
**ALMAJIRI INTEGRATED MODEL SCHOOLS IN NIGER STATE AND POLICY
IMPLEMENTATION: AN APPRAISAL**

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Abstract

*Almajiri education systems were integrated into the mainstream of the Universal Basic Education to address the inequities in accessing primary education and to eliminate the apparent exclusion being suffered by many children in the Northern part of the country. Despite the establishment of the Almajiri Model Schools initiative in Shiroro Local Government Area, assessing basic education remains a major challenge in the area. This study examined **Almajiri Integrated Model schools' and policy implementation: An appraisal**. The study employed a mixed research design by integrating both qualitative and quantitative data in the evaluation of the **Almajiri Integrated Model schools: security challenges and implementation in Niger State** in Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State. The primary data required for this study was sourced from 240 Almajiris/pupils and 60 mallams/teachers through structured questionnaire. The study discovered several key obstacles in the implementation of Almajiri Integrated model schools in Shiroro Local Government Area. These obstacles include inadequate funding, lack of community engagement, insufficient infrastructure, and the resistance from certain religious and cultural groups. The study recommends that the Niger State government and relevant stakeholders should allocate increased funds to support the infrastructure, training of teachers, and resources for Almajiri Integrated model schools as well as develop a curriculum that respects the cultural diversity of the Almajiri children and incorporates local languages to facilitate learning, which can improve the effectiveness of the schools.*

Keywords: Almajiri, Schools, Mallam, Religion, Shiroro

Introduction

Globally, the issue of marginalised and disadvantaged communities struggling to access quality education is not unique to Nigeria. Many countries face similar

obstacles in reaching remote and underprivileged populations (Kandi, *et al.* 2023). The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) emphasises the importance of providing inclusive, fair, and high-quality education for everyone. This worldwide commitment aligns with the challenges posed by the *Almajiri* system, which results in disparities in educational access. Education is a fundamental component of a nation's development and significantly impacts the socio-economic progress of societies. Nevertheless, in various parts of the world, notably in Nigeria, specific segments of the population have encountered substantial difficulties in accessing quality education (Kandi, *et al.* 2023).

Nigeria, being the most populous country in Africa, faces a complex educational landscape. The *Almajiri* system is a prominent feature of this landscape, primarily in Northern Nigeria. The proliferation of *Almajiri* schools has sparked debates concerning child welfare, educational quality, and integration into the mainstream education system (Abubakar, *et al.* 2023). The Nigerian government has acknowledged the need to address these issues and enhance the educational prospects of *Almajiri* children. To put it into perspective, Nigeria has approximately 13.2 million children out of school, with Nigeria accounting for 45% of out-of-school children in West Africa. Of these, 69 percent are from Northern Nigeria, with 60 percent being girls. The number of out-of-school children in Nigeria has risen from 10.5 million in 2010 to 13.2 million in 2015, with a 2022 UNESCO report estimating it at around 20 million (National Bureau of Statistics, 2023). Contributing factors to this issue include the prolonged conflict in Northeast Nigeria, which has led to the destruction of schools by insurgents, forced displacement, and the region's volatile nature, severely impacting primary education accessibility (Kandi, *et al.* 2021). In 2012, the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) established a committee on the implementation of the *Almajiri* Education Programme with the aim of integrating over 9 million *Almajiri* into the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme (Abdullahi & Mohammed). Regrettably, the UBE program didn't receive significant support from the locals. Many parents in Northern Nigeria still prefer *Almajiri* schools due to religious obligations, affordability, and the belief that children learn better away from home (Abdullahi & Mohammed, 2020). Consequently, many *Almajiri* schools continue to thrive, but the downside is that due to their time spent on the streets, several *Almajiri* children eventually mingle with criminals (Attahiru & Bako, 2023).

Niger State, a northern Nigerian state, has taken substantial measures to address the *Almajiri* education issue. The state government has initiated the establishment of *Almajiri* Integrated Model Schools as part of a broader policy framework aimed at reforming and integrating the *Almajiri* system into the mainstream education system (Kandi, *et al.* 2023). The success of these initiatives will have significant implications, not only for Niger State but for the entire country. This study closely examines the *Almajiri* Integrated Model Schools in Niger State, shedding light on the policy implementation process, the challenges encountered, and the potential impact on the

Almajiri education system. In doing so, it contributes to the ongoing discussion on inclusive education in Nigeria and the broader global context.

Statement of the Problem

Education is a fundamental driver of individual and societal development. In the Nigerian context, the *Almajiri* system, which has deep historical and cultural roots, has been a prominent part of the educational landscape. *Almajiri* schools were traditionally religious institutions where young students received Islamic education. However, over the years, these schools have faced numerous challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, a lack of quality education, and limited opportunities for social and economic development (Bolu-Steve, et al.2023).

Similarly, the *Almajiri* practice was what the past governments labeled as dangerous to national development. These innocent adolescents are either killed in road accidents or used as weapons for insurgency. Sometimes, they are murdered for rituals or fall victim to child labour (Teke et al., 2022). In response to these challenges, the Niger State government, like several other states in Nigeria, introduced the concept of *Almajiri* Integrated Model Schools (AIMS) (Kandi, et al.2022). The aim of these schools is to provide a holistic education that combines religious and secular subjects, fostering a more balanced approach to education for *Almajiri* children.

The introduction of the AIMS is part of a broader policy shift towards improving educational access and quality, particularly for marginalised and underserved communities (Kandi, et al.2022). Years later, A report published by Daily Trust (2019) reveals that all the *Almajiri* schools (also known as Tsangaya schools) built for integrating these children into the contemporary system of education are in appalling condition. Moreso, Usman (2022) opines that the schools established in various parts of the country cannot accommodate these students, and that many boys are opting out of conventional schools to join the *Almajiri* sect. It is in the light of the above that this study seeks to provide an appraisal of the *Almajiri* Integrated Model Schools in Niger State, with a specific focus on policy implementation.

Objectives of the Study

This study examined the challenges of implementing ***Almajiri* Integrated Model schools in Niger State**. The specific objectives are:

- i. To interrogate the specific challenges faced by stakeholders involved in the implementation of *Almajiri* integrated model schools in Shiroro Local Government Area.
- ii. To explore the impact of socio-economic and cultural factors on the successful integration of *Almajiri* children into the educational system through these model schools in Niger State.

Research Questions

The paper is guided by the following questions:

- i. What are the key obstacles encountered in the implementation of *Almajiri* integrated model schools in Shiroro Local Government Area of Niger State?
- ii. How do the socio-economic and cultural factors impact the effectiveness of *Almajiri* integrated model schools in addressing the educational needs of *Almajiri* children in Shiroro Local Government Area?

Conceptual Framework

Almajiri

Almajiri is a Hausa word meaning im-migrant children in search of *Qu'ranic* education. The *Qu'ranic* School is the pre-primary and the primary level of traditional Islamic education. It is an institution which has its origin traced to the prophetic period of Islamic education. Historians have traced the *Almajiri* system of education to the beginning of the 11th Century, largely promoted by leading lights of Islam who were determined to spread Islamic knowledge and learning, long before the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates of British Nigeria (Jimba, 2021)

The word "*Almajiri*" emanated from Arabic word "*Al-Muhajirin*" which came as a result of Prophet Mohammed's migration from Mecca to Medina. From the Islamic perspective, the word was first used by the prophet Muhammad to indicate those of his companions (*Muhajirun*) who migrated with him for the sake of Islam from Mecca to Medina (Mashem& Kawu, 2017). 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". The above *Hadith* shows that the search for knowledge knows no geographical, social or religious boundary. He said in another *Hadith* "wisdom (knowledge) is the lost property of the believer wherever he sees it, he picks it up." These and many other similar *Hadith* propelled Muslims to go in search of knowledge. In Hausa land *Almajiri* refers to "children sent from their homes and entrusted into the care of Islamic teachers to learn the Islamic studies. Similarly, Pantami (2019) opined that the Hausa word *Almajiri* (Plural *Almajirai*) is derived from the Arabic *Almajiri* (Plural *Almuhajirun*) which means one of the companions of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) who accompanied him from Mecca to Medinah during his *Hijira* (Migration). The Arabic word *Al-muhajir*, therefore had a special religious connotation in the early period in Islam. It meant a scholar who

migrated from his home to another community in search of knowledge. Up to date a pupil undergoing Islamic Religious training is called *Almajiri* in the Hausa language, hence the *Almajiri* system of education. In Nigeria, the *Almajiri* system started in the 11th century, as a result of the involvement of Borno rulers in *Qur'anic* literacy. Seven hundred years later, the Sokoto Caliphate was founded principally through an Islamic revolution based on the teachings of the Holy Qur'an. These two empires run similar *Qur'anic* learning system which over time came to be known as the *Almajiri* system (Mashema& Kawu, 2017).

Review of Empirical Studies

Teke, et al. (2022) conducted an empirical inquiry into the problems and prospects of the integration programme in North West Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria. A total of 240 *Almajiris*/ pupils and 60 *mallams*/teachers responded to questionnaires designed for the study, while 33 community leaders and school heads were interviewed. The study reveals that authorities are performing below expectations in the area of education, which hinders the achievements of quality education for Nigerian *Almajiris*. Shortage of qualified teachers in some schools and inadequate numbers of *Almajiri* integrated schools in North West Nigeria were also recorded. The researchers further discovered that the government is not consistent in its policies and programmes there were a lot of irregularities and corrupt practices in institutionalized education, including the *Almajiri* Integrated Programme. It is therefore, recommended that the government should be consistent in its policy and programmes for the betterment of its citizens. Authorities' approach to quality education should be centred on the eradication of corrupt practices. *Almajiri* Integrated Programme should be handled as introduced by president Goodluck's Administration.

Lawson, et al. (2021) examined the phenomenon of *Almajiri* system of education in Northern Nigeria. The study adopts the qualitative research model using a phenomenological case study approach. This paper seeks to examine how the process started; the various dimensions the system took overtime and how government came in to rescue the deteriorating state of the system by integrating the system with the modern system, thereby making the beneficiaries (*Almajirai*) learn both the *Almajiri* education and the modern educational system simultaneously. In the end, the study offers suggestions as to how the system could be improved so as to meet the standard set by National Policy on Education and subsequently attain Education for All (EFA).

Mashema and Kawu (2017) examined the integration of traditional Islamic education schools with the western education schools 'model: A case study of *AzareTsangayam* model boarding primary school. The study aims at integration of the traditional system of *Qur'anic* schools to the western model system of education. This study examined this school with a view to assess the success of the integration programme. Hence, the study formulated an open-minded questionnaire for both the traditional and model *Tsangayateachers* to enable researcher gather the information

required and a percentage method was used for the analysis. Twenty teachers were drawn from both the *AzareTsangayamodel* boarding primary school and other *Qur'anic* Schools in *Azare* town as sample for the study. Finally, the result has shown that most of the teachers are aware of the integration process and the Government has made various efforts to integrate the two systems. It was recommended that the current integration drive should be seen as genuine and purposeful educational endeavor that must not only be supported but should be incorporated within the mainstreams of our educational policies.

Theoretical Framework

Elite Theory

Elite theory is a political theory that suggests that societies are ruled by a small, privileged group of individuals or organisations. Key proponents of elite theory include are: Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923). Pareto argued that societies are governed by a circulation of elites, where a small group of individuals with the most power and influence replace one another over time (Pareto, 1935). Gaetano Mosca (1858-1941). Mosca's theory emphasised the existence of a political class that holds power and manipulates the political process to maintain its control (Mosca, 1939). According to Pareto (1935) and Mosca (1939) the key assumptions of the Elite Theory are as follows:

- i. **The existence of a small, influential elite:** Elite theory assumes that there is a select group of individuals or organizations that wield disproportionate power and influence in society.
- ii. **Limited political participation:** It suggests that the majority of the population has limited influence in political decision-making, and real power is concentrated in the hands of the elite.
- iii. **Elites act in their self-interest:** Elite theorists argue that the elite class primarily acts to protect and promote its own interests, often at the expense of the broader population.
- iv. **Reproduction of elites:** Elite power is often self-replicating, as those in power have the means and resources to ensure their continued influence.

In the case of the *Almajiri* schools, political elites play a pivotal role in shaping the policy. Their influence extends to decision-making, funding allocation, and policy prioritisation. Elites often use their political clout to advance or hinder policies, depending on their interests and agendas (Attahiru & Bako, 2023). Elites also have significant influence in the implementation of the *Almajiri* Model Schools policy. They control resources and can exert pressure to ensure the policy aligns with their preferences. For example, influential religious leaders may shape the curriculum and values taught in these schools, impacting the educational experience of *Almajiri* children. While elite involvement is inherent in policy-making, it may lead to

challenges in policy effectiveness. This is because some Nigerian elites often prioritise their interests over the intended beneficiaries, potentially resulting in skewed resource distribution and inadequate implementation. Elite theory provides a lens used for the analysis of the *Almajiri* Integrated Model Schools in Niger State and their policy implementation. This study therefore, acknowledged the role of elites in policy formulation and execution which is vital for understanding the dynamics of this educational initiative and its potential impact on *Almajiri* children in Niger State.

Research Methodology

The study employed a mixed research design by integrating both qualitative and quantitative data in the evaluation of the **challenges of implementing *Almajiri* model schools in Niger State** in *Shiroro* Local Government Area of Niger State. The study employed a descriptive survey research design which assisted the researcher in gathering first-hand information from the respondents. The primary data required for this study was sourced from both the teachers, religious leaders, government officials, students and administrative officers of selected *Almajiri* integrated model schools in *Shiroro* Local Government Area using structured questionnaires. The interview questions collected more details the choice of this design was to establish the interaction among the variables in the study. The study population comprised the entire staff of two selected *Almajiri* model schools in *Shiroro* Local Government Area and the 3 staffs that are heading the department of *Tsangaya* under the universal basic education (UBE). The target population of this study comprises of selected community members, *mallams*, parents, security personnels, teachers and *Almajiri* students in *Shiroro* Local Government Area with a total number of 1,800 people who have been resident in the study area for at least 10 years prior to the survey. With the use of purposive sampling technique, 317 of the teachers as well as other community members were administered questionnaires and the two (2) head teachers were interviewed, focus group discussion was held with the 3 staff of Universal Basic Education. Hence, the sample size for the study is 317 respondents derived from the target population (1,800) with the used of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size table. However, only 310 questionnaire was returned and valid for the data analysis. Data collected was analysed through simple percentages and frequency tables.

Data Presentation and Analysis**Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender**

Category	Male F (%)	Female F (%)	Total F (%)
Pupils	240 (100.0)	0 (0.0)	240 (100.0)
Teachers	69 (98.6)	1 (1.4)	70 (100.0)

Source: Questionnaire Administered (2023)

Table 1 above presented the age distribution of the respondents. From the result, all the pupils were male, 98.6% of the teachers were male while only 1.4% were female. This suggested that Almajiri schools could be dominated by male children and male teachers.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents (Teachers) by Educational Qualification e

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	0	0.0
Secondary	6	8.6
NCE/Diploma	21	30.0
Others	43	61.4
Total	70	100.0

Source: Questionnaire administered (2023)

Result presented in table 2 shows distribution of teachers by educational qualification. From the result, the respondents were made up of 8.6 secondary certificate holders, 30% NCE/Diploma holders and 61.4% with other qualifications. This indicates that data were gathered from respondents that are educated enough to participate in the study.

Table 3: Distribution by Pupils or Almajiri

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
Almajiri	60	25.0
Pupil	180	75.0
Total	240	100.0

Source: Questionnaire administered (2023)

Table 3 above shows whether children are pupils or Almajiri. From the result, it was gathered that 25% were Almajiri's (in Qur'anic schools) while 75% were

pupils (from integrated *Almajiri* schools).

Table 4: Response on the specific challenges faced by stakeholders involved in the implementation of *Almajiri* integrated model schools in Shiroro Local Government Area.

S/N	Items	Agree F (%)	Disagree F (%)	Undecided F (%)
1	The schools have daily records	28 (9.0)	250 (80.6)	32 (10.4)
2	The schools have barricades, wired fences as well as monitored gates	35 (11.3)	256 (82)	19 (6.1)
3	The schools have presence of security personnels at the gates	41(13.2)	257 (82.9)	12 (3.9)
4	The schools are closer to their domain	142 (45.8)	125 (40.3)	43 (13.9)

Source: Questionnaire administered (2023)

Table 4 shows response on perception of stakeholders regarding the challenges of implementing the *Almajiri* integrated model schools. The result shows that the schools' daily records are not effective enough (9.0%), the schools do not have barricades, as well as monitored gates at the moment (11.3%), the schools do not have presence of armed security personnel at the various school gates (13.2%). Mixed reaction was found on perceptions of whether schools the *Almajiri* integrated model schools were closer to students' domain. On this item, 45.8% of the respondents agreed, 40.3% disagreed while 13.9% were not sure. On the basis of the results, it can be deduced that pupils in the *Almajiri* integrated model Schools located in Shiroro Local Government Areas are not safe and the students are not secured. However, it was very clear that some pupils came from far places while others were still within the immediate environment of the school community.

When questioned about the general effects of banditry on the *Almajiri* Model Schools in Shiroro Local Government, respondent (1) had this to say

I never knew that after 58 years of my existence in my community, I will wake up one day to witness the burning of my family farmland and crops, the shooting and killing of my family members on the farm and the raping of my three innocent daughters in my presence, and I wept bitterly without anything to do (KII, 2023).

Respondents 2 and 3 were from Shiroro Local Government areas of the state and had these to say on their personal safety and human security;

Our youths have now found new businesses, collaborating with bandits, they know the spies of the bandits in the community and often go there to give

information about who is keeping money at home, the bandits will just ride on bikes numbering between 20 to 30 in broad day light and come straight to your house to demand for the money and even direct you to where you kept the money to bring it out or they kill you. They will collect the money and yet kidnap your wife or daughters and still ask you to look for money to pay as ransom to serve as punishment.

Table 5: Response on the impact of socio-economic and cultural factors on the successful integration of Almajiri children into the educational system through these model schools in Niger State

S/N	Items	Agree F (%)	Disagree F (%)	Undecided F (%)
1	Social stigma	185 (59.7)	112 (36.1)	13 (4.2)
2	Quality of education	152 (49.0)	120 (38.7)	38 (12.3)
3	Asses to education	191 (61.6)	105 (33.9)	14 (4.5)
4	Economic background	178 (57.4)	114 (36.8)	18 (5.8)
5	Parental involvement	222 (71.6)	47 (15.2)	41 (13.2)

Source: Questionnaire administered (2023)

Table 5 shows response on the impact of socio-economic and cultural factors on the successful integration of Almajiri children into the educational system. The respondents submitted their agreement with regards to the following factors: social stigma (59.7%), quality of education (49.0%), assess to education (61.6%), economic background (57.4%), and parental involvement (71.6%). These results indicated that there are socio-economic and cultural factors affecting the implementation of Almajiri integrated model schools in Nigeria. In this context the pupils' basic needs were divided into two, thus, basic needs for life and basic needs to live in the school. For any pupil to study successfully the two needs must be met. The pupils must be able to eat food and drink good water, have accommodation and clothing (basic for life). They also need school uniform, reading and writing material, beds and mattresses, house and sport wears (basic needs in school).

As mentioned earlier, the schools were of different categories. There are those that were established by the federal government of Nigeria and those established by their respective state governments. But the entire school feeding goes to the respective state government.

Respondent 2 reported that; Ministry (i.e Niger State Government) is responsible for the funding of the school. School infrastructures are those facilities in schools that enhance the welfare of students/pupils in schools. These include; the physical building (plant) class rooms and dormitories, electricity supply, water supply, health facilities, furniture, among others. Most *Almajiri* integrated schools were boarding, which made the infrastructure as basic necessity for the survival of the schools. Availability of good and enough infrastructures assist in arousing the interest of students in schools. They will be happy that they had enough water to use, good toilet facilities among other.

The school infrastructure differed based on the type of the school. Respondent 1 described that:

Infrastructure of school differ, ultra-modern *Almajiri* integrated school (model I) has wide land and sufficient classes, the school still has empty classes, unlike the small centres which has small area and small classes. In the former, there were cleaners responsible for the school latrines, unlike the latter which is dependent upon the commitment of the teacher. In Minna metropolis we have about eleven (3) of such centres and one (1) ultra- modern *Almajiri* integrated school.

The findings reveal that, category one with model I and II has good infrastructure and category two (small centres) suffered dilapidated building and acute shortage of school infrastructure. However, the significant percent of those who disagree and those who were not sure indicates this development might not cut across all states where *Almajiri* integrated schools were established. To this end, the government is not adequately funding the system. School infrastructures are those facilities in schools that enhance the welfare of students/pupils in schools. These include; the physical building (plant) class rooms and dormitories, electricity supply, water supply, health facilities, furniture, among others. Most *Almajiri* integrated schools were boarding, which made the infrastructure as basic necessity for the survival of the schools. Availability of good and enough infrastructures assist in arousing the interest of students in schools. They will be happy that they had enough water to use, good toilet facilities among others. In this context the pupils' basic needs were divided into two, thus, basic needs for life and basic needs to live in the school. For any pupil to study successfully the two needs must be met. The pupils must be able to eat food and drink good water, have accommodation and clothing (basic for life). They also need school uniform, reading and writing material, beds and mattresses, house and sport wears (basic needs in school).

Respondent 3 states that;

As you know, the school is for *Almajiris*, who traditionally beg for food. So, the arrangement for good accommodation and three-square meals (feeding) is actually attractive that make the pupils to be happy and stay in the school. And there were some specified days that the pupils used to eat chickens or eggs (Fridays). And eat variety of food according to the time table. The school also distributed five set of cloth to the pupils. Uniform two sets, house wear two sets and sport one set and every week each pupil used to receive one tablet of soap for washing. There used to be Qur'anic recitation early morning and evening after the normal lessons, considering the normal lessons all primary school subjects were taught including *Tahfizul Qur'an*. All these can attract pupils to stay in the school (KII,2023).

Respondent 1 described that,

The integrated *Almajiri* schools in Niger State was completely founded by government. With good feeding to all students, but for other centers which has itinerant *Almajiris* has no provision for feeding, the students have to beg for food as usual (KII, 2023). These show that, Model *Almajiri* integrated schools were completely fed and funded by state governments. Adopted Quranic school centers were not feed and funded by any government. And the boarding model schools were served with three meals and day ones were served with only two meals.

This shows that provision of pupils/students' basic needs in the *Almajiri* integrated schools can assist retention and completion.

Discussion of Findings

The findings revealed that, category one with model I and II has good infrastructure and category two (small centres) suffered dilapidated buildings and acute shortage of school infrastructure without government support. It also revealed that model III schools had shortage of classrooms and hostels. These findings agreed with the work of Mashema and Kawu (2017) that most of the teachers are aware of the integration process and the Government has made various efforts to integrate the two systems. Similarly, Teke, et al. (2022) study reveals that authorities are performing below

expectations in the area of education, which hinders the achievements of quality education for Nigerian *Almajiris*. Shortage of qualified teachers in some schools and inadequate numbers of *Almajiri* integrated schools in North West Nigeria were also recorded. The researchers further discovered that the government is not consistent in its policies and programmes there were a lot of irregularities and corrupt practices in institutionalized education, including the *Almajiri* Integrated Programme.

However, this present study discovered that here was shortage of water in some schools, there was even a school that used to buy water for school food. This shows that government is not doing well in terms of the school's infrastructure because new contracts are not awarded after the initial ones. The above is inline with Lawson, et al. (2021) who opines that government came in to rescue the deteriorating state of the *Almajiri* system by integrating the system with the modern system of education in Nigeria.

The findings revealed a shortage of instructional materials in some *Almajiri* integrated schools which made some community members to donate in that direction. This had indicated that instructional materials were also inadequately supplied. These findings are in agreement with the work of Oyewumi (2018) that discovered that education is an instrument of liberation which can provide a better, meaningful and robust future for the *Almajiris* labelled as the most disadvantaged in terms of quality and accessibility to formal education.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Almajiri education is not well integrated into the mainstream Nigerian education. In conclusion, the study has identified several key obstacles in the implementation of *Almajiri* Integrated model schools in Shiroro Local Government Area. These obstacles include inadequate funding, lack of community engagement, insufficient infrastructure, and the resistance from certain religious and cultural groups. These challenges significantly impede the successful implementation of these schools. Additionally, this research has demonstrated that socio-economic and cultural factors play a significant role in the effectiveness of *Almajiri* Integrated model schools in addressing the educational needs of *Almajiri* children in Shiroro Local Government. Thus, socio-economic disparities, cultural practices, and language barriers are identified as key factors influencing the effectiveness of these schools. In the light of the aforementioned findings, the study recommends the following:

- i. That the Niger State government and relevant stakeholders should allocate increased funds to support the infrastructure, training of teachers, and resources for *Almajiri* Integrated model schools as well as develop a curriculum that respects the cultural diversity of the *Almajiri* children and

incorporates local languages to facilitate learning, which can improve the effectiveness of the schools.

- ii. The federal, state, local government and other key stakeholders must work harmoniously to implement programmes that provide socio-economic support, such as scholarships or vocational training, to address the socio-economic challenges faced by Almajiri children, as well as ensuring they can fully engage with the educational system.

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