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## The Role of Uthman bin Foduye in Establishing Centre of Islamic Learning in Hausaland, Northern Nigeria: A Comparative Study of *Pondok* System in Kelantan, Malaysia

**ABSTRACT:** Nigerian society, Hausaland in particular, had witnessed the emergence of various Islamic scholars from the outset of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, who played a substantial role in reforming the religious, social, and political life of the people. Nevertheless, the most prominent whose religious reform remains in the mind of thousands of Nigerians was Uthman bin Foduye, who emerged in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This paper, by using the historical method and descriptive-qualitative approaches, entirely relies on the historical record by examining and comparing between the systems of Islamic learning in Northern Nigeria and “Pondok” (Islamic boarding school) system in Kelantan, Malaysia. The finding reveals that for a long period of time, since in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to date, Northern Nigerian system of Islamic learning in its traditional nature was quite similar to that of “Pondok” system in Kelantan State of Malaysia, which produced the majority Muslim scholars of the country. Most among the common features that both regions shared are: “Makarantan Allo” (elementary schools), which is similar to “Pondok”, by extension, it includes “Halaqa” (study circle), “Talakki” (face-to-face learning), and “Tuk” and “Malam” (teacher). This signifies that despite the variation of regions, cultures, and languages, their systems are almost the same. It may conclude that Islamic learning seemed to have similar system everywhere in the globe. This testifies the universality of Islamic religion.

**KEY WORDS:** Uthman bin Foduye; Islamic Centre; Pondok System; Hausaland in Nigeria; Kelantan in Malaysia.

### INTRODUCTION

The foundational development of any society depends on learning. Where there are adequate intellectuals in Muslim communities, the society will be civilised religiously, socially, politically, and economically. Islamic knowledge was no

doubt the root cause of practising *Sharia* (Islamic law) properly in all Muslims societies in the globe. The importance of knowledge in Islam is indeed difficult to estimate, this is because of the much emphasis that various *Al-Qur’anic* verses and *Al-Hadiths* of the Prophet Muhammad SAW (*Salallahu Alaihi*

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Wassalam or peace be upon him) mentioned (Ismail, Shahimi & Possumah, 2011; and Khaled, 2015). To substantiate this statement, Usman M. Bugaje (2013) observed that:

The first word of the Qur'an was the command to read! The Qur'an is replete with passages, which exalt learning and extol the search for knowledge. The saying of the Prophet of Islam, the second most important source after the Qur'an, has continued to place learning on an unmistakably eminent pedestal, equating the path of knowledge with the path of paradise (Bugaje, 2013:14).

Usman M. Bugaje (2013), further, supported his discussion on the basis of the highest emphasis that Islam placed on learning; whereupon, he asserted that the Islamic idea of knowledge, as B. Smith (2013) and S.I. Abdullahi (2017) rightly observed, "is universalist in nature- embracing the knowledge of God and His universe" (Bugaje, 2013:15; Smith, 2013; and Abdullahi, 2017). To achieve the implementation of what the *Al-Qur'an* and *Al-Hadith* emphasised on learning, the establishment of various Islamic centres across Muslim communities is necessary. In this regard, in the earliest history of Islam, Prophet Muhammad SAW (*Salallahu Alaihi Wassalam* or peace be upon him) was the first who established a centre of Islamic learning at his *masjid* (mosque) in Madinah, wherein he used to teach his companions the Islamic rituals verbally and practically, so that they must do as he did (Smith, 2013; Ali, 2014; and Moncrieffe, 2017).

Moreover, A. Ezzati (1979) noted that for hundred years, Islamic centres of learning stood supreme and scholars came from all parts of the world to teach and learn (Ezzati, 1979:92). Historically, A. Ezzati further declared, as following here:

Travel became a mania, from Cordova in Spain to the cities of India. All that Europe knew in the Middle Ages of Greek, Persian, and Indian philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, chemistry, and medicine came from Arabian sources (Ezzati, 1979:93).

How Islam developed to the present day was the impacts of many Islamic centres that had long established before this time. For example, A. Ezzati (1979) puts forward that scholars benefited from the Islamic centres

for higher learning at Damascus, Bukhara, Baghdad, Cairo, Fez, Qairawan, Zeitona, Cordova, Isfahan, Istanbul, Delhi, and other great cities all over the Muslim world (Ezzati, 1979:232).

In West Africa (*Bilad al-Sudan*), the region from which Uthman bin Foduye emerged, Islam became widespread in this region; it was absolutely believed that trade links with North Africa also came to be well established (Freund, 2016; Gokaru, 2017; Gunn & Conant, 2017; Levtzion, 2017; and Sodiq, 2017). Therefore, with such trade and commerce, it smoothly gives way to the development of civilisation and gradually made the intellectual transformation, which naturally followed by the massive spread of literary works; this results in parts of *Bilad al-Sudan* become famous for centuries as a centre of learning up to the present time (Doi, 1992:45; Abdullahi, 2017; Gokaru, 2017; and Sulaiman, Yunus & Umar, 2017).

Therefore, from the late and early 19<sup>th</sup> century, Uthman bin Foduye started manifesting his mission of reforming Nigerian society by active teaching and preaching in his well-established centre of learning, known as Degel which is located in the present day, Sokoto State in Northwestern part of Nigeria (Freund, 2016; and Gokaru, 2017). On the other hand, Kelantan is one of the most popular states in Malaysia; this is because of its strict observance of Islamic *shari'a* (Bajunid, 2004; and Moustafa, 2014).

Some researchers observed that the root cause of its popularity was the existence of Islam in Kelantan since around 11<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, but others attributed its popularity to its development in Islamic education (Abdullah, 2011; Don & Puteh, 2011; Nor *et al.*, 2012; and Azhar, 2013). In this context, L. Haji Abdullah (2011) was among them. He opines that one of the aspects of this development is the traditional education in Kelantan, known as "*Pondok studies*", which started to flourish since in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and managed to exist up to date (Abdullah, 2011:2193).

All in all, the importance of this study would not be over emphasised as the influence of the educational system on both sides of

the study can be seen later. By using the historical method and descriptive-qualitative approaches (Howell & Prevenier, 2001; Elliott & Timulak, 2005; and Sutton & Austin, 2015), this study tries to explore pertaining: (1) a brief biography of Uthman bin Foduye; (2) the coming of Islam into Hausaland; (3) Degel as the established Islamic centre of Uthman bin Foduye; (4) the spread of Islam in Kelantan State of Malaysia; (5) the development of *Pondok* as an Islamic centre of learning in Kelantan; and (6) common features between the system of Islamic learning in Northern Nigeria and Kelantan, Malaysia.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### *A Brief Biography of Uthman bin Foduye.*

Uthman bin Foduye's full name is 'Uthman bin Muhammad bin 'Uthman bin Salih, commonly known as Ibn Foduye,<sup>1</sup> was born on Sunday, 15<sup>th</sup> December 1754 at Maratta a city in Gobir state of the Hausaland (Bugaje, 2013:14). He later came to be known as *Shehu*<sup>2</sup> (Shaykh) 'Uthman bin Foduye.<sup>3</sup> His descendants came from Futa Toro, in present-day Senegal (Fudi, 2010:551-559).

Based on the available information to Abdullahi bin Foduye (2013) about their main origin, he has been stated that their town is Torobe, which is the town of those that had come from Futa. They are the uncles of all Fulani's, and Fufuled is their language because Uqbah bin Amir the righteous fighter, who conquered the towns of the West or Morocco (in general Africa) during the era of Amr bin al-As in Egypt had come to them (Foduye, 2013:17).

Abdullahi bin Foduye (2013), further, illustrated that they were one of the Roman tribes, and their king became Muslim without

any fight. In consequence, Uqbah bin Amir got married to the daughter of their king, and her name was Bojjo Mango. He fathered all the Fulanis (Foduye, 2013). However, Abdullahi bin Foduye (2013) emphasised that this is the recurrent (hence prevalent) account in their place, and they have taken it from trustworthy people who used to come forth from the town of Futa (Foduye, 2013).

He, therefore, reiterated that he means scholars. Thus, those people from Futa Toro, they have spoken the language of their mother, and they did not know the language of their father because of the scarcity of those who spoke the language at that time. It is reported that the children of Uqba were the first spoken the Fulfulde language. This is far from the truth. Conversely, languages had existed from the time of Adam, and because that the claim appears as strange. The word that is nearest (to the truth) is that they were spoken the language of their mother, and the Torobe (Fulani) did not have any basic language besides that one (Foduye, 2013:17).

Knowing the educational background of Uthman bin Foduye is of the highest importance in this study to understand the philosophy behind his knowledge and its subsequent outcomes and influences to his entire society. Uthman bin Foduye dedicated his early life to learning. During his childhood, he dedicated his time mainly to understanding the fundamental things of Islam. Uthman bin Foduye's system of education contained in its syllabus a great multiplicity of themes that are not only related to Islam, but then in the etymology, syntax, grammar, and prosody of the Arabic linguistic. Hence, it was frequently the medium of teaching (Adeyemi, 2016; and Gokaru, 2017).

Major in the syllabus is *Qur'Énic* exegesis and Prophetic traditions, as a result of which the Bukhari's Authentic Compilation was the greatest used text. Next in significance was the study of the autobiography of the Prophet Muhammad SAW (*Salallahu Alaihi Wassalam* or peace be upon him) from his birth to death. Fundamentally, more importance was the study of Islamic jurisprudence comprising all aspects of rule, from private, which include the law of mutual transaction,

<sup>1</sup>Different terms are used in addressing Uthman bin Foduye. Therefore, 'Uthman bin Foduye is the actual name to recognize him, but *ibn* is in Arabic which is equivalent to *dan* in Hausa and *son* in English respectively. Similarly, the word *Foduye* is the Arabized name and *Fodio* is in English; while on the other hand, *Fodiyo* is in Hausa. It is understood that these are the reasons why some people are addressing him as '*Usman dan Fodio* or *Danfodiyo* and *Foduye* respectively. In order to avoid inconsistencies, this study uses '*Uthman bin Foduye*.

<sup>2</sup>*Shehu* is in Hausa which is equivalent to *Shaykh* in Arabic, meaning a great scholar or learned fellow in English.

<sup>3</sup>*Foduye* or *Fodio* is a nickname of 'Uthman's father. *Foduye* is the *Fulani* term meaning "a teacher". Therefore, Uthman bin Foduye means Uthman "son of the teacher".

criminal, constitutional, and so on to the rites. Comprised also in this syllabus were astrological Islamic sciences dealing with the universe and *tasawwuf* or Islamic mysticism (Fodio, 1958; Keffi, 2003; and Gokaru, 2017).

Moreover, it has been reported that Uthman bin Foduye appearance was foretold before his birth; therefore, Uthman bin Foduye in his Fulani poem thanks, Almighty Allah for the blessings that specifically gave him, in which he clearly says, he believed that Prophet Muhammad SAW's appearance was foretold before his coming, likewise his appearance was foretold before he came (Hamid, Gokaru & Zin, 2017). This clearly shows that Uthman bin Foduye has admitted the exposition on his appearance; however, it clearly shows his belief in mystical narrations (Gokaru, 2017).

Therefore, it is of paramount importance to note that Nana Asma'u (1997), daughter of Uthman bin Foduye, as cited in also by Abu Alfa Muhammed Shareef bin Farid (2007), describes a specific points of comparison between the life of her father, Uthman bin Foduye and that of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, and their activities, which she pointed out that initial periods of preaching a *Hijra* and a battle against all odds, itinerancy, attacks and desertion of troops, peace overtures, and amalgamation gesturing the successful end to the campaign (*cf* Asma'u, 1997; Farid, 2007; Ahmed, 2015; and Gokaru, Zin & Hamid, 2016).

Interestingly, the fifth chapter of Nana Asma'u's book carries the title: "Sokoto as Madinah: Imitating the Life of the Prophet and Re-Enacting History" (cited in Farid, 2007; and Gokaru & Zin, 2015). Finally, Uthman bin Foduye died at the age of 63 (Last, 2008:60); and was buried within the city walls of Sokoto, where his tomb<sup>4</sup> is still a

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<sup>4</sup>The name of Uthman bin Foduye's tomb is *Hubbaren Shehu* and it is presently in Sokoto. People were visiting the place for tourism, not only from within Nigeria, but even from Nigerian neighbouring countries; while others considered for pilgrimage for the purpose of seeking *barakah* (blessed) from the *Shehu* Uthman bin Foduye. At the same time, most of the Muslim scholars criticised it pointing out that it is an acts of innovation that was totally forbidden in Islam. Therefore, to worship a grave of any important personality is a major *shirk* (polytheism or belief in more than one God). In fact, even Uthman bin Foduye condemned such action and categorized it

place of pilgrimage (Hogben & Kirk-Greene, 1966:123; and Gokaru & Zin, 2015).

### ***The Coming of Islam into Hausaland.***

Islam is the major religion in Nigeria, particularly in the Northern part of the country. This could be because Islam is the latest of all the divinely inspired or the major religions of the world. It advanced in the full light of history and human knowledge. The factors and causes for its spread, development, and triumph could be fully explained without resorting to assumption. Contrary to other religions, Islam can be explained in the light of history (Smith, 2013:15; and Gada, 2010:46).

Kano<sup>5</sup> and Katsina<sup>6</sup> being the major commercial centre in Hausaland had contributed the emergence of various Muslim scholars from neighbouring places, particularly scholars from North Africa. Islam reached Hausaland and other parts of West Africa through commercial activities (Gada, 2010:42-43).

Moreover, it is interesting to note that before the advent of Islam into Hausaland, the Hausa people were irreligious; their religiosity extended a level, where it began to be regarded as inconsistent with the acceptable faith of Islam. Therefore, Islam introduced into Hausaland in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, despite the fact that it existed in the Borno Empire since the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Between

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as *haram* (forbidden). Therefore, it is not part of his teachings and the legacies that he left behind to his society. The executive governor of Sokoto state, Alhaji Attahiru Dalhatu Bafarawa, who finished his tenure in 2007, has blocked the chance to circumambulators of Uthman bin Foduye's grave. He ordered the build of a small wall in one side of the grave in order to barricade anybody going round it. Nevertheless, some people are still there for day and night in order to get *barakah* from Uthman bin Foduye. This was the researchers' familiarized visit on 16 September 2015.

<sup>5</sup>Kano is the second most populous Nigerian States and centre of commerce. It is located in North-Western part of the country.

<sup>6</sup>Now, Katsina is a state situated in the North West Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria. Its capital town is Katsina. The state has a large deposits of kaolin and asbestos. The capital town is a tourist attraction, because of the wall that surrounds it with its seven different gates. Other tourist attractions are the Palaces of the Emirs of Katsina and Daura known as the Home of Hospitality. In the 2006 Population and Housing Census, Katsina state is made up of 2,948,279 males and 2,853,305 females. See, for example, "National Population Commission, Nigeria: Data for National Development". Available online at: <http://www.population.gov.ng/index.php/katsina-state> [accessed in Gadau, Nigeria: 23 October 2017].

these periods, Hausaland enter into the trans-Saharan trade with their neighbours in Northern-Africa (Barkindo *et al.*, 1989).

**Degel: The Established Islamic Centre of Uthman bin Foduye.** In his attempts to reform his society intellectually, Uthman bin Foduye initially established his centre of learning at his hometown, Degel.<sup>7</sup> The main purpose of the centre is to teach people privately and collectively, that is to say through the method of a study circle. To understand how Uthman bin Foduye maintains his centre, he adopted two approaches for the purpose of quick response and to persuade many students to be in the centre (Fodio, 1958; Alkali, 2006; and Launay, 2016).

In doing so, Uthman bin Foduye became a resident teacher and at the same times a mobile teacher. These approaches have great impacts on the massive mobilisation of his community, while rapidly circulating his mission in Hausaland within a limited period (Fadiran, Sarr & Fedderke, 2017; Gokaru, 2017; and Thurston, 2017). In this context, Abdullahi bin Foduye (2013) explains about Uthman bin Foduye, as follow:

He (Uthman bin Foduye) began his mission at the age of twenty (1774-75) at his hometown Degel. Later on, he started travelling with his brother, Abdullah, and other followers, assisting him in disseminating religion of Islam. However, Uthman further went to the East and the West (everywhere), calling people to the religion of Allah by means of admonition and composing poems as well as reciting them in the local languages (Fulfulde and Hausa).

He was also discussing traditions that were contrary to the religion of Islam. It was at this time that many people from various and distance places come to join his community. Abdullahi, on one occasion, stated that they remained with Uthman bn Foduye in the town of Degel until later they went to the town of Kebbi (presently, a state in Northwestern part of Nigeria). Therein, he called people to various things namely to the right paths and faith, Islam and kindness. He further instructed them to abandon the tradition that was contrary to the Islamic Shari'a.

In consequence, many of them repented, and when Uthman returned to Degel (the main centre of his missionary activities), they came to him in groups listening to his admonition. It was because

of this that Allah made him acceptable at first. Later on, his mission spread to the lands, until his people became numerous (Foduye, 2013:5).

Additionally, Ahmad Tahir (1989) opines that, initially, Uthman bin Foduye preaching lasted for twenty years from 1774-1793; thus, however, took the method of tours in the course of which he delivered sermons, taught and wrote textbooks, treatises, and poems the sermon and poems were in the people's languages, mostly in Fulfulde, the Uthman bin Foduye's mother tongue. He had to resort to tour and to composing poems in the languages of the people, he was trying to preach who were, in fact, Muslims but whose Islam he challenged (Tahir, 1989:85).

Philosophically, Uthman bin Foduye did not concern his preaching to the pagan, who had never accepted Islam. Rather, he was concerned with the Muslims who have mixed Islamic practices with traditional pagan rituals. This in the views of Uthman bin Foduye was unacceptable in Islam. This is the reason why his activities were considered as a revival of faith. Hence, Uthman bin Foduye was called a *Mujaddid* or a "Reformer of Faith" (Tahir, 1989).

Uthman bin Foduye made Degel his centre for mobilisation of students. Therefore, he stayed there for 20 years, teaching, preaching, and writing (Tadiman, 2013) to mobilise his people and to teach them the pure religion of Islam through doing at his home as a resident teacher and by going to other places in the company of his disciples, as an itinerant scholar (Robnson & Smitt, 2008:131). This accords with a statement made by Professor Umaru Dahiru, in his interview, as following here:

Stated that Uthman bn Foduye's methods of teachings and preaching was contained in what his brother, Abdullah, mentioned in his *TazyĒn al-WaraqĒt, IdĒ al-NusĒkh*; and what his son, Muhammad Bello, mentioned in his *InfĒq al-MaisĒr*. In spite of these, at a certain time, some of his students came with their books for personal learning (interview with Professor Umaru Dahiru, 14/2/2016).

This connotes that Degel could be the first learning centre in the early period of

<sup>7</sup>Now, Degel is a town in Sokoto state, which is located in the North Western part of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Uthman bin Foduye's struggle to eradicate the fabricated innovations in Hausaland and establish an Islamic society (Gokaru, 2017; and Thurston, 2017).

**The Spread of Islam in Kelantan State of Malaysia.** Knowing when Islam reached the Islamic state of Kelantan is of great importance to this study. Thus, various scholars had attempted to trace the exact date in which Islam introduced into Kelantan; finally, it concludes that the exact date was not known, and is not clearly and accurately determined (Ahmad, 2009; Nor *et al.*, 2012; and Ibrahim *et al.*, 2016). The reason why as Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor *et al.* (2012) observed, for example, there is no available guide and clear evidence, such as gravestones or inscribed stones that can be used to proof the existence of Islam in the state (Nor *et al.*, 2012).

Notwithstanding, guidance from the historical books recorded that in the year 1297 CE (*Christ Era*) or 697 AH (*Anno Hijriyah*), an Arab traveller, Ibn Battuta, who journeyed from India to China, did mention "Kilu Kirai" (it is believed to refer to the currently exist Kuala Krai) as a country which he visited. According to him, he had met a princess named Urduja in Kelantan, who had embraced Islam. With this fact, it can be found that Islam had arrived into Kelantan since in the 12<sup>th</sup> century (*cf* Dunn, 2005; Nor *et al.*, 2012; and Travassos & Filho, 2016).

According to the historical setting of Kelantan, Audrey Lim (2016) summarises that Kelantan is the epitome of Malay culture, which preserved over centuries. With a general population of 1.4 million people, 95% of them are Malays. The remaining 5% are Chinese, Indians, and Thais (Lim, 2016). Audrey Lim also added that historically speaking, Kelantan has a history that goes as far back as 8000 BCE (Before Christ Era). Although the Malays now predominantly occupy the land, its history, as mentioned in the ancient Chinese historical records, shows the existence of a government in the Peninsular with ties pointing back to the Imperial Court of China. In the records, Kelantan then known as "Ho-lo-tan" (*cf* Hall, 2011; and Lim, 2016).

A quick check with the history books

revealed that one of the earliest rulers in the region was a woman by the name of *Cik Siti Wan Kembang*. Later, her daughter, *Puteri Saadong* took over the throne. Their reign took place during the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It reputed that both women have magical powers. The 18<sup>th</sup> century, ruler who governs the provinces that are now the state of Kelantan was none other than the powerful warrior, *Long Yunus*. His descendants currently make up the royal house of Kelantan. It finally became a part of the Federation of Malaya in 1957 (Lim, 2016; Othman & Mohamad, 2016; and Pramuthya, 2016).

**The Development of Pondok: Islamic Centre of Learning in Kelantan.** As per as Islam reached into Kelantan in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, it is significant to know the development of Islamic education in the region. Hence, Kelantan became a well-known *Sharia* (Islamic law) State in Malaysia, because of the presence of various centres of Islamic learning since the arrival of Islam in the area (Ibrahim *et al.*, 2016; Karimizadeha & Abolghasemib, 2016; and Othman & Mohamad, 2016). Before going any further, it should be clear that originally, the Malay language borrows the term *Pondok* from the Arabic word *Funduk*, which according to Rohi Baalbaki (2010), in *Al-Mawrid a-Quareeb: A Pocket Arabic – English Dictionary*, means "hotel, inn, hostel, and hostelry" (Baalbaki, 2010:309).

Thus, the term *Pondok* technically means the traditional centre of Islamic learning. The centre became more popular among people in Malaysia, particularly in Kelantan, Kedah, and Penang (Yusof *et al.*, 2013). Historically, the main purpose of *Pondok* is to enlighten the Muslim community to understand the basic teachings of Islam. In addition, people in *Pondok* used to learn various styles of *Al-Qur'anic* recitations, the science of Prophetic traditions, and the principles of Islamic jurisprudence among others (Zin, 2005; and Kayadibi & Buang, 2011).

Scholars normally teach in public circle, or at times privately. In public circle, each student must purchase the book, which generally teaching by the teacher; while in private, a student meets the teacher with his book of interest (Yusof *et al.*, 2013).

**Table 1:**  
Similar and Differences between the System of Islamic Learning in Northern Nigeria and Kelantan in Malaysia

Systems	Uthman bin Foduye and Northern Nigeria	Kelantan in Malaysia
<i>Name of the centre.</i>	In Northern part of Nigeria, the centre of Islamic learning, since in the earliest period of Islam, known as <i>Makarantan Allo</i> , which is the elementary, and <i>Makarantan Ilimi</i> the advanced one.	<i>Pondok</i> literally known as the traditional centre of Islamic learning. It is up to date existing with the same name.
<i>Name of the teachers.</i>	<i>Malam</i> is commonly known as the teacher in Northern Nigeria	<i>Tok Guru</i> is the name of the teacher, who always available in the <i>Pondok</i> .
<i>Curriculum.</i>	<i>Al-Qur'an</i> , <i>Al-Hadith</i> , and <i>Fiqh</i> . Uthman bin Foduye was following a <i>Maliki</i> School of Thought and a <i>Qadiriyyah</i> Sufi order.	<i>Al-Qur'an</i> , <i>Al-Hadith</i> , and <i>Fiqh</i> . The majority of Kelantan Muslim scholars were <i>Naqshabandiyyah</i> by affiliation.
<i>Methodology.</i>	The teaching is based on study circle, commonly known as <i>Halaqah</i> , where students surround the teacher with the same book listening him and repeating after him. This method is actualised by <i>Talakki</i> . To understand this, <i>Talakki</i> literally is an Arabic word, which means receive. That is to say to receive something, but verbally. For example, the term clearly appears in the <i>Al-Qur'an</i> in which Almighty Allah says: "Then, Adam received from his Lord Words. And His Lord pardoned him (accepted his repentance). Verily, He is the One Who forgives (accepts repentance), the Most Merciful". Cited in <i>Al-Qur'an</i> , Chapter 2, Verse 37.	<i>Halaqa</i> is the best known type of learning in <i>Pondok</i> , in which <i>Talakki</i> is the simplest methods used in teaching the students to understand the basic knowledge of Islamic.
<i>Teachers.</i>	During the life time of Uthman bin Foduye, he was the teacher in his centre, who used to teach different subjects in a study circle. He never traveled abroad for his education. He studied at the hand of his father and his paternal and maternal uncles. He used the opportunity of the presence of any new scholar within the Hausaland to study under him. After the demise of Uthman bin Foduye, particularly in the 21th century, Muslim scholars in Hausaland used to travel to Mecca to study in Harams and in some key figures Universities in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, like the famous International Islamic University, Madina.	In Kelantan, most of the Muslims scholars travel to Mecca for studies purposes. The majority of them stayed in Haram and acquired different sciences of Islamic knowledge from various scholars available to them. Once they finished their studies, they turn back to their communities and teach what they learnt accordingly. This was the reason that <i>Pondok</i> in Kelantan known as "Verranda of Mecca".
<i>Students.</i>	With the passage of times, most of those who studied in traditional centres of learning had memorised the Glorious <i>Al-Qur'an</i> . This led the community are benefitting with their memorisation, particularly during the month of <i>Ramadhan</i> (fasting month), in which each memoriser will be sent to a particular <i>Masjid</i> (mosque) to lead the <i>Shalat al-Tarawih</i> and <i>Tahajjud</i> (praying in the night and midnight in fasting month) respectively. Usually, the <i>Masjid</i> committee supported them financially in order to be motivated.	In Kelantan, it becomes apparent that students who studied in <i>Pondok</i> and memorised the Glorious <i>Al-Qur'an</i> were sent to various <i>Masjid</i> around the community to lead the <i>Shalat al-Tarawih</i> and <i>Tahajjud</i> . Those <i>Imams</i> (Islamic leader) were honorably funded in order to feel courage and settle some of their daily life activities.

Scholars are always available in *Pondok*. This traditional system of learning was almost everywhere in most of the Muslims communities in the earliest centuries of Islam (Mahmood, 2005; and Hamid, 2010). For example also, in Nigeria, the similar of *Pondok* had established. It popularly known as *Makarantan Allo/Ilimi*, meaning "the elementary and advanced traditional centre

of learning" (Hamid, 2010; dan Danfulani, 2012), as the details can be seen later.

Earlier said what distinguished Kelantan from the other States of Malaysia was the availability of various *Pondok* in the State. The main place that became the centre of Islamic learning was today, the capital city of Kelantan that is Kota Bharu. History recorded that many local scholars "Ulama" in that area,

who were originally studied in the Sacred Mosque of Mecca when they come back, they impart what they learnt accordingly to the *Ummah* (Islamic society). This was the reason why Kelantan produced many religious scholars until it nicknamed as the “Veranda of Mecca” (Aziz, 1983; and Nor *et al.*, 2012).

Therefore, Kelantan played a substantial role in the development of Islamic education in Malaysia. Islamic education in Kelantan had long started in the 16<sup>th</sup> century during the period of Long Yunus in the year 1775 until 1794 CE or Christ Era (Nor *et al.*, 2012; and Sevea, 2016). It was in this period, a remarkable religious scholar named Shaykh Abdul Halim emerged in the Royal Palace, which situated in Kampung Sireh. History records show that this scholar taught the King’s children. His education had influenced the Kelantan society significantly (Diah & Nor, 2009; Jamsari *et al.*, 2011; and Nor *et al.*, 2012).

The system of *Pondok* had gradually developed down to the 19<sup>th</sup> century to date, particularly in Kelantan, the system swiftly expanded until World War II (1939-1945) erupted (Federspiel, 2007; and Salleh, 2011). Abdullah was the first who built *Pondok* in Chondong Island around 1820. It famously known as *Tok Pulau Chondong* located approximately 30 kilometres from Kota Bharu. It argues that what led to the establishment of *Pondok* at that time was due to the presence of many foreigners in the area, who shown keen interest to have religious knowledge. It further stated that *Pondok* in Kelantan, before 1940, numbered hundred. Most of the places were *Pondok* established is *Surau* (little mosque), or also in Kelantan known as “Balaisah” (Don & Puteh, 2011; Nor *et al.*, 2012; and Sevea, 2016).

In addition, mosques that were very close to the foreigners were also used for the same purpose. According to chronicle, before 1946, religious knowledge in general seen in *Masjid Besar* Muhammadi or Main Mosque of Muhammadi (Nor *et al.*, 2012; and Utaberta & Esa, 2016). Ab Rahman al-Qari bin Abdullah, Shukeri Mohamad & Zulkifli bin Haji Mohd Yusoff (2012) noted that *Masjid Besar* Muhammadi formed the largest religious centre in Kelantan and considered as

a University that indirectly played a substantial role since the building of the *Masjid Besar* until today (Abdullah, Mohamad & Yusoff, 2012). The school system of religious education at that time comprised only *Madrasah Muhammadiyyah* (modern Islamic school for Prophet Muhammad followers), or known as *Sekolah Melayu Majlis Agama Islam* (Islamic Religious Council Malay School), which had been established on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1917 and was located within the same premises as Islamic Religious Council and the Kelantan Malay Cultural Council (Salleh, 1967; Don & Puteh, 2011; Nor *et al.*, 2012; and Azhar, 2013).

**Common Features between the System of Islamic Learning in Northern Nigeria and Kelantan in Malaysia.** What comes here is an attempts to mention the common features between the system of Islamic learning since in the earliest period of Islam in Northern Nigeria and the system of *Pondok* (Islamic boarding school) in Kelantan, Malaysia. As earlier mentioned that Uthman bin Foduye established his centre of learning where people used to attend in order to understand the basic teachings of Islam (Gokaru & Zin, 2015; and Haron *et al.*, 2016). Both in Northern Nigeria, where Uthman bin Foduye emerged, and Kelantan as the most popular Islamic state in Malaysia, the system seemed almost similar, even though there are some slight differences (Salleh, 1999; Fadiran, Sarr & Fedderke, 2017; and Gokaru, 2017).

The discussion will be elaborated in a detailed manner as shown in the table 1.

## CONCLUSION

From the aforementioned discussion, it is clear that Uthman bin Foduye played an important role in reforming his society by establishing Islamic centre of learning. The centre resulted in the establishment of Islamic *Shari’a*, which its impacts continued up to date. With this, it can be said that the adequate Islamic knowledge that has been imparted during the time of Uthman bin Foduye was the root cause of *Sharia* (Islamic law) implementation in present-day Northern Nigeria. This is in one hand.

On the other hand, *Pondok* (Islamic boarding school) served as the basic foundation of



Kelantan being the Islamic State in Malaysia. It is discovered that Kelantan had produced the majority of Malaysian religious scholars. Hence, their impacts in the community may be the reason for the emergence of Islamic party in today's Kelantan.

To conclude with the system of Islamic learning in the earliest period of Northern Nigeria was similar to that of *Pondok* in Kelantan, Malaysia. This was due to the fact that both regions shared many features that include the system of *Halaqa*, *Talakki*, among others. Even the similarity of *Pondok* with *Makarantan Allo/Ilimi* is evident.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>**Statement:** We, herewith, declare that the work submitted for publication is original, previously unpublished in English or any other language(s), and not under consideration elsewhere. We also certify that all of us approve the paper for release and are in agreement with its content.

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