

**ANTHROPOLOGY OF STREETISM: DOCUMENTING THE HERITAGE
RESOURCES OF STREET DWELLERS IN ADABRAKA.**

BY

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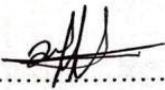
**THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON
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DECLARATION

I, Nsiah, Stephen author of this dissertation hereby declare that, except specific references which have been duly cited, the work presented here is the result of my research, carried out within Adabraka under supervision after a series of fieldwork from June to September 2020. This work has not been presented in full or in part to any other institution for examination. I remain solely responsible for any shortcomings in this study.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Street Dwellers in Adabraka.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My utmost thanks go to the Almighty God for granting me grace and courage to successfully carry out this research.

My profound gratitude and appreciation go to Dr Samuel Nilirmi Nkumbaan, my supervisor, for his immense patience and contribution of ideas toward the success of this research. Many thanks to Albert Larbi Appiah, Jonathan Ampofo Manu, Mark Seyram Amenyo Xa, Mr Gideon Agyare and all Faculty at the Department of Archaeology and Heritage Studies for their encouragements and sharing of ideas to enrich my work.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMA	-	Accra Metropolitan Assembly
CSF	-	Consortium for Street Children
ICOMOS	-	International Council on Monuments and Sites
MGCSP	-	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
MGLSD	-	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MORE	-	Model for Orphan Resettlement and Education
NGOs	-	Non-Governmental Organizations
CAS	-	Catholic Action for Street Children
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	-	The United Nations Children's Fund, formerly United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of working and living on the street is on the rise in most Third World Countries of which Ghana is no exception. There have been several investigations into the lives of street dwellers most of which have provided useful insights into understanding the causes, effects and remedies to this phenomenon. However, most of such works fail to identify and document the positive cultural constructions that can be learned or deduced from life in the streets. This research explored and drew insights from the day to day life of the street dwellers in Adabraka, and identified and documented some aspects of their ways of life that can be viewed as the heritage.

Concluding on information gathered during my research through the use of an eclectic research methodology which included techniques of both ethnography and visual documentation, it was evident that street dwelling is not always bad as mostly perceived. There are some positive aspects of this way of life that can be learned by the ‘normal’ individual. The study, for instance, revealed that the attitude of determination and perseverance, the African concept of ‘Ubuntu’ and egalitarian lifestyles can be learnt from these street dwellers. Hence, it is worthy of documenting these ways of life which can be considered as heritage

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This introductory chapter of the research encapsulates themes such as the background information for the study area by idealizing how living on the street can be seen as a hub of producing both tangible and intangible heritage resources. It also captures the research problem, aim of the study, research objectives and research questions. The significance of the study, the research methods as well as how the research is organized are also dealt with in this chapter.

1.1 Background to the Research

The street has become both temporal and permanent home for some citizens around the world. These citizens identify and find the meaning of their humanity on the street. Some of these citizens begin their lives from a ‘normal’ home and later migrate to the endless world of the street while others originate from the street. Those who begin their lives from the ‘normal’ home and migrate to the street do so for various reasons. A common denominator through personal observation which prompts the home-to-street migration is socio-economic disruptions. People move from home to the street because at a point in their lives the home becomes unsupportive and a colonizer which results in their quest to seek independence in the street.

Streetism is a social and human problem (Asanbayev et al., 2016). It is an undeniable fact that the number of people living on the street is very alarming despite the increasing rate of infrastructural development in the world. There are several misconceptions about street dwellers; from who they are, to their numbers globally, as well as the factors accounting for this phenomenon (Naidoo, 2008). This “phenomenon demonstrates higher prevalence in more developing countries” (Amekuedi, 2016:1). For instance, in 2014 according to a Ghanaian newspaper ‘The Finder’, the

'Census on Street Children in the Greater Accra Region' revealed that there were 61,492 street children in the Greater Accra Region as at 2011 (The Finder, 2014).

Also, according to the Family and Child Welfare Policy Report (2015) of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, over 61,000 children were identified as living or working on the streets in Greater Accra Region in 2011, of whom 59% were girls. Some factors that account for this social canker (streetism) include, but not limited to the increasing influx of people from the rural areas to the urban centres as a result of urbanization, economic hardship, bad parenting (Endris & Sitota, 2019; Jacob, et al 2014; MGLSD, 1999) among others.

1.2 Adabraka: The Study Area

The name Adabraka is a corrupted Hausa word of "*albarka*", translated to mean "blessing". In the Ga language, it is "*womli*". This is because, in ancient times, the Ga customers who transacted business with these Hausa traders would often ask for a bonus on their purchases and that's how Adabraka became the name of the place¹. The town is located within the Osu Klottey Sub-Metropolitan District of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly. Due to its location, Adabraka has attracted all manner of people ranging from public workers, and self-employed business personnel (Blankson, 2001). Adabraka is said to have been first settled in the early 1900s (Sanjek, 1982:59). As an ethnically heterogeneous town, residents of Adabraka speak different languages (Ga, Hausa, Akan, Ewe, Mampruli, English and French). This town doubles as both economic (trade and business) hub as well as a residential area.

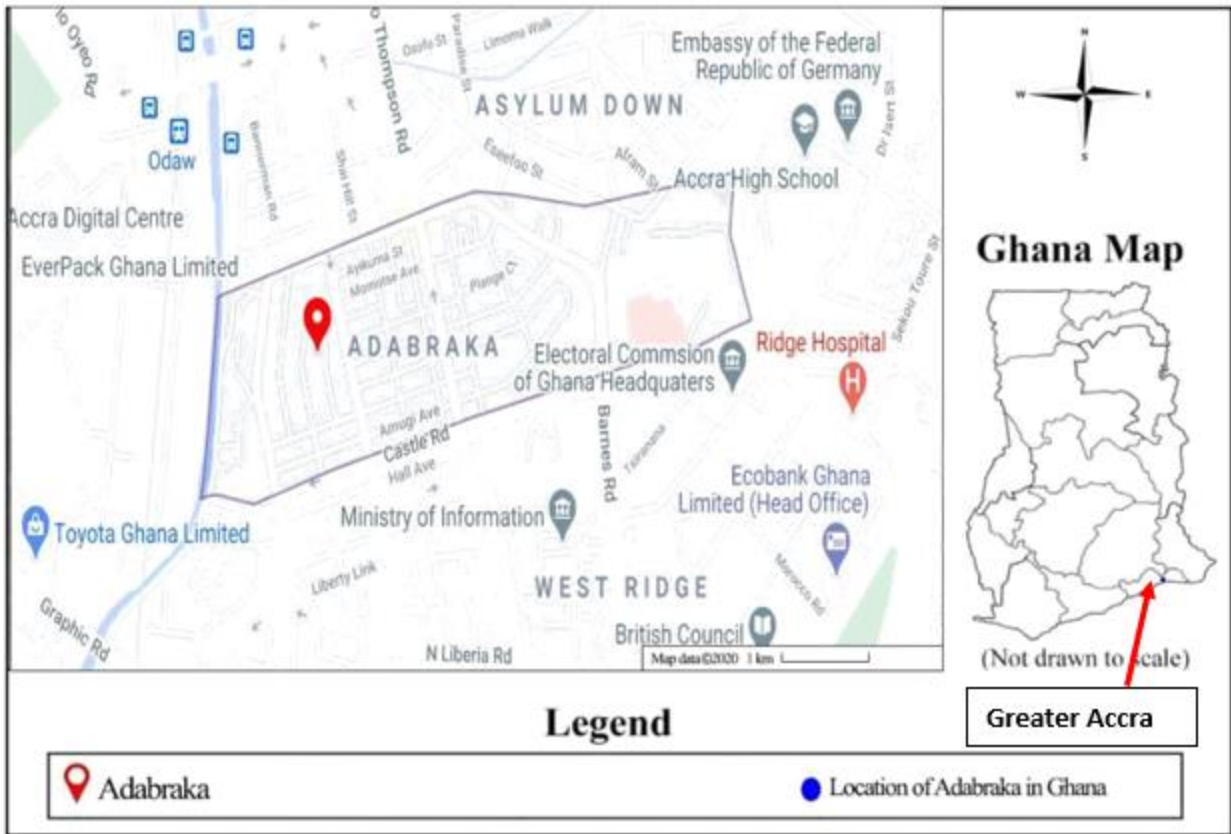
In 1908, Adabraka started as a separate Muslim town. It was not until 1925, under Sir Frederick Gordon Guggisberg's governorship, that Adabraka was incorporated into Accra. It inspired many individuals to start constructing houses north of the city centre when Guggisberg developed the Achimota School north of Accra, and Adabraka was gradually incorporated into this development.

¹ <https://thegadangme.com/meaning-behind-some-ga-place-names/>. Accessed on 18/09/2020.

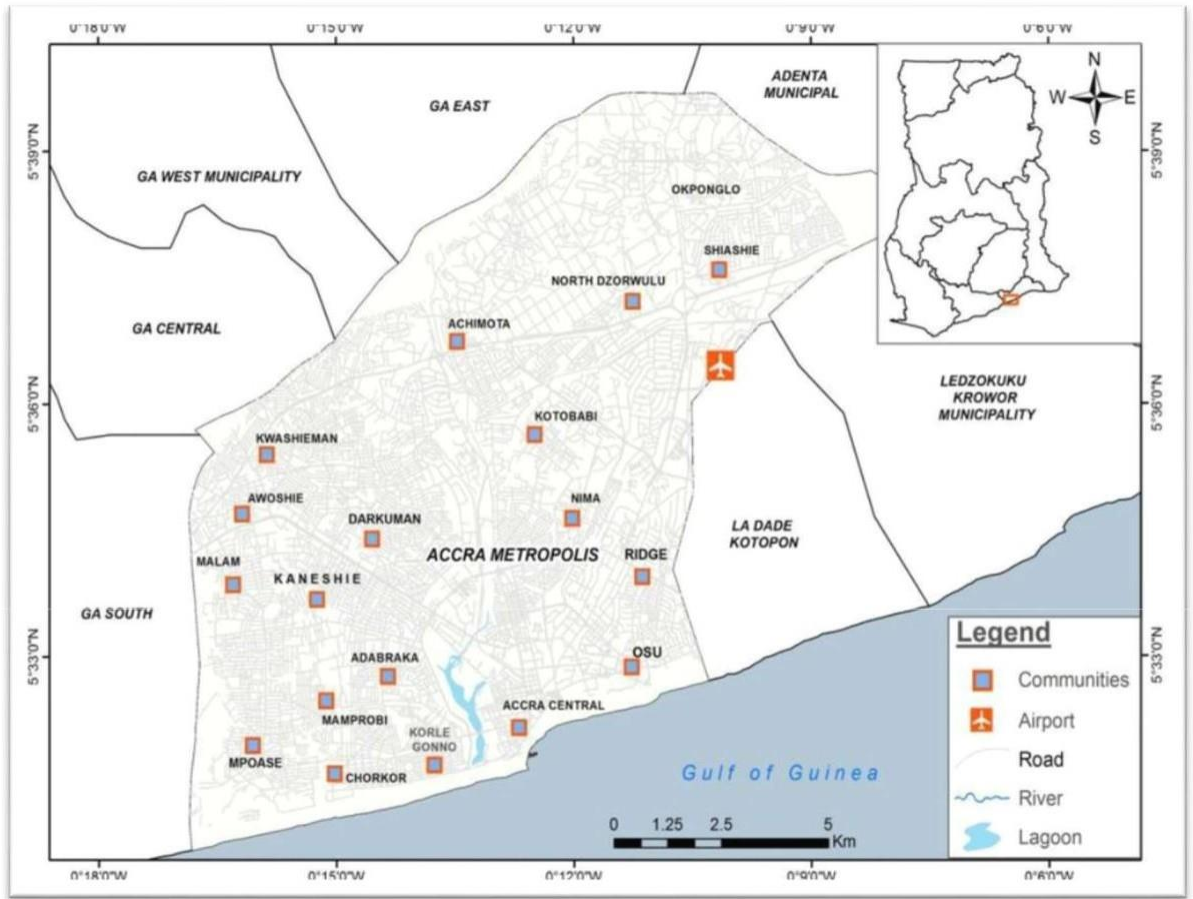
Today, Adabraka is a low-rent area of Accra, and many of its inhabitants are new to the city (2006-2009 AMA Medium Term Plan Preparation). A total of 25.8% of the population of the Osu Klottey Sub-Metropolitan Area, which is one of the Sub-City Councils that make up the Accra District, is the population of Adabraka (2006-2009 AMA Medium Term Plan Preparation). The area has a population density of about 7509 residents per square kilometre (2006-2009 AMA Medium Term Plan Preparation). Adabraka is one of the most heavily populated suburbs in the sub-metropolitan area.

The town is noted for having notable landmarks such as Roxy Bus Stop, and educational institutions like the Accra City Campus, a satellite campus of the University of Ghana, the African University College of Communication (AUCC), the Accra Technical University, a Nursing College, and Kinbu Senior High School. Also, the Accra Psychiatric Hospital, Adabraka Polyclinic, the Accra Rehabilitation Centre as well as the Ghana Museums and Monument Board (GMMB) are all located in Adabraka. The regional headquarters of the National Service Scheme, as well as the Regional Coordinating Council, are located in this area. Major economic activities in the area consist of commerce, services and manufacturing (Ghana Statistical Service, 2010).

Below are maps of Greater Accra showing Adabraka



Map 1.0. Location of the study area (Source: Google Map data 2020)



Map 2.0. Map of Accra Metropolitan Area (source: ghanadistricts.com)



Map 3.0. Aerial view of Adabraka (Source: Google Map data 2020)

To some extent, the town is characterised by poor housing, a poor drainage system and several slums. It is therefore not surprising that streetism is prevalent in this locality. There is a gradual rise of streetism in this area and for that matter, the Greater Accra region as a whole as more individuals migrate from the rural areas to this area without the means to secure decent housing (accommodation). This, coupled with the need to engage in minor economic activities to survive contributes to increasing street life.



Map 4.0. Streets of Adabraka (Source: Google Map data 2020)

As such, these individuals, as a means to survive, resort to living on the streets or in unauthorized places like lorry stations, along major roads and market areas. However, because the characteristics, survival strategies and mannerisms of these street people are unique from the ways of life of ‘normal’ home-dwelling people, the study sought to explore and draw insights from the daily ways of life of the street dwellers in this part of Accra, and identify and document some aspects of their ways of life that can be viewed as heritage.

1.2 Research Problem and Justification

The increasing rate of streetism in Ghana is quite alarming due to the threat it poses. It is no surprise that investigations into the world of street dwellers have increased in contemporary times. Most of such studies focus on the causes and consequences associated with streetism (Asanbayev et al., 2016; Endris & Sitota, 2019; Jane and Maria, 1996). That is, most of such studies seek to understand the factors accounting for this phenomenon. For instance, Endris & Sitota (2019:96) investigated “the pushing factors of streetism for children living on the streets of Harar city”. Likewise, Jane and Maria (1996) listed low self-esteem, lack of confidence, self-hate, feeling of an outcast, unworthy, unloved and unlovable, and feeling degraded and violated as some of the psychological life consequences in the street. Also, Jacob et al. (2004), evaluated how government-initiated program could aid in relocating and resettling orphans and street children in Uganda. However, there has been a cloying silence into the investigation of the positive cultural constructions that can be associated with streetism. It has become important to consider these aspects of the lives of street dwellers – highlighting their positive cultural attitudes, constructions of identities, communal life and other heritage associated with them. The dimensions, nature and reasons accounting for streetism are dependent on the economic, political, and social well-being of a nation’s cultural and traditional settings, institutional interventions and the level of social harmony and peace (Endris & Sitota, 2019, Veale, 1996). Because heritage “exists everywhere including the city streets” (Hoelscher, 2007:200), streetism arguably, is the lifeway of a given set of people. The uniqueness associated with some element of the life ways of street dwellers is well established, and it is worthy of documentation. Also, because human beings create their own culture and for that matter their heritage, streetism can be said to be the culture of a specific group. Again, because the characteristic, survival strategies and mannerism of street dwellers differ from one context to another (Amekuedi, 2016), it is important to document some ways

of life of these individuals which can be considered as cultural heritage. It is against this background that this study attempts to explore the aspect of cultural heritage associated with this way of life (streetism) among street dwellers in Adabraka.

1.3 Research Aim

The research aims to identify and document some aspects of the ways of life of street dwellers in Adabraka that can be viewed as heritage.

1.4 Research Objectives

The specific objectives of this study are:

- i. To observe and document the life ways of street dwellers in Adabraka, a suburb in the Greater Accra region.
- ii. To identify and document the cultural heritage elements embedded in the life ways of these street dwellers.
- iii. To analyse the relationship between the street dwellers and non-street dwellers.

1.5 Research Questions

To meet the aim and objectives of the research, the under listed research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. How do street dwellers in Adabraka construct their identity?
2. What cultural uniqueness may be ascribed to street dwellers in Adabraka?
3. What relationship exists between these street dwellers and the non-street dwellers?
4. What are the cultural heritage elements that can be identified with the street dwellers?

1.6 Conceptual Framework

The study is carried out with the view that no person or a group of people exist without a unique identity (heritage). The human, irrespective of the circumstances, has a way of adapting to a given environment. In the process of adapting to the environment, new values, norms, beliefs, structures and languages are invented².

Anthropology as a discipline employs scientific methods to dive into the entirety of the human species in relation to the 'environment.' Anthropologists often do so as Heinonen (2000) puts it, "by taking a unit, a tribe or a community and present the behaviour of members of such groups in terms of a series of interlocking institutions, structures, norms and values. The usual subjects are small-scale societies or a plurality of individuals bounded by at least a common social organisation or a shared world of meanings and morals."

In the words of Hofstede (1994:5), culture is "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another". "Culture consists of the derivatives of experience, more or less organized, learned or created by the individuals of a population, including those images and their interpretations (meanings) transmitted from past generations, from contemporaries, or formed by individuals themselves" (Spencer-Oatey, 2012:2).

Schein (2009) further affirmed that culture is manifested at different layers of depth consisting of values, basic underlying assumptions and observable artefacts. According to Schein, artefacts include things as dress code, physical settings of the office, and the way and manner people address one another. Schudson (1994:64) proclaimed that "culture, which is, the way of life of a society, brings individuals and families of varying circumstances and backgrounds together in a collectivity with which people may strongly identify, take primary meanings from and find emotionally

² <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-sociology/chapter/culture-and-adaptation/>. Accessed on 19/09/2020.

satisfying”. This research sought to identify and document the unique identity, beliefs, and interactions among street dwellers in Adabraka.

1.7.0. Research Methods

The choice of a research method to employ is dependent on the nature of the research problem. Morgan and Smircich (1980) argue that the actual suitability of a research method derives from the nature of the social phenomenon to be explored. In this research, I sought to explore the issues of the heritage of street dwellers, using Adabraka in Accra as a case study. Case study research methodology is typically seen in the social and life sciences. There is no one definition of case study research. However, very simply; “a case study can be defined as an intensive study about a person, a group of people or a unit, which is aimed to generalize over several units” (Gustafsson, 2017). A case study research paper examines a person, place, event, phenomenon, or another type of subject of analysis to extrapolate key themes and results that help predict future trends, illuminate previously hidden issues that can be applied to practice, and/or provide a means for understanding an important research problem with greater clarity (Mills, et al., 2010).

In understanding the subjectivity of social phenomena, a qualitative research approach is required (Noor, 2008). The study was therefore designed or couched in the context of a qualitative research approach. In explaining qualitative research, Denzin and Lincoln (1994) state that, qualitative, implies an emphasis on processes and meanings that are not measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency. Thus, there are instances, particularly in the social sciences, where researchers are interested in insights, discovery, and interpretation rather than hypothesis.

According to Marshall and Rossman (2014), qualitative research has four purposes: Exploration, Explanation, Description, and Prediction. Yin (1989) recognized the initial three as the types of case study researches that may be conducted. Exploratory research is performed to investigate phenomena about which we know little or nothing, to identify variables for use in a subsequent

study, and to generate hypotheses for quantitative research. Explanatory research attempts to explain the forces and networks that cause and shape the phenomenon of interest. In descriptive research, the phenomenon is described in such a way that the reader feels that he or she understands the experiences of the participants. Predictive research aims to forecast events and behaviour. How and why things happen the way they do, with distilling the "meaning" of what is observed. By way of the method, observation and interviews are critical to the data collection process, and different sampling techniques were used in selecting sites and people for this purpose. Existing literature on the subject and the use of internet sources aided in contextualizing the study and helped provide interpretation and discussion of the issues.

1.7.1 Research Design

Creswell (2009) indicates that research designs are plans and routine for research that span the choices from wide assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis. The research design allows the researcher to acquire answers to the questions posed. Considering the nature of my topic, a qualitative research design was considered the best mode to acquire an in-depth understanding of the relationships between street dwellers, their environment, and 'normal' people; and the products of these relationships described in this research as cultural heritage. With this kind of research, the researcher interacted with participants to varying degrees, observing, questioning, and sometimes actually living as one of those to be studied.

1.7.2 Study Population

A study population is the group of individuals selected based on inclusion and exclusion criteria which relate to the variable being studied. The population from which the sample population is randomly or purposively selected is a study population. The research employed random, snowballing and purposive sampling techniques in selecting a total of 75 individuals from within the street dwellers in Adabraka, Accra as respondents. The varying segments of the selected

population enabled the acquisition of information and perspectives of these groups, and also enhanced the dynamics sought for in the topic of study.

1.7.3 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

The research adopted three sampling techniques; random, snowballing and purposive, in selecting informants. Whereas the random sampling method was used in the selection of 25 of the informants, 10 were interviewed based on snowballing where some informants referred to specific individuals who needed to be interviewed, a purposive sampling technique was used for specific individuals in the streets and organizations that have worked with them because of their expertise on the subject matter. Monga (2009:122) asserts that purposive sampling is used in selecting a study population because they are relevant to the study or that they may be subject matter experts in that particular research field. Therefore, the choice of some personnel of the agencies that have worked with street dwellers, and individuals identified as ‘generational street dwellers’ were targeted, having in mind some specific objectives of the study. The reason is that these categories of personnel by virtue of their involvement with the streets and the street dwellers, have the knowledge and are involved in the case being studied. The focus of purposive sampling is the characteristics of a population which will best enable a researcher to answer specific research questions (Lund 2012:4).

As noted in the methodology of the study, case study research does not require a large number of respondents. The objective is to obtain in-depth and first-hand information for a greater understanding of the case under study. The other generic objectives of the study which did not require expert intervention were attended to using random sampling techniques in selecting informants or respondents. Random sampling is a part of the sampling techniques in which each sample/individual has an equal probability of being chosen. A sample chosen randomly is meant to be an unbiased representation of the total population and is the simplest form of collecting data

from the total population. The sampling technique does not consider variables such as age, expertise, gender etc. but can generate useful data for a research topic. The advantage is that the technique provides for a fair representation of the target population and eliminates sampling bias. The technique creates blinded experiments/randomized control/tests that can extract information from individuals which can then be useful for applying to the entire group.

1.7.4 Data Analysis

As a qualitative research study, the focus was on understanding the everyday life of street dwellers on the street of Adabraka in Accra and the persons involved (Neergard & Ulhri, 2007). Therefore, qualitative analysis emphasizing the knowledge, experiences and meaning of the subject matter as expressed by respondents was critical. Piecing together the views of respondents and constructing meanings (interpretations) out of what the respondents opined is of the essence to data analysis in qualitative research. The identification and segregation of the thematic areas from the interviews and observations constituted a major part of the analysis and interpretation of the data. The variables (dependent and independent) of the study; interviews, observations and written sources ensured that the data obtained could be validated and said to be reliable to a large extent. This approach is eclectic in nature, involving a conscious sifting of the sources of information to ensure prudence in the data presented (Nkumbaan, 2015).

1.8 Significance of the Research

In discussing the research problem, a knowledge gap of previous research works on streetism not paying attention to the unique positive cultural elements / the heritage of street dwellers is firmly established. This research, therefore, complements previous works by providing anthropological knowledge of how street dwellers develop their socio-cultural values. Thus, this dissertation contributes to the knowledge by documenting the heritage of these street dwellers. Also, this research will have a significant influence on policymakers with regards to the outgrowing

phenomenon of streetism. Thus, by bringing out the element of heritage embedded in this act of streetism, this study could serve as reference material for policymakers on streetism. Finally, this study will serve as a useful reference for future research on street dwellers and emerging cultural values related to life in the streets.

1.9 Structure of the Study

This dissertation is organized into five main chapters as shown in the figure below.

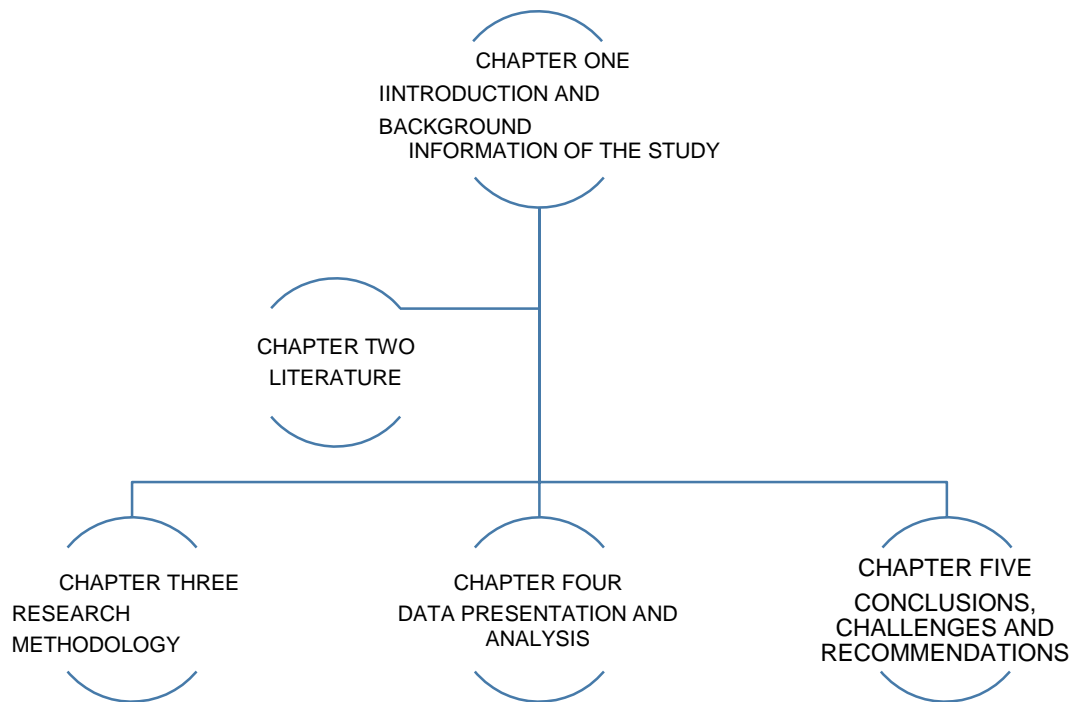


Figure 1. Structure of the study

Chapter One introduces and presents the background of the dissertation. It captures the research problem, research aim and objectives, definition of the research problem, research questions, conceptual framework, research method and significance of the study.

Chapter Two reviews the literature relevant to the study. It discusses related literature on the anthropology of the street as well as the concept of cultural heritage. Here, themes such as

anthropology in context, the meaning and definition of streetism, history of streetism, causes and effects of streetism are discussed. The concept of heritage and why streetism can be considered as a heritage are also discussed in this chapter. Chapter Three describes the fieldwork and the data collection methods used. Thus, the method used to derive data for this research are discussed in Chapter Three. Chapter Four deals with the presentation and analysis of the collected research data. Chapter Five comprises the concluding thoughts, recommendations, challenges encountered in the field and how the challenges were mitigated.

CHAPTER TWO

ANTHROPOLOGY OF STREETISM AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter of the research is a review of the literature that is relevant to the subject under study. It discusses related literature on the anthropology of streetism and the concept of heritage.

Literature review applies to wider, ongoing discussion, filling gaps, and expanding previous studies (Cooper, 2010; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). It facilitates theory development, closes areas where an excess of research exists and also uncovers areas where research is needed. The unit of analysis would be on Anthropology of streetism: documenting the heritage resources of street dwellers in Adabraka. Thus, identification of unique identities within the community of street dwellers in Adabraka. The literature for this study, however, will essentially be drawn from peer-reviewed articles published in journals, textbooks, research papers and newspaper publications. Information were also obtained from Google Search Engine.

The numerous available literature examined mostly discuss issues such as the causes, effects, survival techniques, origins and definitions of streetism. However, due to the complex and diverse nature of streetism, it is irrational to make a universal generalization about the nature, causes, and effects of streetism. It is against this background that making assumptions about streetism of one country based on the experiences of those in other countries is inappropriate. This is because the problem of streetism may differ from one geographical setting to the other.

2.1 Anthropology in Context

Since this study aims at establishing the link between cultural heritage and the anthropology of street dwellers, there is the need to discuss the concept of anthropology. A fusion of two words taken from the Greek language is the name anthropology: Anthropos and logos. The word Anthropos means a human being, while logos means research or knowledge. Anthropology, when bringing the two terms together, is the research or science of humanity.

In a more precise term, Anthropology is a study that investigates the life strategies acquired and exchanged by individuals as members of human social groups; discusses the characteristics experienced by human beings as members of one species (*homo sapiens*) and the varying ways in which individuals exist in different environments; and analyzes the products of social groups: material objects (tools, cloth among others) (World Book Encyclopaedia, Vol.1: 545-548). Anthropology is thus, a holistic study of human beings.

Anthropology has four main focal points – how humankind originates, how humankind evolves, variations of humankind (physical, biochemical and cultural) and the material possessions and cultural heritage of humankind. Through an examination of our biological and cultural history and comparative observation of contemporary human cultures, Anthropology attempts to understand how and why humans are both related and distinct (Howard and Janet, 1992).

Furthermore, Howard and Janet (1992) observed that: The ultimate goal of anthropology is to develop an integrated image of humanity, an objective that includes an infinite number of questions on all aspects of our life.

By the late 1870s, anthropology was starting to develop as a discipline, according to Howard and Janet (1992). A significant catalyst for its development was the rise of Western colonial powers and their consequent desire to better understand the populations living under colonial rule. For

example, in the United States, the government sought information about Native American populations that were subdued and put on reservations. Anthropologists were employed to help devise means to handle these entities while the tribes were subdued. However, before they disappeared and were forgotten, many anthropologists were inspired by the need to document local practices. Anthropology became a discipline mainly in museums, and several museums dedicated to the study of humanity were established in Europe, North America and South America during the 1870s and 1880s.

Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, anthropology's connection with museums affected its development. Professionalization allowed significant breakthroughs in the consistency and amount of ethnographic study during the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In technologically simplistic cultures, early anthropologists largely researched small groups. These cultures, such as rural, non-industrialized or basic cultures, are often referred to by different names. The study of social and cultural differences within human groups was emphasized by anthropologists in the early 1900s. Many of the indigenous peoples of the non-Western world and their social and cultural attributes have been researched and documented.

While no comprehensive evidence is available, it has now become a widely acknowledged reality of anthropology that humankind is a result of evolutionary processes, and that humans have evolved from their nearest living primates (Bryan, 1997; Behe, 1996). Whereas the distinctive characteristics of various cultures are studied by anthropologists, they also research the basic similarities between people around the world (Scupin & De Corse, 1995). They strive to figure out what accounts for the correlations that are seen across societies in many values, traditions and structures. Hence, anthropology provides the scientific framework within which street dwelling (human issue) can be understood and documented as part of human inventions.

2.2.0 The Concept of Streetism

Streetism is a very difficult phenomenon. It is found across the globe (Dabir and Athale, 2011). This shows that this way of life is not limited only to the Third World Countries. The dimension, nature and reasons accounting for streetism are dependent on the economic, political, and social well-being of a nation's cultural and traditional settings, institutional interventions and the level of social harmony and peace (Veale, 1996).

2.2.1 Brief History of Street Dwelling

Streetism is a term for people experiencing homelessness who live on the streets of a city (Benitez, 2007). As far back as 1848, the phenomenon of streetism was documented. In the introduction to his book on the history of abandoned people, *And Now My Soul Is Hardened: Abandoned Children in Soviet Russia, 1918-1930*, Alan Ball noted that orphaned and abandoned children from the earliest times have been a source of misery (Ball, 1996). They paid for most of the boy prostitutes in Augustan Rome and a few decades back, pushed a 442 church council in southern Gaul to state that there is a general complaint among neglected young people that they are now more prone to dogs than to kindness.

In Tsarist Russia, reports of the seventeenth century described destitute young people wandering the streets, and any attempt at eradication thereafter survived the phenomenon. In 1848, in and around London, UK, Lord Ashley referred to over 30,000 naked, filthy roaming lawless and deserted young people. Due to the devastation of World War I and the Russian Civil War, there were at least seven million homeless children in Russia by 1922. Gangs were formed by lost young people, their own argot was developed and petty theft and prostitution were engaged (Fradkov, 2007).

In the 18th century, traces of street dwelling were documented. Reed (1993) writes that as the industrial revolution emerged from the agrarian revolution, England evolved from an agrarian society to an industrial society. As a result, wealth creation divided people into classes.

In Ghana, an article in the Daily Graphic Newspaper by M.N.D Jawula traces the origin of street dwelling people to head porters (Kayayie) who migrate from the northern part of the country to the southern part in the search for greener pastures (Daily Graphic, Monday, August 30, 2010).

2.2.2 Definition of Streetism

Defining streetism is not a one-way deliberation. It is dynamic. Karanja et al. (2013) write that street dwelling as related to children (street children) was coined to identify street children as oodles of destitute children who are on their own in large cities. Their assertion is rooted in the United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF) distinction among street dwelling children. Largely, UNICEF (1995) considers street dwelling persons below the age of eighteen as street children but classify them based on their street dwelling manifestations and connections with their families. The distinction categorises street children into two groups. The first group is termed as “*Children on the street*”. It comprises of street children who live under guardians and keep connections with their families but mostly work [as shoeshine persons, newspaper sellers, beggars, porters and hawkers] on the street for their socio-economic benefits or to support household income. Agyemang (2011:21) articulates this about the group:

At the end of the day, they return to their homes, sleep at night and have some time with their family. But the truth of the matter is that “children on the street” usually do not have family friends and protection.

The second group is coined as “*Children of the street*”. The children under this group somehow maintain loose or no relationships with their families (an example is migrant destitute). They are

on their own to fend for themselves. The street then becomes their estate, religion, community and learning centre. Agyemang (2011:22) postulates that street dwelling children of such calibre have two main abodes of resting at night – open and unauthorized places and overcrowded hired rooms.

In terms of the law, streetism is defined using the “correctional approach” and the passive outlook towards these criteria of children (Karanja et al., 2013). Issues of streetism are often defined based on the particular jurisdiction under consideration. In Ghana, The Children’s Act, 1998 (Act 560) establishes a child as a person who is below the age of eighteen (18) years and has the right to life, dignity, respect, leisure and liberty. A child in Ghana, under the Act, is not expected to be deprived of basic education, immunization, participation in sports, adequate diet, clothing, shelter, medical care, expression of opinion and/or any other thing required for his/her development. Deprivation of these basic rights often produces street dwelling children.

Agyemang (2011:21-25) writes about seven other categories of street dwelling people aside UNICEF categorization but the one which has a larger influence on the current work is “Second-generation” of street children. The Second-generation group of streetism comprises of both the children and their parents or guardians. In Agyemang words,

There are some fathers, mothers and brothers and sisters who happen to be in the streets with their entire family, begging. These parents sit at a distance and ask their children to go near the streets begging (Agyemang, 2011:25).

Streetism, as discussed, often overlooks other street dwelling people who are eighteen (18) years or above. Some people have lived in the street all their lives and have accepted the street as their home.

The current study expands the scope of street dwelling people to include any identified group of people who have made living “on” the street as part of expressing themselves as humans.

2.2.3 Causes, Effects and Role of Streetism

In Ghana, according to the Social Welfare Department, it is estimated that there are about 90,000 street children (excluding street dwellers above the age of eighteen years old) in the Greater Accra region alone (Department of Social Welfare, 2016:1). This estimated figure alone is enough to investigate why people decide to make the street a temporal or a permanent home.

There is always no single factor for streetism. Instead, combinations of many factors lead people to the street (Quarshie, 2011; Mtaita, 2015; Ijadunola, et al., 2015). One of these factors is inability to continue school due to economic hardship affecting the-family and unemployment of one or both parents (Mtaita, 2015; Ijadunola et al., 2015). The cultural factors influencing streetism in the Ibadan metropolis, Nigeria, were studied by Adeyemi and Oluwaseun (2012) and three cultural factors were identified: family structures, social norms and modernization.

The authors found that parents giving birth to many children lead to greater family sizes with the family structures, which places tremendous pressure on the parents. These results were similar to that of Awatey (2014), which discovered that about 90 per-cent of street children chose not to attend school on the streets in Kumasi, Ghana.

The study by Adeyemi and Oluwaseun (2012) further showed that the main explanation for streetism was that such people needed to work to get money to help their families since about 50 per cent of them said they need support in food, education, clothing and other basic needs for their family members. Studies conducted in Nigeria by M.O.D. Ojo (2013), and in Sri Lanka by B.C.V. Senaratna and B.V.N. Wijewardarna (2013) confirm the breakdown of family structures as a cause of streetism. Abebe (2009) stated that most of the street children reported were due to divorce or breakup, resulting in the disintegration of the family. He further indicated that, as a result of large family sizes varying from four to six people per household, these individuals lived on the street. Together with lack of consistent income, this circumstance encourages people to seek for a living

on the street. Similar results have been found in South Africa by Chireshe, etal. (2010) and in Nigeria by Alenoma (2012) and Ojo (2013). Alenoma (2012) for instance asserted that parents and guardians with low educational levels, low interest in sending their children to school and choosing to learn practical skills on the street contribute to streetism. According to the author, such parents believe that there was a gap in the education sector to provide children with practical skills and, therefore, pushed them on the street to acquire such skills. Also, Goodman, etal. (2016) opined that mothers who suffered higher abuse, neglect and violence in youngsters were more vulnerable to street life. The researchers concluded that even street dwellers were undereducated women, born in poverty in their younger days and raised in dysfunctional households. On their part, Senaratna and Wijewardarna (2013) averred that poor family functioning and low social and economic circumstances are triggering and retaining streetism.

In Turkey, socio-economic factors such as poverty, migration and unemployment have been noted to be contributory factors to streetism (Mert & Kadioglu, 2014). Other contributing factors to streetism found in Turkey by service providers include family economic conditions and poor social welfare programs (Bademci, 2012). Kayiranga and Mukasshema (2014); Lam and Cheng (2012) have also noted that factors including parents not being aware of the risks of streetism and inadequate social support from the neighbourhood can lead to streetism. That is, factors such as domestic violence, seeking a better life, sexual abuse, poor parental relationship, and employment leads to streetism.

Colinson and Ash (2015) research in London and Ward and Seager's (2010) research in South Africa reported that factors such as poor parenting and low levels of education contribute to streetism.

Moreover, in 2016, Amekuedi investigated how streetism is unique in the La-Nkwantanang Madina Municipality, Accra, Ghana by focusing on the distinct characteristics and causes of the

problem in the area as well as assessing the involvement of the state and other stakeholders using policy interventions adopted to address the problem. She also highlighted the limitations in addressing the problem of child streetism in the area. However, she failed to outline the survival strategies of these street dwellers which can be considered as a positive cultural construction.

In their work, Karanja et al. (2013), carried out to investigate why the street children phenomenon persists and continues to increase in Nakuru Municipality. They established that “there is a relationship between poverty and being a street child”. They argue that parents of street children are unable to provide for their families hence the children migrate from home to the street to fend for themselves. As a result, these children get involved in a street culture which is characterized by drugs and manual jobs to generate income for their survival. Their work revealed that delinquency and violence nature which are associated with street children is a clear reflection of what happens in the life of street children from their mistreatment at home and how they are abused by their peers in the street. They further asserted that though government agencies and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have made a massive move to rehabilitate the street children, the move has yielded least results due to lack of goal-oriented programme. Karanja et al. (2013) reaffirms Mullahey (2003) assertion that “a free society needs constantly to consider and discuss the present reality in the light of its traditions and where it wants to go.” They further articulated that street children in Kenya face various hardships in their daily lives that range from hazards of living on the streets, harassment, public ridicules and even abuse by one another and even the police. These children have been questioned about who they are; where they come from; why they prefer the street over schools and home what their attitudes to schools and career are (Karanja et al. 2013:220). Again, the authors asserted that their (street children) “continuing presence function to reiterate the existing prejudices about families, substance abuse, street crime and birth control. The street children are part of modern life as it is organized today:

a street culture of petty crime, drug selling and prostitution. They are part of the job market as unskilled, energetic, available, low cost and short term employees” (Karanja et al., 2013)” It should be noted that despite their deceptive physical and situational outlooks, street children have a role to play in society.

Endris & Sitota (2019:96) investigated “the pushing factors of streetism for children living on the streets of Harar city”. Likewise, Jane and Maria (1996) listed low self-esteem, lack of confidence, self-hate, feeling of an outcast, unworthy, unloved and unlovable, and feeling degraded and violated as some of the psychological life consequences in the street. Also, Jacob et al. (2004), evaluated how government-initiated program could aid in relocating and resettling orphans and street children in Uganda. However, they failed to indicate or identify which aspect of the ways of life of these individuals the ‘normal citizen’ can learn from.

Eshia (2010) explored the way of life of the street children within the city of Accra. She outlined the motivations, contributions, perceptions and the challenges street children face at their ‘new place of abode’ (the street).

In her study, she brought to light the views held by street children’s on their rights in terms of their schooling, health care and economic participation. However, there is limited literature on the documentation of the positive cultural constructions that can be associated with streetism especially in the literature covering study areas in Ghana and other developing countries. This is the gap that this study sought to fill in addition to studying the peculiar case of the chosen area.

Concluding from the existing literature, factors such as large family size, societal norms and beliefs, delinquency of children, domestic violence, child neglect, broken homes, attraction to city life, urbanization, migration (Alenoma, 2012; Hatloy and Huser 2005; Jacob, et al. 2004; Eshia, 2010; Endris & Sitota, 2019) among others play significant roles in contributing to the

phenomenon of streetism. Also, generational streetism is another cause of streetism. Boakye-Boaten, (2008) established that street children give birth to other street children, and the cycle continues. He calls this group the ‘2nd Generation Street Children’, that is, they are children who become street children because their parents are themselves, street dwellers. Due to these factors, dwelling or living on the streets becomes a “materially rational alternative” (Hecht, 1998) for these victims of circumstance. The abovementioned and a plethora of others in addition to individual choices, peer pressure are characteristic of street dwellers in the Adabraka area. Also, some interviewees from the study area stated the desire to get money or to be rich, escaping from forced marriages, and adventure (that is, to gain experience outside from home) or to gaining ‘hustling experience’ as reasons for they been on the street at the study area.

There are some consequences associated with this phenomenon. This act sometimes leads to extreme deprivation of certain resources or amenities and leads to social exclusion.

Undoubtedly, streetism has become an avenue for creating opportunities for engaging in crime or other social vices such as, drug abuse, child trafficking, child labour and armed robbery and rape with its attendant problems of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, unwanted pregnancy which leads to early parenthood and the perpetuation of a cycle of streetism (Amekuedi, 2016; Eshia, 2010; Endris & Sitota, 2019; Karanja, et al., 2013). It should be noted that these individuals, to a large extent engage in these vices to survive. That is, these ‘survival strategies’ of theirs are developed in response to the environment they find themselves in. Hence, conforming to the adage “the environment sets the scene, and human remains the actor”. That is, as a result of the hardship these individuals encounter, they become social misfits engaging in the above-mentioned vices.

Due to the threat this act poses, there have been several efforts by both government and Non-

Governmental Organizations in dealing with or curtailing this behaviour. For example, Jacob, et al. (2004) described a model, thus, the Model for Orphan Resettlement and Education (MORE). Asserting that when implemented by the Ugandan government will help to effectively educate and re-socialize AIDS orphans and street children of Kampala.

Also, in Ghana, the Ministry for Gender and Social Protection has adopted several policies geared towards eradicating this phenomenon. Some of such policies include; the Children's Act, 1998 (Act 560) which primarily aims to protect the rights of the Ghanaian child. Likewise, in 2014, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP) with support from UNICEF introduced The Family and Child Welfare Policy. This policy aims at addressing problems like child trafficking, children living and/or working on the streets, absence of birth registration for some children, corporal punishment, domestic violence, sexual abuse and exploitation (Child and Family Welfare Policy, 2014).

Other policies include the campaign of discouraging the act of giving alms to people on the street which in one way or the other serves as an "additional pull factor to entice individuals to come to and stay on the streets" (Wiehler, 2002). Apart from efforts by the state to curtail this phenomenon, some NGOs like Plan International Ghana, Child Rights International, Catholic Action for Street Children (CAS) and several other local and international NGOs have stepped in to contribute to eradicating child streetism mainly through providing educational and vocational training and housing facilities for these children (Amekuedi, 2016:27). All of these policies are geared towards creating awareness to reduce streetism.

It should be noted that the provision of, or investing resources in amenities that the rural areas lack, by the government is a means of preventing rural-urban migration, hence, a means to curtail streetism. This will solve the root problem of poverty which forces individuals to migrate.

While these studies have provided useful insights into understanding the causes, effects and remedy to solving this phenomenon, they fail to identify any ways of life of the street dweller which can be viewed as a heritage, and this is what this research sought to achieve.

2.3 The Concept of Heritage

Heritage is a complex term with varied meanings. How heritage is conceptualized, what is done with it and how it is being used are the pivotal points from which tensions, misunderstandings and conflicts arise (Ampofo Manu, 2019). To have a meaningful definition and understanding of heritage, it is important to integrate the links between material culture, memory and identity (Smith and Waterton, 2009; cf Ampofo Manu, 2019). Howard (2003:6) argues that heritage can be considered as a concept of inheritance. That is to say, heritage is considered as heirloom passed on, or, that may be passed on, to an identifiable generation from a known larger lineage (Ampofo Manu, 2019:18).

According to Pearce (1998), any individual's heritage is possibly a mixture of things that define a group's identity, and this could be a national group, and/or those which define a personal and familial one (cf. Howard, 2003). This "mixture of things" could be natural and human-made features created by an individual or group of people, as a representation of cultural and social values (Ampofo Manu, 2019). Hoelscher (2007) defines heritage as "a mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past" (1998:8), as a specific way of interpreting and utilizing bygone times that links individual within a larger collective" (Hoelscher, 2007: 200; cf. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998). Howard (2003) argues that the concept of heritage must not be restricted to material culture or physical things. This is because many people are much concerned about the things they do other than the things they own (Howard, 2003) and, their emotional attachment to what they own can be described as heritage because such emotions depict their real identity, and essence of place, and belonging (Ampofo Manu, 2019).

Some heritage scholars also assert that heritage can be those physical objects and places that can be formally protected using heritage laws and charters as others claim heritage can both be made up of tangible and intangible legacies inherited from past generations. This is to say that heritage can be considered as two separate cultural variables with different meanings and functions (Ampofo Manu, 2019; Harvey, 2001; Smith, 2006) “fused into a single cultural identity” (Ampofo Manu, 2019). However, Smith and Waterton (2009) define heritage as the material culture of the past and structures produced by humans that make up the archaeological record used to explain the past. The materiality of archaeological data makes the concept of heritage inherently knowable or physical (Smith and Waterton, 2009), hence, described as tangible heritage. Tangible heritage may comprise the built heritage in the form of ancient structures, paintings, sculptures, coins, manuscripts as well as archaeological sites.

Nevertheless, it is this material culture that represents the identity or essence of place and belonging of their users, and cannot be viewed as two separate cultural variables fused into a single cultural entity (Ampofo Manu, 2019).

Smith and Waterton (2009) further argue that heritage can also be considered as an intangible process, in which socio-cultural values can be identified, negotiated, rejected or affirmed (Smith and Waterton, 2009 cf. Ampofo Manu, 2019), and thus, bring in issue of memory. That is, heritage can be considered as a chain of cultural activities that may require commemoration and passing on knowledge and memories that express identity, socio-cultural values and meanings (Smith and Waterton, 2009). Thus, heritage can be seen as something fully incorporated, recognised, and memorialised. It is thus a “memory” and serves as a means of recognising one’s identity and essence of place and belonging (Smith and Waterton, 2009; Howard, 2003 cf. Ampofo Manu, 2019). Thus, heritage is the legacy of physical artefacts (cultural property) and intangible attributes

of a group or society inherited from the past³ and, may represent the cultural identity of a given people. Hence, cultural heritage results from the activities of human.

From the above academic accounts, heritage scholars address both tangible and intangible aspects of heritage and, these two phenomena are acquired, accepted and recognized by the keepers or current owners. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), in particular, defines intangible cultural heritage as “practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith that communities, groups and in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage”(UNESCO, 2003). Clearly, heritage establishes a symbiotic relationship between the tangible and intangible and of which the intangible is partly embedded in the tangible to form a single cultural entity commonly accepted by scholars and stakeholders in the heritage industry as cultural heritage (Ampofo Manu, 2019; Trask, 2008).

These varied definitions of heritage point to the fact that heritage is a fluid and contested term (Aplin, 2002). Schramm (2004:157), attests to this claim, by stating that “to classify a certain set of values and cultural expressions as heritage mean to turn those into an identifiable cultural product, distinguished from others, but comparable to them”. As such, the definition of heritage is an individual subjective matter that depends on a person’s background, life experiences and personality (Aplin, 2002). Heritage can therefore be said to be a “useful thing” (Howard, 2003). That is, what an individual hold in high esteem.

³ <https://culturalheritagestudies.ceu.edu/concept-and-history-cultural-heritage#:~:text=Cultural%20heritage%20can%20be%20defined,society%20inherited%20from%20the%20past.&text=Due%20to%20its%20attached%20values,the%20benefit%20of%20future%20generations>. Accessed on 21/10/2020.

2.4 Streetism as a Heritage

According to Tunbridge and Ashworth (2006), heritage is ‘present-centred and is created, shaped and managed by, and in response to, the demands of the present. As such, it is open to constant revision and change and is also both a source and a repercussion of social conflict.’ The definition of heritage by Tunbridge and Ashworth (2006) connotes that heritage can be/or is a ‘creation of the present’. This shows that heritage encompasses a wide range of our inherited and contemporary traditions, monuments, objects, and culture⁴, and that heritage is also an essential part of the present we live in, and of the future, we build⁵. That is, “heritage is an inheritance of the societies humans live in”⁶. As such, the act of streetism, which despite its absurd outlooks, is still on the rise, can be considered as or is the creation of a new culture by individuals that certain circumstances have forced them.

This is because, it cannot be ruled out that once a given ‘culture/heritage’ emerges in the social space through its cultural moorings, it takes shape in various forms as the refined embodiment of the peoples' consciousness and urge to reach the perfection (Harvey, 2001). Hence, the ‘good’ elements of the ways of life of these street dwellers need to be documented. The documentation of these ways of life is crucial because the preservation and interpretation of heritage can play a constructive role in the social evolution of nations, regions, and local communities (Selicao, 2016). Thus heritage, either tangible or intangible is a specialized form of culture or the representative form of the culture that has stood the test of time (Hampton, 2005).

⁴<https://www.umass.edu/chs/about/whatisheritage.html#:~:text=Heritage%20is%20the%20full%20range,a%20collecion%20of%20old%20things>. Accessed on 20/09/2020

⁵ See footnote 4.

⁶ See footnote 4

It can be argued that heritage is the only form of culture that survives the test of time and reaches from generation to generation as the living proof of people's journey in the process of human evolution (Aas et al, 2005). Due to this, some element within streetism (such as been able to stand a test of time; been the way of lives of some people and this life ways been passed on from generation to generation) can be viewed as heritage, because streetism is still on the rise and has survived the test of time despite the numerous efforts to control it.

Huebner (2015) argues that when elements such as festivals that include traditional songs and lyrics are passed on from generation to generation, they qualify as heritage. As such, generational streetism- the situation whereby street children give birth to other street children, and the cycle in turn continues - indirectly makes streetism a heritage. This is because this act or survival strategies have been passed down from one generation to the other. Thus, it is this standardization (passing on traits from one generation to the other) that leads to the development of identity belonging to a particular group or segment of society (ICOMOS, 2005). As such, this way of life and experience of these street dwellers tend to have social and cultural significance (Borg et al., 1996).

Also, space and time make something to be classified as a heritage. Heritage can be situated within a period and a place (site) (Aplin, 2002; ICOMOS, 2010), where its antecedent could be traced. Peter Howard attested to this by asserting that "time is a great maker of cultural heritage" (Howard, 2003:189). With regards to streetism as a heritage, its origin in Ghana has so far not been traced thoroughly. However, factors that account for streetism have been thoroughly researched.

Again, the rarity of some life ways of these street dwellers is worth documenting. Hence, it makes this phenomenon to be considered as heritage. In determining a phenomenon or a concept as heritage, Howard (2003:190) argues that not all items become heritage merely by being old, but its rarity is often a critical element. Thus, the concept of heritage is not limited to only tangible

and intangible legacies of past human behaviour, but also includes the tendency of humans to respond to nature and the environment around them by creating a way of life and cultural systems that are transmitted across generations. Besides, Hoelscher (2007:200) affirms that heritage exists everywhere including “along the city streets.” As such, some ways of life of street dwellers, which is defined in this research as any human being for whom the street has become his or her place of abode and a source of earning a living can be viewed as a heritage.

CHAPTER THREE

DATA COLLECTION

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the mode of data collection for the research. An eclectic approach, that involved the combination of both the techniques of Ethnography and Visual documentation were adopted during the process of data collection and documentation. The choice of this methodological approach was influenced by my research questions. The chapter is structured into three; the pre-fieldwork activities, fieldwork activities and post-fieldwork activities. The rationale is to give an in-depth account of what transpired during the research.

The initial stage entails all the preliminary preparation embarked on before the actual data collection process. Written records on streetism as well as heritage were consulted during this stage. The second stage (the fieldwork activities) focused on the method used to collect the data. The data collection methods employed on the field included; interview, observation, and focus-group discussion. The third stage (the post-fieldwork activities) touches on all the activities that were undertaken after the data had been collected. This involved showing appreciation to informants, transcription of the recorded interviews and interpretation of the research data.

3.1 Pre-Field Work Activities

This generally involved engaging existing literature on streetism and heritage to gain insights that would guide my research. Other preliminary activities such as conducting feasibility studies, including identifying informants, seeking the necessary permissions, and drafting the interview guide were carried out. The township of Adabraka was traversed to try to locate specific spots where my subjects of study (street dwellers) could be found. Because of the nature of the research,

ethical concerns-taking photographs, etc. were taken seriously and prior approval had to be given before the research proceeded.

Ethical issues were taken into consideration because “ethical concerns are paramount when planning, conducting and evaluating research” (Cozby 2001:32).

3.2 Fieldwork Activities

The fieldwork activities involved engagements with some of the street dwellers in order to obtain the needed data. Given their numbers, several sampling techniques were adopted in selecting the respondents.

3.2.1 Sample Size and Sampling technique

The sample size of this study was seventy-five (75) street dwellers, made up of different categories.

8 -15 years old		15 – 18 years		18 – 25 years		25 years and above	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
16	14	12	4	10	2	6	11

Table 1.0. Age group of respondents

Due to the difficulty anticipated in being able to interview street dwellers within the Greater Accra region, the researcher chose Adabraka, one of the suburbs within this region as the area of study.

As indicated earlier, the town has a long history and is noted for the element of street dwelling.

Also, because I could not go around and interview the entire street dwellers in Adabraka, I employed specific useful sampling techniques. Sampling technique refers to the procedures used by a researcher to select the members of the sample. The sampling techniques employed in the study included simple random sampling, purposive sampling and snowball sampling techniques.

These sampling techniques employed were meant to enable the researcher gather the best information to fulfil the goal of the study and also limit the difficulty that occurred in obtaining the required information.

The first sampling technique adopted was simple random sampling. With this type of sampling technique, members of the sample size were selected randomly and purely by chance. It was through simple random sampling that I discovered or was able to discover the eighteen (18) of the “Family Breakdown Street Dwellers” and four (4) out of the twenty-four (24) of the “Generational Street Dwellers” in the study area (see table 2).

Purposive sampling was also used to select some informants. Purposive sampling is a type of sampling technique where members of a sample are selected according to the purpose of the study (Renfrew and Bahn, 2004; Drennan, 1996). This technique was employed at the area because I was particularly studying street dwellers and not those individuals who hawk on the street and return to their home after their ‘business’ was accomplished and that of mad individuals living on the street at the study area. That is, purposive sampling was used to select participants who it was easy to engage with through preferences, convenience and expectations (van Hoeven et al., 2015) to accomplish the purpose of the study. For example, it was through judgmental sampling that I was able to discover the “Greener Pasture Street Dwellers” in the study area. These individuals were mainly the “Kayayeis” and those who engage in petty sanitation works (known in the Akan parlance as ‘*borla adwuma*’) and the mobile barbers.

Snowball sampling became necessary as some informants referred to specific individuals and institutions that needed to be engaged. Snowball sampling is where research participants recruit

other participants for a study⁷. It is used where potential participants are hard to find. This technique was used “to access people who would otherwise be very difficult to find” (Naderifar, et al. 2017:2). That is, this sampling technique was applied because the samples (street dwellers) under study, although visible in the area but were not easily accessible. With this technique, the researcher first identified specific street dwellers and started the interview (conversation) with them. Afterwards, it was those interviewee(s) who were initially contacted that showed the location of other street dwellers. It was for instance, through this snowball technique that I was able to interview the ten (10) “Adventurers Street Dwellers” in the study area (see table 2). For example, regarding the “Adventurers Street Dwellers” in the study area, it was Kwaku Ababio (a 25-year-old boy from Cape Coast in the Central Region of Ghana, who lives on the street of Adabraka. His motive of being on the street is “*to taste street life so that upon his return, to Cape Coast, he can be considered as a ‘killer’ or a ‘hardcore’ guy among his peers*”) (Personal Communication with Kwaku Ababio), who led me to other street dwellers of his kind. Regarding generational streetism, it was through Kwame⁸ that I was able to interview twenty (20) of the twenty-four (24) “Generational Street Dwellers”.

3.2.2. Observation

Following Atkinson and Hammersley’s fourfold typology of observation, that is; complete observer, observer as a participant, participant as an observer, and complete participant (Atkinson and Hamersley, 1994), and in order to understand and document the life ways of these street dwellers, I observed my informants (or the people under study) both in the day and at night. For instance, during the daytime, I engaged in interviews with them and also observed them and their

⁷ <https://www.statisticshowto.com/probability-and-statistics/statistics-definitions/snowball-sampling/#:~:text=Snowball%20sampling%20is%20where%20research,and%20becomes%20larger%20and%20larger.> Accessed on 22/09/2020

⁸ Kwame is a street dweller at Adabraka. He is a drug addict. He attributes this menace to him being on the street all his life.

activities, and at night I assumed the role of ‘complete observer’, observing how they organize themselves and sleep. This strategy was employed because the daytime was the only time I could learn about how these people (my informants) undertake their daily activities.

These observational strategies guided the kind of questions generated for the interviews. It aided me to obtain data on how these individuals survive on the street. That is, these strategies enabled me to understand how my informants operate in their own ‘natural setting’ (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994). For posterity reasons, photographs were taken.



Figure 2. Street dwellers being observed (Source: Stephen Nsiah, 2020)

3.2.2 Interview

A semi-structured interview guide, made up of different themes was developed to give me focus and direction in the process of conducting the interviews. However, in certain instances, the interview format was unstructured. The format of the interview were mostly in the form of a one-on-one interview. In some cases focus group interview/discussion was used. This was typical when the researcher had conversation with headpotters (Kayayei).

The interviews were mostly conducted at the resting places (lorry station, bus stops, market) of the street dwellers. I have categorized my respondents into four major groups, namely 'generational street dwellers', 'greener pastures street dwellers,' 'family breakdown street dwellers,' and 'adventurer street dwellers'.

"Greener pasture street dwellers" refer to those people who move from their homes to the street to seek for/ in search for a living. Their movement are mostly caused by factors such as economic hardship at home, domestic abuse, among others. "Generational Street Dwellers" are those people who become street dwellers by the virtue that their parents were themselves street dwellers. That is, such people become street dwellers by the reason that their parents are street dwellers (Amekuide, 2016). Cockburn (1990) asserted that some of these parents are children/minor themselves. "Family Breakdown Street Dwellers" are those individuals who have become street dwellers as a result of breakdown in their respective families. "Adventurer Street Dwellers" are those individuals who purposely move to the street so as to have a taste of live experience on the street. That is, it is the delinquent behaviour of such people that send them onto the street (Mnncayi, 1996; Amekueidi, 2016)

‘Generational street dwellers’		‘Greener Pastures street dwellers’		‘Family breakdown street dwellers’		‘Adventurers’ Street dwellers	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
13	11	17	6	6	12	8	2

Table 2.0: Categories of street dwellers engaged in Adabraka



Figure 3. Researcher (left) interviewing a street dweller (Source: Stephen Nsiah, 2020)



Figure 4. Researcher (right) interviewing head porters (Source: Stephen Nsiah, 2020)

To obtain the required information, languages such as; the English, and Ga and Twi languages were used depending on the wishes of the interviewees. Another international language, like Hausa, was used with the help of my research assistant.

To establish a good rapport between myself and my respondents, I usually have informal conversations with them, asking them about their wellbeing at the beginning of every interviewing session. This strategy contributed immensely to building trust and confidence among us.

3.3 Post-Fieldwork Activities

After obtaining the numerous information from the pre and fieldwork activities, the data collected were analyzed to assort the problem investigated. This provided a basis for determining the background, reasons for dwelling and how they have constructed their life in the streets. It further aided in the thematic building of results that are discussed in the fourth chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents data obtained from the fieldwork. It captures themes like streetism in Adabraka by discussing or focusing on areas such as the relationship that exists between the street dweller and the ‘normal’ individual, the causes and effects of streetism and the survival strategies of street dwellers. This chapter also discusses some elements of heritage that are inherent in the ways of life of the street dwellers at Adabraka.

4.1. Streetism at Adabraka

Because streetism manifests differing traits and mannerisms in different contexts, this study adopted a case study approach where it focused on Adabraka to obtain meaningful information about this phenomenon. This approach aided the researcher in exploring and drawing insights from the day to day life of the street dwellers in Adabraka, and also identified and documented some aspects of their ways of life that can be viewed as heritage. To vividly understand ‘Streetism at Adabraka’ the researcher focused thoroughly on investigating themes such as ‘The Street Dweller versus the ‘Normal’ Individual at Adabraka’, the causes and effects of streetism, the survival strategies of street dwellers including but not limited to their subsistence strategies as well as their security.

4.1.1. The Street Dweller versus the ‘Normal’ Individual at Adabraka

This section discusses the relationship that exists between a street dweller and a ‘normal’ individual in the study area. A ‘street dweller’, in this research is used to refer to any human being for whom the street has become his or her place of abode and a source of earning a living as well.

That is, for such individuals, the “street is their constant place for living and a source of income” (Asanbayev et al., 2016:119) as well. On the other side, ‘Normal’ individuals in this context are those who do not live on the streets. That is, with these individuals, the street is not their place of abode. From the research, it was observed that there is a less harmonious relationship between the street dwellers at Adabraka and the ‘normal’ individuals. That is, these ‘normal’ individuals have a negative stereotypic perception about the street dwellers. This is partly due to the physical appearance of the street dwellers. That is to say that, some ‘normal’ individuals in the study area see street dwellers as people beneath the social ladder, regard them as violent and potential criminals. This negative stereotypic perception has led to extreme deprivation in resources allocation and social exclusion. This was evident in the response given to me by some of my respondents at the study area; Kwame Seth, a ‘Scrap dealer’ and Kojo Tenkorang (alias Taller), a mobile barber, when I enquired about the relationship that exists between them (street dwellers) and the ‘normal’ individuals. In their words, they both asserted that;

“Because we sleep (live) on the street, most people do not want to interact with us.

They consider us criminals or even junkies”.

Upon having a conversation with one Maame Ama, a Street hawker in the study area on the question of the relationship that exists between herself and street dwellers, she answered in a derogative manner, by saying;

“These people! What do I want from them? Why should I interact with them, since I don’t have anything to do with them? They may even be armed robbers acting as spies or they may even be people who have been cursed”.

This response from this informant (street hawker) suggests how demeaning some ‘normal’ individuals consider the street dwellers. It should be stated that some street dwellers averred that, not all ‘normal’ individuals look down upon them. Likewise, some ‘normal’ individuals also

claimed that since they and street dwellers are human beings, there was no need for discrimination but they are usually careful in their dealings with them. In all, it was evident from the research that, there is no cordial relationship between street dwellers and ‘normal’ individuals at Adabraka.

4.1.2 Causes and Effects of Streetism in the Study Area

The street dwellers in Adabraka are made up of both Ghanaians and non-Ghanaians. The Ghanaians among this populace come from different towns and villages in Ghana such as Kumasi, Walewale, Damango, Takoradi, Cape Coast, Sefwi, among others. Those non-Ghanaians I interviewed included migrants from Chad, Niger, Mali, Libya and Liberia. The causes or rationale for this phenomenon in the area include the desire or need to seek refuge in a safer environment as a result of political instability. This reason was mainly propagated by the Non-Ghanaian street dwellers in the study area. Also, some of those interviewees (non-Ghanaians) cited economic reasons as to why they are on the street. For instances, Aboubakar⁹, and George Kofi¹⁰ two of my interviewees asserted that they came to Ghana mainly for economic reasons.

Regarding those street dwellers who are Ghanaians from the various parts of the country but reside on the street of Adabraka, they cited the need to secure greener pastures in the city, attraction to city life, domestic violence in the form of forced marriage, bad parenting as a result of broken homes, among others as the reasons for living on the street. For example, Grace¹¹, a porter (Kayayei) and a street dweller, cited the need to earn money so she can set up her own bakery business in her hometown, Wawalele. In addition to the above, generational streetism is also another cause of streetism in the study area. Regarding this, some individuals have become street

⁹ Aboubakar is from Chad who at the time of this study, lived at Adabraka. He is a “Scrap dealer”. He claimed that, since 2013 when he came to Ghana through an unapproved route, he has lived on the Streets of Tema, Ashaiman and Nima.

¹⁰ George Kofi claims to be a Liberian. He asserted that the “Kofi” is his Ghanaian name, and it is attached to his name so as to feel a sense of belonging among his colleagues. At the time of this study, he lived on the street of Adabraka and engages in petty sanitation works, popularly called ‘borla adwuma’ in the Akan parlance.

¹¹ Grace, at the time of this study was a head potter (Kayayei), from Walewale but worked and lived on the street of Adabraka.

dwellers by the fact they were born on the street and that their parents are themselves, street dwellers. For example, one of my informants, Kwame¹² attested that he has lived on the street of Adabraka and Tudu, all in Accra, Ghana since he was born. He further narrated that, her mother was also a street dweller, and that he does not know any of his relatives.

¹² See footnote 8



Figure 5. Kwame, a ‘generational street dweller’ in the study area (Source: Stephen Nsiah, 2020)

Also, some interviewees stated adventure (that is, to gain experience outside from home) or the desire to gaining ‘hustling experience’ as reasons for being on the streets. This was typical of all the ‘Adventurers’ Street dwellers, including Kwaku Ababio, a 25-year-old boy from Cape Coast in the Central Region of Ghana, who lives on the street of Adabraka. Kwaku Ababio, during my

interview with him emphatically stated that he intentionally escaped from his parental home to the street. In his words,

*“I ran away from my parents who were very discipline to taste street life, so that upon my return to Cape Coast, I can be considered as a ‘killer’ or a ‘hardcore guy’ among my peers”*¹³

The phenomenon of streetism at Adabraka is not without consequences. From the research, Grace¹⁴ one of my informants stated that because of they being street dwellers, they are prone to violence such as robbery and rape. In her words, she stated that;

*“Because we do not have permanent places to sleep, and because we sometimes sleep in front of other peoples store, and also at lorry stations, sometimes the drug addicts in the area try to steal our hard earned money. They do this by using scissors or blades to tear our jeans short or underwear where our money is kept. And in the process, they try to rape us”*¹⁵.

That is because they live on the street, their predicaments have become an avenue for some other people to exploit them, by trying to rape them; steal their resources and in some cases inflict harm on them. Apart from rape and robbery, my informants also claimed extreme deprivation and social exclusion as one of the effects of their being street dwellers. For instance, Aboubakar (see footnote) and Samuel K. Cudjoe¹⁶ asserted that they are constantly looked down upon and humiliated by individuals who are not street dwellers and also do not understand their circumstances. As such, it

¹³ Personal Communication with Kwaku Ababio on 21/09/2020.

¹⁴ See footnote 11

¹⁵ Personal communication with Grace on 21/09/2020.

¹⁶ Samuel K. Cudjoe – a scrap dealer, is a 34 year old man who, due to certain circumstances have migrated from Takoradi in the Western Region, Ghana. He has lived for about three years on the Street of Adabraka, Accra.

has contributed to them developing low self-esteem, and are unable to properly associate with the ‘normal’ citizens. In their words, they asserted;

“Because some individuals see us as abnormal people, they mostly do not associate with us, to the extent that, they abhor talking to us”¹⁷.

Again, most of my informants, stated persecution from the Municipal Task Force, known as ‘Abaayei’ in the local parlance as one of the consequences they encounter because of their being street dwellers. They asserted that these government officials, in some instances destroy their properties as in the case of the ‘trays’ of the porters (Kayayei). In some cases, the female interviewees, mostly engaging in head porting (Kayayei) asserted that some members of the Task Force (Abaayei) demand from them, sexual offers so that they can be ‘pardoned’. Despite these negative effects of streetism in the area, some interviewees claimed that they have been able to explore some parts of Ghana as a result and have succeeded in making a living not only on their own but can support their families back home.

4.1.2 Survival Strategies of Street Dwellers in Adabraka

The survival strategies of street dwellers in the area include but not limited to their subsistence patterns including their habitation and source of income, medicinal practices, as well as their security, and a host of other things.

It was evident from the research that, most of the interviewees had no professional job before migrating to their present place of abode (the street). As such, they engaged in several activities such as being porters (Kayayei), ‘scrap dealers’; trimming or cutting of nails, as well as mobile barbering, and many other ‘menial’ jobs so as to earn a living.

¹⁷ Interview with Aboubakar and Samuel K. Cudjoe on 22/09/2020



Figure 6. Head Potters at a resting Place (Source: Stephen Nsiah, 2020)



Figure 7. Resting place of a street dweller (Source: Stephen Nsiah, 2020)



Figure 8. Shoe shining enterprise of a street dweller (Source: Stephen Nsiah, 2020)

Other interviewees asserted that they do not have a permanent stream of work like the ‘Kayayei’ and shoe shining, but in their words, they engage in what they term ‘*some alaala or movements*’. Upon further enquiring the meaning of this phrase, they said, it means the strategies which included resorting to begging for alms on the street by disguising themselves as persons with disability(s), pilfering, or doing “any work” for people in need of help so as to earn a living and also to survive on the street.

Again, one intriguing fact I observed was a particular street dweller (Kwaku Ababio), who claimed his being on the street was “to gain experience outside from home” or the desire of gaining ‘hustling experience’. He explained to me that he purposely moved to the street to fulfil his motive of experiencing street life, so that he can be considered as a ‘hardcore guy’ by his peers. He does not engage in any meaningful livelihood activities, but in his words “join gangs so he can survive”¹⁸. It can be concluded from Ababio’s reasoning that, such individuals who by one way or the other become street dwellers to gain ‘hustling experience’ are mostly those who commit several social vices or crimes, in their quest to survive and also be recognized as ‘bad guy(s)’ by their peers since they do not engage in any meaningful economic activities.

Also, from interviews and observations, it was clear that those individuals living on the street have some idea about healing themselves. This was typical when street dweller, Salamatu who claimed to have come from Chad was preparing herbs (medicine) to be administered on her sick child.

¹⁸ Personal communication with Kwaku Ababio on 21/09/2020



Figure 9. Indigenous medicinal practices of a street dweller (Source: Stephen Nsiah, 2020)

Again, it was noted from the research that, most of the informants are religious. Some claimed to be professing the Islamic faith, while others claimed to be Christians. One intriguing evidence found concerning the religiosity of these individuals was an arrangement of some stones in a rectangular form which was viewed as both a 'sacred' and sleeping place by one Abdallah, a 47-year-old man from Niger but now a street dweller in Adabraka. The man claimed to be professing the Islamic faith but because of the distance from his 'habitat' (the street) to the mosque, he mostly performs his religious obligations where he sleeps.



Figure 10. Stones arranged to serve as a prayer ground and a resting place (Source: Stephen Nsiah, 2020)

Also, it was evident from the study that, some of the respondents, in their quest to protect themselves from both physical and spiritual harm, wore some form of anklets or some rings on their fingers.



Figure 11. Necklace made of cowries as a symbol of identity and for protection (Source: Stephen Nsiah, 2020)

For these people to be hygienic, some of the interviewees stated that they usually visit the public lavatory. This claim by them defeats the popularly held impression that most dirt in the capital towns is as a result of the actions and activities of street dwellers.

Moreover, for these street dwellers to overcome the constant persecution from the task force, they are usually ready to move from one location to the other. That is, they are usually aware of the threats they are likely to encounter. For example, some respondents claim that, when they are suspicious of being at risk, they usually do not sleep at their 'usual' location. This suggests that

they are aware of themselves and the environment in which they find themselves. Thus, their intelligence can be learnt. Therefore, their moving from one place to another when they sense impending danger, is also a means of ensuring their safety or survival on the streets.

Again, to protect their properties, in this case, their hard-earned money, they adopt certain strategies. Upon enquiring from Samuel K. Cudjoe¹⁶ on how he saves his money, he stated that he is a ‘moving bang’¹⁹. That is, he keeps his money on himself. He does this by placing the money he earns in a wallet and places such a wallet in a bag, and the bag is then placed inside a sack which he uses as a pillow.

¹⁹ Personal communication with Samuel K. Cudjoe on 22/09/2020



Figure 12. Street dweller demonstrating how his treasures are secured (Source: Stephen Nsiah, 2020)

4.2.0 Elements of Streetism That Can Be Viewed As Heritage

To understand and document what can be considered as a heritage in the ways of life of street dwellers in the study area, their previous and current motivations and how they have survived were taken into account. Due to this some elements that were identified and worth noting and documenting as a positive cultural construct (heritage) of these street dwellers included; material expressions of religion, religious belief systems, indigenous medicinal practices, the attitude of determination and perseverance, egalitarian lifestyles, as well as communal nature of these people, (the African concept of ‘Ubuntu’).

4.2.1 Material Expressions of Religion

From the study, I discovered that street dwellers in Adabraka use objects like talisman, charms and stones as a way of connecting with a deity (see figure 10 and 11). It is clear from these that the people have a belief system associated with indigenous or traditional religious philosophies, where protection from evil and other forms of bodily harm is ascribed to supernatural agencies, including God, residing in the items they make and use.

4.2.2 Belief Systems

An intangible element of heritage associated with street dwellers in the study area is their belief in God, and other supernatural deities. While some professed Christianity, others were Muslim. Others also practise indigenous/traditional African religion. By virtue of their life on the streets, those who for instance, profess Christianity only pray on their own without going to the Church. Similarly, the Muslims also just pray in the open, without going to the mosques. There is a sense of religiosity in the street dwellers, but their inability to integrate and associate well with 'normal' people limits their practice of their beliefs. They also have a sense of and belief in life-after-death and belief in descent interment of their deceased colleagues. They make contributions and bury the dead, and perform funerals for them on the streets.

4.2.3 Indigenous Medicinal Practices

Their state on the streets limits access to orthodox medicines, not only because of affordability, but also because of societal integration with 'normal' people which is lacking. A number of street dwellers have indigenous knowledge related to medicinal practices using a variety of herbs. Ailments such as stomach aches, headaches, wounds, etc. are treated with herbs (See figure 9).

Another aspect of indigenous medicinal practice is Psycho-religious, where prevention, using charms is common amongst them as noted earlier.

4.2.4 Other Material Cultural Possessions

The street dwellers have their own unique material possessions that reflect their survival strategies. The head potters have unique silver head pans with which they ply their trade. The shoe shine kit that was found is as well unique to the person making a living through mending and polishing people's shoes and sandals. Aside these, other accoutrements they sleep on and protect themselves from the harsh conditions of nature worth mentioning are blankets, polythene mats, etc

4.2.5 Egalitarian Lifestyles

From the research, it was deduced that, for these street dwellers to survive the harsh conditions such as rape, theft, and 'persecution', they have adapted to living a communal way of life. Like hunter-gatherers, these individuals are egalitarian (Ackah, 2017) in the sense that, "each one is his/her neighbour's keeper²⁰.

Although there was no evidence of formal leadership structure among the street dwellers interviewed, they claimed there is a form of respect or cordial relationship among them. For instance, one interviewee called Kwasi claimed that at his place of abode, which is usually in front of a 'store' is mostly occupied by numerous street dwellers he knows personally, however, nobody trespasses against the other.

Also, the interviewed *Kayayeis* said they help each other when there is either attempted robbery or rape on any of their friends. There is also a communal attitude of food sharing – and one does

²⁰ These were the views of Amina, Muniru, Aisha, Abigail, Grace, Samira and Miram, head potters (Kayayeis) as well as street dwellers interviewed at Adabraka. Date: 21/09/2020

not necessarily have to have food every time to survive. Upon questioning their rationale for this caring act, since they never knew themselves before meeting at their present abode, they claimed that as ‘rationale’ beings they must protect one another in times of need. This act of caring by these street dwellers attest to the saying that “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere” (Martin Luther King Jr.). Hence, this attitude is worth documenting.

4.2.6. The Attitude of Perseverance and Determination

There are negative perceptions held by the ‘normal individuals’ about street dwellers. However, one lesson that the ‘normal’ individual can learn from these “*fourth citizens*” (street dwellers) is their attitude of perseverance and determination. It was deduced from my study that, most of these street dwellers hardly give up on their reason(s) for being on the street. This was very typical of the head porters (Kayayei). Amina, Aisha and Jamira, head porters and street dwellers as well, had this to say, when I enquired from them, why they are still on the street despite the ‘persecution’ from the Municipal Task Force (Abaayei) and sometimes attempted robbery and rape on them:

“We came from the North (the northern parts of Ghana) to make money so that we can also help our younger siblings back home. As such, until we get our target, we are not going back. This is why we fight our ‘enemies’ together”²¹

Inherent in this statement is the spirit of perseverance and determination and the spirit of oneness. This is a positive cultural construct, the ‘normal’ individual can adopt. Such oneness gives a sense of ones and unity irrespective of tribe, religion, etc. which foster nation building.

²¹ Personal communication with Amina, Aisha and Jamira on 21/09/2020

With regards to Kwaku Ababio and four other friends of his, whose main aim of being on the street was to “gain hustling experience”, here is evidence of perseverance and determination in how they live their lives on the street. This determined attitude was evident in their words that;

“As for us, we have decided not to engage in any job, but to join gangs so that we can at least have our daily bread always and also achieve our aim of being on the street as well to be ‘respected’ (in this case, seen as a ‘killer’ or a ‘hardcore guy’) by our peers when we return to our respective hometowns”²².

Evident in the above statement is the desire by these individuals to accomplish their mission of being on the street, through whatever means, although their motive may seem ‘irrational’.

4.2.7 Unique Creation of Identity

It was deduced from the research that the ability of some of these street dwellers to disguise themselves as persons with disability in some critical times to solicit alms from passerby(s) to earn a living in certain critical times has become a norm for street dwellers. Although this attitude in itself is considered by some people as not good, their ability to adopt this means of a survival strategy is worth documenting. The ‘normal’ citizen can learn this attitude to protect him or herself in critical times such as when attacked by hoodlums.

²² Interviewed on 21/09/2021

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Concluding Thoughts

It is well to note that investigation into the causes and effects of streetism have received greater attention from scholars (see Endris & Sitota, 2019; Amekuedi, 2016; Ijadunola, et al., 2015; Mtaita, 2015; Karanja, et al., 2013; Quarshie, 2011; Eshia, 2010). The researcher in addition to what scholars have written about the causes and effects of streetism, also identified factors such as the desire or need to seek refuge in a safer environment as a result of political instability; the need to secure greener pastures in the city, attraction to city life, domestic violence in the form of forced marriage, bad parenting as a result of broken homes, ‘generational streetism’, and people who move to the streets voluntarily ‘to gain hustling experience’ are some reasons why they (the street dwellers) live on the street of Adabraka. I also observed from some street dwellers in the study area that, because of their circumstance, they have develop the feeling of self-hate for themselves. Similarly, some of my interviewees had low-self-esteem, mainly because of they living on the street. Also, Social vices such as armed robbery and rape with its attendant problems of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS and unwanted pregnancy which leads to early parenthood as well as extreme deprivation and social exclusion were also highlighted as the consequences of this phenomenon at Adabraka.

It is worth noting that there have been a cloying silence on the discourse on identifying and documenting the positive cultural constructs which could be deduced from the life ways of these street dwellers by scholars. It is for this reason that I undertook this study so as to identify and document some aspects of life ways of street dwellers at Adabraka, Accra that can be considered

as heritage. This was based on the notion that there are some positive cultural constructs inherent in the life ways of these individuals worthy of documentation. Hence, this dissertation fills gaps in our knowledge. An eclectic approach involving the use of written records, ethnographic information gathered through interviews, and observation aided me to accomplish the research aim and objectives.

In many ways, the first object of this study, which was to observe and document the life ways of street dwellers in Adabraka, a suburb in the Greater Accra region was achieved. To achieve this objective, an intensive ethnographic data collection which included the use of interviews, observation, and photographs were undertaken in the study area by the researcher. The interviews for example, provided me with the opportunity to know/document the survival strategies and other life ways of these people. I was able to identify and document how these individuals earn a living on the street. The subsistence strategies of the street dwellers in the study area included people been head potters (Kayayei) (see figures 4 and 6), shoe shining (see figure 8), among others. I also documented the means by which these individuals protect their belongings and resources from robbers or thieves. Other intriguing facts deduced from the research, upon interviewing some of these street dwellers were the tendency of some of them to disguise themselves as persons with disability in some critical times so that they can receive alms from passerby(s).

I also observed and documented where some of these street dwellers in the study area sleeps during the night. It was observed that, their habitation were mostly in the open in front of stores. Some also sleep at lorry stations, and in extreme cases under foot bridges.

The second objective of identifying and documenting the cultural heritage elements embedded in the life ways of these street dwellers was achieved. I have demonstrated that, some elements such as the communal living of these individuals, their attitude of perseverance and determination which

usually encourage them to work harder in all their endeavours, among others are worth emulating by the 'normal citizen'. I argue that their (street dwellers) knowledge about how to cure the sick by using herbs (see figure 9), and the belief systems of these individuals as evident/exemplified by some of their material possessions such as cowry shells (see figure 10) can be considered as heritage. This is because "heritage exists everywhere including along the city streets" (Hoelscher, 2007:200).

The last objective which was to analyse the relationship between the street dwellers and non-street dwellers in the study area was also achieved. It was observed that there is a less harmonious relationship between the street dwellers at Adabraka and the 'normal' individuals. This is because, some of the 'normal' individuals in the study have negative stereotypic perception about the street dwellers. The physical appearance of these street dwellers, partly account for these negative stereotype. To a large extent, some 'normal' individuals in the study area consider some street dwellers as violent and potential criminals. This negative stereotypic perception has led to extreme deprivation in resources allocation and social exclusion.

Also, it was evident from the research that, the continuous erroneously held impression that almost all street dweller are 'junkies' is inaccurate. This is because most interviewees (Street dwellers) at Adabraka appeared to know their rationale for existences, and that 'it was because of certain circumstances that compelled them to adopt this specific way of life'²³.

The researcher concludes that streetism as a product of society can be considered heritage, because heritage is 'present-centred and is created, shaped and managed by, and in response to, the demands of the present (Tunbridge and Ashworth, 2006), and that, it is open to constant revision

²³ Personal Communication with Samuel K. Cudjoe on 22/09/2020

and change and is also both a source and a repercussion of social conflict.’ I further argue that some elements embedded in the day to day lives of street dwellers can be considered as heritage because this phenomenon (streetism) is a creation of a new culture by individuals that certain circumstances have forced them. This is because, ‘heritage is an inheritance of the societies’ humans live in, and streetism is and has become part of this ‘inheritance’ by some individuals in the study area.

The argument is further made that some elements embedded in streetism can be viewed as heritage, by asserting that, “heritage exists everywhere including along the city streets” (Hoelscher, 2007:200). As such, some ways of life of these “fourth citizens” the street serves as their place of abode and a source of earning a living can be considered as a heritage.

Overall, through the use of an eclectic research methodology which included techniques of both ethnography and visual documentation, the research brought to light that, there are some positive aspects of the way of life of street dwellers, such as their perseverance and determined nature, communal behaviour and egalitarian lifestyles that are worth adopting by the ‘normal’ individuals. Furthermore, I identified and documented the physical material manifestations, indigenous medicinal practices and belief systems of the street dwellers reflecting elements of their tangible and intangible heritage resources.

5.1 Challenges Encountered and How They Were Mitigated

Because the street dweller, in most cases, live on the street, where to sit and conduct my interviews was, but a minor challenge. The major problem was how passerby(s) could stop and gaze at us while the conversation was ongoing. This was a challenge because most of the street dwellers when such instances occurred were not comfortable in continuing the conversation with me. Due to this, the interviewing process sometimes delayed.

Another challenge encountered was unnecessary interference by some people (some street dwellers and 'normal individuals) who objected to participating in the research. This was mostly typical of the females. The challenge with regards to this was that, during my meeting times with those who had agreed to participate in the study, those who initially decided not to participate in the research will barge in while the conversation was ongoing purposely to dissuade those who have agreed to participate in the research. This act sometimes delayed my schedule. However, these unforeseen delays were quite understandable due to the perception held by the street dweller about the 'normal' individual and vice versa.

As stated earlier, the street dwellers in the study area came from all walks of life; some from outside the shores of Ghana and others from different towns in Ghana. However, the language was not a barrier as I had a multilingual research assistant. As such, he aided me in the translations, although I would have wished to have done all the interviews directly with such individuals.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on data gathered during the research, the following recommendations are made:

1. A comparative study into the documentation of the positive cultural construction among street dwellers in various towns in Ghana should be conducted, so that a holistic policy on how to manage or care for these street dwellers is developed since positive cultural constructions/heritage are embedded in the day to day lives of these people.
2. The use of visual documentation should be encouraged. This could help save threatened heritage for posterity or future generation. This is because street dwellers are persistently and constantly chased by authorities although measures to help them are not in place or if in place not enforced properly.

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