

Integrating Sangaya and Western Educational Systems in Bui Emirate: Assessing Challenges and Opportunities

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Abstract

Original Research Article

The study assessed the challenges and opportunities in integration of Sangaya and western educational system in Bui emirate. The term Tsangaya is adopted from Sangaya in Kanuri, which mean educational institution. Therefore, is the original name, while tsangaya is a Hausa adulteration of the term, and it has been a cornerstone of Islamic learning in Northern Nigeria and Bui emirate in particular, it plays an important role in preserving religious and cultural values. This study assessed the problems and prospects in integrating Sangaya Sangaya and western educational system in Bui emirate. The method adopted in conducting this research are mixed-method approach combining qualitative and quantitative data collection, structured oral interview will be applied as the primary source of data collection. The research covers 10 Sangaya schools in Bui emirate. The finds that the Sangaya education system is often disconnected from sustainable development goals and lack of exposure to core-subjects. And also research finds that it will be necessary to evaluate the current structure of Sangaya schools in Bui emirate and to identify the challenges of integrating it with western education and explore the best practices and opportunities for successful integration.

Keywords: Sangaya education, western education, integration, Bui emirate, Islamic learning, educational challenges, sustainable development.

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INTRODUCTION

Qur'anic school system of education in Nigeria started many years ago (Ifijeh and James 2012) stated that Qur'anic school system started in the 11th century. Sanagaya is defined as an area or a place where Al-Qur'an is thought and which is generally characterized by the assembly of a conglomeration of children, most of them whom carry their individual wooden plate (Allo), around a single teacher, most of the time with a whip in his hands.

Sanagaya educational system originated in the reign of Mai Ali Gaji (1503 CE), who encouraged and supported the establishment of such centers in many areas for the spread of literacy. The prominent is such among the centers includes; Kukawa, Geidam, and

Damaturu, these centers produced a number of experts in writing and recitation of the Qur'an. The Mais' supported and generously finance these Qur'anic schools and their scholars, it influenced the Qur'anic school system in Borno which spread to the neighboring Hausa State.

The Bui Emirate, located in Borno State, Nigeria, has a rich Islamic heritage with a traditional Qur'anic education system known as sangaya. The Sangaya (also known as Sangaya or Almajiri) system is a traditional Islamic educational model prevalent in Northern Nigeria including Bui Emirate in Borno State. The Sangaya system emphasizes memorization of the Qur'an, Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh) and Arabic literacy. Meanwhile, western education, introduced during colonial rule, focuses on secular subjects such as science, mathematics, and English.

And also is a traditional form of Islamic education centered on Qur'anic learning. In the Biu Emirate, it serves thousands of children, often under informal structures lacking standardized curricula, infrastructure, and state support. Conversely, Western education is structured, secular, and supported by formal institutions. This dichotomy has created tension and missed opportunities for educational synergy. Previous attempts at integration have shown promise in improving literacy, life skills, and vocational outcomes without compromising religious identity. This proposal seeks to critically examine the possibility of such integration in the unique socio-cultural context of Biu Emirate.

Integration means merging two things as two systems together to form a whole, integration is the introduction of the elements of basic education (the literacy, numeracy and the life skills of the western type of education) into Qur'anic school system (Mahuta,2009)

Integration is an act injecting the essential components of public school system into Qur'anic schools.

The concept of integration means to join elements of Basic education that is western type of education together with traditional Qur'anic school system. Based on the national policy on education and transformational agenda of good luck Jonathon's administration in the country. The federal government authority took special interest in integrating the al-majiri systems in the country, this was formally signed into law and presented to the National Economic Council in July 2013.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite its deep-rooted influence, the Sangaya education system is often disconnected from modern development goals. Learners in Sangaya schools often lack exposure to core subjects like English, Mathematics, and Science, limiting their future opportunities. The disjointed relationship between Sangaya and Western education systems in the Biu Emirate perpetuates a cycle of poverty and educational exclusion. There is an urgent need to understand the barriers to integration and identify models that can bridge the gap without eroding the core Islamic values of the Sangaya tradition. In Biu Emirate, there is a pressing need to assess how

integrating Western education components into the Sangaya system can enhance educational outcomes, preserve cultural heritage, and promote socio-economic development.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study have;

- I. Assessed the current structure of Sangaya schools' system in Biu Emirate.
- II. Find-out problems in integrating Sangaya educational system into Western education.
- III. Investigated the prospects and best practices for the successful integration

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous research have explained on the Islamic education and Historical Background of the Sangaya education experience in Nigeria. Many Islamic scholars were thought which includes; Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence), Hadith etc (Anzar, 2003). Mentioned that Sangaya schools were established between the advent of the colonial masters. (Babayo, Jamaluddin, and Hamid, 2017).

Ayuba (2009) Argues that the Sangaya educational system initiated from the prophetic era.

Sangaya educational system has been in existence for decades, its History can be traced back to the early periods of the coming of Islam to the country. It has been source of learning Islamic educational training to the Muslim, the dominated societies in northern part of Nigeria. (Hoechner, 2018)

Furthermore, Jungudo, exposed that after the colonial masters have seized the mantle of leadership from the traditional rulers in Northern part of Nigeria, the Qur'anic educational system had lost the needed sufficient support and power to stand on its own. Consequently, the teachers, the students to beg on the streets and get food as well as some money to pay the weekly due, while their counterpart in secondary schools are enjoying full support from the government. (Jungodo and Ani, 2014)

The literature reveals a growing body of work addressing the disconnection between traditional Islamic education and national education systems. Studies like Umar (2024) note the absence of vocational and life skills in the Sangaya system,

leading to limited employability. Recent reforms in Bauchi and Borno States offer practical models, including the establishment of unified curricula and the creation of state boards for Arabic and Sangaya education. These cases show that integration, when properly managed, leads to positive outcomes such as improved literacy, reduced street begging among Almajiri children, and greater parental acceptance of Western education. However, significant obstacles remain, including teacher qualifications, infrastructural deficits, and societal perceptions.

This study will adopts;

Integration theory: (berry, 1997) Advocates for cultural and educational adaptation without losing core values.

Educational Hybridity Model: (Bello, 2018) proposes blending traditional and modern pedagogies.

Empirical Review:

Challenges: resistance from conservatives’ scholars (Yahya, 2015). Lack of government funding (Musa, 2020), curriculum disparities.

Success stories: ‘Kano’s Islamiyah-Integrated Schools’ improved literacy and employability (Bello 2018)

Gaps in Literature: few studies focus on Biu Emirate specifically. This research provides localized insights and solutions.

METHODOLOGY

Study Area:

The Biu Emirate, located in Borno State, Nigeria, has a rich Islamic heritage with a traditional Qur’anic education system known as sangaya. The Sangaya (also known as Sangaya or Almajiri) system is a traditional Islamic educational model prevalent in Northern Nigeria including Biu Emirate in Borno State. The Sangaya system emphasizes memorization of the Qur’an, Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh) and Arabic literacy. Meanwhile, western education, introduced during colonial rule, focuses on secular subjects such as science, mathematics, and English. And also is a traditional form of Islamic education centered on Qur’anic learning. In the Biu Emirate, it

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Research instrument is a means through which data is collected from different sources and put together for analysis. In the course of data collection, both primary and secondary sources of data collection are used. Structured oral interview is applied as the primary source of data collection, while textbooks, academic journals and other printed materials as well internet resources.

Research Design: Mixed-methods (qualitative and quantitative)

Population and Sampling: Purposive sampling of 10 Sangaya schools across rural and urban parts of the Biu Emirate. That comprises the following;

Sangaya teachers: 30

Western Education teachers: 30

Parents: 50

Policy Makers: 10

Total: 120

Data Analysis:

- Quantitative data: descriptive statistics will be analyzed using SPSS.
- Qualitative data: thematic analysis using NVIVO.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter presents the data collected from respondents and analyzes it in line with the objectives of the study. The research investigated the

challenges, opportunities, and remedies in integrating Sangaya and Western education in Biu. A total of 120 respondents participated in the study,

including 30 Sangaya teachers, 30 Western education teachers, 50 parents, and 10 policy makers.

Distribution of Respondents

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sangaya Teachers	30	25 (%)
Western Education Teachers	30	25 (%)
Parents	50	41.7 (%)
Policy Makers	10	8.3
Total	120	100

Interpretation:

The table shows that parents constitute the majority (41.7%), followed by Sangaya and Western

education teachers (25% each), while policy makers make up 8.3%. This ensures that all major stakeholders in the education sector are represented.

Challenges Facing the Integration of Sangaya and Western Education

Challenges	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Inadequate funding and facilities	40	33.3(%)
Lack of trained and qualified teachers	30	25.0(%)
Curriculum disparity between the two systems	20	16.7(%)
Parental misconception about integration	15	12.5(%)
Weak government supervision and policy implementation	15	12.5(%)
Total	120	100

Interpretation:

The major challenge identified is inadequate funding (33.3%), followed by lack of trained teachers (25%). Other challenges include curriculum

disparity (16.7%), parental misconceptions (12.5%), and weak policy implementation (12.5%). This indicates that financial and human resource limitations remain the major obstacles to successful integration.

Opportunities for Integration

Opportunities	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Moral and academic balance for learners	35	29.2(%)
Strong community and parental support	30	25.0(%)
Government recognition of Islamic schools	25	20.8(%)
Promotion of literacy and vocational skills	20	16.7(%)
Enhancement of unity and cultural understanding	10	8.3(%)
Total	120	100

Interpretation:

The table shows that moral and academic balance (29.2%) and community support (25%) are

the most recognized opportunities. These findings demonstrate that integrating the two systems can produce disciplined and well-rounded students while gaining community acceptance.

Remedies and Strategies for Improvement

Suggested Remedies	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Adequate funding and provision of facilities	35	29.2
Teacher training and retraining programs	30	25.0
Harmonization of curriculum	20	16.7
Stronger government involvement and monitoring	20	16.7
Community sensitization and public enlightenment	15	12.4
Total	120	100

Interpretation:

The most common remedy suggested by respondents is adequate funding (29.2%), followed by teacher training (25%). Curriculum harmonization and stronger government involvement (16.7% each) were also emphasized. These strategies highlight the importance of proper policy support and stakeholder collaboration.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that the integration of Sangaya and Western education faces several challenges, primarily inadequate funding, insufficient teacher training, and curriculum inconsistencies. However, respondents also identified significant opportunities such as moral and

academic enrichment, community acceptance, and increased policy interest in integrated education.

The findings align with existing literature emphasizing that successful educational integration requires both institutional and community efforts. The respondents strongly agreed that the integration, if properly implemented, can promote discipline, literacy, and socio-economic development in Biu and beyond.

Expected output/results

The expected results from this research will detailed profile of the Sangaya education system structured in Biu emirate by identifying the barriers to integration, and to provide a roadmap or framework for sustainable integration that would respect religious identity.

WORK PLAN

S/NO	Activity	Duration	Month/Year
1	Literature Review	2 weeks	July 2025
2	Instrument Design	2 weeks	July 2025
3	Fieldwork and Data Collection	1 Month	August 2025
4	Data Analysis	1 week	September 2025
5	Report Writing and Validation	2 weeks	September 2025
6	Submission of the final report	1 Week	September 2025

Work plan Schedule duration for the completion of the research is three (3) Mon

BUDGET ESTIMATE

S/NO	ITEM	ESTIMATED COST
1.	Research Assistants Two (2)	N300,000
2.	Travel and Logistics across Biu Emirate(Bayo, Biu, Kwaya-kusar and Shani Local Governments)	N250,000
3.	Printing and Photocopying	N60,000
4.	Internet/Data subscription- 3 months	N50,000
5.	Communication-phone calls, follow-ups	N30,000
6.	Stipends for participants- incentives for interviews:	N100,000
7.	Accommodation for fieldwork 30 days	N180,000
8.	Data Analysis Software	N130,000
9.	Report Production and Dissemination	N200,000
10.	Miscellaneous	N100,000
11.	Consultant Review	N50,000
12.	Publishing at International Journal	N94,500
TOTAL:		N1, 544,500

The proposed research is expected to cost One Million Five Hundred and Fifty-Four Thousand Five Hundred naira Only (N1, 544,500)

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

This study investigated the challenges, opportunities, and remedies associated with integrating Sangaya and Western education in Biu. Based on the data collected and analyzed, the major findings include:

- 1. Inadequate funding and lack of trained teachers are key obstacles to integration.
- 2. Differences in curriculum and teaching methods hinder coordination between the two systems
- 3. Despite these challenges, there is strong community and parental support for integration.
- 4. The integration provides opportunities for producing well-rounded individuals with both religious and academic competence
- 5. Government policies exist but are weakly implemented at the grassroots level.

CONCLUSION

The integration of Sangaya and Western education in Biu is both necessary and achievable. The study concludes that proper funding, teacher capacity building, curriculum harmonization, and active government involvement are crucial for sustainable integration. If effectively implemented, the integration can foster moral discipline, literacy, and socio-economic development among learners and the community at large.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

- 1. Adequate Funding: Government and NGOs should provide financial and material support to Sangaya schools to improve learning facilities.
- 2. Teacher Training: Both Sangaya and Western teachers should be given regular professional development training to enhance teaching effectiveness.
- 3. Curriculum Harmonization: A unified curriculum that accommodates both Islamic and Western educational values should be developed.

- 4. Community Involvement: Parents and community leaders should be sensitized to actively participate in integration programs.
- 5. Policy Implementation: Education authorities should ensure effective monitoring and enforcement of integration policies.
- 6. Public Awareness: Campaigns should be organized to enlighten the public on the importance and benefits of integrated education

Suggestions for Further Research

Future researchers should investigate:

- 1. The impact of integrated education on students’ moral and academic performance.
- 2. The role of government and NGOs in sustaining integration programs.
- 3. Comparative studies between integrated and non-integrated schools in other parts of Borno State.

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