

***BARAKA POLICY INSTITUTE (BPI)
EAST LEGON, ACCRA***

RESEARCH REPORT

ON

***THE READINESS OF ISLAMIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN GHANA TO
OFFER ARABIC AS AN EXAMINABLE SUBJECT AT WASSCE***

June, 2016

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ABSTRACT

Arabic language plays significant role in the life of Muslims as it is an immutable determinant in charting a holistic education for the Muslim since the Qur'an, the Muslim holy Book was revealed in Arabic. Moreover, the economic, intellectual and moral benefits of Arabic as a language are abounding in the contemporary interdependence world. The efforts to re-introduce Arabic into the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examinations (SSSCE) and later the West Africa Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) has been long standing. These efforts began in the immediate aftermath of the phase-out of the May/June Ordinary and Advanced Levels of the General Certificate Examinations in 1994 and 1996 respectively which offered the Arabic.

However, in recent times, agitation by some Islamic Senior High Schools to offer Arabic at WASSCE has increased, with some schools in Ghana considering registering with WAEC Nigeria to write Arabic at WASSCE. These agitations have necessitated the need to evaluate and examine the preparedness of Islamic Senior High Schools in Ghana to offer the Arabic at the West Africa Senior School Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) to enable informed discussion on the matter. Hence this study by the Baraka Policy Institute (BPI), a research think tank on education based in Accra.

The main objective for this piece of research is to assess the capacity of Islamic Senior High Schools to offer Arabic at WASSCE 2017 and beyond. In this regard, the study utilized qualitative research techniques of semi-structured interview and focus group discussion to collect data. The findings of the research indicate that most of the Islamic Senior High Schools in Ghana are already offering Arabic as a subject in the schools and are ready to offer WASSCE. Also, most of the schools have qualified teachers who use WAEC examination syllabus to teach the subject. Moreover, the schools have adopted the WAEC prescribed and recommended textbooks for the teaching and learning of Arabic.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Arabic as a language plays a very important role in the religious life and education of Muslims. Some Muslims would not have bothered to be educated had it been through a language other than Arabic. Besides that, the true understanding and practices of Islam are intricately woven into the fabric of this divine language, which is the language of the Quran. Undoubtedly, Arabic remains the language with the highest capacity of fostering regional, national, international and global unity and understanding, in the face of multiplicity of languages.¹ Apart from its historical contributions to human civilization and education, Arabic is today an international language used for official deliberations and proceedings of international and global organizations such as African Union (AU), Oil Producing & Exporting Countries (OPEC), United Nations (UN), Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Confederation of African Football (CAF), Federation of International Football Association (FIFA).²

In Ghana, the history of the Arabic Language is linked to the religion of Islam and Muslim education. Islam was introduced into Ghana by traders, who, through their trading activities had established Muslim settlements in the market towns, where subsequently traditional Qur'anic schools developed to train Muslim children to read the Quran, learn the rituals of the religion; and learn the reading and writing of Arabic language.³ The history of Arabic language is as old as the introduction of Islam to Ghana, formally the Gold Coast. It is generally believed that Islam was first introduced to Ghana in about 1700 CE through Mande or Dyula (Known as Wangara) traders.⁴ By the end of the eighteenth century it had made significant impact in the Dagomba and Mamprugu Kingdoms.⁵ Islam later spread to the Asante Kingdom and later to other parts of Southern Ghana.⁶

Since then, Arabic has been part of Muslim education in the country. With the coming into being of WAEC and the introduction of General Certificate Examinations (GCE), Arabic was made examinable at both GCE Ordinary and Advanced Levels until when Ghana transitioned to Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination. Since then, the effort to re-introduce Arabic into the SSSCE and later WASSCE has been pursued by Muslim leadership in the country as well as many Islamic Senior High Schools in the country.⁷ For Muslims, every Islamic school established must be an opportunity for their wards to learn the language to enhance their versatility in the world of languages and to uplift their Islamic spirituality.⁸

1.2 The Problem

The effort to introduce Arabic into the SSSCE and later WASSCE since the phase-out of the General Certificate Examinations (both the Ordinary and Advanced Levels) which offered the subject has been long standing for Ghanaian Muslim Leadership and for that matter Muslim educational stakeholders in the country. The effort dates back to the time of Mr. Alex Tettey-Enyo, a former Director-General of the GES as many Muslim Leadership organizations such as the Office of National Chief Imam, the Federation of Muslim Councils (FMC), the Ghana Muslim Mission, and the Office of the National Imam of Ahlus-Sunnah Wal-Jamaat (ASWAJ), as well as individual Islamic Senior High Schools both public and private who have written severally to the Ghana Education Service (GES) requesting for approval to offer Arabic as an examinable subject.

However, in recent times, the agitation by Islamic Senior High Schools to offer Arabic at WASSCE has increased, with some thinking of registering with Nigerian schools to write Arabic at WASSCE. Interestingly, Arabic is still examined by WAEC in some of its member countries such as Nigeria, the Gambia and Sierra Leone. Indeed, there are Ghanaian Arabic examiners who

go to these countries every year to moderate and mark Arabic Language for WAEC. But the big question that comes to mind is whether these Islamic Senior High Schools are ready in terms of having the capacity for teaching and learning for Arabic. Do these schools have competent and qualified teachers to teach the language? What syllabus are they using at the various Islamic Senior High Schools to teach Arabic? And do the schools have the recommended textbooks?

It was against this background that BPI decided to pursue the matter under its 2015/2016 educational research and advocacy programmes. Subsequently, in March 2016 the BPI Board approved for a qualitative research to be initiated at all GES-approved Islamic Senior High Schools in Ghana to ascertain the readiness of our schools to offer and to be examined in Arabic language at the West Africa Senior School Certificate Examinations.

1.2 Research Objectives

The research on the readiness of Islamic Senior High Schools to offer Arabic at WASSCE was anchored on the following objectives:

- i. To assess the capacity of Islamic Senior High Schools to offer Arabic at WASSCE 2017 and beyond
- ii. To record the candidature of identifiable and GES-approved Islamic Senior High Schools who are prepared to sit for WASSCE 2017 and 2018.

1.3 Research Questions

1.3.1 Main Research Question

How prepared is your school to offer Arabic at the West Africa Senior School Certificate Examinations?

1.3.2 Subsidiary Research Questions:

1. Does your school offer Arabic in its main teaching and learning activities?
2. What syllabus do you use in teaching Arabic in your School?
3. Do you have qualified Arabic teachers (Diploma/Degree Holders in Arabic)?
4. Are you prepared to sit for Arabic in the 2017 WASSCE if given the chance?
5. How many prospective candidates do you have to present for 2017 and 2018 WASSCE?

2. METHODOLOGY

This piece of research utilized qualitative research techniques to collect data. BPI utilized semi-structured interviews and focused-group discussion to collect primary data for analysis. The unit of analysis is for this study is the GES-approved Islamic Senior High Schools in Ghana. Therefore, the focus of the study was the directors and headmasters of Islamic Senior High Schools who in charge of teaching and learning at their various schools.

2.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

BPI interviewed thirty-one (31) Islamic Senior High Schools across the country between March and May 2016. The interviews were underpinned by the very research questions anchoring the study. Data relating to the availability and number of Arabic teachers, the syllabus being used in the teaching of Arabic currently in the schools, and the availability of recommended textbooks per the WAEC examination syllabus currently being used were collected. The following Islamic Senior High Schools were the main respondents for the study:

GREATER ACCRA REGION

NAME OF SCHOOLS
Ghana-Lebanon Islamic Secondary School, Circle-Odawna
ICODEHS Senior High School, Adenta
Tuba Islamic Senior High School, Tuba
Anisa Senior High School, Madina Estate
Mercy Senior High School, Ashaley Botwe

ASHANTI REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL
Usmaniya Senior High School, Kumasi
Ibadarul Rahman Senior High School, Kumasi
Nurul Amin Senior High School, Kumasi
Ghana Muslim Mission Senior High School, Kumasi
Tijaniya Senior High School, Asokore

Sakafiya Senior High School, Kumasi
Al-Azhariyya Senior High School, Kumasi
Islamic Senior High School, Kumasi
TOTAL

CENTRAL REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL
Nana Khadija Senior High School, Agona Swedru
Siddiq Senior High School, Agona Nyakrom

NORTHERN REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL
Al-Sadi Senior High School, Tamale
Ghana- Libya Senior High School, Tamale
ICODEHS Senior High School, Tamale
Marakaz Senior High School, Walawale
Ambariya Senior High School, Tamale
Islamic Senior High School, Tamale
Al-Maktum Senior High School, Tamale
Abubakar Siddiq Senior High School, Tamale
Business College International, Tamale

EASTERN REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL
Islamic Senior High School, Koforidua
Islamic Girls Senior High School, Suhum

WESTERN REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL
Uthman Bun Affan Senior High School, Kanbuli

UPPER WEST REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL
Islamic Senior High School, Wa

VOLTA REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL
Ahamansu Senior High School, Ahamansu

BRONG AHAFO REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL
Istiqama Senior High School, Wenchi

2.2 Focus Group Discussion

In addition to the individual school interviews conducted, the BPI research team in conjunction with the newly-formed Federation of Islamic Senior High Schools in Ghana (FISHSIG) organized a focus group discussion for the main respondents of this study and other stakeholders such as university Arabic lecturers. Forty-Three (43) persons representing Islamic Senior High Schools and Arabic lecturers attended the meeting. The discussion was held at Al-Azhariyyah Islamic Senior High School in Kumasi on Monday 2nd May, 2016. The discussion of the focus group meeting was also underpinned by the research questions for this study.

After a 3-hour discussion on the preparedness of Islamic Senior High Schools to offer and sit for Arabic at WASSCE, three issues became apparent in the focus group discussion:

1. Heads of Islamic Senior High Schools believe the teaching of Arabic is the soul to the growth their schools since it encourages Muslim enrolment and enhances the spirituality of students.

2. The continuing mounting of Arabic as a course at University of Ghana and University of Education, Winneba as they are now will depend largely on the offering of Arabic as a subject at the Senior High School level. This point was highly hammered on by the University Arabic lecturers who participated in the focus group discussion. This is because the offering of Arabic at the SHS will enhance the quality of learning the subject at the tertiary level.
3. Most Islamic Senior High Schools were committed to preparing their students for WASSCE 2017 and were ready to supplement the current tuition for Arabic with crash programmes for both students and tutors.

The following is the list of participants of the focus group discussion:

S/NO	NAME OF REPRESENTATIVE	NAME OF INSTITUTION
1	ADAM YUNUS	BARAKA POLICY INSTITUTE
2	ADAM IBN AHMED	AL- UMMAH S.H.S
3	ZAGOON ABDUL MANAF	AL- UMMAH S.H.S
4	MAHAMED IBRAHIM AHMED	ALHUDA EDU. CENTER
5	ISSAH ABDALLAH LEDARU	ISLAMIC SHS - KUMASI
6	DR.MAHAMMED Z. ABDULMUMIN	UNIVERSITY OF GHANA –ARABIC DEPT
7	AHMED HAROUN TOURE	NANA KHADIJA SHS
8	SALIFU IBN ABUDU	ABUBAKARI SADIQ S.H.S
9	ABU-KASIM UMAR DAKARI	ABUBAKARI SADIQ S.H.S
10	MUBARAK ISHAQUE	TIJJANIYA S.H.S
11	MOHAMMED MAHEY IBRAHIM	TIJJANIYA S.H.S
12	YAHUZA ABDUL RAHMAN	ARABIC LANGUAGE DEPT UEW
13	ALI LUKMAN	IBADUR RAHMAN SHS
14	MAHAMMED M MUKUTAR	ISTIQAMA SHS
15	SHUAIB SULEIMAN	AL-BASAR S.H.S
16	MOHAMMED SHAHID	SAKAFIA SHS
17	DAWUD ABDUL- HAMID ISHAQ	SAKAFIA SHS
18	IBRAHIM KHIDIR IBRAHIM	IBADUL RAHMAN SHS ACADEMY
19	AHMEAD MOHAMMED	MARAKAZ ISLAMIC SHS
20	YUSUF ABUBAKAR	SAKAFIA ISIAMIC SHS
21	ABDUL KARIM SAEED YUSIF	MERCY SHS
22	MOHAMMED A. DOMBA	ISTIQAAMA SHS

23	ADAM ADAM MUSTAPHA	AL-AZHARIYA SHS
24	ABDUL NASIR UTHMAN	AL-AZHARIYA SHS
25	MOHAMMED TAWFIW A. RAHMAN	NURUL AMEEN SHS
26	ABASS S. IBRAHIM	UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
27	MUHAMMED KABIRU FAAZA	GHANA LIBYA ISLAMIC SHS
28	MURTADA MAHAMMED MUAZ	UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
29	MUSTAPHA KWESI BNAH ABDULLAH	UTHMAN BIN AFFAN SHS
30	ALHASSAN ABUBAKAR SIDDIQ	AL-SA'AD SHS
31	MOHAMMED NURUDEEN SULEMAN	AI-AZHARIYYA SHS
32	SALISU MOHAMMED ALIWU	AHAMASU SHS
33	KASSIM MOHAMMED AMEEN	LADY FATIMAH GIRLS SHS
34	ALHASSAN MUSAH	USMANIYA SHS
35	ABUBAKAR ADAM ABUBAKAR	USMANIYA SHS
36	ALHASSAN OTENG AMIN	ISLAMIC SHS SCHOOL KUMASI
37	YAHUZA ABUAKARI	IBN ABASS SHS
38	KASSIM TIJANI ABD RAHMAN	ISLAMIC SHS, KOFORIDUA
39	UMAR MUDASSIFU	GHANA MUSLIM MISSION SHS
40	HARUNA ZAGOON-SAYEED	BARAKA POLICY INSTITUTE
41	SHEIKH MOHAMMED KAMIL MOH.	AL-AZHARIYA ISLAMIC SHS
42	OSMAN ALI HAMIFU	AL-AZHARYA ISLAMIC SHS

Attendance List of the Focus Group Discussion on Arabic held on 2nd May, 2016 at Al-Azhariyya Islamic SHS, Kumasi.

3. DATA ANALYSIS

3.1 Islamic Senior High Schools in Ghana

Data collected by this study indicates that as at 31st May 2016, there were thirty-eight (38) Islamic Senior High Schools across the country. This number includes both public and private Islamic Senior High Schools. Out of this number, thirty-two (32) are GES-recognized at the time of the conduct of the present research and six (6) schools are yet to be approved. Out of the 32 Islamic Senior High Schools recognized by Ghana Education Service, Fourteen (14) are public Senior High Schools i.e. Government-Assisted. It can also be seen that there is no single Islamic Senior High School in the Upper East Region. Below is the list of Islamic Senior High Schools in Ghana, their locations and status:

ASHANTI REGION

S/N	NAME OF SCHOOL	LOCATION	STATUS
1.	Usmaniya Senior High School	Kumasi	Government Assisted
2.	Ibadarul Rahman Senior High School	Kumasi	Non – Assisted
3.	Nurul Amin Senior High School	Kumasi	Non – Assisted
4.	Ghana Muslim Mission Senior High School	Beposo	Government Assisted
5.	Tijaniya Senior High School	Asokore	Government Assisted
6.	Sakafiya Senior High School, Kumasi	Kumasi	Government Assisted
7.	Al Azaariya Senior High School, Kumasi	Kumasi	Government Assisted
8.	Islamic Senior High School, Kumasi	Kumasi	Government Assisted
9.	Tawheed Educational Complex	Kumasi,	Government Assisted

GREATER ACCRA REGION

S/N	NAME OF SCHOOL	LOCATION	STATUS
1.	Ghana-Lebanon Islamic Senior High School	Circle-Odawna	Non – Assisted
2.	ICODEHS Senior High School	Adenta	Non – Assisted
3.	Tuba Islamic Senior High School	Tuba	Non – Assisted
4.	Anisa Senior High School	Madina Estate	Non – Assisted
5.	Mercy Senior High School	Ashaley Botwe	Non – Assisted

CENTRAL REGION

S/N	NAME OF SCHOOL	LOCATION	STATUS
1.	Nana Khadija Senior High School	Agona Swedru	Non – Assisted
2.	Siddiq Senior High School	Agona Nyakrom	Government Assisted

NORTHERN REGION

S/N	NAME OF SCHOOL	LOCATION	STATUS
1.	Al-Sadi Senior High School	Tamale	Non – Assisted
2.	Ghana- Libya Senior High School	Tamale	Non – Assisted
3.	ICODEHS Senior High School	Tamale	Non – Assisted
4.	Marakaz Senior High School	Walewale	Non – Assisted
5.	Ambariya Senior High School	Tamale	Government Assisted
6.	Islamic Senior High School	Tamale	Government Assisted
7.	Al-Maktum Senior High School	Tamale	Non – Assisted
8.	Abubakar Siddiq Senior High School	Tamale	Non – Assisted
9.	Business College International	Tamale	Non – Assisted

EASTERN REGION

S/N	NAME OF SCHOOL	LOCATION	STATUS
1.	Islamic Senior High School	Koforidua	Non – Assisted
2.	Islamic Girls Senior High School	Suhum	Government Assisted

WESTERN REGION

S/N	NAME OF SCHOOL	LOCATION	STATUS
1.	Uthman Bun Affan Senior High School	Kanbuli	Government Assisted

UPPER WEST REGION

S/N	NAME OF SCHOOL	LOCATION	STATUS
1.	Islamic Senior High School	Wa	Government Assisted

VOLTA REGION

S/N	NAME OF SCHOOL	LOCATION	STATUS
1.	Ahamansu Senior High School	Ahamansu	Government Assisted

BRONG AHAFO REGION

S/N	NAME OF SCHOOL	LOCATION	STATUS
1.	Istiqama Senior High School	Wenchi	Government Assisted

ISLAMIC SCHOOLS YET TO RECEIVE GES RECOGNITION/APPROVAL

S/N	NAME OF SCHOOL	LOCATION
1.	AL- UMMAH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	KISSI, CENTRAL REGION

2.	KHULAFU RASHIDUUN	EKUMFI, CENTRAL REGION
3.	AL- BASR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	AWOSHIE, ACCRA, GT ACCRA REGION
4.	LADY FATIMA SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	ADENTA, ACCRA, GT ACCRA REGION
5.	HAMDANIYYA SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	ALAJO, ACCRA, GT ACCRA REGION
6.	IBN ABASS SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	TAMALE, NORTHERN REGION

3.2 Availability of Arabic Tutors

As part of the data collection at the GES-approved Islamic Senior High Schools, the research sought to know whether the schools pushing to write Arabic at WASSCE have qualified Arabic teachers. The study gathered that most of the tutors graduated from various universities from the Arab world with few being graduates from the University of Ghana and Ghana Institute of Languages. The following is the list of schools and the number of Arabic tutors per each school gathered by the study:

GREATER ACCRA REGION

NAME OF SCHOOLS	CANDIDATURE (2017&2018)	NO OF ARABIC TUTORS
Ghana-Lebanon Islamic Secondary School, Circle-Odawna	304	3
ICODEHS Senior High School, Adenta	95	2
Tuba Islamic Senior High School, Tuba	52	3
Anisa Senior High School, Madina Estate	140	2
Mercy Senior High School, Ashaley Botwe	113	2

ASHANTI REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL	CANDIDATURE (2017 & 2018)	NO OF ARABIC TUTORS
Usmaniya Senior High School, Kumasi	143	2

Ibadarul Rahman Senior High School, Kumasi	63	4
Nurul Amin Senior High School, Kumasi	88	5
Ghana Muslim Mission Senior High School, Beposo	1180	3
Tijaniya Senior High School, Asokore	20	2
Sakafiya Senior High School, Kumasi	45	6
Al-Azhariyya Senior High School, Kumasi	120	10
Islamic Senior High School, Kumasi	2,100	12

CENTRAL REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL	CANDIDATURE (2017 & 2018)	NO OF ARABIC TUTORS
Nana Khadija Senior High School, Agona Swedru	35	1
Siddiq Senior High School, Agona Nyakrom	130	3

NORTHERN REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL	CANDIDATURE (2017&2018)	NO OF ARABIC TUTORS
Al-Sadi Senior High School, Tamale	310	3
Ghana- Libya Senior High School, Tamale	67	2
ICODEHS Senior High School, Tamale	75	2
Marakaz Senior High School, Walawale	104	2
Ambariya Senior High School, Tamale	1212	10
Al-Maktum Senior High School, Tamale	80	4
Abubakar Siddiq Senior High School, Tamale	235	3
Business College International, Tamale	310	2

EASTERN REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL	CANDIDATURE (2017 & 2018)	NO OF ARABIC TUTORS
Islamic Senior High School, Koforidua	30	2
Islamic Girls Senior High School, Suhum	119	2

WESTERN REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL	CANDIDATURE (2017 & 2018)	NO OF ARABIC TUTORS
Uthman Bun Affan Senior High School, Kanbuli	200	2

UPPER WEST REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL	CANDIDATURE 2017 & 2018	NO OF ARABIC TUTORS
Islamic Senior High School, Wa	320	2

VOLTA REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL	CANDIDATURE (2017 & 2018)	NO OF ARABIC TUTORS
Ahamansu Senior High School, Ahamansu	100	3

BRONG AHAFO REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL	CANDIDATURE (2017 & 2018)	NO OF ARABIC TUTORS
Istiqama Senior High School, Wenechi	62	3

3.3 Availability of Recommended Textbooks

The availability of textbooks is critical in the effective teaching and learning for every subject including Arabic. In this regard the present research sought to find out the preparedness of the schools in the area of requisite textbooks for WASSCE Arabic. It came to light in the present study that all the 32 participating schools have textbooks purchased from Nigeria. However, during the Kumasi meeting (focus group discussion) it was identified by the some of the Arabic

Language experts present that some of the textbooks needed to be localized in the future in order to give practical meaning to learning.

3.4 Availability of Syllabus

The present study also sought to know whether the teaching of Arabic in Islamic Senior High Schools in Ghana at the moment is based on any syllabus. It came to light through the individual interviews and confirmed in the focus group discussion in Kumasi that all the schools are using the WAEC examination syllabus in teaching and learning. It was however agreed that there was the need to prepare a GES-anchored teaching syllabus for the teaching of Arabic at the Senior High Schools going forward.

3.5 Candidature for WASSCE 2017 and 2018

As part of the study, data on prospective candidature for WASSCE 2017 and 2018 was collected from thirty (30) GES-approved Islamic Senior Schools across the country. This data was collected individually from Heads of Schools. Below is the data on candidature collected from the schools:

GREATER ACCRA REGION

NAME OF SCHOOLS	CANDIDATURE	
	2017	2018
Ghana-Lebanon Islamic Secondary School, Circle-Odawna	160	144
ICODEHS Senior High School, Adenta	40	55
Tuba Islamic Senior High School, Tuba	22	30
Anisa Senior High School, Madina Estate	60	80
Mercy Senior High School, Ashaley Botwe	58	55
TOTAL	340	364

ASHANTI REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL	CANDIDATURE	
	2017	2018
Usmaniya Senior High School, Kumasi	78	65
Ibadarul Rahman Senior High School, Kumasi	29	34
Nurul Amin Senior High School, Kumasi	35	55

Ghana Muslim Mission Senior High School, Kumasi	560	620
Tijaniya Senior High School, Asokore	**	20
Sakafiya Senior High School, Kumasi	20	25
Azaariya Senior High School, Kumasi	56	64
Islamic Senior High School, Kumasi	1,000	1,100
TOTAL	1778	1983

CENTRAL REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL	CANDIDATURE	
	2017	2018
Nana Khadija Senior High School, Agona Swedru	15	20
Siddiq Senior High School, Agona-Nyakrom	60	70
TOTAL	75	90

NORTHERN REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL	CANDIDATURE	
	2017	2018
Al-Sadi Senior High School, Tamale	150	160
Ghana- Libya Senior High School, Tamale	30	36
ICODEHS Senior High School, Tamale	35	40
Marakaz Senior High School, Walawale	64	40
Ambariya Senior High School, Tamale	600	612
Al-Maktum Senior High School, Tamale	30	50
Abubakar Siddiq Senior High School, Tamale	121	114
Business College International, Tamale	110	200
TOTAL	1140	1252

EASTERN REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL	CANDIDATURE	
	2017	2018
Islamic Senior High School, Koforidua	15	15
Islamic Girls Senior High School, Suhum	51	68
TOTAL	66	83

WESTERN REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL	CANDIDATURE	
	2017	2018
Uthman Bun Affan Senior High School, Kanbuli	91	110

UPPER WEST REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL	CANDIDATURE	
	2017	2018
Islamic Senior High School, Wa	150	170
TOTAL	150	170

VOLTA REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL	CANDIDATURE	
	2017	2018
Ahamansu Senior High School, Ahamansu	48	52
TOTAL	48	52

BRONG AHAFO REGION

NAME OF SCHOOL	CANDIDATURE	
	2017	2018
Istiqama Senior High School, Wenechi	30	32
TOTAL	30	32

SUMMARY

REGIONS	NO. OF SCHOOLS	CANDIDATURE	
		2017	2018
GREATER ACCRA	5	340	364
ASHANTI	9	1778	1983
NORTHERN	8	1191	1320
CENTRAL	2	75	90
EASTERN	2	66	83
WESTERN	1	88	87
UPPER WEST	1	150	170
VOLTA	1	48	52
BRONG AHAFO	1	30	32
TOTAL	30	3701	4113

3.6 Inspection of Schools by GES

At the Kumasi Focus Group Meeting, it came to light that most schools preparing students for WASSCE 2017 have not been inspected by the Ghana Education Service (GES). However, two schools, Al-Azhariyya SHS and Islamic Senior High School, both in Kumasi, have been

inspected by the GES with Al-Azhariyya given the approval to run Arabic as a General Arts course. A letter from the Inspectorate Division of the GES attached to the report dated 4th February 2016 and signed by Mary Kwakye (Ms.), the Ag. Director of the Inspectorate Division of the GES recommended the approval of Arabic to be ran by the school; and stated that the school had qualified teachers and adequate facilities to run Arabic as an elective subject under the General Arts programme. Subsequently, the Director of Secondary Education Division of the GES, Mr. Michael K. Inkoom wrote to Al-Azhariyya on the 15th February, 2016 informing the school of the GES's approval of Arabic to be run by the school (GES letters attached).

It is clear from the above that a school such as Al-Azhariyya has been given approval for running Arabic. It also means that they can prepare their students to sit for the next WASSCE. In the focus group discussion, it came to light that many other schools have applied to the GES to run and sit for Arabic but no inspections have been done yet.

4. SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The following are the core findings of the present study:

- 4.1 There are thirty-two (32) GES-approved Islamic Senior High Schools in Ghana out of which fourteen (14) are Government Assisted.
- 4.2 Heads of Islamic Senior High Schools believe Arabic is the soul to the growth their schools since it enhances the spirituality of Muslim children in particular.
- 4.3 .The continuing mounting of Arabic as a course at University of Ghana and University of Education, Winneba as they are now will depend largely on the offering of Arabic as a subject at the Senior High School level. This point was highly hammered on by the University Arabic lecturers who participated in the focus group discussion.

- 4.4 Most Islamic Senior High Schools were committed to preparing their students for WASSCE 2017 and were ready to supplement the current tuition for Arabic with crash programmes for students and tutors alike.
- 4.5 Islamic Senior High Schools in Ghana have been running Arabic as non-examinable subject and are agitating to be allowed to write WASSCE since it is offered by WAEC in the current examination dispensation.
- 4.6 There are qualified graduate Arabic teachers produced from both domestic and foreign universities who are already teaching the subject in most of the Islamic Senior High Schools.
- 4.7 There are over 7000 candidates in the Islamic Senior High Schools who are being prepared to write 2017 and 2018 May/ June WASSCE
- 4.8 WAEC examination Syllabus is the main source of information teaching and learning as far as Arabic is concerned.
- 4.9 There is no teaching syllabus for Arabic at the Senior High School level.
- 4.10 Textbooks available for the subject at the Senior High School level are bought from Nigeria.
- 4.11 The Ghana Education Service has inspected some Islamic Senior High Schools for Arabic and has issued approval letters to some school including Al-Azhariyyah Islamic Senior High School.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the key findings of the study, Baraka Policy Institute wishes to recommend the following to the Ghana Education Service, Islamic Senior High Schools and other relevant stakeholders for their necessary action:

- 5.1 That Arabic is holds potential for economic and social development cannot be over-emphasized. Therefore, the Ghana Education Service should quicken the process of its re-introduction into both Basic and Secondary education curriculum of Ghana.
- 5.2 The examination syllabus of the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) which is already available should be adopted for Islamic Senior High Schools who are already offering Arabic as non-examinable subject to enable them write WASSCE while a teaching syllabus is developed by the GES in due course.
- 5.3 There is need for a short course in teaching methodology for teaching Arabic as a non-native language for Arabic teachers. This is ensure that the overall teaching of the subject meet the language policy requirement of the Ghana Education Service.
- 5.4 Islamic Senior High Schools who GES are found ready to write the WASSCE 2017 much be encouraged and supported by all stakeholders in education in order to set the pace for the coming years.
- 5.5 Research think tanks such as Baraka Policy Institute must support the Ghana Education Service in the process of introducing Arabic into the secondary education curriculum.

6. CONCLUSION

Arabic language plays a critical role in the life of Muslims as it is an immutable determinant in charting a holistic education for the Muslim. The true understanding and practices of Islam are intricately woven into Arabic, which is the language of the Quran. Undoubtedly, the economic and intellectual as well as moral benefits of Arabic as a language are abundant in the contemporary workings of the world. Today, Arabic remains the language with the highest capacity of fostering regional, national, international and global unity and understanding, in the face of multiplicity of languages, both local and international. For example, the language is used for official deliberations and proceedings of international and global organizations as the African Union (AU), Oil Producing & Exporting Countries (OPEC), United Nations (UN), Non- Aligned Movement (NAM), Confederation of African Football (CAF), Federation of International Football Association (FIFA), all of which Ghana is an active member.

The history of Arabic language in Ghana is as old as the introduction of Islam to Ghana, formally the Gold Coast in the 1680s. Today, some of original manuscripts relating to the history of Ghana can be found in Arabic. Therefore, it can be stated that Arabic is one of the Ghana's national heritage languages.

The effort to re-introduce Arabic into the SSSCE and later WASSCE being pursued by Muslim leadership in the country as well as many Islamic Senior High Schools in the country is a laudable and legitimate. The Ghana Education Service (GES) must fast-track the process of allowing schools ready to offer the subject at the next WASSCE especially when some schools are threatening to register with WAEC Nigeria in order to write the exams.

The formation of the Federation of Islamic Senior High Schools in Ghana (FISHSIG) provides an avenue for solid collaboration between the GES and the Federation to ensure that any initial

challenges envisaged confronting the process of the introduction of Arabic into our secondary education system is surmounted.

As an education research think tank, BPI is willing to solicit both intellectual and financial support in order to ensure that holistic and quality education is provided to all Ghanaians irrespective of one's religion, gender or ethnicity. Indeed, BPI is also ready to collaborate with all stakeholders to ensure the implementation of the recommendations of the study as a public service for the benefit of all Ghanaians.

Endnotes/References

1. Abass Mohammed Umar, *The Importance of Arabic Language as an Examinable Subject in Pre-tertiary Education*, a paper delivered at the National Strategic Conference on Muslim Education in Ghana, held on the 27th May, 2016 at Silver Star Tower, Airport City, Accra, pp. 6-7.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Yunus Dumbe, *Islamic Revivalism in Contemporary Ghana*, Sodertorn University Publications, 2013, P.26.
5. Ibid
6. Ibid
7. Abass Mohammed Umar, *The Importance of Arabic Language as an Examinable Subject in Pre-tertiary Education*, a paper delivered at the National Strategic Conference on Muslim Education in Ghana, held on the 27th May, 2016 at Silver Star Tower, Airport City, Accra, pp. 5-6.
8. Ibid.