BOKO HARAM RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM AND WESTERN EDUCATION IN NORTH-EAST NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The Boko Haram religious fundamentalists have continued to exhibit negative attitude towards western education in north-east Nigeria because they believe that such system of education is harmful to the socio-economic and moral wellbeing of Muslims in the region. This study, therefore, explored Boko Haram religious fundamentalism and attitude to western education in north-east Nigeria with a view to ascertain whether western education is actually the cause of the socio-economic and moral problems bedeviling the region. Data was gathered from existing literature, media reports and observation of the contemporary religious and socio-economic situation of the north-east. Historical, content, critical and constructive methods of analysis were used for data interpretation. This paper revealed that Boko Haram fundamentalism and hatred for western education is predicated on their belief in orthodox Islam. The group demonstrated their hatred for western education by launching violent attacks on every institutions and persons that represent such system of education in the north-east. Unfortunately, western education is not the cause of the problems confronting Muslims in the region. The real architects of the problems are the religious and political elites who have failed in their responsibilities. This essay submits that the people should accept and invest in western education because it is the major solution to the problems confronting the north-east.

Keywords: Boko Haram, Religious Fundamentalism, Western Education, Muslims, North-East

INTRODUCTION

Since 2009, north-eastern region has been an epic center of religious fundamentalism and violent extremism in Nigeria. The region is equally one of the most educationally disadvantaged geo-political zones since the emergence of western education in Nigeria. The major reason for this educational situation of the north-east is simply because some religious fundamentalists in the region have continued to express negative attitude towards western style of education. This attitude can be clearly seen in the rejection of western education and its values by some fanatical exponents of Islamic and Arabic educational systems in north-eastern Nigeria. Some of these religious fundamentalists believed that any style of education other than Islamic and Arabic education is unhealthy

for Muslims. To them, all other systems of education other than Islamic and Arabic education have the tendency of corrupting the minds of believers and make them deviate from the path of the almighty 'Allah' (Atoi, 2013). They believed that it is only Islamic and Arabic education that is based on the teaching of the almighty Allah, who is the source and summit of all true knowledge that mankind require to be morally upright.

Islamic fundamentalists in the north-east claimed that Islam and its educational values have come under the corrupting influence of western education and its democratic system of governance that has become the fundamental features of modern states in Africa, especially Nigeria. It is on this premise that the Boko Haram fundamentalist sect vehemently opposed western education and vowed to destroy anyone and everyone who tries to propagate its values in the Muslim dominated northern region of the Nigerian state. To them, western education and its value system is the real enemy of every true Muslims in Nigeria and indeed the obstacle to the socio-economic progress of the north-east. It is pertinent to note at this juncture that the north-east has been ravage with a lot of social ills such as poverty, hunger and illiteracy for a long time. The general socio-economic outlook of the region portrays that majority of the masses; especially the youths are neglected, exploited and used by the elites to achieve some political and economic advantages at the expense of their future. Most religious fundamentalists have continued to maintain that western education is responsible for the aforementioned social quagmire. Ever since, many Muslim youths and children in the region, especially those under the almajiri system of education have been resisting western education and its values (Marchal, 2012).

Therefore, this study explored Boko Haram religious fundamentalism and the attitude to western education in north-east Nigeria with a view to ascertain whether western education is actually the cause of the socio-economic misfortune of the region. In order to achieve the above set objective of this research, data was collected from existing literature, media reports and careful observation of the contemporary religious and socio-economic situation of the north-east. The data generated from the aforementioned sources were subjected to historical, content, critical and constructive methods of analysis. Aside from this introductory segment, the remaining parts of this essay are discussed under the following sub-headings: Conceptual Analysis of Fundamentalism and Education, A Brief History of Religious Fundamentalism and Western Education in Northern Nigeria, Boko Haram Fundamentalist Philosophy and Western Education in North-east Nigeria, and Conclusion.

Conceptual Analysis of Fundamentalism and Education

Fundamentalism:

According to Vorster (2008, p. 44), "the term fundamentalism was first used to identify a certain movement in Protestant Christianity which germinated in the United States in the 1920's and spread to other parts of the world." Komonchak, Collins and Lane (1993) observe that fundamentalism is an eclectic word that can be viewed from three dimensions: first, from a cognitive understanding where the word is associated with a closed personality type that expresses exclusivity, particularity, literality and moral rigor. Second, from a cultural theological framework where the word expresses opposition to religious and cultural liberalism in defense of orthodoxy and religious traditions; and third from a social movement perspective fundamentalism denotes organizational and ideological uniqueness from other types of religious movements. Similarly, Pavlovic asserts that fundamentalism is a broad cross-cultural applicable concept with a variety of aspects. It is first and foremost characterized by a strong commitment to the basic truth of certain religion, belief, ideology or conviction (cited in Okafor, 2017). Marty and Appleby (1991) see fundamentalism as:

> A tendency, a habit of mind, found within religious communities and movements, which manifests itself as a strategy, or set of strategies, by which beleaguered believers attempt to preserve their distinctive identity as a people or group. Feeling this identity to be at risk in the contemporary era, they fortify it by a selective retrieval of doctrines, beliefs, and practices from a sacred past. These retrieved 'fundamentals' are refined, modified, and sanctioned in a spirit of shrewd pragmatism: they are to serve as a bulwark against the encroachment of outsiders, who threaten to draw the believers into a syncretistic, a religious or irreligious cultural milieu ... (p. 835).

Igboin (2012a) posits that fundamentalism has transmuted from purely religious conceptualization to encapsulate political, social, economic strands such that it will be difficult to delineate its contents in one piece. However, from the prism of religion, it has come to be closely associated with fanaticism, traditionalism and conservatism. For Pratt (2006) the term 'fundamentalism', broadly speaking, is a religio-political perspective found in many, if not all major, religions in the contemporary world today. Most disturbingly, it is associated with variant forms of religious extremism and thus religiously-oriented terrorism. Movements of a fundamentalist type are evident in Islam certainly, but they may be found also in Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and other religious communities. Contemporary fundamentalism is not the sole province of any one religion. Pratt further observes that an upsurge in the totalizing claims of

fundamentalist ideologies, of whatever religion, together with the utilization of globalized communication, transportation and related modern technologies, means that the issue of religious fundamentalism itself requires, once again, some careful attention. He asserts that religious fundamentalism denotes a worldview that can be found across different religions in the world today. Religious fundamentalism can imply a narrow, strict and limited metaphysics and set of doctrines, which to a greater or lesser degree hardly impinges on the wider life of a society. It can mean a worldview that engenders, if not demands, the advocacy of a socio-political ordering and action to achieve an intended outcome (Pratt, 2006). Also, religious fundamentalism (Christian, Islamic, among others) entwines with political fundamentalism. In Africa, conflicts between Christian and Islamic civilizations can be traced to the rapid spread of Islamic religio-economic principles and military conquests in the 7th and 8th centuries in North Africa and Southern Europe, the Crusade's response, the institution of the Ottoman (Muslim) empire and the triumph of European (Christian) imperialism since the 15th century. It seems this ferment is being brewed elsewhere, especially in Nigeria, where political fundamentalism in the disguise of religious fundamentalism is taking place (Ozzano, 2009; Igboin, 2012a; Atoi, 2016; Atoi, 2018). Ali (2002) contends that religious fundamentalism has serious relationship with capitalist fundamentalism. According to him, capitalism has divided the world into two irreconcilable divides: the haves and the have-nots. This division underlies the religious fundamentalist principle that resulted in the ambience of the September 11, 2001 attack by Al-Qaeda.

Ozzano (2009) identifies nine characteristics of religious fundamentalism. One, reactivity to the marginalization of religion, in which case fundamentalists believe that aspects of their religion are being eroded and that they must be protected. Two, selectivity; here, fundamentalists select aspects of their religion and thus stand for special attention, usually in the form of focused opposition. Three, moral Manichaeism which is about the dualization of the world or society into good and bad force in constant warfare with the belief that good will overcome evil. Others are: absolutism and inerrancy; millennialism and messianism; elect, chosen membership; sharp boundaries; authoritarian organization; behavioral requirements: that is, the member's time, space, and activity are a group resource, not an individual one.

Education:

Etymologically, the English term education is derived from two different Latin words "educare" meaning to train or to mold, and "educere" meaning to lead out (craft cited in Bass and Good, 2004; Zitinski, 2005). Howbeit, contemporary definitions of education are broader and more encompassing, though they take their roots from the

etymological understanding of education. Okafor (1988) defines education as a process of accumulation through which the individual is helped to attain the development of his potentialities, and their maximum activation when necessary according to right reason and to achieve thereby his perfect self-fulfillment. Anibueze (2005) says education is the training which is given by suitable habits to the first instincts of virtue in children when pleasure and pain are rightly implanted in non-rational souls. Ofoefuna (2006) explicates that education is the transmission of an inheritance, a culture and a creed. It implies tradition, good and bad and a system of unfolding which enables man to become aware of himself as a being which has been described as spirit, mind and body. According to Harold, education should mean the training of individual mind with the view to helping such to maintain personal independence. It is a lifelong process aimed at benefiting the entire personality and leading to a richer life, so that men can appreciate the riches of the past and live creatively in the present and future (cited in Patrick and Ncha, 2015).

Ukele is of the view that education is a process by which people are acclimatized to the culture into which they are born in order that they may advance it (cited in Osita, 2009). For Akubue (1998) education means all man's activities which enable him to realize himself and to live fully as human being, or a process of influencing people, young or old so that they may become worthy human beings. Education is generally regarded as the main instrument for social, political and economic development of a country. It is today the crucial determinant of a person's and nation's productivity that leads to national development. It is the society's contrivance for transmitting to its younger generation the totality of the way of life of the society (Azuakor, 2019). According to Oshita (2009), education constitutes an indispensable aspect of the social realities of a nation; it involves all aspects of the society from the material conditions to the cognitive and psychological states of the individual with a view to promoting knowledge. Thus, the strength, security and wellbeing of an individual and his country rests squarely on the quality of education the person receive (Ajah, 2015).

Education illuminates a person's mind and thinking, and develops human personality, thoughts, and social skills. It also prepares people for life experiences; make them have special status in their own society and everywhere they live. Moreover, education polishes human mind, reinforces their thoughts, and strengthens their character and behaviors towards others. Also, it facilitates quality life among people of any age group, cast, creed, region and religion (Agrawal, 2020). According to Idrisa, et al (2012), education provides knowledge and skills to the population, as well as shaping the personality of the youth of a nation. Education is very important for an individual's success in life. Education is generally seen as the foundation of society which brings economic wealth, social prosperity and political stability. Economic and social status

depends on education obtained by individual since education contributes to individual capability in managing quality of life.

A Brief History of Religious Fundamentalism and Western Education in Northern Nigeria

Northern Nigeria is a region in Sub-Saharan Africa with a very high percentage of Muslim population and a well-documented history of religious fundamentalism, violent extremism, and high level of illiteracy and lack of interest in western education. The history of religious fundamentalism in northern Nigeria dates back to the Uthman Dan Fodio's jihad (holy war) of the early 19th century (Hickey, 1984; Atoi, 2019). It is imperative to note that prior to 1804 when Uthman Dan Fodio and his jihadist team launched a jihad against the fourteen independent Hausa Kingdom, the inhabitants of the region known as northern Nigeria today were predominantly practitioners of African Indigenous Religion. Dan Fodio's Jihadist movement invaded the region, conquered the original inhabitants of the land and imposed Islam on them. Thereafter, Dan Fodio established the Sokoto Caliphate—an Islamic emirate system that became one of the largest centers for the promotion of Quranic education and Islamic legal and political ideology in Sub-Saharan Africa (Atoi, 2019). In a bid to spread and consolidate Islamic belief system in many parts of northern Nigeria, Dan Fodio went ahead to establish the emirate system in other areas of the north.

However, Dan Fodio and his Jihadist movement were vehemently resisted in many of the communities in the middle belt, a region known as the north central Nigeria today (Agbiboa, 2013). It is pertinent to note that those communities that resisted the jihadist movement of Uthman Dan Fodio later accepted Christianity and western education when the Christian missionaries came to northern Nigeria. In 1903, the Sokoto Caliphate was conquered by the British Colonialists. Some scholars contend that the conquest of the Caliphate and the subsequent dealings of the emirates with colonial and post-colonial states expose the region to the corrupting influence of secularism. Since then, many Muslims in the region have been expressing negative attitude towards western education and its values (Marchal, 2012; Agbiboa, 2013; Atoi, Okosun and Sadiku, 2019). Some fanatical Muslims in the north argue that since European Christian missionaries were the ones who brought western education to Nigeria, children from Muslim homes should be strongly discouraged from attending western schools in the region. They believe that the establishment of western educational institutions in northern Nigeria is a plot by Christians to convert Muslim children to Christianity. As such, Muslim children in northern Nigeria were thought how to recite a derogatory song to ridicule children who attend western schools thus: *"Yan Makaranta Bokoko Bakaratu*

ba Sallah Ba'a biyar hanyar Allah Sai yawan zagin Malam" Meaning: "Children of western schools, you neither study nor pray, you do not follow God's path, you only abuse your teacher" (Daily Trust, 3/8/ 2009, p. 2).

In another historical context, Kukah (2010) asserts that *ilimi boko* was used by Muslims in northern Nigeria to derogate western education during the colonial period, being different from *ilimi islamiyya* (Islamic education). They believe that Islamic education is in all ramifications superior to western education. To them, western education is inimical to the moral wellbeing of Muslim children. According to Kukah (2010), the word boko is derived from the term boka which means witchcraft. Just as *boka* is inimical to the wellbeing of the people so is western education thought of as being counterfeit and harmful to every Muslim child. The strange and suspicious notion about western education defines contempt for the latter, hence, the reason for the incredibly high rate of illiteracy and recruitment of children into religious fundamentalist groups in northern Nigeria.

One of the well-known religious fundamentalist sects that first demonstrated strong hatred for western education in northern Nigeria after over a century of Orthman Dan Fodio's conquest of the region is the Maitatsine. The Maitatsine is an Islamic fundamentalist sect founded by Muhammadu Marwa, a Quranic teacher and preacher who migrated from northern Cameroon to the city of Kano in 1945. When Marwa got to Kano, he became an Islamic zealot preoccupied with the purification of Islam (Agbiboa, 2013; Atoi, 2022). According to Falola (1998), Marwa was forceful, persuasive, and charismatic; he rebelled against many popular opinions among Kano Islamic circles, denouncing certain parts of the Holy Qur'an and even criticizing Prophet Mohammed. He was opposed to most aspects of modernization and all forms of western influence. The Maitatsine sect believed that Islam had come under the corrupting influence of western education. To them, northern Nigeria was an Islamic society before the colonial masters turned it to an infidel land (Agbiboa, 2013; Atoi and Ogunrinade, 2017). Marwa attracted the urban poor and less privilege citizens in the city of Kano who do not have access to western education with his preaching that 'denounced the affluent elites as infidels and opposed western values (Human Right Watch, 2012). One of the groups attracted by Marwa's teaching was the *Almajiris*, a group of young itinerant students of the Qur'an who adopted a very simple lifestyle and earned their daily bread through begging for alms on major streets in the city (Agbiboa, 2013).

It is pertinent to note that the inability of many children to have access to western education in northern Nigeria as a result of religious fundamentalism provided opportunity for itinerant teachers to promote a form of Quranic education. According to

Kukah (2010), such education is usually given to children between the ages of five and six years. The teachers of Quranic schools are not paid but they depend on the proceeds from begging by their pupils. The curriculum of the Quranic schools is purely on recitation of the Quran and hatred for the western style of education.

Boko Haram Fundamentalist Philosophy and Western Education in North-east Nigeria

Boko Haram is a contemporary Islamic sect with a very strict fundamentalist philosophy that abhors western style of education. It is pertinent to note that the name Boko Harm is a combination of Hausa word *boko* meaning book and Arabic term *haram* meaning sinful or ungodly. Literarily, the name means book is sinful or ungodly. But the profound meaning of Boko Haram is that western education is sinful, ungodly and sacrilegious; as such, it should be forbidden (Adesoji, 2010; Onuoha, 2010; Atoi, 2013). The group believes so strongly that western education is sacrilegious and its members were made to believe that as good Muslims, it was their sacred duty to cleanse the land (society) of all influences of western education and values, and replace the system with Islamic and Arabic education. According to Onuoha (2010), a member of the sect stated that their mission was to clean the Nigerian system which is polluted by western education and uphold the sharia system all over the country. The Boko Haram sect is vehemently opposed to what it sees as a western-based incursion that threatens traditional values, beliefs, and customs among Muslim communities in northern Nigeria. In 2009, the late famous leader of Boko Haram, Mohammed Yusuf before his death informed the BBC that western-style of education is mixed with issues that run contrary to the beliefs in Islam (Agbiboa, 2013). Yusuf was reportedly educated in Salafist tradition, under the influence of the blossoming Islamic fundamentalist movement in Nigeria (Adesoji, 2010; Atoi, 2013). Salafist Islam rejects the west and western culture and adheres to a very strict reading of the Holy Qur'an (Hill, 2010).

Yusuf set up a religious complex with a mosque and a Quranic school in Maiduguri, the Borno State capital. The school attracted so many people because of the hardship created by the socio-economic problems, moral lapses and lawlessness that pervade the north-eastern region and by extension most other northern states of the federal republic of Nigeria. Many parents were convinced that their children would be morally upright by attending Quranic schools since the emphasis would be on Islamic moral lessons derived from the life and teachings of the holy Prophet Muhammad (Francis, 2011; Chothia, 2012; Atoi, 2013; Atoi, Sadiku and Kume, 2020). Unfortunately, the school became a breeding ground for the recruitment of young jihadists into the Boko Haram terrorist movement to fight against every elements of western education that run contrary to the practice of orthodox Islam in the north-east and beyond (Onuoha, 2010; Atoi, 2013).

Orthodox Islam according to the Boko Haram Islamic sect frowns at western education and working in the civil service. Therefore, for the aim of the sect to be achieved, all institutions representing western style of education and government including security agencies like police, military and other uniformed personnel should be crushed (Thurston cited in Agbiboa, 2013). According to the group:

> We want to reiterate that we are warriors who are carrying out jihad in Nigeria and our struggle is based on the traditions of the holy prophet. We will not accept any system of government apart from the one stipulated by Islam because that is the only way that Muslims can be liberated. We do not believe in any system of government, be it traditional or orthodox, except the Islamic system and that is why we will keep on fighting against democracy, socialism and whatever. We will not allow Nigerian Constitution to replace the laws that have been enshrined in the Holy Quran. We will not allow adulterated conventional education (boko) to replace Islamic teachings (Agbo, 2011, p. 46-47).

Mohammed Yusuf was quoted to have said: "Democracy and the current system of education must change otherwise this war that is yet to start will continue for long" (Umejesi, 2010, p.237).

The fundamentalist philosophy of Boko haram and the sect's hatred for western education and its values became more intense and worrisome when some students, especially those in tertiary institutions withdrew from schools in Borno and Yobe states because of the influence of Boko Haram fanatical preaching against western education. This issue became almost uncontrollable when some graduates from the University of Maiduguri, Ramat Polytechnic, Maiduguri, Federal Polytechnic, Damaturu, among others, tore their degree, HND and other certificates, renounced western values and joined the Boko Haram group for Quranic lessons and preaching as a demonstration of their faith in orthodox Islam (Onuoha, 2010; Atoi, 2013). Members of this group believe that western education is the source of corruption, inequality and social injustice that pervade the entire Nigerian state (Oyegbile and Lawal, 2009; Atoi, 2013). According to Kukah (2012), in the eyes of Boko Haram members, the persistence of corruption, collapse of public morality, injustice, and other social ills could only be attributed to those who acquired western education.

Hence, Boko haram members are encouraged to do everything within their power to wreak havoc on staff and students of western educational institutions and government agencies in order to discourage people in the north-east from acquiring western education. There have been series of attacks on students of western education and their teachers in north-eastern Nigeria by Boko Haram fundamentalists in recent years. Most

notorious of these attacks has been captured by Verjee and Kwaja (2021) thus:

> Among the most notorious of Boko Haram's attacks are three mass abductions and three mass murders of Nigerian students, conducted in the space of just seven years. In 2013, 42 people, mostly students, were shot or burned alive at the Mamudo Government Secondary School; another 44 students and teachers were killed in a separate incident at the College of Agriculture in Gujba, both in the northeastern Yobe State. In February 2014, militants attacked the Buni Yadi Federal Government College, also in Yobe State, leaving 59 students dead. Most infamously, two months later, in April 2014, 276 girls were abducted from Chibok Secondary School in Borno State, also in northeast Nigeria, which led to the formation of the international campaign Bring Back Our Girls. In 2018, 110 girls were abducted from the Government Girls Science Technical College in Dapchi, Yobe State. While many of the abductees have since been released or managed to escape, 111 of the Chibok girls are still missing, as is one of the Dapchi students (P. 386).

In recent times, many children in the north-east no longer have access to basic education due to a number of factors. These include lack of learning facility due to burnt and destroyed school buildings, displacement of children and their parents from their homes, fear of students' abduction from school by members of Boko Haram sect, among others. It is pertinent to note that Borno state government had to close down both public and private school for 18 months due to the abductions of school children from their hostels and attack on educational facilities by Boko Haram. The religious fundamentalism and terrorism of Boko Haram has led to the death of many school teachers. According to a recent report by Mohammed Alkali, the Managing Director of the North East Development Commission, almost 50% of teachers in north-eastern Nigeria have lost their lives due to Boko Haram religious fundamentalism and terrorism within the last twelve years (Channels Television network news, September 8, 2022).

The irony of Boko Haram religious fundamentalism is the fact that while the group rejects western education, the leaders of the sect use its (western education) products to fight and advance their Islamic fundamentalist ideologies. For example, cell phones, video cameras, bombs and other ammunitions utilized by Boko Haram to facilitate its various activities and attacks are all products of technical and scientific knowledge that emanate from western style of education (Atoi, 2013). Hence, Igboin (2012b) argues that the leaders of Boko Haram are articulate in western knowledge and demonstrate skill in the utilization of its technology. From all indications, western education is not the enemy of Muslims since Boko Haram fundamentalists themselves are also beneficiaries of its products. It seems the Boko Haram sect misunderstood who the real enemies of the

people are and decide to channel their anger towards western education which they perceived as the enemy of the Muslim community. The real enemies of the people are the political elites who failed to improve the socio-economic environment of the north-east and some religious leaders who aided them to manipulate religious beliefs and practices for their own egocentric interests and keep the people in a state of perpetual poverty. It is pertinent to state at this point that the sure way to address the problem of Boko Haram religious fundamentalism and expose the insincerity of the political elites is genuine investment in and acceptance of western education by all and sundry. As a matter of urgent national importance, the government should sincerely invest massively in western style of education to replace the *Almajiri* school system which is currently serving as a reservoir for recruitment into Boko Haram fundamentalist sect. All members of Boko Haram should fully accept western education and seek to acquire its technical and scientific knowledge and value system in all ramifications in order to put themselves in a position to expose the insincerity and corruptions of the political elites and lawfully wrestle power from them and restore the north-east to the part of glory.

CONCLUSION

This paper has discussed Boko Haram religious fundamentalism and western education in north-east Nigeria comprehensively. It was discovered that western education is not the cause of the socio-economic misfortune of Muslims in the north-east as presumed by Boko Haram Islamic fundamentalists. The real architects of the socio-economic quagmire bedeviling the people of the north-east are the religious and political elites who have failed in their responsibilities of giving their adherents the right orientations and developing the human capacity of young people in the region because of their personal interests and ambitions. In fact, western education is one of the major solutions to the numerous challenges confronting the region if only the people would embrace such educational system and utilized its values for the betterment of their communities. The future of many children in north-eastern region is being jeopardized and their destiny crucified at the altar of religious fundamentalism in contemporary times because of the attitude of Boko Haram Islamic fundamentalists towards western education. It is pertinent to state that western education is one of the main institutions contributing exponentially to the building of human capacity and sustainable development of many societies the world over. As such, encouraging Muslim children to reject western education, and accept only Quranic studies for their intellectual development will be counterproductive. Such attitude to education will only lead to underdevelopment in any society where it is exhibited.

It is imperative to note that the socio-political and economic reality of today does not

encourage an educational system that limits its curriculum to only the study of the Quran at the expense of technical and scientific form of knowledge from the west. According to Igboin (2012b):

> A limited and strict adherence to Quranic education is counterproductive in a fast moving world. As a consequence, those who have not acquired the requisite knowledge of contemporary education will inevitably have to contend with what they perceive as corrosive effects of modernization. Modernization challenges the values which define their humanity and may result in an identity crisis. The argument is that since society, just as human beings, is dynamic rather than static, values and ideologies must compete intensely within the context of dynamism (p. 85)

Therefore, Muslims in north-eastern Nigeria and beyond who are yet to embrace western education are encouraged to do so because evidences have shown that it is not in any way harmful to Islam. Educated Muslims, Islamic religious leaders and government functionaries in the north-east should embark on enlightenment campaigns to encourage children and youths to acquire western education. This system of education will avail young people in the region the opportunity to compete favorably with their peers in the global socio-economic and political space and enable them to contribute their quota towards societal development.

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