

# The Socio-Economic Implications Of The Almajiri Practice In Minna Metropolis

*The practice of Almajiri is one of the major forms of child abuse in Northern Nigeria. The practice is denying our society from producing future professionals that will contribute to the development of our nation. The study adopted a cross sectional survey design and applied multi stage sampling techniques to sample 270 respondents from Almajiri Schools in the study area. The first stage involved the splitting of the local government into wards. The second stage involves selecting streets, while the third stage was sampling the Islamiya. In all, 6 wards were sampled for the study. The study utilized both primary and secondary sources of data. Two hundred and seventy (270) structured questionnaires were administered while twenty Mallams were interviewed. Descriptive statistics like tables, frequencies and percentages were employed in presenting and interpreting the data. Information from the qualitative data was transcribed and ordered in themes to ensure that outstanding points of the responses are noted. The following conclusions were drawn from the study: the menace of the almajiri syndrome is caused by societal and cultural norms as well as low socio-economic status of parents, high level of the parents' illiteracy and ignorance on the negative impact of sending their children away in the name searching for religious knowledge at very young age, because the children suffer emotional and physical abuse and are also in most cases hindered from getting a good education or none at all capable of making them productive members of the society. A social reorientation program should be developed specifically on the issue of the almajiri and its negative impacts on children in the society especially in the north western part of Nigeria because the majority of the students are from there. The study made the following recommendations: Integrating the almajiri schools into the conventional school system; Government and its development partners should embark on aggressive campaign to discourage parent from sending their wards far away as almajiris; the mallam should be discourage to admit manageable size of students; parents should also provide up keep for their children while almajiri schools; government at all levels should introduce a realistic poverty alleviation program in the country.*

**Keywords:** Almajiri, Education, Mallam, System, Religion and Awareness

## Introduction

According to United Nation Convention on Child Right, a child is any person below eighteen (18) years. The convention, which was held in 1989, set out various declarations that will improve the quality of life of children worldwide. Some states signed the declaration including Nigeria. Some of the rights set out at

the declaration include the right to education, health care, love and care, adequate food and shelter and live in a clean environment (Babangida, 1993).

Despite these rights, in almost every streets, corner, junctions (especially in the north), are young, homeless, poor, neglected and maltreated children seen roaming the streets begging for food and alms (Babangida, 1993). These young children are called the “Almajiri” (a student who leaves his parent for Qur’anic education). They come mostly from rural areas to urban centres for the purpose of acquiring Qur’anic education. They are sent to study Qur’an under the care of a Mallam (Teacher of the Qur’anic school) or Alaramma (Teacher of the Qur’anic school who memorizes and writes all verses of the Quran) who mostly comes from other village (Garba, 1996). Today the word Almajiri in Hausa has gradually acquired a completely different meaning; it is more or less referred to as beggars roaming the streets in our towns and cities. They include young pupils who left the comfort and protection of their parents and relations at a very tender age for the purpose of Qur’anic education (Sa’id, 1992). The malam/ Alaramma is not responsible for feeding the Almajiris and therefore are forced to beg on the street. They depend on people for their food and other life needs (Ibrahim, 2008). In the course of begging on the streets, they are exposed to various forms of hazards and situations. They are victims of economic hardship, child neglect and abuse; all in the name of Qur’anic education (Salis, 1995). The practice of Almajiri is one of the major forms of child abuse in Northern Nigeria. The practice is denying our society from producing future professionals that will contribute to the development of our nation. The practice is common among polygamous, poor and uneducated families (Perverz, 2005). The Almajiris are under the care of their mallam even though he is not responsible for feeding them. The children move around from door to door, street to street begging for food and other necessities of life; they move either singly or in group. Some of them attach themselves to seller of food items like Massa (waina), beans cake (kosai) or groundnut cake (kuli), moving about looking for buyer who will share to them voluntarily (Babangida, 1993). The Almajiri school system is where Qur’anic religious knowledge is acquired. The school is usually situated either in the mosque premises or tsangaya. It could also be situated outside the mallam’s house either under shade with no definite classrooms built for shelter and no proper sitting and writing facilities available; they use slate as reading materials (Ya’u , 2001). Many Nigerians do not consider the practice of almajiri as a problem. This is because of economic hardship and people do not actually think about the future life of these children (Yuyasa, 2005).

## **Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

With over nine million children in the almajiri system and still counting mostly concentrated in the Northern part of Nigeria, the largest population of out of school children in the world found in major town and cities as well as deep into the hinter land of our villages mostly surviving by begging and soliciting for alms and food, no basic facilities of life and with little or no plan for their future, the

1 almajiri is a cloak in the wheel of progress and time bomb in the waiting. These  
 2 children end up as manicurists, cobblers; trolley pushers etc and constitute a  
 3 serious national security problem and a threat to social cohesion and active  
 4 citizenship. With the spate of sectarian crises that have bedeviled the Northern  
 5 region in the past few years, there is the apprehension that this sorely neglected  
 6 section of our young population, if left uncontrolled, could be dragged into these  
 7 crises. Shehu (2003) noted that begging exposes the almajiri to all kind of  
 8 environmental hazards, which affects them psychologically and instills inferiority  
 9 complex, dependency, sense of dejection and all sorts of negative psychological  
 10 feeling. These psychological dispositions affects their sociological interactions and  
 11 make them vulnerable and susceptible to social vices which exposes them various  
 12 kinds of dangerous juvenile and adolescent peers. They come into contact with all  
 13 kind of people and experiences in the society the good, the bad and the ugly. As  
 14 juveniles, they can hardly differentiate right from the wrong.

15 Nigeria is grappling with series of societal issues among which chiefly is the  
 16 insurgency in the north east where a group of young able men are fighting to  
 17 establish a Caliphate based on their own understanding of Islam. A good number  
 18 of the fighters have roots traced back to the almajiri system of education where  
 19 they were trained with the belief that western education is evil and against the  
 20 teachings of Islam. Unfortunately, the almajiri syndrome provides a pool for easy  
 21 recruitment, over nine million vulnerable children that can be lured. The disaster  
 22 can only be imagined.

23 Shittu & Olaofe (2015) observed that, the majority of the Mallams operating  
 24 the almajiri system today are greedy and reckless. They live ostentatiously at the  
 25 expense of their students and the community. The movement of the Mallams away  
 26 from their customary life of service and sacrifice to a life of selfishness and  
 27 exploitation, couple with the nonchalant attitude of the parents and the society in  
 28 general to live up to their duties in the development of children to the hands of an  
 29 strangers, coupled with the attitude of the type of student nowadays whom are far  
 30 more exposed than those who predates them have make the continuous application  
 31 of the almajiri system of education complicated and hard to operate optimally .

32 It has also been clearly established that most of the Mallams exploit the  
 33 innocence of these children and use them as a source of livelihood. The Mallams  
 34 use the children to do their domestic chores and send out to beg and bring back  
 35 whatever they are given to the Mallams neglecting the primary objectives of the  
 36 children entrusted to them. These Mallams who are mostly not under supervision  
 37 and control of government are generally still answerable to the traditional rulers  
 38 (Emirs, district heads and ward heads). It is this traditional leadership that provide  
 39 them safety nest to operate comfortably in the midst of people, thus supporting  
 40 their activities directly or indirectly. Without the support of the traditional  
 41 leadership, the Mallams would not survive and without the Mallams the almajiri  
 42 system would not exist. Government especially the at the federal and state level  
 43 have tried co-opt the traditional leadership of the north to discourage the present  
 44 practice of the almajiri system or even to modify its application but have met

serious resistance from the conservative Mallams and in some instances with the support of the traditional leadership of the society.

The functionalist theory is greatly related to Durkheim (1858-1917) due to the fact that he frequently made use of analogies with biology with the organic theory analogy wherein he sees the society as an organic whole with each constituent member working to maintain other members, just as the human parts also work to maintain each other. This idea is fundamental to Durkheim concept of organic solidarity and differentiates between functional and historical explanations and recognized the need for both (Ndem, Micheal & Awa, 2012).

Durkheim believed that for every phenomenon that exists or an occurrence of an action in terms of its effects/consequences and contribution in maintaining a stable social whole there exist a functional accounts. According to the functionalist theorists, societies and individuals exist and work to sustain each other in an organic matter. The functionalist sees every member of the society as performing a particular function that keeps and sustains the whole of the society. To the functionalists, the inability of one member to perform results in a breakdown of the entire society; to them every part (no matter how small) plays an important role so as to achieve desired sustenance and unity as a whole (Ndem et.al, 2012).

Therefore, according to this theory, the almajiri syndrome is a consequence of the failure of the society to function normally by not being able to provide these groups of people a means of enrolling their children into formal education. The society has also failed to provide and help push for reforms and restructuring of the almajiri system of education to includes social and economic empowerment for the almajiris` s in other to enable them earn a living and sustain themselves without being a burden and social disorder to the society. Similarly, it explain the believe that the almajiri syndrome exists because their families who are mostly poor also had failed equally to perform their parental functions and roles. Therefore, are responsible for the prevalence of the almajiri syndrome in the society.

## **Methodology**

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design. The study was conducted in Chanchaga Local Government area of Niger State, The study population comprises of Children currently engaged in Almajiranci (begging) that have been resident in the community for at least 6 months prior to the survey. Two hundred and seventy (270) structured questionnaires are administered on the Almajiri that have been resident in the community for at least 6 months prior to the survey and twenty Mallams were interviewed within the study area.

Multi-stage sampling technique was employed for the study, which entailed the use of cluster, systematic and simple random sampling techniques to sample Almajiri schools and almajiri at different stages were employed. Descriptive statistics like tables, frequencies and percentages were employed in presenting and interpreting the data. Information from the qualitative data was transcribed and ordered in themes to ensure that outstanding points of the responses are noted.

## Results and Discussion

**Table 1:** *Percentage Distribution of the Respondents by Age*

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 10	122	45.18
10-15	137	50.74
16-20	5	1.85
21 and above	6	2.23
<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 1 shows that majority of respondents fell within the age range of less than 10-15 years which represent 50.74% followed by the age range of less than 10 years with 45.18%, while 2.23% ranged above 21 years and the least age range was that 16-20 years at 1.85%. The highest respondents fall within the age range of childhood and pre-adolescence of 15 years and below which is 95.92%.

**Table 2:** *Percentage Distribution of the Respondents by Socio-economic Status of Parent*

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very Poor	120	44.44
Poor	116	42.96
Averagely Rich	27	10
Very Rich	7	2.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2018

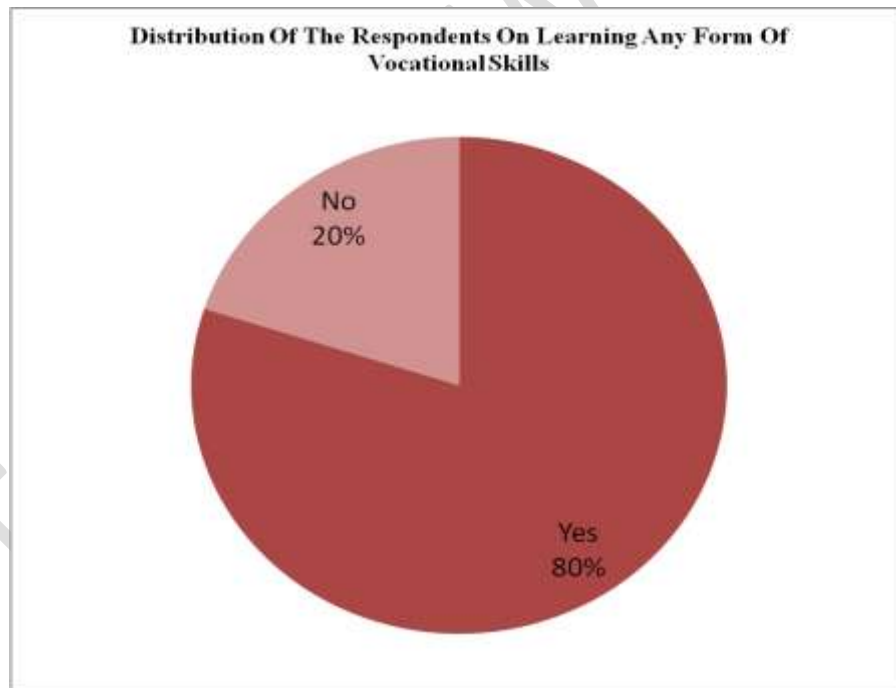
Table 3, shows that majority of the respondents assessed their parents as being very poor with 44.44% while 42.96% of the respondents view their parents socio economic status as poor, while 10% see their parents socio-economic status as averagely rich and only 2.60% of the respondents that assessed as being very rich. This implies that majority of the almajiri students believe their parents socio-economic status is very poor.

**Table 3:** *Percentage Distribution of the Respondents by Reciting the Quran fluently*

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	149	55
No	121	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2018

**Table 3**, shows that more than half of the respondents representing 55% are capable of reciting the Quran they have been taught fluently while 45% of the respondents are unable to do so. This can be attributed to the high number of children under the age of 10 years and also the fact that generally majority of the students are engaged in begging and other menial jobs which takes a large chunk of their time for study.



**Figure 1:** *Percentage Distribution of the Respondents on Learning Any Form of Vocational Skills*

**Figure 1**, shows that 80% of the respondents have learnt or are learning one or more type of vocational skills in addition to the almajiri education they are pursuing, while 20% said they are not learning any form of vocational skills. However, most of the vocational skills they are involved in do not affect

significantly the growth and development of the country or take them out of poverty. The skills learnt include basically truck pushing, cobbling, nail cutting, tailoring, hawking, trading and carpentry among others.

Most of the Mallams interviewed said their students were taught one form of trade or vocation depending on their ages for survival as they grow up. The majority accepts the fact that there is need to strive to earn a living as begging is dehumanizing and demeaning. They also agreed that search for religious knowledge should not stop individuals from seeking other skills to be self-reliance in future. One of the Mallams has this to say:

“It is good for the almajiri to acquire some form of skills before graduation to enable them to be self-reliance in future”.

**Table4 : Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' Source of Feeding**

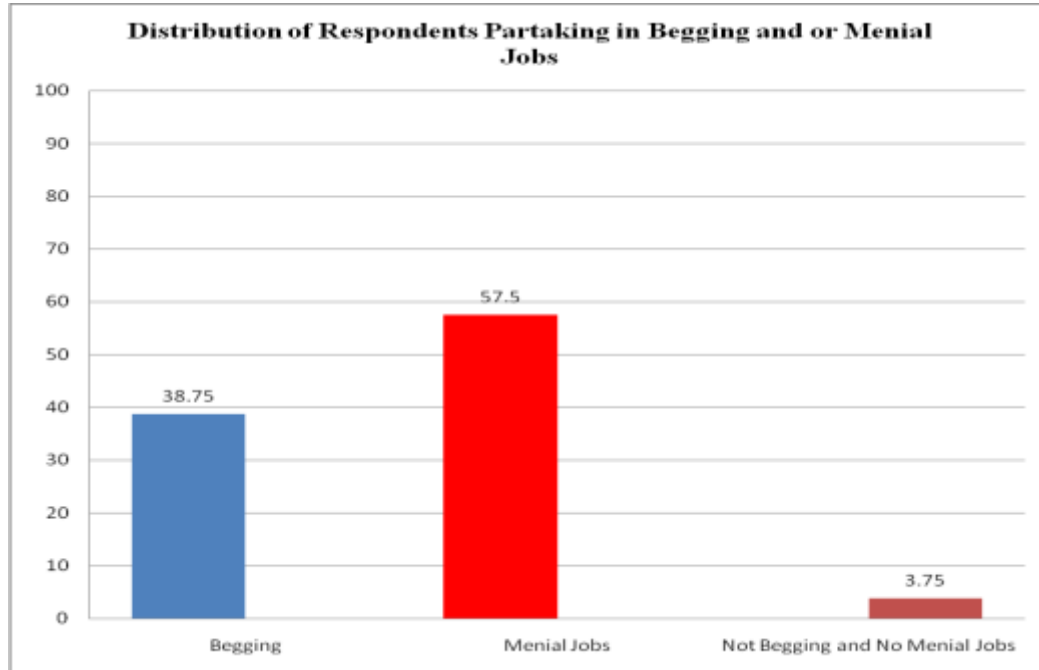
Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Parents	14	5
Mallam	17	6.25
Begging	105	38.75
Government	3	1.25
Menial jobs	131	48.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2018

**Table 4**, shows that 48.75% of the respondents are involved in one form of menial job or the other (cobbling, truck pushing, house help and errand boys, nail cutting, hawking, trading, carpentry etc) for their survival that is almost half of the students (of which 46.15% nearly half are below the age of 15 years), followed by 38.75% of the respondents who are involved in begging for survival (of which 87.1% are children below the age of 15 years). Only 5% of the respondents parents are responsible for their feeding and upkeep and 6.25% are fed and housed by their Mallams. 1.25% say government is responsible for their feeding and upkeep. In general, 87.5% of the respondents are responsible for their upkeep and survival completely.

Majority of the Mallams interviewed accepted that their students were involved in begging. The reason the Mallams gave for their students begging is that begging has historical basis in the religion. The Mallams also agreed that begging was demeaning but argued it was the only means the students would survive as they cannot feed the students who in most cases were above hundred and with no contributions from their parents and guardians. The Mallams interviewed also were of the opinion that begging has no effect on the students learning abilities and the quality of education. One of the mallam interviewed had this to say:

“It is necessary for the almajiris to engaged in begging because I don’t have enough to provide for their upkeep especially feeding and daily needs, and their parents didn’t provide any form of assistance”.



**Figure2:** *Percentage Distribution of the Respondents Partaking in Begging and or Menial Jobs*

**Figure 2,** shows 38.75% of the respondents affirmed that they are involved in begging while 57.5% said they were involved in one or more type of menial jobs, while only 3.75% of the respondents are solely involved in almajiri education without begging and doing any form menial jobs because their parents are completely responsible for their upkeep. This implies that 96.35% of the almajiri are responsible for their upkeep and feeding with no contribution from their parents and guardians. The parents have thrown away their duties and responsibilities to their children deliberately by sending them far away in the name of searching for education.

**Table 5:** *Percentage Distribution of the Respondents Bringing Back Money, Food and Gifts From Begging and Other Menial Jobs to their Mallams*

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	95	35
No	175	65
<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2018



**Table 5**, shows that 35% of the respondents said they bring back money, food and gifts to their Mallams from their begging and menial jobs while 65% noted that they did not bring back anything to the Mallams. This indicates that the majorities of the students beg and involve in menial jobs to fend for themselves only without any compulsion to give part of it to the Mallams. While about one-third bring back to their Mallams thus reinforcing the statement that the Mallams are exploiting the conditions and vulnerability of their students by depending on the students for their own survival.

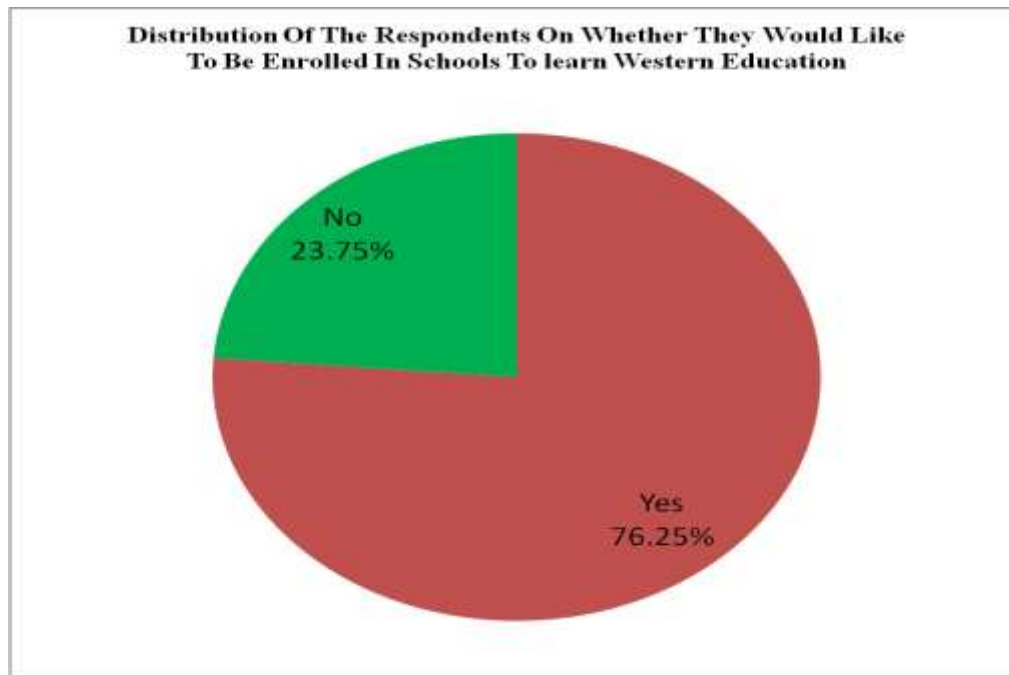
Majority of the Mallams interviewed said their students do not bring back money food and gifts from begging and other menial jobs, however, the Mallams accepted that the students are encouraged to sometimes bring something for them as a form of seeking blessing while others say they collect weekly dues from the students and some said they only collect annual dues from the students. The Mallams noted that begging is for feeding by students whom are too young to partake in menial jobs and students who have come of age do not partake in begging.

**Table 6:** Percentage Distribution of the Respondents on the Time of the Day Used for Learning the Quran

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Morning only	44	16.25
Afternoon only	10	3.75
Evening only	17	6.25
Night only	17	6.25
Morning and Night	118	43.75
Morning and Afternoon	54	20
Afternoon and Evening	4	1.25
Afternoon and Night	6	2.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2018

**Table 6**, shows that 43.75% of the respondents utilize morning and night for learning the Quran, while 20% said they utilize morning and afternoon for learning. 16.25% said they learn in the morning only, 6.25% learn in the evening and night separately while 1.25% and 2.5% learn in the afternoon and evening and in the afternoon and night respectively. This implies that most of the learning occurs in the morning and nights while the other parts of the day are used for menial jobs and begging.



**Figure 3:** *Percentage Distribution of the Respondents on Whether They Would Like to Be Enrolled In Schools to Learn Western Education*

**Figure 3,** shows that 76.25% of the respondents wants to enroll in school to learn western education while 23.75% said they were not interested in learning western education. Across all the age range from those that are below 10 years to those above 20 years, there is a clear thirst and interest in acquiring western education. In fact some of them have already enrolled in schools and are at different level of education from basic up to tertiary level. Nonetheless, there are those that are still too conservative to change and still resist the western education on the premise that almajiri education would provide them with all they require as it has provided to their forebears for generations.

**Table 7:** *Percentage Distribution of the Respondents on Their Prefer for Western Education over Quranic Education*

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Quran education only	68	25
Western education only	17	6.25
Quran and Western Education	185	68.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2018

**Table 7,** shows that 68.75% of the respondents would prefer to continue their almajiri education as well as enroll schools to learn western education while 25% said they prefer the almajiri system of education and finally 6.25% of the

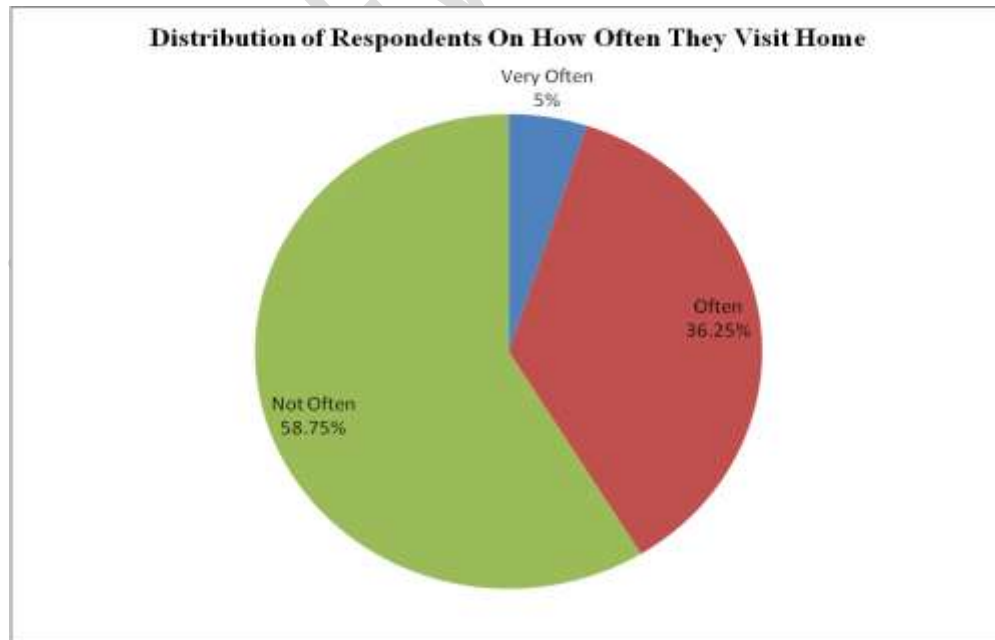
respondents said they prefer the western education over the almajiri system of education. While, there is wide acceptability for the western education by both the students and the Mallams, there is little or no initiative to integrate these categories of students to the conventional school systems. Majority of the respondents did not know of the existence of UBE/Almajiri integration policy, moreover the UBE/Almajiri integrated schools are dormant and have no activity going on in them.

**Table 8:** *Percentage Distribution of the Respondents on Whether They Are Being Physically and Psychologically Abused By the General Public*

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	81	30
No	189	70
<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100</b>

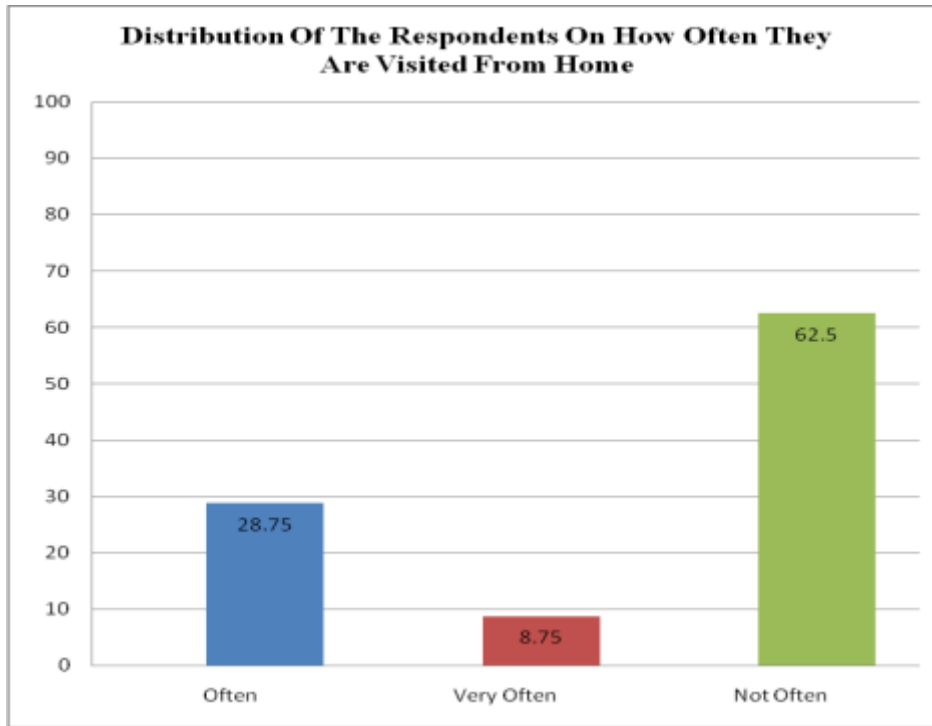
Source: Field Survey, 2018

**Table 8**, shows that 70% of the respondents said they had not experienced any physical or psychological abuse from the general public, which shows that the almajiri are living peacefully with their immediate communities while 30% of the respondents said they are being abused. Of course there would be those who would get the other side of the public because of the nature of the almajiri who would go and beg for food, or to seek for menial jobs in order to survive especially considering that majority of the almajiris are children below the age of 15 years.



**Figure 4:** *Percentage Distribution of the Respondents frequency of home visit*

**Figure 4** above shows that 58.75% of the respondents said they do not visit home often enough, while 36.25% say they visit home often and 5% say they visit home very often. This shows clearly that these children are left to fend for themselves and to grow into adulthood without a major part of the agent of socialization the family in their lives. This shows how easy the parents have relinquished their roles and duties to provide food, shelter, security and education to their children, thus to survive children are forced into lives of adults early.



**Figure 5:** *Percentage Distribution of the Respondents on How Often Are They Visited From Home*

**Figure 5** above shows that 62.50% of the respondents said they are not visited from home often enough, while 28.75% say they are visited from home often and 8.75% say they are visited from home very often. This shows clearly that these children are left to fend for themselves and to grow into adulthood without a major part of the agent of socialization the family in their lives and how easy the parents and guardians have relinquished their roles and duties in the lives of their children.

**Table 8: Percentage Distribution of the Respondents on Whether Their Parents Have Attended Western Education**

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	27	10
No	243	90
<b>Total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2018

**Table 8**, shows that 90% of the respondents say their parents have never attended any form of school to learn western education, while 10% said their parents have been enrolled in school to learn western education at one time or the other. It was however observed that most of those who enrolled dropped out along the way before even finishing their primary school. Most of the parents are farmers, herders or traders who did not attend conventional schools but have passed through the almajiri system of education. This low level of education is a major factor contributing to the high enrollment into the almajiri system of education.

### Discussions of Findings

As stated earlier this research work is based on the functionalist theory as postulated by scholars like Emile Durkheim who opined that societies and individuals exist and work to sustain each other in an organic matter. The functionalist views every member of the society as performing a particular function that keeps and sustains the whole of the society. The individual is a component of a society and each individual belongs to a group either by birth, language, religion, region or association, the closest being the family. It is from the family that these groups build up to become nation states and from within the groups that leaders are chosen to govern in order to maintain balance and advance the interest of the generality of the society. Each branch or sub part of the whole society has its peculiar purpose and role in the society no matter how small or complex. When each sub part performs its role an egalitarian society comes into being where everybody's interest is protected and if one fails to perform its function it invariably affects the whole group. The relationship is so intertwined that practically no one can live in isolation and the price of isolation and individualism is usually foregoing one element or more of the equitable and fair society.

From the functionalist theorist's postulations, the study views the almajiri as a sub part (branch) of the society and almajiri system of education as a means of educating these groups of Nigerians. The almajiri is today viewed as a social menace because the almajiri system of education is failing to meet up with the standards of society in providing the almajiri with the requisite knowledge and skills that would help him contribute to the growth and development of the country

1 as whole which is a result of failure of the system, the system being the family, the  
 2 custodian of the almajiri schools, government and society in general, thus the  
 3 almajiri student is a victim of the failure of the system.

4 The failure of the family (parents and guardians) to carter, protect and educate  
 5 a child to fit into the society so the child grows to contribute and aspire to be  
 6 among the best in society. Only 5.00% of the respondents said their parents are  
 7 responsible for upkeep and feeding, 87.50% of the respondents feed and clothe  
 8 themselves, furthermore, about 60% of the respondents say they neither visit home  
 9 nor are they visited from home regularly. The parents just give birth to them and  
 10 dump them far away running away from their responsibilities. There are three  
 11 agents of socialization school, peer groups and the most important the family, thus  
 12 these children are denied this aspect of life deliberately and molded in that manner.  
 13 The fact that the almajiri system of education is failing is majorly because this  
 14 children are sent to school without upkeep and accommodation and the Mallams  
 15 have no capacity to cater for them, these children are left with only the option of  
 16 begging and doing menial jobs to survive, 96.75% of the almajiri are either  
 17 begging or involved in menial jobs while 61.03% said they beg and seek menial  
 18 jobs at all times of the day depending on the need for food and sustenance. This  
 19 practice of begging would generally expose the almajiri to all sorts of people and  
 20 conditions and becoming a menace to the society.

21 On the other hand, are the owners of the almajiri schools whom as individuals  
 22 and as a group have been very conservative for too long refusing to restructure the  
 23 system in tune with the reality of time. Majority of the Mallams interviewed have  
 24 no verifiable means of livelihood and feeding, those that have means of livelihood  
 25 said they are either farmers or traders and they accept that their source of feeding  
 26 cannot cater for the students under them. Without a comfortable means of  
 27 livelihood, the Mallams have obviously no choice but to push the students into the  
 28 society to beg. For the system to hold all the branches must work and almajiri  
 29 system of education is dependent on the teachers and if there are no teachers the  
 30 system collapses and if the teachers are not comfortable and catered for, the  
 31 education system would suffer. The Mallams argue that the almajiri system of  
 32 education has been in existence for too long for it to be scrapped and thus requires  
 33 government and the society to invest in their system of education just as the  
 34 government and individuals are investing in conventional schools, they should be  
 35 employed and provided with structures and facilities similar to conventional  
 36 schools for the almajiri system of education to witness a turn around. But with  
 37 limited source of income and with no technical knowhow the students cannot be  
 38 expected to be taught meaningful skills for nation building. They grow up to  
 39 become a burden and menace to society.

40 Another branch of the system is the government, and as postulated by the  
 41 functionalist theorists the whole system would not function well if one or more  
 42 branch of the system fails because the effect of the failure affects the whole  
 43 system, the government needs the population to be productive and contribute to  
 44 nation building positively. The government has neglected the almajiri system of  
 45 education and it is not doing enough to curb its menace. 81.3% of the almajiri

1 respondents believe students from conventional schools are better catered and  
 2 treated than the almajiri students and 68.75% of the respondents are interested in  
 3 combining the almajiri system of education with the western style system of  
 4 education because they see the obvious preference the society and government  
 5 give to the conventional schools. These categories of students interested in the  
 6 western education do not know how to go about it because government has  
 7 neglected them. The Mallams from the interview conducted are increasingly  
 8 accepting the integration of the western education with the almajiri system but  
 9 they say there is no forum to discuss on how to achieve the goal. The almajiri's are  
 10 a product of a system that government have over the years neglected and turned a  
 11 blind eye as the system decayed and build up a category of citizenry that have  
 12 become a menace to the society.

13  
 14

### 15 **Conclusion and recommendations**

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17 Based on the findings from the study it was concluded that the menace of the  
 18 almajiri syndrome is caused by societal and cultural norms as well as low socio-  
 19 economic status of parents, high level of the parents' illiteracy and ignorance on  
 20 the negative impact of sending their children away in the name searching for  
 21 religious knowledge at very young age, because the children suffer emotional and  
 22 physical abuse and are also in most cases hindered from getting a good education  
 23 or none at all capable of making them productive members of the society.

24 Furthermore, it should be noted that unless the Mallams let go of their  
 25 conservative nature and resistance to modernization of the almajiri system of  
 26 education, the menace of the almajiri would continue to affect the whole society.

27 Although, the government has made efforts at integrating the almajiri system  
 28 of education with western education through the Universal Basic Education, lack  
 29 of proper implementation of the policy and awareness is hampering its success and  
 30 there is need to put in more effort to control the dwindling fortune of the almajiri  
 31 system of education.

32 The following recommendation is made based on the findings of the study:

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- 34 1. A social reorientation program should be developed specifically on the issue of  
 35 the almajiri and its negative impacts on children in the society especially in the  
 36 north western part of Nigeria because the majority of the students are from  
 37 there.
- 38 2. Government and the relevant stake holders should encourage the parents and  
 39 students to remain at their ancestral home and learn. Children should remain  
 40 close to their parents while learning.
- 41 3. Integrating the almajiri schools in the federal government school feeding  
 42 program of primary schools so that the almajiri students below within that age  
 43 bracket can benefit, this would reduce the rate of begging in the society.
- 44 4. Integrating the almajiri into or developing their own youth empowerment  
 45 schemes and government intervention schemes similar to N-Power as it is

- 1 being done to graduates of conventional schools. This would reduce the level
- 2 of begging and introduce the almajiri to meaningful vocational skills
- 3 5. Introduction of vocational and technical education similar to those taught in
- 4 technical schools by government into the almajiri schools.
- 5 6. Educating the Mallams on the need to accept systematic overhaul and
- 6 admitting only the number of students they can adequately cater for.
- 7 7. Broadening the scope of the UBE integration policy by including relevant
- 8 traditional and religious leaders in transforming the almajiri system of
- 9 education.

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