

Becoming a Street Child in Poverty Ridden Society: A Descriptive Case of Kaduna Metropolis, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT Poverty has been identified as one of the major problems in the developing countries, including Nigeria. Its effect on development is multifaceted, especially on human development and formation. Due to the present economic and social situation, the family institution is in great difficulty of coping with its function of child rearing and upbringing of its young members. The inability of the family to perform its function in this regard has led to the uncoordinated activities of children, leading to fleeing homes to fend for themselves, an act, which has generated several armies of children and youth on the streets. This problem appears to be increasing daily, which requires immediate attention towards addressing the issue. Against this background, this paper focuses on a scholarly examination and description of the street children phenomenon in Kaduna metropolis, one of the major cities in Nigeria. The paper specifically describes the scenario and classification of street children, their social, psychological and physical dispositions. It also points out the social/structural factors closely associated with the etiology of street children in the metropolis, and its impeding dangers on the society and the children in particular. However, this discourse strongly revealed that the root cause of street children phenomenon is embedded in the nature of the societal functioning, rather than in the children themselves. Following this, the author suggests some pragmatic approaches towards alleviating the problem, among which the religious and society based remedies are recommended.