

The Impact of Economic and Social activities of Jama'at At-tabligh in The Gambia: an Experience from Kanifing Municipal Council Youths

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Abstract. Islam is the main religion of The Gambia; it represents 95% of the 2 million population of the region with the first Muslim communities in the country emerging in the 11th century. Thus, Islam has influenced The Gambia throughout the diachronic paradigm of the history and continues to influence its culture, society and politics. The majority of Muslims in the Gambia are Sunnis. They belong to Maliki School of Jurisprudence. In addition, Sufism influenced it. Due to many different views on the activities and movements of Jama'at Tabligh in The Gambia, it is considered necessary to conduct a research on the economic and social impact of the group on the youth of Kanifing Municipal Council (KMC). The Gambia has added history to the literature of Islamic civilization and cultural activities. The research focused on the followings; economic, social, intellectual and spiritual areas. Meanwhile, in this article, one will clearly see the creation, goals, principles and spread of the movement around the world and in The Gambia in particular. This study examines the opinions of people from different lifestyles about the impact of the Jama'at on the youth of the Kanifing City Council by the above-mentioned areas. The researcher will analyze personal views, and consider some of the literary sources written about the Jama'at. Finally, the researcher will provide conclusions and recommendations for further studies based on the currently obtained results.

Key words: Jama'at At-tabligh, Kanifing Municipal Council (KMC), social aspect, economical aspect, intellectual aspect.

Introduction

Background Information

Jama'at Tabligh was founded in 1926 by Muhammad Ilyas as a voluntary, pacifist and independent movement. The emergence of 'Jama 'at At-tabligh' as a movement for reawakening of faith can be observed as a continuation of the broader trend of Islamic revival in North India in the wake of the collapsed Muslim political power and the consolidation of the British rule in India in the mid-nineteenth century. This emergence also coincides with the rise of Hindu proselytizing movements which launched massive effort in the early twentieth century to reconvert Hindus who had previously converted to Islam. Notable among these Hindu revivalist movements were several Shuddhi (purification) and Sangathan (consolidation) movements (Bruton and Steward, 2008).

The magnitude of these movements generated widespread concerns regarding the vulnerability of non-practicing and new Muslims to conversion. 'Jama 'at At-tabligh' originated in 1926 as stated above in Mewat in North India, which inhibited by Rajput tribes known as Meos. At the time, some Muslim Indian leaders feared that Indian Muslims were losing their religious identity to the majority Hindu culture.

There is evidence that several Meo converted to Islam, followed by re-conversion to Hinduism when Muslim political power declined in the region. Meos were generally benighted Muslims before the emergence of 'Jama'at At-tablig' and they lacked the

necessary insight required to resist the overbearing cultural and religious influence of Hindus (Ghazaleh, 2004: 26).

Muhammad Ilyas, the founder of the 'Jama'at' wanted to set forth a movement that would exemplify the Qur'anic decree. "Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. They are the ones to attain felicity" (Agwani, 1986: 49). The inspiration for devoting his life to Islam came to Ilyas during his second pilgrimage to Hejaz in 1926 (Agwani, 1986: 52). His initial effort was to establish a network of mosque-based religious schools to educate Mewati Muslims about correct Islamic beliefs and practices. Shortly afterwards, he was disappointed with the reality that these institutions were producing religious functionaries but not preachers. He abandoned his teaching profession at 'Madrasa' Mazharululum in Saharanpur and embarked on this act as a missionary. He relocated to Nizamuddin near Delhi, where 'Tabligh' movement was formally launched. (Alexiev, 2005: 3-11). When setting the guidelines for the movement, he sought inspiration from the practices adopted by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) at the dawn of Islam (Rotella, 2008).

Muhammad Ilyas put forward the slogan "O Muslims! Be Muslims". This expressed the central focus of 'Jama'at At-tabligh'; their aim to renew Muslim society by uniting them to embracing the life style of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). The movement gained a phenomenal following in a relatively short period and nearly 25 thousand people attended the annual conference in November 1994 (Uddin, 2006).

Problem Statement

The varying controversies among the general public on the concept and activities of Jama'At tabligh coupled with their unique and rapid transformations among youth particularly in KMC.

Research Objectives

The objective that prompted this research is to conduct a study on a particular area. Therefore, the following are the objectives of the study.

- (1) To examine people's views about the activities of "Jama'at At-tabligh' in KMC.
- a. (2) To examine the impact of 'Jama'at At-tabligh' on Kanifing Municipal Council youths on the following aspects:

- :
- b. Social
- c. Economical
- d. Intellectual
- e. Moral/spiritual

Justification

The researcher intends to conduct this study because of the growing influence of 'Jama'at At-tabligh' among Gambians particularly the youths in Kanifing district. The influence of the 'Jama'at' can be noticed in almost all sectors of works in the KMC. Thus the researcher found it necessary to examine the impact of the 'Jama'at' on Kanifing Municipal Council youths. The movement seems unique in the promotion of moral and religious reformations of youths in all walks of life. There are many religious bodies in The Gambia doing a similar work but comparatively they seem exceptional in their motivating skills (Fredrick, 2009: 64).

Literature Review

'Jama'at At-tabligh' (conveying group) is a political religious movement for whose principal aim is reforming Muslims. Although, the movement arouse out of Indians

stringent Deobandi tradition, no particular jurisprudence or interpretation of Islam was endorsed (Birt and Lewis, 2010: 91-120). Many members of the movement follow the Deobandi interpretation in Hanafi jurisprudence of Islam, Ayoob (2007). However, the scope of their activities is not limited to the Deobandi community according to Howenstein Nicholas (2007). The Jama'at maintains a non-affiliating stature in matters of jurisprudence and politics to eschew the controversies which would otherwise accompany affiliations, Ayoob (2007).

Similarly, South Asian missionaries reached West Africa in the early 1960s, but their ideas did not find a fertile breeding ground in The Gambia until the 1990s (Janson, 2006). It is also stated that the activities of 'Jama'at At-tabligh' started in The Gambia in 1985.

Expansion of the Jama'at

The group began to expand activities in 1946, and within two decades the group reached South West Asia and South East Asia, Europe, and North America. Initially, it expanded its reach and Asian Diaspora communities, firstly in Arabic countries and then South East Asia. Before Europe, the movement first established itself in the United States. It established a large percentage in Europe during 1970s and 1980s. In 1978 construction of the Dewsbury Markaz in Dewsbury, England commenced which subsequently became the European headquarters of 'Jama'at At-tabligh'. It was especially prominent in France during the 1980s (Jenkins, 2007). The members of Jama'at At-tabligh are also represented in the French council of the Muslim Faith. Tabligh's influence has grown in increasing Pakistani community in France, which has doubled in the decade before 2008 to 50,000-60,000 (Masud, 2008).

However, United Kingdom is the current focus of the movement in the West, primarily due to the large South Asian population that began to arrive there in the 1960s and 1970s, Howenstein Nicholas (2007). By 2007, Tabligh members were situated at 600 of Britain's 1350 mosques, Norfolk Andrew (2008). After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the movement made its roads in the central Asia. As of 2007, 10,000 members estimated to be found in Kyrgytan alone, Rotar (2007). FIB believes that nearly 50,000 members of 'Jama'at At-tabligh' are active in United States (Burton and Stewart, 2008). By 2008, the organization had a presence in nearly 150 countries and with a global following of 70 to 80 million people; it has now become the largest Muslim movement in the World. However, it maintains a majority presence in South Asia, Arshad (2007).

Expansion of the Jama'at to the Gambia

South Asian missionaries reached West Africa in the early 1960s, but their ideas did not find a fertile breeding ground in The Gambia until the 1990s, Janson (2006). It is also stated that the activities of 'Jama'at At-tabligh' started in The Gambia in 1985, ML Camara quoting Kalipha Jahateh (2018). The history of the Jama'at in The Gambia started with Imam Dukureh, who studied in Saudi Arabia for several years, M. Janson (2006). ML Camara argued that the Jama'at was not introduced to The Gambia by Imam Dukureh, although he is the first Imam at 'Bundung Markaz' mosque, and had a lot of influence in Bundung and its surrounding.

Organization of the Jama'at

'Jama'at At-tabligh' follows an informal organizational structure and keeps an introverts profile. It keeps distance from mass media and avoids publishing details about its activities and membership. The group also exercises complete abstinence from expressing opinions on political and controversial issues mainly to avoid the disputes which would accompany these endorsements, Alexiev (2005: 3-11). Jama'at

At-tabligh does not seek donations and is largely funded by its senior members. It has no permanent membership. An organization can be joined or left at discretion (Banks, 1994; Bruton and Steward, 2008). The organization's activities are coordinated through centres and headquarters called 'Markaz'. Since its inception, Jama'at At-tabligh' has maintained its international headquarters in the Nizamuddin West District of Delhi called Nizamuddin Markaz. It also has country headquarters in over 120 countries to coordinate its activities. These headquarters organize volunteer self-funding people in groups (called 'Jama'at', which literally means assembly in Arabic), averaging ten to twelve people, for reminding Muslims to remain steadfast on path of Allah (Appleby, 1994; Arshad, 2007).

The Six Principles

The six principles or qualities of the companions of the holy prophet peace be upon him set by Muhammad Ilyas influenced most of their teachings. He has devoted to what he described as "The mission of the prophet". The method adopted by him was simple. It was to organize units of at least ten persons and send them to various villages. These units (Jama'ats) would visit a village, invite the Muslims to assemble in the mosque and present their message in the form of the six principles. Muhammad Ilyas articulated six demands in the form of six principles which quintessential to zJama'at teachings. When an individual goes out in a 'Jama'at', he tries to inculcate six principles in his life. These six principles are:

1. Kalimah: "An article of faith in which the 'Tabligh' accepts that there is no god but Allah and the prophet is His messenger".

2. Salah: "Five daily prayers which are essential to spiritual elevation, piety and a life free from the ills of the material world".

3. Ilm and Dhikr: "The knowledge and remembrance of Allah conducted in sessions in which the congregation listens to preaching by the Amir, perform prayers, recites the Qur'an and reads Hadiths".

4. Ikram-i-Muslim: "The treatment of fellow Muslims with honour and respect".

5. Ikhlas-i-NiyyaT: "Reforming one's life in supplication to Allah by performing every human action for the sake of Allah and toward the goal of self-transformation".

6. Tafrigh-i-Waqt: "The sparing of time to live a life based on faith and learning its virtues, following the footsteps of the Prophet, and taking His message door-to-door for the sake of faith, Howenstein and Nicholas (2007). Muhammad Ilyas later added another principle asking members to abstain from wasting time in idle talk and from sinful deeds.

Amirate

Ameer is title of leadership in the movement of Jama'at At-tabligh and it's instated by the recommendation of council or concerned group members. The international Ameer is appointed by a central council which generation comprise of experienced members. The first international Ameer, also the founder, was Muhammad Ilyas, second was his son Muhammad Yusuf and the third was Inaam ul Hassn. The Ameer for outgoing preaching groups is selected by consulting the group members (Arshad, 2007; Gambia, 2007). Apart from the international Ameer, individual countries also have their local Ameer. In The Gambia the first Ameer is Muhammad Faal of Latrikunda German (Howenstein, 2008).

Activities of the 'Jama'at'

The activities of the Jama'at can be characterized by the last six principles. This principle, '*Tafrigh-i-waqt*' (sparing of time) justifies withdrawal from world thought temporally for Preaching. They describe the purpose of this retreats as patch the

damages caused by the worldly indulgence, Musud Muhammad Khalid (2008). Each Jama'at (group) is led by an Ameer sent from each 'Markaz' across the country to remind people to persist on the path of Allah (Rotar, 2007). The duration of work depends on the discretion of individual group which generally spans from three days to a year. During these tours, they live in mosques and go door to door inviting people to prayer (Solat) and sermons, and develop the urge to follow the path of salvation. The 'Markaz' keeps records of each 'Jama'at' and its members with the identity of whom verified from their respective mosques. Mosques are used to assist the Tabligh activities of individual Jama'at that voluntarily undertake preaching missions (Arshad, 2007).

The Jama'at At-tabligh also sets guidelines for local mosques to increase the level of worship and local Muslim involvement in the mosque. These guidelines include having the local members of the mosque implement these steps: two weekly visits to nearby Muslims; one visit to Muslims in surrounding the local mosques and another to the Muslims in the nearby mosque. Two daily readings from Fada'il-Amaal, one in the mosque and another at home. Going out to make effort in other localities for three days, a month, forty days, a year, and four months in a life time to learn and understand the movement. A daily council to discuss how to increase Tabligh activity in the area and spending at least two and a half hours in the Tabligh activities a day (Uddin, 2006).

Annual Gathering (IJTIMA)

An annual gathering of followers is summoned at the headquarters of respective countries. The largest gathering of the followers of the Jama'at At-tabligh is known, as in Bengali, as Bishwa Ijtima, (meaning World Gathering), convergence of followers from all over the world. It took place in Tongi near Dhaka, Bangladesh and with an attendance of over two million people. According to the report of Aljazeera which was published on the 24th of January 2018, this gathering is assumed to be the second largest annual Muslim gathering in the world, Mahmud Hossain Opu/ Aljazeera). Uddin (2006) added that it's the largest Muslims assembly after Hajj. The second largest gathering of the 'Jama'at' took place in Raiwind (Punjab, Pakistan). In 2008, around 1.5 million people attended the Raiwind congregation. In The Gambia, the annual gathering of the Jama'at is rotational. The first took place at Latrikunda German in 1985, another at Bundung 1996, and at Basse in 2008 (Appleby, 1994; Norfolk, 2007).

Methodology and Research Design

In order to collect accurate information, different methods and strategies is applied. Questionnaires were prepared and distributed to people of different social classes, age groups and the box sex. Series of interviews were also conducted to grasp people's thoughts about the Jama'at At-tabligh. Internet resources were also utilized to help acquire information about the Jama'at in general and the introduction of its activities in The Gambia, which is featured in the literature review. Some visits were made to Bundung Markaz (center) to study the nature of Jama'at's membership and their activities in the Gambia to eschew bias conclusion after the views of the respondents were elicited, hence creating a balance analysis and recommendations.

Interestingly, the researcher also participated in some of the activities of the Jama'at, which enabled him to have an insight in to their activities in the Gambia.

Finally, the research used the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to analyze and interpret the findings so as to capture the figurative and narrative information.

Participants and Sampling

Serrekunda was chosen as the study area for this research, because this is the area where effects of the Jama'at can be noticed more than other parts of the country, hence the centre is located in Bundung.

Serrekunda is the largest settlement in the Gambia, lying south west of Banjul, the capital. Its population as of 2018 was 350,000 people. Serrekunda is inhabited by different ethnic groups such as: Mandinkas, Wolofs, Jolas, Fulas and etc. It is a multi-religions society, but dominated by Muslims. Politically, Serrekunda is divided into three constituencies namely: West, Central, and East.

Random sampling of mosques in Bakau, Latrikunda, Tallinding, Serrekunda and Jeshwang was done to gather information from different people on the activities of the movement and its impact on KMC youths.

Limitation

Despite the effort to present an informative paper on the topic, there are inevitably some limitations and potential sources of errors with regard to the data presented in this work. This research aimed to examine the impact of Jama'At tabligh economically, socially, intellectually and morally on the youths of Kanifing Municipal Council; it was therefore not a representation of the Gambia entirely. With any questionnaire, there is a risk of respondent bias, whether respondents are eager to disclose information, provide right answer to questions, or conversely by being too intimate to express their own opinion (Bernad, 1987). The timescale of the study may also lead to bias in the results; sufficient member of the population may not give their portion of the argument which could have been minimized if more time and information is given. The random sampling style might also affect the result as the researcher might choose places that are used to which will not capture all the categories of the population.

Finally, as a result of scarce resources to the topic, this made the data collection extremely difficult.

Data Analysis and Presentation

The study aimed at looking into the impact of Jama'at-At-tabligh on Kanifing Municipal Council youths. The data collected is analyzed and presented in four segments:

- a) Socially
- b) Economically
- c) Intellectually
- d) Morally/spiritually

Data Presentation of Respondents' distribution on the above Impacts of Jama'at-at-Tabligh on the Youths of KMC

Data are presented by Fig. 1 below.

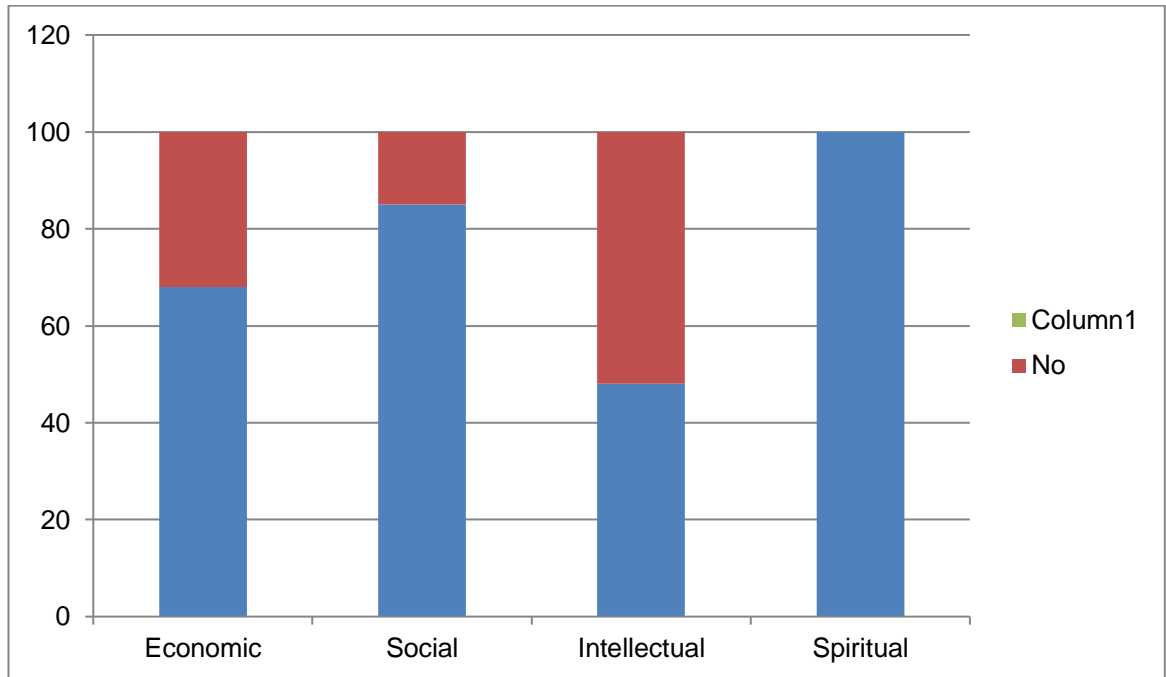


Fig. 1. Data Presentation of Respondents' Distribution on economic, social, intellectual and moral Impacts of Jama'at-at-Tabligh on the Youths of KMC

Economical aspect

The respondents have given out different views about the Jama'at's economic impact on Kanifing Municipal Council youths. 68% of the respondents said that the 'Jama'at' hasn't make great success in the economic life of many youths in the KMC. According to them, it is due to the activities of the 'Jama'at' that many youths leave their economic activities for long period of time folding their hands or doing nothing economically. Consequently, they surely and wholly depend on their parents and other relative for survival, which itself is contrary to the teachings of Islam. Besides, others even lose their customers, jobs, opportunities, promotions, etc., all because of the activities of the 'Jama'at'. In contrast, 32% of the respondents admitted that the 'Jama'at' has contributed to the economic developments of youths in the municipality. According to such respondents, they taught many youths to be self-reliant and spend their resource wisely especially in social activities such as naming ceremonies, wedding ceremonies, etc. which will boost up their economic status. Some of them are inspired into establishing successful businesses, and some are engaged in petty trading to take care of themselves and their families.

Furthermore, some members are engaged in skilful works like carpentry, masonry, etc. to earn decent living. Generally, few of them are economically productive, while most of them spend most of their time in 'khuruj' (going out for propagation) or at their centre.

Social aspect

The Jama'at has exerted a lot of influence on Gambians society, particularly the youth flock. The respondents to this study have highlighted different views on social impact of Jama'at At-tabligh on KMC youths. 84% of the respondents believed that the Jama'at has created a cohesive social relationship among the youths, especially Muslim youths in the Gambia through "Da'wah" (propagation). They said that the social fabrics in some communities have been cemented. They have helped in molding many youths in devoting most of their time in worshipping Allah the Exalted and avoiding social vices.

The 'Jama'at' helped youths to be aware and mindful of Allah's commands. Besides, the respondents said that the 'Jama'at' has incubated good morals into many youths, which contributed immensely to the already peaceful co-existence in our societies. They are reforming the society through the youths by inculcating positive attitudes and values. As a result, it helped many youths to be responsible members in their societies, hence contributing to socio development of the country. Jama'at At-tabligh' has changed the lives of a number of youths who were regarded as a lost generation, but with the effort of the Jama'at, they were better shaped and become good role models in their societies by helping them to emulate the life style of the prophet Muhammad (peace be upon Him). Furthermore, the effort of the 'Jama'at' in Kanifing Municipality according to them is very significant; therefore, it is directed toward reforming the behaviours of Muslims especially the youths so as to uplift their 'Imaan' (faith). In order words unruly and irreligious people particularly the youths were reformed under the noble effort of the Jama'at. They have turned deserted mosques to functional.

Finally, the Jama'at is really non-violent but peaceful in their struggle to propagate Islam and shaping the behaviours of Muslims to the right path. In contrast to all what is mentioned above, 16% of the respondents indicated that though, social fabrics in some communities have been cemented through the 'Da'wah' (propagatory) activities of the Jama'at. Consequently, it created differences in some families, and even beyond. Some parents have serious confrontation with their children who have embraced the ideas of the 'Jama'at' or have joined them. According to the respondents, some conservative parents regard the 'Jama'at' as a new religion different from Islam. They believed that, their children's joining the 'Jama'at' is an act of rebelling against the Islamic religion of their parents and the society, which injured the cohesive social relationship in some families and even communities.

Similarly, some of the members of the 'Jama'at' who are not well informed about the principles and the idea of it tend to isolate themselves from people outside the 'Jama'at'. They have more regard for one another within the 'Jama'at' than other members of the society who does not share the same ideas with them. Thus, this psychologically makes many people not to appreciate and welcome of reforming the society, which caused sectionalism in Islam in Gambian societies. As a result, it created social havocs in some families and even the social cohesion of communities. Some people have negative perceptions about the 'Jama'at' activities, at the same time making their social interaction a bit stiff. The Jama'at also tends to disassociate themselves from the activities of the majority, because those are not in line with their beliefs.

Intellectual aspect

52% of the respondents indicated that efforts made by Jama'at At-tabligh in the intellectualization of the youths are minimal. They said that youths who partake in their activities have little time to read, make research, and attend lectures or classes which should boost up their intellectual capacities. In order words, they are exposed to minimal knowledgeable people or intellectuals. Therefore, most of the members of the 'Jama'at' are not so knowledgeable as far as 'Sharia' (Islamic law) is concerned. In addition, most of the members of the Jama'at do not value the quest for knowledge, but give preference to going out for 'khuruj' (going out for propagation). Thus, the Jama'at has been a barrier in the intellectualization of many youths by giving less regard in acquiring knowledge. Contrary to is mentioned above, 48% of the respondents argued that the Jama'at's effort has increased the level of understanding of many youths in the teaching and practice of Islam. Besides, they said that most of them have good

knowledge in Qur'an and Hadith which they always try to impart in others in the society particularly the youths through an effective and efficient way of Da'wah.

Generally, some of the respondents stated that, the Jama'at has contributed immensely in educating a number of youths about Islam, e.g. how to perform prayers correctly, how to read the Holy Qur'an etc.

Moral / Spiritual aspect

100 % of the respondents indicated that despite some irregularities from the side of the 'Jama'at' in some areas, they have registered a great triumph in uplifting the morals of many KMC youths who encountered with the Jama'at have changed positively and humbly. Some of them tend to consider their lives as values without worshipping Allah the Exalted. According to the respondents, through the effort of the Jama'at' the behaviours of many youths have changed positively. Many youths abandoned drinking alcohol, smoking marijuana, robbing, stealing, and sitting at ghettos etc. all because of the 'Hidaaya' (guidance) from Allah through their efforts.

Jama'at' At-tabligh have successfully changed many youths who were threats to their communities because of their previous dubious acts turned to be preachers of peace, and eventually become role models for their communities. Also the Jama'at has contributed positively to change the dress code of many Muslim women and girls in the country. Many Muslim women and girls who walked in streets half naked have changed to dress decently and modestly, which have earned them maximum respect and raised their values according to most of the respondents' observation. In a nutshell, the moral and spiritual behaviours of the members of the 'Jama'at' are desirable. They are quite adorable and found to be humble, trustworthy, honest, peaceful, and respectful, above all they are committed and dedicated to their acts of worshipping Allah the Almighty. Certainly, the position of the 'Jama'at' in moral and spiritual development of Gambian youths cannot be measured. The Jama'at' has paved the way for many youths in their moral and spiritual development, most of the respondents would say.

In conclusion, Jama'at At-tabligh has instilled good morals in many youths in the KMC through their effective and efficient methodologies in 'Da'wah' (propagation) (Fig. 2).

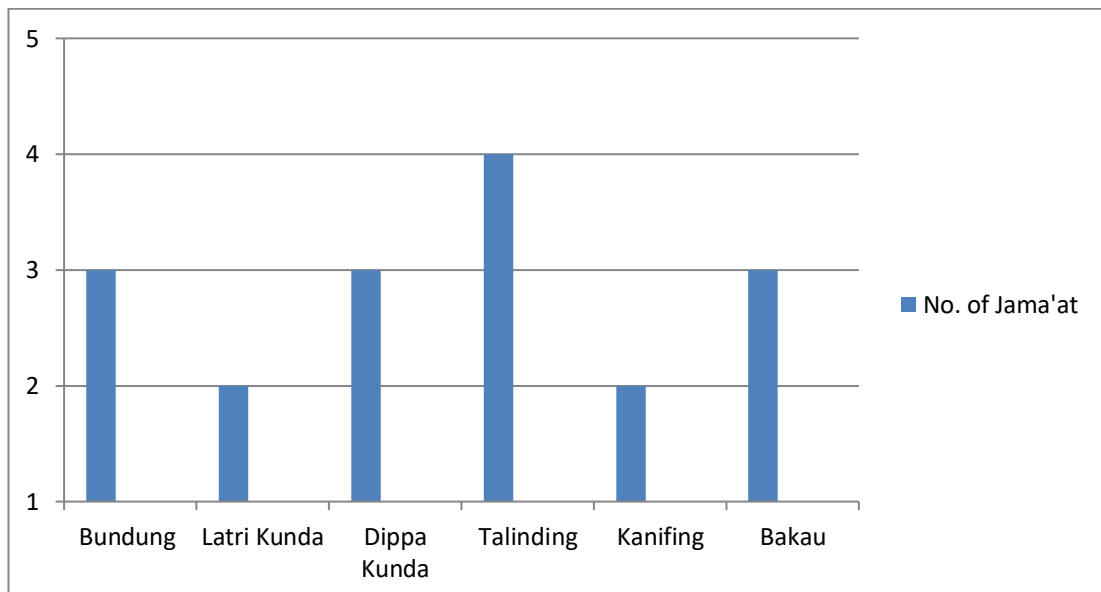


Fig. 2. Number of Jama'at Sent from Major Towns in the Kanifing Municipal Council in a Month

Results

It is of paramount importance to give a comprehensive conclusion to the study. Thus, based on the findings from the respondents and the researcher's own observations and participation in some of the activities of Jama'at At-tabligh during the period of the study, the research hereby present the conclusion of the study in four aspects, all touching the impacts of the 'Jama'at' on Kaninfining Municipal Council youths economically, socially, intellectually, morally/spiritually.

Economically

The impacts of Jama'at At-tabligh on the economic life of Kaninfining Municipal Council youths are not as their social impacts. At the beginning of the activities of the movement in the country, the research revealed that most of the youths who engaged in their activities are seen not economically productive, because most of them were either jobless or drop-outs from school. They depend entirely on their parents and other relatives for survival. Again, looking at the situations of those youths before joining Tabligh dawah, one will judge that, most of them were already jobless or drop-outs from school sitting at the ghettos doing nothing absolutely productive economically. Therefore, the Jama'at attracts them to their centre and orientates them about their belief. It took time to reform these youths to become responsible people, so they were judged and viewed by many people as youths who do not want to work, many people still give the same gloomy picture to the Jama'at in general.

As the Jama'at progresses, the research exposed that most of their members turned to be economically productive through establishing small and large scale businesses, occupying high positions in the civil service and other working places earning good salaries to help their families and relatives.

However, many of the Jama'at's members are economically productive, because they are taught to be self-reliant. Today, if one goes to a working place in The Gambia, he/she would see one of their members working there. Thus, they are economically productive compared to the previous.

Socially

The social impact of Jama'at At-tabligh on Kaninfining Municipal Council youths cannot be overemphasized. The introduction of the activities of the Jama'at has been a positive turning point in the lives of number of youths in the area. Through their occasional and annual gatherings, youths from the length and breadth of the country and from different backgrounds, tribes, etc. come together to acquire good morals from the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet (peace be upon Him). Such gatherings also helped youths to socialize with other members of their societies positively. The Jama'at has cemented the already social cohesion in Gambian societies through their house to house, compound to compound, village to village method of reminding the people particularly Muslims about the reason of their creation. They always endeavour to reach the youths where ever they are and socialize with them. Sometimes, they even visit ghettos where so many youths gather to smoke marijuana, drink alcohol and do other undesirable acts to discuss with them in order to change their spiritual and social likes as polite. Certainly, the Jama'at has contributed a lot in making the society more descent and peaceful by changing the bad attitudes of many youths to the right path. Many youths in this country become responsible citizens contributing to the growth and development of the country.

Despite the Jama'at immense contribution in making our societies a cohesive and peaceful one, the research revealed that there are few of their members who are either

not well informed or glossed over the principles tend to isolate themselves from other people who do not share the same ideas with them. Thus, creating some havocs in our social cohesion. From the very outset of the activities of the 'Jama'at' in the Gambia, the research also revealed that there were some members who, not well informed or trained to go out for Da'wah, made errors in their approaches to people. This created a lot of problems between them and other people. Therefore, many rejected their ideas of reforming the society and some even regard them as religious fanatics or extremists. These really created some problems in our societies, which was a negative social impact on Kanifing Municipal Council youths. Although, the above mentioned scenarios occurred, the Jama'at also strives hard to correct these mistakes committed previously. Eventually, the activities of the Jama'at are being improved by trying to educate its members the principles of the Jama'at, which should be the reference point of their activities. This helped the members to be more mindful in their approaches and interactions with people. Interestingly many people still judge the Jama'at based on the previous mistakes made by some of their members and hold on to that ignoring the fact that the Jama'at has improved on its propagation techniques. Therefore, they could be better judged by studying their previous and present activities and give an unbiased conclusion.

Intellectually

The 'Jama'at's intellectual impact on Kanifing Municipal Council youths need to be treated with great care. Previously, youths were not well informed about the principles of the Jama'at and do not attached much importance to search for knowledge as exposed by the research. As a result, some of them left school for Da'wah purpose. They have the notion that, the little one known should be shared with others, hence creating a barrier to the intellectualization of many youths. But later, they have realized that, knowledge is important in anything one does particularly in Da'wah. Although, they have realized the importance of knowledge in Da'wah, a platform is not created for their members to acquire more knowledge about Islam. However, now there are a number of their members who memorized the Holy Qur'an and acquired some basic knowledge about Islam, but still lack scholars in their membership. Although, the 'Jama'at' is not making much effort in educating their members, they have inspired many youths to memorize the Holy Qur'an as revealed by the research. A few of them even travelled to other countries in search of knowledge due to the inspiration they have from the centre. Many youths who were less informed about their religious are taught briefly some basic knowledge of their religion. In the area of Western education, they can be found in higher intuitions of learning such as The Gambia College, University of The Gambia, etc. and even outside the Gambia.

Morally/Spiritually

The Jama'at has registered a great triumph in the moral and spiritual development of many youths in The Gambia. The research showed that they have effective and efficient strategies in shaping the behaviours of youths positively. Today, many youths in this country show a high moral and spiritual standard. They are striving very hard in inculcating good morals in many youths in the country. Despite all the odds said about Jama'at At-tabligh, it is fact that they have registered a great success in moulding the behaviour of many youth positively in the Gambia. Certainly their efforts in paving the way for many youths in the country to adopt a good way of life cannot be over emphasized.

Interestingly, even all those who highlighted some negative perceptions about the Jama'at At-tabligh confessed to the research that, the 'Jama'at's members portray a high moral and spiritual standards.

Conclusion

Following the literature reviewed data analysis and the conclusion, the activities of 'Jama'at At-tabligh' in The Gambia can be much more efficient and effective if the following recommendations of the research are well noted.

Most importantly, the 'Jama'at' has to establish a training institute to educate its members to acquire more knowledge about Islam. Other disciplines should be also included in their curriculum such as psychology and sociology; hence they deal with individuals and groups. They should also be taught about effective Da'wah techniques and strategies, which will help them to do their job easily, properly and appropriately.

The Jama'at should also set up a monitoring committee that will continuously monitor the behaviours of their members in 'Da'wah' (propagation) to see whether they are going in line with the principles of the 'Jama'at' and make corrections immediately when necessary.

Finally, the 'Jama'at' should open its doors and encourage dialogues between them and other Islamic scholars who highlighted some butts in some of their activities. They should not listen and accept from only ideas from only those who buy or support their ideas and strategies in 'Da'wah' (propagation), but also others who criticize their activities as no one is perfect as they always say.

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