

BRACING THE ODDS IN THE FACE OF DOUBLE TRAGEDY: THE DILEMA OF STREET TRADING IN IBADAN METROPOLIS OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

As a core component of the informal economy in Africa, street trading has been noted to account for a large proportion of those employed in the informal. However, despite its attendant benefit, it has been plagued by the dilemma of double tragedy in Nigeria generally and Ibadan in particular. These tragedies are in the forms of the danger of the road and harassment by government officials. With Ibadan Metropolis as our unit of analysis, this study sought a systematic elucidation of the phenomenon of street trading, within the confines of the aforementioned. Three hundred questionnaires were administered for the purpose of generating primary data and 280 were retrieved. Also, a total of 15 traders were interviewed, 5 each from the three location (Ojoo, Iwo Road and Challenge) chosen for the purpose of the study. Findings of the study established that roads in Ibadan constitute enormous danger to street trading. It also revealed the veracity of harassment by government officials. Similarly, findings showed that the struggle for survival, exacerbated by pervasive and endemic poverty have kept traders on the street, despite the attendant dangers surrounding the enterprise.

KEYWORDS: Street Trading, Danger, Harassment, poverty, Ibadan, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Street trading is widely regarded as the most significant aspect and a core component of the informal economy in Africa (Jimu, 2006), accounting for sixty percent of all urban jobs in the continent (Skinner, 2010:214-215). In Nigeria, the informal economy accounts for about a third of the 50 million labor force out of the 123.9 million people in 1999 (Adeyinka, et.al, 2006:5), who are actively engaged in mostly retail trading such as, the operation of front shops, stalls, kiosks, or hawking (Simon, 1998). Street trading activities has become a permanent feature of most of urban and semi-urban centers in the country, such as Lagos, Ibadan, Osogbo, Aba, Onitsha, Kano, Maiduguri and Abuja (Oyerinde, 2001). However, in spite of inhere benefits of street trading- means of livelihood and economic growth (Cross, 1995; Witt, 2008; Chen, 2001), the activities of street trading in Nigeria is bedeviled by what can be termed a double tragedy. The first tragedy relates to the dangers posed by the roads to street trading activities and its

operation on daily bases. The second is the tragedy of government's alienation, harassment, and abandonment.

Street traders in Nigeria are forced to operate in high risk and unfriendly environment, in which they are constantly exposed to hazardous conditions that most often results in bodily harm, injures and even death. This is not unexpected, in a country where the road environment is dominated by largely illiterate, inexperienced, often drunk, over confident drivers, who operating poorly maintained vehicles on equally poorly designed and ill-maintained roads, have succeeded in transforming the roads into arenas of tears, blood and death (Onakomaiya, 1988). According to Gbadamosi (2006), a total of 69,248 road accidents were recorded within the period of 200-2005 in the country. Similarly, Adewumi (2009) estimated that an average of twenty-five people (excluding pedestrians) die every day as a result of road accidents in Nigeria, thus, making auto accident the second most important cause of death in the country (Odeleye, 2000:212), with street traders often at the receiving end. It goes without saying therefore, that attempts at earning a living through street trading under these circumstances no doubt become a dangerous and risky enterprise.

Precarious as this situation seems, it is however, instructive to note that in their struggle for survival and livelihood, street traders have continually braced the odds, making up their minds to co-habit with death, befriending and loving the tragedy of the road so much so that it would appear that they deliberately never stay out of harm's way. The above scenario is vividly captured in the words of a street trader who averred that:

What will be will be, even if you are in your bedroom, if it is one's destiny to die here (on the road) so be it. I cannot stop my business because people have died trading on the streets. Then how do I take care of my family when there is no shop for me to display my goods? (Umahi, et.al, 2010).

The situation is even more exacerbated by the indignity and inhuman treatment being meted on street traders by government officials. Constant harassments, arrests, detention, violent evictions, multiple taxation and levies, as well as confiscation of their wares by government agents has further compounded the harrowing experiences witnessed by street vendors form time to time. These actions are often justified by the state on the ground that street traders, aside endangering their own lives, encroaches on public space, perpetrate crimes, and engender infrastructural deterioration, thus, constituting social menace. Donovan, in his study of street trading activities in Bogota, Colombia, captures the hapless plight of an average trader in the hands of government officials. This is how he summed it up:

Her work on the street is hazardous... the police often seize her goods, physically mistreat her... she frequently pays local strongmen to work in public space, if she fails to comply; her business may be shut down (Donovan, 2008:40).

Despite these tragedies, it is instructive to note that, rather abate the phenomenon of street trading has spiraled into an enigma of monumental proportion, exacerbated as it seems by pervasive poverty and wide spread unemployment. The task of this study therefore, includes a critical examination of the extant conditions responsible for the upsurge of street trading in Nigeria generally, and Ibadan metropolis in

particular; the danger posed by the roads and the risks encountered by street traders; the nature and dimension of official harassments and its impact on the phenomenon; explore strategies for incorporating and harnessing the benefits of street trading.

Research Objectives

The specific objectives of the research are as follows:

- Examine the dangers posed by the roads on street trading activities in Ibadan.
- Examine the nature and type of hazards/risks encountered by street traders in Ibadan.
- Examine the nature and extent of harassment of street traders by government agents.
- Explore the factors responsible for the upsurge of street trading activities in Ibadan.

Research Questions

- What are the dangers pose by the roads on street trading activities in Ibadan?
- What are the various types of hazards/risks encountered by street traders in Ibadan?
- What are the dimensions and extent of harassments experience by street traders in the hands of government officials?
- Why have the traders continue in this line of business, despite the tragedies?

LITERATURE REVIEW

African roads have always been associated with danger, devastation and desolation right from the colonial era. Masquelier in her study of the Mawri villagers of Southern Niger, documents the nostalgic and harrowing experiences of danger, dissipation, blood and death associated with road construction under the French colonial administration. She therefore argued that, 'rather than serving as pathways to prosperity and education, roads (in Africa) become deceptive traps that maim and kill their prey' (Masquelier, 2002:829- 842). In his book entitled "Riding the Demon: on the road in West Africa", Chilson described the road in Africa as being 'about blood and fear..., where car wrecks are as common as mile markers. And the remains stay in place for months or years'. He contends further that:

The road in Africa is more than a direction, a path to take. After you've paid the passage and taken your seat, the road becomes the very concern, the center of life over every mile, a place where you realize, suddenly, that you have surrendered everything. Even the right to survive (Chilson, 1999:11-12).

The dangers of the road in relation to street trading have also been documented in the literature. Odeleye (2000:210) describes the road in Nigeria as being characterized by 'bushy environment, pot holes, black-spots; poor visibility due to lack of street lights at night'. This according to him creates traffic bottlenecks which often encourages road traffic congestions, accident, air, visual and noise pollution. Arguing further he noted the deplorable and unsafe state of road traffic environment and the danger it poses on children (who constitute a significant proportion of street traders/hawkers) in Nigeria. According to him, the unsafe nature of the Nigerian roads has increased the vulnerability, helplessness and endangered the lives of many children. In her study of the girl street hawker in Kano, Nigeria, Umar (2009), also documents the dangers of the roads to these category of street traders. She submitted that the girl trader is exposed to sexual harassment, molestation and abuse. The attendant outcome of this experience is the tendency to become streetwise (imbibing antisocial and criminal behaviors), with the likelihood of graduating into commercial sex worker.

The danger of the roads on street trading has equally been captured in the works of Umahi et.al (2010), characterizing it as an inevitability of injuries and death. Their survey of accident cases in Lagos and Edo states in 2009 depicts several cases of injuries and death involving street traders. They therefore describe the act of street trading as a dangerous decision to 'co-habit or dine with death'. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), in a survey of over 700 informal traders conducted along border posts in South Africa, found evidences of harassment and sexual exploitation of women by border officials (UNIFEM, 2010). Ekponyong and Sibiri (2011:44), in their study of street trading and child labor in Yenegoa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria, noted that 'street trading is associated with a number of dangers, including kidnapping, accidents and the influence of negative or criminal peer groups'. Onyenechere (2011) draws a correlation between the activities of street traders and increase risk or hazard on Nigerian roads. According to her the waste generated by the activities of street traders defaces the street and clog drainages. These actions concomitantly stimulates 'traffic obstruction and nuisances even road accidents.

Governments and their agents have always come up with myriad of reasons in the attempt to justify their harassments and molestation of street traders. Some of the frequently cited excuses include the desire to keep our cities clean, preventing traders from constituting social menace to the general public, the need to allow easy and free flow of traffic, as well as guaranteeing security. Cross (2003:39), however, situates the basis of traders' harassment on the propagation of the modernist ideals, as imbibed or shared by the elites, particularly in Third World countries. As he argues the approximation of modernization with westernization by these elites creates the impression that 'the presence of large street markets was the clearest sign of the 'disorder' and 'willfulness' of the informal economy that needed to be stamped out. Bromley (2000:12) account also corroborates Cross argument. He argued that there appears to be a widely held belief or perception that street trading is a 'manifestation of both poverty and underdevelopment' thus; its disappearance is viewed as progress'. As such 'aggressive policing (of street traders) is particularly notable just before major public and tourist events, on the assumption that orderly streets improve the image of the city to visitors'.

Agbo (2010), observed that in Abuja, Nigeria, street traders have always been victims of 'persistent raid carried out by agents of the government'. The reason has always been the desire to make Abuja an 'exceptionally neat capital city compared to any modern city anywhere in the world'. In South Africa Nesvag (2000), notes that street traders were particularly harassed by the apartheid regime as part of the strategy of preventing Africans from taking control of public space. Similarly, Rogerson and Hart (1989:32) argued that South African urban authorities 'fashioned and refined some of the most sophisticated set of anti-street trader measures anywhere in the developing world', that allows for the continued 'repression, persecution and prosecution' of street traders up till the early 1980s.

In Tanzania, Nnkya (2006) documents the harassment of street traders by the government in the mid-1970s. She noted that traders operating in the capital city were forcibly evicted to villages on the coast; under the guise that street trading activities undermines socialist principles. Mitullah (2006), noted that the lack of right to trading space and operation sites of street traders have also been the basis for evictions. As she noted, because most spaces traders occupy are considered illegal, it usually leads to evictions and in most cases charging of daily fee without providing any legal protection. Transberg Hansen (2004:68) identifies a leadership change in the local authority as a key reason for evictions of traders in Lusaka. In Ghana, King (2006:17), observed a similar situation. She noted that the new system of decentralization

where there are more frequent changes in the local authorities leads to eviction of street traders which is seen as 'a common way to impress the public '. In Zimbabwe, Potts (2007:270) notes that street traders were removed just before Harare hosted the Non-Aligned Movement Conference in 1984.

Suharto (2003), in his study of street trading in Bandung city of Indonesia also found evidence of harassment of street traders in relation to the occupation of 'illegal space'. According to him, the operation of street trading activities in 'areas that can be classified as public spaces and originally not intended for trading purposes...makes these traders victims of harassment and threats from police and other government authorities'. Suharto showed that municipality government continually use 'clearance' operations to remove street traders from Bandung five busiest areas of the city; "the Alun-alun square and the street of Asia Africa, Dalem, Kaum, Kapatihan and Yogyakarta and Sleman also tend to capitalize on the 'illegal space' argument to adopt relocation policy in evicting street traders. He therefore concluded that situations of these nature increases the level of vulnerability faced by street traders in their daily activities. A similar situation was observed by Kayuni and Tambulasi (2009:87), in their documentation of government harassment of street traders in Malawi, they, noted the 'extreme use of force 'in the relocation of street traders to new location in an operation code named Dongosolo (Chichewa word which means 'order'), effected under watchful eyes of 'heavily armed police', with a further threat to use the army, if resistance continues.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Given the nature of the questions we seek answer to in this study, the political economy approach as an analytical framework that recognizes "the intermeshing of so called political, economic and social factors of change in one on-going historical process" recommends itself (Gutkind and Wallesteing 1976:7). The approach developed in relation to the need "integrate both political and social factors as explanatory elements in economy analysis (Aina, 1986:10). And as Ake (1997:17), rightly submitted the political economy approach "treat social life and material existence in their relatedness". According to Samon (1982:8) it is a conceptual framework that focuses on conflicts, that assumes there are systematic connections among productions, power, stratifications and ideas; that asserts that outcomes are neither largely structurally determined nor largely the result of individual behavior; that regards history as dialectical and contradictory; and that presumes that both the dialectical and the contradictions can be understood.

From these conceptual perspectives, political underscores the central importance of the mode of production and relations of production as a major causal factor in social phenomenon (Onimode, 1985:7). Thus an examination of the socio-economic and political development process in the international system provides a useful back ground for the analysis of street trading and the tragedies of the roads and official harassment. The role of capitalism, the importance of politics in resources allocation, the place of material well being in the determination of man's consciousness, the factor of culture and social relations are all realities. The political economy approach, thus permits the casting off of analytical strait-jackets and hence a closer approximation of reality (Ibid). Political economy is therefore, the science of the development of socio-production, that is, economic relations between people. It clarifies the law governing production, distribution, exchange and consumption of material wealth in human society at various stages of its development (Nikitin, 1983:24).

In Nigeria, consequent upon the eventual integration of the country into the global capitalist framework as a compradorial and dependent formation, and consolidating on the inherited colonial structure, the post-colonial state broadened the basis of capitalist accumulation to include the Nigerian political class (Nnoli, 1981; Bangura, 1991; Adedeji, 1993; Olukohi, 1995). This class, in their unbridled quest for primitive accumulation, carried out through autocratic rule that ensured the privatization of public resources, plunged the country into a national economic crisis. The manifestation of the economic crisis in the forms of poverty and increased unemployment, created an aura of apathy, cynicism and disillusionment on the part of the masses against the political class, owing to their increased vulnerability, marginalization and abandonment. Efforts at tackling the crisis through policies such as the Stabilization Act (1982) and the Structural Adjustment Programme (1986), deepened, rather resolve the crisis. The outcome of these policies (especially SAP), engendered an environment of declining industrial capacity utilization, deteriorating external lending conditions, increased interest rates and scarcity of loans and investible funds (Momoh and Adejumbi, 1995). Similarly, all forms of government subsidies and social welfare benefits were withdrawn, and many public workers retrenched in the name of 'downsizing'. The palpable consequences were the decline and irregular nature of social infrastructure, low quality education, job loss and factory closure, internal and external financial imbalances, depreciating value of the naira, mounting local and external debt, growing poverty, increased unemployment and underemployment, vulnerability to communicable diseases, political instability and rapid rural-urban migration (Jega, 2003, Babalola, 1996; Adejumbi, 2000). Left with no government to turn to for assistance, most Nigerian took their destinies in their hands, bracing all odds and challenges in their struggle for survival. For the millions who have either been retrenched from their jobs, or whose income can no longer support the basic necessities of life, the informal sector, particularly street trading provided hope and succor, owing to its low financial entry requirement (Meagher and Yunusa, 1996; Meagher, 1996). Our contention therefore, is that most of the people engaged in street trading do so out of the need to survival rather a matter of choice.

Study Area

Ibadan is the capital of Oyo State and the third largest metropolitan area in Nigeria, after Lagos and Kano. The population of Ibadan according to the 2006 census is 1,338,659. Ibadan is located in South-western Nigeria, 128km inland northeast of Lagos and 530km Southwest of Abuja, the federal capital. Geographically, Ibadan is located in Southwestern Nigeria about 120 km east of the border with the Republic of Benin, with a populated density of 2,144.5/sq mi (828/km²). The city ranges in elevation from 150 m in the valley area, to 275 m above sea level on the major north-south ridge which crosses the central part of the city. The principal inhabitants of the city are the Yoruba people most of whom are predominantly Christian and Muslims. However, owing to urbanization and the rapid influx of people from other parts of the country, Ibadan has now become heterogeneous comprising Igbo, Hausa and other minority tribes.

Methodology

The data needs for this study were derived from primary and secondary source. The survey involved the use of unstructured interview and structured questionnaire. A total of 300 structured questionnaires were administered directly to respondent in Ojoo, Iwo Road, and Challenge areas of Ibadan. These areas were chosen because of their economic vibrancy, heavy traffic and high concentration of street traders. The

accidental sampling technique was adopted in the administered of the questionnaires. A total of 280 of the 300 questionnaires were retrieved. Also, a total number of 15 traders were interviewed, five from each of the aforementioned areas. Library and archival documents, including text books newspapers and magazines constitute the main sources of secondary data. Data were subjected to content analysis and simple percentages.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This section presents the analysis of data collected.

Table 1: Respondents by Sex

Description of Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	172	61.4
Female	108	38.6
Total	280	100

Table 1 shows that 172 (61.4%) of the respondents were male while 108(38.6%) were female. This table suggests that more male responded to the questionnaire than female. The outcome of the findings is however, not to suggest that more male are involved in street trading in Ibadan. Rather, it only confirmed the disposition and willingness of men towards filling questionnaires and answering questions for research purposes.

Table 2: Age Description

Description of Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
>18	-	-
18-45	194	69.2
46-55	72	25.7
55 Above	14	5.0
Total	280	100

The age description of respondents as indicated in table 2 shows that those under 18 years were not among those that filled the questionnaire. However, 194 (69.2%) of the respondents were between the 18-45 years age bracket, while 72 (25.7%) were of the 46-55 years range. Lastly 14 (5%) indicated their age bracket to be between 55 years and above.

Table 3: Marital Status

Description of Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Single	120	42.9
Married	90	32.1
Divorced	36	12.9
Widowed	34	12.1
Total	280	100

The marital status of the respondents in table 3 above indicates that 120 (42.9%) were single, 90(32.1%) are married. Also, 36 (12.9%) indicated that they have been divorced, while the remaining 34 (12.1%) have been widowed. This findings above, is a clear indication that majority of the people involved in street trading activities are most young school leavers, unable to secure employment in the formal sector. This further validates our findings on the age distribution of respondents, where it was observed that most of them were within 18-45 age brackets.

Table 4: Educational Status

Description of Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Primary	18	6.4
Secondary	70	25.0
Tertiary	150	53.6
Non-formal/Quranic	42	15.0
Total	280	100

Table 4 shows that 18 (6.4%) of the respondents had primary education, 70 (25%) had secondary education, 150 (53.6%) had post secondary or tertiary education, while the remaining 42 (15%) had non-formal/ quranic education. This finding validates our submission on table 3 above, that most of the street traders were young people that were either still in school or has left.

Research Question 1: Danger(s) Posed by the Road

Table 5: Respondents Assessment of the Dangers of the Road

Description of Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	222	79.3
No	58	20.7
Total	280	100

Table 5 shows that 222 (79.3%) were of the opinion that the road poses a danger to street trading while 58 (20.7%) did not perceive the road as posing any danger to street trading.

Table 6: Awareness of the risk(s) associated with Street Trading

Description of Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	234	83.6
No	46	16.4
Total	280	100

Table 6 shows that 234 (83.6%) of the respondents indicated that they were aware of the hazards or risks associated with trading on the roads, while 46 (16.4%) indicated that they were ignorant of the hazards of the roads to trading activities.

Research Question 2: Hazards Encountered on the Roads by Street Traders.

Table 7: Risks Encountered on the Roads

Description of Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Injuries, due to road accident	112	40.0
Death due to road accident	40	14.2
Sexual Harassment	54	19.2
Molestation	57	20.3
Rape	12	4.2
Kidnapping	5	1.8
Others	-	-
Total	280	100

The table 7 shows that 112 (40%) of respondents indicated that injuries due to road accidents is the most common risk encountered by traders, 40 (14.2%) indicated death due to road accidents. For 54 (19.2%) of the respondents sexual harassment is indicated as the risk commonly encountered, while 57 (20.3%) indicated molestation, while 12 (4.2%) indicated rape and 5 (1.8%) indicated kidnapping.

Table 8: Rate of Occurrence

Description of Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Very high	26	9.3
High	84	30.0
Moderate	140	50.0
Low	30	10.7
Total	280	100

Table 8 on the rate of the occurrence of these encounters shows that 26 (9.3%) indicated a very high rate, 84 (30%) indicated high rate, while 140 (50%) indicated moderate rate and 30 (10.7%) low rate.

Research Question 3: Nature and Extent of Harassment of Street Traders by Government Officials

Table 9: Experienced Harassment

Description of Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	234	83.6
No	46	16.4
Total	280	100

Table 9 sought to find out the number of respondents that have experienced harassment in the hands of government officials at one time or the other. Findings revealed that 234 (83.6%) indicated they have been harassed, while 46 (16.4%) indicated they have not been harassed.

Table 10: Official(s) Responsible for Harassment

Description of Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Law enforcement agents	172	61.4
State government officials	22	7.9
Local government officials	86	30.7
Others	-	-
Total	280	100

Table 10 shows that 172 (61.4%) of the respondents indicated they have been harassed by law enforcement agents, while 22 (7.9%) indicated state government officials and 86 (30.7%) indicated local government officials. The outcome of this finding indicates that traders are like to experience harassments more in the hands of law enforcement agents.

Table 11: Frequency of Occurrence

Description of Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Very often	128	45.7
Once in a while	130	46.4
Not at all	22	7.9
Total	280	100

Table 11 shows that 128 (45.7%) indicated these harassments happens very often, while 130 (46.4%) indicated once in a while and 22 (7.9%) indicated not at all.

Table 12: Nature of Harassment(s)

Description of Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Wares destroyed	37	13.2
Wares confiscated	28	10.0
Arrest	165	58.9
Extortion	39	13.9
Violent eviction	11	3.9
Others	-	-
Total	280	100

Table 12 shows that 37 (13.2%) indicated destruction of their wares, while 28 (10%) indicated wares being confiscated, 165 (58.9%) indicated arrest as the nature of harassment. For 39 (13.9%) of the respondents extortion was identified as the nature of harassment, while 11 (3.9%) indicated violent eviction. The most common forms of harassments as revealed by the finding are indiscriminate arrest and extortion.

Research Question 4: Persistence of Street Traders despite Challenges

Table 13: Reason(s) for Continued Trading

Description of Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Unemployed	74	26.4
Survival	138	49.3
Lack of shop	22	7.9
High rent	26	9.3
Quick sales	18	6.4
Others	1	.7
Total	280	100

Table shows that 74 (26.4%) indicated unemployment as the reason for their continued trading on the street despite the numerous challenges. For 138 (49.3%) the reason indicated was survival, while 22 (7.9%) indicated lack of shop, another 26 (9.3%) indicated high rent of shop, quick sales was the reason given by 18 (6.4%) of the respondents. Lastly, 1 (0.7%) specified 'don't have a choice.

DISCUSSION

This study was interested in examining the dangers posed by the roads on street trading activities in Ibadan Metropolis. It also, sought to find out the nature and extent of official harassment of street traders in Ibadan Metropolis. The findings on the danger of the roads on street traders, as well as the nature and extent of their harassment by government officials were ascertained through formulated and tested research question which are as follows:

- What are the dangers posed by the roads on street trading activities in Ibadan?
- What are the various types of hazards/risks encountered by street traders in Ibadan?
- What are the dimensions and extent of harassments experienced by street traders in the hands of government officials?
- Why have the traders continued in this line of business, despite the tragedies?

The findings revealed that indeed, the road poses significant dangers to street trading activities in Ibadan. For this 79% of the respondents answered in the affirmative. Also, as evident from the responses elicited with the survey, well over 83% considered trading on the street a dangerous and risky endeavor. Prominent among the risks encountered were injuries due to road accidents, molestation, sexual harassments and death, with over 54% of the respondents indicating injuries and death as the most common. These risks were found as indicated by 80% of the respondents, to occur at a rate considered well above average. With respect to the third research question on harassment, majority of the respondents (83%) have experienced harassment in the hands of government officials. With 61% of the respondents indicating that law enforcement agents were the most culpable. This again was observed to happen very often, as indicated by 92% of the respondents. Arrest and extortion were cited by 74% of the respondents as the most common forms of harassment. Finally, with regards to research question five, street trading activities have continued despite these tragedies, owing to the need to survive, as well as the high rate of unemployment. This conclusion was inferred based on the fact that 75% of the respondents indicated as such.

CONCLUSION

The dangers of the roads no doubt impacts negatively on street trading in Ibadan. Official harassments in all its ramifications are a further decimation of an already precarious situation. It further compounds the woes of street traders, driving them deeper into the abyss of disillusionment. As a result of which their survival and indeed continued existence, becomes unwittingly linked with the mutual cohabitation of fear, blood and death. Mujiratu Akanni, a street trader in Challenge area of Ibadan, summed up the situation in the following words:

We all know there is danger in street trading. Take me for instance, i fear for my life every day, because my children as still young, god forbid anything happens who will take care of them. But still, they have to eat, and we all have to survive, so what do we do? God should just continue to protect us (Field Survey, 2011).

The choice of an individual to trade on the street is a right issue, this right need to be respected by governments and their agents. Enduring the hazards of the road is harsh enough, government should not encumber where they find difficult to lighten the plight of the traders.

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