

Towards Enhancement of Health Care Services: Private Hospitals and Health Institutions Established by Muslim Organisations and Communities in Northern Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT: *On the aspect of health care services establishments of hospitals and health institutions such as Schools of Nursing and Midwifery, Schools of Health Technology and Medical Laboratory Science are very significant in any community. It is evident that governments of all nations had established public health institutions like the above mentioned in all nooks and corners of their territories. However, with the contemporary trend of population growth especially in developing nations the need arises for establishments of private health institutions in order to supplement government efforts towards health care delivery. It is in this direction that Muslim Organisations and communities in Northern Nigeria embarked on establishments and running of some hospitals and health institutions, side by side with the existing public health institutions, towards enhancement of health care delivery to all people within their environments regardless of religious, sectional or tribal affiliations.*

KEY WORDS: *Health care, Hospitals, Health Schools, Muslim Organizations, Muslim Communities.*

I. Introduction

There is a popular adage which stated that “Health is wealth.” Contrary to what happened as a positive plan in Christianity in terms of building and maintenance of Missionary Hospitals, the number of hospitals established by Muslims and Islamic organisations in Nigeria is very few indeed. It is a historical fact that one of the methods employed for the propagation of Christianity in Nigeria and other countries in Africa was by building Missionary Hospitals, clinics and Leprosaria^[1] in all nooks and corners of many countries. However, it is to be noted that long before the advent of colonialism, some Muslim rulers had established full-pledged hospitals and clinics, vis-a-vis medical institutions in their areas of jurisdiction. Mention could be made of hospitals built by the Umayyad Caliph Al-Walid ibn Abdul Malik in the 8th century C.E. and those built and maintained by the Abbasid Caliph Harun Al-Rashid at Baghdad and other places between 786-809 C.E.^[2] In this direction, this research provides information on some hospitals and health institutions established by Muslim Organisations and communities in northern Nigeria. These are notably: the FOMWAN Hospital, the Islamic Medical Foundation Hospital and School of Health Technology at Kaduna, the Muslim Community School of Health Technology at Funtua, the Sunnah Hospital at Jos and the Muslim Specialist Hospital at Zaria.

II. The F.O.M.W.A.N Hospital

At Kaduna, a hospital was established by the Federation of Muslim Women Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN). This hospital, which is situated at Badarawa Quarters in Kaduna North, was commissioned by Sultan Ibrahim Dasuki in 1993. The Hospital started functioning in 1992 with skeletal services to out-patients. Currently it offers consultancy services to over eleven thousand (11,000) out-patients. This number comprises of male, female, Muslim and non-Muslim patients. There are three admission wards and a labour room for admitting pregnant women during their labour period. The hospital is also equipped with a well-stocked

¹ Leprosarium (plural leprosaria) is a special clinic for diagnosis and treatment of leprosy. Typical examples in Northern Nigeria are Amanawa Leprosarium at Sokoto, Babbar Ruga Leprosarium at Katsina and Roni Leprosarium in Jigawa State, etc.

² See M.I.H. Surty “Muslims Contributions to the Development of Hospitals,” a seminar paper, University of Sokoto, 1986, p.1.

pharmacy. There is also a medical laboratory financed by a Muslim humanitarian for investigations of medical specimens.^[3]

The staff managing FOMWAN Hospital comprises of the Hospital Matron (who is an active member of the organization), a medical Director and other medical doctors. There are many qualified senior/junior Nurses and Midwives and Medical Auxiliary Staff. Contrary to other private clinics operating all over the country, FOMWAN Hospital is not profit-oriented. It is aimed at providing humanitarian services to all members of the surrounding community and beyond. For this purpose, only some token amount of money is charged from patients for the maintenance of the hospital.

In view of the course for which they are offering services (that is seeking for the pleasure of Allah, S.W.T.), the staff working at this hospital who are either permanent or casual, are contended with the little amount they receive as salary or allowances. In August 1994 an appeal fund was launched by the organization for realizing money to build a new and bigger FOMWAN hospital. About ten million Naira (N10 million) was collected and it is hoped that with more funds forthcoming, the anticipated new and bigger hospital would be built and would be fully established so that it would be wider in scope of services to the entire society.^[4]

III. Islamic Medical Foundation Hospital and School of Health Technology, Kaduna, Kaduna State.^[5]

The Islamic Medical Foundation of Nigeria is a non-political and non-profit oriented organisation which was created primarily for the promotion of health and health education in all its ramifications for all and sundry in the service of Islam.^[6] It has its headquarters at Kaduna, Kaduna State. This organisation solely stands to articulate and practice the medical principle enunciated by the Islamic Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) as he mentioned that “For every illness there is medicine except death,” which they are obliged to pursue in line with full recognition of Islamic rules and regulations in general medical practice.^[7]

The aims and objectives of this organisation are: To promote health to all and sundry, to establish hospitals so as to cater for the less privileged and other people in the society with minimal or sometimes no charges, to promote and encourage the application of Islamic ethics in the practice of medicine, to establish and maintain nursing homes, infirmaries, convalescent homes, specialist hospitals, medical institutions, medical welfare services, paramedical facilities, laboratory services and pharmacies, to establish and maintain training schools for promotion of health. Others are to initiate, conduct and promote research and other activities aimed at furthering medical knowledge including that of traditional medicine and herbs and to do all such things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above goals.^[8]

Membership of this organisation is open to all Muslims who proclaim the *kalimat-Al-Shahadah* through application/acceptance by the Board of Trustees or the Executive Council. There is a nominal Membership fee which is decided by the Board of Trustees. Sources of finance for the foundation are monthly or annual subscriptions by every member as fixed by the Board of Trustees or National, State or Local Government Executive Committees from time to time, collection of donations from the general public in aid of the activities of the foundation, requests for donations and other pecuniary assistance from friends, well-wishers and sympathizers, collection of *zakkat* from the Muslim *Ummah*, and borrowing or obtaining loans for attainment of its aims and objectives.^[9]

In order to facilitate realisation of the aims and objectives of the Islamic Medical Foundation it has secretariats at the Federal Capital Territory Abuja and state capitals. It is also having offices at Local Government Levels and anywhere in Nigeria as may be needed for furtherance of its aims and objectives. The main organs responsible for conducting all the affairs of the foundation are the Board of Trustees and Patrons, Councils at Federal Capital, National, State and Local Government Levels, Executive Committee selected from members of the Board of Trustees and other committees as may be necessary in pursuance of the provisions of the Constitution. The Board of Trustees is the supreme organ of the foundation. It includes all the founding members and any other person(s) appointed during the Annual Convention. Qualities for appointment of membership of this Board are for a person to be a prominent Muslim with upright character, transparency, honesty, exemplary behaviour and leadership qualities. The Board shall not exceed a total number of 41 members at a time and shall reflect the Federal character representation.^[10]

³ Interview with Hajija Rukayyah Shittu Suleiman, Matron i/c FOMWAN Hospital, Badarawa, Kaduna, in the hospital.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Information on these institutions was obtained from Alh. Mustapha Jumare (P.R.O.), Alh. Aliyu Suleiman Aliyu(Chairman School Man.Comm.) and the Constitution of I.M.F.N.

⁶ Constitution of the Islamic Medical Foundation of Nigeria 1996, p.1.

⁷ Constitution of Islamic Medical Foundation of Nigeria,opcit.

⁸ Ibid, pp.1-2.

⁹ Ibid p.3-4.

¹⁰ Ibid, pp.4-6.

In pursuance of its aims and objectives the Islamic Medical Foundation succeeded in establishing hospitals and health institutions. It has a hospital which is based at Kaduna; this hospital is an offshoot of a hospital named Muslim Hospital, which was established in 1988 at Kaltungo Road Tudun Wada, Kaduna. The Islamic Medical Foundation Hospital was initially opened on the 16th of June 1994. It was a child born out of the 1992 Zangon Kataf and Kaduna Christian/Muslim clashes when a lot of Muslims and Christians were killed and several others seriously injured. Some concerned Muslim elders saw the need for establishing a hospital which is exclusively owned and maintained by Muslims in order to take care of the sick and those who might be afflicted by injuries resulting from unfortunate circumstances like that of Zangon Kataf and Kaduna clashes in 1992.^[11] The Islamic Foundation Hospital is not owned by a single Muslim sect or organization. Thus, both Members of its Board of Trustees and staff are drawn from individuals with affiliations to different Muslim organizations in the country, such as the *Tariqah*, *Izalah* and others. This is because the hospital is based on the promotion of unity of all Muslims within the country. Funds for operating the hospital are realized from collection of *Zakat* and voluntary donations from members and the rich among Muslims. The funds are used for purchasing drugs and medical equipments. Drugs are sold at very cheap prices to patients in hospitals under their control. The money realized from sales of drugs and medical services are utilized on rotational basis for re-purchasing of drugs and payment of staff salaries.^[12]

Members of staff in this hospital include the Administrative Officer, Medical Doctors, Full time Staff Nurses/Midwives, part-time Nurses/Midwives, Auxiliary staff and other essential hospital workers. The hospital has male and female wards capable of admitting 30 patients along with an Out-Patients Department for consultations. Facilities like a Pharmacy and Medical Laboratory are also available.^[13] There are also Anti-Natal and Post-Natal Clinics for maternity cases.

For achieving the objective of health education the Islamic Medical Foundation, since its inception to date, was engaged in training of paramedical staff. This started initially at Kaltungo/Dutsinma Road of Tudun Wada, Kaduna. It started with training of Medical Auxiliary personnel. The first batch graduated in 1995 who were employed by public and private hospitals and clinics within Kaduna metropolis.

The Islamic Medical Foundation had secured a plot donated by a Muslim philanthropist at Kinkinau quaters of Tudun Wada. Through donations, largely from the Islamic Development Bank at Jeddah Saudi Arabia, the two former governors of Kaduna State (Alh. Ahmad Muh'd Makarfi and Arch. Muhammad Namadi Sambo) and others, the foundation relocated and built its health Institution at the above mentioned site in 2009, named as ISLAMIC MEDICAL FOUNDATION OF NIGERIA SCHOOL OF HEALTH TECHNOLOGY. Courses undertaken in this school includes remedial S.S.C.E/W.A.E.C. Science courses, Junior and Senior Community Health Extension Workers Course, Environmental Health, Medical Auxiliaries and of recent Medical Laboratory Technology. However, services of their Hospital at this site were skeletal during the initial period.

IV. Muslim Community School of Health Technology Funtua Katsina State.^[14]

This school is located at Funtua town in Katsina State. It was established in 1996 by the Kaduna Zonal branch of Ex-Officio members of the Muslim Students Society of Nigeria(M.S.S.N.) as part of their *Da'wah* activities, in collaboration with the Islamic Medical Foundation of Nigeria mentioned above. The school has a Board of Trustees, with members drawn from various Islamic Organisations. The motivating factors for establishment of this school were to counter the activities of Christian missionaries in the health sector within Funtua, Malumfashi and Kafur Local Government Areas of Katsina State, and to assist in minimizing shortage of female Muslim paramedical personnel in the area, along with inculcation of tenets of Islam during the period of training.

Initially it started in 1996/97 for training Medical Auxiliary/Midwifery staff. During this period the school was located within the premises of a *Jumu'at* Mosque owned by *Ja'ma'atu Izalatil Bid'ah wa Iqamatil Sunnah* organization, under the auspices of its *Islamiyyah* Foundation. From 1996 to 1999 five sets of total number of 100 paramedical personnel graduated. As a result of some obstacles the school was moved to its present new site in 2003. The site was a former quarantine^[15] behind Funtua General Hospital. It was renovated by donations from Sarkin Maska (the District Head of Funtua) and other Muslim philanthropists. New additional blocks of classrooms, lecture halls and practical rooms were also constructed.

Among certificate courses currently studied in this school are Medical Auxiliary, Junior Community Health Extension Worker, Environmental Health, Mental Health, Diploma in Community Health and Remedial Courses

¹¹ An interview with the hospital's Administrative Officer, Malam Abubakar ibn Yahya.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ All information on this school were obtained from oral interviews with Umar Imam, Sec. Board of Directors and Shehu Harisu, Muslim Ummah Amir Funtua and Overseer of the School in the School premises on 2nd April, 2010.

¹⁵ Quarantine is a place outside a town reserved for isolation and treatment of patients with commendable/infectious diseases.

for Science subjects at SSCE/WAEC levels. Efforts were also made by the school authority to establish a School of Midwifery. Before 2005 the school was affiliated to Shehu Idris College of Health Technology Makarfi, Kaduna State, but it is now independent. The school is also seeking for accreditation with the West African Health Council Examination Board.

A minimum of 200 students were admitted for various courses annually, who were drawn from more than 18 states of the Federation and these students, for the purpose of requirements of registration/accreditation, include Christians. However a dress code in compliance with Islamic ethics is necessary for all students in the course of training. The level of academic performance of students in this school is very high. This is because annually whenever the final examination results of students from the school is compared with other similar institutions in the Federation it emerged with the highest percentage. Likewise remedial courses are achieving 75% of success. Some of the problems confronting this institution are inadequate financial support which is mainly from individuals (and none from the government), accreditation problems as a result of inability to cope with required equipments for running the courses and lack of full-time lectures. Whenever these pressing problems are solved, all the anticipated goals of this institution would be achieved.

V. The Sunnah Hospital Jos.

At Jos, the capital of Plateau State, a hospital was established by the *Jama'atil Izalatul Bid'ah wa Iqamatis Sunnah* Muslim organization.^[16] This hospital, which is named "Sunnah Hospital", was initiated by one of the founding leaders of the organization, the late Sheikh Isma'il Idris. It started operating in the year 1981 as "Sunnah Clinic" and later on moved to a new site in 1991 when and where the name was changed from Sunnah Clinic to Sunnah Hospital. The hospital is managed by a number of staff consisting of the Director, permanent and part-time Doctors, a male Principal Nursing Officer (P.N.O.) who is in-charge of the hospital, male and female staff with double qualifications as nurses/midwives, Community Health Assistants, Auxiliary Staff, a Pharmacist/Storekeeper, Ward Orderlies, Cleaners and Labourers. It is interesting to know that members of staff at Sunnah Hospital comprises of both Muslims and Christians.^[17]

Sunnah Hospital has three main blocks which are partitioned into the Out-patients Department (O.P.D.) for attending to minor and emergency cases and consultations with doctors, a male admission ward of ten(10) rooms with two(2) beds in each, a female ward of thirteen(13) rooms with two(2) beds in each of them for admitting patients and conducting deliveries. Within the O.P.D. there is a dispensary, an injection room, a dressing room, doctor's consulting rooms, a medical laboratory and a pharmacy. There are also provisions for overhead water tanks on each of the three main building blocks and a standby electricity generating plant.^[18]

Services offered at Sunnah Hospital are medical consultations and treatments, conducting deliveries, admission and treatment of patients and minor surgical operations such as herniorrhaphy, hydrocelectomy, circumcisions and incision/drainage of abscesses. The hospital concentrates on providing services to common people within the community throughout the twenty four (24) hours of the day and night. This is one of the reasons why majority of patients treated daily ask for discounts on their bills.^[19]

At the time of this investigation the record number of out-patients who were attending Sunnah Hospital was about 65,259 and about 6,302 deliveries were conducted successfully. Many pregnant women do attend the hospital for Ante-Natal Clinic (ANC) and Post-Natal Clinic (PNC) services. The hospital offers services to all people within the town regardless of their religion or any other consideration in line with the teachings of Islam. In the course of offering services to patients the hospital liaises with government hospitals within the town for referring serious cases whenever necessary.^[20]

A very important service undertaken at Sunnah Hospital is that of merger between local and modern medical treatments of fractures. This is done in such a way that traditional doctors were employed for immobilization (correction)of broken bones to their proper positions, while injections of drugs and other modern medical treatments are administered by modern medical doctors and nurses in order to safeguard against complications. This measure proved to be a quicker way for healing of fractures than that of modern medical methods of immobilization in hospitals by application of plaster of Paris and other technical devices. There is a greater

¹⁶ This is one of the contemporary Muslim organizations in Nigeria preaching for eradication of innovations and establishment of the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad(SAW).

¹⁷ An interview with the former Director of Sunnah Hospital, the late Sheikh Isma'il Idris, at the hospital premises on Thursday, 31 may 1995.

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ *ibid.*

²⁰ *ibid.*

response from the general public on this aspect of treatment because of the success recorded from a large number of patients cured in this manner at the hospital.^[21]

As a result of appreciation of its services by the general public, people are increasingly patronizing Sunnah Hospital. This therefore necessitates the need for a bigger hospital to be built. A permanent site was acquired at Unguwar Rimi, Jos, which is going to be developed as soon as possible. However, the Director and proprietor of Sunnah Hospital is not in support of launching an appeal fund for building of hospitals. This is because of his fear for abuse of services either by patients themselves or those who donated a large sum of money.^[22]

Among the reasons for establishing Sunnah Hospital is realization and concern on high charges of medical fees to Muslim patients by Christian Missionary Hospitals within and around Jos town. Muslim patients were usually charged double the amount of fees being charged on their Christian counterparts. Since Sunnah Hospital was established the management has been charging equal medical fees from both Muslims and non-Muslims. This gesture by the hospital promotes the principle of justice and equality to all human beings. However, the proprietor of the hospital commended efforts of Christian Missionary organizations for establishing private hospitals in Nigeria. He also called upon them to be moderate and charge equal medical fees for all patients.^[23]

VI. Muslim Specialist Hospital Zaria, Kaduna State.^[24]

Like the Islamic Medical Foundation Hospital Kaduna the catalyst for establishment of this hospital was the 1992/93 Zangon Kataf Christian/Muslim religious conflict. The idea for its establishment aroused during a discussion between a group of Muslims at the *Majlis* (sitting place) of one Mal. Sani Yakub, where they thought for Muslims in Zaria to establish a hospital that would be rendering health care services to casualties of religious conflicts and other ailments instead of solely relying on Christian Missionary Hospitals or Government Hospitals.

In order to actualize this vision these concerned Muslims established a mobilization and orientation committee charged with the responsibility of going round within and outside Zaria city to call for Muslims to donate financially, materially and kindly for establishment of the hospital. Among members of this committee were Dr. M.L. Amin, Mal. Zakariyyah, Mal. Bashir Usman, Dr. Yusuf Dalhat and Eng. Hayatu Sanusi. This committee was strongly supported by eminent personalities like his Royal Highness the Emir of Zazzau, Alhaji Nuhu Babajo, Alhaji Ahmadu Ido Tudun Wada and Yariman Zazzau Alhaji Muhammad Munir Ja'far.

In 1995 Alh. Nuhu Babajo donated a building where the hospital started with a statute of a clinic, while in the following year 1996 Alh. Ahmadu Ido donated the present building structure of two upstairs at Dan Magaji Wusasa Zaria as an endowment (*waqf*) for the Muslim Specialist Hospital. As a result of this success, various specialists from medical and other fields of knowledge were consulted to give advice on establishment and operations (activities) of the hospital. Yariman Zazzau Alh. Muhammad Munir renovated the building and skeletal services commenced at the Out Patients Department (O.P.D.) in 1998.

In 1999 a launching/appeal for funds was organised. About N4,000,000 cash and equipments were realized for the set-up of the full pledged hospital. As a result, services commenced in the year 2000, such as the O.P.D., Anti-Natal Clinic (A.N.C.), Pharmacy department, Medical Operation Theatre and Medical Laboratory. The hospital was also registered with the Corporate Affairs Organization.^[25] At the initial stage the hospital had a 19 member Board of Trustees drawn from various Muslim Organisations under the chairmanship of Prof. Jibril Aminu. It also has patrons with the Sultan of Sokoto as the Grand patron. Others are the Emir of Zazzau, the Emir of Kano, the Shehu of Borno, Dr. Lateef Adegbite and Hon. Justice Abdulqadir Orire.

Muslim Specialist Hospital is currently fully operational, conducting the under listed services:-

1. General Out-Patients Department (O.P.D.) for 24 hours, for attending to minor cases of illnesses.
2. Pharmaceutical services.
3. Laboratory unit for medical investigations, tests and analyses, screening of blood for transfusion, T.B. investigation and screening for H.I.V./AIDS.
4. Ante-Natal Clinics three times weekly, health talks, palpation, advise on hygiene and nutrition.
5. Medical records keeping.
6. Labour unit for conducting deliveries, caring of new-born babies and their mothers.
7. Ultrasound services.

²¹ Shaykh Isma'il Idris..

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Detailed information on this hospital was obtained through oral interview with Ustaz Ahmad J. Abdulmalik, Assistant Sec. Gen. II of the Board of Trustees and chairman of the Da'awah Committee as well as Mal. Dauda O. Onehisa the Admin. Officer at the hospital premises on 18th July 2010, through assistance of the Asst. Sec. Gen. 1 Dr. M. L. Amin of A.B.U. Zaria.

²⁵ The Islamic Development Bank of Saudi Arabia conducted renovations of the 1st and 2nd floors of the hospital.

8. Admission of male and female patients for management/treatment of diseases.
9. Medical Operating Theatres for major, intermediate and minor surgical operations.
10. Administrative Department, which co-ordinates activities of the hospital, employment, training and discipline of staff, arrangement/coverage of meetings.
11. Accounts Department. Which deals with financial activities/transactions and staff salaries.^[26]

Besides offering Medical Services, the hospital management has a *Da'awah* (preaching) Committee and a *Waqf* (endowment) foundation under its auspices. The committee organizes *Da'awah* to Board members three times annually, to staff of the hospital on how to conduct their duties Islamically once in a month, and to patients occasionally. It also undertakes Radio and Television talks on health issues. Likewise it goes around Zaria city to conduct public lectures on health education in strategic Mosques. The *Waqf* foundation produces pamphlets to educate the general public on what it is, and its significance for social well-being of the Muslim Community. It is responsible for mobilization, collection and justifiable utilization of any property released or donated for upkeep of the hospital.

Muslim Specialist Hospital is managed by adequate number of medical and Para-medical staff. Apart from those permanently employed by the management there are N.Y.S.C. doctors annually deployed, and specialist Muslim medical doctors who are volunteering to serve from Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital Zaria. Kaduna State Government and nearby Local Government Areas are also posting and paying salaries of significant number of medical doctors and nursing staff.

Among the pioneer members of the Board of Trustees of the hospital were the Chairman Group Captain (Rtd.) Usman Jibril, the Secretary General Alh. (Dr.) Yahaya Hamza, Assistant Secretary General-1 Dr. Muhammad Lawal Amin, Assistant Secretary General-II Ustaz Ahmad J. Abdul Malik who is also the Chairman of *Da'awah* Committee and Mal. Dauda O. Ouehisa the hospitals Administrative Officer. The hospital management is anticipating to establish a school of Health technology and out-reach services in the rural areas, which could be actualized, *Insha Allah*, with more funds from Muslim philanthropists in donations and *Waqf*, as well as internally generated revenue.

VII. Conclusion.

Close observations on the activities and status of the above-mentioned private hospitals owned by Muslim Organizations in Northern Nigeria revealed that they have many things in common. All of them render services to every human being, regardless of any kind of discrimination. Secondly, the charges for drugs and medical treatments are cheaper than what obtains in other privately owned hospitals within the country which are strictly profit-oriented. Thirdly, on some occasion's members of staff include non-Muslims, such as at Sunnah Hospital in Jos. This helps in promotion of harmonious relationship between Muslims and other religious groups in the country. In view of the adage "Health is wealth," it could be realized that the above mentioned hospitals and health institutions are contributing to promotion of health within their immediate communities. This is another form of economic empowerment, because it is only in good conditions of health that economic activities could be undertaken.

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²⁶ Circular released by the Hospital's Sec. Gen. Alh. (Dr.) Yahaya Hamza.