

**STREET CHILDREN, SKOLOMBO PHENOMENON AND NATIONAL
SECURITY IN CALABAR, CROSS RIVER STATE,
NIGERIA.**

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis has been written by me and it is a report of my research work. It has not been presented on any previous application for Master of Science (M.Sc) Degree in Security and Strategic Studies. All quotations are indicated and the sources of information specifically acknowledged by means of references.

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CERTIFICATION

This Thesis titled “Street Children, the Skolombo Phenomenon and National Security in Calabar, Cross River State Nigeria” meets the regulations governing the award of Master of Science (M.Sc) Degree in Security and Strategic Studies, Institute of Governance and Development Studies Nasarawa State University, Keffi and, is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literal presentation.

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DEDICATION

This Research is dedicated to the God Almighty.

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ABSTRACT

Research on the activities of Street children in Nigeria is paltry. However, this study investigates street children, the Skolombo Phenomenon and national security in Calabar, Cross River State in South-South Nigeria. The research is both qualitative and descriptive. Survey research design was adopted using Semi Structured Questionnaire and interviews. The primary data for the study were generated from Street Children and residence of Calabar metropolis while secondary sources like books, library materials, journals and periodicals were utilized. The findings of the study showed that the menace of the Skolombo Phenomenon has serious adverse security implication for Calabar in particular and Nigeria in general. Based on these findings, it is recommended amongst other things that an Agency should be set up to rehabilitate street children and reintegrate some of them with their families and strengthen the social protection system in Nigeria.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

In recent times in Nigeria, virtually all our city centers are littered with children who have made the streets their home. These children sometimes engage in nefarious activities and hardly return home. The streets automatically have become an abode for such children. In the past, the presence of children on the street was very minimal but the problem of street children became aggravated after the Nigerian civil war and beyond. WIN (2002) opine that the Civil War left tales of untold hardship by children who were separated through death or divorce. Many parents due to loss of the means of survival could not provide for their children who had no option but to take to the streets. According to UNICEF (2014) children on the Street go there to trade or hawk goods for some hours during the day either for their parents, guidance or as hired hawkers. For most of these children, they may have a home to return to at night while others simply keep some links with their families. Children of the Street on the other hand, are those who actually live and survive on the Street on their own. For this category, the Street is by all intent and purpose, a home for them. These children usually devise survival strategies which include stealing, use of violence, lying, cheating, among other anti – social activities. They loiter on the streets, motor parks and filling stations doing odd jobs, often fighting and pilfering other peoples' possessions. These Street children assume different names such as Area boys (these include girls), Almajaris, Skolombo boys and are always there to be used by Politicians, demonstrators and mischief makers.

Several Governments over the years have attempted to assist Nigerian Children in different ways to no avail. The issue of assisting children to go to school is an age long phenomenon. Panter-Brick (2002) pointed out that, the phenomenon had not only attracted public concern but has also become a matter of priority for Government as well as National and International Organisations. For instance, in the late 1950s, Chief Obafemi Awolowo introduced free education in Western Nigeria in a bid to empower the children. Again, Denga (2002) pointed out that, in 1976, the Obasanjo administration introduced the Universal Primary Education (UPE) to train Nigerian Children. After this, Edim and Bisong (2012) informed that, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo in Sokoto State on 30th September, 1999, flagged up the Universal Basic Education (UBE) and on 27th May, 2002, the various States and Local Government Heads launched the UBE all over the Federation. These lofty ideas were in a bid to pre-occupy and make every Nigerian child acquire at least basic education for future sustainability. Even with the free pre-primary education, the situation has not seen any significant change. Apart from introducing the free education, Government imposed sanctions on erring children and parents who failed to be in school or send their children to school. Such sanctions included the arrest of school age children along the street during school hours. In addition, Government provided free text books and reading materials to students in schools. Despite all these incentives and sanctions, the number of street children of both the poor and the rich keep increasing on daily basis. Their activities affect their families as well as the security of the nation in general.

Origin, Growth and Development of the Skolombo Phenomenon

Street Children in Calabar, who later metamorphosed into *Skolombo*, have been there for years. Initially, they were harmless, but later grew to be known as “Isakaba” in 2007 and 2008 at which period they had become a menace. The major cause or origin of *Skolombo* could be traced to family disorganization and the church.

In the church, some children are branded witches or wizards through the spiritual pronouncement of some Pastors and Prophets in churches. As a result, some parents throw those children into the streets where they grow up and learn the street life. Some street children are of a single parenthood, whereby, the mother is not capable of taking care; hence the child ends up in the streets doing all sorts of criminal adventures to eke a living. In most cases these *Skolombo* children move in groups. Initially, they operated like beggars, hanging around street corner, but later they started carrying guns and getting dangerous as they grew bigger and matured with street life. They operate with different kinds of crude weapons, collecting phones, money and other valuables from people. They have also been reports of robberies and kidnapping carried out by this group of street children.

In December 2016, a gang of dare-devil robbers, who operated in a commando-like style, engaged the police in a gun battle, held the city of Calabar hostage for about three hours. Worried by the menace of *Skolombo* which has posed a threat to the peace of the state and its development, the state governor put in place a security taskforce codenamed “Operation *Skolombo*,” to rid the state of criminals. The evolution of *Skolombo* from

homeless street children to a security threat to the inhabitants of Calabar in particular and other Nigerians is the Crux of this Research.

This research therefore, seeks to investigate Street children and the phenomenon of Skolombo and national security with particular attention to Calabar, the capital city of Cross River State in Southern Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Calabar the capital city of Cross River State like most metropolitan cities in Nigeria is littered with street children plying different “trades” on the streets. This has given rise to the phenomenon of Skolombo with serious economic, environmental and most disturbingly security challenges. This has reflected in high crime rate in Calabar in particular and its environs in general. To curb these challenges, there is need for proper parental up-bringing for the children and enhanced welfare packages for homeless children. This research attempts to bring to the fore the security implication of allowing the phenomenon of street children to fester, and suggests pragmatic solution to the problem. The major problem of this research is the dearth of literature on the Skolombo phenomenon in Cross River State, Nigeria. Hence, this research intends to narrow the gap on the topic.

1.3 Research Questions

This research seeks answers to the following questions;

- i) What is the relationship between street children, the Skolombo Phenomenon and national security?
- ii) What kind of parental background do street children come from?

- iii) What are the impacts of street children, the Skolombo Phenomenon on National Security?
- iv) What are the extant measures in managing the phenomenon of street children in Calabar metropolis?

1.4 Objectives of the study

The major objective of this study is to assess the security threat posed by the Skolombo Phenomenon to National Security. The specific objectives of this study are;

- i) To examine the relationship between street children and national security.
- ii) To determine the kind of parental background that street children come from.
- iii) To ascertain the implication of the Skolombo Phenomenon on National Security.
- iv) To examine how street children have been managed by the government and citizens of Calabar.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research is significant in the following ways. Firstly, the findings of the study will be useful to policy makers. Secondly, after carefully examining the factors that have resulted into street children in the country and Calabar metropolis, the research will be relevant to the law enforcement agencies toward combating the menace.

This study is expected to give an insight into what the problem is all about to enable governments, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and related stakeholders to formulate policies on how to minimize the phenomenon of street children. It will also attract the needed attention during budgets and other development projects.

Furthermore, the study will add to the existing body of knowledge on the subject matter to serve as reference material to future scholars.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This research cover the activities of street children in Calabar referred here as Skolombo street children who are involved in antisocial behaviours from 2006-2017.

The study looks at their evolution from abandoned children to street urchins, then to real criminals and the implication for national security. Calabar metropolis is the economic, administrative and political hub of Cross River State. Calabar is geo-politically divided into two administrative units – Calabar South LGA and Calabar Municipality, with an estimated combined population of about 1.2 million persons.

1.7 Operational Definition of Terms

Skolombo: The term is the slang used by the inhabitant of Calabar to describe street children especially those involved in criminality. The term Solombo was derived from a Jamaican slang meaning to ‘obtain’ by force.

Street Children: The most common definition of street children or youths is any girl or boy who has not reached adulthood, for whom the street (in the broadest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings, wasteland etc) has become his or her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood and who is inadequately protected, supervised or directed by responsible adults. In this research, the term street Children is used to describe two categories of street children i.e, those “on the street” and those “of the street” (Inter-NGO, 1985).

Child: The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child defines a child as a Human being below the age of 18 years. The National Welfare Policy of 1989 defines a child as anybody who is 12 years or below. The child's Right Act sets the age of a Nigerian child as 18years and below. However, for the purpose of this Research, a Child is any human being from infancy to the age of twenty one.

National Security: The definition of the term National Security has been notoriously elusive based on the disagreement of what constitutes National Security. In this research, National Security means the ability of the nation to protect its social values from internal threats.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews literature on the “Street Children and National Security in Calabar, Cross River State. It covers such subtopics like the concept of street children, national security and human security under conceptual framework. Other titles include: Prevalence of Street Children in Nigeria, Causes of menace of Street Children, Government efforts towards curbing menace of Street Children, Psychology of Street Children, International Perspective on Street Children, effects of Street Children on National Security. Finally, the chapter provides a discussion of the theoretical framework and empirical review.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

There are two broad concepts in this research. They are; street children and National Security. These concepts will be examined below in a context- specific manner.

2.1.1 The Concept of Street Children

Like every other social fact, the concept of street children is a fluid concept and defies any universal acceptable definitions. To Benitez (2003:107) street children is subject to several interpretations, this is because the phenomenon arises as a result of these children being “abandoned” by their families and homestead. The most common definition of a street child is “any girl or boy who has not reached adulthood, for whom the street (in the broadest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings, wasteland, etc) has become his or her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised or directed by a responsible adult (Inter-NGO, 1985).

In this research, the term “Street children” will be used to refer to children who work and/or sleep on the streets. It will also refer to children who are not adequately supervised by responsible adults and include the two co-existing categories of those “on the street and those “of the street.

According to Ennew, (1986:103) “Children of the street” are homeless children who live and sleep on the streets in urban areas. They are totally on their own, living with other street children or homeless adult street people. On the other hand “children on the street” earn their living or beg for money on the street and return home at night. They maintain contact with their families”.

The above distinction is important since “children on the street” have families and homes to go back to at night, whereas, “children of the street” live on the street and probably lack parental, emotional and psychological support normally found in parenting situation. Thus, the crux of this research will be on the “children of the street. For the purpose of this research, street children are those children under the age of twenty-one years who spend most of their lives on the streets, there are those who live permanently on the street and those adults who have “graduated from the street children’s school” and continue to constitute a threat to society’s cherished values

2.1.2 The Concept of National Security

National Security is best described as a capacity to control those domestic and foreign conditions that the public opinion of a given community believes necessary to enjoy its own self-determination or autonomy, prosperity and well-being (Kufour, 2012). It is the

ability to preserve the nation's physical integrity and territory, to maintain its economic relations with the rest of the world on reasonable terms. Although there is often a legitimate military dimension to national security, further studies have proven that national security cannot be measured by military parameters alone. It is also a function of economic strength, political cohesiveness, social equity, cultural outreach, and environment soundness. This security dilemma is not peculiar or unique to Third World countries and Nigeria in particular, but a universal concern particularly in these contemporary times of growing interdependence, globalization, and shared danger posed by weapons of mass destruction and varying nature of terrorist acts.

Edeko (2011), was of the opinion that the debate is essentially premised on the need to focus more on political threats posed by regional, ethnic and religious conflicts-as a result of the explosion in global interdependence, communication and information technology and crisis in public World Order. Apart from the issue at stake, the menace of Skolombo boys, other security problems currently confronting the nation have been identified to include: Boko Haram sect, Fulani herdsmen, political and electioneering conflicts, socio-economic agitations, ethno-religious crises, ethnic militias, boundary disputes, cultism, criminality and organized crimes. These problems individually and collectively constitute threat to the peace, security and development of the country. These have implications for the continuity and survival of the nation's nascent democracy.

Sampson and Onuoha (2011) see national security as the absence of threats to core values and the prevention of public disorders. Security could be seen at two levels, namely; the state and individual. Individual security has to do with core values such as job security,

social security, and security against national disaster whereas at the state level, security connotes the safeguard of the territorial integrity of the state against internal and external aggressors. Thamos (2008) noted that national security is to feel safe, and safety should stand guaranteed by the political dispense in such a way that wars may be less likely and the normal conditions among states may prevail. National security also envisages preparations for all sorts of defense which may appear as preparedness for war. Peters (2003) conceptualized national security as the preservation, protection and the guarantee of the safety of life, property, wealth of the citizenry and measures to guard against threats to national sovereignty. It equally implies freedom from danger to life and property and people to pursue legitimate interest within the society.

National security is concerned about those governmental institutions that seek to ensure the physical protection and safety of their citizens, their equal access to the law and protection from abuse. There are two sets of government systems and institutions concerned with national security. The first component consists of the traditional instruments of national security, namely: the criminal justice system (police, justice and correctional services/prisons) the military and the intelligence community. The second and more important, relates to the nature of governance, its institutions and rules, norms and values that underpin it – as well as the efficacy thereof (Thomas, 2008).

The bad state of national security in Nigeria has become more alarming than the issue of power and energy in the country. It finds explanation at the rate at which armed robbery, kidnapping, abduction, religious fanaticism, political assassination and other criminal acts have become the other of the day (Thomas, 2008). The ability of a country to maintain

its sovereignty and protect its political, economic, social and other interests in a sovereign manner and act likewise in its relations with other states in the International system. It follows then that national security entails the protection of all her National interest upon which the surround of the country depends.

2.1.3 The Concept of Human Security

The commission on Human Security defines human security as protecting the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedom and human fulfillment. There are essentially seven issues associated with human security. These are Economic Security, Food Security, Health Security, Environmental Security, Personal Security, Community Security and Political Security. Some of the criteria associated with economic security include; insured basic income and employment and access to social safety nets. Food security is simply access to basic nutrition and food supply. Health security cover different issues such as access to safe drinking water, living in a safe environment, access to health services, access to safe and affordable family planning and basic support during pregnancy and delivery, prevention of HIV/AIDS and other diseases and to have basic knowledge to living a healthy life. Environmental security covers such issues as prevention of water pollution, prevention of natural hazards such as drought, flood etc. community security on the other hand include conservation of traditions and cultures, language and community held values. It also covers abolishment of ethnic discrimination, prevention of ethnic conflicts and the protection of indigenous people.

Political security is concerned with the protection of human rights and well-being of all people. It also include: The protection of people against state repression, abolishment of

systemic ill treatment and disappearance of people are also covered under political security.

The absence of these basic aspects of human security is the reason why children are on the street and its attendant security threats.

2.2 Review of Related Literature

There have been a plethora of literatures on Street Children within and outside Nigeria. Here, the Researcher takes a review of some of those literatures in Nigeria, Africa, Europe and Southeast Asia.

2.2.1 Prevalence of Street Children in Nigeria

The phenomenon of street children in the strict sense of the term has been on the increase in most major urban areas (Oloko, 1999). This is evident in the number of children seen on the street scavenging, hawking and soliciting. Ahiane (2004) also expressed that street children are all over the markets, bus stops, car parks, garages, street corners, under the bridges and other public places across Nigeria's major cities. There are no official statistics for street children in Nigeria, but it is known that children of under 18 years of age made up nearly 48% of the estimated country's population of 182 million in 2018 (World Bank). This estimate increases obviously with increase in Nigeria's population. The United Nation Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported in May 2017 that over 9.3 million Nigerian children of school age were not in school. This ugly trend has its own social consequences, one of which is the spiraling proportion of street urchins in the major towns and cities of Nigeria. There are other factors responsible for the prevalence of street children in the country.

Yet, there is another variant of the phenomenon known as street wandering boys and girls roaming the streets doing nothing serious. While it is hard to come by accurate national statistics on Street Children in Nigeria, available figures are often contested, and many are estimates or projected figures from other sources as opposed to figures derived from specific studies. A study conducted by a leading human rights expert in the country shows that homeless people were rare in the mid-eighties, there were an “estimated” 8000 of them by the early 1990’s. By 1999, the less privilege was reported in over a hundred street locations in Lagos. This claim of 8000 was highly criticized as highly grossly under – representative of the actual number on the Streets of Lagos State. This is against the backdrop of the International Labor Organization’s (ILO) estimate that the less privilege in Nigeria constitute over 6% of the world population figure of between 425 to 477 million. A significant percentage of the less privileged are mostly Street Children who are found in a rapidly urbanizing world (Burra, 1997, Cigno and Rosati, 2001; Basu and Tzannatos, 2003; ILO, 1999). Given this statistics, Street Children in Nigeria under any guise are in millions and are on the increase.

The problem of street children in the society has also attracted the attention of the general public, social critics, mass media, and researchers alike. For instance, Wilmot (2008) laments that: In every city across Nigeria, hordes of children who should be in school flood the streets selling cheap goods manufactured in China, newspapers and sometimes their bodies. Many have no parents because of premature deaths due to malnutrition or disease and others have parents who cannot feed, cloth, school or house them. When they

complete their day selling in the streets, they may have to find a place to sleep there also (Wilmot, 2008).

The situation in Calabar clearly agrees with the above assertion by Wilmot. On a daily basis, children below 21years get involved in hawking items like assorted soft/juice drinks, sweets, biscuits, pure water, cookies, gala, plantain chips, bread, cashew nuts and groundnuts. Other items they also hawk include small flannels, handkerchiefs, belts, electrical appliances, mobile phone accessories, recharge cards, mobile phone lines, newspapers, magazines among several other products. In Abuja, areas like Wuse Zone 4 at Sheraton Hotels and NNPC Towers Junction and Garki II near Rita Lori Club House, several young girls hang around waiting for adult patronage of their commercial sex business right on the streets at night and at very odd hours. The same pattern of prostitution also exists in Jos the Plateau state capital where young girls hang at Hill Station Junction and places like West of Mines Junction every evening waiting for men to pick them.

The general public and concerned individuals including the researcher is horrified and worried at the hazardous nature and harsh conditions that these children are exposed to in their quest for survival.

The general public is also worried about the exploitation of their labor by their guardians/parents and the future of these children. The activities that these children are involved in also complicate not only their health but many of them live at the mercies of some people that can take their lives for rituals.

These children also have a tendency to frequently run into problems either with themselves, members of the public as well as the law enforcement agencies. This results from their attempt to survive by all means including through stealing, cheating and the likes. Thus, many people treat them with contempt and as law offenders. In this way, they do not receive any sympathy from such adults. Apart from this group of people (adults), there are other people that see these children as being victims of circumstances, so this group seems to be more sympathetic with the plight of these children. What is however very fundamental is that despite this attitudinal divide from the members of the public it is the seeming consensus view that the problem of street children is as a result of disequilibrium in the mechanisms/forces with some or several subsystems of the social system.

2.2.2 Causes of the menace of Street Children

Researches worldwide have shown that many of the causes that push children to the street are linked to multiple factors. Among some of the causes are poverty, underdevelopment, parental neglect, lack of support, urbanization, lack of logistics or infrastructure and no opportunities in the educational system, excessively large family size, peer pressure, adventure, Absence of recreational facilities for children, breakdown of marriages and extended family systems etc. A socio-political view expanded by Ebigbo (1989) explained Nigerian children were caught up in the struggle for survival occasioned by the dearth of technological and infrastructural development in Nigeria leading to mass urban migration with resultant emergence of the urban poor. This situation is partly enhanced by the disintegration of the extended family system which hitherto had promoted the concept of brotherhood and shared responsibility. The resultant chaos has led to the

balkanization of the sacred ethos of the value of children to the average Nigerian. This social malaise is reflected in many ways. One distinct manifestation is the “Almajiri” system in Northern Nigeria. This is a system of Islamic education that has grown to become a social problem. Young boys bearing bowls are seen in most towns and cities in northern Nigeria in tattered clothes begging from house to house in order to survive. Many of them live in slums, have little access to health facilities and are therefore vulnerable to various diseases. The Koranic form of education encourages Islamic tutors to send their pupils to the streets to beg. A few of such are found in southern cities although in a different form, usually as guides leading physically handicapped adults to beg on the streets. In Eastern Nigeria, children as young as eight or nine years are out on the streets early to trade as less premium is placed on education in this part of the country as compared to trading activities.

Other causative factors include marital problems or instability in the home, poverty, hunger, insecurity, abuse and violence from parents, displacement caused by clashes in the community, insufficient parental care, death of one or both parents, inadequate family income, unemployment of one or both parents, lack of (or limited) opportunities in education, abandonment by parents, housing difficulties, drug use by children, and peer influence. UNICEF accepted that physical abuse accounted for greater than 27% of children forced into the street, 24% by family financial problems, 8% by family misunderstandings and 5% by emotional trauma. Another growing cause that should not be discounted is the cult of child witches currently actively sponsored by so-called Christian evangelists in the South Eastern and delta regions of the country. This is a growing social cause that has recently attracted international criticism. Also, the concept

of destitute families, another significant social problem representing extreme deprivation, is becoming an increasing problem. The Plight of Street Children all around the country are vulnerable to dangerous behaviors that impair all aspects of their development and growth. They are exposed to hard drugs, smoking, armed robbery, homosexuality, prostitution, gambling, deceit and violence. At several times they are exposed to accidents, kidnapping, and ritual killing or sold into slavery, because they live in a situation of some form of abuse, where there is no protection, lovely supervision or expectation from responsible adults. The streets have also transformed the innocent children into abusive, irritable, hot tempered, difficult and angry people, who are also tortured by street touts who send them on dirty errands.

It is common to see majority of the children living currently on the street either 'too old' to go to school or 'too young' to learn an apprenticeship trade. All this makes it too easy to overlook or ignore what is happening anywhere else in Africa if not the world. Street Children often spend their entire life on the street trying all means of 'survival' that could help sustain their livelihood. They are engaged in all kinds of street work (jobs). They lack access to basic necessities of life and are exposed to all kinds of dangers, health-physical and psychological. Some of the children in these series told of escapes from unhappy homes, while others recall travelling to the city in search of adventure. They ended up selling water packaged in plastic bags (pure water) or washing the windshields of vehicles in heavy traffic. Some, apparently the most dangerous, roam the streets with the intention of stealing money or jewelries. These are popularly called 'pick-pockets.' They told of the anguish of survival in a relentlessly merciless environment, open to the

dangers of the elements and the risks occasioned by absolute lack of security or protection and also open to physical violence and sexual abuse.

2.2.3 Government efforts towards curbing menace of Street Children

Sometimes in the mid nineties, a government approach to solving the menace of area boys in Lagos State was to lock them up at an island called Ise in Lagos State. This was the same notorious island where Chief Obafemi Awolowo was detained at the heights of political disturbances in the first republic. The area boys were kept in a specially constructed building which was surrounded by water. On the face of it, it appeared possible for the detainees to scale the fence, jump into the water and escape by swimming. The sad part was that the water was infested with crocodiles. General Ibrahim Babangida, Nigeria's military ruler from 1985 to 1993, established a People's Bank, which extended micro-credits to many street boys and girls to help them start small businesses. However, the programme suffered from insufficient funding and many of those who benefited from the handouts simply returned to the streets when the bank collapsed in the late 1990s. Ex- Governor Bola Tinubu of Lagos State, with the return of democracy in 1999, designed a scheme aimed at ridding the city of the Area Boy scourge. He set up a skills training centre at Ita Oke, a disused island prison in Lagos. The aim was to rehabilitate these street boys by teaching them artisan skills and trades. This laudable programme also went the way of previous government attempts either due to insufficient attention by the government or lack of commitment to its implementation.

The government of Cross River State in collaboration with the Basic Rights Council Initiative in partnership with United Nation Children's Fund signed an agreement to carry

out a survey on Street Children Phenomenon with a view to reducing the number of children of and on the streets to the barest minimum. The objectives of the Initiative include the following:

- i) Undertake the social, economic, educational and family background of street children;
- ii) Understand the reasons(causes) for children being on the streets;
- iii) Understand the challenges faced by children on the street and their future aspirations;
- iv) Develop an up-to-date database of street children in Calabar that will be useful in planning and policy making purposes by NGOs, Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies.
- v) Attempt to rehabilitate identified street children by equipping them with vocational skills and
- vi) Attempt to reunite street children (where family members can be traced) or place them on foster families in the absence of living direct relatives.

2.2.4 Psychology of Street Children

Children are not born feeling good or bad about themselves. They learn this from what happens to them. Self-esteem is the pride that a person has in himself or herself. A person with high self esteem feels worthwhile (good and capable). People with low self-esteem think they are not worth-while and that what they do is not important to others or to themselves. Good self esteem helps protect children from the traps they are exposed to growing up in our modern society. Self esteem results from self respect and respect from others. Self respect includes competence, confidence, mastery, achievement,

independence and freedom. Respect from others includes recognition, acceptance, status, and appreciation. Healthy self-esteem is a realistic appraisal of one's capacities and begins with deserved respect from others. When these needs are not met, a child grows up feeling discouraged, weak and inferior. He or she is then vulnerable to finding other ways of being accepted outside of the family and is then susceptible to looking for acceptance from other groups like gangs and is vulnerable to peer- pressure and acquiring feelings of acceptance through sex, drugs and alcohol. Positive self esteem means having confidence, a child knows who he is in the world and does not have to fit in to be accepted. Encourage them toward college and career. When children feel confident and capable growing up and hold a vision of a satisfying future they are less likely to get into trouble that could prevent them from reaching their goals in life or lead them to the street (Ebigbo, 2003).

Children, who are constantly growing, developing, and maturing, are required to take some risks in order to test their strengths and recognize their limitations. The most important thing for parents of these risk-taking children to acknowledge is that they play a huge role in whether or not their child's risk taking spirals out of control later in life, or whether their risks will lead to innovative and creative productions (Wilmot, 2008).

Taking risks allows children to understand the concept of trial and error. Success will certainly build the child's self-esteem, and inevitable failures will not only make them acknowledge their boundaries, it will provide them with opportunity to cope with the negative emotions that accompany failure.

The problem with children taking risks lies primarily in the fact that most children, especially younger children, are incapable of abstract thought and reasoning. For this reason, many children are unable to accurately assess the dangers associated with taking some risks. This is where parents step in. The main priority as a parent is to keep the children safe. Talk to the children about the dangers associated with any risky behaviours they may be exhibiting.

2.2.5 International Perspective on Street Children

According to UNICEF (2009), there are some fifty- seven million children on the streets around the world, majority of them living in Africa and Southeast Asia.

There are an estimated 250,000 street children in Kenya and over 60,000 in the capital Nairobi. Rapid and unsustainable urbanization in the post-colonial period, which led to entrenched urban poverty in cities such as Nairobi, Kisumu and Mombasa are an underlying cause of child homelessness. Rural-urban migration broke up extended families which had previously acted as a support network, taking care of children in cases of abuse, neglect, and abandonment. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has reported that glue sniffing is at the core of "street culture" in Nairobi, and that the majority of street children in the city are habitual solvent users. Research conducted by Cottrell-Boyce for the African Journal of Drug and Alcohol Studies found that glue sniffing amongst Kenyan street children was primarily functional – dulling the senses against the hardship of life on the street – but it also provided a link to the support structure of the ‘street family’ as a potent symbol of shared experience.

Sierra Leone was considered to be the poorest nation in the world, according to the UN World Poverty Index 2008. Whilst the current picture is more optimistic – World Bank

projections for 2015/16 ranked Sierra Leone as having the second fastest-growing economy in the world – a prevalent lack of child rights and extreme poverty remain widespread. There are close to 50,000 children relying upon the streets for their survival, a portion of them living full-time on the streets. There are also an estimated 300,000 children in Sierra Leone without access to education. Often neglected rural areas – of which there are many – offer little or no opportunity for children to break from the existing cycle of poverty. UNICEF puts the number above 670,000 referring to a study conducted by Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, "Estimation of the Size of Street Children and their Projection for Major Urban Areas of Bangladesh, 2005". About 36% of these children are in the capital city Dhaka according to the same study. Though Bangladesh improved the Human Capital Index over the decades, (HDI is 0.558 according to 2014 HDR of UNDP and Bangladesh at 142 among 187 countries and territories), these children still represent the absolute lowest level in the social hierarchy. The same study projected the number of street children to be 1.14m in year 2014. India has an estimated one million or more street children are littered in different cities. When considering India as a whole, there are over eleven million children who earn their living off the streets in cities and rural areas. It is more common for street children to be male and the average age is fourteen. Although adolescent girls are more protected by families than boys are, when girls do break the bonds they are often worse off than boys are, as they are lured into prostitution. The Republic of India is the seventh-largest and second-most populated country in the world. Due to the acceleration in economic growth, an economic rift has appeared, with just over thirty-two per cent of the population living below the poverty line. Owing to unemployment, increasing rural-urban migration, the

attraction of city life, and a lack of political will, India has developed one of the largest child labour forces in the world.

According to a 2007 study, there were over 170,000 street children living in Indonesia. In the 2000, about 1,600 children were living on the streets of Yogyakarta. Approximately five hundred of these children were girls from the ages of four–sixteen years of age. Many children began living on the streets after the 1997 financial crisis in Indonesia. Girls living on the street face more difficulties than boys living on the street in Indonesia. Girls on the street are often abused by the street boys because of the patriarchal nature of the culture. "They abused girls, refuse to acknowledge them as street children but liken them to prostitutes". Many girls became dependent on boyfriends; they receive material support in exchange for sex. The street children in Indonesia are seen as a public nuisance. "They are detained, subjected to verbal and physical abuse, their means of livelihood (guitars for basking, goods for sale) confiscated, and some have been shot attempting to flee the police"

The number of street children in Pakistan is estimated to be between 1.2 million and 1.5 million (Manoj, 2014). Although this number remains anecdotal since it was cited over ten years ago. There has been no head-count or a mapping study of street children in Pakistan except couple of large metropolitan cities such as Karachi and Lahore. These studies were also geographically and scope-wise limited. These studies show that the numbers may be much higher now after the increasing poverty, people's displacement after the natural disasters and war on terrorism in Pakistan. Most recently, Social Welfare Department of Sindh has conducted a mapping study of street children in all of Karachi

only. Past efforts have been initiated by UNICEF and other NGOs to assist children in need through various programs and rehabilitation centres; however, the situation remains as a prominent socio-economic issue in Pakistan during the 21st century.

According to the 1998 report titled "Situation of the Youth in the Philippines", there are about 1.5 million street children in the Philippines, 70% of which are boys. Street children as young as ten years old can be imprisoned alongside adults under the country's Vagrancy Act; in past cases, physical and sexual abuse have occurred as a result of this legislation. Vietnam also has her share of street children. According to The Street Educators' Club, the number of street children in Vietnam has shrunk from 21,000 in 2003 to 8,000 in 2007. The number dropped from 1,507 to 113 in Hanoi and from 8,507 to 794 in Ho Chi Minh City. There are currently almost four hundred humanitarian organizations and international non-governmental organizations providing help to about 15,000 Vietnamese children.

In Greece, Street Children activities are heavily connected with human trafficking, especially with immigrants from Albania. In 2003, street children located in state-run facilities had disappeared. The disappearance is suspected to be linked to human trafficking. The numbers have decreased in recent years, and the country has taken "legislative action to criminalize human trafficking and related crimes", though Amnesty International reports that the problem still exists, and there is a failure of government protection and justice of trafficked children. Begging and other street activities have been outlawed in the country since 2003, but the recent unemployment hike has increased levels of these actions. There are few programs for displaced children in Greece, which

created a *street child* problem in the early 2000s. Giving foster parents to special needs children is not something the Greek government has done, leading to higher numbers of physically or mentally disabled street children. There are also deterrents for working and poor parents in Greece making them more willing to force their children to the streets. For example, orphans are given financial benefits, but if they live in state-run facilities they cannot receive these benefits. For working parents to get government subsidies, they often have to have more than one child. The phenomenon of street children in Romania must be understood within the local historical context. In 1966, in communist Romania rule, Nicolae Ceaușescu outlawed contraception and abortion, enacting an aggressive natalist policy, in an effort to increase the population. As families were not able to cope, thousands of unwanted children were placed in state orphanages where they faced terrible conditions. Under communism, the struggle of families was made worse in the 1980s, under the 1980s austerity policy in Romania, when living standards dropped dramatically, and food was rationed; and the fall of communism in December 1989 initially meant economic and social insecurity. Under such conditions, in the 1990s, many children moved onto the streets, with some being from the orphanages, while others being runaways from impoverished families. During the transition period from communism to market economy in the 1990s, social issues such as those of these children were low on the government's agenda. Nevertheless, by the turn of the century things were improving.

A year 2000 report from the Council of Europe estimated that there were approximately 1,000 street children in the city of Bucharest. The prevalence of street children has led to a burgeoning sex tourism business in Romania; although, efforts have been made to

decrease the number of street children in the country. The year 2001 documentary film *Children Underground* documents the plight of Romanian street children, in particular their struggles with malnutrition, sexual exploitation, and substance abuse. In the 1990s, street children were often seen begging, inhaling 'aurolac' from sniffing bags, and roaming around the Bucharest Metropolis.

In the 21st century, the numbers of children living permanently in the streets dropped significantly, although more children worked on streets all day, but returned at home to their parents at night. By 2004, it was estimated that less than 500 children lived permanently in the streets in Bucharest, while less than 1,500 worked in the streets during the day, returning home to their families in the evening. By 2014, the street children of the 1990s were adults, and many were reported to be living 'underground' in the tunnels and sewers beneath the streets of Bucharest, with some having their own children.

In 2001, it was estimated that Russia had about one million street children, and one in four crimes involved underage individuals. Officially, the number of children without supervision is more than 700,000. According to UNICEF, there were 64,000 homeless street children brought to hospitals by various governmental services (e.g. police) in 2005. In 2008, the number was 60,000. Overall number of children that lost their parents' support by the end of 2011 was 654,355. This number includes 522,802 kids being on foster care or adopted, and 105,688 kids in orphanages. In 2012, unaccompanied male minors from the capital started claiming asylum in Sweden. In 2014, 384 claimed asylum. Knowing that, their chances of receiving refugee status were slim, they frequently ran away from the refugee camps housing them to live on the streets.

As at 2016, of the estimated 800 street children in Sweden, Morocco was the most prevalent country of origin. In 2016, the governments of Sweden and Morocco signed a treaty to facilitate their repatriation to the later. Efforts by authorities to aid the youth were declined by the youth who preferred living on the street and supporting themselves by crime. Morocco was initially reluctant to accept the repatriates, but as they could be identified using the Moroccan fingerprint database, repatriation could take place once Moroccan citizenship had been proven. Of the 77 males Morocco accepted, 65 had stated a false identity when claiming asylum to Sweden.

Out of Turkey's 30,891 street children, 30,109 live in Istanbul. Research conducted by the Turkish Prime Ministry's Human Rights Presidency (BİHB) has shown. Of the street children, 20 were identified in Ankara, and Turkey's third-largest city, İzmir, had none. Kocaeli province was reported to have 687 street children while Eskişehir has 47. The research also revealed that 41,000 children are forced to beg on the streets, more than half of whom are found in Istanbul. Other cities with high figures include Ankara (6,700), Diyarbakır (3,300), Mersin (637) and Van (640). Based on unofficial estimates, 88,000 children live on the streets, and the country has the fourth-highest rate of underage substance abuse in the world. Four percent of all street children in Turkey are subject to sexual abuse, with 70 percent of the victims being younger than 10. Contrary to popular belief, boys are subject to sexual abuse as frequently as girls.

In reported cases of children subject to commercial sexual exploitation, 77 percent of the children came from broken homes. Twenty-three percent lived with their parents, but in those homes domestic violence was common. The biggest risk faced by children who run

away and live on the street is sexual exploitation. Children kidnapped from south-eastern provinces are forced into prostitution here. Today, it is impossible to say for certain how many children in Turkey are being subjected to commercial sexual exploitation, but many say official information is off by at least 85 percent.

2.2.6 Effects of Street Children, the Skolombo Phenomenon on National Security

Street Children is a Social, Security, Psychological and an Environmental problem that affects the population of Nigerians especially the less privilege that requires urgent solution through welfare programmes, Governments and Non-governmental Organisations to provide and cater for the less privileged, their families and needy homes. National security has been defined as the “aggregate of the security interest of all individuals, communities, ethnic groups, political entities and institutions which inhabit the Calabar metropolis and other states in Nigeria. Street children in Nigeria have caused so many security challenges against the nation. The cost of maintenance is very expensive which instead would have gone a long way to be useful in infrastructural development in some parts of the country. Nigeria has witnessed ethno-religious conflicts due to lack of understanding on the part of the governments NGOs and social welfares and the recourse to ethno-nationalistic sentiments as survival strategies by helpless Nigerians whose destiny have been on the altar of irresponsible ruling class in Nigeria. During the series of the major ethno-religious conflicts like the Zagon-Kataf riot, Kano riot, Bauchi riot, Jos riot, Sharia riots in Kaduna, the free El Zakzzaki protest of year 2018 and 2019 etc., were championed by Street children. Today, one of the greatest menace Calabar is facing and in Nigeria at large is kidnapping, armed robbery and terrorism. Calabar is confronted with intimidation from Skolombo boys and girls which

accounted for more than 78 armed robberies and threat to the peace in Calabar and Nigeria at large (Kennedy, 2001). These have bridged national security, Peace, safety of lives and properties are not guaranteed.

Most countries in Africa are grappling with the menace of Street children; Nigeria which has so far escaped macro level conflicts may not completely survive the menacing realities of Street children who constitute a population of armed robbers, thugs and area boys and violent cultists who are mostly between the ages of 10-21 years. The fact, therefore, still remains that Street children in Nigeria are potent threat to National Security. Similarly, the effects of globalization which has giving rise to poverty, lack of food, no clean water, lack of education, and lack of health care services making the less privileged filled with hates tend to increase the level of frustration in street people in ways that transform them into violent creatures. The lack of policies, law and resource management of the states in social political and economic areas, the weakening of institutions, increased economic inequality and the breaking up of both social and political spheres have a devastating effect in many societies, especially the third world countries. The increase of ethno religious conflicts, Boko Haram , with the appearance of street gangs from Street children and other Manifestations of small violence is one of the most visible effects. Street Children, Skolombo, Almajirism, Boko Haram, child traders/labourers that invade Nigeria cities if not properly addressed will continue to remain a threat national security.

2.3 Empirical Review

There have been several studies on the phenomenon of street children. However, very few have linked the phenomenon with increase in crimes where these children live and “work”. In a study on street child density undertaken by Ebigbo (2003), he opines that during the series of the major-ethno-religious conflicts like the Zango-Kataf riot, Kano riot, Bauchi riot, Jos riot, Sharia riot in Kaduna etc., street children especially the Almajiris or Islamic street Urchins drew the first blood and the bulk of the mayhem were sustained by this group of children. In another study carried out by Obiora (2009) titled *Becoming a street Child In poverty ridden society: A descriptive case of Kaduna Metropolis, Nigeria*, he identified five categories of street children. They are; children of beggars, Almajirinci, Hawkers, child prostitutes and Touts and Bus conductors. The study did not link their activities to any crimes.

Owolabi, (2017) identified another type of street children which can better be described as Road children who under the guise of filling pot holes on major roads engage in begging. Apart from facing serious safety risks to themselves and other road users, they are found to be part of organized highway robberies as they provide intelligence and sometimes plant sharp objects on the road to puncture and deflate vehicle tyres and trap vehicles for easy plundering by the main armed robbers. The need for every child to grow up in a favorable environment that will guarantee the realization of his/her full potential cannot be over-emphasized. In this regard, there has been a deeply entrenched concern for over-all well-being of children to be bound up inextricably with their parents, family and community that they live and grow up in. The issue of proper child training and development has also been clearly articulated by Ekpe and Mamah (1997), Amali and

Ojogbane (2004) and Kopoka (2000). To these scholars, traditional Africa society was characterized by proper establishment of families and family functions were patterned by path-ways, governed by mores and reinforced by moral code for proper child socialization and upbringing. The above scholars report further that community opinion and spirit governed the behavior of parents in terms of child rearing practices and so parents tended to conform to the standard so as to avoid the sanctions from the community.

To these scholars, these expectations were taught and readily adhered to and transmitted through oral tradition by elders.

Children were also highly treasured and they were protected from abuse/neglect as they were believed to be gifts from the creator of humanity. The scholars conclude that the importance attached to children has been responsible for many cases of divorce/separation in circumstances of childlessness not just in Nigeria but Africa as a whole both in traditional and contemporary times.

For instance, Kopoka (2000) reports that the baby was seen as belonging to the entire lineage, clan or extended family and so it was the entire responsibility of all these groups to ensure its safety and proper upbringing. Kopoka (2000) further states that in East Africa, a child was normally a member of a community and could not be separated from it.

As such, the child was educated and socialized by the community for membership of the community and that adoption was not common as fostering of children by the extended families was the common practice, hence there was no need for orphanages. For Amali and Ojogbane (2004) and Kopoka (2000), children were initiated into the activities of

their parents/family which they were expected to be doing throughout their adult life. This was as such a real social security for children and it further enable children to help themselves and also prevent them from unemployment which to a large extent never existed in traditional African setting. The belief in the fundamental human rights, dignity and worth of human beings as well as the internationally accepted principle that mankind owe to children are issues of utmost concern to both Nigeria and the international communities. A clear demonstration to this effect is the inclusion of the rights and welfare of children in both the Social Development Policy of Nigeria (1989) as well as in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. In the same way, there are several international conventions on the rights of children which direct governments to protect children below eighteen years from performing hazardous work, any work that can interfere with their right to education and general economic exploitation. For instance, the International Labor Organization (ILO) has passed conventions on child labor to protect the right of children below the age of fifteen years from employment in any economic sector. In the same way, the entire international community forbids dangerous or harmful employment in areas like prostitution, combat, mining, pornography among others to all children below eighteen (18) years. Similarly, the UNICEF (1985) report exposes the fact to the problem.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

This Research will use three theories: The Failed State Theory, The Human Needs Theory, and The Strain Theory to analyze Street Children and the Skolombo Phenomenon.

2.4.1 The Failed State Theory

‘State failure’ and security and development challenges have been commonly linked since the creation of the concept in the 1990s. An inherent link becomes particularly evident when looking at the definition of ‘state failure’ by Robert Rotberg, which revolves around two central aspects of the concept. According to Rotberg states are considered failed ‘when they are consumed by internal violence and cease delivering positive political goods to their inhabitants’. For Rotberg, the primary public good is the provision of security within a territory. Once this good is provided, a number of other goods can evolve, such as, for example, dispute settlement, the rule of law, political participation, education and health care. Consequently, violence is idiosyncratic for ‘failed states’. Other indicators would be a predatory government, loss of control over territory, criminal violence and the rise of warlords, lack of medical and educational services and a declining GDP per capita. While weak states may perform well in some of the political goods mentioned above, overall failure relates to all of the categories. The benchmark, on which generally a state is measured, is thus the western nation-state with its three core functions: representation, security, and a concern for welfare of its population.

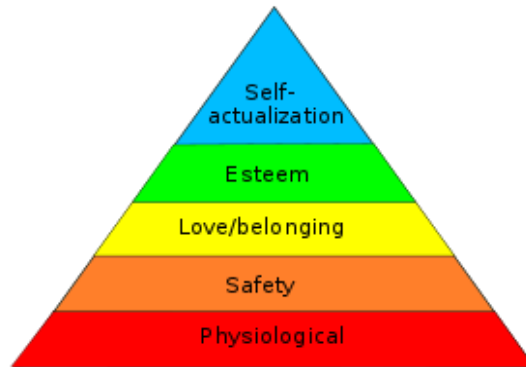
Rotberg’s symptoms of state failure overlap with the Millennium Development Goal’s (MDG) aim of reducing infant mortality, AIDS and the guarantee of education. From the definition above, it becomes clear that it is perceived as a state’s core duty to provide political goods linked to development. In fact, the establishment of a functioning state itself is often regarded as a development challenge. In its traditional role as a guard of security, a state is responsible for the protection of the national territory and state

institutions. As postmodern states are often of a more intertwined nature, national security issues do seldom stay within a nation-state's borders. In this sense, the state's lack of domestic security may transform into transnational security problems.

State failure was first seen as a post-Cold War phenomenon. With the terrorist attacks of September 11th, however, concerns of policy makers and scholars shifted to security problems related with weak states and terrorism. Albeit mainstreamed with regards to security and development policy, the concept was subject to a considerable amount of critique. For example, the United States of America has been experiencing an upsurge in gun violence. Does it make the USA a failed State? The theory treats all states equal without taking other factors into consideration. However, this theory also explains the reason for the upsurge of the Skolombo Phenomenon in Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria.

2.4.2 The Human Needs Theory

The human needs theory as expounded by Abraham Maslow is also apt in explaining the Skolombo Phenomenon in Calabar. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is often portrayed in the shape of a pyramid with the largest, most fundamental needs at the bottom and the need for self-actualization and transcendence at the top. In other words, the crux of the theory is that individuals' most basic needs must be met before they become motivated to achieve higher level needs as illustrated in the figure below.



The most fundamental and basic four layers of the pyramid contain what Maslow called "deficiency needs" or "d-needs": esteem, friendship and love, security, and physical needs. If these "deficiency needs" are not met – with the exception of the most fundamental (physiological) need – there may not be a physical indication, but the individual will feel anxious and tense. Maslow's theory suggests that the most basic level of needs must be met before the individual will strongly desire (or focus motivation upon) the secondary or higher level needs. Maslow also coined the term "[metamotivation](#)" to describe the motivation of people who go beyond the scope of the basic needs and strive for constant betterment.

The human brain is a complex system and has parallel processes running at the same time, thus many different motivations from various levels of Maslow's hierarchy can occur at the same time. Maslow spoke clearly about these levels and their satisfaction in terms such as "relative", "general", and "primarily". Instead of stating that the individual focuses on a certain need at any given time, Maslow stated that a certain need "dominates" the human organism. Thus Maslow acknowledged the likelihood that the different levels of motivation could occur at any time in the human mind, but he focused

on identifying the basic types of motivation and the order in which they would tend to be met.

Physiological needs

Physiological need is a concept that was derived to explain and cultivate the foundation for motivation. This concept is the main physical requirement for human survival. This means that Physiological needs are universal human needs. Physiological needs are considered the first step in internal motivation according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. This theory states that humans are compelled to fulfill these physiological needs first in order to pursue intrinsic satisfaction on a higher level. If these needs are not achieved, it leads to an increase in displeasure within an individual. In return, when individuals feel this increase in displeasure, the motivation to decrease these discrepancies increase. This explains why our streets are literally littered with children trying to meet their Physiological needs. Physiological needs as traits allude to long-term, unchanging demands that are required of basic human life. Physiological needs as a state allude to the unpleasant decrease in pleasure and the increase for an incentive to fulfil a necessity. In order to pursue intrinsic motivation higher up Maslow's hierarchy, Physiological needs must be met first. This means that if a human is struggling to meet their physiological needs, then they are unlikely to intrinsically pursue safety, belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization. Physiological needs include: [Homeostasis](#), Health, Food, Water, Sleep, Clothes and Shelter etc.

Safety needs

Once a person's physiological needs are relatively satisfied, their safety needs take precedence and dominate behaviour. In the absence of physical safety – due to war, natural disaster, [family violence](#), [childhood abuse](#), institutional racism etc. – people may (re-)experience [post-traumatic stress disorder](#) or [trans-generational trauma](#). In the absence of economic safety – due to an economic crisis and lack of work opportunities – these safety needs manifest themselves in ways such as a preference for [job security](#), grievance procedures for protecting the individual from unilateral authority, savings accounts, insurance policies, disability accommodations, etc. This level is more likely to predominate in children as they generally have a greater need to feel safe. Safety and security needs are about keeping us safe from harm. These include shelter, job security, health, and safe environments. If a person does not feel safe in an environment, they will seek to find safety before they attempt to meet any higher level of survival, but the need for safety is not as important as basic physiological needs.

Safety and Security needs include: Personal security, Emotional security, Financial security, Health and well-being

Social belonging

After physiological and safety needs are fulfilled, the third level of human needs is seen to be interpersonal and involves feelings of [belongingness](#). This need is especially strong in childhood and it can override the need for safety as witnessed in children who cling to abusive parents. Deficiencies within this level of Maslow's hierarchy – due to hospitality, [neglect](#), [shunning](#), [ostracism](#), etc. can adversely affect the individual's ability to form and maintain emotionally significant relationships in general.

Social Belonging needs include: Friendship, Intimacy and the Family.

According to Maslow, humans need to feel a sense of belonging and acceptance among social groups, regardless of whether [these groups are large or small](#). For example, some large social groups may include clubs, co-workers, religious groups, professional organizations, sports teams, gangs, and online communities. Some examples of small social connections include family members, intimate partners, mentors, colleagues, and confidants. Humans need to love and be loved – both sexually and non-sexually – by others. This explains why the Skolombo street children operate as a group.

Self-esteem

Esteem needs are ego needs or status needs. People develop a concern with getting recognition, status, importance, and respect from others. Most humans have a need to feel respected; this includes the need to have self-esteem and self-respect. Esteem presents the typical human desire to be accepted and valued by others. People often engage in a profession or hobby to gain recognition. These activities give the person a sense of contribution or value. Low self-esteem or an inferiority complex may result from imbalances during this level in the hierarchy. People with low self-esteem often need respect from others; they may feel the need to seek fame or glory. However, fame or glory will not help the person to build their self-esteem until they accept who they are internally. Psychological imbalances such as [depression](#) can distract the person from obtaining a higher level of self-esteem.

Self-actualization

"What a man can be, he must be. This quotation forms the basis of the perceived need for self-actualization. This level of need refers to the realization of one's full potential. Maslow describes this as the desire to accomplish everything that one can, to become the most that one can be. Individuals perceive or focus on this need very specifically. People may have a strong, particular desire to become an ideal parent, succeed athletically, or create paintings, pictures, or inventions. Maslow believed that to understand this level of need, the person must not only succeed in the previous needs but master them. Self-actualization can be described as a value-based system when discussing its role in motivation; self-actualization is understood as the goal-or explicit motive, and the previous stages in Maslow's Hierarchy fall in line to become the step-by-step process by which self-actualization is achievable; an explicit motive is the objective of a reward-based system that is used to intrinsically drive completion of certain values or goals. Individuals who are motivated to pursue this goal seek and understand how their needs, relationships, and sense of self are expressed through their behaviour. Self-actualization can include: Mate Acquisition, Parenting, Utilizing and Developing Abilities, Pursuing Goals.

2.4.3 Strain Theory

This study was guided by **Strain Theory** also called anomie theory that was developed by Robert Merton (1993). The theory argues that crime is as a result of the frustration and anger people experience over their inability to achieve legitimate social and financial success. This is corroborated by the fact that if a society's culture adores ownership of property and other forms of wealth, individuals with no employment or education are

bound to attempt to acquire these through robbery. Strain theory does not focus directly on crime, but rather upon various acts of deviance, which may be understood to lead to criminal behaviour. Merton notes that there are certain goals which are strongly emphasized by society. The society emphasizes certain means to reach those goals such as education, employment, hard work; however, not everyone has the equal access to the legitimate means to attain those goals, thus setting stage for strain.

According to Merton, there are five modes of adapting to strain caused by the restricted access to socially approved goals and means which are; conformists, innovators, ritualists, retreatists and rebellious. Not all the people who are denied access to society's goals become deviant. Rather the response, or modes of adaptation, depends on the individual's attitudes toward cultural goals and the institutional means to attain them. Conformists accept both the goals as well as the prescribed means for achieving the goal. Conformists accept, though not always achieve the goals of society and the means approved for achieving them. In a balanced or stable society this is the most common mode of social adaptation. The innovators on the other hand accept societal goals but are incapable or rejects legitimate means to achieve those goals, they thus innovate (design) their own means to get ahead. The means to get ahead may be through crime, embezzlement or other such criminal acts. Of the five social adaptations, innovation is most closely associated with criminal behaviour. This condition accounts for the high rate of crime in poor areas, where access to legitimate means is severely limited. However, innovative adaptations can occur in any social class when members perceive a lack of appropriate means to gain social success. For example, stock frauds and tax evasion schemes are carried out by the rich (Siegel, 1989).

The Ritualists follow rules obsessively but abandon the goals they once believed to be within their reach. On the other hand, Retreatists, refer to those who give up not only the goals but also the means. They often retreat into the world of alcoholism and drug addiction. These individuals escape into a non-productive, non-striving lifestyle. Included in this category are the psychotics, psychoneurotic, pariahs, outcasts, drunkards and drug addicts. The final adaptation model is that of rebels who emerge when both the socially accepted goals (for the individuals create their own goals and their own means, through protest or revolutionary activity. This adaptation is typical of revolutionary, who wish to promote radical change in the existing social structure and who call for alternative lifestyles, goals and beliefs (Siegel, 1989).

Relevance of the theory to the study

One may move from one adaptation to another depending on the prevailing circumstances. Street children live under difficult conditions and these forces then to adapt to some survival adaptations. This explains why the Skolombo guys take to the streets in Cross River State. They simply try to resolve conflicts and bring down social pressure exerted on them at school and also at their homes. Thus, if government is keen on containing crimes, especially within the Calabar metropolis, it has to exert more efforts on creation of opportunities targeted at the less educated bulging population of the youths. However, in adopting this theory, the Researcher is fully aware of the weaknesses of this theory which include the fact that Strain theory does not focus directly on crimes, but rather on various acts of deviance, which may be understood to lead to criminal behaviours.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The researchers adopted a survey approach in carrying out this study. This approach was chosen to enable the researchers reach out to a reasonable number of the population within the available resources. The choice of this design was also chosen due to the fact that it enriches the data collection. The research design adopted in this study was carefully planned, so as to be able to obtain accurate and complete information about the variables being investigated. Therefore, research design refers to a logical model of proof that allows the researcher to draw inferences concerning causal relations among the variables under investigation. It also serve as a plan and a strategy designed for systematically solving research problems of interest to the researcher within his relevant circumstance (Polit et al, 1999).

3.2 Area of study



The study was conducted in Calabar Metropolis, consisting of Calabar South Local Government Area and Calabar Municipality. Calabar South is made up of twelve wards while Calabar Municipality is made up of 10 wards. Calabar lies between latitude $50^{\circ} 51^1$ and $40^{\circ} 22^1$ North and Longitude $70^{\circ} 51^1$ and $90^{\circ} 28^1$ East. It is about 21, 481 sqkm in size. It is situated within the tropics sharing a common boundary with Republic of Cameroon in the East, Odukpani Local Government Area in the North.

3.3 Population, Sample and Sampling Technique

The population of this study comprises of selected street children from Calabar South and Calabar Municipality being two local government areas that make up Calabar Metropolis as well as residents of the Calabar metropolis. Calabar South is made up of twelve wards while Calabar Municipality is made up of 10 wards. The Calabar South has the population of eight hundred and forty one (841) street children while Calabar Municipality has seven hundred and fifty (752). Similarly, 5 residents each were selected from the above local governments. In all, a total of one thousand five hundred and ninety two (1,592) consists of population for this study as shown in the table below.

Table 3.1: Targeted Sample population

Targeted population	Population	Sample
Calabar South	841	84
Calabar Municipality	752	75
Residents from Calabar metropolis	10	10
Total	1602	169

Source: Field Survey, 2018

In selecting the sample size, the researcher therefore picked 10% each of the above population as recommended by Black and Champion (1976) thus;

$$\text{Calabar South} = \frac{841 \times 10}{100} = 84$$

$$\text{Calabar Municipality} = \frac{752 \times 10}{100} = 75$$

Therefore, the sample for this study stood at one hundred and sixty nine (169) street children purposively selected from Calabar South and Calabar Municipality respectively.

Purposive sampling (also known as judgment, selective or subjective *sampling*) is a *sampling* technique in which researcher relies on his or her own judgment when choosing members of population to participate in the study. *Purposive sampling* is where a researcher selects a sample based on their knowledge about the study and population.

3.4 Sources and Method of Data Collection

Data collection is central to any research and are essential in arriving at the solutions to the problem been investigated. There are two basic instruments of data collection or source available to research study, these are the primary and secondary and sources of data collection instruments. This study utilized both methods. The primary data were collected through the use of questionnaire. Questions were structured in line with the research objectives and other relevant questions in the research study. The questionnaire was validated by a pre-test carried out on street children found opposite UJ Esuene Stadium in Calabar.

Similarly, Focus Group Discussions and interview were also conducted. Each of the sessions was carried out to elicit sensitive data from the street kids in order to ascertain its impact National security.

On the other hand, the secondary data were gathered through articles from journals, news outfit, newspapers, magazines, textbooks and other publications were also utilized in the course of gathering data. In addition, secondary data were also obtained from records of MOSWCD, MOWA, CPN and 2009 CRL. Published resource on street children globally were also used as references.

3.5 Technique for Data Analysis

The collected data and information derived from the respondents were analyzed using simple percentage as well as table in order to test the validity of the research questions. Percentage analysis is the method that represents raw streams data as a percentage (a part in 100) for better understanding of data collected. The choice of this was because it is straight forward and simple to understand.

3.6 Justification of Method

The methods adopted for this research were carefully chosen bearing in mind their significance to this research work. Specifically, the primary and secondary methods of data collection are inevitably necessary as data generated through primary method cannot be sufficient for this research without an understanding of the origin and development of the phenomenon which is contained in already existed literatures that can only be traced through the secondary method.

CHAPTER FOUR

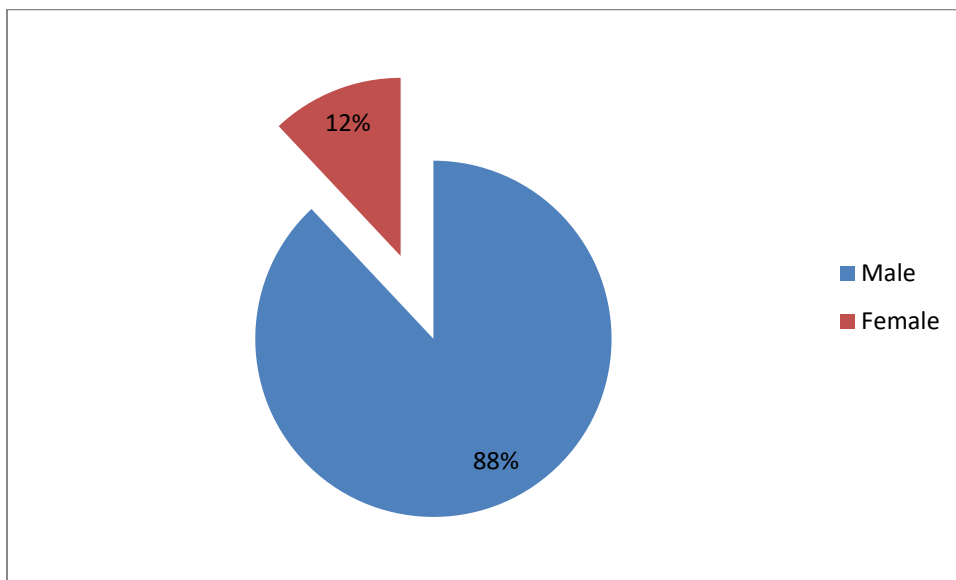
DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Data Presentation

This chapter is concerned with the presentation and analysis of data based on the questionnaire administered and Focus Group Discussion and Interview conducted. The analysis was divided into two sections. They are the demographic variables “Bio-data” section and the ‘descriptive sections’.

4.1.1 Socio- Demographic Characteristic of Respondents

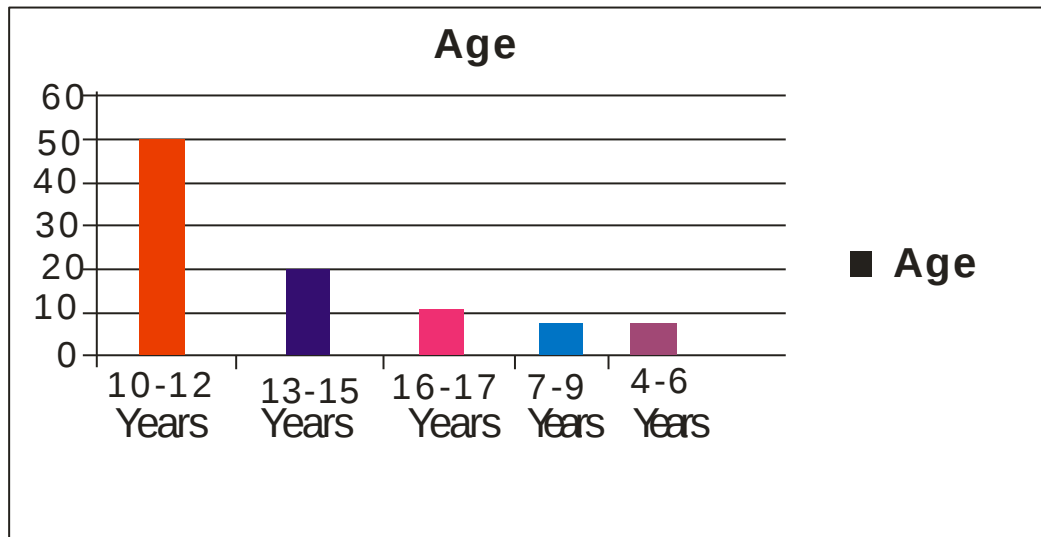
Fig. 1: Sex of the Respondents (SC)



Source: Ntui McDonald’s Field Survey, 2018

Figure 1 shows that majority of the street children interviewed were males (88%) and 12% are females. This corresponds with the findings in Lusaka and Juba where percentages of streets boys out of the total assessed were >80% and 90% respectively. This shows that more male respondents were available and ready to answer the questions.

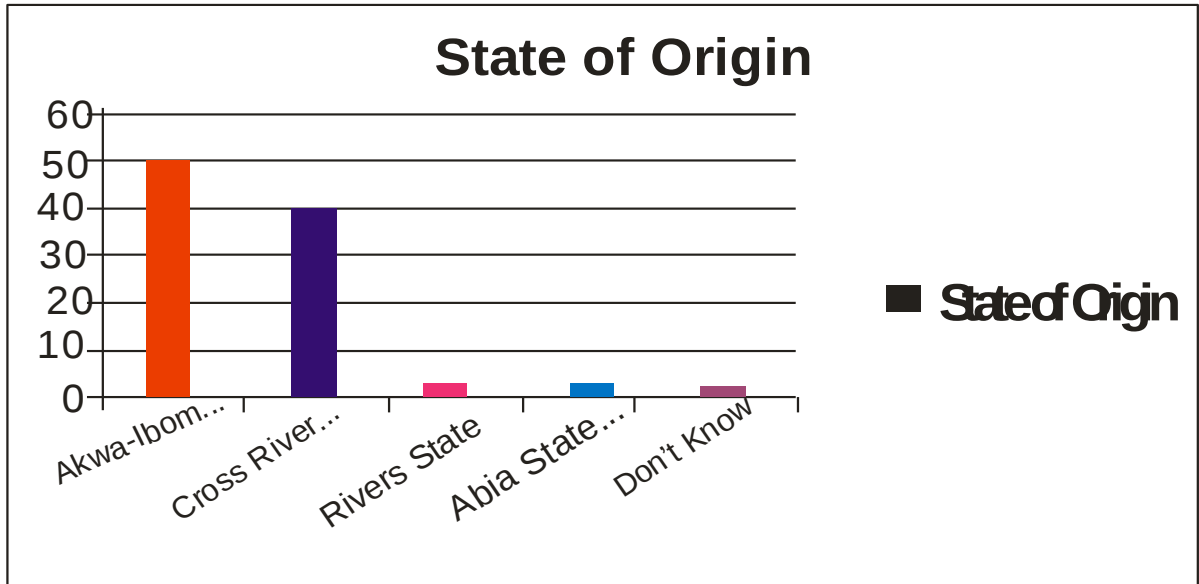
Fig. 2: Age of the Respondents (SC)



Source: Ntui McDonald's Field Survey, 2018

Figure 2 shows that majority of the children on the streets were aged 10-12 (50.7%), followed by those aged 13-15 (25.3%), 16-17 years (12%), 7-9 (9.3%) and 4-6 years (2.7%). The average age level of the sample selected of street children is 12years. These findings are in consonance with results in Zimbabwe where 42.2% of street children were found to be aged 11-15% and men age was 13 years. The average age of the street children in Ghana was also found to be 13 years. The implications of this is that most of the children found on the street are between the age of 10 and 12 similar to other African countries like Ghana and Zimbabwe.

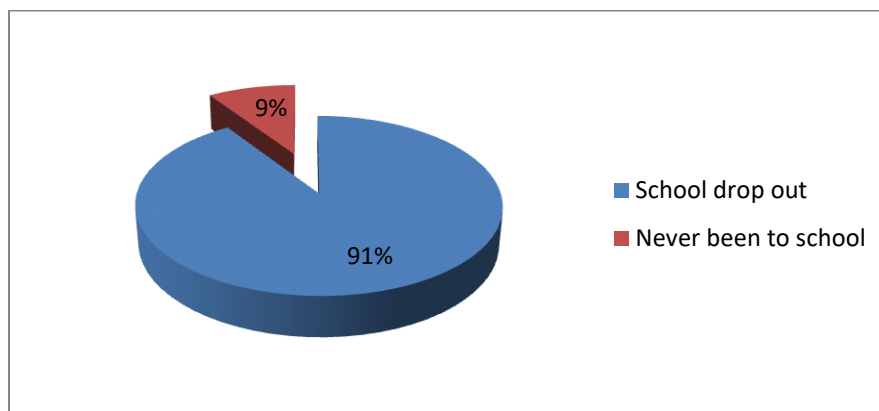
Fig. 3: Respondents State of Origin (SC)



Source: Ntui Mcdonald's Field Survey, 2018

Data from Figure 3 indicates that majority of the street children came from Akwa- Ibom State (52%) whereas 44% of the sample came from Cross River State, Abia State and those who don't know their father's state of origin accounts for 1.3% each. This signifies that majority of the street children found within Calabar metropolis came from outside the state and this could be detrimental the security of the state thereby making it difficult for security agencies to ascertain their identity during operations.

Fig. 4: Educational Level of the Respondents (SC)



Source: Ntui Mcdonald's Field Survey, 2018

Data on the educational levels of street children in figure 4 indicates that 90.7% of the sample was school drop outs while 9.3% of them have never attended schools. These findings are in line with the results in Cairo and Alexandria where 70% are school dropouts. The findings means that the operations of street children posed security threat to the state in view of the fact that the boys might have dropped out of school as a result of their engagement in dubious acts in schools.

4.2 Data Analysis and Results

4.2.1 Family Information/ Home Visit

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents according to knowledge of family situation and frequency of Home visits.

Are your Parents alive?		
	Frequency	Percentage
Both dead	25	33.3
father alive only	22	29.3
Mother alive only	15	20.0
Both alive	7	9.3
Don't Know	6	8.0
Total	75	100
Do you know your parents or relatives (if Parents are dead) live?		
Yes	50	66.7
No	25	33.3
Total	75	100
How often do you visit home?		
Do not go home	57	68
More than once a month	7	10.6
once a week	7	9.3
Once in a month	5	6.6
More than once a week	3	4.0
Everyday	1	1.3
Total	75	100

Source: Ntui McDonald's Field Survey, 2018

The table above shows that amongst the street children interviewed, the fathers of 29.3% of them are still alive, 20% have their mother's alive but only 9.3% have both parents alive. Then both parents of 33.3% of the children are dead. 8% don't know whether their father or mother is alive. Data from the table also reveals that majority of the children (66.7%) knew where their parents or relatives (if parents are dead) live whereas 32% don't have any idea. From the same table above, the categorization of street children into street and children on the street can be deduced. 68% of the children do not go home as such can be said to be children of the street while 31.8% do visit home. Out of the 31.8% that visit home, 10.6% visit home more than once a month, once a week (9.3%), once in a month (6.6%), more than once a week (4.0%) and everyday (1.3%).

4.2.2 Witchcraft Labelling

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents according to witchcraft labelling

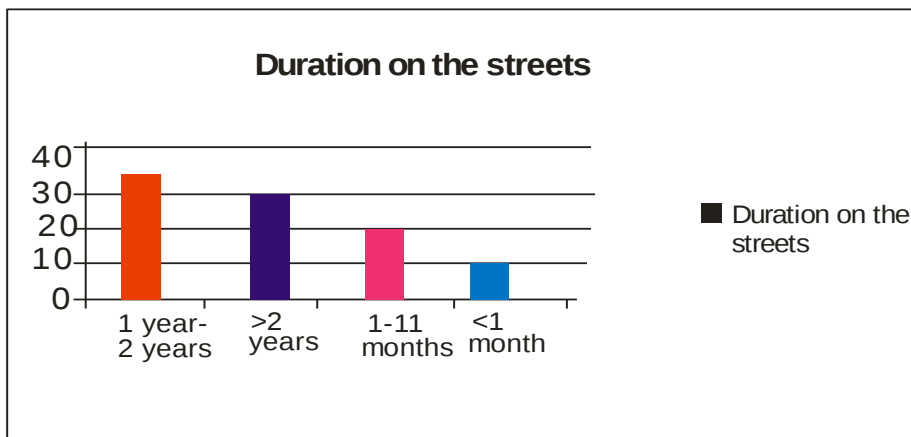
Have you ever been accused of being witch?		
	Frequency	percentage
Yes	38	50.7
No	37	49.3
Total	75	100
What were you accused of/ why were you called a witch		
was never called a witch	37	49.3
Because I was stubborn	22	29.3
Death/ Sickness of a family member	11	14.7
Family hardship/ Bad luck	5	6.7
Total	75	100

Source: Ntui McDonald's Field Survey, 2018

Table 2 reveals that 50.7% of the children interviewed admitted that they have been accused of being a witch or a wizard. However 49.3% said no one has ever branded them witches. This result sharply deviates from finding of stepping stone in a study of street children conducted in Akwa-Ibom State which states that 95% of street children in AKS were dubbed witches. Thus CRS can be said to be less tolerant to aptitude of dubbing children witches than AKS. Also amongst those that have been branded as witches, 29.3% attributed being stubborn as the reason why they were called witches, 14.7% were blamed for the sickness or death of a family member while 6.7% were accused due to bad luck/ family hardship.

Length of time on the streets

Figure 5: Duration on the streets



Source: Ntui McDonald's Field Survey, 2018

Figure 5 reveals that out of the sample of street children interviewed, 32.5 have lived in the streets for over 2 years, 34.75 have been on the street for between a year and 2 years. 21.3% have been on the street between 1 to 11 months, 9.3% for less than one month. However, 2.7% said they don't know how long they have been on the street.

4.2.3 Reason for leaving Home

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents according to reasons for leaving home

Major reason why you left your home to the street?		
	Frequency	Percentage
Abuse by stepmother/ father/ relatives	21	28.0
poverty/ To earn money	15	20.0
Neglect/ Abandonment by parents	9	12.0
Abuse by parents	8	10.6
Committed an offence at home	7	9.3
Peer pressure	6	8.0
Death of both parents	5	6.7
Abuse by master/mistress	3	4.0
To join brother/ sister in the street	1	1.3
Total	75	100

Source: Ntui McDonald's Field Survey, 2018

In summary, Table 3 indicates that the major reason why children leave their homes to the streets in Calabar metropolis is due to Child Abuse at the home (42.6%). This total combines Abuse by stepmother/father/relatives (28%), abuse by parents (10.6) and Abuse by master/mistress (4%).

Information arising from the FGD showed that child abuse takes various shapes and forms. Most times step mothers maltreat children upon the death or divorce of their

mothers. Parents also for reasons including stubbornness, family hardship, death or sickness of family members dub their children witches and abuse them physically.

24% of the children cited poverty/ to earn money as the reason why they left their homes Neglect/abandonment ranks as the next severe factor (12%). Often times neglect comes from lack of supervision, large family size/polygamous families, sick parents, and parents spending lots of time at work (away from home location). Other reasons include those who ran away from home after committing an offence (9.3%), peer pressure (8%), Death of both parents (6.7%), and 1.3% which accounts for those that left to join their brother/sister in the street.

Some other reasons found in literature such as being forced to attend school and desire to be independent did not generate any response from the children.

The results above corresponds with findings in Cairo and Alexandria where majority (82%) of the street kids attributed child abuse at home as the direct cause of their leaving their homes. It however contradicts findings in Ghana where majority (86%) said they left their homes to the streets to look for money.

4.2.4 Street Life

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents according to survival activities and preferences on the streets

What do you like about street life? (MMA)		
	Frequency	Percentage
Ability to earn money	31	36.9
Spending time with my friends	24	28.6
Freedom	11	13.1
play all day	10	11.9
Members of the pubic take care of me	8	9.5
Total	84	100
What do you do to get money on the street? (MMA)		
Picking metal scraps	37	23.3
Begging	25	15.7
Washing plates in food outlets	25	15.7
Collection plastic bottle	23	14.5
Selling old papers/ pure water	18	11.3
Temporal work in shops	8	5.0
Washing cars	7	4.4
Bus conductor	7	4.4
Carrying luggage in markets	6	3.8
Prostitution	2	1.3
Shining Shoes	1	1.3
Total	159	100

Source: Ntui Mcdonald's Field Survey, 2018

Data from table 4 shows the underlying reasons why the children love street life. 36.9% cited earning money as a major factor, spending time with my friends accounted for 28.6%, freedom (13.1%), and play all day (11.9%) while 9.5 said because members of the streets, the children find it difficult to return home due to the amount of money they make on the streets thus confirming the report of the study in Ghana where majority attributed search for money as a reason why they are on the street.

From the same table, the children identified the various sources of income in the streets as follows; picking metal scraps (23.3%), washing plates in food outlets (15.7%), collecting plastics bottles(14.5%), Selling old papers/pure water(11.3%), Temporal work in shops(5.0%), Bus conductor (4.4%), Washing cars (4.4%), Carrying luggage in market (3.8%), prostitution (1.3%) and Shining shoes (1.3). findings here are related to results in Juba where 38% of the kids earn their living by collection empty plastic bottles. In Zimbabwe, 45.75 of the street kids earn money via begging.

4.2.5 Street Children and National Security

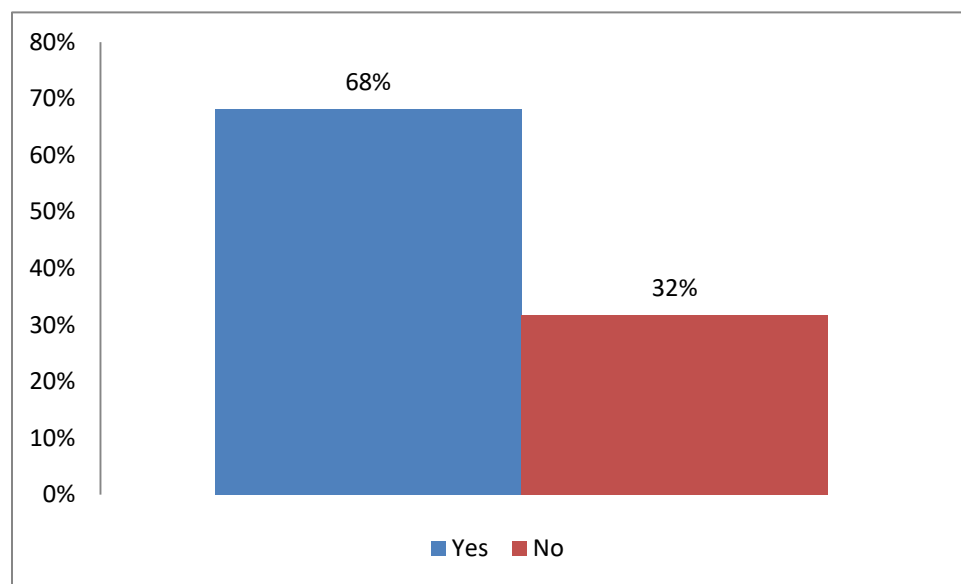
Table 5: Distribution of Respondents on the relationship between street children and national security?

Variables	Responses	Percentage %
Yes	10	100 %
No	—	—
Total	10	100%

Sources: Ntui Mcdonald's Field Survey, 2018.

Data on table 5 shows that the whole respondents representing 100% are of the view that there is significant relationship between street children and national security. The implications of the above findings is that the menace of street children particularly the Skolombo boys in Calabar metropolis is however not different from other insurgent groups such as Boko Haram and Fulani herders.

Fig. 6: Social Environment and crime



Source: Ntui Mcdonald's Field Survey, 2018.

From the above figure, majority 68% of respondents indicated that social environment such as Calabar metropolis influences street children to commit crime, while 32% posited that social environment never influences street children to commit crime. The findings therefore illustrates that the social environment contributes towards involvement in crime. Street children who commit crimes are likely to learn about it from the people they live with including their friends, peers and family members.

4.2.6 Impacts of Street Children

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents on impacts of street children on National Security

Variables	Response	Percentage (%)
Yes	9	90%
No	1	10%
Total	10	100%

Sources: Ntui Mcdonald's Field Survey, 2018.

Table 6 above shows that 90% of the respondent agreed that street children in Calabar metropolis has negative impact on National security, only 10% of the respondents opposed to the statement. In view of the foregoing responses therefore, the Skolombo boys/girls posed security threat to Calabar metropolis.

4.2.7 Measures in managing street children

Table 7: Distribution of Respondents on measures put in place in managing the phenomenon of street children in Calabar metropolis.

Variables	Response	Percentage %
Little attention by Cross River State Government	4	40%
Government being embarrassed by street children	3	30%
Keeping the street children in an undesirable places	3	30%
Total	10	100%

Sources: Ntui Mcdonald's Field Survey, 2018.

Analysis from the above table shows various perspectives regarding government efforts towards managing the phenomenon of street children in Calabar metropolis. 4 respondents representing 40% were of the view that governments of Cross River State pay little or no attention to the plight of children generally. 3 respondents representing 30% however said Cross River State governments is embarrassed by street children and government rather than resolve the challenges of street children turn around to blame the parents. Similarly, the remaining 3 respondents representing 30% also said when government take steps or implement programs to deal with the issues of street children, Governments action generally involve placing the children in orphanages, juvenile homes or correctional Institutes.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The study has unveiled the predisposing factors that account for the rising wave of street children in Nigeria and its implication of National Security using the Calabar metropolis experience. On the basis of our findings, we can draw the following deductions:

- Most of these children are from poor homes with low socio-economic backgrounds.
- Majority of the children use the proceeds of this activity for the upkeep of their families.
- Material deprivation and other abuses from the home front are major factors that push the children to the street.
- Some of the children at that tender age get cut off from their families completely.

- Most of these children and their parents/guardians have little or no formal education. Thus their chances of breaking out of their culture of poverty appear to be very slim.
- Majority of the street children interviewed admitted that they have been accused of being either a witch or a wizard. Some attributed being stubborn as the reason why they were called witches, 14.7% were blamed for the sickness or death of a family member while 6.7% were accused due to bad luck/ family hardship.
- Majority of the street children (52%) in Calabar metropolis are from neighbouring states (Akwa Ibom State).
- The study also revealed that the immoral activities perpetrated by street children (Skolombo) in Calabar posed security challenges to the metropolis, the state and Nigeria in general.
- The state has continued to withdrawal its attention from providing social welfare to citizens, particularly family and child welfare, thus escalating the menace of street children in the society.
- Finally, Cross River State government pay little or no attention to the plight of children in the state and rather than resolve the challenges of street children the government turn around to blame the parents.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The study examines the rising wave of street children in Nigeria with particular focus on Calabar metropolis. It focuses on the intricate and adverse human and social consequences and the resultant effects in Nigeria, especially Calabar metropolis. To critically examine the topic under review, the research was structured into five chapters in the following manner. Chapter one consist of background to the study, statement of problem, research questions, objectives of the study, propositions, significance of the study, scope of the study and definition of operational terms. Chapter two dwells on the review of existing literatures that are relevant to the study as well as theoretical framework of analysis. Chapter three comprises of the methodology utilized in conducting the research, which includes; research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, method of data collection and techniques for data analysis. Chapter four centred on presentation and analysis of data obtained from respondents on the predisposing factors that account for the rising wave of street children and its implications on national security. Finally, chapter five consists of summary, conclusion, recommendations and limitations of the study

5.2 Conclusion

The study therefore concluded that commission of crime by street children is as a result of several factors among them lack of education, unemployment and family breakdown. In addition, crime by street children poses a threat to national security and on the other

hand sustainable economic development; to the quality of life and human rights as investors' consider peaceful environment for investing in any place.

For many years the government of Cross River State has been struggling to address the problem of drug abuse and creation of employment for the youth. However, these efforts have not borne much fruits. There is existence of a structured relationship between drug abuse and crime by street children, where drug addicts commit crime in order to fund their drug addiction. Unemployment causes individuals to commit crime as a way of earning livelihood. Furthermore, occurrence of crime is area specific since, street children are likely to attack their victims in certain areas of the town where they cannot be easily apprehended by police. Finally, street children are likely to learn how to be criminals through socialization with the people they live together with including; friends, peers and family members. Street children can also learn about crime from past convicts. There is therefore an urgent need for stakeholder participation in the formulation of strategies, programs and plans to reduce crime by street children particularly within Calabar metropolis.

5.3 Recommendations

Many developing countries Nigeria inclusive are still decades away solving the menace of street children. It is not impossible to eradicate street children in a country like Nigeria where poverty is ravaging the people. However, the government and Non-Government Organizations can help curb this menace in order to make these people productive in Nigeria and Cross River State in particular, by providing the following.

1. Setting up an Agency on street Children Eradication

This is the major recommendation of this study, informed by the need for coordination and tracking of efforts. An inter-agency team of key stakeholders (drawn from Special Police Unit – JWC, MOJ, MOSW, MOWA and relevant NGO) must be setup and tasked with the responsibility of coordinating and facilitating the implementation of other recommendations of this study. The reason behind setting up a stand-alone agency is due to the rigorous nature of the task. The responsibilities require full time commitment of the team members as such can't be combined with other duties. Interventions must begin with a census and baseline study, sustainable programs for implementation must be developed, planned and executed.

Process, monitoring must follow implementation at each level; benchmarks must be set for program outputs, outcomes and impacts to be evaluated. This agency should be domiciled at the Governor's office or reporting directly to the Governor with line ministries such as MOSW, MOWA, MOE, MOY making mandatory contributions to its budget and running costs and must work for a maximum of 24 months. The role of this agency though may focus on eradicating the phenomenon of street children; it however should not exclude other child protection concerns as contained in the CRL.

The major term of reference of the agency should be to:

- i. Ensure that child abusers are apprehended and arraigned at the family courts.
- ii. Identify and stop all those that employ and exploit street children. From brothels that use them as sex workers, metal collectors that engage them to pick metals, to car wash and restaurants operators.

- iii. Evolve and implement sustainable programs that will deliver all other recommendations of this study as stated below.

The problem of street children is strongly affected by community attitudes and perceptions. A lot of advocacy to community heads and sensitization/arising awareness levels is needed and must be aimed at the slum communities. Child rights, care and protection campaigns must be targeted and followed up, information spread must be related and regular, to ensure the information conveyed are not forgotten and that the impact is sustainable. Alongside, initiating community based structures such that communities can take responsibility for the welfare and upbringing of their children, where families are unable, should also form thrust of deliberations with the community heads.

2. Strengthening Social Protection Systems

CRS Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) program must be enhanced to deal with the chronic issue of poverty. This study has shown that poor families are at risk of losing their children to the streets since their kids are more vulnerable and predisposed to various forms of abuse. Sustainable Rural Development programs must also be implanted both on short and long term basis to make the slum areas more habitable as well as decrease the rural – urban migration.

3. Census and tracking of street children

More studies should be carried out especially to cover the delimitation of this study. Of importance is to carry out a Census of street children in Calabar metropolis and mapping of needs and current service providers as well as institutions working with street children in the metropolis.

4. Strengthening CRS Family Courts/Setting up Children Correction Centers and homes

Family Courts in CRS must be empowered enough to deal decisively with child abusers. Efforts must be made especially through the civil society to raise awareness of the existence of the courts and galvanize patronage to the courts. Accordingly, the street must also establish correction centres, children homes etc in line with the provisions of the CRL for the rehabilitation of child offenders and victims of child abuse. These centres can also serve as drop in centres where rehabilitation would commenced while preparations for reunification and family tracing are carried out. Given the violent nature of street life and the exposure to vice, it will be unrealistic to expect that all street children who have been on the streets up to one year will seamlessly integrate with family relatives when re-united.

5. Dealing with school dropouts

School has to be targeted, to ensure that teachers can effectively deal with children emotional and behavioural problems. UBE should be strictly followed, to ensure that children complete basic education. If parents pay very little to send their children to schools, then they will not be able to excuse themselves on poverty grounds if they are prosecuted for not doing so.

6. Having access to vocational training institution

It is not sufficient to stop the children from working on the streets, viable alternative must be provided to fill the vacuum. Street children especially those that are no longer in age appropriate classes and who are desirous of learning a vocational skill should be able to access to vocational training without the usual pre-requisites. The Cross River State

Micro credit Enterprise Development Agency (MEDA) MOSW, MOY should be able to provide support for these children to achieve their aim.

7. Finally, government should encourage couples to have the number of children that they can cater for.

5.4 Limitation of the Study

In the course of this research the research encountered certain challenges ranging from time constraints, mobility to acquire adequate materials and literature on the subject matter under study. There were cases of non-compliance by the Skolombo street children while some decline access to interview for the fear of the information being given to security agencies. But despite all the challenges, modest efforts were made for the outcome of this research. The above limitations do not in any way affect the originality and outcome of the research findings.

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APPENDIX I

Location/Interview site:.....

Date of Interview:.....

1. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐
2. Age: 4-6 ☐ 7-9 ☐ 10-12 ☐ 13-15 ☐ 16-17 ☐ Don't know ☐
3. Father's State of Origin? CRS ☐ AKS ☐ Rivers ☐ Abia ☐ others specify.....
4. Are your parents alive? Both alive ☐ Father alive only ☐ mother alive only ☐
both dead ☐ don't know ☐
5. Do you know where your parents/relatives live Yes ☐ No ☐
6. How often do you visit home? Everyday ☐ More than once a week ☐ once a week
☐ once a month ☐ more than once a month ☐ Do not go to home ☐
7. Did you ever go to school? Yes ☐ No ☐
8. How long have you been living on the streets?
Two years ☐ 1-2 years ☐ 1-11 months ☐ <1 month ☐ Don't known ☐
9. Why did you leave your home to the street? (MAA) Abuse by Parents ☐ Abuse by
Stepmother/father ☐ Abuse by Master/Mistress ☐ Neglect/ Abandonment by
Parents ☐ Peer Pressure ☐ Poverty/to earn money ☐ Forced to attend school
☐ Wanted to be independent ☐ To join brother/ Sister ☐ Committed an Offence
at home ☐ Death of Parents ☐ Other specify.....
10. Why do you like living on the street? (MAA) Freedom ☐ Spending time with my
friends ☐ Earning money ☐ Play all day ☐ Act like an adult ☐ Members of
the public take care of me ☐

11. Have you ever been accused of being a witch? Yes ☐ No ☐
12. What were you accused of as witch? (MAA) Death of sickness of a family member ☐
Family Hardship/Bad luck ☐ Stubbornness ☐ other specify.....
13. How do you earn your living? (MAA) Begging ☐ Washing cars ☐ Selling old papers ☐ Temporal work in shops ☐ collecting plastic bottles ☐
Stealing/Robbery ☐ Carrying luggage in market ☐ Prostitution ☐ Picking metal scraps ☐ Washing plates in parks ☐ Sell pure water/Bus conductor ☐ Others specify.....
14. Do you consider yourself a threat to security in Calabar? Yes ☐ No ☐

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE
FOR
RESIDENTS OF CALABAR METROPOLIS

1. Are you aware of the incidents of street children in Cross River State?
2. What type of crimes do street children commit with Calabar metropolis?
3. In your opinion, do you think environmental factors influences street children to commit crime?
4. Is there a significant relationship between street children and national security?
5. What are the measures put in place by Cross River State government in managing the phenomenon of street children in Calabar metropolis?