading firms in the cities. The European educated elites was also exposed to and receptive of British culture in a way that poorer or other people in the Northern Nigerian society must isolated themselves from those who have attended colonial education schools. A taste transfer therefore occurred among the members of the European – educated –middle class, as they began to identify, at least in part, with the culture in which they were educated and which they worked compared to other Islamic masses in Northern Nigeria (Falola 2008, p.129)<sup>[5]</sup>.

The European educated-middle class earned better wages and therefore had greater advantage in the affairs of colonial government offices. As a result they bought more imports than other Nigerians, particularly luxury items such as the European clothing, hats and shoes, books radio sets, and automobiles, as well as building European style homes. Possessing such items became a status maker, visibly setting European – educated Nigerians apart from their uneducated compatriots of western schools. Even though, European-educated Nigerians understood that they had good reasons to reproach that colonial regime compared to Islamic masses in Northern Nigeria (Philips 2004, p. 76)<sup>[10]</sup>.

British colonial regime was founded on the ideology that Africans, as a race, were inferior under British supervision; this was the basis of the dual mandate. The European – educated Nigerians face a threat to both 'British rule' and traditional social norms. The ideal was that Nigerian elites was one who had attained enough education to be useful to the colonial system but not enough to think of themselves as the intellectual equal of the white man. Within the colonial government and European firms Nigerians filled only low-level bureaucratic positions, and there was little opportunity for promotion or advancement within the colonial government before the post-colonial era in Nigeria. This was the condition or the impact of British colonial education, which led to the division of the society among those who refuse to accept the change brought by the British colonial education and those who have accepted the British educational model (Falola 2008, p.129)<sup>[5]</sup>.

In addition, colonial education have created a kind of impact by the side of European-educated elites to distinguished themselves from a British culture that did not view them as equals were accompanied by direct protests and criticisms directed at the colonial regimes which continued to exclude European-educated Nigerians from the process of government and to subordinate traditional authorities to alien domination.

An independent Nigerian press emerged in the late nineteenth century and quickly became the tool through which literate Nigerians criticized the colonial government and made their demand known over fifty different news papers were printed in Nigeria between 1880s and 1937 (Falola 2008, p.170)<sup>[5]</sup>.

More interestingly, with regard to the impact of British colonialism and its education system, many Nigerians wrote a lot of Reflections on the same study which include Abdurrahman his journal entitled as " *Religion and Language in the Transformation of Education in Northern Nigeria during British colonial rule 1900-1960*. Also Omotosho in his journal " *the impact of colonial education on the culture of Muslims in Nigeria*" Imam in her journal entitled " *Educational policy in Nigeria's and its impact from the colonial era to the post independence*". Umar in his Journal of business and social science examined " *Islam and colonialism intellectual responses of Muslims of Northern Nigeria to British colonial rule and its education*. Garba in her journal " *the impact of colonialism in Nigerian Education and the need for E- Learning Technique for sustainable development* and so on.

Meanwhile, the authors especially the Nigerians examined the following reflections on the impact of British colonialism and its education system towards the social transformation of Northern Nigeria. Some of their reflections on the topic includes Arbesu' 'the lasting impact of colonial educational policies in Nigeria Evidence from a policy Experiment on Missionary activity. Fabunmi in his journal of research) entitled " *Historical analysis of Educational policy formulation in Nigeria: implications for educational planning and educational examined the impact of colonial education in Northern Nigeria*. Also Rotimi in his journal entitled " *Paradox of progress: The Role of western education in the transformation of the family in Nigeria examined the role of western education towards the social transformation of family life in Nigeria*. Spichtinger in his book entitled as " *the impact of colonial education and colonialism as the spread of English and its appropriation Magister grades der philosophies*. Row man and little in their book entitled as " *Policy-making in Education A Holistic Approach in Response to Global change examined the role of western education in Nigeria*."

## 5. Conclusion

This paper concludes that the role of British colonial education on how it had created impact in the transition and transformation of Northern Nigeria from the previous existing Islamic education towards the changes brought by western education in Northern Nigeria. Colonial education created social split between those who have attended the western schools and those who were not due to their cultural and religious educational foundations, which they have as a criterion for their stepping stone. Thus, the British colonial education created a new generation of people who can spoke English, can be consider as superior in the colonial administration of Northern Nigeria, and they could get white color jobs. While the other classes of the society would not get such opportunity to be included in the colonial government offices, the situation further continued even and during the post colonial Era.

## 6. References

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