

**STREET CHILDREN AND ROAD TRAFFIC INJURIES:
A NEGLECTED ASSOCIATION IN PREVENTION
STRATEGIES IN NIGERIA**

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Background The volume of road traffic and the number of street children are increasing in major towns and cities in Nigeria since 1999.

Objective The objectives include understanding and documentation of the nature and extent of injuries experienced by street children and their coping strategies, and to understand the categories of those responsible and suggest preventive measures.

Methods Qualitative data collection techniques such as informal interview and case study were carried out. Information was obtained from 250 street children selected using convenience sampling technique.

Results Of the 250 children interviewed, 136 (54.4%) confirmed sustaining one road traffic injuries. About one-third (44 or 32.3%) of these injuries resulted from a knockdown by a speedy vehicle, while 28 (20.6%) was due to fall from a moving motor-cycle. Injuries (minor and deep cuts) purposefully inflicted by other persons accounted for 16 (11.8%). Firearms (stray bullets) led to 3 (2.2%) sustaining bad wounds and fractures while injury undetermined whether by accident or purposefully inflicted was 23 (2.3%). The culprits or perpetrators of these accidents were mostly poorly trained and unlicensed drivers (56.7%), alcoholic drunk drivers (36.8%), speedy bank drivers (2.2%) and armed escort drivers of government vehicles (4.3%).

Significance and Contribution to the Field The findings from this study are of paramount importance to policy makers, law enforcement agencies, youths and community leaders in instituting effective preventive strategies that aimed at reducing mortality and morbidity. This study revealed that the road traffic injuries among the street children are mainly caused by poorly trained and unlicensed drivers