

Mainstreaming Peace Education into Almajiri Integrated Model Schools Curricula in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria

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Abstract: *The focus of this study was to evaluate the curriculum of the Almajiri integrated model schools in Abuja, Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory for the content of peace education. The specific objectives of this study are to assess the current curriculum of the Almajiri Model Schools for the content of peace education and find out for the five years of its existence the measures the federal government put in place for the Almajiri to imbibe a culture of peace. The findings showed that there is a 32% content of peace education in the school curriculum. The interview results also found that civic education should be added to the Almajiri integrated curriculum, strategies for Almajiri education should be regularly reviewed, a regular census of Almajiri schools is needed, as well as the mobilization and sensitization of the general public. The study recommended that religious orientations, seminars, and conferences should be organized from time to time to clarify the misinterpretation and misunderstanding associated with Almajiri and the Almajiranci system. The federal government need to improve the provision of basic social amenities in rural areas, as this can reduce the migration of the Almajirai to cities. The government also need to improve the condition of public schools by providing adequate infrastructure and adequate qualified teachers. Finally, generate job opportunities for graduates of formal schools to serve as incentives to motivate students of Almajiri Quranic Schools.*

Keywords: *Almajiri, Peace Education, Curricula, integrated model schools*

1. Introduction

Background to the Study

The word 'Almajiri' coined from the Arabic word "Al-Muhajirin" came into limelight as a result of Prophet Mohammed's (SAW) migration from Mecca to Medina in 609 CE. From the Islamic perspective, the word was first used by Prophet Muhammad (SAW) to indicate those of his companions (*Muhajirun*) who migrated with him from Mecca to Medina for the sake of Islam. Abdulqadir (2003) argued that the name *Muhajirin* refers to those knowledge seekers who move from one place to another in search of knowledge like *Quranic* school teachers and pupils. In a Hadith (which is the sayings and deeds of the prophet) in the collection of Al-Tirmidhi (2008), the Prophet is quoted to have said: "the search for knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim."

Traditional Islamic education has a long history of existence in Nigeria. It started in the northern part of Nigeria. However, the curriculum contents, teaching methods, teacher's qualification, infrastructure and administration of the schools have been compromised. Therefore, the Quranic Schools have remained archaic. Consequently, the *Almajiri* has become more of a social problem than a useful member of society (Al-Tirmidhi, 2008). The *Almajirai* are vulnerable to being used as political thugs by benefactors who take advantage of their vulnerability and lack of formal education. They are considered a great security risk, as many of them have become miscreants who actively participate in ethnic, religious and political violence as well as terrorism (Al-Tirmidhi, 2008).

Since the earliest times of human history, peace has been conceived, practised, contextualized, and defined in a multidimensional and holistic way. A simple, clear and easy-to-understand way of thinking about peace is a state of being when people live in harmony; when people coexist and are happy to coexist; when people value one another and are making efforts to stay in the relationship. According to Sule (2002), Martin Luther King, Jr. observed that "Peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek but a means by which we arrive at that goal." The means of achieving peace is critical to the nature and durability of peace itself. It has evolved in the analysis among the growing community of African peace builders that to prevent war, it is critical to building a culture of peace; one that is lasting and sustainable. To build a durable, sustainable culture of peace, there must be systemic strategies (Sule, 2002).

Despite the undisputed fact that Africa is termed the "cradle of civilization" because of its multi-millennia history of milestones and achievements in science, agriculture and environmental management, arts and scholarship, family support systems, community social structures and governance, including indigenous traditions and practices of mediation and violence prevention, the fact remain that for the past fifty years many African societies have been embroiled in horrifying wars that have claimed the lives of millions of people, devastated and displaced another tens of millions of people, damaged culture, destroyed local economies and deterred development.

In addition to the millions of deaths from violent conflicts and the indirect effects of war, such as diseases, millions of Africans have suffered the worst, most

incomprehensible indignities to humankind: rape, mutilation, torture, child soldiering, state-sponsored and rebel group terrors with grievous implications for security and stability in society (Abdulkadir, 2003). But violent conflicts in human society can be limited through the agency of education. This necessitates a critical consideration of the use of peace education as a means of reducing the incidence of conflict in human society. A consideration of the level of peace ingredients or elements in the subjects covered in the *Almajiri* school syllabus would reveal the degree of the culture of peace taught to the students. Such subjects as Social Studies (in the Junior Secondary School), History, Geography, Government (in the senior secondary school) and Religious Studies, in general, has been identified as very useful for this end (Sifawa, 2006). Against this background, this study evaluates the curriculum of *Almajiri* integrated model schools on the content of peace education in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria to understand the role of these schools in the moulding of the culture of peace in the *Almajirai*.

2. Statement of the Problem

The world today faces threats/problem of terrorism on a scale that has become a global phenomenon affecting millions of lives in virtually every country (Nacos, 2011). Nigeria is not an exception, as the emergence of terrorists and insurgents have contributed to the ubiquity of violence in the country (Omitola, 2012, Lloyd, 2013). Further complicating the situation is the fact that Nigeria is very diverse in its composition, divided structurally along sharp ethnic and religious lines with historical underpinnings for conflict. Several efforts, (Abdulkadir, 2003, Sule 2002) initiatives, and policies including the use of military might and attempts at diplomacy and amnesty have failed to address this problem properly (Omitola, 2012).

Najjuma (2011) agreed that education has advantages in reducing the intensity of conflicts and setting the stage for lasting peace. Other studies have also demonstrated the efficacy of peace education in helping to address situations of conflict. Bar-Tal and Rosen (2009) advocated peace education as a positive step towards reconciliation that can bring about lasting peace. Scholars, such as Umar (2003) and Rosen and Salomon (2011), have canvassed this position. Cardozo (2008) proposed peace education as a means of addressing the problems of protracted conflicts because of terrorism, violence, and insurgency. Cardozo's proposal is for a holistic change to the curriculum, approach, and strategy for teaching on issues related to conflict resolution and peace-making (as opposed to peacekeeping), which will bring about attitudinal changes. Also, such scholars as Najjuma (2011), had advocated similar positions. In the Nigerian context, there has been neither research into nor attempts by policymakers to incorporate the concept of peace education in addressing the violent conflicts plaguing the *Almajiri* schools.

This lack of investigation is, of course, a meaningful gap in the current research literature that this study aims to address. It is worthy of note that this approach emphasizes peace building as opposed to the practice of using military might solely to solving the problem of insurgency, conflict

and terrorism in Nigeria. Incorporating peace education into the curriculum of *Almajiri* schools to target early childhood education may bring about the dynamics needed to break the cycle of conflict and reverse the current trend. Scholars have researched the existing education system in this sector and explored the viability of introduction and application of peace education into the system of teaching in *Almajiri* schools and the impact it may have on the future of conflict resolutions (Umar 2003). Studies depict that educational sector lacks sufficient professionally trained and skilled manpower that will cultivate or encourage peace in *Almajiri's* school curriculum and emphasized the need for increased peace building capacity, tools and intellectual for the execution of this project. Even though the educational curriculum of the *Almajiri* schools has the element of peace in it, taking subjects like Social Studies, Religious Studies, Government, Geography and Biology as examples, yet we do not practice peace as expected in *Almajiri* schools and the society at large.

Hence the broad objective of this study is to evaluate the curriculum of the *Almajiri* Model Schools in Abuja, Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory for the content of peace education.

This study is limited to the evaluation of the curriculum of the *Almajiri* Model Schools in Abuja, Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory for the content of peace education. The study is also limited to two selected *Almajiri* Model Schools in Abuja. The two schools were selected because they are the only *Almajiri* integrated model schools in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

3. Significance of the Study

The study contributes to knowledge in the following ways: by providing empirical information to curriculum designers, educational management authority, Ministry of Education and other educational agencies for proper educational planning. Also, peace educators, peace programme developers, advocates for peace and other stakeholders in the culture of peace who may be interested in knowing the content of peace in the *Almajiri* Model School curriculum will find the study useful.

This study's findings will furnish *Almajiri* model school teachers and others interested in peace education with useful information to improve their services and better equip the students on peaceful living for a better society. The educational sector may benefit from the study by incorporating the findings and updating student centered peace activities and community components into school curricula so that peace education emanates from the school to the community.

Historical Background of *Almajiri*

Almajiri is a Hausa word meaning immigrant children in search of *Quranic* education. The *Quranic* School is the pre-primary and the primary level of traditional Islamic education. It is an institution which has its origin traced to the prophetic period of Islamic education. Historians have

traced the *Almajiri* system of education to the beginning of the 11th Century, largely promoted by leading lights of Islam who were determined to spread Islamic knowledge and learning long before the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates of British Nigeria (Al-Tirmidhi, 2008).

The word, *Almajiri*, emanated from the Arabic word *AL-MUHAJIRIN* which came as a result of Prophet Mohammed's migration from Mecca to Medina. From the Islamic perspective, the word was first used by Prophet Muhammad to indicate those of his companions (*muhajirun*) who migrated with him for the sake of Islam from Mecca to Medina (Al-Tirmidhi, 2008). However, the name *Muhajirun* later came to refer to those knowledge seekers who move from one place to another in search of knowledge like the *Quranic* school teacher and his pupils. In a *Hadith* (sayings and deeds) of the prophet in the collection of Al-Tirmidhi (2008), the Prophet is quoted to have said: "the search for knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim." The *Hadith* did not discriminate against age or status. In another *Hadith* collection by Wali'al-din (1977) (*Mishkat al-masabih*) the prophet said: "go in search of knowledge even to China." The above *Hadith* shows that the search for knowledge knows no geographical, social, or religious boundary. He said in another *Hadith*: "wisdom (knowledge) is the lost property of the believer, wherever he sees it he picks it up." These and many other similar *Hadith* propelled Muslims to go in search of knowledge. In Hausaland, *Almajiri* refers to children sent from their homes and entrusted into the care of Islamic teachers to learn Islamic Studies. In Nigeria, the *Almajiri* system started in the 11th century, as a result of the involvement of Borno rulers in Quranic literacy. Seven hundred years later, the Sokoto Caliphate was founded principally through an Islamic revolution based on the teachings of the Holy Quran. These two empires ran similar *Quranic* learning system which over time came to be known as the *Almajiri* system.

The Plight of the Almajiri

Almajirai are found mostly in the northern part of Nigeria. They are usually between the ages of seven and fifteen. Originally, the idea was for these children to be sent out from their homes to learn Quranic education in the traditional way under the care of a "Mallam." However, this system changed and the children are now left to wander about the streets, and beg for alms to sustain themselves and their *mallams* (Obioha, 2009). They neither receive Islamic education nor western education. *Almajiri* practice leads to child abuse in the sense that the children are exposed to laborious work at a tender age (between 6 and 17 years), lack the basic necessities of life and plunged into poverty and its attendant evils and may not be trained in any skill leading them to become a ready tool in the hands of unscrupulous elements who take advantage of their vulnerability to engage them in illicit acts. They are a common sight in the northern states of Nigeria including Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Niger, Gombe, Kaduna, Plateau and Sokoto.

According to the statistics released by the Ministry of Education in 2009, Kano State alone harbours 1.6 million *Almajirai* in some 26, 000 *madrassas*. Sokoto, Kaduna, Niger and Borno States are home to approximately 1.1 million, 824, 200, 580, 000 and 389, 000 *Almajiri* pupils, respectively. They also have a large presence in neighbouring West African countries like Mali, Togo, Niger Republic, Chad and Cameroon. Trying to be precise, the Ministry of Education estimated there were 9.5 million *Almajiri* children in the northern part of the country in 2010.

Over the past few decades, the system has been overwhelmed, neglected and abused (Christian, 2010). The mere mention of the word *Almajiri* or its plural form, *Almajirai*, evokes different feelings among Nigerians. For many, a picture of unkempt, hungry-looking children of school age clutching plastic plates and begging for alms readily comes to mind. The *Almajirai* are a fallout of the abuse of the *Tsangaya* system of Islamic education (Alechenu, 2012). According to Abdullahi (2011), Nigeria's *Almajirai* have been denied every single right enshrined in the Child Rights Convention of 1989. These street urchins are a product of a failed Islamic education system and impoverished homes. They are deserted or are turned out from their parents' homes as early in life as age 5 or 6 to live with and memorize the Quran from teachers in local *madrassas*. Also called "*makarantaalo*" (Arabic schools), the *madrassas* are mostly dilapidated "dormitories" constructed from rotten corrugated roofing sheets or inferior bricks. Pupils' learning materials are torn fragments of papers with portions of the Quran or small wooden slates known in the Hausa language as "*Alo*" are used to write down verses of the Quran to be memorized. To capture the plight of the *Almajirai*, Abdullahi (2011) states that the students endure utter deprivation, and their appearances leave much to be desired. With their unkempt hair, dirty faces, blistered lips, tainted teeth, crusty skin, stinking bags and bare feet, they are distinctive. Armed with plastic bowls, decorated with shabby attires and congregated into small groups, they accost members of the public with alluring songs and soliciting alms. The begging proceeds are used to sustain themselves and their teachers (Al-Tirmidhi, 2008). Though there are no exact figures of the *Almajiri*, they are estimated to number in millions.

The *Tsangaya* schools or *Almajirancias* they are popularly known in the north, have, thus, become breeding grounds for political thuggery and religious fanaticism. The success so far made by the Boko Haram sect, for instance, might not be unconnected with the proliferation of the *Almajiri* schools. It is believed that the leader of the sect, Muhammed Yusuf, while alive went recruiting his members from mosque to mosque and from one *Almajiri* School to the other. The vulnerability of the *Almajirai* made them handy as they were already antagonistic to western culture and opposed to society which has failed to treat them well (Peace, 2012). According to Yahaya (2004), the *Almajiri* who is thought to be a pious pupil in search of knowledge became rather a social problem in society. Begging for food took most of his time instead of learning. As he grows up, he becomes a graduated beggar

moving around hotels, market places, bus stops and motor parks. He may become a porter and do all sorts of menial jobs or pickpockets (Abdullahi, 2011). These jobless youths constitute a major force in the event of any social, political or religious uprising. They were usually recruited during riots, examples being the Maitasine riots in Kano, Dangungu riot in Kaduna, the Bulunkutu riot in Borno State and many recent Islamic riots in the northern part of Nigeria and the present insurgency of the Boko Haram (Al-Tirmidhi, 2008). Some of these children are also used for drug peddling and other criminal activities.

The Dilemmas of *Almajiri* System of Education

Almajiri is a religious practice which has come up with some innovations that are contrary to the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Instead of being in school to study, unfortunately, all the *Almajirai* do is to spend their time wandering about begging for livelihood and engaging in unlawful activities. Khalid (2000) observes that one of the most serious charges levelled against the *Almajiranci* is that it subjected its enrollees to a condition of begging. In 1988, the Kano State Committee Report on *Almajirai* adequately reflected this opinion when it reported that the agony of lives of 5 – 10 years old child having to live barely on his own with virtually no visible means of support for his livelihood other than the little charity he gets from good Samaritans is a real one (Kano State, 1988). This report identified some factors that contributed to the problem of *Almajiri* apart from begging and wandering on the street. These factors include:

1. Norms and values of society encourage children of age 3 - 5 years to be enrolled in *Qur'anic* school.
2. Parental ignorance and poverty as most of these children come from peasant families.
3. Inadequate commitment on the part of the government.
4. The distance of centres of learning from the rural areas to communities.
5. Nonspecific year of graduation in the traditional *Qur'anic* boarding school, make the *almajirai* pupils/students to lack opportunities for western types of education.

In a nutshell, the major problems affecting the *Almajiri* schools are i). Unfriendly environment ii). Over crowdedness. iii). Inadequate instructional materials. iv). Insufficient teachers and instructors. v). Inadequate community support to *Qur'anic* schools among others.

Commenting on the problems of *Almajiranci* system of education, Muhammad (2010) explained that many people criticize and condemn the system of *Almajiri* education due to some problems associated with it. However, the condemnation is not about the type of knowledge received by the pupils, but the inherent problems identified with this system of education, such as:

1. **Inadequate provision of feeding:** The *Almajiri* migrates without adequate provision for feeding, clothing, shelter, and essential human needs. This may not go well for small children, who may not be able to

work elsewhere as labourers to feed themselves. This sometimes exposes them to juvenile delinquency.

2. **Overpopulation:** Numerical growth of these *Almajiri* per *Mallam* and *Qur'anic* centres makes it difficult for *Mallam* to control them and it also leads to congestion and engenders health hazard, poor environmental conditions, and insecurity, among others.
3. **Lack of payment of salary:** Although imparting knowledge in this type of schools are voluntary, intended to seek Allah's reward in this world and hereafter. This, however, has some negative effects on the pupils because *Mallams* may not fully concentrate on the teaching process, as he may attend to other businesses like trading, farming, etc. to get means of survival for himself and his family. This is the major reason they engage *Almajiri* in farming, hawking, begging and other forms of child labour.
4. **Age:** Pupils in *Almajiranci* system of education are under aged (below six years) are admitted into the system (boarding) instead of the studying under the care of their parents/guardians.
5. **Methods of discipline:** The nature of discipline in some *Almajiri* schools does not help in the positive development of the pupils. For instance, continuous flogging is assumed to instil fear in the minds of the *Almajirai* but instead of this bringing them to change their negative attitudes, they rather become even more recalcitrant (Muhammad, 2010).

Sule (2002) laments that in Northern Nigeria, the problems of *Almajiri* manifested in various forms of social explosions like Mai-tatsine crisis, Yan Daba Phenomenon, Area Boys, Yan Daukar Amarya incidences, and Boko Haram. He asserts further that *Almajiranci* became a perfect excuse for some parents to reduce the burden of rearing children and that the *Almajiri* phenomenon provided the grounds for recruitment of masses of Muslims children into all sorts of anti-social activities, mostly turned into beggars, hawkers and wanderers. The *Almajirai* were made to live in a sorry state of learning; most of them live in a condition of poor health, malnutrition and squalor. Hamza (2009) opines that the *Almajirai* of the present time are somewhat used as money-making tools by the *Mallams*. Some of them go to restaurants to wash plates and fetch water so that they will be given leftover foods. They are all over the streets, very dirty, hungry, thirsty, lack all kinds of necessities of life and, at times, they cause traffic hazards.

The United Nations International Children Education Fund (UNICEF) (2008) shows that the *Almajirai* also serve as domestic servants or porters to other people and do odd jobs that are hazardous, detrimental to their health and exploitative. Their basic rights to survival and development as well as protection are violated as they are exposed to all forms of violence, discrimination, abuse and neglect by parents or guardians. The empirical findings of the 2008 UNICEF study confirm the value of ability of the *Almajirai* of the *Makarantan-allo* and reveal the fact that they are further disadvantaged, discriminated against and are marginalized by members of the society who operate, patronize and condone the *Almajiranci* system of education. This is further made apparent by the violations

of the rights to life, human dignity, universal basic education, health, parental love, care, maintenance, socialization, value orientation and the right to grow up in a family environment. These deprivations constitute a gross violation of child's rights guaranteed under both the *Shari'a* and the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

The *Almajirai* are socially and even psychologically disoriented; they cannot be mobilized for positive social change. Apart from the loss of filial and, by extension, human emotions, they are also deprived. These deprivations are not the only disincentive for positive social change but their humiliations and agonies of make them very violent (UNICEF, 2008).

Integrating *Almajiri* Education

Integration refers to the merging of two or more things, parts or systems together to form a whole. In this case, the integration of the *Almajiri* educational system refers to the combination of the Western system of education with the *Qur'anic* school system. The concept of integration, as clearly understood, is the introduction of the elements of basic education of the Western type of education, i.e. literacy, numeracy and life skills, into the traditional *Qur'anic* school system. In other words, it connotes injecting the essential components of public schools into *Qur'anic* schools (Mahuta, 2009).

The concept of integration of the *Almajiri* educational system aims to join elements of basic Western-type education together with traditional *Qur'anic* school systems without interfering with the goals of the *Qur'anic* school system. It is meant to strengthen the ability of the learners to read, write and memorize the Qur'an in an atmosphere conducive for learning. Thus, by introducing secular educational subjects into *Qur'anic* school system, the products become literate, numerate and well-enabled to acquire manipulative and survival skills relevant to the modern formal system to meet the goals of Education For All (EFA). The integration also aimed to eradicate the *Almajiranci* method that involves teenage children in street begging, child labour, unhygienic condition, social vices and to provide adequate and qualitative instructional materials in both Islamic and secular subjects (Al-Tirmidhi, 2008). The integration will also help empower and improve the welfare of the *Mallams* through the provision of respectable remuneration and allowances to live decent lives. It is this realization that makes the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1976 to introduce the Universal Primary Education (UPE) Scheme, which was reformed and re-introduced as the Universal Basic Education (UBE) in September 1999.

A number of efforts have been made over the years by groups, individuals, organizations and governments towards integrating *Qur'anic* schools or Islamic education with the Western education system, such attempts have, however, achieved varying degrees of success (Fafunwa, 1990; Junaid *et al.*, 2005). The integrated *Almajiri* schools are to offer the following core subjects: English, Science, Mathematics, Social Studies together with Hausa

Language, Computer Studies, Physical and Health Education and Handwriting under a formal system of education with Agriculture, Trade, Commerce, Handcraft, Auto-mechanic, Vulcanizing and Islamic Calligraphy, among others, as vocational skills of their curriculum. The non-formal component of the curriculum is *Qur'anic* education which involves a strong foundation in the recitation of the Glorious Qur'an and Islamic Studies comprising *Qira'atul Qur'an*, *Tahfeez*, *Tajweed*, Arabic, Islamic Knowledge, *Tauhid*, *Hadith*, *Fiqh* and *Sirah*.

The first official attempt to put a halt on the practice of migrant *Qur'anic* schooling system was started by Kano Native Authority as far back as 1959 when it warned parents against allowing their children to roam the streets begging in the name of an Islamic school. *Qur'anic* school teachers were warned against taking their pupils to other towns without the approval of the village head or district head of the targeted town. This effort, however, failed to yield fruitful results eventually, as some *Mallams* campaigned against the local authority, accusing it of trying to undermine Islam (Abba, 1983).

Khalid (2002) laments that since 1959; it was not until 1980 that state governments in Northern Nigeria began to express concerns about the *Almajiri* phenomenon, starting with the removal of beggars from the streets. Particularly, the Kano State Government enacted an edict, tagged the *Qur'anic* School Registration in 1980 (after the June 1980 Maitatsine crisis) and subsequently amended in 1988 to read: *Qur'anic* Schools (Registration and movement). Khalid (2002) further explains that the Sokoto State Government signed into law an edict regulating the movement of *Almajirai*, entitled "The Control of Juvenile Accompanying *Qur'anic* *Mallams* Adoptive Rules" and appointed a Committee on Control of Migrants in 1986 to enable the Government to determine the needs of these children, provide the needs and settle the children in their places so that they could undertake studies in both Islamic and Western education in their homes and villages.

During the pre-independence period, Muslim parents showed serious displeasure in response to the Christian evangelical nature of early public education process that interfered with the religious upbringing of their children. Consequently, concerned Muslim scholars, organizations and groups initiated several integration projects by developing separate religious and secular subjects (Fafunwa, 1990; Junaid *et al.*, 2005). These disparate group and individual attempts later galvanized by the colonial government in its response to growing agitation by Muslim groups culminated in the establishment of post-elementary integrated schools, such as the Kano and Sokoto Kadi (Judicial) schools and School for Arabic Studies in Kano (Dahiru, 2011). There were other similar efforts made to establish an integrated primary school in Zaria in 1959, as the Nizzamiyya Islamic Primary School was established in the 1960s (Umar, 2003).

After Nigeria's independence in 1960, the Northern states established other integrated post-primary schools, such as the Arabic Teachers Colleges i.e. the present Sheikh Abubakar Mahmud Gummi Memorial College, Sokoto and

Sultan Abubakar College, Sokoto, to train teachers for the Qur'anic and Islamic schools. These types of schools and many Women Arabic Teachers College were established in Katsina, Gombe, Kano and Maiduguri. Bunza (2009) and Dahiru (2011) state that several Islamic organizations started establishing model primary schools from the 1980s. Prominent among them were The Islamic Education Trust (IET), Minna and Sokoto; The Islamic Trust of Nigeria (ITN), Zaria; The Islamic Foundation, Kano; The Hudabiyah Foundation, Kano; FOMWAN, JIBWIS and the Daawah Group of Nigeria, Kano. The most recent of these trends is the establishment of Tahfeez Schools at the primary level and integrated Islamic secondary schools. This rapid increase as noted by Junaid et al. (2005) and Dahiru (2011) attracted the attention of several interest groups, local and international NGOs and other development partners and Donor Agencies.

The Federal Government's intervention into the issue of Qur'anic schools was first announced in March 1977 and maintained this position since then (Mahuta, 2009). This is the reason in September 1999, the Universal Basic and Compulsory Primary Education Scheme (UBE) was launched to achieve the total enrolment of schools age children into school (Sifawa, 2006). Similarly, President Goodluck Jonathan touched on the sensitive matter of protection of life and property of Nigerians wherever they chose to live at the flag-off of his campaign in the Northeast. All through his electioneering campaigns, the provision of formal and Islamic education to over 9.5 million *Almajiris* was a point of discussion (Laniyan, 2011).

Goals and Consequences of Integrating *Almajiri* Education

The current trend of integrating both *Qur'anic* education with the Western system of education is progressing at all governmental levels— federal, state and local government. This is a sign that the trend will be fruitful. However, the fruit of the effort may not be immediate but in future. Umar (2003) lists the following anticipated consequences of integrating *Almajiri* education on society. The anticipated consequences of integrating *Almajiri* education on society are:

1. Enrolment of *Almajiri* from *Makaranta Allo* into the Integrated *Almajiri* School will drastically reduce the numbers of beggars on the street, restaurant, and other public places.
2. All the hazards and communicable disease that *Almajirai* are exposed to will be avoided.
3. Exposure of *Almajiri* to bad behaviour and other social vices such as theft, drug addiction, pocket-picking etc will be eradicated.
4. All security threats in the nation such as post-election violence in Jos and most recently Boko Haram Bombings in the north, which has the element of *Almajiri* as perpetrators will be halted.
5. Integrated *Almajiri* Education has a standard curriculum and duration of Programme hence it will reduce time wastage.

6. Knowledge acquisition at Integrated *Almajiri* School will not be limited to *Qur'anic* and Western Education but will also include other vocational skills (e.g. Mechanic, Technician, Fashion Designer, Vulcanizing, Barbing etc) that will make them be self-reliance thereby reducing their poverty level.
7. Employment of the *Almajiriv Mallams* (teachers) will also salvage them from poverty.
8. Honour and dignity will be accorded to the student, graduates, and teachers of Integrated *Almajiri School* in the society as their mode of dressing and way of life will be different from the tradition *Almajiri*.

The following are the goals of Integrating *Almajiri* Education.

1. To provide a conducive and organized learning environment that will ensure *Almajirai* acquire both *Qur'anic* and Modern Basic Education.
2. To provide an integrated curriculum that promotes the study of Al-Qur'an and basic education subjects.
3. To provide the *Almajirai* with opportunities to acquire knowledge and vocational skills and that will enable them to be self-reliant and useful to their communities.
4. To provide a sound foundation for Tajweed and Tahfeez for *Almajirai*.
5. To provide opportunities for graduates of the school to further their studies.
6. To provide health and sanitary condition, physical and social security and social welfare that ensures protection of *almajirai* from all forms of danger.

Furthermore, the goals of integrating the two systems are to improve living condition and empower the *Almajirai* and their *mallams* and to eradicate all negative practices of *Almajiranci* system, especially the involvement of teenage children in street begging. Moreover, Mahuta (2009), Dahiru (2011) and Bunza (2009) all declare the goals of integrating the two systems of education in their works as follows:

- a. To accord the Islamic system of education an official status and formal recognition.
- b. To integrate the element of Basic Education into the *Qur'anic* school system without interfering with the goals of the *Qur'anic* system. These shall be with the view to improve their capacities and empowering them.
- c. To introduce into the Islamic education curriculum some modern subjects of science, mathematics, languages, and other aspects of life skills found in the curriculum of the modern secular curriculum.
- d. To acquire skills and competencies necessary for entry to primary and secondary schools as well as tertiary and University Education.
- e. To make the products of the system useful and acceptable to members of their communities, introduce elements of Basic Education into the *Qur'anic* school system thereby making the products literate, numerate and to enable them to acquire, manipulative and survival skills in the modern formal system to meet the goals of education for all (EFA).
- f. To provide conducive learning environments in the *Qur'anic* schools and inculcate in the learner's

knowledge of some Islamic rites that will be taught from the Qur'an, Hadith, Fiqh, Surah and Tahdhib.

- g. To provide bases for capacity development in the *Qur'anic* school system through training and retraining of its operators and teachers.
- h. To increase the number of school's enrolment thereby greatly reducing the number of out-of-school children on the streets and improve the health condition of the *Qur'anic* or *almajiranci* school children.

Peace Education in Nigeria

The term 'Peace', according to Oyebamiji (2001), is "a state of quiet, calm, repose, public tranquillity, freedom from war, and concord of ideas among different people." It is a condition in which there is no war between two or more groups or nations. Also, peace, according to the 1974 edition of Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, is "a form of developing a deep sense of concern and solidarity with the less privileged, courage to act in a non-violent way against injustices in one's community and the nation, and acceptance of responsibility by each individual for the maintenance of peace." Article 1 of the United Nations General Assembly's (UNGA) Resolution 23/243 of 1999 highlights the importance of peace education, emphasizing the need to promote set of values, attitudes, traditions, mode of behaviour and ways of life based on respect for life, promotion of non-violence through education dialogue and cooperation, promotion of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Ajala (2003) states that peace education includes all the values, attitudes and forms of behaviour, way of life, respect for life, a rejection of violence, commitment to the principle of freedom, justice, solidarity, tolerance among people and between groups and individual. Hick (1988) explains that the objective of peace education can be grouped into three, namely: acquisition of skills, knowledge about issues and development of attitudes. This is in line with Oyebamiji (2001). Ajala (2003) defines peace education as the type of education that impacts learner's norms, values and attitudes that could bring about an environment conducive for human living.

Nigeria is a plural and multi-ethnic society. This factor has a lot of implications on the unity of the country. Kadiri (2003) posits that in Nigeria, most of the ethnic crises are caused by no factor other than tribal sentiments, greed, selfishness, and chauvinism. In Nigeria, there have been cases of inter-ethnic crises. A good example of this is the crises between Hausa and Yorubain Lagos with a spill over effect in Kano. Cases of ethnoreligious riots are common in the Northern part of Nigeria. Examples of other crises in Nigeria include the Tivs and Jukuns tribal wars of 1991, 1992 and 1993; the Kataf and Hausa; Fulani in Kanfanchan 1988; the Ijaws and Itsekiri clashes of 1991 and 1992. There are many cases of boundary disputes, such as the one between Modakeke and Ife, Ipoti and Iloro in Ekiti State, just to mention a few (Kadiri, 2003).

The crisis between school children and school authority is rampant while political crises disrupt progress in all ramifications almost at all times. These are also a source of

disturbances to the peace of Nigerians, the common occurrences of armed robbery, ritual killings, and incessant fuel crises. There is no doubt that there is a problem of peace in Nigeria. The need for solutions to the numerous problems that cause disturbances in Nigeria is, therefore, evident. Peace should be conceived as something common to all, a global state (Galtung, 1974). Peace must be the goal pursued by the Nigerian government. Several efforts have been made towards making peace a reality in Nigeria. The National Policy on Education (2004) for example, explains the role of education in this regard. The policy states that all levels of the Nigerian educational system must inculcate the values of respect for the worth and dignity of man and liberty, and develop moral and spiritual values of inter-personal and human relations. Along the line, school subjects, such as Social Studies, History, Religious Studies, Moral Education, and Geography, to mention but a few were introduced into the school curricula. Also, the use of military forces in turbulent areas, such as Modakeke and Ife communities, Ijaw and Itsekiri areas, Kano and Kaduna during crises, was common measures to curb such incidences (Kadiri, 2003).

To further maintain peace and interpersonal relations, the government constituted many Commissions, such as the Ibidapo-Obe and Olabode George Panel of Enquiry to Modakeke-Ife crises and boundary commission for the settlement of boundary problems. The local, state, and national courts have made settlements in cases involving chieftaincy titles, such as positions of Olowo in Owo, the Sultan of Sokoto, Deji of Akure and a host of others. In the school system, panels of enquiries have been set up to settle rifts between the university students and the school authority. Also, cases between students and other people living within the school communities have been settled by government agents. Examples include the rifts between the people of Ire and students of the Polytechnic located in the town.

Aliyu and Umar (2019) examine the spatial characteristics of *Almajiri* Schools to assess the physical planning implications. Geographic coordinates of *Almajiri* Schools was obtained with the aid of GPS (Garmin GPSMAP 78S). Features related to space considered include site and situation of *Almajiri Schools*, living area per *Almajiri*, floor area, site coverage. Building and environmental physiognomies like building type, building use, building facilities, environmental sanitation, and waste disposal methods. Additional data was obtained through a structured interview with *Almajirai* (pupils) and with heads of the schools. 252 schools were sampled representing 5% of the population of the schools in the area. One *Almajiri* from each of the sampled schools was administered structured interview. Teachers (Mallams) of the sampled schools provided useful information about the '*Almajiri*' system. Findings of the study revealed that the *Almajiri* school system is spatially unorganized, sitting is not based on planning standards and activity points within the school premises are haphazardly located without any informed decision. Space use, structures as well as environmental and sanitary characteristics are below the minimum requirement, consequent on which far-reaching physical planning implications are evident.

Ifijeh and James (2015) examine the concept and plight of the *Almajirai*. It identifies parental influence, infrastructural decay of *Qu'ranic* schools, religious fanaticism and poverty as causes of lack of formal education of the *Almajirai*. The study advocates that public and school libraries must begin to play relevant roles and contribute to the provision of formal education to the *Almajirai*. It outlines the roles public and school libraries must play to enhance *Almajiri* education. To effectively play their roles, the study suggests that libraries should source for funds from external agencies rather than depend only on their parent institutions/organizations.

Chukwuka (2019) examines *Almajirai* and the Rights to Mainstream Western Education in Northern Nigeria. The study used/employed the Social Learning Theory. The survey design was done through In-depth Interviews and Key Informant Interviews. The sample size was chosen based on a multi-stage sampling method. Thirty households were systematically sampled from four Local Government Areas which yielded a sample size of 120 households selected from the three states in Far Northern Nigeria. It was observed that the *Almajiri* activities are closely associated with violent crimes, such as terrorism and kidnapping. The study concluded that governments should replace *Almajiri* education with Western education in Northern Nigeria. Usaman, Zawayah and Bashir (2017) examine the linkage between the *Almajiri* system and violence in Northern Nigeria, three conflicting narratives on the issue exists which instead of unrevealing the dilemma has further thrown the policymakers into a conundrum. While the first narrative has it that the *Almajiri* system, in itself, is an instrument of youth radicalization, the second narrative argued that such claims are rather flawed and problematic. The third narrative argued that relative deprivation and destitution are the main causes of radicalization among *Almajiri*. This study, therefore, puts the issue into proper perspective by providing a balanced argument based on empirical evidence. The study employs an ethnographic design where qualitative data were generated through interviews and focus group discussions. This study contends that, though the *Almajiri* system in itself does not radicalize the *Almajirai* cohort, so many decades of bad governance have invariably transformed it into a mechanism for the production of jobless, traumatized and alienated large youth cohort who becomes the target for recruitment by the insurgent leaders.

Abubakar (2016) applied the investigative method to examine and explain the relationship between cultural and social capital, using literature review, policy document, and other secondary sources of research such as comparative analysis to evaluate the role of this initiative in delivering access to formal western education in northern Nigeria. The results of this study unearth the persistent cultural and religious challenges that the Nigerian government faces regarding parental beliefs and influence, the expectation of modern curriculums and the teachings of the Holy Qur'an, and the prioritizing of the Islamic form of education over general education in preparing children for their world and beyond. As this study will make clear, these aforementioned cultural

values act as a major impediment to the educational access and youth empowerment provided through AIMS.

Isiaka (2015) examines the challenges of infusing *Almajiri* educational system into Universal Basic Educational Programme in Sokoto State Nigeria. The target population of the study comprised of all the teachers in all the *Almajiri* Model schools in Sokoto. The sample involved sixty (60) teachers who were randomly selected from different *Almajiri* Model Schools. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire developed by the researcher. Data were analysed with frequency count and percentages. The results of the findings revealed that the Programme is being adversely affected by some problems such as insufficient funding, inadequate infrastructural facilities, poor planning and supervision and poor public enlightenment programme. The study also made a recommendation for solving these challenges.

Babagana and Idris (2018) examine the implication of the *Almajiri* system of education on the child, family and the nation at large. A hundred and twenty questionnaires were distributed among people from selected towns in Niger State, Nigeria. Interviews and surveys were also conducted. The instrument for the study was a self-designed questionnaire. A sample of 120 people in the selected areas was drawn using simple random sampling. Data were analysed using frequency tables, percentage and mean. It was observed that the *Almajiri* system of education has a strong and positive impact on the child, family, and the nation at large. Based on the findings of the study it was recommended that government should consider addressing the feeding and welfare needs of the *Almajiri* and their *Mallams*, infrastructural facilities should also be provided.

Bandura's Theories of Imitation

According to Bandura's influential theory of imitation, also called social learning theory, four factors are necessary for a person to learn through observation and then imitate behaviour: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation.

In explaining the theory in relations to this research work, the terms in the theory above are thus considered:

1. **Attention:** The curriculum will draw student's attention to the values taught and how to be peaceful citizens in society.
2. **Retention:** This is accomplished by the effort of the teacher to make the teaching of peace clear and easy to understand to the student so that the students will be able to retain whatsoever concept that is been taught.
3. **Reproduction:** Through the concept of reproduction, the students will be able to relate with their fellow students and other people in society applying the concepts of peace and achieving a peaceful atmosphere and environment.
4. **Motivation:** This is also expected of the teacher to reinforce positive attitudes in students who practice what is been taught about peace and to negate the wrong attitudes practised by erring students.

The curriculum and the teacher will present subjects that have peace Elements in them pointing the students to the freedom, happiness and ease that the mind will have if peace is maintained and the dangers and shattered dreams that will be experienced by a community that does not have peace (Deutsch, 1973). The curriculum is like the mirror presented to the student and the teachers which should be imitated and also serve as a medium of evaluating them if what has been taught by the curriculum is adhered to.

The study employed a mixed research design by integrating both qualitative and quantitative data in the evaluation of the curriculum of Almajiri Integrated Model Schools on the content of peace education in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja (FCT). The design gave an insight into evaluating the current curriculum of the Almajiri Model schools for the content of peace education and to find out the five years of its existence the measures that the government put in place for the Almajiris to attain a culture of peace. The study employed a descriptive survey research design which will assist the researcher in gathering first-hand information from the respondents. The primary data required for this study was sourced from both the teachers and administrative officers of selected Almajiri integrated model schools in Abuja using structured questionnaires. The curriculum of the schools was evaluated using the Peace Education Evaluative Framework (PEEF). The interview questions will collect more details the choice of this design was to establish the interaction among the variables in the study.

The study population comprised the entire staff of two selected Almajiri model schools in Abuja and the 3 staffs that are heading the department of *Tsangaya* under the universal basic education (UBE). With the use of purposive sampling technique, 37 of the teachers were administered questionnaires and the two (2) head teachers were interviewed, focus group discussion was held with the 3 staff of Universal Basic Education making a total population size of forty-two (42).

4. Findings

The study examined the curriculum of Almajiri integrated model schools on the content of peace education in Abuja Federal Capital Territory- Abuja FCT also to find out the measures that the Nigerian government put in place for the Almajiris to attain a culture of peace. The results of the regression analysis showed that all the regression parameters were positively related to the dependent variable.

It can be concluded that the Curriculum of the Almajiri model school in FCT Abuja has a high content of Peace Education. Despite this high content of Peace, it appears that the goal of Peace Education, that is, the culture of peace is yet to take root in the students' lives, activities, school community and the larger society. This could be as a result of the fact that these contents are not directly linked to peace or culture of peace by the teachers and students alike. Alternatively, it could be consequent on the fact that topics on Peace Education focus on the theoretical

aspects rather than the practical aspect. Also, teachers lack teaching materials, teaching methods and skills (for example role-play, discussion method of teaching, field trips, an invitation of resource person, etc.) have not given Peace Education the chance to be well known by the students. But this will be corrected if the contents of peace are well directed to the culture of peace through training teachers on peace and teaching teachers on different methods for teaching each subject that has Peace Education elements in them and also provides with suitable teaching materials.

5. Recommendations

Based on the findings, this study recommends the following recommendations were drawn. The Almajiris should have at least one or two field trips in a year to get to know about other peoples culture and tradition. Teachers of the Almajiri school need to be trained on peace education methods and skills for them to have an impact on the Almajiris. The government also need to improve the condition of public schools by providing adequate infrastructure and adequate qualified teachers.

The interview results also found that civic education should be added to the Almajiri school curriculum and also rethinking Strategies for Almajiri Education, Regular Census of Almajiri Schools and Mobilization and Sensitization of General public on measures that will incorporate peace education.

The Federal Government of Nigeria should improve the provision of basic social amenities in rural areas. This can reduce the migration of both the pupils and Almajiri to the cities. Another thing is seeing the improvement of the condition of public schools by providing adequate infrastructures and trained adequate qualified Teachers as well as generating job opportunities for graduates of formal Schools. This will entice many and serve as a role model to AlmajiriQuranic School Children.

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