

# **Communication, Conflict, Reconciliation, and the Shehu Usman Danfodiyo and Sarkin Gobir Saga: Communication Failure and Its Implication in Escalating Conflicts between Sokoto Caliphate and West African Nations**

**Tambari Abbas Bashar**

Department of Islamic Studies, Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Usmanu Danfodiyo University,  
Sokoto, Nigeria

**Abstract:** This paper explores the communication approach of Shehu Usman Danfodiyo, a revered leader who aimed to revive Islam in West Africa. It examines the theoretical perspectives on communication, qualities of a teacher, and barriers to Shehu's message in Hausaland. The study highlights Shehu's effective use of encoding, medium, and message to spread Islam, despite challenges like illiteracy, personal biases, and environmental factors. Shehu Usman Danfodiyo was a social reformer who objected to non-Islamic practices in Hausaland. His methodology involved training followers through personal example, preaching, and teaching. He utilized various sciences, including Tawhid, Hadith, Tafsir, and Fiqh, to transform society. Communication involves sharing messages, ideas, and information between parties. The components include sender, encoding, medium, receiver, decoding, and feedback. Effective communication requires timely, brief, and appropriate messaging, with attention to feedback and understanding. Shehu emphasized the importance of a teacher's preparation, conduct, and qualities, such as patience, mercy, and softness. A teacher should prioritize Qur'an and Sunnah, treat others with justice, and avoid wrongdoings. Noise, illiteracy, and personal biases hindered the assimilation of Shehu's message. Environmental factors, like Sarkin Gobir's resistance, also posed challenges.

**Keywords:** Communication, Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo, qualities of a teacher, Sokoto Caliphate, failed communication, Gobir, conflict

**Email:** [tabbas.bashar@gmail.com](mailto:tabbas.bashar@gmail.com)

## **1. Introduction**

"The significance of Shehu Usman Danfodiyo's Islamic revival in 19th-century West Africa, particularly in Hausaland, Nigeria, cannot be overstated. As a renowned scholar, social reformer, and spiritual leader, Shehu Usman Danfodiyo's mission was to revive Islamic values, eradicate un-Islamic practices, and promote education. This paper examines the crucial role of communication in the success of Shehu Usman Danfodiyo's Islamic revival, highlighting his effective use of various communication channels, including preaching, teaching, writing, and leadership. [1] has this to say about Shehu:

“But Usman Danfodiyo was more than a preacher. He was also a social reformer who objected to the non-Islamic practices of the Hausa leaders.”

“The importance of Usmanu Danfodiyo in 19th and 20th-century West Africa cannot be restricted to Hausaland, for the resurgence and reform of Islam, which he had accomplished, spread throughout West Africa. The expansion of Islam into Yoruba land, the conquest of Ilorin, and the destruction of Oyo inaugurated 70 years of civil war in south-west Nigeria, which ultimately drew the British into the interior of Nigeria in the late 19th century. Similarly, the pressure of his forces on the moribund state of Bornu east of Lake Chad contributed to its rebirth under El-Kanemi and his successor” [1]

The methodology of Sheikh Usman in transforming the Sokoto Caliphate was based essentially on training his men by personal example and not by theory; his own life was the embodiment of Islam. But that did not prevent his going out to preach. Indeed, that was his main life-engagement. It was realized that his preaching was excellent, that in compliance with the Qur’an, he preached with wisdom and good exhortation, and his training of the men around him and his call to people were all based on knowledge. Thus, the Shehu fully utilized the sciences (*Ulum*) in his efforts to transform his society, the science of Tawhid, the science of hadith, the science of Tafsir, the science of Fiqh, as well as the sciences of medicine, astronomy, and mathematics. Any aspect of knowledge which they thought was beneficial to the community was taught and acquired” [1]

Similarly, [2] disclosed this about the life of Shehu:

“Shaykh Usman was born at Maratta in the land of Galmi in the year (1754-1817 CE). Later, he moved to Degel, which was in the city-state of Gobir, where he started his activities. The inhabitants of the area lived in the darkness of ignorance about Islam. He started preaching and teaching in his hometown, Degel, when he was 20 years old, from where he later travelled within and outside Gobir on preaching tours. The tours took him to Kebbi, Zamfara, Faru, Daura, Illo across the River Niger, and to Zauma. The tours took place at different times with Degel as the base. He stayed in Zamfara for about five

years, during which he had the most fertile ground for his missionary activities.”

Possibly the objective of this paper was to examine the role of communication in the success of Shehu Usman Danfodiyo's Islamic revival in West Africa, specifically in Hausaland, Nigeria, and to explore the implications of the misinterpretation of Shehu's message in escalating conflict.

## **2. Theoretical Perspectives on Communication**

Communication has been explained in different words and perspectives, but the context is very similar. Communication is a process of sharing messages, ideas, facts, information, etc between at least 2 people or more. Communication is an exchange of information between parties (persons) or people [3]. The components of the communication process include the following:

- Message - Message refers to the subject matter of communication. It is usually composed by the sender as an idea or stimulus. The major message of the Sokoto Caliphate is Islam, which is depicted in books, read by people, and highly documented [4].
- Sender- The sender is the one who initiates the message or communication.
- Encoding - Encoding refers to a situation whereby the message is given meaning through composing words, symbols, drawings, etc.
- Medium- Medium entails the channel of conveying the message in any communication process. For instance, a letter or drum.
- Receiver - Receiver entails the person intended to receive the message. The purpose of the message is to reach the receiver.
- Decoding - Decoding means the interpretation of the message by the receiver.
- Feedback- Feedback refers to the response elicited by the communication or message from the receiver [4].

However, for the communication to be effective or understood, it must be properly passed and decoded by the receiver; therewith, some of these must be present as features of a good communication [3].

- Timely - The communication is done in the right time, for instance, written books intended for social change in Sokoto, such as *Ihya'u Sunnah wa ikhmad al-Bid'ah*.
- Briefly - The Sokoto literatures are mostly done in a summary sense, so that users fully understand them.

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- Appropriate - The communication or message shall be good. Sokoto Caliphate literatures are good to elicit the needed response.
- Feedback - The receivers of Sokoto Caliphate literature respond by coming in troops to learn and consequently implement the preaching lessons
- Attention - The Sokoto literature had received proper attention from the population.
- Understood - The Sokoto literatures have been well-understood by the populace because it is simple, implementable, and in multiple languages (including local dialects) [5].

### 3. Qualities of a Teacher Based Asserted By Shehu

#### 3.1 Preparation of the Teacher

According to the conviction of the Sokoto Caliphate, it is compulsory to have a teacher who guides in every responsible area or ward. The teacher is responsible for guarding the public [6], [7]. One important aspect is that teachers must behave well and ensure that they shun all forms of evils, vices, or crimes. The teacher should teach the following:

- Foundations of religion: The foundations of the aspects of belief and monotheism. According to this, all creatures are beings brought by Allah Almighty. The teacher informs the followers about the attributes of Allah, the attributes of the Prophets, the Angels, and the hereafter.
- Theology or jurisprudence-Accordingly, the teacher teaches about water purification and attributes of water sanitation, aspects of personal hygiene, bathing, ritual, and likes. Other aspects to be taught here include ablution, *tayammum*, about time, prayer (*Salat*), marriage, commerce, and the like.
- Sufism (purification of soul and behaviour)-The teacher ought to inform the public about dangerous features of the soul or mind (pride, sadness, anger, greediness, unnecessary or false hope, and stereotyping, among others). The teacher teaches about repentance, trust in Allah, agreement with Allah's judgement, purifying deeds for the sake of Allah, and the rest of the good behaviours of the heart.
- The people should fear Allah. The teacher should fear Allah and influence the people to fear Allah. This will help them not to cheat or disobey Allah or the people.
- Glad tidings-The teacher works tirelessly to inform the public about glad tidings such as the mercy of Allah upon his servants and creatures.

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- Conduct of a teacher- A teacher warns the students and stakeholders against committing crimes or evils. And he exhorts them to obey commandments by doing good things. In the course of teaching, a teacher should not insult specific people or persons; a teacher should not embarrass or humiliate people. A teacher shall not despise himself by begging people for wealth or alms. Teaching should not be done when people are tired; therefore, there is room for resting or relieving [8], [9], [10], [11].

Verily qualities of a teacher according to the views of Shehu shall reflect the attempt in following the injunctions prescribed by Qur'an, and the Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW). Therefore, Shehu composed his text in the form of major partitions or paragraphs with a view to identifying the needed qualities of a teacher while administering his students or conducting educational business. These prescribed qualities shall be generally categorized into three folds, namely, wanted and unwanted, and the warning aspects [12], [13], [14].

### ***3.2 Lawful Qualities of a Teacher in the Teaching Profession or the Wanted Qualities***

The wanted qualities in a teacher are many [15], [16]. A teacher shall behave with his students, school actors, and stakeholders in a “good manner”, patience, mercy, and softness, according to the nature of contact (students, school actors, and stakeholders). There are people who, when treated with softness, will cause disturbance; therefore, they are handled carefully and accordingly. People (students, school actors, and stakeholders) or the public shall be treated according to the behaviors and footsteps of the companions of the Holy Prophet SAW.

“Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah, you have a good example to follow him who hopes for Allah...” Qur'an, 33:21.

A teacher has to be very patient with the bad behaviours of people (including reneging promises). A teacher has to display mercy and beneficence, especially to the weak students, parents, and stakeholders. The teacher seeks to enjoin the people to the path of Allah SWT, seeking Allah's mercy, and adhering to the footsteps of the righteous past leaders. A teacher shall put forward the Qur'an and Sunnah, ahead of anything, anybody, and everything. He treats everyone with justice and equity as well. He shall shun wrongdoings and injustice. The highest among the miracles given to people or teachers is adhering to Allah SWT and the teachings of the Apostle SAW. Interacting with students, teachers, parents, and others requires the behaviours of the teacher to be good and trustworthy. It is significant to warn them against wrongdoings, evils, crime, illegality, rascality, and vandalism. Warning them through lectures is the first

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intervention to mend or correct wrongdoing, followed by the use of actions, and if impossible, he feels the pains in his heart. It is imperative to submit that the use of the mother tongue in teaching and learning is advantageous, at least by integrating it with a foreign language. This among the qualities of a teacher to follow superiors and obey orders, and shall be pious (by obeying Allah SWT, and teachings of the Prophets). It is part and parcel of the piousness of a teacher to lend belongings to anyone who is entitled without violent discrimination. A teacher shall live decently and shun flamboyancy and luxury because the two features may lead him to corruption and bribery. Notably, teachings shall be preceded by learning and scholarship. Therefore, a teacher has to be well-learned before embroiling in the teaching services. And it is emphatic for a teacher to work with their knowledge. Teaching requires showing love to the followers (students) and stakeholders. People shall be taught according to their respective levels of capacities and abilities. Every teacher shall be a very humble, critical thinker, befriending good scholars. It is imperative for a teacher to be investigating and evaluating his methods and instructions with a view to correcting mistakes, solving problems, and improving [17], [10], [18]. Other wanted qualities of a teacher shall be:

- Agitating, not lazy
- Avoiding fear
- Respectful to all. And equally accord deserving respect to leaders and seniors.
- Focus on forms of worship without negligence
- Return to Allah, and ask for forgiveness severally
- Coordinating is good, but disintegration is a source of destruction
- Furthermore, a teacher shall work to earn a living, for instance, by engaging in farm work, trading, innovation, entrepreneurship, and animal keeping [19], [20], [14].

### ***3.3 Unlawful (Haram) Behaviours of a Teacher in the Teaching Profession***

A teacher has to shun several behaviours in order to succeed and impart knowledge positively in the society. This section broached on these features that shall be avoided by the teacher as submitted by Shehu Usman Danfodiyo. The following are some of the features:

- Betrayal is a significantly blameworthy behaviour unbecoming of a teacher
- Use of excessive force, dictatorship, and arrogance is unbecoming of a teacher.
- Injustice is a blameworthy act unbecoming of a teacher
- Evil deeds or crimes of all kinds shall be halted

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- It is unbecoming for a teacher to send away households of a departing teacher out of an official house. He shall allow the occupants to leave gently and peacefully. Without humiliation or embarrassment
- Corruption and any form of bribery are illegal for any teacher. This includes collecting unworthy gifts from students or parents with a view to accord unjustifiable favour.
- Redundancy by sitting idle without earning through a halal way is unbecoming
- Complete instruction using a foreign language is unbecoming
- A lackadaisical attitude is blameworthy
- Disobedience to superiors is forbidden
- Unequal enforcement of law and order, for instance, by punishing the poor and acquitting the rich
- Arrogance and pride are forbidden
- Exercising unrestricted anger, carelessness about students and fellows
- Luxury life and insulting students or fellows are unbecoming
- Relying on students' or parents' wealth to cater for himself or his family is unbecoming
- Impatience
- Fractionalization or lack of coordination [14], [21].

### ***3.4 Ideas on Behaviors of People of Concern***

The majority of the people (students, fellows, parents) and stakeholders may exhibit some demeanors that a teacher shall be careful with. These features are enumerated as follows:

- Laziness
- Hatred with a reason or not
- Greediness for wealth or leadership
- Unclassified as good or bad (because their nature is unknown or untested)
- Disloyalty
- Divided loyalty or hypocrisy
- Falsehood
- Ungrateful
- Envy
- Crime tendency

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- Sycophancy
- Few of them (the pious can be trusted)
- Corruption, such as the tendency to bribe a teacher [14], [22], [23]. These behaviors conflict with the sayings of Allah Almighty SWT.

“And obey you not everyone (the one who swears much and is a liar or worthless). A slander, going about with calumnies, cruel, and base-born (of illegitimate birth).” Qur’an, 68:10-13.

By *Al-asr* (the time)

Verily, man is in loss

Except those who believe and do righteous good deeds and recommend one another to the truth, and recommend one another to patience. Qur’an, 103:1-3

Verily, from the verses in these injunctions, it can be grasped that the best outlook and behaviors of a teacher shall be “righteousness,” “good deeds and behaviors,” and patience. These are the best tools that help anyone to succeed. Similarly, Allah SWT says:

“Whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom (or small ant) shall see it.

And whoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom shall see it.” Qur’an, 99:7-8.

“They wish that you should compromise with them: So they (to) would compromise with you.” Qur’an, 68:9.

“O you who believe! When you hold secret counsel, do it not for sin and wrongdoing, and disobedience towards the messenger, but do it for righteousness and *Taqwah* (virtues and piety).

“And follow not that of which you have no knowledge. Verily, you can neither rend nor penetrate the earth...”

“All the bad aspects of these are hateful to your Lord. Qur’an, 17:36-38.

Or do they envy men for what Allah has given them of His Bounty?” Qur’an, 4:54.

#### **4. Misinterpreted Or Altered Shehu's Message (Letter) By the Sarkin Gobir's Aide**

Because Shehu and his Muslim brothers, along with the supporters (of the revivalism), realized that they had no safe place to live or practice their religion (of Islam) correctly in Gobir and the

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relevant Hausa domains, decides to embark on migration. They migrated to Gudu, an area that is in the wild bush of Gurdam (Gudu), which is not within the Gobir or Kebbi, in order to flee from their religion. That migration took place in 1804. It is clearly stated in the Holy Qur'an that Muslims are exhorted to migrate to escape harassment and have room to practice Islam peacefully. Despite the structural measures instilled by Sarkin Gobir to halt migration, the situation worsens. Sarkin Gobir (SG) and his allies prevented the sale of food to any Muslim, and Muslims are killed on sight, their wealth is seized permanently, and other severe penalties were declared [20]. The resultant consequences of the migration to Gudu include:

- Depopulation of cities and loss of economic activities. However, Sarkin Gobir realized that he had committed a huge blunder by instigating the Muslims to leave for Gudu (migratory site), therefore, decided to apply diplomacy and sent a delegate asking Shehu (the leader of the revivalist Muslims in the 19th century) to return to his hometown, Dagele. Therefore, Shehu insisted that he and the Muslims will return to Dagele if Sarkin Gobir fulfills the following;
- Repent and correct his religion and practice rites efficiently
- To be in line with the Muslims in one religion, which is Islam
- To establish justice and return all corrupted wealth to the owners
- Freeing all the incarcerated or enslaved Muslims [20].

By abiding by these demands, Shehu and Muslims have to return to Dagele. The Shehu's letter containing the listed demands was taken to Sarkin Gobir by Waziri (of Sarkin Gobir) and the Shehu's messenger. The letter was read in front of Sarkin Gobir, his ministers, and scholars, but was corrupted by the reader. The noise erupted because the person who read the letter deliberately altered it and insulted Sarkin Gobir in the course of delivering it. This angered Sarkin Gobir and triggered the escalation of the conflict to other height. Another form of noise erupted from the Sarkin Gobir scholars, because instead of abiding by the verse that implores people to make an investigation before making decisions or believing a narrative, they opted that Sarkin Gobir is on the "truth" and Shehu is on the "false."

Allah SWT says:

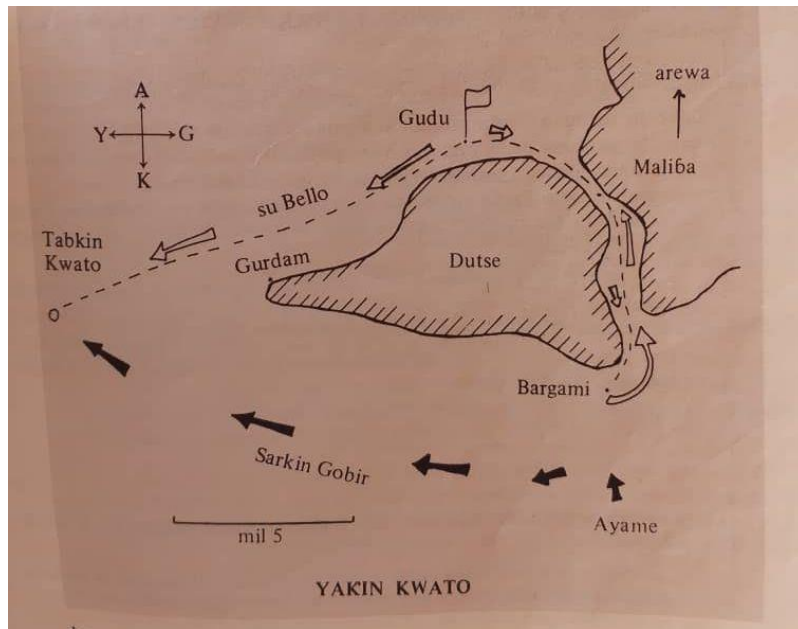
O you who believe! If a *Fasiq* (liar or evil person) comes to you with any news, verify it, lest you should harm people in ignorance, and afterwards you become regretful for what you have done. Qur'an:46,6.

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The mentioned verse calls on every person to make an investigation and verify the truth before taking serious decision or believing warmongers or liars. However, Sarkin Gobir refused to abide by that, and was equally misled by his scholars and ministers. Afterwards, Sarkin Gobir sent a big signal of escalating conflict with the Muslims in this way:

- Instructing Shehu's messenger to inform Shehu that he will come to wage war on Shehu and the Muslims
- Instructing Shehu's messenger to return without "a guide" even though, any Muslim found could be killed or abducted by the residents of the land (Hausa) [20].

In their vein, Shehu was appointed as *Amirul mumunina* to lead based on Qur'an and Sunnah by his people (Muslims). This *mubayaah* (oath of allegiance) had occurred in 1804. Shehu had to instruct his followers to dig a trench to protect his migration site (Gudu), while Sarkin Gobir sent for all his subordinates (*Hakimai*, village heads, and district heads) to prepare. He equally sought the support of his fellow kings, such as Azbin, Kano, Gummi, Daura, and Katsina, to fight Shehu's supporters in their domains [20], [24].



**Figure 1: Overview of Shehu's migratory surroundings; Source: Sayudi & Boyd (1974)**

## **5. Barriers to Communication of Shehu's Message In Hausa Land**

Certainly, these given factors act as noise or barriers to fully accepting or assimilating Shehu's message of revivalism in Hausa and its neighborhood. Some of these factors are enumerated here:

### ***5.1 Noise***

The noise is anything that impedes the proper understanding and responding to the message [25]. In the Sokoto Caliphate, the significant forms of noise that hinder assimilation of Shehu's message include personal biases and other environmental factors.

### ***5.2 Wide range of illiteracy***

Many of the majority of the people in the land have poor knowledge, only a few are versatile in Islamic knowledge. Therefore, the Shehu's message may be regarded as a new thing [26].

### ***5.3 Corruption and tyranny***

Many among the leaders (teachers, kings, and army generals) relied on the parasitic nature of capitalizing on the poor through a corrupt polity, where the poor are impoverished. Therefore, if Shehu's message that called for returning to true Islam is accosted, the corrupt polity system will fall, and it is not helpful to them, thus, they must use any way possible to resist this revivalism [20].

### ***5.4 Envy***

Some scholars felt that they were provoked by Shehu's unusual popularity; thus, they must resist his message and instigate a lot of rumors among the populace [20].

### ***5.5 Capacity***

Capacity is the ability to do things. Most of the Hausa kings are powerful, having the appropriate capacity to tame Shehu's social movement, because the Shehu and his people are literally weak; thus, the kings felt they could erase him and are inclined to the use of force (war) instead of dialogue.

### ***5.6 Middlemen or backbiters***

Many of the aides or ministers of Hausa kings had already spread rumors and blackmail against Shehu to their principals; therefore, the kings tended to misinterpret Shehu's message because they were misled. Similarly, the ministers tend to twist Shehu's message to their bosses (*Sarakuna*), and the conflict persists.

## **6. Consequences of Escalated Conflicts between Shehu (Muslims) and Others**

Wars and battles are, to some extent, disasters that lead to loss of lives and properties. Surely, both of the parties (Sokoto Caliphate and Hausa kings on the other side) had suffered certain levels of losses, as will be surveyed in this section.

### ***6.1 Consequences on the Hausa kings (Sarakuna)***

The losses to the Sarakuna in Hausaland as a result of escalated unresolved conflict with the Muslims (people of Shehu) are significant, some of which are explained here:

### ***6.2 Loss of lives***

Certainly, as a result of several conflicts that led to wars or armed conflicts that occur, lives were lost. The lives lost were not quantified, but the testimony of Caliph Bello shows that both parties had casualties. Bello indicates that after the migration of Shehu to Yabo, Malam Agali was assigned to guard the enemy land (Gobir and Azbin axis), and in that course, he succeeded in neutralizing a lot of reprisal attacks on his camp, and in ensuring that repel, many Gobirawa were killed [20].

1. Allah SWT ensured the disintegration of the army that battled with the Muslims at Tafkin Kwato, and many of them were killed, and some fled.
2. Sarkin Kabi Hodi (after one of the battles of Kebbi) fled to the northern side, and in that course, many of his people died due to water scarcity. This led to the installation of Usuman Masa as Sarkin Kebbi (who later became disloyal to Muslims)
3. At the battle of Jata (a land in Maradun presently), we (Muslims) killed more than a hundred of them (non-Muslims).
4. Lost battles at Kwanni, Matankari, Gurdam, DanGeda (Chimmola), Bumburmi, Mazuzi, Rima, Kanoma, Dalla, etc [20].

### ***6.3 Property losses***

It is widely known that battle or wars result in spoils of war (*Ganima*). The spoils are obtained by destroying cities, villages, or the abandonment of posts by fleeing soldiers (armies). Therefore, several villages and towns suffered losses of property, including food materials. A state that had caused food insecurity. Some of the examples of property losses include:

- Muslims obtained the spoils of war after defeating a town called Mane (near Kirare, Goronyo)

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- At the battles of Papara Sarkin Adar (Azbin), Tambari Agumbulu fled and left behind his properties, that fall in the hands of Muslims. Some of the things recovered by Muslims at Papara include horses, camels, slaves, clothing, and food.
- A fire break at the city of Kiyawa during the battle with the Muslims and in turn led to the fall of the Kiyawa army [20].

### ***6.4 Fall of Sarauta to the hands of Muslims***

After the end of battles in Hausaland, whereby the kings lost the conflict, the Muslims (Sokoto Caliphate) appointed Muslims (who are knowledgeable and pious) to chair the affairs of people in various capacities in all villages and towns [27]. Some of the kings (Sarakuna) were dethroned, some fled, and some were killed in the battlefield, and some made a peace deal with the Muslims and dwelt peacefully [20].

### ***6.5 Consequences to the Muslims or Sokoto Caliphate***

There are a lot of outcomes (positive and negative) for the Muslims or the Sokoto Caliphate that resulted after the eruption of conflict between the two parties. Some of the major items are as follows:

Most of the battles or wars fought by Muslims resulted in deaths and injuries to both parties. However, to Muslims, anyone who dies in the course of jihad is a *Shaheed* and will be judged appropriately by Almighty Allah. So any life lost or injury faced is just a loss. Some typical examples are:

1. The meeting of Muslims (Sokoto army) and non-Muslims (enemy) at Kirare was recorded with the deaths of many Muslims, because one Sambo Kabashi withdrew his troops and, in turn, aided the enemies. It, in turn, spurred the death of several Muslims, including pious, memorizers, and commoners.
2. Killing several Muslims led to Sarkin Gobir's attack on Gimbana
3. Nearly 1 thousand Muslims were killed by the enemies at the battle of Alwasa, albeit in the end the Muslims won [20].

### ***6.6 Loss of Properties***

Muslims were deprived of carrying their resources along with them during their several migration sessions, which amounts to loss of properties. A total onslaught on Muslims in Hausaland was declared, indicating that they can be killed, maimed, and properties seized for seeing any Muslim. Thus, during migration from Dage, many lost their wealth (including food).

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Likewise, the persistence migration from place to place puts the Muslims at risk of being affected by animal rustling and the harsh climate lead to loss of animals as well [20], [28].

### ***6.7 Migration and city formations***

Migration in Islam has been a historical event, like in the archive of humans (Abu-Salieh, n.d) [29]. Because of the fear of being attacked, Muslims move from one place to another to save life, property, and religion. Some major migration sessions include Gudu, Yabo (Magabchi), Zamfara, and Kebbi region (Gwandu), and others such as Katsina. These series of migrations led to the establishment of many new towns and villages. In fact, after the (1808) settling of the Caliphate, many *Ribat* towns that in turn became valuable multifunctional centers emerged prosperously [30-34]

### ***6.8 Education and leadership***

Migration of Muslims led to the spread of true Islam through preaching, teaching, writing, and the establishment of the Islamic Caliphate that thrives on the appointment of Muslims in public services as *Sarakuna* (*Amir*) and *Hakimai* to work based on Shari'a [35].

### ***6.9 Food security***

Muslims in Hausaland were sanctioned from buying food from any resident (host) and their migration, coupled with fear of being attacked, formed a mixture of uncertainties that bred food insecurity among Muslims. That is why they migrated to Yabo to seek food, attacked Matankari and Konni for food security. Some of the migrations sought food security as among the key values or determinants [20].

## **7. Properties of Shehu's Communication**

Viewing Shehu's communication stimulated a comprehensive consideration of the major parts of the ideal communication process that will be dealt with in this section.

### ***7.1 Sender***

Although there are several scholars in Sokoto, the major head is the Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo. Shehu is a favor of Allah to the West Africa and beyond, raised to give life to the society and religion (Islam), erase religious innovations, and ensure the implementation of struggle (jihad). He was reported as a "saint" *Waliy* and a teacher of teachers, who started his preaching adventure from his youthful days. Shehu's motivation for this course was drawn from the challenges of the system he faced, such as the spread of polytheism and wrongdoings, and the spread of illiteracy [36]. It is hard to see a lot of people who are well conversant on how to carry out acts of Ibada

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(such as ablution, Salah, Zakat, fasting) or awareness about *Tauheed*, before the emergence of Shehu in West Africa Hausaland. There were pure unbelievers inclined to the acts of worshipping mountains, trees, and jinni; and they were not absolutely engaged in Salah or Zakat or fasting. They additionally disclose insults against Allah. Those are the major categories of people in Black land (West Africa). These crops are Maguzawa, and some of them are found in Fulani and Azbinawa clans [20]. There are other crops of people that are well aware of religious concepts such as Salah, Zakat, and fasting. However, they joined with other practices of shirk (polytheism) that they inherited from their forefathers. These are the majority of people in the circle of Sarakuna (kings), armies, scholars, and sorcerers [37], [35]. Some (rare) crops of people in the land are Muslims, well aware of Tauheed, and properly perform ablution, prayer, Zakat, and fasting. They practice these properly, but there are very few people in the land. The state polity motivated Shehu to rise and advocate for teaching about *Fard al-Ain* (personal compulsory things and commandments) and guide the public against illiteracy and ambiguities. Some people joined him as followers, students, and helpers. However, in discharging this advocacy, Shehu faced a lot of suffering and torment that is immeasurable [20]. Some of the pious features of Shehu are:

Shehu's virtues shall be the templates drawn from the Qur'an, Hadith, and the books of Islam, because he always disclosed that the best in everything is following the guide in the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet SAW. Shehu was pious, possessing the best qualities that are pleasing, more than anyone during his time. Because of his good features, a lot of people attend his place, listening to his teaching and preaching from far and near. Shehu was a great scholar who taught professors and elevated the religious flag. He revived the Sunnah, erased the innovations (*bid'a*), disseminated scholarship, resolved ambiguities; certainly, his knowledge is at its peak for he is vast in monotheism and jurisprudence or theology. He performed and delivered Tafsir in the presence of a conference of peak scholars (professors), he is aware of the knowledge of Qur'an, jurisprudence, and has been a head in Hadith scholarship. Shehu knows the scholarship of narration of Hadith, and the foundations (*usul al-Addin*). Shehu supported the religion with his words and actions, revived the Sunnah, and guidance is certainly his main job. He holds onto Qur'an and Sunnah and possesses dual lights, namely, scholarship and actions. The characteristics of Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo are plain, sun needs no explanation. Whenever he is about to come out, he always renewed his intentions to seek Allah's guidance and support to

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deliver diligently. Shehu always greeted his people (students) and asked them to maintain silence, then the lectures began. He is not angered by the poor or lack of understanding of his lessons, despite the illiteracy of his crowd. They asked questions that interrupted lessons, but he had to answer at the end of instruction. Shehu does not hide the truth from the old, teachers, or anyone. Shehu is brave religiously, and fears no criticism in the cause of religion, and does not avoid truth [20], [9], [38], [39].

### ***7.2 Encoding***

In conveying Shehu's message, he utilized the multiple languages (Hausa, Fulfulde, and Arabic, for example) in simple terms to deliver his message [40]. The use of local language is very significant to express Shehu's ideas in books, poems, letters, manuscripts, presentations, preaching, teachings, and discussions. The methods utilized include lecture, field trip (example to Zamfara and Kebbi), and discussion (example with Yandoto scholars, and Sarkin Gummi).

### ***7.3 Messages***

The messages of Shehu here are varied. The message laconically includes calling on people to return to the true teaching of the Qur'an and Sunnah. The messages are delivered in oral preaching and teachings, books, and letters dispatched to fellow teachers, citizens, and leaders, as well as his clan. However, the major specific teaching of Shehu can be categorized as follows: Shehu preaches on all religious and relevant worldly things. Some surveys of the things or topics taught by Shehu Usmanu Danfodiyo during his preaching sessions include:

- Foundation of religion - Under the foundation of religion, Shehu teaches attributes of Allah, Angels, Prophets, Hereafter, and its ties, etc.
- Fiqh or theology - In this section, Shehu teaches ideas about ablution, bathing, pilgrimage, *Tayammum*, prayer, oath, marriage, business or trading, and protection of body parts against crime or sins.
- Sufism - In terms of sufism or soul purification, Shehu teaches under the aspects of mind and heart healing, including aspects of avoiding the destructive behaviors such as pride, envy, enmity, showing-off, loving fame, loving the world, greediness, arrogance, and others. The solutions to mind or heart problems include repentance, seeking forgiveness, trusting Allah, relying on Allah, fear of Allah, fear of the Torment of Allah, and hoping from Allah, etc [20], [9].

## **8. Preventing Reconciliation or *Amanah* between Shehu and Sarkin Gobir**

Some events send a signal to the Shehu's enemies to look for a way to mend fences and make a peace deal or *Amanah*. Some of the events that forced the enemies of Islam to seek reconciliation with Shehu include:

- The defeat of allies (Sarkin Gobir, Sarkin Gummi, and representatives of other kings) at Tafkin Kwato (near Gudu), and subsequently the fleeing of Sarkin Gobir and Sarkin Gummi. This indicates the need for seeking reconciliation.
- The Muslims also followed the enemies up-to some a point that is about a few kilometers away from Alkalawa, a move that indicates the power and bravery of the Muslims. Other subsequent battles failed to squarely deal with Muslims, such as the Battle of Kirare, battle of Chimmola, etc.

Therefore, after the battle of Chimmola, Sarkin Gummi sought *Amanah*, and he was accepted. He insisted that he would bring Sarkin Gobir to talk with Shehu for peace to reign. That is why, in a bid to commence the peace deal, Sarkin Gobir sent Galadima, who discussed with Shehu. Galadima informed Shehu about the intention and determination of Sarkin Gobir to accept peace, and clearly submit the regret of Sarkin Gobir to the Muslims over all that transpired. Shehu informed Galadima to tell his principal (Sarkin Gobir) that they are expecting him to be at Shehu's place, so that the talks will proceed. In this vein, Sarkin Gobir wanted to come, but the noise that prevented him was his ministers. The ministers insisted that Sarkin Gobir will not be at the talk in person, he will appoint another minister. However, the Muslims could not accept anyone except Sarkin Gobir, because they knew they could be beguiled. This led to further escalation of the crisis (conflict). Therefore, Shehu had to dispatch troops to the neighborhood of Alkalawa in a bid to pave the way for its defeat.

## **9. Conclusion**

In laconics, Shehu Usman Danfodiyo's communication approach was a pivotal factor in the Islamic revival in West Africa, particularly in Hausaland. His ability to convey his message effectively, using simple language and various media, helped spread Islam and bring about significant social and religious change. Shehu's qualities as a teacher, leader, and communicator were instrumental in his success. He was a man of great knowledge, piety, and courage, who inspired his followers and commanded respect from his enemies. The conflict between Shehu and Sarkin Gobir, which escalated into war, was largely a result of miscommunication and the

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interference of malicious individuals. Despite efforts at reconciliation, the conflict ultimately led to the fall of the Hausa kingdoms and the establishment of the Sokoto Caliphate. Shehu's legacy continues to inspire and guide Muslims in Nigeria and beyond. His emphasis on education, piety, and social justice remains relevant today, and his communication approach serves as a model for effective leadership and social change.

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