

The Almajiri Palaver in Northern Nigeria: How Islamic?

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Abstract: The word “Almajiri” is a Hausa language is derived from Arabic “Al-Muhajir” Any one of the early Muslims who had migrated from any place to Madinah during the life time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), before the conquest of Mecca, and also the one who refrains from all things forbidden by Allah. Muhajirun the plural form of the word means: the emigrants. A term used for all those who migrated with their Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) from Makkah to Madinah. Both words i.e. the singular and the plural were driven from the word “Hajarah” which means to flee one’s country, to migrate, to emigrate. In Quran: He who flees his country in the path of Allah’s religion (Q4:100).

Keywords: Al-Muhajir, Hajarah, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

INTRODUCTION

Seeking for knowledge is among the core values in a Muslim’s life and this is why Quran emphasizes that no similitude can be drawn between the possessor of knowledge and one who is dispossessed of knowledge, and that those who have knowledge are the true lovers of the Almighty. Every society have a way of living and its culture forms a significant part of this way of living. Northern region of Nigeria which is a home to numerous social and political entities have an established culture since time immemorial. This culture was predominantly Islamic in nature. Northern Nigeria was in the advent of contemporary world never considered as a primitive society. It had all the features and potentialities of a civilized community. Actually this was why when the Colonialist came they opted to administer it through what they call indirect rule, which means that they rule the rulers and the rulers continue ruling their subjects on their behalf. They met a well-structured educational system that starts from the kindergarten stage up to the university level. At the onset of the Colonial hegemony the system only needed support in order to develop so that it would grapple with modernity. Colonial administration deliberately turn its back to this system because it dreaded any form of civilization to exist with it side by side.

It is in this background that the traditional system of learning collapse into a state of coma on which it never really recovered. Since the usurping authority never intended to sustain it, it actually allowed it to remain in that condition. All the educational laws were promulgated in utter disregard to the system. So the people who like any other sovereign entity and being proud of their own continued to support the

system themselves. However, officially the system was allowed to wither away as the colonial power had wished and wanted. But what happens after they had left? Before they had left they had already groomed those who would replace them and continue to do exactly what they have been trained to do, which was marginalizing and disregarding the Quranic School system. This is the major and the most fundamental predicament of the Quranic School. In actual fact the colonial powers had done exactly what the parents of the present almajiri boys are now doing. But the Boss is always right, they say. So the end result of the type of care that the Quranic School has received from the Colonialist and their stooges over the years is what is being portrayed now in the most disdainful manner by certain elites who claim that the almajiri system education is responsible for all the atrocities committed by youngsters. The western oriented mind is thereby presented with the most gruesome picture of a system that is so barbaric as to allow its little children who are in dire need of support and help to turn in to vagabonds. The question is, is this really what Islam stand for? Every aspect of the teachings of Islam is as glaring as the brightness of the Sun. So Quran ought to be consulted to find out what it says with regard to the care, discipline and education of the little ones.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Actually the word al-Muhajir is derived from the root word “Al-Hijrah” according to Muhammad Hassan al-Daddu al-Shanqiti (ar.islamway.net/fatwa/13686 [Tariq al-Islam islamway.net 7-01-2017 12; 30 P.M] when answering the following question, what is al-Hijrah and when is it

incumbent on a Muslim to undertake it? He answered thus: Hijrah can be classified in to four.

1. The *Hijrah* (i.e. migration) in other words abstinence of a person from what Allah has forbidden. This type of *Hijrah* is incumbent upon every Muslim. To this end a sound report of both Bukhari and Muslim states: A Muslim is he in whom people remain secure from his utterances and actions, and a *Muhajir* (migrant) is who abstain from what Allah has forbidden” So this *Hijrah* is obligatory.
2. The *Hijrah* from the abode of unbelief to the abode of belief which is related to the migration done by Prophet Muhammad when he migrated from Makkah to Madinah. This type of migration was incumbent at the early epoch of Islam. The Prophet was commanded to migrate so it became a religious duty on all the Muslim contemporaries of the Prophet. However, later the Prophet (PBUH) was reported to have said there is no more *Hijrah* after today accept jihad (striving) and good intention, so when you are commanded to set forth, you must do so immediately. (Nasa’i No. 7792)
3. Allah al-Mighty has informed the reason for their migration thus: For the poor emigrants who were expelled from their homes and their properties, seeking bounty from Allah and approval and supporting (the cause of) Allah and His messenger those are the truthful. Q59:8
4. The *Hijrah* of a place where iniquities are being committed and when apparently nothing could be done to stop it.
5. The *Hijrah* of a sinner when he sins. Allah al-mighty has commanded thus:

When you see men engaged in vain discourse about Our signs, turn away from them unless they turn to a different theme. If Satan ever makes you forget, then after recollection, sit not in the company of those who do wrong. Q6:68

Already has He sent you Word in the Book, that when you hear the signs of Allah held in defiance and ridicule, you are not to sit with them unless they turn to a different theme: if you did, you would be like them. For Allah will collect the hypocrites and those who defy faith - all in Hell Q4:140

When angels take the souls of those who die in sin against their souls, they say: "In what (plight) were you?" They reply: "Weak and oppressed were we in the earth." They say: "Was not the earth of Allah spacious enough for you to move yourselves away (From evil)?" Such men will find their abode in Hell, - What an evil refuge! Q4:97

The immediate occasion for this passage was the question of migration (hijrah) from places where Islam was being persecuted and suppressed. Obviously the duty of Muslims was to leave such places, even if it involved forsaking their homes, and join and strengthen the Muslim community among whom they could live in peace and with whom they could help in fighting the evils around them. But the meaning is wider. Islam does not say: "Resist not evil." On the contrary it requires a constant, unceasing struggle against evil. For such struggle it may be necessary to forsake home and unite and organise and join our brethren in assaulting and overthrowing the fortress of evil. For the Muslim's duty is not only to enjoin good but to prohibit evil. To make our assault we must be prepared to put ourselves in a position from which such assault would be possible, and Allah's earth is spacious enough for the purpose. "Position" includes not only local position, but moral and material position. For example, we must shun evil company where we cannot put it down, but organize a position from which we can put it down.

Going by the above definitions it can safely be admitted that the word Al-Muhajir has a narrower connotation in the strictest Islamic sense and thus it cannot be used to mean anything other than migration from one place to place, although attempt has often being made to give this word al-majiri an Islamic outlook as for example Good luck & Juliana expresses this view in this words:

However, the name Muhajirun later came to refer to those knowledge seekers who move from one place to another in search of knowledge like the Quranic school teacher and his pupils. In a Hadith (sayings) of the prophet in the collection Al-Tirmidhi (1980), the Prophet is quoted to have said “the search for knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim”. The Hadith did not discriminate against age or status. In another Hadith collection by Wali’al-din (1977) (Mishkat al-masabih) the prophet said: “go in search of knowledge even to china”.

In the above quotation there is apparently nothing that relates the term Muhajirun with the Hausa version almajiri in the two reports attributed to the Prophet (PBUH). Firstly obligation for the seeking knowledge has nothing to do with migration or *almajiranci* likewise going to China in order to seek knowledge does not signify anything as far as the Nigerian conception of the whole subject matter is concerned. The point now is that the word Al-Muhajir emigrant has not been used by scholars of old and of present-day to mean a student and a beggar.

Moreover, there seem to be slight divergence in the use of this term Al-Muhajir rendered in to Hausa as al-majiri by different academics. Some use the term mostly in the Academic context and thereby expressing it as an appellation of a student, for example, (Muktar Yakubu, 2012) “Almajiri (Learner) is someone irrespective of gender who searches for Islamic knowledge at home or on transit and display high moral behavior”. Some other academics used to express it as an identification of a distinct social class. None of these expression actually represents the pristine Islamic stand point. In actual fact the *Al-majiri* phenomenon represent one of the most historically ridiculous fiasco of the predominantly Muslim populated Northern Nigerian enclave. The term *Al-Majiri* denotes a Person who at inception of his life is rejected and abandoned by his family. It is due to the brazen and flagrant manner in which these poor members of the community are being handled in the name of Islamic schooling that caused real concern especially considering the nasty epithet being used to describe the religion of Islam, and at the same time attributing to Islam the doing of individuals professing to be its adherents. It is a common knowledge that these schools were known for quite a long as Quranic schools. In Hausa language they are labelled as *Makarantar Allo* slate school, because the slate is the main instrument used for learning the inscribed Qur’anic text. One often comes across some articles written by certain elites disdainfully referring to the whole superstructure of Islamic scholarship in the Northern Nigeria to be an al majiri system. Why should it be any different from the systems practiced elsewhere by Muslims all over the world? This paper seeks to clarify the misconception that it is Islam that prescribe the system that condones people expelling their progenies from their dwellings under the guise of seeking knowledge.

The precise portrayal of the status of Islamic elementary school could be discerned when some genuine historical document are consulted. These documents could be found to be describing the Quranic schools using their ancient appellations and ascribing to them enormous position in scholarship. For instance: Education Encyclopedia - StateUniversity.com, says,

Islamic education began. Pious and learned Muslims (*mu' allim* or *mudarris*), dedicated to making the teachings of the Koran more accessible to the Islamic community, taught the faithful in what came to be known as the *kuttāb* (plural, *katātīb*). The *kuttāb* could be located in a variety of venues: mosques, private homes, shops, tents, or even out in the open. Historians are uncertain as to when the *katātīb* were first established, but with the widespread desire of the faithful to study the Koran, *katātīb* could be found in virtually

every part of the Islamic empire by the middle of the eighth century. The *kuttāb* served a vital social function as the only vehicle for formal public instruction for primary-age children and continued so until Western models of education were introduced in the modern period. Even at present, it has exhibited remarkable durability and continues to be an important means of religious instruction in many Islamic countries.

Islam - History of Islamic Education, Aims and Objectives of Islamic Education - Knowledge, Religious, Koran, and Muslim - StateUniversity.com <http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/2133/Islam.html#ixzz4VUMMNyBX>

Surprisingly going through the records of the colonial masters one hardly finds them referring the Quranic schools as anything but the conventional appellation used by the Muslims themselves. For instance according to the annual report of 1907-8 No. 594 NORTHERN NIGERIA, presented to both Houses of Parliament by the Command of His Majesty, in February, 1909. It reads:

In the Mohammedan states there has existed for probably many years the ordinary village “Kuttab” perhaps rather below the average in most Mohammedan countries.

Aside the Kuttab which served as an infant school there was a higher level institution which was tagged College by Jean Boyd in her description of the school run by the Ulama’.

The colleges they run were away from the main thoroughfares, behind high walls and were not open for inspection. The students went to the college to study such subjects as Hadith, Law, Grammar, Philosophy, Poetry and Mathematics. They read books as fundamental to Islam as Shakespeare is to English Literature and were familiar with all major commentaries. Some colleges had a rolling programme of activity, which started dawn and continued until about 11.00 pm.

In describing the kind of intellectual orientation and reformation launched by Sheikh Uthman Bin Fodio on his students Ibrahim Suleiman, asserted,

He widened his students. Intellectual horizons and introduced pertinent social issues into the scheme of education. It was his view, as expressed in *Ihya al-Sunna*, that it was the knowledge of the exact nature and implications of the aberrations existing in society. Such as

nepotism, moral indiscipline, and political tyranny. Rather than the knowledge of Islam that was missing in Hausa scholarship. Scholars, he thought, knew the law in minute detail, but had not grasped the social and political implications.

Therefore, the argument put forward by the modern academics that the Islamic institutes which they deem fit to tag the “Al-Majiri system”, as being a breeding ground of miscreants is totally untenable unless if malice is the sole aim of this proclamation. For instance, Sebastine & Obeta [1] declared that “Almajiri system failure and abuse by the Mallam could foster crime and violence by the Almajiri population in cities like Kano and Kaduna. Almajiri has graduated into Yandaba, adolescent group”. These Yandaba could be described as hooligans and every society has a plethora them. In similar vein Good luck & Juliana proclaimed that,

Almajiris are vulnerable to being used as political thugs by benefactors who take advantage of their lack of formal education. They are considered as great security risks as many of them have become miscreants who actively participate in ethnic, religious and political violence and terrorism.

Turning back to Jean Boyd in her rendering of the precise mode and manner in which the Ulama’ had been handling their colleges, there are a lot of revelations for the dispassionate mind. She has clearly submitted on page 80 that, “these activities continued to this day” her book was published in 2003 and so she had obviously not only opened the pages of history but was rather discussing the contemporary times. She further stated, “

The economy that sustained the entire society was the one that sustained the school and its scholars, who all supported themselves through trading, agriculture, sewing clothes, and selling products such as grass for fodder and working as labourers. Scholarship and learning in these schools was considered part of worship.

It should be clear that the appellation of Al-Majiri whether attributed to a social standing of individual or institutional is purely a matter of custom whereby people decide to adopt a certain terminology and it becomes part of their culture. The word al-majiri is a common word in Hausa mostly when a person want to portray a attitude of humility. When a Hausa scholar is addressed as Mallam which mean Teacher he would say no “almajiri dai” meaning I am only a seeker of knowledge. But that is to a Hausa man in his culture.

Most certainly he has borrowed the word from Arabic language which is the language of Quran, and most Hausa words are Arabic loan words. Therefore, all this has no bearing whatsoever on the names and appellations in Islam.

In the Islamic education system of higher learning, students are known for their travels in search of knowledge. The aims of this peripatetic learning is to enable the student to acquire the knowledge directly from the teacher, and to have a firsthand experience of the materials he is learning. Therefore, the travels undertaken by a student would take him several years before accomplishing his objective. He would be enquiring the whereabouts of erudite scholars and would go after them one by one. In this type of endeavours, the student used to undergo severe hardship before reaching the particular teacher.

Imam Shafi’i is the greatest proponent of migration for seeking knowledge which he also extended even to business and a number of things. He likened it to a precious stone which he said is nothing unless it is mined and transported away from its soil. He summarized everything in two verses:

“Emigrate from your home in quest of excellence, and travel for in travel there are five benefits:

Relief from sorrow and earning a livelihood, then knowledge, good manners and friendship with the famous“.

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Perhaps these and similar episodes were the basis upon which scholars have taken the issue of travel in search to be akin to the endeavor of migration which has its roots in the Islamic tenet as a religious rite. Actually there is sense in attributing one to the other but a student remain a student and an emigrant remain one in the Islamic literature.

HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS

With what is vividly on ground one would have to believe that the Qur’anic school or Islamic institution of higher learning which now being tagged as Al-Majiri school has been “completely bastardized” as claimed by Sebastine & Obeta. This among other reasons has landed the whole system of Islamic education in to the predicament it is in today. The Ulama’ who had been an epitome of science and learning are now a target of censure and ridicule. Moreover, it is actually not in startling that the Islamic education system could not be able to succumb or fit in to the transformation and modernization which is the main feature of the present day civilization. “In over eleven thousand (Ayat) verses, nearly twenty percent of the Qur'an are

references to natural phenomena". http://www.irfi.org/articles/articles_101_150/quran_its_pires_modern_science.htm.

QUR'AN INSPIRES MODERN SCIENCE By Ibrahim B. Syed, Ph.D President. Islamic Research Foundation International, Inc. 7102 W. Shefford Lane. Louisville, KY 40242-6462, U.S.A. E-mail: IRFI@INAME.COM. Website: <http://WWW.IRFI.ORG>

It can therefore be discerned that Islam is a religion of scholarship.

The words of the Quran have been a source of awe for both Muslims and non-Muslims for the past many centuries and have driven countless people to revert to Islam. This book of divine truths contains laws of metaphysics, religious beliefs and worship, morality, facts about afterlife, psychology, sociology, epistemology, history, human relationships, and more, without any contradictions. The book essentially covers all topics that are pertinent for humans to live a practical and peaceful life. The book also sheds light on scientific facts that have been discovered only recently. These include facts related to space, geology, biology, and much more.

The interaction between Northern Nigeria and the imperial powers of Europe under the flag of Colonialism was solely responsible for the onslaught of the indigenous style of living and the sovereignty of Islam as a religion and a way of life. Europeans regard Islam as a major stumbling block towards their suzerainty because the Muslims are the ones who have elements of civilization when the Europeans came over to their land. According to Mehta [2].

The place of other civilizations is already marked: they can be anything from vacant lands to Barbarians waiting to be civilized; they may have excellences of their own, but those excellences have normative standing at the mercy of and behest of the imperial order itself.

Aliyu 2014 [3] has outlined detailed account the position of Islamic culture and religious life of Northern Nigeria in the nineteenth century, which was prior to the coming of colonialist to West Africa. This is traceable to the time that Islam infiltrated into this part of the world. It dates back to several centuries before the appearance of Sheikh Uthman bn Fodio. Another thing that helped the spread of Arabic and Islamic scholarship was the Magribite and Shanqite who hailed from North Africa and who used to traverse this land on their way to perform pilgrimage at Makkah. Example of such people were Muhammad bin Abdul Karim Al-Maghili and Ahmad Baba of Timbuktu.

Among them as well were those who have studied at Al-Azhar University like Muhammad Al-Amin Al-Kanemi.

Likewise, plethora of students who have studied at Al-Azhar over time up to the present day. It is due to the great number of these students that the administrators of Al-Azhar name an arcade as "Borno Lobby" attributing it to Borno. There were other Nigerian students who have studied in "Magrib" Morocco and Timbuktu like Jibrin bn Umar, Uthman bn Fodio and his brother Abdullah and others who had devoted their life in the spread of Islam and its culture.

Quranic schools were of two types. First one was for children who would learn to recite the Quran in this school a child get enrolled by the age of five it is often being referred to locally as "slate school" because children start learning to recite the Quran inscribed on a slate. This type of schools are uncountable. Hardly can a child whether male or female grow up without attending the slate school, until of course recently when it is being depicted in the most gruesome picture. This attitude of branding the school with all sort of epithet drive away most of the educated element of the society. In actual fact what is happening now of an unidentified man taking away children under the guise of giving them education is not a new phenomenon as explained by Ali Abu-Bakr: "some of the teachers have abused these schools especially in the remote areas. There they subject the boys in to force-labour in their farms. Some of them would deliver these children to the cities and leave them on their own wondering about, this obviously leads to moral perversion and ultimately to delinquency, the community is then obviously at risk. It is the responsibility of the authorities to prevent this from happening as much as possible by prescribing a law clearly proclaiming this attitude as illegal and a criminal offence attracting severe punishment on the Malam".

As can be deduced from the preceding statement there were Malams who with the collaboration of guardians indulged in this nefarious act of taking away small children to most of the times unidentified destination, which also indicate that there were others who are resident teachers to whom children used to shuttle to from their homes. The writer of these lines is among the beneficiaries of this type of school. "The second type of school is the one in which they learn to memorize the Qur'an. These schools are few compared to the first one it mostly found in the Borno enclave. Then there is the *Maa'hid ad-Dini* Religious Institutions". This is the type of school referred to as *Sangaya* by (Umar, 2013 P. 32.) he said:

The *Sangaya* is an educational institution with its own physical entity that could be situated

either in a town or a completely independent settlement, detached from other members of the society....the *Sangaya* could be compared with the modern University system, established for the purpose of learning having its professors and students. *Sangaya* is usually established by a scholar or scholars with resident students within their vicinity.

In this scenario a peculiar circumstance was enacted which would eventually subject the Northern Nigeria to a permanent stigma upon the Islamic system of education, because to the colonialist it has to be unseated and if possible permanently put to rest, probably because it is a contending power.

ISLAM AND CHILD CARE

The al-Majiris parading the streets of Nigerian cities are mostly if not all children of the Muslims of Northern Nigeria. Therefore, it is pertinent in this regard to unravel the real stand of Islam with regard to child treatment and care. This would enable us to see whether it is actually under the guidance of Islam that they are perpetrating these practices of detaching children at a very tender age or not? If it is not Islam then who is responsible?

Quran clearly states that children and wealth acquired by humans are the ornaments of this world. "Wealth and children are ornaments of this world but the enduring good deeds are better to your Lord for reward and better for [one's] hope" Q18:46 By the same token Quran has practically described how wealth and children are valuable as to make a person powerful and secure in this world. In a verse of *Surah al-Mudathir* Allah exposes the utter ingratitude of one among the Makkan aristocrat in the nascent stage of Islam. In the following words: "Leave me alone with the one whom I have created alone and then bestowed upon him ample means, and sons abiding in his presence, and made life smooth for him..."Q74:11-14. Obviously having children is a great advantage, and that is why whoever could not bear children bears the agony of the deficiency, depending on his power of self-endurance. Innately mankind desires as the Quran puts it:

Beautified for people is love of the joys (that come) from women and offspring, and stored up heaps of gold and silver, and horses branded (with their mark), and cattle and land. That is comfort of the life of the world. God! With Him is a more excellent abode.Q3:14

Children are great divine endowment and they are as well the most precious and most cherished of what humans may possess, they are the greatest source of satisfaction and joy for which the provider al-Mighty deserves thankfulness.

And Allah has made for you mates (and Companions) of your own nature and made for you, out of them, sons and daughters and grandchildren, and provided for you sustenance of the best: will they then believe in vain things, and be ungrateful for Allah's favours? Q16:72

And those who pray, "Our Lord! Grant unto us wives and offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes, and give us (the grace) to lead the righteous."Q25:74

To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. He creates what He wills (and plans). He bestows (children) male or female according to His Will (and Plan), Or He bestows both males and females, and He leaves barren whom He will: for He is full of Knowledge and Power.Q42:49-50

Naturally, the most ardent desires of men and women is reproduction of progenies, since both share this propensity, as well as other worldly desires as enumerated previously. Therefore, whoever does not share these natural disposition with other human species is bound to be deemed as being an abnormal person.

According to the Quran the parent or guardian of a minor must never indulge in anything that cause harm to a child. Therefore, his physical, emotional and psychological wellbeing must be preserved and protected. Quran declares:

Say: "Come, I will rehearse what Allah hath (really) prohibited you from": Join not anything as equal with Him; be good to your parents; kill not your children on a plea of want; - We provide sustenance for you and for them; - come not nigh to shameful deeds. Whether open or secret; take not life, which Allah hath made sacred, except by way of justice and law: thus doth He command you, that ye may learn wisdom.Q6:151

Prophet Muhammad PBUH said: "there should be neither harming nor reciprocating harm".

Islam obligates parents to teach, train, discipline and refine the character of their children according to the dictates of Islam. The Prophet said: "I have been sent to perfect moral conduct" he was reported to have said also: "Nothing a parent may award his (her) child that is better than a good upbringing." Tirmizi 1952 Allah al-Mighty has given a commandment thus:

Enjoin prayer on your people, and be constant therein. We ask you not to provide sustenance: We provide it for you. But the (fruit of) the Hereafter is for righteousness.Q20:132

Islam has made the sustenance of children mandatory upon parents, in such a way that it is not to be considered that any service rendered to a child is a favour done to him, but rather the father is merely performing his duties. It is among the most guaranteed way of seeking the pleasure of Allah. The Prophet (PBUH) "It is enough a grievous sin for a person to neglect his child" He was also reported to have said: "the best money spent by a man is the money he spends on his children" the Quran said it all when it declares:

The mothers shall give suck to their offspring for two whole years, if the father desires to complete the term. But he shall bear the cost of their food and clothing on equitable terms. No soul shall have a burden laid on it greater than it can bear. No mother shall be treated unfairly on account of her child. Nor father on account of his child, an heir shall be chargeable in the same way, If they both decide on weaning, by mutual consent, and after due consultation, there is no blame on them. If you decide on a foster-mother for your offspring, there is no blame on you, provided you pay (the mother) what you offered, on equitable terms. But fear Allah and know that Allah sees well what ye do. Q2:233

Furthermore, the father is commanded to give out according to his means thus:

Let the man of means spend according to his means: and the man whose resources are restricted, let him spend according to what Allah has given him. Allah puts no burden on any person beyond what He has given him. After a difficulty, Allah will soon grant relief. Q65:7

Every father is commanded to spend on his family regardless of his financial status, so nobody is spared from this burden. In this regard whoever has the nerve to eject his child at a very tender age and yet claim that he is sending him out to learn Quran, ought to be asked where he gets such precept and wisdom. In other words where is it to be found in the Quran and the in precept of the Prophet of Islam? If it is not found in either of them then it should be declared and maintained that it is simply the desire of such a person.

Another important aspect enshrined in the laws promulgated in the Quran is the principle of setting up of a society dominated by affection, kindness, love,

solidarity, justice and mercy. Allah has obligated Muslims wherever they are to provide absolute care to the orphans in the same manner they would render it to their own progeny. Plethora of verses abound that emphasizes this basic responsibility of taking care of those who genuinely needed care especially the orphans. Quran declares "and they give food, in spite of their love for it, to the poor, the orphan, and the captive". And also it says: "they ask you concerning orphans. Say: the best thing is to work honestly in their property and if you mix your affairs with theirs, then remember that they are your brothers" If such is the type of instructions emanating from the Quran over the affairs of the orphans how could Islam allow a person claiming to be Muslim to forsake his own progeny.

Similarly, numerous verses of the Quran and traditions of the Prophet (PBUH) have extolled knowledgeable people and the value of knowledge in itself. Quran declares: "Say "Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know? It is those who are endowed with understanding that receive admonition." Q39:9 Likewise in the following verse: Allah will rise up, to (suitable) ranks (and degrees), those of you who believe and who have been granted (mystic) Knowledge And Allah is well- acquainted with all ye do" Q58:11 Similarly he says "Those who truly fear Allah, among His Servants, are those who have knowledge, for Allah is Exalted in Might, Oft-Forgiving" Q35:28 Prophet Muhammad had spoken in this regard when he said: "Humans are either teachers or learners. There is nothing good beyond that." He was also fond of uttering the following invocation thus: "O Allah! I seek refuge in you from knowledge that is of no use". He as well had said: "Take good care of your children and bring them up well".

In this part, the paper tries to review and discuss a study that was conducted as an undergraduate project titled "Socio-Economic effects of Al-Majiri education system: A case study of Gombe metropolis" by Maryam Adamu Aliyu a Student of Federal University Kashere who Graduated in October 2015. The researcher interviewed 80 Almajiris and 30 people at random. She said she had used the percentage method in calculating by the formula. No. of Response X 100

No. of Expected 1

1. Age distribution of the respondents reads thus 4-9 year 43.75% 10-14 years 30% 15-20 years 18.75, 21 years and above 7. 5%
2. Who brought them into Almajiriship by Parent 46.25% by Relatives 35% by self-18.75
3. Reason for bringing him to Almajirci become versed in reciting Quran 62.5%, to become Scholar 12. 5%, Poverty situation at home 25%, Parental Belief 37.75, I don't Know 18,750%k

4. Highest period spent in the system, Less than a year 18.75%, 1-5 years 50%, 6 years and above 31.25%.
5. Total number of Hizb committed to memory 2-10 Hizbs 43.75%, 11-25 25 %, 26=35 "12.5% 36-60 "62.5% None "12.5%.
6. Number of times you receive visit from parent, Once 25%, 2 years ago 12% 4 years ago 6.25%, Never 56%.
7. Will you be able to return home? Yes I can 37.5%, No I cannot 62.5%, and how do you get the food you eat? Through begging 71.25%, through menial Jobs 18.75%, Charity donations 6.25% Malam's wife 3.75.
8. Number of times you eat in a day, Twice 25%, Thrice 12.5%, Once 6.25 Sometimes sleeps without eating 56%,
9. Do you work for the Malam? Yes 87.5% No 12.5%
10. Number of pupils that sleep in a room 15 pupils 26.25, 8-20 "42.5%, 21 and above 31.25%

According to the findings of the research the Almajiri who suffered neglect the most are the ones within the age bracket of 4-14 years and they are mostly Hausa or Fulani by tribe, also the Malams, the elder almajiris (Gardawa) and some members of the general public are in the words of the researcher" the exploiters of the almajiri in Gombe metropolis,

SOLUTIONS TO THE ALMAJIRI PROBLEM

In proffering the role of the parent in a bid to find lasting solutions to the Problem the researcher states that children must never be sent to Almajiranci as a means to evade the parental responsibility care, especially feeding, The parent have to understand that Allah Almighty has given them responsibility over their children, and they have to fulfill the trust as Allah and the Prophet (SAW) enjoined in the Quran and Hadith.

Additionally the researcher opines that children should be allowed to remain with their parent until when they have acquired proficiency in reading the Quran, basic fundamentals of Islamic beliefs and practices. these can be acquired through reading books like Al-Qawaid, Al-Akhdhari and Al-ashmawi, all these books can easily be learnt at home or from neighbouring Malams in the community. After that they can migrate if the need to acquire other Islamic or secular sciences, she further asserts that parents are responsible for the proper upbringing of their children, hence they are enjoined to teach their children how to pray from the age of seven and beat them if they do not when they reach ten. The researcher further advised that Religious awareness and guidance should be provided through personal contact, and the media to the vast community. Also that the parent and Malams of the Almajiri should be adequately informed of their responsibility towards their children and that "they should be sent at the right

age and to the right guardian and be doing the right thing".

On the role of the government she advise that "government should provide adequate job opportunities for its citizenry so that people will find themselves being able to cater for their children's need rather than sending them off or having them scattered on the streets" the researcher is also of the view that the government should formalise the Almajiri system. "Formal learning should also be introduced, such as Mathematics, English and General knowledge (Current affairs) without eradicating or corrupting their initial goal and motivation towards older religious scholarly learning"

RECOMMENDATIONS

Upon deeper rumination over the foregoing discussion it would seem apparent that Islamic precept of child care and orientation is unequivocal Hit children are and valuable asset one can possess, A person who neglect his Most precious possession would have to be judged as a queer kind of an individual. Prophet in a hadith declared that "whoever does not display mercy would not be shown mercy". It has been disclosed that of the 80 Almajiris interviewed 71.25 % take to begging as a means of earning a living, and 56% of them often sleep without having anything to eat, and 70.75 % of all the sample fall between the ages of 4-14 years of age, This is really an incredible situation. These children are obviously among those who frequent every house in the metropolis chanting in a pitiful tone that they have gone round but could not get what to eat. The very hour these poor children are trying to stir peoples emotion and pity, their own biological fathers are there at home taking their breakfast, lunch or dinner as the case may be. The "Maqasid" he higher intents Objectives, purposes, goals and principles of Shariah are categorised as two (1) Promotion and preservation of the common good and benefit. (2) Avoidance and protection from harm. These two articles are the intents, objectives and goals of the shariah, and a Muslim is one who upholds the Shari ah, then who really deserves to be tagged a true and sincere Muslim who abide by the Shariah in this part of the Muslim world. The Stigma of Almajiri seems to be an accepted norm of the society of Northern Nigeria. It is the humble belief of the writer that nothing can be without a cause, this tell why the various strata of the Northern Nigerian enclave become very insensitive to this very ridiculous fiasco. This may be because the people have been intellectually and culturally malformed by the colonial rulers and this is manifest in the plentiful records that abound prominent among these records is what was quoted by Jean Boyd and other indigenous scholars in this regards. She has narrated that:

So Lady Sherwood-smith, wife of the Governor, was able to write in 1948 of places like Borno, Kano, katsina and Sokoto, where literacy was highly valued and Scholars were venerated, that 'compared with other regions, the North was extremely backward'. From being the most literate territory in the nineteenth century it had become the most 'illiterate' as a result of the spectacular cultural upheaval which had taken place.

No Muslim child Northern Nigerian needs English or any other European Language to develop intellectually because his language can provide all his intellectual requirement to develop and prosper himself and his community. Other communities may need that since most of their languages are mere communication tool and not a tool of learning. The researcher quoted above suggested the formalization of Quranic School and obviously there should not be any problem with that because it means giving the system the attention it requires which it had lost since the pre-colonial days. The only prominent Northerner whom I know had made plausible pronouncement over the situation was Wazir Junaidu.

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