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Examination session (May or November)

Year

Diploma Programme subject in which this extended essay is registered: World Religions

(For an extended essay in the area of languages, state the language and whether it is group 1 or group 2.)

Title of the extended essay: "A comparison of development projects:
Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) in Kenya
and the Islamic community in Lusaka."

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I confirm that this work is my own work and is the final version. I have acknowledged each use of the words or ideas of another person, whether written, oral or visual.

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Assessment form (for examiner use only)

Candidate session number	
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Achievement level

First examiner	maximum	Second examiner
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General assessment criteria

Refer to the general guidelines.

A Research question	2	
B Approach	3	
C Analysis/interpretation	4	
D Argument/evaluation	4	
E Conclusion	2	
F Abstract	2	
G Formal presentation	3	
H Holistic judgement	4	

Subject assessment criteria

Refer to the subject guidelines.

Not all of the following criteria will apply to all subjects; use only the criteria that apply to the subject of the extended essay.

J		
K		
L		
M		

Total out of 36

Name of first examiner:
(CAPITAL letters)

Examiner number:

Name of second examiner: _____
(CAPITAL letters)

Examiner number:



Candidate Name:

Candidate Number:

Centre Number:

**Title: “A comparison of development projects:
Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) in
Kenya and the Islamic community in Lusaka.”**

Area/Topic: World Religions

Word Count: 3753 words

Date Finished:

Table of Contents

Abstract	pg. 2
Introduction	pg. 3
Background information	pg. 3
Who is Aga Khan?	pg. 4
The role of Islam	pg. 4
The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN)	pg. 6
Development in Zambia by the Islamic community	pg. 8
Comparisons of two schools; The Aga Khan Academy-Mombasa, Kenya and Licef School - Lusaka, Zambia.	pg. 9
Analysis of the AKDN in Kenya and the Islamic community in Zambia	pg. 10
Conclusion	pg. 12
Bibliography	pg. 14
Appendix	pg. 15

Abstract

My extended essay is a comparison of development projects by the Islamic community in Zambia and the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) in Kenya. Through my research I found out that there are more development projects that have been implemented in Kenya by the AKDN than in Lusaka by the Muslim community. The Aga Khan is the current imam (spiritual leader) of the Shia Ismaili community and has contributed vastly towards development in many countries where the AKDN functions. Contributing towards development is a form of service to the community which is vital in Islam. Allah (God) has said this to the followers of Islam through the Prophet, Muhammad. There are many agencies which are part of the AKDN each of which is in charge of carrying out various projects. Through these agencies, the AKDN has been able to put in place many projects in different countries some of which include hospitals, schools as well as hotels. Despite Zambia being less developed economically, the Muslim community has tried, and are continuing, to serve the society by creating projects through which the community can benefit. From my research, it is evident that the Islamic community is putting their best effort to help the local community and by this they are following the teachings of Muhammad who said that it is a duty of every Muslim to help others who are unprivileged. The Islamic community in Lusaka are sacrificing from the little that they have whereas the AKDN has access to unlimited funds for their development projects. However, the AKDN is implementing projects not only for the sake of religion but also for the general community and to alleviate poverty in the world. In general, the society is benefiting from the development projects.

(Word count: 291)

Introduction

The reason why I chose to do my extended essay on this topic is that it is related to my religious background. Being an Ismaili Muslim, I have noticed that there are many people, especially in Zambia, who are unaware of who the Aga Khan is and of all his great contributions towards development in many countries around the world such as Kenya, Tanzania, India and Afghanistan. The research question which I ultimately came up with is “**A comparison of development projects: Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) in Kenya and the Islamic community in Lusaka.**” Through this I will explore the religion of Islam and the fundamentals of its principles such as that of contributing towards development. By comparing two different development projects, one very large and comfortably funded and the other more humble, I thought that I would find out how two different settings contribute towards development. It is necessary to keep in mind the concepts of development of Islam which is the same for all Muslims around the world.

It is clear that the development projects that are being implemented by the Muslim community in Zambia and the AKDN in Kenya are helping not only the Muslims, but also the local citizens of those respective countries. There are obviously fewer development projects in place in Zambia than in Kenya by the AKDN. The reason for this is probably because Kenya is a more developed country economically than Zambia.

Background information

Background of Islam

All followers of Islam believe that the Prophet, Mohammed was the last prophet of Allah (God). Today, the Muslims have been divided into two groups namely the Sunnis and the Shia's and again are further sub- divided. The Sunnis believe that after the death of the Prophet Mohammed, the concepts of Islam are to be followed through the teachings of Mohammed. The Shia group also agreed with this but also added another facet which was that the Prophet Mohammed declared his cousin, Ali to be the first Imam. The Sunnis did not believe this and followed their own path. The Prophet Mohammed's daughter Fatima, got married to Ali and that is where the line of descendents began. The Shia group was

again split and the Muslims which to date follow the line of descendents are known as the Shia Ismaili Muslims. They have always had a living *imam* (spiritual leader) to guide them on the right path of Islam. The present Imam of this community is Prince Karim and is also known as the Aga Khan.

Who is Aga Khan?

The Aga Khan is the 49th Imam of the Shia Ismaili Muslims after succeeding his grandfather “Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah Aga Khan” in 1957. His tender years were spent in Kenya, thereafter moving on to Switzerland where he was born and ultimately proceeded into Harvard University to obtain a degree in Islamic history.

The offering of services in international associations has been traditionally pursued by the family members of Aga Khan. The family members have been closely involved in international organizations such as the United Nations. Princess Zahra who is the daughter of the Aga Khan is in charge of the social development associations. The president of the League of Nations was Sultan Mahomed Shah (the grandfather to Aga Khan). His father and his elder brother Prince Ameen were also part of the UN Organization.

He has achieved many successes in his life with respect to the outstanding work which he has contributed to the society. He is known as “His Highness the Aga Khan” of which the title “His Highness” was honored in 1957 by the Queen of Great Britain. Many renowned universities from around the world have presented Aga Khan with honorary degrees. He has also received awards on behalf of International organizations in recognition for his excellent work in architecture. The Aga Khan and his family members I believe have devoted their time to the contribution of service for the society.

The role of Islam

In a personal interview with one of my neighbours who is a Muslim, Ms. Nagia, said that in Islam, contributing towards development is fundamental to the society because it is a form of service. In my opinion, service to the world is an obligation before God hence it is fundamental to contribute towards development. Development projects are beneficial

to every country. This is because there are several countries with high levels of poverty and if more and more projects are being implemented in a country, poverty levels would be alleviated. Development projects benefit the poor as it increases employment levels in the country thus improving the lives of individuals. Ms. Nagia also said that, development projects benefit the whole society including the poor. She also informed me that in Islam helping the poor is something that is highly regarded. Ms. Nagia stated that in the Quran, God says “Help the poor and you will be helped”¹.

The Quran says that it is a duty of the Muslims to give *zakat* (almsgiving). This is a compulsory act where by any Muslim who is fortunate enough to have a comfortable income should pay a “religious tax” which provides for the needy. I think by contributing towards development, the Muslim community is indirectly fulfilling its obligation of giving *zakat* as the development is also benefiting the poor. Zakat is a must and the money given as a “religious tax” is mostly used to aid the poor in the society. For example, the money collected through the tax may be used for building orphanage centers which educate the unprivileged children or mosques where religious education is being taught to and practiced by the youth of the society.

The Muslim community came to Zambia during the colonial period and established themselves in Lusaka. Eventually, the *Dawah* of Islam which is an “invitation” in Arabic to join the Muslim community spread throughout Zambia. The *Dawah* is thought to be a responsibility on all Muslims throughout the world to welcome others to join Islam. Allah says in the Quran that Muslims should try and guide people, including Non-Muslims who may be interested in converting themselves and practicing the Islamic faith, to follow the beliefs of Islam. Today five per cent of the population in Zambia represents the Muslim community.

¹ Nagia, Nilofer. Personal Interview. 04 Sept 2007

The Aga Khan Development Network

The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) is a non-governmental organization (NGO). It consists of many institutions working under the AKDN and is functioning to enhance living conditions of various individuals without taking into account their religious backgrounds or race. The AKDN centers on improving the health sector, education, rural development, development of the countries' economy and encouraging private sector firms. One of its objectives is to make individuals self reliant so that they can help the less privileged and in turn plan for their own future and also of the generations that are to come. By contributing towards development, the Islamic community in Lusaka and the AKDN in Kenya are following the concepts of Islam.

The AKDN focuses on all areas of development such as health, culture, education, and financial aspect along with economic development. The Aga Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKFED) has many companies operating under it and has made huge investments in different projects. Such projects have not only benefited the organization but also the economy of the country that it operates under.

The main aim of the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) is to alleviate poverty. The programmes that have been set up under AKF are there to strengthen the development in rural areas so villagers would also benefit from it. The development in these areas has been through providing irrigation systems, facilities for agriculture and farming or infrastructure such as that of building roads. The AKF also encourages women to be a part of the present society that is, it encourages them to present themselves as a strong part of the society which can contribute towards development.

Development projects by the AKDN in Kenya.

From the time Aga Khan became the Imam of the Ismaili Muslims, many development projects have been implemented, a few of which I will mention below.

- The first “Aga Khan Nursery School” was inaugurated in Mombasa. Other educational institutions that have been put in place are the Aga Khan academies, and Aga Khan University. One of the projects that were launched in 1997 was the Coastal Rural Support Programme. The villagers in the district now have access to good water supply due to the laying of pipelines and construction of small reservoirs and dams. This programme has benefited over 130,000 locals in the area.
- There are thirteen schools in Kenya which are operated by the Aga Khan Education Services (AKES) which is agency that is part of the AKDN. The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) together with other international agencies funds towards education programmes. The numbers of schools benefited from such programmes are more than 200 and the quality of teaching has become better.

The Aga Khan greatly emphasizes youth to be educated. He has said that “The key to future progress in the developing world will be its ability to identify, develop and retain expert and effective home-grown leadership².”

- In 1958, the Aga Khan hospital was launched. At this time, it was the biggest private hospitals in Kenya. Later on, some more extensions were made and are still continuing to progress the hospital.
- The Serena Hotel which is well known in many countries was inaugurated in Kenya in 2003. The hotel has also received many environmental awards. “Serena hotels and lodges contribute to the local economy through the training of skilled manpower, the reinvigoration of artisans and craft industries, and through sensitive conservation or development of the surrounding area³.”
- In 2003 there was a discussion between the president of Kenya and Aga Khan that approximately \$70 million was to be invested in the education and health sector

² <http://allafrica.com/stories/200707101045.html?page=2> (10/08/2007)

³ <http://www.akdn.org/agency/akfed.html> (06/09/2007)

Development in Zambia by the Islamic community

Despite Zambia being a smaller and still developing than Kenya, much advancement has taken place. There are many business firms that are owned in Zambia by the Muslim community each of which has contributed greatly to the society. Some of the development projects that have been implemented in Lusaka are:

- Licef School and Metropolitan School which is owned and run by Muslims in Lusaka. It is a Muslim school which offers primary and secondary education for all students regardless of race. Through building schools, the local youth as well as the Muslims who are attending the school are gaining education.
- Primary and Secondary education is being executed in Zambia as Muslims have been putting schools in place. Some communities are also providing education for free for the locals in the rural areas who are unable to afford such costs.
- Many mosques and orphanage centers have also been built in different parts of the city.
- There is an association known as the Lusaka Muslim Women Trust especially for women which educates them to be a strong part of the society and to come up and face themselves in the developing world so that they too can contribute to the society.

According to Mr. Sakyi,⁴ who is a non-Muslim thinks that Islam has made a lot of improvements in the Zambian society. He said that the development has increased as there are many Muslim retailers and wholesalers in the retail industry who have provided jobs for the locals hence increasing employment levels in the country and they also rent many shops and warehouses from which the landlord benefits by getting high rent rates.

When asked if the society is gaining from such development projects, Mr. Sakyi replied that it “surely does”, he believes that the local community is benefiting by the Islamic community through Social Welfare and Education.

Through the interview which I conducted with Mr. Sakyi, I also got to know that, there are also some Muslims who are helping the poor people by providing them with food, clothes and also transport at certain times for the less privileged and other items.

⁴ Sakyi, Kwesi. Personal Interview. 05 Sept 2007.

This is done every Friday as Friday is considered to be a very holy day for the Muslims.

Comparisons of two schools; The Aga Khan Academy-Mombasa, Kenya and Licef School - Lusaka, Zambia.

The Aga Khan Academy in Mombasa opened up in 2003 and is part of a larger conglomeration of the Aga Khan Academies. The education system in the school is international and entry is based only on merit. There is a wide variety of subject choices from which the students can select particular subjects of interest. The main importance in the education system is placed on the humanities because the philosophy of the school is that this course of study will develop critical thinking in the students an international exam such as IGCSE is offered by the school. The Academy has recently implemented the International Baccalaureate system, an excellent program which is recognized world wide. The education system is student oriented and follows an interactive learning system. The annual budget of the school is generous.

Licef School in Lusaka on the other hand, offers both primary and secondary education. The school provides an internationally recognized exam, GCE O levels which is also offered at the Aga Khan Academy in Mombasa. Licef has recently implemented the A-level program for students who have completed their secondary education. It was published in the Times of Zambia Newspaper that some students of Licef School offered a range of items as a donation to some under privileged children students. It was stated by one of the early year's students that "Allah wanted those who had wealth to share it with others because spending on charity was fruitful⁵. One of the unprivileged children stated that "it was good that children in a privileged position had remembered their colleagues who were poor." This tells us that the Muslim community in Zambia is being credited for the kind deeds that it shows towards the community. From this we can also see that such an Islamic school is not only focusing on education alone but is also doing some sort of community service by offering donations to charity.

⁵ <http://www.times.co.zm/news/viewnews.cgi?category=6&id=1161420752> "Lusaka's Licef School donates to charity" 02/10/2007

From the above comparisons of two schools we can see that the level of education is almost the same. Therefore, we can assume that the Muslim community is putting effort in terms of providing internationally recognized education for students in Zambia which could help them in the future.

Analysis of the AKDN in Kenya and the Islamic community in Zambia

Some people may presume that the Islamic communities in Zambia are the ones who are fulfilling their religious obligations of contributing towards society to a greater extent than the AKDN in Kenya. These people believe that the Muslim community are following and obeying what their religion tells them to by following the teachings of the Prophet. As told by Zeenat Quadri ⁶ who is a Muslim friend, she said that the teaching of the Prophet was that the people who are fortunate enough should try as much as possible to help the poor and the less privileged individuals in the society. I think that all the Muslims around the world contribute to the society in some way or the other. This is done through building up orphanage centers, setting up small businesses for the people who are unable to afford setting up small firms, opening up educational centres for the unprivileged youth and also donating money towards charity. By doing so, these people are improving the lives for the unfortunate as it means that they would have better standards of living; they are also playing a role in improving the development in the country by providing service to the community. There are many organizations that are similar to AKDN which contributes to the society.

Nevertheless, service which as mentioned before is fundamental to the society and is regarded to be an important act is thought to be more highly if the service is offered with a clean heart and with good intentions.. If a person who is able to only afford one meal a day shares this with a person who is unable to afford anything, this act is thought to be more acceptable by Allah (God) than a person who has unlimited food and offers what he has. This is because the first person has sacrificed the food that he had. He was not greedy and gave from the little that he had. Whereas the latter just gave without knowing the value of it or without any sacrifice.

⁶ Quadri, Zeenat. Personal Interview. 01 Oct 2007

The example which I mentioned above can be linked to the Islamic community in Zambia and the AKDN which does consist of Muslim and non-Muslim members. Some individuals would believe that the Islamic community which is a very small community as compared to the very big organization AKDN in Kenya, are the ones who are sacrificing the little that they have thus following the teaching of Prophet Muhammad. The latter also following the teachings of Muhammad but being a large organization and operating in many countries, they are the ones in abundance of the Aga Khans fund. The sacrifice which is offered by the Muslim community in Zambia will be more greatly accepted as a humble deed by Allah, it will be considered more worthy than that which is offered by AKDN.

On the other hand, it may be argued that the Muslim community is offering service to the community just for the sake of its religious obligations whereas the AKDN is not only fulfilling the religious duty of giving service to the community and not only doing it because it is compulsory, the AKDN is actually trying to alleviate poverty and improve the standards of living for the whole community irrespective of race or gender. The Aga Khan has said *“There are those who enter the world in such poverty that they are deprived of both the means and the motivation to improve their lot. Unless they can be touched with the spark which ignites the spirit of individual enterprise and determination, they will only sink into apathy, degradation and despair. It is for us, who are more fortunate, to provide that spark.”*⁷ It is also trying to develop the country in which it is operating so that the economic standard of the country is also enhanced. The AKDN’s perspective of offering service is both from a religious point of view and also a global point of view.

The AKDN has tried to get into Zambia, but unfortunately government has not yet approved that the organization can function in Zambia. If the AKDN was to function in Zambia, there would surely be a big change brought about in Zambia. There would be many development projects that would be implemented in the country such as new schools would be put up, hospitals, there would be more employment as jobs will be created if new projects are put up and also hotels would be put up. The standards of living of the poor would improve and poverty levels would go down. Economically, Zambia would grow larger and become more developed.

⁷ <http://www.agakhanschools.org/kenya/akam/snr.asp> “The Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa” (11/02/2007)

Conclusion

The extended essay was a great challenge for me and I encountered many problems whilst doing it. The major problem was the formation of the research question. I knew the topic which I wanted to deal with which was world religions but didn't know how to phrase the question which I kept on changing whilst researching. However, after I decided upon the research question my research process went on quite well. I learnt several things about my religion such as the teachings of Muhammad which I learned from my interviewees and the act of paying zakat which is compulsory for all Muslims who are fortunate enough which I myself never knew in spite of being part of the Shia Ismaili community.

As I mentioned it earlier in my introduction that there are many people in Zambia who are unaware of who the Aga Khan is, through this extended essay, my friends who read my essay got to learn who he is and what contributions he makes in the society.

Although the AKDN has implemented many huge projects in Kenya, the Islamic community is doing the best it can to promote the Social Welfare of the society in Lusaka. AKDN is present in many countries in the world and I see no reason why it should not be present in Zambia. The AKDN has contributed in many ways to the society and if it could be approved in Zambia, it would be very beneficial to the community.

I also concluded that the Muslim community in Lusaka and the AKDN in Kenya are both giving a lot of importance to education in the society mainly through building schools. This is because education improves the nobility of man.

From my research and interviews conducted, I came to the conclusion that there are more development projects implemented in Kenya by the AKDN than in Lusaka by the Islamic community in terms of the monetary aspect. Nonetheless, I believe that the Islamic community in spite of being a very small population in Zambia of only five per cent is trying its level best to contribute as much as possible as it can to the society both in terms of financial aid and what they have sacrificed for the community as it is their duty to proffer service to the community because service is something which is considered to be highly regarded by Allah (God).

The development projects that are being carried out in both the countries are not only benefiting the Muslim community but the local citizens as well. Through such development projects people have a source to good education, jobs are created, more medical facilities are available and the standards of living of the society improves.

Even though the AKDN has not yet been approved by the government of Zambia, I think it would be very beneficial to the local community as many projects would be put up which would enhance the quality of lives that people here, in Zambia are leading.

Aga Khan is trying to target all aspects of development projects which I believe is admirable and of great value to the community. I also concluded that through the AKDN in Kenya and the Islamic community in Zambia, the Muslims are following the right path of Islam and fulfilling almost every aspect of what their religion, Islam preaches.

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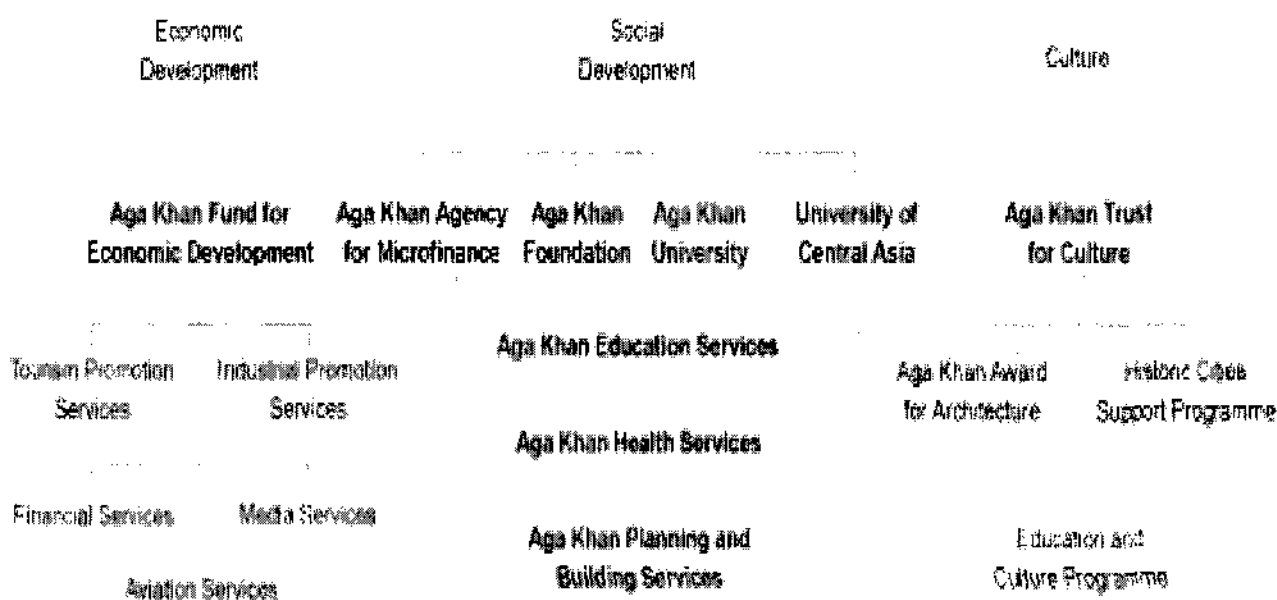
Quadri, Zeenat. Personal Interview 01 Oct 2007

Appendix

Organisation Chart of the Aga Khan Development Network

THE IMAMAT

AGA KHAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK



<http://www.akdn.org/agency/org%20chart.html> 05/09/2007

Interview Questions

1. Do you think that the local community benefits from development projects that are being put in place? How?
2. What are some of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad?
3. What does the Quran say about helping the unprivileged?
4. What sort of development projects are you aware of that have been put up in Zambia?
5. What is the Muslim community in Lusaka doing to help the unprivileged?