



The Advent, Evolution and Impact of Islamic Schools in Anglophone Cameroon: A Historical Study

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Abstract: Arab-Islamic education operating in Anglophone Cameroon, appeared in Sub-Saharan Africa at the same time as the dissemination or a spread of Islam in the 11th Century. It was initiated by Arab-Berber Merchants in West and later Central Africa, and was subsequently spread by religious clerics and brotherhoods in the 19th Century. To compete with Quranic schools and attract Muslim students, the colonial administration subsequently created formal Madrasas to train competent Arabic speaking civil servants. From 1960s to 1970s and early 1980s, an Islamic education market gradually emerged in Anglophone Cameroon, with entrepreneurs supported by external funding from the Maghreb and the Middle East. In seeking to integrate them into the formal education system, African countries, Cameroon included, gradually developed new educational institutions commonly referred to as Anglo-Arabic or Franco-Arab schools. In Anglophone Cameroon more precisely, immediately after independence, some Anglo Islamic schools were created. The first President of Cameroon, Ahmadou Ahidjo greatly encouraged the creation of those schools. By the late 1980s and early 1990s, Islamic primary schools were spread all over Anglophone Cameroon. Most of those Islamic primary schools were later transformed to Islamic secondary schools. Base on substantial evidence from the activities and functioning of those Islamic schools, through an analytical and chronological approach, we arrived at the conclusion that Islamic schools in Anglophone Cameroon have contributed enormously in the education, training, growth and development of the Muslim Youth and Islam in particular and Anglophone Cameroon at large.

Keywords: Anglo-Arabic schools, Anglophone Cameroon, Muslim students, Madrasas, Islamic Primary and Secondary Schools

1. INTRODUCTION

Islamic schools helped a great deal in propagating and spreading Islam in Anglophone Cameroon. Islamic or Quranic Schools were created or open in the early 20th Century in Anglophone Cameroon, especially in areas where Muslim Communities were found. The various mosques in Anglophone Cameroon were also centers for Islamic education. From the beginning, we had the normal Quranic Schools. Then came the Elementary and Complementary Schools. Anglo-Arabic and Anglo-Islamic Schools first saw the light of day in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Then, by the late 1980s and early 1990s, Islamic Secondary Schools were also created in Anglophone Cameroon. Thanks to the liberty laws of the 1990s, many Islamic Associations were created in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon. Islamic Schools in Anglophone Cameroon became the main vectors of spreading and propagating Islam (Interview with Alhaji Swaibou Baba Mallam, 3rd June 2003).

The history of Islamic Schools is closely link to the origin and most especially spread and evolution of Islam in Cameroon, in general and in Anglophone Cameroon in particular. Islamic education can refer to efforts by the Muslim Community to educate its own to pass along the heritage of Islamic knowledge, first and foremost through its primary sources, the Quran and the *Sunnah* or Hadith (the latter being the Saying and teaching of the Prophet). The education of Muslims might take place in mosques, schools or universities, and other organizations established are served by this type of Islamic education. Islamic Institutions are often described by Muslim and others as Islamic schools where educators deliver both "secular" and Islamic education. (A.Kurshid, 1977: pp. 2-57). This was and is still the case with Anglo Arabic and Anglo Islamic schools in Anglophone Cameroon. In terms of curriculum, apart from the public school curricula, they add subjects such as instruction in Quranic recitation and memorization, basic Islamic beliefs and practices, and usually Arabic language. As such, Islamic schools have contributed enormously in the education of the Muslim youth in Anglophone Cameroon. (Interview

with Mallam Moustapha, 10th December 2002). This article therefore set out to examine Islamic schools and the role they have played in the education of the Muslim youth in Anglophone Cameroon.

2. ISLAMIC SCHOOLS IN THE NORTH WEST REGION OF ANGLOPHONE CAMEROON

When the Muslim Communities began their settlement in Anglophone Cameroon in general and the North West Region in particular, most of them were only literate in Arabic. Since all of them were Muslims, they were inclined to Islamic Studies. According to Mallam Ibrahim, among each contingent of Muslim migrants, were found some Mallams who were Islamic scholars. Having migrated and settled in Anglophone Cameroon, they were able to set-up Quranic Schools under the influence and leadership of the Muslim Traditional or Spiritual Authorities. Muslim youths in the North West Region were sent to such school. Some of the most remembered Mallams or Islamic Scholars in Bamenda were Mallam Haruna, Mallam Eliasu, Mallams Garba, Mallam Yaya, Mallam Isa, Mallam Sambo, Mallam Gwani, Mallam Missa and Mallam Umaru.¹ The Muslim youths in Bamenda were expected to read, master, memories and be able to recite the Quran, Hadith and other Islamic texts.

At the initial stage, the children were taught the Alphabets and different letters or signs of the Quran. According to Mallam Moustapha, during this first stage, the Quranic Alphabets, letters or signs are written on a plywood board with the use of a local ink, *Tawada*. This was to enable the young learner read and master those Quranic Alphabets or letters. The second stage or level of learning has to do with mastering and memorising the first simple short chapters of the Quran. The third stage or level becomes more complicating by learning the longer and complicated chapters of the Quran. The subsequent stages or levels deals with deepening the learning and mastering of the Quran, the Hadith and other Islamic texts. Graduation ceremonies were organized for young Muslims in Bamenda who have completed the reading and mastery of the whole Quran. (M. Lapidus, 1988: pp. 2-50).

If anything is to be written on Arabic and Islamic Education in Anglophone Cameroon, few lines must be written on the scholars who brought it to Cameroon and where it came from. Islam was brought to Anglophone Cameroon by Fulani and Hausa Muslim Clerics from Northern Nigeria. During the reign of Yaqub (1452 C.E.-1463 C.E.), some Fulani scholars migrated to Kano, bringing with them books on Islamic theology and jurisprudence. It was during this period that Muslim scholars from Timbuktu came to Kano to teach and preached Islam. Al-Maghili, a famous scholar, later went to Katsina which had also become a centre of Arabic and Islamic learning during the fifteenth century. Many scholars emerged from this centre. From Northern Nigeria, they migrated to Northern Cameroon and later move down south to Anglophone Cameroon. In Anglophone Cameroon, they opened Arabic and Islamic schools (A. Kurshid, 1977: pp. 2-57).

The Muslim Scholars or Clerics organised themselves into a sort of guild, and a master would grant a recognised certificate (*ijazah*) to those students who satisfactorily passed the prescribed courses under him. This system continued until the coming of the British to Anglophone Cameroon. It was this Arabic and Islamic education which gave cultural prestige to Islam.

The history of the teaching of Arabic throughout the Islamic world, particularly in the non-Arab world, has been the history of the spread of Islam. This is one of the reasons why the elementary Arabic schools in Anglophone Cameroon were called Quranic schools, and both Arabic and Islam were taught simultaneously. Thus, two types of Quranic schools developed in Anglophone Cameroon; the tablet-school and higher school. The first school is meant for beginners while the higher school embraces all aspects of Arabic and Islamic Studies (A. Rahman and I. Doi, 1972: pp. 2-50).

The teaching and learning of the Quran and the Arabic language started in Northern Nigeria and later Anglophone Cameroon where the teachers in the early stage depended for their living on charity. As Mallam Musa put it, the noble principle, which was successfully applied in the early stage of the development of Arabic and Islamic education, reduced the status of a teacher to that of a mere beggar; he came to occupy socially a rather low status. He had to wander from place to place looking for charitable Muslims to patronise him and give him food and shelter. Whenever his efforts were not sufficient to procure the basic necessities of life, he had to send his pupils from door to door for charity to sustain himself and the pupils living with him.

Earlier on at the beginning of Quranic Schools in Anglophone Cameroon, they were usually found in or outside the mosque as it was done in the oldest Muslim University, of Al-Azhar in Cairo. Today,

¹ Interview with Mallam Ibrahim

hundreds of these schools are to be found in Anglophone Cameroon, located either in mosques, private houses or premises specially built for this purpose (Interview with Mallam Musa, 3rd March 2022).

Christian missionaries dominated the education on scene in Anglophone Cameroon especially during the colonial periods. During the early period of western education, Muslim parents did not hide their discontent to the attitude of missionaries in winning converts through the school. Later, the colonial government in the late 1930s and early 1940s established several schools in response to appeal by Muslim Anglophone Cameroonians when many popular Muslim missionary organisations sprang up and built numerous primary and secondary schools to teach western education alongside Arabic and Islamic Studies. Some of them had built Arabic and Quranic Schools offering courses at Primary and Secondary levels. (V. J. Ngoh, 1996: pp. 2-60).

When the Muslim intellectuals realized the importance of the western type of education, in the age of industrialisation, scientific and technological advances especially in the 1950s, they felt that they were not participating enough in the administration of government. They also needed Muslim lawyers, doctors, engineers and educationists. They wanted to achieve these aims without changing their religion and culture. They felt a need to combine a sound Muslim education with an equally sound education along western lines. This caused renewed enthusiasm in Muslim circles (V.G. Fanso, 1989: pp. 2-55).

Worth noting is the fact that, when the British arrived the Bamenda Grassfields, modern schools started to be constructed. Some Christian missionaries were also putting up schools. The first government school was opened in Bamenda in 1922 followed by a Native Authority School in 1923. According to Paul Nchoji Nkwi and Jean Pierre Warnier (1982: 218), when these schools started functioning, the Muslim community, which at first was reluctant to send their children to those schools for fear they would be converted to Christianity, began to do so in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

In the 1970s, a Government Primary School was opened at up-station, Medankwe, to which Muslims sent their children. Other primary schools were open in other areas of the North West Region. The Muslim parents were sensitized by the administrative authorities to send their children to school. The Muslim traditional and spiritual leaders were also asked to sensitize their people to send their children to school. According to Mallam Musa, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Muslim parents started sending their children to school.

Beginning from the early 1980s, the Muslim communities started creating their own primary schools. The schools were first called Anglo-Arabic Schools before later being changed to Islamic Primary Schools. In Bamenda, the first Anglo-Arabic School was created in the early 1980s, which combined the teaching of both the Islamic and Western subjects. The school resulted from the collective effort of the entire Muslim Community. Many Muslim youths attended the school. Subjects taught included Arabic, the Quran, English, Arithmetic, General Knowledge and Hygiene (Interview with Mallam Moustapha, 10 December 2000).

In 1982, another Anglo-Arabic School was created at Old Town, in Bamenda. The school was created thanks to the collective effort of the Muslim elites, Muslim traditional leaders, contribution of well-wishers and administrative authorities. The Muslim community supported the school in kind and cash. Most of the Muslim parent in Bamenda sent their children to the school. Subjects taught in the school were Arabic, Arithmetic, Reading, Writing, General knowledge, Natures Study and Hygiene. The Anglo-Arabic Schools were later change to Islamic Schools in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Many former pupils of the two primary schools had enrolled in secondary schools (Interview with Mallam Moustapha, 10 December 2000).

One other important Muslim Primary School that was created in the North West Region was the Islamic Primary School, Vekovi, in Bui division. The school is located precisely in Jakiri Sub-division. It was founded in 1964 by the Parent Teachers' Association (PTA) with an enrolment of 136 pupils. The school taught and continued teaching subject such as English, French, Arabic Languages and the Quran. As time went on, other subjects were added to the curriculum. Thanks to the effort of the PTA members, the school enrolment increased from 126 pupils to 200 pupils. The school infrastructure also increased from six classrooms to almost eight to ten. The Muslim community in Jakiri also contributed money for the school. Islamic Primary School Vekovi should be noted was a class seven primary school that served five quarters (Interview with Mallam Musa, 3rd March 2002). We also had another important Islamic Primary School in Ngoketunjia Division called Islamic Primary School Bamungo.

In terms of Islamic Colleges, they were not as early as the Islamic Primary Schools in the North West Region of Cameroon. Mallam Ibrahim is of the opinion that by the late 1970s, most of the Muslim youths who completed primary school and wanted to continue in colleges were compelled to continue their studies either in Government Secondary Schools, Private or Mission Schools. Muslim parent never loved seeing their children studying in Mission Schools like Presbyterian Secondary School (PSS) Mankon, Our lady of Lord, Mankon, Sacred Heart College, Mankon and St. Bede's college, Ashing, kom, for fear of their children to adopt Christian values. Most of the parents clamoured for an Islamic Secondary School. Request and authorization letters were sent to Government Authorities asking for the creation of Islamic colleges. The Muslim community made it clear that they were ready to support the initiative in kind and cash. Areas who exerted alots of pressure in the creation of an Islamic College were Bui Division, Donga Mantung and Ngoketunjia Divisions. It was not until the late 1980s that, through the financial and material support of the Government, the Muslim Parent Associations, other well-wishers and foreign NGOs that the first Muslim College or Secondary School in Anglophone Cameroon saw the light of day (Interview with Mallam Musa, 3rd March 2002).

The first region or area where Muslim colleges were created in the North West Region was the Bui Division. This was in the mid-1980s. An example of those colleges was Islamic High School Kumbo. The creation of this college was thanks to the collective effort of the Muslim community in Bui Division. Henceforth, most of the Muslim youths who completed Primary School in Bui Division in particular and the North West Region in general had the opportunity to register and continue their studies in Islamic High School Kumbo. Most of the Muslim parent registered their children in Islamic High School Kumbo. Once having completed in the school, some of the graduate with their Ordinary and Advanced level continued their studies in some state Universities. Others obtained scholarship to study in Arab Countries or abroad (Interview with Mallam Isa, 5th April 2010).

Another Islamic College created in the North West Region was Islamic Comprehensive College Kumbo. This college also played a very important role as far as the development of Islamic education was concerned. Many Muslim youths in Bui Division and elsewhere in the North West Region attended the school. Apart from the normal general subjects taught in the college, Arabic was also taught and had a special place in terms of the curricula (Interview with Mallam Umaru, 10th March 2000).

One other important Islamic college created in the North West Region in general and Ngoketunjia Division in particular was Islamic Secondary School (I.S.S.), Baba I, Ngoketunjia. As Mallam Musa put it, this was another Islamic college that helped Muslim youths to continue their studies in the secondary school. Apart from Islamic Secondary School, Baba I, we also had Islamic Secondary School (I.S.S.) Ntumbaw, in Donga Mantung Division. Apart from that, we also had the Islamic Comprehensive College (I.C.C.), Bangoland, Ngoketunjia Division. Then followed by the Islamic College of Commerce, Arts and Science (I.C.C.A.S.), Kikaikom, followed by Islamic Secondary School (I.S.S.) Nseh, Islamic Comprehensive College (I.C.C.) Tatum in Bui Division, Islamic Secondary School (I.S.S.), Jakiri and Islamic Teacher Training College (I.T.T.C.), Njombo, all in Bui Division. Most of the teachers who taught in the Islamic Colleges were trained in the newly created Islamic Teachers Training College, Njombo, and Bui Division. Others acquired their Islamic knowledge in some prestigious Islamic Institutions in and out of Cameroon (Interview with Mallam Inua Wirba, 20th November 1998).

Below are series of tables presenting Islamic Primary and Secondary Schools in the North West Region of Anglophone Cameroon. So far, we could count almost 80 Islamic Primary Schools and 10 Islamic Secondary Schools or Colleges operating in the region.

Table 1. *Islamic Nursery and Primary Schools in the North West Region of Cameroon*

S/N	Name of School	Division	Authorisation N°	Date of Authorisation	Year of Authorisation
01	IPS KUVLU	BUI	314/J1/24/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	14/08/1988	1988
02	IPS KIKAKELARI	BUI	314/J1/24/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	14/08/1988	1988
03	IPS TAKIJAH	BUI	314/J1/24/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	14/08/1988	1988
04	IPS MAREM	BUI	314/J1/24/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	14/08/1988	1988
05	IPS MELUF	BUI	314/J1/24/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	14/08/1988	1988
06	IPS DZENG	BUI	314/J1/24/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	14/08/1988	1988
07	IPS NJANAWA	BUI	314/J1/24/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	14/08/1988	1988

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08	IPS KINGOMEN	BUI	314/J1/24/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	14/08/1988	1988
09	IPS NJOMBO	BUI	314/J1/24/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	14/08/1988	1988
10	IPS NSEH	BUI	314/J1/24/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	14/08/1988	1988
11	IPS JAKIRI	BUI	314/J1/24/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	11/08/1988	1988
12	IPS FAAKUI	BUI	1006/J1/23/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	12/08/1988	1988
13	IPS NTUR	BUI	314/J1/24/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	12/08/1988	1988
14	IPS VEKOVI	BUI	314/J1/24/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	11/08/1988	1988
15	IPS BABUNGO	BUI	/J/7/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/CAFEP/BCMP	31/07/1988	1988
16	IPS OLD TOWN BAMENDA	MEZAM	/J2/7/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SEP/BCMP	10/10/1990	1990
17	ISP TATUM	BUI	270/J1/3465/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SCAFES/BCPM	29/04/1992	1992
18	IPS BAMNTOV	BUI	270/J1/3465/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SCAFES/BCPM	29/04/1992	1992
19	IPS BUH	BUI	270/J1/3465/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SCAFES/BCPM	29/04/1992	1992
20	IPS RIFEM	BUI	270/J1/3465/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SCAFES/BCPM	29/04/1992	1992
21	IPS MBEVEH	BUI	270/J1/3465/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SCAFES/BCPM	29/04/1992	1992
22	IPS MBOSHAH	BUI	508/J2/3466/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	14/12/2000	2000
23	IPS WAIKOV	BUI	509/J2/3465/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	14/12/2000	2000
24	IPS NTIM	DONGAMANTUNING	507/J2/346/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	14/12/2000	2000
25	IPS SABONGARI	DONGAMANTUNING	523/J2/3477/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	28/12/2000	2000
26	IPS MBOKOP	DONGAMANTUNING	528/J1/3474/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	28/12/2000	2000
27	IPS CHAKO	DONGAMANTUNING	524/J2/3476/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	28/12/2000	2000
28	IPS NTUMBRAW	DONGAMANTUNING	522/J2/3478/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	28/12/2000	2000
29	IPS FUJUA	BOYO	521/J2/4379/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	28/12/2000	2000
30	IPS KIMBI	DONGAMANTUNING	81/J2/3514/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	06/03/2001	2001
31	IPS BABA I	NGOKE TUNJIA	174/J2/3825/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	02/05/2001	2001
32	IPS WAILAI	BUI	334/J2/3647/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	05/09/2001	2001
33	IPS NOI	BUI	3357/J2/3648/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	05/09/2001	2001
34	IPS TEEI-LIMBO	BUI	371/J2/3679/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	05/09/2001	2001
35	IPS BRIDGE FIVE	DONGAMANTUNING	337/J2/2650/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	05/09/2001	2001
36	IPS NTABA	DONGAMANTUNING	373/J2/3677/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	05/09/2001	2001
37	IPS MISAJE	DONGAMANTUNING	374/J2/3676/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	05/09/2001	2001

S/N	Name of School	Division	Authorisation N°	Date of Authorisation	Year of Authorisation
38	IPS DUMBU	DONGAMANTUNG	376/J2/3674/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	05/09/2001	2001
39	ISP NTANTALAH	DONGAMANTUNG	377/J2/3672/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	05/09/2001	2001

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40	IPS MENFU MFE	DONGA MANTUNG	366/J2/3651/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/S CAFES/SCAFEP	05/09/2001	2001
41	IPS TAKOV	BUI	338/J1/3649/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/ SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	25/09/2001	2001
42	IPS NDU	DONGA MANTUNG	372/J1/3678/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/ SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	26/09/2001	2001
43	IPS MENGU NTUNIR	BUI	3017/J1/3494/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/ SECP/SCAFES/SCAFEP	10/01/2001	2001
44	IPS MBARSE	DONGA MANTUNG	003/J2/3487/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/ CAFES/SCAFEP	10/01/2001	2001
45	IPS MBOYAH LUH	DONGA MANTUNG	001/J2/3491/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP SCAFES/SCAFEP	10/01/2001	2001
46	IPS NSAM	DONGA MANTUNG	002/J2/3492/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/ /CAFES/SCAFEP	10/01/2001	2001
47	IPS MBONGONG	DONGA MANTUNG	005/J2/3489/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP SCAFES/SCAFEP	10/01/2001	2001
48	IPS NKAMBE	DONGA MANTUNG	015/J1/3484/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/S CAFES/SCAFEP	10/01/2001	2001
49	IPS KITUYA	DONGA MANTUNG	29/J2/3501/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/ SCAFES/SCAFEP	25/01/2001	2001
50	IPS BAINJONG	BOYO	J2/J2/3509/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/ SCAFES/SCAFEP	21/01/2001	2001
51	IPS QUEBESSI	NGOKETUNJIA	214/J2/3861/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP /SCAFES/SCAFEP	13/06/2002	2002
52	IPS BAMBALANG	NGOKETUNJIA	213/J2/3862/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/S CAFES/SCAFEP	13/06/2002	2002
53	IPS BABESSI	NGOKETUNJIA	205/J2/3842/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/S CAFES/SCAFEP	13/06/2002	2002
54	IPS BAMUNKA	NGOKETUNJIA	284/J2/3888/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/S CAFES/SCAFEP	24/06/2002	2002
55	IPS BANGOLAN	NGOKETUNJIA	4439/J2/3850/MINEDUC/SG/SDEMPN/S AAP	05/08/2001	2003
56	IPS ANGIE BATIBO	MENCHUM	2055/J2/4013/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SDEM /BC/	27/04/2003	2003
57	ITTC NJOMBO	BUI	4790/J2/3599/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SDEP ES/SAAP	28/08/2003	2003
58	INS NJOMBO	BUI	4965/J2/4264/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SEPE MPN/BC/C2	22/07/2004	2004

S/N	Name of School	Division	Authorisation N°	Date of Authorisation	Year of Authorisation
59	INS KIKAIKELAKI	BUI	4939/J2/4239/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SEPEM PN/BC/C2	22/07/2004	2004
60	ISP TADU	BUI	4939/J2/4239/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SEPEM PN/BC/C2	20/01/2004	2004
61	IPS MAMBIM	NGOKETUNJIA	740/J2/3860/MINEDUC/SG/SDEPES/SDE PMPN/SAAP/BC/C2	20/01/2004	2004
62	IPS BALIKUMBAT	NGOKETUNJIA	739/J2/3980/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SDEPM PN/BC/C2	20/02/2004	2004
63	IPS CHUKUBU	NGOKETUNJIA	1080/J1/3851/MINEDUC/SG/DEP SDEPMPN/BC/C2	06/02/2004	2004
64	IPS BAMALI	NGOKETUNJIA	1618/J1/3171/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/ SDEPMPN/SAAP	11/03/2004	2001
65	IPS BAMUKUM BIT	NGOKETUNJIA	739/J2/3980/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/ SDEPMPN/BC2	20/01/2004	2004
66	INPS TADU	BUI	1257/J2/4688//O/MINEDUC/SG/DSEPB	10/07/2008	2008
67	INPS YANGKITA RI	BUI	1257/J2/4688//O/MINEDUC/SG/DSEPB	10/07/2008	2008
68	IPS NGAAN	BUI	1257/J2/4688//O/MINEDUC/SG/DSEPB	10/07/2008	2008
69	INPS KITIWUM	BUI	1257/J2/4688//O/MINEDUC/SG/DSEPB	10/07/2008	2008
70	IPS WASI	BUI	1257/J2/4688//O/MINEDUC/SG/DSEPB	10/07/2008	2008
71	INPS MBACOUT	DONGA MANTUNG	1257/J2/4688//O/MINEDUC/SG/DSEPB	10/07/2008	2008
72	INPS KAKAR	DONGA MANTUNG	1257/J2/4688//O/MINEDUC/SG/DSEPB	10/07/2008	2008
73	INPS BAMKIKAI	BUI	1257/J2/4731/O/MINEDUC/SG/DSEPB	10/07/2008	2008

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74	IPS BAMUNKUMBIT	NGOKETUNJIA	1257/J2/4731/O/MINEDUC/SG/DSEPB	19/11/2008	2008
75	INPS BIH NKAMBE	DONGA MANTUNG	1257/J2/4688//O/MINEDUC/SG/DSEPB	19/11/2008	2008
76	IPS ELLE	DONGA MANTUNG	DOCUMENTS MISSEING		
77	IEPS MBEM	DONGA MANTUNG	1417/J2/4731/O/MINEDUC/SG/DSEPB	19/11/2008	2008
78	IPS BINKA	DONGA MANTUNG	1417/J2/4731/O/MINEDUC/SG/DSEPB	19/11/2008	2008
79	INPS MBAJENG	DONGA MANTUNG	1417/J2/44731/O/MINEDUC/SG/DSEPB	19/11/2008	2008

S/ N	Name of School	Division	Authorisation N°	Date of Authorisation	Year of Authorisation
80	IPS BAMESSING	NGOKETUNJIA	1417/J2/4731/O/MINEDUC/SG /DSEPB	19/11/2008	2008
81	ISP MBEBAH	NGOKETUNJIA	1417/J2/4731/O/MINEDUC/SG /DSEPB	19/11/2008	2008
82	IPS WUM	MENCHUM	1417/J2/4731/O/MINEDUC/SG /DSEPB	19/11/2008	2008
83	IPS FUNDONG	NGOKETUNJIA			
84	IPS ROHVITANGTANG	BOYO			
85	IPS NJONO	BUI			
86	IPS SABGA	MEZAM			
87	INPS CHUKU	MEZAM			
88	IPS BAMUNGO	NGOKETUNJIA			

Source: *The Islamic Education Secretary, North West Region*

Table 2. *Islamic Colleges in the North West Region*

	COLLEGE	DIVISION	AUTHORISATION N°
01	Islamic High School (I.H.S) Kumbo	BUI	112/J22886/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SCAFFES/SECP
02	Islamic comprehensive (College (I.C.C.) Kumbo	BUI	375/J2/3675/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SCAFFES/SEAFF EP
03	Islamic Secondary School (I.S.S) Baba I	NGOKETUNJIA	8761/J2/4339/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SDESP/SAAP
04	Islamic Secondary School (I.S.S.) Ntumbaw	NGOKETUNJIA	152/21/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SCAFFES/SECP
05	Islamic comprehensive College (I.C.C.) Bongoland	NGOKETUNJIA	152/21/MINESEC/SG/DESG/SDSEPEG/SGEPESG
06	Islamic college of commerce, Arts and Science (I.C.C.A.S) Kikaikom	BUI	151/21 /MINESEC/SG/DESG/SDSEPEG/SGEPESG
07	Islamic Secondary School (I.C.C) Tatum	BUI	114/12/MINESEC/SG/DESG/SDEPEG/SGEPESG
08	Islamic comprehensive College (I.C.C.) Tatum	BUI	116/12/MINESEC/SG/DESG/SDEPEG/SGEPESG
09	Islamic Secondatry School (I.S.S) Jakiri	BUI	337/15/MINESEC/SG/DESG/SDSEPEG/SGEPSG
10	Islamic Teacher Training College (I.T.T.C) Njombo	BUI	4790/J2/3599/MINEDUC/SG/DEP/SECP/SCAFFS/ SCAFED

Source: *The Islamic Education Secretary, North West Region.*

3. ISLAMIC SCHOOLS IN THE SOUTH WEST REGION OF ANGLOPHONE CAMEROON

The advent and settlement of Muslim communities in the South West Region were accompanied first by Quranic Schools and later Anglo-Arabic Schools. Worth noting is the fact that, the Muslim Communities in the South West Region of Anglophone Cameroon from the beginning of their

settlements never had any liking for Missionary and Colonial Schools. They restricted most of their children to Quranic Schools for fear of Christian influence on them. Some of them even thought that the colonial masters and the Christian Missionaries will take advantage of the Muslim youth presence in their schools to convert them to Christianity (Interview with Mallam Ibrahim, 2nd April 2002).

Beginning from the late 1950s, administrative authorities in the South West Region asked Muslim leaders to sensitize their community on the importance of going to school. Through the Muslim leaders, the South West administrative authorities clamoured for Muslim parents to send their children to school.² It was then that Muslim parents in Buea, Muea, Kumba, Mamfe, Limbe, Tiko and Muyuka registered their children in the few primary schools found around. As time went on, other Muslim children were registered in Public Primary Schools.

By the late 1960s, Muslim Authorities started requesting the creation of an Anglo-Arabic School. By the late 1970s and early 1980s, few Anglo-Arabic Schools saw the light of day in Buea, Kumba, Mamfe and Limbe. Most of the Muslim parents sent their children to those Islamic Primary Schools. By the late 1980s, some of those Anglo-Arabic Schools were change to Islamic Primary Schools. For example in the whole of Buea town, more precisely in Mile 17, there was and still exist one Islamic School called Buea Islamic Private Anglo Arabic Nursery and Primary School. Subject taught in the Schools included Arabic, English, Arithmetic, Reading, Writing, General knowledge and Hygiene. Upon graduation, some of the Muslim children enrolled in Public and Private Secondary Schools to continue or advanced their studies. Islamic Secondary Schools were not so much available in the South West Region like in the North West Region (Interview with Mallam Isa, 5th April 2010).

By the early 1990s, most of those schools were not very active, but still existed with very low enrolment. Most of the Muslim children who attended Islamic Anglo Arabic Nursery and Primary Schools, upon graduation enrolled in public or private colleges to Advanced their education. Those who succeeded in the G.C.E. Ordinary and Advanced Levels, registered in State Universities to continue their studies. Others obtained Scholarships to study in Arab countries. Islamic Primary and Secondary Schools were not so much advanced or developed in the South West Region as in the North West Region (Interview with Mallam Isa, 5th April 2010). By the late 1990s and early 2000s, few Islamic Primary Schools started functioning in the South West Region. We can cite the examples of Buea Islamic School, Muyua Islamic School, umba Islamic School and Limbe Islamic School. However, the Muslim community in the South West Region made everything possible to promote Islamic studies and Islamic institutions. An Islamic Secondary School was recently open in the town of Buea called Gratitude Islamic Secondary School. This was thanks to the effort of Muslim dignitaries in Buea and the entire Muslim Community in the South West Region.

As a matter of fact, the Central or Principal Imam of the Buea Central Mosque, Elhadj Sheikh Abubakar played a very important role in the opening of the Gratitude Islamic Secondary School Buea. According to the Imam of the Buea Central Mosque during an interview on a CRTV program, Cameroon Calling, he said when the school started or was open, it had not up to 100 students. Most especially due to the socio-political crises that was going on in the two Anglophone Regions of Cameroon. Also, some non-Muslim parents thought that the school was limited just to Muslims. Once those misunderstandings were cleared, the school enrolment went up to about 700 Students. Under the Presidential Plan for the Reconstruction of the North West and South West Regions due to the socio-political crises, the Cameroon Government recently gave some financial support that greatly help in the reconstruction of part of the infrastructures of the school that were affected by the crisis.

4. PROBLEMS FACING ARABIC AND ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN ANGLOPHONE CAMEROON

There are many problems hindering the smooth or better functioning of Arabic and Islamic education in Anglophone Cameroon. Some of the reasons are:

4.1. Lack of Unified Syllabus

The syllabus in operation varies from one Arabic School to another. That is, there is no co-ordination between one school and another especially in the North West Region. Most of the Arabic and Islamic Schools in Anglophone Cameroon operate base on their individual school syllabus, different from the other schools. The Arabic and Islamic Schools in Anglophone Cameroon lack unity in terms of syllabus

² General Secretariat of Islamic Education ; Interview with Mallam Musa

or plan of work. These usually create a lot of problems to the student upon graduation when they want to further their education (V.G. Fanso, 1989: pp. 2-55).

4.2. Inadequacy of Qualified Teacher

Basic elementary knowledge of linguistics ought to be a prerequisite for anyone who wishes to specialise in the teaching of a language (T. Tajoche 2008: pp. 2-75). Arabic especially requires this and something more: motivation. To teach or learn a language outside its native environment requires motivation and devotion. There is a dearth of qualified teachers in quantity vis-à-vis primary, secondary and tertiary institutions in many parts of Anglophone Cameroon. Besides, a great number of the few available ones lack linguistic background.³

4.3. Unavailability of Suitable Text books

Most of the textbooks used in our institutions are those written for learners in environments outside Anglophone Cameroon. Thus, the content of the books are usually not within the students' experience. The expressions are of so high a standard that the students get more and more discouraged, especially in terms of understanding the Arabic language (V.G. Fanso, 1989: pp. 2-55).

In most of the institutions where Arabic language and literature are taught, books, rather than the language, are taught. Text book must have bearings to a large extent to the background and culture of the learners if they are to mean anything to them (P.M. Kaberry, 2004: pp. 2-50).

4.4. Difficulties of learning the language

Some students of Arabic tend to become frustrated as soon as they are confronted by some difficulties the language itself presents. Their response is either dropping out, which is common, or to display a lukewarm response. Among the reasons of this is lack of concrete background on the subject by the students before getting into higher institution. The remedy can come from the teacher. If the teacher is a motivated and devoted one, she/he will employ various tactics to excite and regenerate the interest of the students; but if he is a non-motivated one, she/he will just abandon the students with the problems (K.B.C. Onwubiko, 1973: pp. 2-57).

4.5. Uncared Attitudes of the Government

In the Inspectorate Division of the Ministry of Education, there is an Inspector for every subject except Arabic. This is a sign of indifference on the part of the Government. The effective teaching will be guaranteed when the subject is adequately supervised from Inspectorate Division of the Ministry (V.G. Fanso, 1989: pp. 2-55).

5. THE PROGRESS MADE ON ARABIC AND ISLAMIC EDUCATION

Although there are problems, there are many ways in which the achievements are recognized from Arabic and Islamic education in Anglophone Cameroon today. For many years back in the history of Arabic and Islamic education in Anglophone Cameroon, graduates from Quranic Schools had no future because the Quranic or Arabic and Islamic Schools had no uniform curriculum. It was not only difficult to determine the level of attainment of the scholars, but also to fix salaries for them. These problems were removed with the establishment of the School for Arabic Studies when program for training Arabic and Quranic teachers for primary schools was started. Later, similar programs for post-primary Quranic and Arabic teachers were established (V.J. Ngoh, 1996: pp. 2-55).

In the beginning, Arabic and Islamic schools had no uniform curriculum and it was not only difficult to determine the level of attainment of scholars but also to fix salaries for them. But these problems were solved through the help of western education's positive influence when School for Arabic Studies was established. Today, some Cameroonian Universities and some private Islamic Institutions offer various degrees in Arabic and Islamic Studies, and Colleges of Education on different levels liberate many Muslim scholars from their conservative behaviours towards modern education (V.J. Ngoh, 1996: pp. 2-55).

It is obvious that as from the colonial era till today, the Government did not accredit most of Arabic and Islamic learning centres and the Certificates awarded there cannot fetch their products white collar jobs or admission for further studies to higher institutions. This made many Muslims to consider government jobs to be highly prestigious thus leading them to abandon Arabic and Islamic education which could

³Interview with Mallam Musa and Mallam Moustapha

not qualify them or their children for such appointment unless they attend western oriented schools (V.J. Ngoh, 1996: pp. 2-55). To solve this problem, the Arabic schools can include English language and some of the other subjects taught in western oriented schools in their syllabuses. Also, if Muslims can encourage their children to attend the Government Schools where they can be taught Arabic and Islamic Studies in the primary and secondary schools levels, the problem is likely to be over (Neba, S. Aaron 1987: pp. 2-50).

In a nutshell, Arabic schools should modernize their academic fashion with the same of western type. There should be a unified syllabus and curriculum of studies among all Arabic Schools, while dependence on foreign books should be discouraged. Doing these will help to prepare Arabic learners in the tertiary levels thereby will make it possible for the continuity of Arabic and Islamic education in Anglophone Cameroon.

To conclude, one can say that the advent of Islamic education in the 1960s and 1970s, in Anglophone Cameroon was a great leap forward in the education, training and development of the Muslim youth. With the coming of those Islamic schools be there primary or later secondary, the Cameroon government was obliged to integrate those schools and their curricular into the Cameroonian educational system. In the late 1970s, Cameroon former President, Ahmadou Ahidjo gave subvention to most of those Islamic schools to let them function well. With the liberty laws of the early 1990s promulgated by President Paul Biya, more Islamic schools were created. The early and late 2000 experience the creation of other Islamic primary and secondary schools all over Anglophone Cameroon. Those Islamic schools are playing a very important role in the teaching and training of Islamic youth.

It becomes evident that both the obligation to be educated, and the moral, intellectual and cultural concepts of an education in the Muslim tradition are not far removed from similar goals and concepts associated with Western traditions and aspects of education. Today, in Cameroon in general and Anglophone Cameroon in particular, there is need to define a frame work in which a compromise would be established between the various current movements which Arab- Islamic education institutions on one hand, and governments, which are responsible for organizing their education system, on the other hand. Efforts need to be made by all stake holders in order to overcome the mutual incomprehension, build a common project and innovate to improve education in Anglophone Cameroon in terms of access, equity and quality.

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