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Keywords: *street children; spatial pattern, socioeconomic; population growth; poverty.*

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Spatial and Socio-Economic Dimensions of Street Children in Ibadan, Nigeria

David Victor Ogunkan

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I. Introduction

The twenty-first century presents a remarkable threshold in the demographic history of the world, particularly in developing nations such as Nigeria. In this century, described by the UN Habbitat (2012) as "Urban Millenium", the world's urban population has grown from 220 million to almost three billion (Isabelle – Jasmin, 2012). It has also been observed that over 70% of the world population will be urbanized by 2050 (UNDP, 2006). While Africa is the most urbanizing region in the world (Habbitat 2012), Nigeria is one of the greatest contributors) to its urbanization profile (Adeboyejo, 2013). This unprecedented population growth has been accompanied by rapid and tremendous changes that have transformed the urban physical, economic and social environments. The impacts of these changes are felt by almost every urban dweller, but the urban poor is the most vulnerable. Consequent to these changes is another growing global problem of the rising number of street children in urban areas, mostly within the developing world. Street children are a complex phenomenon and certainly one of the challenges presented by urban poverty (Consortium of Street Children, 2009).

Nigerian urban centres are not exempted from this phenomenon; in recent years, the number of children on Nigerian streets has grown exponentially (Oloko, 1992; Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2003; Owasanoye and Wermham, 2004; Fakoya, 2009). Although there is no statistical evidence to support this claim in Nigeria, it has been reported that over 7.3 million Nigerian children of school age were not in school (Faloore, 2009; Fakoya, 2009, UNICEF, 2005). This ugly trend has its social consequences, one of which is the spiralling population of street children in major towns and cities in Nigeria (Fakoya, 2009).

While there are no reliable figures on the number of street children in Nigeria, there is a consensus in the literature that various factors such as poverty, hunger, insecurity, child abuse, domestic violence, inadequate care, death of a parent (or of both parents,), need for income in the family, inability to continue school, willful deviance in a few children, literacy, housing challenges, drug use by children and peer influences (Okpukpara, et al, 2006; Faloore, 2009, Fakoya, 2009; Obioha, 2009) are major factors, pulling children into the streets in Nigeria.

However, the point of concern is that the increasing number of street children in Nigerian cities constitutes serious environmental problems, health hazard and immense challenges to national security (Ngowanji et al., 2009). The street children are socially relegated and stigmatized; they are subject to neglect, exploitation, and the female among them are vulnerable to sexual abuse (Ikechebelu et al., 2008).

The extant literature and policy recommendations on street children and such allied social problems as child labour and child prostitution notwithstanding, the escalating incidence of street children in Nigeria, like most developing countries, calls for a refinement of empirical approach and tailor-made programme formulations. It has been observed that most of the recommendations that have emanated from researchers and adopted by government and support providers for policy measures and support networks are adaptive in nature and so ineffective. The reason is that the recommendations were not based on intensive

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empirical research with a holistic approach focusing on the spatial, socio-economic and socio-cultural dimensions of street children in Nigeria. According to Jelili (2009), the analysis, control and management of most sociological problems or social vices (of which street children is one) in cities without recourse to their spatial implication account for the failure of most policies or efforts at addressing such problems. This research gap motivates this study to examines the spatial and socio-economic implications of street children in Ibadan, the largest city (in terms of spatial extent) in sub -Sahara Africa (Adeboyejo, 2013).

II. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The literature is extant with conceptual clarifications of the term street children (WHO, 1993; Veale, 1992;). For instance, it has been argued that the appellation "street children" is a socially constructed term that in reality does not form a clearly defined homogenous population or phenomenon (Faloore, 2009; Brick and Malcom, 2000; Veale, 1992; CSC, 2009; Ogunkan, 2013) and that, particular circumstances in a particular society dictates who should be included in the definition (Owoaje et al, 2009). However, the definition provided by the Inter-NGO (1995) is attractive and adopted in this study more so that it enjoys the support of practitioners, Scholars and Policymakers. According to Inter-NGO (1995), street Children as any girl or boy who has not reached adulthood, for whom the street (in the broadest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings, wasteland etc.), has become her or his habitual abode/or sources of livelihood and who is inadequately protected, supervised or directed by responsible adults.

While the definition of street children defies universal agreement, there is a level of consensus in the literature on the factors responsible for the phenomenon of street children. The factors, which may be social, economic, political or environmental are broken down by scholars across the Globe. In a study of Columbian street children conducted by Pineda et al (1978), it was discovered that such factors as extreme poverty, family disintegration, physical abuse and search for adventure are responsible for the phenomenon of street children. World Health Organization (1993) identifies such factors as family breakdown, poverty, armed conflict, natural and man-made disasters, famine, physical and sexual abuse, exploitation, dislocation through migration, urbanization and overcrowding, and acculturation. Kombarakara (2004) opines that children run away from home because of such factors as physical abuse by parents, rejection by step-parents or guardians, extreme poverty and family discord. In Nigeria, there is a consensus in the literature that such causative factors as poverty, family maladjustment, death of parents, parents' illiteracy, the disintegration of the extended family system, hunger, insecurity, abuse and violence, unemployment, housing difficulties, rural-urban drift among several others (Ebigbo, 1989: Okpukpara et al., 2009; Ogunkan, 2013).

These underlying factors lead to harmful consequences that are obvious in the Nigerian urban environment. Street children constitute environmental eyesores, present an ugly scene of an urban environment (Ogunkan, 2013), and the pool of recruits as armed robbers, urban terror gangs and violent critics (Ngoawaji, 2009). Many of them eventually become criminals and a threat to society (NCWD, 2009). The nature of life on the street has exposed children to unforeseen circumstances such as motor accidents (NCWD, 2009), physical and sexual assault, vagrancy and kidnapping (Faloore, 2009). They suffer from malnutrition and ill-health (Ogunkan, 2014).

The problem of street children is a comparatively new phenomenon in Africa. Therefore the problem is not well documented in the continent as in Latin America and South-East Asia (Mehta, 2000). However, the rapid unguided and uncontrolled urbanization process has made the street children phenomenon a significant issue in developing countries (Kopoka, 2000; Mehta, 2000). Although sub-Saharan Africa is currently the least urbanized region of the developing world, with less than 30 per cent of the population living in the urban area (Mehta, 200), it has the highest urbanization rates average of 4.6% per annum (UNCHS, 1996). In addition to this, Africa is one of the continents experiencing high population growth rates with an estimated annual growth rate of 3.6 per cent (UNDP, 1990). Consequently, African cities are increasingly confronted with a rising number of street children.

Nigeria may not be the most urbanizing country in Africa, but pieces of evidence have shown that it has contributed immensely to the urbanization profile of Africa (Adeboyejo, 2013). The National Population Census conducted in 1952 put the Nigerian population at 30.4. million, 11% of which was classified as urban (Olayiwola, 2000). In the official census of 1963, Nigeria's population was around 55.6 million, out of which 10.6million (about 19.1%) were living in 183 cities and town (Olujinmi, 2000). By 1991, the population of Nigeria Urban population had also risen by 36.3%, with 359 urban centres existing in the countries (Odeyemi 2002). The last conducted 2006 census indicates total population figures of 140,542,032. (NPC, 2006). These figures also revealed a tremendous increase in the urban population, and consequently an increasing population of street children. (Fakoya, 2009; Faloore, 2009; Obioha, 2009; Ogunkan, 2013). There is no denying that the obviousness and enormity of the problem of street children have attracted considerable research attention in Nigeria. However, there is little or

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no evidence of studies in the spatial dimensions of street children in street children in Nigeria.

III. Data and Method

a) The study setting

The study setting is Ibadan, a pre-colonial urban centre in Nigeria. Urbanism as a way of life in Ibadan predates European colonization of the country. The city has the farthest spatial extent among cities in sub-Sahara Africa. It has distinct residential neighbourhoods of urban high, medium and low residential densities. Ibadan metropolis consists of locations in five Local Government areas: Ibadan North, Ibadan North East, Ibadan North West, Ibadan South East and Ibadan West local governments. The city of Ibadan has recorded substantial growth due to its central location in Yorubaland, and its accessibility from the colonial capital city of Lagos (Udo, 1994). In addition to rural-urban migration, urbanization in Ibadan is due to immigration from other urban centres within and outside Nigeria (Afolayan, 1994)

b) The Study Population

For this study, the research population was defined to be children living and working on the streets. This definition was deliberately adopted, and it includes all groups of children who regarded the street, at a minimum, as the place where they get their subsistence. Some of these children, it was recognized from the outset, would be school-goers and have homes and families they go back to daily. Others have no homes to go back to and therefore would be residing full time on the streets

c) Sampling procedure

Ibadan is a pre-colonial urban centre with a vast spatial extent and well developed and easily distinguishable residential densities; the urban high, medium and low-density residential areas. Each residential density is homogenous in terms of physical layout, socio-economic and environmental characteristics (Adeboyejo and Onyeonoru, 2002). This framework is the spatial unit upon which data were collected. it is advantageous to analyze urban issues based on this spatial unit because each density exhibits certain consistent features in terms of location, the types, structures and layout of housing, housing conditions and occupancy ratio, which reflect social, economic and cultural attributes of residents (Adeboyejo and Onyeonoru, 2002; Afon, 2007; Adeboyejo et al., 2012). In each residential density, street children-prone-areas were surveyed. However, for objective comparison among densities, five categories of locations were recognized in each residential density as:

i. One largest mosque in each residential neighbourhood (determined by the size of the weekly congregation).
ii. One largest church in each residential neighbourhood (determined as in (i) above).
iii. One popular market in each residential neighbourhood (determined by the spatial extent and degree of patronage);
iv. One popular junction in each residential neighbourhood (determined by the intensity of use); and
v. One popular motor park (determined by the extent of patronage and spatial extent).

These locations, defined here as Data Delineated Areas (DDAs), are well known as major attractions for street children, being centres/areas of intense socio-economic or religious activities and consequently centres of population concentration.

Table 1: Selected Locations (Data Delineated Areas)

Residential Districts	DDA A	DDA B	DDA C	DDA D	DDA E
HIGH	Oja Oba Central Mosque	OkePadi Catholic Church	Gbagi- Dugbe Market	Dugbe junction	Gbagi – Ogunpa-Dugbe Motor Park
MEDIUM	Alhaji Arisekola Mosque	OritaMefa Baptist Church	Agodi – Gate Market	Iwo Road Roundabout	Iwo Road Motor park
LOW	Bodija Community Mosque	Living Spring Church	Bodija Market	Sango/ polytechnic junction	Sango Motor Park

Source: Authors compilation

In each of the locations described above,

1) Data on the incidence of different categories of street children were obtained through the method of direct counting. This was done with the help of trained assistants. Street children, being a mobile population, will inevitably move between DDAs, carrying a moveable business. Therefore, to ensure that double or multiple counting is avoided, the counting was done simultaneously in all the DDAs with the help of trained assistants. The counting was done on four different days of the week, i.e. Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Wednesday and was measured by "Relative Incidence of Street Children" (RISC). The RISC is defined as the addition of the

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number of street children identified in four days divided by four.

2) For further investigation, 10% of the number of identified street children age population of street children (RISC) in each of the DDAs derived above was selected and a questionnaire administered to elicit information on the socio-economic, socio-cultural and other economic characteristics of the street children. The choice of 10% is premised on Conroy (2006)'s postulation that a good maximum sample is usually 10%, provided it is not more than 1000.

d) Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistic such as average, cross-tabulation and standard scores. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed to analyze the variations in the incidence of street children across the residential neighbourhoods.

IV. Results and Discussion

a) Incidence and Spatial Analysis of Street Children

The results of the street children enumeration is as shown on Table 2.

The distribution in the Table indicated that street children were more concentrated in Market (24.9%) than any other location. This is followed by Motor Park (20.3%), Mosque (19.9%), Junction (19%) and Church (15.9%) in the order of magnitude. It follows, therefore, that the market, motor parks and mosque are the three highest attractors of street children.

Table 2: Incidence of Street Children in the selected locations

Residential Zone	HIGH		MEDIUM		LOW		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Mosques	216	25.7	46	13.0	42	12.7	304	19.9
Churches	140	16.7	65	18.4	37	11.2	242	15.9
Markets	143	17.0	101	28.5	136	41.1	380	24.9
Junctions	164	19.5	90	25.4	35	10.6	289	19.0
Motor Parks	177	21.1	52	14.7	81	24.5	310	20.3
Total	840	55.1	354	23.2	331	21.7	1525	100

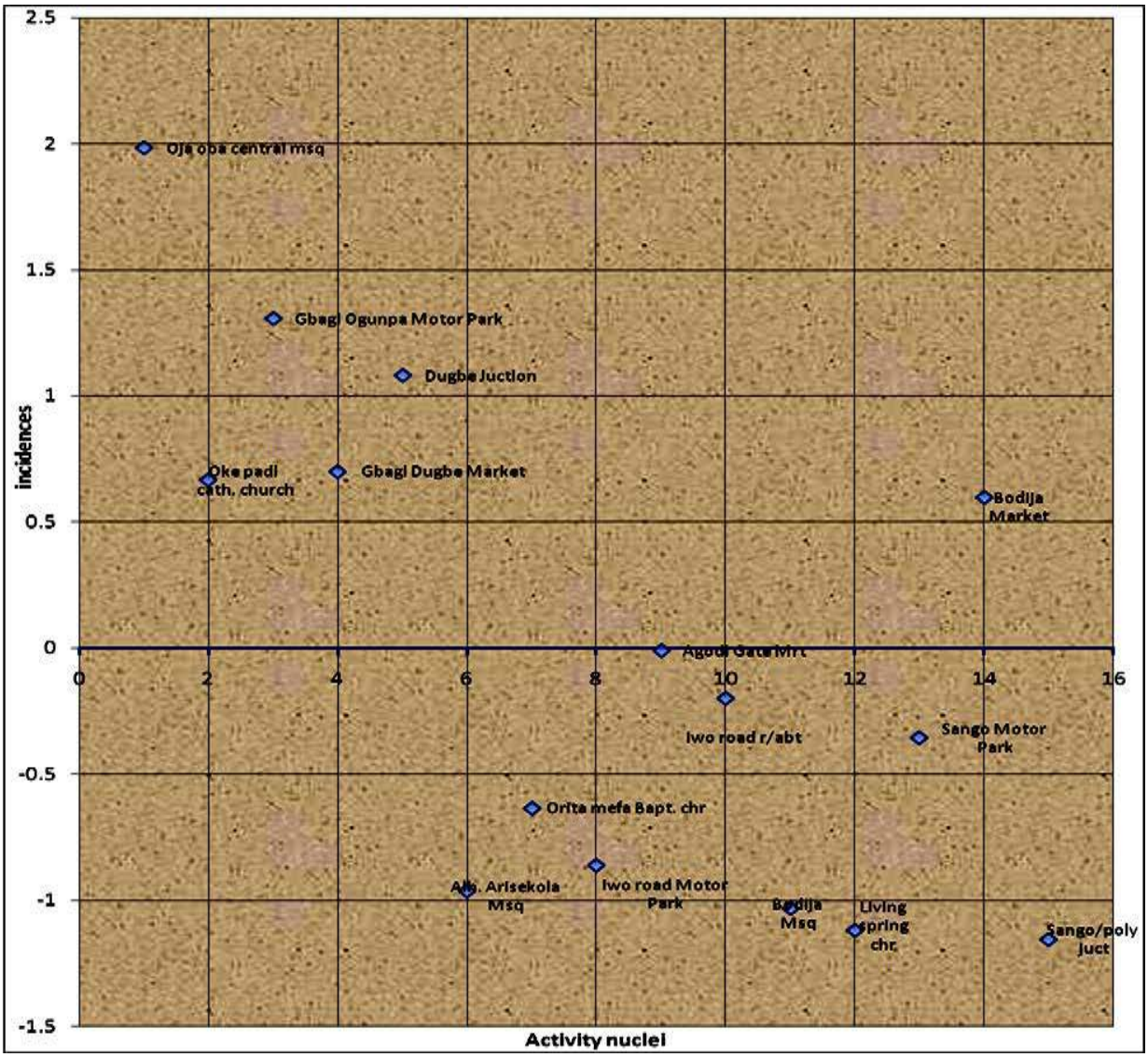
Source: Authors' fieldwork

The high concentration of street children in Market may not be unconnected with the fact that market provides a convenient spot for street children, especially child hawkers and child traders to sell their wares. Motor Park also provided avenue for street children to engage in a number of commercial activities such as selling of packaged sachet water, selling of items such as handkerchiefs, face towels, recharge cards for mobile phones, chiled soft drinks and fast food to travellers. Motor park is also a convenient spot for child beggars to beg for alms for the reason that when people are traveling they attach much importance to giving alms at motor parks as a way of pleading God for safe journey (Jelili, 2009). The relatively high incidence of street children in Mosque has religious implication as charity or almsgiving *(zakat*, in Arabic) is one of its five pillars. Therefore, mosques are good and convenient places for child beggars to beg for alms.

The aggregation of data by residential neighbourhood shows that the highest proportion of street children (55.1%) are found within high residential neighbourhood. This is followed by medium (23.2%) and low (21.7) densities residential neighbourhoods.

For locational specific analysis, the incidence of street children in all the locations was transcribed into Standard scores (Z-scores), irrespective of their assigned neighbourhood. The results of their Z- scores were plotted on the scatter graph in Figure. The Figure shows that all the locations in the top half of the graph are locations with a high incidence of street children. These locations include Oja-oba central mosque; Gbagi- Ogunpa Motor Park; Dugbe Junction; Oke Padi Catholic Church; Gbagi- Dugbe Market; Bodija market. Locations with low incidence are at the bottom half. These include Agodi – Gate Market; Iwo Road roundabout; Sango Motor Park; Orita Mefa Baptist church; Alhaji Arisekola Mosque; Iwo road Motor Park; Bodija Community Mosque; living Spring Church and Sango/ Polytechnic Junction.

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Source: Authors' fieldwork

Figure 1: Scatter Diagram of Distribution of Street children in Ibadan

As shown in Figure 1, all locations but one within the top half of the graph are locations in high-density residential neighbourhoods, while those at the bottom half are either located at medium or low-density residential neighbourhoods. The point to be stressed in this analysis is that the physical and socio-economic attributes of location play significant roles in the incidence of street children. The breakdown of the distribution of street children shows that the high-density residential neighbourhoods had the highest proportion of street children; this is followed by medium and low-densities neighbourhoods with 23% and 22%, respectively. This variation in the distribution of street children across residential neighbourhoods further attests to the impact of physical and socio-economic attributes of locations on the incidence of street children.

Table 3: ANOVA: incidence of street Children among Residential Densities

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	33053.733	2	16526.867	14.587	.001
Within Groups	13595.600	12	1132.967		
Total	46649.333	14			

Source: Author's Computation

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However, it is important to test how significant is the variation as observed above. Given this, the incidence of street children defined by RISC was subjected to ANOVA. The result of the ANOVA shows that with f=14.587 and p=0.001, there is a significant difference in the observed variations in the incidence of street children among residential densities. This result implies that the incidence of street children varies significantly among residential neighbourhoods; with the high-density residential neighbourhood having the highest distribution. This distribution was not unexpected since the high-density areas are characterized by the low socio-economic class and poor housing quality, and low environmental quality (Afon, 2007). Also, there is a great deal of informal activity from which street children can eke out a living and prevalence of makeshift structure used by the informal operators, which provide a haven for the street children.

The low incidence observed in low-density areas is a result of the physical and social attributes of the area. The low-residential areas usually have well-planned layouts; good quality housing; good quality environmental services; and a high proportion of the higher income and better-educated residents. There is simply no hiding place for street children in these areas.

b) Socio-Economic Characteristics of Street Children

As shown in Table 4, the majority of the street children were within the age range of 15 – 17 years (46.1%); followed by those in the age range of 12- 14 (32.9%), while children between 9 –11 years had the lowest proportion of 21.1%. This age distribution pattern evolved because only street children who disclosed their ages between 9 to 17 were involved in the survey. The study, however, concentrated more on those within 12 - 17 because they showed better knowledge of issues under investigation. Therefore, they were able to respond satisfactorily to various questions asked. The evolving age pattern conforms to the result of a similar study by Owoaje et al. (2009), where a significant proportion of street children within the age bracket 15-17 constitute the majority of street children interviewed.

Table 4: Socio-Economic Characteristics of Street Children

Characteristics	n	%
Age		
09 – 11	32	21
12 – 14	70	46.1
15 – 17	50	32.9
Total	152	00 1
Gender		
Male	106	70
Female	46	30
Total	152	100
Schooling Status		
Primary Schl	57	37.5
Junior Secondary Schl	29	19.5
Senior Secondary schl	5	3.0
Not In School	61	40
Total	152	100
Income		
₦1 – ₦200	49	32.2
₦ 201 – ₦ 500	43	28.3
₦ 501 – ₦ 1000	28	18.4
₦ 1001 - ₦ 1500	17	11.18
Above ₦1500	15	9.87
Total	152	100
Nativity		
Towns in Ibadan	106	65.8
Towns outside Ibadan but in South – West	24	17.1
Town outside South West	15	12.5
Town outside Nigeria	07	4.6
Total	152	100
Tribe		
Yoruba	124	81.6
Hausa	14	9.2
Igbo	08	5.2
Others	06	3.9
Total	152	100

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Religion		
Christianity	79	51.9
Muslim	71	46.7
No Religion	02	1.31
Total	152	100

Source: Authors' fieldwork

The gender of street children varied from place to place, but WHO (1995) puts the proportion of girls among street children as less than 30% in developing countries. A similar finding from the Lusaka study puts the proportion of street girls at 20% (PCIZ, 2002). This finding was corroborated in this study as the bulk of street children encountered were street boys (69.1%) compared with the proportion of street girls (30.9%). Literature from other countries shows similar gender disproportion among street children (UNICEF, 1993; Malcom, 2001; FREPD, 2003; Wargan and Dershem, 2009). As noted by Aptekar (2001), this gender disparity may be attributable to the fact that girls are expected to help at home more than boys, especially in female-headed households. The observation here is that girls are more sought after and employed as a housemaid in fairly well-to-do homes. Also, girls are more at risk than boys. Therefore, the fear of molestation by street boys and criminals must have kept most girls off the street. Moreover, the clandestine nature of girls works makes them less visible on the street than boys.

The educational status of street children indicates that about two-fifths (40.1%) of the children were schooling. However, about one- third (37.5%) were either in Primary school or Junior Secondary School. A few (3%) claimed they were in Senior Secondary School. The distribution suggests there is a connection between the cost of education and the street children phenomenon. Despite that the basic education in Nigeria is almost free of charge, the so-called "free schools" have hidden costs that make them unaffordable for many street children. Even though there are no tuition fees, there are often charges for school supplies and materials, uniform, transportation and extra – curriculum activities. Many families are extremely poor, and cannot afford the other cost of schooling.

The income level of street children shows that the majority (32. 2%) made between ₦1 – ₦200 per day. About 28.2% earned between ₦201 – ₦500 per day on average, while 18.4% earned between ₦500 to ₦1000 per day. Interestingly, about 20% of the street children made as much as ₦1000 per day, while another 9.9% made well above ₦1500 a day. The daily income for street children compares favourably with the daily take-home of some operators of informal activities. It is also observed that, if these children lived with their poor families, such economic opportunities would not be available. Further results show that major sources of income of the street children were menial jobs such as hawking (47.4%), alms from benevolent individuals (26.7%) and load-carrying (13.2%). The economic attractions of being on the street may be one of the major reasons why it is difficult for the government to get the children off the street.

Contrary to the submission that street children in Ibadan are mostly migrants (Faloore, 2009), this study shows that seven out of every ten street children (69.7%) had lived their entire lives in Ibadan (Table 4). In the remaining groups, (24%) were migrants from adjoining towns like Ile-Ife, Osogbo, Ikirun, Iwo, Ikire, while 9.9% were from other regions outside South West Geopolitical Zone. Only 4.6% came from outside Nigeria, in particular Chad and the Niger Republic.

The findings also revealed that an overwhelming number of children on the streets of Ibadan identified themselves as Yoruba (81.6%). Hausa and Igbo were 9.2% and 5.3%, respectively, while children from other tribes were 3.9%. Bearing in mind the analysis on the nativity of street children, the aggregate distribution of tribe of street children is in line with the expectation because the bulk of street children are from Ibadan and adjoining towns which are largely Yoruba speaking towns.

In Nigeria, religion has pervaded every sphere of social life (e.g., family, school, helping and coping behaviour of individuals and economic life). The religious affinity of the street children as analyzed in this study shows that 83 (54.6%) were Christians; 67 (44.1%) were Muslims, while 2 (1.3%) indicated they had no religious affiliation. However, this does not influence their values; attitudes, emotions, and behaviour as a number of them have been linked with a string of negativities such as pickpocketing, prostituting, recruits as armed robbers, urban terror gangs and violent cultists (Ngowaji et al, 2009, Boakye – Boaten, 2006)

As a matter of comparison, the socio-economic variables discussed above for the three residential densities were subjected to Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

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Table 5: ANOVA: Socio-economic Characteristics of street Children among Residential Densities

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Socio-Economic Variable	Between Groups	2.240	2	1.120	1.415	.246
	Within Groups	117.967	149	.792		
	Total	120.207	151			

Source: Author's computation

The results of ANOVA in Table 5 shows that out of the socio-economic variables discussed, only income (with f=18.762 and probability value of approximately 0.000) varies significantly with density. However, the observed variation in the overall socio-economic characteristics among residential densities is not statistically significant at f= 1.415 and p=0.246. This finding agrees with those of Zuberi, (2005); Owoaje, (2009); WERK, (2009); and Ekpenyong and Sibiri, (2011), which suggest that street children have similar characteristics irrespective of their locations.

c) Parental Characteristics of Street Children

The distribution of the parental characteristics of street children shows that contrary to reports in some studies (Isangula, 2011, Nichols et al. 2014; Pillay 2016), streetism may not directly correlate with orphanhood. More than two-third (121 or 79.6%) of the sampled street children indicated both parents were alive. This distribution suggests that their being on the street had the tacit approval of either or both parents. Nearly nine in every tenth street child (133 or 87.5%) reported their mothers were still alive, while more than three-quarters of street children (130 or 85.5%) claimed that their father was still alive. (see table 5)

The public perception that the majority of street children were pushed to the street as a result of dysfunctional family structure (Ruto, 1999; Kudrati et al., 2001; Kopoka, 2009) may not be entirely accurate; because a higher proportion (32.2%) of street children were from "apparently stable families". Nevertheless, one cannot completely rule out the possibility of a dysfunctional family being a contributory factor. The reason is that 19.3% of sampled street children were from broken homes, while 15.1% had their parents separated but not divorced. 6.7% had single-parent families. 26.9% were from widowed families having lost either of the parents.

Table 6: Parental Characteristics of Street Children

Characteristics	n	%
Parents Mortality Status		
Both parents alive	120	78.9
Both parents dead	10	6.0
Mother alive, father dead	13	8.6
Father alive, mother dead	9	5.9
Total	152	100
Fathers' Occupation		
Farming	13	10
Petty Trading	21	16.2
Artisan	28	21.5
Driving	19	14.6
Clerical	15	11.5
Unemployed	31	23.8
Retiree	03	2.3
Total	130	100
Mothers' Occupation		
Farming	06	4.5
Petty Trading	59	44.4
Artisan	06	4.5
Clerical	18	13.5
Unemployed	44	33.1
Total	133	100
Fathers' educational Level		
No formal Education	89	68.5
Primary Education	31	23.9
Secondary	06	4.6
Technical Education	01	0.7

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Post Technical Education	03	2.3
Total	130	100
Mothers' educational Level		
No formal Education	113	85.2
Primary Education	13	9.5
Secondary	5	3.8
Technical Education	-	-
Post Technical Education	2	1.5
Total	133	100

Source: Authors' fieldwork

As summarized in Table 6, almost one third (33.1%) of the children said that their mothers had no stable occupation or not working at all as against the less than a quarter (23.8%) who claimed that their fathers were unemployed. The mothers of an appreciable (44.4%) percentage of the children were involved in petty trading as compared to other types of work, which includes farming (4.5%), Artisan (4.5%) and clerical (13.5%). Many fathers, as claimed by the children, were more involved in skilled manual work (21.5%) and driving (14.6%). Petty trading appeared to be the occupation of fewer fathers than mothers (16.2%). Other occupations associated with the fathers were clerical job (11.5%) and farming (10%). A small proportion (2.3%) said their fathers had retired from employment. This distribution clearly illustrates the precarious socio-economic status of the families of these children.

According to FREPD (2003), street children come from families with the lowest educational attainment. This finding has been validated in this study that 68.5% of fathers and 85.2% of mothers had no formal education. Almost a quarter (23.9%) of the children said that their fathers did not go beyond primary school, while less than a tenth (9.5%) reported that their mothers did not have secondary education. About 4.6% and 3.8% respectively for fathers and mother had completed secondary education while only one father (0.7%) reportedly attended Technical school.

V. Recommendations and Conclusion

It can be concluded from the above analysis and discussion that:

1. Well planned, good quality environmental services tend to generate a low incidence of street children, while a poorly managed environment generates a high incidence of street children.
2. The phenomenon of street children is a symptom of the larger poverty problem, being the main cause for children ending up living on the street.
3. Education is an important human right to break the poverty cycle that street children experience. The disintegrating nature of the urban family and the breakdown or the weakening of the African kinship systems in the urban setting could be the important contributing factors to the problem of street children in Nigeria.

Thus, it is concluded that the street children phenomenon is the expression of a complicated web of social, economic and environmental problems. It is, therefore, essential to find structural solutions to the problem.

Arising from the above, the following recommendations are put forward to tackle the increasing trend of street children in Ibadan and, by extension, Nigerian urban centres.

- Urban planners are urged to ensure that the new layout (residential, industrial, commercial etc.) plans discourage open spaces that may not be manageable by the potential users. When such are created, adequate provisions should be made on how to manage them, and such provisions should be well implemented to guide against springing up of indiscriminate location of squatter-informal-sector activities which street children of different categories mingle.
- Government Poverty Alleviation Programmes should be restructured if not re-designed and should be centred on the basic needs' approach. This can be done through the establishment of environmentally attractive and affordable schools, provision of shelter, provision of scholarship for their children and setting up of medical centres in the urban slums
- In line with this, the government should introduce policy measures to ensure that all children of relevant ages are included in compulsory education and that education is provided free of charge, at least up to the secondary school level. This will assist to keep children off the street. The introduction of Universal Basic Education represents a positive step in this direction. However, the effect of over-politicization and corruption on the programme should be addressed to ensure compliance with policy recommendations for solving educational issues of street children in line with the context of the Millennium Development Goals and Education for All strategies that the country has signed.
- The traditional kinship system, where the extended family functions as a social safety net for its members, should be encouraged. The reintroduction of collective responsibility for the

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upbringing of children in African societies can be promising for the prevention of streetism.

While it could be stated that the recommendation mentioned in this work are by no means exhaustive, it is strongly suggested that they can go a long way in addressing the problem of ever-increasing problem of street children in the country.

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