



RESEARCH ARTICLE

PREVALENCE OF ALMAJIRAI (STUDENTS) INVOLVEMENT IN VIOLENT CRIMES IN
SOKOTO METROPOLIS ALMAJIRAI SCHOOLS

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 21st November, 2017
Received in revised form
20th December, 2017
Accepted 15th January, 2018
Published online 28th February, 2018

Key words:

Prevalence, Almajirai,
(Students),
Violent, Crimes.

ABSTRACT

This paper focused on the prevalence of almajirai (students) involvement in violent crimes in Sokoto Metropolis almajirai schools. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated for the study. Sokoto metropolis state was divided in to two south and north. The sample of the study was 300 almajirai students (130 from the south and 170 from the north), randomly drawn from almajirai students population of 14,470 in Sokoto State Mora (2008). A researcher developed an instrument titled, "Almajirai Violent Crimes Questionnaire" (AVCQ) was employed to collect data. The questionnaire was subjected to validation by an expert and its reliability determined using Cronbach Alpha. This yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.76. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The findings of the study revealed that the prevalence of violent crimes was high in the study area. The violent crimes commonly committed by the almajirai (students) included, steeling, post election violence, pickpocket, violent victimization, purse snatching, findings of the study, recommendations of the study were highlighted and conclusion drawn.

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Citation: Anas Mhuammad Yaqub and Umar Abubakar Nasarawa. 2018. "Prevalence of almajirai (students) involvement in violent crimes in sokoto metropolis almajirai schools", *International Journal of Current Research*, 10, (02), 65804-65807.

INTRODUCTION

A crime is an illegal act which is punishable by law. According to Selwan and Narany (2007) a crime is an unlawful act which is an offence against the public and renders the person guilty of the act or default liable to legal punishment. it is an illegal act or offence committed by a person or group of person against the state law which punishment can be inflicted as a result of judicial proceedings taken in the name of the state. The use of physical force in the cause of committing an unlawful act is called violent crime. Violent crime therefore is any form of offence or unlawful act that is accompanied by the use of physical force. Nigeria is indeed riddled with pervasive violent crime resulting from the socio –economic challenges. Violence as a social problem has permeated educational institutions in Nigeria. This has greatly undermine not only the quality of education in the country but also severely impacts negatively on right to education as observed from the increasing number of people who drop out from the school due to the inherent dangers associated with schooling in violence prone environments (Nnebedum, (2012). Violence has many faces, which includes gang activity, House to house thefts, bullying, assault or any action that causes physical harm on a person (Volokh and Snell, 1998).

The word 'Almajiri (student) is a singular' derived from the Arabic word 'Almuhajir' emigrant. It refers to a traditional method of acquiring and memorizing the Glorious Qur'an in Hausa/Fulani community where boys at their tender ages are sent out by their parents or guardians to the far and near villages, towns and cities for the search of Qur'anic education under an Islamic scholar called *Malam*. The Almajirai (plural of Alamjiri) are classified as; adults, adolescents and infants. The Adult engage in some labour services for a means of livelihood, while the adolescents and infants beg for alms/food (Bambale, 2003). A sound program of Almajiri in the school has a long lasting effect on the almajirai students and on their academic achievements. Almajiri Education has long been recognized as an integral part of the total education process in the northern Nigeria. It is acknowledged that Almajiri Education helps in the development of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being of the students. Ja'afar (2008) declared that the Almajirci (learning) system of education was designed for the intellectual and moral training (of pupils/students). This point was further strengthened when Hamza (2009) stated that Almajirai who successfully completed their studies and become scholars are those that mostly take the responsibilities of Imams, mediators, Qadis (judges), counsellors, Emirs, kings etc. The types of enrolment in the Almajiri schools, has intellectual objectives. Those that are enrolled under the domestic type are mostly restricted and

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expose to reading and writing of Glorious Qur'an only, while the boarding ones were mostly aimed at producing future teachers and professionals in various fields, such as Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence), Sirah, (Prophets biographical life), Hadith (sayings and practices of Prophet (S.A.W.)) among others. The primary goals of the Almajiri Education according to Sule (2000) are to produce a faithful and piety man that will be useful to the society in general. Almajiri Education Teachers are an essential part of the Almajiri School System. They encourage students to be spiritually and morally active and promote good habits. The teachers are well-trained personnel that provide instruction to students to help them in any areas of difficult. The teacher teaches the students from the beginning until they graduate from the school. However in the process of teaching both the Almajirai and their teachers do experience stress and frustration.

The involvement of almajirai in violent crime has made the almajirai schools environment unsafe for teaching learning and researching. In the early 1970s and 1980s, the school environment was safe and secured for learners and physical development of individuals. Today the situation have changed drastically and the school environment has become a source of worry, anguish and misery for almajirai mallams (teachers), students and parents. The prevalence of violent crime in Sokoto state have rendered Almajirai schools of learning unsafe for human habitation. Khalid (2000) observed that almajirai schools, change from its origin or purpose to the centre of violence, torture and unwarranted intimation executed seniors to the junior one. They plan and execute violent crimes like steeling in neighbouring houses. They talk tough, and believe tough and can easily go to other Almajirai schools from their own, in a bid to perpetuate evil. This malady appears to have rendered Almajiri schools unmanageable with pervasive violence perpetuated by Almajirai especially if the mallams keep the large number of them in the school. The involvement of almajirai in violent crimes in school most often as a result of terrible condition they see themselves as result of hard ship they are facing. It is not yet known empirically the causes of almajirai student's involvement in violent crimes, the forms of violent crimes they commit and the frequency of occurrence. It is against this background that the present study was undertaken to examine critically the violent crimes almajirai students commits, its aetiology and prevalence among students in Sokoto State Almajirai Schools

Statement of the Problems

There is no doubt in saying the fact that, there are many forms of violent crimes that are associated with the almajirai students, in Sokoto metropolis. Among Are steeling, fighting, punching, pushing, partiality, disruptive behaviours ,treats of violent, child abused, psychological violent, denial of rights, hunger and starvation,Some of the causes of violent crimes by almajirai, are corporal punishments, drugs abuse and steeling of students properties, socio economic problems. While some causes of violent are less concern by parent, Peer group influence, feeling neglected /rejected by society, feeling bad for wearing dirty clothes, feeling of no future, lack of interest for being Almajiri, feeling of no security in the school, felling of depressed, feeling hungry, Influence of negative value system, lack of dedicated teachers who devoted their life in the warship of Allah, les concern by the government in almajirai education, indiscipline among almajirai students etc. As it is

assumed that these students are future leaders of tomorrow it become pertinent to identify the areas where counselling could be provided based on their areas of problems so as to assuage the causes of violent crimes by making recommendation for counselling implication. Therefore this study is set to investigate the involvement of almajirai in violent crimes and perceived causes of violent crimes among almajirai schools students in Sokoto state.

Research Questions

This study is instituted to find out:

- What are the forms of violent crimes prevalent among almajirai students of Sokoto metropolis Almajirai schools?
- What are the causes of almajirai (students) involvement in violent crimes?

Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

- To identify the forms of violent crimes prevalent among almajirai students of Sokoto metropolis almajirai schools.
- To find out the causes of almajirai (student) involvement in violent crimes?.

Research Hypotheses

Based on the purpose of the study, null hypotheses were postulated and tested during the investigation.

A research hypothesis was also postulated

- The forms of violent crimes prevalent dos not significantly cause violent crimes among alamajirai students of Sokoto metropolis Almajirai schools.
- Lack of dedicated and qualified teachers does not significantly cause almajirai students involvement in violent crimes.

METHODOLOGY

The design adopted was descriptive survey research design. The study was conducted in Alamajirai Schools in Sokoto metropolis. The population comprises of all the 83 almajirai schools in the metropolis. Sokoto State was divided into two South and north The population of the study comprised Seven Thousand, Eight Hundred and Fifty Four (7,854) almajirai student in the city, Sokoto state MORA 2008 verification The sample of the study was 300 almajirai students randomly drawn from the almajirai schools across the metropolis south area Wamakko LGEA (100), Dange Shuni LGEA (50) in Sokoto north (100) and Kare LGEA (50). The sample was made up of 130 southern Geo political zone and 170 northern Geo political zones. The proportionate stratified random sampling technique involving balloting was employed in selecting the sample The instrument for the study was a researcher developed questionnaire titled "Violent Crime Questionnaire (VCQ). It consisted of three parts, A,B, and C, Part A bio-data of respondents part B, comprised 20 items, on

the forms of violent crime and Part C consist of 10 items that highlights the causes of violent crime.

Table 1. Sampled population based on the two geo-political zones

S/No	Zone	N0 of almajirai s	No. of almajirai	Total
1	South	100	30	130
2	North	70	100	170
Total		170	130	300

Source researchers works 2015

The questionnaire was developed on four point rating scale of strongly Agree (4 points) and strongly Disagree (1 point). A mean source of 2.50 and above was used as a cut off point for decision making on each item. The questionnaire was validated by experts in the department of counseling psychology Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto. Faculty of Education,. The experts critically examined the relevance of the questionnaire items in relation to the research questions, its appropriateness and clarity of statements. They also advised the researcher on the suitability of the rating scales. Their observations and recommendations were taken into consideration in the final modification of the instrument. The instrument was trial-tested on 20 almajirai drawn in yabo LGA makarantun allo Almajiri School. This enabled the researcher to generate the data for computing the internal consistency of the instrument. This was done using Cronbach Alpha method which after computation yielded internal reliability coefficient of 0.72, and 0.80 respectively. These scores were high enough to consider the instrument reliable for the study. Copies of the questionnaire were then administered by the researcher with the help some research assistants who translate the instrument in Hausa language for the respondents easy understanding and compliance. Descriptive statistics which involved the use of mean was used to answer the research questions. Any respondent that scores 2.50 and above indicates a positive response while any respondent who scored below 2.50 indicates negative response.

Table 2. Mean Responses on the Forms of Violent Crimes Prevalent in Sokoto metropolis Almajirai Schools (300)

S/N	ITEM DESCRIPTION	X	SD	DECISION
1	steeling	2.05	1.04	Disagree
2	fighting	2.84	1.13	Agree
3	punching	2.77	0.93	Agree
4	pushing	3.41	0.61	Agree
5	partiality	3.14	0.87	Agree
6	disruptive behaviours	2.88	0.86	Agree
7	treats of violent	2.69	1.06	Agree
8	child abused	3.46	0.79	Agree
9	psychological violent	3.00	0.95	Agree
10	denial of rights	3.10	0.94	Agree
11	hunger and starvation	3.82	0.60	Agree
12	allegation by colleagues	3.54	0.68	Agree
13	discriminations	2.88	1.05	Agree
14	religious fundamentalism	2.65	0.93	Agree
15	Hard labour	3.43	0.65	Agree
16	corporal punishment	3.54	0.68	Agree
17	Gang asterism	3.23	0.78	Agree
18	Ethnicity	3.10	0.84	Agree
19	Slapping while begging	3.82	0.60	Agree
20	Flogging with hand	3.51	0.79	Agree
Grand X		62.86	11.51	
Average X		2.14	0.58	

RESULTS

The results of this study are presented in tables based on the research questions that guided the study. Table 1 presents the

forms of violent crimes prevalent in the Almajiri school. The data in table 1 shows that the respondents agreed to all the items (2 to 20) but one as the forms of violent crimes prevalent in the Almajiri school. These items had mean scores that ranged from 2.65 to 3.82 which are above the criterion mean of 2.50. However the respondents disagreed with item one which had a mean score of 2.05. This score is below the criterion mean of 2.50. Table 1 shows that items 1 to 10 had mean scores which ranged from 2.51 to 3.42 and standard deviation that ranged from 0.59 to 0.83 respectively. These scores were above the criterion mean of 2.50 and therefore accepted. The respondents therefore perceived all the items as the major causes of almajiri (students) involvement in violent crimes.

Table 3. Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses on the Causes of Students Involvement in Violent Crimes

S/N	Item Description	X	SD	Decision
1	les concern by parental	3.42	0.71	Agree
2	Peer group influence	2.86	0.83	Agree
3	feeling neglected /rejected by society	2.51	0.78	Agree
4	feeling bad for wearing dirty clothes	3.04	0.59	Agree
5	feeling of no future	2.83	0.0083	Agree
6	lack of interest fro being Almajiri	3.41	0.71	Agree
7	feeling of no security in the school	2.88	0.64	Agree
8	felling of depressed	3.12	0.63	Agree
9	feeling hungry always	3.12	0.63	Agree
10	Influence of negative value system	3.36	3.36	Agree
Cluster X		30.28	5.69	
Average X		3.03	0.57	

DISCUSSION

The study was guided by two research questions which focused on the prevalent of Students involvement in crimes. The study revealed that student are involved in violent crimes such as steeling, fighting, pushing, corporal punishment and pick pockets, among others. Abubakar A N, (2010, Sule, (2011) and Alkhali (1998) who identified that the students in Almajirai, Schools are involved in one form or the other violent crimes. There is no gainsaying the fact that almajirai involvement in crimes adversely affect their studies pursuit and expose them to danger especially adolescent and infant among them. The result of the study reveal that, almajirai students involvement in violent crime is caused by the following factors; poverty, poor parental care, lack of school rules, violation of almajirai students rights, influence of mass media, harsh policies by the Mallams (Teachers) in the school, negative value system. The findings are in consonance with the views Ahmad (2001), Binanchi (2003) and Adams (2000) who observed that almajirai (students) resort to violence when they are threatened, Abdullah (1999) argued that incidence of violent crimes in Sokoto almajirai schools is caused by poverty, or value system and absents of some schools rules and regulations. The outcome of this study agrees with Bambale (1996) Khaldum (1989) when they observed that students in almajirai schools engage in one form of violent crime or the other. There has been many concern for the increasing in bad attitude of almajirai students involvement in violent crimes in Sokoto state and Nigerian at large. The dimension which this problem has assumed and the inherent danger which it portend for the educational development of the nation make it expedient for more stringent measures to be taken against the menace, as feeling bad for sleeping on bare floor, feeling neglected /rejected by the society, feeling hungry most of the time, feeling bad always for wearing dirty clothes and, I feeling ashamed if I saw other children very neat, is observed

as problems that need counselling intervention. Nevertheless, the counselling needs of Almajirai differ based on their age.

Summary and Conclusion

The prevalence of violent crimes by almajirai in Sokoto metropolis has undermined individual's right to the formal education systems. The students' continuous involvement in various forms of crime such as fighting, stealing, robbery etc has made the almajirai school environment not conducive for learning. There are many reported cases of almajirai students dropping leaving their school to avoid being harmed by their colleagues Imam (20012). The level of almajirai students' involvement in crime is associated with poverty, less concerned of the state government in helping the almajirai and their schools teachers, and lack of disciplinary structures among other factors. The effect of almajirai students' involvement in violent crime grave and gives much concern to the students, parent and government today in the state.

Recommendation

In view of the findings of study and the conclusions thereof, the following recommendations are made:

- The almajirai school mallams teachers should respect the rights of the students and endeavour to involve them in decision making process.
- The government should provide a conducive environment that would stimulate learning activities among mallams and almajirai students. The provision of some amenities or facilities in their school will facilitate teaching and learning activities and prevent crime. There must be improved facilities and provision of good living conditions in the areas they are so as to minimize frustration among the almajirai students.
- Government and NGOS should organize workshops, seminars and orientation to sensitized almajiri school mallams teachers for almajirai students to be inform then on the dangers of getting involved in violent crimes. By so doing the students will become aware of the devastating effect of violent crimes and keep away from them.
- There is need to establish counselling centres to monitor the activities of all almajiri schools in Sokoto state where students will be assisted too resolve their educational, vocational and personal to excel problems.
- Parents and guardians should devote more time and resources in the training of their children. This is because the home is the first school where the child should learn morals, ethics, discipline and values.

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