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## The Almajiri System and Insurgency in the Northern Nigeria: A Reconstruction of the Existing Narratives for Policy Direction

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### **Abstract:**

*The Almajiri phenomenon represents one of the messy and wicked problem thwarting the policy maker's effort of addressing the problems of youth restiveness, disaffectedness and insurgency in Northern Nigeria. While there is lack of empirical studies on the linkage between the Almajiri system and violence in Northern Nigeria, three conflicting narratives on the issue exists which instead of unveiling the dilemma has further throw the policy makers into conundrum. While the first narrative has it that the Almajiri system in itself is an instrument of youth radicalization. The second narrative argued that such claims are rather flawed and problematic. The third narrative argued that relative deprivation and destitution are the main causes of radicalization among Almajiri. This work therefore intends to put the issue into proper perspective by providing a balance argument based on empirical evidence. The work employs an ethnographic design where qualitative data were generated through interviews and focus group discussions. It is the contention of this work that, though the Almajiri system in itself does not radicalize the Almajirai cohort but so many decades of bad governance have invariably transformed it into a mechanism for the production of jobless, traumatized and alienated large youth cohort who apparently becomes the target for recruitment by the insurgency leaders. The work concludes by suggesting a policy direction and implication.*

**Keywords:** Almajiri, radicalization, political violence, insurgency, Nigeria

### **1. Introduction**

A substantial body of research literature exists on the linkage between the Almajiri phenomenon and violence in Northern Nigeria. An extensive review of the available literature revealed three conflicting narratives, the first narrative argued that the Almajiri system in itself serve as an instrument of radicalization (Awofeso, Ritchie & Degeling, Purefoy, 2012, Soyinka, 2012). The second narrative asserted that the linkage between Almajiri system and violence is flawed (Hoechner, 2013, Higazi, 2013, Omeni, 2015) while the third narrative has it that the economic destitution of the Almajiris render them vulnerable to radicalization and accordingly culpable of fierce rebellion (Falola 2009; Isichei 1987; Danjibo 2009).

Against the above background, this paper to reconstructs the above narratives based on empirical evidence with the view to putting the phenomenon into proper focus, which can provide a guide for the policy makers on how to tackle the problems of radicalization and insurgency in Northern Nigeria. This is because without proper understanding of the Almajirai situation it is extremely difficult to come up with a result oriented and workable policy framework that can provide a lasting solution to the problems of disaffected youth which has particularly epitomized the Northern Nigeria for more than three decades.

#### *1.1. Objective and Method*

This article analyzed the views and opinions of the Almajiris, Security operatives, Teachers of Almajiri School, Islamic clerics and Members of the Academics on the causes of the radicalization of the Almajiri cohorts. Specifically, the article tried to analyzed how the opinions expressed by the people in the affected areas especially the Almajiris compared with the views outlined in the academic literature and national media. It is imperative to note that the main objective of this work is to reconstruct the current views outlined in the academic literature and national media on the linkage between the Almajiri system and insurgency in the north-eastern Nigeria based on the first hand data generated from the Almajiris themselves. This research paper argued that the Almajiri School system in itself does not radicalized the Almajiri cohorts but it has indirectly contributed in producing large jobless youth cohorts with a strong sense of identity. The paper further proposed that the causes of radicalization among the Almajiri cohorts go beyond the well-reported economic deprivation arguments. It is imperative to note that all the factors identified in this article as contributing to radicalization

are only limited and applicable to the Almajiri cohorts hence the work does not try to explore the causes of radicalization among other youth cohorts who are not affiliated to the Almajiri school neither does it try to explain the general causes of Boko Haram insurgency. This study adopted ethnographic design; it relies on both secondary and primary data sources. The next two sections discussed and investigate the causes of radicalization among the Almajiri cohorts. The first section reviews the background and nature of the Almajiri system, it went further to discussed academic articles and media reports to represent the views mentioned in these secondary sources. The final section is complemented with primary data from the in-depth, face-to-face and semi-structured interviews with 40 informants (Creswell, 2013), cutting across twenty (20) Almajiris, four (4) Islamic clerics, four (4) Parents of Almajiris, four (4) teachers of Almajiri School, four (4) security personnel and four (4) members of the academics. Additionally, two focus group discussions were conducted with former Almajirai. The study is limited to the North-eastern Nigeria. It was conducted in four of the six states that constituted the North-eastern Nigeria namely Adamawa state (Mubi North and Yola North Local Governments), Gombe state (Akko and Dukku Local Governments), Taraba state (Jalingo and Karim Lamido Local Governments) and Yobestate (Gulani and Fune Local Governments) between April and July 2016 these states were carefully selected to ensure a proper ethno-cultural mix of informants, but also guaranteeing the safety of the researchers as Borno state was excluded for security reason. The interview was conducted in Hausa language; the information from the interview was translated, transcribed and analyzed based on the conceptual/analytical framework developed by the researchers.

### *1.2. The Almajiri System: Background and Nature*

The word Almajiri was etymologically acquired from Arabic word 'Al-Muhajir' which means a migrant. Its root stems from the Hijrah of Prophet Mohammed from Mecca to Medina. The disciples who relocated with the prophet to Medina were called 'Al-Muhajirun', which means migrants. However, within the context of Nigeria the word signifies a seeker of knowledge; it is therefore use to describe those who migrated from their domicile to other places in search of Islamic knowledge (Usman, 2008).

The Islamic religion came to Nigeria through the Northern region; Fafunwa (1974) narrated that, 'Islam was introduced to Hausa land of Northern Nigeria during the mid-fourteenth century by merchants and clerics. Around forty Wangarawa merchants were believed to be in charge of introducing the Islamic religion to the Kano people during the rule of king Yaqub (1452 – 63) where a few Fulani clerics relocated to Kano, carrying with them books on Islamic religious knowledge and law. By 1463 during the rule of Muhammad Rumfa Islam was fully established in Hausa land in which Islamic doctrines were popular in so many places. It was during this period that Muslim clerics from Timbuktu came to Kano to educate and inculcate the Islamic values in Hausa land.

Furnished with the Islamic doctrines which expresses that, 'the best man among you is one who learns Quran and teach it (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 4739), the Islamic religion thus continuously to be spread in the north and gradually trickling down to the remaining parts of the nation. The system of learning and teaching the Qur'an and Arabic began from the Northern Nigeria where the Mallam relied on "zakat" (alms) which as at then was collected and managed by the state. As observed by Fafunwa this arrangement which underscore the early phase of the advancement of Islamic Education in northern Nigeria unfortunately diminished the status of the Mallams (teachers in Almajiri school system) to mere beggars who live at the mercy of the community.

With the advent of colonialism, the British faced vehement resistance from the Hausa Emirs, the colonial master therefore attacked the area and executed a large portion of the Emirs and sent few into exile (Falola, 2008). The Emirs lost control of their domains hence without option than to accept their new role, as mere figure heads and subterfuges. They additionally lost major control of the Almajiri system. The British intentionally abrogated state financing of the Almajiri educational system by pointing out that they were religious schools (Taiwo, 2013). With the loss of government funding the Almajiri system begins to undergo a system decline, which gradually transformed it into dilapidated and ramshackle institution with no significance in the eyes of the government in spite of the fact that the populace patronized it much more than its western counterpart called the "Karatum Boko", i.e. the western education which was recognized and financed by the state (AbdulQadir, 2003). This invariably transformed the students of the Almajiri schools together with their Mallams into mere beggars and menial laborers which was invariably the genesis of the predicaments of the Almajiri system today (Taiwo, 2013).

Subsequently begging becomes synonymous with Almajiri in the contemporary Nigerian state. This is a serious anathema because the Islamic religion discourages begging in any form as it diminishes a Muslim's self-regard and nobility. A typical Almajiri cannot afford meal, he does not have capacity to meet up with unexpected expenses, he does not have proper shelter, he does not have good sanitary facilities and he does not have access to formal education. Ruefully many parents in northern Nigeria especially from the country side prefer to send their kids mostly at the age of seven to experience this awful condition due to cultural resistance, poverty and government negligence.

### *1.3. Political Violence and the Almajiri System: Review of Current Narratives*

As highlighted in the introductory part of this work, the linkage between the Almajiri system and violence is view from three conflicting narratives in the literature. Beginning with the first narrative in which as advocated by Awofeso, Ritchie & Degeling (2003: 314) the Almajiri school system served as an instrument of radicalization for three important reasons "first it involves children being relocated or separated from their family and friends to the guardianship of Mallams in towns. Second, it is restricted almost exclusively to boys. Third, the curriculum of the schools is concerned primarily with teaching the sixty chapters of the Koran by rote memorization. Fourth, each school serves 25 to 500, from the ages 6 to 25. These schools are largely autonomous from government oversight".

The authors went further to argue that "The 1993 Zangon-Kataf religious/ethnic riots in Kaduna State, Nigeria, indicated that the Almajirai could be rapidly mobilized by Mallams to exacerbate the underlying ethnic and religious tensions that have characterized

Nigeria since independence. During the Zangon-kataf riots, fundamentalist Mallams called for the killings of all “infidels” (meaning all non-Muslims), in Kaduna State, in retaliation for the killings of “pious” Muslims earlier in the riot. The scale of the retaliation, and the manner in which terrorist acts were carefully targeted by the Almajirai on churches, Christians, and Mallams’s critics during the Mallams’s sanctioned Jihad, attests to the Mallams potential to facilitate terrorist acts”.(p:320)

In the same vein a noble laureate Soyinka (2012) argued that “the youth generally known as Almajiris are the butchers of Nigeria who have being deliberately breed, nurtured, shelter, rendered pliant, obedient to only one line of command”

In yet another narrative Purefoy (2010) asserted that “Almajiri schools are now mostly run by radical Islamic sects and that state crack down on these schools has led to attacks on government building”

The above narratives are problematic, in the sense that they have generated a scenario in which the Almajirai cohorts are now seen by many as the problems rather than the victims of a socio-economic challenged youth system. It is imperative to note that no single Almajiri “tsangaya” was cracked down by the state in the fight against insurgency in northern Nigeria. What the above scholars failed to understand is the differences between a “tsangaya” and a “markaz” while the former denotes an established informal Qur’anic schools which was in operation since the 11<sup>th</sup> century under the Sufi Islamic sects while the latter connotes a place (in most cases a mosque) used by the salafi Islamic sects for learning and teaching. A striking an important distinction between these two is while the students from Tsangaya are known as Almajirai those from Markaz are called “*daliban ilimi*” (seekers of knowledge).

Despite the fact that the funder of the Boko Haram was a product of the Almajiri school system he latter subscribed to the salafi ideology in which he established two “Markazs” (Markazus “Ibn Tayymiah” and Tah’ifatul Mansurah”) in Maiduguri the capital of Borno state which equally served as the headquarters of the Boko Haram. It was through these institutions that he spread his ideology and recruits his followers not through Tsangaya per say and it was these types of schools that were cracked down by the state in the fight against the Boko Haram insurgency.

The second narrative advanced by Hoechner (2013) and Omeni (2015), argued that majority of the narratives on the *Almajiri* system are flawed because they fail to recognize the nuances of the practice or properly distinguish who among the total population of youth in northern Nigeria are *Almajirai*.

Hoechner (2015) argued that current narratives on the linkage between the Almajirai and strife are frequently being overemphasized: "Almajirai might well be, and presumably are, amongst the members of Boko Haram, [but] there is no precise proof to back up such declarations". Hoechner, in this manner, does not disregard the probability that some Almajirai might, voluntarily or be compel into joining Boko haram guerillas. As she notes, in any case, "There are obviously issues and flaws identified with the circumstances under which numerous Almajirai grow up. Yet, significant numbers of research suggest that the existence of disaffected youth in northern Nigeria is an automatic consequence of the Almajiri system.

The third narrative established a causal nexus between the economic destitution of the Almajirai and the increase in youth restiveness in northern Nigerian. The inference to be drawn from the deprivation literature is that in light of the fact that Almajirai are poverty stricken, they are therefore vulnerable to radicalization and accordingly culpable of fierce rebellion (Falola 2009; Isichei 1987; Danjibo 2009). For instance in his views Onuoha(2012) argued that the Almajirai are often cramped into shacks or makeshift homes and have little or no food or drinking water, forcing them to roam the streets begging for alms. Given their social and religious status, they are extremely vulnerable to religious extremism and financial influences.

Similarly, Ofongo (2016: 153) suggested that “an increase in population and thereby enrolments in the face of soaring unemployment, many of the graduates from the Almajiri system end up jobless and idle. For most Almajirai, prospects for formal education are either very low or non-existent due to parental neglect and lack of governmental initiatives to galvanize education. Accordingly, desolate, hungry and largely illiterate, the Almajirai become ready instruments of manipulations in the hands of the elite and other mischievous individuals”. However, a gap was identified in this literature by Hoechner (2013: 17) when she argued that "the conditions under which Almajirai might come to learn values and practices capable of radicalization, remained unexplored."

This work therefore attempt to fill this gap by exploring how social identity, bad Governance and system declined contributed in producing a traumatized, socially excluded and out of school demographic cohort from the Almajiri system. Though the Almajiri system in itself does not radicalized the Almajirai cohorts (as argued by the first narrative for instance), but it has indirectly contributed in producing a large and socially excluded youth cohort with a strong sense of identity primarily due to negligence by the policy makers, in the sense that the first real effort geared toward integrating the Almajiri school system into the mainstream educational system was done five decades after independence. This is quite alarming considering the fact that evidence from empirical studies revealed that the enrollment rate into the Almajiri school system is three times higher than that of the formal school (Goodluck & Juliana, 2012). Evidence also suggested that among the 10.5 million out of school children in Nigeria 9.5 are Almajirai cohort, where the hub of the Boko Haram insurgency (i.e. Borno state) alone has 1.8 million Almajirai alongside seventy per cent (70%) out of school children which arguably is the highest in the entire country (Owen & Usman, 2015).

This work therefore argued with empirical evidence that an insecure environment for the Almajirai cohort created by utter negligence from the policy makers and amplified by strong sense of social identity has immensely contributed in radicalizing the Almajiri cohort into violent extremism. For instance, at its inception the Boko Haram leader Mohammed Yusuf was too critical of the current political system arguing that it has institutionalized the marginalization of those without formal school certificate by relegating them into second class citizens in their country. This is hinged on the inability of the state to address the problem of the Almajiri cohort who even after graduating from the Almajiri School tend to exist as unemployable social class with a strong sense of identity and high tendency for cooptation into anti-state activities.

#### *1.4. Cultural identity and the Radicalization of the Almajiri Cohorts*

Erickson, (1968:57) defines identity as “a person’s sense of belonging to a group if (it) influences his political behaviour”. It is said to be “always anchored both in physiological ‘givens’ and in social roles’...” (Erickson, 1968:63) Its attribute comprise “commitment to a cause”, ‘love and trust for a group”, “emotional tie to a group”, as well as “obligations and responsibilities” relating to membership of a group with which a person identifies. According to Pye (1962:124) “those who share an interest share an identity; the interest of each requires the collaboration of all”. Thus, ordinarily, identities serve as rallying and organizing principles of social action within the civil society, and in state-civil society relations. They inform and guide political behaviour, and they add dynamism to political conduct in the context of plural societies (Jega, 2000).

In the context of state-civil society relations, they also serve as a check on the potential excesses of the state. Hence, Parry and Moran have observed that “in advanced societies... what is as significant as overriding national identities are the multiple identities which go to make up plural societies” (Parry, 1994:275). Such physiological givens as gender and age, and sociological characteristics as ethnicity, nationality, religion, kinship relations, or even workplace affiliations can, and often do, create a basis for identity. Identity is not only about individuality and self-awareness, but also and especially about identification with, and commitment to, shared values and beliefs, in a social collectivity into which a person belongs. At any given time, a person may have multiple identities, each of which may always have some bearing on his or her political conduct and social roles in society.

However, the question of which sort of identity has the most significant impact or bearing on a person’s behaviour is the critical issue, and a subject of theoretical speculation. It is significant that while identities are more or less fixed, identity consciousness is dynamic. Hence, mobilization, provocation and agitation are central to the formation of a requisite identity consciousness which, in turn, is critical to identity-based politics. The formation or construction of identity space, according to Jega (2000:14), is the “dynamic operator linking economic and cultural processes” in modern societies. In competition or struggles over societal resources, especially in situations of scarcity, collective demands tend to be predicated and organized on shared interests, which in turn and to be hinged on either physiological ‘givens’ or, as is more often the case, on shared socio-cultural identities.

In the words of Huntington (1996:125): in the new world, however, cultural identity is the central factor shaping a country’s associations and antagonisms. While a country should avoid cold war alignment, it cannot lack an identity. The question, “which side are you on?” has been relegated by the much more fundamental one, “who are you?” Every state has to have an answer. That answer, its cultural identity, defines the state’s place in world politics, its friends and its enemies. Identity issues are of course, particularly intense in cleft countries that have sizable groups of people from different civilizations.

Cultural identity is therefore very instrumental in radicalizing the Almajiri cohort in the sense that one popular response to western education in northern Nigeria is the belief that it will change the existing cultural structure. Threat to one’s cultural identity is consistent with an integrated threat theory posited by Stephan and colleagues (Stephan, Ybarra, Martinez, Schwarzwald, & Tur-Kaspa, 1998). Stephan et al. identify four distinct types of threat including realistic threat cultural or symbolic threat, intergroup anxiety, and negative stereotypes. Cultural threat is the most relevant in explaining the radicalization process of the Almajiri cohorts. Stephan et al. define cultural threat as the perceived harm caused by foreigners with distinct morals, norms, and values. When an individual feels that his or her culture is threatened by the potential integration of a particular set of foreign culture, that person responds more negatively towards that group. On an interpersonal level, this means that the potential integration of foreign culture with a different language and interpersonal style will provoke serious negative reactions (Hitlan, 2002). Here, cultural threat is defined as the perception of between group distinctiveness on social or interpersonal traits. Cultural threat models predict that as one perceives greater differences between the in-group and potential foreign culture on important interpersonal traits, one should feel greater threat and exhibit greater prejudice towards that group.

#### *1.5. Relative Deprivation and the Radicalization of the Almajiri Cohorts*

Relative economic deprivation is an important factor in understanding the social origins of radicalization and violent extremism in northern Nigeria on both a macro and a micro level. At the macro level, significant number of youth in northern Nigeria perceives that globalization and Western cultural and economic imperialism have malign influences on Muslim societies. According to this worldview, these societies are failing to keep pace economically with the West and Asia because of corrupt and incompetent regimes shored up by a rapacious West that seeks to plunder Muslim societies and keep them economically dependent for its own economic benefit and material well-being.

On the micro level, youth in northern Nigeria particularly the Almajirai cohorts perceive their present economic and social status as out of line with their education, capabilities, family tradition, and customary social status. Among the Almajirai cohorts, the sense of deprivation often stems from three additional factors: the loss of historical status as independent communities, the disruption of traditional economic structures, and the economic exploitation of local resources by western educated elites and regimes that often leaves them in an abject poverty. The result is a class perception of relative social and economic decline. At all levels, fear of becoming economically and socially marginal is keen. In this sense, the Boko Haram leaders come from the same socio-economic group. These groups have historically been, and continue to be, the ones that live in constant fear of economic marginalization and stand to lose the most in the downward redistribution of wealth that often results from economic modernization. The Boko haram leaders impart to the insecure Almajirai cohorts, many of whom have had to delay marriage and family for economic reasons, the notion that they have a vital role to play and mission to fulfill in a cosmic war between good and evil. In a world in which their milieu and their futures seem increasingly beyond their control, these youth, find for themselves a glorious destiny and values other than economic achievement that separate them from the crowd and, often, from what they see as the dreary, spiritually empty lives of their petit-bourgeois parents.

## 2. Result and Discussion of Data

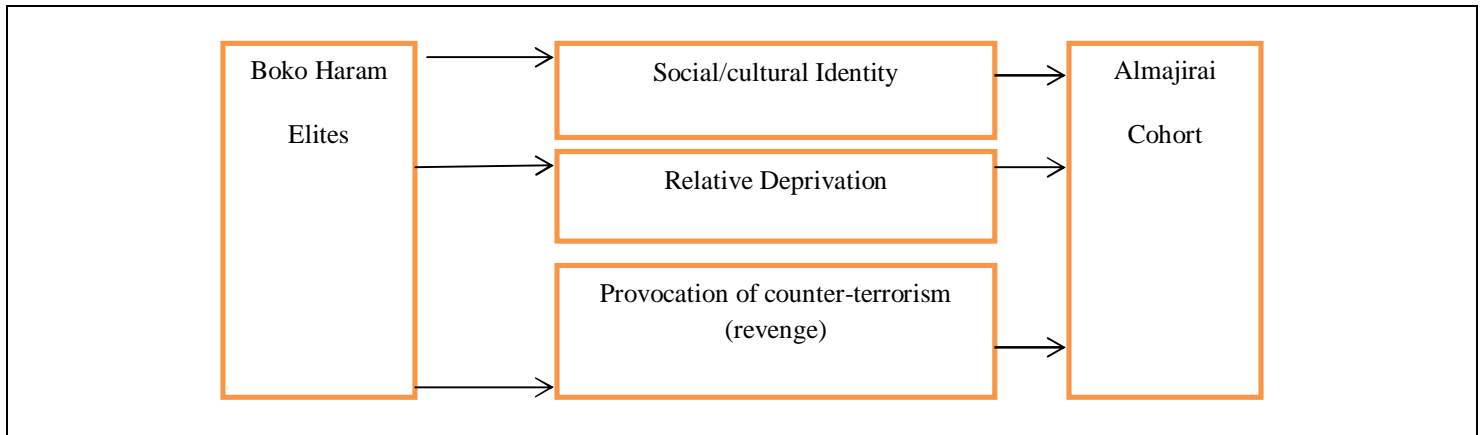


Figure 1: Conceptual/ Analytical Framework

The Boko Haram Elites in an effort to get the supports from the Almajirai Cohorts who offer cheap sources of recruitment due to their predicaments capitalized on three important factors which are cultural/social identity, relative deprivation, and provocation of government counter-terrorism to further alienate the Almajirai cohort from the mainstream political system and to instill the rage for revenge in them.

In brief, Cultural/social: connotes ideological and theological tools use by the Boko Haram elites to justify taking arms against the state. These primarily focus on the legitimacy and otherwise of the current liberal democracy by putting them in a theological context through emphasizing the negative attributes of the liberal economic and political institutions from the Islamic religion perspective. Relative deprivation on the other hand involves the utilization of the real grievances of the Almajirai cohorts such as institutional violence and lack of democratic values. The third method involves the provocation of government counter-terrorism through hit and run strategy, thereby instigating and intensifying military repression and extra-judicial killings of all perceived enemies which further alienate the Almajiri cohort as they become the prime suspect whenever such attacks occurs.

### 2.1. Almajiri Cohort and Boko Haram Insurgence: The Linkage

In this section, details of the main research findings as they relate to the three keys elements that facilitate support and linkage between the Boko Haram elites and the Almajirai cohorts as presented in Figure 1 shall be discuss.

### 2.2. Social/Cultural Identities

Ethnic and religious mobilizations are often found at the heart of political competition (Jega, 2000). As with all social cleavages; fault lines within societies form along these identities, creating opposing interests. These differences of interest, in turn, offer themselves to potential or occasionally violent, conflict (Liu, J. H., & Hilton, 2005). No state, for example, is devoid of ethnic influences. Notions of ethnicity and nationalism during the 1940s, for example, helped tear Europe apart in the twentieth century. More recently, in the 1990s, similar sentiments have brought devastation to the Balkans, the Great lakes and the Horn of Africa (Jega, 2000).

To this end, in Nigeria under the current democratic transition, competitive partisan political activities are being used as avenue through which groups are mobilized, identities rigidly reinforced, often infused with excessive religiosity, violent youth gangs and militants are formed and armed, and ethnic tensions and conflicts thereby facilitated. As the elite pursue zero-sum political engagements, all means, including violent ones, are used to achieve selfishly and narrowly defined ends (Jega, 2000).

Social and cultural identities therefore forged a strong linkage between the Boko Haram elites and the Almajirai cohorts by reinforcing pre-existing social identity, providing an incentive for recruitment and justifying the need to sanitized and re-organized the community in the sense that in Northern Nigeria, there is an established social categorization in which the societal members (citizens) are broadly classified into two categories the “Yan Boko” (western educated citizens) and the “non-yan Boko” (the non-western educated citizens). What makes this categorization quite instrumental is the unhealthy rivalry between the two categories both politically and culturally. While the yan Boko are seen as the agents of the western world because they are theones controlling the government, the non-yan Boko on the other hand have an absolute control over the society (religion and culture for instance).This therefore created a situation in which the society look upon the “yan Boko” as infidels, corrupt and perverted and the “Yan Boko” by virtue of their role as political leaders do little to change this negative impression about them as the state becomes epitomized with corruption and bad governance thereby paving the way for the emergence of anti-state movements such as Boko Haram.

The disdain towards and fear of Boko (Western education) arose from its historically close association with the colonial state and Christian missionaries. This also suited colonial educational policy well, as the British had no intention of widespread education anyway. The aim of colonial education, particularly in northern Nigeria, was to maintain the existing status quo by “imparting some literacy to the aristocratic class, to the exclusion of the commoner classes” (Tukur 1979: 866). By the 1930s, colonial education had produced a limited cadre of Western-educated elite, who were conscious of their education and were yearning to play a role in society. Mainly children of the aristocratic class, the type of education they received was “different from the traditional

education in their various societies, and this by itself was enough to mark them out as a group” (Dambuzu 2012: 50). This new education enabled them to climb the social and economic ladder over and above their peers who had a different kind of education, Qur’anic education. This was the origin of the animosity and distrust between the traditionally educated and Western-educated elite in northern Nigeria.

In this study the informants were clear on how the dichotomy and the unhealthy rivalry between these two groups provided a fertile ground for violent extremism in North-eastern Nigeria. Most informants narrated how colonialism plays a significant role in establishing such societal cleavages in the sense that before the advent of colonialism the people in the northern Nigeria were predominantly Muslim where the Almajiri system was the recognized system of education then came the missionaries with their own educational system. By virtue of the fact that the missionaries were Christian the educational system they came with was equally considered as an instrument of Christianity hence the native vehemently rejected and resisted the educational system only few native got enrolled in the new school system (Tukur 1979: 866).

Consequently, even when the colonial masters invaded and overthrew the pre-colonial indigenous political system and established their dominance great majority of people still resisted the western educational system, the colonial master therefore devised an indirect rule where the natives were governed through their traditional institution to minimize local resistances (Casey, 2008).

However, by the time the colonial masters departed the political scene, the traditional political system was rendered completely irrelevant in the process of governance even when the western democratic model was not fully internalized (Tukur, 1979). This therefore served as the genesis of the cleavages between the western educated elites (yan Boko, who are still consider as the representative of the colonial masters) and the rest of the society which continue to shape the nature of Governance and politics in the region.

It is therefore imperative to note that in Northern Nigeria social categorization and group influence has immensely contributed in forging a strong nexus between the Almajirai cohorts and the Boko Haram elites via the link fate phenomenon. In the sense that the founder of the Boko Haram Muhammad Yusuf was a graduate of the Almajiri school who did not had the opportunity to attend the formal school, hence he shares the same fate and social self-category (the non-yan Boko) with the Almajiri cohorts which enable his ideology to possess a substantial influence among them. The main planks of the identity linkage between the Boko Haram elites and the Almajiri cohorts were built, exclusively, around three factors: the concept of idolatry, including secularism, democracy, and partisan politics; Westernization (culture and way of life) and Western education.

The result of the interview in this study revealed that, for instances informant from among the Almajirai cohorts who were opportune to have access to western education appear not to concur with the idea that the Almajirai are subjected to marginalization and alienation to them all those Almajirai complaining of alienation should blame no one but themselves because the society has created opportunities for them to enroll in the formal school and be useful to themselves and the society but they have declined to utilized the opportunity. This is evident from the following responses:

In an interview with a former Almajiri in Kochifa, Yelwa ward Mubi North local government area of Adamawa state on 23 April 2016, he made the following remarks when asked whether there is an element of social exclusion in the Nigerian educational policy in respect to the Almajiri cohorts: *I do not seem to concur with the notion that there is a conspiracy against the Almajirai, we were given equal opportunities with other youths but some us refused to utilized it for a reason best known to them, I have known some individuals who graduated from the Almajiri school before but refused to get enroll in the formal school deliberately, how can you describe such people? Some of us are just being lazy period.*

In another interview conducted on 7 May 2016 in Bularafa Gulani local government of Yobe state while responding to the same question he asserted that: *to be frank I do not consider myself as an Almajiri because I just finished my National Diploma in mass communication and very soon I will start my degree program, all those you see roaming the street are just bunch of lazy people because being a graduate of Almajiri school is never an excuse for not having access to western education.*

Another Almajiri from the same group in an interview conducted in Jauroji Quarters Kumo, Akko Local Government Gombe State on 3 June 2016 went further to explicitly identified the categories of the former Almajirai who support and join the Boko Haram: *The Boko Haram ideology was propounded by a “Gardi” (Graduate of Almajiri School) who was not opportune to attend the western school system that is why he enjoyed a considerable support from among those “Gardis” who share same fate with him.*

It is evident from the above that access to education plays an important role in how self-categorization and social identity aid or prevent radicalization among the Almajirai cohorts, this is because the result of the interview with the second category of the Almajirai i.e. those that were not opportune to attend the western school revealed a quite contrasting result from the above. For instance, a responding former Almajiri in an interview conducted in Ngelzarma Fune Local Government on 8 May 2016 has this to say about why he thinks the Boko Haram are fighting a just war: *We live in a wicked society where injustice prevail, for instance, by mere being an Almajiri your opportunities of excelling in life is being thwarted, because as you can see me I can never become someone in life simply because my parent decided to send me to Almajiri school instead of the western school that is why you see some of us are actively participating in this insurgency because they want to correct this injustice.*

Another Almajiri from Kaigamari, Dukku Local Government Gombe state in an interview conducted on 4 June 2016 lamented that: *In Nigeria having access to western education is what determines if you are either a person or animal, because for us without school certificate we have a very low self-esteem in the society, Boko Haram shall continue to enjoy the support of those youth who are discriminated just because of western education.*

Against the above background, access to education plays a significant role in determining the propensity of the Almajirai cohorts being radicalized in the sense that those cohorts without western education attainment demonstrated high propensity to radicalization than those with educational attainment.

Another important factor in determining the propensity of the Almajiri cohorts being radicalized into Boko Haram is threat which serves as a central element in the understanding of the relationships between the two categories of citizens in northern Nigeria. This threat need not be to the physical safety of a group or of its members; in fact, cultural threats may be at least as salient as if not more than physical threats (Schwartz, Dunkel, & Waterman, 2009). The issue then becomes the nature of the threat and how it is construed and interpreted. It is therefore important to appreciate the potential terrorist's view of the world and to examine the meanings that she or he assigns to a given situation (Tosini, 2007).

To this end, as revealed by the result of the interview in this study most Almajirai tend to have negative perception about the socio-cultural formation of the Nigerian state as indicated by the result of some of the interviews conducted below:

An Almajiri in Bularafa Gulani Local Government of Yobe in an interview conducted on 7 May 2016 has this to say: *To me Nigeria is not supposed to be a single country, because our religion and cultural backgrounds are quite different, what is acceptable in the southern region may not be accepted down here, am not comfortable with the way of life of the southern region.* In another interview conducted on 18 April in Barade ward Jalingo Local Government, an Almajiri responded that: *A strange social formation and cultural identity were forced upon us by the colonial masters which are not in line with our historical background that is why our people are fighting.*

In an interview conducted on 7 May 2016 An Almajiri from Bularafa in Yobe State responding to the author's question about his perception of the current Nigerian state opined that: *I want the Nigerian state to be disintegrated peacefully so that we can retain our identity, because the influx of other regions means of socialization is really affecting us.* The issue of cultural threat was also visible in an interview conducted with an Almajiri in Jauroji quarters of Akko local government in Gombe state, when he proclaimed that: *The problem with western education is not the knowledge but the way of life they want to force on our people.*

Similar view was expressed by one of the teachers in the Almajiri school system in Ngelzarma Fune Local Government of Yobe State, when he asserted that: *The truth is that our social and religious values have been relegated to the background; the world is now being ruled by a strange Christendom doctrine which is very harmful to our youths.*

It is evident therefore from the above that the Almajirai cohorts considered the manner in which the western way of life is fast becoming an acceptable norm in the Northern Nigeria as a serious threat hence the conflict between Boko Haram elites and the Western educated elites in northern Nigeria, are largely prompted by ideological and identity-based threats. This becomes very potent because the main planks of Almajiris and Boko Haram identities nexus were built, exclusively, around three factors: the concept of idolatry, (including secularism, democracy, and partisan politics; Western education), working for an un-Islamic government and Westernization (culture and way of life). For example, the Mallams and the Almajiris often regard the pervasive spread of Western culture as a threat to their way of life. Images of scantily clad women and expletive-filled music are common in the western culture which is forbidden in Islam. This serves as an important bonding mechanism between them and the Boko Haram elites whose self-described mission is to protect Islam, then, claims to be morally obligated to destroy the Western influences that threaten the sanctity of the Islamic faith in Nigeria. The above is quite clear from the expressions made by the informants in this study.

A former Almajiri in Bularafa, Gulani local government of Yobe State commented that: *I think the main motivating factor on why most of us join the Boko Haram movement is to rid our society of all the social evils infused by the western education.*

A similar comment was made by another Almajiri in an interview conducted in Kaigamari, Dukku Local Government Gombe state: *The Boko Haram ideology gain popularity among our people because of the manner in which evils of all types are being glamorized in the name of western education.* This is quite similar to what a teacher of Almajiri School in Kochifa Yelwa ward Mubi Adamawa state stated when he remarked that: *The political and social aspect of the western education is what the late Mohammad Yusuf tried to change because it is seriously damaging our faith but he did it in a wrong way.*

Against the above background, religious and cultural identities revolving around theological campaign was quite an instrumental tool used by the Boko Haram elites in mobilizing the Almajirai into taking arms against the state. Interviewees representing security personnel's, members of the academics, Islamic clerics and teachers of the Almajiri school system all identified identity as very instrumental in the Boko Haram mobilization of the Almajirai cohorts. The example given next is indicative of the Comments made:

In an interview conducted with an Islamic Cleric in Yola North Local Government Adamawa state he asserted that: *It is very unfortunate that the Nigerian Government does not have a law regulating preaching because it paves the way for the Boko Haram extremist to use religion in mobilizing the gullible youth especially the Almajirai by twisting and distorting the message of Islam.* A member of academics from Adamawa state University Mubi in an interview conducted on 12 April 2016 said that: *Because our justice system is weak and public institutions are not functioning it becomes easy for them to convince the Almajirai by pointing out the illegitimacy of the entire system in light of religion doctrines... because corruption and injustice are everywhere no one has confidence in our judicial system and public agencies.* Another member of academic from Federal University Kashere Gombe state asserted that: *The first thing they do is point out the weakness of the current political system by identifying some practices that are against the Islamic teachings they would then justify the use of violence to effect changes so as to make life better for all.*

To this end, it is imperative to note that ideology depicts one of the important tools used by the Boko Haram elites in radicalizing the Almajirai cohort through the Salafist-jihadist ideology utilized by both ISIS and al-Qaida which is deep rooted in narrative and propaganda amplified by social identity. This they do by dwelling and emphasizing the dichotomy between the "Yan Boko" and the "Non-yan Boko" in which the former are depicted as agents of the western world who are hell-bent in destroying the religious and cultural identities and practices of the people. Societal ills such as corruption and poverty were pointed out as upshot for people refusal to resist democracy. They thus sanction the use of violence against Government agencies and other Muslim clerics who are considered hypocrites and promoters of democracy.

### 2.3. Relative Deprivation

This revolves around grievances and frustration resulting from poor governance in the country. In this study significant portion of the informants began by identifying unsatisfying political conditions due to structural violence and lack of ideal democratic governance as the major causes of frustration among the Almajirai demographic cohorts which invariably makes them very aggressive hence an easy target for recruitment by the Boko Haram.

There is an explainable interlocking nexus between democratization and the causes of radicalization into violent extremism by the Almajirai cohorts in northern Nigeria. For instance, as argued Unumen and Emordi (2012:13) “the situation in the contemporary Nigeria has failed to engender, maintain or sustain the belief in Nigerians that democracy is the most appropriate system of government in the country. The average Nigerian now possibly associates democracy with corruption, cyclical crisis of legitimacy, institution decay, chronic economic hardship, underdevelopment, volatility, insecurity and violence”.

This situation gained wider currency among the improvised and malnourished Almajirai cohorts who completely lost their faith in the western political system as it does not seem to have any impact on their lives. This is evident from the result of the interview below:

An Almajiri in Anguwan Gabas in Karim Lamido Local Government has this to say: *Democracy is nothing but an instrument use by the powerful elites to molest the ordinary citizens like us, because it only promotes corruption and stealing of state-owned resources by the ruthless predators we called our leaders.* Another former Almajiri in Bularafa Gulani Local Government of Yobe state asserted that: *I do not believe in democracy because of two things, first it was introduced to rival the Islamic political system and secondly, it promotes cheating, deceit and corruption.* In yet another interview by an Almajiri in Dukku he claimed that:

*Most of my friends joined Boko Haram with a sincere motive to rid our society of the corrupt and perverted political system that only care for the rich.... But they later discovered that even the Boko Haram leaders are corrupt and perverted.*

A graduate of an Almajiri school system from Jambutu in Yola North Local Government who openly declared his lack of support for the government says: *Not only we the Almajirai but majorities of the citizens are not in support of this government because it is grossly corrupt, useless, unrepresentative, non-responsive and callous.*

In a yet another interview with a graduate of Almajiri School from Ngelzarma in Dukku Local Government the following comments emerged: *The Nigerian state is grossly corrupt and inadequate that is why majority of citizens do not consider it legitimate.*

The above findings are consistent with the findings of previous result, in the sense that Significant number of literature on youth radicalization has provided evidence on how Middle East youth perceived their respective governments as generally corrupt, perverted, unrepresentative, unaccountable hence not providing legitimate avenue for discontent, which therefore replaced the sentiments of nationalism by Islamist discourse, which often becomes more appealing to youth due to bad Governance (Richards 2003; Bahari, & Ahmad, 2014).

Another important factor contributing toward the radicalization of the Almajirai cohorts in northern Nigeria is structural violence. In the sense that looking critically at the current situation in Northern Nigeria, we fail not to be strike by the fact that the key elements of structural violence appear to be reinforced by the thousands of impoverished and socially excluded Almajirai demographic cohorts in the region and as argued by Galtung (1969) socio-cultural systems, political structures and state institutions act as indirect instigators of violence especially when societal injustice and class discrimination prevent citizens from reaching their full potential, which invariably saw the plantation of the seeds of rancor and acrimony among the citizens thereby degenerating into large scale uprisings, revolutions and conflicts within societies.

Significant numbers of the informants were quite emphatic on the nexus between structural violence and the radicalization of the Almajirai cohorts. Informants identified class discrimination and social exclusion as the main contributing factors in radicalizing the Almajirai cohorts. The Almajirai cohorts from among the informants were particularly more vocal in that regard as some of them lamented that:

An Almajiri cohort from Bularafa, Gulani Local government of Yobe state lamented that: *In Nigeria today being an Almajiri amounted to being relegated to an outcast because people do not even see us as human, no one wants to be associated with us in anyway.*

Another Almajiri from Akko in Gombe state has this to say: *The most painful thing about our lives, is how people tend to be avoiding us, people look down upon us as liabilities and nuances to the society which in actual sense is not true because most of us are responsible with the exception of few.*

In yet another interview an Almajiri in Jambutu Yola North Local Government He complained that: *We Almajiris are facing a serious predicament in which both the state and the society treat us with levity no one seems to take us serious, people consider us irresponsible hence everyone try to avoid us.*

A result of interviews with respondents cutting across community leaders, teachers in Almajiri School (Mallams) and Islamic clerics also echoed the same result, for instance according to a community leader in Akko Local Government of Gombe State: *The both the state and society continue to do a great deal of injustice to those boys because the state neglect them and the society call the names I think this has contributed in so many way in radicalizing them.* This view point was corroborated by a local Mallam in Ngelzarma of Dukku Local Government in Gombe state when he argued that: *When an individual is treated like a foreigner in his native country then expect all what we are witnessing these days.*

An Islamic Cleric in Jalingo local Government of Taraba state also made similar response: *Am not in support of the Almajiri school system in its current form because it is not in accordance with Islamic teaching for parents to throw out their children to the street at this tender age without care and nurturing but that is not an excuse for the government to show total negligence of the system.*

It is therefore evident from the above that the Almajirai cohorts are victims of structural violence and according to the structural violence perspective social exclusion and discrimination has a strong tendency of fueling political violence where the rational for



such conflict is to address grievances. The theory therefore categories grievances into three broad clusters; the economic grievances have to do with inequality, penury and economic recession, whereas the political grievances covers issues such as lack of political participation, lack of minority rights and absences of democratic governance, the socio-cultural grievances on its parts involves issues such as non-recognition of traditional system, destruction of cultural tradition and lack of language rights (Hoeffler, 2011).

The existence of alienation and discrimination against them makes the Almajiri to become dissatisfied with the political system thereby paving the way for them to be coopted into the Boko Haram. The result of the interview conducted in this study has indicated that. For instance an academic staff in Taraba state University when asked whether the state negligence of the Tsangaya school system has contributed in radicalizing the Almajiris, he responded thus: *Yes, it is correct the main problem is that the Almajirai after graduating from schools mostly ended up as misfit because they do not possess the requisite skills to survive under the harsh economic conditions prevailing in the country they thus become dissatisfied with the life it is therefore easy for them to join the insurgency movement.*

A graduate of the Almajiri School in the process of focus group discussion in Mubi north made a comment that appeared to confirm the above position when he proclaimed that: *I do not feel upset when people say bad things about the Government or the state because I have never benefit from the Government so why should I care.* Another former Almajiri opined that: *I often feel I do not belong here because my wish and interest does not count in Governance.... I think I will never become an important person in my life because I do not have the privilege of attending the western school.* This is an indication of how alienated and frustrated are the Almajiris within the Nigerian state which invariably made some of them to withdrew their loyalty and commitment. A couple of responses in this study clearly indicated how frustrated some of the Almajiris are with their lives in Nigeria. For instance, a responding Almajiri in Dukku local Government commented that: *If I have the means I will walk out of this country and will never return because the government does not care about us even those who have the opportunity of attending the so-called western education are still jobless how about us?* Another responding Almajiri in Karim Lamido Local Government argued that: *Both the state and Boko Haram are killers, the Boko Haram use gun while the state uses poverty to kill us. For most of us the options are you either join the Boko Haram or die of hunger.*

It is therefore imperative to note that alienation and social exclusion created antinomian tendency among the Almajiri cohorts thereby participating in the struggle against the state. This argument is consistent with the findings of previous empirical studies, for instance, Østby (2008), studied a various measures of inequality where she found that all were positively correlated with higher risks of an outbreak in violent conflict. The study revealed that a country with high level of political exclusion and regional inequalities have a greater risk of violent conflict. The study further revealed the importance of institutional arrangements in determining the occurrences of political violence, as a presence of strong state capable of repressing dissent horizontal inequalities may prevent the eruption of violent conflict, whereas the existence of more liberal electoral systems may actually increase the risk of political conflict.

The above highlight the importance of Governance in curbing restiveness and rebellious tendencies in the society. It is imperative to note that of all the factors that can tackle the problem of insurgency in Northern Nigeria none is more important than Good Governance. This is because when the Government policies are effective in alleviating the predicaments of the Almajirai cohorts by reintegrating them back into the society and giving them sense of belonging and a renew hope, it will be extremely difficult for the Boko Haram jihadist ideology to survive, because they will be like voices crying in the wilderness when the conditions in the society are not structured in a way that people will respond emotionally in support of their propaganda.

#### 2.4. Repression and Extra-Judicial Killings

Social identity identifies with individuals' internalized feeling of their participation in a specific group and has implications for numerous types of social reaction, including social perception, pro and antisocial behaviors, social judgment, and social influence. Most recent study discovered that salient social identities are essential determinants of a man's reactions to external threat (Haslam & Reicher, 2006). Specifically, these have been found to assume an imperative role in deciding both whether and how individuals adapt to various situations.

Studies in this parlance lay much emphasis on how salient social identities affect individual response to several threats such as coping with identity related personal threat such as threat to academic performance or personal attractiveness (Haslam, Jetten, O'Brien, & Jacobs, 2004). However, social identity researches indicate that these same processes ought to be especially applicable at group level. Specifically, reactions to threat ought to be clear when one's group is threatened (Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999). Also, it is obvious that previous research in that regards has tended to concentrate on internal coping process, taking into cognizance how much the striking nature of specific social identities drives individuals to avoid or maintain a strategic distance from specific threat.

In any case, as Haslam and Reicher (2006) contended, at the group level, social identity striking nature ought to be a premise for individuals not just to "adapt" to a giving threat but also to oppose that threat. This suggestion emanate from the proposition that social identity is a premise for accomplishing more than basically replicating the present circumstance but also bringing about social change (Reicher & Haslam, 2006). In addition to other things, this implies self-definition as far as social identity ought to be a premise for individuals to "battle back" when there is a show of a threat against social identity conceivably prompting aggressiveness and retaliatory behavior.

Significant numbers of the interviewees acknowledge the fact that state response to the Boko Haram guerrilla has contributed in further alienating the Almajirai cohorts. This is because whenever there is a hit and run attack on the military convoy. The troop instantly embarkson reprisal attacks where the main targets are the Almajiris who have been stigmatized as prime suspects. This

further alienates them and paved the way for them to join the insurgence with the view to be secure from being brutalized or for revenge mission. This can be infer from some of the responses in this study.

In an interview conducted in Jambutu Yola North Local Government on 12 April 2016, an Almajiri lamented that: *The law enforcement agencies consider all of us as Boko Haram members, in 2013 there was a bomblast in a small market in Mubi my friend was a victim because the bomb exploded very close to his kiosk but the military denied him treatment claiming he was a suspect sadly he died, latter on more soldiers arrived at the scene shooting haphazardly destroying properties of marketers they arrested so many Almajirai and executed them three days later.* A responding Almajiri in Bularafa Yobe state in an interview conducted on 7 May 2016 expressed same concerned thus: *As Almajirai we suffer two kinds of persecutions first the Boko Haram abduct us and force us to fight, second, those of us that were not abducted become the target of reprisal attack by the state troop (Almajiri from Yobe state).*

A member of a local security operative known as Civilian Join Task Force in an interview with the author on 13 April in wuro-bulude Mubi north local government tried to justified why he and his colleagues believed Almajiris are the primed suspects: *I read so many comments in the media regarding this issues but there is something people fail to understand here, agreed not all the street urchins are Almajiraibut you cannot just claim that the Almajiris are not among the “yan sara suka”, “yan ci rani” and “yan bangan siyasa” for instance we made so many arrest during the 2011 post-election violence after thorough investigation we found out that there were lots of former Almajirai among them.* Another member of the Civilian JTF in Gombe state explicitly concurred with the view of his colleague from Adamawa when he responded that: *Yes, we are more watchful of the Almajirai because they are the majority in the Boko Haram foot soldiers and for your information significant numbers of the Almajiris in places like Maiduguri and Mubi are not even Nigerians.*

However theviews expressed by some of the members of the civilian JTF do not go well with other informants. For instance an academic staff from Yobe state University has this to say: *it is absolutely a wrong notion to consider all Almajiris as Boko Haram members. I think the way our military often respond to Boko Haram attack by rounding up all those who looks like Almajiri has immensely contributed in further alienating them.* A Mallam in Damagum Fune local area of Yobe state in an interview conducted on 8 May 2016 expressed that: *the military tactics of tagging the Almajiris as prime suspect in the Boko Haram insurgency has enormously contributed in creating more enemies of the state among them. This is because most Almajiris join the Boko Haram movement because they want to avenge the dead of either their friends or brothers who were innocently killed by the military.*

Violence and propaganda have much in common. Violence aim at changing someone conducts through compulsion while propaganda intends to achieve same result by persuasion. Terrorism can be seen as a blend of the two. Boko Haram, utilizing violence on the society is a ploy to convince those with sympathy towards them that they have the capacity to overthrow the existing status quo. Similarly, by carrying out hit and run the Boko Haram have succeeded in alienating the Almajirai cohort who are always seen as the suspect whenever such incidences occur, which further makes the linkage between the Almajirai and the Boko Haram Elites stronger.

### 3. Conclusions

The existing literature on sustainable peace building established a vital dichotomy between ‘negative peace’ (absence of violence) and ‘positive peace,’ which connotes, the structural transformation geared toward eradicating all sorts social injustices which may likely resulted confrontation and violence (Galtung, 1969). Consequently, inclusive education in which the Almajiri School is transformed and integrated into the mainstream education system can ultimately lead to the achievement of sustainable peace in northern Nigeria. This can therefore result to the realization of not just ‘negative peace,’ but most importantly, ‘positive peace. This is in congruity with the peace building theory which, among others, advocates for education to bolster individual and societal transfiguration in the areas of security, political organizations, economic and social empowerment within the pre-and post-conflict societies. (Lederach, 1995).

To this end, there is need to provide free and compulsory primary and secondary education by the Nigerian governments to all the Almajirai cohort and not in separate schools as it is currently being implemented but in inclusive secular ones. It is thus imperative for state-run schools to involve and accommodate children of all groups, and to provide all sort of knowledge secular and religious to guarantee fairness in access and quality. These schools must have the capacity to address the distinctive socio-cultural and language needs of the different categories of children, and create a learning ambiance which does not debilitate, estrange or alienate, but rather acknowledges divergence hence looks to give an overriding society that is composite in nature, taking into account the fact that Nigeria treasures secularism, social equity, dignity of persons, and a democratic society.

In a bid to foster inclusive environments for inclusive education, there is a need for absolute overhaul of the Almajiri school system in which instead of allowing some schools to religious bodies that will hone or impact the precepts of any specific religion, governments ought to guarantee that schools instill the of spirit of scientific humanism, of peace and unity, and there must be an overriding philosophy which seeks to promote excellence and goodness, social value and equity, working for national solidarity and a global cognizance. It is just when children of various groups, physical and economic wellbeing work and play together that they comprehend and acknowledge each other's disparities, and developed an atmosphere of resilience, building up a common identity and composite society. They start to speak the same dialect of unity and national identity. However, when the children of various societies and religious groups are confined in their mono-social schools, it is extremely difficult to achieve national integration. This is because the process of nation-building requires as a precondition the blending of various societies and statuses, and the weaving together of the distinctive strings of different national fabrics which can only be achieve through inclusive education.

No human society on the planet has ever achieved political, economic and social advancement in the midst of political, economic and social insecurity. Similarly, no country has ever prospered amidst disunity among its citizenry; nor has any flourished in an atmosphere of trepidation and strain, economic and political exclusion of some citizens and above all a limping and non-utilitarian education system. This signifies the need to forge a strong linkage between social inclusion, education and sustainable peace for any

nation to accomplish national prosperity. This paper has thus succeeded in reconstructing the current narratives surrounding the Almajiri issue with the view to putting the phenomenon into proper focus, which can provide a blue-print for the policy makers on how to tackle the problem of radicalization and insurgency in Northern Nigeria. This is because without proper understanding of the Almajirai situation it is extremely difficult to come up with a result oriented and workable policy framework that can provide a lasting solution to the problems of disaffected youth which has particularly epitomized the Northern Nigeria for more than three decades. The paper thus concludes by linking the problems of the Almajiri restiveness to the absence of an inclusive education system which is very vital for sustainable peace, a commodity Nigeria as a whole requires for sustainable socio-economic and political revolution.

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