

## **Opinions of Islamic Studies Teachers on the Incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into Western Education in Ilorin-south, Kwara State, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

Almajiri system of education has deteriorated over the years and in order to rescue the deteriorating condition of the system, the Federal government of Nigeria integrated the system into the western education so that the recipients could learn both Almajiri education and Western education simultaneously. However, this issue has generated a lot of concerns to various stake holders. Against this backdrop, this paper sought the opinions of Islamic Studies teachers in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State, Nigeria on the integration of Almajiri system of education into Western education. The research was a descriptive study of cross-sectional type. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 60 respondents. The instrument for data collection is a questionnaire titled “Opinions of Islamic Studies Teachers

on the Incorporation of Almajiri System Education into Western Education Questionnaire (OISSTIASEWEQ)”. Summated mean rating, the t-test and the ANOVA were the statistical tool used in this study. It was revealed that mmajority of the respondents’ opinions on the incorporation of Almajiri system of education into the Western education is positive. Also, no significant difference was found in the opinions of Islamic Studies teachers on the incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into the Western education based on gender and teaching experience. It was however recommended that an agency that would be regulating the activities of Almajiri system of education should be established

**Keywords:** Almajiri, Almajiri system of education, Mallam.

## **Background to the Study**

Education is the corner stone of growth and development in any society. This is because it has power to fashion an individual to be integrated into the society and to become a promoter of societal culture and development. Ekpo & Is’haq (2014) opined that education is a weapon for acquiring skills, knowledge and competence for survival in a changing World. Ekpo & Ishaq (2014) further submitted that when citizens of a country are educated, they would think right, act right and bring positive change for the development of their nation and the world at large. However, if a nation fails to educate its citizenry and make them deficient in carrying out some of the activities of life effectively, then that nation is likely to witness, destruction and obscurity. Education therefore remains the tool for the integration of individual effectively into the society so that the individual can achieve self-realization, develop national consciousness, promote unity and strive for social, economic, political, scientific, cultural and technological process.

According to Mahuta (2008), education is essentially regarded as a social process for capacity building, socialisation, social integration, development and maintenance of the society. Thus, in order to meet up with the modern challenges of life and globalisation, education is a weapon which is capable of equipping people with knowledge and skills that would enable them to survive in the modern world of science, technology and globalisation. Realizing the significance of education, the Federal Government of Nigeria adopted education as an instrument par excellence effective national development and thus, made education free and compulsory for all particularly at the basic level.

In a bid to provide education for all Nigerian citizens as stated in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2014), the Federal Government of Nigeria under the leadership of Goodluck Ebele Jonathan came up with a four-year development plan tagged: Transformation Agenda (TA) in May 2011. TA is based on a set of programmes aimed at transforming the Nigerian economy to meet the needs of Nigerians without jeopardizing the needs of future generations. TA therefore makes education a key component of the agenda (Ekpo & Is’haq, 2014). In the light of this, Almajiri Model Schools were established across the Northern states with the view to incorporate the Almajiri system of education into Western education so as to transform the Almajiri which had been previously neglected to be functional member of society.

The word Almajiri emanated from Arabic word “Al- Muhajirun” which came as a result of Prophet Muhammad’s (peace be on him) migration from Mecca to Madinah. From

the Islamic view point, the term “Al-Muhajirun” was used by the Prophet to differentiate between the companions who followed him down to Madina and those ones (“Al-Ansor”) who accepted them in the city of Madinah. However, the name Al-Muhajirun later came to mean those knowledge seekers who move from one place to another in search of knowledge like the Qur’anic school teacher and his pupils (Ifijeh and James, 2014).

In Nigeria, Almajiri refers to children sent from their homes and entrusted into the care of Islamic teachers (Mallam) to learn the Islamic studies. The Almajiri system of education started in Nigeria in 11th century as a result of the involvement of Borno rulers in Quranic literacy (AbdulQadir, 2003). 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 run similar Qur’anic learning system which over time came to be known as the Almajiri system (Abdullahi, 2011).

Almajiri are found mostly in the Northern part of Nigeria. They are usually between the ages of seven to fifteen. Originally, the idea was for these children to be sent out from their homes to learn Qur’anic education in traditional way under the care of “Mallam”. However, this system changed and the children are now left to wander about the streets to beg for alms in order to sustain themselves and their Mallams, (Ifijeh & James 2014). Almajiri are commonly sight in the Northern states including Borno, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Niger, Gombe, Kaduna, Jos and Sokoto. According to statistics released by the Ministry of Education in 2009, Kano state alone harbours 1.6 million Almajiri in some 26,000 Madrassa. Sokoto,

Kaduna, Niger and Borno states are home to approximately 1.1 million; 824, 200; 580, 000 and 389,000 Almajiri pupils respectively. They have a large presence in neighbouring West African countries like Mali, Togo, Niger, Republic of Chad and Cameroon. To be precise, the Ministry of Education estimated that there were 9.5 million Almajiri children in the Northern part of the country in 2009. Over the past few decades, the system has been overwhelmed, neglected and abused (Abdullahi, 2011). The mere mentioning of the word Almajiri evokes different feelings among Nigerians. For many, a picture of unkempt, hungry looking children of school age clutching plastic plates begging for alms readily comes to mind (Mahuta, 2004).

The necessities for the incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into Western of Education according to AbdulQadir, (2013) are as follows:

- a. To provide a conducive and organized learning environment that will ensure Almajiri acquire both Quranic and Modern Basic education.
- b. To provide an integrated curriculum that promotes the study of Al- Qur'an and Basic education subjects.
- c. To provide the Almajiri with the opportunities to acquire knowledge and vocational skills that will enable them to be self- reliant and useful to their community.
- d. To provide opportunities for graduates of the school to further their studies.
- e. To provide sound foundation for Tajweed and Tahfeez for Almajiri.

- f. To provide health and sanitary conditions, physical and social security and social welfare that ensures protection of Almajiri from all forms of danger.
- g. To increase the number of school enrolment thereby greatly reducing the number of out of school children on the streets and to improve the health condition of the Quranic Almajiri school children.

The Almajiri system of education is a good initiative of the federal government of Nigeria as it is a way of intervening in the menace of street begging by school-age children across Northern Nigeria. However, the educational programme came with a lot of criticisms. The programme was criticized for its poor professional handling of pupils for effective learning, inadequacy of qualified teachers and poorly planned curriculum. In the light of the foregoing, the researchers deemed it necessary to seek the opinions of Islamic Studies teachers in Ilorin South Local Government Area on the incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into Western Education.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to seek the opinion of Islamic Studies teachers in Ilorin South Local Government Area on the incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into Western education. Specifically, the study would examine the opinion of :

- a. Islamic Studies teachers on the incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into the Western Education.

- b. Islamic studies teachers on the incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into the Western Education based on gender.
- c. Islamic studies teachers on the incorporation of Almajiri system of education into western education based on teaching experience

### **Research Questions**

- a. What are the opinions of Islamic Studies teachers on the incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into the Western education?
- b. what are the difference in the opinions of Islamic Studies teachers on the incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into Western education based on gender?
- c. what are the difference in the opinions of Islamic Studies teachers on the incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into Western education based on teaching experience?

### **Hypothesis**

- a. There is no significant difference in the opinions of Islamic Studies teachers on the incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into the Western education based on gender

- b. There is no significant difference in the opinions of Islamic Studies teachers on the incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into the Western education based on teaching experience

## **Methods**

This study was a descriptive study of the cross-sectional survey type. Ogott, Chisikwa and Okwara (2010) described a survey as a method of collecting data in order to get a detail description of current practices, status of the subject or situation required. The population for this study consist all primary schools in Ilorin South Local Government Areas. A total number of 60 (sixty) respondents were engaged in the study. The sixty respondents were randomly selected from the target population using purposive sampling techniques.

The instrument that was used for this study was a researchers-designed questionnaire tagged Opinions of Islamic Studies Teachers on the Incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into Western Education. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section contains background information on the respondent while the second section contains items seeking the opinion of respondents on the incorporation of Almajiri into Western Education. The Likert scale of four (4) points rating was used to seek the opinions of the respondent on the study. The instrument was validated using both face and content validity procedure. The test re-test reliability technique was employed to test the reliability of the instruments. This was administered to twenty randomly selected teachers. The researchers ascertained the reliability of the instruments using Pearson's Product Moment Co-efficient



method at 0.05 level of significance. Research question 1 was answered with the use of summated mean rating while research questions 2 and 3 with their corresponding hypotheses were answered with the use of the t-test statistic.

## Result

### Demographic Description of Respondents

Results presented below include demographic characteristics of the respondents through frequency counts and percentage. Variable used included gender and years of teaching experience.

**Table 1: Percentage Analysis of the Distribution of the Respondents by Gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	31	51.7
Female	29	48.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 1 reveals that out of the 60 teachers that participated in the study, 31(51.7%) were males, while 29 (48.3%) were females. This shows that there more male teachers than female teachers that participated in this study.

**Table 2: Percentage Analysis of the Distribution of the Respondents by Teaching Experience**

Teaching Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
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0 – 5 years	28	46.7
6 years Upward	32	53.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 2 reveals that out of the 60 teachers that participated in the study, 60 (46.7%) had 0 – 5years teaching experience, while 32 (53.3%) had 6 years upward teaching experience.

**Research Question 1:** *What are the opinions of Islamic Studies teachers on the incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into the Western education?*

In order to answer this research question, respondents' responses on the questionnaire were collated. The output of the analysis reveals thus:

**Table 3: Rank Order of the Opinions of Islamic Studies Teachers on the Incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into the Western Education**

Opinions	Frequency	Mean	SD.
Opinions of Islamic Studies Teachers	60	39.42	2.74

Table 3 indicates that 60 respondents participated in this study. Responses to items that sought information on the opinions of Islamic Studies teachers on the incorporation of Almajiri system of education into the Western education revealed that majority of the respondents' opinions is positive because the benchmark weighted mean score stood at 10 and the weighted mean score is 39.42 which is above the benchmark weighted mean score. These

findings corroborate the findings of ..... which found that stake holders supported the incorporation of Almajiri system of education into Western education.

### Hypotheses Testing

Two research hypotheses were postulated in the course of this study, and were tested using t-test at 0.05 alpha level.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** *There is no significant difference in the opinions of Islamic Studies teachers on the incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into the Western education based on gender.*

In order to this test the hypothesis, responses of the respondents on the questionnaire based on gender were collated. The output of the analysis reveals thus:

**Table 5: The t-test Analysis of Difference in the Opinions of Islamic Studies Teachers on the Incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into the Western Education based on Gender**

Gender	No	Mean	Std.	df	Cal.t-Value	Sig.(2-tailed)	Decision
Male	31	23.19	3.22	58	1.59	0.12	<b>Accepted</b>
Female	29	21.76	3.76				

#### **P<0.05**

Results on table 5 shows t-value = 1.59 with p-value = 0.12 > 0.05 alpha level. Since 0.12 was greater than 0.05 alpha level, hypothesis one is thus accepted. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the opinions of Islamic Studies teachers on the incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into the Western education based on gender.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** *There is no significant difference in the opinions of Islamic Studies teachers on the incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into the Western Education based on teaching experience.*

In order to this test the hypothesis, responses of the respondents on the questionnaire based on teaching experience were collated. The output of the analysis reveals thus:

**Table 3: The t-test Analysis of Difference Perceptions of Islamic Studies Teachers on the Incorporations of Almajiri System of Education into the Western Education based on Teaching Experience**

Teaching Experience	No	Mean	Std.	df	Cal.t-Value	Sig.(2-tailed)	Decision
0 – 5 years	28	22.89	3.60				
				58	0.80	0.74	<b>Accepted</b>
6 years upward	32	22.16	3.49				

**P<0.05**

Results on table 6 shows t-value = 0.80 with p-value = 0.74 > 0.05 alpha level. Since 0.74 was greater than 0.05 alpha level, hypothesis one is thus accepted. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the perceptions of Islamic Studies teachers on the incorporation of Almajiri System of Education into the Western education based on teaching experience.

**Conclusion**

The efforts made by the Federal Government to incorporate Almajiri System of Education into Western Education in order to transform the society as well as meeting up with Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and vision 20:2020 targets cannot be over emphasized. The study sought the opinions of Islamic Studies teachers on the incorporation of Almajiri system of education in Western education and it was revealed that majority of respondents' responses were positive.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations were made:

- a. An agency that would be regulating the activities of Almajiri system of education should be established.
- b. the northern states governments must put their heads together through Northern Governors Forum to give adequate support to the Federal Government on the programme.
- c. the school environment should be made convenient and conducive for learning.
- d. the school administrators and teachers who are the implementer of the programme should be closer to the students and give them listen ears always.
- e. policy should be formulated to put an end to street begging in the country.

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