

## **BRIDGET AISHA LEMU AND HER CONTRIBUTIONS TO ISLAMIC SCHOLARSHIP IN NIGERIA, 1940 – 2019**

**BY**

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### **Abstract**

Women through passage of time have been part of successes of Islamic scholarship in Nigeria. It is noteworthy to state that Nana Asmau, the daughter of the 1804 Jihad has a strong background in Islamic scholarship. She was poetess of reputation. Thus, this paper examines the place of Aisha Lemu in the development of Islamic in Nigeria, 1940 – 2019. These areas seem to have been neglected by scholars. But her giant stride and massive publications in the realm of Islamic scholarship cannot be undermined. She did well not only to promote Islamic ideals through her scholarship expositions but also brought closer the true understanding of Islam and its teachings. It is against this background that we explored some of her tremendous achievement that perhaps had not been hitherto properly recorded. We relied on some comment in the Guardian news and secondary works. Our tentative results are that the scholar under consideration had authored more than thirty books in different sphere of Islamic studies in Nigeria. This informs the present effort to look into various works of the writer. We realized that the work of the scholar under consideration are very many. As such, a few of her efforts as this present paper, space, and other considerations would permit have to be examined. Thus, the development of Islamic scholarship, 1940 to 2019, cannot be over emphasized. Bridget Aisha Lemu was a famous scholar and very experienced educator. She was deeply involved in her effort to conceptualize and develop Islamic scholarship at different levels of educational systems in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Islamic, Scholarship, Prolific, Converttee, Milestone, Achievement, Massive intellectualism

### **Introduction**

Islam strongly emphasizes the importance of education, particularly formal learning, as reflected in the teachings of the Prophets of God and upheld by Muslim reformers throughout history. The pursuit of knowledge is considered a fundamental obligation for both men and women, serving as a foundation for personal growth and societal development. Despite this, in many countries of Sub-Saharan Africa with predominantly Muslim populations, the rate of girls' school enrollment remains comparatively low. Scholars have identified several factors contributing to this trend. One key issue is the perception of Western-style education, which is sometimes viewed as conflicting with local cultural or religious values. In addition, deeply rooted indigenous social structures often assign extensive domestic responsibilities to girls, limiting their opportunities to attend school ((Ann Dunbar 400).

There is also a widespread concern in some communities that formal education may negatively affect girls' roles in marriage, leading to fears that educated girls may become less suitable for family life. These factors collectively discourage investment in girls' education. However, despite these constraints, women have historically played significant roles in the teaching and advancement of Qur'anic, Arabic, and Islamic scholarship. They have served as educators, mentors, and transmitters of religious knowledge within their communities. Unfortunately, this vital contribution has often been overlooked or underrepresented in academic studies. Recognizing the role of women in

Islamic intellectual traditions is essential for a more balanced understanding of the history and development of education in Muslim societies, particularly in the African context.

It is true that Jean Boyd and Murray Last have educated us in respect of Nana Asmau, the daughter of Shehu Usman Dan Fodio, in her own right and writings which culminated into a popular movement called *Yan Taru* movement. This movement went beyond the rural areas, in addition a female scholar called Khadija of the Ahl-al-Agil in Mauretania was reputed to have instructed Abdal-Qadir, on religion of Torodo revolution (Ann Dunbar 400). There were other notable women Islamic scholars such as Aisha referred to as Muqaddama and ahadith expert and also Safiya Umar Falke who was also a Muqaddama both of them regarded as women mystics during the colonial administration. Specifically, therefore, we intend to look into the various facets of this woman Islamic scholar called Bridget Aisha Lemu, 1940 – 2019. Her intellectual endeavour manifested greatly in better understanding of Islam and what it stands for through her different books made available to Nigeria society. She has written massively towards the intellectual development of Nigeria. Thus, the place of Aisha Lemu in the conceptualization and development of Islamic scholarship in Nigeria cannot be over emphasized.

### **Islamic Scholarship Across the Ages**

Scholars have educated us that both Arabic and Islam have contributed tremendously to world civilization through culture. It was proclaimed that Islam rejuvenated humans through science and Arabs contributed significantly to science. Around the ninth and tenth centuries the Muslim collected dictionaries and created philological teaching and learning in Islam. Muslims were in the fore-front of learning in such centres as Basra, Kufa, Cordova and Cairo. They started as religious schools and centres and later into universities. It was mentioned specifically that in Cordova there were large number of Christian students but the influence of Arab which came through Spain on the University of Paris, Oxford was very remarkable.

Consequently, some notable scholars such as Averroes (Ibn Rushd) of Cordova became a major influence of Arab philosophy of European ideas. He built on the teaching of Aristotle in such a way that religious truth and scientific truth became clearer. Another notable intellectual was Avicenna (Ibn Sina) called the prince of physicians (980 – 1037). Muslims contributed to the development of mathematics by introducing world Arabic numerals. Muhammad ibn Musa was the first Scholar to apply decimal that gave digits and added value to position. The Arabs made achievements in geometry, algebra, spherical trigonometry, the sine, tangent and co-tangent. In physics, they discovered pendulum and contributed to optics, in chemistry, they went into potash, silver nitrate, corrosive sublimat, nitric and sulphuric acid. (Fafunwa 51). In the field of Islamic Sciences and Language, Arabic has made remarkable progress in our understanding of early history of West Africa. Our understanding of ancient kingdom and centres of Kush, Kumbi Saleh, Timbuktu, Mali, Sokoto was from Arab travellers accounts and historians. There were two notable Muslim historians who made significant contributions to the understanding of early history of West Africa. They were Muhammed al-Wassan al-Zayyati popularly called Leo Africanus and ibn Battuta who made journey to Arabia, China, India and who also wrote copiously on the kingdom of Mali before the accomplishment of Tarikh al-Sudan. So, we cannot say that it was through coincidence that rulers of these old kingdoms were acclaimed Muslims under the influence of Islam. Islam got to Savannah area of West Africa around the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the period from which the documented history of West Africa started. This assertion was corroborated by the writings of Munnabeh in 738 and Al-Masudi in 947. Islam was adopted by the ruler of Kanem called Umme Jilmi around 1085 and 1097. By the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Kanem Burnu became a centre of notable learning in addition to the influx of teachers who taught Islamic jurisprudence in Mali. Islam came into Hausaland around the 14<sup>th</sup> century through the traders and

scholars. For instance, around forty Wangarawa traders were reported to have introduced Islam to Kano during the administration of Ali-Yaji (1349 – 1385).

A mosque was erected while an Imam, Muezzin and Qadi were appointed. The administration of Yaqub (1452 -63) received some migrant Fulani scholars who brought with them books on Islamic theology. Muhammad Rumfa used to have consultation with Muslim scholars about governance. He commissioned al-Maghili, that popular theologian to author a book on Islamic administration during his visit to Kano around the fifteen century. He authored a renowned book called *The Obligation of the Princess*. Al-Maghili proceeded to Katsina which had already been Islamised in the fifteen century. Different pilgrims and scholars paid different visits to Katsina. In addition, scholars from Sankore University, Timbuktu were in the city with various books about divinity and etymology. By the seventeenth century, Katsina could boast of indigenous scholars such as Muhammadu Dan Masini (d. 1667) and Muhammadu Dan Marina (d. 1655). Thus, these scholars promoted Islamic education in Katsina till the incursion of the British Administration in Nigeria. Thus, Islamic education gave impetus to Islamic learning. In addition, intellectualism paved ways to acquire various Islamic books. This provided the standard by which Muslims could defend the sanctity of Islam in their encounters with non-believers. In the past, there was strong desire for knowledge and prestige for acquiring letters which has been contrary today (Fafunwa 55). Johnson in his monumental book, *History of the Yoruba*, mentions that Islam came to Yorubaland towards the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century. Around 1830, some scholars came to Yorubaland enroute North through Ilorin. Some scholars such as Ahmad Qifu and Uthman ibn Abubakar arrived Ibadan during the reign of Alaaftin Oluyedun.

#### **The 1804 Jihad and Muslim Women Education in Nigeria**

The Jihad of Shehu Usman Dan Fodio was embarked upon to cleanse the Muslim society of its iniquities and all forms of syncretism. But apart from this, one of the most outstanding achievements of Shehu Dan Fodio in Hausaland was his reform on women education. We can find this in his book called *Nur al-Albab*, where he stated thus:

They treat their wives and daughters like household implements which are used until they are broken and then thrown on to the rubbish heap. Alas, how can they abandon their wives the daughters in the perpetual darkness of ignorance while they daily impart their knowledge to their students. This is nothing but error because they are instructing their students in this manner out of sheer ego and hypocrisy (Doi 321).

He was a reformist or a revivalist who embarked on the mission of Jihad among Muslims in Northern Nigeria. He cautioned and warned against the neglect of women education. He stated that one of the major practices was that many of the learned men treated their wives and daughters like beasts. They failed to instruct them concerning articles of faith, their ablution, prayers and other obligations which God ordered them to teach. Shehu Usman Dan Fodio further reiterated the importance of educating women in his renowned work called *Ihya al-Sunnah* it goes thus,

If anyone says that a woman is generally ignorant of these matters (for example, relating to business transaction) my reply is that it is incumbent upon her to endeavor to know these (commercial regulations) as it is binding upon her to know about other matters pertaining to her religion like ablutions, fasting and praying (Fafunwa 56).

## The Jihad and Muslim Women Literary Resurgence in Nigeria

The extortions and messages made by Shehu Usman Dan Fodio towards women education in northern Nigeria became rewarding. His reform was simultaneously followed by a literary resurgence. More importantly, Shehu's two daughters were highly rated as women Islamic scholars. They have made remarkable contributions to the generality of Muslim Women education in the whole of West Africa. The elder daughter to Shehu Usman was reported to have been rendering religious teachings on Islamic studies, Law and Islamic jurisprudence. In particular, his younger daughter was a famous poetess. Thus, women were not prevented from participating in public lectures. Thus, Shehu was a leader and showed leadership by example. He did enforce what he preached. This was further corroborated in one of his brother's famous works Abdullahi Ibn Fodio called *Tazyin al-Waraqat*. This fact was reported by Shehu's brother called Abdullahi. This trend in the development of Arabic and Islamic scholarship remains till the incursion of the British Administration around the middle of 19<sup>th</sup> century. (Fafunwa, 1974:57). The effects of this methodology remain till the present time in the sphere of women education. For instance, with the traditional institution called *Madaris*, it is not uncommon to see both boys and girls sit together. But as girls increase in age during their education, they are separated to maintain sanity and discipline in schools (Doi 322). In furtherance of women education in Sokoto during the colonial time the following may attest to women scholarship and literary resurgence.

In 1938 the first batch of girls had been daughters of aristocrats and were pioneers and who had been encouraged to teach. The example of poet Nana was quoted to encourage support for female scholarship and a large proportion of the small number of the first girls at our school were allowed to teach after they were married (Jean Trevor 257).

## Background and History of Bridget Aisha Lemu in Nigeria

Bridget Aisha Lemu otherwise known or christened Bridget .A. Honey had genealogy in England. She attended School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London where she learnt Chinese History. By the year 1961 – 1965, Bridget Aisha Lemu enrolled for her post-graduate studies and specialized in the teaching of English as a foreign language. This she did at the Institute of Education in the same University. Aisha Lemu later accepted Islam in 1961 and this consequently changed her christened name Bridget .A. Honey to Aisha Lemu, her Islamic name. Aishat Lemu, an accomplished career woman, took up her first appointment in 1966 at the school for Arabic Studies, Kano, Nigeria where she taught English. After two years, she married Shaykh Ahmad Lemu who was then the Grand Khadi of Niger State, Nigeria. Aisha Lemu later relocated to Sokoto for another higher assignment and appointment. She was appointed as a principal of Government Girls' College Sokoto between 1968 - 1976. She spent eight years in Government Girls' College Sokoto where she was appointed again as a principal of Women Teachers' College Minna between the years 1976-1977. She took instructions in Islamic Studies throughout these years and she authored many books and wrote articles on Islamic Studies, gender issues and other relevant intellectual issues. (Aisha, 1980:). Bridget Aisha Lemu devoted her time whole heartedly to Islamic scholarship under the aegis of Islamic Education Trust, Minna. She also embarked on an organized weekend Islamic Programmes for Primary Schools pupils generally. The Sultan of Sokoto made his remarks on this great scholar:

With the Lemu's arrival in Nigeria, the participation of Muslim women in Islamic propagation took a new positive dimension which particularly gingered the northern Muslim sisters into an action never hitherto dreamt of in the

country. It was Aisha Lemu who initiated the idea of bringing all Nigerian Muslim Women under a common umbrella called Federation of Muslim Women's Association of Nigeria (Salau 1 – 13).

### **Bridget Aisha Lemu and Her Religious Doctrines Before Accepting Islam**

Bridget Aisha Lemu was reported to have been brought up in the Church of England but she could not believe so much in its teaching according to her. This necessitated her to search for the ultimate truth which according to her she got elsewhere. By the age of fourteen, her curiosity led her to research and study Buddhism and Hindu philosophy. Later on, she decided to study Chinese History, Language and culture at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. By the age of twenty years, Aisha Lemu was reported to have suffered from a spiritual crises realizing that she had no belief and certainly concerning anything about the existence of god. At this stage, she came across some Muslim Students who gave her the translated Qur'an to deploy and remove some of her misconceptions, even though, she seemed to know little about Islam then. She never considered it necessary because of her negative attitude about god then. But after some weeks, Aisha Lemu converted to Islam. She equally assisted to establish Islamic Society at the School of Oriental and African Studies, thereby becoming its first secretary and was also very instrumental to the formation of Students' Islamic Societies.

### **Some of the Publications of Bridget Aisha Lemu in Nigeria**

Bridget Aisha was the author of well over thirty books out of which just a few of her works would be examined because of space and other consideration that may guide this paper. When Bridget Aisha Lemu arrived Nigeria, she battled with the way Islamic Studies was taught in Schools. The methodology focused primarily on how to pray, how to fast but nobody taught the students why they should pray, fast and so on. This perhaps influenced her to embark on book projects in Nigeria. The first book to be examined under this discussion is titled, *The Methodology of Primary Islamic Studies (A Hand Book for Teachers)*. This book remains to be one of the major books for teachers of Islamic Studies in Nigeria. This book which is monumental is divided into twelve chapters. Chapter one covers the aims and objectives of teaching Islamic Studies in primary school to arouse in the child a consciousness of Allah and the bedrock of intellectual, emotional, spiritual, growth and development to teach the child how to be conscious of the duty to Allah. The aim also is to teach the child how to worship Allah, to build his personality and morality. Chapter two examines general guidance for teachers of Islamic Studies. The Islamic teacher must play his role and proclaims what he teaches. The teacher must emphasize good conduct and be mild in administering punishment. He should identify his aims to bring in methods to attain them. The Islamic teacher should be conversant with daily affairs and his community. Chapter three emphasizes the importance of Islamic Studies in the primary school. This can be seen as a guide to the child as he would be guided in his moral conduct. In addition, good foundation of discipline is emphasized among others. Chapter four covers the syllabus, this was in line with the first one proclaimed in 1972 according to the author at the institution of the Education, Zaria.

The place of Arabic language in the primary school was covered in chapter five and this was in line with the teaching of Islamic Studies syllabus. Chapter Six focuses on the branches of the syllabus and the aims of teaching each branch. This covers *Tawhid* (Theology), *Fiqh* (worship and jurisprudence), *Tahdhib* (moral and social teaching), *Sirah* (The life of the Prophet) *Qur'an* (the Holy Book and Arabic Language). The purpose of teaching Arabic at the primary school level is to have pupils read the Qur'an in its original form and indeed the wordings

properly. Chapter Seven elucidates *Tawhid* (Theology). *Tawhid* literally implies the signs of the unity of Allah. Chapter Eight reiterates *Fiqh* (Worship and Jurisprudence). Chapter Nine discusses *Tahdhib* (Moral and Social training). Chapter Ten relates *Sirah* (Biography and Life of the Prophet Muhammad and other prophets, four caliphs of Islam and other famous Muslims were stated. Chapter Eleven dwells on the Qur'an and finally, Chapter twelve talks about Arabic Language where the purpose, problem of teaching Arabic was spelt out (Lemu 111 – 120).

Islamic Studies for Senior Secondary Schools book (2) is another major book authored by Aisha Lemu. The book has sixty-one chapter in all but amply divided into three sections. *Hidayah* comprises the Qur'an, Hadith and *Tahdhib*, *Fiqh*, in section two of the book comprises *Tawhid*, *Ibadah* and Muamalat and Tarikh. Section Three involves *Sirah*, the life of the Prophet and leadership of four orthodox caliphs, the spread of Islam in West Africa and contributions of Muslims to world civilizations. The Qur'an is further subdivided into five parts namely, *Ash-Shams* (the Sun); *Al-Balad* (The City); *Al-Fajr* (The dawn); *Al-Ghashiya* (The over-shadowing event); *Al-'la* (The Most High). The revelation of the Qur'an; the preservation of the Qur'an; The Order and Arrangement of the Qur'an; The Qur'an: Its importance and authenticity and *Tafsir* of the Qur'an. Hadith comprises hadith number 5 of An-Nawawi's Forty Traditions, Bukhari 78, Hadith number 2; Bukhari 79, hadith number 4, Hadith number 20 of Tirmidhi; hadith number 12 of An-Nawawi Forty Traditions; the relationship between Hadith and Sunnah; the importance of Hadith, the form of Hadith, Criteria of Authenticity of Hadith and Six sound collections. *Tahdhib* (Moral Education), involves honesty in the words deeds; bribery and corruption; the dignity of labour, gambling, alcohol and other intoxicants; arrogance and extravagance, modesty of dress and behaviour; adultery and fornication, obscenity pornography and dancing in relation *zina*; cigarette - smoking, stealing and fraud *Fiqh* in the book under consideration comprises *Tawhid* (Faith); *Ibadah* (modes of worship) *Muamalat* (Human transactions). In particular *Tawhid* comprises the Unity of God; concept and implication and Belief in revelation; Concept and implication in Belief of prophets; concept and implication in belief in the hereafter and the historical development in Islam starting from the life of the prophet and the roles and leadership of the orthodox caliphs of Islam, the spread of Islam in West Africa and roles of Muslims in the world civilization (Lemu 3 – 109).

One of the Aisha Lemu's numerous publications include *The Ideal Muslim Wife*, this book has a total number of thirteen chapters. Chapter one defines marriage and concept of marriage and mentioned four benefits of marriage. Chapter two looks into selecting the right partner and compatibilities for doing so. Chapter three discusses issues of truest and honest between the partners. Chapter four mentions the issue of understanding the husband. Chapter five stipulates the issue of authority with due consultation and obedience. Chapter six talks about the home and peaceful atmosphere at home. Chapter seven evaluates good counseling through mutual trust and understanding. Chapter eight emphasis on the issue of money to run the affairs of home and living within the means provided. Chapter nine provides friendliness to attain the real social life. Chapter ten reiterates on the issue of conjugality through sexual relationship. Chapter eleven informs us about the issue of co-wife, this is allowed in Islam with specific condition on the issue of provision. Chapter twelve dwells on the unreasonable partner particularly husband who must protect his wife as the peacemaker of the house. And chapter thirteen summed up everything specifying you, your family and above all Allah. This becomes pertinent through the mutual trust of taking care of one another and have the mercy of Allah as the foundation (Lemu 1 – 52). In addition to the above elucidation on publications, she has equally authored the following books on Islamic Studies in Nigeria. We have *Islamic Studies for Junior Secondary Schools* (Book One) (Lemu 1 – 167) Aisha, 2021:1 – 167, *Islamic Studies for Junior Secondary Schools* (Book Two) (Lemu 1 – 171), *Islamic Studies for Junior Secondary Schools* (Book Three), (Lemu 1 – 143) and *Islamic Studies for Senior Secondary Schools* (Book Three) (Lemu 3 – 182). Thus, the list of her publications under the present consideration seems to be endless.

**Table 1: Some of the Selected Publications of Bridget Aisha Lemu, 1976 – 2022**

| S/No | Author        | Date of Publications | Title of the Works                                                                               | Publishers                                   |
|------|---------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 1.   | B. Aisha Lemu | 1976                 | Women in Islam                                                                                   | Islamic Council of Europe                    |
| 2.   | B. Aisha Lemu | 1979                 | Islam and Alcohol                                                                                | Islamic Education Trust                      |
| 3.   | B. Aisha Lemu | 1979                 | A Degree Above Them                                                                              | Islamic Education Trust                      |
| 4.   | B. Aisha Lemu | 1979                 | Islamic Citizenship and Moral Responsibility                                                     | Islamic Education Trust                      |
| 5.   | B. Aisha Lemu | 1980                 | A Critical Look and the Theory of Evolution                                                      | Islamic Education Trust                      |
| 6.   | B. Aisha Lemu | 1980                 | Methodology of Primary Islamic Studies (A Hand book for Teaching)                                | Islamic Publications Bureau, Lagos, Nigeria. |
| 7.   | B. Aisha Lemu | 1989                 | Islamic Studies for Senior Secondary Schools, Book 2                                             | Islamic Education Trust                      |
| 8.   | B. Aisha Lemu | 1991                 | Laxity, Moderation and Extremism                                                                 | Islamic Education Trust                      |
| 9.   | B. Aisha Lemu | 1992                 | Ideal Muslim Husband                                                                             | Islamic Education Trust                      |
| 10.  | B. Aisha Lemu | 1993                 | Animals in Islam                                                                                 | Islamic Education Trust                      |
| 11.  | B. Aisha Lemu | 1993                 | Ideal Muslim Wife                                                                                | Islamic Education Trust                      |
| 12.  | B. Aisha Lemu | 1996                 | Islamic Aqiqah and Fiqh: A Test of Islamic Belief and Jurisprudence.                             | Islamic Education Trust                      |
| 13.  | B. Aisha Lemu | 2001                 | Islam: One God, One Humanity                                                                     | Islamic Education Trust                      |
| 14.  | B. Aisha Lemu | 2001                 | Women in Da'wah                                                                                  | Islamic Education Trust                      |
| 15.  | B. Aisha Lemu | 2001                 | A Holistic Approach To Teaching of Islam To Children                                             | Islamic Education Trust                      |
| 16.  | B. Aisha Lemu | 2001                 | Students Islamic Society Branch, Organization, Revelation and Structures: An Islamic Perspective | Islamic Education Trust                      |
| 17.  | B. Aisha Lemu | 2021                 | Islamic Studies for Junior Secondary Schools 1                                                   | Ibadan University Press                      |
| 18.  | B. Aisha Lemu | 2021                 | Islamic Studies for Junior Secondary Schools 2                                                   | Ibadan University Press                      |
| 19.  | B. Aisha Lemu | 2021                 | Islamic Studies for Junior Secondary Schools 3                                                   | Ibadan University Press                      |
| 20.  | B. Aisha Lemu | 2022                 | Islamic Studies for Senior Secondary Schools 3                                                   | Ibadan University Press                      |

**Source: Author 2025**

### **Bridget Aisha Lemu and Formation of Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria**

The issue of gender equity was globally embraced following the United Nations declaration of the year 1975 at the International Women's Year. Thus, the period of 1976 – 1985 was famously called decade for women. More importantly the Cairo conference of 1984 and the Nairobi conference of 1985 gave further impetus to women recognition. In addition to this was the Beijingodo of 1995. It was perhaps Beijing more than anything that gave fame to women in the universe (Bugaje 9). The first Nigerian women's organization was the National Council of Women Societies established in 1950s, around 1965, the Muslim Sisters organization arranged for school graduate focusing on Muslim women. Another body known as Women in Nigeria (WIN) was formed in 1982. Therefore,

women have continued to play major roles in the development of education particularly on the women folk because of their sensitivity. We would recall in this respect the effort of the Muslim women elites in Kwara State of Nigeria. This women folk founded the Muslim Women Association of Nigeria. This body was formed in April 1974 to create awareness for the educated Muslim Women class. This was a line with the teaching of the Qur'an and Hadith.

Prior to this time, most of the primary schools were championed by the Christian missions. Thus, the coming of the Muslims to establish their own school was to further strengthen educational development in Nigeria. Apart from this, to retain Muslim children in western school while they continued to enjoy the teaching of the religion without hindrance. The Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria was founded in 1985. The aim of the body includes encouraging and promoting Islam, promoting unity, promoting educational and social development, to build *Tarbiyyah* (proper child upbringing) and to promote charitable deed (Yusuf 284 – 285). From the beginning, Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria was faced with the challenges of politicizing Muslim Women and dishing out agenda about those who intended to speak about the women. The body called for formation of Sharia Court and Women right generally. They called for adequate women representation and political leadership role. Thus, in October 1985 Aisha Lemu established the Federation of Muslim Women Association in Nigeria through the support of other Muslim Women. Consequently, she was elected as the first National Amirah for the body which ran for four years. In fact Aisha Lemu led the leadership with the effort and support of the body in Nigeria. Aisha Lemu conceptualized the Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria platform, this made the body a formidable one in its effort to nurture, mentor and unite Muslim women in noble path of religious ethics.

## Conclusion

We have traced tenaciously Islamic scholarship across the ages in Nigeria. In addition, we have highlighted notable efforts of some Islamic women scholars with particular reference to Nana Asmau and host of other women scholars before Aisha Lemu. Fundamentally, we have evaluated works of Bridget Aisha Lemu. She was a British born author who embraced Islam in 1961 in Nigeria. Her coming into academic scene of Nigeria added more to academic development and transformation in Nigeria. As a veteran and western woman who embraced Islam, she has shown that knowledge was not about inheritance but centres on curiosity, enthusiasm and above all having dedication to intellectual development. She was a member of educational research council who also founded Federation of Muslim Women Association in Nigeria in 1985. We have discussed about her involvement in Islamic education globally. More importantly, Aisha Lemu has written several books either for academic reasons or for general Islamic understanding. More than thirty publications have been credited to her and this remains as a major legacy of Islam and Islamic culture in Nigeria.

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