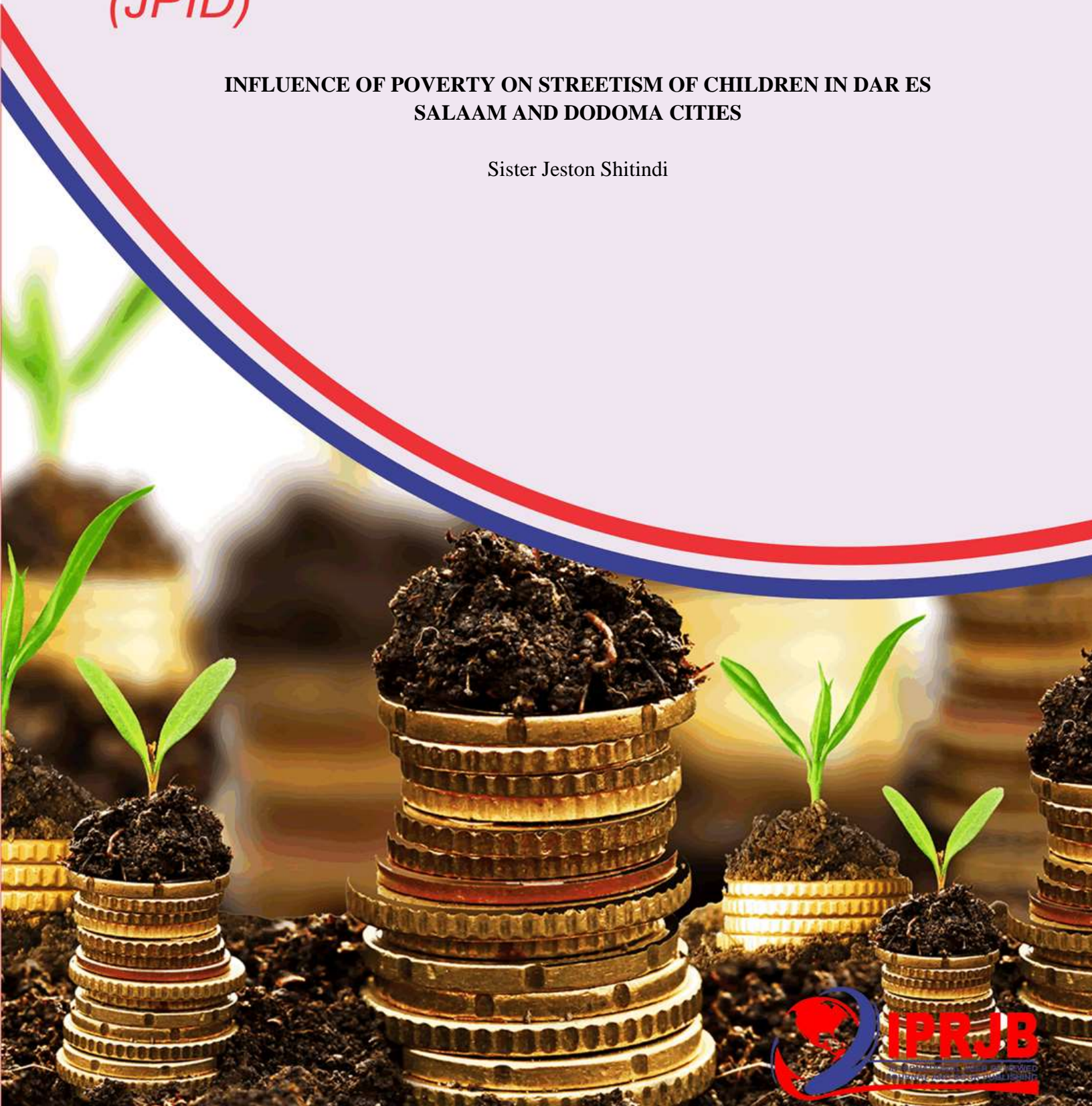


Journal of Poverty, Investment and Development (JPID)

**INFLUENCE OF POVERTY ON STREETISM OF CHILDREN IN DAR ES
SALAAM AND DODOMA CITIES**

Sister Jeston Shitindi



Influence of Poverty on Streetism of Children in Dar Es Salaam and Dodoma Cities

Sister Jeston Shitindi

PhD Student: School of Sociology and Political
Science, Shanghai University, 99 Shangda road,
Baoshan District, Shanghai, China

Article History

Received 3rd January 2023

Received in Revised Form 15th January 2023

Accepted 27th January 2023

Abstract

Purpose: Tanzania has been implementing several initiatives to address the challenge of street children in the country. Despite such efforts, the child streetism has become the daily reality and has shown the sign of increasing. This dissertation is a study on the influence of poverty and family support on child streetism in urban Tanzania. Specifically, the study focused on analysing the lived experiences of street children; describing the influence of income poverty on streetism of children.

Methodology: The study adopted interpretivism research paradigm using descriptive cross-sectional design and inductive research approach. It involved a total of 38 informants who were purposively selected while the snowballing sampling technique was used in accessing street children. Semi-structured interview, documentary review and observation method were conducted.

Findings: Through thematic and content data analysis techniques, this study reveals that street children experienced difficulties in getting their basic needs and did not easily access health services when they fell sick. They also engaged into intra-violence among themselves. Further, child streetism has been largely influenced by income poverty. Regarding coping strategies, street children engaged into begging, unsafe sex and petty income-generating activities such as car wash and bottle collection. They also used self-medication to treat themselves when they fell sick or being left at the hospital buildings or on the street by their fellow street children when the condition got worse.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: Additionally, they did not have any coping strategy to enroll themselves into the school. The study also revealed that vulnerability and rational choice perspectives must be used in exploring the lived experienced of street children instead of using the vulnerability perspective alone. The rational choice perspective explains, among others, why street children sustain street life hardships and difficulties instead of going back to their families.

Keywords: *Poverty, Streetism of Children*

INTRODUCTION

Globally poverty is defined as the number of people worldwide who live on less than \$2.15 a day. A person surviving on less than \$2.15 a day lives in extreme poverty, as defined by the (World bank, 2015), and children, a highly vulnerable segment of society, account for more than half of the world's poorest citizens (UNICEF, 2015). Despite the poverty concentration in Asia, poverty abuse, despair, and inequality is a global problem. Because of the coordinated efforts of the global community to reduce poverty the percentage of the world's population living in extreme poverty has decreased significantly in recent decades. In 1990, almost 1.9 billion people lived on less than \$2.15 a day. At the time, that was over 35 percent of the world's population. Now, just ten percent of the world's population lives under this poverty line. But that's still hundreds of millions of people (World Bank, 2015).

In addition according to the World Bank, (2011-2020), with the lone exception of the Asian country Afghanistan, whose GNI per capita of \$500 would place it at #6 on the second list, Africa's 10 poorest countries are also statistically the world's 10 poorest. To be fair, this ranking comes with one significant caveat: It is possible that additional non-African countries particularly North Korea, Syria, and/or Yemen would appear in the bottom 10 if they openly shared their GDP/GNI data, but they typically decline to do so. That said, African countries would still take up the majority of the list.

Poverty has a long history in Africa. Yet, the most conventional and influential history of African poverty is a very short one. As told by the World Bank, the history of poverty starts in the 1980s with the first Living Standard Measurement Study. This history of poverty by numbers is also a very narrow one. There is a disconnect between the theoretical and historical underpinnings of how academics understand and define poverty in Africa, and how it has been quantified in practice. Based on the per capita GDP and GNI values from 2020, Burundi ranks as the poorest country in not only Africa, but also the world. The second-poorest country in Africa, Somalia, holds the same distinction. In fact, this pattern carries through much of the list. With the lone exception of the Asian country Afghanistan, whose GNI per capita of \$500 would place it at #6 on the second list, Africa's 10 poorest countries are also statistically the world's 10 poorest. To be fair, this ranking comes with one significant caveat: It is possible that additional non-African countries particularly North Korea, Syria, and/or Yemen would appear in the bottom 10 if they openly shared their GDP/GNI data, but they typically decline to do so. That said, African countries would still take up the majority of the list (World Bank, 2011-2020).

Africa's economic challenges when viewing the numbers in a vacuum to add the figure in terms of poverty perspective, we can look at the GDP values of the wealthiest countries in the world. According to 2020 data, the country with the highest GDP per capita (PPP int.\$) is Luxembourg, with a value of \$118,356 which is more than 150 times higher than Burundi's \$771. Similarly, Norway's world-leading 2020 GNI per capita (Atlas method, current US\$) of \$78,250 seems almost modest until one realizes that it's a full 289 times higher than Burundi's \$270 (World Bank, 2020). Africa's economic situation may not always be so bleak. A few African countries have seen significant economic growth and development over the past two decades. If this progress

can be sustained and expanded, many Africans may realize a more promising economic future. For a full list of Africa's countries and their 2020 GNI per capita (Atlas method, current US\$), see the table below. Here are the 10 poorest countries in Africa: Burundi - \$270, Somalia - \$310, Mozambique - \$460, Madagascar - \$480, Sierra Leone - \$490, Eritrea - \$510, Central African Republic - \$510, Liberia - \$530, Niger - \$540 and Dr Congo - \$550 (IMF report, 2021).

In addition, African countries especially the Sub-Saharan countries are faced with extreme poverty (Ward and Seager, 2010; Le Roux, 2016). The rampant poverty in Sub-Saharan Countries has contributed to the problem of street children who do not have an access to education, nutrition, food, shelter, water, sanitation and good health services (Kopoka, 2000). In addition, the consequence of poverty, with reference to income poverty, is argued to be the main cause of street children (Bhukuth and Ballet, 2015; Chowdhury *et al*, 2017; Adrioni, 2018; Mandoyu, Gameda & Genemo, 2018; Mandoyu, Gameda & Genemo, 2018; World Bank, 2019).

Several global initiatives were conducted to address the challenge of street children in the developing countries including the African Countries. These initiatives include an introduction of Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Despite the implementation of aforementioned global initiatives, the problem of street children is still a daily reality in African Countries (Kopoka, 2000; URT, 2009; De Benitez 2011). Meanwhile recognizing the presence of street children, there is no accurate information regarding the exact figure of street children around the global and the estimated figure differs according to the source. The United Nation's Report argues that the population of street children is estimated to be 100 million worldwide (UNICEF, 2012). of this figure, 20 million street children are from Africa, 40 million from Latin America and 25 to 30 million are from Asia. Likewise, 25 million are assured to be scattered around the World. Ennew, (2004) specifically argues that one million children in Africa are exploited in the streets for commercial purposes.

In Tanzania, alike, poverty is considered to be the main driver for street children. World Bank (2019) reports that in the period of two years 10,000 children went to the street which indicates a rapid increase in the number of street children in Tanzania. The challenge of street children in Tanzania is more historical since then. Saramba (2002) attests that 30,000 children are in Tanzania while Dar es Salaam was leading with 10,000 street children. Mwinyiani (2004) reveals that the population of street children increased to about 40,000. Statistics from a research conducted in 2017/2018 in about six regions of Tanzania show that Dar es Salaam has about 2984 street children. Mwanza has 978 children, Arusha 544, Iringa 954, Dodoma 347 and Mbeya 586.

Tanzania as one of the developing countries in Africa has instituted a number of national initiatives to curb the challenge of street children. These initiatives include economic and social initiatives that mainly focus on addressing household poverty and family reunification. Despite such initiatives, the number street children keep on increasing (World Bank, 2019). In this case, various researchers become interested to research on the causes of street children. The prior empirical studies on street children (De Benitez, 2011; Lemoyan, 2015; Kopoka, 2002; Corsaro, 2011) associate the challenge of street children with poverty. However, the influence of poverty on street children is not so direct and it can be also determined by other social factors. It is possible to find

children from rich families in the streets or children from poor families not in the street. This may be determined by the family support and vulnerability level which may play an important role in addressing the challenge of street children.

Despite such possible relationship between income poverty, family support and street children, there is scanty knowledge on such relationship. In this case, it has resulted to the lack of comprehensive interventions in addressing a challenge of street children. Hence, it is the direction of this study to explore the influence of income poverty on street children considering the family support provided to a child.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

The paper is anchored by the Vulnerability Theory by Martha A. Fineman, (2018) Vulnerability is a characteristic of human existence that carries with it the imminent or ever-present possibility of harm, injury, and misfortune. In this fact, the Vulnerability Theory explains how vulnerable environment can lead to a certain social consequences of an individual. The theory also enlightens the public's response to poverty and homeless. Homelessness may tend to create an identity of vulnerable population of poor. Basing on this theory, children's vulnerability is demonstrated in different ways including being victims of hunger, sexual abuse, and parental neglect, and ends their lives to become street children. Children need the daily connection that they share with their parents and siblings. The act of being separated from one another and placed with strangers instills trauma and most of them ending up in the depression, aggression, and withdraws while others develop severe attachment disorders.

Such unpleasant child's experience is caused by the child's family being rooted in poverty, hunger, family and neighborhood violence, family dissolution and the breakdown of the traditional supportive community structures (Gracey, 2002). Hence, the theory was used to explain the first, second and third objective of this study. Specifically, the theory was used to both analyse the live experiences of street children and describe the influence of income poverty, as part of vulnerable environment, on streetism of children.

Likewise, it was used to explore the influence of the family development on children streetism. The Vulnerability theory explains the economic and social factors that make children to live in the street. The theory was relevant covers both the lived experiences of street children and influence of income poverty on street children. But the theory does not explain the competencies, strengths and resilience of children and how they can be re-integrated into a society (McAdams – Crisp, 2006).

Strength of the Vulnerability Theory

The theory offers an opportunity to overcome the limits of antidiscrimination law, equality analysis, and identity based politics. It recognizes the limits of existing interpretations of antidiscrimination where formal nondiscrimination constrains state responsiveness to substantive inequality by reinforcing a series of dichotomies including state action and omission, negative and positive rights, public and private spheres.

Vulnerability theory recognizes that the human experience of constant vulnerability varies as a result of stages in the life-course, social institutions, and law, which often trace intersecting forms of oppression on the basis of race, gender, sexuality, disability, and class. Yet the theory focuses our attention on social rather than individual identities and characteristics on socially constructed relationships that are inherently unequal, such as those between employer/employee, creditor/debtor, adult/minor, parent/child, stockholder/stakeholder, and so on. Equality and antidiscrimination are inadequate as frameworks for understanding how to promote justice within these roles and relationships. Vulnerability thus provides a heuristic device for exposing the structural privilege and disadvantage enveloped in these relationships and suggests ways to readjust them in order to advance social justice and lessen inequality.

Weaknesses of the Vulnerability Theory

It is not simply a substitute term for dependency on care. Nor is it or its theoretical and conceptual potential exhausted in concepts such as weakness, fragility, precariousness, or being “at-risk” these are terms usually found in dichotomous pairing weakness/strength; precarious/stable and so on]. There is no position of invulnerability there is only resilience we know this intuitively and experientially. Vulnerability is NOT just another way of talking about discrimination or signaling disadvantage. Vulnerability is not merely one among many possible “identities” traditionally adopted or assigned in arguing for equality and civil and political rights.

In addition, recognition of vulnerability does NOT reflect or assert the absence or impossibility of agency rather, it recognizes that agency in the form of resilience is socially produced over the life course and is limited and constrained by the resources and relationships available to any specific individual. Vulnerability theory asserts that agency or autonomy like the concept of resilience and unlike vulnerability should always be understood as particular, partial and contextual.

Further to note, theorizing vulnerability as both universal and constant means that it should NOT be used as a variable and/or comparative concept. No individual or group should be considered more or less vulnerable, uniquely vulnerable, or specifically or especially vulnerable. Rather, we can think about spaces, places, and positions or relationships as indicators of the proximity of, exposure to, or probability for vulnerability to be manifested or realized in the form of dependency. By the same token, we can think of these same spaces, places, and positions as sites for the production of resilience these are or should be thought of as sites of state responsibility.

METHODOLOGY

Methods and Data

This paper adopted the descriptive cross sectional design and data were collected only once. It was adopted because it can well describe a population or a subgroup within the population with respect to child streetism, income poverty and family development (Levin, 2006). This is important because street children are categorised into two subgroups i.e. children living in the streets and children who were not in the streets but earning their living from the streets. In addition, the study explored the influence and not the impact (occurs overtime) of income poverty and family

development on child streetism which allowed data to be collected only once at a particular point in time.

The areas in this paper were Dar es Salaam and Dodoma. Dar es Salaam was chosen because it makes up over one third of urban population in Tanzania (UN – Habitat, 2009) and leading in terms of the number of street children in Tanzania (URT, 2018). Due to increasing population growth, the Dar es Salaam infrastructure and basic services such as water, and health services are not adequate.

The population in this paper included street children who are living in the streets of Dodoma and Dar es Salaam regions. The street children consisted of those ones who were either living in streets or earn their living from the streets. This paper also included children who once lived in the streets but are under children’s homes or care centres. The paper also included social welfare officers, ward executive officers, and children’s homes staff as the units of inquiries. These are people who are knowledgeable on the causes of street children and how the family development status results to children streetism.

The paper adopted both snowballing and purposive sampling techniques. Snowballing sampling technique was used to reach children living in the streets of Dodoma and Dar es Salaam. Key Informants which included local government officials from Dodoma and Dar es Salaam regions cities and senior staff member from Non-governmental organizations involved with children and street children were interviewed in order to gather the qualitative data regarding the objectives of this study and its research questions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and took on average of 40 to 45 minutes.

Trustworthiness and authenticity of qualitative data were also observed. The researcher and her assistants familiarized themselves with the experiences of street children and variances guidelines and laws which stipulate their rights. Thematic data analysis technique was used to analyse the qualitative data. Brawn and Clarke (2006) contend that thematic data analysis technique provides rich and detailed findings as per each thematic area supported by thematic statements. The researcher focused on six steps when analyzing the collected data thematically. These steps consisted of data familiarization, development of initial codes, theme searching, identification and classification and report production. Content analysis was also used to analyze the data collected through documentary review.

Compliance to ethical issues is one of the most important aspects in research. In this paper, informants were given an opportunity to withdraw from the research whenever they needed to do so. Fortunately no one withdrew from the study. Secondly, the researcher familiarized informants with the study objectives and guaranteed of confidentiality.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Income Poverty and Street Children

Interviewed street children stated that they hardly had a meal in their families and felt like they would die if they decided to stay their homes. Moreover, lack of food taught children to become beggars and beg for food in the neighboring communities, which motivated them to become fully street children. One informant stated that *“I began to beg for food to our neighbors which gave*

me an experience to become a street child” (A boy, 14 years old). In the same way, Dutta, (2018) also came up with similar findings that poverty is the main cause of child streetism which was also mentioned by other prior empirical studies (Sam, 2016; Byegon, et al 2021, Chowdhury, 2017, Bhukuth& Ballet, 2015). In support of the findings of this study, Strobbe, et al (2010) attest that the family with a male household who sick whose children are likely to be in the street. However, Strobbe et al (ibid) argue that educational level, age and employment status of a parent/guardian has insignificant influence on child streetism. This is true because it depends on the willingness of a parent or guardian to carter for the need of his/her children. Hence, children are likely to do anything in order to survive (Kwaku, 2019) which also include going to the street.

Lack of shelter as one of the income poverty indicator contributed to child streetism. A child who was born by homeless parents was likely to become a street child. The findings showed that children born by the homeless parents had no opportunity for education, proper family care and in most cases, they were taught to beg as their career. For instance, the contacted informant argues that *“I managed to visit one of the homeless families that had four children who were all of them in the street begins as a means for their survival”* (Male informant, Social Worker). Street children are facing widespread challenges i.e. social network fragmentation, child trafficking, harassments and shortage of coverage of basic needs. Furthermore, absences of comprehensive and contextualized strategies and less political value for this group worsening it.

Thus, street children have been considered as felon, out laws and having a mentality of committing crime by both law keeping bodies and society. This in turn, affecting street children’s’ acceptance by their community and get legal protection under the law and made them more risk to denial of social protection services. To win street life struggles, they use different survival mechanisms by forming small group. Income Generating Activities (IGAs), shelter, community support, child protection, access to health education, health services, life coaching and by less extent reintegration are positively perceived strategies to address their problems.

Lack/poorly designed policies and strategies targeting street children has made them prone to health and social problems. Furthermore, stigma by community, limited resources, lack of comprehensive standards and absence of political value of interventions exacerbating it. Therefore, call for different stakeholders in supporting to design and implement clear, case based and contextualized strategic policies to address and prevent plights; by considering positively perceived street children’s strategies.

Inability to access education is one of the income poverty indicators that influenced child streetism. It is theoretically agreed that children who are in schools are less likely to become street children because schools played as the functional social support networks. However, inadequate financial capacity of families to accommodate education expenses contributed to child streetism. This was due to the fact that most interviewed street children were either did not go to school at all or dropped schools in early years of their studies due to inadequate family income.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that children who were under children’s homes (i.e. childcare institutions) and sent to school did not go to the street. This finding indicated that children who

were integrated with their fellow children in the education system were less likely to become either children in the street or street children. This was justified by one of the informants who argued that *“I cannot go back to the street because I am now finishing my primary school education”* (A girl, 14 years of age, child under Children homes). The findings of this study are supported by several prior empirical studies. For instance, Edris and Silotal, (2019) argue that poverty is one of the push factors that contribute to child streetism. Diriba, (2015), with reference to poverty as a push factor, contend that children who are born by parents who engage into low income generating activities are likely to become street children. Likewise, Diriba (2015) argues that poverty is the main cause of child streetism, which is in support with the findings of this study.

The main cause of the growing population of young people living and working on the street is poverty. Poverty is the major cause and acts as the driving force and reason for so many children are spending their days and in many cases their nights living and working on the streets, living in absolute squalor and degrading circumstances. The girls are forced into sexual relationships for protection and food; are prone to disease and malnutrition; often trafficked; no education and schooling or medical healthcare; living a life of trauma, held captive to their constant cycle of poverty with no hope of a better future, only despair. *“Street children are mostly affected by the communicable disease”* and... *They are addicted to substances like benzene”* which had a profound effect on their health.” Furthermore, the study discovered a statistically significant association between respondents’ health status and socio-demographic characteristics (age and educational status), job presence, and drug use.

The factors that drove street children to live on the streets, such as the inability to find work and disagreements with their parents. The majority of the street children were affected by preventable and treatable diseases. Unfortunately, almost all street children reported drinking alcohol, which exposed them to a variety of health problems. In general, the study discovered that street children require immediate attention. Decision-makers and academicians should collaborate to develop a plan for these children’s health and social interventions.

Case II Provides Details on the Influence of Income Poverty to Child Streetism:-

CASE II: Income Poverty and Child Streetism

Hassan Fredrick Keng’ete (Not a real name) is a 15 years old boy coming from Dodoma. He ran away from home and, lives and works on the street. He also comes from a poor family which consists of his mother and three (3) brothers while their father left home three years ago. He started to live on the streets of Dodoma and met his friends who told him to migrate to Dar es Salaam because life is not so hard. However the reality is completely different. He further said that he failed to accomplish his primary education because his mother could not afford to pay for his school uniforms and other needs.

In this case, Hassan has been in the street since 2019 and engaging into picking and collecting iron steel, washing cars in the queue and sometimes stealing and begging. He also sleep under the bridges such as under Ubungo Flyover; unfinished buildings as well as at the bus stand. He also smoke cigarettes and glue sniffing. Regarding the sanitary conveniences, whenever he has money

he pays TZS. 200 for public toilets but in most cases, he looks for private places to comfort himself. Over the last century, there have been a growing number of children who live on the streets. Although very little is still known about them, they are often regarded in a negative light. This non-empirical paper explains some of their characteristics with the support of existing literature. It offers possible definitions and shows the complexity in trying to quantify them. It examines the difference between children “on” and “of” the streets and talks about street culture. It is the firm view that if people are more informed about the lifestyle of these children, they may be more sensitive to their needs.

Reza and Henly (2018) believe that the street environment is often filled with illness, violence and poverty and these children rely on each other for survival. Consortium for Street Children (CSC) notes that many people use the terms “street children” and “homeless children” interchangeably but there are some differences. For example, not all street children are homeless. A review of the literature clearly indicates that street children are often described in a negative manner. Atwar and Engkus (2020) state that: “Street children are always associated with acts of violence, crime, and social disturbances”⁴. They become socially susceptible and vulnerable to their environment, both as causes and victims.

Dabir (2014), notes that unsupervised minors who constantly dwell on the streets and make it a source of livelihood could be considered as street children. Irawati et al. (2021) think that street children work on the streets and unsuitable places such as under bridges and vacant land. They also hold no support from family and are unsupervised. Embleton et al. (2016) suggest that street children are persons, aged 12 to 24, for whom the street is their chief source of livelihood, and they also spend a significant time on the streets. Mulekya et al. (2021) define them as individuals who literally dwell on the streets

From this case, it indicates that income poverty is more severe to children who depend on single parents or guardian. Most households led by single parents or guardians, either due to family separation or death, experienced more severe income poverty and whose children usually go to the streets. One informant argued that “*Children living and working on the streets are led by different factors including family separation, (income) poverty and abuse but (income) poverty is the main cause and more experienced in a single parent/guardian households*” (Social Worker, Female).

Other informant contended that “*They (single parent’s households) are very poor families that cannot afford taking them to school and provide other basic needs.....*”. It is also supported by the following case of street children in Dar es Salaam who came from Mbeya region. Further studies reveal that there are more than 5,000 street children living and working on the streets in Dar es Salaam. Most of these children come from rural village’s upcountry, about 72% of the street children they come from outside the Dar es Salaam, whereby 28% hail from Dar es Salaam. This study found that children are driven to the streets by “push” and “pull” factors. “push” factors includes, poverty, domestic violence and abuse, lack of parental guidance and support, urban migration and orphan hood. “pull” factors are income on the streets, substance abuse, peer group influence, independence and street culture.

Dumayoz Kilwagikinaz2 (Not a real name) is 16 years old and did not complete his primary school education because of family's income poverty. He was living with his grandmother ever since he was 10 years old and experienced an extreme poverty. The house is not habitable especially during rainy seasons with no doors and windows. He normally had a single meal in the entire day with no money to access health services when he fell sick. He never met his parents since he was 10 years old and his biggest fear being in the street is to be arrested by the Police because they sometimes steal and being raped by other older street children because they normally do that to others.

The paper also assessed the combined influence of income poverty and family development on child streetism in Dodoma and Dar es Salaam regions. The results revealed that majority of street children got into that situation after experiencing income poverty which resulted into inaccessibility to education, health services, shelter, food and habitable accommodation. In the situation whereby societies have negative perceptions towards street children, income poverty and limited family support to cater for children's needs and associated by low development level at the family level turn out to be the main drivers.

The results in this paper indicate that the main factors behind pushing children to the street are poverty, unemployment, orphaned, and disability, which leads these children towards terrorism and many other social evils. Such children are viewed negatively by the people and are considered a social burden. This research revealed that most of the children on the street face harassment but females face more than males. Children on the street are abused physically by police as well. It also focused that the behavior of society towards street children is not positive. Street is the most dangerous and threatening place for physical and sexual abuse.

Equal access to basic education is the fundamental right of all children. Educated workforce is required to boost the economy in a sustained manner. Children from poor households, particularly girls and the minorities are denied of basic education. Therefore the access of education should be improved by building public schools and improving the public health resources to make education common for all (Jabari et al., 2005).

Social problems seem to appear independent but at times emerge due to economic crisis. In any society good health, quality education, and reasonable employment opportunities to the people are considered the stake of success and are indispensable for human development. But to become healthier and erudite individuals, amputation of economic inequality and fair distribution of national wealth is a precondition. Economic status in fact decides the form of interaction with other people and their social class whereas parents economic situation decides the providence and future of children. It all starts from home that how they are socialized with the family members and how their family takes care of them. “.

It was supported by one of the informants who argued that “*There is no good relationship between the societies and street children because they are taken as thieves and children with no manners*”. Despite the fact that the statement shows inadequate participation of the communities in re-integrating a street child to the society, it also indicates the unique family role in protecting children

to enter into the streets. It is also supported by a street child who said *“I did not go to school because it is about 30 km from where we live in our rural village and my parents could not afford to buy me a bicycle”* (Child, male).

The results in this paper also revealed that there is a connection among income poverty, peer pressure and child streetism. It was found that children who experienced extreme income poverty and lack proper guidance were more likely to engage into a street for this survival. In this case, parental, guardian or community guidance to children living in vulnerable environment was one of the key drivers of a child not to go into a street. The following case VII provider more details:-

Poor parents who cannot afford to send their children to schools force them to earn money. They became more exposed to physical, mental and social hazards. They are mostly employed in the agriculture and manufacturing sector. Some children end up begging on the streets whereas some get trapped in the worst forms of slavery as a result of armed conflicts. The fundamental cause recognized by various International organizations of street children is poverty in Pakistan. Lack of basic educational opportunities and health services have further deteriorated the issue of Street Children. Poor parents cannot afford to send their children to schools and they fail to provide their children with their basic rights. As a result, poor households face their children to work in order to meet the finances of the family. Being the part of the workforce, they are more exposed to harsh physical and mental hazards. Children working under severe conditions are likely to lack ideal physical health and they become vulnerable from disease, poor nutrition, and reduced access to health care and worse environmental conditions.

As explained earlier the experiences of childhood determine the character of an adult. Everything in social life can be modified except children if the society does not concentrate on them in time; they may be spoiled forever. They can develop positive attitude and move towards mainstream of life through proper guidance in receptive age. Curiosity level among children varies at different stages of life, one and same incidence has diverse impact on Childs behaviour and response would be accordingly, in other words, “social realities lead to behavioural inequalities.

CASE VI: Income Poverty, Peer Pressure and Child Streetism:

*Mgunduzi was a 15 year Street Child in Dar es Salaam who came from Singida region. At home, I stayed with my father, mother, aunt, grandparents, brothers and sister under one house of three rooms. It is the family that experiences extreme poverty with no hope of getting even a single meal per day. He met his fellow children in Singida who advised him to go to Dodoma to look for a green pasture and he did so. He lived and worked on the streets of Dodoma for six months before going to Dar es Salaam after being influenced by other street children he met in Dodoma. The findings are in line with the findings of this study are also supported by several prior empirical studies. For instance, World Bank (2019) supports that income poverty is the main cause of street children while Ward and Seager (2010) argue that street children are an indicator of poverty. Other studies including Chenga & Chamwi, (2014); Lemoyan, (2015); Mandoyu, *et al.*, (2018) also link poverty and street children. However, the findings of this study revealed that children who are cared by single parents experienced a severe income poverty which forced them to go to the street.*

Further findings revealed that income poverty was the main cause of child streetism. Lack of family capacity to meet children's basic needs such as food, shelter, clothes, education and health needs resulted into child streetism. However, lack of food and shelter as income poverty indicators were said to be the main push factors that contribute to child streetism. Street children who were born in the homeless family mostly mentioned lack of shelter. The study found out that despite the programme of rehabilitation of the street children in shelter homes being a noble idea, the children are facing myriad of challenges in the homes. Some of the challenges faced by the children in the homes include; lack of sufficient housing, child abuse and molestation in the children homes, lack of adequate and quality food and clothing.

The main challenge facing the rehabilitation is the sustainability of the process since after the completion of education period by the children; the children are released from the homes to pave way for the admitted cohorts of children being admitted to the homes. The other challenge was lack of adequate funding by the government and civil society since the population of children to be admitted to the homes is quite huge. The study further revealed that the shelter homes were not actually offering conducive environment for the children since majority of them opt out to the streets due to oppressions or abuse by the management or fellow street children. The findings in this paper are also supported by the vulnerability theory. The theory shows how vulnerable environment including poverty may lead to a certain social consequence. According to this theory children's vulnerable is explain in different ways including being victims of hunger and homelessness, which is considered an identity of a vulnerable population.

In this case, the findings of this paper also shows how vulnerable environment i.e. poor family lead to child streetism. It shows lack of food, shelter, clothes, education and health services lead to child streetism. It further showed that children who were born in the homeless family were also likely to become street children. In this regard, the findings of this study show how vulnerable environment for a child may lead to a certain social consequence (child streetism).

While acknowledging that income poverty is the main cause of street children, there are children whose households are living below the poverty line but still do not go to the street. This situation is attributed by the existence of social and family support especially from relatives and community members. Meanwhile, this study acknowledges that income poverty contributes to the challenge of street children in the communities but there are other factors to consider such as the family and community support systems.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The paper intended to explain the influence of income poverty on child streetism. It was revealed that income poverty was the main cause of child streetism in Tanzania. Inability of the family i.e. parents and guardians to accommodate children's basic needs and services pushed children to join the street life. Basic needs and services include food, shelter, clothes and educational and health services. However, lack of food and shelter were the primary income poverty indicators contributing child streetism. Lack of shelter for the children who were born in the homeless family

were the main poverty indicator that led the homeless child to end his/her life to the street. Moreover, inadequate financial capacity of families to access education and health services contributed to child streetism. However, the findings of this study, revealed that inaccessibility of basic needs and services by children which made them to end up to the street was also contributed by lack of family support and not income poverty alone.

Conclusions

It has been noted that factors which cause street children increase are termed as poverty in the community which limits the ability of parents and guardian to take care for the children. And this can be proved by looking at the failure of the parents to provide the basic needs for the children such as missing food, clothes, schooling and shelter. The street children are basically related to parent quarrels whereas the children are the victims and the burden bearers of these quarrels hence they decide to move to the safe place (Urban). Family dismantling caused by divorce leads to these children being raised up by single parents who in many cases fail to manage and provide the necessary needs; hence causing the children to run away from their homes.

The paper also noted other factors such as orphans, peer groups and seeking for freedom. The street children expected to be reduced by the support from the community, family, NGOs and religious institutions. The best strategies must be connected to the accessibility of food, clothes, shelter and schooling needs. The reality being noted that street children sometimes receive minimum support in terms of food, medicine and some protection. The street children reduction basically relies on the support in terms of welfare.

In addition, although many of the characteristics of street children are different from those of the urban poor, they have one thing in common, which is benefiting from the places where they live. Despite the harsh conditions both groups live in, they make good use of the surrounding environment to survive. In other words, slums are the source of livelihood, social networks and shelter for their dwellers. Similarly, street children do benefit from the streets as a source of generating income, as a large number of street children who still have ties with their families contribute to the income of their families. Thus, it would be recommended to consider the advantages of slums and streets for their residents, besides the disadvantages, in future research in order to gather a holistic image that would help to address these phenomena in the appropriate way.

Recommendations

Income poverty was found to have an influence on child streetism. It is therefore important to address income poverty within the families. In this case, cash transfers and entrepreneurial capacity among families to address family income poverty are of great importance.

There is a need for facilitating the formation of community based income generating groups among poor households and provide interest free loans through SACCOS and other Microfinance Institutions to address income poverty. Additionally, the National Economic Empowerment Council (NEEC) may strengthen its Economic Empowerment Fund to empower women who are in most cases bear the family responsibilities when the family is disintegrated.

Government of Tanzania through the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elders and Children should basically pay attention to the increasing number of street children in the country, by formulating intervention programs that can reduce the number of children who live in streets. This could be through a supportive mechanism such as provision of clothing, schooling and medical care and also sustainable programs that will boost the economic status of families such as soft loans and training on entrepreneurship, small scale agricultural activities, and also fishing or animal keeping. All these activities should intend to give economic strength to the poor rural families so that they may be able to handle families' responsibilities. When these are provided and children are sure of them, it will automatically help the number getting reduced because children will be able to stay home with families.

The study recommends that government should make effective legislation and ensure strict implementation of the laws concerning child rights, education system and awareness. All institutions, from top to bottom, should be activated to save children from un certainty and vulnerability .The government should establish rehabilitation centres where children addicted by drugs can stay until fully cured .Besides, awareness campaign should be launched as soon as possible to help people to realize the gravity of the situation of children who work and live on streets.

REFERENCES

- Adrioni F. (2018). Street Children at the interface with social reality. *Social Science and Education Research Review*, 5(2):44 – 61.
- Bhukuth, A and Ballet, J. (2015). Children of the Street. Why are they in the street? How do they live? *Economics and Sociology*, 8 (4): 134 – 148.
- Chowdhury, S. Chowdhury; A.S. Hug, K.E., Johan Y, Chowdhury, R., Ahmed, T. and Rahman, M.M. (2017). Life style and risk behavior of Street Children in Bangladesh: A health perspectives. *Health*, 9:577 - 591.
- De Benitez, S.T. (2011). *State of the world's street children: Research*. London: Consortium for Street Children.
- Ennew, J. (2003). Difficult circumstances: Some reflections on “street children” in Africa. *Children, youth and environments*, 13(1). Retrieved from http://www.colorado.edu/journals/cye/13_1/Vol13ArticleReprints/DifficultCircum_AfricaInsight.pdf on 12th October, 2021
- Gracey, M. (2002). Child health in an urbanizing world. *ACTA Paediatrica*, 91(1), 1–8.
- Kopoka, A.P. (2000). The problem street children in Africa: An ignored tragedy. A paper presented at the *International Conference on Street Children and Street Children's Health in East Africa*, Dar essalaam, 19-21 April, 2000
- Le Roux, S.G. (2016). *The role of family literacy programmes to support emergent literacy in young learners*, D.Ed thesis, University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- Levin K.A. (2006). Study design III: Cross-sectional studies. *Evid Based Dent*. 7(1):24-5.
- Sachs, Jeffrey D. (2005). *The End of Poverty*. Penguin Press. p. 416. ISBN 978-1594200458.
- Saramba (2002), Influencing style on children's behaviour. *Journal of Education and Educational Development*, 3(2): 222-249
- UNICEF, (2015). *Child Poverty in Perspective: An Overview of Child Well-Being in Rich Countries*. Innocent Report Card 7. UNICEF Innocent Research Centre, Florence.
- UNICEF, (2012) *Strong Foundations: Early Childhood Care and Education*. EFA Global Monitoring Report. Paris: UNESCO.
- Ward and Seager, (2010), The Relations of Early Television Viewing to School Readiness and Vocabulary of Children from Low-Income Families: The Early Window Project. *Child Development*, 72(5), 1347-1366
- Ward, C.L and Seager, J.R. (2010). *South African street children: A survey and recommendations for services*. 27 (1). Retrieved 20th November, 2020 from: <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/bibl.proxy.hj.se/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=fcc96dd9-0214-46bc-9975-466726145442%40sessionmgr112&vid=26&hid=106>
- World Bank (2020), Archived from the original on 30 August 2004. Retrieved 23 April 2010. World Development Indicators - World Bank (2011-2020)