

Street Begging Practices

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Abstract: *The street begging is a social menace which has a negative implication not only for economies of the cities, socio-physical environment but also for beggars themselves. Although studies have been extensively conducted on causes, prevention, reasons, strategies and eradications of street begging in Nigeria, sufficient attention has not been devoted to practices of street begging as a distinct phenomenon. Therefore, the study examined street practices in Ibadan North Local Government Area.*

Qualitative and quantitative research design was used by the researcher to obtain in-depth data, regarding the practices of street begging, the population for the study comprises all street beggars within Ibadan north local government area. A purposive and convenience sampling techniques was employed for the selection of 200 male and female street beggars that participated in the quantitative study and 27 for qualitative collection of data. The study adopted qualitative, quantitative, observation, in-depth interview and key informant interview for the collection of data among street beggars in Ibadan north local government. Qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed separately so that they could complement each other. Qualitative data from observations, key informant interview and in-depth interviews were analyzed through theme and content analysis. Subsequently, responses were summarized, and analyzed.

Finding revealed that majority of the beggars beg on the street throughout the day from 8am to 9pm and most street beggars have target which must be met on daily basis, it also showed that most of the street beggars, particularly physically challenged ones always beg in groups and adopted praying as a major techniques of begging. Furthermore, the results of the study found that the factors that cause people to become street beggars and the phenomenon of begging are diverse and multifaceted, reasons that for begging include poverty, unemployment, physical challenges, homelessness, and family disintegration. Finding revealed that the categories of beggars that were school dropout, beggars who could not trace his/her family, and beggars who has lost their jobs.

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that Government should provide alms houses, so that the poor can get helps on feeding and shelter, Nigerian Government should collaborate with the populace, counselors, philanthropists and NGOs in order to fight poverty and provide mass and free education devoid of any form of discomfort, employment should be provided for widowed and separated destitute women, Rehabilitation Centers should be established in every local government area of states within the Federation where counsellors can render educational, moral, vocational, emotional and personal-social services to the rehabilitated street beggars, Improve the literacy level of beggars and make them aware about the various government poverty alleviation programmes, academic researches on the issue should be encouraged from time to time to check and enhance the curbing of beggary problem, to mention a few were suggested for the various stakeholders.

Keywords: socio- physical environment, street beggars, Poverty, Rehabilitation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Cities across the world are confronted with diverse challenges which have socio-economic and physical future effects for its citizen. These problems as experienced by cities of less developed countries, are enormous in nature. One obvious sign of these problems, especially in Nigeria, is street begging, that is the act of soliciting for money, food, clothes from people. It is practiced to get from others what one is unable to obtain by oneself. It is a request directed to the rest of the society to bring oneself out of misery of poverty. The situation of street begging has become globally prominent over the years. The presence of street beggars in major places of Nigeria has gone beyond the level where it could be viewed strictly as an uncommon occurrence to a worrisome social menace. Street begging are found everywhere in public spaces, such as filling stations, restaurants, banks, super markets, mosques, churches, among others. Street begging is experienced in almost every urban area in Nigeria, even though it is significantly higher in some places in the country than the others. The phenomenon of street begging is as a result of a number of factors, such as poverty, religion, physical disability, culture, national disaster, civil war, bad habits, family heritage, uncontrolled rural urban migration, and psychiatric disabilities and disorders. Deviant behaviours such as theft, thuggery, and vandalism are listed as some of the vices associated with street begging (Amman, 2006; Ogunkan & Fawole, 2009).

Begging on the streets, in the urban centers has last for an age and perhaps occupations of the highly vulnerable, poverty-ridden individuals in the society. There is no written evidence as to where and when begging began to be practiced first. However, studies indicate that begging was non-existent in primitive societies where small groups of relatives live together and support one another. Mutual aid served as self-protection and security for the society. The phenomenon of begging has emerged in association with private property. Starting from the beginning of the middle ages, the spread of begging was reinforced by the Christian doctrine of alms giving. There were also periods when the state assumed the duty of looking after the handicapped and the fortunateness. The acceleration in the number of street beggars took place in the 19th century, when the British introduced agrarian

reforms, which forced farmers to leave the land. Like-wise, the industrial revolution sent hand-spinners and weavers to the road forcing them to beg. Till then the joint family system took care of the weaker members of the family and helped in keeping begging in check. But, under the pressure of industrialization which brought with it a rapid growth of population and its steady flight from rural to urban for job, the traditional pattern of the society started breaking up. The poor could not turn to their society for sustenance (Namwata, 2012).

Street beggars of nowadays are patronized by the religious sympathy and they make best use of this religious sentiment. A large number of beggars collect outside temples and mosques expecting graceful sentiments in the religious people. It is interesting to note that people gathering around temples give alms as a religious duty rather than out of philanthropist act. In another words, it can be said that alms-giving is a duty rather than out of sympathy. These socio-economic pressures in turn resulted in the collapse of traditional social structures. The aggravated misery of mass poverty makes itself visible in large cities with the spread of slums. Large street beggars' population has taken up a surprisingly fast growth rate. The social implications of street begging are manifested not only in beggars' tendency to obstruct free flow of human and vehicular traffic but also their high tendency to create dirty materials either as waste or as part of their belongings to their regular routes and stations.

The potential threat of street begging to Nigerian societal fabric is obvious in its negative implications to social, environmental and economic survival of the country. Street beggars constitute environmental hazard to Nigerian society especially in the cities. The city and national economy is regarded as considerable proportion of beggar's population. The increasing population of beggars in Nigerian cities constitutes an environmental nuisance and health hazards, particularly those carrying infectious and contagious diseases. Street begging has negative implication for the city and national economy as beggars have no economic advantage in any way since they contribute nothing to the economy. It leads not only to social depletion of the city but also to that of street beggars as well as stigmatization. Street beggars paint a bad image to outsiders or strangers. Some criminals hid under the umbrella of begging to perpetuate their evil deeds. They are at times used as instruments by mischief makers, who use them to vandalize public properties and utilities built with national resources. The sinful activities of those fake beggars such as criminals, area boys and kidnappers constitute one of the sources of civil unrest to the city dwellers (Adedibu & Jelili, 2011). It is therefore upon the premises presented above that the study sought to examine Street begging practices in Ibadan North Local Government Area.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

The population of street beggars on Nigerian streets is growing rapidly, begging manifest several reactions from people; some see it as a sign of poverty and lack of services including affordable housing for vulnerable groups. The identification of this deviant behaviour as a serious social problem has driven the Federal Government of Nigeria and some State Governments to formulate measures to contain it at different points in time. The problem has, however, remained pervasive despite past efforts designed to address it (Adedibu and Jelili, 2011; Adewuyi, 2000; Aboluwade, 2012; Balogun, 2012). In spite of measures, such as: proscription of street begging in Nigeria, periodic evacuation of beggars from the streets and the construction of rehabilitation centers for street beggars, amongst other measures which are targeted at addressing the challenges of street begging, different categories of individuals, ranging from child to aged, the able-bodied and the physically challenged still take to the street every day for the purpose of alms solicitation. The problem persists because these authorities have failed to develop strategies that would help street beggars to obtain the basic necessities of life. Evidence shows that the strategies adopted to curb the problem of street begging have not been effective and rarely discourage street beggars. Efforts to curb the problem of street begging have failed because governments and other stakeholders are not well educated about the categories of street beggars and the reasons associated with begging activities. This lack of detailed information has led to the adoption of efforts that deal with the symptoms of begging rather than with the root causes of the begging problem. Street beggars are highly visible in public places, commercial centers, residential neighborhoods and worse still on campuses and inside buses. Although there has been a lot of studies on the social problem of street begging and activities of street beggars in Nigeria (Fawole, Ogunkan, and Omuruan, 2011; Aderinto, Akinwale, Atere, and Oyenuga, 2007; Adewuyi, 2000, Sule-Kano, 2015), sufficient scholarly attention, however, has not been devoted to the practices of street begging. Thus, there is a need to further expand the scope of research to the act of street begging, in which this study will fill the gap of previous works.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

The major aim of this study is to examine street begging practices in Ibadan north local government area. specific objectives of the study are identified to;

1. examine the prevalence of street begging in Ibadan north local government area.
2. examine the techniques of street begging among the citizen of Ibadan north local government area.
3. investigate the reasons for citizen been engaged in street begging in Ibadan north local government.
4. identify the categories of street begging among the citizen of Ibadan north local government area.

1.3. Research Questions

1. What is the prevalence of street begging in Ibadan north local government area?
2. What are the techniques of street begging among the citizen of Ibadan north local government area?

3. What are the reasons for engaging in street begging in Ibadan north local government area?
4. What are the categories of street begging among the citizen of Ibadan north local government area?

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Research Design

Research design essentially entails a plan or blueprint which specifies how data relating to a given problem will be collected, processed and analysed (Babbie, 2005). Qualitative and quantitative research design was used by the researcher to obtain in-depth data, regarding the practices of street begging. The complexity and unpredictable nature of the human social reality makes the adoption of this mixed approach of data collection expedient because of the advantage it offers at facilitating access to a comprehensive and holistic understanding of the subject matter of the study.

2.2. Population

The population for the study will comprise all street beggars within Ibadan north local government area.

2.3. Sample and Sampling Techniques

A purposive sampling technique was used to select street beggars on street, under the bridge, church, Motor Park and bus stops. Also convenience sampling techniques was employed for the selection of street beggars that participated in the study. A total of 227 male and female street beggars were covered in Ibadan north local government.

2.4. Research Instrument

The study adopted qualitative, quantitative, observation, in-depth interview and key informant interview for the collection of data among street beggars in Ibadan north local government.

2.4.1. Qualitative

The study adopted the use of questionnaire to collect the bio data of the respondents while structured interview was used to collect information on the research question from respondents.

2.4.2. Observation

The study used observational techniques in observing the presence of the respondent in terms of frequency, timing and behaviour of the street beggars.

2.4.3. In-depth Interview

The researcher used in-depth interview to conduct interview for 25 participants in Ibadan north local government area. The researcher sought for approval for these participant and explained the need for the study while considering the respondent's privacy, confidentiality and anonymity. The in-depth interview was made use of few questions, the process was tape recording and researcher used about 20 minutes for each question.

In-depth Interview Themes

1. Prevalence of street begging
2. Techniques of street begging
3. Reasons for street begging
4. Categories of street begging

2.4.4. Key Informant Interview

Key informant interview was used by the researcher to conduct interview with the leader of physically challenge beggars and the leader of visually impaired beggars at Jenbewon, Mokola within the study area to collect more detailed information about beggars.

2.5. Procedure for Data collection

The research instruments adopted for the purpose of data collection in this study included: survey questionnaire, observation, key informant interview and in-depth interviews methods, the researchers had control over the line of questioning while allowing respondents adequate space to provide detailed information where necessary. In order to fully understand the issues being investigated, the one-on-one story-telling interview approach was adopted as it is an effective tool which offers researchers an opportunity to get in-depth information regarding the phenomenon under investigation. The one-on-one interview approach was also adopted because of the beggars' limited educational background. There were many instances where the researchers had to read the items on the interview guide over and over and also interpret them into other local languages before the appropriate responses were obtained.

Language translators were also used in which interview guides which were initially in English were translated into Hausa to ease communication with participants who can only communicate in Hausa language. Three research assistances in the collection of data into English language. Additionally, relevant materials were sourced in the library, from the Internet and scholarly journals.

2.6. Method of Data Analysis

Qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed separately so that they could complement and supplement each other. Qualitative data from observations, key informant interview and in-depth interviews were analyzed through theme and content analysis.

Subsequently, questionnaire responses were coded, summarized, and analyzed. Descriptive statistics were used to obtain frequencies and percentages for the coded responses.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Analysis of Data Based on Research Questions

Research Question One: What is the prevalence of street begging in Ibadan north local government area?

Table 1: Distribution Table for Respondents Prevalence

Items	1-5	6-10	11-15	16 and above
How often do you beg on the street per day	4 (2%)	4 (2%)	36 (18%)	156 (78%)
What time of the day do you beg of the street	27 (13.5%)	21 (10.5%)	43 (21.5%)	109 (54.5%)
How often do you beg on the street per week	10 (5%)	14 (7%)	14 (8%)	160 (80%)
How many of you beg on the street in this area	3 (1.5%)	7 (3.5%)	13 (6.5%)	178 (89%)
How many number of your family members beg on the street	106 (53%)	54 (27%)	16 (8%)	24 (12%)
Total	150	100	122	627

Finding revealed that majority (78%) of the respondents reported that beggars beg on the street throughout the day, (18%) of beggar beg on street for 11 to 15 times per day, (2%) of respondent beg for 6 to 10 times and (2%) beg for 1 to 5 times for the day. (80%) of beggars beg for the whole day of the week, while (8%) of the respondent beg 11 to 15 times in the week, (7%) of the respondent beg 6 to 10 times in a week and (5%) beg for 1 to 5 times in a week. Finding demonstrated that respondents reported that they started begging from 8am to 9pm. The respondents said that begging is their source of livelihood and as a result they perceived it as a serious business. Therefore, if they do not resume to the street on time, they could lose profiteers and consequently affect their target. Finding demonstrated that most street beggars have target which must be met on daily basis. Finding showed that most of the street beggars, particularly physically challenged ones always beg in groups. The reason is quite simple, the cripple/lepers/ blind, and others have to be supported by normal persons in order to prevent motor accident on the road, though, most of them do not beg on the highways but begging on some streets in Ibadan. For further understanding of the data, qualitative data was used to gather information from beggars below

An interviewee said:

"We are more than 30 beggars around this area. I beg from morning till night. I pray and run after vehicles during traffic. I decided to venture into begging because of poverty. I lost my husband long time ago and since then nobody was ready to cater for my needs. As a result, I decided to beg in order to feed myself and my children".

A Key Informant Interview with the leader of physically challenged beggars in Sabo-Mokola area

I am the Dattijo (leader) of the physically challenged beggars in this Sabo, the total numbers of physically challenged beggars here are one hundred (100 beggars), I am married to two wives, all beggars assemble here very early and dispatch for begging by 7:am and the all return at night by 10:pm daily, the elderly and their leaders sit here under the hut to beg, while all young disabled beggars move out to beg.

A Key Informant Interview with the leader of visually impaired beggars in Sabo-Mokola area

I the Waziri (leader) of the visually impaired beggar in Sabo genbewon, I got married to three wives, the total number of blind beggars around makola and Sabo is one hundred and fifty (150 beggars), begging is not about timing like the government worker, beggars go out for begging in the morning and return at night, many of beggars relative lives in the north.

An in-depth interview with one of the beggars at Dugbe

Beggars here are mostly children in which they are guided by their parent, beggars here are about thirty in numbers, in which adult beggars are very few in number but for the children, they are the dominant beggars because they are still very strong to move around the traffic to solicit for help.

Unusually large number of beggars have descended on Ibadan, the capital of Oyo State, causing all sorts of problems for the residents amidst efforts by the state government to rid the city of their menace. Major roads and strategic road junctions in the

ancient city have been taken over by these ‘army’ of beggars who could also be seen lurking around major motor parks and markets across the metropolis.

A beggar along Jemibewon Road, Bashir Mohammed, a father of eight children said that begging is the only way he could take care of his large family because nobody gives him and his family food.

The upward trend has become increasingly worrisome when it is discovered that some of these beggars have no business begging, because they seem physically capable of doing menial jobs to eke out a living.

An interview with a visually impaired beggar

“There are more than four-five beggars around here. I am sixty-year-old. I have eye problem. I have been under medication at UCH. I got married to a polygamous home, I pray hard in soliciting for help. I survive through begging to meet up with my daily meal”.

Timing was also important in where and how to court the right attention. Mostly beggars started their trade during the morning rush hours (between 7am and 10am). Another busy period was during that after rush hours (3pm to 7pm). A 15-year-old beggar, remarked:

“I like the morning and the evening period because that is the time many people are going to work or they have closed. You know in the morning everybody you approach will give you because they believe if they give you, God will bless them and the day’s work will be successful”.

The 38-year-old mother of the twins narrated why she preferred the evening rush hour period:

“At that time many people would have closed from work and those who had a good day will give you money as a way of thanking God for his mercies and blessings. Business is good between 4 pm and 6:00 pm”, she concluded.

There is no sufficient document that indicates the exact time and place where begging has been started. However, it is known from oral traditions that the practice has existed for centuries; especially around religious shrines (temples) and in the rural areas of the country. The prevalence of street begging in Ibadan North was continually increasing. The 2013 population census of beggars in Nigeria is 12.4 million. Findings shows that the prevalence of street begging in Ibadan north varies at time to time and day to days.

Research Question Two: what are the techniques of street begging among the citizen of Ibadan north local government area.?

Table 2: Distribution Table for Street Begging Techniques

ITEMS	YES	NO
I used praises to beg from people on street	178(89%)	22 (11%)
I pray for people in order to collect money from them	153 (76.5%)	47(23.5%)
I lie about my health to people in order to collect money from profiteers	115(57.5%)	85(42.5%)
I lie about my family to people in order to collect money from people	72(36%)	128(64%)
I act on pretense to collect money from people	166(83%)	34 (17%)
I hold peoples’ cloth/hand in order to beg for alms	176 (88%)	24 (12%)
I greet people frequently to collect money from people	142 (71%)	58 (29%)

Finding revealed 76.5% representing majority of the respondents reported that one of the techniques they adopted in begging is to pray, few respondents representing 23.5% reported otherwise. Furthermore, finding demonstrated that they lied about their health to people in order to collect money from profiteers, others reported that they lied about their family to people in order to collect money from them. Additionally, result indicated that 83% of the respondents agreed that they acted on pretense to collect money from people. An In-depth interview revealed that street beggars used various begging technique to make a living for themselves and their families. These techniques included sending children into the street to beg (both children and parents as beggars); sitting in strategic places such as churches, mosques, praising pedestal, praying and frequent greeting.

One interviewee had this to say:

“I solicit for help on wheel chair, people sees my condition and give aim to me, I pay young children to push me around in getting help from pedestrians, I sit at mosques on Fridays to get aim from people, I pray and beg “Bi-se-bi-li-lah”, people sees giving help after pray as a means to get reward from God, in which I sees as an opportunity, to get aim from them, I prefer staying at the secretariat, in the morning and evening to seek help from government workers”.

The field observations showed that the team was normally made of three or four children usually stationed at vantage points to beg. They also moved or walked around depending on the concentration of potential clients. It is important to state that team begging was different from those beggars who were seen simply crowded in one area doing individual business. Team beggars

did their business in a well-planned and organized manner. The proceeds were shared after close of business but this also created some sort of conflicts as street beggars on several occasions were observed to be engaging in heated arguments because of mistrust and suspected cheating.

The findings were in support of Haruna (2013) who confirmed that street begging does not only constitute nuisance to the society, but taking its toll on the lives of teenagers who either act as guides to beggars and those that even engage in the act of begging. It is also in support of Talk (2012) whose findings said, presently in the globalization environment, street begging has become as serious menace and a liability on the government and the populace.

The research further revealed that another technique of street begging was 'advocacy begging'. Advocacy begging was a form of begging where one person begged in the name of or as an advocate or spokesperson for others. This type of begging mostly occurred where beggars interviewed presented themselves as advocates for their sick person. In some of those cases, twins or triplets were seen practicing advocacy begging due to religious persuasions/inclination. A mother of a triplet indicated in an interview that in her religious beliefs, triplets must subsist on the goodwill of mankind. She continued:

"We have been advised by the native doctor in my hometown to engage in alms begging to feed the babies or lest my children will lose their lives".

Handicap or diseased individuals use their deformities as a technique for money. They show-off their deformed or diseased body parts to gain the sympathy of passersby. We can easily find these types of beggars at markets, religious places, and railway station, where the movement of large numbers of people takes place.

Carrying an infant is another technique used by beggars to touch the hearts and minds of donors for money. Frequently, female beggars with a baby asking for aid in the name of the infant can be found at different parts of markets, railway station and residential areas.

"I left Arewa because there was a riot. So, I am begging to rescue myself and since I got to Ibadan, I could not find a suitable job. I engage in begging to order to earn a living and sustain my relatives by backing an infant to get sympathy help from people"

A direct personal request for money for food and medicines, in the hopes that honesty will gain sympathy. Being stationed near traffic in order to get money or goods or solicit donations, it was revealed during the interview process that street beggars mostly planned soliciting for help from their target from a distance. That is, an examination is somehow conducted on their targets to find out if they are able to offer them (beggars) money.

One child beggar narrated how he approaches passers-by.

"Once somebody is coming, you look at the way he is dressed and then you start asking for money. Sometimes, you ask anybody you see too for money when those who are neatly dressed do not mind you"

Whereas some child beggars indicated they normally assessed the possibility of getting money from their targets and concentrated more on them, some others generally begged anybody they chanced. Operationally, the begging business was observed to be quite diverse, pervasive, and spatially defined.

Research Question Three: What are the reasons for citizen been engaged in street begging in Ibadan north local government area?

Table 3: Distribution Table Showing Reasons for Street Begging

ITEMS	YES	NO
People beg on street in order to meet up their daily meals	187(93.5%)	13(6.5%)
Beggars sees begging as a source of livelihood	162(81%)	38(19%)
Beggars beg on the street to raise money for their tuition fees	26(13%)	174 (87%)
Beggars beg on the street in order to support their family	137(68.5%)	63(31.5%)
Beggars beg on the street to raise money for their medical bills	25 (12.5%)	175(87.5%)
Beggars beg due to divorce/parent divorce	15(7.5%)	185(92.5%)
People resort to begging due to their disabilities	147(73.5%)	53(26.5%)

Finding revealed 93.5% representing majority of the respondents reported that beggars beg to meet their daily meals, few respondents representing 6.5% reported otherwise. Furthermore, finding revealed that begging was the participants' main source of income and survival. People who beg do so because they are trapped in a "cycle of poverty" and that begging is an activity or adaptation of last resort. Moreover, there is a traditional link between poverty and disability. Poor people are at greater risk of becoming disabled through lack of adequate housing, food, clean water, basic sanitation and safe working environments. People with disabilities, in turn, are at increased risk of becoming poor through restricted access to education, health care, job training and employment opportunities. These factors, in combination with the effects of stigma and social isolation, limit the ability of people with disabilities to be full participants in their societies and to find employment that will support them and their families.

"I beg always, there are countless number of beggars here. I use to send my child to school. my family live around; I am also a Taylor. I still have customers I do work for. I have no family support. My husband abandoned me at home, so I have to beg for a living".

Beggars see begging as a form of assistance that they render towards the upkeep of their families. Children beggars indicated that begging helps their families in terms of food. Providing food for the family is like a shared responsibility between them and their parents. One of the respondents indicated that he usually goes to beg without being told when he sees that the food is about getting finished.

"As I am going it helps the family because the money, I will bring will be what my mother sometimes use to prepare food".

The result indicates that poverty was mentioned as the most notable reason for people adopting a begging lifestyle. Similar findings were reported by Ogunkan and Fawole (2009), Ogunkan (2009), Amman (2006), and Tambawal (2010) and Jelili (2006). As a result, the poor are trapped into a begging lifestyle, with little chance of escape.

Findings from the interview revealed that physical disability and loss of spouse is one of the reasons that led people into street begging.

An interview conducted to the leader of physically challenge beggar at Mokola

"I am the leader of physically disabled beggars in Sabo Area of Ibadan. We are about 100 beggars that beg with physical impairment. I never attended any school. I got married to two wives. Beggars move out to beg every day by 10am daily and return home by 10pm. Some are on wheels, some use stick, some use tire motor to move around. I sit here every day. People come around to give help directly as they have seen we are disable. The family relative of the beggars is in the north. Beggars beg because of insufficient funds to take care of family responsibilities. We elderly sit here to lead but the young ones go to the street to beg. We need rooms from government so beggars can have shelters and food for living"

An interview with beggar on a wheel chair:

"I came here to beg alone with my children, I beg every time and every day from 10 am to 2pm. Different people beg here. I am on wheel people push me, while I beg through praising and pointing at them to give me money. I beg for livelihood and meal."

A 15-year-old beggar explained that where the pitiful facial expression does not work, she grabs passers-by and possibly cry out with intent and purpose of courting their sympathy. She explained:

"I am with my two younger brothers who need to be feed and so if I don't make my face look pitiful people will not mind me and support me and my brothers as my mum is physically challenged and cannot work"

An interview with another street beggar:

I pray and praise to collect money from people. I am begging because my husband is dead. I do not have job again. I do not have money to take care of my children. I have been struggling to meet up with living through begging. I use the proceeds from begging to pay my children's school fees.

Adedibu (1989) identifies thirteen closely related factors influencing begging in Nigerian cities. These include: physical disability, unemployment, religious belief, old age, lack of caring relatives, and lack of rehabilitation center. Others are poverty, death of spouse, uncontrolled migration, lack of education, place of origin, and acceptability of begging in society.

Insightful Observation is that begging is seen as a lucrative job. All the participants mentioned that, there is high incentive with regard to begging. Although they lamented that, there are days they get less, there are also days they get individuals who bring them consumer goods and invite them for occasions. The above finding is supported by Awumbila and Ardayfio-Schandorf (2008) who contends that poverty is gendered because the ways through which people become poor vary from experiences due to the positions they hold in the society.

Street beggars engaged begging for their personal gains and family support. Beggars sees their status as beggars were temporary and they will soon grow out of it. Also, families and friends of beggars also play a major role in their continuous begging. They sometimes talk to themselves in a manner that will definitely compel them to beg, unemployment and underemployment is also a causational factor that engage beggars in the act of begging.

A beggar expressing what makes him like begging.

He said:

I never planned or dreamed to being a beggar, even once in my life, but I don't have a choice because I have to survive. Being a beggar is an unfortunate life experience. God knows I tried every effort to avoid this condition I have found myself now. But who would give a chance to a man who could not even read or write his name? If ever there are, I never met one. I thought the city would be the best

place for me and my family to live in. We left far away Dutse (Jigawa State capital) where we once lived to come down here to survive in this city”.

The results further revealed that for many families and caregivers, using children as beggars has increasingly become a socially and economically constituted process that mediated how they dealt with poverty and livelihood challenges. All the study participants agreed that though begging was not a socially and legally acceptable livelihood activity, it was still far better than many of the casual jobs in town.

They shared their views in the follow-up interviews:

“There are many people standing here to beg. I never attended any form of school. I only beg from morning to afternoon. We have a leader who is responsible for coordinating our activities here Mokola. He is always around very early. We are about 30 beggars here. People give us variety of items/gifts. Some people give us N1000 and some give us N10. It varies and depends on the individual. I only praise and pray to people. I am begging because am a disable and I do not have any means of livelihood”.

An interviewee said:

“I came to beg within my children. I have no money to send my children to school. I do collect N50, N100. I do not have any means of livelihood except begging. My husband family did not support me in any way. My husband is disable. I also support him daily. My children are able bodied. I thank God”.

It is important to note that poverty and peer influence seems to be part of the major reasons why people beg on the street, though there are other factors. In the context of this study, street begging alms is the solicitation of a voluntary gift, most often money or food, in public places.

Below are some of the interview:

“Am 22 years old, I dropped out from school after my primary education, I run after cars, when there is traffic, I praise people to earn money from them, I prefer money than goods or food, I help clean up car screen during dry season in the hold up to get money from drivers, some ignore me while some appreciate me.”

One of the interviewees had this to say:

“My friends always tell me that begging is not a bad thing and that we do it because we are children that, when we are grown we will stop it. And when they go and come back you see them buying a lot of things which they could not have bought if they had not gone to beg”

Other child beggars who participated in the study gave reasons such as poverty, broken homes, and no parental support among others necessitating their resolve to ply the trade.

“For me, it is good, for I’m getting more money every day I’m begging. Me, I’m always begging here and supporting my small brother in the house...when I don’t get money I will sleep here on the street and not go home because my madam will beat me for not bringing anything to the house”

In Nigeria, begging seems to be a cultural practice and it is encouraged by religious practices especially among certain ethnic groups Hill (cited Abang, 1986) opined that alms giving is regarded as one of the pillars of Islam, were by beggars are believed to bring blessings to others and in so doing, provides them with an opportunity for earning merit. Therefore, the wealthy give alms in fulfillment of religious obligation.

A 38-year-old mother whose twins have been engaging in the business of begging for alms introduced religious dimension to the phenomena:

“In my hometown, twins, triplets and quadruplets are deified. The spiritualist says we the mothers must beg to cater for the children. So, when my children were 3 years old we all begged together. Now I have stopped and they have to beg for alms till they are 10 years old or they will die”.

A close examination of these factors reveals that they appear similar and one or more of them may be reasons for taking to begging. Researchers have attributed the problem of begging to a number of factors such as poverty (Adedibu, 1989; Jelili, 2006) religion (Hanchao, 1999) physical disability (Fabregas, 1971; Adedibu, 1989; Jelili, 2006) and culture (Adedibu, 1989, Jelili, 2006). However, of all those highlighted factors, poverty and physical disability are most visible in Nigeria (Jelili, 2006).

Researchers have discovered that casual and consequential correlation exists between begging, homeless, poverty, and mental illness, inadequate access to housing, income, and health support services (Kennedy and Fitzpatrick, 2011). Some of the factors associated with begging are inadequate housing, poor health care, malnutrition, unemployment and lack of education. These were usually measured with regards to specific calories intake as well as earnings per capita (FGN/UNICEF, 1990). In survey from developed countries, it was observed that a child living in a solo-mother family is five times as likely to live below the national

poverty level, especially when both economic and parenting responsibilities fall on only 'one pair of shoulders; (UNICEF, 1996). In alleviating their sufferings 55% of children were sent out as street workers in Nigeria, by their mothers (FGN/UNICEF, 1990). The above finding is consistent with NCFWD (2001) also identifies six reasons for begging. These are lack of parental / guardian support, lack of parental / guardian neglect, poverty, disability, socio -cultural misconception, and lack of parental education. Literature has shown that 43% of beggars were long-term homeless, out of which 71% of them slept rough (Horn & Cooke, 2001). Danczuk (2000) found that 80% of people who beg are homeless. Break down of the family system was of the view that most children ran away from their homes with complaints that their fathers' wives were too strict or that parents were too busy to care for them. Some forms of separation or divorce exert financial pressure on a partner and results into mothers sending their children out to beg on the streets (FGN/UNICEF, 1990).

Research Question Four: What are the categories of street begging among the citizen of Ibadan north local government area?

Table 4: Distribution Table showing the Categories of Street Beggars

ITEMS	YES	NO
beggars who beg on street are school drop out	19(9.5%)	181(90.5%)
beggars beg on street because they do not have family	31(15.5%)	169(84.5%)
Beggars beg on street because they cannot trace family members	32(16%)	168 (84%)
Beggars beg on street because their families do not accept them again	64(32%)	136(68%)
Beggars beg on street because of loss of job	27(13.5%)	173(86.5%)

Finding revealed that the categories of beggars that were school dropout were 19%, beggars who could not trace his/her family were 16% and beggars who has lost their jobs were on 13.3% which implies that most of the beggars had families. Adugna (2006) held the view that street beggars have generally been categorized in terms of their abilities and disabilities based on how they make their living from the streets. There were also individuals who did not show any externally observable deformities or disabilities. Based on the data collected street begging was categorized into four groups based on where they slept after begging hours, contact with or ties to their families, i.e., whether they had abandoned or were abandoned by their families either permanently or temporarily, and whether they were born or raised in the streets.

The first group of beggars earns money on the street for themselves and/or their families. Beggars in this group spend most of the day on the streets begging for alms, but they have permanent homes, they usually maintain family ties or contacts, and they often return home in the evening to sleep after spending the day on the street begging. The results in Table show that respondents who have family (84.5%) respectively, of all the sampled street beggars were beggars on the street who had homes to go to at night after begging.

Findings showed that most of the beggars on the street (especially children) were staying with at least one parent, whereas others were staying with members of their extended families, such as grandparents, or sometimes with other beggars.

This second group of beggars lived and slept on the streets and had loose family contacts. Beggars in this group normally spent some nights or days on the streets and very occasionally went back home. The results in Table shows that 15.5% do not have family. The study also found that most beggars of the streets usually found accommodation around verandas or close to various public areas such as mosques, shops, and under the bridge among others. The study also found that it was very rare for beggars in this group to go back home in the evening or at night to sleep, or even to join or meet their families or relatives, as was evidenced by the comments of two street beggars:

"Am from Sokoto, I have been in begging activities for three years here in Ibadan. Ever since I got to Ibadan I have never return home. Sincerely, I have no plan for staying in Sokoto... life is too tough there!"

A physically challenged beggar said that:

I am a Mohamed from Burno. I rarely pay a visit to my relatives in the village. This is simply because my immediate family is dead and if I am at home, no one takes care of me.

Beggars in this third group were completely detached from or had abandoned (or been abandoned by) their families and their immediate communities, and they have drifted into the begging life. The findings in Table show that (32%) the respondents were not accepted by the family or relatives again

People in the fourth group of beggars were born and raised on the streets. Most of them had parents who were beggars. These beggars and their parents engaged in begging activities, and they were quickly branded as beggars. These individuals were mainly established beggars in the street. There were also beggars who lived with one or both of their parents. They were either born on the streets (second-generation beggars) or had moved to the streets with their families. They may be referred to as 'street families.'

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

The results of this study found that the factors that cause people to become street beggars and the phenomenon of begging are diverse and multifaceted. Poverty influences begging to a large extent in all of the studied municipalities. Other factors include unemployment, physical challenges, homelessness, and family disintegration. Also, since literature has identified that most of the people who beg were children are young people, it implies that the nation is losing the economic contributions of such people, in Nigeria as well as jeopardizing the lives of children. The solution does not lie with Government alone. Counseling should focus on the family first, whose main tasks of care, love and provision of basic necessities of life have been relegated as a result of urbanization, separation and divorces. Family counseling clinics should be challenged in this area by discouraging families from engaging young children in street begging, helping to changing their attitude, and making them realize the dangers inherent in street begging which includes accident risk, sexual, exploitation and crime. Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations are put in place for policy formulation and implementations

1. Government should provide arm houses, in that the poor can get alms from the government on feeding and shelter in other to reduce street begging.
2. Street begging deserve a collaboration of the efforts of the government, Nigerian populace, counselors, philanthropists and NGOs in order to fight poverty and provide mass and free education devoid of any form of discomfort.
3. A special provision like pensions Scheme may be made for the cares of the aged beggars, who are not able to do any productive work i.e. Suitable institutional care, with a view to achieve ultimate rehabilitation, should be provided to the dependent, homeless and destitute children who have turned to this profession of begging. Employment should be provided for widowed and separated destitute women.
4. Rehabilitation Centers should be established in every local government area of states within the Federation where counsellors can render educational, moral, vocational, emotional and personal-social services to the rehabilitated street beggars.
5. Improve the literacy level of beggars and make them aware about the various government poverty alleviation programmes.
6. Finally, a range of training programs particularly for the police and social workers are needed to help them to respond sensitively to the particular needs of these beggars. Academic researches on the issue should be encouraged from time to time to check and enhance the curbing of beggary problem.

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