



Contents lists available at ASJP (Algerian Scientific Journal Platform)

Journal of Excellence

journal home page : www.asjp.cerist.dz/en/PresentationRevue/673



BIOGRAPHY OF SHEIKH ALKASIM ALI SHANGA AND HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARD THE SPREAD OF ISLAMIC TEACHINGS IN POTISKUM TOWN AND ITS ENVIRONS

حياة الشيخ القاسم علي شنغا ومساهمته في نشر التعليم الإسلامي في بلدة بوتسكم وما جاورها

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Article info

Article history:

Received : 01/03/2023

Revised :

Accepted :

Keywords:

Islamic teaching

Potiskum

Alkasim Ali Shanga

Development

Abstract

Potiskum is the capital of Potiskum Local Government part of Yobe state, Nigeria had the contributions of many scholars. Sheikh Alkasim Ali Shanga had such a scholastic way of preaching and teaching Islamic knowledge which contributed to the growth and development of Islam and Islamic knowledge in Potiskum and beyond. But to date, there is no tangible record about the biography and contributions of this prominent scholar. As such, the study aimed to provide reference of the historic biography of Sheikh Alkasim Ali Shanga and his contributions to the spread of Islamic knowledge in Potiskum local government. Using historical and analytical approach. Findings have revealed that Sheikh Alkasim Ali Shanga, through sound scholastic approaches, contributed a lot to the development of Islamic teaching through his Majaalis.

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

Potiskum is the capital of Potiskum Local Government and doubles as the headquarters of Fika emirate for over a century. This town becomes the headquarters of Potiskum Local Government in 1999 under leadership then the Executive Governor of Yobe state Alhaji Bukar Abba Ibrahim. It is located on the A3 highway at 11°43'N and 11°04'E. it had an area of 9 square kilometers (216 sq mi) and a population of 20,876 at the 2006 census. The postal code of the area is 631. Oral tradition by the Kare-kare and Ngizim state that Kare-kare man discovered a well and told his Ngizim friend, but later the Ngizim laid claim, over the well which was located in a very thick forest of trees called "Kuma." With the discovery of the well, few Kare-kare people decided to live around it. There was no central authority in that place because the people were scattered in class dwelling on their forms. Earlier on, local people around the area were using the "Kuma" tree cuts to make thatch house because of its resistance to time and weather (Rabo, 2017).

Islam emerged at Potiskum as early as 1876 as a result of the coming of Kanuri people from Borno who came from different directions. Some of them came to Potiskum as traders and others as preachers, but the fact is that the Kanuri traders were the earliest that carried the religion of Islam to Potiskum through trade routes which linked Potiskum with other parts of Muslim areas like Gashua via Nguru, Hadejia from the North, Sokoto via Kano from the west, Gombe from south and Maiduguri from the East. The people exchange goods as well as ideas. It was reported that the people of Potiskum region had business relation with Kanuri even before the acceptance of Islam as religion, more especially the first settlers of Potiskum (Muhammad, 2021).

After Islam was launched established in Potiskum, the first mosque was built at the

Emir's palace and Qur'anic scholars were invited from Borno by the emir Moi Mama to teach the community Qur'an and Islamic religion in general. These has resulted almost all the tribes in Potiskum accepted Islam as true religion and denounced their traditions regardless to their festivals, marriage system and naming ceremony, and now almost all the people in Potiskum and its environs are familiar with religion of Islam (Ba'aba, 2021).

This research aims at documenting the biography of Sheikh Alkasim Alhaji Ali Shanga and highlighting his contributions to the development and spread of Islamic teaching in Potiskum and its environments.

Historical and analytical approaches are adopted. Both primary and secondary materials are collected and utilized. Primary source was collected through oral interview. While the secondary sources were collected through journals, published works of other researchers, and undergraduate final year essays were consulted.

2.0 BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF SHEIKH ALKASIM ALI SHANGA

Sheikh Alkasim was the son of Alhaji Ali Shanga, and Alhaji Ali Shanga was the son of Sale Dan Maisamari Akuya (Ali, 2021).

Sheikh Alkasim Alhaji Ali Shanga known as Malam Alkasim and aslo known Dr. Alkasim was born in a village called Shanga, Fune local government Area, Yobe State Nigeria. In the 27/03/1968. Sheikh and his family left Shanga to Potiskum in the year 1983 due to the crisis occurred in Ngelzarma. Because of this crisis they moved to Potiskum and settled (Ali, 2021).

Sheikh was enlisted into Sabon Layi primary school from 1983 to 1988 after which his father took him for the second time to tsangaya of Alarammah Alhaji Ibrahim Kasesa at Unguwar Kaji Potiskum, he stayed for two years then returned to his father's

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house and stayed for one years. Sheikh got admission to study in Higher Islamic Studies of JIBWIS at Potiskum, he started from JSS1 to JSS3. After completion of his junior section he moved to Higher Islamic Studies of JIBWIS Jos where he completed his senior section. After that he secured admission in Annur Islamic Institute Kano to study Arabic and Islamic Education (Diploma level), after successful completion he got admission at Islamic University, Niger Republic (Kwakuri, 2021).

After his graduation he was appointed as Assistant lecturer at Umar Sulaiman College of Education Gashua, Yobe State in 2012. In addition, he further his education journey to the level of Masters in Arabic literature at Sudan and also obtained his Doctor of Philosophy at Gezira University Sudan (Ali, 2021).

Sheikh family was learned family. This must have laid a solid foundation for his rapid and steady advances in his learning and dedication to Islamic faith. Sheikh Alkasim grow up under the tutelage of his family. Sheikh was a generous man. It was part of his behaviors to respect elders and the even the youngest once. He used to assist his friends and families and he was a patient, calm, gentle, brilliant, and hardworking throughout his childhood. He never fought or quarreled with anybody. Sheikh Alkasim is a Sunni who believed and agreed with the supremacy of Qur'an and sound Sunnah of the Prophet (May Peace Be Upon Him). He believes in the all sound attributes of Allah that came in the Qur'an and sound ahadith of the Prophet (May Peace Be Upon Him) without discriminating or changing its real meaning (Aliyu, 2021).

2.1 HIS FAMILY

Sheikh Alkasim married five (5) wives during his life time. He was blessed with twelve (12) children. Nine (9) of them are a live during conducting this research.

2.1.1 His wives

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Sheikh Alkasim married five (5) wives in his life time and they are:

1. Malama Khadija Usman Sulaiman (Jamila): his first wife. Indigene of Jos State, he gets married to her, in the year 1997.
2. Malama Halima: his second wife. Indigene of Yobe State from Potiskum Local government area, he gets married to her in the year 2000.
3. Malama Maryam Amadu Abdullahi: his third wife. She is form Niger republic. Sheikh married her when he was studying at international Islamic University, Niger in the year 2007.
4. Malama Hauwa Amadu: his fourth wife. Indigene of Yobe State Potiskum local government area. He gets married to her in the year 2016 along the line he divorced her.
5. Malama Fatima Rufa'i: his last wife. Indigene of Borno State. He gets married to her in the year 2019. (Ali, 2021).

2.1.2 His children

Allah (SWT) blessed sheikh with twelve (12) children males and females as follows:

1. Salihu Alkasim Shanga.
2. Muhammad Bukhari Alkasim Shnaga.
3. Ahmad Alkasim Shanga.
4. Abdullahi Alkasim Shnaga.
5. Aisha Alkasim Shanga.
6. Hassana Alkasim Shanga.
7. Hauwa Alkasim Shanga.
8. Halima Alkasim Shanga.
9. Balkisu Alkasim Shanga.
10. Halima Alkasi Shanga.
11. Alkasim Alkasim Shanga (Musa, 2021).

2.2 HIS EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Sheikh Alkasim had started his education at his early age. The following are the schools and the dates of attendance:

S/N	SCHOOLS	YEARS
1	Traditional School	

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	(Makaranta Allo)	
2	Islamiyyan Alh.Abdullahi Gamajeji	
3	Islamiyyan masallacin Sawun-Kura	
4	School for higher Islamic Studies of JIBWIS Potiskum And school for Higher Islamic Studies of JIBWISS Plateau, Jos	1992-1997
5	Islamic University Niger	2004-2007
6	Arabic language and Arabic Literature	2004-2005
7	Certificate in Computer	2005-2006
8	University of Gezira Sudan	2013-2015
9	University of Gezira, Sudan	2015-2019

2.3 SOME OF HIS SCHOLARS

In fact, Sheikh Alkasim had studied from many scholars in Nigeria, Niger Republic where he obtained his first degree and in Sudan where he obtained his second Degree and PhD respectively. Apart from the above mentioned, he also attended schools of individual scholars like:

1. Malam Yunusa: was his first teacher, from whom he learned Qur'anic alphabet and recitation of the Holy Qur'an.
2. Alarammah Malam Alhaji Ibrahim Kasesa: His second teacher. He taught him Qur'anic alphabet and recitation of Holy Qur'an also.
3. Alarammah Malam Muhammad: his third teacher, he learned Qur'anic recitation and memorized some Hizb.
4. Malam Ibrahim Unguwar Kaji: Sheikh learned Arabic, Fiqhu, Seerah, Hadith and Tauhid.
5. Late Malam Lamba Ali Farsawa (Tsohuwar kasuwa): also learned Arabic, Seerah, Fiqh, and Tauhid.
6. Malam Muhammad Inuwa (Mai Gyaran Agogo): residing at Potiskum,

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Yobe state Sheikh learned Arabic, Fiqhu, Seerah, Hadith and Tauhid from him.

7. Malam Ayuba Mika'il (Imam A.U Kaifayi Potiskum): Arabic, Fiqhu, Seerah, Hadith and Tauhid.
8. Malam Ali Ibrahim Tela (Chief Imam JIBWIS Potiskum).
9. Malam Iliya Unguwar Rogo Plateau State: learned Arabic, Fiqh, Seerah, Hadith and Tauhid.
10. Malam Adam Ibrahim Saye Niger Republic: learned ilmu Qiraat, Arabic, Fiqhu, Seerah, Hadith, and Tauhid. Among others (Musa,2021).

2.4 SOME OF HIS COLLEQUES

1. Abdullahi Musa Daya
2. Idriss Musa Tela. Among others.

2.5 SOME OF HIS STUDENTS

Sheikh Alkasim had many students, males and females. Some of them include:

1. Malam Ahmad sulaiman Baffa.
2. Malam Ali kwakuri.
3. Malam Aminu Garba.
4. Malam Ibrahim Haruna. Among others (Musa, 2021).

2.6 HIS DEATH

Sheikh Alkasim die on a car accident, on his way back coming home from Karage Village in Jakusko local government, Yobe State (where he was posted to conduct Ramadan Tafsir) on 29 April, 2020 (Musa, 2021).

3.0 THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF SHEIKH ALKASIM ALHAJI ALI SHANGA TOWARD THE SPREAD OF ISLAMIC TEACHINGS IN POTISKUM AND ACROSS.

3.1 HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO JAMA'ATIL IZALATIL BID'AH WA IQAMATISUNNHA (JIBWIS).

Da'awah Activites

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The Arabic word *DA'AWAH* simply means a call or an invitation. In the Noble Qur'an, this word has been used to indicate the process of calling or inviting mankind towards the truth or to be right path prescribed for mankind by Lord. Qur'an says:

آدع إلى سبيل ربك بالحكمة والموعظة الحسنة وجدلهم
بالتی هي أحسنه إن ربك هو اعلم بمن ضل عن سبيله
وهو أعلم بالمهتدين

“Invite to way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best. Your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowing of who is guided (Ali, 1938)”

The term *DA'AWAH* applies conveying the message of Islam to non-Muslims and inviting them to Allah.

Objective of *Da'awah*

Da'awah is very important to the development of Islamic religion as well as Muslim's life. Some of the objectives of *Da'awah* include the following:

1. Conveying the message of Islam to non-Muslims and inviting them to Allah.
2. Making efforts to remove misinformation about Islam and Muslims from text books, reference materials and media,
3. Making efforts for integration of new Muslims into the Muslim community (Abdulqadir, 2019).

Sheikh Alkasim Alhaji Ali shanga's *Da'awah* activities started from the time that he began to advance his educational carrier. Sheikh Alkasim's *Da'awah* started capturing people's attention during his Degree program in Niger and also during his second Degree in Sudan. He used to preach and teach people.

Sheikh Alkasim shanga continued his *Da'awah* activities after returning to Nigeria. He chose to live in his home town for the benefit of his people to enable them gain more

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from his knowledge. All his *Da'awah* activities are under the umbrella of JIBWIS with the exception of sermon presentation, circle *Ta'alim* system in some of JIBWIS mosque (Salisu,2021).

He used his education to educate people in JIBWIS schools.

His Contribution to Hajj Commission Yobe State Government

sheikh used to teach *hujjaj* every year at Potiskum Fika Emir Palace (Central Mosque). The government usually have Sheikh a seat to perform *Hajj*, so that he would be preaching the *hujjaj* on the Holy land (Musa,2021).

Traveling for Ramadan Tafsir

Sheikh Alkasim contributed a lot in Tafsir within Potiskum and across during Ramadan period. The following of the places:

1. Ibbi Local Government, Taraba State.
2. Okari Local Government, Taraba State.
3. Yawuri Local Government, Kebbi State.
4. Aleru Local Government, Kebbi State.
5. Karage Jakusko Local Government, Yobe State (Kwakuri, 2021)

3.2 SOME OF THE SCHOOLS WHICH HE ESTABLISHED

As the history shows Sheikh established so many schools in Potiskum and across, and also he gave advises in stabling some of the schools (Salisu, 2021), these are some of the schools that was established in different state as follows:

S/N	NAMES OF THE SCHOOLS	LOCATION
1	Tahfizul Qur'an	Potiskum, Yobe State
2	Mutawassidah	Potiskum Yobe State
3	JIBWIS Collage Dambam	Dambam, Bauchi State
4	Makarantar Iyaye	Saye, Niger

	mata	Republic
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3.2.1 MAJALIS ILM

Sheikh as a Teacher at home Apart from his regular visitation to villages to preach, he also made himself available at his residence to teach as a traditional scholar, where he organized a time for teaching student's different subjects of Islamic studies. These include: Tafsir, Fiqh, and Hadith. The following table showed days, time and material he used.

1. Majalis of Tafsir Qur'an at Waziri mosque between Maghrib and Isha'i prayer on Friday.
2. Majalis of Tafsir Qur'an at Daban Tsakiya between Maghrib and Isha'i prayer on Wednesday.
3. Majalis of Tafsir Qur'an at Masjid Umar Bn Khattab Alhaji Kolo after Subuhu prayer on Saturday.
4. Majalis of Tafsir Qur'an at Alhaji Adamu Mama between Maghrib and Isha'i prayer on Saturday.
5. Kasuwan yan Kuka between Maghrib and Isha'i prayer Umdatul Ahkaam on Monday.
6. Majalis Riyadus saliheen at Masjid Umar Bn Khattab Alhaji Kolo after Subuhu prayer on Sunday,
7. Majlis Riyadus saliheen at masjid Adamu waziri between Maghrib and Isha'i prayer on Thursday (Suhail,2021).

3.3 HIS WORK

Sheikh Alkasim Shanga has many works in different fields of knowledge, but here I would only like to present his academic writings and paper presented in various seminar, conferences and workshops, as part of his biography, these are;

ACADAMIC WRTINGS

- 1- B.A:
- 2- M.A:

- 3- PhD: Citation with poetry in the Interpretation of the Holy Qur'an empirical study in Tabari Interpretation 2015

PRESENTATIONS

Some of his presentations include:

1. How to be a successful teacher, presented at Aliyu Ibn Abi Talib Islamic organization Potiskum (ABADIO).
2. Significant of teaching method, presented in 2 days' seminar at Potiskum local government 2009.
3. Orientation for the individual society. Presented in seminar organizes by JIBWIS Yobe state 1998.
4. Workshop for teachers of school for higher Islamic studies Potiskum (SHIS), organized by the head of trustee 2009.
5. The impact of Islamic Teachings to the Islamic community (2019).
6. The importance of entrepreneurship to Islamic community (2019).
7. Islamic believe (2017).
8. Six (6) article of faith from the light of Qur'an and prophetic traditions (2019).
9. Islamic Education in Human life (2018).
10. Islamic politics and politicians (2016).
11. Significance of Islamic education and virtues of Islamic scholars (2017).
12. The fundamental principles of Islamic Da'awah (2017).
13. Peace and conflict resolution in the light of Islamic Tradition (2018).
14. The impact of Imam Malik and his Mazhab for the development of Islamic education (2019).
15. The fundamental principles and significance of reading of the Holy Qur'an (2020) (Suhailu, 2021).

4. CONCLUSION

An indigene of Yobe State, Sheikh Alkasim was born to a family of great scholars and he

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also grew up to be one. During his life, he married five (5) wives and had twelve (12) children. Sheikh Alkasim Ali Shanga learnt from many scholars, and travelled to various places in Nigeria and across in the quest to search for Islamic knowledge. He later become a scholar and taught students from various place in Nigeria.

The major contributions of Sheikh Alkasim include Teaching Islamic knowledge through short talks after prayers, observation and correction, use of evidence from Qur'an and Hadith, and exemplary practice forms apart of Sheikh Major Contribution. Then *Majalisahu* was another important contributions of Sheikh Alkasim. *Majalisahu* become the largest hub for propagation of Islam and teaching of Islamic knowledge.

Indeed, sheikh Alkasim rendered great contributions toward the development of Islamic teaching in Potiskum which consist different field; Qur'an, Hadith, Tafsir, Fiqh and Tauhid.

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