

TRANSFORMING THE *AL'MAJIRI* WAY OF LEARNING TO A FORMAL AND MODEL SCHOOL SYSTEM: GOVERNMENT EFFORT AND THE WAY FORWARD

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Abstract

This study examines the Integration of Qur'anic School System into Formal Education in Gombe State, Nigeria. The study was guided by three research questions and conducted using Simple Random Sampling (SRS) Technique. The method was found to be appropriate because of its flexibility in the use of sample when the population is large. The population of the study was made up of all Almajiris, their teachers and parents in 11 Local Government Areas of Gombe State. A total of 140 Almajiris schools (tsangaya), 8,440 Almajiris, 140 teachers and 1,448 parents in Gombe State were used in this study. A Simple Random Sampling (SRS) technique was used to select 32 Almajiri schools which represent 23% of the Almajiris schools, 1875 Almajiris representing 22% and 299 parents' represents 21% of the population from the eleven (11) Local Governments were considered for the study, The data collected was analyzed using SPSS Statistical package, Frequencies and descriptive statistics (percentages) were used to answer the research questions. Findings of the study showed that the Almajiris, Parent and Teachers are all in support of the model of integrating Qur'anic education into formal education system in Gombe State. The major recommendations are that the Almajiris should be provided with opportunities to be educated by the Government and non-governmental organizations. This can be achieved by developing the acceptable models of integrating Almajiris educating system into the formal system of education. Almajiris should be encouraged by making the education completely free. That is, the FGN and Gombe State Government should provide free tuition, uniform, textbooks and free lunch to all school children. This will help the Almajiris to integrate better. Lastly, food supply to the integrated school should be adequate, regular and the school environments should be made more convenient and conducive for learning.

Keywords: Transforming Almajiri School System, Integration, Formal and Model School system, way forward.

Introduction

Al'majiri (n) is a Hausa word derived from Arabic word *Al'muhajirun*, referring to people who believe in Islam and emigrate to an Islamic state or society for the purpose of studying Islamic Knowledge. (*Pl. Al'majirai*) They are usually children (pupils) of very young age between 4-6 years that moves around with their teacher (an Islamic scholar). The Almajiri education system is justified on the premise that Islam encourages its entire adherent to learn the holy Qur'an by heart and seek for knowledge; this can be found in many hadith of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). In a collection of Hadith in Al-tirmidhi it was reported that Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) says "*that the search for knowledge is obligatory to every Muslim*" (Ibn Mājah 224), in another hadith collection by Bukhari & Muslim reports that prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) says "*seek out for knowledge even if it's in the farthest city*"

In the quest for knowledge the prophet made no distinction between sex, age, race or status. The prophet is the first to have thought his companions the recitation of the holy Qur'an and other religious duties.

No nation in the world today can achieve greatness if its youth cannot access quality education. This is more understandable in today's knowledge-driven world. Education denotes the method by which a society hands down from one generation to the next its knowledge, culture and values. The individual being educated develop physically, mentally and socially (Pyke, 2007). Education is present in all communities and societies. It could be formal or informal. The societal norms, beliefs, culture and technology are passed from one generation to the next through education (Garba, 2008).

With the firm establishment of Islam in the Northern Nigeria and some part of southern cities of Oyo, Ibadan and Lagos for over 500 years, eminent scholars (Ulamas) and Emirs who serve as political and spiritual leaders of their people and staunch guardians of Islamic theology, philosophy and jurisprudence, declined any local or foreign interference with their religion. It was not surprising, therefore, the advent of Christianity in Nigeria in 1842 caused a head-on collision with Islam, especially in the North where it was more firmly established (Fafunwa, 1995).

The beginning of formal education in Nigeria especially in the North did not start without some challenges. With the proclamation of Northern Nigeria on 27th December 1899, Sir Lugard who was appointed High Commissioner then prepared three 'civilizing' agents for the North. These agents according to Fafunwa (1995) were Christianity, commerce and colonialism and subsequently formed an alliance at Lokoja to open up to the northern territories, particularly against Kano, Katsina and Sokoto. The permission sought and received from Lord Lugard to penetrate Hausa land was resisted by the Emirs especially, Kano (Fafunwa, 1995).

Historically, schools for Qur'anic knowledge originated with Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) when he started spreading his message mission in 609CA; inviting interested audience of his preaching to a house, popularly known as *DARUL-ARQAM* to hear and memorize the message of the Qur'an. That was in effect, the beginning of Qur'anic school the world over (Lemu, 2003). Fafunwa (1995) revealed that the establishment of the Qur'anic school system pre-dated colonial era and that Islam

was first introduced in Nigeria in the 11th century A.D through the ancient Kanem-Bornu Empire, by the 15th century, Islam had been firmly established in Kano, Katsina, Sokoto, east-africa.

With several educational reforms down the line, after independence, the Nigerian state in the early 1970s took over private and religious schools from individuals, religions groups and communities as education was considered to be government venture and not a private enterprise. However, despite the decision to take over the running of schools and other efforts to operate some Qur'anic schools in Northern Nigeria have continued to operate outside the purview of the state by enrolling more pupils of primary school age than western-styled schools (Nasir 2008). National level strategy by the state in 1999 re-introduced a free and compulsory western-styled education program for primary and junior secondary school aged children (UBEC. 2012b). The main aim of the program is to ensure smooth transition from primary school to junior secondary school and for learners to remain in school long enough to acquire basic life skills (Moja 2000). Since the implementation of the program enrolment rates have appreciated, but still the groups of Almajiri children were not included and continue to suffer the disadvantages in the policy.

Statement of the Problem

The *Almajiri* are just like other children from families brought to learn the Qur'an under the watchful eyes of *Mallams* (Islamic teachers). Some student (*Almajiris*) dropout along the way without fully acquiring the knowledge that the system is providing, and sometimes become a problem to the society. Most pupils withdraw due to hardship that is encountered during the training. They have not only become a source of concern to Islam and their parents but the society at large. Hence they are seen on streets begging for alms and food, and at the end of the day go back to their camps to sleep. They come across various kinds of dangerous juvenile and adolescent peer.

Over the years the researchers has observed with the nature and manner at which the Almajiri system operates in Gombe State which is not conducive to learning. The Almajiri learn under the tree, with no feeding schedule and without uniforms. This situation is not ideal for the education of the child in the 21st century. It is in view of this high proportion of Almajiri children in Qur'anic schools and in recognition of their contribution to raising the literacy levels and providing moral training, that there is the urgent need for government involvement in the integration and transformation of the Almajiri schools with the conventional schools not only to increase access but also for the rapid development of a large part of the nations' manpower resource (Northern Education Research Project, 2000). The limited existing data have showed that children are increasingly abused as child militants in the various recent communal conflicts and episodes of mass violence across the country. This includes the use of the Almajiri and young but radicalized religious fundamentalists (e.g., the Boko Haram) in the North child militias in the Niger Delta, "Area Boys" in the Lagos area, and young political thugs mostly evident during elections and related violence across the country (UNICEF, 2007). It is against this background that the researcher intends to carry out this study with a view to establish the integration of Qur'anic school

system into formal education system in Gombe State and come out with relevant suggestions that will enable the government and the society to address these problems and proffer solutions.

Emerging Issues, Challenges and Threats;

There are several challenges and threats regarding the Almajiri system of education, some of these challenges are:

- The near total destruction of the system of education by colonialism and the lack of interest by the postcolonial leadership to effectively address the issue, thus the Almajiri pupils are increasingly transformed into beggars and this in turn has diminished the prime purpose for which the Almajiri schools were established;
- Despite being educated still the communities do not regard them as civil educated on the basis or stigmatization that they can't speak English or dress cooperate;
- The misunderstanding deliberate or non-deliberate of the Almajiri system, equating it with producing rebellious youth with radical ideas of challenging constituted authority;
- The collapse of the *Tsangaya* system of education, especially from 1970s due to the emergence of a lot of modernized Islamic schools, mostly organized along the lines of western education, the *Islamiyya* schools receive funding from the government through the state office of the bureau for Islamic affairs.
- Lack of support from the Government, in almost all the Almajiri schools pupils sit on bare floor since the schools cannot even afford mats for them. And terrible poor health condition.
- The *Almajiri's* are turned into beggars, hawkers, and wanderers with little chances of learning the Qur'an and hadith, the primary reason for which they were sent to the Almajiri schools by their parent.

Purpose of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to establish the integration of Qur'anic school system into formal education in Gombe State of Nigeria. The secondary objectives are:

- i. To examine the perception of the Almajiri, parents and teachers on the integration of Almajiri system of education into formal education system.
- ii. To investigate the perception of the Almajiris, parents and teachers on the need for establishing a model Almajiri School in a different location outside the original location as a means of integrating Almajiri system of education into formal education system.
- iii. Examine the perception of the Almajiris, parents, teachers, and community on the integration of Qur'anic education into curriculum of basic education.

Government Interventions in Transforming the Almajiri Education System;

President Goodluck Jonathan, the former President of Nigeria, initiated several programs aimed at improving the Almajiri education system in the country. During his presidency, Goodluck Jonathan recognized the need to address the challenges faced by Almajiri children, such as lack of access to quality education, poverty, and vulnerability to radicalization. He launched the Almajiri

Education Program, which aimed to integrate Qur'anic education with formal education, providing basic literacy and numeracy skills to Almajiri children.

The program involved building special schools known as Almajiri Model Schools, equipped with modern facilities and qualified teachers. These schools aimed to provide both Islamic and Western education, ensuring that Almajiri children receive a well-rounded education.

President Jonathan in his remark on the Almajiri “Some of them can even memorize the Qur’an as voluminous as the Qur’an is, and for someone to memorize the Qur’an and you say that person is not educated, you are not telling the truth”.

“They (Almajirai) felt that they are educated but still rejected by the society, that even their local government council cannot employ them even as messengers because they don’t have any element of Western education attached to the Qur’anic education.

“That is why the Federal Government said we must assist the states, that this young people must be encouraged to study Islamic education but in addition to the Islamic education, we are not going to remove anything from it, they should also take some parts of Western education, so that when they finished at that level they can go on to study other things like Engineering, Medicine.

“That was what motivated us to go into Almajiri education,” he said.

The Almajiri model schools were established in the Northern states such as Bauchi, Yobe, Jigawa, Borno, Adamawa, Gombe, and Kano States etc. as an effort to curb the begging and improved the Almajiri lifestyle.

During President Muhammadu Buhari, his administration did not relent but tried very much to see to the improvement of the Almajiri education, thus leading to the establishment of The Almajiri Commission. The Commission was established in 2019 by the Nigerian government to provide a framework for the integration of the Almajiri system with formal education, as well as to address issues such as poverty, child begging, and vulnerability to radicalization that are associated with the system. FGN (2019).

Failures and Challenges in Sustaining the Almajiri Model Education System

The Almajiri school system is a traditional Islamic education system in Northern Nigeria, However, Government makes several efforts in enhancing and improving the system but the system faced several challenges and failures in sustaining it. Some of these failures include:

- i. The recently model schools build by Jonathan administration were poorly equipped and not handed over directly to the Almajiris in-need, but to state government mishandled the aim of the project.

- ii. Lack of training on their Teachers (Mallam); the government did not engage to train the Almajiris teachers in any form of civil or model way of learning, rather they left them with their old method and syllabuses;
- iii. There was no any minimum standard or modules provided for the Almajiri teacher to be used as a guide to teach and educate the Almajiris, they were left to the mercy of their teachers' knowledge.
- iv. Lack of infrastructure: Many Almajiri schools lack basic facilities such as classrooms, proper sanitation, and adequate accommodation for the students. The government has failed to provide the necessary infrastructure to support the system.
- v. Poor quality of education: The Almajiri system often focuses solely on Qur'anic education, neglecting other important subjects like mathematics, science, and English. This limits the opportunities for Almajiri students in gaining broader education and future employment prospects.
- vi. Neglect of welfare: Almajiri students often live in poor conditions, facing issues like inadequate food, shelter, and healthcare. The government has failed to address their welfare needs and provide necessary support.
- vii. Lack of regulation: The Almajiri system is largely unregulated, leading to issues such as child abuse, exploitation, and vulnerability to radicalization. The government has failed to establish proper regulations and monitoring mechanisms to address these concerns.
- viii. Insufficient funding: The government faile to allocate sufficient funds to support the Almajiri system, resulting in a lack of resources for teachers' salaries, school supplies, and overall development of the system.

Methodology: Design of the Study

This study was conducted using Simple Random Sampling (SRS) Technique. The method was found to be appropriate for the study because of its flexibility in the use of sample when the population is large. The research used multi-stage sampling procedure of schools and Almajiri, Parents and Teachers, as respondents which were considered as representation of the population for the study.

Research Questions

The following research questions were postulated to facilitate this study:

1. What is the perception of the Almajiris, parents and teachers on the integration of Qur'anic schools into formal education system?

2. What is the perception of the Almajiris, parents and teachers on the establishment of model Qur'anic schools different from its original location as a means of integrating Qur'anic education into formal education system?
3. What is the perception of the Almajiris, parents and teachers on the integration of basic education into the curriculum of Qur'anic education?

Population and Sample

The population of the study was made up of all Almajiris, their teachers and parents in 11 Local Government Areas of Gombe State. A total of 140 Almajiris schools, 8,440 Almajiris, 140 teachers and 1,448 parents in Gombe State used in this study.

In selecting teachers for the survey, Simple Random Sampling (SRS) technique was used to select 1875 Almajiris representing 22% and 299 parents representing 21% from 32 Almajiri schools which represent 23%, the eleven local government in the respectively were considered.

Instrumentation

The instrument used in conducting this study was an interview questions designed by the researcher, which had a definite set of questions and predetermined order of asking. This type of interview was a face to face interpersonal role situation in which the researcher asked respondents questions that were responded verbally, this allowed the researcher to obtain first-hand information about a respondents' perception of the integration of Almajiri system into the formal system of education.

The responses are rated on the 4 point rating scale of agreement or disagreement. The scale ranges are Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. To validate the instrument, a pilot test was carried out using two Secondary Schools in the State. This has assisted in identifying areas of weaknesses in the instrument which were addressed. During the pilot-test, the instrument was administered to 100 Almajiris, 10 teachers (Mallam) and 10 parents. To establish the reliability of the research instrument, the split half method of spearman brown formula was used, which yielded reliability coefficient of internal consistency index of 0.82 at significant level of $\alpha = 0.05$. Consequently, the instrument was adjudged to be reliable for use. This is in line with Akuezuilo (1993) that a correlation close to one (1) is more appropriate for this type of instrumentation.

Data Analysis

The data was collected and analyzed using SPSS Statistical software. Frequencies and descriptive statistics (percentage) to answer the research questions were considered. Responses of the questionnaire items were rated based on the 4 point scale to ascertain the extent to which a response was judged to be Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree, high percentage was considered.

Result

Research Question 1: What is the perception of the Almajiris, their parents and teachers on the integration of Qur’anic schools into formal education system?

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Almajiris, their Parents and Teachers on the Integration of Qur’anic Schools into formal education system

Statement	Variables	Responses				
		SA	A	D	SD	Total
The integration of traditional Qur’anic schools within its original location as a means of integrating Almajiri education into formal education system is a good idea.	Almajiris	940 (50)	575 (31)	260 (14)	100 (5)	1875 (100)
	Parents	101 (34)	92 (31)	95 (32)	11 (3)	299 (100)
	Teachers	13 (41)	9 (28)	6 (19)	4 (12)	32 (100)

Source: Field work 2022

Table 1: Revealed the findings on the responses of perception of the Almajiris, their parents and teachers on the integration of Qur’anic schools into formal education system. The results show that 940 (50%) and 575 (31%) of the Almajiris Strongly Agree and Agree that, the integration of traditional Qur’anic schools within its original location as a means of integrating Qur’anic education into formal education system is a good idea while, 260 (14%) Disagree and 100 (5%) Strongly Disagree with the idea of integration of traditional Qur’anic schools within its original location as a means of integrating Qur’anic education into formal education system.

The Table further revealed that 101 (34%) and 92 (31%) Almajiri Parents Strongly Agree and Agree respectively that the integration of traditional Qur’anic schools within its original location as a means of integrating Qur’anic education into formal education system is a welcome development. However, 95 (32%) and 11 (3%) of the Almajiris’ parents used for the study Disagree and Strongly Disagree that the integration of traditional Qur’anic schools within its original location as a means of integrating Qur’anic education into formal education system is not a good idea.

Furthermore, 13 (41%) and 9 (28%) of the Almajiris’ Teachers Strongly Agree and Agree that the integration of traditional Qur’anic schools within its original location as a means of integrating Qur’anic education into formal education system is a good idea while 6 (19%) and 4 (12%) of the Almajiris’ Teachers have contrary opinion that the integration of traditional Qur’anic schools within its original location as a means of integrating Qur’anic education into formal education will not work well for the system.

Generally, the findings on the three respondents, the Almajiri, their parents and teachers, it is evident that they are all in support of the model of integrating Qur’anic education into formal education system in Gombe State.

Research Question 2: What is the perception of the Almajiris, their parents and teachers on the establishment of model Qur’anic schools to serve a group of Qur’anic schools as a means of integrating Qur’anic education into formal education system?

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Almajiris their Parents and Teachers opinions on the Establishment of a Model Almajiri Schools

Statement	Variables	Responses				
		SA	A	D	SD	Total
The establishment of a model Almajiri schools as a means of integrating Almajiri education into formal education system is a good idea.	Almajiris	390	423	715	347	1875
		(21)	(23)	(38)	(18)	(100)
	Parents	30	69	135	65	299
		(10)	(23)	(45)	(22)	(100)
Teachers	6	4	15	7	32	
		(18)	(12)	(46)	(24)	(100)

Source: Field work 2022

Table 2: Present findings on the establishment of a model Qur’anic schools to serve a group of Qur’anic schools as a means of integrating Qur’anic education into formal education system. The result shows that 390 (21%) and 423 (23%) respectively of the Almajiris Strongly Agree and Agree that the establishment of a model Qur’anic schools as a means of integrating Qur’anic education into formal education system is a good idea while 715 (38%) and 347 (18%) respectively of the Almajiris Disagree and Strongly Disagree that the establishment of a model Qur’anic schools as a means of integrating Qur’anic education into formal education system is not a good idea.

The Table also revealed that only 30 (10%) and 69 (23%) of the Almajiris’ Parents have Strongly Agree and Agree respectively that the establishment of a model Qur’anic schools as a means of integrating Qur’anic education into formal education system is a good idea, while, 135 (45%) and 65 (22%) of the Almajiris’ parents Disagree and Strongly Disagree that the establishment of a model Qur’anic schools as a means of integrating Qur’anic education into formal education system is not a good idea for the system.

The table further suggested that, 6 (18%) and 4 (12%) of the Almajiris’ Teachers Strongly Agree and Agree that the establishment of a model Qur’anic schools to serve a group of Qur’anic schools as a means of integrating Qur’anic education into formal education system is a good idea. However, as much as 15 (46%) and 7 (24%) of the Almajiris’ Teachers Disagree and Strongly Disagree respectively that the establishment of a model Qur’anic Almajiri schools to serve a group of Qur’anic schools as a means of integrating Qur’anic education into formal education system is not a good idea.

Therefore, from the views of the three groups of respondents, it is very clear that the Almajiris, their Parents and Teachers are not in support of establishing a model Qur'anic school to serve a group of Qur'anic schools.

Research Question 3: What is the perception of the Almajiris, parents and teachers on the integration of basic education into the curriculum of Qur'anic education?

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Almajiris their Parents and Teachers opinions on the Integration of Basic Education Into the curriculum of Qur'anic Schools

Statement	Variables	Responses				
		SA	A	D	SD	Total
The integration of basic education into the curriculum of established Qur'anic and Ma'ahad schools as a means of integrating Almajiri education into formal education system is a good idea.	Almajiris	879	456	423	117	1875
		(47)	(25)	(22)	(6)	(100)
	Parents	93	96	75	35	299
		(31)	(32)	(25)	(12)	(100)
Teachers	9	15	4	4	32	
	(29)	(47)	(12)	(12)	(100)	

Source: Field work 2022

From Table 3, it is explicit that as much as 879 (47%) and 456 (25%) of Almajiris Strongly Agree and Agree that the integration of basic education into the curriculum of established Qur'anic schools as a means of integrating Qur'anic education into formal education system is a welcome idea, while 423 (22%) and 117 (6%) of the Almajiris Strongly Agree and Agree that the integration of basic education into the curriculum of established Qur'anic schools as a means of integrating Qur'anic education into formal education system is not a good idea.

It is also evident in the table that 93 (31%) and 96 (32%) of Almajiris' Parents Disagree and Strongly Disagree that the integration of basic education into the curriculum of established Qur'anic schools as a means of integrating Qur'anic education into formal education system is a good idea while 75 (25%) and 35 (12%) of the Almajiris' parents Disagree and Strongly Disagree with this arrangement.

Furthermore, the result shows that as much as 9 (29%) and 15 (47%) of Almajiris' Teachers Strongly Agree and Agree that the idea of integrating a basic education into the curriculum of established Qur'anic schools which will serve as a means of integrating Qur'anic education into formal education system, while it was only 4 (12%) and 4 (12%) of the Almajiris' Teachers Disagree and Strongly Disagree with this arrangement and stated that the integration of basic education into the curriculum of established Qur'anic schools as a means of integrating Qur'anic education into formal education system is not a good idea.

Therefore, it is conclusive from the findings that the Almajiris, their Parents and Teachers are strongly in support of this model of integrating basic education into the curriculum of established Qur'anic School as a means of integrating Qur'anic education into system formal education system.

Discussion of Findings

The main objective of this study is to examine the integration of Qur'anic school system into formal education in Gombe State, Nigeria. Analysis of data revealed that Almajiris, their Parents and Teachers are in support of this idea as indicated by 81%, 65% and 69% respectively. This finding agreed with Tahir (2013) who stressed the importance, and the need to ensure the model of integrating of Qur'anic schools within its original location in place for the success of EFA. He further stressed that in achieving this, Government should make provision for construction of classrooms, offices, dormitories, boreholes and toilets.

Deduction from analysis indicated that Almajiris, their Parents and Teachers are not strongly in support of the second model of establishment of a model Qur'anic schools to serve a group of Qur'anic schools as a means of integrating Qur'anic education into formal education system as suggested by 56%, 67% and 70% respectively, This perception has disagreed with the assertion of Tahir (2013) that it is an important model that entails the establishment of a model Qur'anic school to serve a group of Qur'anic schools with the following facilities; construction of 6 classrooms with office, a store and furniture, a recitation hale and office with furniture, a block of 50 pupils dormitory with furniture, the teachers' residence and bore-hole with hand pump.

Furthermore, findings revealed that Almajiris, their Parents and Teachers are strongly in support of the third model of integration of basic education into the curriculum of established Qur'anic schools as a means of integrating Almajiri Education into formal education system as indicated by 72%, 63% and 76% respectively. This is however in accordance with essential of this model as stipulated by Tahir (2013).

Way Forward;

Improving the Almajiri education system is a complex issue that requires a multi-faceted approach. Here are some potential ways forward;

- i. Integration of Almajiri schools into the formal education system: This involves integrating the Almajiri schools with the mainstream education system both at federal and state level, providing them with quality teachers, curriculum, and infrastructure. This would ensure that the Almajiri children receive a well-rounded education that includes both Islamic and secular subjects.
- ii. Teacher training and capacity building: Providing training and support to Almajiri teachers can greatly improve the quality of education they deliver. This includes training them on modern teaching methods, pedagogy, and classroom management techniques.

- iii. Curriculum reform: Developing a curriculum that is relevant to the needs of Almajiri children is crucial. It should include both Islamic and secular subjects, with a focus on practical skills that can help them in their future careers.
- iv. Addressing poverty and Socio-economic factors: Many Almajiri children come from impoverished backgrounds. Addressing poverty and socio-economic factors is essential to improving their education. This can be done through poverty alleviation programs, vocational training, and providing support to their families.
- v. Community involvement and awareness: Engaging the local communities and religious leaders is important for the success of any reform efforts. Creating awareness about the importance of education and encouraging community participation can help change mind-sets and attitudes towards the Almajiri system.

Conclusion

In view of the findings of this study, it is clear that the Almajiris, their Parents and Teachers are in support of integration of Qur'anic schools into formal education system in Gombe State. Therefore, it should be noted that the Qur'anic system of education focused on creating a good righteous human being who worships Allah in the true sense of the term, builds up the structure of their earthly life according to the sharia injunctions. Therefore, integration of Qur'anic system into formal education should be seen as laudable initiative and a tool for social conservation.

Recommendations

Here are a few recommendations for improving the Almajiri education system;

- i. Integration of formal education: Incorporating basic literacy, numeracy, and life skills into the traditional curriculum can provide Almajiri children with a more holistic education.
- ii. Improved infrastructure: Building and renovating Almajiri schools to provide better facilities, such as classrooms, libraries, clean water, sanitation, and accommodation, can significantly enhance the learning environment.
- iii. Trained and qualified teachers: Providing training and support for teachers (Malams) to improve their teaching methods and ensure they have the necessary skills to deliver a well-rounded education.
- iv. Collaboration with local communities: Involving local communities, parents, and religious leaders in the development and implementation of educational programs can help ensure their sustainability and cultural relevance.

- v. Access to healthcare and social services: Almajiri children often lack access to healthcare and social services. Providing these services can improve their overall well-being and contribute to better educational outcomes.
- vi. Government support and funding: Adequate allocation of resources and funding from the government can help address the challenges faced by the Almajiri education system and ensure sustainable improvements, Almajiris should be encouraged by making the education completely free. That is, the Gombe State and the Federal Government should provide free tuition, uniform, textbooks and free lunch to all school children. This will help the Almajiris to integrate better.
- vii. Inspectors from the Inspectorate division of the State Ministry of Education and State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) should regularly pay visit to Almajiri Schools to closely monitor their activities to ensure the success of the integrated project.

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