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Inter-Urban Concentration of Street Children in Southwestern Nigeria

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Abstract: The scant literature of street children has virtually focused only on the phenomenon's intra-urban variation. This has made it difficult to evolve an all-inclusive recommendation to solve similar problems in other cities because of the varying levels of urbanisation. It is against this background that this study analyses the inter-urban concentration of street children phenomenon in the selected cities of Southwestern Nigeria. Using a multistage sampling method, with residential neighbourhoods and street child "hot spots" as parameters, street children enumeration was conducted in forty-five Data Collection Areas (DCAs) across the three cities. The variations in the occurrence of street children among the selected cities were examined through the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Street Child Concentration Index (SCCI) was developed to analyze the inter-urban variations in the severity of the problem. The ANOVA results show that the observed differences in the occurrence of street children from among three areas of study are statistically significant. ($f = 14.636$; $p = 0.0000$). Nevertheless, the results of SCCI indicate that child streetism is more severe in Ibadan (2.18) than in Osogbo (1.45) and Akure (1.15). The study concludes that child streetism is a product of urbanization and the quality of urban management. Therefore, it recommends effective urban planning and management as antidotes to the seemingly intractable problem of street children.

Keywords: Street Children; Urban centres; Urbanization; Concentration; Urban Manageability; Urban Planning

1.0 Introduction

A significant milestone in the world's demographic history was recorded in the 21st century. In this century, the global urban population has exploded to nearly three billion people. A prediction has also suggested that by 2050, more than 70% of the global population will be living in urban centres (UNDP, 2006). Africa has been adjudged to be the fastest urbanizing region (UN Habitat, 2012), Nigeria is without a doubt one of, if not the, most significant contributor(s) to Africa's soaring urbanization profile (Adeboyejo 2013).

This unprecedented increase in the global urban population is accompanied by pathologies such as rising unemployment, the emergence of an unofficial economy, unofficial housing, violence and criminality, social disorders, and other challenges. (Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), 2009; Adeboyejo, 2013). Despite the reality that almost all city dwellers, especially the urban poor, are impacted by these pathologies, the downside of urbanization is inordinately harmful to children, who often go hungry and become malnourished, quit school to perform menial jobs, and are forced to forego needed health care. (UNICEF, 2012). Consequent upon these is another rising global question of the increasing population of street boys and girls in urban areas, particularly in developing countries; the phenomenon which has come to be known as child streetism.

Worrying is the widespread negativity surrounding the menace of street children; they pose a significant threat to the public safety (Ngoawaji et al., 2009). The

phenomenon of street children has serious implications for these children's survival because they overwhelmingly live with incessant feelings of insecurity; street children face harsh and harmful conditions; they are vulnerable to inclement weather and are susceptible to numerous demeaning situations including sexual assault, homelessness and kidnapping (Fakoya, 2009). Street children engage in harmful and dangerous activities are caught in a cycle of deprivation and poverty.

The ever-rising number of street children in Nigeria has become important research foci of researchers from different fields; Oloko (1993) appraises the adaptation and maladaptation of children's street work to the unstable socio-economic conditions in urban Nigeria; Ebigbo (2003) examines street children phenomenon as the nucleus of abuse and neglect of children in Nigeria; Aransiola (2007) assesses the effectiveness of the support network for street children in Nigeria; Ikechebelu *et al* (2008) excoriate the sexual molestation of street girls; Falore (2009) investigates the significance of the social networks of street children in their survival on the streets; when Obioha (2009) confirms the connection of street children. The bulk of the recommendations that stemmed from these studies have been embraced by government and street children support providers for policy formulation but such policies are found to be grossly ineffective and inadequate to address the mounting problems of child streetism in Nigeria. This is apparent in the unabated rise in the population of street children in Nigerian urban centres (UNICEF, 2001; Ogunkan, 2014)

While the failures of these policy measures have been attributed to a variety of factors, including poor coordination and implementation (Faloore, 2009), it is imperative to recognize that the analysis, assessment, management, and control of almost all social issues (including child streetism) in urban centres without particular reference to their spatial or urban and regional planning possible consequences make up the bulk of the failures (Jelili, 2009). Owing to the foregoing, Ogunkan (2014) examined the spatial, economic, as well as socio-cultural implications of street children in Ibadan. However, the findings showed that the impact of such spatial factors and the influence of socioeconomic and socio-cultural characteristics may vary from urban centre to urban centre depending on the socio-political circumstances and their level of urbanization. This may make it difficult to evolve an elaborate program and strategy to address the problem in different urban centres with different levels of urbanization.

Premised on the foregoing background, this study assesses the inter-urban concentration of street children phenomenon in the Southwestern Nigeria, focussing on Ibadan, Osogbo, and Akure, the administrative headquarters of Oyo, Osun, and Ondo states, respectively. This is in order to propose consistent and

elaborate workable solutions of street children in Southwestern Nigeria..

2.0 The Study Area

The study was conducted in Ibadan, Osogbo, and Akure, the respective capital centres of Oyo, Osun, and Ondo States in the Southwestern, Nigeria. Given the fact that the region comprises many prominent urban centres with the highest levels of urbanization. The choice of the three cities was premised on their high and varying levels of urbanization which puts this study in a position to examine the impact of urbanization on the spatial pattern and underlying mechanisms of the phenomenon of child streetism in the Zone.

It must, however, be stated that Lagos was obviated because of its megacity status, having reached the population milestones of 10,000,000 (DESA, 2010), a contiguous built-up area of about 1,140 km² (Adelekan, 2009), an average density of 20,000 km² and population heterogeneity, which produces a diverse cultural landscape. These factors make Lagos be compared only with such cities as Los Angeles, New York, and Tokyo (Adeboyejo, 2013), and may not allow an objective comparison with other cities in the SWGPZ.

The geographical locations of the three cities are as depicted in Figure 1

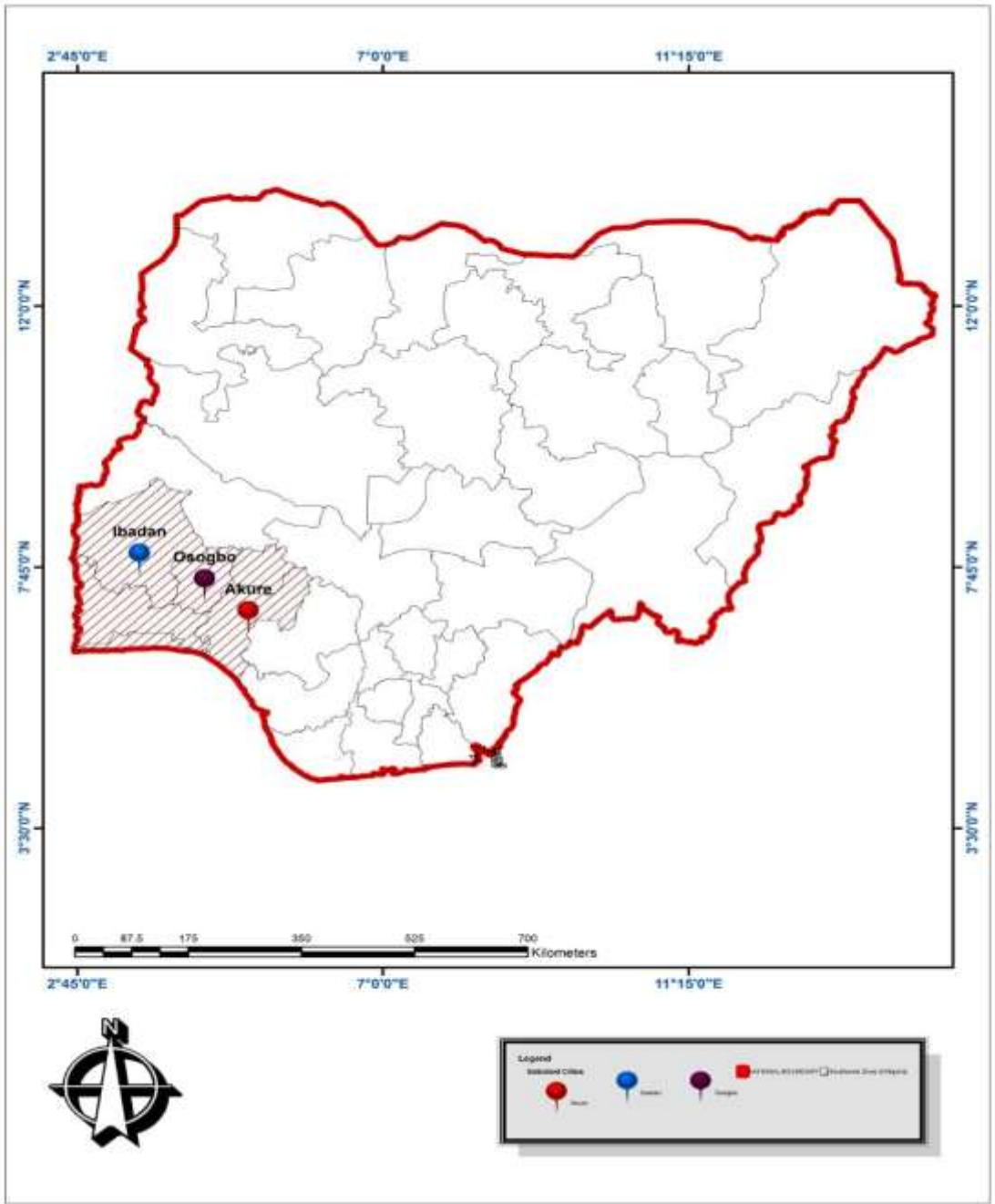


Figure 1: Study Areas in National Context

2.1 Ibadan, Akure, and Osogbo: A Comparative Overview

Ibadan, Akure, and Osogbo are prominent urban centres in the Southwestern Nigeria. Although urbanization in these cities centres predates colonial rule, their increased relative political influence as headquarters of their respective states has played an important role in their continued expansion.

The assembled data (see Figure 2) of population trend and spatial extent of Ibadan, Akure, and Osogbo from a range of sources allows a comparative assessment of the cities. A visual representation of these facts (Figure 2) illustrates some remarkable differences, especially when it comes to their spread of growth, spatial expansion, population density, and urbanization level.

	IBADAN	AKURE	OSOGBO
CITY CENTRES			
MAPS			
POPULATION	2,180,534	620,582	369,246
BUILT UP AREAS (Km ²) **	324.03	157.71	176.01
POPULATION DENSITY(Km ²) ++	4161	3935	2097
URBANISATION INDEX	416	393	210

Figure 2: Comparative overview of Ibadan, Akure, and Osogbo

** Obtained from Google map, 2019++ Obtained by division of population figures by the size of built-up areas

◆ Obtained by division of Population density by 10.

While Ibadan remains the most populous of the three cities with 2,180,534 inhabitants, it is Akure that is adjudged to have the fastest population growth speed, having grown at an astonishing 1,496% increase within 63 years period (1952 to 2015). As a result, the population of Ibadan which was almost 12 times higher than that of Osogbo in 1952 is now just four times higher than that of Akure in 2015. A dramatic population switch was observed between Akure and Osogbo. In 1952, the population of Osogbo was more than three times higher than the population of Akure but by 2015, Akure's population

is almost 2 times higher than that of Osogbo.

The assembled data on built-up areas of the cities (Table 1) shows that there is appreciable variation in spatial extent among the three cities. While Ibadan is the largest in terms of spatial extent having expanded from 36 km² in 1952 to 524 km² in 2015 (1,355% increase), Osogbo is the second largest with 176 km². Akure has also undergone significant expansion from 13.45 km² in 1965 to 157 km² it currently occupies.

Table 1: Built-up Areas of Ibadan, Akure and Osogbo

Ibadan		Akure		Osogbo	
Year	Built-up Area (km ²)	Year	Built-up Area (km ²)	Year	Built-up Area (km ²)
1952	36♣	1965	13.45†	1962	3.95*
1973	100♣	1986	27.57†	1991	15.98*
1981	136♣	2002	70.58†	1995	21.08*
1989	240♣	2009	88.39†	2005	57.00*
2000	400♣♣	2012	96.5†	2007	68.00*
2015	524♣♣♣	2015	157♣♣♣	2015	176.01♣♣♣

♣ Areola, 1994

† Oyinloye, 2013

♣♣ Onibokun et al 1995

*Aguda and Adegboyega, 2013

♣♣♣ Calculated from Google map, 2015

of 416, 393, and 210 were obtained for Ibadan, Akure, and Osogbo respectively.

Urban population density designates the volume of urban population/sq. unit of an urban area and is a measure of urban concentration in spatial variation (Suman *et al*, 2012). The population density of the three cities as shown in Figure 2 indicates that Ibadan has a population density of 4,161 people per km². The population density of Akure is 3,936 people per km² while there are 2,097 people per km² in Osogbo. Consequently, the urbanization index computed from population density also shows marked differences among the selected cities. The urbanization indexes

3.0 Methodology

Within their urban context, Ibadan, Akure, and Osogbo were delineation into residential neighbourhoods. To achieve this, the list of residential localities in each city was compiled and grouped into appropriate residential densities of high, medium, and low. It is on this spatial framework that the data were collected. Studies in the past have adopted this framework (Adeboyejo & Onyeonoru,

2002; Afon, 2007; Atolagbe, 2011; Abolade, 2012; Adigun, 2012). The analysis of urban problems on the premise of this spatial unit is advantageous because every neighbourhood has certain consistent features that mirror the socio-cultural and economic status of inhabitants (Adeboyejo & Onyeonoru, 2002; Afon, 2007; Adeboyejo et al, 2012).

Previous studies have shown that street children are found to be more prevalent in the marketplaces, houses of worship, road intersections and motor parks (Jelili, 2009; Adedibu & Jelili, 2011; Ogunkan & Adeboyejo, 2013; Ogunkan, 2014). Therefore these locations are considered "hot spots" for street children. As a result, it is suitable to adopt the aforementioned

locations as Data Collection Areas (DCAs). Nevertheless, to ensure an objective comparison of the selected cities, residential neighbourhoods, and land uses, this study upholds the "rules of representativeness and 'equal chance,' (Asika, 1991) through the adoption of Jelili (2009)'s approach to select one largest mosque; the most popular market; the most popular junction; the most popular motor park in each residential neighbourhood of each selected cities. These locations were selected across all the residential densities in each city to constitute DCAs. Therefore, in each urban centre, fifteen (15) DCAs for data collection purposes were recognized and purposively selected as shown in Tables 2, 3 and 4.

Table 2: Data Collection Areas in Ibadan

Residential District	Largest mosques	Largest churches	Popular markets	Popular junctions	Popular Motor parks
<i>HIGH</i>	Oja Oba Central Mosque	Oke Padre Catholic Church	Gbagi-Dugbe Market	Dugbe junction	Gbagi – Ogunpa-Dugbe Motor Park
<i>MEDIUM</i>	Alhaji Arisekola Mosque	Orita Meffa Baptist Church	Agodi – Gate Market	Iwo Road Roundabout	Iwo Road Motor Park
<i>LOW</i>	Bodija Community Mosque	Living Spring Church	Bodija Market	Sango/Poly junction	Sango Motor Park

Table 3: Data Collection Areas in Akure

Residential District	Largest Mosques	Largest Churches	Popular Markets	Popular junctions	Popular Motor parks
<i>HIGH</i>	Akure Central Mosque	Cathedral Catholic Church	Oja Oba Market	Post Office Junction	Old Garage Motor Park
<i>MEDIUM</i>	Oke Aro Community Mosque	St David Anglican church	Isinkan Market	High Court Junction	Ondo Garage Motor Park
<i>LOW</i>	Ijoka Central Mosque	Winners Chapel	NEPA Market	Road Block Junction	Benin Garage Motor Park

Table 4: Data Collection Areas in Osogbo

Residential District	Largest mosques	Largest churches	Popular markets	Popular junctions	Popular Motor parks
HIGH	Oja Oba Central Mosque	All saint cathedral, Balogun Agoro	Oja Oba Market	Ola-Iya Junction	Ogbomoso Garage Motor Park
MEDIUM	Ansarudeen Central Mosque, Sabo	Grace Baptist Church	Igbona Market	Stadium Junction	Offa garage Motor Park
LOW	Ajisebiyawo Mosque, Service	RCCG, Zion Mega Parish	LAMECO	NUT Roundabout	Iyana Ofa Motor Park

The headcount method was used to collect data on the prevalence of various classes of street children in the DCAs. This was accomplished with the support of research assistants. In each DCA, the headcount was conducted on different weekdays (Monday to Sunday) to reflect the likely daily variations. To ascertain the probable time variation (owing to school-attending street children) was conducted in the morning (10-11 am) and the exercise was iterated in the evening (5 - 6 p.m.) on each day. From the outset, street children were recognized as needing to move from one DCA to another - possibly carrying a mobile business. The headcount exercise was thus conducted concurrently within the same city to prevent the scenario of double counting. The children who passed by or accompanied adults were not included in the count. Furthermore, to ensure unbiased and unobtrusive results, the headcount exercise was conducted outside of the holiday season.

The relative frequency of the occurrence of street children in the DCAs of each city was measured on a ratio scale using an index labelled "Relative Incidence of

Street Children" (RISC). This index is computed by dividing the overall number of street children counted in each DCA for seven days by seven. The RISC thus derived is testable both parametrically and non-parametrically. The RISC obtained in the three cities was subjected to Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to test the statistical significance of variation of incidence of street children. Other analytical methods such as Child Streetism Rate (CSR), Street Child Density (SCD), Street Child Urbanization Index (SCUI), and Street Child Concentration Index (SCCI) were further devised to analyze the concentration of street children in the urban centres.

4.0 Results and Discussion

Except where otherwise indicated, all Tables and Figures in this study were produced from the results of the author's fieldwork conducted in 2017 and updated in 2020.

4.1 The Incidence of Street Children

The seven-day Street Child Count (SCC) exercise conducted in the forty-five (45) DCAs drawn across the three selected cities yielded a total of 19,885 street children. Ibadan had the highest incidence

of street children among the three cities, with a total count of 12,201 (61.35 per cent) and an average of 1,743 street children per day. This was followed by Akure, with a total count of 3,895 (19.58%) and an average of 556 street

children per day. Although Akure had a higher number of street children than Osogbo, it was a close call between the two cities as Osogbo had a total count of 3,789 (19.07%) and an average of 541 street children per day (see Figure 3)

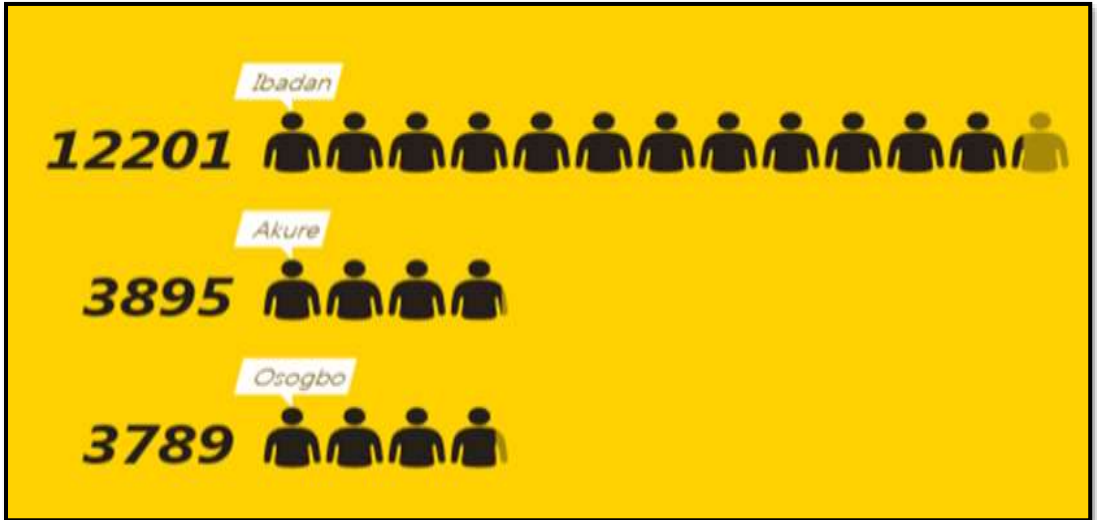


Figure 3: Street Child Counts in Ibadan, Akure, and Osogbo

The foregoing descriptive analysis of SCC revealed that there was an appreciable variation in the incidence of street children along with urbanization levels. For instance, Ibadan, the city with the highest number of street children, was also the most urbanized of the three (as shown in Figure 3). To test for the significance of the observed variation among the cities, the RISC observed in different locations

of each city was analysed using ANOVA. The results show that the occurrence of street children varies significantly across the city, with $f = 14.63$ and $p = 0.0000$. (Table 5). It can be deduced, therefore, that the number of street children varies with the level of urbanization. Thus, the more urban a town or city in Nigeria the higher the potential of generating incidence of street children, all things being equal.

Table 5: ANOVA on the incidence of street children among the urban centres

Source of Variation	SS	Df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	63210	2	31605	14.63627	0.00001502	3.219942
Within Groups	90693.2	42	2159.362			
Total	153903.2	44				

The link between urbanization and children’s survival has been emphasized in the literature (UNICEF, 2010; Save the Children, 2012; UNICEF, 2012). While urban centres are recognized as better positioned than their rural counterparts to improve the standard of living for children and other inhabitants, urbanization and the proliferation of the informal sector have made the plight of urban children more pathetic than their counterparts in rural areas. One of the visible manifestations of this fact in this study is the proportionate distribution of street children along the urbanization continuum.

As a by-product of urbanization, street children tend to concentrate in a highly urbanized centre. The analysis of inter-urban variation of children in Ibadan, Akure, and Osogbo revealed that the proliferation of child streetism is proportionately related to the level of urbanization. Therefore, urbanization plays a major role in the disproportionate distribution of street children among urban centres. The more urbanized a city or town, the more the population of its street children. Urbanization, therefore, is an important spatial determinant of child streetism.

4.2 Street Children Concentrations in the Urban centres

Although the ANOVA test conducted on the incidence of street children among the three cities shows significant variation, it does not reveal the level of severity among the three cities. As a result, some other methods are required to analyze the magnitude of child streetism in urban centres. Child Streetism Rates (CSR) are notably useful in measuring the inter-urban variation of streetism. To determine the CSR, RISC is used as a numerator while the denominator is the number of people residing in the aggregation area. The CSR is presented in equation 1:

$$X1 = \frac{K}{P} \times 100,000 \dots \dots \text{equation 1}$$

Where:

XI= CSR

K= RISC

P= Population

100,000 is a theoretical constant

Table 6 shows the calculated CSR for Ibadan, Akure, and Osogbo. Without prejudice to the actual distribution of street children in the three urban centres, the data in the Table show Osogbo had the highest CRS, trailed by Akure and Ibadan in order of magnitude. The inference is that the scale of the problem is greater in Osogbo (136 street children per 100,000 people) than in Akure (90 street children per 100,000 persons) and Ibadan (with 80 street children per 100,000 persons).

Table 6: Child streetism rate in Ibadan, Akure and Osogbo

<i>Urban Centres</i>	<i>CSR</i>	<i>*Population</i>	<i>◆Child Streetism Rate</i>
<i>Ibadan</i>	1743	2,180,534	80
<i>Akure</i>	556	620,582	90
<i>Osogbo</i>	541	399,246	136

**projected population ◆Obtained by dividing the RISC by the population of each of the urban centres and then multiply by 100,000*

To some degree, the CSR shows the complexity of the situation across cities, but it did not account for the size of an urban centre; the method only focussed on the raw population. As a result, standardizing the occurrences of child streetism in each city by population disregards the influence of an urban centre as a geographical unit. This is a significant shortcoming of CSR as a measure of the prevalence rate of street children problems across space.

Against this backdrop, this study examines the feasibility of using density to fill the missing gaps of CSR to adequately analyze the severity of the problem across the urban centres. Although density is commonly used in academic research, its use as an index in the empirical analysis of social issues is extremely restricted. (Nicolau, 1994; Harries, 2006; Zhang and Peterson, 2007). Given this, this study applies the use of density to analyze the problem of child streetism across space. Therefore, Street Child Density (SCD) is calculated by dividing the RISC by the

built-up area of an urban centre expressed in 100km². This indicates that SCD is not influenced by population distribution, but rather by the urban geographical extent. By removing the bias caused by different entity sizes, normalizing the incidence of street children by geographic area can produce a more accurate depiction of the spatial patterns of child streetism. The developed formula for calculating the SCD is shown in Equation 2.

$$X2 = \frac{K}{B} \times 100 \dots \dots \dots \text{equation 2}$$

Where:

X2 = SCD

K= RISC

B= Built-up Area (km²)

100 is theoretical constant

Table 7 shows the SCD in the three cities. The Table shows that in every 100km² of Ibadan, Akure, and Osogbo, there are at least 19, 28, and 33 street children respectively. This distribution shows that Osogbo has a higher spatial concentration of street children than Ibadan and Akure.

Table 7: Street Child Density (SCD) in Ibadan, Akure, and Osogbo

Urban Centres	RISC	*Built-up Area (km ²)	◆street child density
Ibadan	1743	324.03	19
Akure	556	157.71	28
Osogbo	541	176.01	33

**obtained from Google map, 2015 ◆Obtained by dividing the RISC by the built-up area of each of the urban centres and then multiply by 100*

The Street Child Density is effective when focusing only on the influence spatial extent of an urban area. Nonetheless, SCD disregard the pertinence of the urban demographic in analyzing the problem of street children. To aggregate both the spatial and demographic components of an

urban centre in the inter-urban analysis of street children, RISC in each city was normalized by an urbanization index (obtained by multiplying population density by 10) to produce the Street Child Urbanization Index (SCUI) for each city.

$$X3 = \frac{K}{U.I} \times 100 \dots \dots \dots \text{equation 3}$$

Where:

X3 = SCUI

K= RISC

U.I= Urbanization Index

The computed SCUI for each of the cities is shown in Table 8. The SCUI in Ibadan was 4.189, 1.414 in Akure, and 2.576 in Osogbo, Using SCUI as a statistical

treatment, the results show that the street child problem in Ibadan is almost three times that of Akure. and nearly two times that of Osogbo. As a result, it is possible to conclude that the problem of street children is worse in Ibadan than in the other two cities. The situation is also worse in Osogbo than in Akure

Table 8: RISC and Urbanization Index as SCUI

URBAN CENTRE	RISC	Urbanization Index	SCUI
<i>IBADAN</i>	1743	416	4.189
<i>AKURE</i>	556	393	1.414
<i>OSOGBO</i>	541	210	2.576

An evaluation of the different methods of analysis used in this study to examine the inter-urban disparities in child streetism indicated that while all of the methods are important in some way to understanding the different spatial patterns of child streetism, they produce contrasting results. As a result, they reveal widely disparate spatial distribution of the phenomenon, making it challenging to draw definitive conclusions about street children’s inter-urban concentration.

When the results of each approach are compared, it becomes clear that the four methods have a considerable range of differences. One city ranked in the top order in one method is not necessarily ranked also in the top order for other methods. For example, Ibadan was ranked first in SCC but was ranked last in SCD. Osogbo was ranked first in SCD but was ranked last in SCC (see Figure 4)



Figure 4: Child Streetism ranking by urban centres

The incongruities in the outcome of the four parameters demonstrate that they cannot, on individual strength, offer all of the facts and analysis needed to understand the variation of child streetism across space. One technique's strength is usually the other's weakness, and vice versa. As a result, establishing a composite index from the four approaches' ratios appears to be quite important.. Averages of ratios of all four methods were computed as a composite index, known as the Street Child Concentration Index (SCCI). The SCCI combines all the elements of the four methods to give the concentration of street children across the

three cities a more accurate and reliable depiction. SCCI is represented mathematically in equation 4:

$$SCCI = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n y^i}{n} \dots \dots \dots \text{equation 4}$$

Using SCCI as a specific index of child streetism concentration, Ibadan has an SCII of 2.18, while Akure has an SCII of 1.15 and Osogbo has an SCII of 1.45. (Table 9). This indicates that Akure (89%) and Osogbo (89%) almost have doubled the severity of the problem of street children at Ibadan (50 per cent), while the severity of the problem is 26% higher in Osogbo than in Akure.

Table 9: Street Child Concentration Index

URBAN CENTRES	SC C	RSC C	CS R	RCS R	SC D	RSC D	SCU I	RSCU I	SCC I
IBADAN	174 3	3.22	120	1.50	19	1.00	4.189	3.00	2.18
AKURE	556	1.08	80	1.00	28	1.50	1.414	1.00	1.15
OSOGBO	541	1.00	90	1.12	33	1.70	2.576	2.00	1.45

With these clear differences, one may infer that child streetism in Nigerian urban centres is a function of both urbanization and urban manageability. This shows that irrespective of the level of urbanization, a less managed urban centre where informal activities are highly proliferated generates a high magnitude of child streetism problem.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

Arising from the observation that child streetism is a function of urbanization, poor urban management, and some spatial factors, attempts at addressing the problem of child streetism should not be without recourse to urban planning and management. Therefore, urban policymakers, in conjunction with urban planners, should devise an urban management policy that will ensure equilibrium among demographic, political, socio-cultural, and economic factors of urbanization. Priority should be given, in this regard, to the equality of social opportunities for all. As a result, it is critical to gain a better understanding of the disparities in income in urban areas. This would help to create policy for inclusive development and strategies to reduce unemployment, underemployment and promote economic diversification.

In addition, the government should be more focused on distributive equity in infrastructure and social services such as housing, education, health as well as a functional and livable environment. Good urban management necessitates equitable access to nutrition, schooling, job opportunities and standard of living, medical care, housing, safe drinking

water, sanitation, and other basic services for all residents. This process begins with broad participation in urban governance, which can occur through direct, legitimate, and intermediary institutions, as well as through government representatives.

It should also be the joint responsibility of Town planners, landscape planners, and urban designers to ensure that urban centres are properly planned in a way that leaves no room for street children to converge for their activities. This could be accomplished by requiring that each project environment be properly landscaped. Again, planners should ensure proper locational planning to avert the indiscriminate springing up of squatters' economic activities within the informal sector with which street children of various categories congregate.

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