

## **The Interface between Social Studies Education and the *Almajiri* System of Islamic Education toward Effective Citizenship in Niger State**

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### **Abstract**

This paper investigates the interface between Social Studies and the *Almajiri* system of Islamic education in their quest to produce effective citizens in Niger State. The research objectives formed the basis of the research question and hypotheses from which questionnaire items of the study were generated. Specifically, the survey method was used in the study. Three hundred and seventy-seven Social Studies and Islamic Studies teachers were selected as sample size from the target population of twenty-one thousand and seventy using stratified random sampling and a simple random sampling. The sampled respondents were served with a questionnaire, which was the research instrument and responses to the items on the questionnaire were on a four-point Likert scale. The responses were analyzed using statistical means to answer the research questions, while the hypotheses were tested using the chi-square test of a significant relationship. The research findings show that while there is no relationship between the problems hindering the effective dispensation of the *Almajiri* system of education and those of Social Studies, effective learning for citizenship can be promoted in the *Almajiri* system of education through Social Studies. Respondents' educational qualification and religious affiliation, all have an influence on their perception of the interface between the *Almajiri* system of education and Social Studies toward effective citizenship in Niger State. The paper recommends among many other things, that the reform in the structure, organization, and operation of the *Almajiri* School in Nigeria need to be implemented in a sustained manner with all seriousness to among others, stamp out child begging and its consequences, which the research findings show are detrimental to effective citizenship among the pupil.

**Keywords: Social Studies, Islamic Education, Almajiri, Quranic School, Effective Citizenship.**

### **Introduction**

The Western type of education in Nigeria, which is formal and secular emphasizes the development of students physically, mentally, emotionally, and morally to initiate them into society as functional members. To achieve this all-round development in the students, one of the subjects introduced in the curriculum of the schools in the country is Social Studies. It is defined as a program of study that a society uses to instil in students or learners the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and actions it considers important in the relationships human beings have with each other, their world, and themselves (Edinyang and Mezieobi, 2013). The subject is mindful and appreciates man's problems and encourages its students to solve such problems, which can be done through critical thinking and rational decision-making. In the process, students acquire desirable

attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary to help them develop their intelligence, which in turn enables them to take responsible decisions on their social problems (Famwang, 2013).

The issue of functionalism occupies a very important place in Social Studies and that is why the subject is designed to achieve goals that are defined by society. Bozimo and Ikwamelu (2000), believed that any Social Studies programme and in fact, any educational programme that has no relationship with the needs of society cannot be said to be relevant or functional and therefore cannot be used as an instrument of change or problem-solving. Thus, as a discipline, Social Studies is not only concerned with the acquisition of facts, concepts, and generalizations, but also with changes in value, and skills in decision-making and problem-solving.

On the other hand, the Islamic system of education, which is religious-based, provides for the teaching and learning of Muslim children in the area of *the Qur'an* and other Islamic knowledge. Thus, it runs a distinct content from the Western system of education in Nigeria because here, the central theme in this education is the *Qur'an* and that is why it is otherwise called *Qur'anic* education. Gazali (2005) states that the main aim of Islamic education is to produce a complete human being with sound knowledge, who will act as vicegerent of Allah, fully educated and greatly concerned and conscious of his activities, that of others and the environment in which he lives. According to Fafunwa (1974), two *Qur'anic* schools developed in Hausa land: *MakarantanAllo*, or tablet school, and *MakarantanIlimi*, or higher school. The first was meant for beginners, which this research is concerned with, while the higher school embraced other aspects of Islamic studies. The *MakarantanAllo* is where *the Almajiri* system of education emerged and has been in operation for more than a century in some parts of Northern Nigeria (Fafunwa, 1974). Usually, parents send their children to places far away from their homes to acquire religious knowledge under the custody of a *Mallam* and while they study, they take care of themselves by begging for charities from the public or serving on farms belonging to their teachers in return for their religious education and upbringing (Damagum, 2024). In showing how the *Almajiri* practice evolved over the years, due to changing economic circumstances, Imam (1998) asserted that in traditional times, the *Mallam* and his *Almajiris* lived entirely on the generosity of the community, royal patronage, and gifts sent by the pupils' parents. However, as poverty became more widespread, the old order of collective support for the *Almajiri* system wilted and the *Mallams* began to rely more on sending his *Almajiri* pupils out on erratic begging sessions. Imam (1998) further states that child begging may be regarded as a form of child labour because of its enormous negative psychological, social, and health consequences. Firstly, it is time-consuming and reduces the hours the pupils could be available for learning. Secondly, some

of the *Almajiris*, challenged by hunger due to the dwindling resources of their benefactors, end up engaging in deviant types of behaviour such as theft, pick-pocketing, thuggery, and vandalism, which contradict the upright moral code they are supposed to be learning. All these vices are contrary to the goals and objectives of the educational system, which according to Lemu (1982) is to enable an individual to know and worship God and to be a good citizen of his society.

Increasingly, the *Almajiri* system of education has been criticized by many concerned Nigerians including religious leaders, who have called for reforms in the way the religious educational system operates to be inter-dorm with its aim of ensuring effective citizenship (Suleiman and Usman, 1985). In addition, there is substantial literature on *the Almajiri* system of Islamic education curriculum and how it operates, its limitations, and how to achieve effectiveness in its teaching and learning (Umar, 2021). Similarly, literature abounds on Social Studies and effective citizenship in Nigeria (Umar, 2005). However, the opinion of teachers on the relationship between the two systems of education in their bid to produce effective citizenship is not known. It is for this reason that this study sets out to investigate the perception of teachers on the interface between the *Almajiri* system of education and Social Studies education toward effective citizenship in Niger State.

### Research Questions

This study attempted to find answers to the following research questions:

- 1 – What are the related problems hindering the effective dispensation of the *Almajiri* system of education and Social Studies education?
- 2 – Can effective learning for citizenship be promoted in the *Almajiri* system of education through adopting some aspects of Social Studies education?

### Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses have been advanced for testing:

Ho1- The qualification of the respondents has no significant influence on their perception of the interface between *the Almajiri* system of

education and Social Studies toward effective citizenship.

Ho2-Religious affiliation has no significant influence on the respondent's perception of the interface between *the Almajiri* system of education and Social Studies toward effective citizenship.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Given the subject matter of this study, which is education, this research is predicated on the framework of the functionalist perspectives. The functionalist theory of education as advanced by Comte, Durkheim, Parsons, Davis, and Moore, among others, which is concerned with the function of education for the individual in particular and the society as a whole, serves as a theoretical foundation for this study. In what has become a widely accepted functionalist view of education, Giddens (2000) quoted Parsons as arguing that after primary socialization within the family, the school takes over as the focal socialization agency and serves as a bridge between the family and society as a whole, preparing the child for his adult role. Similarly, Giddens (2000) cited Durkheim as stating that, the major function of education is the transmission of both general values, which provide the necessary homogeneity for social survival, and specified skills, which provide the necessary diversity for social cooperation. He further maintained that society could survive only if there exists among members a specific degree of homogeneity, and education perpetuates and reinforces this homogeneity by instilling in the child from the beginning the essential things that group life demands Giddens (2000).

The relevance of the functionalist theory of education to this research work can be conceptualized on the functionalist view that education tends to enhance positive contributions to the maintenance of the social system. That is, there exists a relationship between education and the socio-economic system and a consideration of how this relationship helps integrate the society and makes it perform better. The citizenship model of teaching Social Studies as theorized by Barr, Barth, and Shermis (1970) is in line with the structural-functionalist approach which

discusses how social norms and values are transmitted within the context of school. It highlights how Social Studies socialize young people to accept sets of beliefs, rules, and dispositions which are vital ingredients to the functioning of the larger society. This model therefore is very concerned with the preservation of the cultural heritage and the fostering of nationalistic loyalties. Thus, the citizenship transition model views the teaching of facts, principles beliefs, and themes as the primary means of training young people to be good citizens.

In discussing functionalism in Islamic education, Gazali (2005) states that the concept and purpose of Islamic education is, among others, to inculcate goodness and justice in man through education. That is, the education expects its products to be knowledgeable and faithful Muslims with refined qualities, integrity, and good upbringing so that they can worship their Creator and also function effectively in society.

### **Concept of Social Studies**

According to the Federal Ministry of Education, (1981), the Nigerian National Policy on Education was an important development that accorded Social Studies a vital place in the school curriculum. The policy regards Social Studies as a compulsory subject area that all pupils in the primary and junior secondary schools (UBE) study to among other things build up patriotic and self-reliant citizens. More importantly, the policy endorses that the teaching of the subject in the school must be seen as one of those avenues of establishing strong bases for the production of effective citizens and forging a cohesive society that will support nation-building (Okam, 2002).

According to Edinyang and Mezieobi (2013), Social Studies as an integrated area of scholarship investigates the relationship between man and the environment and instills in students high-level social and intellectual skills and other capabilities useful to help man solve his varied environmental challenges for better and effective living in the society. Similarly, Osakwe (2014) opines that social studies education is "an integrated field of

study that attempts to study man in depth within the ramification of his dynamic environments as well as equipping him with positive knowledge, attitudes, values, and skills for purpose of producing competent, humane and effective citizenry who can contribute positively to the good of the society". The above definitions point to the fact that Social Studies is a discipline that instils the spirit of patriotism, human relations, and decision making among others which are crucial in the production of effective citizenship and nation building.

### **Almajiri System of Islamic Education**

Islamic Education is that type of education that provides for the teaching and learning of Muslims in the area of the *Qur'an* and other Islamic knowledge. According to Dio (1970), the philosophy behind Islamic teaching and learning began with prophetic advice, which says, the best among you is one who learns the *Qur'an* and cares to teach it. This advice is further strengthened by another tradition of the prophet, cited by Suleiman and Usman (1985) which says, the acquisition of knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim, man or woman. These pieces of advice inspire Muslims to acquire and teach Islamic knowledge everywhere they go which they consider a duty for which the reward is in Heaven.

*Qur'anic* school, where the *Almajiri* pupil attends, is a place where the teaching and learning of the *Qur'an* and other Islamic knowledge is taught. According to Fafunwa (1974) the tablet schools or *MakarantanAllo*, which is one of the two *Qur'anic* schools that emerged in Hausa land, is an organized place where beginners *Almajiri* acquire the foundation knowledge. It is usually located either inside a mosque, private house, or premises especially built for that purpose. In a typical tablet school, volumes of the *Qur'an* and other Islamic books surround the teacher, and a little further off, but near enough to be within reach of his whip, squat some *Almajiri* pupils in semi-circle chanting different verses of the *Qur'an*.

At the start of schooling, children as early as the third year of life learn Arabic alphabets, which are consonants. They are written on slates and

pupils are made to repeat the sounds several times until they master them. When the teacher is satisfied that the pupils have attained the standard required, he introduces the formation of syllables with vowels. When this is completed, the pupils then employ their newly acquired skills in reading the *Qur'an*. When the pupils are ready to start reading the *Qur'an*, they are made to write a chapter on the slate, which they clean for the next one after the written portion is mastered. It should however be noted that the *Qur'an* is divided into sixty parts, each of which contains several chapters. This continues until the learner finally covers the sixty parts, the occasion that is marked by a graduation ceremony called *Walimat* (Fafunwa, 1974).

The school week starts on Saturday and ends on Wednesday. There are usually three sessions per day: morning, afternoon, and evening. In between, pupils carry out domestic work for their master and in addition scout for food. Also, they learn a few trades when they are old enough (Fafunwa, 1974).

### **Effective Citizenship**

Citizenship is membership in a particular community (originally a city but now usually a state), and carries with it the right to political participation; a person having such right is a citizen. Citizenship also often implies working towards the betterment of the community one lives in through participation, volunteer work, and effort to improve life for all citizens (Ogunlade, 2022). VanFossen, Friedman & Hartshorne (2009) define an effective citizen as someone who possesses the attitude, skills, and knowledge that are needed to function in a democratic society such as partaking in communal efforts, voting during elections, reporting crime, and criminales. Okam (2002) states that an effective citizen is usually expected to exhibit certain principles or characteristics which include the following:

An appreciation of the nature and law of social life; a display of intelligent and genuine loyalty to high human ideals; possession of a sense of responsibility of the

individual as a member of social groups; display of loyalty and a sense of obligation to one's city, state, nation and the human race; and possession of intelligence and the will to participate effectively in the promotion of social well-being.

### **Social Studies and Effective Citizenship**

An important development associated with the Nigerian National Policy on Education is the pride of place it has accorded Social Studies in the school curriculum. The policy regards it as a core subject area that all pupils in the primary and junior secondary schools (UBE) must study to, among other things; build up patriotic and self-reliant citizens. More importantly, according to Okam (2002), the policy endorsed that the teaching of the subject in the school must be seen as one of those avenues of establishing strong bases for the production of effective citizens and forging a cohesive society that will support nation-building.

The production of effective citizens which is the prime concern of Social Studies education is packaged in the subject in Nigeria so that it inculcates in the pupils citizenship ideas, norms, and values that are essential for national development. At the end of the day, Social Studies produce effective citizens who, Bolarin (1996) describes as among others:

Sensitive to their environment;  
active participant in the polity;  
democratic-oriented minded;  
willing to assume and perform civic responsibilities; obedient to the law of the land; dogged in defence of his rights; positive relation with the political class; positive habits essential for effective social living; harmoniously co-exist with other members of the society; respect other members of the society; possess nationalistic and patriotic spirit geared towards societal improvement.

The above description of effective citizens produced by Social Studies education influenced Okobia (1985) to perceive the

Social Studies curriculum not only in terms of understanding human relationships but also of its aim at producing citizens with skills, competencies, moral values, and reasoned judgment to effectively live, interact, interrelate and contribute positively to the economic, social, political and overall development of Nigerian society. Similarly, Okam (2002) states that Social Studies is committed to transmitting and forming the value of citizens. Its philosophy is essential to the maintenance and extension of the fundamental values of a democratic society.

Looking at the objectives of Social Studies, one will be convinced that it is in concrete agreement with noble citizenship. According to Atu (2005), although the subject is not expected to make 'good citizenship' out of all who learn it, it is strongly agreed that the subject will have some positive impacts on the behaviour of the citizen as he/she addresses himself to social and political affairs of the society. Thus, through Social Studies, the student is expected to develop perspectives, insights, understanding, values, and skills necessary for his conduct of affairs in society.

Given this therefore, Okam (2002) points out certain aspects of the educational environment to which the attention of Social Studies should focus to provide an optimum instruction setting for attaining goals associated with the norms of citizenship and they are as follows:

The content area of Social Studies needs to be drawn from Social Science subjects, arts, and humanities to form the curriculum bedrock of the subject area in dealing with the central issue of citizenship education. The curriculum goal behind the teaching of Social Studies in schools should be for the purpose of establishing a strong foundation for the acquisition of citizenship among the students. The methodology employed in the instructional setting should be relevant and in some cases be a combination of such techniques as inquiry, role-playing, problem-solving, group discussion, and others, so as to achieve learning and behavioural objectives designed as being relevant to the acquisition of citizenship norms. In addition, the evaluation procedure in Social Studies must adopt an adequate comprehensive and systematic scheme for collecting evidence

of a child's progress and growth, particularly in the affective and psychomotor domains because those are the areas related to citizenship education. Finally, concerning the use of instructional materials and resources, Social Studies must explore the productive use of instructional materials, resources, facilities, and textbooks with particular reference to the interests and needs of the learners in relation to those of society in order to help achieve the objectives of citizenship education.

### ***Almajiri* System of Islamic Education and Effective Citizenship**

In discussing Islamic education's view on the production of good citizenship in society, Zajda, (2005) states that the fundamental philosophy of Islamic education is that knowledge comes from the development of the whole person; the physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual dimensions of the person so that he can be useful to himself and his society. On his part, Gazali (2005) states that the concept and purpose of Islamic education is, among others, to inculcate goodness and justice in man. That is to produce knowledgeable and faithful Muslims with refined qualities, integrity, and a good upbringing. In the same vein, Lemu (1982) indicates that Islamic education seeks to produce good and complete human beings with knowledge and faith, and an open heart for the fear and love of Allah. Thus, Islamic knowledge is to produce a noble citizen, who must be good to himself and also to others. Sarwar (1996) shares the same opinion with Lemu because he maintains that Islamic knowledge provides and builds a sound, disciplined individual with a great sense of spiritual well-being, conscious of the existence and unity of his creator. It seeks to mould the character of the learner according to the Islamic moral code, which is cherished by Islamic society. Similarly, the holy *Qur'an* directs Muslims to prepare themselves and their children (by means of education) as the best people to establish good and eradicate evil in society (Sarwar, 1996).

The above-mentioned statements have unequivocally showed the relationship between Islamic education and the production of effective citizenship. However, the *Almajiri*

system of Islamic education as it is practiced in Northern Nigeria falls short of the realisation of this objective of Islamic education. Damagun (2024) laments that she cannot comprehend any benefit of the *Almajiri* system of education in 2024 as currently implemented. Specifically, Imam (2004) has observed that the practice of begging for food and other necessities of living engaged by the *Almajiri* pupils is capable of constituting a stumbling block to the system achieving its objectives of bringing about active and effective citizenship in Nigeria. Similarly, The FOS/ILO/SIMPOC Report, (2001) observed that distress, a depending syndrome that impairs one's ability to carry out any normal work in the future, the propensity to be tempted into deviant behaviour like theft and pick-pocketing in the face of hunger due to lack of resources and the tendency to be easily recruited to carry out the crime of arson and murder during communal clashes are some of the negative psychological and social impacts of child-begging practice among the *Almajiri* in Northern Nigeria.

### **Research Methodology**

The survey research method, which involves sampling from the population of the study and generalizing the findings obtained from the analysis of the sampled data to the entire population, is used in this study. The target population of the study covers all the teachers of primary and JSS in Niger State totalling twenty-one thousand and seventy (21,070). The sample for the study comprised three hundred and seventy-seven (377) male and female Social Studies and Islamic Studies teachers, selected based on one hundred and ninety-two (192) and one hundred and eighty-five (185) respectively. The sample is drawn from ten primary and Junior Secondary schools in the four educational zones in Niger state. A stratified random sampling technique was first used to select the subjects. Four local government areas were randomly selected, one from each of the four educational zones. Within each of the local government areas, two JSS and two Primary schools were randomly selected. The schools were then stratified according to location in the urban and rural areas. In each of the schools, twenty-four

Social Studies and Islamic Studies teachers were selected using a simple random sampling technique in order to give every member an equal chance of being selected for the sample to be studied.

The instrument 'Teachers' Perception on the Interface between *Almajiri* System of Education and Social Studies toward Effective Citizenship' (TPRBASESSEC) used in this research is an adaptation of the Wisconsin Improvement Guide (1980) which was modified and was pilot tested. Responses to the items on the questionnaire are on a four-point Likert scale. To ensure adequate coverage of the objectives of the study, a content validity check of the items on the questionnaire was conducted. Also, to ensure that the items were capable of obtaining the desired data from the field, a construct validity check was carried out. In addition, the research instrument passed through the scrutiny of Social Studies research

experts to ensure face validity before using it for the pilot study.

The responses of the respondents were analyzed using statistical means to provide answers to the research questions, and the chi-square test of significant relationship was used to reject or retain the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance and the decision was on 3.0 cut-off point.

### Analysis

Research question 1: What are the related problems hindering the effective dispensation of the *Almajiri* system of education and Social Studies?

**Table 1.** Responses on teachers' perception of the relationship between problems hindering the effective dispensation of the *Almajiri* system of education and Social Studies. (N=377)

S/NO	Problems of teaching Social Studies and the <i>Almajiri</i> System of Education	$\Sigma fx$	$\frac{\Sigma fxn}{n}$ Mean Score	Remark
20	Both the <i>Almajiri</i> system of education and Social Studies suffer from lack of appropriate use of modern methods of teaching.	1060	2.81	Not a similar problem
21	Both the <i>Almajiri</i> system of education and Social Studies suffer from lack of appropriate use of teaching resources.	1090	2.89	Not a similar problem
22	Both the <i>Almajiri</i> system of Education and Social Studies suffer from lack of appropriate use of evaluation techniques	1048	2.78	Not a similar problem
23	Child begging is embedded in the <i>Almajiri</i> system of education, while it is absent in Social Studies.	1207	3.20	Not a similar problem
24	Both the <i>Almajiri</i> system of Education and Social Studies suffer from lack conducive environment for learning	1050	2.80	Not a similar problem
25	Both the <i>Almajiri</i> system of Education and Social Studies suffer from lack of harmonized curriculum	1048	2.79	Not a similar problem
Sectional Means Score			2.88	

Table 1 shows the analysis of data obtained from questionnaire items 20-25, which indicates not a similar problem on all the items. This means that the problems hindering the

effective dispensation of the *Almajiri* system of education and those of Social Studies are not related.

Research question 2: Can effective learning for citizenship be promoted in the *Almajiri* system of education through borrowing a leaf from Social Studies?

Table 2 Responses on teachers' perception on the use of Social Studies to promote effective learning for citizenship in the *Almajiri* system of education.

(N = 377)

S/N O	<i>Almajiri</i> System borrowing a leaf from Social Studies	$\Sigma$ fx	$\Sigma$ $\frac{fxn}{n}$ Mean Score	Remark
26	The curriculum content of the <i>Almajiri</i> system of education should be harmonized across the country just like that of Social Studies.	1108	2.94	Rejected
27	Methods of teaching the <i>Almajiri</i> system of education should be restructured to respond to the modern needs of the child and be harmonized nationally as is obtained in Social Studies.	1218	3.23	Accepted
28	Teaching resources as obtained in Social Studies should be employed in the <i>Almajiri</i> system of education and be harmonized nationally	1208	3.20	Accepted
29	Modern evaluation techniques such as obtained in Social Studies should be employed in the <i>Almajiri</i> system of education.	1203	3.19	Accepted
Sectional Mean Score			3.14	

Table 2 shows the analysis of data obtained from questionnaire items 24-27, which indicates that item 5 was rejected, while items 6, 7, and 8 were accepted. This means that the

respondents generally support using Social Studies to promote effective learning for citizenship in the *Almajiri* system of education.

### Test of Hypotheses

As earlier stated, two null hypotheses were formulated and tested using the chi-square test of significant relationship at 0.05 level of significance. Below is the analysis:

Ho1- The qualification of the respondents has no significant influence on their perception of the relationship between *the Almajiri* system of

education and Social Studies for effective citizenship.

**Table 3:** Perception of respondents on the relationship between the *Almajiri* system of education and Social Studies toward effective citizenship by qualification.

QUALIFICATION	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL
GRADUATE	7192(6430)	3804(3845)	464(1005)	90(270)	14973
NON GRADUATE	7404(8170)	4926(4885)	1818(1277)	523(343)	11231
Total	14600	8730	2282	613	26225

Table 3 shows a calculated chi-square result of 777.0, which is higher than the tabulated chi-square (x2) value of 7.815 at 3 as degree of freedom (df) and 0.05 level of significance. This clearly shows that there is a significant difference between the observed and the

expected scores of the graduate and the non-graduate respondents, which means qualification has influenced the views of the respondents. Given this, therefore, hypothesis number one (Ho1) is rejected.

Ho2 -Religious affiliation has no significant influence on the respondent's perception of the relationship between *the Almajiri* system of

education and Social Studies for effective citizenship.

**Table 4:** Perception of respondents on the relationship between *the Almajiri* system of education and Social Studies for effective citizenship by religious affiliation.

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION	SA	A	D	SD	TOTAL
ISLAM	8832(9486)	5991(5684)	1752(1460)	441(385)	17016
CHRISTIANITY	5788(6465)	2769(3874)	498(995)	153(263)	9208
Total	14620	8760	2250	594	26224

Table 4 above shows a calculated chi-square (x2) result of 357.0 which is higher than the tabulated chi-square (x2) value of 710.1 at a 0.05 level of significance. This clearly shows that there is a significant difference between the

observed and the expected scores of the Muslim and the Christian respondents, which mean religious affiliations, have influenced the views of the respondents. Given this, therefore, hypothesis number two (Ho2) is rejected.

## Discussion

On the relationship between the problems that hinder the effective dispensation of the *Almajiri* system of education and those of Social Studies, the research findings show zero relationship. This can be attributed to the differences observed by the respondents in the two systems. For instance, the respondents did not agree that both *the Almajiri* system of education and Social Studies suffer from a lack of appropriate use of methods of teaching, teaching resources, and evaluation techniques. However, there was a favorable response from the respondents to the statement that says, Child begging is embedded in *the Almajiri* system of education, while it is absent in Social Studies. This confirms the view of Iman (1998) who observes that the practice of begging for food and other necessities of living engaged by the *Almajiri* pupils constitutes a stumbling block to achieving the system's objectives of bringing up good Muslims in Nigeria.

The research findings also show that Social Studies could be used to promote effective dispensation of learning for citizenship in Niger state. That is, the curriculum content, methodology, resources, and evaluation procedure of the *Almajiri* system of education should be restructured and reformed to respond to the modern needs of the child and be harmonized nationally as is obtained in Social Studies. This result confirms the views of

Suleiman and Usman (1985) who state that *the Almajiri* system of education has been criticized by religious leaders, who have called for reform in the way the religious education operates.

Findings from the hypotheses tested show that they have significant influence on the respondents. On qualification of the respondent, the research findings reveal that it has significant influence because, a calculated chi-square (x2) result of 777.0, which is higher than the table value of 7.815 at 3 as degree of freedom (df) and 0.05 level of significance was arrived at. Given this, therefore, hypothesis number one (Ho1) of the research was rejected. The respondents who were graduates held a higher positive view than the non-graduates, particularly on questionnaire items that concerned reforming the *Almajiri* system of education. This finding is in line with Purefoy (2010) who states that elites are critical of the way the *Almajiri* system operates. A professor of law at Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Muhammed Ladan describes the system as "child destitution, and child trafficking" and that such *Almajiris* are easily recruited as fighters in violent conflicts that are often bloody and result in loss of lives and properties in the Northern part of Nigeria. Similarly, Usman Jibrin, the president of the National Council for the Welfare of the Destitute,

complains that *Almajiris* "are a real threat, and a real problem to the society, unless you address this issue now, otherwise, these children will one day take over control of this country in a very unpleasant way" Purefoy (2010).

On religious affiliations, the finding shows a calculated chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) result of 800.4, which is higher than the table value of 7.815 at 3 as the degree of freedom (df) and 0.05 level of significance. This means religious affiliations have influenced the views of the respondents. Given this, therefore, hypothesis number two ( $H_02$ ) of the research was rejected. Furthermore, the Christian respondents held a higher positive view than the Muslims, particularly on questionnaire items that relate to reforming the *Almajiri* system of education. This confirmed the views of Suleiman and Usman (1984) who state that in a society as sophisticated as ours, people naturally frown at and even condemn in the strongest term the idea of harbouring *Almajiri* in our education system. They further state that as usual, the non-Muslims are more vocal over this ill of the society.

### Conclusion

After a careful analysis presentation and discussion of the data collected from the field using a research questionnaire, the result essentially shows that while there is no relationship between the problems hindering the effective dispensation of the *Almajiri* system of education and those of Social Studies, effective learning for citizenship can be promoted in the *Almajiri* system of education through Social Studies. Finally, personal variables such as educational qualification and religious affiliation of the respondents all have a direct bearing and influence on the perception of the respondents on the relationship between the *Almajiri* system of education and Social Studies for effective citizenship.

### Recommendations

The study recommends the following:

### Reference

Atu, D. A. (2005). Social Studies and Citizenship Education. In Danladi., E. N. (Ed) *Social Studies Perspectives in Nigeria*. Vol. I. Nimo: Rex Charles and Patrick.

Since the research finding shows that begging engaged by the *Almajiri* pupil with it attending negative consequences is inimical to effective citizenship, the government should pass legislation restricting the *Mallams* from admitting under-aged *Almajiri* into their schools except for those children whose parents reside in the same town where the *Qur'anic* school is located. And parents who insist on sending their children to *Qur'anic* schools far away from them should be mandated to give them pocket money to serve as a means of sustenance that would discourage them from begging.

The sole ownership of the *Almajiri* School by poor *Mallam* should be discouraged and instead, wealthy individuals, organizations, and others should be encouraged to replicate the *Almajiri* integrated boarding school reform initiated and launched in 2012 by former president Goodluck Jonathan's administration so that less privileged Muslims can send their children to study there. And where the sole ownership of the schools by the *Mallams* is indispensable, wealthy Muslim individuals should show more interest in funding them i.e. channeling their alms (*Zakat*) so that a conducive atmosphere for learning will be created for the production of effective citizens amongst *Almajiris* in those schools.

Teachers of these *Almajiri* schools should be adequately trained in modern teaching methodology to make them perform their duty effectively and be paid a monthly salary so as not to depend on *Almajiri* pupils' labour.

Since the research finding also shows that the *Almajiri* system could borrow a leaf from Social Studies to promote effective dispensation of learning for citizenship amongst *Almajiri* pupils, the curriculum content, methodology, resources, and evaluation procedure of the *Almajiri* system of education should be restructured and reformed to respond to the modern needs of the child as is obtained in Social Studies.

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