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An Assessment of the Emerging Networks of Support for Street Children in Nigeria

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Abstracts

Nigeria, being a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989) promulgated the Child Rights Act 2003, which aimed at ameliorating the condition of street children in Nigeria. In line with this, there are emerging networks of support for street children. The extent to which these support networks are fulfilling their mission mandates is not yet known. Hence, this paper attempts to bridge this gap by focusing on the available networks of support for these children, who were mainly on their own, and often left to face the horrors of street life without recourse to their significant others.

Both quantitative and qualitative techniques were employed to collect primary data for the study. Study findings showed that Children 'of' the street enjoyed more supports from community members in Kaduna (56.6%) and Port Harcourt (59.0%) than in Lagos (19.0%). Although, few NGOs now work with the street children, their impacts are yet to be felt because of lack of requisite resources. The government through the Social Welfare Department also provides some assistance to street children; their programmes were not attractive enough to the children. 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 ($\mu=3.26$) while the government agencies were least on this ranking scale ($\mu=1.78$). 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, children 'of' the street are still socially excluded in Nigeria. 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.

Introduction

The proliferation of street children especially in developing countries is attracting global attention. 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. According to UNICEF (2001), 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 2001). 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 2001).

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 Ross (2000), 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. 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.

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 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 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 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;

Methods

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. 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 with 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.

The primary data collected using quantitative measures were analysed using simple frequencies and percentages and ANOVA while the qualitative data collected using key informant interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions were analysed using the content analysis carried out with the help of the Text Base Beta Computer software,

Results and Discussion

Characteristics of Street Children

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. Table1 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. 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 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 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.

Networks of Support Available to the Street Children

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, Civil Society organizations, Street children themselves and the local communities.

Attitudes of the community members to children 'of' the street

Table 2 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 quotations from the in-depth interview and FGD sessions to show the attitudes of the community members to the street children.

“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”. (FGD with Youth males, 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”. (FGD with Adult Women, Lagos)

“Street children in the North are called ‘Almajiri’ and they are very wicked. They are used for religious crisis to kill and maim people. In fact, 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”. (In-depth interview with a Pastor, Kaduna)

Specific assistance received from community members are presented in Table 2. 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 2). 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 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 the quotations 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.

“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”. (FGD with Opinion Leaders, Males – Lagos)

“There are those who assist the street children out of sincere heart while some have ulterior motives for doing so”. (FGD with Adult Females – Kaduna)

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. (See table 3) 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. 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. The in-depth interview quotation below 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.

“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”. (In-depth Interview with NGO Official – Port Harcourt)

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, 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 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 cooperation between the street children and support facilities, if and when available

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. (Table 4). 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 quotation below

also confirmed weaknesses in the present government structures and programmes targeting the street children.

“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”. (FGD with Opinion Leaders – Lagos)

Ever Received Assistance from other Street Children and the Assistance Received from them

Table 5 presents types of assistance received by the street children from peers on the streets. Table 5 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. It is also important to note that 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.

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 includes; feeding (29.4%), counseling (27.7%) and cash gifts (21.6%).

Children ‘of’ the Streets’ Ranking of the Support Provided by Support Providers

Table 8 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 8 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.

Conclusion and Recommendations

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.

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.

The following recommendations emerged 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

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 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.

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Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Street Children’s Socio – economic and Demographic Characteristics by City of Residence

Age in Years	Town of Residence						Total	
	Kaduna		Lagos		Port Harcourt		N=1500	%
	N=500	%	N=500	%	N=500	%		
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
Sex								
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
Educational level								
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
Religious Affiliation								
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
Parents, marital status								
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
Parents’ marriage types								
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
Income per week								
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
<i>Mean</i>	#133.49		#1052		#759.40		#651.89	

Table 2: 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 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

Table 3: Children ‘of’ the Streets’ Awareness of NGOs in the communities and the assistance they receive from the NGOs

Awareness of NGO	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

Table 4: 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

Table 5: 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

Table 6: 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)