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**A STUDY OF THE NETWORK OF  
SUPPORT FOR STREET CHILDREN IN  
NIGERIA**

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**B.Sc. (Hons) and M.Sc Sociology and Anthropology**

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This research work by Aransiola, Joshua Oyeniya has been read and approved as meeting part of the requirements for the award of Ph.D degree in Sociology and Anthropology of the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile – Ife, Nigeria.

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This work is dedicated to God, who gave me the opportunity to complete the degree, to my lovely and caring wife, Funmi, for her support and endurance throughout the period of this work and to my children, Grace and Joy, for their understanding during this study

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## ABSTRACT

The study examined the emerging network of supports available to street children in Nigeria. It assessed the kind of support given to street children and the extent to which these networks of support are fulfilling their mission mandates; and to examine the attitudes of the street children to these networks of supports thereby investigating the street children's preferred options of care.

For the purpose of this study, both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used to obtain primary data from the following social categories – street children, community members, NGOs, CSOs and government agencies. Convenience sampling technique was used to select 500 street children in each of the three cities selected for this study (Kaduna, Lagos and Port Harcourt). Out of the total sample of 1500 street children interviewed; a total of 647 representing 43.1% were 'of' the street children (that is children who made the street a permanent home, having severed relationship with parents and relations); while the rest were children 'on' the street (that is, children who trade on the streets but go home by evening to either parents or relations or some caretakers). Importantly, the focus of this study is on the 'of' the street children, who were mainly on their own, and often left to face the horrors of street life without recourse to their significant others. Three NGOs working with street children were purposively selected in each of the three cities. Quantitative data were collected from the street children and these NGOs using semi - structured questionnaire, while in-depth interviews were conducted in each study city with one key government official and three Civil Society Organisation leaders. Also, 6 Focus Group Discussions were also conducted with different social categories of community members in each city. Secondary data on government policies and practices on street children were collected from relevant government ministries and departments. The quantitative data were analysed using SPSS and STATA computer softwares, while these data were presented using univariate, bivariate and multivariate analyses, which then allowed the use of cross tabulations, chi-square and T- Test/ ANOVA. Probit regression was used to determine the degree of association between the independent and dependent variables in the study propositions. The qualitative data collected using key informant interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions and case studies were analysed using the content analysis carried out with

the help of the Text Base Beta Computer software, while data from the content analysis were presented using the ZY index tables.

Study findings show that 'of' the street children were the major targets by the network of the support since children 'on' the street were still being supported by their families. Also, 'of' the street children generally enjoyed more supports from community members in Kaduna (56.6%) and Port Harcourt (59.0%) than in Lagos (19.0%), while the support they received were more of feeding (30.8%), counselling (20.1%) and clothing (19.0%) than other forms of assistance. Although, few NGOs now work with the street children, their impacts are yet to be felt because of lack of requisite resources. It was evident that, although the government through the Social Welfare Department provides some assistance to street children, their programmes were not attractive enough to the children, hence, the street children's concept of approved schools is that of a typical 'Nigerian prison yard'. Eight (8) out of every 10 street children (80.1%) claimed to have received assistance from their peers on the street especially in the area of feeding (52.1%) than other forms of assistance. The assistance received by the street children from homeless adults tend to rate very high. These are in form of feeding, counselling, security and clothing. On the whole, the children's ranking of the 'support providers' shows that the support provided by the homeless adults on the street is most preferred. This was followed by supports from community members while the Civil Society Organisations were ranked third and the NGOs were ranked fourth. The government agencies were least on this ranking scale. Some background characteristics were found to be significant predictors of availability of support network. Such characteristics include educational level and place of residence and the availability of support network. This is because the observed probability associated with Z - statistics in each of the cases were small ( $P < 0.01$ ) or ( $P < 0.05$ ). Other significant predictors of the availability of support network in Model B were children's relationship with the Police ( $Z = 2.33$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), whether children have problem with other children on the street ( $Z = 2.81$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ), attitudes of the community members to the children ( $Z = -7.90$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ), the children's awareness of the presence of NGOs who can assist them in their area ( $Z = -6.41$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ) and whether the government is doing enough for the street children or not ( $Z = -2.42$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ).

The study concluded that, despite the global shift from eradication of street children to providing support for them right on the streets, this paradigm shift has very weak roots in Nigeria. Hence, the homeless adults on the street seem to be the role model for ‘of’ the street children. This has serious implication for the future of the country since it could lead to the proliferation of street gangs who are often involved in various crimes and ready instruments of violence. Increase in the population of street children and possibly street gangs could become serious economic burden to the nation. It is therefore important to attract support to the children ‘of’ the street in order to reverse this problem

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## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

A child is a person below the age of 18 years unless under the law applicable to child, majority is attained earlier (UNCRC, 1989). In traditional African society, the extended family system served as a social security mechanism, which was effective as a veritable source of socialization for all children within the family. Owasanoye and Okunsanya (2004) however noted that this extended family system has virtually disintegrated due to urbanization, physical dispersion of family members and influence of capitalism and globalization. This family disintegration coupled with uncontrollable population increase, increase in maternal mortality and increase in the number of children orphaned by AIDS led to the problem of street children in Africa, especially Nigeria. In the same vein, Oloko (1992) found that the factors which push children out of their homes vary from physical maltreatment and emotional problems, to being sent out of the home because of misdemeanors or family financial problems. Keen (1990) found that, some children flee in search of excitement, adventure, personal freedom and self – fulfillment, a comfortable, independent, and financially secured life and become part of the “action” in society. Majority of them, however, leave as a result of socio – economic and other factors within the family or immediate environment. Le Roux (1993) opined that, these family factors may include: abuse of alcohol and drugs, financial problems and poverty, family violence and family breakup, poor family relationships, parental unemployment and resulting stress, physical and/or sexual abuse of children, and parents absence from home as a result of personal or financial reasons such as migrant labour. Other reasons may include: collapse of family structure, collapse of extended family, and

emergence of vulnerable nuclear families in urban areas. Fall (1986) categorized the reasons for children leaving homes into two main factors. These are the “push” and “pull” factors. Pull factors include excitement and glamour of living in great cities, hope of raising own living standard, and financial security and independence. Push factors on the other hand include, national population increase above carrying capacity, international trend of urbanization, cost of living, search for additional income, child abandonment and neglect, large family size and disintegration of the traditional family.

According to Le Roux (Ibid), many children come from structurally disadvantaged homes where poor living conditions result in many difficulties. Parental loss through death or abandonment and/or family conflict or shortage of housing may force children onto the streets. The move to street life, in many cases, is an adaptive response to stress and severe oppression experienced by families living in a society of conflict. Thus, Hickson and Gaydon (1989) believed that the move to the streets often represents a desire to take control of one’s life and displace old values and conditions with new ones. UNFPA (2003) noted that in many settings, child – parent relationships have traditionally been just one component of a web of extended family relations. But migration, new values and understandings, poverty, family dispersal and the impacts of HIV/AIDS have reduced reliance on the extended family, particularly in cities. This has increased demands on the parents, while depriving them of the systems of support. Also, the loss of one or both parents dramatically changes adolescents’ lives by forcing them to become heads of households or onto the streets. Poverty, political and ethnic conflicts and impacts of HIV/AIDS exacerbate the situation (Ibid).

According to Le Roux (1996), the phenomenon of street children is worldwide despite cultural differences, while the social background of street children are remarkably similar. Hence, Oloko (1992) expressed that the phenomenon of street children in the strict sense of the term has been on the increase in most major urban areas in Nigeria. The increasing magnitude of the problem can be gauged from the finding that, in 1986, children who lived and slept on the streets were a rarity in Lagos, but in 1990s, there were an estimated 8,000 of them (Oloko 1992). In 1999, there were over 100 locations in Lagos in which children were found to be living on the streets (Oloko 1999).

Ahiane (2004) expressed that the sight of the street children sometimes infuriates and frightens, but their plight invokes sympathy and compassion. They are all over, in the markets, at bus stops, car parks, garages, street corners, under the bridges and other public places across the nation's major cities. UNICEF (1996a) estimated that by the year 2000, half of the world's population was less than 25 years of age and living in cities with a significant number of these living in poverty. By the end of the century, there were about 250 million more urban children in the 5 to 19 years of age cohort than there were in the mid – 1980s. More than 90 percent of these youths were living in developing nations, and many of these children were living on the streets (UNICEF 1996b).

According to Cockburn (1991) “in the extreme circumstances, street children are the neglected, abused and rejected offspring of parents and communities ...80 percent of all children we see have a history of abuse physically, sexually or emotionally”. Ross (2000) also stated that street children refer to children for whom the street, more than their family has become their real home. It includes children who might not necessarily

be homeless or without families, but who live in situations where there is no protection, supervision, or direction from responsible adults. They are children who cannot rely on their families to provide them with the necessities of life to live and grow up peacefully. Although few of them still maintain bonds with their parents, especially mothers, street children live by their wits at the back streets of cities. Cosgrove (1990) used two dimensions to define street children; the degree of family involvement and the amount of deviant behaviour. Hence, he defined a street child as “any individual under the age of maturity (i.e. 18years) whose behaviour is predominantly at variance with community norms, and whose primary support for his/her developmental needs is not the family or family substitute”.

According to Williams (1993), the term “street children” was first used by Henry Mayhew in 1851, although it came into general use only after the United Nations Year of the Child in 1979. Before this, street children were referred to as homeless, abandoned, or runaways. Most definitions of street children concentrate on just two characteristics: presence on the street and contact with the family (Lusk 1989). Lusk (1992) developed four categories of children found in the street. First, there are poor working children returning to their families at night. They are likely to attend school and not be delinquent. Second, the independent street workers whose family ties are beginning to break down. Their school attendance is decreasing, while their delinquency is increasing. Third, there are children of families who live and work with their families on the street. Their conditions are related to poverty. Finally, there are the children who have broken off contact with their families. They are residing in the street and are the ‘real’ street children. According to UNICEF (1988), street children can be categorized into three.

These are: (i) Children on the street – they work on the street but maintain more or less regular ties with their families. Their focus is home, to which they return at the end of the working day and have a sense of belonging to the local community; (ii) Children of the street – they maintain tenuous relations with their families, visiting them only occasionally. They see the street as their homes where they seek shelter, food and companionship and (iii) Abandoned children – they are also children of the street but are differentiated from that category by the fact that they have cut off all ties with their biological families and are completely on their own. Therefore, children on the street refer to “Home based” children who spend much of the day on the street but have some family support and usually return home at night while children of the street are “street based” children who spend most days and nights on the street and are functionally without family support. Most (75 percent) street children have some family links, but spend most of their lives on the streets begging, selling trinkets, shining shoes or washing cars to supplement their families’ income. Most of this 75 percent never go beyond primary education. The remaining 25 percent live on the streets, often in a group of other children known as “street children”. They sleep in abandoned buildings, under bridges, in doorways, or in public parks (Casa Alianza 2004). Inciardi and Surrat (1997) also noted that very small number of the children actually lives full time on the streets and they often engage in illegal activities in order to survive. Infact, children of the street are more typically associated with theft, drug sales, petty theft, prostitution and gang activity (Ibid).

UNICEF (1988), described street children in the following manner: The term denotes not only a place of congregation, but also a certain set of working and living

conditions. The vast majority are on the street to make a living for their families and/or themselves. For these children, the street is, above all, a work place. They spend large amounts of time on the street frequently because of the low returns on their labour. Most of them invariably make their way into the informal sector as petty hawkers, shoe-shine boys, scavengers of raw materials or even thieves and street prostitutes, and by the nature of their work and life, they are normally on their own, largely unprotected by adults. According to UNICEF (2001), street families are also becoming prominent in certain urban slum areas. These destitute families can be found living under bridges, in public toilets and in markets. Their children too are in extreme precarious conditions and urgently require intervention and assistance.

The process of moving from home to the streets is in stages, beginning with a slow but progressive amount of time away from home until there is a full matriculation to street life and culture (Aptekar 1988 and Visano 1990). According to Aptekar (2000), girls begin street life much later than boys, usually after the age of ten years. Boys are expected to contribute to the household income and thus, many go to the street to do so, while girls are expected to stay at home and help out with household chores. Street boys therefore leave home and take to the streets because they have been brought up to be independent, while some street girls take to the streets mainly as a means to flee from a very difficult domestic situation. Thus, boys usually leave home on their own volition, whereas girls leave home only when they feel forced to, and see no other viable options. This is responsible for the number of street girls being visibly much less than the corresponding number of street boys (Aptekar 2000). However, Nixon (1991), UNICEF

(1986) and Tacon (1981a) opined that there are fewer girls visible on the streets because they are quickly taken off the street to become prostitutes.

As the number of street children and their related criminal activities continue to grow, so does public opposition to their presence. Hence, the youngsters who were once looked upon as deserving some compassion and sympathy are now viewed, at best, as nuisance, and at worst, as dangerous to public safety and are therefore future criminals who ought to be locked up.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Bourdillon (2001) noted that when we see children neglected on the street, we should be worried about what this means for the future of our society. When we see young children fighting with knives, we should be worried about how violent they will be when they grow up. According to UNICEF (2002), children must rely on adults for the nurture and guidance they need to grow towards independence. Such nurture is ideally found in adults, but when primary caregivers cannot meet children's needs, it is up to the society to fill the gap. Since children are still developing, they are especially vulnerable, more than adults, to poor living conditions such as poverty, inadequate health care, poor nutrition, unsafe water, poor housing, environmental pollution and these conditions, in turn, jeopardize children's physical, mental and emotional development. Many changes in the society have a disproportionate and often negative impact on children. These changes include transformation of the family structure, globalization, shifting employment patterns and shrinking social welfare net in many countries (UNICEF 2002). Children's earliest experiences within the family and with other caregivers significantly

influence the future course of their development. The way in which children develop determines whether they will make a net contribution or pose a huge cost to society over the course of their lives (UNICEF 2002).

Unfortunately, the family, which was traditionally, the primary agent of socialization for children, is gradually losing its strength, especially in the area of child upbringing. King (2003) opined that one could even say that the degree to which the family is factionalized, to that degree it is weakened and dissolved. This is because family life increasingly manifests the strains that came from inhabiting an inhospitable environment due to the dynamics of technological society. Hence, the family has lost many of its functions to some other social institutions in the society. Therefore, King (Ibid) expressed that, it is generally true that an individual in traditional society spent much of his/her time within his/her family and under the care of his/her family. In technological society, most of the functions once associated with family life are transferred to the realm of mass institutions, such as school and religion. The consequences of this according to King (Ibid) are the isolation of the conjugal family, which appears to weaken the family. Also the nuclear family life tends to be unable to carry the heavy burden for personal and emotional support that the technological society lays upon it. Thus, there is weakened relationship between parents and children. As family functions are attenuated and emotional support becomes the basis for the family relationship, the bond between parents and children grows fragile.

According to Ryder (1996), the links between parents and children, unlike those between husband and wife, are forged during the long and intimate process of interaction required for child socialization. In spite of this solid foundation, it is uncertain that those



links will survive the child's transition to adulthood because the structural supports, which are characteristic of a traditional society, have now largely vanished. Hence, parents in technological society become less important to their children in every area other than emotional attachment, since they provide for less of their children's needs. The breakdown of structural support puts considerable pressure on the emotional bond, and in many cases, the bond is too unstable to bear the pressure. The father's authority in the family becomes questioned and the relationships between parents and children as a whole become brittle and unsteady (Ibid). Consequently, the family undergoes serious tensions and its future in technological society is in question.

Also, added to the above facts is the seeming chain reaction between urban poverty, street children phenomenon and HIV/AIDS. These factors put more strains on the family and incapacitate it further from functioning properly, especially with regards to child upbringing. According to Diop (2003), the population of the street children is on the increase, and will, in all likelihood, continue to increase in the coming decades given the broad structural constraints and the macro – economic trends in the sub – Saharan Africa as well as indications of increasing poverty. Also, street children by virtue of their environment, lifestyles, knowledge and attitudes are at particular risk of contracting and spreading HIV/AIDS (Diop 2003). UNFPA (2003), found that AIDS has so far orphaned at least 13million children currently under the age of 15 years. The total number of children that will be orphaned by the epidemic in 2010 is estimated to be more than double its present figure.

Before the onset of AIDS, about 2 percent of the children in the developing countries were orphans. Today, in about 10 countries of sub – Saharan Africa, more than

15 percent of children under the age of 15 years have been orphaned. Many orphaned adolescents are involved in crime, drug use and street life (Diop 2003). Girls and young women are often forced into early marriage or turn to sex work due to economic pressure, further subjecting them to physical, mental, and sexual trauma, and the risk of contracting and spreading sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV/AIDS. All these have serious implications for the street children themselves, their families and the society at large. The street children will not develop properly (both physically and mentally) and could be at particular risk of contracting HIV/AIDS. They may therefore not live a normal life without necessary support. Also the families that produce street children will likely continue in the vicious circle of poverty, since life on the street does not offer the children opportunities to make use of their full potentials and will not contribute to national development. They also constitute health hazard to the society, in that most of the street girls usually turn to commercial sex work. The government efforts at checking the spread of HIV/AIDS may not be complete without taking into consideration the problem of street children. The government efforts on poverty eradication may also be futile without necessary support for the street children.

Researchers over the years have explored how the problem of street children can be ameliorated and street children rehabilitated (Oloko1992, Scanlon et al 1998, Vasino 1990, and UNICEF 2001). Also, governments in different countries have tried and are still trying to rehabilitate the street children, but most of the measures and solutions suggested by these researchers are punitive in nature i.e. focus on punishment rather than rehabilitation (Bourdillon 2001, Gigenback 1994 and Human Right Watch 2004). Hence, the problem of street children seems unabated while it is becoming a permanent feature

of the societies across the globe. Added to this is the emergence of the phenomena of street families, which is becoming prominent in certain urban slum areas (UNICEF 2001). Therefore, there is a global shift in focus from emphasis on the eradication of street children, to emphasis on taking their immediate needs to them on the streets. In line with this, many NGOs are emerging across the globe (Catholic Action for Street children (CAS), Ghana, Action International Ministries, Colombia, and Caza Alianza International, (U.S) to provide support for the street children.

In recent times, there are many programmes emerging for the support of street children in Nigeria. These programmes include the provision of support in the area of feeding, clothing, housing, medical care and education. The Nigerian national assembly also promulgated a Child Rights Act in 2003. These events marked significant landmarks in ameliorating the problems of street children in the country. The extent to which these measures were effective is not yet known. Therefore the focus of this study is to assess the existing support network for street children from the perspective of the government, civil society organisations, Non – Governmental Organisations, the community and the street children themselves. The study is to provide important information for those involved in the provision of support to the street children. The study poses the following research questions:

- (i) What are the existing government policies on street children in Nigeria?
- (ii) Who are the actors in the social networks of support for street children and in what specific areas are they involved?
- (iii) What kinds of support are given by different social actors in the areas of schooling, economics, shelter and health?

- (iv) What are the gender dimensions of these social support systems?
- (v) What are the attitudes of the street children to the social support options?
- (vi) What are the preferred options for the children themselves?
- (vii) What support mechanisms exist among the street children themselves?
- (viii) What is the possibility of re – uniting the street children with parents or any other significant others through the existing support systems?

### **1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The major objective of this study is to assess effectiveness of the emerging network of support for street children from the perspective of the government, Non-Governmental organizations, civil society organizations, the community and the street children themselves.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- (i) identify the emerging network of support for the street children in selected cities in Nigeria;
- (ii) assess the kind (in quantity and quality) of support given by actors within the network of support systems available to street children;
- (iii) assess the extent to which these networks of support for the street children are able to fulfill their mission mandates;
- (iv) examine the attitudes of street children to these networks of support; and
- (v) investigate the preferred options of care that the street children desire.

#### **1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

For the past few decades, there has been the proliferation of street children in Nigeria. This is evident in the number of children seen on the street scavenging, begging, hawking and soliciting. This has been linked with so many factors. For instance, Swart (1958) believed that the street child phenomenon is directly linked with industrialization and urbanization, with the concomitant breakdown of extended family ties. Harsh or neglectful treatment of children by their families frequently derives from parental depression, anger, anxiety and frustration at life circumstances. UNICEF (2002) noted that changes in the global economy, unfavourable weather conditions and recurring armed conflicts have led in recent years to rapid growth of the urban population in the developing world living in poverty, while the plights of children often worsen when families relocate from the countryside to large urban cities. Dreams of improved living circumstances go unrealized following such moves, while parents and children lose support systems with the break up of extended families. Among the most conspicuous signs of the poverty of the urban slum is the presence of children on the street (UNICEF 2002). One fact that is clear from the above is that the proliferation of the street children has a direct link with family disintegration, and with a concomitant relationship with pressure of industrialization, urbanization, high level of poverty and impact of HIV/AIDS.

Despite constant condemnation of the proliferation of street children at the global level, the problem seems unabated in the developing countries, especially in Nigeria. In the recent past, efforts are now being redirected, at the global level, towards the provision of basic needs of the children on the streets. In line with this, networks of support for the

street children are now emerging. In the same vein, the Nigerian National Assembly passed a Child Rights Act in 2003, which among others, aimed at ameliorating the conditions of the street children and corrects the socio – milieu that breeds them. Hence, there is need for research efforts directed at the study of omnibus support system available to the street children and the specific areas in which the social actors give necessary support or otherwise to the street children. There is also a need to unravel the mechanisms of supports existing among the street children, their views on the social supports available for them and their preferred options in an effort to build a workable and sustainable support for them. This study will investigate all kinds of support available for street children in the area of schooling, economy, health and shelter. It will hopefully contribute to knowledge by broadening our understanding of street children phenomenon in Nigeria. It will also provide useful information for those who provide support for the street children and could stimulate policy direction for the government, NGOs and other support providers.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This section examines literature relevant to the understanding of issues relating to the plight of the street children, and in particular, literature on the different support programmes available to the street children in both the developed and the developing countries. In order to provide a better understanding of the subject matter, the literature review covers the following areas:

- (i) Children and their fundamental human rights
- (ii) Street children in developed countries
- (iii) Street children in Third World countries
- (iv) Factors responsible for the proliferation of street children.
- (v) Problems of street children
- (vi) Coping strategies of street children
- (vii) Solutions to the problems of street children
- (viii) Support programmes available for the street children.

#### **2.2 CHILDREN AND THEIR FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS**

Article 8(i) of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom states that: “everyone (children inclusive) has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence”, while Article 14 of the same Convention states that: “the enjoyment of the rights and freedom set forth in the Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as age, sex, race,

colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status”. Hence UNICEF (1990) noted, “the children of the world are innocent, vulnerable and dependent. They are also curious, active and full of hope. Their time should be one of joy and peace, of playing, learning and growing. Their future should be shaped in harmony and co-operation. Their lives should mature, as they broaden their perspectives and gain new experiences”. Every child has the right to grow up in a safe and nurturing environment. Children rely on adults for protection and guidance. So when adults harm and exploit children, it is the most serious betrayal of trust imaginable. Whether in the home, school, streets, or workplace, a child should never be subject to harm (Global Movement for Children 2004).

The rights of a child are stated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (1989). The articles of the convention relevant to this study are discussed below:

Article 1 of the Convention refers to a child as every human being below the age of eighteen years, while Article 2 reiterated that States parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind (see Articles 1 and 2 in Appendix I). A child has the right to life, to preserve his or her identity, including nationality, name and family relations as recognized by law without unlawful interference. State parties are expected to provide for the survival and development of the child and where a child is denied any of these rights, state parties shall provide appropriate assistance and protection, with a view to re-establishing speedily his or her identity (see Appendix I, Articles 6 and 8).



In Article 9 of the Convention, it was emphasized that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against his or her will, except when such separation is in the interest of the child and is duly approved by competent authorities. Paragraph 3 of the same Article also noted that, the right of the child who is separated from one or both parents to maintain personal relations and direct contact shall be protected except where this is contrary to the interest of the child. Where a child or his or her parents apply to enter or leave a state party for the purpose of family reunification, the request shall be dealt with in a positive, humane and expeditious manner. Also, children whose parents reside in different states have the right to maintain personal and direct relationship on a regular basis (see Article 10: 1 and 4, Appendix I).

Article 16 provides that no child shall be subjected to unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence, or to unlawful attacks on his or her honour and reputation. While article 18 emphasized that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child. A child therefore must be protected from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse (see article 19, appendix I). A child who is temporarily or permanently denied of his or her family environment shall be entitled to special protection and assistance by the state (Appendix I, Article 20). Also, while Articles 32 and 36 seek to protect a child from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development, Article 39 emphasized the re – integration of a

child who suffered any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse, torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, or armed conflicts.

Despite all the provisions of these articles UNICEF (1990) noted that each day, countless children around the world are exposed to dangers that hamper their growth and development. They suffer immensely as casualties of war and violence; as victims of racial discrimination, apartheid, aggression, foreign occupation and annexation; as refugees and displaced children, forced to abandon their homes and their roots; as disabled; or as victims of neglect, cruelty and exploitation. Each day, millions of children suffer from the scourges of poverty and economic crisis - from hunger and homelessness, from epidemics and illiteracy, from degradation of the environment. They suffer from the grave effects of the problems of external indebtedness and also from the lack of sustained and sustainable growth in many developing countries, particularly the least developed ones (Ibid). Human Right Report (1999) also noted that although the Convention on the Rights of the Child unequivocally prohibits the use of the death penalty on juvenile offenders, those who were under the age of eighteen at the time of their crimes, six countries- Iran, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the United States, and Yemen are known to have executed juvenile offenders in the 1990s.

### **2.3 NIGERIAN CHILD RIGHTS ACT 2003**

The Nigerian Child Rights Act 2003 sets out the rights and responsibilities of a child in Nigeria. It also provides for a system of child justice administration, and the care and supervision of a child. The sections of the Act relevant to this study are also discussed below:

The Act started in Section 1 by emphasizing that “ in every action concerning a child, whether undertaken by an individual, public or private body, institutions or service, court of law, administrative or legislative authority, the best interest of the child shall be the primary consideration”. Hence Section 2 seeks to charge any individual or organisation who acts as the child’s parents or guardian with the responsibility of giving protection and care to the child as is necessary for the well – being of the child while section 4 reiterated the fact that every child has a right to survival and development (see appendix II Sections 2 and 4).

Section 8 of the Act noted that every child is entitled to his privacy, family life, home, correspondence, telephone conversation and telegraphic communication. Hence, no child shall be subjected to the interference of his privacy, except where it affects the rights of the parents or legal guardian to exercise some reasonable supervision and control over the conduct of their wards.

A child shall not be subjected to any form of discrimination by reason of his community or ethnic group, place of origin, sex, religion or political opinion or by reason of the circumstances of his birth (Section 10 appendix II). In line with this, Section 11 of the Act seeks to protect the dignity of the person of a child. Hence, it provides that no child shall be subjected to physical, mental or emotional injury, abuse, neglect or maltreatment, torture, degrading treatment or punishment. No child shall also be subjected to servitude or slavery or attacks upon his honour or reputation. No child shall be subjected to any forced or exploitative labour; or employed to work in any capacity except where he is employed by a member of his family on light work of an agricultural,

horticultural or domestic character (Section 28 appendix II). This was further expatiated in Section 30 of this Act as it declares it illegal to deal in child for the purpose of begging for alms, guiding beggars, and prostitution, domestic or sexual labour or for any unlawful or immoral purpose and for hawking of goods on main city streets. (see appendix II).

Every child has the rights to parental care, protection and maintenance. Thus, no child shall be separated from his parents against his wish except when this is in the best interest of the child (Section 14). A child who is in need of special protection to promote his self reliance and active participation in the affairs of the community has the right to such protection and every individual, authority or institution responsible for the care of the child shall endeavour, within the available resources, to provide the child with such assistance and facilities (Section 16).

Section 31 of the Act provides that no person shall have sexual intercourse with a child whether he believes the person is above eighteen years of age or not or that the sexual intercourse was with the consent of the child or not. Hence a person who sexually abuses or exploits a child commits an offence punishable by imprisonment for a term of fourteen years (see Section 31 and 32, appendix II). Section 33 also provides that a person who exploits a child in any other form or way not mentioned in the Act commits an offence and is liable to a fine of five hundred thousand Naira or imprisonment for term of five years or to both. Section 50 of the Act therefore empowers a development officer; a police officer or any person authorized by the minister to take a child to the court if he has reasonable grounds for believing that the child is an orphan, neglected or is in any condition that can hamper his proper growth and development (see Section 50, Appendix

II). In line with this there shall be established for the 36 states of the federation and the Federal capital territory, Abuja, a court to be known as family court, referred to as “the court” in the Act, for the purpose of hearing and determination of matters relating to children (Section 149, Appendix II).

According to Onyekamuo (2004), the bill (which has now been passed into law) was a long-awaited move to eradicate destitution, child labour, child slavery, illiteracy and child prostitution in the country. Despite the fact that Nigeria was one of the first countries to ratify the Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC) in early 1990s, there was no specific Act to protect the right of the child. UNICEF (2002), noted that it was very disappointing that Nigeria was still, in 2002, debating the Child Rights Bill to legitimate the CRC into Nigerian law. The bill, which was sponsored by the government, and seeks to protect the rights of children against all forms of abuse, whether by parents, guardians or other individuals, was rejected by the House of Representatives. Some parliamentarians said it was not in tune with the country’s religious diversity and that a law on children’s rights could make them lawless. The debate on the draft law had polarized legislators: those from the North argued against it while those from the South applauded its intentions (UNICEF 2002). While proponents believed that the bill would heighten the responsibility of the government in catering for the needs of less privileged children, its opponents argued that no law would change people’s religious beliefs with regard to bringing up children and that any such changes, if positively motivated, would have to be gradual (Ibid).

Olori (2004) however noted that a wide-ranging Child Rights Bill that was signed into law, which seeks to check child hawking by prescribing penalties for the parents and guardians who allow children on to the streets has yet to be properly implemented. The family court, which is to try offenders, has not been established. This was after one year of the passage of the Act into law. This call for questions, the operational realities of the act, hence, there is need to investigate into what services are available for the children, especially street children in this case. This will help us to be able to compare what was in the provisions of the act with the realities of problems confronting the street children in Nigeria.

The United Nations has estimated the population of street children worldwide at 150 million, with the number rising daily. These young people are more appropriately known as community children, as they are the offspring of the communal world (UNICEF 2002). They range in age from 3 – 18 years; about 40 percent of these are homeless while the other 60 percent work on the streets to support their families. They are unable to attend school and are considered to live in “especially difficult circumstances.”(Shaw 2004). The Human Rights Watch (1999) noted that in the decade (i.e. 1989 – 1999) that followed the Convention on the Rights of the Child, many countries used the convention as the basis for reviving domestic legislation and improve protection for children, or have appointed special ombudspersons or envoys for children. As the Committee on the Rights of the Child evaluated country reports under the convention, it developed new standards of protection and pressed governments for specific reforms (Human Right Watch 1999). In 1999, the convention stood as the single most widely ratified treaty in existence. The convention was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on November 20,

1989, and the promises of this historic document included children's rights to life; to be free from discrimination; to be free from military recruitment and to be protected in armed conflicts; to be protected from torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment; to be free from arbitrary deprivation of liberty; to special treatment within the justice system; and the rights to education, health care, an adequate standard of living, and freedom from economic exploitation and other abuse (Human Right Watch 1999).

In the decade following the adoption and near-universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a growing number of countries modified their juvenile justice laws to guarantee children the rights set forth in the convention and in other international instruments. According to Human Rights Watch (1999), this trend was most evident in Latin America, where many countries enacted reforms to bring their legislation into compliance with the convention. Brazil, one of the first to reform its national laws comprehensively in response to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted its Children's and Adolescent's Statute in 1990. Ecuador and Peru passed Juveniles Acts in 1992, Mexico adopted its Law on the Treatment of Juvenile Offenders in 1991, El Salvador enacted a new juvenile justice law in 1995, and Nicaragua adopted a Children's Legal Code in 1998 after a two-year delay grounded in the principle that all children possessed rights, which must be respected by the state. These reform efforts represented a significant departure from earlier legislation directed exclusively at "minors" in "irregular situations" and in need of protection. Efforts to reform Guatemala's juvenile justice system stalled in early 1998, when the government delayed for the second time the implementation of a new Minors' Code that would represent a vast improvement over current legislation. Among other protections, the code would guarantee the right to a

lawyer at government expense to children accused of crimes, would forbid placing children in protective custody in juvenile detention centres, and would end the practice of imprisoning children for “status offenses” such as running away or being homeless.

#### **2.4 Street children in developed countries**

Despite the promises of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), its basic tenets were broken for countless children around the world even in the developed countries. The armed conflicts that raged in all quarters of the world produced appalling abuses of children’s rights. Hundreds of thousands of children were pressed into service as soldiers. Millions became refugees displaced from their homes, often separated from their families, their future and safety uncertain. Children living outside war zones were also subjected to routine violence. Street children on every continent including the developed world, endured harassment and physical abuse by police (Human Right Watch 1999). According to Ross (2000), the public view of street children in many countries is overwhelmingly negative. The public has often supported efforts to get these children off the street, even though they may result in police round ups, or even murder. There is an alarming tendency by some law enforcement personnel and civilians, business proprietors and their private security firms, to view street children as almost sub-human. Claridge and Hume (2004) expressed that in New Zealand, Children as young as 10 are being recruited into new Christchurch street gangs. Amnesty International (2002) noted with concern the continued discrimination of children from vulnerable groups in UK with respect to their enjoyment of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights; the high number of children living in poverty; the trafficking of children for sexual and other type



of exploitation; and the continued retention of the defense of “reasonable chastisement” and the lack of “significant action towards prohibition of all corporal punishment of children in the family” which is one of the conditions that force children out of homes, while Honduras was accused of mass killings of street children (Amnesty International, 2002). Rhoads (2004) expressed that while the established legal age of maturity in America is eighteen, there exists a double standard when it comes to dealing with children who have committed crimes. Not even old enough to vote, sign contracts or even purchase cigarettes, offenders are thrown into a legal system that allows them to be punished by death, years down the road for acts committed before being considered fully responsible for their own actions.

### **2.5 Street children in the Third World countries**

Over the years, there have been some improvements in the area of legislation on child right in some Third World Countries, hence Mensah – Williams and Winkler (2004) noted that the Nigerian Parliament has passed a Child Right Act (2003), which sets out the rights and responsibilities of a child and provides for a system of child justice administration. In Malaysia, the Child Act (2001) was designed to provide care and protection to all children while the National Advisory and Consultative Council on children was also established in addition to the Coordinating Council for the Protection of Children. Namibia also passed a Children Act aimed at protecting the rights of all children. However, little or nothing has been achieved in the area of implementation. Thus Casa Alianza (2004) noted that the social phenomenon of street children is

increasing as the Third World population grows. In fact, the largest-ever global generation of children will be born in this decade.

According to D'Souza, Castelino and Madangopal (2002) Asia, Africa and Latin America are infamous for having the largest percentages of street children in the world. More than 75,000 children live on the streets of Zambia's major cities. In addition, 13% of the children populations of 4.1 million are orphans as a result of HIV/AIDS. Street children "fell prey" to drug and substance abuse and some have been raped. In the central Asian Republic of Kyrgyz Stan a growing number of children have been abandoned by their families and are forced to live on the streets due to poverty (World Population Awareness 2004).

Cuc and Flamm (2000) opined that the number of children living/working on the street has been on the rise in both rural and urban areas in Vietnam. "However, no one had been able to say with certainty how many of these children are there, living/working on the street in Vietnam. Estimates vary from one organization to another, as it has proved difficult to make a general survey of "street children". These children have been defined in many different ways and popularly been labeled in various terms such as; "*children of the dust*" (*bui doi* in Vietnamese)," or "*the dust of life*," "*homeless kids*," "*vagrant children*," or "*roaming children on the street*." The labels attached to street children can often be hurtful and promote negative connotations.

Klich (2002) noted that there are a million street children in Mexico City. Majority of these children are between the ages of 5 and 15. Most of them have been forced into the street to find support for themselves and those at home. The least lucky

ones are those who have been abandoned by their families and live night and day on the street.

In Nigeria, there were an estimated 12 million child labourers. (UNICEF, 1995). For the year 2000, there were 3,859,000 economically active children, 1,262,000 girls and 2,597,000 boys between the ages of 10-14, representing 23.91% of this age group. (ILO, 1997). In 1995, there were 3,546,000 economically active children, 1,094,000 girls and 2,452,000 boys between the ages of 10-14, representing 25.75% of this age group. (ILO, 1997). Children, particularly girls are withdrawn from schools into early marriages and into extensive child labour such as street trading and related activities. (Child Welfare League of Nigeria, 1996). According to Global movement for Children (2004), children all over the world are being harmed every day. An estimated 250 million children between the ages of 5 and 14 are working in developing countries. Roughly 60 million children are exploited in the worst forms of child labor. Some 120 million work full-time, many of them for nine or more hours a day. Almost 80 per cent of them earn no money at all for their labour. None of these children are able to attend school. In Nigeria, two of the main forms of child labour outside the home are street vending and weaving. Children as young as 6 years old may be found in street trading but most are between 9 and 14 years old. Trafficked children are made to work as hawkers and petty traders, beggars, car washers, bus conductors, farm hands or cattle rearers. (UNICEF Child Domestic Workshop, 1998). Child Welfare League of Nigeria (1996) noted that the use of children as hawkers, beggars and bus conductors is widespread in urban areas. In Lagos alone there are about 100,000 boys and girls living in the streets.

## **2.6 Factors responsible for the proliferation of street children**

Scanlon et al (1998) noted that several related economic, social, and political factors have been linked with the phenomenon of street children. These include; land reform, population growth, drought, rural to urban migration, economic recession, unemployment, poverty and violence. In the same vein, D'Souza et al (2002) noted that the phenomenon of street children has come into existence because of the interplay of a medley of factors such as industrialization, migration from rural to urban areas, poverty, dearth of opportunities for education, broken families, cruelty, neglect, and natural calamities. All these have led to an escalation in the number of children running away from homes or being left to fend for themselves. Street children have been described as victims of "economic violence." (Swift, 1989).

Aptekar (1994) noted that several hypotheses have been advanced to explain the origins of street children. One relates to urban poverty, the second relates to aberrant families (e.g. abandonment, abuse or neglect) and a third is associated with modernization. To him, in any attempt to ascertain why children became street children, such factors as psychological status of the child and the child's family, the perception of life on the streets and the degree to which street children culture exists must be considered. Wherever the inquiry might lead, it is important not to assume that leaving home is a mistake (Aptekar 1989 and Felsman 1984). Connolly (1990) expressed that children find that their "living conditions on the street are often better than those at home". Wright, Witting and Kaminsky (1993) opined that street based children are less likely to come from a home headed by their father and less likely to have access to

running water or toilet facilities; their parents are more likely to be unemployed, illiterate, less cooperative, and less mutually caring with higher levels of violence.

According to CAS (1999) some children left their home because of abuse or domestic disharmony. In general, they don't feel wanted and supported at home. Sometimes, their parent(s) sent them to the urban centre to help augment the family income. Other reasons are: urbanization, parental neglect, peer pressure, lack of basic infrastructure in some parts of the rural area, etc. Many children were attracted to urban centres through promising stories of friends (CAS 1999). According to Casa Alianza (2004), many are victims of abuse, sometimes murder by police, other authorities and individuals who are supposed to protect them. Physical, emotional, and sexual abuse by parents, often by step-parents, are the most common reasons why children leave their families. This is referred to as "family disintegration"—the breakdown of the nuclear family (Casa Alianza 2004). Binh (2000) believed that the street children phenomenon is a product of urbanization, poverty and a lack of alternative. For some, the street is a permanent escape from broken families or domestic violence, while for others the street life is a means of supplementing family income, of passing time and having fun, or of temporarily escaping from overcrowded conditions at home. In addition, unequal distribution of resources, limited economic opportunities and the breakdown of traditional family values and community structures deny millions of children the care and support they need for wholesome growth and development. According to UNICEF (1985), "yesterday, street children were no more than a footnote, today, street children are a major issue, while tomorrow, if the present trends continue, they could be a blight on urban civilization. For Africa, tomorrow is already here. Street children are not only a

blight on urban civilization, they pose a serious obstacle to overall socio-economic development in Africa”.

The world and Africa in particular are witnessing rapid and wide-ranging socio-economic and political changes. There is rapid urbanization, runaway population growth and increasing disparities in wealth. The introduction of structural adjustment programmes and globalization are changing the very fabric of African society. One of the negative consequences of these changes is the emergence of large numbers of children on the streets (UNICEF, 1985). Shelter Don Bosco (2003) categorized the factors responsible for the proliferation of street children into nine. These categories shall be adopted in this study. Culture that was identified by Aptekar (1993) shall be added to this list. Therefore, the factors include:

- Socio – structural causes
- Economic causes
- Quality of Education
- Natural Calamities and civil unrest
- Neglect and abandonment
- Cruelty and Abuse
- Family disintegration
- Peer group
- Influence of the media
- Culture

These factors are discussed below one after the other.

**Socio-Structural Causes:** The phenomenon of street children is a repercussion of industrialization, urbanization and modernization. In the race for technological advancement, industrial growth centres have come up all over the world, thus upsetting the age-old patterns in which people lived and worked in their native villages and towns. The most crucial among such development-induced patterns is the migration of people from rural to urban areas (Shelter Don Bosco 2003). Dwindling opportunities in the rural areas and the concomitant lure of life in towns and cities have resulted in a 'pull' towards the urban areas. People start migrating from relatively undeveloped regions of the country to the developing regions often leaving behind their families and homes. But, there is little that they can do for their children who wander on the streets while they work until late hours to make ends meet (Shelter Don Bosco 2003). Wright et al, (1993) and de Galan (1981) noted that rural to urban migration which is one aspect of modernization is sufficient enough to explain the origins of street children. Aptekar (1993) also expressed that modernization led to the demise of extended family, hence, children no longer grow up in extended families with strong community support. This has also led to the proliferation of street children. Owasanoye and Okunsanya (2004) found that, the phenomenon of street families, a variant of street living, is also becoming prominent and this has a serious implication for the survival of the children.

**Economic Causes:** Often, the earnings of the parents are insufficient to secure even the family's most basic needs. Consequently the children have to be sent to work to supplement the family's income (Shelter Don Bosco 2003). Child labor and exploitation are not only the results of poverty – they also perpetuate poverty. Without education, many children end up without opportunities later in life. Many of them in turn will look

to their own children to help supplement the family's income. Many more will suffer from injuries or contact diseases that will leave them permanently unable to work and poor.

According to Kopoka (2000) poverty is a major cause of street children. Africa is today a continent characterized by extreme poverty. Poverty is resulting in children being forced to work on the streets to support themselves and their families. Poverty is also causing many families to break up, with parents being unable to support their children. Rural poverty is making rural populations including children to move to urban areas with the hope of a better future. Poverty causes malnutrition and poor health and reduces a family's ability to work, thus creating conditions for children to move to the streets. Hence, Bourdillon (2001) noted that for the children and their families, being on the street is not a problem. It is their solution to a number of problems. Crowded living conditions and not having enough money to feed and clothe the children are problems. A young lad, who shares a single-room with his mother and two grown-up sisters with children of their own, solves a problem by finding somewhere to sleep with his friends. He remains attached to his family and visits them regularly. He is integrated with them and does not need to be reintegrated. But it is better for him to sleep out than to stay at home. When he finds a group of friends with whom he can stay at night, his situation has improved. He becomes visible as a street child and part of our problem, but for him, being on the streets solves the problem of sharing an overcrowded room.

In a study of 55 Nigerian street children under age 15 who were begging for a living, Ojanuga (1990) found that the children were on the street because their families were poor and needed the money they earn. Indeed 80 percent of the children still lived



with their families, and many of the children begged with them. Lusk (1992) believed that most children in developing countries are on the streets to work and earn money because there is not enough at home. In the same vein Rosa de Sousa and Ebrahim (1992) found that 82 percent of the children left home for economic reasons. Once on the streets, the children contributed half or more of what they earn to their families. This is hardly a sign of family discord.

**Quality of Education:** Many street children are school dropouts. Shelter De Bosco (2003) noted that the dropout rate in India is quite high (36%-52%), the most common reasons for which are the poor quality of education in the country, the irrelevance and monotony of the syllabi taught in schools, and child labour. Besides, a number of schools in the country have only a single teacher to deal with very large numbers of children. Sometimes these teachers are not even adequately trained to deal with children or even to teach them in interesting ways. The teachers depend on traditional methods of corporal punishment to discipline the children, which in turn develop into a phobia for school and education in the minds of the young ones. As a consequence, the entire learning atmosphere is not pleasurable, but rather, seems persecutory to many (Shelter Don Bosco 2003). This is also true of most developing countries, especially Nigeria. Hence Bourdillon (2001) noted that being out of school might not be a problem. Paying school fees for an education that will be useless in terms of finding employment is a problem. Living under an authoritarian teacher can be a problem, especially one that regularly beats, or verbally abuses vulnerable children. Spending hours doing boring and totally useless and meaningless learning is a problem. Opting for the streets solves all these problems. Osemwegie (1994) also confirmed that 86 percent of street children in Lagos

had attended school but had dropped out. When these children are grown up without education, they are unable to find formal employment. Unemployed and without money, often petty thieves, alcoholics or drug user, they are unable to give their own children any education. Children without positive father figures to model themselves after later find it difficult to relate to their own offspring. Fathers devalued by enforced idleness, alcoholism and socially unacceptable activities cannot nurture confident children. The result is that more and more children are escaping to the streets as a safe heaven.

**Natural Calamities and Civil Unrest:** Families are often displaced and torn apart (physically, socially, economically and culturally) as a consequence of natural calamities like floods, droughts, earthquakes and war. Relief operations from various sources not only arrive long after the disaster, but also are woefully inadequate. There are many 'red tape procedures' to be followed before relief becomes truly operative. Subsequently, the children orphaned by these calamities are compelled to take to the streets merely to survive (Shelter Don Bosco 2003). According to Beauchemin (2002), "During the war in Angola, many children and adolescents fled the rural areas and conflict zones to join communities surrounding Luanda (the capital of Angola) and the major provincial capitals. Others lost their parents during the fighting." Although Nigeria has not suffered full – scale warfare since 1970, there has been a series of localized yet bloody conflicts in different parts of the country, mainly triggered by ethnic or religious rivalries, against the background of poverty and grievance (UNICEF 2003). These local conflicts have also led to loss of lives and properties, turning many families poor by losing their breadwinners to the crises. Hence, their children are forced to the streets to supplement family income.

**Cruelty and Abuse:** Many parents today still use the traditionally upheld methods of disciplining children by hitting them with belts, canes, sticks and so on. In families where one/both parents is / are alcoholic(s), this cruelty is more pronounced (and many involve the parent flinging the child against the wall, sexual abuse, etc) and the children may sustain severe injuries. The young, gentle mind of a child is not designed to cope with such severe trauma and pain and when the situation becomes unbearable, the only escape the child knows is physical escape from the home - the source of the pain and torture (Shelter Don Bosco 2003). Patel (1990) believed that the major reason for street children was family violence while Subrahmanyam and Sondhi (1990) claimed that, although poverty was a significant aspect of the children being on the streets, family discord was the major problem. Aptekar (1993) argued that many children entered the street as a result of being pushed out of their homes because of family problems as well as being pulled towards the streets to find refuge from their problems. To such children, the streets were a solution; a possibility of experiencing freedom and stimulation. In the same vein, Kopoka (2000) expressed that many children run away to the streets to avoid violence and abuse in the family. It is now common occurrence to hear of terrifying stories of abuse of children by parents or family members. Children as old as three are increasingly being sexually abused, starved and ignored by the family and community at large. It is today not surprising to see parents or guardians using force or threats to send their children out to beg, steal and work to earn income for the family. Adults are increasingly using children as sources of income and thus violating and denying children their basic rights as human beings.

**Neglect and abandonment:** In large and / or economically deprived families, parents get little opportunity to devote time to their children. With both parents at work, the children go unattended to for hours. In many cases, older siblings have to look after the younger ones. There is too little for them to share by way of food and the younger ones in particular do not always get their proper share. The neglected and deprived among the children feel not only insecure, but also unjustly treated. They may even doubt their parents' love for them. Thus, in a state of rejection and hurt, they may turn hostile and run away from home in search of other places where they can belong and feel loved (Shelter Don Bosco 2003). Kopoka (2000) noted that many families are also increasingly characterized by absent parents, lack of communication between parents and children, alcoholism and domestic violence. However, Aptekar (1993a) argued that the number of children arriving streets because their families have abandoned them is far less than is commonly assumed, while Felsman (1989) and Boydon (1986) found that only about 3 percent of the street children were abandoned by their families.

**Family disintegration:** The traditional family is a system of interdependent members possessing two attributes: membership in the family and interaction with other members (Janosick and Breen 1992). A unique social group is bound together by generational ties, an emotion care giving, established goals, altruistic orientation, and a nurturing form of governance (Bentler et al 1989). Stone and McGuire (1998) defined family as a group of two or more persons related by blood, marriage, adoption or emotional commitment who have a permanent relationship and who work together to meet life goals and needs. The strength of the kinship family, often called extended family, may be inferred from four indices, namely: the residing of two or more related nuclear families together,

engagement in joint activities, the giving of assistance to individual related persons based on social expectation of such assistance, and having friendship networks of relatives. Hence, Fadipe (1970) noted that “it is chiefly from the extended family that child obtains the bulk of his education as a member of society. In the extended family the child is afforded frequent opportunities of various experiences not only of the practical effects of many items of the social code but also of the unpleasant consequences. The handling and punishment of such offenses as theft or incest which occur within the household and the opinion of members on such crimes are all impressive object lessons to him”.

Zethin et al (1995) however noted that this communal responsibility of bringing up children is no longer strong as in traditional Yoruba society due to the breakup of the extended family as a result of urbanization and industrialization. In the same vein, Aina et al (2003) found out that kinship networks are losing their strongholds and relevance in the Nigeria urban communities. They noted that kinship ties, NGOs and Government institutions are the least emphasized among the social institutions generally mentioned as serving as a resource to the urban poor in their study. This is because “the urban transfers weaken bounding and predisposes to exposures with people of diverse backgrounds and cultures”. According to Kopoka (2000) the family institution in Africa is going through a lot of upheavals. Fewer and fewer children have stable and loving family environments. Many families have broken up with children left to fend for themselves. Shelter Don Bosco (2003) noted that Children living with a single parent or a stepfather or stepmother, or children who are orphans, are most prone to emotional trauma and often suffer from feelings of rejection and insecurity that may drive them out in search of a place where they may be better accepted and loved.

**Peer Group Influence:** A few children leave their homes for street life because of the influence of their peers. Some children find themselves on the streets as a result of their peers encouraging them to leave the conflict-ridden homes they live in. This may be done by the peers glorifying the idea of city life, or of independent life out of the home (Shelter Don Bosco 2003). According to Cutcher (1999), many street children have taken flight to the street because they are attempting to find new alternatives and to make a better life for themselves rather than stay at home.

**Influence of Media:** According to Shelter Don Bosco (2003), the media today also plays quite a significant role in the problem of children leaving home. Films typically dramatise, in an exaggerated fashion, the hero who leaves his home in the village, moves to the city and makes a fabulous life for himself. The newspapers, soap operas and other audio visual media over emphasize 'city life' as being 'exciting', 'adventurous', and 'totally filled with fun' and at the same time fail to realistically present the disadvantages of the same. As a result, children do not think twice about leaving their homes for the cities because they feel they will definitely have no problems with city life. Their illusions are shattered when they actually come into the cities, and they are then faced with the decision of admitting their mistake, giving up their pride and returning home or staying on in the city in an attempt to prove themselves right. (Shelter Don Bosco 2003).

**Culture:** According to Aptekar (1993), one factor that is missing from most studies is the role of culture in explaining the origins of street children. To him, some cultures make it quite easy for children to become street children. Others make it

impossible. Hence, Hickson and Gaydon (1989) believed that the political culture of the apartheid encouraged the proliferation of street children in South Africa.

## **2.7 Problems of the street children**

Street children live in an environment devoid of the affection, love, care and comfort of a family life. They are impelled by circumstances to struggle to fulfill their most basic needs like food and shelter at a very tender, impressionable age. Street children are deprived of all the things they covet in their childhood and are therefore aware of the chasm of difference that exists between them and 'normal' children (Shelter Don Bosco 2003).

Scanlon, Tomkins, Lynch and Scanlon (1998) noted that millions of children throughout the world live on the street. These children are among the most deprived; they usually have no access to health care or education and some of them have been victims of violence even before taking to the street. Street children are seen by many as worthless, and many countries have used violent and punitive measures to remove them.

Human Rights Watch (1999) noted that attention to street children has focused largely on their pressing economic and social plight—poverty, lack of shelter, denial of education, AIDS, prostitution, and substance abuse. But, the constant police violence and abuse inflicted on these children, or their treatment within the justice system through which they regularly pass is equally worthy of consideration. Civil and political rights violations against street children have been largely overlooked, symptomatic of the larger

failure to take seriously the full scope of children's rights (in particular articles 37 and 40) enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Viewed as "anti-social" or criminal elements, or a scourge on a city's tourist-filled streets and business districts, many police and ordinary citizens simply wish street children would disappear, by whatever means. Police, government, and private security forces subject street children throughout the world to routine harassment and physical abuse, out to wipe the streets clean of a perceived social blight. Street children face extortion, theft, severe beatings, mutilation, sexual abuse, and even death. (Human Rights Watch, 1999).

Street children are charged with vague "offenses" such as vagrancy or loitering, or status offenses such as being "in need of protection or discipline," which effectively make children's poverty and homelessness, or status as children, a crime. They are often arbitrarily rounded up and detained simply because they are on the streets and appear to be homeless. (Human Rights Watch, 1999).

Some street children are arrested and jailed because of their involvement in small businesses deemed to be illegal, such as unlicensed hawking, or are accused of petty theft, drug-related crimes, or prostitution. Some are arrested as scapegoats, or in order to finger or catch others. Many police officers believe street children have information about crimes committed on their beat, or attribute crimes in the area to street children directly, imputing criminal associations and criminal activities to street children generally.



For whatever the alleged crime, from vagrancy to theft, street children face frequent roundups, being chased down by police and hauled off to jails. They are often held for excessive periods of time, for days and even weeks, under horrendous conditions, and usually mixed with adults. Fagbongbe (2004) noted that the children in Nigeria are detained in police station beyond the period prescribed by the constitution and in an environment with poor hygiene, over crowdedness with physical and verbal abuse and maltreatment. In jails they may be further beaten by police, or forced to pay bribes in order to be released. Girls are sometimes coerced into providing sexual services to police in exchange for release, or are raped. From jails, street children may be transferred eventually to long-term penal institutions, sometimes euphemistically called “homes” or “schools” where they may languish, out of sight, for years. The problems of the street children have been summarized into three main categories by Shelter Don Bosco (2003).

These categories shall also be adopted in this study. They include:

- Physical Problems
- Psychological Problems
- Social Problems

These shall be discussed one after the other.

### **Physical Problems**

**Lack of Adequate Nutrition:** Even though many street children can usually get some amount of food to eat, they do not have nutritious or balanced diets. This deficiency thus

manifests itself in form of anemia, malnutrition, and vitamin deficiencies (Shelter Don Bosco 2003).

**Homelessness:** The children who choose the streets as their home face the most acute problems related to shelter. They are vulnerable to all ranges of weather conditions be it the burning heat of summer, the rainstorms or the chilly winter nights. These children do not suffer merely from physical homelessness, but also from a psychological homelessness since they have 'nowhere to belong'. The homes they leave behind no longer remain their havens; the streets provide no comfort, and society does not accept them (Shelter Don Bosco 2003). According to Bourdillon (2001), street children are often homeless, hungry and abused, and we need to do something to help them. To him, having young children on the street offends our ideas of what childhood should be about. All children should have a home to go to, should have shelter, and a caring family environment. All children should have security. They should be able to play games and have fun. They should be improving themselves at school. Oloko (1992) found that street children in Lagos were living under the bridges, in markets, in motor parks, in cul – de – sacs and dilapidated or abandoned buildings and in school buildings and other places.

**Health Problems:** Street children live in an atmosphere of continued physical and mental strain. Many of them rummage through the garbage to find food; others go hungry for days, drinking water or taking to drugs to diminish their pangs of hunger. All street children suffer from severe malnutrition and various kinds of deficiencies. The consumption of tobacco, alcohol or drugs retards their growth at an early age (Shelter Don Bosco 2003). According to Scanlon et al (1998), trauma and certain infections are

more common among children who are street based than among those based at home due to exposure to dust and other pollutants while they work near traffic junctions and other congested places. They suffer from bronchitis, asthma and even severe tuberculosis. Since they do not have the opportunity to bathe for several days at a time, and because of the unhygienic conditions in which they live, they are prone to skin diseases such as scabies, ulcers and rashes (Shelter Don Bosco 2003).

Scanlon T, Scanlon F, Nobre Lamarao (1993), Wright, Witting, Kaminsky (1993), Pinto et al (1994) and Porto (1994) noted that street children are sexually active early in life. To obtain money, food, clothing, and shelter they may engage in “survival sex” with adults. Within their peer group, sex is used for pleasure and comfort as well as to exert power and establish dominance, sometimes in ritualized gang rape. Sex under the influence of drugs, anal sex, and same sex encounters are common. Teenage pregnancy is almost universal among street girls, and over 25% of them report one or more abortions, procured illegally. Shelter Don Bosco (2003) however expressed that many street children have no knowledge / have limited knowledge about hygiene or Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs). As a result, they encounter sexual and reproductive health problems such as STDs, HIV / AIDS (common to street boys and girls), unwanted pregnancies, premature births, and unsafe abortions (specific to street girls).

The lack of opportunity to ever visit a doctor further compounds all these health problems. Mainstream health and social services are often regarded with suspicion, mainly because so-called welfare has historically been associated with punishment (Scanlon T, et al (Ibid) and Dewees A, Klees SJ 1995) Health services are rarely geared

to the needs of street children. They are often run at times and places that make them inaccessible. Furthermore, street children will tolerate adverse physical symptoms for long periods (Scanlon T et al (Ibid) and Campos R, Raffaelli M, Greco WU, Greco M, Ruff A, Rolf J, et al 1994). UNICEF (2001) noted that due to their physical conditions, along with malnutrition, inadequate clothing and lack of opportunity for bathing expose street children to frequent illness. Most appear disheveled, with their clothes frayed and dirty, their hair unkept and matted, and their feet unshod and filthy, while some have open sores on their skin, ankles or feet. Many street children resort to using psychoactive substances (such as alcohol and drugs) in an attempt to escape from the overwhelming pressure of their traumatic past and their daily problems. This, in turn, can lead to medical problems due to overdoses, an increase in the probability of accidents, violence and unprotected sex. Over time, it can lead to complications such as brain and liver damage, as also to diseases like HIV / AIDS (Shelter Don Bosco 2003).

### **Psychological Problems**

**A Stressful Past:** The situations and events that lead children to take to the streets may have an on-going impact on their well-being and may deprive them of emotional, economic, and other kinds of support for many successive years. The past also plays a role in predisposing street children to become more vulnerable to emotional, social, and psychological disorders in the future.(Shelter Don Bosco 2003). The World Health Organisation (WHO) (1993) expressed that events as parental death or abandonment, natural disasters and personal injury tend to occur suddenly, without warning, with the adolescent having no control over the situation. It is likely that the event will result in

shock and require a period of adjustment. It is not unusual for young people in developing countries to have experienced at least one major life event. Natural disasters, such as earthquakes, droughts and floods; migration or mass population movements; civil unrest and armed conflict; industrial accidents; and disease are common and have tragic consequences for the young. Often, whole communities are affected. The young may see their family and community devastated, family members die or may themselves experience physical harm (WHO, 1993).

**A Transitory Lifestyle:** Street children frequently move from district to district, town-to-town, and city-to-city. In majority of instances, they do this by choice, but at other times, they are forced to keep moving in order to hide from the police, welfare authorities, and gangsters. This evasive lifestyle results in problems of social isolation and loneliness and leads to difficulties in developing emotional attachments to other human beings.(Shelter Don Bosco 2003). WHO (1993) noted that Street children may move between communities/cities to escape threats from police and peers, or move from family to family or other sources of accommodation. Such transitions usually involve a disruption in peer relationships.

**Substance Abuse:** From the administrators' point of view, street children are unsightly. They tarnish the image of a modern, well-administered city. They offend middle and upper-class ideas of what life should be like in a city. The presence of street children offends particularly those administrators who are responsible for running the city properly: it looks as though they are incapable of doing their job properly. If this is the major problem, the solution is simply to round up the people concerned and put them out

of sight (Bourdillon 2001). Street children throughout the world are subjected to physical abuse by police or have been murdered outright, as governments treat them as a blight to be eradicated-rather than as children to be nurtured and protected. They are frequently detained arbitrarily by police simply because they are homeless, or criminally charged with vague offenses such as loitering, vagrancy, or petty theft. They are tortured or beaten by police and often held for long periods in poor conditions. Girls are sometimes sexually abused, coerced into sexual acts, or raped by police. Street children also make up a large proportion of the children who enter criminal justice systems and are committed finally to correctional institutions (prisons) that are euphemistically called schools, often without due process.(Human Rights Watch 2004).

According to Bourdillon (2001) “Street children are abused due to two main reasons especially from the administrators’ point of views. First, street children often do break the law. They are often involved in minor crime. They certainly do not respond well to attempts to control their activities — especially where money is concerned. If they are to be held responsible for the running of society they need to be in control. Street children sometimes threaten the rights of other, more law-abiding, citizens. Apart from threat to people’s property, street children sometimes harass the public, and can threaten their physical safety. Street children are viewed as nothing but trouble, making cities look dirty and crime infested. Because of this viewpoint, police does whatever it takes to remove the kids from the streets”. The children face beatings, mutilation, sexual abuse and death. Because of the constant threat of violence, the children sleep during the day in order to avoid social-cleansing acts (clearing the children off the streets by means of murder) at night. They are arrested for a number of reasons, usually for vague offenses

(such as loitering or in need of discipline) and sometimes as scapegoats or in order to catch others. Then they are detained for long periods of time in adult jails. In jail, they may be beaten again or pay a bribe to get out. Girls can be pressured into doing sexual favours or are raped before their release.

According to Gigenback (1994) the judiciary, the police, the media, business, and society at large believe that street children are a group of irredeemable delinquents who represent a moral threat to a civilized society—a threat that must be exorcised. The most frightening manifestation of this view is the emergence of “death squads”: self-proclaimed vigilantes, many of whom are involved with security firms and the police and seek to solve the problem by elimination (Human Rights Watch 1994).

**Unlearning of Learned Behaviour:** All children learn a set of moral values and moral behaviour in their early years of family life. The children who leave home and begin to live on the streets soon realize that the values their family taught them (such as honesty, integrity, etc.) are not conducive to their survival on the streets. At times they are forced to steal food and money because they have none of their own. They have to swallow their pride in order to beg for food or money. They learn to live without a daily bath, in unhygienic and unsanitary conditions. They learn to let go of their shame when they have no clothes or when they have only an undergarment to wear (Shelter Don Bosco 2003).

### **Social Problems**

**Deprivation of Needs and Lack of Resources and Opportunities:** The main reason for some children being on the street is that they suffer neglect at home. Their problem is

however compounded by the fact that they suffer the same faith or even worse situation on the street. This is double jeopardy. According to Shelter Don Bosco (2003), the varied needs of street children are rarely met. They frequently go hungry; wear torn, tattered and dirty clothes or sometimes, no clothes at all. They have no permanent place to stay, no educational facilities, no facilities for hygiene and in brief, no facilities at all. Psychologically, they are exploited and abused, thus their basic needs of security and happiness are not met. Socio-culturally, they lack opportunities for healthy recreation and lack social acceptance.

According to Bourdillon (2001), planners do not plan for street children. Wherever street children appear, they are not in the plans — and not wanted. But they are there through force of circumstances. It is no good deciding where we do not want them and trying to wish them out of existence. We need to decide where and how we do want them to live in a way that is practically possible. By virtue of their position, street children are denied access to basic economic and social facilities. Children should not have to earn their own living. They should be clean and wash regularly. They should be healthy, and get help immediately when they are sick. These are the fundamental rights of children, and street children appear to be denied some or all of these rights (Bourdillon 2001).

WHO, (1993) noted that a major problem working with street children is that of determining the reliability of the information that they provide. Lack of trust towards this population and disbelief in the “stories” that they tell significantly influence the accessibility to and quality of services provided. Service providers may feel



uncomfortable with this lack of trust and, where possible, will try to avoid contact with street children. They may be cautious in treating these children, suspicious that they are exaggerating or lying about their ailments or other problems. They may feel resentful about being misled by some of the tales told, or they may dismiss what may be valid complaints as an attempt by the children to manipulate them.

**Exploitation:** Children on the street have to work to survive. Since they have no skills with which to bargain for fair pay or to fight for their rights, they are very vulnerable to employers who look to make a profit on them. Frequently, they are forced to work for 10-12 hours a day for very meagre payment or in exchange for just one square meal a day. Besides all this, abuse and harassment - either physical or sexual, by persons in authority, be they police personnel or others is not uncommon (Shelter Don Bosco 2003). According to Human Right Watch (2004), in several countries, the racial, ethnic, or religious identification of street children plays a significant role in their treatment. The disturbing notion of “social-cleansing” is applied to street children even when they are not distinguished as members of a particular racial, ethnic, or religious group. Branded as “anti-social,” or demonstrating “anti-social behavior,” street children are viewed with suspicion and fear by many who would simply like to see street children disappear. Besides the police, the street children are frequently taken advantage of by the underworld gangsters or by older street boys who bully them and use them to achieve their own ends. If the children do not oblige, they are threatened, beaten and sometimes, in extreme cases, may even be killed (Shelter Don Bosco 2003)

**Stigmatization:** People in society generally perceive street children as difficult children who are out to cause trouble. The general misconception is that street children are addicts, uncontrollable and violent, have no emotions or moral values, and so on. As a result of these misconceptions, people tend to be unsympathetic and indifferent to the actual plight of street children. This lack of social acceptance is what pushes them away from mainstream society and forces them to survive on the fringes of the social system (Shelter Don Bosco 2003).

## **2.8 Coping strategies of street children**

The experience of street life appeared harder than most expected. All the street children struggle to take care of themselves. According to Catholic Action for Street Children (CAS) (1999), most of them do not beg. They try to make a living by doing all kinds of jobs. The boys often earn money through shining of shoes, pushing trucks and gathering refuse and carrying it to the dumpsite. Some children are 'hawkers', which means they try to sell their wares (often small items like chewing gum) by moving around, especially by chasing vehicles. The girls often sell ice water, oranges and bread while some children sell rubber bags at the market. Casa Alianza (2004) expressed that street children often resort to petty theft and prostitution to survive. Most are addicted to inhalers such as cobbler's glue, which offers them an escape from reality, and takes away hunger—in exchange for a host of physical and psychological problems, including hallucinations, pulmonary edema, kidney failure, and irreversible brain damage. Weber (1997) also noted: "many of the children spend their time stealing because they want nice clothes and sweets. So most of them will end up in jail. They have no future and it's very

sad”. Karombo (2004) referred to street children as a frail band of beggars, thieves and tricksters, who appears terribly vulnerable and are able to claw their way to survival if need be, a struggle that has made some violent, and insolent. Shelter Don Bosco (2003) argued that since these children are young, uneducated and unskilled they do not find work easily in the organized sector. Hence, they work largely in the unorganized sector and frequently end up in trades such as shoe shining, rag picking and so on.

According to Hansson (2003), Rizzini and Butler (2003) and Hanahan(2003), Street children’s co-residential groups are sometimes referred to as “surrogate families”. Ennew and Swart – kruger (2003) noted that the role of the street group is significant in terms of physical survival. Sharing resources and information is vital and a group is often a means of protection from violence and police harassment. Because people in authority such as social workers and the police cannot be trusted, the group is often the only source of support and care when members are ill and injured (Aptekar and Heinonen 2003, and Swart 1990).

Street lifestyle and networks develop a subculture that provides both reference group and collective identity (Awad 2002; and Beazley 2003). These tend to have a broader reach than nuclear or even extended families; members of a street child subculture draw newcomers into the fold, teach them survival skills and socialize them. Once on the streets, these children beg, pilfer, grab and steal in the name of the family. New arrivals on the streets soon find that the streets are full of drugs and violence, a place of fear where the constant preoccupation is sheer survival. Beauchemin (2002) noted that Street children tend to organize themselves in small groups. They generally come from the same village or province and speak the same language. They develop their own self-support

mechanisms. In the same vein, UNICEF (2001) noted that street children survive by engaging in menial activities such as head – loading of goods in markets, scavenging inorganic waste for middlemen who supply recycling firms, shoe – shining and car – guarding. To cope with such a harsh lifestyle, street children live in small groups, which provide mutual support and protection to their members and a strong sense of companionship (UNICEF 2001).

## **2.9 SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEM OF STREET CHILDREN**

The problems of street children can be addressed by the government; Non – Governmental Organisations, the society, the Civil Society Organisations and the street children themselves. The various ways of finding solutions to the problem have been categorized into two by UNICEF (2001). These are; (i) the preventive and (ii) the interventional strategies.

**The Preventive Strategies:** UNICEF (2001) stated that preventive strategies need to be put in place to prevent more children joining those already on the street. Since marital and financial problems lie behind the departure of children for the streets, these require timely detection, investigation and monitoring by social welfare officers, within the framework of adequately funded and fully mainstreamed social welfare programmes. According to Beauchemin (2002), there are no easy solutions to the problem of street children. Providing services for these children is essential, but we also need to address the root causes, and that is a complex challenge. We have to reduce poverty and re-establish the role of the family. That will require a much greater effort on the part of the government and the donor community. Scanlon et al (1998) reported that there is no one

answer but there are some clear messages. There are many reasons for street children being on the street, most of which are outside the control of children or their families. Hence these reasons should be addressed. Preventive measures could involve building housing, community centres, and nurseries and introducing work skills into schools' curriculums (International Catholic Child Bureau, 1989).

**The Interventional strategies:** According to Oloko (1992), the fact that some street children desire to be re – united with their families indicates that intervention programmes should be geared towards encouraging re – unification with parents or, as an alternative, fostering by family relatives. At the same time, however, programmes must be sensitive to the independent spirit of these children, who, due to the harsh conditions they experience, develop a high degree of resilience and strong bonds with their companions (UNICEF 2001). Scanlon et al (1998) argued that for many years, non-governmental Organisations noted that with sufficient support street children could be “rehabilitated.”

According to Vasino (1990), disengagement from street life, like beginning street life is not an abrupt procedure but a slow process of estrangement brought about by the inability to live well on the streets, a feeling of meaninglessness, and a sense of not resolving the psychological issues that led to beginning street life in the first place. Street children have unique physical and emotional problems, for which they need early intervention. Appropriate social policies are essential, but lacking. Social cleansing is not the answer. Leaders need to focus on the protection of these children and their families by investing in social policies such as healthcare and education. Street children are the prime

example of what happens when the focus is no longer in this direction. Scanlon et al (1998) opined that various interventions are required, although returning children with their families seems to be a viable and appropriate option. The move towards advocacy and social mobilization is welcome, particularly if street children lead it. This process needs to be monitored, however, to ensure that street children are not manipulated for the ends of others who may have a personal political agenda and that it is not at the expense of successful non-governmental interventions. The public and the media still need to be convinced of the worth of street children and the contribution they can make to resolve the situation. The more street children are afforded the chance to speak out for themselves, the more people will come to realize that street children are not in fact a moral threat to society, but rather a sad reflection of an amoral society (Scanlon et al 1998).

## **2.10 Support programmes available for the street children**

Network of supports are now emerging for the street children both in the developed and the developing countries, some of which are discussed in the subsequent sections.

### **Catholic Action for Street Children (CAS)**

This is a Ghanaian NGO, which helps street children who live on the streets of Accra, Ashaiman, and Tema metropolis. CAS runs a House of Refuge in Laterbiokoshie, Accra. In this day-centre, street boys and girls play games and rest. They can receive

medical treatment, wash and keep their money and belongings safe. Very importantly, the Refuge is also a place where they can receive advice about their life and future.

There are so many programmes run by CAS. These include, literacy classes and vocational training in the demonstration classes. They also help children to really move off the street and go to school. CAS has a Hopeland Training Centre, which helps in providing a sponsorship placement for street children.

Every day CAS staff visits the streets to be with the children and to know where they work and sleep. There are many 'Mini-Refuges-meeting points' established in the town. At these small contact places children can meet the field workers. Hence, many children benefit from CAS' work. CAS works closely with another NGO Street Girls AID (S.AID), which runs a Refuge in Mamobi, Accra, for the pregnant street girls. Before and after the delivery, the girls can stay in S.AID's Refuge. They get medical care as well as advice about how to take care of themselves and their baby. At the biggest market of Accra, CAS also established three crèches (Baby Care Program) and supported S.AID to establish other crèches in town. S.AID runs the crèches, where babies and young children are cared for, while their mothers are working for their daily living.

### **Casa Alianza**

Casa Alianza is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to the rehabilitation and defense of street children in Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Nicaragua. Casa Alianza is the Latin American branch of the New York-based Covenant

House. Casa Alianza began in Guatemala in 1981, and expanded into Honduras and Mexico in 1986 and into Nicaragua in 1998.

Casa Alianza is dedicated to helping children 'of' the streets and back on the road to meaningful and productive lives. Casa Alianza cares for street children, most of who have been abused or rejected by their families, and further traumatized by the indifference of the societies in which they live.

Casa Alianza focuses on offering the street children the option to improve their lives by offering free sanctuary, rehabilitation services, vocational training, and legal aid. They also work with other NGOs such as Amnesty International and other human rights organisations and individuals who support the street children.

### **Cambodian Street Children Organization**

This is an organization founded in 2000 to help orphans and street children and to respond to the needs of children victimized by war in Cambodia. The organisation provides food, clothing, fresh water, health care, and educational assistance to street children in the Third World.

Cambodian Street Children Organization has dug several wells, bringing fresh, clean water and the gift of health to hundreds of children. This prevents diseases and protects hundreds of street children.



## CHAPTER THREE

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 3.1 Introduction

The analytical frameworks for the study are provided by the political economy theory, social support theory and social network analysis. These are discussed below;

#### 3.2 Political economy theory

Political economy theory is a science of the laws governing the social “household”, or economic life in the society (Kulikov 1986). The theory could be linked with the writings of Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels (1848) while Lenin made outstanding contribution to its development.

Marxism – Leninism does not deny the role of the individual in history but historical experience shows that an individual’s political activity is successful only when it does not lie at the root of the society’s life and development. Therefore political economy studies the social relations that emerge between people in the process of production of material values and laws governing the production, exchange and consumption of material values at different stages in the society’s development. It studies the relations of production in connection with the productive forces. Thus Lenin wrote, “It is not with ‘production’ that political economy deals but with the social relations of men in production, with the social system of production”.

Political economy examines the laws of the formation, development and downfall of different modes of production and consequently, of different social classes. This affects the vital interest of all classes. Thus, it is a class partisan science, which means that it deserves the interests of a definite class. The bourgeoisie political economy seeks to camouflage the exploitative nature of capitalism, to shift the blame of the misfortunes of millions of working people from the capitalist mode of production to the laws of nature, to the technical progress or the individual's economic mentality. Thus, the bourgeoisie political economy serves the interests of the capitalist class.

On the other hand, the proletarian Marxist – Leninist political economy proclaims its class character by voicing the interest of the working class, it gives the scientific explanation of the society's development uniformities and provides a theoretical basis for the proletariat's revolutionary struggle to restructure the society on socialist principles. The only way to end the exploitation of the working people, according to Marx and Engel was to eliminate capitalist property in the means of production and that a revolutionary replacement of capitalism by socialism was historically inevitable.

Also, Marxism – Leninism political economy show that the cause of the unemployment and poverty is the capitalist mode of production itself. Each capitalist tends to turn a part of the surplus value into additional capital. As they accumulate capital, the capitalists buy more means of production: machinery, equipment and tools. With the scientific and technical progress, these tend to become ever – more productive. Therefore, each worker can now process more raw materials than before. The growing organic composition of capital will also reflect in the declining share of living labour in

the values of the product as compared with that of embodied labour. Therefore, the higher the accumulation of capital, the lesser the relative demand for labour power by the capitalists. Moreover, capital accumulation and concentration of the means of production at large enterprises lead to the ruin and closure of small enterprises with small commodity producers turning into wage workers. Thus, the number of the proletariats will be growing up.

These two situations will inevitably bring about a relatively surplus working population, which cannot apply its labour power and which constitutes an army of unemployed. Since the growth in labour productivity as a result of improvements of the productive forces is used by the capitalists to maximize profit and increase their fortunes and not to meet the requirements of the working people, it leads to a decline in the capitalist demand for labour – power, and thus, deprives thousands of people of their jobs and limits the possibilities for creating new jobs. Consequently, the growth of the organic composition of capital inevitably engenders an industrial reserve army of labour. Therefore, during an economic recovery, capitalists draw upon that reserve of labour power to expand production at a rapid pace. During economic crisis, the reserve army of labour makes it possible to cut wages – intensify labour, lengthen the working day and so increase the exploitation of those who have a job.

Political economy theorists posit that, people who are out of job for a long time loses their professional skills, so that even when they manage to find a job, their wages, as a rule are lower than before. They thus usually agree to any work on any terms. Therefore unemployment is a powerful instrument enabling the bourgeoisie to step up its

offensive against the working people's living standards and social rights. Unemployment also exerts a powerful moral and psychological pressure both on those who have a job and especially on those who do not.

Political economy theory is relevant to this work because it gives an insight into possible causes of the problems of street children and why the government in a capitalist system like we have in Nigeria may not be capable of finding lasting solutions to the problems. The theory's emphasis on the two main classes that emerge from the mode of production in a capitalist system gave us an insight into the origin of poverty, which is one of the necessary conditions for the emergence and proliferation of street children. This is so because of the concentration of capital in the hand of few while the majority, who own their labour, are either exploited by the few or they cannot even exchange their labour for their living due to scientific and technical progress. This will further lead to growth in the number of the proletariats and hence in the level of poverty.

The political economy theory also posits that the bourgeoisie seeks to camouflage the exploitative nature of the capitalism by shifting the blame of the misfortune of the proletariats on the laws of nature, technical progress or to the individual's political mentality. Hence the bourgeoisie government may blame the families, the masses and the individuals involved for the proliferation of street children rather than on the capitalist economy system. This explains to a large extent why government policies are inadequate to address the problems of the street children and why the policy environment is hostile to the street children rather than being accommodative and rehabilitative.

The political economy theory alone will not be sufficient to address the focus of this study, because it only gives us an insight into the origin of the problem but do not offer any explanation on the solution to the problem, hence, the social support theory and the social network analysis will also be discussed.

### **3.3 Social support theory and Social network analysis**

Cassel (1976) referred to Social Support and Social Network as concepts that describe the structure, processes and functions of social relationships. Social networks can be seen as the web of social relationships that surround individuals. Neergaard (2004) expressed that social support theory is generally associated with how networking helps people cope with stressful events and enhances the psychological well-being. Since the street children will experience a number of stressful events throughout different stages of their lives, social support theory may help enhance our understanding of how the networking behaviour of organisations such as NGOs, government departments, the family and even the street children serve as social supports to themselves at various stages of street life.

According to Neergaard (2004), social support theory has historically been considered within a structural perspective and has concentrated on exploring the size, density and frequency of network interactions, all of which can be operationalised in quantitative terms. More recently, however, social support researchers have recognised that as different relationships can provide different types of support, the *composition* of a social network is as essential as the presence of sets of dyadic ties. For example, across an individual's social network, family and friends may provide one type of support while

colleagues and acquaintances provide another. This perspective on social support concurs with social network research (Mitchell, 1969; Granovetter, 1985; Szarka, 1990). Neergaard (2004) noted that social support research distinguishes between four types of support: emotional, informational, companionship and tangible support (Wan *et al.*, 1996). *Emotional support* is associated with sharing life experiences. This type of support conveys that an individual is valued for his or her own worth and experiences and is accepted. It is primarily provided by kin. *Companionship support* serves to help distract persons from their problems or to facilitate positive affective moods. It is provided by close friends, colleagues and neighbours. *Tangible (or material) support* refers to the provision of financial aid, material resources and needed services, indeed all the various types of physical resources needed by street children. This type of support is given by anybody who provides money, or any kind of direct solution to a problem. *Informational support* concerns the provision of knowledge that might help an individual to increase his/her efficiency in responding or generating solutions to a problem (Cross, 2000). It involves feedback, advice; suggestions and direction that may help bolster individuals' belief in their own capacity to handle challenges. Hence, having adequate social ties and supportive others in their networks, whether personal or professional, helps street children cope with stressful events and thus enhances chances of their survival.

Haythornthwaite (1999) noted that a social network is a set of actors and the relations that hold them together. This produces the social capital, which is important for the healthy development of any society. According to Cohen and Prusak (2001), "social capital consists of the stock of active connections among people: the trust, mutual understanding, and shared values and behaviors that bind the members of human networks and

communities and make cooperative action possible". This sense of belonging and concrete experience of social networks can bring great benefits to people. These benefits have been identified by Putman (2002). They include: (i) the development of a child is shaped by social capital. This is true because, the trust, networks, and norms of reciprocity within a child's family, school, peer group, and larger community have great effects on their opportunities and choices, and hence on their behaviour and development. (ii) in a community where social-capital is high, public spaces are cleaner, people are friendlier, and the streets are safer. (iii) social capital can help to mitigate the insidious effects of socioeconomic disadvantage and (iv) there is a strong relationship between the possession of social capital and better health. This is because, civic connection, marital marriage and affluence as predictors of life happiness, have influence on people's health. Hence, communities with a good 'stock' of social capital are more likely to benefit from lower crime figures, better health, higher educational achievement, and better economic growth (Smith, 2001).

Actors in social networks can be individual, or they can be aggregate units, such as departments, organizations, or families. The key is that the actors exchange resources, which then connect them in a social network. Resources may include data, information, goods and services, social support, or financial support. Each kind of resource exchange is considered a *social network relation*, and individuals who maintain the relation are said to maintain a *tie*. The *strength* of their tie may range from weak to strong depending on the number and types of resources they exchange, the frequency of exchanges, and the intimacy of the exchanges between them (Marsden & Campbell, 1984).

According to Haythornthwaite (1999), social network theorists hold that individuals, group and organizational behaviour is affected more by the kinds of ties and networks in which actors are involved than by the norms and attributes they possess. Aggregating data by some external criterion, such as membership in a division or organization, fails to show the complexity of interpersonal relations. Moreover, it fails to show how individuals may be constrained by their social networks to behave in certain ways, dependent on certain others for their resources (Bates & Peacock, 1989; Monge, 1987). Thus, another aspect of the social network approach is that the notion of a group cannot be defined ahead of time, e.g., based on membership in an organization or other aggregate unit such as street children. Instead, networks need to be evaluated empirically, with definitions of who belongs to the group or network emerging from the data.

Haythornthwaite (1999) noted that tie strength varies along a continuum from weak to strong. Those who have weak ties share few types of information or support, whereas those with strong ties share many. Strong ties are more intimate; they involve more self-disclosure and more than just instrumental exchange (Granovetter, 1982; Haythornthwaite, 1996b). Those who are strongly tied are likely to show similarities in attitudes, background, experiences, and access to resources (McPherson & Smith-Lovin, 1987). Strong ties are characterized by:

- “ (a) a sense that the relationship is intimate and special, with a voluntary investment in the tie and a desire for companionship with the partner; (b) an interest in frequent interactions in multiple contexts; and (c) a sense of



mutuality of the relationship, with the partner's needs known and supported" (Walker, Wasserman & Wellman, 1994).

Weak ties involve fewer, less intimate exchanges. Weak ties are maintained infrequently, with individual's experiences and exposures operating in a different sphere. It is this exposure to different others that gives the weak tie its significance. By having access to different sources of information or resources, a weak tie can bring to individual resources, which are unobtainable from close associates (Burt, 1992; Granovetter, 1973). Both strong and weak ties serve to help street children in their daily lives.

The theories of social support and social network analysis are relevant to this study because street children need to be supported in our effort to rehabilitate them. This support could be in terms of emotional support i.e. to value them for their own worth and experiences and accept them, companionship support i.e. help to distract them from their problems or facilitate positive moods in them. The support could also be in form of tangible (material) support i.e. provision of financial aid, material resources and needed services and informational support i.e. provision of knowledge that might help the street children to increase their efficiency in responding or generating solutions to their own problems. The theory also helps us to identify the actors that may be involved in providing networks of support for the street children, namely; the individuals, NGOs, Civil Society Organisations, communities, government departments and even the street children themselves.

According to Garmezy (1983), "if there is any lesson to be derived from recent studies, it lies in the reaffirmation of the resilience potential that exists in children under

stress". This does not mean that they are unaffected by their experiences, but that they have the capacity to resist being overwhelmed by them. Garmezy (1983) noted that the capacity to recover is dependent upon the provision of a nurturing environment in the post-trauma phase. The challenge for those committed to addressing the plight of street children is to provide such an environment. Hence, Neill (2004) expressed that life and even non-life forms demonstrate remarkably simple principles. In order for a life-like pattern to flourish, it requires challenge and support. Challenge sets a process in motion - it provides the motivation or energy for a response. Support helps to ensure successful adaptation. In humans, support alone creates laziness. Challenge alone can be harmful. Together, challenge and support can create a myriad of adventurous growth experiences. Hence, in the case of street children, the challenges facing them are the problems, which push them to the street and also face them while on the street. These include; physical, psychological and social problems as explained above while the social actors networking could provide the support they need to cope with the problems. The support may include emotional, companionship, tangible (material) and informational services as explained in the social support theory and social networks analysis. The outcome of social support networks to children, who are socially challenged, is the ability to remodel their lives and to fully rehabilitate them to function normally like their counterparts from supportive families.

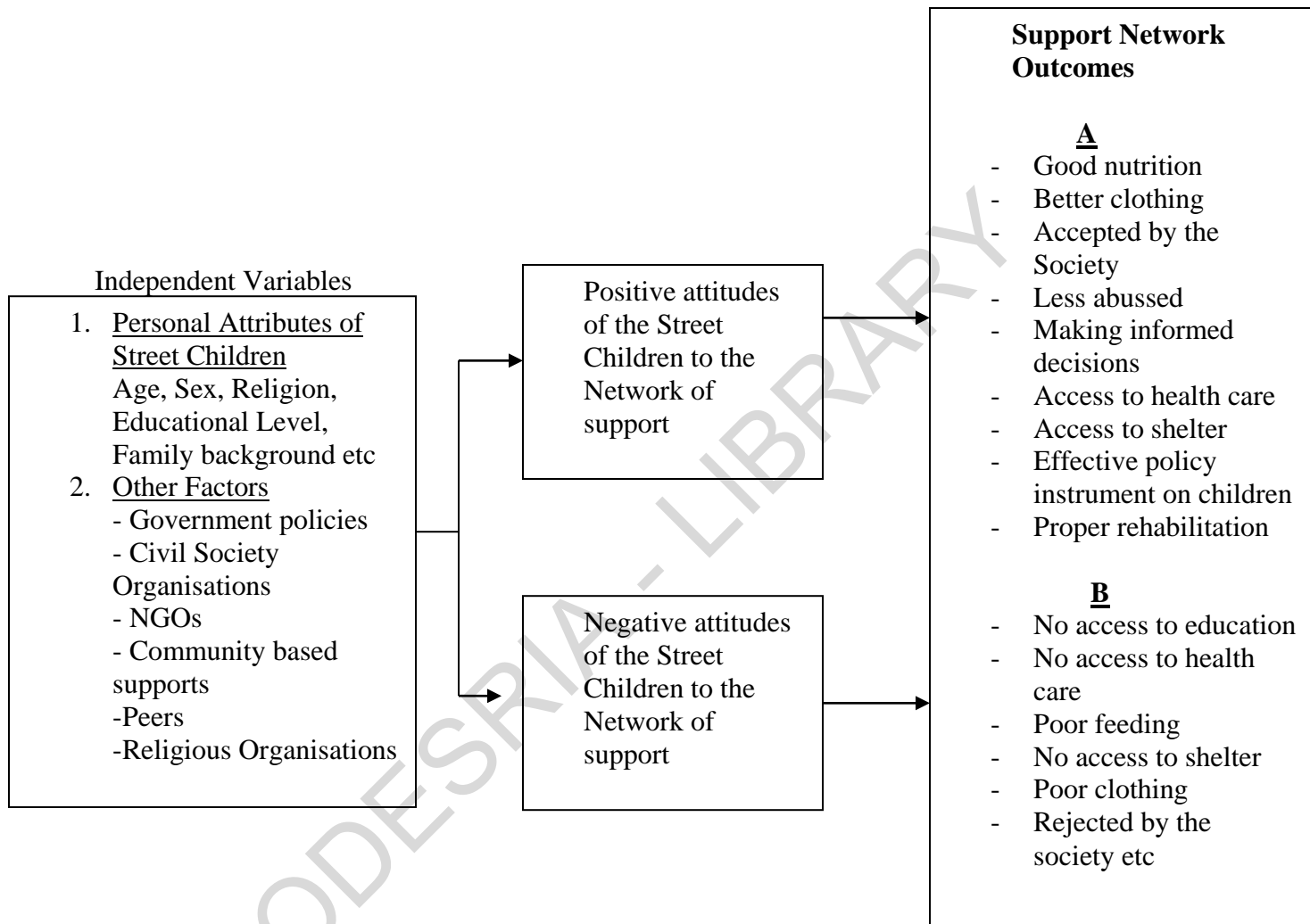
Study Propositions:

- (i) The policies and plan of the government which are executed by her agents such as the police and the social welfare will likely determine the availability of support network for the street children.

- (ii) 'Of' Street children's awareness of the NGOs working with street children, and the activities of such NGOs will likely have effect on whether they are supported or not.
- (iii) The willingness of the street children to be re-united with their parents will likely determine the availability of support network for them.
- (iv) Street children who enjoy support from their peers/street adults are likely to reject other options of care and support.
- (v) The attitude of the community members to the street children is an important determinant of the availability of support to street children.

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Fig.1: Conceptual Framework showing the outcomes of Social Network of Support to Street Children



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This section presents the study methodology, and with the following four sub – headings, description of study locations, methods of data collection, sample size and the methods of data analysis.

#### **4.2 STUDY LOCATIONS**

The study was carried out in the cities of Lagos, Kaduna and Port Harcourt, which are three of the several locations where street children are largely concentrated in Nigeria. The selected cities reflect the three main cultural diversities in Nigeria and most of the Non – Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working with street children are also concentrated in these cities.

##### **4.2.1 Brief History of Lagos**

Lagos is located in the south – western part of Nigeria on the narrow coastal plain of the Bight of Benin. It lies approximately on longitude 20 42'E and 3 22' East respectively and between latitude 60 22'N. It is bounded in the North and East by Ogun state, in the west by Republic of Benin and stretches over 180 kilometres along the Guinea coast of the Bight of Benin in the Atlantic Ocean. Although, predominantly a Yoruba town, there is no other ethnic group in Nigeria that is not found in the city being the commercial heart of Nigeria.

#### **4.2.2 Brief History of Kaduna**

Kaduna was the headquarter of the former North Central State which was renamed Kaduna state in 1976 by the General Murtala Muhammed's administration. Kaduna town experiences a typical tropical continental climate with distinct seasonal regimes, oscillating between cool to hot dry and humid to wet. These two seasons reflect the influences of tropical continental and equatorial maritime air masses, which sweep over the entire country.

Kaduna town was founded by the British in 1913. It later became the capital of Nigeria's former Northern Region in 1917 and remained so until 1967. Kaduna is still today the most important political centre in Northern Nigeria. As at 1995, the population of Kaduna was estimated at 333,600.

#### **4.2.3 Brief History of Port Harcourt**

Port Harcourt, the capital of Rivers State, is the heart of the hydrocarbon industry and is responsible for a huge chunk of the nation's foreign exchange earnings. It has a topography of flat plains netted in a marvelous web of rivers and tributaries. Among the rivers are New Calabar, Orashi, Bonny, Sambreiro and Bartholomeo. With a good climate, many rivers and vast areas and arable land, the people of the town are predominantly farmers, fishermen and traders.

Port Harcourt is Nigeria's second busiest seaport. This cosmopolitan city has a busy international airport with regular links to all parts of the country and major cities of the

world. It marks the eastern terminal of Nigeria's railway system, while being the largest commercial and industrial centre in Nigeria outside Lagos.

### **4.3 Research Design**

The research design for this study is descriptive. This is because the emphasis in this study is not to test any existing theory but to describe and understand how the government, NGOs, civil organisations, the community and even the street children perceive and interpret the situation they find themselves in and act within it.

### **4.4 SAMPLE DESIGN**

The cities of Lagos, Kaduna and Port Harcourt were purposively selected for this study since street children and even the NGOs working with them are more concentrated there. In each of these towns, five different categories of support network providers were selected. These are; Government, Civil Society Organisations, the Community, Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and structured maintained by street children themselves.

For the purpose of questionnaire administration, convenience sampling was used to select 500 street children in each of the three cities selected for this study due to lack of sample frame from which the sample size could be selected while three NGOs were purposively selected in each of the three cities based on the programmes they have for the street children. The NGOs that were selected in Kaduna are Millenium Hope Programme, (MHP), Human Development Foundations in Nigeria (HDF), Save the child Foundation, Kaduna (SCF), while those selected in Lagos are Child Association of Christian Charity

Organisation (CCO), Missionaries of Charity (Sisters of Mother Theresa) (MC), Defence for children, International (DCI), Those selected in Port Harcourt are The Adolescent Project, Port Harcourt (AP), Home for Street Children, Port Harcourt (HSC) and SOCA Foundation, Nigeria, Port Harcourt. (SOCAF)

Four in-depth interviews were conducted in each study city. These include, one key government official and three civil society organisation leaders such as a church leader, an Imam and a lawyer.

In each of the city, 6 Focus Group Discussions were conducted with the following social categories - Opinion leaders (1male and 1female groups), Adult males and females (2 separate groups), and Youths (1male and 1 female groups). Each FGD included between 8 and 12 participants.

#### **4.5 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION**

For the purpose of this study, both qualitative and quantitative research techniques were used to obtain the primary data from the government officials, civil society organisations, community members, NGOs and the selected street children. Secondary data were also collected from the NGOs and relevant government departments.

The quantitative data were collected from the street children and the NGOs using semi - structured questionnaire. The questionnaire for the street children captured the following thematic issues - socio – demographic characteristics of respondents, factors which led the children to the street, the problems the street children face on the street; the kinds of support available for the street children and the social actors providing them and finally, the views of the street children about the support networks available to them.



Also, qualitative data were collected from government officials, civil society organisations and the community members using Focus Group Discussion and In – depth interview techniques. This was to allow in-depth social analysis of the problems being investigated.

For the secondary data, documents relating to government policies and practices regarding the street children were obtained from government departments and relevant ministries.

#### **4.9 DATA ANALYSIS**

The primary data collected using quantitative measures were analysed using univariate, bivariate and multivariate analyses, using the SPSS and STATA computer softwares.

Univariate analysis of the variables are presented using simple frequencies and percentages, while for the bivariate analysis, cross tabulation, chi-square and T- Test/ ANOVA were used. The bivariate analysis helped to explore the relationships between the independent variables such as the respondents' social – background (age, sex, educational level, town of residence, religious affiliation, etc); and the dependent variable (i.e. availability of network of support). At the level of multivariate analysis, probit regression was used to determine the degree of association between the independent and dependent variables.

Qualitative data collected using key informant interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions and case studies were analysed using the content analysis carried out with the help of the Text Base Beta Computer software, which helped in sorting out the data thematically while data from the content analysis are presented using the ZY index tables.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter is sub-divided into two sections. Section I focused on the univariate and bivariate analysis of data while Section II focused on the multivariate analysis and the explanation of the research propositions.

#### **5.2 SECTION I: UNIVARIATE AND BIVARIATE ANALYSIS**

##### **5.2.1 SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS**

###### **5.2.1.1 CHARACTERISTICS OF STREET CHILDREN**

The purpose of this section is to provide a descriptive summary of the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the street children, FGD participants, key informants and the NGOs selected for this study.

The characteristics of the street children described here include age, sex, educational level, town of residence, religious affiliation, ethnic origin and socio-economic backgrounds of parents. The distribution of the study population is 500 street children per study location. The study sample was limited to children who were working and/or living on the street and who were 18 years and below. Table 5.1 shows that majority (56.5%) of the respondents were in the age group of 6 – 15 years (56.5%). Also 4 out of every 10 street children across the three study locations selected were in the age

group of 15 years and above (42.5%). The mean age of the street children across study locations are – Kaduna; 14.9 years, Lagos 14.7 years; and Port Harcourt 13.5 years; while for the total population, the mean age is 14.4 years. Evidence from the literature suggests that most street children are in the age group of 9 – 14 years. The UNICEF Child Domestic Workshop (1998) noted that children as young as 6 years old may be found in street trading but most are between 9 and 14 years old.

The distribution of respondents by sex also shows that majority (83.1%) were males and 16.9% were females. It is evident that there is a consistent rise in the proportion of female street children as we move from the North (i.e Kaduna), through the South West (i.e Lagos), to the southern part of Nigeria (i.e Port Harcourt). Hence, the proportion of female street children in the South West (13.6%) is a little more than double their proportion in the North (6.6%) while that of the South (30.4%) is also a little more than double their proportion in the South West. The explanation for this could be because girls were traditionally given out in marriage at a very tender age in the Northern part of Nigeria. This is usually before their first menstrual experience, which could be between age 10 and 13 years. Hence, the problem of young girls in the region is associated with early marriage than living on the streets

Data on the educational level of the street children revealed that 26.7% dropped out of primary school while 26.2% dropped out of secondary school. Also, 23.5% completed primary school education while 21.5% did not have any formal education. It was however clear that the pattern of education among respondents across the study locations is not identical. Hence, while the majority (46.2%) of the respondents in Kaduna had no

formal education, 36.2% did not complete their secondary education in Lagos and 34.6% of respondents in Port Harcourt only completed their primary school education. This could be because most of the street children in the Northern part of the country are quranic school pupils who have never had western education. Also, evidence from the literature also suggests that there is a relationship between education/school system and children option of taking to street life. Hence, Shelter Don Bosco (2003) noted that when the teachers use traditional methods of corporal punishment to discipline school children, such develops a phobia against school and education in the minds of the young ones. Bourdillon (2001) also noted that living under an authoritarian teacher could be a problem, especially one that regularly beats, or verbally abuses, vulnerable children. Spending hours doing boring and totally useless and meaningless learning is a problem. Opting for the streets solves all these problems. Osemwegie (1994) also confirmed that 86 percent of street children in Lagos had attended school but had dropped out. From the data, it is evident that there is a link between children's education and their possibility of moving to the street. Hence, the proper implementation of the Federal Government's Universal Basic Education would be a good instrument for addressing the problem of schools drop out among children and consequently, may help in checking the proliferation of street children.

Data on the street children's religious affiliation shows that 47.5% were Christians while 48.3% were Muslims. Majority (87.6%) of the respondents in Kaduna were however Muslims while the majority (59.2%) of the respondents in Lagos and 71.4% in Port Harcourt were Christians.

Table 5.1, shows that, although majority (50.6%) of the selected street children across the three study locations claimed that their parents were married, there is a significant difference in the distribution of the respondents' parents' status across the three regions. For example, 7 out of 10 respondents (70.0%) in Kaduna reported that their parents were married, 4 out of 10 respondents representing 40.4% and 41.4% in Lagos and Port Harcourt respectively said the same thing. This means that only 30% of the parents in Kaduna were in the other categories (i.e. single, widowed, divorced or separated). Notably, majority of the respondents' parents in Lagos (59.6%) and Port Harcourt (58.6%) were either never married or were in the other categories (i.e. single, widowed, divorced or separated). It is therefore important to note that while half of the respondents' parents were either in the category of 'married' and living together, the other half were single parents. The implication of this is that while factors such as the death of either of the spouse or both, separation and divorce can lead children to street living, there were other factors within the family apart from these factors that can push them to the street.

The distribution of the respondents by parents' living arrangement shows that 54.1% reported that both parents live together. However, 75.8% reported this in Kaduna and 45.8% and 40.8% of the respondents' parents in Lagos and Port Harcourt respectively. As high as 28.9% of the total sample did not have any knowledge of their parents' living arrangement, which could mean that they had lost touch with them and/or hardly have any information on them.

The parents' type of marriage revealed that 51.5% are in monogamous union, while 48.5 are in polygynous marriage. The number of parents in monogamous marriages is greater in Lagos and Port Harcourt compared with Kaduna, where the polygyny is as high as 58.6%. This implies that both children from monogamous and polygynous marriages can be equally predisposed to street living, fuelled not just by marriage type but by other societal factors.

The mean income of the total sample was #651.89 in a week while the modal income was #500. This has a lot of impact on the physical, emotional and psychological well being of the street children. The mean incomes across the study cities however show this distribution: #133.49 in Kaduna, #1052.00 in Lagos and #759.40 in Port Harcourt. This may however not translate into better condition of living for the street children in Lagos and Port Harcourt due to the high cost of living in the towns compare with that of Kaduna.

The fathers' occupations also revealed that many (42.2%) of the respondents' fathers were farmers, 16.3% were traders while 15.8% were artisans. The variation across the three study locations however shows that in Kaduna majority (77.6%) of the respondents fathers were farmers. In Lagos, 35.0% were government workers, 29.0% were traders while 19.4% were farmers, while in Port Harcourt, 33.6% were artisans and 29.6% were farmers. Also, many of the respondents' mothers' (46.6%) were traders with only 1.1% being salary earners in private organizations. Majority (57.2% and 60.0%) of the respondents' mothers were traders in Kaduna and Lagos respectively while in Port Harcourt, 27.6% of the respondents' mothers were farmers and 22.8% were traders. It is

worth noting that many of the street children may have migrated from different rural areas across the country and this may account for many of their parents being farmers.

When respondents were asked about the income of their parents, it is clear that most street children do not know their parents' income. Hence, all the respondents in Kaduna had no data on this while only a small sample reported this in Lagos and Port Harcourt. The data for Port Harcourt and Lagos therefore shows a mean income for the fathers being #916.59 per week and that of the mothers being #629.63 per week. In Lagos alone, the mean income for fathers was #1284.94 and for mothers was #956.66 while for Port Harcourt it was #483.83 for the fathers and #246.79 for the mothers per week. This distribution shows that most of the children actually came from poor homes and this may account for their taking to street living.

Data on the type of houses parents of street children live are presented in Table 5.11. The distribution shows that majority of these parents either live in a single room (34.3%) or in 'a room and parlour' apartment (45.5%). In Kaduna, at least 2 out of every 10 street children said that their parents live in a single room (23.0%) while 6 out of 10 said their parents live in 'a room and parlour' apartment (63.8%). In Lagos, 45.0% of the respondents' parents live in a single room while 36.0% expressed that their parents live in a room and parlour. Also, 34.8% and 36.8% of the respondents in Port Harcourt said that their parents live in a single room and a room and parlour apartments respectively.

The number of children ever born by respondents' parents was considered. Majority (76.0%) had more than 4 children while 30.4% in Kaduna, 10.0% in Lagos and 31.6% in Port Harcourt said their parents had less than 4 children. In comparing the

number of children ever born by respondents' parents and the type of house they live, it is evident that there is problem of over crowding in most homes which produced these street children. Evidence from literature shows that street life for many of the children is a temporary way of escaping from overcrowded conditions at home (Binh, 2000). The study data shows that the mean number of children in these homes is 6.48.

### **5.2.1.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION PARTICIPANTS**

The age category of the FGD participants across the three locations ranged between 25 and 75 years with that of the opinion leaders male groups being between 45 and 62 years and opinion leaders female groups being between 44 and 55 years. The age category of adult male groups was 50 – 75 years while that of adult female groups was 42 – 75 years. Also, the age of the youth male groups was between 28 and 45 years while that of their female counterpart was between 25 and 42 years. Each FGD group included both educated and uneducated members of the communities while there were more Muslims than Christians among the FGD participants in Kaduna as against more Christians than Muslims among the FGD participants in Lagos and Port Harcourt. The FGD participants included the opinion leaders; males and females, adult; males and females, and youth; males and females.

### **5.2.1.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE KEY INFORMANTS**

The age category of the key informants was between 40 and 62 years out of which there were three government officials (one from each study location) from Social Welfare Department. There were also three church leaders, three Imam and three lawyers. Twelve



key informants were selected for this study (four in each location) out of which five were Muslims and seven were Christians. All the key informants had at least secondary school education.

#### **5.2.1.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF NON- Governmental Organisations**

The nine NGOs that were selected for this study are:

- Millennium Hope Programme, Kaduna (MHP),
- Human Development Foundations in Nigeria, Kaduna (HDF),
- Save the child Foundation, Kaduna (SCF),
- Christian Charity Organisation, Lagos (CCO),
- Missionaries of Charity (Sisters of Mother Theresa),
- Lagos (MC) and Defence for children, International, Lagos (DCI).
- The Adolescent Project, Port Harcourt (AP),
- Home for Street Children, Port Harcourt (HSC)
- SOCA Foundation, Nigeria, Port Harcourt. (SOCAF).

Most of the NGOs are membership NGOs while two were own by the wife of the State Governors of Kaduna and Rivers State. From past experience, any project owned by political office holders often lack continuity after the pioneers of such projects might have left the office while the non-membership NGOs usually suffer the same fate. Examples of this are ‘Better Life for Rural Women’ and ‘Family Support programme’ championed by the wives of the former Nigerian Military Presidents, General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida and Late General Sani Abacha respectively. The sources of finance

of the NGOs also revealed that most of them rely on donations from foundations, philanthropists, and personal resources. Only very few of these NGOs are assisted by the government and corporate organizations, while in most cases, they rely on international donor organizations.

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**Table 5.1: Percentage Distribution street children’s Socio – economic and Demographic Characteristics by City of Residence**

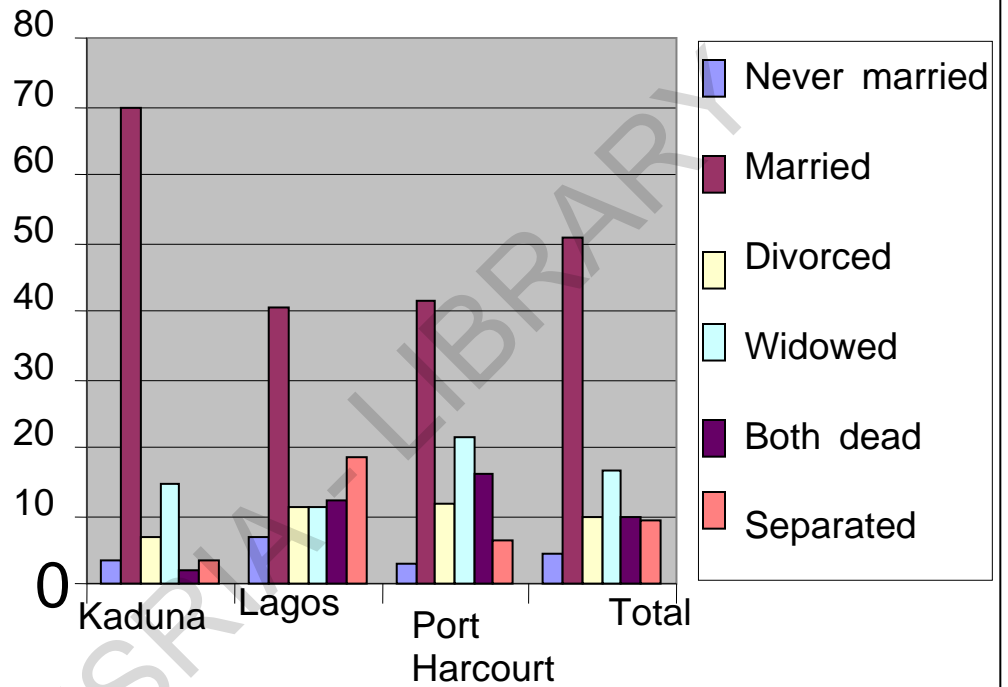
Age in Years	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt			
	N=500	%	N=500	%	N=500	%	N=1500	%
Less than 6 years	-	-	01	0.2	14	2.8	15	1.0
6 – 15 years	263	52.6	274	54.8	311	62.2	848	56.5
Above 15 years	237	47.4	225	45.0	175	35	637	42.5
<b>Sex</b>								
Male	467	93.4	432	86.4	348	69.6	1247	83.1
Female	33	6.6	68	13.6	152	30.4	253	16.9
<b>Educational level</b>								
Primary not completed	141	28.2	148	29.6	111	22.2	400	26.7
Primary completed	45	9.0	135	27.0	173	34.6	353	23.5
Secondary school not completed	74	14.8	181	36.2	138	27.6	393	26.2
<b>Religious Affiliation</b>								
Christianity	60	12.0	296	59.2	357	71.4	713	47.5
Islam	438	87.6	196	39.2	90	18.0	724	48.3
Traditional	2	0.4	8	1.6	53	10.6	63	4.2
<b>Parents, marital status</b>								
Never married	18	3.6	33	6.6	15	3.0	66	4.4
Married	350	70.0	202	40.4	207	41.4	759	50.6
Divorced	33	6.6	56	11.2	58	11.6	147	9.8
Widowed	73	14.6	57	11.4	108	21.6	248	16.5
Both dead	10	2.0	60	12.0	80	16.0	150	10.0
Separated	16	3.2	92	18.4	32	6.4	140	9.3
<b>Parents’ living arrangements</b>								
Living Together	379	75.8	229	45.8	204	40.8	812	54.1
Living Separately	38	7.6	145	29.0	71	14.2	254	16.9
Don’t Know	83	16.6	126	25.2	225	45.0	434	28.9

<b>Parents' marriage types</b>								
Monogamous	207	41.4	284	56.8	281	56.2	772	51.5
Polygynous	293	58.6	216	43.2	219	43.8	728	48.5
<b>Income per week</b>								
Less than #100	222	44.4	10	2.0	30	6.0	262	17.5
#100 - #500	269	53.8	207	41.4	295	59.0	771	51.4
#501 and above	09	1.8	283	56.6	175	35.0	467	31.1
Mean	#133.49		#1052		#759.40		#651.89	
<b>Fathers Occupation</b>								
Farming	388	77.6	97	19.4	148	29.6	633	42.2
Trading	45	9.0	145	29.0	54	10.8	244	16.3
Artisan	26	5.2	43	8.6	168	33.6	237	15.8
Teaching	06	1.2	11	2.2	14	2.8	31	2.1
Other Government workers	26	5.2	175	35.0	34	6.8	235	15.6
Private sector workers	09	1.8	23	4.6	24	4.8	56	3.7
Others	-	-	06	1.2	58	11.6	64	4.3
<b>Type of house</b>								
A single room	115	23.0	225	45.0	174	34.8	514	34.3
A room and a Parlour	319	63.8	180	36.0	184	36.8	683	45.5
A flat	31	6.2	70	14.0	46	9.2	147	9.8
A duplex	11	2.2	25	5.0	19	3.8	55	3.6
Others	24	4.8	-	-	77	15.4	101	6.7
<b>Children ever born</b>								
Less than 4	152	30.4	50	10.0	158	31.6	360	24.0
4 – 8	140	28.0	384	76.8	225	45.0	749	49.9
9 – 13	132	26.4	58	11.6	94	18.8	284	18.9
14 – 18	54	10.8	06	1.2	10	2.0	70	4.7
19 – 23	19	3.8	02	0.4	05	1.0	26	1.7
24 and above	03	4.8	-	-	08	1.6	11	0.7

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

**Fig. 1: Distribution of Street Children by Parents' marital Status**

**Percentages**



**Locations**

**5.2.2 FACTORS**

**CHILDREN IN NIGERIA**

Issues discussed in this section include the length of time the respondents have been working and/or sleeping on the street; the events that actually brought the children

to the street; whether or not they have problems with their parents before they began street life; the way the respondents spend the income they make on the street and whether or not the respondents visit home regularly. These issues give us insights to the factors responsible for the proliferation of street children and the support network that are necessary for them.

#### **5.2.2.1 Years Respondents have spent working and sleeping on the street**

Table 5.2 presents information on the number of years respondents have spent working on the street. On the average, 6 out of 10 respondents (62.7%) have spent 4 years or less working on the street, while 2 out of 10 street children (19.8%) have spent 10 years and above working on the street. Table 5.2 revealed that across the three study locations, most street children have spent 4 years or less on the street (i.e. 79.8% for Kaduna, 57.2% for Lagos and 51.2 for Port Harcourt). It is however interesting to note that this proportion decreases as we move from the North i.e. Kaduna through the Southwest to the South–South zone while the proportion for those who have spent 10 years and above increases as we move from the North (6.6%) through the southwest (19.2%) to the South – South (33.6%).

In a survey of 1,500 street children, a total of 647 (43.1%) were sleeping on the street, 104 (20.8%) in Kaduna, 320 (64%) in Lagos and 223 (44.6%) in Port Harcourt. Table 5.2 presents data on total number of years spent on the streets. Table 5.2 shows that majority (84.5%) have spent 4 years or less on the streets. The proportion of those who have spent 4 years or less sleeping on the street across the study locations are, 77.9% in Kaduna, 89.1% in Lagos and 81.2% in Port Harcourt.

**Table 5.2: Percentage Distribution of the number of years street children have spent working and sleeping on the Street.**

Number of Years Spent working on the street	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt		N=1500	%
	N=500	%	N=500	%	N=500	%		
0 – 4	399	79.8	286	57.2	256	51.2	941	62.7
5 – 9	68	13.6	118	23.6	76	15.2	262	17.5
10 years and above	33	6.6	96	19.2	168	33.6	297	19.8
Number of years spent sleeping on the street								
0 – 4	81	77.9	285	89.1	181	81.2	547	84.5
5 – 9	20	19.2	29	9.1	36	16.1	85	13.1
10 years and above	03	2.9	06	1.8	06	2.7	15	2.4

**Source: Survey Reports, 2006**

#### **5.2.2.2 Events that brought the children to the street**

The events that brought the children to the street were explored. Table 5.3 shows that 3 out of 10 (34.0%) claimed that they were on the street purposely for survival, while 16.7% claimed that they were on the street to hawk in order to supplement family income. Many of the respondents in Kaduna (36.7%) said they were on the street to seek knowledge (quranic education) 16.6% said it was for survival, while 11.5% said it was due to the problem of poverty in their family and lack of parental care. In Lagos, 53.7% said they were on the streets for survival, while for 28.2% it was to hawk to supplement family income. In Port Harcourt (26.8%) and (25.8%) reported poverty and survival needs respectively while 14.9% said they were hawking to supplement family income. Evidence from Focus Group Discussions conducted with community members confirmed

this trend. Poverty was found to be the main factor which made parents to send their children to the street to hawk some in support of the family. Also, Islamic culture, which supported the practice of ‘Almajiris’ in the North, also supported street begging or begging for alms. Polygynous marriage which encourages large family size, often leads to families not being able to take care of excess children. Other factors identified are peer group influence and broken homes syndrome which tend to push children to the streets, fending for themselves. The extracts from FGD and in-depth interview sessions support many of those assumptions (also see Table 1 Appendix VII for details).

**Extract I: FGD with Youth females - Kaduna**

*“Poverty is the main problem in Nigeria. Some parents send their female children out for prostitution so that they can get money to support the family and the children will become wayward”*

**Extract II: FGD with male opinion leaders - Lagos**

*“I read in the paper about a man with 7 wives and 77 children. How on earth do you think that the man can take care of those children? Most of them will just be left uncared for and they will become street children. So overpopulation is one of the problems”.*

**Extract III: In-depth interview with a Pastor – Kaduna**

*“Islamic religion encourages men to have up to four wives and the problem is that the wives compete to have more children than the others. So, if one of them has ten*



*children, others will also want to have a minimum of ten. This will make about forty children for a single man. How do you think that the man can take care of the children? The best he can do is to send them to mallam, who will also send them to the street to fend for themselves because he can not also take care of them”.*

**Extract IV: FGD with Adult Men – Port Harcourt**

*“I met a street boy of about 8 years of age, who said that his father is working in one of the big banks, and that the father knows that he now lives under the bridge. He explained that the father had another wife who does not want to see him. Hence, he had to escape the daily torture at home for street life”.*

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**Table 5.3: Distribution of Respondents by the events that brought them to the street**

Events that brought respondents to the street	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Quranic education	192	36.7	09	1.3	19	3.2	220	12.0
Survival	87	16.6	380	53.7	154	25.8	621	34.0
Hawking to supplement family income	16	3.1	200	28.2	89	14.9	305	16.7
Poverty	60	11.5	35	4.9	160	26.8	255	13.9
Looking for job	33	6.3	07	1.0	40	6.7	80	4.4
Lack of Parental care	60	11.5	56	7.9	36	6.0	152	8.3
Parental separation	6	1.1	7	1.0	1	0.2	14	0.8
Lost of parents	48	9.2	04	0.6	75	12.5	127	6.9
Indiscipline	9	1.7	9	1.3	5	0.8	23	1.3
Begging for alms	12	2.3	01	0.1	19	3.2	32	1.7
Total	*523	100.0	*708	100.0	*598	100.0	*1829	100.0

\*Multiple responses were received

**Source: Survey Reports, 2006**

### 5.2.2.3 Respondent Relationship with Parents

A consideration of the respondents' relationship with their parents is very important because of the effects of such relationship on the decision of a child either to leave home for street life or to remain in the home. Some indicators of cordiality as mentioned by the street children include, whether the parents appear lovely or not, the kind of punishment meted out to them when they offend the parent, the willingness of the parent to provide for what they need and whether the home environment is hostile or

friendly. Table 5.4 shows that 68.5% claimed to have cordial relationships with their fathers and 66.3% had cordial relationships with their mothers. In the same vein, most of the respondents in Kaduna claimed to have cordial relationship with their fathers (92.2%) and their mothers (95.0%). In Lagos, majority of the respondents had cordial relationship with their fathers (65.8%) while majority (56.8%) did not have cordial relationship with their mothers. Also in Port- Harcourt, 52.6% did not have cordial relationship with their fathers while 60.8% had cordial relationship with their mothers. It is however worth noting that although, majority of the respondents in Lagos claimed to have cordial relationship with their fathers while majority also claimed to have cordial relationship with their mothers in Port Harcourt, a substantial proportion of the respondents (34.2%) did not have cordial relationship with their fathers in Lagos, while 39.2% in Port Harcourt did not also have cordial relationship with their mothers. This has an implication on the children's decision to or not to leave home. Evidence from the literature suggests that strained relationship with any of the parents is one of the factors responsible for children leaving home for street life. Hence, Kopoka (2000) expressed that many children run away to the streets to avoid violence and abuse in the family.

Among those who claimed that they had no cordial relationship with either the father or the mother in Lagos, more than half of them (55.2%) said that they move to the street due to parental clash, 15.5% expressed that "there was no peace in the house" and 12.9% said that "there was no parental care" while most of the respondents in Port-Harcourt (81.3%) said that they left home because they had no parental care.

Data on street children's frequency of visiting their homes revealed that in the total sample, 2 out of 10 respondents (25.3%) said that they visit home every day, 23.7% said that they did not know where the parents are while another 2 out of 10 (19.7%) visit home frequently but not everyday. Table 5.4 shows that in Kaduna, 26.8% visit home occasionally, 20.8% visit home frequently but not everyday and 20.2% did not know where the parents are. In Lagos, 29.2% of the respondents visit home frequently but not everyday while 25.2% visit home everyday and 19.4% did not know where the parents are. In Port Harcourt, 31.4% did not know where the parents are, 30.6% said that they visit home everyday while 17.2% hardly visit home.

**Table 5.4: Percentage Distribution of the Respondents on relationship with their parents and the frequency of their visit to their homes.**

Had cordial relationship with father?	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt			
	N=500	%	N=500	%	N=500	%	N=1500	%
Yes	461	92.2	329	65.8	237	47.4	1027	68.5
No	39	7.8	171	34.2	263	52.6	473	31.5
Had cordial relationship with mother?								
Yes	475	95.0	216	43.2	304	60.8	995	66.3
No	25	5.0	284	56.8	196	39.2	505	33.7
How often do you visit home?								
Everyday	100	20.0	126	25.2	153	30.6	379	25.3
Frequently but not everyday	104	20.8	146	29.2	45	9.0	295	19.7
Occasionally	134	26.8	57	11.4	59	11.8	250	16.7
Hardly	61	12.2	74	14.8	86	17.2	221	14.7
Don't know where they are	101	20.2	97	19.4	157	31.4	355	23.7

**Source: Survey Reports, 2006**

#### **5.2.2.4 How Respondents spend their income and the family members that take money from the street children.**

Responses to the question on how respondents spend their income revealed that across the three study locations, respondents spend their money mainly on three things, namely; feeding, clothing and to supplement family income. In the total sample, 4 out of 10 of the respondents (40.5%) spend their income on feeding, while 23.5% and 23.4% spend their income on clothing and to supplement family needs respectively. This pattern of spending was similar for all the locations for this study. Evidence from the literature suggests that substantial proportions of the street children are sent to the street to work in order to supplement family income. Hence, Shelter Don Bosco (2003) said that often, the earnings of the parents are insufficient to secure even the family's most basic needs. Consequently, Bourdillon (2001) noted that for the children and their families, being on the street is not a problem, it is their solution to a number of problems such as crowded living conditions and not having enough money to feed and clothe the children are problems.

Table 5.5 presents data on those who take money from the street children. In the total sample, 3 out of 10 reported that mothers take the money made on the streets, compared to 2 out of 10 respondents who reported same for the fathers. It is therefore clear from the table that it is more likely for mothers to take money from the street children than the fathers. This is also evident in the fact that higher proportion of the respondents across the three study locations claimed that more often than not, their mothers (35.0%) take money from them compared with their fathers (20.4%). This was

reported for Port Harcourt (46.3%), followed by those in Kaduna (34.7%), and the least in Lagos (28.8%). In other cases, sisters and brothers also take money from the street children (see Table 5.5). This implies that the eradication of poverty among women must be taken with all seriousness in a bid to control the proliferation of street children.

**Table 5.5: Percentage Distribution of how Respondents spend their income and family members who take money from them.**

How respondents spend their income	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt		N	%
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
To supplement family needs	146	17.5	249	22.4	218	32.3	613	23.4
To pay school fees	59	7.1	156	14.1	51	7.6	266	10.1
For clothing	223	26.7	296	26.7	98	14.5	617	23.5
For feeding	404	48.3	396	35.7	262	38.8	1062	40.5
Total	*836	100.0	*1110	100.0	*675	100.0	*2621	100.0
Who takes the money from you?								
Father	102	22.8	128	19.5	72	19.3	302	20.4
Mother	155	34.7	189	28.8	173	46.3	517	35.0
Brothers	68	15.2	78	12.0	26	7.0	172	11.6
Sisters	49	11.0	99	15.1	33	8.8	181	12.3
Relations	32	7.2	28	4.3	05	1.3	65	4.4
Friends	35	7.8	87	13.3	01	0.3	123	8.3
Total	*447	100.0	*656	100.0	*374	100.0	*1477	100.0

**\*Multiple responses were received**

**Source: Survey Reports, 2006**

### **5.2.3 PROBLEMS OF THE STREET CHILDREN**

This section discusses the problems encountered by the street children in the study sample. The section specifically discusses issues relating to the kind of activities the children engage in for a living on the streets, the things that respondents enjoy most, the most difficult problems they are experiencing, the worst things that have happened to them in their lives and the coping strategies of the street children. Other issues discussed include the respondents' relationship with the police; where the children slept a day preceding the survey; the common health problems of the respondents; their health seeking behaviour; their eating habit; where they seek for help whenever they are sick; and the number of times the children eat in a day. The section also discusses the issue of whether the respondents have any problem with other children on the street and other government agents apart from the police. The chapter draws some conclusions on the solutions to the problem of street children.

#### **5.2.3.1 Activities that respondents engage in for a living**

Table 5.6 presents data on the activities the street children engage in for a living. In the total sample, 4 out of 10 (43.6%) respondents said that they engage in hawking for a living, while 32.9% said they engage in petty jobs such as selling of pure water, and shining shoes. In Kaduna, 44.8% of street children engaged in petty jobs, while 33.9% engaged in hawking. Majority (49.9%) of the respondents in Lagos engaged in hawking, while 28.3% engaged in petty jobs. Also in Port Harcourt, 47.9% engaged in hawking, while 25.0% engaged in petty jobs. Data from FGDs and in-depth interview also revealed that most of the 'children on the street' engaged in hawking and pilfering. In general,

'children of the street' begged for alms, or do petty jobs such as shoe shinning, carrying of loads for money, commercial sex services, stealing, and other criminal activities for their survival. One of the FGD participants retorted "*Many of the street children here in North are involved in begging for alms, for survival. You will see them on the street with robber plates with which they beg for food and they always wear rags. It is evident all over them that there are no traces of care for them by any adult*". Another person said "*most street children here in Lagos are notorious for crime for their survival. They are involved in theft, burglary and even aiding the drug pushers. There is rarely any form of crime in which street children are not involved*". Also in Port Harcourt, it was said that "*most street girls are prostitutes, even when they hawk some things; it is just a means to an end for their commercial sex services while the street boys are also involved in various crimes*". Below are more extracts from in-depth interviews and FGD sessions documenting the experiences of the street children and their coping mechanisms.

**Extract V: In-depth Interview with Social Welfare Officer – Port Harcourt**

*"Typical street children will have no mother to take care of them or any father to advice them. They are left on their own to work. They are involved in menial jobs such as pushing of wheelbarrows, carrying loads for market women and of course most of the times take to crime in order to survive"*.



#### **Extract VI: In-depth Interview with a Pastor – Lagos**

*“The street children get themselves involved in stealing, causing violence because they take advantage of violence to rob people. They remove people’s handsets and engage in pocket picking for their daily bread. They join hands with armed robbers. They are 419”.*

#### **Extract VII: In-depth Interview with an Imam – Kaduna**

*“A hungry man is not a normal person, if the children have eaten from their respective homes before coming to the Mallam, the mallam will only give them instructions on quran, but if they did not eat from home, the Mallam cannot feed them. So they have to beg for alms in order to eat. Any attempt to stop street begging without trying to modernize Islamic education will cause problem for the society. It will not work”.*

#### **Extract VIII: FGD with Opinion Leaders – Lagos**

*“If there are no street children, the rate of crime will be very minimal because they are the most dangerous agent of crime. They are involved in every form of crime for a living”*

Data on the activities the street children enjoy most revealed that 27.3% of the respondents express that what they enjoy most on the street was playing, 24.3% said that it was quranic recitation, while 19.4% said it was dancing. An overwhelming majority (62.0%) in Kaduna claimed that what they enjoy most was the quranic recitation, 47.5%

and 25.9% in Lagos said that it was dancing and playing respectively. In Port Harcourt, 49.1% said they enjoy playing.

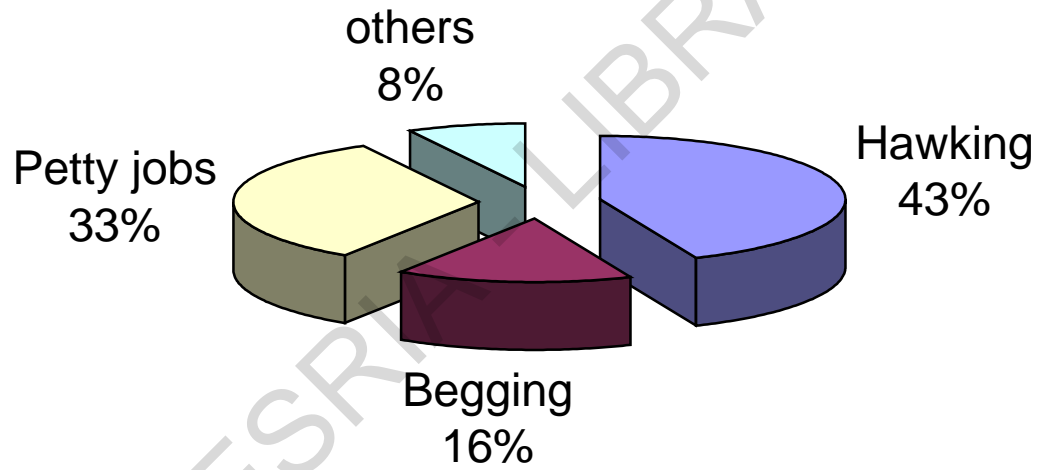
**Table 5.6: Distribution of the activities that Respondents engage in for a living and the activities they enjoy most**

Activities that respondents engage in	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Hawking	192	33.9	249	49.9	267	47.9	708	43.6
Begging for alms	107	18.9	74	14.8	74	13.3	255	15.7
Petty jobs	254	44.8	141	28.3	139	25.0	534	32.9
Others (Carrying of loads and Commercial sex services)	14	2.5	35	7.0	77	13.8	126	7.8
Total	*567	100.0	*499	100.0	*557	100.0	*1623	100.0
Activities respondents enjoy most on the street								
Learning/reciting of Quran	340	62.0	51	7.4	48	8.4	439	24.3
Eating	26	4.7	71	10.3	12	2.1	109	6.0
Playing	36	6.6	179	25.9	280	49.1	495	27.3
Watching Films	28	5.1	58	8.4	56	9.8	142	7.8
Hawking/Trading	46	8.4	01	0.1	69	12.1	116	6.4
Begging for alms	38	6.9	-	-	14	2.5	52	2.9
Good company	10	1.8	-	-	59	10.4	69	3.8
Dancing	-	-	329	47.5	23	4.0	352	19.4
Life a bit stable	15	2.7	03	0.4	03	0.5	21	1.2
The job I do	09	1.6	-	-	06	1.1	15	0.8
Total	*548	100.0	*692	100.0	*570	100.0	*1810	100.0

\* Multiple responses were received

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

**Fig.2: Kinds of Activities Street Children engage in**



### **5.3.2 Most difficult problems facing the street children and their worst experiences on the street**

Table 5.7 presents the most difficult problems of the street children showing that their most difficult problems are feeding (21.6%), accommodation (20.1%), health (19.6%) and education (18.8%). It is clear from the Table 5.7 that 30.6% of the respondents in Kaduna said that their most difficult problem was feeding while another 20.2% said that it was health problem. In Lagos, 2 out of 10 each stated that their most difficult problem was accommodation (23.3%), health (21.1%) and education (21.0%) while in Port Harcourt, 24.3% stated that their most difficult problem was accommodation, 22.4% expressed that it was feeding while 19.0% said that it was education. Data from the FGDs and in-depth interviews conducted revealed that part of the problems facing the street children include: lack of care, homelessness, constant abuse from the hand of police and community members, feeding and clothing. The extracts from FGD participants and in-depth interviews document the problems of the street children.

#### **Extract IX: FGD with Opinion Leaders, Females – Kaduna**

*“Street children face a lot of problems on the street. They are abused and even used for rituals by the rich and wicked people in the society”*

#### **Extract X: In-depth interview with a Pastor – Kaduna**

*“Street children are used for religious riots to cause violence and kill Christians in the North. The Islamic fundamentalists and religious fanatics take advantage of their situation. Once they are given #20 or #50, they are ready to do anything because they are*

*hungry. Their mallams also always indoctrinate them that if they die in the course of fighting for Allah, they will get to heaven”.*

**Extract XI: FGD with Youths Males – Port Harcourt**

*“The street children are always molested by the law enforcement agents that is suppose to protect them. They are also exposed to cold and different forms of diseases because they eat just anything”.*

**Extract XII: In-depth interview with a Pastor – Port Harcourt**

*“Some of the street children do not take their bath for days, weeks or even a month. I met a street boy less than 9 years of age sometimes ago; he sleeps on bare floor under the bridge. Imagine what will happen to such children during raining season”?*

**Extract XIII: In-depth interview with Social Welfare Officer, Lagos**

*“Many street children do not have a place of abode; they sleep under the bridge, market places and in uncompleted buildings. They also lack parental upbringing and have no financial assistance anywhere, hence they take to all sort of dirty jobs and crime to survive”.*

Table 5.7, presents data on the experiences of the street children and 22.8% of the respondents said that their worst experience was lack of food while 21.5% said it was lack of resources and opportunity. The respondents’ opinion about their worst experiences however varies from one location to the other. In Kaduna 3 out of every 10 respondents said that their worst experiences were lack of food (27.9%) and lack of

resources and opportunity (26.1%). In Lagos, 21.5% said that it was health problem, 20.1% said that it was homelessness and another 19.1% expressed that it was lack of food. In Port Harcourt, 21.8% said that their worst experiences are lack of food while 21.1% said that it was lack of resources and opportunity and another 19.5% said that it was homelessness. A problem ranking of the street children's experiences, showed that lack of food occupied their priority list (see Table 5.7).

**Table 5.7: Distribution of the most difficult problems facing the Respondents and the worst experiences of the street children**

Most difficult problems	Town of Residence						Total		Ranking of the problems
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt				
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Accommodation	144	12.2	353	23.3	254	24.3	751	20.1	2
Feeding	362	30.6	211	14.0	234	22.4	807	21.6	1
Clothing	133	11.3	239	15.8	145	13.9	517	13.8	5
Health	238	20.2	319	21.1	177	16.9	734	19.6	3
Education	185	15.7	318	21.0	199	19.0	702	18.8	4
Counselling	108	9.2	61	4.0	32	3.1	201	5.4	6
Total	*1180	100.0	*1512	100.0	*1046	100.0	*3738	100.0	
Respondents worst experiences									
Lack of food	368	27.9	286	19.1	226	21.8	880	22.8	1
Homelessness	93	7.1	302	20.1	202	19.5	597	15.5	4
Health problems	183	13.9	323	21.5	178	17.2	684	17.7	3
Physical abuse	97	7.4	243	16.2	123	11.9	463	12.0	5
Lack of resources and opportunity	344	26.1	267	17.8	219	21.1	830	21.5	2
Stigmatization	90	6.8	24	1.6	37	3.6	151	3.9	7
Exploitation	141	10.7	49	3.3	48	4.6	238	6.2	6
Total	*1319	100.0	*1500	100.0	*1037	100.0	*3856	100.0	

\* Multiple responses were received

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

### 5.2.3.3 Street Children's coping strategies

There were varieties of strategies used by the street children to cope with problems, which dragged them to the streets. In the total sample, 32.4% said that they engage in hawking, while 16.4% beg for alms in order to survive. In the same vein 50.8% of the street children in Kaduna said that they engage in hawking while 18.5% engage in begging for alms. In Lagos, 27.8% engage in hawking, 19.1% beg for alms and 18.1% said that they were hard working and in Port Harcourt, 19.5% of the respondents engaged in trading while 17.2 merely said that they were hard working. Evidence from the FGDs and in-depth interviews conducted shows that street children also employ other strategies other than the ones mentioned above to cope with street life. These include “forming street gangs as a network to assist one another, involving in theft and robbery activities”. “Many street children smoke Indian hemp and take all sorts of hard drugs to cope with street life”. Below are more extracts documenting street children's coping strategies across the study locations.

#### **Extract XIV: In-depth interview with an Imam – Lagos**

*“Most street children cope with street life by involving themselves in crime and hard drugs”.*

#### **Extract XV: FGD with Opinion Leaders, Males – Lagos**

*“Street children form gangs to protect themselves against external enemy and to assist one another in times of trouble. They form their own artificial family on the streets”.*

**Table 5.8: Coping strategies of the Respondents**

Coping strategies	Town of Residence						Total		Ranking
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt		N	%	
	N	%	N	%	N	%			
Begging for alms	112	18.5	98	19.1	61	11.4	271	16.4	2
Hawking	307	50.8	143	27.8	86	16.1	536	32.4	1
Farming	84	13.9	-	-	02	0.4	86	5.2	7
Trading	14	2.3	11	2.1	104	19.5	129	7.8	5
Manage what I have	09	1.5	89	17.3	28	5.2	126	7.6	6
Through prayer	29	4.8	73	14.2	88	16.5	190	11.5	4
Hard working	33	5.5	93	18.1	92	17.2	218	13.2	3
Managing with parents	05	0.8	07	1.4	17	3.2	29	1.8	9
Keeping good company	11	1.8	-	-	56	10.5	67	4.1	8
Total	*604	100.0	*514	100.0	*534	100.0	*1652	100.0	

\* Multiple responses were received

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

#### 5.2.3.4 Respondent relationship with the Police

Table 5.9 shows that in the total sample, 50.2% said that they did not have cordial relationship with the police while 28.2% said they have not had any encounter with the police. In a similar manner, majority of the respondents across the three locations selected for the study said that they did not have cordial relationship with the police. Hence, 74.2% in Kaduna, 36.4% in Lagos and 42.0% in Port Harcourt said that they did not have cordial relationship with the police. The respondents said they were not in good terms with the police because the police usually molest, detain and even take bribe from them out of the meagre income they get on the street. Evidence from the literature shows that in most cases, the relationship between the street children and the police are not always cordial. According to Human Rights Watch (2004) Street children throughout



the world are subjected to physical abuse by police or have been murdered outright, They are frequently detained arbitrarily by police simply because they are homeless, or criminally charged with vague offenses such as loitering, vagrancy, or petty theft. They are tortured or beaten by police and often held for long periods in poor conditions while girls are sometimes sexually abused, coerced into sexual acts, or raped by police.

**Table 5.9: Distribution of Respondents relationship with the police**

Respondents relationship with police	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cordial	33	6.6	70	14.0	78	15.6	181	12.1
Not cordial	371	74.2	182	36.4	210	42.0	753	50.2
Ambivalence	30	6.0	76	15.2	37	7.4	143	9.5
No encounter with police	66	13.2	172	34.4	175	35.0	423	28.2
Total	500	100.0	500	100.0	500	100.0	1500	100.0

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

### 5.2.3.5 Places where respondents slept the night preceding the survey

Table 5.10 presents information about the places respondents slept a day before the survey. This was purposely to have the idea of places where street children usually sleep. More than half of the respondents (56.9%) claimed to sleep at home with their parents, 20.0% slept in the quranic teacher's house, 12.1% slept in uncompleted building, 10.9% slept in the public school building, and 10% slept in the motor garage. However, while an overwhelming majority (60.0%) slept in the Malam's house (i.e. the quranic teachers' house) in Kaduna, 36.0% and 20.6% in Lagos slept in their parents' houses and uncompleted buildings respectively in Lagos; while the majority (55.4%) in Port Harcourt also claimed to sleep in parents' houses. Data from the FGDs and in-depth interview also support these. It was evident from the FGDs that the bulk of the street

children in the North, who were ‘Almajiris’ sleep in their Malams houses at night, a few of the street children return home at night while the rest sleep in uncompleted buildings, School premises, market places, open shops and motor garages. This experience is the same for street children in other locations – Lagos and Port Harcourt except that sleeping in Malam’s homes was not recorded in the south.

**Table 5.10: Distribution of the places respondents slept a night preceding the survey**

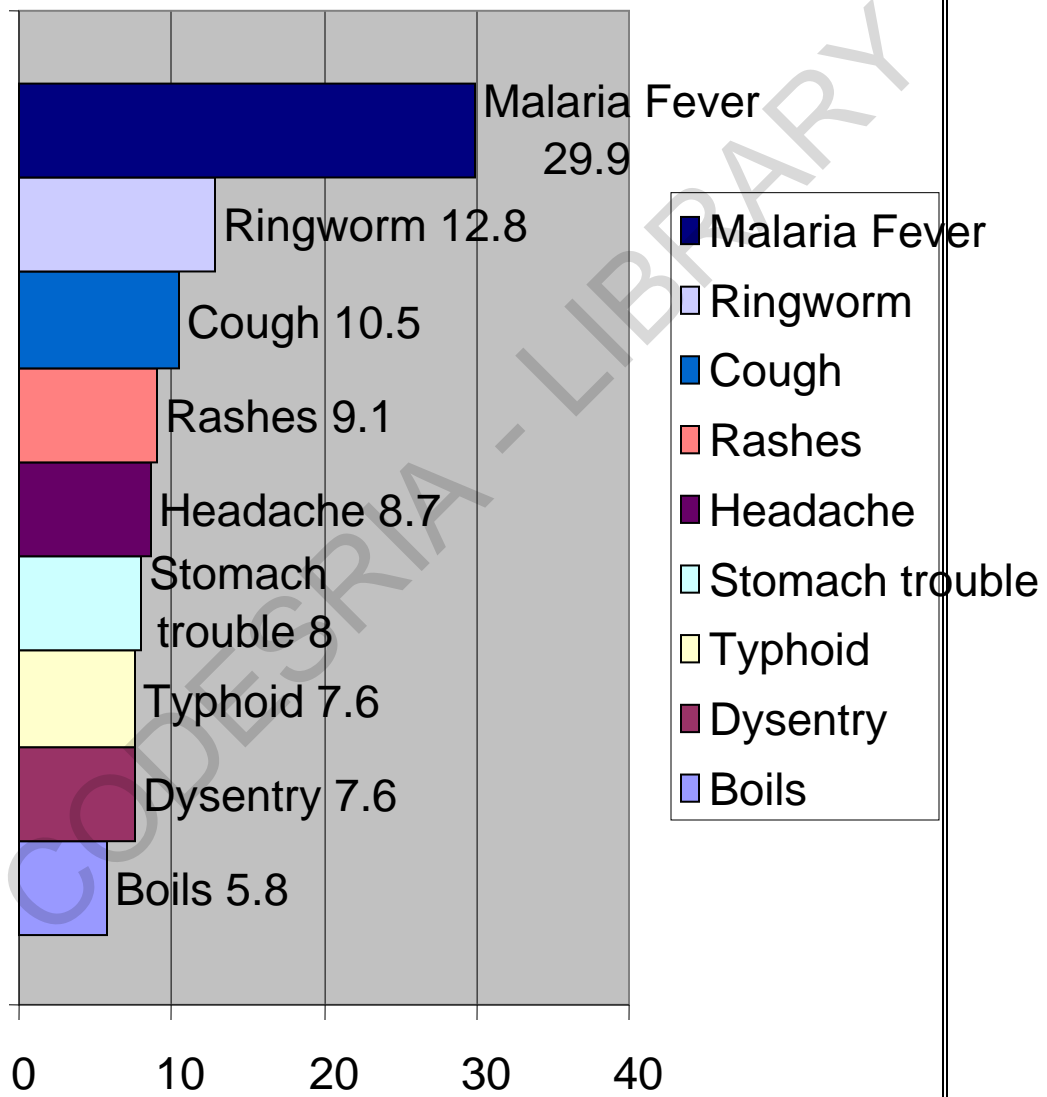
Places where respondents slept	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Slept with parents at home	50	10.0	180	36.0	277	55.4	853	56.9
Uncompleted building	15	3.0	103	20.6	64	12.8	182	12.1
Under the bridge	8	1.6	38	7.6	33	6.6	79	5.3
Motor garage	64	12.8	60	12.0	26	5.2	150	10.0
In the market	63	12.6	36	7.2	20	4.0	119	7.9
Malam’s house	300	60.0	-	-	-	-	300	20.0
School buildings	-	-	83	16.6	80	16.0	163	10.9
Total	500	100.0	500	100.0	500	100.0	1500	100.0

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

#### 5.2.3.6 Places where Respondents seek for assistance when they are sick

When the respondents were asked about their common health problems, 29.9% complained of malaria fever, 12.8% complained of ringworm, 10.5% complained of cough while 9.1% said that it is rashes. The respondents were therefore asked for where they seek for assistance whenever they are sick and more than half of the total respondents (54.3%) expressed that they usually buy drugs from chemists while 32.5% of the street children said that they use traditional herbs. Only 11.9% of the total respondents seek assistance in the hospital whenever they are sick.

**Fig.3: Distribution of Respondents by Common Health Problems**



**Table 5.11: Places where Respondents seek for assistance when they are sick**

	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt		N	%
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Hospital	64	7.0	131	21.7	50	9.4	245	11.9
Bought drug from chemists	421	45.9	307	50.7	387	72.7	1115	54.3
Use traditional herbs	424	46.2	159	26.3	85	16.0	668	32.5
Others( Peers, community members)	08	0.9	08	1.3	10	1.9	26	1.3
Total	*917	100.0	*605	100.0	*532	100.0	*2054	100.0

\* Multiple responses were received

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

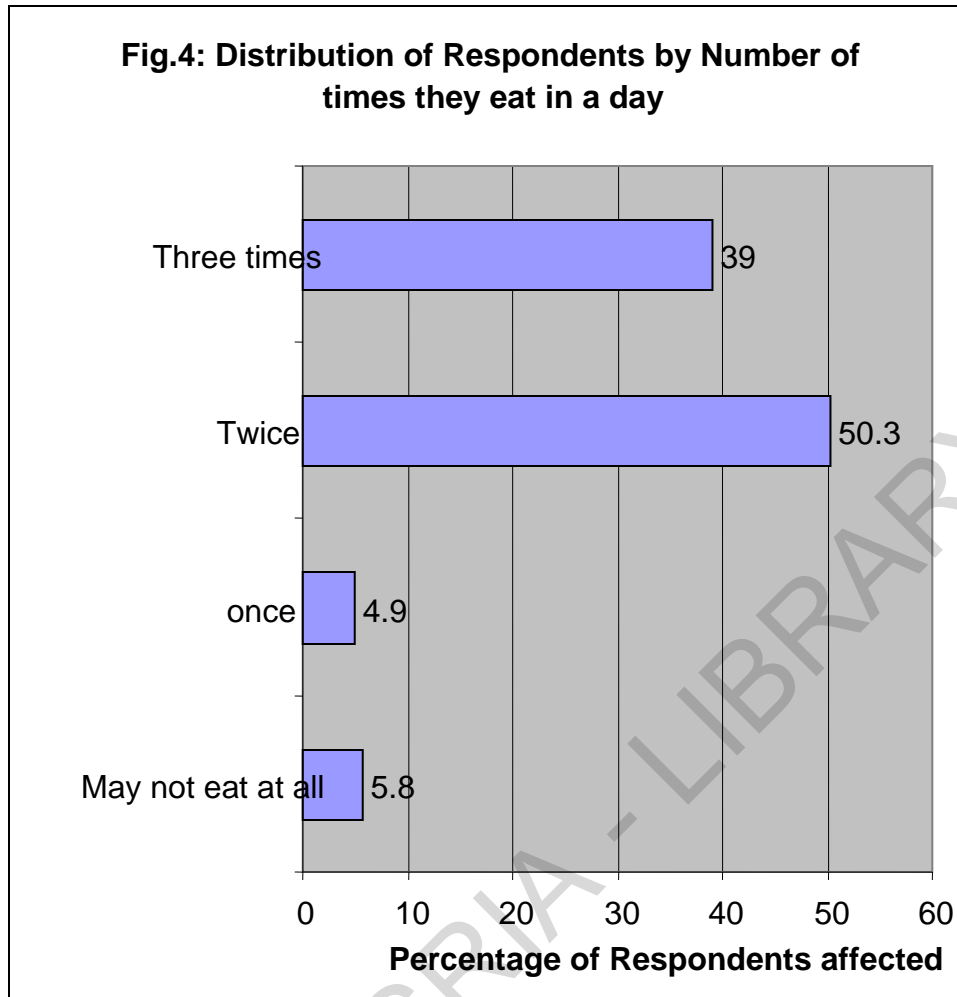
### 5.2.3.7 Number of times Respondents eat in a day

Table 5.12 presents information on the number of times respondents eat in a day. The table reveals that more than half of the respondents (50.3%) claimed that they eat two times in a day while 39.0% said that they eat three times or more in a day. Given the mean income of #651.89 in a week, it can be deduced that, though a substantial proportion of the children claimed to eat 3 times or more in a day, the quality of what they eat would be substantially low since this will translate to an average of #31.04 per meal.

**Table 5.12: Number of times Respondents eat in a day**

Number of times respondents eat in a day	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt		N	%
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Once	37	7.4	07	1.4	30	6.0	74	4.9
Twice	219	43.8	242	48.4	293	58.6	754	50.3
Three times or more	231	46.2	213	42.6	141	28.2	585	39.0
May not eat for a whole day	13	2.6	38	7.6	36	7.2	87	5.8
Total	500	100.0	500	100.0	500	100.0	1500	100.0

Source: Survey Reports, 2006



#### **5.2.3.8 Respondents problems with other children on the street**

Data in Table 5.13 revealed that 9 out of 10 of the respondents (89.7%) expressed that they did not have any problem with other children who were on the street like them. However, majority (66.4%) of the few that said they had problems with other street children were always fighting with them, 10.9% said that other street children are stronger than them, 9.2% expressed that they were being cheated by some other children who were on the street like them and 5.9% of them said that some street boys usually take

advantage of street girls by sexually harassing them. This has implication on the effort of the government to control the spread of HIV/AIDS.

The respondents were asked if they had problems with other government agents other than the police. Majority (81.8%) reported no problems with other government agents, while 14.4% reported problems with the social welfare officers who always see them as suspects in cases relating to theft and urban violence.

**Table 5.13: Distribution of the Respondents according to whether they have problems with other children on the street**

	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt		N	%
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Yes	37	7.4	63	12.6	55	11.0	155	10.3
No	463	92.6	437	87.4	445	89.0	1345	89.7
Total	500	100.0	500	100.0	500	100.0	1500	100.0

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

#### 5.2.3.9 Solutions to the problems of the street children

The respondents suggested various solutions to the problems they experience on the street, but of all the solutions suggested, four major ones emerged. These are: (i) provision of employment and loan for business by the government (28.6%), (ii) provision of free and compulsory education for all children up to secondary school level (24.7%), (iii) provision of shelter for the street children (16.7%) and provision of food for the street children (15.0%). Among the FGDs participants and in-depth interviews conducted, the following suggestions were made:

- the execution of the Child Right Act promulgated by the Federal Government to improve the status of children generally;

- provision of free education for all children in primary and secondary school levels ( this is already in place but it is not properly executed);
- prosecution of parents whose children are found on the street;
- And the modernization of Islamic schools in a way that discourages street begging.
- Parents were also advised not to be involved in polygynous marriage and they should take good care of their children and that the government should provide jobs for the people and reduce the poverty level in the country (see Table 7 Appendix VII).

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**Table 5.14: Suggested Solutions to the Problems of Street Children**

Suggested Solutions	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt		N	%
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Government should provide employment/ Loan for business	60	18.2	67	22.9	106	35.2	233	28.6
Provision of food	50	15.2	44	15.0	28	9.3	122	15.0
Provision of social amenities	46	13.9	07	2.4	17	5.6	70	8.6
Provision of compulsory and free education	58	17.6	56	19.1	87	28.9	201	24.7
Traditional rulers should assist	15	4.5	-	-	05	1.7	20	2.5
Parents should care for their children	09	2.7	54	18.4	07	2.3	70	8.6
Re-uniting with parents	07	2.1	09	3.1	03	1.0	19	2.3
Community members should provide assistance	47	14.2	06	2.0	-	-	53	6.5
Provision of shelter	38	11.5	50	17.1	48	15.9	136	16.7
Total	*330	100.0	*293	100.0	*301	100.0	*814	100.0

\* Multiple responses were recorded

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

## **5.2.4 NETWORKS OF SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO THE STREET CHILDREN**

This section presents data on the existing support networks available to the street children in the surveyed locations. The discussion here focuses on ‘of’ the street children since the attention of the support providers are always directed towards them and not to children ‘on’ the street. Hence, the issues discussed in this section relate to children who work and sleep on the street. Specifically, data are presented on the following: attitudes of the community to ‘of’ the street children and the forms of assistance received from the community members; their awareness of NGOs working with street children in the respective communities and the types of assistance given to the street children. The institutions focused on here include local NGOs, the Government Welfare Departments, the police, and the local communities.

### **5.4.1 Attitudes of the community members to children ‘of’ the street**

Table 5.15 presents information on the attitudes of the community members to the street children as perceived by the respondents. In the total sample, 44.9% said the community members were accommodative while 31.4% said that the community members were indifferent. However, the community attitudes vary from one location to the other. Majority (59.0%) of the respondents in Port Harcourt and Kaduna (56.6%) said that the community members were accommodative, while others reported indifferent attitudes from communities. In Lagos half of the sample said that the community members were hostile to them while 31.0% reported indifference attitudes from community members. In the same vein, 84.8% in Kaduna, 47.4% in Port Harcourt and 29.0%, in Lagos respectively expressed that they have received assistance from

community members. Evidence from FGDs and in-depth interviews show that there is a mixed feeling towards the street children at the community level. While some pity their condition and willing to help them, others see them as a threat to the societal peace because of their nefarious activities. Below are more extracts from the in-depth interview and FGD sessions to show the attitudes of the community members to the street children

**Extract XVI: FGD with Youth males, Lagos**

*“I pity the street children because many of them are victims of circumstances. They have no other option to live more quality life than they are living and their future is bleak”*

**Extract XVII: FGD with Adult Women, Lagos**

*“Street children are very notorious. I have had some encounter with them. They pick pocket and rob people. They are merciless and create crisis so that they could use the opportunity to rob people of their properties. The government must do something to eradicate them”.*

**Extract XVIII: Indepth interview with a Pastor, Kaduna**

*“Street children in the North are called ‘Almajiri’ and they are very wicked. They are used for religious crisis to kill and maim people. Infact, if you love yourself, you better be careful to assist them because they will never appreciate whatever assistance you give them and whenever there is religious crisis you will be the first target because*

*they will think that you have so much. The mentality is that they will want to kill you, so that they can rob you of your properties”.*

Specific assistance received from community members are presented in Table 5.15. These were listed as - feeding (24.9%), accommodation (24.5%), and counselling (18.1%). Although there are some variations in reporting, these four items were commonly itemized across the three study areas (see Table 5.15). Importantly, support for education and health care for the street children is rare across the study areas. Also data from FGDs and the in-depth interviews revealed that most of these street children were not rarely supported by the public. Although some people genuinely assist them but most of the assistance rendered by community members was to further exploit them (see Extract XIX below). FGD discussions showed that community members also face a lot of economic challenges, including poverty, fear, lack of security, and the tendency to see the street children as instrument of fear and violence. (see Table 5 Appendix VII).

**Extract XIX: FGD with Opinion Leaders, Males - Lagos**

*“In some cases street children were only accommodated by some people so that they could be used as a cheap labour for domestic works or even for the purpose of using them for rituals”.*

**Extract XX: FGD with Adult Females – Kaduna**

*“There are those who assist the street children out of sincere heart while some have ulterior motives for doing so”.*

**Table 5.15: Attitudes of the community to children ‘of’ the street and the assistance they received from them**

Attitudes of the community to the street children	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt		N	%
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Accommodative	60	56.6	61	19.0	132	59.0	253	44.9
Hostile	05	5.8	160	50.0	34	15.4	199	23.7
Indifference	39	37.6	99	31.0	57	25.6	195	31.4
Total	104	100.0	320	100.0	223	100.0	647	100.0
Assistance received from the community								
Accommodation	95	22.0	65	13.7	150	41.3	310	24.5
Feeding	100	23.1	133	28.1	83	22.9	316	24.9
Clothing	97	22.5	62	13.1	43	11.8	202	15.9
Health service	50	11.6	12	2.5	30	8.3	92	7.3
Education	10	2.3	32	6.8	14	3.9	56	4.4
Counselling	80	18.5	122	25.8	28	7.7	230	18.1
Others	-	-	47	9.9	15	4.1	62	4.9
Total	*432	100.0	*473	100.0	*363	100.0	*1268	100.0

\*Multiple responses were received

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

#### **5.4.2 Children ‘of’ the Streets’ awareness of NGOs in their community and the assistance received from such NGOs**

The respondents were asked whether they were aware of the presence of Non – Governmental Organisations working with street children in their respective communities. Majority (93.0%) were not aware of the presence of such NGOs. This trend was recorded for all the three study areas, 96.6% in Kaduna, 98.0% in Lagos and 84.0% in Port Harcourt, all said they were not aware of the presence of NGOs in their communities that are working with street children. Evidences from FGD and in-depth

interviews show that the few existing NGOs in this sector face a lot of challenges, ranging from lack of funds, poor staffing, and poor infrastructures. Data collected from the NGOs revealed that only very few of them are assisted by the government and corporate organizations while some are also assisted through the donations from international organizations (see Table 2 Appendix VIII). Presently, many of these NGOs face the problem of sustainability and variability. For example, even when the NGOs reported that they provide accommodation and vocational centre for street children, the NGO itself is located in a rented apartment. This is contrary to the government condition for registering an NGO, that is the condition mandating an NGO to have its own building. None of the NGOs under investigation fulfilled this condition. In-depth interview extract XXI further supports that a lot of challenges currently face these NGOs. Hence, only very few of the street children ever received supports from these local NGOs (see Table 5.16 and Table 3 Appendix VIII).

**Extract XXI: In-depth Interview with NGO Official – Port Harcourt**

*“The kind of work we do is enormous and requires a lot of money. You know how much it could cost to maintain a street child, giving him/her food, shelter, clothing, education and so on and the resources is not forth coming as such. Also, if the resources are coming as it should, there is need for so many people to share the vision to assist them. So there is need for many more NGOs providing support for street children because the population is increasing every day”.*

For the few street children who receive supports from local NGOs, they listed these supports as

- provisions of vocational training (33.8%),
- counselling (21.0%) and
- feeding (20.3%).

Rarely are respondents provided with accommodation, accommodation; health services, education and clothing. However, NGOs data showed that they provided shelter, feeding, clothing, provision of educational materials and scholarships for some street children (see Table 4 Appendix VIII) in reality, the impact on the street children is minimal. It is also significant to mention that many of the street children showed preference for the freedom of street life, rather than being under the supervision of adults running these NGO programmes. An important area of concern is how to bridge this gap in interest, and thereby establish a cooperation between the street children and support facilities, if and when available

**Table 5.16: Children ‘of’ the Streets’ awareness of NGOs in the communities and the assistance they received from the NGOs**

Awareness of NGOs	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt		N	%
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Yes	04	3.4	06	2.0	36	16.0	46	7.1
No	100	96.6	314	98.0	197	84.0	611	93.0
Total	104	100.0	320	100.0	223	100.0	647	100.0
Assistance received from the NGOs								
Accommodation	-	-	02	3.8	11	4.1	13	2.8
Feeding	05	23.0	09	17.0	77	28.4	94	20.3
Clothing	04	19.0	09	17.0	32	11.8	45	9.7
Health service	02	9.0	04	7.5	10	3.7	16	3.5
Education	-	-	09	17.0	32	11.8	41	8.9
Counselling	04	19.0	10	18.9	73	26.9	97	21.0
Others (vocational Training)	06	28.0	10	18.9	36	13.3	156	33.8
Total	*21	100.0	*53	100.0	*271	100.0	*462	100.0

\*Multiple responses were received

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

#### **5.2.4.3 The Police and the Children ‘of’ the Street**

The relationship between the Police and street children (especially ‘of’ the street children) is that of a ‘cat and a mouse’. These children have very negative impressions of the police. Their vision of the police is that of ‘punishment’ rather than ‘help’. Thus, only 2 out of every 10 respondents (20.1%) claimed to have received any assistance from the police. A consideration of the three study locations even shows that the case is worst in Kaduna with only 3.8% of the street children ever claimed to have received any assistance from the police. For the few who reported some form of support from the police, they listed the following supports –



- protection and counselling (28.3%)
- feeding (23.6%);

While these supports for the ‘of’ the street children from the police, cut across the three study locations, it was only in Kaduna that the children reported provision of accommodation to the ‘of’ the street children. Evidence from the FGDs and the in depth interviews however revealed that most of these assistance rendered by the police do not come until the police have been able to gain some advantages in terms of sexual advantage from the girls or bribe from the boys.

**Table 5.17: Distribution of Children ‘of’ the Street according to whether they have ever received assistance from the police and the forms of assistance received**

Have you ever received assistance from the police?	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	04	3.8	72	22.6	54	24.2	130	20.1
No	100	96.2	248	77.4	169	75.8	517	79.9
Total	104	100.0	320	100.0	223	100.0	647	100.0
Assistance received from police								
Accommodation	04	26.3	02	2.7	01	1.8	05	3.9
Feeding	03	21.1	30	39.8	12	21.5	31	23.6
Clothing	02	10.5	01	1.8	05	9.1	08	6.4
Health service	-	-	03	3.5	05	9.1	08	6.4
Education	-	-	-	-	03	5.8	04	3.0
Counselling	01	5.3	34	46.9	05	9.1	37	28.3
Others (protection)	05	36.8	04	5.3	23	43.6	37	28.3
Total	15	100.0	72	100.0	54	100.0	130	100.0

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

#### **5.2.4.4 The Social Welfare Department and its Network of Support to the street children**

The Social Welfare Department has a mandate to give succour to members of the community with social problems. It is assumed that the Welfare Department should have concerns for the Welfare of the street children. Field data shows that half of the respondents (52.0%) never received any assistance from the Social Welfare Department. Also, 9 out of 10 respondents in Kaduna (93.5%) and 6 out of every 10 respondents (65.3%) in Port Harcourt said they did not receive any assistance from the social welfare department. In the same vein, a simple majority of 38.0% expressed the same opinion among the respondents in Lagos. Data from FGDs also revealed that the government through the Social Welfare Department has some programmes for the street children but the programmes are usually not properly executed in a way to fulfill the mission mandate. Hence, a participant noted *“there is Social Welfare Department that is meant to address the problems of the street children but you know that government programmes are not usually taken with all seriousness. There are lots of policies that have never seen the light of the day in terms of execution while those executed are always done haphazardly. The child Right Act passed into law more than two years ago has not been taken with seriousness till now. Do you expect a dead hen to lay eggs?”* In the same vein, the extract below (Extract XXII) also confirmed weaknesses in the present government structures and programmes targeting the street children.

#### **Extract XXII: FGD with Opinion Leaders – Lagos**

*“The programmes of the Social Welfare Department are not well designed in a way to attract the street children. The programme emphasizes punitive measures as a*

*means of rehabilitating the street children. They see Approved Schools as a prison yard. Hence, many street children usually run away from government approved schools. I think that, if the programmes are designed to be attractive, it will be more productive than the way it is now”.*

**Table 5.18: Forms of Assistance the Street Children received from Social Welfare Department**

Assistance received from Social welfare	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt		N	%
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Accommodation	-	-	74	10.1	04	1.2	78	7.0
Feeding	02	1.8	90	12.3	10	3.3	102	9.2
Clothing	01	0.9	75	10.2	11	3.5	87	7.8
Health service	01	0.9	70	9.6	06	2.3	78	7.0
Education	-	-	74	10.1	05	2.1	79	7.1
Counseling	03	2.8	65	8.9	09	3.1	77	6.9
None	101	93.5	279	38.0	198	65.3	578	52.0
Others	-	-	06	0.8	25	8.3	32	2.8
Total	*108	100.0	*733	100.0	*303	100.0	*1111	100.0

\*Multiple responses were received

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

#### **5.2.4.5 Ever received assistance from other street children and the assistance received from them**

Table 5.19 presents types of assistance received by the street children from peers on the streets. Table 5.19 shows that 7 out of 10 (77.7%) had received some sort of assistance from other children on the street. The distribution followed the same pattern for all the study locations. However, three forms of assistance from peers on the top of the list from the street children are –

- feeding (41.1%),

- counseling (26.8%), and
- clothing (19.4%). This distribution followed the same pattern for all the study locations.

**Table 5.19: Distribution of Respondents according to whether they have ever received assistance from other children on the street**

Have you ever received assistance from other street children?	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt		N	%
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Yes	98	94.2	252	78.8	153	68.6	503	77.7
No	06	5.8	68	21.2	70	31.4	144	22.3
Total	104	100.0	320	100.0	223	100.0	647	100.0
Assistance received from other children on the street								
Accommodation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Feeding	100	34.6	251	37.2	193	53.8	544	41.1
Clothing	71	24.6	144	21.4	42	11.7	257	19.4
Health service	16	5.5	45	6.7	17	4.7	78	5.9
Education	06	2.1	45	6.7	04	1.1	55	4.2
Counselling	90	31.1	183	27.2	81	22.6	354	26.8
Others	06	2.1	06	0.9	22	6.1	34	2.6
Total	*289	100.0	*674	100.0	*359	100.0	*1322	100.0

\*Multiple responses were received

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

#### **5.2.4.6 Assistance received by Children ‘of’ the Streets from adults ‘of’ the street**

Table 5.20 presents information on the forms of assistance the street children received from the adults who were on the street like them. The assistance received from the street adults includes; feeding (27.9%), counseling (23.9%) and clothing (15.4%). The distribution followed the same pattern across the study locations except in Port Harcourt where accommodation (23.9%). is on the top of the list of the assistance received by the

respondents from street adults. Data from FGDs also revealed that the adult on the street gives protection to the street children in addition to these.

**Table 5.20: Forms of Assistance received by Children ‘of’ the Streets from adults on the street**

Assistance received from adults on the street	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Accommodation	48	13.4	20	3.2	177	23.9	245	10.2
Feeding	103	24.4	106	17.0	167	22.5	376	27.9
Clothing	98	23.2	46	7.4	69	9.3	213	15.4
Health service	13	1.2	22	3.5	31	4.2	66	2.7
Education	06	0.6	22	3.5	-	-	28	1.2
Counselling	100	25.8	175	28.1	131	17.7	406	23.9
None	50	4.8	229	36.8	156	21.0	435	18.0
Others	04	0.4	02	0.3	11	1.5	17	0.7
Total	*422	100.0	*622	100.0	*742	100.0	*2413	100.0

\* Multiple responses were received

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

#### 5.2.4.7 Other sources of assistance for Children ‘of’ the Street

Among the children ‘of’ the street included in this study, 18.7% claimed that they have been assisted by the adult hawkers, 18.0% have been assisted by the civil servants, 17.1% were assisted by Reverend/Pastors while 16.9% said that they got assistance from Islamic scholars.

In Kaduna, 2 out of 10 respondents said that other sources of assistance to them include adults who hawk different items on the street (27.2%), the civil servants (26.2% and the Islamic scholars (24.2%). In Lagos, half of the respondents (47.6%) said that they were usually assisted by drivers while 6 out of 10 respondents in Port Harcourt (60.5%) claimed that they were assisted by religious leaders.

The assistance received from other sources by the respondents includes: feeding (35.5%), counselling (28.2%) and cash gift (16.4%). The assistance the street children receive from these other sources in Kaduna includes: feeding 32.3%, accommodation 25.8%, and clothing 16.1%. In Lagos, more than half of the respondents (52.3%) said they have received assistance in the area of feeding from these other sources while 33.9% said that they have been assisted in the area of counseling. In Port Harcourt, the assistance received from other sources include; feeding (29.4%), counseling (27.7%) and cash gifts (21.6%).

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**Table 5.21: Other sources where the children ‘of’ the street have ever received assistance and the assistance from them**

Other sources of assistance for the street children	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
WHO	-	-	02	9.5	-	-	02	0.4
Churches	02	0.5	02	9.5	18	11.5	22	3.9
Drivers	05	1.3	10	47.6	29	18.5	44	7.8
Hawkers	106	27.2	-	-	-	-	106	18.7
Passengers/Passersby	06	1.5	02	9.5	04	2.5	12	2.1
Red Cross	-	-	02	9.5	01	0.6	03	0.5
Reverends/Pastors	-	-	02	9.5	95	60.5	97	17.1
Rich men	04	1.0	-	-	02	1.3	06	1.1
Traders	63	16.2	-	-	-	-	63	11.1
Women group	07	1.8	01	4.8	06	3.8	14	2.5
Civil servants	102	26.2	-	-	-	-	102	18.0
Islamic scholars	94	24.2	-	-	02	1.3	96	16.9
Total	*389	100.0	*21	100.0	*157	100.0	*567	100.0
Assistance received from other sources								
Accommodation	08	25.8	06	5.5	03	1.1	17	4.0
Feeding	10	32.3	57	52.3	83	29.4	150	35.5
Clothing	05	16.1	04	3.7	41	14.5	50	11.8
Health service	-	-	01	0.9	11	3.9	12	2.8
Education	-	-	-	-	05	1.8	05	1.2
Counselling	04	12.9	37	33.9	78	27.7	119	28.2
Others (Cash gift)	04	12.9	04	3.7	61	21.6	69	16.4
Total	*31	100.0	*109	100.0	*282	100.0	*422	100.0

\*Multiple responses were received

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

### **5.2.5 ATTITUDES OF CHILDREN ‘OF’ THE STREET TO THE NETWORK OF SUPPORT**

This section focuses on the attitudes of the respondents towards the support network available for them. The respondents were therefore asked to rate the different forms of assistance given to them by different support providers using Likert scale containing five

different ratings which are - very adequate, adequate, moderate, inadequate and grossly inadequate. These six different ratings were however collapse into four main categories at the level of analysis for the sake of convenience. The support providers specifically mentioned in this section are: the government (represented by their agents - Social Welfare and the Police); the community, civil society organisations, Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and other street children and respondents were asked to rate six different kinds of supports namely feeding, accommodation, clothing, health services, education and counseling.

#### **5.2.5.1 Support received from Government**

Data about respondents' rating of the government support for them are in table 5.22 It is evident that majority of the respondents said that the services were not applicable to them as they do not receive such services from the government. Hence, the proportion of the children of the street who said the services were not applicable to them are: 80.1% for accommodation, 73.1% for feeding, clothing was 78.8%, health services - 74.8%, education was 75.4% and counseling 76.7%. The distribution followed similar pattern for the study locations. The proportion of the respondents who believed that the services were adequate range between 8.7% and 15.1% for all the services provided by the government (see Table 5.22).



**Table 5.22: Support Received from Government**

Support from government	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt			
	N=104	%	N=320	%	N=223	%	N=647	%
<b><u>Accommodation</u></b>								
Adequate	03	2.9	68	21.3	08	3.6	79	12.2
Moderate	01	1.0	04	1.3	03	1.3	08	1.2
Inadequate	12	11.5	26	8.1	04	1.8	42	6.5
Not Applicable	88	84.6	222	69.4	208	93.3	518	80.1
<b><u>Feeding</u></b>								
Adequate	04	3.8	73	22.8	15	6.7	92	14.2
Moderate	14	13.5	13	4.1	09	4.0	36	5.6
Inadequate	15	14.4	17	5.3	14	6.3	46	7.1
Not Applicable	71	68.3	217	67.8	185	82.9	473	73.1
<b><u>Clothing</u></b>								
Adequate	01	1.0	69	21.6	21	9.4	91	14.1
Moderate	02	1.9	-	-	02	0.9	04	0.6
Inadequate	21	20.2	13	4.1	08	3.6	42	6.5
Not Applicable	80	76.9	238	74.4	192	86.1	510	78.8
<b><u>Health service</u></b>								
Adequate	01	1.0	79	24.7	18	8.1	98	15.1
Moderate	08	7.7	02	0.6	04	1.8	14	2.2
Inadequate	31	29.8	12	3.8	08	3.6	51	7.9
Not Applicable	64	61.5	227	70.9	193	86.5	484	74.8
<b><u>Education</u></b>								
Adequate	01	1.0	79	24.7	17	7.6	97	15.0
Moderate	06	5.8	-	-	11	4.9	17	2.6
Inadequate	34	32.7	08	2.5	03	1.3	45	7.0
Not Applicable	63	60.6	233	72.8	192	86.1	488	75.4
<b><u>Counselling</u></b>								
Adequate	03	2.9	47	14.7	06	2.7	56	8.7
Moderate	-	-	14	4.4	03	1.3	17	2.6
Inadequate	20	19.2	47	14.7	11	4.9	78	12.1
Not Applicable	81	77.9	212	66.3	203	91.0	496	76.7

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

**5.2.5.2 Support Received from the community**

Table 5.23 presents information about the supports received by the street children from the community members. It is also evident from Table 5.23 that slightly more than half of the total respondents said that the community members did not give assistance

such as accommodation (53.3%), feeding (51.5%) and clothing (56%), to them while 70.8% and 75.5% said the same thing about health services and education respectively. In Kaduna, substantial proportion of the respondents expressed that the support given to them by the community members in the area of accommodation (34.6%), feeding (45.2%) and clothing (45.4%) were moderate while half of the respondents said the health services was inadequate and 40.8% said the same thing about support in the area of counseling. It is however interesting to note that while 4 out of 10 respondents (39.9%) in Port Harcourt said that the support given in the area of accommodation was adequate, 2 out of 10 also said the same thing about the support given by the community members in the area of feeding (20%), clothing (19.4), health services (18.2%), education (17.2%) and counselling (19.2). Data from FGDs however shows that the community members see the Children 'of' the street as insatiable and ungrateful. *"The children are insatiable, wicked and ungrateful. For me I am assisting them because I know God will reward every good works. The fact that you help them today does not give you any immunity against their onslaughts"* (see Table 6 Appendix VII). Infact, many of the FGD participants believed that street children pose a lot of dangers to the peace of a community (see Table 4 Appendix VII).

**Table 5.23: Support Received from the community**

Support received from the community members	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt		N=647	%
	N=104	%	N=320	%	N=223	%		
<b><u>Accommodation</u></b>								
Adequate	16	15.8	33	10.3	89	39.9	138	21.3
Moderate	36	34.6	15	4.7	10	4.5	61	9.4
Inadequate	34	32.8	53	16.6	16	7.2	103	15.9
Not Applicable	18	16.8	219	68.4	108	48.4	345	53.3
<b><u>Feeding</u></b>								
Adequate	45	43.0	57	17.8	45	20.0	147	22.7
Moderate	47	45.2	25	7.8	12	5.2	84	13.0
Inadequate	05	4.8	62	19.4	17	7.4	84	13.0
Not Applicable	07	7.0	176	55.0	150	67.4	333	51.5
<b><u>Clothing</u></b>								
Adequate	08	7.8	35	10.8	43	19.4	82	12.7
Moderate	47	45.4	12	3.6	08	3.4	113	17.5
Inadequate	36	34.6	11	2.2	11	4.8	90	13.9
Not Applicable	13	12.2	267	83.4	161	72.4	362	56.0
<b><u>Health service</u></b>								
Adequate	02	2.4	15	4.7	41	18.2	59	9.1
Moderate	32	30.8	10	3.1	07	3.2	49	7.6
Inadequate	52	50.0	20	6.3	09	4.2	81	12.5
Not Applicable	18	16.8	275	85.9	166	74.4	458	70.8
<b><u>Education</u></b>								
Adequate	20	19.4	07	2.2	38	17.2	83	12.9
Moderate	16	15.0	10	3.0	03	1.4	42	6.5
Inadequate	12	12.0	08	2.6	01	0.6	33	5.1
Not Applicable	56	53.6	295	92.2	180	80.8	489	75.5
<b><u>Counselling</u></b>								
Adequate	31	29.8	40	12.4	43	19.2	133	20.5
Moderate	17	16.6	37	11.6	08	3.4	68	10.5
Inadequate	42	40.8	52	16.4	10	4.4	133	20.5
Not Applicable	13	12.8	191	59.6	163	73.0	314	48.5

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

### 5.2.5.3 Support Received from NGOs

Data on the support received from the NGOs are presented in Table 5.24 showing that the overwhelming majority of the respondents did not receive any assistance from

these NGOs. As many as 95.5% for accommodation, 88.1% for feeding, 92.3% for clothing, 94.1% for health services, 96.7% for education and 90.7% for counselling respectively said these. The distribution followed similar pattern for all the study locations.

**Table 5.24: Support Received from NGOs**

Support received from NGOs	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt		N=647	%
	N=104	%	N=320	%	N=223	%		
<b><u>Accommodation</u></b>								
Adequate	01	0.9	09	2.8	05	2.2	12	1.8
Moderate	-	-	08	2.4	01	0.6	07	1.0
Inadequate	03	2.4	03	1.2	01	0.6	08	1.3
Not Applicable	100	96.4	300	93.6	216	96.6	620	95.9
<b><u>Feeding</u></b>								
Adequate	02	1.8	15	4.6	24	10.8	34	5.3
Moderate	-	-	28	8.6	12	5.2	30	4.6
Inadequate	02	1.8	12	3.6	01	0.6	13	1.9
Not Applicable	100	96.4	266	83.2	186	83.4	570	88.1
<b><u>Clothing</u></b>								
Adequate	01	0.9	09	2.8	13	5.6	19	3.0
Moderate	01	0.9	05	1.6	22	10.0	26	4.0
Inadequate	02	1.8	03	0.8	01	0.6	05	0.7
Not Applicable	100	96.4	303	94.8	187	83.2	597	92.3
<b><u>Health service</u></b>								
Adequate	02	1.8	10	3.0	05	2.0	12	1.8
Moderate	02	1.8	21	6.6	04	1.6	19	2.9
Inadequate	02	1.8	04	1.2	01	0.6	08	1.3
Not Applicable	98	94.6	285	89.2	213	95.8	609	94.1
<b><u>Education</u></b>								
Adequate	02	1.8	09	2.8	02	1.0	09	1.4
Moderate	-	-	07	2.2	01	0.6	06	0.9
Inadequate	02	1.8	04	1.2	01	0.6	07	1.0
Not Applicable	100	96.4	300	93.8	219	97.8	626	96.7
<b><u>Counselling</u></b>								
Adequate	01	0.9	17	5.2	31	13.8	43	6.7
Moderate	-	-	09	2.8	01	0.6	07	1.0
Inadequate	02	1.8	06	2.0	04	1.8	10	1.6
Not Applicable	101	97.3	288	90.0	187	83.8	587	90.7

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

#### **5.2.5.4 Support Received from Civil society organisations**

Table 9.4 present data on the support received by respondents from other civil society organizations apart from the NGOs. From the table, majority of the total respondents for this study said that they do not receive such supports from the civil society organizations. These proportion ranges between 84.3% and 94.6% of the respondents (see table 9.4). The implication of this is that 15% of the total sample ever claimed to have received any support from the civil society organizations, whether adequate, moderate or inadequate.

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**Table 5.25: Support Received from Civil society organisations**

Support received from civil society organisations	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt		N=647	%
	N=104	%	N=320	%	N=223	%		
<b><u>Accommodation</u></b>								
Adequate	01	0.9	03	1.0	11	5.0	32	2.1
Moderate	-	-	13	4.2	02	0.8	25	1.7
Inadequate	11	10.6	19	6.0	07	3.0	56	3.7
Not Applicable	92	88.5	284	88.8	203	91.2	1387	92.5
<b><u>Feeding</u></b>								
Adequate	04	3.8	08	2.6	13	5.8	46	3.1
Moderate	01	0.9	44	13.8	05	2.0	80	5.3
Inadequate	09	8.7	26	8.2	07	3.2	66	4.4
Not Applicable	90	86.5	241	75.4	198	89.0	1308	87.2
<b><u>Clothing</u></b>								
Adequate	01	0.9	11	3.4	12	5.4	46	3.1
Moderate	-	-	16	5.0	02	0.8	30	2.0
Inadequate	07	6.7	08	2.6	06	2.8	34	2.3
Not Applicable	96	92.3	285	89.0	203	91.0	1390	92.7
<b><u>Health service</u></b>								
Adequate	01	0.9	10	3.2	10	4.4	40	2.7
Moderate	01	0.9	31	9.8	04	1.8	60	4.0
Inadequate	06	5.8	01	0.4	07	3.2	23	1.5
Not Applicable	96	92.3	277	86.6	202	90.6	1377	91.8
<b><u>Education</u></b>								
Adequate	01	0.9	06	2.0	08	3.8	31	2.1
Moderate	-	-	15	4.8	01	0.6	27	1.8
Inadequate	08	7.7	01	0.4	06	2.6	23	1.5
Not Applicable	95	91.3	297	92.8	207	93.0	1419	94.6
<b><u>Counselling</u></b>								
Adequate	04	3.8	11	3.4	09	4.2	18	2.8
Moderate	-	-	39	12.2	03	1.2	29	4.5
Inadequate	09	8.7	66	20.6	07	3.0	55	8.5
Not Applicable	91	87.5	204	63.8	204	91.6	545	84.3

Source: Survey Reports, 2006

### 5.5.5 Support received from other street children

Information on the support received from other children on the street is presented in Table 9.5. The table revealed that it was only in Kaduna that majority of the respondents

(52.8%) said that the food support received from other street children is moderate. From the total sample however, majority of the respondents also said that the supports in accommodation (59%), feeding (31.5%), clothing (47%), health services (63.4%), education (73.5%) and counseling (43.7%) were not applicable to them. This implies that majority of the respondents do not receive assistance from other children on the street. Hence, only 13.7% for accommodation, 17.7% for feeding, 13.7% for clothing, 9.3% for health services, 8.9% for education and 24.2% for counselling said that the support they receive from other children on the street were adequate. The distribution for all the study locations were similar except in Kaduna where more than half of the respondents (52.8%) said the assistance they receive from other street children on feeding was moderate while 46.8% for accommodation, 64.6% for clothing, 44.2% for health services and 38.2% for counselling said the services received from their colleagues on the street were not adequate.

**Table 5.26: Support Received from other street children**

	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt		N=647	%
	N=104	%	N=320	%	N=223	%		
<b><u>Accommodation</u></b>								
Adequate	03	2.8	35	10.8	61	27.4	89	13.7
Moderate	07	6.4	28	8.8	12	5.2	44	6.8
Inadequate	49	46.8	27	8.6	14	6.2	133	20.5
Not Applicable	46	44.0	230	71.8	136	61.2	382	59.0
<b><u>Feeding</u></b>								
Adequate	07	6.8	56	17.4	63	28.8	115	17.7
Moderate	55	52.8	40	12.4	50	22.2	188	29.1
Inadequate	34	32.6	68	21.2	25	11.2	140	21.7
Not Applicable	08	7.8	157	49.0	84	37.8	204	31.5
<b><u>Clothing</u></b>								
Adequate	03	2.6	36	11.4	61	27.2	89	13.7
Moderate	14	13.0	47	14.6	22	10.0	81	12.5
Inadequate	67	64.6	28	8.8	15	6.8	173	26.7
Not Applicable	21	19.8	209	65.2	125	56.0	304	47.0
<b><u>Health service</u></b>								
Adequate	01	0.9	09	2.8	55	24.8	60	9.3
Moderate	04	3.8	29	9.2	14	6.2	41	6.3
Inadequate	46	44.2	45	14.2	11	4.8	136	21.0
Not Applicable	53	51.0	236	73.8	143	64.2	410	63.4
<b><u>Education</u></b>								
Adequate	01	0.9	17	5.4	47	21.0	58	8.9
Moderate	10	9.6	22	7.0	04	1.8	23	3.6
Inadequate	29	27.8	38	11.8	05	2.2	90	13.9
Not Applicable	64	61.5	243	75.8	167	75.0	476	73.5
<b><u>Counselling</u></b>								
Adequate	09	8.8	90	28.0	80	35.8	157	24.2
Moderate	24	22.6	26	8.2	16	7.2	82	12.7
Inadequate	40	38.2	42	13.2	16	7.2	126	19.5
Not Applicable	32	30.4	162	50.6	111	49.7	283	43.7

Source: Survey Reports, 2006



From the foregoing, the supports received by the street children from different sources were examined in line with their assumed level of adequacy and appropriateness. On the whole, the children appraised these support mechanisms as grossly inadequate, and often not accessible to the children for which these supports were meant to help. This means that the present network of supports for street children has minimal impact. First, many of the children have no information about the existence of these networks, and second, the few available networks are faced with mirage of problems, ranging from financial to shortage of infrastructures and facilities.

#### **5.2.6 Availability of network of support for children ‘of’ the street by their background characteristics**

This section focuses on the availability of support networks to the street children. To establish some level of statistical significance, the available support networks was measured against some background variables such as – age, sex, educational level, religion, and the residence of the street children. This was to test whether some background characteristics of the respondents could determine the availability of support network to them. Where  $P < 0.01$  or  $P < 0.05$  the availability of support is assumed to be statistically significant and otherwise where  $P > 0.05$ .

##### **5.2.6.1: Age group of Children ‘of’ the Street by Availability of Network of support**

Table 5.27 shows the respondents who claimed to receive support by their age groups with 7 out of 10 (66.7%) of those who are less than 6 years of age claiming to have received support. Also, 6 out of 10 respondents (61.2%) of those in age group 6 – 15

years claimed to have received support, while 58.4% (5 out of 10) of those in age group 16 years and above claimed to have received support. Data in table 5.27 further shows that the availability of support network for street children decreases as they increase in age although this association is not statistically significant since  $P > 0.05$ . Hence, it can be deduced that the support providers tend to be more sympathetic with younger street children than the older ones

**Table 5.27: Percentage Distribution of Age group of Children ‘of’ the Street by Availability of Network of Support**

Age group	Availability of Network of Support					
	Yes		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Less than 6 years	04	66.7	02	33.3	06	100.0
6 – 15 years	224	61.2	142	38.8	366	100.0
16 years and above	161	58.4	114	41.6	275	100.0
Total	389	60.1	258	39.9	647	100.0

$$X^2 = 0.159, 2df, P > 0.05$$

Source: Author’s Survey Reports, 2006

### 5.2.6.2: Sex of Respondents by availability of Network of support

Sex as an explanatory variable is not statistically significant, considering the supports received by boys and girls 'of' the street. Table 5.28 shows that 60.8% males and 57.3% females reported some forms of supports from the available social networks.

**Table 5.28: Respondents Sex by Availability of Network of Support**

Sex	Availability of Network of Support					
	Yes		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	327	60.8	211	39.2	538	100.0
Female	62	57.3	47	42.7	109	100.0
Total	389	60.1	258	39.9	647	100.0

$$X^2 = 0.303, 1df, P > 0.05$$

Source: Author's Survey Reports, 2006

### 5.2.6.3: Educational level of Children 'of' the Street by availability of support

Education as a variable showed significant difference (i.e. between those with formal education and non formal education) in access to social supports. For instance, 77% of those with no formal education claimed to have received support as against 57.5% of those who did not complete their primary school education, 61.2% of those who completed primary school education and 48.6% of those who did not complete their secondary school education.

**Table 5.29: Percentage Distribution of Educational Level of Children ‘of’ the Street by Availability of Network of Support**

Educational Level	Availability of Network of Support					
	Yes		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
No formal education	107	77.0	32	23.0	139	100.0
Primary not completed	99	57.5	74	42.5	173	100.0
Primary completed	93	61.2	59	38.8	152	100.0
Secondary not completed	83	48.6	87	51.4	170	100.0
Others	08	59.4	05	40.6	13	100.0
Total	390	60.3	257	39.7	647	100.0

$X^2 = 0.000$ , 4df,  $P < 0.01$

Source: Author’s Survey Reports, 2006

#### 5.2.6.4: Residence of Children ‘of’ the Street by availability of support

Table 10.4 presents data on the respondents’ town of residence and the availability of Network of supports. Data on the street children by location, shows that 85.4% in Kaduna, and 63.6% in Port Harcourt claimed to have received some forms of support as against only 31.6% who claimed same in Lagos. This finding is consistent with the earlier findings in this report which stated that the community members in Kaduna and Port Harcourt were more accommodative to the street children than the community members in Lagos. The implication of this is that there is need for more vigorous public enlightenment campaigns which would focus more on positive attitudinal change in Lagos than in other locations selected for this study.

**Table 5.30: Residence of Children ‘of’ the Street by availability of support**

Residence	Availability of Network of Support					
	Yes		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Kaduna	89	85.4	15	14.6	104	100.0
Lagos	101	31.6	219	68.4	320	100.0
Port Harcourt	142	63.6	81	36.4	223	100.0
Total	332	51.3	315	48.7	647	100.0

$$X^2 = 0.000, 2df, P < 0.01$$

Source: Author’s Survey Reports, 2006

#### **5.2.6.5: Religious Affiliation by availability of support**

The association between the respondents religious affiliation by the availability of support as shown in Table 5.31 shows a significant relationship. It is clear from the table that 7 out of 10 among Muslim respondents (68.8%) claimed to have received support, while 6 out of 10 (59%) among traditional worshipers respondents said the same thing. Only about half of the respondents among Christians expressed the same opinion. Since Nigeria is dominated by these three religions, leaders of the religions can also be involved in enlightenment campaign aimed at positive attitudinal change towards the street children in Nigeria.

**Table 5.31: Respondents Religious Affiliation by Availability of Network of Support**

Religious Affiliation	Availability of Network of Support					
	Yes		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Christianity	159	51.6	149	48.4	308	100.0
Islam	215	68.8	97	31.2	312	100.0
Traditional	15	59.0	10	41.0	25	100.0
Others	01	50.0	01	50.0	02	100.0
Total	390	60.3	257	39.7	647	100.0

$X^2 = 0.000$ , 3df,  $P < 0.01$

Source: Author's Survey Reports, 2006

### **5.3 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION II**

#### **5.3.1: Analysis of the composite index of support network and the respondents**

##### **background characteristics**

This section presents the composite score index of social support for the street children, while also using the value of this composite score index to describe the situation of the street children across selected personal characteristics. Six different indices were used in computing the composite score index. These are - accommodation, feeding, clothing, health services, education and counselling. The composite score index was computed by assigning '1' to the respondent's answer where it is 'Yes' (i.e. where the respondent claimed to receive support in a particular area) and '0' where the answer is 'No', while the mean of the overall result was taken to be the composite score of the available social support network. The use of T- Test and ANOVA were employed to compare the mean levels of supports received by the children 'of' the street of various social descriptions. This was to ascertain whether the mean index of support differs significantly across the

selected variables. Where  $P < 0.01$  or  $P < 0.05$ , the differences in the levels of support received is assumed to be statistically significant, and otherwise where  $P > 0.05$ .

### 5.3.1.1: The Ages of the children ‘of’ the streets and the Composite index of support

The age group of the respondents and the overall index of support were considered in Table 6.1. The data shows that the level of support received by the street children who were less than 6 years is higher than that of those who were between the ages of 6 and 15 years and above. The differences in the levels of support is however not statistically significant since P value of 0.294 associated with F value of 1.224 is greater than 0.05 (i.e.  $P > 0.05$ ). This simply implies that the younger a street child is, the more sympathy the support providers would likely have for him

**Table 5.32: Respondents Age group by Composite index of support**

Age group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Less than 6 years	06	5.1333	1.68466
6 – 15 years	366	4.7606	1.75958
16 years and above	275	4.6421	1.81382
Total	647	4.7140	1.78241

$F = 1.224, P = 0.294$

### 5.3.1.2: Sex of children ‘of’ the street by composite index of support

Table 6.2 shows that the level of support received by street boys is higher than that received by the street girls, although the difference is not statistically significant ( $P > 0.05$ ).

**Table 5.33: Respondents’ sex by Composite index of support received**

Sex	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Male	538	4.7666	1.73091
Female	109	4.4545	2.00072

T = 1.480, P = 0.224

Source: Author's Survey Reports, 2006

### 5.3.1.3: Residence of children 'of' the street by composite index of support

When the place of residence of the respondents was considered by the overall index of support, the difference in the levels of support across residence was found to be significant. Hence, the street children found in Kaduna received higher support than those found in Lagos followed by support received by street children in Port Harcourt.

**Table 5.34: Residence of children 'of' the street by composite index of supports received by the street children**

Location	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Kaduna	104	4.9920	1.51675
Lagos	320	4.6880	1.98154
Port Harcourt	223	4.4620	1.78183
Total	647	4.7140	1.78241

F = 11.285, P<0.01

Source: Author's Survey Reports, 2006

### 5.3.1.4: Children 'of' the Streets' ranking of the support provided by support providers

Table 6.4 presents data on the ranking of the different support providers according to levels of importance attached to them by the street children. In the total sample, the street children ranked the homeless adult on the street as most important, the community members as second and Civil Society Organisations as third. The NGOs were ranked fourth, while the Government Agencies were least important. Table 6.4 shows that in Kaduna, the community members as support providers were ranked most important. The homeless adults on the street were ranked second in importance while civil society



organisations as support providers were ranked third. The government Agencies were ranked fourth, while The NGOs were ranked the least in the scale of importance. In Lagos, the homeless adults on the street topped the list, while community members as support providers ranked second. The Civil Society Organisations ranked third; the Government Agencies ranked fourth, and the NGOs as support providers ranked the least. The street children in Port Harcourt also ranked the homeless adults on the street as most important to them while the community members were ranked second, and Civil Society Organisations as third. The NGOs were ranked fourth, while the Government Agencies were ranked the least important. This implies that the homeless adults on the street seem to be the role model for the street children. This has serious implication for the future of the country, for such associations could lead to the proliferation of street gangs.

**Table 5.35: Children ‘of’ the Street ranking of the support provided by support providers**

Support providers	Town of Residence			Total Mean (N)
	Kaduna Mean (N)	Lagos Mean (N)	Port Harcourt Mean (N)	
Government Agencies	2.0552 (102)	1.8896 (313)	1.3232 (190)	1.7751 (606)
NGOs	1.9980 (102)	1.3183 (312)	2.1853 (188)	1.8175 (603)
Community members	4.8277 (104)	2.1660 (308)	2.6095 (198)	3.2367 (614)
Civil Society Organisations	2.1649 (101)	1.9979 (308)	2.5530 (194)	2.2279 (604)
Homeless Adults on the street	3.1697 (102)	2.2731 (291)	4.3843 (193)	3.2553 (593)

Source: Author’s Survey Reports, 2006

### **5.3.2 Multivariate Analysis of Availability of support for children ‘of’ the street**

This section focuses on the multivariate analysis of the predictors of availability of support network for the street children and the explanations of the propositions for this study. As explained earlier, the multivariate analysis employed is probit regression.

#### **5.3.2.1 Probit Regression Analysis of Availability of support network for street children**

In order to examine the nature and strength of the association between the background characteristics of the street children, intermediate factors, (children’s relationships with police, other government agents apart from the police and other street children, attitudes of the community to the children, children awareness of the NGOs, children willingness to be re-united with their families and whether government is doing enough for the street children or not) and the availability of support network, it was necessary to control for the confounding effects of other correlates of availability of support network using multivariate analyses. Probit regression was employed because the dependent variable was constructed to be a binary outcome (i.e. it is either a street child receives support or does not). A sequential approach was adopted, starting with a model with the background characteristics of the respondents and then adding a block of variables in the second step (see Table 6.5).

The unadjusted association between the children ‘of’ the streets background characteristics and the availability of network of support for the street children is presented in model A. Table 6.5 shows that some background characteristics are significant predictors of availability of support network. Such characteristics include educational level and place of residence and the availability of support network. This is

because the observed probability associated with Z – statistics in each of the cases were small ( $P < 0.01$ ) or ( $P < 0.05$ ). With the inclusion of the intermediate variables in Model B, respondent's religious affiliation emerged as significant. The observed probability associated with Z statistics in the case was small ( $P < 0.05$ ). Other significant predictors of the availability of support network in Model B were children's relationship with the Police ( $Z = 2.33$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), whether children have problem with other children on the street ( $Z = 2.81$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ), attitudes of the community members to the children ( $Z = -7.90$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ), the children's awareness of the presence of NGOs who can assist them in their area ( $Z = -6.41$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ) and whether the government is doing enough for the street children or not ( $Z = -2.42$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). Hence, it is very important to note that any effort to rehabilitate street children in Nigeria must focus on positive attitudinal change of the community members to street children, strengthening and proper monitoring of the NGOs to improve upon their performances and proper implementation of government policies by her agencies such that the emphasis of such agencies will change from being punitive to rehabilitative in nature.

**Table 5.36: Probit Regression Models of Predictors of Availability of Support for children ‘of’ the Street**

Variables	MODEL A		MODEL B	
	Z	P>/Z/	Z	P>/Z/
Sex	1.43	0.154	1.72	0.085
Education	-3.87	0.000	-1.70	0.089
Residence	-3.86	0.000	-5.29	0.000
Age group	-0.76	0.446	0.60	0.547
Religious Affiliation	0.58	0.559	1.96	0.050
<b>Constant of Model A</b>	<b>4.22</b>	<b>0.000</b>		
Children’s relationship with the Police			2.33	0.020
Whether children have problem with other children on the street			2.81	0.005
Whether children have problem with other government agents apart from the Police			-0.20	0.839
Attitudes of the community members to the children			-7.90	0.000
Children’s awareness of the presence of NGOs in the community			-6.41	0.000
Children’s willingness to be re-united with parents			-1.39	0.165
Whether government is doing enough for the street children	-2.42	0.016	-2.42	0.016
<b>Constant of Model B</b>			<b>6.54</b>	<b>0.000</b>

Source: Author’s Survey Report, 2006

a Log – Likelihood = -327.90033 LR Chisq = 79.01 P<0.01

b Log – Likelihood = 168.48225 LR Chisq = 197.57 P<0.01

### 5.3.2.2: Research Propositions

This section presents tests of study propositions.

#### **Proposition I**

“That the policies and plan of the government which are executed by her agents such as the police and the social welfare will determine the availability of support network for the street children”.

Table 12.1 The policies and programmes of government through its Social Welfare Department, and the Police Department are treated as important predictors of the availability of network of support for the street children using the probit regression statistics, it was observed that in each of the cases, the observed probability associated with Z –statistics were small ( $P < 0.05$ ). Hence, proposition I is confirmed and accepted as true. This simply means that, when the policies and plans of the government in terms of their welfare packages for children ‘of’ the street improves, there will be a better network of support available for the children. Also, evidence from FGDs shows that the programmes and plans of the government are inadequate and poorly implemented.

*“The programmes of the Social Welfare Department are not well designed in a way to attract the street children. The programme emphasizes punitive measures as a means of rehabilitating the street children. They see Approved Schools as prison yards. Hence, many street children usually run away from government approved schools. I think that, if the programmes are designed to be attractive, it will be more productive than the way it is now”.*

## **Proposition II**

“Awareness and acceptance of support from NGOs by the street children is a predictor of the effectiveness of the social network of support to the street children”.

The probit regression presented in Table 12.1 shows that street children’s non-awareness and acceptance of NGOs in the community in which they live is a significant predictor of weak network of social support system for the street children ( $P < 0.01$ ). Therefore, the second proposition is also confirmed and accepted as true. The data collected shows that the overwhelming majority (93.0% of the total sample) were not aware of the presence of the NGOs in their communities. The evidence from the indepth interview conducted with the officials of the NGOs shows that the NGOs are faced with a lot of constraints which limit their capacity to perform. These constraints include – finance and human resources. Since most of the children ‘of’ the street are not aware of the presence of these NGOs, most of them could not have access to formal support systems.

## **Proposition III**

“That the willingness of the street children to be re- united with their parents is a predictor of the availability of support network to the children”.

The probit regression analysis presented in Table 12.1 shows that the willingness of the children to be re – united with their parents is not an important predictor of the availability of support to them. The observed probability associated with Z – statistics is large ( $P > 0.05$ ). This proposition is therefore rejected. The implication of this is that

whether the children 'of' the street wish to be re-united with their parents or not has nothing to do with the availability of network of support to them.

#### **Proposition IV**

“That the street children who enjoys support from their peers/street adults are likely to reject other options of care and support”.

When the children were asked to rank the types of support they received from the different support providers, the result shows that the supports provided by the homeless street adults on the street was most preferred by the children of the street while that of the community was ranked second, followed by the civil society organisations (see Table 11.4). The probit regression in Table 12.1 also revealed that the status of relationship that these children have with other children on the street, is an important predictor of the availability of support received on the street ( $P < 0.01$ ). The 'P' value being significant helps to accept the proposition as true. This implies that the preference of the source of support by children 'of' the street will determine the availability of support for them.

#### **Proposition V**

“That the attitude of the community members to the street children is an important determinant of the availability of support for the children”.

The probit regression in Table 12.1 shows that the attitude of the community members to the street children is an important predictor of the availability of network of

support to the street children ( $P < 0.01$ ). Thus, this proposition is confirmed and accepted. The FGD findings also support this claim. The quotation below, accredited to a community member, further supports negative perceptions of the public of the street children.

*“Street children are very notorious. I have had some encounter with them. They pick pocket and rob people. They are merciless and create crisis so that they could use the opportunity to rob people of their properties. The government must do something to eradicate them”. “Street children in the North are called ‘Almajiri’ and they are very wicked. They are used for religious crisis to kill and maim people. Infact, if you love yourself, you better be careful to assist them because they will never appreciate whatever assistance you give them and whenever there is religious crisis you will be the first target because they will think that you have so much. The mentality is that they will want to kill you, so that they can rob you of your properties”.*



## CHAPTER SIX

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### 6.1 SUMMARY

This study examines the support network targeting the needs of street children in Nigeria focusing specifically on three of the six geo-political zones. One major city in each of the three geo-political zones was selected for this study. These are: Kaduna in the North Central zone, Lagos in the South – western zone; and Port Harcourt in the South-South zone. The street children are concentrated in the three towns selected while most of the NGOs providing support for them are also concentrated in these cities. A total of 1,500 street children who were 18 years or below were selected across the three towns (i.e. 500 in each of the towns). Focus Group discussions were also conducted among the community members in each of the towns while in-depth interviews were held with 9 NGOs and among the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

Majority of the street children were in the age group of 6 –15 years (56.5%). The mean age for the respondents was 14.4 years while the standard deviation was 3.1. It is also worth noting that most of the respondents were males (83.1%), while the proportion of females respondents increased from 6.6% in the North Central (i.e. Kaduna) to 13.6% in the southwest (i.e, Lagos) and to 30.4% in the South- South (i.e. Port Harcourt). Also, 2 out of 10 respondents (21.5%) did not have formal education, while 2 out of 10 either dropped out of primary school (26.7%) or secondary school (26.2%). The mean number

of children that respondents' parents have was 6.48 while the mean number of children that grew up with them was 5.15.

The events that brought the children to the street vary from one location to the other. In Kaduna, as high as 36.7% of the respondents claimed to be on the street as part of the culture associated with seeking for knowledge in terms of quranic education. Majority of the respondents in Lagos (53,7%) were on the street for their own survival while another 28.2% were on the street to hawk in order to supplement family income. In Port Harcourt, 26.8% and 25.8% were on the street due to poverty and for survival respectively.

A consideration of the respondents' relationship with their parents shows that majority claimed to have cordial relationship with their fathers (68.5%) and their mothers (66.3%), while significant proportion did not have cordial relationship with their fathers (31.5%) and mothers (33.7%).

When respondents were asked how they spend their income, 40.5% of the total respondents said they spend it on feeding, 23.5% spend it on clothing and 23.4% spend it to supplement family income. Also, 35.0% of the respondents said their mothers do take the money they make on the street from them, while 20.4% said the same thing about their fathers. Also, 25.3% of the respondents said that they visit home everyday while 23.7% did not know where the parents are.

The most difficult problems facing these children are feeding, accommodation, health education, and hunger. There were so many coping strategies employed by the

street children. These include, begging for alms, hawking, theft and criminal activities. When the respondents were asked about their relationship with the police, about half of them (50.2%) expressed that they did not have cordial relationship and only 12.1% of them had cordial relationship with the police. The data also revealed that as high as 56.9% of the total respondents claimed to return home at night while others slept in different places such as uncompleted building, under the bridge, motor garage market places and so on. Also, more than half (54.3%) buys drugs from chemists when they are sick while another 32.5% use traditional herbs. Although, about 89.3% of the respondents claimed to eat at least twice a day, it could be deduced that the qualities of the food taken was substantially low due to their income. It was also revealed that most street children live in harmony with one another. There were only few cases of conflict among them, hence close to 9 out of every 10 of them (89.7%) claimed to have no problem with other street children.

Various solutions were suggested for the problems of street children. These solutions include provision of employment and loan for business for the street children, provision of shelter, free education and food for the street children, execution of the Child Right Acts, prosecution of parents whose children were found on the streets and modernization of quranic education to discourage street begging.

Different sources of support network were examined. These include supports from the community members, NGOs, police, Social Welfare Department, other street children and the support received from street adult and other individuals and organisations.

Study data show that children 'of' the street enjoy more supports from community members in Kaduna and Port Harcourt than in Lagos. In the other words, community members in Lagos were more hostile to children 'of' the street than those in Kaduna and Port Harcourt. Also, most children 'of' the street are yet to feel the impact of the presence of NGOs in the communities where they are. This is because the NGOs providing support for children 'of' the street are too few in number and those existing are unable to function more effectively due to financial problems. Many of them are based in only one town without any branch outside the town and they cannot even make much impact in the town where they are based because of the number of the children and the way the number proliferate daily. The police only give assistance to the children 'of' the street after they have been able to exploit them either sexually or through bribe.

Although the government through the Social Welfare Department provides some assistance to children 'of' the street, their programmes were not made attractive enough to encourage the children, hence, the children 'of' the street's concept of approved schools is that of a typical Nigerian prison yards. At least 8 out of 10 children 'of' the street (80.1%) also claimed to have received assistance from their peers on the street but this was more of feeding than other forms of assistance while the assistance they received from street adults includes, feeding, counseling, security and clothing. Other sources of assistance to the children 'of' the street include churches, mosques, drivers, adult hawkers, passengers, traders and women groups among others.

The attitudes of children 'of' the street to support network available for them was considered. The respondents were therefore asked to rate the support received from

different providers using a three level ranking scale (adequate, moderate and inadequate). Most of these street children were not able to use the ranking scale because they never enjoyed any form of supports listed out for ranking. It was only in Kaduna that the support provided by the community members especially in the area of feeding, education (quranic), counseling and accommodation were either seen as adequate or moderate by relatively high proportion of the street children.

The 'of' the street children's background characteristics were used as explanatory variables in exploring the types of supports made available to these children. The statistical results revealed that the association between availability of support and some background characteristics such as the children's educational level, location of residence, and religious affiliation were statistically significant. Also, the composite index of support by some background characteristics was considered. This was to ascertain whether the mean index of support differs significantly across some selected variables. Again, background characteristics such as the children's place of residence appeared to be important determinants of the levels of support received by the children.

The ranking of the different forms of support available to the street children presented the support provided by the homeless adults on the street as the most preferred by the 'of' the street children.. This was followed by supports from the community members, while the supports from Civil Society Organisation were ranked third. Supports from the NGOs were ranked fourth, while supports from the government agencies were the least on the ranking scale.

Five (5) propositions were tested with the use of probit regression analysis. The results supported the proposition that the policies and plan of the government which are executed by their agents will determine the availability of support network for the street children. The awareness and acceptance of support from NGOs by the street children is also found to be important predictor of the effectiveness of the social network of support to the street children. Also, street children's relationship with their peers and the attitudes of the community members to the children were found to be important predictors of the availability of support for the 'of' the street children. However, the street children's willingness to be re-united with their parents was found not to be an important predictor of the availability of support network to the 'of' the street children. This could mean that the factors which originally predisposed them to street life might still be present in the respective homes.

## **6.2 CONCLUSIONS**

Despite the global shift from the eradication of street children phenomenon, to providing support for street children right on the streets, data from this study revealed that this paradigm shift has a very weak root in Nigeria. The homeless adults on the streets seem to be the role models for the children on the Nigerian streets. This has a serious implication for life on the Nigerian streets, since this could lead to the proliferation of street gangs, and could heighten street crimes, and violence. Although, the Child Rights Act was promulgated in 2003, there has not been any serious attempt to implement the Act by the Federal Government. Therefore, the programmes of the Social Welfare Department and other Government Agencies are still more of punitive rather than rehabilitative, as stipulated by the Child Rights Act. Also, there are still too few NGOs

specifically focusing on the provision of support for street children, while those existing are incapacitated by insufficient funding. Hence, not much impact is made as majority of the street children claimed not to be aware of NGOs working within their sector. It is significant to note that some NGOs were established by the wives of State Governors and from past experiences in Nigeria, such projects usually suffer continuity whenever the founders cease to be in office. Therefore, there is a need for the provision of improved and attractive support for the children 'of' the street to solve this social menace.

### **6.3 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The following recommendations emerge from the study findings -

- (i) There is the need for proper implementation of the Nigeria Child Rights Act promulgated in the year 2003, which could improve the standard of practice presently obtainable in Social Welfare Department and in other government agencies such as the Police Department. If implemented, the Act will make government support to the children 'of' the street attractive.
- (ii) There is also the need to provide more financial supports to the NGOs already supporting street children. This will allow them to function more effectively than they are at present. The government should encourage other NGOs to include the provision of support to street children in their programmes, while new NGOs can be encouraged. This is important because the number of NGOs providing support is too few at present and the inclusion of more NGOs on the list of those providing supports will help in reaching out to more children 'of' the street.

(iii) The children 'of' the street at times are highly elusive even to those who want to assist them. This is because of the mistrust between the street children and the public. Hence, in rehabilitating the street children, there is the need to include some selected and supported homeless street adults who could serve as link between the street children and support providers. This will make it easier to enlist more street children for rehabilitation since the findings of this study revealed that street children generally preferred the support provided by homeless street adults to that provided by other support providers. Some of the already rehabilitated street children can also be used as peer educators in order to enlist more street children for support.

(iv) The interaction between the children 'of' the street and the community members is very important in any effort to provide sustainable support for the former. The findings of this study show that most community members, especially in Lagos and Port Harcourt have negative attitudes towards the street children. Hence, there is a general mistrust between the street children and the public. There is therefore a the need for community enlightenment programmes, which will target positive attitudinal change towards street children. This will help in building a level of trust between the street children and the community members, and thereby helping to improve the levels of supports provided by the public.

#### **6.4 SUGGESTED AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

There is need for research which will focus on the issue of street children and urban violence in Nigeria. This will help in understanding the impact of various communal crises on the proliferation of street children.



Also, there is a need for research studies to focus on the phenomenon of ‘street families’, which is becoming one of the features of the Nigerian urban centres. This is important in the efforts to combat the proliferation of street children, and rehabilitate those children who are already on the streets.

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**APPENDIX I**  
**CONVENTION FOR THE RIGHT OF THE CHILD**

**Article 1**

For the purposes of the present Convention, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

**Article 2**

1. States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.

**Article 6**

1. States Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life.

2. States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.

## **Article 8**

1. States Parties undertake to respect the right of the child to preserve his or her identity, including nationality, name and family relations as recognized by law without unlawful interference.

1. Where a child is illegally deprived of some or all of the elements of his or her identity, States Parties shall provide appropriate assistance and protection, with a view to re-establishing speedily his or her identity.

## **Article 9**

1. States Parties shall ensure that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will, except when competent authorities subject to judicial review determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures, that such separation is necessary for the best interests of the child. Such determination may be necessary in a particular case such as one involving abuse or neglect of the child by the parents, or one where the parents are living separately and a decision must be made as to the child's place of residence.
2. In any proceedings pursuant to paragraph 1 of the present article, all interested parties shall be given an opportunity to participate in the proceedings and make their views known.

2. States Parties shall respect the right of the child who is separated from one or both parents to maintain personal relations and direct contact with both parents on a regular basis, except if it is contrary to the child's best interests.
3. 4. Where such separation results from any action initiated by a State Party, such as the detention, imprisonment, exile, deportation or death (including death arising from any cause while the person is in the custody of the State) of one or both parents or of the child, that State Party shall, upon request, provide the parents, the child or, if appropriate, another member of the family with the essential information concerning the whereabouts of the absent member(s) of the family unless the provision of the information would be detrimental to the well-being of the child. States Parties shall further ensure that the submission of such a request shall of itself entail no adverse consequences for the person(s) concerned.

#### **Article 10**

1. In accordance with the obligation of States Parties under article 9, paragraph 1, applications by a child or his or her parents to enter or leave a State Party for the purpose of family reunification shall be dealt with by States Parties in a positive, humane and expeditious manner. States Parties shall further ensure that the submission of such a request shall entail no adverse consequences for the applicants and for the members of their family.

A child whose parents reside in different States shall have the right to maintain on a regular basis, save in exceptional circumstances personal relations and direct contacts with both parents. Towards that end and in accordance with the obligation of States

Parties under article 9, paragraph 1, States Parties shall respect the right of the child and his or her parents to leave any country, including their own, and to enter their own country. The right to leave any country shall be subject only to such restrictions as are prescribed by law and which are necessary to protect the national security, public order (order public), public health or morals or the rights and freedoms of others and are consistent with the other rights recognized in the present Convention.

#### **Article 16**

1. No child shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his or her honour and reputation.
2. The child has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

#### **Article 18**

1. States Parties shall use their best efforts to ensure recognition of the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child. Parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child. The best interests of the child will be their basic concern.
2. For the purpose of guaranteeing and promoting the rights set forth in the present Convention, States Parties shall render appropriate assistance to parents and legal

guardians in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities and shall ensure the development of institutions, facilities and services for the care of children.

3. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that children of working parents have the right to benefit from child-care services and facilities for which they are eligible.

#### **Article 19**

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

#### **Article 20**

1. A child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State.

2. States Parties shall in accordance with their national laws ensure alternative care for such a child.

3. Such care could include, inter alia, foster placement, kafalah of Islamic law, adoption or if necessary placement in suitable institutions for the care of children. When considering solutions, due regard shall be paid to the desirability of continuity in a child's upbringing and to the child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background.

### **Article 32**

3. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

4. States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular:

(a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;

(b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;

(c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article.

### **Article 36**



States Parties shall protect the child against all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child's welfare.

**Article 39**

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of: any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts. Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment, which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child.

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## Appendix II

### NIGERIA CHILD RIGHTS ACT 2003

#### Section 2

A child shall be given protection and care as is necessary for the well – being of the child, taking into account the rights and duties of the child’s parents, legal guardians, or other individuals, institutions, services, agencies, organisations or bodies legally responsible for the child.

#### Section 4

Every child has a right to survival and development.

#### Section 8

(1) Every child is entitled to his privacy, family life, home, correspondence, telephone conversation and telegraphic communication, except as provided in subsection (3) of this section.

(2) No child shall be subjected to any interference with his right in subsection (1) of this section, except as provided in subsection (3) of this section.

(1) Nothing in the provision of subsections (1) and (2) of this section shall affect the right of parents and, where applicable, legal guardians, to exercise reasonable supervision and control over the conduct of their children and wards.

#### Section 10

(1) A child shall not be subjected to any form of discrimination merely by reason of his belonging to a particular community or ethnic group or by reason of his place of origin, sex, religion or political opinion.

(2) No child shall be subjected to any disability or deprivation merely by reason of the circumstances of his birth.

#### Section 11

Every child is entitled to respect for the dignity of his person, and accordingly, no child shall be;

(a) subjected to physical, mental or emotional injury, abuse, neglect or maltreatment, including sexual abuse.

(b) subjected to torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

(c) subjected to attacks upon his honour or reputation.

(a) held in slavery or servitude, while in the care of a parent, legal guardian or school authority or any other person or authority having the care of the child.

#### Section 14

(1) Every child has a right to parental care and, protection and accordingly, no child shall be separated from his parents against the wish of the child except;

(a) for the purpose of his education and welfare: or

(b) in the exercise of a judicial determination in accordance with the provision of this Act, in the best interest of the child.

(2) Every child has the right to maintenance by his parents or guardians in accordance with the extent of their means, and the child has the right, in appropriate circumstances, to enforce this right in the family court.

#### Section 16

(1) Every child who is in need of special protection measure has the right to such measures of protection as is appropriate to his physical, social, economic, emotional and mental needs and under conditions which ensure his dignity, promote his self reliance and active participation in the affairs of the community.

(2) Every person, authority, body or institution that has the care or the responsibility for ensuring the care of a child in need of special protection measures shall endeavour, within the available resources, to provide the child with such assistance and facilities which are necessary for his education, training, preparation for employment, rehabilitation and recreational opportunities in a manner conducive to his achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development and his cultural and moral development.

#### Section 28

(1) Subject to this Act, no child shall be –

(a) subjected to any forced or exploitative labour; or

- (b) employed to work in any capacity except where he is employed by a member of his family on light work of an agricultural, horticultural or domestic character.

### Section 30

(1) No person shall buy, sell, hire, dispose of or obtaining possession of or otherwise deal in a child.

(2) A child shall not be used -

- (a) for the purpose of begging for alms, guiding beggars, prostitution, domestic or sexual labour or for any unlawful or immoral purpose.
- (b) As a slave or for practices similar to slavery such as sale or trafficking of the child, debt bondage or serfdom and forced or compulsory labour.
- (c) For hawking of goods or services on main city streets, brothels or highways.
- (d) For any purpose that deprives the child of the opportunity to attend and remain in school as provided for under the compulsory, Free universal Basic Education Act;
- (e) Procured or offered for prostitution or for the production of pornographic performance; and
- (f) Procured or offered for any activity in the production or trafficking of illegal drugs or any other activity relating to illicit drugs as specified in the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency Act.

- (3) A person who contravenes the provisions of subsection (1) of this section commits an offence and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of ten years.

### Section 31

- (1) No person shall have sexual intercourse with a child.
- (2) A person who contravenes the provision of subsection (1) of this section commits an offence of rape is liable on conviction to imprisonment for life.
- (3) Where a person is charged with an offence under this section, it is immaterial that-
- (a) the offender believed the person to be of or above the age of eighteen years.
  - (b) the sexual intercourse was with the consent of the child.

### Section 32

- (1) A person who sexually abuses or sexually exploits a child in any manner not already mentioned under this part of this act commits an offence.
- (2) A person who commits an offence under subsection (1) of this section is liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of fourteen years.

### Section 33

- (1) a person who exploits a child in any other form or way not already mentioned in this part of this Act which is prejudicial to the welfare of the child commits an offence.
- (2) A person who commits an offence under subsection (1) of this section is liable on conviction to a fine of five hundred thousand Naira or imprisonment to a term of five years, or to both such fine and imprisonment.

### Section 50

- (1) A child development officer, a police officer or any other person authorized by the minister may bring a child before the court if he has reasonable grounds for believing that the child-
- (a) is an orphan or his deserted by his relatives;
  - (b) has been neglected or ill treated or battered by the person having the care and custody of the child.
  - (c) has a parent or guardian who does not exercise proper guidance or control over the child;
  - (d) if found destitute, has both parents or his surviving parent, undergoing imprisonment or mentally disordered or otherwise severely incapacitated;
  - (e) is under the care of a parent or guardian who, by reason of criminal or drunken habits, is unfit to have the care of the child;

- (f) is the daughter of a father who has been convicted of the offence of defilement or indecent treatment of any of his daughters;
- (g) is found wandering or has no home or settled place of abode, is on the street or other public place, or has no visible means of subsistence;
- (h) is found begging or receiving alms, whether or not there is any pretence of singing, playing, performing, offering anything for sale or otherwise or is found in any street, premise or place for the purpose of begging or receiving alms;
- (i) accompanies any person when that person is begging or receiving alms, whether or not there is any pretence of singing, playing, performing, offering anything for sale, or otherwise;
- (j) frequents the company of a reputed thief or common or reputed prostitute;
- (k) is lodging or residing in a house or the part of a house used by a prostitute for the purpose of prostitution, or is otherwise living in circumstances calculated to cause, encourage or favour the seduction or prostitution of the child.

#### Section 149

There shall be established for each state of the federation and the Federal capital territory, Abuja, a court to be known as family court (in this Act referred to as “the Court”) for the purpose of hearing and determining matters relating to children.



**APPENDIX III**

**FORM A – STREET CHILDREN QUESTIONNAIRE**

**SECTION A**

**SOCIO – DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS**

1. Age \_\_\_\_\_

2. Sex

Male \_\_\_\_\_ 1

Female \_\_\_\_\_ 2

3. Educational level

No formal education \_\_\_\_\_ 1

Primary school not completed \_\_\_\_\_ 2

Primary school completed \_\_\_\_\_ 3

Secondary school not completed \_\_\_\_\_ 4

Others (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

4. Town of residence \_\_\_\_\_

5. Religious Affiliation

Christianity \_\_\_\_\_ 1

Islam \_\_\_\_\_ 2

Traditional religion \_\_\_\_\_ 3

Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is your ethnic origin? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Which of the following describe the condition of your parents?

Father dead \_\_\_\_\_ 1

Mother dead \_\_\_\_\_2

Both dead \_\_\_\_\_3

8. Which of these describe the present status of your parents?

Never married \_\_\_\_\_1

Married \_\_\_\_\_ 2

Divorced \_\_\_\_\_ 3

Widowed \_\_\_\_\_ 4

Separated \_\_\_\_\_ 5

9. What is the living arrangement of your parents

Living together \_\_\_\_\_1

Living separately \_\_\_\_\_2

Don't Know \_\_\_\_\_88

9. What type of marriage does your parent have?

Monogamous (one man one wife) \_\_\_\_\_ 1

Polygynous (one man, two or more wives) \_\_\_\_\_2

10. What is your average income per day \_\_\_\_\_

11. What is your father's occupation

Farming \_\_\_\_\_ 1

Trading \_\_\_\_\_ 2

Artisan \_\_\_\_\_ 3

Government worker \_\_\_\_\_ 4

Teaching \_\_\_\_\_5

Salary earner in private organisation \_\_\_\_6

Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

12. What is your mothers occupation

Farming \_\_\_\_\_ 1

Trading \_\_\_\_\_ 2

Artisan \_\_\_\_\_ 3

Government worker \_\_\_\_\_ 4

Teaching \_\_\_\_\_ 5

Salary earner in private organisation \_\_\_\_\_ 6

Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

13. What is your father's income per month (a) \_\_\_\_\_

(c) Don't Know \_\_\_\_\_ 88

14. What is your mother's income per month (a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) Don't Know \_\_\_\_\_ 88

15. What type of house do your parents live

A single room \_\_\_\_\_ 1

A room and a Parlour \_\_\_\_\_ 2

A flat \_\_\_\_\_ 3

A duplex \_\_\_\_\_ 4

Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

16. How many children do your parents have \_\_\_\_\_

17. How many of them grew up with your parents \_\_\_\_\_

18. Whom did you grew up with \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION B: FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROLIFERATION OF THE STREET CHILDREN**

19. How long have you been working on the street (specify number of years)

\_\_\_\_\_.

20. How long have you been sleeping on the street (specify number of years)

\_\_\_\_\_.

21. What event(s) actually brought you to the street

(i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

22. Have you always had a cordial relationship with your father or mother?

	Yes	No
Father	1	2
Mother	1	2

23. If no, what problems did you have with any of them before your being on the street?

(i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

24. How do you spend the income you make on the street?

To supplement family needs \_\_\_\_\_A

To pay for my school fees \_\_\_\_\_B

To buy cloths for myself \_\_\_\_\_C

For feeding self \_\_\_\_\_D

Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_X

25. If you ever give the money to your family, who takes the money from you?

My father \_\_\_\_\_A

My mother \_\_\_\_\_B

My brothers \_\_\_\_\_C

My sisters \_\_\_\_\_D

My relations \_\_\_\_\_E

My friends \_\_\_\_\_F

Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_X

26. How often do you visit you parents

Every day \_\_\_\_\_1

Frequently but not everyday \_\_\_\_\_2

Occasionally \_\_\_\_\_3

Hardly \_\_\_\_\_4

Don't know where they are \_\_\_\_\_5

### **SECTION C: PROBLEMS OF THE STREET CHILDREN**

27. What are the kinds of activities you engage in for a living

Hawking \_\_\_\_\_1

Begging for alms \_\_\_\_\_2

Petty jobs (Shoe shining, trucks pushing etc)\_\_\_\_\_3

Others \_\_\_\_\_

28. What do you enjoy most at this moment?

(i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

29. What are the most difficult problems you are experiencing

Accommodation \_\_\_\_\_A

Feeding \_\_\_\_\_B

Clothing \_\_\_\_\_C

Health service \_\_\_\_\_D

Education \_\_\_\_\_E

Counseling \_\_\_\_\_F

Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_X

30. What are the worst things that have happened to you in your life

Lack of adequate food \_\_\_\_\_A

Homelessness \_\_\_\_\_B

Health problems \_\_\_\_\_C

Physical abuse \_\_\_\_\_D

Lack of resources and opportunity \_\_\_\_\_E

Stigmatization \_\_\_\_\_F

Exploitation \_\_\_\_\_G

Others (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_X

31. How do you cope or manage to survive all the difficulties you face in your life

- (i) \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) \_\_\_\_\_
- (iii) \_\_\_\_\_

32. How will you describe your relationship with the police

- Cordial \_\_\_\_\_ 1
- Not cordial \_\_\_\_\_ 2
- Sometimes cordial, at other times problematic \_\_\_\_\_ 3
- No encounter with the police \_\_\_\_\_ 4

33. What are the reasons for your answer

- (i) \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) \_\_\_\_\_
- (iii) \_\_\_\_\_

34. Where did you sleep last night

- Uncompleted building \_\_\_\_\_ 1
- Under the bridge \_\_\_\_\_ 2
- Motor garage \_\_\_\_\_ 3
- In the market \_\_\_\_\_ 4
- Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

35. What are the common health problems you have

- (i) \_\_\_\_\_
- (ii) \_\_\_\_\_
- (iii) \_\_\_\_\_

36. Each time you are sick, where do you seek for assistance

Hospitals \_\_\_\_\_ A

Bought drugs from chemists \_\_\_\_\_ B

Use traditional herbs \_\_\_\_\_ C

Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_ X

37. How many times do you eat in a day

Once \_\_\_\_\_ 1

Twice \_\_\_\_\_ 2

Three times or more \_\_\_\_\_ 3

There are times I do not eat for a whole day \_\_\_\_\_ 4

38. Do you have any problem with other children who are on the street like you

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 1

No \_\_\_\_\_ 2

39. If yes, what are the problems

(i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

40. Do you experience any problem with other government agents other than the police

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 1

No \_\_\_\_\_ 2

No encounter with other government agents \_\_\_\_\_ 3

41. If yes, mention the government agents



(i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

42. What are the problems you have with them

(i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

43. What solutions will you suggest to the problems you are experiencing on the

street (i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(i) \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION D: SUPPORTS NETWORK AVAILABLE TO STREET CHILDREN**

44. How will you describe the attitudes of the community members to you

Accommodative \_\_\_\_\_ 1

Hostile \_\_\_\_\_ 2

Indifference \_\_\_\_\_ 3

45. Have you ever received any support from community members

(a) Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 1

(b) No \_\_\_\_\_ 2

(46) If yes, what forms of assistance/ supports do you receive from them

Accommodation \_\_\_\_\_ A

- Feeding \_\_\_\_\_ B
- Clothing \_\_\_\_\_ C
- Health service \_\_\_\_\_ D
- Education \_\_\_\_\_ E
- Counseling \_\_\_\_\_ F
- Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_ X

(47) Are you aware of any Non – Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in this community

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 1

No \_\_\_\_\_ 2

(48) Have you ever received any support from the NGOs?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 1

No \_\_\_\_\_ 2

(49) If yes, list the names of the NGOs

(i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(50) What form(s) of assistance do they give you?

Accommodation \_\_\_\_\_ A

Feeding \_\_\_\_\_ B

Clothing \_\_\_\_\_ C

Health service \_\_\_\_\_ D

Education \_\_\_\_\_ E

Counseling \_\_\_\_\_F

Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_X

(51) Have you ever received any assistance from the police?

Yes \_\_\_\_1

No \_\_\_\_2

(52) If yes, what form(s) of assistance do they give you

Accommodation \_\_\_\_\_A

Feeding \_\_\_\_\_B

Clothing \_\_\_\_\_C

Health service \_\_\_\_\_D

Education \_\_\_\_\_E

Counseling \_\_\_\_\_F

None \_\_\_\_\_G

Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_X

(53) What type(s) of assistance have you ever received from social welfare Department/  
government ministries?

Accommodation \_\_\_\_\_A

Feeding \_\_\_\_\_B

Clothing \_\_\_\_\_C

Health service \_\_\_\_\_D

Education \_\_\_\_\_E

Counseling \_\_\_\_\_F

None \_\_\_\_\_ G

Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_ X

(54) What assistance do you receive from other children who are on the streets

Accommodation \_\_\_\_\_ A

Feeding \_\_\_\_\_ B

Clothing \_\_\_\_\_ C

Health service \_\_\_\_\_ D

Education \_\_\_\_\_ E

Counseling \_\_\_\_\_ F

None \_\_\_\_\_ G

Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_ X

(55) What forms of assistance do you receive from adults on the streets?

Accommodation \_\_\_\_\_ A

Feeding \_\_\_\_\_ B

Clothing \_\_\_\_\_ C

Health service \_\_\_\_\_ D

Education \_\_\_\_\_ E

Counseling \_\_\_\_\_ F

None \_\_\_\_\_ G

Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_ X

(56) Which other organisations and/or individuals give you some form of assistance on

the street? (a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

© \_\_\_\_\_

(57) What exactly do you receive from the sources in Q 52?

Accommodation \_\_\_\_\_ A

Feeding \_\_\_\_\_ B

Clothing \_\_\_\_\_ C

Health service \_\_\_\_\_ D

Education \_\_\_\_\_ E

Counseling \_\_\_\_\_ F

None \_\_\_\_\_ G

Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_ X

(58) What are the kinds of assistance you receive from the organisations listed in Q52

Accommodation \_\_\_\_\_ A

Feeding \_\_\_\_\_ B

Clothing \_\_\_\_\_ C

Health service \_\_\_\_\_ D

Education \_\_\_\_\_ E

Counseling \_\_\_\_\_ F

None \_\_\_\_\_ G

Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_ X

**SECTION E: ATTITUDES OF THE STREET CHILDREN TO THE  
SUPPORTS NETWORKS**

(59) Assess the different supports you receive from the government according to their level of adequacy

Supports	Very adequate	Adequate	Moderate	Inadequate	Grossly inadequate	Not Applicable
Food						
Health service						
Education						
Shelter						
Clothing						
Counseling						
Others(specify)(i)_____						
(ii)						

(60) Assess the different supports you receive from the community according to their level of adequacy

Supports	Very adequate	Adequate	Moderate	Inadequate	Grossly inadequate	Not Applicable
Food						
Health service						
Education						
Shelter						
Clothing						
Counseling						
Others(specify)(i)_____						
(ii)						

(61) Assess the different supports you receive from the NGOs according to their level of adequacy

Supports	Very adequate	Adequate	Moderate	Inadequate	Grossly inadequate	Not Applicable
Food						
Health service						
Education						
Shelter						
Clothing						
Counseling						
Others(specify)(i)_____						
(ii)						

(62) Assess the different supports you receive from Civil Society Organisations according to their level of adequacy

Supports	Very adequate	Adequate	Moderate	Inadequate	Grossly inadequate	Not Applicable
Food						
Health service						
Education						
Shelter						
Clothing						
Counseling						
Others(specify)(i)_____						
(ii)						

(63) Assess the different supports you receive from the street children like you according to their level of adequacy

Supports	Very adequate	Adequate	Moderate	Inadequate	Grossly inadequate	Not Applicable
Food						
Health service						
Education						
Shelter						
Clothing						
Counseling						
Others(specify)(i)_____						
(ii)						

(64) Following scale 1 – 5, please, rank the different support providers according to their importance to you, using rank 1 for the most important/ effective and the highest figure (5) for the least important/effective.

Government Agencies \_\_\_\_\_

NGOs \_\_\_\_\_

The community \_\_\_\_\_

Civil Society Organisations (Organized groups in the community

\_\_\_\_\_

(e) Homeless adults on the street \_\_\_\_\_

(65) Will you be willing to be re – united with your parents

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 1

No \_\_\_\_\_ 2



(66) If yes, state the reasons for your answer (i) \_\_\_\_\_  
(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(67) If no, give reasons for your answer (i) \_\_\_\_\_  
(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(68) Will you agree that the government is doing enough for the street children

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ 1

No \_\_\_\_\_ 2

(69) If yes, state the reasons for your answer \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(70) If no, what do you expect the government to do that they have not done

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

(71) What suggestions do you have to improve the supports network available to children living and working on the streets?

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX IV: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE NGOs**

1. Name of NGO \_\_\_\_\_

2. Year of establishment \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ LGA \_\_\_\_\_

3. Owners/ members \_\_\_\_\_

4. Target groups \_\_\_\_\_

5. Number of staff \_\_\_\_\_

6. What are the objectives of this organisation

(iv) \_\_\_\_\_

(v) \_\_\_\_\_

(vi) \_\_\_\_\_

7. (a) Operation Coverage \_\_\_\_\_

(b) Branch Offices \_\_\_\_\_

8. What are your sources of funding (i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

9. Why are you interested in the street children?

(i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

10. What are some of the factors responsible for the proliferation of street children?

(i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iv) \_\_\_\_\_

11. What forms of support do you give to the street children?

(i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iv) \_\_\_\_\_

12. Do you have any special programme for the street boys? (a) Yes (b) No

13. If yes, list the programmes

(i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

14. Do you have any special programme for the street girls? (a) Yes (b) No

15. If yes, list the programmes

(i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

16. What are the specific problems facing the street children in this community?

(i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iv) \_\_\_\_\_

17. What are some of the coping strategies of the street children?

(i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

18. Would you say that the government is doing enough for the street children

(a) Yes

(b) No

16. Would you say that your organisation is fulfilling her mission mandate

(a) Yes

(b) No

17. If yes, state your reasons (i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

18. If no, what are the challenges confronting your organisation

(i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

19. What are the attitudes of the street children to the supports you give them

(a) Positive

(b) Negative

(c) Indifference

20. Give reasons for your answer

(i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) \_\_\_\_\_

21. What other suggestions do you have as solutions to the problems of street children?

**APPENDIX V: INDEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR  
MINISTRIES/GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT AND CIVIL SOCIETY  
ORGANISATIONS**

1. Name of the Ministry/Government Department/CSO \_\_\_\_\_
2. State \_\_\_\_\_ LGA \_\_\_\_\_
3. What are the factors responsible for the proliferation of street children?
4. What are the problems facing street children?
5. What are some strategies employed by street children to cope with street life?
6. Mention some government policies existing for the protection and rehabilitation of street children?
7. Do you have specific programmes for the street children? (Probe for programmes in the area of education, feeding, clothing, shelter, counseling etc).
8. What specific programme do you have for the street boys?
9. What specific programme do you have for the street girls?
10. Would you say that your ministry/ Department/ organisation is fulfilling her set goals for the street children?
11. What are some of the challenges facing your ministry/department/ organisation in fulfilling her missions?
12. What is the general attitudes of street children to the supports your ministry/department/ organisation give to them?
13. What are your suggestions to address the problems of the street children in this community and in Nigeria at large?

## APPENDIX VI

### FGD GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS

1. Participants' Socio-Demographic characteristics (Age, Marital Status,, Sex, Income, Occupation, Religion and Town of residence) .
2. Who are the street children?
3. What factors are responsible for the proliferation of the street children in this Community?
4. What are the problems facing the street children in this community?
5. Do you have pity for street children?
6. What positive contributions do street children make to your community?
7. What are the dangers that street children pose to a community?
8. What are the programmes existing in this community to support the less privileged such as the poor and orphans?
9. If a person is sick, what forms of assistance are usually rendered to him/her in this community?
10. What programmes exist to support the street children in this community? (Probe for specific programmes for boys and girls)
11. Will you say that this community is doing enough for the street children?
12. What are the challenges facing this community in providing supports for the street children?
13. What are the general attitudes of the street children to the supports given to them by this community?
14. What are your suggestions on the problems of the street children in this community?

## Appendix VII: FGD Tables

**Table 1: Factors Responsible for the Proliferation of Street Children**

Responses	Kaduna						Lagos						Port Harcourt					
	A M	AF	O M	OF	Y M	YF	A M	AF	O M	OF	Y M	YF	A M	A F	O M	O F	Y M	Y F
Islamic Religious beliefs	++	++	++	++	++	++	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Poverty	++	++	++	++	++	+	++	++	++	++	+	++	++	+	++	++	+	+
Polygyny/ Large family size	+	-	-	-	-	+	++	++	++	++	+	++	++	+	++	++	++	+
Broken Homes	+	-	-	+	+	-	++	++	+	++	++	+	++	+	+	+	++	+
Peer group influence	+	++	+	-	++	+	+	++	+	+	++	+	++	+	++	++	++	+
Lack of parental care	-	-	+	-		+	++	++	++	+	+	-	++	+	-	+	++	+

**Key**

AM = Adult Males

AF = Adult Females

OM = Opinion Leaders Males

OF = Opinion Leaders Females

YM = Youth Males

YF = Youth Females

+ = Where the opinions were expressed by few of the respondents

++ = where the opinions were expressed by most of the respondents

- = where the opinions were not expressed at all

**Table 2: Activities that street children engage in for a living**

Responses	Kaduna						Lagos						Port Harcourt					
	A M	AF	O M	OF	Y M	YF	A M	AF	O M	OF	Y M	YF	A M	A F	O M	O F	Y M	Y F
Begging for alms	++	++	++	++	++	++	+	-	-	++	-	-	-	-	++	-	-	-
Hawking	-	++	+	+	-	+	++	++	+	+	-	++	+	+	-	++	-	+
Criminal activities like stealing, drug pushing etc	+	++	+	+	++	+	++	++	++	++	+	++	+	+	++	+	+	+
Prostitution	+	-	-	+	+	-	++	++	+	++	++	+	++	+	++	++	+	+
Petty jobs	++	+	+	+	++	-	++	+	++	++	-	+	++	+	+	+	+	+

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**Table 3: Problems of the street children**

Responses	Kaduna						Lagos						Port Harcourt					
	A M	AF	O M	OF	Y M	YF	A M	AF	O M	OF	Y M	YF	A M	A F	O M	O F	Y M	Y F
Lack of protection	++	++	-	+	++	+	++	-	++	+	++	+	+	-	+	++	+	
Constant abuse	+	++	+	+	-	++	+	++	+	-	++	++	++	+	+	++	-	+
Lack of food	++	++	+	++	++	+	++	++	++	+	++	++	+	+	++	++	++	+
Homelessness	++	+	-	+	+	-	++	++	++	++	++	+	+	+	++	++	-	+
Lack of care	++	++	++	++	+	+	++	++	++	++	+	+	++	+	++	++	+	+
Stigmatization	+	+	++	-	+	-	++	++	+	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	++	+
Exploitation	++	++	+	-	-	+	++	++	+	++	-	++	-	+	+	-	++	+

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**Table 4: Dangers that children ‘of’ the street pose to the community**

Responses	Kaduna						Lagos						Port Harcourt					
	A M	AF	O M	OF	Y M	YF	A M	AF	O M	OF	Y M	YF	A M	A F	O M	O F	Y M	Y F
Insecurity in the urban centres	++	++	++	+	++	+	+	++	++	++	++	++	++	+	++	+	++	+
Instrument of violence	-	-	-	+	-	+	++	++	++	++	+	++	++	+	++	++	++	+
Economic burden to the nation	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	++	-	-

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++ = where the opinions were expressed by most of the respondents

- = where the opinions were not expressed at all

**Table 5: Challenges Facing the Community in providing supports for the street children**

Responses	Kaduna						Lagos						Port Harcourt					
	A M	AF	O M	OF	Y M	YF	A M	AF	O M	OF	Y M	YF	A M	A F	O M	O F	Y M	Y F
Poverty	++	++	++	++	++	++	+	++	++	++	+	+	++	-	++	++	+	+
Feeling of apathy towards the children	-	+	++	+	-	+	++	++	++	+	+	++	+	+	+	++	++	-
View as dangerous to the community	+	+	-	++	++	+	++	++	++	++	++	+	++	+	++	+	++	+

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++ = where the opinions were expressed by most of the respondents

- = where the opinions were not expressed at all

**Table 6: Attitudes of the street children to the support given to them**

Responses	Kaduna						Lagos						Port Harcourt					
	A M	AF	O M	OF	Y M	YF	A M	AF	O M	OF	Y M	YF	A M	A F	O M	O F	Y M	Y F
Not appreciative	+	-	+	++	+	++	++	++	+	++	++	-	++	+	++	++	-	+
They are never satisfied with whatever you give them	++	++	+	++	+	+	++	++	++	+	++	++	+	+	++	++	-	+
Their attitude is generally bad	+	++	+	+	++	+	++	++	++	++	++	++	+	+	++	+	+	+

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++ = where the opinions were expressed by most of the respondents

- = where the opinions were not expressed at all

**Table 7: Suggested solutions to the Problems of Street children**

Responses	Kaduna						Lagos						Port Harcourt						
	A M	AF	O M	OF	Y M	YF	A M	AF	O M	OF	Y M	YF	A M	A F	O M	O F	Y M	Y F	
There is need for modernization of Almajiri culture in Islam	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
Eradication of poverty	++	++	++	+	++	+	++	++	++	+	++	++	+	+	+	++	++	+	+
Government school improve the services provided in the approved schools	+	++	+	++	+	-	++	++	++	+	++	-	++	+	++	++	+	+	+
Parents should stop having too many children and take care of the ones they have	+	-	-	+	+	-	+	++	+	+	++	+	++	+	+	++	+	+	+

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## Appendix VIII: Tables of Reports from NGOs

**Table 13.1: Ownership of the NGOs**

Ownership	Kaduna			Lagos			Port Harcourt		
	MHP	HDF	SCF	CCO	MC	DCI	AP	HSC	SOCAF
Wife of the State Governor	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Own by Religious Organisations	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Private ownership	-	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+

**Key**

+ = where the opinions were expressed

- = where the opinions were not expressed

**Table 13.2: Sources of funding for the NGOs**

Sources of funding	Kaduna			Lagos			Port Harcourt		
	MHP	HDF	SCF	CCO	MC	DCI	AP	HSC	SOCAF
Government	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
International Organisations	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	-	+
Individual donations	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Self Sponsored	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Donations from corporate organizations	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	-
Donations from religious organizations	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-

**Key**

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- = where the opinions were not expressed

**Table 13.3: Facilities of the NGOs**

Facilities	Kaduna			Lagos			Port Harcourt		
	MHP	HDF	SCF	CCO	MC	DCI	AP	HSC	SOCAP
Accommodation for street children	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	-
Vocational training centre	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	+	-
Own building/office complex	+	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-
Rented Apartment	-	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+

**Key**

+ = where the opinions were expressed

- = where the opinions were not expressed

**Table 13.4: Supports provided by the NGOs**

	Kaduna			Lagos			Port Harcourt		
	MHP	HDF	SCF	CCO	MC	DCI	AP	HSC	SOCAF
Provision of vocational training	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-
Shelter	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	-
Feeding	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+
Scholarships for street children	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+
Provision of educational materials	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Health care	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	+	-
Clothing	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+
Enlightenment campaign about their rights	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	+
Re-integration with families	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
Embarking on legal case on behalf of street children	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-

**Key**

+ = where the opinions were expressed

- = where the opinions were not expressed



**Table13.5: Achievements of the NGOs**

	Kaduna			Lagos			Port Harcourt		
	MHP	HDF	SCF	CCO	MC	DCI	AP	HSC	SOCAF
Rehabilitation of street children	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Re-integrated some street children with families	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Provision of Shelter for street children	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	-
Feeding of street children	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+
Sponsored street children's education	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Payment of hospital bills for street children	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	+	-

**Key**

+ = where the opinions were expressed

- = where the opinions were not expressed

**Table 13.6: Problems of the NGOs**

	Kaduna			Lagos			Port Harcourt		
	MHP	HDF	SCF	CCO	MC	DCI	AP	HSC	SOCAP
Finance	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Poor cooperation of the street children	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	+	+
Difficulties in managing the street children due to their number	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+

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