

CONTRIBUTIONS OF *ṢŪFĪ* ORDERS ON THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT OF MUSLIMS OF SAKI, SAKI WEST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract: *The growth and spread of Islam in West Africa and particularly in Nigeria have always been attributed to the activities of Ṣūfī orders. Between the mid and last quarter of twentieth century Sufism was subjected to a bulk of criticism. It seems that the tidal waves of the said criticism and proliferation of Muslim associations have allowed the study of Ṣūfī orders to be felt. Thus, this study is an attempt directed towards bringing into the fore the genuineness or otherwise of the contributions of Ṣūfī orders on the overall development of Muslims of Saki. One hundred (100) samples were selected through random sampling technique; structured questionnaire was designed to elicit information from the respondents. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentage statistical tool. The study revealed that Sufism is described as the core and beauty of Islam by its practitioners while to some it has been regarded as bogus, flippant, vile and irksome defilement in the parapet and structure of Islam and therefore, vitriolic criticism of its rites and practices. The study also discovered that Ṣūfī orders contributed to the lives of the people educationally, politically and socially but a very little of religious reawakening. The study recommended that Muslims must not only be sincere in restricting themselves to the Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW) in all religious affairs but also refrain from all temptations that are either unlawful or innovative in the remembrance and showing reverence to Allah, the Almighty.*

Keywords: *Islam, Muslim, Saki, Ṣūfī orders, Ṭarīqah*

Introduction

Sufism being one of the hotly debated and controversial parts of Muslim movements has provoked quite a large number of publications to have appeared by many leading orientalist and many *Ṣūfī* scholars of West Africa in like manner bothering mostly on the origin, derivation, spread, genuineness and otherwise of the whole practice called Sufism (Nicholson, 1967).

According to Olakojo as cited by Kareem & Yusuff (2017), the advent of Islam in Saki is traceable to 18th century. Since its inception, the preponderant of the population is said to be Muslims. A good number of these Muslims acquired both Arabic and Islamic education thereby becoming scholars, teachers' authors and preachers. They concerned themselves with the spread of the religion and its scholarship in the town and beyond. Their efforts were blessed by Allāh and the effects could be seen in the solid presence of Islamic footing in the town; domination of both traditional and political offices by Muslims; establishment of primary and secondary schools (Lateef, 1998) and recently the establishment of school of Basic Midwifery Saki in the area of health which was financed by the income generated from the Bayt Al-Māl (Muslim treasury) founded by them in the year 2000 (Kareem & Yusuff, 2017). In fact, Saki Muslims have far-reaching impacts on the lives of the inhabitants including non-Muslims. Today in Saki, general acceptance and strong patronage seem to be

accorded to Sufism by sizeable number of Muslims who may for religious recognition, social attachment, spiritual development and perhaps preference of miracle. With this, *Şūfī* centres, practices, emblems and celebrations are founded here and there in the town.

Sufism is claimed to be a distinct way of getting access to the Ultimate Reality, the Source of Being through guidance. Quadri, 1981 observes that this method of gaining nearness to Allah is termed as *Tariqah* or path. Thus, Sufism is believed by its practitioners to be an attempt at curbing human limitations by approaching the Divine. Many schools have been formed so as to educate the prospective *Murid* (student) who actually wants to have the mystical knowledge of God; these schools are the *Şūfī* orders.

He further submitted that initially some people were said to have organized themselves into small group purposely for mutual encouragement and also met for recitation of Qur’ān and other forms of remembrance so as to get to the proximity of God (Quadri, 1981) as contained in the following passages of Qur’ān:

Then do ye remember Me; I will remember you.
Be grateful to Me, and reject not faith. (Q.
2:152) (Ali,1934).

And keep thy soul content with those who
call on their Lord morning and evening,
seeking His Face; and let not thine eyes pass
beyond them, seeking the pomp and glitter
of this life; no obey any whose heart We
have permitted to neglect the remembrance
of Us, one who follows his own desires
whose case has gone beyond all bounds. (Q.
18:28) (Ali, 1934)

The verses quoted above and among others in the understanding of *Şūfīs* serve as the bases for the spiritual centre but the argument subsists as to whether or not the people of early time gathered together for group recitation and what exactly they recited collectively for mutual encouragement.

Şūfīs were in small group and majority of them lived in isolation. Nasr, 1979 posits that it was only later, did these smaller groups become standardized into orders and attached to particular masters. The orders are similar to one another but there are some differences which however, do not affect the extant law.

The coming into being of *Wilāyah* or sainthood and the performance of miracle attributed to the saints of God played a prominent role in drawing people to Sufism. The twelfth century of the Christian era recorded the influx of people into great *Şūfī* orders. Among them were *Qādīriyyah*, the *Suhrawadīyyah*, the *Rifa’iyyah*, the *Shādhilīyyah*, the *Mawlawīyyah*, and the *Ahmadiyyah* (Esposito, 1995). Others that were formed between eighteenth and twentieth century’s include *Badawīya*; *Khatmiyah*; *Idrīsīyah*; *Nakshabandiya*; *Sālīhīyāh*; *Rashidiya*; *Sanūsiyah*; *Sāmmāihīyah*; *Tijaniyyah* and some others. The first four *Ṭuruq* (Plural of *Ṭarīqah*) were the most prominent for the growth and proliferation of group Sufism and have their branches in the Muslim world (Esposito, 1995).

Nicholson, 1967 opines that Sufism and indeed *Şūfī* orders were first introduced into West Africa in the fifteenth century through Morocco. Shah, 1990 observes that Sufism is

evidently posed to propagate the religion of Islam as well as to put in order and making accessible to chosen *murids* the particular methods and techniques taught by the founder of each order. Consequently, its tentacles spread to the cities, towns and villages of western Nigeria including Saki via the northern part of the country. Thus, this study is hinged on the above premise to assess the contribution of *Şūfī* orders towards the development of the people of the study area.

Statement of the Problem

The emergency of the virulent criticism of *Izālah* group and the formation of Muslim associations with their over-bearing effects on *Şūfī* orders in Nigeria have necessitated many to write on the relevance or otherwise of Sufism. The non-availability of any work in Saki towards this direction has compelled the researcher to cross-examine the activities as well as the influence of *Şūfī* orders if any on Muslims of Saki.

Purpose of the Study

This study is having the below as its aims and objectives:

1. To assess the prevalence of Sufism in Saki
2. To establish how many *Şūfī* orders are in Saki
3. To evaluate the degree to which *Şūfī* orders have contributed towards Muslims development in Saki

Research Questions

1. Is Sufism present in Saki?
- ii. Does Sufism contribute to spiritual development of Saki Muslims?
- iii. Does Sufism spread real Islam in Saki?
- iv. To what extent has *Şūfī* orders influenced the lives of Saki Muslims?

Significance of the Study

This study is undertaken with a view to bringing into consciousness the contribution of the *Şūfī* orders to the spread of Islam in Saki. Through this study, awareness on the relevance of the genuineness or otherwise of the impact of Sufism on the Muslims of the town is brought to limelight. As a matter of fact, as much as this attempt would provide useful information on the activities of *Şūfī* orders in Saki, it cannot make complete our knowledge of Sufism in the town. However, it will still pave way for further researches. This study is hoped to bring into focus facts and factors responsible for the impacts of *Şūfī* orders on Muslims of Saki which have remained, for long, unexplored. It will also augment the readers' knowledge of Islam in Saki.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this study is not to dwell on the emergence of Sufism in the global world nor its advent in Nigeria but it will however, be limited to the *Qādīriyyah* and *Tijaniyyah* orders

because these two orders are those that are present in the town under study. The discussion on them will focus on their evolution and contribution.

Origin and Development Şūfī Order

Nicholson, 1967 submits that the origin of Sufism has become a subject of wild controversy such to an extent that divergent opinions emanated. This is because different authors saw different origins from different sources. Hence, the grouping of the exponents into three different classes with contradicting views. The first group maintains that the word *Şūfī* is derived from *Şūf* which means wool. This goes in line with the wearing of woolen dresses by the *Şūfīs* in a time when silk and brocade had become the taste of wealthy and the worldly people. The second group opines that the term *Şūfī* is associated with a group of people who dedicated themselves to the service of *Ka'abh*, the *Ahl-Suffah* i.e., the brotherhood of purity. The third group is the group of those who attribute the origin of Sufism to foreign influences like Christianity. He represents this group when he establishes that the wearing of woolen clothes and ascetic practices like silence, litanies and the doctrine of divine love are of the Christians origin (Nicholson, 1967).

Meanwhile, the opinion of the third group is not unconnected with the semblance between the mystic of Islam and other religions and mostly the contact between the two. It is of noteworthy that, the contact between different ideas does not necessarily mean that one influences the other. But it could be that the two have the same or similar origin (Quadri, 1981).

The name *Şūfī* was ascribed to the practitioners of *Şūfī* practices while they themselves preferred the name *al-fuqarā'* (*Faqīr*. Singular) i.e., the poor in conformity with Qur'an that says: "O ye men! It is ye that have need of God: but God is the one free of all wants, worthy of all praise " (Ali, 1934).

It should be recalled here that, the twelfth century CE witnessed a great deal of the advent of many *Şūfī* orders (*Ṭuruq*) that had previously lived in isolation. And by the thirteenth century many *Zawayah* had acquired a dignified repute built upon the personality of a *Shaykh* and turned to his school. The institution of sainthood and the belief of the people in the power of miracle of the saints impel people to *Şūfī* orders. Consequently, the spread and growth of *Tasawwuf* in the modern times owe much to the penetration of both the *Qādīriyyah* and the *Tijaniyyah* orders in towns, cities and village including Saki via the Northern part of Nigeria.

Evolution of Şūfī Orders in Saki

Ahmed, 1991 maintains that the presence of the *Qādīriyyah Şūfī* order predates its *Tijaniyyah* counterpart in Saki. The order (*Qādīriyyah*) is widely practiced from India to Morocco and other West African countries. It got to the Northern Nigeria shortly before the coming of Shaykh Uthman Danfodio (1754-1817). The practice of the order had been well implanted in Kano as a result of the effort of many *Qadiri* personalities such as Shaykh Nasiru Kabara. The most highly rated propagator of the *Qādīriyyah* order in the Yorubaland was Shaykh Ahmad Rufa'i, commonly known as Nda Salati (d. 1966) in view of his frequent chanting of *Salat 'ala-Nabiyy*.

However, some sources lay claim to the presence of Qadirīs in Ibadan, Ijebu-Ode, Badagry and Lagos before him. Yet he was regarded as the first person to have introduced *Qādīriyyah*

group devotion into this area as a deputy of Shaykh Nasiru Kabara. For his effort and dedication to the order, the *Qādīriyyah* finds way to places like Osogbo, Iseyin, Ifo, Owode, Ilubu, Lanlate, Ifon, Ejigbo and some other places all in western Nigeria (Ahmed, 1991).

Oral tradition had it that it was from Iseyin, a town in the present day Oke-Ogun area of Oyo state that the gospel of the order spread to Saki, the town under study. Though no oral or written document has handed down to us the exact year in which the Order penetrates. It was introduced in Saki by one Muslim cleric called Thanni Megida from his teacher, Alfa Olayiwola, a native of Iseyin. The initiation of the former was brought about in the year 1940. Prior to this time, many clerics in Saki had been endowed with the real ascetic impulse and as had been engaged for long in *Tarīqah* activities, these activities were majorly clandestine, devoid of public knowledge. Some of these clerics are Alfa Olorunero, Alfa Ahmad Alaro and one elder brother to late Shaykh Kewulabi, a renowned Islamic scholar in town to mention just a few. Perhaps due to the negligible membership for the performance of the rites of the order, the said Alfa Alaro joined the *Tijaniyyah* order while others remained as Qadirīs (T. Sobaloju, personal communication, November 10, 2018).

However, Alhaji Tiamiyu Olabisi was the first to introduce the *Qādīriyyah* group devotion in 1983. He, himself was initiated by his teacher, Alhaji Atiku of Iganaland, a town in Oke-Ogun in 1964. Since, the former had been deeply involved in the practices and rites of the Order all alone. In view of the insignificant number of membership, he was once an active member of the *Tijaniyyah* order for a period of ten solid years.

Interestingly enough, Alhaji Tiamiyu returned to *Qādīriyyah* and established his on *Zawiyah* within Saki central Mosque. During this early period of its formation, the members were in the habit of travelling to Ilorin, Abeokuta and Iseyin to participate in the annual *Mawlid Nabiyy* of the Order. This continued till 1990 when the branch started its own celebration of *Mawlid Nabiyy*. The spread of the *Qādīriyyah* order in Saki followed a slow pace. The *al-awrad al-kubrah* session of Alhaji Tiamiyu remained only the centre for congregational devotion. But in 1987, Mallam Usman Alawiye, a son of the Chief Imam of Sakiland who is now late joined him (T. Sobaloju, personal communication, November 10, 2018). There is a controversy as to whether he formed his own *al-awrad al-kubrah* centre at his Ilua resident or not.

Actually, a little change in the status quo was heralded by the graduated students of *Markaz Ta'īm al'Arabi* located at Agege area of Lagos State, Nigeria. These students, during their days of studentship under the tutelage of late Shaykh Shasili Sambo (d. 1998), a grandson of Alfa *Nda Salati* had been initiated into the Order. These students, on getting home, paid visit to the only *Khalifah* of the Order and actively participated in group devotional rites with him. Subsequently, these students with the express permission of the *Khalifah* formed their own centres. Hence, the spread of the *Kuburah* centre of the Order in Saki (T. Sobaloju, personal communication, November 10, 2018).

The first of such students was *Muqaddam* Taofiq Imran Buseri (now late) who formed his own *Zawiyah* in 1993 at his house Mokola area. Both *Muqaddam* Abdur-Rahman and Taofeeq Adeniji were ordered by the *Khalifah* to be attending the *kubrah* session of the former (T. Imran, personal communication, November 10, 2018). Barely three years later, the two *Muqaddam* formed another *Zawiyah* at the same place in Sango area of Saki. In the year 1997 another branch was added under the auspices of *Muqaddam* Najeemdeen Abogun. The year 2001 witnessed the formation of more *Ziwayah* as *Muqaddam* Abdul Azeez Shittu

(Kube), *Muqaddam* Gazali Raji (Kara area) established theirs while *Muqaddam* Abdul Nafiu Jumah and *Muqaddam* Tohiru Abdul Fatai have been authorized to form *ziwayah* of their own (T. Imran, personal communication, November 10, 2018).

Adekilekun observes that the *Tijaniyyah* order is majorly practiced in African countries like Morocco, Algeria, Sub-Saharan Africa and Nigeria. It came to Nigeria in the early days of its existence and many people have been initiated into it. The coming of Hajj ‘Umar al Futi in 1825 to Nigeria also made the Order to be popularly known (Adekilekun, 1997). During his second visit to Nigeria in 1832 via Borno, he made a stop-over in Sokoto where he took part in the Jihad activities for five years. He later married the daughter of Muhammad Bello, who was also a member of the order (Quadri, 1981), though there was a controversy as to whether the daughter of Muhammad Bello was a member or not. From Northern Nigeria the tentacles of the order spread like a hammattan fire to the south-west, including Ilorin, Ibadan, Ijebu-Ode, Iseyin and some other places (A. Arebo, personal communication, November 10, 2018).

Like the *Qādīriyyah*, the *Tijaniyyah* order penetrated Saki through Iseyin and to some other parts of Oke-ogun. The presence of the Order in Saki had been dated back to quite a number of years, which no source can with certainty establish. The actors and participants in the *Ṭarīqah* events during this time were very secretive; they did it all alone without exposing it to the knowledge of the general public for the reasons best known to them. These were Shayskh Ahmad Tijani al-Mustapha Awelenje (Isale-onikeke); Imam Aliyu Gafata; Shaykh Aminullah Oyesade (Isale-Taba); Shaykh Yusuf Paraqou; Shaykh Ahmad Tijani Ibadawaki (Isale-Taba), Shaykh Abubakar Seyyidi Iyake (Oke-Elefun) and Alhaji Jimoh Akepe (Isale-Taba) (A. Arebo, personal communication, November 10, 2018).. The list can be long.

Consequently, with the coming of Shaykh Muhammad Nafiu Olayiwola in 1952 after the completion of his training there at Iseyin. He introduced the *Tijaniyyah* congregational devotion at *Imale-falaffia* Mosque, the first Mosque ever built in Saki, located at Isale-Abudu where a piece of white cloth (*Izar*) was first spread. He was initiated into the Order by his teacher *Muqaddam* Jeje of Iseyin. Ever since then, the former had got many young Muslims initiated into the *Ṭarīqah* (A. Salahudeen, personal communication, November 10, 2018). Undoubtedly, this *Zawiyah* remained the only centre for activities of the Order for five years with many different interested members from different areas of the town. These were its founding members Alfa Nafiu Olayiwola; Alfa Fowewe; Alfa Jeje Ogidigbo; Alfa Okemale; Alhaji Badrudeen, Alhaji. Salaudeen Adebayo; Alfa Abdur-Rahaman Olopoeyan and many others (B. Ajagbe, personal communication, November 10, 2018). In 1957 another *Zawiyah* was formed and situated at Isale-Ola area of Saki under the leadership of late Shaykh Shittu Kewulabi (B. Ajagbe, personal communication, November 10, 2018).

The polarization of Saki member of *Tijaniyyah* order into two *Zawaya* centers continued up till early 1970s when many active members began to form their own *Zawaya*. The formation of more *Zawaya* which began in the early 1970s to date was more rapid and progressive unlike it was in 1950s. It should be of note worthy to mention that, the proliferation of *Zawaya* centers was brought about by the efforts of the said two Shayks: Shaykh Nafiu Olayiwola and Shaykh Shittu Kewulabi throughout the tom, dick and harry of Saki township. Although the efforts of those who received their initiation into the Order somewhere from Ghana, Ibadan, Ilorin, Eko, etc. can never be undermined (O. Yunus, personal communication, November 10, 2018).

Contributions of Şūfī Orders towards Muslims Development in Saki Town

Indeed, it is of no use denying the fact that Sufism through its orders (*Qādirīyyah* and *Tijaniyyah*) has been in the remote past and particularly in the recent years actively instrumental to the progress of educational, political as well as social lives of Saki Muslims and its environs. Members of these orders from time to time have been in forefront working tirelessly for the propagation of Islam in the area, and to making sure that the light of the religion that has once been brightly shown in Saki will never dim.

Educational Contribution

Admittedly, in the area of learning, members of Şūfī orders in Saki have intensified efforts not to allow the educational standard to be deteriorating; to checkmate the excesses of the Christian schools in alluring Muslim children into Christianity; to boost the teaching and preaching career as well as to bring Western cum Arabic or Islamic education to the doorsteps of all and sundry. By so doing, many Arabic and Western oriented schools have been formed. Indeed, Sufi orders have actually brought Arabic and Islamic literacy to the Muslims of Saki (A. Salahudeen, personal communication, November 10, 2018).

Furthermore, in addition to the traditional schools, many Islamic institutions of learning have come into limelight such includes: *Zumuratul Hujaj* (Isia) founded in 1966 by *Alfa* Alaro Olore or the league of Alfas; *Mujidūna* Arabic and Islamic School (Oke-Sebe) established on November 18th, 1978 under Shaykh ‘Abdul Azeez Jeje Kunmi, the incumbent chief *Imām* of the town, *Muthabitudeen Islamiyyah* (Oke-Elefun) founded in April, 1986 under the aegis of *Alfa Zakariyyah* Agboluaje (now late); *Nasirdeen Islamiyyah* (Oke-Daodu) established in December 25th, 1985 under the control of *Alfa Badru Bello*; *NurSahadat Islamiyyah* (Isale-Oro) under the leadership of *Tijaniyyah Şūfī* order, the Islamic Institute of Science and Technology (Weewe) established on 17th of August, 1992 under the auspices of *Alfa Nafiu Olayiwola* (A. Badmus, personal communication, November 10, 2018). The list can be long on this. These schools have provided employment opportunity for many teachers who are adepts in the field of learning. And also, the schools have produced students who have become graduates in various universities both in Nigeria and Abroad. It is of noteworthy that the establishment of Muslim schools in Saki is not original to the members of Şūfī orders, *Nawar-ud-Deen* and *Ansar-ud-Deen* societies were formed in 1950s to establish Muslim owned schools to mention but few.

Political Contribution

Undoubtedly, the political scene of Saki Township has only recorded an insignificant impact from the Şūfī orders, in spite the fact that the preponderance of the population of the town is said to be Muslims. Yet members of these orders constitute a vast number of the total electorates, with this, they have been able to influence other Muslims against voting for non-Muslim candidates (T. Massa, personal communication, November 10, 2018), thereby enlisting the support of Muslims for Muslim candidates to win in the various elections held in the town, so as to accord a wholesome assistance to Islam and the course of Muslims. The Şūfī clerics have been greatly patronized by many who are seeking political offices into the only Local Government of the town. Non-Muslims are not left out in this patronage (Z. Agboluaje, personal communication, November 10, 2018). This explains the acceptability of the efficacy of power to commune with Jinns waged by these clerics. This is not to put into total oblivion the visitation to the traditional medicament practitioners by these individuals and the involvement of un-Islamic practices by some of these Şūfī clerics under the guise of

prayer for the success of their candidates. Although, we cannot with certainty pin down to *Şūfī* membership any of the previous chairmen of the local government in the town, nevertheless, the *Şūfī* clerics are the acclaimed spiritual fathers of these chairmen whose words become orders which should be put into practice by the latter.

In addition, it should be recalled that whenever there is an urgent and important issues on different aspects of life concerning the people of Saki which require the opinions and the right counsels of different religious leaders and distinguished individuals either by the king or the chairmen of the local government area the *Şūfī mallams* cannot be dispensed with (Z. Agboluaje, personal communication, November 10, 2018) this is because many of them are the elderly *mallams* in Saki.

Social Contribution

On the social plane, the contributions of the *Şūfī* orders towards social organization of Muslims have been worthwhile. Meanwhile, the *Şūfī* orders in Saki served on an effective tool in bringing brotherhood and unity to prominence among *Şūfī* Muslims who came from different background³⁵. The *Wazifah* and *aI-awrād* sessions served as vehicles in bringing the *Şūfīs* together daily or on weekly basis (O. Yunus, personal communication, November 10, 2018).

Abdul Azeez expresses that no better proof is required of the innermost impact of the *Şūfī* orders than the fact that Islam spread through them in Saki (A. Areebo, personal communication, November 10, 2018). Islam at first, spread in Saki as a result of the personal examples of *Şūfī* masters and their preaching methodology, these include: Shaykh Ahmad Tijani Al-Mustapha Awelenje (Isale-Onikeke), Alfa Olohunero (Igboro), Alfa Ahmad Alaro (Ajegunle), Shaykh Aminullah Oyesade (Isale-Taba) just to mention but a few (Z. Agboluaje, personal communication, November 10, 2018). These masters have shown a living example of Islamic spirituality in their respective domains so much so that many were drawn nearer them. And much later, the knowledge of *Shari'ah* was passed across and Islam becomes increasingly acceptable to the people. This is not to say that the propagation of Islam in Saki is entirely credited to the efforts of *Şūfī* orders as there are some organizations which see this as their major concern.

Research Design

This is a descriptive research thus a survey method of enquiry is adopted for the study. The researcher has been using questionnaire and interviews to gather enough facts and figures for analysis of data collected from the field

Method of Data Collection

The researcher has personally visited and administered questionnaire among the sample population. For the purpose of accuracy and objectivity, 100 copies of the questionnaires were dully administered, filled and returned. The analysis of the results was discussed fully in the next chapter.

Procedure for Data Analysis

The method for the analysis of the information obtained from the respondents' responses was simple percentage statistical method. Details of the analysis were presented in chapter four of the study.

Data Analysis and Discussion of the Findings

This section is all out to present, analyze and discuss the data collected for this study. The analysis is essentially dependent on the respondents' consideration of the items on the questionnaire administered for the study. Four research questions were tested and the below tables show the analyzed data for each item and the result of each is also discussed just to aid easy understanding for the would-be readers of this study.

Analysis and Discussion of the Demographical Data of the Respondents

Table 1: Frequency and percentage Distribution of the Respondents Based on Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	67	67
Female	33	33
Total	100	100

Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents based on sex. 67 (67%) of the respondents are males while 33 (33%) are females. The above class distribution shows that the majority of the respondents contacted for this study are males and therefore, to a very large extent the opinion expressed in this study emanated from the most active sex when it comes to religious attachment and practices.

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of the Respondents Based on Age

Age (in years)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18 – 40	25	25
41 – 60	43	43
66 and above	32	32
Total	100	100

Table 2 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents based on age. Age bracket 18 – 40 has 25 (25%), age bracket 41 – 65 has 43 (43%) while age bracket 66 and above has 32 (32%). Thus, it can be inferred from the above distribution that age bracket 41 – 65 and 66 and above constitute the majority and therefore, the views expressed in this study are those of the matured minds.

Table 3: Frequency and percentage Distribution of the Respondents Based on Educational Qualification

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No formal education (<i>Mallams</i> and Artisans)	31	31
Primary Leaving Certification	18	18
SSCE	27	27
NCE/OND	16	16
Graduate	08	8
Total	100	100

Table 3 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents’ educational qualification as follows. No formal education 31 (31%), primary leaving certification 18 (18%), SSCE 27 (27%), NCE/OND 16 (16%) and graduate 08 (8%). Hence, the study concludes within the above scope of statistical investigation of this survey that educated individuals have a simple majority.

Table 4: Frequency and percentage Distribution of the Respondents Based on Occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Trade	32	32
Transportation	13	13
Civil service	15	15
Private sector	12	12
Self-employed	21	21
Others	07	7
Total	100	100

Table 4 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents occupation as follows: Trade 32 (32%), Transportation 13 (13%), Civil service 15 (15%), Private sector 12 (12%), Self-employment 21 (21%), others 7 (7%). The major occupation of the observed respondents is trade followed by self-employed thus, the implication of the above class distribution is that working class Muslims who are not employed by government dominated the respondents contacted for the study and to a large extent their opinions can be creditable.

Analysis and Discussion of Data on the Contribution of Şūfi Orders towards Muslims Development in Saki Town

Table 5: Is *Tariqah* a spiritual path through which man is able to transcend his own weakness and approach the Divine?

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	18	18
Agree	25	25
Disagree	32	32
Strongly Disagree	25	25
Total	100	100

Table 5 shows 18 (18%) of the respondents to have strongly agreed on the proposition that *Tariqah* as a spiritual path is able to make man transcends his weaknesses and approach the Divine, 25 (25%) agreed, 32 (32%) disagreed vehemently on the same proposition while 25 (25%) as the remnant strongly disagreed. The implication of the above distribution is that the opinion of the majority of the respondents invalidates the research question that says Sufism spread real Islam in Saki.

Table 6: Islam spread in Saki through the personal examples and preaching methods of *Şūfī* masters.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	31	31
Agree	25	25
Disagree	22	22
Strongly Disagree	22	22
Total	100	100

Table 6 above shows a simple majority of the respondents 31 (31%), 25 (25%) to have strongly agreed and agreed with the statement that the spread of Islam in Saki is through the personal examples and preaching methods of Şūfī masters while the remaining 22 (22%) and 22 (22%) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. Thus, it is reasonable judging from the above data that Islam spread in Saki through Sufism.

Table 7: Muslim Organizations other than Şūfī orders spread Islam in Saki

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	28	28
Agree	19	19
Disagree	33	33
Strongly Disagree	20	20
Total	100	100

Table 7 shows 28 (28%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 19 (19%) agreed, 33 (33%) and 20 (20%) to have been in support and opposition to the view that Muslim organizations other than members of Şūfī orders responsible for the spread of Islam in Saki respectively. The inference that can be taken from the above data distribution is that members of Şūfī orders are credited for the spread of the religion in Saki though other Muslim Organizations do spread Islam in the town. Thus, the above validates the research question that says Sufism is present in Saki.

Table 8: Many gatherings of Şūfī (*Mawlud n-Nabiy* and *Laylatul Qadr* celebrations) turn out to be avenues where un-Islamic practices are carried out in a large scale

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	43	43
Agree	31	31
Disagree	19	19
Strongly Disagree	07	07
Total	100	100

Table 8 above shows an overwhelming majority of the respondents which stood at 43 (43%) strongly agreed and 31 (31%) agreed to have concurred on the notion that many gathering of Şūfī orders in town under study are greeted with a number of un-Islamic practices such as free mixing of sexes, improper dressing, fornication consumption of alcoholic drinks etc while insignificant number of 19 (19%) and 07 (7%) disagreed and strongly disagreed. Thus, this distribution also confirms the research question that states that Sufism in Saki spread fake Islam.

Table 9: Many Muslims even among Şūfī members in Saki are lagging behind in following the Sunnah of the Prophet (*Şallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	21	21
Agree	36	36
Disagree	13	13
Strongly Disagree	30	30
Total	100	100

Table 9 shows 21 (21%) of the respondents strongly agreed that many Muslims including sufists are not in the forefront in following Sunnah of the Prophet (*Şallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*), 36 (36%) agreed, 13 (13%) disagreed while the remaining 30 (30%) strongly agreed. The implication of the above class distribution is that since a simple and clear majority of the respondents tends to support the proposition thus the distribution is valid enough to conclude that some Muslims of Saki together with members of *Şūfī* orders are not following into the Sunnah of the Prophet (*Şallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam*).

Table 10: Members of *Şūfī* orders and traditional medicament practitioners are patronized by political office seekers in the town.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	48	48
Agree	30	30
Disagree	11	11
Strongly Disagree	11	11
Total	100	100

Table 10 above shows 48 (48%) of the respondents to have strongly agreed on the claim that members of *Şūfī* orders and traditional medicament practitioners are visited by political office seekers in the town, 30 (30%) agreed, 11 (11%) disagreed and 11 (11%) strongly disagreed respectively. What can be inferred from the above data going by the response of the majority of the respondents is that members of *Şūfī* orders claim the knowledge of unseen like the traditional people. Thus, this also validates a research question that says Sufism does not lead to correct spiritual development among Muslims

Table 11: Sufism encourages mixing paganistic beliefs with and practicing it together with Islam.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	37	37
Agree	41	41
Disagree	16	16
Strongly Disagree	06	6
Total	100	100

Table 11 above shows that a great majority of the respondents which stands at 37% (37%) and 41 (41%) strongly agreed and agreed respectively on the submission that Sufism encourages mixing paganistic beliefs and practices with Islam. Whereas a very low percentage of the respondents 16 (16%) and 06 (06%) disagreed and strongly disagreed on the same notion. The inference is that the whole garment of Sufism is shrouded in paganistic tendencies.

Table 12: Sufism propagates bogus Islam

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	51	51
Agree	31	31
Disagree	10	10
Strongly Disagree	08	8
Total	100	100

Table 12 above shows 51 (51%) of the respondents strongly agreed that Sufism propagates bogus Islam, 31 (31%) agreed, 10 (10%) disagreed while the remaining 08 (8%) strongly disagreed. The submission of the above distribution is that the response of the overwhelming majority (82%) reinforces the assertion that Sufism spread adulterated Islam.

Table 13: *Ṣūfī* orders brought Arabic and Islamic literacy to the Muslims of Saki by establishing Arabic and western oriented schools.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	49	49
Agree	17	17
Disagree	16	16
Strongly Disagree	18	18
Total	100	100

Table 13 shows 49 (49%) of the respondents to have strongly agreed on the idea that *Ṣūfī* orders brought Arabic and Islamic literacy to the doorsteps of Saki Muslims, 17 (17%) agreed, 16 (16%) disagreed while 18 (18%) strongly disagreed. The implication of the above data is that the evidence above is sufficient enough to conclude that members of *Ṣūfī* orders helped in bringing Arabic and Islamic literacy to the people of Saki.

Table 14: The schools established by members of *Ṣūfī* orders provided employment opportunities for many teachers in Saki

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	62	62
Agree	14	14
Disagree	09	9
Strongly Disagree	15	15
Total	100	100

Table 14 shows 62 (62%) of the respondents to strongly agreed with the statement that *Ṣūfī* orders provided job opportunities for Muslims of Saki through schools established by them, 14 (14%) agreed, (9%) disagreed while the remaining 15 (15%) strongly disagreed. Therefore, the inference that can be taken from the above statistical distribution is that an overwhelming majority of the respondents supports the view and hence Sufism provided job opportunities for many teachers in Saki.

Table 15: Turning rosary into necklace and attaching emblems of eminent *Ṣūfī* personalities to one's clothe is attributed to members of *Ṣūfī* orders in the town.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	23	23
Agree	54	54
Disagree	12	12
Strongly Disagree	11	11
Total	100	100

Table 15 above shows that 23 (23%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the assertion that turning rosary into necklace and attaching emblem of eminent *Ṣūfī* personalities to one's

clothe is attributable to members of Şūfī orders in the town, 54 (54%) agreed, 12 (12%) disagreed while 11 strongly disagreed. Thus, the above distribution of data suggests that truly Sufists in the town under study have developed a social outfit of making rosary and pictorial representation of the *Shuyukh* means of identification.

Table 16: Elderly *Mallams* among members of Şūfī orders are consulted by the successive kings and local government chairmen for wise counseling.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	54	54
Agree	23	23
Disagree	06	6
Strongly Disagree	17	17
Total	100	100

Table 16 above shows that 54 (54%) of the respondents strongly agreed on the belief that many kings and chairmen of the only local government area in the town consulted elderly Şūfī *Mallams* for wise counseling, 23 (23%) agreed, 06 (6%) disagreed and 17 (17%) strongly disagreed. The implication of the above class distribution is that going by the response of the majority Şūfī *Mallams* support the leaders in the study area via wise counseling.

Conclusion

The whole passages of this study have been directed towards finding out the contribution of Şūfī orders towards development of Muslims of Saki. Born out of sheer love, enthusiasm and adoration Sufism is described as the core and beauty of Islam by many. But to some other, it has been viewed as bogus, flippant, vile and irksome defilement in form of a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the parapet and structure of Islam. Hence, the vitriolic criticism of Şūfī rites and practices is in vogue in the Muslim world at large.

Right from the inception of Sufism, nay, formation of its orders in Saki (*Qadiriyyah* and *Tijaniyyah*) efforts have been put in place to achieve thorough evangelization process bringing about internalization of the religion of Islam in the area. The contribution of members of Şūfī orders according to the findings of this study have been felt in Muslims' lives ranging from educational, political to social and a very little of religious reawakening. This is because it is a matter of regret that despite the efforts, many un-Islamic practices have found sway among Muslims in the town. This has invariably shown that the Islamic culture and spiritual development so-introduced have not been able to compete favourably with a host of unholy accretions within the fabric of these Muslims. Thus, many are still wanting in the practice of the pristine and undiluted Islam.

This state of affair may perhaps due to the types of Islam spread by Şūfī orders which does not discriminate between the authentic and adulterated. It is equally relevant to observe that during the course of this study, many sufists saw us as an outsider who is not a member of any Şūfī order and as such many things were hesitantly disclosed while some others were not disclosed at all. Some see *Tarīqah* as a sort of 'secret cult' the knowledge of which must not be divulged to uninitiated nay, the general public. Far from assassinating the personality of individuals, some sufists in Saki are not well grounded in the so-called knowledge of the spiritual path.

Recommendations

Based on the field experience and the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. First and foremost, Muslims should endeavour as much as humanly possible to painstakingly study the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth thoroughly in order to practicalise the commandments and the compulsory duties so as to shun in good term all innovative practices in their lives.
2. Muslims must not only be truthful in restricting themselves to the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in all religious affairs but also refrain from all temptations that are either unlawful or innovative in the remembrance and showing reverence to Allah, the Almighty.
3. While spreading Islam, Muslims should do away in good term once again, in attaching even as small as an iota of significance to miracles and its likes.
4. Muslims should allow the penetrating effects of the glorious Qur'ān and Ḥadīth to prevail in their daily lives only if their intention is genuinely for Allah. In doing this, their followers and non-Muslims would see for themselves the beauty of the best pattern of human behaviour imbued in the Prophet of Allah (SAW), an embodiment of all virtues per excellence.
5. Visitation to Mallams (Muslim clerics) for spiritual blessings and breakthrough should henceforth be stopped as this breeds arrogating the possession of superhuman power and knowledge of unseen to mortals. However, recitation of *ar-Ruqiyah* (Qur'ānic exorcism) with correct beliefs and practices for healing is allowed.

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