

# Effects of Family Size and Types on Psycho-Social Problems of Almajirai Pupils in Traditional Quranic Schools System in Kaduna State, Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

*This study is quasi-experimental in nature. It aims at investigating the effect of family size and types (monogamy or polygamy) on psycho-social problems experienced by Almajirai Pupils in Traditional Quranic School System in Kaduna State, Nigeria. An inventory named psycho-social inventory questionnaire (PSI) was administered to 600 Almajirai pupils of thirty traditional Quranic schools sampled from the total population of 8,200 pupils both from rural and urban schools. Two research questions and hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Mean scores and percentage were used to answer research questions while t.test and ANOVA were used to test the two hypotheses. The findings reveals that family size and family type (monogamous or polygamous) affect psycho-social variables, and that there is high incidence of abuse and neglect of the pupils undergoing the traditional quranic system of education and their deplorable living conditions which comprises their health and ability to learn. It was recommended among others that parents, governments and non-governmental organizations should provide Almajirai pupils with the basic physiological needs such as clothing, shelter, good water supply, food, as well as adequate security.*

**Keywords:** *Family Size, family type, traditional Quranic schools, Psycho-Social problem*

## INTRODUCTION

“Almajiranci” is a word that connotes a distinct system of Islamic education that evolved in the West African sub-region from the traditional Quranic schools in northern Nigeria. The traditional Quranic School System entails the enrolment of a prospective student of tender age by his parents or guardians under a reputed Mallam (Teacher; mostly in a distinct place) for the purpose of acquiring Quranic knowledge (Abdulcadir, 2013). This practice in a few centuries back was respected and regarded as necessary and an integral part of the growth of the community as it produced the future educators, administrators and teachers of the largely unlearned population. Historically, however, the most important role of the Quranic school teachers’ lies in their ability to inculcate Islamic cultural sentiment and social discipline in their pupils, and prepare them physically and intellectually for future development of their spiritual life. This is by various means, one of which is the flexibility of the schools with regard to teaching hours. These schools are cheap, accessible to all and

open-ended, pupils of all ages can join and leave at any time, regardless of the pupils respective family status and background, whether they are rich or poor, their common classroom furniture is the bare floor and the right manner of sitting in the presence of the teacher is to fold their legs (Lantana, 2008). Slight misconduct on the part of any pupil is corrected ruthlessly, sometimes accompanied with beating. According to Mohammed (1992), begging is not a virtue of this practice but became only part of an historical antecedent. It only emerged as part of the practice in recent times. The situation surfaced as a result of poor condition of the economic reality of the schools which parents send their children to such traditional Quranic schools without being able to support them adequately, and the government not funding the traditional Quranic schools (Lantana, 2008). Hence the Almajarai pupils must beg for themselves to live and have enough to satisfy their teachers (Mallams). These consequences are serious and cause social psychological problems especially amongst those children who left their parents to entirely new environment at a very tender age.

In spite of the fact that the society does not see elements of child right abuse in the Almajarai, the Almajarai are victims of child abuse (Ayuba, 2009 and Abdulkadr, 2013). The most obvious is that they suffer undue neglect by their parents who send them to the school and leave them without any support base to cater for their needs. Many of these pupils are very young, at their formative stages, yet they have no access to adequate food which they need for their growth and development. Rosen (1965) decries the negative effects on the growth and development, because of psychological deprivation of mothering, child-parental dependency and isolation. Almajarai pupils sent to traditional Quranic schools system especially in northern Nigerian can fall into this group of psychological deprivation because they do leave their biological parents very early in life to entirely new environment to experience a very early independent life. The deprivation can lead to socio-psychological frustration, isolation, personality, instability and uncertainty in their adult life.

In normal circumstances, the family is supposed to provide the child with good nutrition, healthy environment, necessary care and stimulation to promote psychological and social adjustment and all round development. Many child advocates like the developmental psychologists, pediatricians and social scientists give reasons on why the child should be adequately care for. Abdulkadir (2008); Alkali (2001); Helfare and Kempe (1980) put it that once the developmental process of the child is insulted by bizarre child rearing pattern, the scars continues to remain. Unfortunately today in Nigeria with particular reference to Almajarai pupils in traditional Quranic schools, the social and psychological rights as stipulated by the United Nations declaration on the rights of the child, like recognition of the right of every child to a standard of living, force and compulsory education preparation of the children for responsible life, security among others are not met for one reason or the other. The child may become maladjusted (Santrock, 2010). The Almajarai pupils are extremely sensitive to the deprivation of these needs, and when basic needs are denied, it can lead to a serious problem. The psychological and social problems of these topics become very important to investigate because the practice has been observed very often to have relationship with child abuse. This has forced many specialists in behavioural

education to suspect that physical, social and psychological problem may be well within the repertoire of such practice and can slow down learning (Helper and Kempe, 1980; Yushua, Tsade, Babangida and Lawal, 2013). Lantana (2008) investigated the Assessment of Universal Basic Education Primary and Koranic schools synergy for Almajarai street boys in Nigeria and reveals that boys adaption to the force lunch feeding policy as maturation to partial school attendance management shortcoming of the synergy include in effective communication and collaboration poor instrumental supervision and cultural insensitivity to boys school retention. Remedies to the shortcoming are reviewed as policy option to includes effective management, collaboration and improve instruction supervision to mention but few were emphasized.

Yushau, Tsafe, Babangida and Lawal (2013) investigate problems and prospects of integrated almajari education in Northern Nigeria. They try to clarify how the whole process started, the varons dimension 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 (Almajari) learn both the Almajari education and the modern education simultaneously and to meet the standard set by the National policy on education and subsequently attain the vision for education for all (EFA). This study was therefore undertaken to investigate the effect of family size and types on psychological problem of Almajarai pupils in traditional Quranic school system in Kaduna State. Consequently, the following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

- H<sub>0</sub>1 There is no significant effect of family size on psycho-social problems experienced by Almajarai pupils.
- H<sub>0</sub>2 There is no significant difference in psycho-social problems experienced by Almajarai pupils from monogamous and those from polygamous families.

## METHOD

This study is a quasi-experimental design, aimed at identifying the dominant factor, that is, family size and family types responsible for the psycho-social problems experienced by Almajarai pupils in traditional Quranic schools system. Questionnaire was developed to seek information from Almajarai pupils attending these schools system, categorized as large and small Traditional Quranic Schools (TQS) based on their population in selected six zones of Kaduna State, from where six schools were each randomly selected from urban town and rural areas after several visits to the schools. According to Winner and Dominic (1987) such drawing of a sample from a small and large population will give undoubtedly reliable results. A total of 600 Almajarai pupils were selected to respond to questionnaire name psycho-social inventory (PSI). The instrument on the psycho-social problems of Almajarai pupils was developed by the researcher as a self report scale to measure their feelings on those psycho-social problems like feeding, clothing, shelter, security, medicare and affection. The instrument was designed on a likert five-point scale. In scoring the items, respondents would have a possible score ranging from 1-5 which represents his opinion on each item. Higher score on each item indicate a more severe

psycho-social problem. The instrument was validated by experts and reliability test was also conducted using the Cronbach alpha technique for the sub-scale that gave a value of .6388 for feeding, .6598 for clothing, .6040 for shelter, .6019 for security, .8157 for medicare and .7419 for relationship/affection. The administration of the questionnaire was done with the help of six research assistants in the various zones. Data collected was statistically analyzed using frequency distribution and percentage and the t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) for testing the hypotheses.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The mean scores of family size and psycho-social problem of Almajarai pupils was presented on table 1, while results of the analysis of variance (Anova) were presented on table 2. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 probability alpha level. The selected psychosocial problems of these children who come from larger family size having 15 children and above in their families are found to rank first with 66.48%. Those with number of children in their family who fall within the range of 10-14 came second with 66.2% which is slightly less than the first group. Those with 5-9 in numbers came third with 65.11% and others with less than five children in their households came fourth with 64.6%. Children who are less than five in size from their family have more problems of affection and security, followed by medicare, clothing, and shelter while feeding is the least.

Among the size of the children who fell within 5-9 in number, it was found that affection and security also count most, followed by medicare, shelter and feeding, while clothing is the least. For those who had 10-14 children, affection and security are their major problems followed by shelter and feeding then clothing. The least group who has the largest size in their house encountered more problems in affection, security and medicare, while shelter, feeding and clothing are of the least problem. Table 2 shows the result that critical value of 2.10 is less than the calculated value. The result of analysis of variance that tested hypothesis 1 reveal that a significant effect exists as regards to feeding, security medicare and affection. The hypothesis is therefore rejected. This indicates that the family-size has effect on the Almajarai's psycho-social problems. As regards to clothing and shelter, the hypothesis therefore is not significant.

Table 3 indicates that the obtained t-values of 1.12, .86, .91, and .16 are less than the critical t-value of 1.965 at 598 degree of freedom (df) and probability (alpha) level of 0.05. The hypothesis is therefore retained as it is clear that no significant differences exist between the two families as regards feeding, shelter, security and medicare. As could be seen from table 3 also, the hypothesis is rejected as regards to problems of clothing and affection, since the obtained t-test value (4.22%) and (8.81\*) is greater than the critical t-test value of 1.965 ( $p < 0.05$ ). The finding of this study reveals that, there is significant relationship between family size and psycho-social problems experienced by Almajarai pupils. This finding is not surprising because feeding, clothing, shelter, security, Medicare and affection are very important variables for learning process and without them the children must face the adjustment problem. This finding is in agreement with Rosen (1965),

Muhammad (1992), Abdulkadir (2003) who report that large size of the family makes it difficult for the children to get all the required parental attention like provision of food nutrients and other necessities of life. The size of the family may therefore, be a potential source of child-abuse, neglect, among others especially where the family is large and poor like that of Almajarai pupils. Furthermore, the result shows no significant differences existing between the two families. This means that judging from the situation; one can safely conclude that whether from monogamous or polygamous families, the intensity of their children problems is that majority of the Almajarai pupils are from very poor parental background. This result agrees with the findings of Lantana (2008), Yashua, Tsafe, Babangida and Lawal (2013) whose findings show that low-class parents tend to place less value on their children's social as well as psychological problems. They are also less ambitious about their children. As a consequence of these Muhammad (1992) and Ayuba (2009) observe that the children are lower in self-esteem and self assurance as in the case of Almajarai pupils. In terms of the problem of clothing and affection, the difference in the mean percentage scores between the two groups indicate that the monogamous families have a higher mean than those of polygamous families who had a lesser mean. This implies that the monogamous families place more emphasis towards their children's clothing and affection than the polygamous families. The findings agree with Cole and Hall (1980), Abdulkadir (2008) and Alkali (2001) who see children from large families (polygamous) as receiving less than the normal support in their problems because they received less aid from their parents and the children are less adjusted and might have more problems than from smaller families (monogamous).

**Table 1:** The Percentage Mean Scores of Family Size and Psycho-social Problems of Almajarai Pupils

Variables	Feeding	Clothing	Shelter	Security	Medicare	Affection Relationship	X	Rank
0-4	45.92	49.98	47.58	61.02	56.7	62.04	(65)	
5-9	45.26	43.56	47.12	66.30	5.78	68.74	64.96	4 <sup>th</sup>
10-14	45.92	39.98	46.80	67.48	56.68	68.72	65.16	3 <sup>rd</sup>
>15	45.92	55.18	42.80	62.80	52.46	71.1	66.2	2 <sup>nd</sup>
							66.48	1 <sup>st</sup>

*Source:* Survey, 2013

**Table 2:** Summary of F-Ratio Size and Psycho-social Problems of Almajarai Pupils

Variables	Feeding	Clothing	Shelter	Security	Medicare	Affection Relationship
F-cal	11.2073*	1.2816*	1.6604*	3.2871*	3.3809*	8.0295
F-PN	.0000	.2798	.1744	.0204	.0181	.0000
Dec.	Rejected	Retained	Retained	Rejected	Rejected	Rejected

Dec. F. 3.576 (.05) = 2.10 \* Significant (P<0.05)

*Source:* Survey, 2013

**Table 3:** Summary of t-test between Monogamy and Polygamy Family

**Types and Psycho-social Problems of Almajarai Pupils**

Variables	Feeding	Clothing	Shelter	Security	Medicare	Affection Relationship	
T. Value	T-cal	1.12	.422*	.86*	.16	.91	.81
PV	T-pro	.262	.000	.389	.389	.389	.8
Dec	Retained	Rejected	Rejected	Retained	Retained	Rejected	

AF(.05) = 1.95 \* Significant (P<0.05)

*Source:* Survey, 2013

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Effect of family size and types (monogamy or polygamy) on psycho-social problems experienced by Almajirai Pupils in Traditional Quranic School System in Kaduna State, Nigeria was the major issue that this study focuses on. The major finding of the study reveals that family size and family type affect the psycho-social variable and there is high incidence of abuse and neglect of the pupils undergoing the traditional Quranic System of education and their deplorable living conditions which comprises their health and ability to learn. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made: Government and non-governmental organizations should encourage the pupils/almajirai by encouraging them to attend western education. Parents, government and non-governmental organizations should provides basic physiological needs (shelter, clothing, water sampling, food) to the Almajirai. The mallams should be assisted with good accommodation, inculcated into salary, and exposure to western education. Government should provide equal educational opportunity for all Nigeria child. Family planning and sex education should be emphasize

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