

*Full Length Research Paper*

# The influence of land use on the spatial variation of begging in Ogbomoso, Nigeria

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**Following an observation that urban land use influences the incidence of begging, this paper examines the relationship between land use and begging with Ogbomoso as a case study. The study utilizes both the primary and secondary data. To determine the spatial variation, beggars were enumerated across the 20 political wards in Ogbomoso simultaneously for seven days. Structured questionnaires are also used to extract relevant information from randomly selected beggars. The study which employs z scores to compare the intensity of begging across the wards, confirms that the incidence of begging is a function of land use activities. It also observes that the incidence of begging in Ogbomoso conforms to concentric, sector and multiple nuclei theories of urban land use. It recommends, therefore that urban planners, religious leaders and governments have roles to play in proffering solutions to the menace. It also calls for more research works on the problem of begging.**

**Key words:** Urban land use, begging, spatial.

## INTRODUCTION

Land is required for virtually all human activities. It is perhaps the single most important element in development and mankind's most basic natural resources (Agbola and Olatubara, 2004). Because of the multifunctional nature of land, there is always increased competition and demand for different purposes. As observed by Agbola and Olatubara (2004) the different competing uses of land have a complex mechanism for arranging themselves within urban landscape with the activity that ultimately gains the use of a portion of land called by such name. However, because of the increased competition that occur as a result of high demand for land for different purposes and the fact that land is practically irreplaceable finite resources have made adequate planning and control of land otherwise known as land use planning a worthwhile exercise. One of the prime prerequisite for proper land use planning is the information on sociological problems or social vices generated by different land uses. Consciousness of this fact is widely disseminated, yet many urban planners and urban

designers failed to reckon with a strong, often dominant influence of land use in generating social problems. This, to a large extent, accounts for the ineffectiveness of land use planning in developing countries and especially Nigeria. It is an obvious fact that the importance of land use planning cannot be overemphasized as it is required to ensure harmonious development and functional efficiency of various land uses and to meet the need of users of urban facilities. Furthermore, as observed by Agbola and Olatubara (2004) land use planning becomes necessary to allow for and ensure greater predictability in urban growth and development so as to make for adequate provision for public services. However, of much concern in such exercises is the emergence of different phenomena, some of which may be regarded as social vices or environmental nuisance to people. One of such phenomena is begging.

Begging simply defined as asking passers - by for money in public places (Kennedy and Fitzpatrick, 2001), is a social ill whose implications for city economy and environment call for concern of urban planners (Jelili, 2006). The negative impacts of begging on social and physical environments are obvious in the tendency of beggars to delay and obstruct free flow human and

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vehicular traffic and their high propensity to generate dirty materials either as waste or as parts of their belonging (Jelili, 2006). Adedibu (1989) also observes that begging also has implications for the economy of the nation as beggars depend on the already overstretched workforce.

The nefarious activities of fake beggars, who are mostly criminals in disguise, constitute the social implications of begging in Nigerian cities. Although literature is replete with resources conducted on issues of begging in Nigeria thus generating much academic discourses. However, the problem remains intractable. This is because much has not been done on the problem of begging in relation to land use activities. This gap in literature provided the impetus for this study which examines and compares the spatial distribution of beggars in Ogbomoso, a traditional Yoruba city. This is with a view of ascertaining the land uses that generate high incidence of begging and to proffer solutions to the problem of begging in the study area and by extension Nigerian cities.

## THEORETICAL ISSUES AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Land use is rich in theoretical constructs which have contributed much to geographical sciences, agricultural sciences, urban planning, and sociology. However, the relationship between begging and land use is generally drawn from three different descriptive and prominent classical theories of Burgess (1925), Hoyt (1939) and Harris and Ulman (1945) as expressed by concentric, sector, multiple nuclei respective theories of land use. The concentric theory, articulated by Ernest Burgess (1925) was among the first attempt to investigate spatial pattern at urban level. The theory states that as city grows, it expands radically around the Central business District (CBD). Surrounding the CBD are succeeding zones that contain other types of land use that illustrate the growth of the urban area over time.

Hoyt (1939)'s sector of urban land use was an expansion of concentric theory. The theory examines the influence of transport axis in the distinctive district which often form the wedge shaped sectors. Hoyts (1939) suggests that zones expand outward from the city center along railroads, highways and other transportation arteries. He theorized that cities tended to grow in wedge-shaped pattern-or sectors-emanating from the central business districts and centered on major transportation routes (Wikipedia, 2009). The multiple nuclei theory propounded by Harris and Ulman (1945) is an amalgam of concentric and sector theories with the addition of multiple nucleus. In their view, not all urban growths radiate outward from a Central Business District. Instead, an urban area may have many centers of development, each of which reflects a particular urban need or activity. Articulating this theory, Scwab (1993) identifies that a city may have a financial district, a manufacturing zone, a water front area, an entertainment

centre and so forth. The literature of begging is replete with a large variety of issues, discussions and arguments on the incidence, causes, effects and measure against begging. The existing literature of begging has it that the problem of begging is a universal phenomenon, though it has been observed to be prevalent and least attended to in the third world countries (Adedibu, 1989). In the work of Jordan (1999), begging has been observed to be highly visible in Britain major cities and in those of others industrialized countries. Chinese cities have also been identified to be among the worst beggars devastated cities of the world (Hanchao, 1999). However, one salient fact remains that governments of those countries direct a great deal of attention to the problem of begging unlike the situation in the third world countries where the problem is left unattended to (Adedibu, 1989).

Literatures have also shown that beggars can be categorized into groups to reflect the factors that induced them into begging. Fabrega's intensive project on begging classified beggars into six major groups: those physically deformed and disabled but with relatively less disability such as those with single amputation or partial blindness; those with prominent symptoms of psychiatric disability; those who claim to be medically ill or appear to be so; those who claim illness but do not look so and those who are elderly.

In his own categorization, Ibrahim (1997) categorizes beggars into distinguished beggars; apparently maimed beggars; the cultural beggars like the praise singers and the twins' mothers; the lepers, the blind and the crippled. Others are young and elderly who are unemployable because either because they are too young or too old and the 'almajirai' who beg for alms to fulfill religious belief. In the words of Jelili (2009), beggars are categorized into destitute and jobless beggars; occasional and unprofessional beggars; wanderers; unskilled, uncatered for female beggars; criminals in disguised and old age beggars. Esan (2009) recognizes four categories of beggars as: the "fine" beggars – the psychological beggars who use language to deceive, the important and unimportant lies, hush up under the garb of religion, flaunt affections, and when occasion demands, take to petty stealing; the sit-at-a-place beggars, who select places especially restaurants, holy places, and points where goods commonly observed for affluent are sold; the "Babiyala" beggars typically Hausa from Northern part of Nigeria, who wander street, sing begging; and render small services to their client such as fanning them with locally made hand fan, mopping their faces with handkerchiefs or decorating them with stickers. The question now is what influenced those people to take to begging? This question was answered by scholars who provide several factors considered to have influenced begging. These factors identified at different times and in different locations or countries are closely related (Jelili, 2006)

For instance, national disaster, civil war, handicaps and diseases, bad habit and family heritage have influenced begging in China (Hanchao, 1999) while Faberge (1971)

identifies physical disability, or incapacitation, medically illness, laziness, psychiatric disabilities and old age as factors that promote begging in Mexico.

In Nigeria, Adedibu (1989) observes thirteen closely related factors influencing begging in Nigerian cities. These factors include physical disability, unemployment, religious belief, old age, lack of caring relatives, and lack of rehabilitation centres. Others are poverty, uncontrolled migration, lack of education, place of origin, lack of adequate, accident and acceptability of begging with society. Jelili (2006) identifies physical disability, unemployment and old age as factors influencing begging in Nigerian Cities. The NCFWD (2001) also identifies six reasons why people beg in Nigeria. These include loss of parental/guardian support, Parental guardian neglect, poverty, disability, socio-cultural misconceptions and lack of parental education. Be that as it may, Jelili (2006) contends that physical disability and poverty remain the most visible of all the identified factors. On how to address the problem of begging, measures have been suggested. For instance, Okediji and Sofola (1972) suggest rehabilitation while Adedibu (1989) makes case for anti begging regulations, shelter and productive employment. Jelili (2006) observes that begging problem cannot be tackled without collective efforts of governments, corporate organizations, individuals, religious groups and community associations. Ogunkan (2009) emphasis is on the need to educate and sensitize the general public on the negative consequences of begging to social, economic and environmental survival of humanity. Laudable as these suggestions are, it is important to note that the analysis, assessment, control and management of most sociological problems or social vices (begging inclusive) without recourse to their relationship with land uses may not yield any positive result.

## METHODOLOGY

The study made use of both primary and secondary data. Secondary data was obtained from relevant textbooks, journals, newspapers, past thesis, internet materials and articles on the subject matter form the bulk of the information used in the conceptual and theoretical issues as well as in demographic, physical and other geographic features of Ogbomoso - the study area. Primary data was generated through the direct counting of beggars across the 20 political wards in Ogbomoso. The counting was done in each ward at the same time with the help of trained assistants. The total number of beggars found in each ward was recorded on different days of the week to reflect probable variation among weekdays. Structured questionnaires were also administered on randomly selected beggars to obtain relevant information on their spatial distribution.

The data collected on the spatial distribution of beggars were subjected to standard scores otherwise referred to as  $z$  - scores to compare the intensity of incidence of begging from different wards. The standard scores are obtained by linear transformation of the actual number identified such that the mean becomes zero and standard deviation becomes one. That is  $(x - \bar{x})/s$ . The study also made use of simple percentage to analyze the place of residence of

the beggars.

## The study area

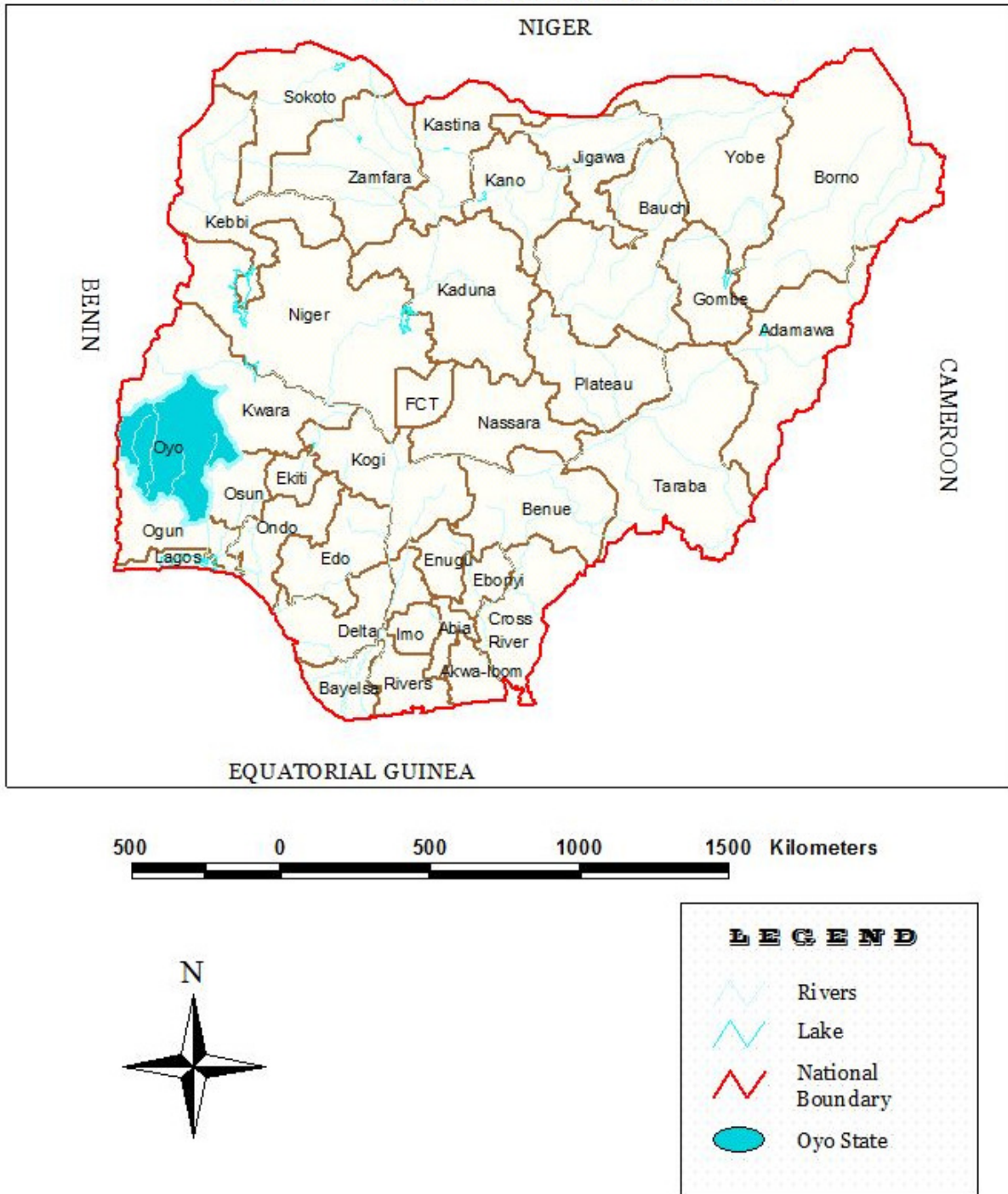
Ogbomoso is located on the  $8^{\circ}10'$  North of the equator and  $4^{\circ}10'$  East of the Greenwich meridian. It is a derived Savannah region and it is 104 km North East of Ibadan, 58 km North West of Osogbo, 57 km South West of Ilorin and 53 km North East of Oyo (Figure 1). The physical and economic growth of the town began in 19<sup>th</sup> century; when there was an unrest through-out the Yoruba land due to inter ethnic wars and Fulani Jihad. This brought more than 140 communities to seek refuge in Ogbomoso because of its strong defense. Most of these people took permanent residence in Ogbomoso, and by the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, a continuous built-up compact settlement was evolved from the hamlet, covering an extensive area of land (Figure 2).

The rapid growth of the town is also induced by the advent of missionary and establishment of schools. The deportation of indigenous Nigerian by Ghanaian government in 1969 also brought physical and economic growth to Ogbomoso. The establishment of Ladoke Akintola University of Technology in Ogbomoso is said to have induced its phenomenal growth since 1991. The Urbanization process resulted from the development mentioned above led to the demographic change over time. For instance, the population rose from 25000 in 1885 (Bowen, 1957) to more than 166,000 by 1991 (NPC, 1991) and was said to be about 299,535 by 2006 census. The demographic changes have contributed to the expansion in built-up area of Ogbomoso. The built-up area of the town which was 2 km<sup>2</sup> in 1935 and 4.5 km<sup>2</sup> in 1963 (Opeloye, 1983) was estimated to have reached 24.3 km<sup>2</sup> in 1995 (Popoola, 1997). In 2003, it has increased to 27.5 km<sup>2</sup> (Abolade, 2004) (Figure 3). Ogbomoso, being a traditional, unplanned town that predated planning effort could not be identified by land use zones. Therefore it is easily identified by political wards. It has no land use segregation; most its parts are characterized with admixture of land uses. The land use in each ward is dominated by residential type, but a few other land use types feature fairly prominently in a few wards (Tanimowo, 2006)(Table 1, Figures 4 and 5).

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

The research findings were reflected in the table showing the prevalence of begging at different days of the week across the twenty (20) political wards in Ogbomoso. Table 2 shows the result of beggars' enumeration across different wards and at different weekdays. The table was transformed for necessary analysis that follows. Table 3 presents the number of identified beggars across the wards and their standard scores. In order to have a better comparism of the relatively standing raw scores of the beggars, standard scores are employed. Therefore, the standard scores indicate that with positive value there is relatively high incidence of begging while with negative value there is low incidence of begging. It could be inferred from the table therefore, that the incidence of begging is high in Sabo/Taraa, Osupa, Saja/Isale Ora, Okelerin, Ijeru I, Ijeru II and Lagbedu wards, while there is low incidence of begging in Abogunde, Aaje/Ogubado, Masifa/Aguodo, Isale Afon, Alaasa, Jagun, Akata, Alapata, Arowomole, Oke-Olla, Isoko, Ilogbo and Ibapon.

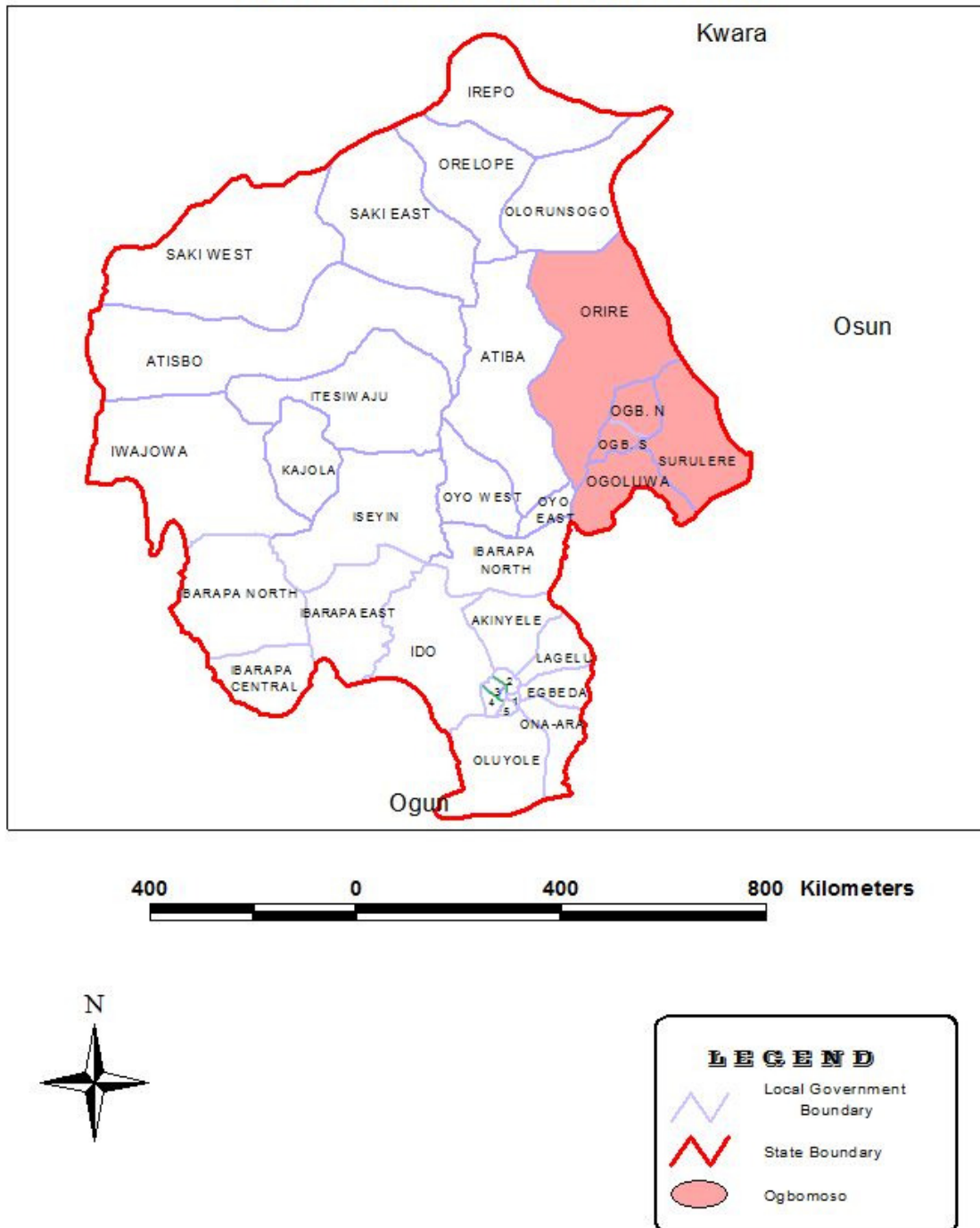
The variation in the incidence of begging so observed is adduced to urban land uses activities. For instance, the



**Figure 1.** Oyo State in the National context.  
 Source: Adopted from Federal Ministry of Lands and Planning Abuja (2007).

high incidence of begging observed Sabo/Taraa, Osupaand Saja Isale ora is attributed to transport corridors (Ibadan – Ilorin, Iwo – Ilorin highways), transport junctions (Iyana Afoju and Takie junctions). Also commercial activities are highly concentrated in those wards. The high incidence of begging in Okelerin is adduced to the proliferations of informal sectors activities

and the influence of public buildings (mainly religious edifices) in the ward. Other wards with high incidence of begging that is Ijeru 1, ijeru 11 and Lagbedu is also as a result of commercial activities in those wards. While those wards with low incidence of begging are mere residential areas. Ogbomoso Township is made up of 20 wards. 105 sampled beggars living in Ogbomoso were

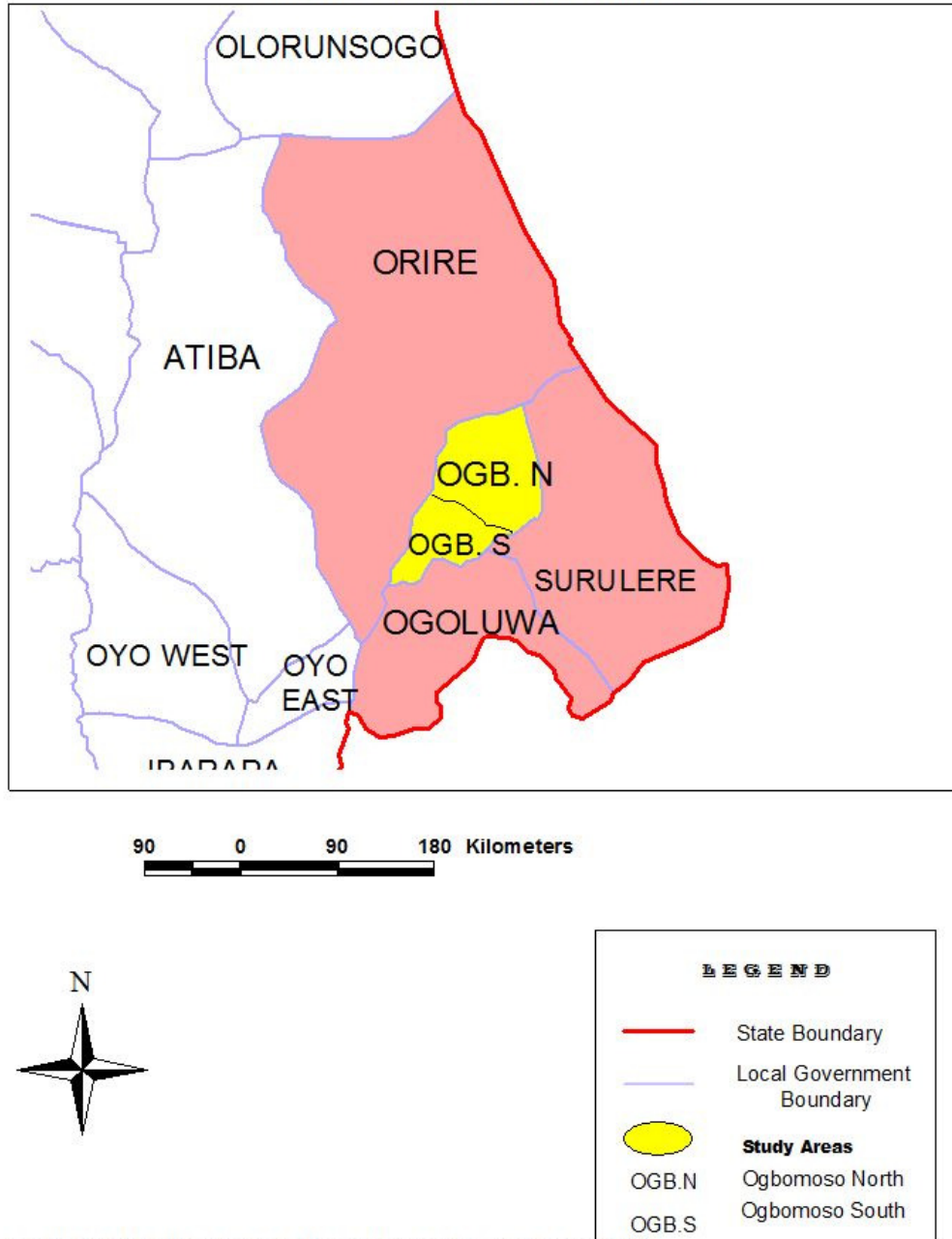


**Figure 2.** Map of Oyo State showing Ogbomosho.  
 Source: Ministry of Lands, Housing and Physical Planning, Ibadan Oyo State (2007).

distributed across 10 wards with Sabo/ Taraa housing the highest proportion of beggars (64.8%) followed by Saja/Isale ora with a distant 12.4% while such wards as Isale Afon, Okeolla, and Ibapon recorded the lowest with 1% each (Table 4). From this observation, it is evident that majority of beggars in Ogbomosho live in sabo/ Taraa

ward. This could be attributed to two factors:

1. Sabo is a settlement mainly for non indigenes, especially the Hausas. This points to the fact that majority of beggars in Ogbomosho are Hausas.
2. Sabo is one of the commercial centres of Ogbomosho.

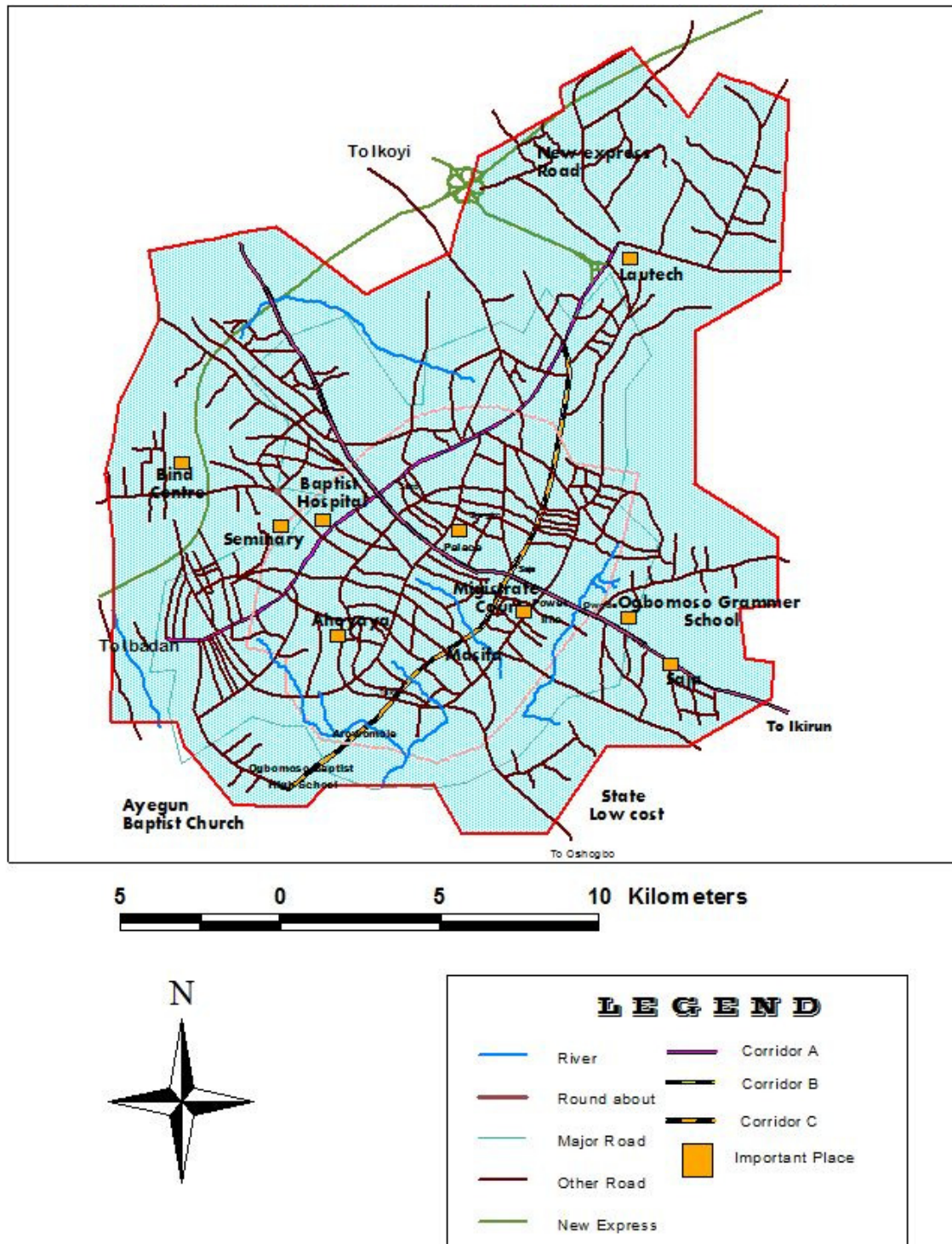


**Figure 3.** Map showing the study area.  
 Source: Ministry of Lands, Housing and Physical Planning, Ibadan Oyo State (2007).

This attracts the beggars to take up residence in the area.

What has been so clear from the foregoing analysis is that begging is a function of land use activities. The most favourable land uses as observed in this study are commercial, transport and public land uses. This however, depends on how organized a place is. Thus, a less organized commercial or public area, where informal sector are predominant, tends to attract more beggars than an organized one. For example Sabo/Taraa

recorded highest incidence of begging because it is predominantly less organized commercial area, infiltrated by public and informal land use activities, especially due to the distortion of the neighbourhood design. The spatial distribution of begging observed in Ogbomosho is in conformity with theories of urban land use that is Burgess (1923), Hoyt's (1939) and Harris and Ullman (1945) respective theories of urban land use. The high incidence of begging in Sabo/Taraa and Osupa wards could be partly adduced to the influence of Takie – the later emerged CBD in Ogbomosho (Takie is shared by



**Figure 4.** Map of Ogbomoso township showing the road network.  
 Source: Ministry of Lands, Housing and Physical Planning, Ibadan Oyo State (2006).

Sabo/Taraa and Osupa wards). This distribution is reminiscent of Burgess' Concentric Theory. However, the sector and multiple nuclei patterns are more pronounced, in Ogbomoso than concentric pattern. For instance, the high incidence of begging observed in Sabo/Taraa Osupa

and Saja/Isale-ora wards is largely attributed to the influence of Ilorin-Ibadan and Ilorin-Iwo highways that run through them. This conforms to Hoyt's concentric theory. On the other hand, high concentrations of beggars in such wards as Okelerin, Ijeru I, Ijeru II and Lagbedu are

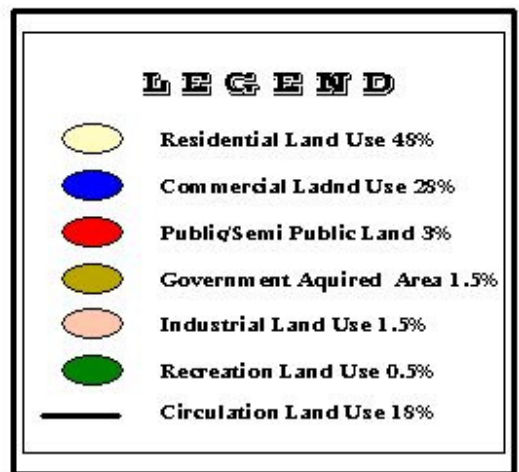
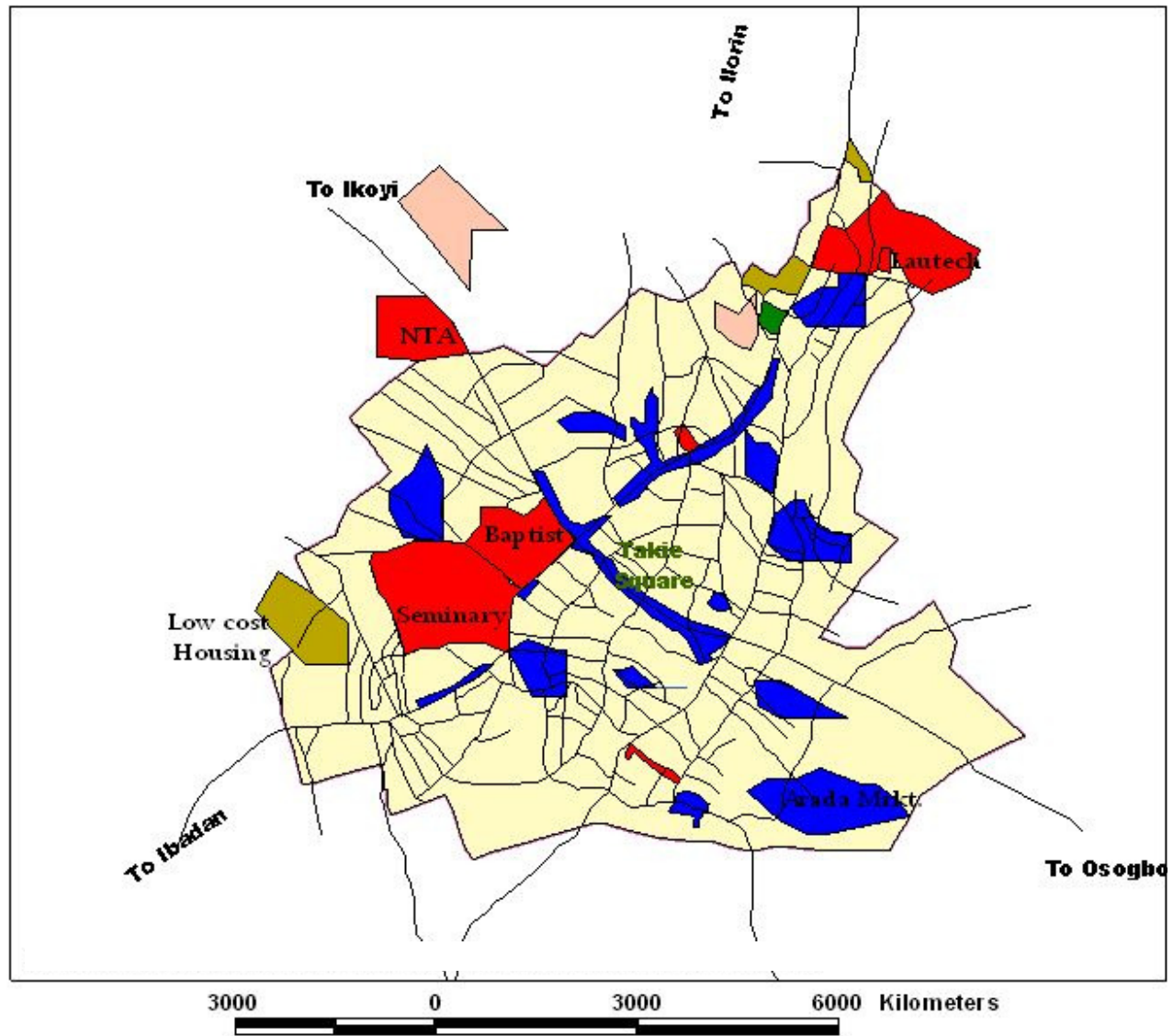


Figure 5. Land use map of Ogbomoso township.  
 Source: Adapted from Town Planning Department South and North L.G., Ogbomoso.



**Table 1.** Land use characterization of the wards in Ogbomosho.

Wards	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Recreation	Education	Other public	Agric/vacant	Transp	Total
<i>Abogunde</i>	66.5	4	2.5	2	4	1	5	15	100
<i>AajeOgunbado</i>	75.5	4	1.5	2	0.5	1.5	-	15	100
<i>Masifa/Aguodo</i>	37	5	2	10	23	5	5	13	100
<i>Isale Afon</i>	72	4	1.5	2	1.5	2.5	1.5	15	100
<i>Alaasa</i>	72.5	3	1	1.5	2	1	5	14	100
<i>Saja/ Isale ora</i>	61.5	8	1.5	2	4	3	5	15	100
<i>Jagun</i>	79.5	4	1	1	-	4	0.5	10	100
<i>Okelerin</i>	67.5	10	0.5	1.5	1	4.5	-	15	100
<i>Osupa</i>	38	16	3	3	9	6	7	18	100
<i>Sabo/ Taraa</i>	39	17	7	5	4	3	5	19	100
<i>Akata</i>	80	2	1	1	1.5	0.5	0.5	14	100
<i>Alapata</i>	71	1	0.5	1.5	3.5	0.5	1.2	11	100
<i>Arowomole</i>	65.5	6	2	1	7	2.5	8	8	100
<i>Ibapon</i>	46.5	5	3.5	1	9	7	14	14	100
<i>Ijeru 1</i>	81	3	0.5	0.5	-	2	-	13	100
<i>Ijeru11</i>	82.5	1.5	1	1	-	1	-	13	100
<i>Ilogbo</i>	84	3.3	0.5	0.2	-	1	6	5	100
<i>Isoko</i>	89	2	1	1	-	1	1	5	100
<i>Lagbedu</i>	73	5	0.5	1.5	1	1	10	8	100
<i>Okeola</i>	57.5	3	3		1	1.5	25	8	100

Source: Tanimowo, 2006.

**Table 2.** Beggar's enumeration's result in Ogbomosho.

Wards	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Total
<i>Abogunde</i>	4	2	2	1	1	4	11	25
<i>Aaje Ogunbado</i>	2	3	1	2	2	3	2	15
<i>Masifa/ Aguodo</i>	4	5	4	5	15	8	13	54
<i>Isale Afon</i>	9	8	5	6	14	11	10	63
<i>Alaasa</i>	8	7	7	8	7	12	10	59
<i>Saja/ Isale ora</i>	16	13	12	15	25	25	28	134
<i>Jagun</i>	4	5	4	3	7	5	4	32
<i>Okelerin</i>	15	10	7	10	23	9	25	99
<i>Osupa</i>	23	21	19	24	20	32	27	166
<i>Sabo/ Taraa</i>	59	52	54	49	60	32	38	344
<i>Akata</i>	3	5	6	1	4	6	12	37
<i>Alapata</i>	16	10	10	13	8	12	6	75
<i>Arowomole</i>	15	11	10	13	8	11	5	73
<i>Ibapon</i>	7	10	5	3	14	13	6	58
<i>Ijeru 1</i>	11	10	7	8	16	4	18	84
<i>Ijeru11</i>	10	10	12	5	13	19	17	86
<i>Ilogbo</i>	7	6	9	10	5	7	4	48
<i>Isoko</i>	6	3	5	2	6	5	14	41
<i>Lagbedu</i>	17	13	7	14	8	10	18	87
<i>Okeola</i>	11	9	8	12	4	3	2	49

Source: Authors' field work (2009).

**Table 3.** Incidence of begging across the wards in Ogbomosho.

Wards	No identified	**Standard scores
Abogunde	25	- 0.80
Aaje Ogunbado	15	- 0.93
Masifa/ Aguodo	54	- 0.40
Isale Afon	63	- 0.23
Alaasa	59	- 0.31
Saja/ Isale ora	134	0.70
Jagun	32	- 0.70
Okelerin	99	0.25
Osupa	166	1.20
Sabo/ Taraa	344	3.74
Akata	37	- 0.62
Alapata	75	- 0.09
Arowomole	73	- 0.12
Ibapon	58	- 0.31
Ijeru 1	84	0.04
Ijeru11	86	0.10
Ilogbo	48	- 0.50
Isoko	41	- 0.60
Lagbedu	87	0.10
Okeola	49	- 0.509

Source: Authors' field work (2009). \*\*the standard score (also called z score or sigma score) has a mean of zero and standard deviation of one. It is obtained by subtracting the mean from each score and then dividing the difference by standard deviation.

**Table 4.** Place of beggar's abode.

Wards	Frequency	Percentage
Aaje Ogunbado	2	1.9
Isale Afon	1	1.0
Saja/ Isale ora	13	12.4
Okelerin	5	4.8
Osupa	2	1.9
Sabo/ Taraa	68	64.8
Ibapon	1	1.0
Ijeru 1	9	8.6
Ilogbo	3	2.9
Okeola	1	1.0
Total	105	100

Source: Authors' field work (2009).

attributed to land use activities as markets, religion centre, motor parks etc. This is the reflection of multiple nuclei pattern, a reminiscence of Harris and Ullman (1945)'s multiple nuclei theory.

## SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

This study has examined the influence of land use

activities on begging. It has confirmed the relationship between land use and incidence of begging. In the light of the findings above, it is recommended that urban planners should redirect their activities and focus the development control exercise towards organizing land use activities especially as affecting informal enterprises, public buildings and traffic movement such that those on land uses become less attractive to beggars. It is also recommended that government should ensure that the overall legislative framework for prescription of begging is put in place not only that, the government should meet up with challenges of effective enforcement of these legislations.

This study has also established that religious centres are high generators of beggars. In view of this, religious leaders are advised to preach to their subjects on the need to uphold their dignity and engage in productive components of the economy. They are also encouraged to discourage their members from giving alms directly to the beggars but instead turn a larger percentage of their alms to donation to rehabilitation centres where adequate provisions are made for socio-economic, health and mental rehabilitation of the less privileged. Lastly, it is observed that despite the danger poised by begging to the environmental and socio-economic development of Nigerian urban centres, much research works have not been directed toward the problem of begging as it relates

to land use. In view of this, it is highly suggested that more researches be carried out on the issues of begging especially on other dimensions of this menace.

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