



Australian Journal of Social and Cultural Studies
Vol. 14, October 2024, pp. 85-100

Established July 2008

*The Islamic Centre for Research and
Development Inc. Sydney, Australia*

**SURVEY OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF NATIONAL QURĀNIC
COMPETITION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE QURĀNIC
RECITATION IN KWARA STATE**

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined the contributions of National Qurānic Competitions to the development of recitation in Kwara State. There is the need to have a critical look into areas that lack behind in the science of the Qur'ān. The major problem faced in the National Qur'ānic competitions is the problem of lack of knowledge, especially, sciences of *Tajwīd*; that is why the Government of Kwara State set up a committee for the National Qur'ānic Competition competes favorably with other States at International Competitions. To this end, the state employed qualified *Hufāz* (memorizers of the Qur'ān) most especially from Northern Nigeria to train interested participants of the recitation of the Qur'ān. This paper aims at studying the performance of selected Qurānic Reciters in order to evaluate the efficacy of the education given to them. This is because the as Kwara State Qurānic Competition Committee organizes a special training for the entire participants at Local Government and State levels. Some hindrances which will not make one to be successful as a reciter of the Qur'ān are also highlighted by the trainers. Such hindrances include lack of sound knowledge of *Tajwīd* and *Tafsīr* of the Qur'ān. Research methodology adopted in this work is historical. The work concludes that the Qur'ānic memorization as well as the Qurānic education is much necessary for human being to attain the highest goals in this world and hereafter.



Key words

Qur'ān, Hadith, Conception, Recitation and competition

Introduction

The word, Al-Qur'ān is derived from the Arabic word Qar'a, which connotes read or to recite. This has the same meaning as the Hebrew word "Kara" to read, or to recite. As-Sayuti.(1981). Furthermore, Ahmad Von Denffer (1982) defined the Qur'ān as inimitable and unique protected by God from corruption. The Qur'ān was sent to the Holy Prophet Muhammad through Angel Jibril in its precise wordings, and meanings. Besides, the glorious Qur'ān is actually the real foundation on which the whole super structure of Islam rest, and being the only absolute and final authority in every discussion relating to the principle and laws of Islam. It is perfectly right to say that the glorious Qur'ān is the sole source from which all the teachings and practices of Islam are drawn.

However, this paper is to evaluate the activities of the National Qurānic Competition with regard to how it aids education in Kwara State. The Qur'ān named itself as suggested by Jalalud-deen Sayuty (1981), as Al-kitab the book Al-Qur'ān the reading An-nur the light, *Al-Ajaib* the wonderful, *An-nathir* the Warner and *Ad-Dhikir* the Reminder.

The revelation of Al-Qur'ān began as reported by the Prophet in the *Lialatu Qadir* (night of majesty) of Ramadan {the 27th night or one of the odd night of Ramadan starting from 21st downward. This was when the Holy Prophet Muhammad {S.A.W) was forty years of age, precisely (610 AD) during his seclusion in the cave of Hira on a mountain near Makkah, A. Rahman, D. (1981). The prophet used to go on seclusion in the cave of Hira for divine mediation; pondering about the Creator, the Universe etc. He



was there for many times, when the Angel Jibril came to him and asked him to read, the Prophet replied: I do not know how to read. He added that the Angel taught him forcibly to read for about three times. The prophet reported that Angel Jibril taught me again and said to me:

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ (1) خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ (2) اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ
(3) الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ (4) عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ (5)

1. Proclaim! (or read!) In the name of Thy Lord and Cherisher, who
2. Created man, out of a (mere) clot of congealed Blood:
3. Proclaim! and Thy Lord is Most Bountiful,-
4. He who taught (the use of) the pen,-
5. Taught man that which He knew not.

Eventually, the prophet went back to his wife, Khadijat and narrated to her his dreadful experience. She consoled him. Khadijah took him to Waraqah bn Nawfal, and later told Muhammad {S.A.W} that he had encountered the Angel whom Allah had sent to Musa and was chosen as a Prophet of Allah. He further said that the Prophet would be later driven out by his people. Abu Ameanah, B. (1990).

Compilation of the Qur'an

The glorious Qur'an was recited by angel Jibril to the Prophet. Then, that portion or verses of Al-Qur'an was put in writing by the order of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W).

It was the custom of the Prophet (S.A.W) even when he was in Makkah before Hijrah whenever any verse of different Suraat was revealed to him, he asked the close companion to record them. Those who used to write the verse were Zayd bn Thabit 592-69 AD (Mu'awiyah bn Sufyan 620/680 AD,



Abdullahi bn Rawaha 581/667 AD, Abubkr Sidiq 573/632 AD, Umar bn Khattab 584/644 AD, Uthman Bn Affan 575/656 AD, and Ali bn Talib, 601/661 AD etc. Keaneth (1985) reported as thus:

Holy Prophet used to tell them write these verses in the chapter.

When another verse is revealed, he will give instruction to writes it down in the relevant chapter (s). Al Qur'ān was written and recited in a proper way during the life time of the Prophet. The revelation at that time indicated that Qur'ān used to be recorded on the wood, palm leaves, bits of leather, shoulder bone of camels, stone and other available writing materials thereof. In addition, there were many companions who committed the glorious Qur'ān into memories.. Khuran,M. (1985).

From the above submission we can deduce that the first stage of the glorious Qur'ān was recorded during the life time of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W).

The second stage of the recording took place after the life time of Prophet Muhammad, during the first caliph. Abudakar Sidiq (R.A). As a result of the war of apostasy which had broken out and claimed lives of the memorizers (battle of Yamama). At this juncture, Umar bn Khattab suggested the compilation of the Qur'ān. Khuran, M. (1985)

In a nut shell, Abubakar embarked on the compilation process and was successful. Then he passed it to his successor Umar Bn Khattab. The standard written copy was put in the custody of Hafsaah the daughter of Umar and the wife of prophet Muhammad (A.S.W).

During the period of the third Caliph Uthman bn Affan, Hudaifa Bn al-Yamama, the Chief of the Army in the USSR now situated in Russia discovered that Muslim from different Arab countries recited the glorious Qur'ān in different ways. The incident made the serving Khalifah to compile the Qur'ān in single dialect.



Uthman bn Affan tried to abolish multi-dialect recitation of the Qur'ān so that the believers might not quarrel among themselves over the recitation as that of the Jews. Khuran, M. (1985)

Uthman bn Affan, therefore asked Hafsa for the *Suhuf* (copy of al Qur'ān in her possession), so that reference might be made from it. However, the caliph entrusted the task to a constituted committee headed by Zayd bn Thabit other members of the committee were Abdullahi bn Zubair, Saheed bn al-Abdulladhi and Al-Rahman bn al-Harabi. Finally, it was proved beyond any doubt that the version of Uthman was based on Zayd's version. Actually, it is true to say that there has not been any change even a word in the glorious Qur'ān from the time of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) till today. Al-It-qan fi-Ulumil-Qur'ān, (1982)

***Tajwīd* and its' meaning**

The word *Tajwīd* which is a verbal noun from the verb: *jawwada*, which literally means betterment and decoration. However, different scholars have given it different technical definitions. Abdullahi, J. et-al Ibrahim, A. (1975).

According to Abdul-Warith who postulated that, *Tajwīd* is the science, which explains the rules and the principles to be adhered to in the recitation of the Qur'ān according to the standard right from the generation the prophet (SAW). Others have defined it as the articulation of each Arabic sound correctly and distinctly, and the pronunciation of each consonant, vowel word and sentence according to the standard of Arabic spoken by the prophet generation, yet some others defined it simply as reading Qur'ān exactly the way it was revealed by Allah.

According to Abu Azim it is reciting the Qur'ān, pronouncing the letters distinctly giving each of them due worth by pronouncing it from its point of articulation in correct manner following the rule of *Idgam*



(assimilation) *idh-har*) clear and sharp (pronunciation) *Iqlāb* (conversion) *ikhfa'* (suppressed pronunciation *madd* (prolongation), *gunnah* (nasalization). *Tarqīq* (soft pronunciation, *tafkhim* (heavy pronunciation, reading it slowly and gradually, beautifying one's voice as much as possible during its recitation, but without any unnaturalness, extensibility, and not in a theatrical way. Abdullahi, J. et-al Ibrahim, A. (1975)

Kalimullahi Husain however, sees *Tajwīd* as the recitation of every letter of the glorious Qur'ān from its point of articulation with its attributes such as elevation depression (*Istifal*) softness (*Tarqīq*) heavy pronunciation (*Ikhafah*). However, some scholars defined *Tajwīd* as a course of study. Perhaps, in practical sense, it is the application of the rules and principles of *Tajwīd* in the recitation of the Qur'ān. In a nut shell, *Tajwīd* simply means learning and reciting the Qur'ān in the way the Prophet (S.A.W) recited and taught it to his immediate companions

Importance of Tajwīd in the Qur'ān Recitation

Since *Tajwīd* is basic part of knowledge of the Qur'ān. Its importance is obvious. One of its great advantages is that proper knowledge about *Tajwīd* will lead to the correct recitation of the Qur'ān. To recite the Qur'ān with the rule of *tajwīd* is *fard* (obligatory) on every Muslim. And in accordance with the Shariah principle that says: Whatever that is a condition for the completion of an obligatory act, automatically becomes obligatory too.

The position of Qur'ān in the life of Muslims

The Glorious Qur'ān occupies a very important position in the life of Muslims. This is because, it is the constitution upon which Muslims relied upon for their spiritual, political, social activities and economic value. This is so, because the five daily prayers that Muslims observe where portions of the



Glorious Qur'ān are read for an integral part to their worship indeed, is a complete system which has left nothing untouched. It is also a system of faith, a system of law. It modifies good governance, social inter-relationship, economic system, and all ramification having to do with welfare of people irrespective of religious affiliations, but more importantly, Muslims.

The Qur'ān is entrenched to be lent and taught by the Prophet as reported in the following Hadith:

On the authority of Uthman bin Affan (may Allah be pleased with him) who reported the Messenger of Allah (God's blessing and peace be upon him) to have said: "The best among you is he who learns the Qur'ān and teaches it." Also, On the authority of Abi Umama (May God be peace with him) who reported that he heard the Messenger of (God's blessing and peace be upon him) saying "Recite the Qur'ān because it will come as an intercessor for the reciters on the Resurrection Day". Abdullahi, J. et-al Ibrahim, A. (1975).

On the authority of Al-Nawawi's bn Sam'an (May had be pleased with him) who reported that he heard the Messenger of Allah (God's blessing and peace be upon him) saying 'On the Resurrection Day the Qur'ān will be brought with its followers who acted according to its injunction in the world. The two Suras (Chapters) of al-Baqarah and Al-Imran will seek forgiveness for the reciters.

The believer who does not recite the Qur'ān is like a date which has no scent but a sweet taste. The hypocrite who recites the Qur'ān is like basil which has a fragrant smell but a bitter taste, and the hypocrite who does not recite the Qur'ān is like a date which has no good smell and a bitter taste.

Formation of the National Qurānic Competition in Nigeria

The Qurānic reading has been held in different schools for Arabic and Islamiyyah for quite some time in Nigeria. It usually forms the school learning activities. This situation is not peculiar to Nigerian



alone, It is a global event. In 1986, the Federal Government asked the then Sultan of Sokoto to nominate memorizers who will participate in the International Qurānic Competition.

As Alhaji Waliyu Kamal, (2022) said in an interview, the Sultan charged the University of Sokoto to organize the competition to select the best reciters to represent the country. It is on this basis University wrote a letter to the Ministry of the Education across the country to send participants from each state to compete in the First National Qurānic Competition. This was finally held in September, in 1986, in which about twelve (12) States of the Federation took part. Winners were then selected to represent Nigeria in the International Qurānic Competition in Saudi Arabia. Since then, the programs became annual event in which best reciters are selected to represent the country at International Competition which usually holds in Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Malaysia. Alhaji Waliyu Kamal, (2022).

The Role of Center for Islamic Studies (Usmanu Dan Fodio University, Sokoto)

The center for Islamic studies (UDUS) was charged with the responsibility of the National Qurānic Competition throughout the Federation. The pioneer national coordinator of the competition, who was the Director for center for Islamic studies in 1986, was Dr. Umaru Ballo. The center is part of the organizations responsible for the organizing the programme both at the state and local level respectively. Besides, the center for Islamic studies is responsible for choosing the venues where the competition would be held annually, and it is responsible for the provision of cash and materials for the winner (s).

Among her roles is to ensure that the participants from Nigeria who must have won first position in various categories represent Nigeria in the International Qurānic Competition. Interview with Hon. Justice Haroon (2022)



Origin of the Qurānic Competition in Kwara State

The Qur'ān reading competition started in Kwara state in 1986, following the communication received from Usman Danfodio University, Sokoto. The State Ministry of Education mandated state members of the committee from the Ministry of Education, Islamic organization, Educational Institution and the mass media to form the committee. The chairman of the committee was late Alhaji AbdulSalam Ayinla who was then the controller of production Nigerian Television Authority (N.T.A) Ilorin with late Aihaji Babatunde Lawal Yusuf as the secretary to the committee. Alhaji waliyu kamal, (2022).

The Activities of the Committee in Kwara State

The committee also visited the Arabic and Qurānic Schools to give them guidelines and rules and regulation guiding the competition. The committee picked some competent men from each Local Government and employed them to form local organizing committee in their area (Local Government Committee of the Qurānic competition). The state committee established centre for the training and coaching the selected contestants.

The committee employed a specialist as a trainer who was from Maidugri and had participated successfully in the National and International Competition before becoming a trainer. Alhaji waliyu kamal, (2022)

The training started in 1996, the then Emir of Ilorin provided accommodation for the trainers at Ilorin central mosque. The committee runs centre with donations she received from Muslims the philanthropists.

In organizing the state competition, invitation letters are given to the State Governor the chairman of the occasion, the Emir and chief, commissioners, permanent Secretaries, Chairmen of Local



Government Areas, and eminent people in the State, proprietors of Arabic and Islamic Schools, Islamic Scholars and learners of different Schools were present. The state competition always takes place sometimes before the National competitions, and only those who emerged 1st and 2nd positions in each category are selected to represent the state in the National Competition, nevertheless, prizes are awarded to those who came 1st to 4th positions in the Competition.

However, the committee henceforth seeks for financial supports from people, especially, the philanthropists, while the Ministry of Education sponsors the transportation by given the vehicle (s) free of charge to convey the participants to the host States. The money realized was used to pay the salary of the committee members, and broadcasting on Radio and Television programme. Alhaji Waliyu kamal, (2022).

Appointment of Judges

Judges were appointed by the centre for Islamic Studies Usman Danfodio University, Sokoto. The present judge of Qur'ānic Competition in Kwara State is Ustaz Murtadho Yahyah Sufyan who represents the state at the National and International level respectively. The judges elected must be a *Hafiz* Al-Qur'ān and must be practical of science of *Tajwīd*. Beside this, on the selection of judges for the competition, one judge is appointed from Kwara State, and the tenure of office for the judge appointed is usually three years after which another judge will be appointed. B.O Yusuf, (2022)

The guideline for engraving grade in the competition is six categories. The first category is for those who memorize the sixty *Hizb* of Al-Qur'ān with *Tafsir* of one selected Juzu' with *Tajiwid*. The second category is for those who memorize the forty *hizb* of Al-Qur'ān with *Tajwīd*. The fourth category is for those that memorize twenty *Hizb* of Al-Qur'ān with *tajwīd*. The fifth category is for those that memorize two *Hizb* of Al-Qur'ān from any portion of glorious Qur'ān with *Tajwīd* and *Tafsir*. The sixth



category is for those that memories juz Hamah (Sūratul An-Nabai) with little *Tajwīd*. However, *Tajwīd* is only approvable for the first to fifth categories which is from *Tajiwīd Al-Hamali*. B.O Yusuf, (2022)

Brief History of Mallam Goni of Borno

He was born on 3rd June 1968 into a noble family. His birth place Kirenawa, Marlie Local Government, Borno State. His father Goni Bishara was also a notable Muslim. He starts the Qurānic Studies in 1975 to 1979 in Dagdogowa under his Mualim Goni Muhammad at Ijiwad. Furthermore, he goes further for another Qurānic studies between 1979 and 1983 under his second Mualim Goni Duruma and often he memorized the whole Qur'ān. He went again to Goni Idris as his third teacher from where he was taught small part of the Qur'ān while his recitation of Warsh and Hafs mode of the Qurānic recitation from his first and second Mualim respectively in Borno State. Alhaji Waliyu kamal, (2022)

However, he began Western Education from 1984-1985. He joined Primary four and earned his first leaving school certificate. He received the little Gold in 1990 from one of Mualim Goni Idris, and cannotes *Tahfizul-Qur'ān* who passed the ability of memorizing the Qur'ān off-hand. He started teaching the Qurānic memorization in Shaykh Ahmad Abul-Fathi in Maiduguri between 1992 and 1993. He was at Mustapha Umar Arabic Teachers College in Maiduguri between 1992 and 1995. He was at Kwara State Qurānic Competition committee as a chief trainer on Qurānic Memorization in January, 1997 in Ilorin. Alhaji Waliyu kamal, (2022)

The Kwara State Qurānic competition committee sent to council for the Qurānic memorization in Maiduguri to provide them with a teacher, it was this council that appointed him. While in Ilorin, he acquired the knowledge of *fiqh*, Hadith and Arabic language, among his teachers were Shaykh Ahaji Musa Bayo Ya'qub Al-Muffasir Gambari (d.2003), Shaykh Dr. Abdul Hamed Shuaib Agaka (d. 2021) in Ilorin



West Local Government Area. The trainer carries out his duty by coaching his students the knowledge of the Qur'ān daily with the exception of Fridays at the Central Mosques in Oja Oba, Ilorin. The morning Coaching hour is between 9am-12am, and the evening classes hold between 4:30pm-6:30pm respectively. Among his student were Dr. Saheed Katibi who is current HOD Arabic Department, Kwara State College of Education, Ilorin, Abdulfatai Thaoban, Abdulrasheed Abubakar Ahmad Akorcde Masud Muhammad and Dr.Khalid Bello who is a lecturer in the Department of Religions, Kwara State University, Maletete. etc. Alhaji Abdullah Garba (2022)

The trainer was then, paid N7, 000 Naira monthly but later Increased to ₦10, 000 monthly. Although, Kwara State has been winning 3rd and 4th position in the late 80s and 90s, but on his appointment a remarkable performance was recorded in 1999. When the National Qurānic Competition held in Yola Adamawa State where Kwara State won the competition by claiming the first position in the highest category.

Conclusion

In discussing the compilation of the Qur'ān right from the time of the Prophet (S.A.W) to the era of Uthman bn Affan (R.A) more often than not, the origin of different recitation of the Qur'ān which had started since the holy Qur'ān was revealed in Arabic language other non Arabs find it difficult to pronounced some words such as *Hatta* (meaning until) was pronounce *atta* by the Arabs and also *Talamun* (meaning you know) was pronounced *tilamun* by the Mad. Furthermore, there was no compulsion in pronouncing for the Arabs, through there dialects significance of *Tajwīd*. Equally, the origin of the Qurānic Competitions in Nigerian was looked into. It commenced in Sokoto State and the roles the center for Islamic Studies (UDUS) played which includes choosing the venue for the competition, appointment



Australian Journal of Social and Cultural Studies
Vol. 14, October 2024, pp. 81-96

Established July 2008

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of judges, provision of cash and materials for the winners etc. In addition, the employment of the trainer so as to yield positive result in the competition and get supports from State Government and the Muslims philanthropists. Also, the organization, the local competition coupled with the achievement of the committee at the National level. Besides, the hosting of the fourteenth National Qur'ān competition held in Kwara State in the year 2000 and the regulation guiding the competition.

In conclusion, one has to agree that there is something called Al-Qur'ān which was sent to the entire nation through Angel Jibril to the zeal of the Prophet (Muhammad S.A.W). It is not an innovation to memorize the Qur'ān. The Prophet himself memorized it and encouraged Muslim to do so. It is obvious that the Qurānic competition began in Nigeria in 1986. It was introduced to Nigeria by the authority of Saudi Arabia because they had been doing so for long.

It was later introduced to Kwara State, and the same method is adopted by the trainer (s). Also, appointment of the judges with the rules and regulations guiding the reading were introduced.



Recommendations

The followings recommendations are drawn;

1. The state Government should contribute financially to the state Qurānic memorization centre, so that the people of the state would be attracted and develop interest on the memorization exercise.
2. All the Qurānic and Arabic institutions should include *Tahfizul Qur'ān* in their curriculum
3. The parents should encourage their children in memorizing the Holy Qur'ān. The trainers should be motivated with all kinds of incentives that can arouse their interest towards the assignment given to them.
4. Government of the state should endeavour to encourage the memorizers of the Qur'ān, by giving them job/ having special package for them as motivation for the job well done.
5. Creating Ta'fizuli-Qur'ān centers across the state by the state Government is another way of consolidating essence of the Qur'ān and paving way for employment for the *Huffaz* (memorizers)
6. Private Centers for the memorization of the Qur'ān can also be established by individuals, especially, the philanthropists. This is another way of employment for the *Huffaz*.
7. Government should strive to aid financially any interested individual among the *Huffaz* of who wishes to establish *Ta'fizul-Qur'ān* centers of his own.



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