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Problems and prospects of integrated almajiri education in northern Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

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The issue of Almajiri education has been a subject of discussion among scholars and a subject of great concern to the authorities. Almajiri education started from time immemorial in the Northern part of Nigeria. This paper tries to clarify how the whole process started; the various dimensions the system took overtime and how government came in to rescue the deteriorating state of the system by integrating the system with the modern system, thereby making the beneficiaries (Almajirai) learn both the Almajiri education and the modern education simultaneously. In the end, the paper offers suggestions as to how the system could be improved so as to meet the standard set by National Policy on Education and subsequently attain Education for All (EFA).

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1. Introduction

The issue of Almajirai has remained worrisome in the minds of northern elites. This is because the practice has been a source of embarrassment to the region. The concept of *almajiri* came as a result of Prophet Muhammad's migration from Mecca to Medina. In Hausa land the term *Almajiri* could take any of the following forms; any person irrespective of gender, who begs for assistance on the street or from house to house as a result of some deformity or disability; children between the age of seven and fifteen who attend informal religious school who equally roam about with the purpose of getting assistance or alms; or even a child who engages in some form of labour to earn a living.

According to Muhammed (2010) the concept of Almajiri education in Nigeria started in the olden days when the quest to acquire knowledge was prevalent, especially the Koranic knowledge by the Muslims, there were no laid down procedures or channels to adopt in obtaining such, except the unconventional way of handing over wards to a supposedly teacher, known as Mallam. It was this Mallam that now enlist the child and the teaching of religious scriptures and way of life are indoctrinated into the young pupils. It was so perfect and rewarding that highly educated Sheikhs and *Mullas* who became successful in life by holding positions of judges and teachers that were moulding the minds of the young on how to become righteous and exemplary in their future lives. However, when the civilized life styles of the west started encroaching into the big cities of the north, some of these *Mallams* became allured to the greed for money and started migrating to the cities and towns with their pupils and subjected them to the vagaries of the streets.

He further explains that one teacher can register up to a hundred and more pupils who he singularly keeps, guides and controlled. To keep them fed and accommodated are also part of the teacher's responsibilities. But nowadays even to keep and feed one hundred mouths is not easy, and perhaps impossible. But life must go on, and the pupils have to, as a must, acquire the knowledge their parents sent them to do. The little stipends the parents were able to give their wards for them and the teachers hardly sustains them for a month, so an alternative means of getting more income has to be employed. During the day time, when there are no classes the pupils are allowed to stretch into the town and wander around until when classes were to begin. It is this going about around the town that affords the pupils to engage in menial jobs that fetches them some little amounts. This also was kind of stopped by the people because they have other means of doing such jobs and so the pupils venture into house to house begging for remnants of food to eat. It is also said that the pupils take back part of this food to the teacher. It is clear from the above, that the teacher himself is gaining from the engagements of the pupils in the town, and can do anything to sustain it.

The system that was hitherto organized and well charted has now been bastardized and abused to the extent of letting our children roam streets and picking remnants of food leftover from dustbins. One other aspect of the system that has been abused nowadays is the degenerated value of trust and togetherness that our forefathers have lived and died with. This issue of lack of trusts is as a result of the changing world in terms orientation and our rush for acquiring the status of a civilized lot. Couple with this is also the government's nonchalant attitude of fending for the citizenry that result in thousands of our youths daily roaming the streets looking for what to eat (Muhammed, 2010).

Integration of almajirai education becomes necessary due to the predicaments of traditional almajirai educational system. Integration is the merging of the two system of education together. i.e. the combination of the western system of education with *Qur'anic* system of education. The establishment of *Almajiri* Integrated Schools (AIS) across the country is one of the governments' intervention strategies to curtail the menace of street begging by children and youth in the name of pursuing Qur'anic Education. The school is to accommodate the *Almajiri* who are coming to the city from far and near villages for Qur'anic knowledge. They mostly arrive without provisions and other essential needs; consequently they move from house to house, street, motor packs, restaurants, and other public places. Gradually they become exposed to child abuse, neglect, health hazard, hawking and other forms of social vices. Many of the *Almajirai* are orphans and vulnerable children. The purpose of the integration of the two system of education is to provide educational opportunities for these categories of children to acquire Traditional *Qur'anic* Education and Basic Western Education so as to improve their living condition and empower the *Almajirai* and their *malams*. This will also enable each State of the federation to achieve Education for All (EFA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Moreover since the creation of the school, *Almajiri* within and outside the state has been enrolled while teaching and learning process had already commenced. Therefore, this paper intends to portray the problem and prospects of the programme and the students of *Almajiri Integrated Model School* since its inception with a view to proffer recommendations.

2. The meaning and origin of almajiri

The word '*Almajiri*' is derived from the Arabic word '*Almuhajirun*' migrants. It refers to a traditional method of acquiring and memorizing the Glorious Qur'an in Hausa/Fulani land where boys at their tender ages are sent out by their parents or guardians to other villages, towns or cities for Qur'an education under a knowledgeable Islamic scholar called *Malam*. According to Bambale (2003), *Almajirai* (plural of *Almajiri*) are categorized into 3 classes:

1. *Gardi* (adult).
2. *Titibiri* (adolescent) and
3. *Kolo* (an infant)

The *Gardi* (adults) engage in some labour-intensive services for a means of livelihood while the *Kolo*(infant) and *Titibiri* (adolescent) beg for alms/food.

Almajirci is the activities in which *Almajiri* (pupil/student of traditional *Qur'anic* schools), get involve during the process of acquiring *Qur'anic* and Islamic education. It's an educational system that is primarily Islamic. According to Alkali (2001) Almajirci is a semi-formal system of *Qur'anic* education in which children mostly boys, are sent by their parents to take up residence with Islamic *Malams*, for instruction in the *Qur'anic* and other Islamic texts. They further explain that it is originated from the Arabic root word *Almuhajirun* which means "immigrants", this is an allusion to the time of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) when the people of Mecca migrated to Madina. Traditionally, children would be sent to places far away from their parents, where they would be under the custody of a *Malam* to acquire religious knowledge while also learning to fend for them. They would beg for alms or serve in their teachers farms as a means of compensation for their religious education and upbringing.

Also, studies by Ayuba (2009) indicate that *Almajirci* practice is religiously legitimized since the Prophet (S.A.W.) was reported to have advised Muslims to travel in search of knowledge even up to China. It is said in a Hadith that:

"Who ever able to set out seeking knowledge will be walking in the path of God until his return and who ever dies while in pursuit of learning will be regarded as Martyr"

This is the reason why Islamic scholars travel and migrate to different part of the world in search of knowledge with their students, but right from initial stage begging was not a virtue of this practice as the Prophet of Islam that brought the Qur'an and knowledge of Islam discourage begging. As the Prophet says that it's better for a believer to go and cut firewood in the bush and sell than begging.

Ibrahim (2010) observes that Islam encourage people to seek knowledge but does not in any way promote begging or allowing children to be wandering on empty stomachs under the guise of searching for *Qur'anic* education.

3. Almajiri system of education

Almajiri education is an aspect of Northern Nigeria Islamic Education System. It is semi-formal non-secular education in which children between the ages of four and eighteen are assigned to wandering Islamic teachers usually referred to as *Malams* to learn the Qur'an and also acquire some form of Islamic knowledge. *Almajirci* is a sunnah of the prophet (SAW) that is being practiced in most Muslim countries. Though *almajirci* is a good system, but the phenomenon as it is being practiced in the Northern part of Nigeria is iniquitous, obsolete and it needs a concerted effort to reform. The problem is not with the system but the process, the traditional *Qur'anic* schools still remain mostly one classroom located outside a mosque, private house or under a tree. The school environment in most cases tends to be unfriendly, overcrowded and unhygienic.

The negative impact of the system is child labour in which *almajirai* must assist their teachers in earning what to eat with his family and they also have to earn a living by begging not only to feed themselves but also to contribute to the welfare of the *Malams* (teachers). These *Qur'anic* schools have their own types of syllabus, methodology, time table and several years before the child graduates. The system evolved with good intention, and it is serving a good purpose, but nowadays the *almajirai* system has turn *almajirai* (pupils) to be tools for money making for their *Malams*, some are even required to give a fixed amount on daily basis, feed themselves and clothed themselves, so they have to always roam about at motor parks, house to house, the streets and other public places begging for money just to escape punishment from the *Malams*. They render services as plate washers in restaurants and even prohibited places, which make some of the *almajirai* to result in intermingling with bad people, engaging in prohibited conducts like pocket picking, stealing, or being mobilised by other people to promote violence in return for money. They even waste their time in other unnecessary activities instead of acquiring knowledge.

Bako and Sule (1994) observed that, in Northern Nigeria the *Qur'anic* school system predated the western education system, but the majority of the population still looks upon the *Qur'anic* system to provide training for their offspring. In fact, most families view the *Qur'anic* system as integrated educational set up with the capacity to

provide training for children. But unfortunately the realities of the system has changed, it's not in a position to carry on with its traditional task as before.

That the degeneration of the *Qur'anic* school system into the present state of not being able to provide adequate care for its pupils and students had its roots in the history of the socio-economic, political and cultural transformation of the society in Nigeria. Added that the colonial experience was the turning point in the history of this transformation. It is believe that to acquire Islamic education is the creation of a good and righteous man and Islam is a religion that is primarily based on education. It encourages literacy pursuit and enjoin it followers to seek more and more knowledge generally (Abdullmalik, 2008). Furthermore, Islam attaches great importance to knowledge and considers it the basis of human development and key to the growth of culture and civilisation.

4. Aims of almajiri education

Almajiri system of education is associated with *Qur'anic* Education, which in Northern Nigeria the *Qur'anic* schools system predates western system of education in fact, in most parts of the Northern Nigeria, *Qur'anic* system predates even the Usmanu Danfodiyo Jihad (Sule, 2002). The aims and objectives of *Qur'anic* system of education are to produce a faithful and piety man that will be useful to the society in general. Ja'afar (2008) declared that the Almajirci system of education is the intellectual and moral training of pupils and students. The intellectual objectives are of two types depending on the type of enrolment in the school. Thus, the intellectual objective for pupils/students enrolled under the domestic type is mostly restricted to expose them to reading and writing of Glorious Qur'an only. As for the boarding ones, their enrolment mostly aimed at producing future teachers and professionals in various fields, such as Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence), Sirah, (Prophets biographical life), Hadith (sayings and practices of Prophet (S.A.W.)) among others. While the second objective of the Almajirai system which is the provision of moral development of the pupils which can be achieved through different means. These according to Ja'afar (2008) include the teaching of good habits, manners like eating, drinking habit, greetings, respect for elders, relatives and neighbour, proper dressing etc. Furthermore, pupils are also taught to shun away from the forbidden acts such as telling lies, deceitfulness, alcoholic drinks, adultery, gambling and dishonesty among others through admonition and preaching.

Dahiru (2011) observed that since the goals of *Qur'anic* schools are infuse, the complete knowledge of the *Qur'anic* and Islamic education is a way of absorbing moral values and spiritual sanctity for the individual here on earth and in the hereafter. He therefore itemized the following as specific objectives of Qur'an education.

- i. Ensure that children read and recite the Qur'an,
- ii. Children become fully inducted into Islamic moral values in all behaviours,
- iii. Children become as knowledgeable in Arabic language and basic Islamic sciences as a foundation for further studies.

Abdullmalik (2008) stated that in Islam, education is conceived as process of self disciplined which involve physical, mental and spiritual training of man. It aims at producing well disciplined, highly skilful and responsible human beings who are conscious of their duties to Almighty Allah and commitments to the service of their society. According to Sule (2002) the main aim and objective of *Almajiri* education is to enable one to live a life of good Muslim, benefit himself and his society.

5. The Dilemmas of almijiri system of education

Almajirci is a religious practice which has come up with some innovations that are contrary to the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) because instead of being in the school to study, unfortunately all they do is to waste their time to beg for livelihood and engage in unlawful activities. Khalid (2000) observed that, one of the most serious charges levelled against *Almajirci* is that it subjected its clients to a condition of begging. The Kano State Committee Report on *Almajirai* adequately reflected this opinion when it reported that the agony of lives of five – ten 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;

- i. Norms and values of society encourage children of age 3-5 years to be enrolled in *Qur'anic* school.
- ii. Parental ignorance and poverty as most of these children come from peasant families

- iii. Inadequate commitment on the part of the government
- iv. Distance of centres of learning from the rural areas to communities.
- v. Non specific 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 *Almajirci* system of education, Muhammad (2010) explained that many people criticize and condemn the system of *Almajiri* education due to some problems associated with it. The condemnation is not in relation to the type of knowledge received by the pupils, but due to some identified problems in it which include;

i. 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.

ii. Over population: Numerical growth of these *Almajiri* per *Malam* and *Qur'anic* centers makes it difficult for *Malam* to control them and it also leads to congestion, health hazard, poor environmental conditions and insecurity among others.

iii. Lack of payment of salary: Although imparting knowledge in this type of schools are on voluntary basis, with an intention of seeking Allah's reward in this world and hereafter. This has some negative effects on the pupils because *Malams* may not concentrate fully on the teaching process, because of other business like trading, farming etc. so as to get means of survival for himself and his family, this is the major reason why they engage *Almajiri* in farming, hawking, child labour and begging.

iv. Age: Pupils in *Almajirci* system of education are under aged (below six years) are admitted into the system (boarding) instead of the studying on domestic basis schools where they will be under the care of their parents/guardians.

v. Methods of discipline: The nature of discipline in some *Almajiri* school does not help in changing the pupils for the better. For instance, continuous flogging is assumed to instil fear in the minds of the *Almajirai* but instead of them to change their negative attitudes they become recalcitrant.

Sule (2002) lamented that in Northern Nigeria the problems of *almajirci* were manifested in various forms of social explosions like:

- i. Mai-tatsine crisis
- ii. Yan Daba Phenomenon
- iii. Area boys
- iv. Yan Daukar Amarya incidences.
- v. Boko Haram

He continues to say that *Almajirci* 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 sorry state of learning and most of them live in condition of poor health mal-nutrition and squalor. Hamza (2009) opined that *Almajirai* of present time are somehow made as tools for money making for the *Malams*. Some of them do go to restaurants to wash plates and fetch water so that they will be given left over 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. United Nation International Children Education Foundation, UNICEF (2008) added that *Almajiri*-child 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 their study confirmed the value of ability of the *Almajirai*-children of *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 right 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 gross violation of children's rights guaranteed under both the Shari'a and the Nigerian constitution. The *almajirai* are socially and even psychologically disoriented, they cannot be mobilised for positive social change. Apart from loss of filial and by extension human emotions, they are so deprived. These deprivations are not only disincentive for positive social change but the humiliations and agonies of endangers makes them very violent.

6. Integrating almajiri education

Integration means merging two things or two system of education together to form a whole. In this case, it is the combination of the western system of education with *Qur'anic* system of education. The concept of integration as clearly understood is the introduction of the elements of basic education i.e. the literacy, numeracy and life skills of the western type of education 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 means to join elements of basis education that is, western type of education together with traditional *Qur'anic* school systems without interfering with the goals of the *Qur'anic* school system. But just to strengthen the ability of the learners to read, write and memorise the *Qur'an* in a conducive learning atmosphere and to introduce secular subjects of education into *Qur'an* school system thereby making the products literate, numerate and to enable them acquire manipulative and survival skills in the modern formal system to meet the goals of Education For All (EFA) and to eradicate *Almajirci* method of involving teenage children into street begging, hard labour, unhygienic condition, social vices and also to provide adequate and qualitative instructional materials in both Islamic and secular subjects.

This will help in empowering and improving the welfare of *Malams* through receiving salary and enjoying of allowances for them to live happily. It is this realisation that makes the federal government in 1976 introduces Universal Primary Education (UPE) Scheme and re-introduced Universal Basic Education (UBE) in September, 1999. Various efforts had been made over the years by groups, individuals, organisations and governments towards a successful integration of the *Qur'anic* school or Islamic education into the Western Education System, such attempts had achieved varying degrees of success. What is required is to strengthen and build upon them. The integrated *Almajiri* schools are to offer the following core subjects, English, Science, Mathematics, Social Studies together with Hausa, Computer, PHE and Handwriting under formal system of education with Agriculture, Trade, Commerce, Handcraft, Mechanic, Vulcanising and Islamic Calligraphy among others as vocational skills of their curriculum. While the component to the curriculum of non-formal education is *Qur'anic* education which involve strong foundation in recitation of the Glorious *Qur'an* and Islamic studying include *Qira'atul Qur'an*, *Tahfeez*, *Tajweed*, *Arabic*, Islamic Studies, *Tauhid*, *Hadith*, *Fiqh* and *Sirah*.

However, 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 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 targeted town. But this effort does not yield any fruitful result and even make some *Malams* to campaign against the local authority, accusing them of trying to undermine Islam (Abba, 1983). Khalid (2002) lamented that since then (1959) it was in 1980 that state government in the Northern part of Nigeria began to express their concern about *Almajiri* phenomenon, starting with clearing beggars from the street 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 explained that 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 the State Government appointed a committee on control of migrants in 1986 in order to enable the Government to determine the needs of these children, provide such needs, to settle the children in their places domicile so that they could undertake studies in both Islamic and Western education in their home and villages.

During pre-independence, Muslim parents response to the Christian evangelical nature of early public education process that interfered with the religious up-bringing of their children, concerned Muslim scholars, organizations and groups had initiated several integration projects by establishing their own separate religious and secular subjects (Fafunwa, 1990; Junaid et al., 2005). Notable among these past attempts were the efforts of the Ansarudeen Society of Nigeria in 1920s. The Jamatul Nasirul Islam and those of Mallam Aminu Kano under the

auspices of NEPU in 1950s. These disparate group and individual attempts were later galvanized by the colonial government in its response to growing agitation by Muslim groups which culminated into the establishment of post-elementary integrated schools such as the Kano and Sokoto Kadi (Judicials) schools and school for Arabic studies in Kano (Dahiru, 2011). "There were other similar efforts made to establish integrated primary school in Zaria in 1959 as the Nizzamiyya Islamic Primary School was established in 1960's" (Umar, 2003:4).

After independence, 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) stated that several Islamic organizations started establishing model primary schools from 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 ever since then (Mahuta, 2009). "This is the reason why in September 1999 Universal Basic and compulsory primary education scheme U.B.E was launched with the aim of achieving the total enrolment of schools age children into school." (Sifawa, 2006:564)

Similarly, the present Government of President Jonathan had touched on the sensitive matter of protection of life and property of Nigerians where ever they chose to live at the flag-off of his campaign in the Northeast. Also all through his election campaigns, the provision of formal and Islamic education to over 9.5 million *Almajiris* was a point of discussion (Laniyan, 2011). Furthermore, in an NTA Abuja Network discussion of Vice-President Arc. Namadi Sambo on Monday 28-March, 2011 on how Nigeria will achieve her aims in 2020. On his speech, he declared that every child of Nigeria has equal right to all aspect of life especially education through Universal Basic Education and that 9.5 million Nigerian children that are selling pure water on the street and begging are *Almajiri* children of *Qur'anic* traditional schools, so according to him, to eradicate the problem, their administration has started building boarding *Almajiri* integrated model schools in which they enrol these children and give them both Islamic education together with western education with their mallams (teachers) being employed to teach *Qur'anic* and other Islamic tenet subjects in the schools.

In recent times Kaduna, Kano, Borno, Niger, Adamawa, Sokoto and other states in regions have started given the *Almajiri* system the required attention. In Kaduna State for instance, the state government had since completed the building of an ultra-modern school in Zaria named Bi-Lingual Boarding primary school for *Almajiri*. Also, Murtala Nyako of Adamawa State had also started the integrating *Almajiri /Madarassa* system of education with its own nomadic education programme, even before the Federal Government's policy of integrating. While Niger State government has since began moves to integrate the *Almajiris* into formal school system. A committee set up to advice the government on the possibility of merging the two systems headed by Emir of Suleja, Mallam Muhammad Auwal Ibrahim submitted its findings to the government, which had released a white paper and commenced the implementation of provisions of the white paper. The committee discovered that there were 8,210 *Qur'anic* schools in the state with a total enrolment of 586,521 students, Manned by 15,895 Mallams. The report showed that most of the *Almajirai* and their teachers are as far as Maiduguri and Funtua in Katsina State. Hassan (2010) shared his view on the issue of integration of the two system of education.

7. Consequences and goals of integrating almajiri education

The current trend of integrating both *Qur'anic* Education with the Western System of Education is progressing at all governmental level be it 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) list the following anticipated consequences of integrating *Almajiri* education on the society.

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 element of *Almajiri* as perpetrators will be halted.

5. Integrated *Almajiri* Education has 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 to be self reliance thereby reducing their poverty level.

7. Employment of the *Almajiri* 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 totally different from the tradition *Almajiria*.

The following are the goals of Integrating *Almajirai* 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 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 *malams*. Also to eradicate all negative practices of *Almajirci* system especially that of teenage children involvement in begging. Moreover, Mahuta (2009), Dahiru (2011), and Bunza (2009) all declared the goals of integrating the two system of education in their works as follows:

a. To accord the Islamic system of education an official status and formal recognition.

b. To integrate 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 aspect of life skills found in the curriculum of modern secular curriculum.

d. To acquire skills and competences 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 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 learners 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 schools enrolment thereby greatly reducing the number of out of school children on the streets and to improve the health condition of the *Qur'anic* or *almajiranci* school children.

8. Conclusion

The integration of *Almajiri* education could not have come but now hence there must be some prospects and problems encountered by the school. One of the major problems faced by the students is the difficulties in the understanding of English language which is general language of communication in the classroom. Other major notable problem is the inadequacy in food given to the students. However, the schools have qualified teachers who are graduates of NCE, BSc/Bed and even MSc/Med degrees. Likewise the teachers are not only experienced but also punctual and committed to their duty. This suggested that the future could be bright for the school.

9. Recommendations

The following recommendations if well followed and implemented may sustain and improve the prospect of the school while the problems being faced would become a thing of past.

1. Adequate and updated instructional material should be provided by the government, NGOs, philanthropists, and other stakeholders in Almajiri education.
2. The food supply to the school should be adequate and regular.
3. The school should organize extra lesson for the students especially on English language and Mathematics.
4. The school environments should be made more convenient and conducive for learning.
5. The school administrator and teachers should be closer to the students and give them listening ear always.

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