



Original article

# Able-bodied beggars on the street: perceived determinants of their prevalence and their targeted land uses in Ibadan metropolis, Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

This study examined the perceptions of able-bodied beggars to factors responsible for their prevalence and the land uses they occupied for their activities in Ibadan metropolis, Nigeria. Data were obtained from 117 (18, 12, 46, 13 and 28 in the areas of Sango, Iwo Road, Sabo, Challenge and Oja Oba, respectively) randomly selected able-bodied beggars using a structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed using percentages, mean index, standard deviation, chi-square and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The study showed that 51.3% of the beggars were males; the youngest was 19 years old, while the oldest was 59 years. The average age of the beggars was 33 years. Further findings revealed that the average household size for the study area was 5, while the standard deviation was 2.6. The important perceived factors responsible for the prevalence of begging among the able-bodied beggars, measured on a 5-point Likert Scale, were homelessness (4.29), lack of skills for gainful employment (3.77), debt (3.64), meeting cost of education/children's education (3.64), inability to secure a job (3.52) and lack of food (2.97). The study further revealed that the prevalence of begging among able-bodied beggars varied with land uses. Against this background, it was concluded that the information obtained on the socio-economic attributes of able-bodied beggars, perceived determinants of their prevalence and their targeted land uses could be utilized by policy-makers and urban planners to proffer lasting solutions to the menace of begging.

KEY WORDS: able-bodied, beggars, determinants, poverty, land uses, Ibadan metropolis

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## 1. Introduction

Street begging has been a major social and environmental problem across towns and cities all over the world (JORDAN, 1999; KENNEDY & FITZPATRICK, 2001; LYNCH, 2005; REDDY, 2013; TAIWO, 2016; ABEGUNDE ET AL., 2016). Although, the problem of begging is a global phenomenon, it is more prominent

and least attended to in the developing nations. The situation becomes severe, especially in Nigeria, due to the present economic recession ravaging the country. The number of beggars, both able-bodied and disabled, has continued to increase on the streets. However, the concern of this study is the able-bodied beggars. Although, there are no reliable statistics as to how many able-bodied beggars are in Nigeria,

there is more than enough evidence that their number is relatively large going by daily encounters on the streets with this poverty-ridden people soliciting alms.

The term 'able-bodied', according to the [OXFORD DICTIONARY](#) (eighth edition, 2010), simply means to be physically healthy, fit and strong in contrast to somebody who is weak or disabled. Street begging, in the words of [MORTIMER](#) (2005), is asking for money without an exchange of service in a public place. This definition is not all inclusive to reveal all activities of the beggars. This is because beggars may approach people not necessarily for money only, but also for other necessities like food, clothes and other material possessions. Moreover, this activity may not necessarily take place in public places, it may take place anywhere. According to [OLAWALE](#) (2007), begging is seen as the habit of someone (a beggar) soliciting favour from others (potential donors) for survival and enrichment. The [INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION](#) (ILO) (2004) viewed begging as a range of activities whereby an individual asks a stranger for money on the basis of being poor or needing charitable donations for health or religious reason. What is common to the above definitions is that they have their orientations towards the act of asking people for something.

Studies on begging in Nigeria have classified beggars into different groups to reflect reasons why they take to the street soliciting alms. For instance, [AYAGI](#) (1997) categorized beggars into six types. These were: lepers, the blind and the crippled; disguised beggars; cultural beggars, including multiple-child bearing mothers and praise singers; the apparently maimed beggars; the Almajiris (young Qur'anic school boys), the young and the elderly. In a similar vein, [JELILI](#) (2009) in his classification, identified six categories of beggars: destitute and jobless beggars; disguised, occasional and unprofessional beggars; wanderers and professional beggars; unskilled, uncatered for female beggars; criminals in disguise and old age beggars. [ADEGBITE](#) (1997) identified four main categories of people who need help and may be involved in begging as: the distressed; the debtors; the poor and the needy, including orphans, the disabled and the ill; and wayfarers.

[OSA-EDOH & AYANO](#) (2012) observed four main factors contributing to the incidence of begging. These were: homelessness, unemployment, poverty and family rejection. Factors responsible for begging phenomenon are found in the breakdown of the

socio-economic formation of the country. Beggars in Nigeria are the victims of an unstable socio-economic structure. They are amongst the most vulnerable people in our society and are characterized with a low economic situation. Without a doubt, this is a human deprivation of the lowest extent, and it constitutes a threat to a healthy society. However, of all these factors listed, the fact remains that for an individual able-bodied beggar, none of the factors may be reasons for soliciting alms. This may also differ among the able-bodied beggars in Ibadan metropolis.

It is important to note that one of the concerns of this study is the targeted land use of able-bodied beggars. Land use simply refers to the use to which land is put. This use includes residential, commercial, educational, agricultural and so on. Urban land use comprises two elements: the nature of land use and the level of spatial accumulation ([RODRIGUE](#), 2009). The nature of land use has to do with activities that are taking place at a certain spatial unit, while the level of spatial accumulation indicates their intensity and concentration. [FAVOLE ET AL.](#), (2013) opined that central areas have a high level of spatial accumulation and corresponding land uses while peripheral areas have lower levels of accumulation.

Land use can be categorized into two: formal and functional. While formal land use is concerned with the qualitative attributes of space, such as form, pattern and aspect and is descriptive in nature, functional land use has to do with the economic nature of activities such as productive, consumption, residence and transport and is mainly a socio-economic description of space ([RODRIGUE](#), 2009).

The relationship between land use and street begging is drawn from the theory of [HARRIS & ULMAN](#) (1945) as articulated by multiple nuclei theory. The theory emerged because the Central Business District (CBD) was losing its dominant position and primacy as the nucleus of the urban area. This theory is based on the premise that large cities have a spatial structure that is predominantly *cellular*. This is a consequence of cities' tendencies to develop as many nuclei that serve as the focal point for agglomerative predispositions. It is believed by the theorists that not all urban growths radiate outward from the CBD. Instead, an urban area may have many centres of development, each of which reflects a particular urban need or activity. [AFON & TAIWO](#) (2016) observed that each of these centres attracts different urban

dwellers, including able-bodied beggars, to achieve diverse purposes.

The increasing problem of street begging in major urban centres of Nigeria has become a serious concern over the years (JELILI, 2006; FAWOLE ET AL., 2010; ABEGUNDE ET AL., 2016). The problem is evident in various ways. Beggars interrupt the free flow of traffic, constitute an economic threat to society and generate dirty materials either as waste or as part of their belongings (JELILI, 2006; TAIWO, 2016). In addition, some criminals hide under the disguise of being a beggar to achieve their malevolent deeds. These evil activities of those fake beggars constitute one of the root causes of societal insecurity in Nigerian cities (FAWOLE ET AL., 2011).

In an attempt to proffer lasting solutions to the above problems, policy-makers and urban planners have made frantic efforts, but they seem to be helpless to either resolve the menace of begging or to assist able-bodied beggars. The reason for the poor results is that the solutions offered emanated only from intuitions and the technical skills of the policy-makers and urban planners. Such solutions need to originate from information provided by the able-bodied beggars themselves. Therefore, the focus of this study is to document the socio-economic attributes of able-bodied beggars, the perceived

determinants responsible for the prevalence of begging and the land uses targeted for their operations. These are with a view to providing information that could assist policy-makers and urban planners to understand the positions of able-bodied beggars and the socio-economic and physical environment in which they operate in Ibadan metropolis, Nigeria.

## 2. The study area

Ibadan is the capital of Oyo State (Figures 1 and 2) and one of the famous Yoruba traditional urban centres whose urbanization predates colonialism in Nigeria. Ibadan was created in 1829 as a war camp for warriors coming from Oyo, Ile-Ife and Ijebu (MABOGUNJE, 1968, 1971). It is on longitude 7°22' and 7°40'E and latitude 3°53' and 4°10'N. Ibadan was initially occupied by immigrants, who moved into the city in search of security from intertribal wars (COKER ET AL., 2009). The city succeeded in becoming a large empire from around 1860s to 1890 and it witnessed a rapid growth when it became the Western Province Headquarters in 1939 (ONIBOKUN & KUMUYI, 1996; COKER ET AL., 2009). The built up area of Ibadan was 38.85 km<sup>2</sup> in 1935, 46.40 km<sup>2</sup> in 1955, 77.70 km<sup>2</sup> in 1965 and extended to 152.80 km<sup>2</sup> in 1977 and to 214 km<sup>2</sup> in 1988 (FADARE, 1997).

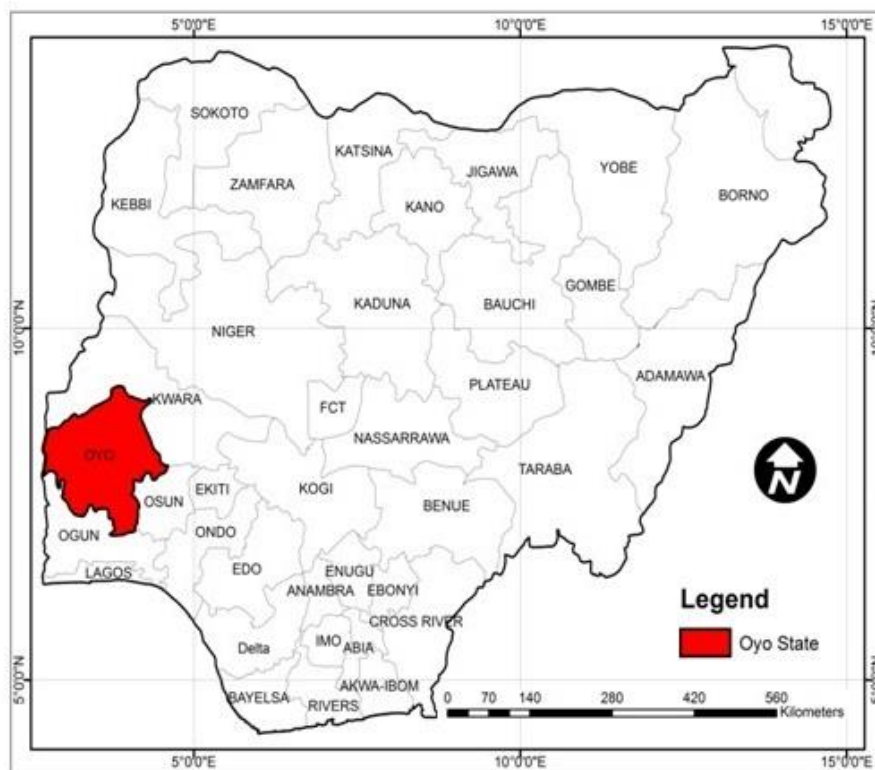


Fig. 1. Maps of Nigeria indicating Oyo State in the shaded portion (Source: Cooperative Information Network [COPINE], 2016)

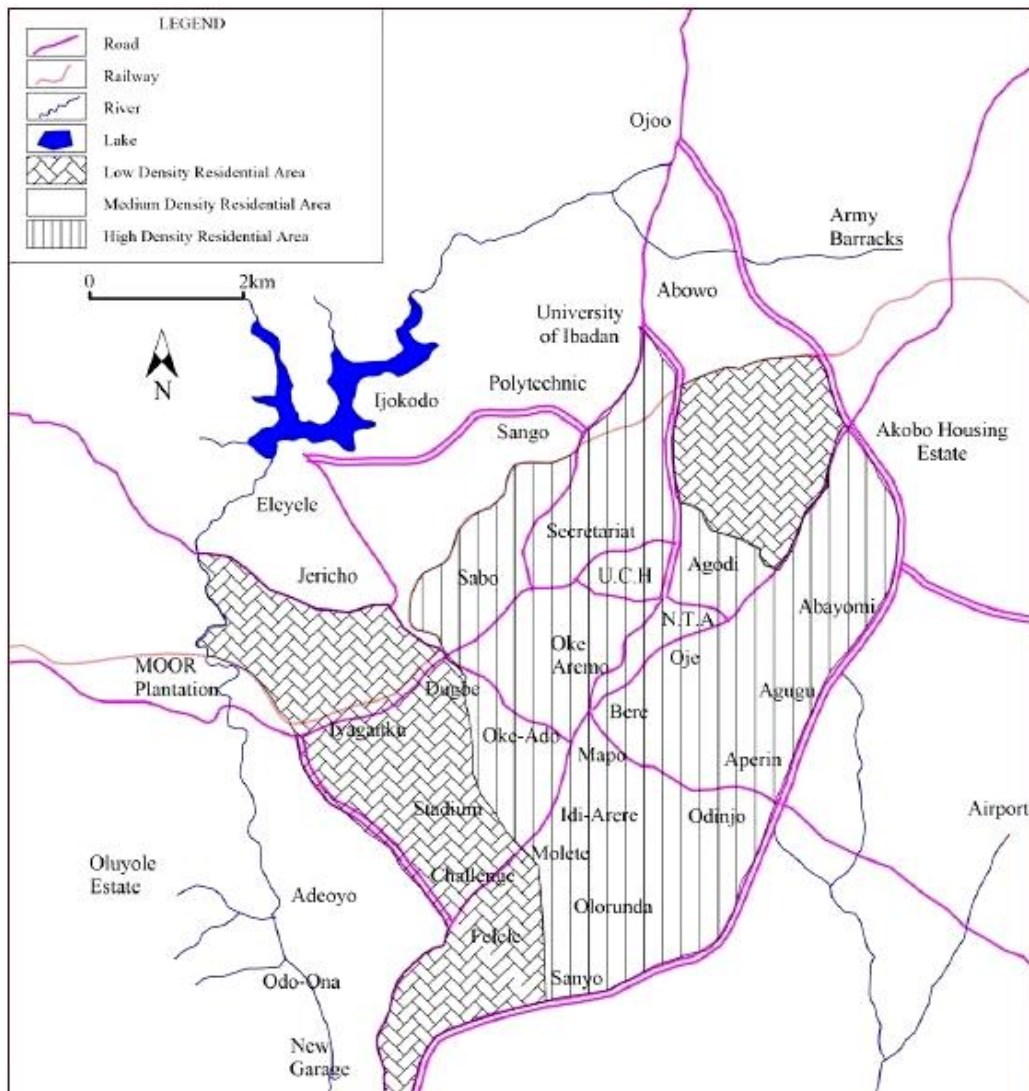


Fig. 2. Maps of Ibadan indicating the spatial structure (Source: Cooperative Information Network [COPINE], 2016)

There has been an incremental growth in the density and population of Ibadan. The city grew from a population size of 175,000 in 1890 to 200,000 in 1911, 238,075 in 1921, 459,196 in 1952, and 1,783,962 in 1981 (MABOGUNJE, 1968; AYENI, 1994) to 1,338,659 in 2006 (NPC, 2006). With the rapid population growth, physical and political expansion, development possibilities as well as urban problems of various forms and in varied complexities started. The national economic crisis and the decrease of public funds radically changed the landscape of the city. A general decay of urban facilities (roads, railway, water and electricity supply) and of social services (education and health) affected Ibadan like other Nigerian towns (AMUWO ET AL., 2001) with several social consequences. One of these social effects is the increasing number of able-bodied beggars

soliciting alms in different locations of the city. Some of these locations are Sabo, Sango, Oja Oba, Iwo Road and Challenge.

### 3. Methodology

The study employed primary data which were gathered through the use of a questionnaire administered on able-bodied beggars between the ages of 19 and 59 in five different locations where they congregated. The five locations were Sango, Iwo Road, Sabo, Challenge and Oja Oba. The data were collected within 500 metre radius of each location (see Fig. 3).

Through reconnaissance survey, 585 able-bodied beggars were estimated in the five locations with 90, 60, 230, 65 and 140, respectively. The head count



was conducted for seven days of the week at three different periods, namely morning (7am-9am), afternoon (1pm-3pm) and evening (5pm-7pm). These times were considered ideal as a result of the experience from the preliminary survey. The average was computed and used. Systematic sampling was employed to select the able-bodied beggars for the survey. One out of every five beggars (20%) was selected for sampling. This was after the first beggar had been picked randomly. Using this methodology, 18, 12, 46, 13 and 28 able-bodied beggars were surveyed, respectively in Sango, Iwo Road, Sabo, Challenge and Oja Oba. The sample size was 117 able-bodied beggars.

The data obtained revealed able-bodied beggars' socio-economic attributes, perceived determinants of begging prevalence and their targeted land uses. Statistics utilized for the socio-economic attributes of the able-bodied beggars were percentages, mean, standard deviation, chi-square and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). In order to know the perceived determinants of begging prevalence among the able-bodied beggars, able-bodied beggars were provided with a list of factors responsible for begging in the literature. To calculate BPI, beggars were instructed to rate each variable (factor) using one of the five ratings: *very important, important, just important, not important and not at all important*. Each of these was, respectively assigned with a

value of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1. The Summation of the Weight Value (SWV) for each variable was obtained through the addition of the products of the responses for each rating of the variables and their respective weighted values. This can be mathematically expressed thus:

$$SWV = \sum_{i=1}^5 X_i Y_i \quad \text{equ. (1)}$$

where:

BPI is the Beggars' Perception Index,  
SWV is the summation of weight value,  
 $X_i$  is the respondents rating of a particular variable (factor responsible for begging)  
 $Y_i$  is the weight value assigned to each variable

The Beggars' Perception Index (BPI) for each variable was arrived at by dividing the summation of weight value by the addition of the number of respondents to each of the five ratings. This is expressed mathematically as:

$$BPI = \frac{SWV}{\sum_{i=1}^5 X_i} \quad \text{equ. (2)}$$

The closer the BPI of a particular variable to 5, the higher the importance attached to that variable.

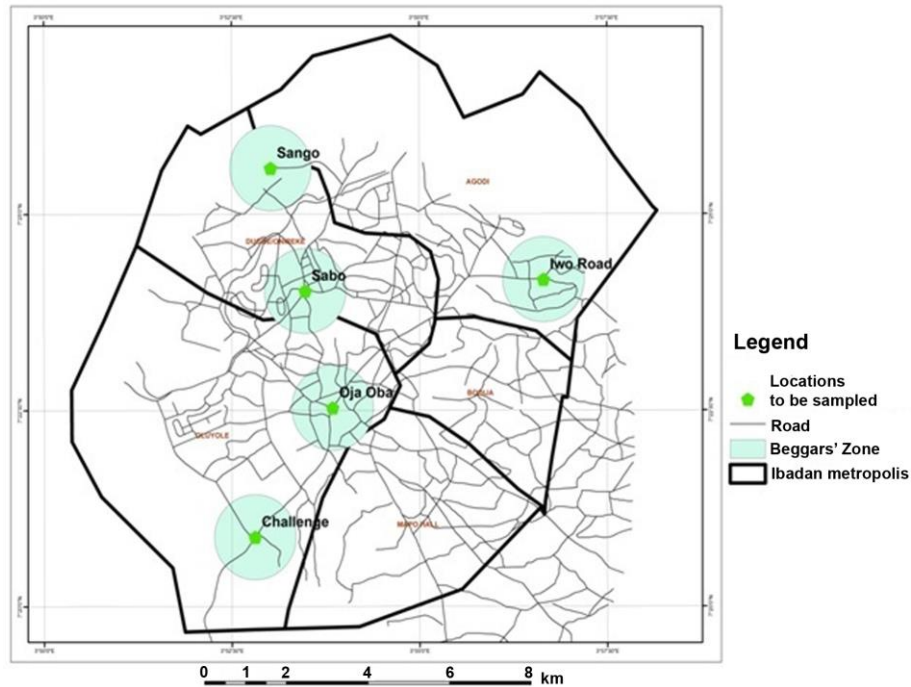


Fig. 3. Map of Ibadan metropolis indicating the locations of able-bodied beggars' (Source: Author's device, 2016)

## 4. Findings and discussions

### 4.1. Socio-economic attributes of the able-bodied beggars in Ibadan metropolis

The socio-economic attributes of the able-bodied beggars in Ibadan explained in this section include gender, age, marital status and income. Others are educational attainment and household size. Unless otherwise stated, tables in this section are the outcome of the authors' field survey of 2014.

From the summary presented in Table 1, the majority of the able-bodied beggars were males. Of the 117 able-bodied beggars sampled, 51.3% were males while their female counterparts represented 48.7%. This pattern is consistent with traditional family structure and gender role in Nigeria. Variation in the gender of able-bodied beggars across the five locations was not statistically significant. The result of Chi-square test ( $\chi^2 = 4.818$ ;  $P = 0.307$ ) confirmed this. This implied that there was no significant difference in the gender of able-bodied beggars in the five locations in Ibadan metropolis.

Closely related to gender is age. The average age of able-bodied beggars in Ibadan metropolis was 33 years. While the minimum age was 19 years, the maximum age of the able-bodied beggars was 59 years. The fact that the standard deviation of the age distribution was 9.7 indicated that the ages of the able-bodied beggars clustered around the mean. It was observed that 54.7% of the beggars were between 19 and 30 years of age. While 44.4% were 31-55 years, only a proportion of 0.9% of the beggars was 56 years and above. Therefore, it could be inferred that youths constituted the highest proportion of the able-bodied beggars in the study area. The implication of this is that the country is greatly losing the economic contributions of such people as well as jeopardizing their lives. This finding is consistent with the submission of ADUGNA (2006) that young people are more engaged in begging than the elderly. Variation in the five beggars' locations was confirmed by ANOVA test computed ( $F = 0.507$ ;  $P = 0.731$ ), which indicated that there was no significant difference in the age distribution of the able-bodied beggars.

Analysis performed on marital status of the able-bodied beggars revealed that 52.1% were married. This represented the highest proportion in the study area. While 39.3% were single, widow/widower represented just 8.5%. Dominance of married able-bodied beggars might be due to inability

to cater for the need of family members. This finding is in tandem with the outcome of OGUNKAN & FAWOLE (2009) in a similar study that begging is more of married persons than single. Differences in the five beggars' locations was confirmed by chi-square test computed ( $\chi^2 = 6.261$ ;  $P = 0.618$ ). This indicated that there was no significant difference in the marital status of the able-bodied beggars.

The income categorization in this study was adopted from TAIWO (2016) who grouped the income of beggars into five: ₦1-₦200, ₦201-₦400, ₦401-₦600, ₦601-₦800 and ₦801-₦1000. In this study, USD\$1 is taken to be equivalent of ₦360. Information obtained from able-bodied beggars indicated that the minimum income was ₦160. The maximum daily income realized from begging activity was ₦1000 while the mean income of the able-bodied beggars was ₦634.10. The variation in the amount of money made daily among able-bodied beggars was high. This was confirmed by the high value of the standard deviation (164.5). A proportion (53.8%) of the able-bodied beggars made a daily income of between ₦601 and ₦800. While 32.5% realized ₦401-₦600, 1.7% earned ₦201- ₦400 per day on average. The least proportion of 1.7% realized ₦1000 per day. It is quite interesting to note that 55.5% (53.8% and 1.7%) of the able-bodied beggars made more than ₦600 per day (more than ₦18,000 per month) (that is, more than USD\$50 per month). This is an income that is far more than the national minimum monthly wage in the public sector. It is important to note that the national minimum monthly wage in the public sector as at the time of data collection was ₦18,000. If this income is compared with to what is being earned in the public sector, it then follows that someone with no formal educational background, or at best a secondary school graduate, is earning as high as a university graduate in the public sector. This simple reason explains why able-bodied beggars are increasing daily on the streets of Nigerian urban centres. This may be the major reason why it is difficult for the government to get rid of the beggars from the streets. It is important to mention that the able-bodied beggars and begging will remain perpetually on the streets except very drastic efforts are made to eradicate them. However, irrespective of the huge income, the able-bodied beggars are not excluded from the larger group of urban poor. This is because, as put forward by SCHMIDT (2003), poverty is not only measurable in terms of economic, but must also be seen as multidimensional: social exclusion, hopelessness and stigmatization.

Table 1. Socio-economic attributes of able-bodied beggars

Socio-economic attributes	Able-bodied beggars' locations					Ibadan metropolis f(%)
	Sango f(%)	Iwo Road f(%)	Sabo f(%)	Challenge f(%)	Oja Oba f(%)	
Gender						
Male	5(27.8)	7(58.3)	26(56.5)	7(53.8)	15(53.6)	60(51.3)
Female	13(72.2)	5(41.7)	20(43.5)	6(46.2)	13(46.4)	57(48.7)
Total	18(100.0)	12(100.0)	46(100.0)	13(100.0)	28(100.0)	117(100.0)
Age						
19–30 (Youth)	10(55.6)	6(50.0)	29(63.0)	6(46.2)	13(46.4)	64(54.7)
31–55 (Young adult)	7(38.9)	6(50.0)	17(37.0)	7(53.8)	15(53.6)	52(44.4)
56 and above (adult)	1(5.6)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	1(0.9)
Total	18(100.0)	12(100.0)	46(100.0)	13(100.0)	28(100.0)	117(100.0)
Marital Status						
Married	11(61.1)	6(50.0)	21(45.7)	8(61.5)	15(53.6)	61(52.1)
Single	6(33.3)	4(33.3)	23(50.0)	4(30.8)	9(32.1)	46(39.3)
Widow/widower	1(5.6)	2(16.7)	2(4.3)	1(7.7)	4(14.3)	10(8.5)
Total	18(100.0)	12(100.0)	46(100.0)	13(100.0)	28(100.0)	117(100.0)
Income						
₦1–₦200	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	3(6.5)	2(15.4)	0(0.0)	5(4.3)
₦201–₦400	2(11.1)	2(16.7)	3(6.5)	1(7.7)	1(3.6)	9(7.7)
₦401–₦600	7(38.9)	4(33.3)	12(26.1)	4(30.8)	11(39.3)	38(32.5)
₦601–₦800	9(50.0)	6(50.0)	26(56.5)	6(46.2)	16(57.1)	63(53.8)
₦801–₦1000	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	2(4.3)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	2(1.7)
Total	18(100.0)	12(100.0)	46(100.0)	13(100.0)	28(100.0)	117(100.0)
Educational attainment						
No Formal Education	12(66.7)	7(58.3)	29(63.0)	6(46.2)	16(57.1)	70(59.8)
Primary school	5(27.8)	4(33.3)	13(28.3)	5(38.5)	5(17.9)	32(27.4)
Secondary school	1(5.6)	1(8.3)	4(8.7)	2(15.4)	7(25.0)	15(12.8)
Post-secondary school	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
Total	18(100.0)	12(100.0)	46(100.0)	13(100.0)	28(100.0)	117(100.0)
Household size						
Small (<=6)	12(66.7)	9(75.0)	32(69.6)	9(69.2)	23(82.1)	85(72.6)
Medium (7–10)	6(33.3)	3(25.0)	12(26.1)	4(30.8)	5(17.9)	30(25.6)
Large (>10)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	2(4.3)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	2(1.7)
Total	18(100.0)	12(100.0)	46(100.0)	13(100.0)	28(100.0)	117(100.0)

Among the able-bodied beggars surveyed, majority of them did not have formal education. This represented 59.8%. A proportion of 27.4% reported that they completed primary education, while the remaining 12.8% claimed they had secondary education. None of the able-bodied beggars had post-secondary education in the study area. The highest proportion of able-bodied beggars without formal education suggests a link between the cost of education and street begging. It appears that the government policy of Universal Basic Education (UBE) in Nigeria has made it possible for some of the beggars to complete primary school. However, as

they climb up to higher levels, it becomes expensive and they quit. It is important to say at this juncture that even the so called 'free education' in the country has hidden costs which makes it unaffordable for many people, including the able-bodied beggars. Although, there is no cost for tuition fees, there are often charges for school supplies and materials, uniform, extra-curricular activities and transportation. Poverty has eaten deep into the fabric of many families such that they cannot afford the costs (ILO, 2004). This accounted for one of the reasons why majority of able-bodied beggars did not have formal education.

Investigation into the household size of the able-bodied beggars indicated that 72.6% of them had a household size of less than or equal to 6. Those having a household size of between 7 and 10 represented 25.6%, while beggars with more than 10 were only 1.7%. The average household size for the study area was 5, while the standard deviation was 2.6. Variation across the five beggars' locations was not statistically significant. The result of ANOVA ( $F=0.454$ ;  $P=0.769$ ) confirmed this. Having examined the socio-economic attributes of the able-bodied beggars, it is imperative that the perceived determinants of the prevalence of begging prevalence among this category of people should be investigated. This is the focus of the next section.

#### 4.2. Perceived determinants of able-bodied beggars' prevalence in Ibadan metropolis

Beggars' Perception Index on the determinants of the prevalence of begging in the study area is presented in Table 2. The findings established that six out of fifteen variables of the perceived determinants of the prevalence of begging among the able-bodied beggars were predominant in the

study area. The most important determinant was *homelessness* with a BPI of 4.29. Others were *lack of skills for gainful employment*, *debt*, *meeting the cost of education/children's education*, *inability to secure a job* and *lack of food*. Their respective indices were 3.77, 3.64 each, 3.52 and 2.97 (in that order). The average beggars' perception index (**BPI**) for the study area was 2.83. It could be inferred from these findings that poverty was a very significant predisposing factor to begging prevalence among the able-bodied beggars. These findings are in line with previous studies, which suggest that these factors have been strongly and consistently related with begging in the developing nations of the world (OSA-EDOH & AYANO, 2012; TAIWO, 2016).

Determinants perceived to be highly responsible for able-bodied beggars taking to the streets in Sango included *homelessness* (4.61), *debt* (3.56) and *meeting the cost of education/children's education* (3.56). Others were *lack of skills for gainful employment* (3.39), *inability to secure a job* (3.00), *lack of food* (2.72), and *Inability to cope with city life* (2.72). The mean beggars' perception index (**BPI**) for Sango was 2.69.

Table 2. Beggars' Perception Index on the determinants of begging prevalence in Ibadan metropolis

Sango		Iwo Road		Sabo		Challenge		Oja Oba		Ibadan metropolis	
Factors	BPI	Factors	BPI	Factors	BPI	Factors	BPI	Factors	BPI	Factors	BPI
A	4.61	B	4.33	A	4.46	A	4.00	A	4.25	A	4.29
B	3.56	M	3.75	B	3.87	M	4.00	M	4.00	M	3.77
E	3.56	A	3.58	J	3.74	E	3.85	E	3.93	B	3.64
M	3.39	J	3.50	M	3.72	B	3.69	J	3.46	E	3.64
J	3.00	E	3.42	E	3.5	J	3.62	B	3.00	J	3.52
D	2.72	D	3.25	D	3.07	D	3.15	N	2.96	D	2.97
O	2.72	F	3.08	F	2.78	K	2.77	F	2.89	F	2.78
L	2.56	L	2.92	O	2.67	O	2.77	D	2.75	O	2.64
N	2.56	O	2.83	L	2.61	F	2.62	K	2.61	N	2.6
F	2.50	N	2.50	N	2.46	G	2.46	O	2.39	L	2.48
K	2.39	H	2.33	K	2.39	N	2.46	H	2.32	K	2.44
C	1.83	G	2.00	C	2.07	C	2.31	C	2.14	C	2.05
I	1.78	K	1.92	H	1.89	L	2.31	L	2.11	H	2
G	1.56	C	1.83	G	1.85	H	2.00	G	2.07	G	1.94
H	1.56	I	1.42	I	1.52	I	1.92	I	1.71	I	1.64
Total	40.3	Total	42.66	Total	42.6	Total	43.93	Total	42.59	Total	42.4
<b>BPI</b> = 2.69		<b>BPI</b> = 2.84		<b>BPI</b> = 2.84		<b>BPI</b> = 2.93		<b>BPI</b> = 2.84		<b>BPI</b> = 2.83	

Please Note: A = homelessness, B = Debt, C = flood and epidemics, D = lack of food, E = meeting cost of education/children's education, F = economic problem, G = lack of support from family members, H = family heritage, I = truancy and delinquency, J = inability to secure a job, K = unwillingness to work, L = culture and religion, M = lack of skills for gainful employment, N = being abandoned, O = inability to cope with city life.



In Iwo Road, the most important perceived determinant of begging prevalence among able-bodied beggars was *debt*. BPI of 4.33 was computed for the factor. Other determinants each with indices higher than the location's *BPI* mean were *meeting the cost of education/children's education* (3.75), *homelessness* (3.58), *inability to secure a job* (3.50), *meeting cost of education/children's education* (3.42) *lack of food* (3.25); *economic problems* (3.08); *culture and religion* (2.92).

Analysis of the perceived determinants influencing able-bodied beggars soliciting alms in Sabo followed a similar pattern with that of Sango. The most important perceived determinant was *homelessness* with BPI of 4.46. Others were *debt*, *inability to secure a job*, *lack of skills for gainful employment*, *meeting the cost of education/children's education* and *lack of food*. Indices of 3.87, 3.74, 3.72, 3.50 and 3.07 were, respectively computed for the determinants. The mean index (*BPI*) for Sabo was 2.84.

Those determinants perceived to be highly important to the beggars in Challenge were *homelessness* (4.00), *lack of skills for gainful employment* (4.00), *meeting the cost of education/children's education* (3.85), *debt* (3.69), *inability to secure a job* (3.62) and *lack of food* (3.15).

In Oja Oba, *homelessness* was also the most important perceived determinant of the prevalence of begging. The index represented 4.25. Other perceived determinants with their respective indices

higher than the location's *BPI* mean were *lack of skills for gainful employment*, *meeting the cost of education/children's education*, *inability to secure a job*, *debt*, *being abandoned* and *economic problems*. Their indices were 4.00, 3.93, 3.46, 3.00, 2.96 and 2.89, respectively.

#### 4.3. Targeted land uses of able-bodied beggars in Ibadan metropolis

Presented in Table 3 was the targeted land use analysis of able-bodied beggars in the study area. Able-bodied beggars were most concentrated in commercial land use (market). This accounted for a proportion of 41.3%. While religious land use ranked second with 30.5%, places with a traffic jam (transport land use) was ranked third with 21.6%. The least land use was residential, which accounted for only 6.6%. The reason for the high concentration of able-bodied beggars in commercial land use is because it is known for different activities and is usually crowded with people who can be generous enough to part with their money. As observed in the course of the survey, religious land use, especially the mosque, was a good and convenient spot for able-bodied beggars to solicit people for alms. Places with a traffic jam, such as junctions, roads with pot holes and speed breakers (bumps) attracted able-bodied beggars as they were taking advantage of these poorly managed areas to beg.

Table 3. Targeted land uses of able-bodied beggars

Land uses	Able-bodied beggars' locations					
	Sango f(%)	Iwo Road f(%)	Sabo f(%)	Challenge f(%)	Oja Oba f(%)	Ibadan metropolis f(%)
Commercial use	17(44.7)	13(36.1)	47(39.5)	13(38.2)	36(46.2)	126(41.3)
Religious use	13(34.2)	10(27.8)	33(27.7)	9(26.5)	28(35.9)	93(30.5)
Residential use	2(5.3)	5(13.9)	6(5.0)	4(11.8)	3(3.8)	20(6.6)
Places of traffic jam	6(15.8)	8(22.2)	33(27.7)	8(23.5)	11(14.1)	66(21.6)
Total	38*(100.0)	36*(100.0)	119*(100.0)	34*(100.0)	78*(100.0)	305*(100.0)

Note\* These figures are higher than the total number surveyed because of multiple responses allowed

It was observed that the targeted land uses of able-bodied beggars varied across different locations. Commercial land use accounted for 46.2% in Oja Oba. This represented the highest proportion when compared to other locations in the study area. The same use accounted for the lowest (36.1%) in Iwo

Road. Similarly, religious locations (35.9%), places with a traffic jam (transport) (27.7%) and residential (13.9%) land uses had the highest proportions in Oja Oba, Sabo and Iwo Road, but recorded the lowest percentages of 26.5%, 14.1% and 3.8% in Challenge and Oja Oba, respectively. The variation

in the concentration of able-bodied beggars across different land uses is an indication that the use to which a land is put determines the number of beggars attracted to such land.

What can also be observed in the pattern above is that the prevalence of begging is not only a function of urban land use but also of urban physical attributes, that is, attributes of space expressed in terms of form, pattern, formal attributes and socio-economic activities of space, such as production, and consumption, among others. Therefore, variation in location, physical and socio-economic characteristics play a significant role in the difference in prevalence of street begging. For instance, the dominance of able-bodied beggars in the commercial land use of Oja Oba was a result of its location and socio-economic significance. It is important to note that Oja Oba is the nerve centre of the transport and trading network in Ibadan. Located close to the commercial centre (market) was Oja Oba central mosque. Road corridors in the area were terribly cramped and encroached with informal business activities and traffic movement. Thus, these attributes explain the reason for the high prevalence of able-bodied beggars and other street persons in Oja Oba. Conversely, the low percentage of beggars observed in the commercial land use of Iwo Road was attributed to the fact that the area, though relatively commercial, was a medium residential zone with some degree of physical order.

## 5. Conclusion and recommendations

This study concluded that the information obtained on the socio-economic attributes of able-bodied beggars, perceived determinants of their prevalence and their targeted land uses could be utilized by policy-makers and urban planners to proffer lasting solutions to the menace of begging.

In the light of the findings of this study, it was established that majority of the able-bodied beggars were illiterate youths. Able-bodied street begging in the study area was perceived to be associated with such determining factors as homelessness, lack of skills for gainful employment, debt, meeting the cost of education/children's education, inability to secure a job and lack of food. Again, it was established that certain land uses and locations were better targets and generators of able-bodied beggars than others. For instance, the spatial analysis revealed that able-bodied beggars concentrated most in commercial and religious

land uses of Oja Oba area. This was attributed to the fact that Oja Oba market was close to the central mosque. In addition, road corridors in the area were awfully congested and encroached with informal business activities and traffic movement. However, these attributes mirror a lack of proper planning and organization. The inference that can be drawn from this is that the lack of proper planning and organization of urban land uses or activities generates varying urban social problems, including street begging.

In the context of the findings of this study, it is recommended that, since meeting the cost of education/children's education, inability to secure a job and lack of skills for gainful employment were important determinants of able-bodied beggars taking to the street to beg, free and compulsory education opportunity is considered indispensable to tackle the problem of begging. Policy-makers should, therefore, initiate policy measures to ensure that all youths of relevant ages are included in compulsory education and that education is provided practically without charges. Policy measures should embrace educational opportunities, such as formal schooling, vocational training, regulation and certification of flexible schooling schemes. These are very important because an educated person and employed citizenry are bound to form an infertile environment for social maladies and vices to thrive and triumph (OKOKO 2008). If all of these are properly put in place, they will provide opportunities for formal and non-formal education as well as apprenticeship training for the able-bodied beggars to realize their ambitions and goals in life.

It has also been established that begging was prevalent because of homelessness, debt and lack of food. These are some of the indicators of abject poverty in any society. Therefore, policy-makers are encouraged to proffer solutions to the problem of poverty in the country by focusing on poverty reduction programmes and strategies that will have a direct bearing on able-bodied beggars. These programmes and strategies can be in the form of provision of adequate and standard infrastructure and social services, such as housing, schools, functional and livable environment, among others.

Urban planners can also play a big role in dispelling able-bodied beggars from different land uses they occupied by focusing on the development control exercise. Proper planning and organization of land use activities must be prioritized. This will go a long way in abating the menace.

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