Land Use Correlates of Street Children in Ogbomoso, Nigeria

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Abstract:

Following the observation of increasing incidence of street children phenomenon in Nigerian urban centers, this study examines the relationship between land use and street children in Ogbomoso. Data on incidence of street children were obtained through the method of direct counting which was done on four different days of the week within defined Data Delineated Areas (DDAs) purposively selected across the residential zones of the city. The study employs z scores to compare the intensity of the problem across the selected DDAs. Data were also analyzed using pie chart, bar chart, graph and percentages. The study reveals that the incidence and categories of street children varies with land uses. It recommends, therefore that urban planners, governments as well as individuals have roles to play in proffering solutions to the menace. It also calls for more research works on the problem of street children.

Keywords: *street children, land use, child hawkers, child beggars*

Résumé:

Suite à l'observation de l'incidence croissante de la rue phénomène des enfants dans les centres urbains du Nigeria, cette étude examine la relation entre l'utilisation des terres et les enfants des rues dans Ogbomoso. Les données sur l'incidence des enfants des rues ont été

obtenues par la méthode de comptage direct qui a été fait sur quatre jours différents de la semaine dans les zones définies données délimitées choisis à dessein dans les zones résidentielles de la ville. L'étude emploie z-scores pour comparer l'intensité du problème à travers les DDA sélectionnés. Les données ont également été analysées à l'aide camembert, histogramme, graphique et pourcentages. L'étude révèle que l'incidence et les catégories d'enfants des rues varie avec l'utilisation des terres. Il recommande donc que les planificateurs urbains, les gouvernements ainsi que les individus ont un rôle à jouer dans proférer des solutions à la menace. Il appelle également à plus de travaux de recherche sur le problème des enfants des rues.

Mots-clés: *enfants des rues, l'utilisation des terres, les colporteurs de l'enfant, les enfants mendiants*

Introduction

There is increasing complexity and diversity of urban problems across the globe, especially in the developing countries. The multi- dimensional nature of such problems has presented a worrisome situation with the social aspects more pronounced (Obioha, 2009). One obvious manifestation of urban social problem is the phenomenon of street children. Street children have been a recurrent theme which, for long, has captured the attention of urban scholars internationally and within Nigeria. In Nigeria, street children are seen in their thousands roaming the streets and portraying a decadent social order. There exist many locations in which street children are found: public spheres such as markets, bus stops, car parks, garages, street corners, and under the bridges (Oloko, 1992; Okpupara and Odurekwe 2003; Owasanoye and Wemharm, 2004) and in some urban slums (CSC, 2004)

These street children pose problems which are enormous and multidimensional. The point of concern, however, is that the increasing number of street children in Nigerian cities constitutes serious and sundry environmental problems, health hazard and immense challenge to national security (Ngowanji et al, 2009). The phenomenon of street children has implication for the survival of these children as they are socially relegated and stigmatized. They may be subject to neglect, exploitation, and the female among them are exposed to sexual abuse (Ikechebelu et al, 2008)

Researchers over the years have examined the problems of street children from different dimensions. Faloore (2009) examines the social network and livelihood of street children, Ikechebelu et al (2008) decry the sexual abuse among female street children, Owoaje et al, (2009) examine the socio-demographic characteristics of street children in rural communities while Obioha (2009) establishes the relationship between poverty and the menace of street children. We suggest that most of the recommendations that have emanated from researchers and adopted by government are ineffective and inadequate. In this case therefore, we ask: why have these recommendations failed to achieved the desired results?

In the words of Jelili (2009), the analysis, control and management of most sociological problems or social vices (of which street children is one) in cities without recourse to their spatial implication account for the failure of most policies or effort at addressing such problems. The realization of this fact stimulates this study which examines the relationship between land use and street children in Ogbomoso, a medium sized urban center in Nigeria. We start with clarification of concepts and a discussion of the theoretical issues

Conceptual and theoretical issues

The term "street children" has many definitions in different societal and cultural settings thus demonstrating the claim by CSC (2009) that the term is increasingly recognized by sociologists and anthropologists to be a socially constructed category that in reality does not form a clearly defined, homogenous population or phenomenon. As such, particular circumstance in a particular society dictates who should be included in the definition (Owoaje et al, 2009), hence terms like latchiely child, vagrant, abandoned, waif, urchin etc. are synonymously used in different societies and at different circumstances to denote street children (Veale, 1992). The four categories of street children: children of the street, children who are part of a street family, and those in institutionalized care (WHO, 1995) reflect differing socio-economic and cultural context across countries (UNESCO, 2001). Further, street children are frequently associated with negative events (Owoaje et al, 2009). In Addis-Ababa, the term street children reinforce a negative image as they are collectively referred to as "Boco" meaning pig (Aptekar et al, 2003). In Nigeria, a peculiar type of street children known as "area boys and girls" has been anecdotally attributed to increase of violent crime in the society (Owoaje et al, 2009).

The situations described above make the universally accepted definition of street children difficult. Nevertheless, Veale (1992) conceptualized street children from two stand points: popular and legal meaning of street children. According to Veale (1992), the popular meaning of street children sees them in the context of the particular society in which they evolved whereas the legal conceptualization is historical in the criminalization of vagrancy in England. Vagrancy law in England has its root in societal perception of vagrants in the mid-nineteenth century and children were not exempted from such portrayal and as of today, were perceived as a social threat (Veale, 1992).

Despite these conceptualizations of street children, many emanating definitions of street children are often being contested. Therefore, many practitioners, policy makers have adopted the Inter-NGO (1995) definition of street children as any girl or boy who has not reached adulthood, for whom the street (in the broadest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings, wasteland etc.) has become her or his habitual abode and/or sources of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised or directed by responsible adults.

Given that the concern in this study is street children and land use, the later requires clarification. Lyold (1968) defines land as a delineable area encompassing all attributes of the biosphere immediately above or below the earth's terrestrial surface, including the soil, terrain, surface hydrology, the near-surface climate, sediments and associated groundwater reserve, the biological resources, and the human settlement pattern and infrastructure resulting from human activity. The concept of land use connotes the use to which the land is put, thus we have residential land use, commercial land use, educational land use, agricultural land use and so on. According to Rodrigue (2009), urban land use comprises two elements; the nature of land use and the level of spatial accumulation. While the former relates with activities that are taking place at a certain spatial unit, the latter indicates their intensity and concentration. For instance, central areas have a high level of spatial accumulation and corresponding land uses while peripheral areas have lower levels of accumulations.
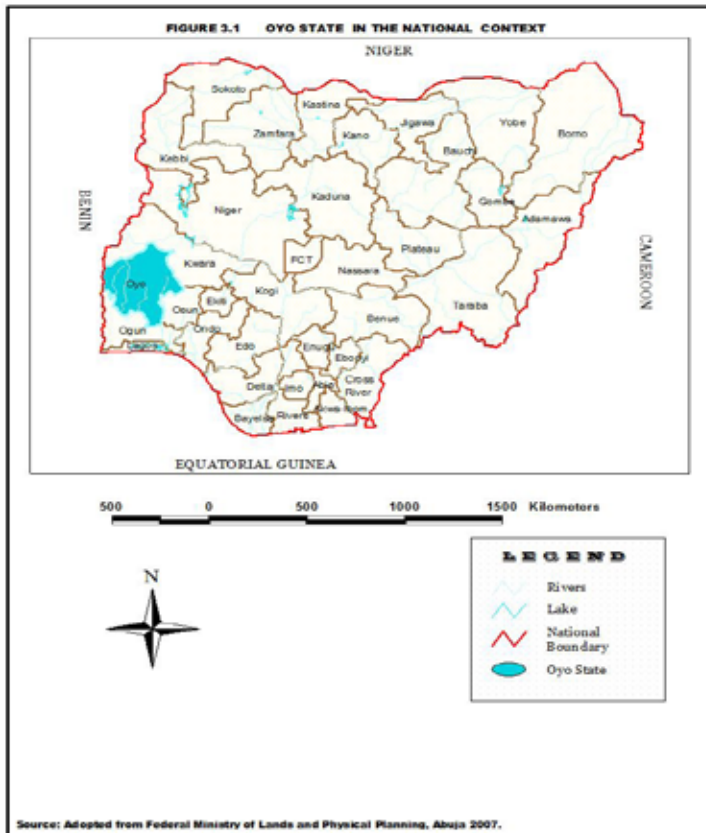
Land use can be formal or functional. Formal land use are concerned with qualitative attributes of space such as form, pattern and aspect and are descriptive in nature while functional land use are concerned with economic nature of activities such as productive, consumption, residence and transport and are mainly socio-economic descriptive of space (Rodrigue, 2009).
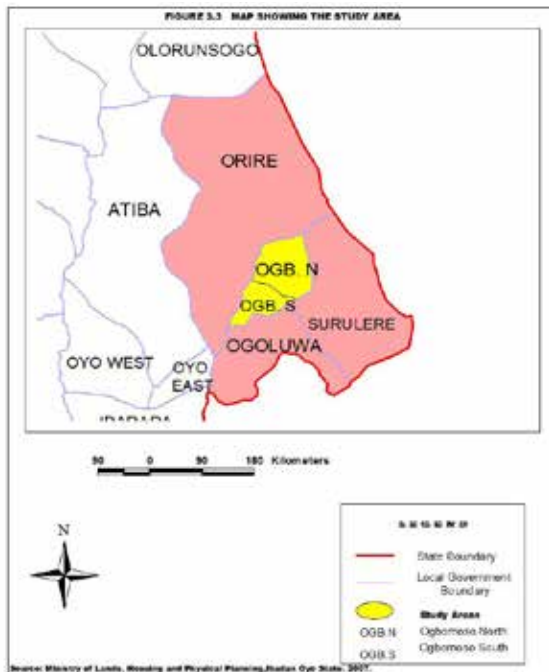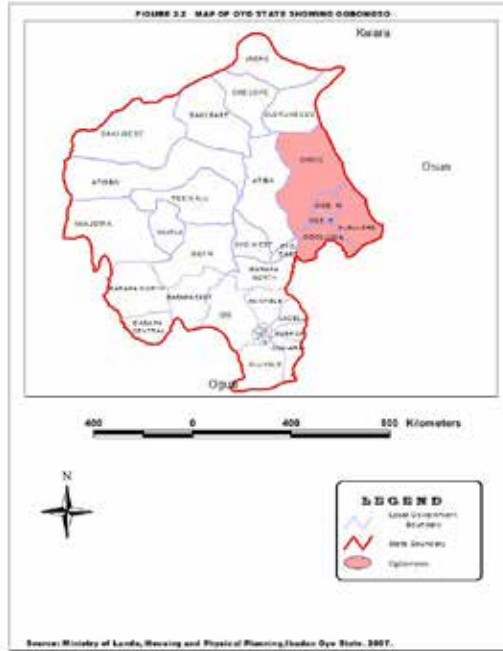
Theoretically, many scholars have examined the relationship between urban space and social problems. In his socio spatial dialetic, Soja (1980) describes urban environment as having a continuous two way process in which people create and modify urban spaces while at the same time being conditioned in various ways by the spaces in which they live and work. Soja (1980) argues that space was in some ways homological to class structure. In this wise, the theory of social spatial dialetic plays a crucial role in the explanation of a multitude of social sins that have distinctive patter of intra-urban variation such as street children, prostitution, suicide, delinquency etc. Most aspect of social behavior (of which street children is one) seems to exhibit a definite spatial pattern of some sort, rather than being randomly distributed across the city (Knox and Pinch, 2000).

Ogunkan and Jelili (2010) articulate the theory of environmental determinism while analyzing land use and street begging. They discovered that certain land uses attract more street beggars than the others. It was suggested that certain environments attract certain kinds of people. What makes this suggestion relevant to this study is the fact that the child beggars (a form of street children) constitute parts of the identified beggars (Ogunkan and Jelili, 2010). What has been noticed from arguments above is that there is interrelationship between social or physical environment and social behavior (of which street children is one). One can see how planners and designers might be enraptured with the idea that environment can determine behavior. The theory poses the potential for solving many of society's woes simply by reconfiguring the environment.

The study area

Ogbomoso is located on the 8°101 North of the equator and 4°101 East of the Greenwich meridian. It is a derived Savannah region and it is 104 km North East of Ibadan, 58 km North West of Osogbo, 57 km South West of Ilorin and 53 km North East of Oyo. The physical and economic growth of the town began in 19th century; when there was an unrest through-out the Yoruba land due to inter ethnic wars and Fulani Jihad. This brought more than 140 communities to seek refuge in Ogbomoso because of its strong defense. Most of these people took permanent residence in Ogbomoso, and by the end of 19th century, a continuous built-up compact settlement was evolved from the hamlet, covering an extensive area of land

FIGURE 3.1 OYO STATE IN THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

Source: Adopted from Federal Ministry of Lands and Physical Planning, Abuja 2007.

FIGURE 3.2   MAP OF OYO STATE SHOWING OGBOMOSO

Source: Ministry of Lands, Housing and Physical Planning, Ibadan Oyo State. 2007.

FIGURE 3.3   MAP SHOWING THE STUDY AREA

Source: Ministry of Lands, Housing and Physical Planning, Ibadan Oyo State. 2007.

The rapid growth of the town is also induced by the advent of missionary and establishment of schools. The deportation of indigenous Nigerian by Ghanaian government in 1969 also brought physical and economic growth to Ogbomoso. The establishment of Ladoke Akintola University of Technology in Ogbomoso is said to have induced its phenomenal growth since 1991. The Urbanization process resulted from the development mentioned above led to the demographic change over time. For instance, the population rose from 25000 in 1885 (Bowen, 1957) to more than 166,000 by 1991 (NPC, 1991) and was said to be about 299,535 by 2006 census. The demographic changes have contributed to the expansion in built-up area of Ogbomoso. The built-up area of the town which was 2 km2 in 1935 and 4.5 km2 in 1963 (Opeloyeru, 1983) was estimated to have reached 24.3 km2 in 1995 (Popoola, 1997). In 2003, it has increased to 27.5 km2 (Abolade, 2004).

Ogbomoso, being a traditional, unplanned town that predated planning effort could not be identified by land use zones. Therefore it is easily identified by residential zones. It has no land use segregation; most its parts are characterized with admixture of land uses. The land use in each ward is dominated by residential type, but a few other land use types feature fairly prominently in a few wards (Tanimowo, 2006)

Methodology

Ogbomoso is a pre-colonial urban centre with vast spatial extent and well developed and easily distinguishable residential zones; urban core, transitional zone and urban periphery. Each residential zone is homogenous in terms of physical layout, socio-economic and environmental characteristics (Afon 2007). This framework provided the most available spatial unit upon which data were collected.

Having stratified the city into three zones, specific street children prone areas were identified in each zones. However, to allow for an objective comparison among zones, areas that have at least one or a combination of the characteristics of street children prone areas as identified earlier were chosen from each zone (Conceptualized here Data Delineation Areas "DDAs"). Four categories of DDAs were identified as follows:

(i)   One largest mosque in each residential zone (determined by the size of the weekly congregation

(ii) One largest church in each residential zone (determined as in (i) above)

(iii) One popular market in each residential zone (determined by the spatial extent and level of patronage)

(iv) One popular junction in each residential zone (determined by the intensity of use).

(v)   One popular motor park in each residential zone (determined by level of patronage and spatial extent)

Table 1 Selected Data Delineation Areas (DDAs)

Residential Zones	Largest Mosques	Largest Churches	Popular Markets	Popular junctions	Popular Motor parks
Urban core	Oja igbo Central Mosque	First Baptist Church, Okelerin	Oja igbo/ oja jagun market	Rediffusion junction	Oja igbo motor pak
Transition Zone	Ansarudeen Central mosque, Caretaker	St David Anglican Church, Agbonyin	Old Wazo market	Takie Square	Sabo Motor Park
Urban periphery	LAUTECH central mosque	St Mary catholic church	New Wazo Market	Stadium Juction	New Ilorin garage

Source: Author's computations

In each of the locations described above, data on incidence of different categories of street children were obtained through the method of direct counting. This was carried out with the help of trained assistants. The counting shall be done on four different days of the week i.e. Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

The incidence of street children, which define the magnitude or extent of the problem in each identified area of the city, was measured in ratio scale through a surrogate or index "relative incidence of street children" (derived by the addition of number of street children identifiable in four days divided by four). The RISC so derived was subjected to standard scores otherwise referred to as z – scores to compare the intensity of incidence of street children in each zone and in each DDAs. The standard scores are obtained by linear transformation of the actual number identified such that the mean becomes zero and standard deviation becomes one. That is (x –x)/0.

Research Findings

The main findings of this study are presented in Tables 2 and 3 below. The tables were transformed for necessary analyses that follow. The analyses are presented in two broad subheadings (i) Land use pattern of Street Children and (ii) Street children categorization by land use

Table 2. Incidence of street children by land use in Ogbomoso

Residential Zones	Mosques	Churches	Markets	junctions	Motor parks	TOTAL
Urban core	39	33	49	16	27	164
Transition Zone	53	20	55	171	56	355
Urban periphery	20	8	35	6	21	90
TOTAL	112	61	139	193	104	609

Source: Author's field work

Table 3 Street children Categorization by Land use

LAND USES	STREET CHILDREN CATEGORIES							Total
	Child Hawkers	Child Beggars	Bus conductors	Load carriers	Street urchins	scavengers	Child Traders	
Mosque	35	40	-	-	2	-	35	112
Church	20	25	-	-	-	-	16	61
Motor Park	33	31	10	-	5	-	25	104
Market	41	10	11	16	15	4	42	139
Junction	63	31	11	21	9	10	48	193
Total	192	137	32	37	31	14	166	609

Source: Author's field work

Land Use Pattern Of Street Children In Ogbomoso

**Table 4 Land use Pattern of Street Children in Ogbomoso**

Land uses	Urban Core		Transitional Zone		Urban Periphery		Total	
	RISC	Z- scores	RISC	Z- scores	RISC	Z- scores	RISC	Z- scores
Mosque	39	0.49929	53	-0.31092	20	0.17118	112	-20136
Church	33	0.01611	20	-0.88095	8	-0.85592	61	-1.24925
Motor Park	27	-046707	56	-0.25910	21	0.25678	104	-0.36573
Market	49	1.30459	55	-27638	35	1.45507	139	0.33341
junction	16	-153290	171	1.72735	6	-1.02711	193	1.46293

Source: Author's field work and computation (2012)

*Z-scores are used to compare two distributions with different units (Adana 1996). They are standard scores that reflect, at a glance, how measurements/observations vary from the mean As obtained from Z- scores from Table 4, the incidence of street children attracted by various land uses varies across residential zones. For instance, the incidence of street children attracted by mosque is high in urban core and urban periphery but it is relatively lower in transitional zone. The incidence of street children around churches is relatively lower in transitional and urban periphery; however, it is higher in urban core. Motor Park recorded higher incidence of street children in urban periphery but recorded lower incidence in urban core and transitional zone. For market, the incidence of land use is more pronounced in urban core and urban periphery while the incidence is less in transitional zone. Junction recorded a significant incidence of street children in transitional zone, but recorded a lower incidence in urban core and urban periphery.

What can be observed in this pattern is that the incidence of street children is not only the function of land use but also a function of urban physical attributes i.e. attributes of space expressed in term of form, pattern and socio economic activities. For instance, the high incidence of street children in Takie junction may be as a result of its location and economic relevance while the low incidence of street children observed in Stadium junction may be attributed to that fact that the area, Stadium, is a residential zone with minimal commercial activities.

The above pattern notwithstanding, street children are observed (Figure 4) to be more concentrated along road junctions constituting about 35% of the RICS, This is followed by market (23%), mosque (19%), Motor Park (17%) and church (10%)

Figure 4: Incidence of Street children by Land use
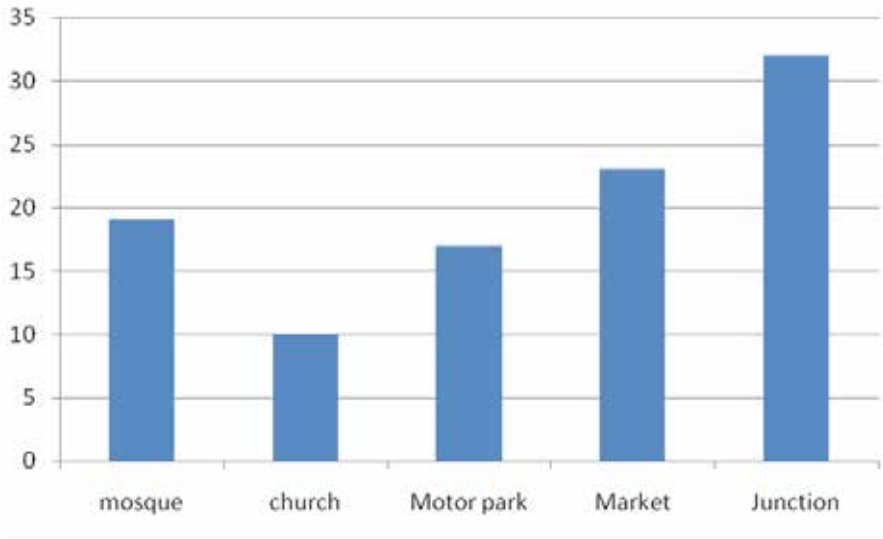
Source: Author's field work (2012)

Plate 1: Street children sighted at Old wazo market

STREET CHILDREN CATEGORIZATION BY LAND USE

Previous studies on street children (WERK, 2002, Faloore, 2009, Fakoya, 2009) have emphasized the fact that street children are found at motor parks, markets, road junctions, religious centres (mosque and church areas), among other public places. However, such studies have not been able to link the categories of street children to different land uses. In order to fill this gap, this study has made attempt to categorize street children by land uses.

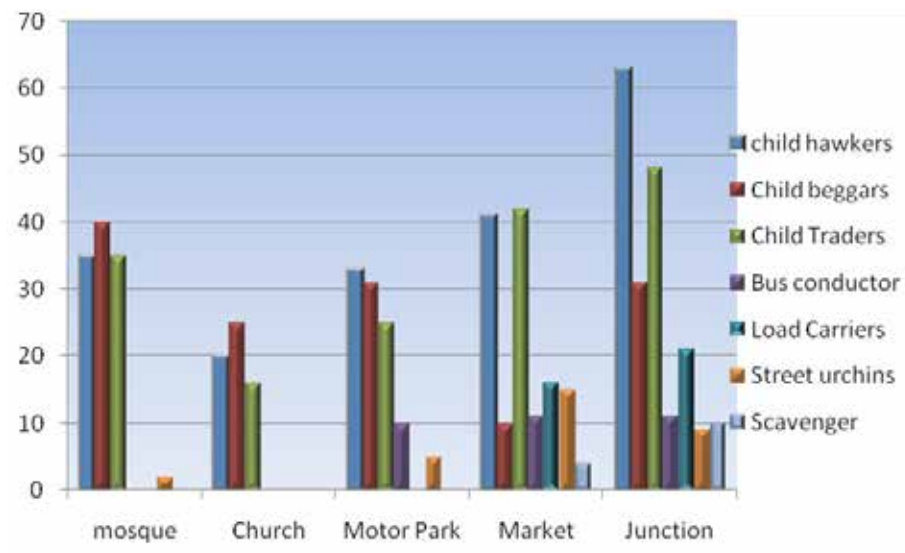**Figure 5: Street children Categorization by Land use**

Figure 5 shows different categories of street children along different land uses. Child beggars recorded the highest proportion of street children found in mosque and church. This distribution may not be unconnected with the fact that Islam and Christianity encourage the giving of alms. In Motor Park, market and Junction, child hawkers are the most visible street children, followed by child traders except in Motor Park where child beggars are more visible than child traders. In the overall analysis (Figure 3), the highest proportion of street children in

Figure 6: Categories of Street Children
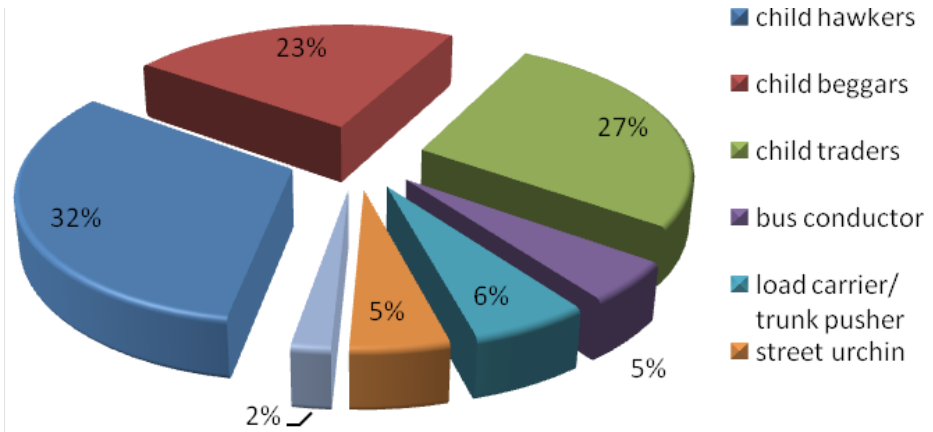
Source: Author's field work (2012)

Ogbomoso are child hawkers (32%). This is followed by child traders and child beggars (in that order) that account for 27% and 23% respectively of the street children identified. The least proportion of the identified street children are scavenger (2%), bus conductors and street urchins (5% each) and load carrier/ trunk pusher (6%)

Plate 2: A group of child hawkers at New Wazo market

Plate 3 Street urchins at Sabo Area   **Plate 4: a group of street Urchins**

Conclusion

This study has revealed that street children are an urban phenomenon which is not peculiar to certain parts of the urban centre. It is an urban social problem noticeable in every part of the city. However, it is observed that the problem is significantly higher in one part of the city than in the other. For instance, the magnitude of the problem is observed to be acute in the transitional zone of Ogbomoso than others. The planning implication is that as the city grows outward in concentric pattern, the urban social problems tend to move from the outer city to follow the pattern of urban development.

The study also observed that although, all land uses are important generators and attractors of street children, the magnitude and categories attracted vary from land use to others. In Ogbomoso, the highest generator of street children is the junction (31.70%). This is followed by market (22.83%) and Mosque (18.39%), with the least from church (10.02%). Be that as it may, it is pertinent to note that the highest incidence of street children across the residential zones is observed in Takie. Although this is not unconnected with the intensity of use which is informed by its locational characteristics, it is relatively unplanned. The implication of this is that the complexities of urban social problem (such as street children) are reflected in the disorderly arrangement of land uses or activities in cities, making some major land uses abodes of negative and/or undesirable activities,

The study also made a broad categorization of street children by land use. It examined the categories of street children as generated by varying land uses. It is observed that some categories of street children are found a certain land uses, however, child hawkers, child beggars and child trader are the highest generated categories of street children

In view of the above, the following are recommended to reduce the menace of street children in our urban center

(i)   The urban stakeholders are advised to checkmate the urban social problem (including street children phenomenon) through adequate urban development management techniques. This is more important especially as the city grows

(ii) Urban planners and urban designer should be properly informed of the social vices each land use has the potential to generate. They should therefore be redirect their activities their activities and focus the development control exercise towards organizing land use activities to make it less attractive to street children

(iii) The problem of street children revealed the endemic nature of urban poverty, governments at various level are encouraged to tackle the problem of poverty in the country by embarking on poverty alleviating programme that will have direct impact on the street children

(iv) In addition to suggestion (iii) above, government should make it a legal duty to ensure that all children of relevant ages are included in the compulsory education and that education is provided virtually free of charge. I Government should, therefore, improve the educational infrastructure

(v) To complement the findings here, the study recommends that more researches be carried out on street children and land use to cover more cities and towns

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