



St. Clements University

**“Factors Related to the Street Children Phenomenon
in Major Towns in Sierra Leone: A Comparative Study
of the City’s Street Children and Children
in Normal Family Homes”**

A Dissertation Submitted
in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Award
of Doctor of Philosophy

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2008

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

One of the major social problems encountered by different nations worldwide is that of homeless or street children. Aside from some aspects of poverty such as inadequate education, nutrition, and medical care, homelessness is also visible. On the streets of urban shopping districts, homeless adults and especially children flock the area. However, the visibility of their plight has yet to evoke a comprehensive public policy response in many countries.

The street children phenomenon is an everyday social reality in many countries as far apart as Brazil in Latin America, Nigeria in West Africa and the Philippines in Asia. The situation demonstrates the paradox of horrible poverty in the midst of modern urban development and affluence. Moreover, prevalent and persistent is the problem that Gichuru (1993:2) has observed regarding children living on the streets in cities. The author observes that street children are distinctive urban feature as old as the cities themselves.

To provide a brief background, a street child is any child that works and lives on the street. They are highly mobile like a modern day nomad and they can alternate between living on the streets and living with family members. Studies found that children who usually reside in the street were involved in begging, hawking, prostitution, and theft. These activities provide them money for daily needs.

The reality is that millions of children around the world live in the street and only few people and organizations are doing something about it. This lukewarm, or rather, passive response to the problem of street children is a trend that needs attention. This means that although poverty remains a constant issue to solve, specific type of poverty such as homelessness is yet to capture attention.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and some international non-government associations (NGOs) have attempted in their different ways to provide support for street children worldwide. Individual countries have themselves made attempts to tackle the problem locally. Kenya is a case in point, according to the country's newspaper, *Daily Nation* (15 January 2000); the government since 1994 has participated in workshops to address the plight of street children known as the *Forum*. The paper further states that the *Forum* was the initiative of the African Network for the protection and prevention of child abuse and neglect. It also aimed at identifying the solutions that would help eradicate the problem on street children.

However, as the number of street children keeps growing in individual countries as pointed out above, it is clear that the responses of international NGOs and individual countries are far from being adequate. Apparently, organizations need to exert more efforts to ensure the involvement of every individual, family, group, and community in solving the problem. The pressure required may take the form of an investigation into the nature and dimension of the street children phenomenon in a variety of urban settings in a given society.

Such a study will enable the researcher to go beyond the context of large urban centres (like Bo, Makeni, Kono, Kenema, and Freetown in Sierra Leone) where the street children phenomenon exists. In this way, the researcher will consider the case of small urban centres as well, and may as such be in a position to determine the specific needs of street children in a specific urban setting.

Street children in Africa are recent development although its root originated from colonialism in the early 20th century. For instance, in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, there were approximately 200 and 300 street children recorded in 1991, and in 1995 there were 3,500 street children recorded (Bamurange, 1998: 230). In Khartoum Sudan, the street children are limited to a few boys only in 1984, but by 1990, those so-called "street boys were a predictable part of the urban landscape" (Dodge & Raundalen 1991:40). In South Africa, all street children are noted to be African origin, with no white children on the

streets, this incidents is considered a fact reflective of South Africa's past of racial segregation and apartheid (Le Roux, 1996).

Another example is street children phenomenon in Kenya. While in 1969 Kenya had only a few hundred *parking boys* or male street children, today, there are an estimated 10,000 to 30,000 both male and female street children in Nairobi. Throughout Africa, street boys greatly outnumber street girls. The reason is that girls are supposed to stay home to care for children in South Africa (Le Roux, 1996). In Khartoum and Maputo, Mozambique, girls reside in homes as servants subject for punishment if they move to the streets (Dodge & Rundle, 1991).

Similarly, the same situation is been experienced in Sierra Leone. The number of street children has increased geometrically, from 10,000 in 1990 to about 200,000 in 1998 (Social Welfare Ministry). Estimates indicate that by the year 2008 the number of street children in the country will double if adequate measures are not put in place to address the problem. It should be borne in mind that the eight years of civil war has caused untold suffering to many children in Sierra Leone, dragging them to the streets of Freetown and elsewhere in the country. The consequences of this war have been devastating.

Women and children who constituted the vulnerable group bore the brunt of the atrocities committed by the rebels. There were gross violations of children's rights, ranging from abductions, multiple rape, amputation, slavery, exploitation, forced recruitments and drug addiction and the destruction of a significant portion of natural infrastructure. Despite the fact that the United Nations convention on the right of the child, stresses the need for every child to have access to shelter, food, clothing and education, this has not been the case for many children inclusive street children in Sierra Leone.

There are specific macro causes that are associated with a dramatic rise in Africa's street children, along with the poverty of global economic and structural adjustment forces mentioned above. These factors include civil war and famine such as in Mozambique and Sudan, (Dodge & Raundalen, 1991), children soldiers and acute immunity deficiency

sickness (AIDS) in Uganda, (Dodge & Raundalen, 1991), and apartheid in South Africa (Le Roux, 1996). Recent statistics published by UNICEF indicate that in Africa alone, five million children live in the street or outside the normal family home.

The figures are alarming, this imply that homelessness have not received the attention they deserve with a view to combating the child poverty and misery they represent. This lack of urgency may be attributed to the fact that many of the countries in which the street children phenomenon is one of the countries' cultural landscape rather than being a major social problem needing immediate attention and concrete solutions.

Other problems aside from poverty of the street children exist such as physical abuse from police officers. Some government forces tend to treat street children like criminals. In reality, most people conceive street children as problems rather than problematic individuals who need help and protection. Since the 1980s, a lethal combination of circumstances has emerged that severely threatens the next generation of African children. Other problems such as ethnic violence, AIDS, external indebtedness, corruption, mismanagement, educational decline, and overpopulation are the conditions that harm these street children.

Children in every nation are the future leaders and therefore needs protection by their families and their countries. This study of the street children phenomenon in five major towns in Sierra Leone is intended as a contribution, however modest this may be, towards understanding the predicament of the city's unfortunate children. The investigation involves a comparative study on children living in the street or outside normal family homes and children enjoying the benefits of living in such family homes.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The term street children in this thesis refers to children who have made streets their very home. It includes children who might not necessarily be homeless or without families,

but who live in the street where there is no care, no protection, supervision or direction from parents or responsible adults. The sheer number of street children worldwide is estimated 100 million (Mafuba 1994:5), which clearly points to the enormity of the problems of poverty and deprivation besetting the countries in which these children live.

The number of street children is constantly increasing. This is a kind of situation, which needs close attention and investigation. Millions of children around the world live in situations that put them at risk of exploitation, abuse, and discrimination. The most marginalized children, those who often experience human rights abuses, need special protection to promote their physical, mental, spiritual, moral, and social development.

Problems related to coping with society reflect the behaviours and personalities of people. Due to these challenges, at-risk youths encounter much difficulty in interacting with others. These children become the victims of racism, bullying, divorce, and other related problems. Because children are still undergoing the continuous process of building their characteristics and their personalities, the guidance that they receive should also be based on their backgrounds and personal characteristics (Machiarolla & Garner, 1989, pp. 70-83). Helping the youths to overcome problems in society is a priority as it is through these youths that the future will be decided.

Beaudoin (2001) have noted that youths who are going through their adolescent changes encounter certain problems, particularly in coping with their environment and the people that surround them. This can result to other related problems, which can affect their behaviour and ability to socialize. As part of their development, the situation and the reaction or feedback that the society show towards their behaviours have a large impact on their outcome, including the characteristics that develop during their adolescence (Watts & Eggellation, 1999, pp. 79-110).

The importance of the adolescent age as well as the consequences that the society has made these youths bear during a crucial time of their development led to the establishment of various programs by several organizations within the society. These

coping programs usually have a monitoring system, in which those with the identified problems acquire guidance from someone typically referred to as “mentors”. The effects of these programs are advantageous for both the mentor and the youth as it allows them to become more drawn to each other (Alessandri et al, 2002).

In Sierra Leone and in many developing countries, such programs could be the solution to the street children phenomenon. Millions of children live in the street because of poverty and negligence of their communities and countries. Children who live in the streets do not go to school, often because they have to work. Moreover, they do not have nutritious food or quality health care. Their lives have been devastated by HIV/ AIDS or war. They live and work on the streets. The adolescent programs prove vital to aid the street children in their development.

The importance of addressing the problem on street children is because the development of Sierra Leon maybe hampered if many of the children continue to be subject to negligence, thus allowed to live in the streets. It is important therefore, to address and monitor the problem of street children in order to find solution to the problems. The study of street children will focus on five major towns in Sierra Leone. This will help to reveal the extent of the problem, provide a clear picture of the issues related to the street children phenomenon, and explore the situation of those children living in normal family homes.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The primary objective is to examine and determine the factors related to the street children phenomenon in major towns in Sierra Leone. In addition, this paper attempts to conduct a comparative study of the city’s street children and children in normal family homes. Specifically, this dissertation aims to achieve the following objectives:

- To conduct literature review on the fundamental concepts of the occurrences of street children
- To determine what factors account for the appearance of the phenomenon

in the city, what affects the phenomenon produces, and in what ways these effects can be minimized.

- To show how the lives of street children in the city compared with the lives of children in normal family homes differ. The point is that by focusing on the two groups of children, the study seeks to investigate the extent to which the differences in the socio-economic backgrounds of the groups account for the differences in the quality of life available to each group.
- To provide the government through the ministry of social welfare, NGOs and other policy planners with reliable information on the true situation of the street children phenomenon after the war and current, in order to address their problems more seriously.

1.4 Research questions

Generally, the purpose of this study is to determine the factors related to the street children phenomenon in major cities of Sierra Leone. This study tries to answer the following queries:

1. What are some of the factors that causes street children phenomenon in Sierra Leone?
2. What are the factors that affect the lives of street children in Sierra Leone?
3. What activities street children usually do?
4. How do the lives of street children differ or relate to the lives of children in normal family homes in the city?

1.5 Hypothesis

The comparative study of street children and of children in normal family homes consists a number of hypotheses related to the socio- economic conditions in which the two groups of children live. These are the following hypotheses:

1. Children in the street do not face difficulty to adapt to life in the streets
2. Children in the street are not likely to be failures in society

3. Peer group influence has no effect on children living on the street
4. Single parenthood has no effect on the development of street children
5. Children living on the streets are not likely to be violent children
6. There were significant difference on how children in normal family homes and street children live

1. 6 Significance of the study

Most studies carried out on street children focus exclusively on children in the street. To get a complete picture of poverty and deprivation in which these children live, it is important to do a comparative study showing how the lives of children in the street differ from the lives of children living with their parents or relatives in normal family homes, which is what this study did. In other words, this study provides a new type of exploring the problems associated in the street children phenomenon. This is important as it could generate new findings aside from the findings already found.

This study is to help development workers and other professionals as well as the government of every nation, to grasp fully the implications of the relationship and behaviour of the two groups of children. The result of this study hope to enable different organisations, local and national government to device concrete ways by which the less fortunate group of children can be given access to a measure of security and protection that their more fortunate counterparts enjoy.

1. 7 Scope and limitations

This study focuses on identifying the factors that cause street children phenomenon in Sierra Leone's major towns and to compare the life of children in normal family home and the life of street children. The scope is from the filed of sociology regarding street children to the reality derived from the experience of Sierra Leone. This study is limited

to the evidences from children in major towns of Sierra Leone. Other limitations also exist, which are out of the control of the researcher:

- The inability of some of the children to understand the questions properly because some of the questions need interpretation, as not all of them understand Creole lingua franca language spoken nation wide in the country.
- Unwillingness of some of the children to be interviewed for data collection

Given that these limitations happen, the researcher exercises a rational decision not to include elusive answers in the results.

1.8 Definitions of operational terms

1. Street children: refers to children who are homeless or those who are not homeless yet live on the street. Specifically, those children who are not taken care of by their parents, family, and other adults. These children usually live in abandoned buildings, automobiles, parks, containers, or on the street itself. There are numerous documents, which stated the definition street children. The issue is that there are no specific categories, but rather a scale ranging from those kids, who spend some time in the streets but essentially live at home. Again, there are those children who live wholly in the streets and do not receive parent care or no adult supervision.

A widely accepted set of definitions, which is primarily attach to UNICEF, defines the context into two major categories:

- a. There are those children who have been engaged in some type of economic activity such as vending and begging. These children go home at the end of the day to give their income to their family. Due to the economic fragility of their family, these children may eventually choose a permanent life on the streets.

- b. Those children who are actually living on the street or outside a normal family home; Herein, family ties may be present but are weak and maintained only gradually.

2. **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF):** an organisation that provides long-term developmental and humanitarian assistances to mothers and children.

3. **Non-government organisation (NGO):** A non-government organization can be defined as an association that pursues legal, cultural, social and environmental goals; the operation of an NGO is not driven by commercial or profit reasons. The funding used by the NGOs to support its different projects is typically derived from private sources. NGOs are established for a number of reasons.

In some cases, they are formed in order to support the social or political goals of its member; some NGOs on the other hand are developed to support larger organizations like companies and schools. Some of the common activities of NGOs all over the world include the promotion of human rights, improvement of the natural environment, welfare enhancement of the at-risk or disadvantaged population. National, religious, business-oriented, environmental, government-operated, and international are some of the common types of NGOs. The World Bank cited that there are two basic divisions of NGOs called operational and advocacy NGOs.

In operational NGO, the purpose of the organization is to create and implement projects directed towards development. On the contrary, advocacy NGOs are more active in promoting awareness, knowledge, or acceptance of a specific issue. Hence, participating in activist events and conducting presswork are the common type of NGO. The role of the NGOs or the nongovernmental organizations tends to vary from nation to nation.

In some nations, the NGOs are considered as significant contributors, particularly in the development processes. Traditionally, the role of the NGOs is focused on the establishment of development programs, delivery of services, or the provision of

assistance to official departments to help spread the advantage of their designed programs. NGOs are often perceived as the modern cure of development, which can remedy various ills of the society including inefficiency, instability, poverty, disempowerment, and authoritarianism. The claims for these beneficial effects of the NGOs have been supported by various success stories and anecdotal evidence.

Eventually, the role of the NGOs has become more diversified. Aside from supplying various services and programs for development, some NGOs are presently involved in helping out various communities regarding their problems and preferences, networking skills to give and enhance the power of the poor, as well as coordinating with official bodies to amplify the masses' voice.

4. Poverty: People understand poverty in various ways. Some aspects of these definitions are measurable, while some are not. Typically, people define and understand poverty as the inability to provide for one's needs. This condition or state is often termed as "moneylessness" (Tussing, 1975). In a broader yet less concrete perspective, some consider poverty as an aspect of social pathology, which includes not only the state of moneylessness but also the conditions of helplessness, lack of political influence, dependency and other similar situations. In this case, poverty is also a state of powerlessness.

In the sense of "moneylessness," the definition of poverty is as a problem of not having enough basic medium of exchange in order to satisfy the basic human needs as well as to function socially and economically. Within any society or part of the world, basic human needs always exist. Although the standards of living tend to vary from place to place, elementary human needs are the same.

These include nutritious food, shelter, clothing, and sanitation, medical attention, and for some affluent societies, recreation and entertainment. People who are suffering from poverty lack the financial resources, or money to acquire these basic needs. Rowntree (2000) supported this definition when he stated that poverty is the point where the total

earnings are inadequate to acquire the minimum necessities of life for mere physical efficiency. Several other authors have given similar definitions of poverty. For instance, poverty may also be defined as the point wherein resources are seriously below the average family or individual (Townsend, 1979). As the resources of an individual or family continue to diminish, the poor tends to withdraw themselves from participating in activities and customs sanctioned by the culture.

This tendency to withdraw is also recognized as poverty line or threshold (Townsend and Gordon, 1989). More specifically, Townsend (1979) defined poverty as persons, families or groups considered to be in poverty when they have insufficient resources to acquire the types of diet, participate in activities, and obtain the living conditions that are usual or at least widely approved or encouraged within the societies where they belong.

The size of a person's income is not only a factor that makes poor people different from others. Many are dependent economically as well as psychologically. People in poverty have higher than average rates of suicide, criminality, physical and mental illness, alcoholism and narcotics addiction. Poor people are likely to live within unhealthy environments and in physically unsafe structures.

Moreover, social and family disorganizations are highly prevalent among poor people. These observations and problems of poverty encompass the feeling of powerlessness. Majority of the poor people lead lives that appear to be regulated outside their control. Most likely, evil forces or those in positions of authority are then ones monitoring people in poverty. This point is further emphasized by the concept of relative deprivation.

As argued by Peter Townsend (1979), market generates certain levels of deprivation that systematically hinders the poor from participating in economic and social activities of the society. According to Townsend, it may be hypothesized that, as resources for any individual and family are diminished, there is a point at which there occurs a sudden withdrawal from customs and activities sanctioned by the culture (Townsend, 1979, p.57).

5. Juvenile delinquency: Juvenile delinquency is a set of crimes committed by juveniles or children. A juvenile is a person, by some standards, who has not yet reached the age of maturity, or the legal age of 18 in some countries. Juvenile delinquency is a serious social issue because juveniles are capable of committing serious crimes.

Many legal systems around the world take special procedures in dealing with juvenile delinquency. Many factors point out to the reasons why many young people resort to juvenile delinquency. In addition, one will soon find out that the delinquents should only receive a part of blame not all the blame for their actions. They are only victims of the situation. Pushed into committing these things and were not really left with much of a choice.

6. Addictions: Genetic, biological/pharmacological, and social factors precipitate chronic conditions known as addiction. Addiction is characterized by the compulsive use of substances or engagement of behaviors despite clear evidence to the user of consequent morbidity and/or other harmful effects.” Addiction as mentioned above is a state wherein a person engages in a certain behavior or substance repeatedly and soon becomes highly dependent on this substance or behavior.

This situation can cause harmful effects on the person, not only physically but also mentally, socially and financially not to mention the possibility of a run-in with the law. Addictions can cause homelessness because it may cause the person to squander the money that has been earned on this addiction. If this addiction becomes serious, it can cause great financial instability, and in turn may lead to homelessness.

7. Schools: A school is a type of educational institution. The range of institutions covered by the term varies from country to country. In the United Kingdom, the term *school* refers primarily to pre-university institutions, and these can for the most part be divided into primary schools (sometimes further divided into infant school and junior school) and secondary schools.

In North America, the term *school* refers to any institute of education, at any level, and covers all of the following: preschool (for toddlers), kindergarten, elementary school, middle school (also called intermediate school or junior high school, depending on specific age groups and geographic region), high school, college, university, and graduate school. In the US, school performance through high school is monitored by each state's Department of Education.

2. Review of related literature

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the related literature about the area of study. The manner of review includes first, discovering where the research is coming from. Second is identifying the extent of studies regarding the topic. Third is exploring the shortcomings of the studies. Accordingly, this chapter provides the necessary backbone and support in order for the research to stand credible.

By surveying the past researches related to the study, a historical perspective takes place. In this manner, this study is able to reflect, to compare, to learn from setbacks, and to produce a stronger and more efficient study. This part of the paper also provides the research with a rich source of data, both new and old that enhances and enriches the study.

The review of related literature focuses on discussing the following: (1) street children phenomenon, (2) street children in global perspective, (3) street children in Sierra Leone, (4) factors that cause street children phenomenon, (5) the intervention used by Sierra Leone in order to solve the issue of street children, and (6) the living condition of street children. The specific topics provide necessary materials for the study.

2.2 Street children phenomenon

The scenario is typical and painstakingly well known; a busy street lined with different establishments and shops that display the latest electronic equipment and the latest fashion, well-dressed individual going in and out, the sound of vehicles speeding by, expensive vehicles, and the flash of neon lights. Every night, cities and towns come alive and urban life seems to reach its peak.

However, a typical scenario is also observable in the street. Some of these children sell cigarettes, flowers, and even lottery tickets while some of these children are just loitering and some of them are asleep in the arcades of the city. As the night goes by, street children are seen sniffing solvents, smoking, gambling, and taking up with both locals and foreigners for a night of big money. This means taking on odd jobs in order to earn some money to ease their hunger or to give to their family who are starving to death (Childhope, 1993).

These street children, which are known to be the offspring of this generation's complex urban realities all over the world signifies one of the global family's most severe, urgent and rampantly growing social dilemma. Consequently, there is no country and practically no city or town can escape the occurrence of the street children. In some parts of the globe, such occurrence is a daily occurrence. As mentioned earlier, this social dilemma has grown in the last decades at an alarming and distressing rate throughout Africa and Asia.

In contrast to popular belief, the so-called street children are noted to have a function in the society. The presence of street children in nation's functions is to reaffirm each individual's pre-existing intolerance and injustice regarding family, street crime, substance abuse, and birth control. Usually, such phenomenon reaffirms ideas regarding the incorrigibility of a child or his or her inherent resilience. The presence of this phenomenon contributes to the confirmation of theological assumptions of corruption, sin and violence, aggressions and other evils. Herein, most of the studies assumed that the

presence of street children phenomenon defines moral boundaries and the heartless and uncaring nature of contemporary and modern society.

Street children are part of contemporary life as it is recognised nowadays as street culture of prostitution, drug selling and petty crime. Street children are part of the job market as available, energetic, low-cost, unskilled, and short-term employees. Most of the street children serve as runners to deliver some mostly illegal packages.

The street children terminology was pertinently coined sometime in the 1980s to determine children who have preferred to spend most of their time in the busy streets in different occupations. The age of the street children ranges from five to 18 years old and these children ply sidewalks in a distracted attempt to take out whatever they can to bring home to their starving families. This may include medicine, foods, and other necessities for living. Most of the street children are those who lived with poor parents who have migrated from the rural cities in hope of uplifting their life status in big city. However, because of lack of educational attainments, these parents rendered them as ill equipped to survive in the urban areas. Various countries describe street children in various manners.

2.2 Street children global perspectives

Worldwide, there were approximately 100 million children in 1993 that live on city streets without care or shelter (World Health Organization 1993), a figure that doubled in a three-year period (200 million in 1996). The United States has over two million homeless and runaway (at risk of becoming homeless) youth, 16% of whom have run away more than five times (Terrell 1997; Regoli and Hewitt 1991). Los Angeles County alone has over 10,000 street youths. Canadian cities have 150,000 homeless youth, many of whom are at high risk for AIDS (Davis 1993).

Some have estimated that as many as 70% of street children run away because of physical and/or sexual abuse and family conflict (Jenks 1994). Others flee for adventure or freedom, but often confront unanticipated risks, some of which are life threatening.

The "hard core" homeless youth may number as high as 500,000 in the United States, but services meet only a fraction of that in need (Baggett and Donough 1988).

Additionally, 500,000 juvenile prostitutes roam streets, many of whom are among the covert homeless and thus not included in statistical reports, because they ostensibly have shelter (Sereny 1985). In reality, they live a precarious existence with pimps or a series of boyfriends, or with other prostitutes (King 1991). On a global level, sexual exploitation is an enduring condition for girls.

In Australia, a country of under eighteen million people, the *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission* (Burdekin 1989; O'Connor 1989) estimated that between fifty thousand and seventy thousand youth were homeless or in danger of becoming homeless. The same report stressed that homelessness was not merely a condition of being on the streets or the threat of homelessness, but in addition having a highly mobile life or otherwise lacking security without dependable caregivers.

The *Youth Accommodation Association* in 1991 estimated that prostitution varies from individual cases to mass victims of organized crime. This may encompass a selection of children; some run away from home or from situations, some are sold by their parents, some are forced or tricked into prostitution, some are street children, some are working part-time and some full-time, some are amateurs, and some are professionals.

The effects of tourism on child prostitution have led to dangerous developments. Children of both sexes are involved in satisfying the sexual appetites of organized bodies of tourists; with paedophile tourists, they are able to obtain profusely illustrated guides containing extensive information, including local agent, legal practices, and the "legal limits" of contact with children in each country.

Prostitution of very young children is known to occur in Asia, Latin America, Europe, and North America. In Bangkok, 30,000 children under 16 years of age and some as young as six years old are estimated to work as prostitutes. *Anti-Slavery International*

reports approximately 200,000 child prostitutes in Thailand, where a relationship exists between tourism, drugs, prostitution, and the German Mafia. A legal investigation by the Thai government found that 13 of every 19 children involved in prostitution had been deceived by promises of work or education, but were forced into prostitution.

Another investigation uncovered that brothel owners had beaten up or drugged children who refused to work. Countries of the Middle East tend to deny that the problem exists in the region. Yet, reports indicate that citizens of these countries travel to other countries, especially in Southeast Asia, in search of sexual services.

In Brazil, those involved in illegal sexual activities often support their entire family by their wages. Young prostitutes in Bogotá, Colombia earn 3,000 pesos from each client (\$21), whose money may help support cocaine addictions and marijuana purchases. In Europe and North America, economic deprivation, domestic violence and abuse, family disintegration, and drug addiction are all significant factors leading to the increase in runaways, homelessness, and child prostitution.

The usual account of how a child gets into prostitution in North America is that he or she usually is a runaway newly arrived in a big city, and is picked up by a "sweet-talking" pimp, who treats the child well for a short time, and then demands favours in return. A recent study estimated that 5,000 boys and 3,000 girls below the age of 18 are involved in prostitution in Paris. In 1990, the legal age of consent in the Netherlands was reduced to 12 years old. Child sexuality has existed for two millennia or more, but the current industry of child prostitution may represent a more highly exploitative and destructive version, especially in light of the international AIDS epidemic.

In the state of New South Wales alone, there were about 20,000 to 25,000 young people, aged twelve to eighteen seeking accommodation because of homelessness (Coffey and Wadelton 1991). This number does not include the discouraged homeless or those living in squats (abandoned buildings), sleeping outdoors, and living in temporary housing arrangements, and other makeshift situations. Covert homelessness is similarly patterned

in Australia as in the United States, where the practice of short-term live-in relationships with boyfriends or "sugar daddies" may account for the gross under-representation of girls in official counts (King 1991).

The *Australian Institute of Family Studies* research on youth applying for the *Young Homeless Allowance* found a number of recurring themes often associated with "extreme domestic disharmony" (Cass 1991, 48):

- (1) The re-partnering of parents precipitating conflict;
- (2) Strong cultural and value differences between generations affecting young persons from different ethnic backgrounds wishing to adopt the values and practices of their Anglo-Australian peers;
- (3) Violence and sexual abuse affecting young women in particular;
- (4) Unemployment by parents or by youth; or lack of employment for rural or outer suburban youth who then seek jobs in the city, and inadvertently become homeless in the urban centre as limited work, inadequate support and life skills lead to youth joblessness; and
- (5) Young women, especially, are more likely to be unemployed and remain so for longer periods, less likely to be in education and training, more likely to be found in marginal part-time or casual work, and more prone to seek employment in a narrow range of occupations.

This contributes to systematic neglect of the exploitation and misery that young people experience, as well as their increased likelihood of entering criminal careers. The World Health Organization's (WHO) report on street youth in ten cities wholly rejects the short-term thesis (1993). Instead, the WHO argues not only that the street lifestyle exposes street children and adolescents to multiple forms of victimization, but that street survival entailing drug addiction, dependency on prostitution, or other street crimes may jeopardize the youth's return to mainstream society.

In many instances, street activities simply kill the youth outright (e.g., drug overdoses, murder, suicide). In addition to the street lifestyle that precludes movement back to home

and school, the equation of sexual abuse and homelessness implies a "forced exit" (Hirst 1989) and acts as an additional barrier to young people's returning to their abusive families (Robson 1992).

Moreover, after months or years on the street, there may be a severing of all familial ties, physical retribution, and in some cases, going into hiding for some time with possible change of name and state. Homeless young people experience chronic loss and suffering because street life teaches harsh lessons. It promotes learning how to be abusive, dishonest, evasive, selfish, and irresponsible in order to "play the system" and uses violence, drug addiction, and criminal behaviour as essential parts of the street survival kit (Robson 1992). Violence is part of the daily routine of street youth and involves peers, acquaintances, police, and strangers (Alder 1991; Davis 1993; Terrell 1997).

Young people escape violent homes only to encounter further violence on the streets (Burdekin 1989). Among homeless youth, extensive histories of violence exposure--including witnessing violence, victimization, fear, and perpetrator roles--regularly occur. Kipke et al (1997) report that among a Hollywood, California, homeless youth sample, 70% reported having been punched, hit, burned, or beaten; 33% indicated having been seriously hurt during a violent attack; and 44% reported having been sexually assaulted, molested, or raped. The Hollywood sample emphasizes that the increase in risk for violent victimization associated with life on the streets is particularly strong for females (Kipke et al. 1997).

Alder (1991a; 1991b) conducted intensive interviews with 51 homeless Australian youth under the age of 18 reveal that almost two-thirds had been physically assaulted and half had been sexually assaulted in the previous twelve months. Distinct gender differences in victimization prevail, "violence for males predominantly involves fights, while for females, it involves sexual assaults" (Alder 1991a, 10).

Perpetrators of this violence were overwhelmingly male, including police attacks reported by 47% of females and 58% of males (Alder, 1991a). One of the most disturbing

findings of Alder's research is the extent to which these young people suffer violent victimization without seeking assistance or reporting the crime to authorities.

In the United States, street children are a serious problem for young people and delinquencies are punishable by arrest and jailing (Janus et al. 1987). Girls make up 63% of young people appearing in juvenile court charged with running away from home (Chesney-Lind and Shelden 1993). Because runaways are virtually without police protection, they are the most vulnerable group for violence and sexual exploitation (White, Underwood, and Omelczuk 1991). Once forced out, the movement into prostitution may follow shortly thereafter. A study in Miami consisting of 100 seriously delinquent, drug-addicted girls shows the age at first time for prostitution was 12.6 years old (Inciardi and Pottieger 1991).

Street prostitution is undoubtedly the most violent-prone experience among all street activities, and follows a childhood of sexual assault, rape, and physical assault (Boyer et al. 1988; Davis 1993a; 1993c). Teenage prostitutes are drawn from the chronic homeless who often live in squats or "crash pads" in abandoned buildings without utilities or bathrooms (Beyette 1988). Several factors may be involved with a girl engaging in prostitution, "she may be coerced, tricked, seduced, blackmailed by a pimp, or learned in her abusive family to communicate primarily through sex" (Campagna and Poffenberger 1988, 65-66).

Lack of shelters is a major factor in the girl's movement into prostitution (Davis 1993b; 1993c). However, the most common form of teenage prostitution is a non-commercial transaction, "survival sex," by which the girl trades sex for "warm shelter for a night, drugs or perhaps a few 'Big Macs'" (Beyette 1988; see also Chesney-Lind and Shelden 1993, 38). American data on drug use among young people show a strong association between substance abuse and delinquency, a trend that is increasingly occurring among younger ages (National Institute of Justice 1997).

Majority of today's youth faces conflicts that they can barely handle in a very young age. Modernization has brought many social changes in the society. These children are being taken for granted, usually by parents who both work and have no time for their children. Another factor is the issue of broken family, peer pressure, and many other issues that would make a youth feel inferior of himself/herself.

Many youth with problems seek a way to express themselves and unfortunately, this search for self-expression has often lead to deviant practices such as joining gangs, engaging in pre-marital sex and engaging in substance abuse. Stephen (1997) wrote that growing numbers of children are being neglected, abused, and ignored. Without change, the dark spectre of generational warfare could become all too real. Stephen (1997) further continues that child-care advocates report that up to 15% of 16 to 19-year-olds are at risk of never reaching their potential and simply becoming lost in society.

In other recent studies, the research shows that family and peer influence, individual characteristics including behaviour and personality can also be considered as factors that influence children and adolescent to engage in substance abuse (Johnston, O'Malley & Bachman, 2003). There are several ways to determine if a youth is at-risk of substance abuse. Christle, et al (2002) cited that researchers have identified a number of demographic and behavioural characteristics of youth that contribute to their risk of involvement with substance abuse. The following behaviours are related to ethnic minority status: aggressiveness, antisocial behaviour, difficulties in school and school failure (including educational disabilities). These risk factors are common denominators in the backgrounds of youth who require a variety of human services like child welfare services.

2.3 Substance use and abuse

Substance use and abuse is in the forefront of societal problems. It is a pervasive problem, affecting directly or indirectly the overwhelming majority of persons. The deleterious impact of alcohol and drugs is devastating. The involvement of some children

and adolescents in substance abuse often lead to different consequences. Such consequences include physiological, psychosocial, and legal aspects.

The physiological effect of drug abuse depends on the drugs in use. Substance abuse undermines physical health. For example, chronic alcohol abuse is associated with diseases of the liver, central nervous system, and heart. Often, as in the case of the brain disorder, Korsakoff's syndrome, the damage resulting from alcohol abuse is irreversible. Additional health problems stemming from the use of other substances are well documented (Colby 2000). Well-known examples are lung cancer caused by smoking, and pervasive central nervous system damage resulting from the inhaling of solvents, cardiovascular disease and neurological damage.

In addition, many substances are toxic in excessive doses, resulting in numerous acute and chronic effects on physical health, potentially leading to permanent disability or death. Finally, substance abuse increases the risk for acquiring other health-related problems, sexually transmitted diseases, or trauma secondary to accidents while under the influence of psychoactive substances (Colby 2000).

Mental health disorders often occur with substance abuse. Co-morbidity is relatively common, with up to one third of individuals with psychiatric disorders reporting a lifetime history of substance abuse disorders as well. In some instances, psychiatric disorder precedes or even contributes to the development of substance abuse, whereas in others, emotional and behavioural disturbances arise within the context of alcohol and drug use problems (Colby 2000).

A large body of research has delineated the disproportionate representation of psychological dysfunction in substance abusers. Included are problems in personality, mood, self-esteem, coping, behaviour, and social functioning. Once again, some of these psychological difficulties may be evident prior to the onset of substance abuse, although

psychological functioning often worsens over time in individuals with substance use disorders (McWhirter, 2004).

In addition, children and adolescents who are involved in substance abuse may also be affected in terms of their educational status. Abuse of specific substances may also contribute to relatively unique psychological presentations, such as the a-motivational state that has been linked to chronic marijuana use. Other psychological effects of substance abuse are directly linked to the biological impact of psychoactive substances (such as anxiety and irritability stemming from withdrawal) and the behaviours that result from dependence on drugs and alcohol (such as craving and preoccupation with obtaining desired substances).

Today, youth in the age of 13 is becoming the average age for early criminal participation (burglary, robbery, and serious theft) or early use of drugs other than alcohol and marijuana (Carpenter et al. 1988:11). This drug-crime link may be especially pronounced among street youth because of the high availability of drugs as well as their intricate involvement with the street scene. The widespread use of drugs by virtually all young street people has become the norm (Davis 1993; Costello 1991; Inciardi, Horowitz, and Pottieger 1993; WHO 1993; King 1991). For example, crack cocaine has been estimated to be eight times as prevalent among runaway and homeless youth as in the general adolescent population (Kral et al. 1997).

Homelessness contributes to high criminality among youth. Results from previous research with homeless youth suggest that "hunger causes theft of food, problems of hunger and shelter lead to serious theft, and problems of unemployment and shelter are associated with prostitution" (Kipke et al. 1997). McCarthy and Hagan (1991) self-report study of 390 homeless youth in Toronto, Canada, found that although a sizable proportion of those surveyed participated in a number of illegal activities (most of them minor delinquencies) before leaving home, a significantly higher proportion of adolescents were involved in more-serious criminal activities afterwards. Levels of crime

show profound increases for older street children for those whose homelessness lasts for more than a year.

They propose that street life is inherently "criminogenic" in that it provides both opportunities for criminal offending as well as the necessity to sustain existence. The fact that the youth's participation in crime escalates after a certain period on the street points to the probability that crime may be adopted as a "conditional survival strategy" for coping with the economic and social strains that characterize homelessness (McCarthy and Hagan 1991).

2.4 Young women in the street

Davis (1999) provides a study that explores the process of how girls are usually forced into the streets. The study consisted of a case study comprising of 105 young women in Sydney, Australia in 1992. Fifty percent of these young women were living in a shelter at the time of the interview while 14% were located in a girls' detention centre. The average number of shelters each girl has gone through implies that homelessness among girls is a serious matter because even in a rich country such as Australia, the problem exists. The following sections provide the certain factors that could be considered reasons why young women are in the streets according to the study of Davis (1999).

2.4.1 Family history

Family histories reveal several significant themes. First, family breakdown through death, divorce or separation is common. Less than one-third grew up with an intact family, almost 20% because of a parent's death, and 50% because of divorce. Additionally, another 14% had lost siblings through death. Chronic disease also affected about 25% of the girls' parents or siblings, with many of the illnesses occurring when they were in infancy or throughout their childhood.

Second, parental employment patterns show that mothers or stepmothers were much more likely to have professional or white-collar jobs, compared to fathers or stepfathers.

Given the resistance to stereotypical gender roles, this status discrepancy may have been a contributing factor in the high rates of parental conflict and abusive drinking patterns. These girls have experienced sustained abuse; some from infancy or young childhood onward, as shown by their self-reported statements on types of maltreatment (see Table 6.2). Physical abuse was experienced by almost 65 percent; emotional abuse was reported by 82 percent; and sexual abuse was a factor in the lives of nearly half the sample. Perpetrators were overwhelmingly fathers or stepfathers, although mothers counted among a significant proportion of those who were defined as emotional abusers (27 percent).

Although fathers and stepfathers accounted for only 39 percent of the sexual abuse cases, other male predators, including older siblings, uncles, friends and neighbours, family acquaintances, or strangers had been involved in the abuse. When questioned about their experience with family counselling, given the pattern of family violence and substance abuse, 52% indicated that they had at least one or more sessions with a therapist; only 11% found such intervention useful. Most of the young women complained that one or both parents refused to follow up either on the appointments or the recommendations of the therapist.

2.4.2 Alcohol and drug use

Among these girls, heavy alcohol and drug use was common with 30% begins drug use at age twelve and below. Almost 87% have used substances that were either illegal for minors or contraband for all persons. Alcohol and marijuana remained the drugs of choice (nearly 50% were currently using alcohol, and 51% admitted to current use of marijuana), but their drug experience extended to heroin, cocaine/ crack, amphetamines, prescription drugs, methadone, inhalants, and barbiturates.

The study also confirmed that some girls report being raped, mugged, beaten up, thrown out of shelters or apartments, losing friends, having accidents, experiencing blackouts, and other severe mishaps while drunk or drugged but nothing usually happen in the cases. Many girls boasted about their high level of alcohol or drug intake, and apparently

perceived little connection between their health and safety problems and their alcohol and drug use.

2.4.3 Health issues

The United Nations' *Year of the Child* and its *Declaration on the Rights of Children* focused much attention on the situation of street children in less developed countries throughout the world. The situation includes violence directed toward street children, such as police brutality, frequent imprisonment, and even (in at least one case) killings of street children that are informally sanctioned and abetted by officials and the media. In their haste to condemn these intolerable conditions in the less developed nations, many commentators in the more developed countries have all too easily forgotten that the conditions of children in their own countries have steadily deteriorated in the past decade.

There is every reason to expect that street children experience exceptionally widespread health problems, an expectation that is borne out by what little research exists. For instance, there are studies that compared the health problems of 110 street children in Los Angeles to those of 655 children in normal family home who had been seen in the same health clinics. Among the conclusions of the study were that street youth are at greater risk for a wide variety of medical problems and of health-compromising behaviours including suicide and depression, prostitution, and drug use.

It has been noted that more widespread among the street children were genitourinary problems, hepatitis, asthma, serious respiratory infections (pneumonia), lice, drug abuse, and trauma. Life on the streets or even in institutions, such as refuges or detention centres, away from family, caring adults, and normal routines, has been shown to be hazardous to health. About 75% of this group have sought medical care since becoming homeless.

The high medical risk of homelessness is apparent in the list of medical problems reported by this group that range from what medical informants emphasize are common ailments experienced by homeless persons, such as scabies, head lice, foot problems, and

frequent colds. In addition, this is a population of young women and girls who are exposed to high rates of violence; sexual coercion and unprotected sex that contributes to sexually transmitted diseases; pelvic inflammatory disease; and in three cases, a diagnosis of HIV-positive for AIDS. Almost 45% have been pregnant, itself a serious health risk, considering the age of some of these young women. Some reported illnesses have been complications from pregnancy or abortion.

2.5 Children in and off the street

According to the study of Connolly (1990) involving Honduran street children, age ranges from one to 22 years with the average of about 11 years old. Children of the streets are older on average (mean age = 12.9 years) than market children (mean age = 10.3 years). Boys are more numerous than girls are: among market children (N = 909), 54% are boys and 46% are girls; the street children (N = 110) are overwhelmingly boys (95%).

The strong preponderance of males among Honduran children of the street and among homeless U.S. adults is indicative of the matrilineal organization of poverty families in both nations, whereby young males are considerably more likely than young females to be "turned out" (kicked out or asked to go) once familial resources have been stretched past the limit.

A substantial majority of both groups are native Tegucigalpa's, although nearly 40% of the children of the street (and 17% of the market children) are in-migrants from other regions of the country, reflective of the rural-to-urban population flow discussed earlier. One assumes that many of the in-migrating children of the street have fled abusive or otherwise unacceptable family situations whereas the in-migrating market children have come to the city with their families.

Other studies of street children in Bogotá and Guatemala City suggest that weak or disorganized family structures contribute a great deal to the problem. Whether resulting

from the cultural disorientation of rural migrants experience or the extreme material deprivation of the urban slum, the family's role as a protective and socializing force for children is diminished; for many older boys in particular, life in the streets becomes an adaptation to unbearable family conditions (Connolly 1990).

Consistent with earlier findings, the Honduran children also tend to come from large, disorganized family backgrounds. About five percent of the children of the streets and two percent of the market children are orphans; among the remainder, the average number of other persons living in the child's nuclear household is five point three. Very few of the parents of these children are currently married (15% of the market kids; only 8% of the street kids), most are separated or divorced (45% of the total sample), while others were never married in the first place (32%).

Family disorganization and estrangement are, of course, dramatically higher for the true abandoned street children than for the market children. Among the latter, case workers have assessed 78% as having good to excellent relations with their families; among the former, this is true of only 32%. Three-quarters of the children of the street but only a fifth of the market children exhibit symptoms of family dysfunction. Nearly nine in ten of the market children (86%) live with one or both of their parents. Among children of the street, barely a third lives with a parent and most (57%) of them live and sleeps, literally, in the streets of the city.

Two-thirds of the market kids have someone who takes care of and looks after them during the days (normally the mother, of course). This is true of only 13% of the children of the street, and in most cases (Nine of 14); the caretaker is a brother or sister who is also in the streets. About half the market children attend school (many are too young to do so) while 90% of the abandoned street children do not. Of those who have ever received formal schooling, almost all have completed three or fewer years. A bare majority (57%) can read and write at some level; the remainder cannot. Very few of these children (either category) are recent arrivals in fact, 82% have been in the streets for more than a year.

It is of more than passing interest that there are equivalent rates of all these indicators of family "dysfunction" among the families of street children in Honduras, where there is a very limited welfare system, and where nothing even remotely similar to AFDC exists. The similarity in outcome, in the context of very different structural conditions (presence or absence of welfare) suggests instead that severely restricted economic opportunities in both nations create a shortage of desirable males capable of helping to support a family, and that the women in both nations therefore do without husbands in fulfilling their pronatalist values.

As suggested earlier, most of the market children's economic activities are based on the informal economy of the open-air market; average daily earnings per child (as reported to the interviewers) vary from as little as 20 centavos (about \$0.04) to as much as 10 lempira (\$1.90). In nearly all cases, the earnings of the market children are shared with their families. In addition to general "market work," other activities include carrying things, running errands, and selling trinkets, gum, and candy.

The children of the street support themselves mainly through begging (42%), carrying things for people (15%), and petty theft (12%); nearly all of them keep for themselves whatever money they earn. Interviewer assessments of client functioning in a number of areas showed that about one client in six (16%) probably suffered fair to poor mental health, more than a third (36%) were in fair to poor physical health, and over 40% had significant nutritional deficiencies. In most cases, these assessments were more negative for the children of the street than the market children, but the differences were not large.

The range and extent of health and social problems indicated in these data are scarcely surprising. As of the intake interview, doctors had not seen five percent of these children and another 51% had not been seen by a doctor or other health professional in more than a year. Their nutritional needs were also unmet; it is worth noting that only 59% of these children ate three meals a day on the average; about a third ate only two meals a day; eight percent ate only one. Here, as in most other comparisons, the market children fared

considerably better; among the abandoned street children, only six percent ate three meals a day.

Despite these differences, it is of considerable interest that researchers have found second- and third-degree malnutrition only among the market children; they have seen no such cases among the children of the street. It also needs to be mentioned that in the Honduran context, the breakfast meal can consist of just coffee, bread, and lunch while dinner might be nothing but tortillas and salt.

In most Latin American countries, definitely including Honduras, inadequate nutrition is so prevalent that most hospitals have special wings to care for malnourished and starving children (Lusk 1989). There are other conditions, which undermine the life chances of these children. Police have arrested about half the children of the street (but almost none of the market children); four in ten have been in jail (15% of them many times). One in five of the abandoned street kids belong to a street gang. More than half sniff glue (half regularly); four in ten also drink alcohol at least occasionally; six in ten smoke cigarettes; one in five smokes marijuana. (In contrast, substance abuse is nearly absent among the market children.)

Thus, inhalants are the most commonly abused substance among abandoned street children in Honduras, as opposed to alcohol (and then crack) among homeless teens in the United States, but the overall rate of substance abuse is about the same in both contexts. As in the United States, street children in Honduras sniff glue because it is very cheap; the pharmacological effects are quite similar to those of alcohol. Sniffing glue, like getting drunk, diminishes pain, reduces fear, increases bravado, and suppresses hunger.

Further compounding the health and emotional difficulties of the abandoned street children is that many of them (44%) are sexually active (compared to only 5% of the market children). Almost all of the sexually active children of the street (85 percent; N = 47) have been treated for sexually transmitted diseases at least once (compared to only

40% of the sexually active market children; N = 40). More than a fifth of the sexually active children of the street also have engaged in prostitution.

Despite the many clear differences between children in and of the streets of Tegucigalpa and homeless children in U.S. cities, the health problems of the two groups are remarkably similar. Skin ailments, respiratory infections, trauma, and dental problems are the leading causes of morbidity in both contexts. As in the U.S. case, the diseases and disorders exhibited among these children are not unusual or exotic ailments for the most part; they are, rather, the characteristic diseases of childhood.

However, because of the degraded conditions of existence, they appear at abnormally high rates and intensities. During a recent visit to the project, Wright observed the medical team treating six of the abandoned street children. Three of the children were being treated for trauma (two of them secondary to police-administered beatings the previous evening, the third a knife wound resulting from a fight), one had an upper respiratory infection, one had a severe case of head lice, and the sixth had come to see the doctor just because he was sad.

Street children in all societies inhabit an exceptionally high-risk environment. Nutritional status and personal hygiene are generally poor. Thus, many are debilitated and susceptible to infection. Life in the streets is an obvious risk factor for injuries and disorders due to exposure. Crowded and unsanitary living conditions present optimal vectors for the transmission of infectious and communicable disease. Air and noise pollution are extreme.

Extreme poverty prevents customary treatment with over-the-counter palliatives such as aspirin, dermatological preparations, or cough syrup. Overall, there is scarcely any aspect of a street existence that does not imperil the physical health of children; this is equally true in Honduras, in the United States, and, one imagines, everywhere else.

The general theme that emerges in these data (consistent with the observations of our street educators and clinicians in Tegucigalpa) is that the social problems of the market children stem primarily from the extreme poverty of their families, whereas the social problems of the abandoned street children result from being essentially family less in the first place. Neither situation is acceptable, of course, but there is little doubt that the abandoned street children are the more troubled group (and more comparable to homeless teens in U.S. cities).

Life in the street has become a generic condition in contemporary society. Almost one-quarter of homeless people in the various countries are children (persons seventeen and under), the average age of which is nine. Few street children have escaped emotional, behavioural, and academic problems, and among those who have serious behavioural problems, few of the children receive any treatment.

The homeless family population is one source for homeless children and youth. According to the *National Centre for Children in Poverty*, New York City witnessed an astounding 500 percent increase in the number of homeless families within a decade, with close to 1,000 new families entering the New York City system each month. Today, there are over 400,000 homeless families living in shelters in the United States (Homes for the Homeless, NYC 1998).

Homelessness among the poor is directly attributed to three main conditions: (1) reducing benefits and dropping people from assistance programs; (2) sharp rise in housing costs due to fall of low-income housing construction and the abolishment of existing single-room occupancy (SRO); and (3) economic displacement, people pushed out of their jobs through unemployment, underemployment, and the low-income housing pinch. According to Vanderstaay (1992), the supply of low-income housing shrank half a million units for every year of the Reagan administration.

Still, the largest proportion of street children previously were attached to residential families, not homeless ones, and such youth have either been cast out, voluntarily left

because of poverty, or have run away from oppressive home conditions, especially violence and abuse. Parent-adolescent conflict is the major trigger that initiates the separation process.

Some scholars claims that running away, ostracism, separation, restrictive interaction, and other efforts to curtail, reduce, or end contact all represent expressions of "avoidance," a conflict-management strategy that arises to deal with perceived injustices and grievances. Avoidance is perhaps the most common way to deal with family conflicts, and may appear in various forms on a continuum from the voluntary and covert to the coercive and overt: exit (voluntary departure), exclusion (denial of access), expulsion (denial of membership), and exile (isolation). The coercive and overt strategy, if relentlessly pursued by either party, entails only limited risks for parents and caregivers, whose liability may be taken over by the state. However, it invariably leads to drastic consequences for adolescents, for whom banishment, whether self- or other-imposed, rarely resolves the grievances but certainly may be fateful.

In virtually every respect, Australia and the United States share the "culture of childhood," a pro-child ideology that constitutes juvenile homelessness as particularly reprehensible. Historically, Australia and the United States have a common ancestry, as well as embracing a legacy of democratic institutions and a welfare-oriented state. Unlike the United States, which has always been reluctant to expand the public sector, Australia has a far more developed system of state intervention. For example, low-income and street children in Australia are frequently awarded a "Street children allowance," a subsistence income, which permits them to attend school or seek out-of-home shelter without resorting to crime.

Street risks among homeless girls		
physical	psychological	environmental
-drug/alcohol abuse	-drug/alcohol abuse	-drug/alcohol abuse
-drug overdose		
-infertility	-delinquency stigma	-poor foster homes;

		inadvertently leads to extended stays in brothels or living with series of men
-sexually transmitted diseases (STD's)	-sleeping/eating disorders	
-HIV/AIDS		
-pregnancy		
-cervical Cancer	-hysteria	-adult criminal associates
-murder	-sexual harassment	-"shelterization"
-rape		
-suicide	-peer pressure	-dependency cycle
	-emotional abuse	-misguided/contradictory agency care
-physical assault		
-genital/facial/limb disfigurement	-value loss contributes to confused sexual identity	
		-victimogenic/criminogenic milieus
	-"post-traumatic syndrome" reinforces patterns of instability in relationships/ life choices	

Source: Vanderstaay (1992).

Life on the streets has its positive side as well, according to some of our respondents. Freedom from adult constraints, autonomy to make their own decisions, fun, and adventure with peers, and learning to "stick together like a family" made street life worthwhile. Whereas some relish their freedom, many indicate that being away from the family is not considered a "best thing in life." The worst thing in life now for 30 percent remains the unresolved conflict with their family. Many regretted leaving home at all, even when parents ordered them out.

2.6 Street children in Sierra Leone

Accordingly, there are two categories of street children in Sierra Leone. The first is referred to children who stay with their parents or adult guardians at home but who go into the street daily to socialise with other children or to earn money for their family or for themselves. These children return home in the evening. The next category is those children who have abandoned or leave their homes and are permanently staying or living on the streets to work. These children have not received any parental guidance or parental care. Both categories are said to be equally vulnerable to violations of children's rights and child abuse.

When discussing the dilemma of street children, it is important to stress several demographic facts. In 2001, the estimated population of Sierra Leone is 4.6 million. It is noted that the population of Sierra Leone is young and those under 18 correspond to 2.3 million while the average annual growth rate of the population in urban cities between 1990-2001 is 3.2%. Consequently, it is not possible to provide a definite number of street children in Sierra Leone since there has not been any official collated record of street children in the country. However, a research conducted from 1984 up to now in different parts of Sierra Leone has put the number of street children between 1, 625 and 3, 000.

There have been few rigorous studies of street children in Sierra Leone, but such children's means of survival are fairly well known. It is virtually impossible to walk across downtown without being confronted repeatedly by child beggars. Children as young as two years old will approach both Africans and foreigners, whom they will ask for money, or food. Some children work alone, but most work with a small group of other children or even with the child's entire family.

A common scene is for a young girl (perhaps 12 years old) to beg for money with a young sibling on her back. At times, the young girl may claim that the child on her back is her own, which, on occasion, it may be. However, more often than not, the child is a younger brother or sister carried around in an effort to elicit sympathy from people they

approach for money. Children may simply approach strangers and ask for money, turning away when they are told no. Other children will walk with a person (especially foreign whites) for several blocks, stressing their chronic hunger. Some children even tug on the arms of people in an effort to "encourage" giving.

Another approach occurs at stoplights, where children (either alone or smeared with dirt) move from the driver's window to the passenger side of the same car in an effort to find a sympathetic person. Although an occasional person in the car or on the street gives money to street beggars, the vast majority of people do not. Even those citizens who do give money often avoid all physical contact with the street child for fear of contracting some type of skin disease.

Some street children engage in some type of labour to survive. A large number of young boys are "parking boys," who wait on crowded urban streets for cars to approach. The child (or children) will "assist" the driver in pulling into a parking place and then will clean and "guard" the car while the driver is away. Street children hope that the driver will pay them for their efforts. Although some girls participate in this activity, the overwhelming majority of such children are boys. Other street children sell a variety of small items in the informal sector, including paper from trash containers, peanuts, candy, cigarettes, and other products. In addition, because of desperate economic conditions, some children increasingly steal watches, purses, and other items, especially in urban areas.

Street children represent a large pool of easily exploited workers in various types of labour. Young boys are recruited for manual labour positions such as dishwashers and cleaners, especially in small informal-sector eating establishments known as kiosks. The boys wake up very early to clean and work in the kitchen (e.g., peel potatoes) and after working through the day and evening; they clean again after closing hours. In exchange for this labour, the boys are paid a nominal wage, given food, and allowed to sleep on the kiosk floor. Clearly, these boys do not have the opportunity to attend school.

Young girls often are recruited as 'house girls' (maids), where they work very long hours doing housework and caring for young children. House girls seldom have an opportunity to attend school and receive very little payment or nothing for their labour. They often receive only a room and food. Moreover, house girls are frequent victims of sexual abuse by men in the home. Sierra Leone laws on child labour are weak and rarely enforced.

Prostitution constituting street children in Sierra Leone is also a major problem. Recent surveys reveal that child prostitution is the leading form of child exploitation in Kenya today, particularly in urban centres. The majority of girls are from poor families -- abandoned, neglected or orphaned children who are exposed to this lifestyle during their problematic young lives. Although good estimates concerning the number of children engaged in prostitution are not available, there is a consensus that the numbers are growing for several reasons: (1) Sierra Leone's deepening poverty is a breeding ground for sexual and other types of exploitation. More girls become involved in prostitution to survive and to generate additional income for their families.

Increasingly boys are also turning to prostitution as a way to survive the streets. (2) The alarming increase in AIDS has caused men to look for younger and younger sexual partners in the belief that they will be free from the disease. This means that more and more children are contracting sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV. One estimate is that about 20 percent of children with AIDS are in the five to 14 age range, a group that has not contracted HIV at birth or through breast-feeding. Much of this increase is due to growing prostitution among the very young in the country. Some estimates indicate that nine out of ten street girls have been treated for sexually transmitted diseases and that three out of ten are HIV positive.

To summarize, street children are compelled to beg, work, steal, and prostitute themselves in order to survive. The effects of this way of life are predictable and depressing. The physical toll is enormous. Street children suffer from high rates of disease, malnutrition, drug abuse (especially petrol and glue sniffing), and sexual abuse. Children without homes must also contend with rain, cold, lack of sanitation, and

environmental hazards. In addition to disease and other adverse conditions, street children must face a public that, although generally sympathetic, is growing increasingly frustrated with the aggressive tactics used by youngsters. Some children are slapped, pushed, or verbally abused by citizens on the street.

A few children are also victims of random violence. Even the most concerned citizens often refuse to give money to street children and encourage them to move off the streets and back home. Unfortunately, the street is "home" for an increasing number of children. Beyond the physical damage that accompanies street life, there is a substantial mental and emotional toll. Chronic malnutrition stunts mental development, as does the widespread drug abuse that characterizes street life. It is clear that some street children now routinely use "hard drugs". In addition, street children seldom attend school for very long, precluding them from developing the basic skills necessary for life.

All of these problems are compounded by the emotional stress and abuse that go along with begging, stealing, and prostitution. Even if street children were institutionalized for rehabilitation, they would still have to cope with the years of trauma, abuse, and sadness that many have endured. Street life in Kenya is extremely dangerous for children, stealing their childhood and producing circumstances that can end their lives.

2.7 Factors that deteriorates condition in Sierra Leone

There is no single factor causing the declining quality of life among Sierra Leone's children. Moreover, there is no magic formula to determine why children face increasingly difficult circumstances in the country. There are, however, a number of conditions and situations widely believed to cause or exacerbate the declining plight of Sierra Leone's children. The factors are discussed individually.

2.7.1 Economic stagnation

There is little questioning that economic performance and the distribution of income has relationship with physical quality of life in a country. If a country has a growing economy and distributes resources equitably, then there will be more money for health, education, and the provision of basic services. Conversely, if a country has a contracting economy, or if it distributes resources inequitably, then there will be few resources available to improve the physical quality of life of the mass population.

The biggest losers in this situation are children, who often have the lowest priority in difficult circumstances (UNICEF 1993). In terms of economic growth, Sierra Leone's situation has fluctuated since the country was devastated by civil war. Accordingly, Sierra Leone is an extremely poor West African country with greater inequality in income distribution.

While Sierra Leone possess substantial fishery, agricultural and mineral resources, the social and economic infrastructure of the country is not well developed and grim social and national disorders continue to hinder economic growth and development. The condition of Sierra Leone's economy highly depends upon the maintenance and preservation of domestic peace and continued reception of substantial aid from foreigners, which is important to offset the extreme trade inequality and supplement government income.

The main distinction was that between rural and urban income. Nationwide the average annual income of rural people had been estimated at around. Generally, their living standards were marginal. They lived in houses that they had built of locally available materials, and they grew most of the food they consumed.

In good years, they were able to store enough food to last until the harvest of the following year and possibly had a small surplus for sale. A bad year could mean a

prolonged period of hunger before the next crops were harvested. Migration from farms to towns and mining areas had been an established trend for several decades and continued in 1976. However, villagers who attempted to escape the rigors of farm life were seldom able to find full-time urban employment.

Life-styles of the well-to-do in Freetown or mining towns like Sefadu and Yengema in Kono district contrasted sharply with those of villagers or the urban poor. They owned automobiles, refrigerators, sewing machines, radios, and other durable goods. They varied their diets with imported foods and had access to modern medical care.

On balance, inflation and unemployment also remained relatively low during this period. The situation began to change significantly in Sierra Leone and the rest of Africa during the 1980s. Between 1980 and 1990, Sierra Leone's total economic growth slowed and its industrial expansion decreased. To make matters worse, inflation is skyrocketing at an annual rate that exceeds 40%, drastically reducing the standard of living of citizens already suffering in a stagnant economy.

In real terms, the average income gross national product (GNP per capita) is about one-half of what it was in the late 1970s. In 1976 no national unemployment insurance or compulsory government program of old age benefits had been established, but certain categories of wage earners were covered by injury and disability benefits programs. Most Sierra Leonean continued to depend on their next of kin to help them in case of sickness or unemployment and in old age.

Economic decline clearly affects children in specific ways. First, families have substantially less purchasing power today. This translates into less food, less medicine, less schooling, and fewer overall services for children. An increasing number of Sierra Leonean families simply cannot afford even the necessities of life during this period of severe economic stagnation and austerity. Street children are a direct consequence of this climate. Second, the government and other national organizations do not have as much money for programs to assist children and other vulnerable groups.

2.7.2 Child abuse

On the streets, one can earn one's living, watch the goings-on in the city, wander around, and play. There are neither schedules nor bosses, and each young person seems to be in control of his own body and his own time. However, under this veneer of freedom and independence, one also finds hunger, cold weather, aggressive competitors, exploitation, and fellowship with the corrupt and violent side of law enforcement. Life is agonizing, and one's horizon does not extend beyond day-to-day survival, social relationships where individualism dominates, constant fear, and—in the worst case—death itself.

To the majority of those children and youth, therefore, living on the streets is not really a choice, but rather a result of their lack of alternatives. Once the street instructors win their trust during the pedagogical romance phase, usually they express a desire to leave the streets, go back to their families, attend school, and work. One of the reasons for this choice is because of the abusive environment they have at home.

Physical and emotional abuse, neglect, and incest have enough similarities, especially in terms of ministry, that they can be considered together. We have learned that abusive families usually have the following six characteristics:

- Abusive parents usually have experienced abusive or neglecting behaviour from their own parents. As children, they may have been either victim or observer, but in either role, they learned abuse as a style of relating that they bring to their own parenting.
- Abusive parents generally do not understand the needs of a child and lack parenting skills. Consequently, they feel inferior, ineffective, and often guilty for their failures and frustrations. These feelings may then be taken out on the child.
- Part of raising children requires a parent to be aware of the child's capabilities and limitations at different ages and stages. Because abusive parents lack this information, they may think the child is intentionally being "bad" to hurt the parent; the parent then punishes the child for the imagined injustice.

- The abusing family is often isolated from neighbours and extended family. Family members have few, if any, friends. They have no one, therefore, to whom to turn in times of stress. The abuse, of course, makes family members feel different and secretive, which heightens the sense of isolation.
- The abusing family tends to be a family where independence is sacrificed for the sake of togetherness. Family members long for closeness but are afraid they might lose their sense of identity and feel swallowed up in a family that has no room for individuals. Enormous hunger for love and care is present, brought by each parent from a depriving background.
- This results in constant competition between the marriage partners to see who is taken care of. The loser, then, in a desperate attempt to have needs met, turns to the child. When the child is unable to meet these inappropriate demands, a whole lifetime of the parent's frustration over unmet needs is acted out on the child in the form of overt aggression. Immature or insecure parents usually struggle with everyday problems. One distinctive feature of abusive families is that they are continually trying to adjust to changes. We know something of the stress and pressure the average family is confronted with each day: money problems, work-related stresses, family relational problems, and the pressure of just getting it all done. At times of change-be it a job change, new family member, or sickness or death of a family member -life-altering stresses are added to the everyday pressures. Each family develops its own way of handling stress and conflict. Some people cry, others withdraw, some work hard, others get depressed, some turn to alcohol to escape, while others problem-solve. Some, of course, release the tension and frustration by assaulting a family member.

Apparently, child battering is an ineffective and destructive attempt to handle conflict and stress. The beater has not learned to cope with feelings in a productive way but has learned to strike out at a family member. This behaviour diverts the anger to an inappropriate target and releases it. In that sense, it works. However, damage is done and the long-term cost is high. Abusive episodes typically go through a three-phase cycle:

the tension-building phase, the incidence of violence, and the calm, loving phase. The tensions come from a variety of stresses, although the abusive parent believes the child is the cause of all the tension.

The child, in fact, may be causing some trouble or demanding attention at that time, but in no way is the child responsible for all the family tensions. Once the violence has erupted, the parent feels calmer and often becomes loving and caring. The parent may explain to the child why the abuse occurred, interpreting events in a way that leaves the child feeling guilty and responsible.

In abusive families, often one child is picked as the primary target of abuse, the one identified as the problem, or the difficult one to handle. This may represent some truth. The child was born in adverse circumstances that he or she does not behave according to parental expectations, or the child may have a special need that demands more from a parent. The parent's frustration is released by abusing the child. Once the scapegoat cycle has begun, both parent and child see the child as the problem, and this faulty view becomes ingrained in the parent's expectations and the child's self-image.

In other cases, the abuse flows freely to all children in the home. The role of the abuser does not always remain with one parent. Sometimes the father is the abuser and the mother, as the non-offending parent, may attempt to be protective. At other times, she may be the abuser, taking out her frustration on the children. It is generally felt that in an intact family mothers and father's abuse about the same amount.

However, the total number of children abused by mothers is higher, a reflection of the number of female single-parent homes. Abusing child creates the tendency of a child to abandon their homes and live interpedently.

2.7.3 Specific sectors that lead to the growth of street children plight

Studies and reports focusing on the street children phenomenon in countries in Latin America, Asia and Africa, tend to draw attention to a number of factors seen to be behind the appearance and growth of the phenomenon.

Generally, these factors are mainly socio –economic in nature; they include such issues as:

1. The children living on the streets do not face difficulty to adapt to street life.
2. Children living on the streets are not likely to be failures in society.
3. Peer group influence has no effect on children living on the streets.
4. That single parenthood has no effect on children living on the street.
5. That children living on the streets are not likely to be violent.

The researcher will examine these factors looking at the effect if any this may have in the phenomenon of street children in Sierra Leone.

2.7.3.1 Children who live on the street do not have difficulty to adapt to life on the street.

The mere fact that children have always like to be on the street is an indicator that life in the street might not be too difficult for them. The street kids live in a condition of extreme poverty. They are between five and fifteen years of age; the ones younger than five are usually a burden to the rest of the gang and the ones who are 15 years and over become too old to wander the streets without exposing themselves dangerously. The street kids have not had the opportunity of going to school for one reason or the other. Either they were never sent to school or there is no school within their communities.

The child profane pilgrim of the metropolis will have to be trained by his own means without any essential schooling or family, which have we have seen has not even been protective. The socialization will be a result of direct learning from life in the streets, the only way possible in the absence of the home. We know the steps of this learning: violence, hunger, diseases, small robberies on the sidewalks, the selling of one self to

some passing pervert, stealing wallet or pickpockets, clever ways of cheating and in some cases involved in use of drugs and drug abuse. A study done in Brazil examines the relationship between social support and the ability of Brazilian adolescents to adapt to life on the streets reveal that street children with more social support would adapt better to life on the streets.

It is also the notion that street children with higher quality support would adapt better. Findings further indicate that neither quantity nor quality of social support has any effect related to adaptation. The start point of the kid is the street. His home is the street, his friends are from the streets, food, clothing, and survival is all from the streets. The street kids never understand the life and benefits of a family. For many of these kids this is a way of life for them.

They have comfortably adapted to the system of a street child in their own world. Without any identification papers, and with their dirty metropolitan gypsy face, they are face to the elements conditions of life in the streets. Without any memory of their roots and no intention of remembering, changing facts by any means so as not to regret anything, mistreated and without an established identity, they lived the worse as a routine, and when the worse gets worse, they die skinny and malnourished, misunderstood toothless.

It is a common saying, that for many the street is a place for a street child to stay permanently, a place to work, a place to sleep in. The old mechanisms of reform do not work any more, since we are dealing with the entire societies of wandering children that need the attention of the public and reform entirely. The only record that the street kids know is that of informality, the law of the street. For the majority this begins from the day they were born: not wanted, not love, rejected excluded. They thus form nomadic groups, with changeable but not inter changeable, element and fluctuated societies. In addition, even after so much suffering and rejection, they are still push aside because of their informality of their identity.

As a proof to adaptation in the street, the street child has developed their own system of communication and living in those hazardous conditions that is fast and informal. They know the streets and their rules to steal, that of shoes without laces, the rule of sniffing glue, of sexual abuse, the law of the strongest in which the strongest is the leader. They know about the violence in all relationships, even the most fraternal ones, between gang members. They know the violence of friendships and of total trust. They know about the situation with transient beings and night, situations where one is afraid and one tries to avoid. They also know that the police are easily corrupted and can accept bribes and be easily corrupt. Sam Zinnah on the *Plight of Liberia's Street Children* (November 8, 2008) stress that Monrovia street children can be placed in two major groups; working street children and children that live on the streets.

Working street children comprises of those who leave home in the morning to sell and the return home in the evening. These children are in many instances sent by their parents or relatives to earn money to help with the running of the home.

The second category of street children is the children that live in the streets. This category comprise of those who live in the streets. They do some contracts of fetching water or washing dishes and carrying short distance loads for people, most of them are mentally not stable; they steal and are involved in other forms of hustle. They sleep in unfinished buildings, markets stalls, old and abandon cars, soccer pitches and just any available places they can find regardless of it safety. For all reasons street kids are most fragile and subtle, the most submerged in the urgency of life.

The child that is found from very early age on the street, start by becoming familiar and perhaps even controlling small territories where he can feel relatively secure, even being alone. From the time he joins a gang, the size of his territory expands or deepens since he is dealing with avenues and streets which he will work non –stops with his new friends and his gangs. Usually the adaptation centres for the street kids are bus stops, train stations, market places, as well as places around bars and dilapidated buildings. They are

mostly in central locations where they can easily get access car traffic and be able to approach people for begging.

Little by little, the child turns to be city boy or girl, discovering the best corners and hiding places to sleep without being torments or awaken by some storeowner wanting to open his store. Normally a child who lives in the street hardly goes back to his original community where he was born. If a child lives his or her community, they would mostly end up in juvenile centres.

Children living on the streets are not likely to be failures in society. Children who lived on the streets usually will have opportunity to reform and become good citizens within society. In most cases, some of these street kids with this kind of opportunity will have great history and life story to tell. Street children are less violent from the violence from which they arise. The simple fact of their surviving and existing in the street is a violent act. None the less, we have experience many instances in which street kids have end up to become very powerful people in society.

There are few examples of those cases in Sierra Leone in which children who have lived in the streets had the privileged to escape from the street gang system that existed in the streets. It is also true that children who lived on the streets do not have all the opportunities expose to them as compared to those who lived with their family members. It is also true that children who lived on the streets are mostly not educated and have not been giving the opportunity to attend school for them to become good citizens of their countries. But it can also be true that not all children who are given the best opportunities to attend school, live with family, have regular food do come out and become good citizens of society.

As we see hundreds of children who never lived on the streets, highly educated but end up living on the street without any proper guidance and protection. One would be tempted to ask what the reasons are for this type of behaviours. Failure of children

merely because they lived on the streets is not the only possible cause for failure. Many factors could be responsible that can be associated to street children failing in life. Again, we have witness many children who have lived on the streets for many years and have been fortunate to return to their families and successfully turned out to be good people within their societies.

A publication on human rights watch of February 2003 discloses that 'The public view of street children in many countries is overwhelmingly negative. The public has often supported efforts to get these children off the street, even though they may result in police round ups, or even murder. There is an alarming tendency by some law enforcement personnel and civilians, business proprietors and their private security firms, to view street children as almost sub-human'.

Among the 81% of young women who have been on the streets for any period, 72% mentioned that they had made the decision to leave. At the time of the interview, 45 percent had left the street three or more times, and nearly 12 percent had tried leaving ten times or more. Almost 29 percent had never left the street, regardless of their implied intention to do so. What are the major impediments to change in this case? Street friendships (retained by over 66 percent) have strong claims on this group. Life on the streets is living on the edge in a perpetual state of crisis that takes away any motivation for change. As explained by a seventeen year-old, who originally came from a family of ten.

"It is just lack of motivation; no one has motivation to do anything. Other street people say, "You'll never get out of that life (street)." When I lived on the street, I gave away everything; somebody stole all my clothing [before that] worth \$700. So, what is the use? "

A persistent belief is that only one's street mates understand the street experience. Moreover, street mates will always share whatever they have: food, clothes, and shelter, all without censure or judgment in a world where "you make your own rules."

Most girls made repeated efforts to leave the street. Life was unsafe, insecure, and dangerous. Being a girl on the street is different from being a boy, especially for very young girls:

“It is worse being a girl on the street because with guys, they think we can be taken advantage of. Last night a friend of mine was raped. In some area, a girl gets raped once a month.”

For many of these young women, lack of coping skills and resources make existence untenable. Making the effort to leave represents a step away from danger toward a possible future. Thus, the healthy response is to keep trying despite setbacks, but mainly, stay away from street friends. Two girls provided their perspectives on how homeless young people could escape the streets: “When you walk away from your family, don't look back. My job is to straighten out my own life. I want my own home, security, a good relationship with someone who loves me. I'm willing to work it out, and stay away from the street.”

Do not trust anybody (on the street). You have to look out after yourself. You just have to do things for yourself. You have to keep an awareness of yourself and other people. Do not lose reality; always keep in touch with it. Always, always, keep your head about you. Keep whatever you have been left of your self-esteem [because] without self worth; you cannot do anything no matter how many opportunities you have.

Surprisingly, only three percent indicated that they received help from a refuge when they were attempting to shift lifestyles. Because this was an open-ended question with respondents providing statements without linguistic cues, it seems likely that among street youth, shelters are perceived as part of the street scene, and not separate from it. Because we also know from the interviews that there is a steady movement between the street and the short-term shelter system, a decision to leave may require a more established accommodation system than presently exists.

A policy of shifting girls from one shelter to another, based on short-term housing availability or staff convenience, may undermine the belief that the shelter is a "taking off" point toward a better future, rather than merely an extension of the street scene. There could be all the support provided by social workers, community persons, but the final decision has to confirm by the child. Moreover, once a decision is accepted, the child can work his or her way through and become an asset in society.

In many places in the world especially Africa, the issue of street children is usually a common or communal concern. In Sierra Leone for instance, more interest continue attract the public, government and NGOs to support programs addressing issues of street kids. Reports and records have shown that this kind of effort has helped to transform many of the street children who today have become good citizens in their various countries. The negative impact of street life on children is enormous. Many street children lack basic rights such as education, family love, health care, good food, and safety.

Other disadvantages include exposure to drugs, the risk of being knocked by a car, harsh punishment for little offences, the early arrival of adulthood, association with the wrong people and criminals and lost of family ties. Another big problem is exploitation. The street children are in most cases exploited by adults who hire them to work for wages payable at the end of the month without good reason and the children remain unpaid. All the circumstances surrounding these children can easily be associated as a factor for failure more especially when you do not see any hope or way out the problem. At the same time, there are measures that be instituted to address rapid reformation of the street child.

Once there is willingness from the child to accept getting out of the street, once there is strong family support and from the community that child's life can go through easy transformation to be a good citizen in his or her community. For success to over come failure, the street child has to be fully engaged in the process. He needs encouragement and persuasion that the street life is not the best. The street child needs to be convincing

that once he left the street there are better things he or she will enjoy than living in the street. Moreover, the street child needs to be aware that the family life is far better than living on the streets.

2.7.3.3 Peer group influence has no effect on children living on the streets.

Onyango et al (1991: 23) have established that some children leave school mainly because of the influence of peers. These cases can associate to deviant behaviour. They are persons who reject the authority of parents and teachers and opt for the streets to live independent lives (ibid). In Sierra Leone, the streets are where they look to find their home, parents, their play ground, their peers, their education, their health care and their love for others, the streets are where they work, from as earlier as sunrise to as late as midnight. Being on the street can have adverse effect on peer group influence and on the other hand can be difficult to ascertain.

Most street children are in the street because of peer influence. They lived in the street because they have friends and peers they could trust and do things in common. State of the *World Children Report* 1997, page 41 states; “On the streets, they shine shoes, wash and guard cars, carry luggage, hawk flowers and trinkets, collect re-cycles and find a myriad other in-genius ways to make money. The street is the only place where the acquire brothers and sisters, and it the street is the place where they developed their own family ties and friendship. In Sierra Leone for instance, many of these children have their own groups consisting of their peers.

Street children are very particular of those who are from the outside. They prefer always to do business and have close relationship with those who have gained trust and confidence from their side. The street child has more confidence on their street counter parts than any one else. Street children have strong faith, believe in themselves, and are ready to protect each other at any time. Street children always work in groups, share experience, and work together in groups.

It could also be argued that peer group influence may not have influence on a child living on the street because of the mere fact that a child who decides to get out of the streets and ready for a reformation can do that without any possible effect and influence of other children living on the streets. They could choose to be an important person in society and would be able to achieve that goal. They could also choose to keep a very low profile not to be influence by others.

Peer group influence has a strong effect in leading other children to the streets because of some of the above reasons. In a peer grouping, each of the members wants to behave responsible and to assist one another. Living on the street, with no supervision, protection or guidance often makes street children vulnerable to a wide range of problems or hazards. Majority of the street children are face with violence, associated to street peers especially when they are under the effect of drug substance.

Street children are not very welcomed in specific areas. They could only gain access in certain places if they associated or have links with peers of similar circumstances. Accordingly, most street children tend to exist in small groups when walking on the streets in order not to draw the attention of the people and get protection from one another within the same peer grouping.

The magazine of the *International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement* entitled *Positive Peer Pressure* indicated that young people are more easily influenced by their peers than other age groups. They understand each other and speak the same language. The magazine further states this can be channelled in a positive way through peer education. It is very important to involve children in positive things that can help them rethink of returning to their normal homes. When peer groups are been influence the result can has very adverse effect. This effect can be either positive or negative.

In the negative, we see the effect of hundreds of children who have been drag to the streets because of peer pressure and delinquency. The reasons why many children end up

in the streets are that they are more susceptible to adequate care and protection from the home. These children have less care and control at home to the point that even food is not provided. For this reason, they will end up making friends in the street who will in turn initiate them to the street life. In the street they live an independent life free from absolutely no control and protection. There they will now be oriented by senior peers on how the street life is all about.

In many instances, street children living with their peers act as supportive means for their existence on the street and helped develop their ability to cope with street life, concerning food, shelter, entertainment, earning money, and protection, especially during their early days on the street. Younger children depend on older street children to provide them with guidance and protection. In most cases, the older street children behave more like the parents and provide all necessary instructions to the other street children. In order for these children to survive, they need to reside in areas where they could be sure there is adequate protection from older street children within their peers.

One of the major problems faced by street children on the other hand with their peers is the punishment inflicted upon them when they refuse to carry out a specific task given by their seniors. Refusal to undertake any instructions can lead to serious violence and torture by the rest of the peers. A child without friends to protect him has a little hope of surviving. Older boys lead the groups and protect the younger ones from rival groups. In exchange, the younger boys pay protection fee". Street children who live in the streets have cabals of peers and each of those cabals has a set policies and principles that work well for them. It is very common that older boys who have been on the street for longer period are to provide the opportunity for leadership.

The leader has all the authority as in the home where the father is the head of the home. The leader within the peer group provides daily directives, instructions, and provides guidance to the rest of the team on important task needs to perform. There is respect for each other and great trust within the peer groupings. Tibamanya Mwene Mushanga in his book, *Crime and Deviance* (1988, p.146) says, "Parental example and pressure from peer

groups have a more lasting impact on an individual than what he is taught at school or told by a preacher". In other words, the street child who lives in the street wants to have a status. Whatever the status is he or she would strive to be like their peers either wanting to become a leader in the future within their peer setting or would want to have a position that would be recognized by his peers. While waiting to achieve this kind of status a street child will therefore be forced or be pressure to be involved in all of the behaviours a street child should undergo.

These behaviours are very peculiar and feasible in many of the street children. They range from, techniques in stealing, shoplifting, using drugs, begging, taking alcoholic drinks, doing petty jobs and in many cases leading in the selling of drug substances.

One would think why is it that street children had to engage in all of this. As stated by a reading publication by *CYC Online*, issue 35, December 2001, says that all children should have security. They should be able to play games and have fun. They should be improving themselves at school. Children should not have to earn their own living.

They should be clean and wash regularly. They should be healthy, and get help immediately when they are sick. The child rights are compulsory for children and those in authority should endeavour to give it. Children should enjoy and grow up with these rights regardless of where you are coming from. Partly out of sympathy, and partly out of a sense of guilt about our own comforts, it offends us when we see children deprived of these essentials of childhood.

2.7.3.4 Single parent statuses and the effect it has on street children.

Studies and reports on the street children phenomenon also argue that street children come essentially from homes where there are single parents. It has also been argued that many of these single parents are from poverty-stricken homes. This means they are hardly able to take responsibility of a child. In fact, *The State of the World's Children* (1997:27) points out those parents of street children have irregular incomes and for the most part are employed in the informal sector and may be involved in illegal trades and in

downright criminal activities like burglary. These conditions of poverty force single parent hood to abandon their children who in turn resort to the street because they could not get the required control and support needed by the mother. Single parent hood in Sierra Leone may be the result of many things. In most cases, it is an unforeseeable tragedy as in the death of one parent, divorce, or abandonment by one parent.

In other instances, many youngsters will choose to become single parent as in adoption. One of the major reasons for single parent hood in Sierra Leone is the effect of the ten years of civil war. This left many of the girls becoming pregnant through forceful rape and torture by rebel forces. Many of these girls end up becoming single parent without any money to take care of these children. Because street children do not get adequate support in their respective homes, they end up in the street and join the rest of their friends who have already been on the street for sometime.

The traditional society believes that a family with both parents is normal or predominant and the single parent families will be alienated from the normal interactions. The real fact behind this myth is that single parent families are showing a sharp rise. In Sierra Leone itself, around 45% children are living in single parent homes. Since the single parent norm becomes a common phenomenon, the parents do not feel alienated in the common society.

Single parent are associated with scandals that they are mostly broken families. In most situations especially in Sierra Leone, women, and girls are the most vulnerable persons who end up taking responsibility for the up keep of the child. When such situations arises in which the woman or teenage girl ends up bearing the responsibility, it is always a set back for the single parent as the funds are just not available.

The child will in most times be deprived from be sent to school, getting enough food, getting medical attention if sick and providing clothing and other relevant materials needed. This is mostly absent with a single parent families. These conditions of poverty force children out of their homes into the streets where they hope to find better

alternatives than living with their parents (Sicault, 1963:P13; Onyango et al, 1991: P 9, 63, 65). Sicault (1963: Page 47-48) has observed that rural urban migration results in rural groups transplanted from traditional agricultural communities to unfamiliar urban settings where they face serious problems of adaptation.

The sudden contact with new cultural patterns, which stimulate false desires, disrupts family structures leading to divorces and single parenthood. Such disruptions can handicap a child from birth, sending him inevitably to the streets. Aptekar (1994: 210) quoting Mirtz (1984) argue that unlike the traditional family system, the Latin American family is composed of generations of women often living together in the house. Mothers have a series of men who live with them temporarily. With the absence of a father figure at home, the child may become wayward and end up in the streets.

Aptekar (1994 -209) further points out that modernization has watered down the extended family. Increased nucleated families have led to single parenthood, prostitution, and illegitimacy. He concludes that the demise of the extended family and the high incidence of extra –marital affairs are the major causes of street children in the world and Sierra Leone is no exception.

The financial crisis is a major area of dread for most single parent families. One has to learn to be independent, give and receive; taking on responsibilities and asking for support and sometimes even end up in the street looking for means to earn money.

The African Studies Quarterly in a publication, *Street Children in Kenya*, Page 2 stated that the increase in single parent families, and impacts of dislocation, urbanization, and austerity measures on families living in poverty – all of which bear the responsibility for the rapid increase in street children.

A young boy who shares a single – room with his mother and other sisters, solves a problem by finding somewhere to sleep with his friends. He is attached to his family but will prefer to sleep outside and visits the home occasionally. He is part of the family and does not need reintegration. Nevertheless, it is better for him to sleep out than to stay at

home. When he finds a group of friends which whom he can stay at night, his situation has improved. He becomes visible as a street child and part of our problem, but for him, being on the streets solves the problem of sharing an over crowded room. This is all part of the single parent problem. In reality majority of these parents have strong ties with their children, but the means of support is mostly not available.

The extent of poverty faced by this single parent is such that she would have to accept a behaviour pattern from the child that she herself would not be able to control. This is because the mother is poor and cannot provide food, shelter, clothing, and schooling for the child. Survival for even her self can be a difficult task. In Sierra Leone majority of the single parents are not well educated and therefore do not have the opportunity to have regular jobs.

As a matter of fact, *The State of the Worlds Children Report* (1997:27) points out that parents of street children have irregular incomes and for the most part are employed in the informal sector and may be involved in illegal trades and in down right criminal activities like burglary. These conditions of poverty force children out of their homes onto the streets where they hope to find better alternatives to living with their parents (Sicault, 1963:13; Onyango et al, 1991:9, 63, 65)

Indeed, in a study of 55 Nigerian street children under age 15 who begged for a living, Aptekar (1994:208) quoting Ojanuga (1990) found that the children were on the streets because their families were poor and needed the money they earned. However, not all studies support entirely the poverty hypothesis. Aptekar himself (1994:208) claimed that the major cause of the street children phenomenon was not so much parental indigence as parental violence.

2.7.3.5 Children living on the streets are not likely to be violent.

The question is whether children living on the streets are likely to be violent children. Firstly, we need to look at the background for these children leading them to the streets.

We have argued in the beginning that there could be numerous reasons ranging from, single parenthood, poverty, unemployment, and wars. These are all valid reasons for children to be in the streets. These children are homeless because of the former communist ruler Nicolae Ceausescu, who forbade contraception in the hopes of ruling a populous nation, or of his successor, who consider the economy of greater importance than social welfare. Children left unattended from proper care, tend to run away from their parents since they are poor and cannot afford to provide basic needs. In a similar situation, he pointed out that, the Republic of India is the seventh largest and second most populous country in the world. With acceleration in economic growth, India has become one of the fastest growing developing countries. This has created a rift between poor and rich, 22% of the population lives below the income poverty line.

Due to unemployment, increasing rural-urban migration, attraction of city life and a lack of political will has increase child laborers in the world. Street children are subject to malnutrition, hunger, health problems, substance abuse, theft, CSE, harassment by the city police and railway authorities, as well as physical and sexual abuse. Though Government of India has taken some corrective measures and declared child labor as illegal.

In Sierra Leone, many of the street children roaming the big cities seem to be very naïve and innocent. They appear as victims who are suffering because of parents or conflicts that has arisen out of their own innocence. They end up in the streets simply because of the many reasons already described in this chapter. In reality, not even the fault of the children themselves but because of poverty and social circumstances.

The character of these children before going to the streets has been one of family relationship and obedience. In the streets, they now get to know new tricks when they start interaction with other friends living on the streets. During this interaction, they get to learn all the methods required for a street child to survive. In addition, in most cases violence becomes one option for street children to develop.

The culture of violence gradually builds up and becomes a character in street children. Quoting Tibamanya Mwene Mushanga in his book *Crime and Deviance* (1988: 52) states that, “violence can become a part of the lifestyle, the theme of solving difficult problems and problem situations. It should be stressed that problems and situations to which we refer arise mostly within the subculture, for violence is used mostly between persons and groups who themselves rely upon the same supportive values and norms”. Because street children has to ensure responsibility for themselves while on the streets, they easily practice the rule of being violence so that they could be able to protect themselves from the public or police when caught in an illegal act. In a conflict situation with one another, they easily get irritated and fight, use knives and in some cases even guns.

These are all tactics to enable them engaged in self-defense. Mushanga (1988:53) argues that, “Miller’s theory of delinquency was formulated after a study of one particular kind of delinquency, law-violating acts committed by members of adolescent street corner groups in lower class communities. Miller defined delinquency as behavior of acts committed by individuals within a specified age limits which if known to official authorities could result in legal action”.

When children realized they can be torture and even killed by adults who would want to take advantage of them, it sends a signal that can lead them to become violence children. They know this will probably be the way out in defending themselves.

Street children are regarded with a mixture of suspicion and contempt. The children themselves are equally wary of adults. It takes a special kind of person for acceptance into their milieu. The street child also needs protection and would do any thing to ensure he or she gets the protection needed.

Quoting the *Magazine of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement* in an article title, *Forgotten Children*, the law of the streets is such that the strongest prevail. A child without friends to protect him has a little hope of surviving. Older boys lead the

groups and protect the younger ones from rival groups. In exchange, the younger boys pay a protection fee”.

What emerges from the review of this literature on street children is that the socio – economic factors identified and discussed is generally perceived is directly related to the appearance and growth of the street children phenomenon. Wars, epidemics, and severe political or economic crises can affect many -- sometimes nearly all -- of a society's members.

In such circumstances, a large proportion of a society's children may face conditions far more severe compared to those experienced by all but a few children in Western societies. Many children lack access to adequate food, shelter, basic medical care, and education; they find themselves vulnerable to disease, violence, lives of perpetual poverty, and other devastating problems. Deprived children face poverty, disability, family problems, and other constraints on their lives. These are matters of circumstance, not choice. Even with circumstances for which adults are held responsible (e.g., poverty), blame rarely extends to children, and this is especially true for younger children.

Reformers seek to help children overcome their deprivations, to make their childhood more complete, more like the happy, innocent childhoods the sentimental perspective idealizes. Here the reformers' goal is to compensate for what is missing, to minimize the damage to the child. If rebellion often leads to calls for legal solutions, the proposed solutions to deprivation usually involve social welfare institutions.

The child-victim is a fourth image. Menaced by deviants, child-victims are vulnerable to harms intentionally inflicted by kidnappers, child molesters, child abusers, and other malicious adults. Like deprived and sick children, child-victims are not responsible for their plight; their vulnerability is consistent with the sentimental view of childhood. Reformers seek to protect child-victims, both by helping children protect themselves and by cracking down on those who would harm them.

Most children live and grow within families. The sentimental vision of childhood celebrates the family as a haven for children. At the same time, following the lead of psychoanalysis, we also define the family as the probable cause of many difficulties in the child's later life. Adults who have personality problems, who drink or use drugs, or who encounter other difficulties need to know that their problems are a result of their upbringing. In fact, some claims makers argue that virtually all families are dysfunctional, and therefore virtually all children are in danger of destruction by their family experiences. However, do these factors readily apply to the Sierra Leone situation? Our view is that the factors need to be tested, to show whether and to what degree they influence children to drift into the major cities in Sierra Leone.

2.8 Interventions that can be done to solve street children problem

The situation facing Sierra Leonean children appears quite bleak, at least for the near future. Long-term solutions to the plight of street children include national economic recovery, control of the street children dilemma, better overall children care, and additional resources for various development programs. As discussed, it is unlikely that these solutions must occur in the near future. In fact, it is also unlikely that any national short-term programs will be initiated, largely because of (1) Sierra Leone's deteriorated position in the world economy; and (2) the Sierra Leone government's indifference to the situation.

Foreign donors are unlikely to give substantial new sums of capital to Sierra Leone, at least not as long as the present regime remains in power. The country has an expanding foreign debt, a stagnating economy, and a corrupt government, none of which is conducive to attracting new foreign investment or aid. Investors and donors (including NGOs) will not leave Sierra Leone, but they probably will be more circumspect in their giving. This means that new programs such as money for Street children will be difficult to fund on a long-term basis. Until Sierra Leone undertakes extensive economic and political reforms, foreign donors are unlikely to change their basic posture.

Under incredible pressure from the *International Monetary Fund* (IMF), the Sierra Leonean government has initiated some economic reforms, but the government has done little to discourage the corruption that continues to siphon off millions of U.S. dollars from development programs. Moreover, it continues to repress true democratic reform and free expression of opposition views.

In addition to these shortcomings, the Sierra Leone government is rather indifferent to the nation's children. It has not yet initiated tangible programs to assist street children; it "steals" foreign assistance that could be used for development programs; and, perhaps most reprehensibly, it has been reluctant to stop the ethnic violence that is devastating the next generation of Sierra Leonean children.

Although the government cannot end child poverty and rampant increase in street children, it can help coordinate and initiate programs that would alleviate the problem to some extent. Furthermore, it could initiate reforms that would attract outside aid specifically for programs to assist children. With these points in mind, we believe that an agenda for assisting street children must have several specific objectives, none easy to achieve. First, the Sierra Leonean government (current or future) must initiate substantial reforms, including an effort to curb corruption and implement more democracy.

The government should also take some of the money previously used for corrupt activities and channel them into programs for street children. The government must also end the ethnic violence. It has the power to achieve this last objective within a matter of days by: (1) using the police and military to intervene in clash areas; (2) telling politicians to speak out against the violence; and (3) aggressively prosecuting those who continue to commit violence, regardless of their ethnic background.

Second, foreign donors and the international financial community need to give more aid specifically for programs that assist street children. Such programs could be for health, education, or other needed services. Important, however, donors should not give the

money to the national government for distribution; instead, they should distribute the money themselves or give it to a trusted NGO for distribution.

Moreover, foreign donors should withhold non-humanitarian aid from Sierra Leone until the government stops the ethnic clashes and other forms of harassment. The IMF and other organizations have made future assistance contingent on economic reforms and a few political reforms, but they have not insisted on an end to ethnic violence. International donors have significant advantage on the Sierra Leonean government, and they should use it to end violence whenever possible. Third, NGOs must continue to work closely with local communities on programs to assist street children. Sierra currently has NGOs than any other sub- that work on a variety of development projects.

A fourth objective to assist community in reducing street children consists of community-level actions. Villages, slums, and other communities must work hard to provide as much assistance for children as possible, especially in conjunction with NGOs. Sierra Leone has a long tradition of self-help within the tradition; it is targeted increasingly for programs that assist children.

The cooperation between various communities is a model that should be emulated throughout Sierra Leone. Because the government lacks trustworthiness to facilitate development, it is essential for local communities to work hard with a variety of NGOs to assist children. This approach would create a number of small "success stories" among an otherwise bleak situation for Sierra Leonean children, most especially the street children.

2.9 The living condition of street children

Homelessness is a situation where a child does not have a permanent place to take shelter in. Being homeless means being exposed to more violence and even bigger problems since there are no parents or adults that will guide them. Most of the children living in the street are sometimes situated in juvenile delinquency. Chronic homelessness implies a full-time street involvement with reduced or no contacts with family and conventional friends.

Now the girl has lost meaningful contact with reality and has serious drug or alcohol dependency that involves illegal activity and a lifestyle that centres on the urban street culture. Whereas a few girls will be supported by welfare (a youth worker at an earlier stage helped her to fill out the form), most activity focuses on illegal or deviant activities such as prostitution, drug sales, and theft; and for a few, assault and armed robbery become part of the lifestyle.

For an unknown number of young women, streets become their home while street life becomes their culture and society. Such persons create a specific street lifestyle, "the culture of chronicity." A severely abused girl, who left home at fifteen years old, justified her current life of hanging out with a "mob of eighty people." They have mentioned that the streets are not as hard as people say they are. Accordingly, the street life is not a social status; it is a separate culture and all of the people in the street have emotional and financial support for each other.

They take you in if they have somewhere to stay, in that sense; one has to stick to one's own territory or one's own people. The open-ended question "What's a typical day for you?" elicited a standard response from street people: "I get up, find money, buy alcohol, pot; get drunk, stoned, go to sleep. When I am on the streets, I just hang out; take drugs, shoplift; nothing much. Staying out of trouble can be difficult, if not impossible."

After a brief career as a "street kid," a sixteen-year-old, who described herself as "being severely abused," but now goes by her street name, "Rebel," listed the health dangers she encountered while "on run": "broken collarbone, suicide attempts, operations (lump removed from my breast), sexual assaults, cervical cancer, getting into fights." A temporal profile of the street children population shows that 60 percent to 70 percent of the population are homeless from some months to several years. There is a significant minority (estimates as high as 25 percent) who comprise a new "skid row" of chronically street children or youth. Certainly, an argument can be made that having a street identity is better than having no identity at all.

As members of the new homeless, youth are obliged to create their own culture, social space, routines, and networks. As a culture, street youth have a sense of belonging; a hierarchy based on gender, age, and physical size; an argot (much of it borrowed); and a special mode of communication, such as graffiti, that marks them as a special group. Street youths occupy territories, a large proportion of which they share with traditional homeless (usually male) and the mentally ill. In some cases, expropriation of other occupants happens usually when one causes much trouble to others. Some of this culture is positive supporting street mates, forbidding adults or other street youth to injure children; serving as police against outsiders who harass or exploit "streetwise" while sharing their food, drugs, and material possessions with each other.

Certain features of this culture are highly destructive, given the backgrounds of these youth. Death is an ever-present concern, and suicide attempts are common. Among girls, self-mutilation as in wrist and forearm slashing is both an activity--something to do to reduce the boredom--and a strong signal of distress. In the words of one thirteen-year-old girl who came from a very abusive home, life is hurting or being hurt:

For street kids, it is either to kill or be killed. I have been arrested twenty-nine times for robberies, attempted robbery, stealing, selling stolen goods, malicious damage, assault, beatings, B & E (breaking and entering), and having drugs on me, other stuff. The police usually just bash me, and let me go. They punish kids by putting a phone book on your head, and bashing you to keep you from bruising. I used to hate being locked up, but it's not so bad. I would rather not be here (detention), but it is OK; it feels safe.

In a culture that represses and denies suffering, violence becomes a legitimate form of self-expression, as well as a statement of power relations, a situation that places untrained youth workers at considerable risk (staff interviews, Sydney, 1992).

For females caught in the street culture of chronicity, the lack of clear boundaries and secure location is reinforced by violations from others of their physical and social space. Sexual assault, theft of personal possessions, invasion of living areas by police or other

authorities, sexual harassment by police, adult men and street youth, give most chronically homeless girls a sense of frustration and despair. Devices they use to cope with their powerlessness are often interpersonal violence, increase in street crime, alienation, and suicide. In) words, they have become "the children our parents warned us about." The streets and youth homelessness generally, generate a highly criminogenic situation, where crime becomes a "survival strategy".

In the dawning of the new age, the relationships and patterns in the family and social life are starting to alter for street children anywhere in the world. Relationships that ensure street children's smooth existence in the world of social beings are slowly disappearing. Predictability in the patterns of social existence is gradually disappearing, giving way to unpredictability and uncertainty. A myriad of factors, such as age gap, less labour opportunity, and lesser opportunities to become an independent person alters all the patterns that have undoubtedly kept juveniles sheltered from the harshness on the world.

Juveniles and street children are offer lesser chances to become independent and seemingly, the world is closing in on them. It is not an issue faced only by advanced countries: all the countries that are in the transition period are affected. Because of all the transition that countries face, new challenges surface to affect the growing population of the youth from childhood to adulthood.

A multitude of pressures, including poverty, limited government support, less warmth and reciprocation of love and support from families, friends and other social groups, and lesser opportunities to land a decent job are the greatest factors that continually affect the youth today, thus, forcing a number of them to succumb to delinquency. Today's children are presented with a myriad of opportunities, some beneficial, come harmful, but more or less, still great opportunities for children. However, oftentimes, juveniles or children sometimes wrongly understand these opportunities. Due to the tenderness off their age or the incapability to properly distinguish between right and wrong, street children commit offences, which may be harmful, or not.

Illegal activities flourish in the hands of delinquents; many succumb to serious crimes, violence, and even go so far as to harm themselves. The use of illegal drugs is common to young delinquents. Programmes and research often provided on juvenile delinquency often always take note only of juvenile delinquents as offenders. Aspects on delinquency which most studies and programs fail to focus on the aspect of the reasons for youth delinquency. Juveniles who resort to delinquency are most often victims of crime themselves. Due to this, the orientation of young men to the social aspect of being part of a larger society is altered. According to reports, the victims (un.org database, 2007) do not report almost 80% of grave offences. Conclusions from self-reports can be drawn out about the victims and the offenders as well.

This study found that the offenders are most often below 20, and the victims are around the same age bracket as well. In addition, the offenders tend to pick out victims who are of the same age and gender as them. Men are more likely to be victimized than women that also go for the question on the aspect of age bracket. Since offenders pick out victims of the same age and gender, it most unlikely for offenders to harass older people, but of course, there are some special cases like that.

The extremity of the crimes committed varies from country to country and situation to situation. Variation in the social, economic, and cultural conditions existing in that country may have a great effect on the gravity of the offence committed. Poor economic situation in a country can lead to an increase in the rate of juvenile delinquency in that country, especially in dilapidated and unattended parts of the country. Street children often succumb to delinquency because they either already have experiences or they have become victims of violent acts.

Due to lack of educational attainment, less family influence and guidance and the poor economic status with unemployment as a result, it is no longer a wonder why many children go on to become juvenile delinquents. Delinquency cases rise every year. In one article, it stated that in Colorado, in 1997, cases filed on juvenile delinquency rose from 15,577 the year before to 19,063 (Ensslin, 1997).

The factors that contribute to juvenile delinquency are located in almost every aspect of the social ladder. The following describes the factors that contribute greatly to the choice of delinquency by the youth. According to the United Nation's World Report, the following factors are the most important factors that greatly contribute to the delinquency of juveniles:

- Economic and social factors – the negative consequences concerning the social and economic development push juveniles to commit delinquency. Economic crises and instability of social institutions often are the key factors why most offenders become offenders in the first place.
- Cultural factors – the breaking down of cultural norms brought about by changes and shifts in the society. This occurrence may cause some members of the society to respond to the changes in a negative manner. These members may respond through rebellious acts, violence, and criminal activity.
- Urbanization – highly urbanized areas tend to foster higher crime rates than rural areas. This is due to the fact that people from the rural areas have stronger social bonds and mainly rely on family and community control as a way to suppress criminal activity whilst urbanized areas seem to become indifferent towards the people existing in its society. The people in highly urbanized areas mainly rely on legal and mechanical way of dealing with offences. Somehow, it is devoid of human touch.
- Family – studies prove that the warmth, protection, and guidance offered by the family can greatly increase the risks for a person to enter delinquency. In dysfunctional families however, the case is different. Tendencies for the children to engage in criminal activity seem to be higher. In addition, the likelihood for juveniles who are part of a family with a criminal background is high.
- Migration – immigrants have a very different culture from the people to which they would want to migrate in, therefore, their actions to the native people may seem very different thus resulting to criminal behaviour. Indifference and negative perception towards these immigrants may cause delinquency, not only for juveniles but also for other members of the immigrant society as well.

- The media – media give out different viewpoint of violent behaviours to viewers, especially children. The use of violence to “uphold justice” is often the topic of shows that many children watch. The society tolerates this type of violence since it seems to be on the positive side of the situation. However, studies have shown that these violent behaviours in the media often influence impressionable children ages between eight and 12. According to the United Nation’s world report, the media brings an individual closer to violence in 3 ways:
 - “Movies which show violent acts excite the viewers, and the aggressive effect can then be transferred to daily living, pushing an individual or children to be involved in physical activity on the streets.”
 - “Television can portray ordinary daily violence committed by parents or peers (the imposition of penalties for failing to study or for violations of certain rules or norms of conduct).”
 - “Violence depicted in the media is not realistic and has a surrealistic quality; their wounds are bleeding less, and the real hurt and agony which results from violent actions which are very rarely shown, so the consequences of violent actions and behaviour often seem negligible.”
- Exclusion – gaps in economic and social status may contribute to the growing number of juvenile delinquents. Exclusion of people with low-class status is very common and usually scars a person, especially at a young age. This may soon lead to desperate acts of delinquency and often violence.
- Peers influence – peer groups, whether delinquent or not, provides a “shelter” for adolescents. Having peer groups is necessary in order to gain an identity and to train the self for the real society. However, unlike adult groups, peer groups offer equality and equal opportunity to elevate one’s status in the hierarchy. Delinquent peer groups can offer a surrogate family for a juvenile lacking in that aspect. In addition, a delinquent group can greatly provide a sense of security for an adolescent.
- Delinquent identities – “Delinquent identity is quite complex and is, in fact, an overlay of several identities linked to delinquency itself and to a person’s ethnicity, race, class and gender” (United Nation, 2003). Delinquent identity is

somewhat like an overlay of many identities linked to the person, it is like a second skin, somewhat. Therefore, the person may have difficulty discarding that image.

- Offenders and victims – sometimes, violent acts, which are committed, are often because some people have what it takes to be a victim of a certain negative behaviour. Provocation and even toleration of the act may even fuel the offender more. In addition, the person who seems to be the “victim-material” makes no effort at all in getting stopping the incident, thus, allowing the offender more opportunities to become an offender.

According to the World Youth Report (Youth at the United Nations, 2003, pp. 192-193), gender plays a strong role in delinquency. As indicated in police reports, crimes committed by male juvenile and young adult offenders are greater than their female counterparts are.

The World Youth Report noted that there are actually a number of reason why this is the case. In terms of social factors, a number of societal standards tend to control the delinquent behaviour of females than in males. For instance, mostly males, due to the social norm and stereotypical belief commit sexual assault or violations than men are more sexually aggressive than women are. Culturally, society in general is not as open to delinquent behaviours among females as compared to males.

Similarly, this is associated to a cultural stereotype where violence, dominance, and aggression are believed to be factors that make up individual masculinity. With greater tolerance by society, males are then are less restrained to commit delinquent acts. Peers or social groups are also significant factors that make males more delinquents than females. In particular, group relations and authority that is based on gender is much more observe among male peers than in girls. As masculinity is typically measured by degree of dominance and aggressiveness, males tend to prove themselves worthy by acting arrogantly or delinquently.

There is a great difference as to how peer groups are constructed due the behavioural differences of both genders (Youth at the United Nations, 2003, p. 193); this difference in peer group behaviour make it more likely for men to be more delinquent than women. Loper (2000) also related the tendency of males to be more delinquent to the fact that girls display a different form of aggression, which results to lesser degree of delinquency. In particular, women frequently commit a relational type of aggression; examples of which include gossiping, bullying, as well as social exclusion. Males on the other hand, are more on violence of physical aggression. As acts of juvenile delinquency typically involve physical rather than relational aggression, males become more frequent delinquents than females.

2.10 Illegal and deviant activities in the streets

Movement to illegal and deviant activities appears to be an integral part of running away and exposure to sophisticated street persons. Thus, deviance and crime may be directly related to survival mechanisms learned on the street. Alternatively, the young person may have a prior history of conflict with the law, and the push-out from the family merely underscores the family's effort to construct boundaries for itself by excluding a disturbing element.

In a word, there are two possible issues: Is deviance and illegal behaviour an outcome of running and homelessness; or contrariwise, is the homelessness an outcome of previous deviant and illegal involvement? Let us examine the data for an understanding of these two alternatives (see Table above) Firstly, most of these female youth have had some deviant involvement prior to their leaving home or living on the streets.

For instance, before their movement into street life, over half had already engaged in shoplifting while 15 percent had sold drugs while 35 percent had stolen property worth \$50 or more. Along with that, 19 percent had a history of forgery while 65 percent had been involved in fighting constituting 24 percent using weapons (usually a knife). In addition, 18 percent had stolen a car while over 28 percent had been involved in burglary

and around 10 percent claimed to make money through gambling. Finally, fewer than two percent had a history of voluntarily posing for pornographic pictures or videos. This criminality pattern is especially pronounced among the older homeless girls, and those confined in the detention centre.

Second, after moving to the streets, the pattern of illegal behaviour is exacerbated with the rates rising precipitously. In fact, six percent admitted to shoplifting and 37 percent said to regularly sell drugs. Along with that, 56 percent has been involved in theft while almost 27 percent have committed forgery. Moreover, 70 percent had a history of fighting, and most notable, almost 40 percent used weapons. Accordingly, 36 percent had stolen cars while 48 percent had been involved in burglary. Finally, 30 percent had gambled for money while over 10 percent of the sample had engaged in pornographic modelling.

Deviance and crime are a persistent and widespread pattern for these street youth. Although most street youth try to avoid giving or receiving harm, some girls were matter-of-fact about their criminal exploits. When I use [alcohol and drugs], I do crime. I have been arrested six times for drunken disorderly, rolling people, and doing other things. When I am wasted, I do not even remember what I did.

Third, whereas only a small group indicated that they were currently prostituting, about one out of three girls has been involved in prostitution for money while on the streets, and nearly the same number sold sex for drugs. This pattern contrasts with less-street-sophisticated girls who sold sex for food, shelter, love, or loneliness. Regardless of the specific motivation for selling sex, young homeless girls involved in prostitution constitute a high-risk group for serious victimization, drug addiction, and health problems, especially HIV-positive and AIDS.

Fourth, there may be two distinct modes of street adaptation here. On the one hand there are girls who become involved in crime and deviance, but never or rarely with prostitution. Early on, they sought protection from an older male, and became part of a

crime-dependent street culture. On the other side, there are girls who have rarely been involved in serious crime (although most of the older girls reported they had tried shoplifting a few times), who instead use their sex as "capital" to negotiate street life.

Although only two percent of the sample identified themselves as "sex workers," girls who prostitute on a regular basis are apt to (1) not draw on street children allowance; (2) live primarily off their prostitution earnings; and (3) have chronic drug abuse histories. Isabel King, a researcher and youth worker at King's Cross-, Sydney, emphasizes those homeless girls who engage in prostitution for a living are invariably drug addicted (King 1991).

Unpredictably, most girls who prostitute did not identify themselves as "sex workers" (under two percent). The idea of sex as work, promoted by politicized sectors of prostitutes, rather than sex for survival or to feed a drug habit appears not to be a well-established concept among adolescent prostitutes. Opportunistic prostitution may be a better description of this form of street survival.

2.10.1 Child exploitation

For decades, denials and negligence of the issues of child neglect and abuse were common among nations. This is despite the fact that institutions for neglected and abused children, especially those who are living on the streets or street children. State propaganda offered sanitized and idealized representations of children -- usually depicted as healthy and well nurtured. So committed were governments to this version of "reality" that social scientists were often prevented from doing research or publishing findings that revealed social problems concerning children.

In many countries, the full extent of these problems is still unknown. Discussions of underage sex and sexuality, for example, remain largely taboo. Problems such as teenage suicide, prostitution, and incest go underreported especially for the street children. In addition, little funding is available for research in these areas. Likewise, homelessness,

pregnancy, alcoholism, and drug addiction among teenagers are often statistically "invisible."

Yet, in countries that have experienced severe economic collapse, mistreatment of children has escalated dramatically, often taking the form of sexual exploitation and abuse and even the sale and trafficking of children. In Sierra Leone and in Africa, child exploitation has been seen as one of the greater problems that are attached to street children phenomenon.

2.10.2 Child labour

Children of the cities are found in great numbers in department stores and mills, where employment certificates are generally required. On the other hand, children do a considerable amount of labour of which there is no record. Some of this is legal, but much is illegal. Thus, industrial homework or the sweatshop claims many children who are unable to obtain employment certificates to work in factories.

Again, the number of children in agriculture is far greater than the recorded number. Street trades, such as those of newspaper carriers and bootblacks, are also hard to regulate or to eliminate. Part-time employment and the unrecorded, if not illegal, employment of children in numerous other occupations makes the problem of child labour of far greater magnitude than the census figures indicate.

All studies of child labour reveal the fact that the earnings of children have been pitifully small. Except for the war period, most averages were from three to five dollars a week. This seems hardly enough to supplement the family income largely, or to warrant the loss of educational opportunity, which is involved.

The minute subdivision of labour, which accompanied the introduction of machinery, lessened the need for craftsmanship. Little strength or intelligence is required to feed and

tend many machines in the modern factory. Hence, children can perform this labour. Moreover, such labour is generally plentiful and cheap.

An indifferent public opinion is a second factor. Although cheap goods take a fearful toll in the health and welfare of the workers, they can easily be sold. Organizations, such as consumers' leagues, have inaugurated a campaign of popular education to inform the public as to the social cost of certain commodities. It maintains an honour list or white list of firms whose working conditions are satisfactory and which, therefore, warrant public patronage.

A third factor in the problem of child labour is the necessity for self-support. Poverty is a cause that demands that the child's wages supplement the family income, even to a small degree. In the fourth place may be mentioned an unsatisfactory school system. The child may be glad to leave school as soon as he is permitted by the compulsory school law to do so.

The subjects taught may be neither practical nor interesting. The modern school, however, is providing a curriculum sufficiently diversified to appeal to the needs and capabilities of various groups of children. The effects of child labour may be grouped in a threefold division: first, the effects on the child; second, the effects on society; and third, the effects on industry.

The physical effects of child labour are frequently most unfortunate. Childhood is the period of physical growth, which requires an abundance of fresh air, freedom, and activity. The monotony of repeated operations of the same character is a poor substitute for the self-expression of play and the intellectual training of the school. Again, the moral atmosphere of the working child is often bad. At best, child labour is apt to stunt the physical, intellectual, and moral growth of the individual child.

Second, the injurious effects of child labour on society tend to break up family life by removing the child from his normal and proper place in the home. The young wage

earner may become independent of parental authority. At best, his opportunity to rise out of a blind alley job is limited, and he gradually becomes accustomed to low wages and low standards of living. It must be remembered that the present army of child workers are destined to become the fathers and mothers of the next generation.

Finally, the effects of child labour on industry must be considered. In the end, it is not always the cheapest from the economic as well as the social point of view. It lowers the efficiency of the worker; because a dollar earned before the age of fourteen years must be subtracted, several fold from later earning capacity. Moreover, the labour of children is wasteful and dangerous. Their inefficiency is a frequent source of both human and economic loss. In conclusion, little can be said to justify the existence of child labour in any enlightened community.

2.10.3 Substance abuse

Majority of today's street children conflicts that they can barely handle in a very young age. Modernization has brought many social changes in the society. Children are being taken for granted, usually by parents who both work and have no time for their children. Another factor is the issue of broken family, peer pressure, and many other issues that would make a youth feel inferior of himself/herself. Youth like these seeks a way to express themselves and unfortunately, this search for self-expression has often lead to deviant practices such as joining gangs, engaging in pre-marital sex and engaging in substance abuse.

Stephen (1997) wrote that growing numbers of children are being neglected, abused, and ignored. Without change, the dark spectre of generational warfare could become all too real. Stephen (1997) further continues that child-care advocates reports that up to 15% of 16-to 19-year-olds are at risk of never reaching their potential and simply becoming lost in society.

In other recent studies, the research shows that family and peer influence, individual characteristics including behaviour and personality can also be considered as factors that influence children and adolescent to engage in substance abuse (Johnston, O'Malley & Bachman, (2003). There are several ways to determine if a youth is at-risk of substance abuse. Christle, et al (2002) cited that researchers have identified a number of demographic and behavioural characteristics of youth that contribute to their risk of involvement with substance abuse. These include ethnic minority status, aggressive, antisocial behaviour, difficulties in school and school failure (including educational disabilities). These risk factors are common denominators in the backgrounds of youth who require a variety of human services like child welfare services.

Substance use and abuse is in the forefront of societal problems. It is a pervasive problem, affecting directly or indirectly the overwhelming majority of persons. The deleterious impact of alcohol and drugs is devastating. The involvement of some children and adolescents in substance abuse often lead to different consequences. Such consequences include physiological, psychosocial and legal aspects. It is noted that the physiological effect of drug abuse depends on the drugs that has been used.

Substance abuse undermines physical health. For example, chronic alcohol abuse is associated with diseases of the liver, central nervous system, and heart. Often, as in the case of the brain disorder Korsakoff's syndrome, the damage resulting from alcohol abuse is irreversible.

Mental health disorders often occur with substance abuse. Co-morbidity is relatively common, with up to one third of individuals with psychiatric disorders reporting a lifetime history of substance abuse disorders as well. In some instances, psychiatric disorder precedes or even contributes to the development of substance abuse, whereas in others, emotional and behavioural disturbances arise within the context of alcohol and drug use problems.

A large body of research has delineated the disproportionate representation of psychological dysfunction in substance abusers. Included are problems in personality, mood, self-esteem, coping, behaviour, and social functioning. Once again, some of these psychological difficulties may be evident prior to the onset of substance abuse, although psychological functioning often worsens over time in individuals with substance use disorders (McWhirter, 2004).

In addition, children and adolescents who are involved in substance abuse may also be affected in terms of their educational status. Abuse of specific substances may also contribute to relatively unique psychological presentations, such as the a-motivational state that has been linked to chronic marijuana use. Other psychological effects of substance abuse are directly linked to the biological impact of psychoactive substances (such as anxiety and irritability stemming from withdrawal) and the behaviours that result from dependence on drugs and alcohol (such as craving and preoccupation with obtaining desired substances).

2.11 Psychological condition of street children

It is clear that the phenomenon of street children is present in every nation and almost every towns and cities all over the worlds. For some areas, street children has been a familiar occurrence for a long time while for others, street children has existed only in the recent years. Dilemmas and plight arising in the social milieu, including the political and economic upheaval are considered as the major causes.

According to the UNICEF, street children face the sad reality of increasing isolation from their natural or biological families and become in danger for losing their restricted access to basic facilities involving education, recreation and health. Once such procedure is underway, it is hard to hold in check, with the output that children may end up on abandoning or leaving their family or vice versa.

According to Donald & Swart-Kruger (1994), in accordance with emotional health, the loss or shortage of an adequate kinship with an adult caregiver presents the greatest dilemma for most of the street children. They have cited that writings of Bowlby (1988), with the theory of attachment and its impact on the development and growth of emotional trust and security and its role in the psychological care and the identification process, have significant impact for street children.

Paradoxically, the shortage of such a caring and loving relationship usually hurries the option or forced acceptance of the street life. If the children try to live on the street, they adopt with each other and other people on the street as their role models. With this arrangement, affective and cognitive desires are met. Many consider the everyday living of many street children as unstable and unstructured. It often said that in the end, such notion that nothing is established could produce destruction of the mind.

Most of the street children said to lose track of time and have no idea on how long they have become a wanderer with no specific and structured purpose. These children do not have the ability to describe precisely their process on a given day. In addition, these street children believe that the streets are barren or productive, unfriendly or friendly at various times of the night or day. It is also said that physical danger is all too precise and visibility means not protection but susceptibility.

2.11.1 Resilience and vulnerability

Many literatures support that idea that children are resilient and that the psychological aspects will heal if they would be given greater opportunity. According to Garmezy (1983), the lesson that should be learned from recent researchers lies in the reaffirmation of the potential resilience, which emerges in children who are mostly under stress.

Such idea does not mean that they are not affected by the children's experiences, but they have the ability to resist of being overwhelmed by them. It has been noted that this potential to recover usually depends upon the provision of a caring surroundings in the

post-trauma stage. In this regard, the challenge for those devoted to adhering to the problem of street children phenomenon is to give a nurturing environment.

Conversely, the idea of childhood as a time of emotional vulnerability indicates that traumatic occurrences scar the psyche that carries over up to their adulthood. Other studies have carried out the notion that there are much mediating aspects; for instance, the development age in which the certain trauma happens. The limitations in terms of cognitive aspects often mean that street children cannot fully comprehend the effects of unnecessary occurrence, and this moderates the effect.

On the other hand, there are some researcher who has found that the bigger the exploitation to stressful happenings, the higher the probability and tendency of deviant behaviour when street childe are faced with later stresses. The strongest counterstatement in the discussion over the emotional vulnerability of street children relates to the enhancement of autonomy.

Most of the research implies that street children reports freedom both their aim and highest value. Some have described this as being liberated and free from organisations, institutions, freedom to choose activities and daily rhythms, freedom of movement and freedom from commitments and kinships.

Even though the emotional sacrifice involved in reaching these freedoms, liberty may be greater, and the value placed on them may, in fraction, be a distrustful denial of that value, the practice of such liberty and freedoms does have significant effects for self-reliance and sense of autonomy. Such aspects may be intensively essential attributes in the overall enhancement and development of street children.

Some researchers have perceived that resilient children present few of the cognitive or emotional disability, which has connections with their material and social situations. Even though the system of prevention and protection are not understood fully, it has been assumed that social support in terms of understanding, acceptance and companionship

gives by a significant individual or group, is somehow involved. In addition, it must also be understood that street children who seems to exist unscathed from the horror if neglect, violence and abuse are still highly prejudiced to emotional trauma.

It has been a fact that people do not experience adverse situations as equally stressful as that of street children. The level of stress relies on the personal assessment of seriousness of a specific situation including the available coping resources. In this regard, there is an increasing effort to determine the factors, which encourage resilience. In line with street children, three factors have been discovered that linked with resilience. These include the presence of supportive biological and kin family, constitutional aspects and the external social support factors.

According to Donald and Swart-Kruger (1994), there is a paradox among evidence that shows the developmental hazard and vulnerability in terms of emotional, physical, social and cognitive regions and the evidence of adaptability, coping mechanism, adaptability.

2.11.2 Psychopathology

According to Swart (1988), being a street children does not necessarily mean that these children are society's dropouts and that they should be regarded for the creativity, exceptional fortitude, astute knowledge of human nature which they should possess in order to survive on the streets. It has also been noted that escaping from physically abusive environment may be a positive experience for many children.

Researchers said that prejudice to find greater autonomy may encourage some children to escape and has been attributed to the lack of psychopathology among children on the streets as well as to their successful coping mechanism. However, discovery of negative traits include apathy, low self-esteem and fatalism.

The characteristics of children on the streets that has been identified includes children who abuse drugs (solvents, glue), distrust and controls of adults, high impulsivity,

escaping rather than facing their problems, internal locus of control, adherence to conventional morality, high value on personal freedom, low self-confidence and reluctance to disclose or opening true life story.

It has also been noted contradictory discoveries about internal locus of manipulation and low self-esteem may be connected to interpretations of adult in terms of lifestyle, including reactions of children on the street to the intimidating, hostile and aggressive, condemnatory responses from other people around them. Some studies have stated that a small but relative proportion of children on the street has extreme behavioural and emotional problems, but since these children may not show the type of symptoms which can easily be identified by known psychiatric disorders, in which they are not acknowledged to seek help.

Despite of being unwilling and hesitant to attribute psychopathology to these street children, has determined between three groups of boys. Herein, the first group has shown no signs of psychological problems and disorders. Second group shows moderate to severe symptoms of psychological disorders; and the third group fell somewhere in-between the two aspects.

Studies have found that street children, specifically boys with a strong inner desire of control display less psychopathology such as depression. On the other hand, those with an extreme external locus of control usually spend longer time on the street and obviously have less positive relationships with their peers. These street children also show more signs of psychopathology, especially in terms of psychosomatic symptoms and depression. However, despite of the difficulties in which these children had been subjected, some of them may show tremendous resilient and potentialities beyond their years.

In a study of these street children, some has found symptoms of oppositional attitude, such as non-aggressive type and under-socialized. There are three categories of street children. These involved those who were delinquent, those who frequently escape but

displayed no signs of delinquency and those children who showed signs of psychosis. These street children with delinquent behaviour may have a tendency to display truancy, involved in theft, assault behaviour, substance abuse, promiscuity, and other conduct disorders.

2.12 Sociological and psychological theories on child development

Child development study is a very complex field; human beings, and children, specifically, are very complex. Bjorklund and Pellegrini (1998) stated that developmental is a term used in many different ways specially those who are interested in children. In general term, the construct development is also of interest to those of interested in human development, psychology, and education.

It is better to understand that the term developmental has broad and disparate uses. According to Mindes, Ireton and Mardell-Czudnowski (1996) assessing children's functioning is an essential part of childcare and education. Young children's development is best appreciated by observing them in action in their everyday environments including social and cultural elements.

Primarily, the main goal of this paper is to provide insightful details regarding different sociological and psychological theories related to the development of a child and the impact of these theories from different cultures and diverse needs. In addition, this paper will also include the discussion of the application of these theories and knowledge through observations. And lastly, description of healthy development in childhood and through the use of developmental perspective, the discussion will also include the arguments regarding the development of child which is being interrupted by the child's experiences such as changes, loss and disruption.

Child study starts with working with children. First, we try to understand the ways in which they develop, grow, and learn in their everyday habitats. This knowledge is then used to design environments for children. Various theories attempt to explain the

meaning of children's behaviour and development, provide different methods of collecting child data, and show how intervening in children's lives can facilitate optimal development. By its very nature, therefore, child study is interdisciplinary.

This interdisciplinary approach to child study makes the field stronger because children are viewed from many different perspectives. Indeed, an interdisciplinary approach is necessary to understand the complex behaviour of children. For example, we need the zoologist's orientation to understand the ontogenetic phylogenetic histories of children. All of these disciplines attempt to draw pictures of children at different levels of specificity. Some psychologists attempt to describe the normative behaviour of children. The best example of such a normative description of behaviour can be found in Piaget (1970) stage theory.

The researches that Piaget (1970) has made in line with developmental psychology, focuses in giving emphasis upon a theory of knowledge regarding cognitive development. According to him, the development of knowledge can be referred as progressive structure of rationally surrounded organization that intervenes with one another by a manner of insertion of less powerful reasonable means into more advanced and powerful ones until the individual grows. Hence, the logic and modes thinking of a certain individual is known to be initially and entirely distinct from other individuals.

These stages are said to describe children independent of their cultural histories. Thus, this is a universalistic description of behaviour. Such an approach to child study also assumes specific methods by which children can be studied. Typically, psychologists have a specific theory about children and they design tests or experiments to elicit behaviours relevant to the theory.

Observed behaviours are used as the data for inferences about children's competence. More recently, however, such normative descriptions have often embedded children in various contexts that affect development (Bornstein & Lamb, 1999; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Another theory was developed by Vygotsky (1978), which mentioned that

children's development could be attributed to two factors (social level and individual level); social level refers to outside forces including the cultural aspects. These theories along with the others, affect different cultures of the society by letting each individual determine why children in a certain culture behave differently from other children who have another culture.

Through these theories, many people would have knowledge that the development of a child not merely depends on the inner-self but also external environment such as culture. In addition, these theories influence child development in cultural perspective, in a way that it provides in-depth comprehension to understand better the behaviour of children. Furthermore, these sociological and psychological theories in child development affect diverse needs in a way that through the comprehension of culture, these theories can be helpful in determining the needs of children that develop in a certain society or culture.

Moreover, other individuals may understand the different needs, which should be given to children in line with their cultural inheritance. In addition, through these theories, children may be understood concerning their needs. Overall, it can be said that sociological and psychological theories in child development have a great influence on both culture and needs of these individuals.

Principally, the theory of Piaget (1970), regarding child development can be considered as a view of a constructivist. Herein, Piaget believed that the acquisition of a certain notion or knowledge is a continuous and permanent procedure of self-construction. In this manner, as the individual is constructing his or her knowledge, Piaget (1970), presumes that there exists an interaction between the individuals' environment and heredity that is known as the interactions.

By merely observing the behaviour of children, Piaget has been able to formulate children's development framework, in which he proposed four major stages of development: the sensory-motor period (birth to 2 years), preoperational thought (two to

6/7 years), concrete operations (6/7 to 11/12 years) and formal operations (11/12 to adult).

Through observation of an infant, the first child development aspect has been established in terms of child's development; the cognitive system of infant is restricted to motor reflexes. However, children usually build on these reflexes to enable growth of a more refined process. During the second stage of children's development, it has been observed that children have the ability to obtain figurative and emblematic abilities in terms of mental imagery, such as language and others. The children in this stage may be considered as very self-oriented, and have an insensitive standpoint.

The main argument of Piaget is that through observation of different stages of children's growth the schema or logical construction of an individual transforms with age and can also be regarded as action-based (sensorimotor) and as the individual grows will have the tendency to a higher level which is known as the mental (operational) level. In addition, Piaget also believed that the cognitive performance in individual has a connection with the child development stage which they belong.

Vygotsky (1978) has been able to explain the importance of society in accordance with the child's development. By observing the behaviour of a child, it can be said that the theory of Vygotsky is a great contribution since it provides more explanation to know why children developed differently from each other. Accordingly, the theorist believed that an individual obtains certain ideas from the culture in which he or she belongs.

The notion of Vygotsky is his belief that child development emerges from outside forces. In addition, Vygotsky (1978) also highlights the idea that the occurrence of development usually happens in instances where the individual's is being guided by an adult or someone more experienced who have the ability to show examples.

In the society today, there is a saying that a child imitates whatever he/she sees to adults. This means that by observing the behaviour of children living in a society where adults

have intense behaviour, there is a possibility that the children could develop the same behaviour. According to Vygotsky (1978), the cultural development of an individual can be recognized in two instances. The first one is in the social level (inter-psychological) and as life continues, development occurs in the individual level (intra-psychological). This means that as an individual interacts with a more experienced individual within the society, there is a possibility for development to happen. Moreover, as this situation continues, and as an individual grows, the development will then occur within one's self.

Generally, most individual think differently from the others. Hence, some outside forces, specifically society and culture, influences the development of a child. The other main tradition, strongly influenced by the work of Vygotsky (1978), has tended to emphasize wider cultural influences on development, particularly as mediated through interaction between participants of unequal intellectual status. This tradition has also generated a good deal of empirical research, much of it concerned with the nature and effectiveness of adult intervention in learning.

Development by imitation of role models, “observational learning”, and other principles of socialization, have constituted broad associations models, although, again, there has been little regard for actual cognitive aspects of the processes. On the other hand, Bandura (1989) has augmented his early “social learning theory” with an important role for cognitive regulations in the individual’s reactive self-control and guidance of his or her behaviour.

He now calls his theory “social cognitive theory” and describes social learning as “knowledge acquisition through cognitive processing of information” (1989), rejecting what he calls the “cognitive bypass operation”. According Bandura (1977), most of the behaviour of humans is being learned through observations. This means that by merely observing the work of others, some individuals are able to form a certain idea on how new behaviours can be performed. Then, in later instances, this coded idea eventually serves as a guide for such individual’s action.

An important aspect of Bandura's theory is the self-knowledge that children gain about themselves, by interaction with others. This includes perceptions of their competence in each of the various domains with which they have to deal. There may be a deep disjunction between what children can do and what they think they can do, and a number of studies have shown how this directly affects their behaviour.

Jerome Bruner, as constructivist theorists, has been involved in studying the concept of cognition. It is said that most of the general framework for this was mostly linked and based on child development. In this manner, Bruner (1960) has been able to originally link this to math and science learning. He illustrated his notions in accordance with social science and mathematics programs for young children (Bruner, 1972). Primarily, the main concept of Bruner's explanation about cognitive development is the idea that development is an active procedure.

In this manner, individual is entitled to form new ideas from their past or current experiences. With this, individuals has the opportunity to choose and change the formed ideas, structures some new premised and eventually makes their decisions, by simply relying on a certain cognitive formation which comprises models and representations. These cognitive structures are the ones that provide meaning and organization to the experiences and permits individual to go beyond what was given in the information.

The theory of emotional development has its foundation in Piaget's child development and the range of human feelings is a product of our autonomy, and the consequent need to make important decisions. Feelings guide us in those functions (Kagan, 1994). On the other hand, childcare can strengthen or undermine children's cognitive and social development. If childcare quality is high, children learn rapidly, develop strong attachments to adults, and behave sociably toward other children. If quality is low, children learn more slowly, develop less secure attachments, and demonstrate less sociability and consideration for others (Gormley, 1995). Thus, through observation method, one can test such theories.

2.13 Healthy development childhood

The term behaviour generally refers to the actions or reactions of an object or organism/individual, usually in relation to the environment or surrounding world of stimuli. Behaviour can be conscious or unconscious, overt or covert, and voluntary or involuntary. Behaviour controlled by the endocrine system, and the nervous system. Moreover, many researches reveal that proper or correct management in the preschool/nursery has something to do in child's behaviour (Allen, Benning, & Drummond, 1972; Bricker & Bricker, 1971).

On the other hand, in developmental management of children, the instruction of behavioural expectations occurs through how parents, teachers, and other individuals within the community influence the child. In a child development program, the instruction of behavioural expectations occurs within the activities or interactions of the children.

Children are not likely to understand a general rule that constructed for them out of context as they have difficulty making meaning out of a list of information. For example, a child would be guided to respond to frustration calmly if given the redirection, "Say to me, I need help" followed by the provision of help. The use of activity-embedded social guidance facilitates children to construct their own understanding of behavioural expectations.

As children mature, behavioural expectations are more likely to be presented within whole group lessons or activities (e.g., reading a story about lying) and may be posted for children who are interested in print by using a combination of words and visuals. Furthermore, Bredekamp & Copple, (1997) argued that supporting the development of positive self-esteem in children and the ability to evaluate their own behaviour is a critical element of quality early childhood programs. This is similar to the emphasis of school on acknowledging appropriate behaviours among children.

In order to have a positive or healthy development among children, it is important to discuss the concept of childcare. Childcare is defined as a regularly used arrangement for supervising young children that supplements care by one or both parents (Gormley, 1995).

Child care can strengthen or undermine children's cognitive and social development". (Gormley, 1995, p.4) A well-equipped childcare centre can provide a suitable pace of learning, supervise social behaviour, provide a sense of security to children up to the point where they develop an attachment to their caregivers. This is as much as an ideal compensation for the absence of the children's parents.

In child development, the child often faces different changes, and these changes may influence the development of such individual. Although, there are still strongholds on the belief that the best care for children especially during the developmental stages is maternal, there is still no denying the fact that the current economic and social movement continue to make this difficult for our family units to provide. As with every change that directly affects the family and a child's well-being, the acceptance of child-care, as an alternative to parental care is gradual and tenacious.

Children go through developmental changes that can be very confusing. The principles of children egocentrism tie this fascinating stage to children's development. As egocentric children, children believe that others are always watching and evaluating them, and that they are special and unique. Children egocentrism is an interesting and important subject to study because it helps explain the general well-being of a child. Moreover, understanding its characteristics enables parents, psychologists, sociologists, teachers, and other concerned groups to respond and help children move successfully through this stage.

As a child experiences heightened self-consciousness, negative emotions such as fear, sadness, disgust, anxiety, and depression are activated. Many children are weathering

numerous storms of negative emotion. Often these clouds of negativity trail them to a healthy development or the other way around. Bad things happen and they feel wounded. Some of the wounds heal, and others leave a psychic scar that never seems to leave them. In studying child development, it is necessary to focus negative emotions caused by egocentrism, self-exploration, and other transitional factors to understand the future well-being of a child and minimize the cases of depression among children.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The study takes a close look at the street children phenomenon in Sierra Leone, focusing specifically on the nature of this phenomenon in five major cities in Sierra Leone, i.e., Freetown, Bo, Makeni, Kono and Kenema. More precisely the study approaches the subject of street children from a strictly comparative and synchronic stand – points, showing how, at a given point in time, the lives of street children parallel or differ, as the case may be, from the lives of children in normal family homes.

The choice of the comparative approach is in response to the need to determine as clearly as possible, just how badly disadvantaged street children are in terms of the facilities and privileges enjoyed by children in normal family homes. The randomly selected participants consisted of 325 respondents. Survey and interview methods were the two research instruments used for the data gathering.

The children living a normal life at home who have been chosen in this study accomplished a survey questionnaire and the researcher interviewed the street children. The results of the survey were then processed by computing the weighted mean of each survey item. The computed values were compared to the Likert scale for data interpretation. Relevant literatures were also used to support the gathered findings.

The credibility of findings and conclusions extensively depend on the quality of the research design, data collection, data management, and data analysis. This chapter will be dedicated to the description of the methods and procedures done in order to obtain the data, how they will be analysed, interpreted, and how the conclusion will be met. This section justifies the means obtaining the results in the study and helps in giving the study its purpose and strength, as it will then be truthful and analytical. All these will help in the processing of the data and the formulation of conclusions.

Specifically, this research will cover the following: the research design and method, the respondents or subjects to be studied (which will include the sampling method), the data collection instrument, and the data analysis. These will be presented below.

3.2 Research design

This study utilizes the descriptive method of research. The purpose of employing the descriptive method is to describe the nature of a condition, as it takes place during the time of the study and to explore the cause or causes of a particular condition. The researcher opted to use this kind of research considering the desire to acquire first hand data from the respondents to formulate rational and sound conclusions and recommendations for the study. According to Creswell (1994), the descriptive method of research is to gather information about the present existing condition. Since this study is focused on the perception or evaluation difference of the two contexts, the descriptive method is the most appropriate method to use.

Two types of data were used: the primary and the secondary data. The primary data were derived from the answers respondents gave in the structured questionnaire prepared by the researcher. In addition, the information obtained from the interview also provided primary research data that supported the study. The secondary data on the other hand, were derived from the findings stated in published documents and literatures related to the research problem. These were based from the recent literatures related to street children and the concepts cited by the respondents.

In terms of approach, the study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The quantitative approach focused on obtaining numerical findings was used with the survey method. The interview on the other hand, made up the qualitative approach of the study as this focused on personal accounts, observations, description and individual insights of the employees. This study employed the combined approach to overcome the limitations of both approaches.

3.3 Participants

In comparing the lives of street children with the lives of children in normal family homes in cities in Sierra Leone, the study adopts a sample survey design. Five major cities in Sierra Leone were targeted mainly, Freetown, Bo, Makeni, Kono and Kenema. All street children living within the city centre and market area in these respective towns formed the target group for the research. The point is that the central market area and city centre is the place where street children are most visible and active in the city.

The unit of analysis is a child living and sleeping in the central market place. Thirty-five of such children in each location form a representative sample of the city's street children population where selected. However, in fact only one hundred and sixty six respondents were interviewed. Concerning children living in normal family homes, thirty children from three different primary schools in each of the locations form a representative sample of the population. In each of the three primary schools, the researcher randomly selected ten pupils from the target population. The unit of analysis is a child living with his or her parents or guardian in the city.

Overall, 175 individual children served in this study as a representative sample of the city's street children and one hundred and fifty children served as a representative sample of children living in normal family homes. The total representative sample of three hundred and twenty-five children both street children and children in normal family homes formed the research population.

All of these participants were selected through random sampling. This sampling method is conducted where each member of a population has an equal opportunity to become part of the sample. As all members of the population have an equal chance of becoming a research participant, this is said to be the most efficient sampling procedure. In order to conduct this sampling strategy, the researcher defined the population first, listed down all the members of the population, and then selected members to make the sample.

The Likert format was the structure of the survey questionnaire. The questionnaire does not apply inclusion criteria for the individual applicants; hence, all are part of the population. However, due to time and budget constraints, the researcher opted for a smaller sample size.

3.4 Research instruments

The study used two research instruments to gather pertinent data. These research instruments are survey questionnaire methods and the interview method. The structured questionnaire was for the children who are living a normal family life at home. The questionnaire given to these aimed to determine the condition of the children at home. In addition, this also aims to evaluate the how the life of these children differs from the life of the street children. On the other hand, the interview approach was conducted to street children.

The questionnaire was structured in such a way that respondents would be able to answer it easily. Thus, the set of questionnaire was structured using the Likert format with a five-point response scale. A Likert scale is a rating scale that requires the subject to indicate his or her degree of agreement or disagreement to a statement. In this type of questionnaire, the respondents were given five response choices. These options served as the quantification of the participants' agreement or disagreement on each question item. Below are the designated quantifications in the questionnaire:

(Source: Creswell, 1994)

1	Strongly agree
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2	Agree
3	Uncertain
4	Disagree
5	Strongly disagree

3.5 Interview/questionnaire structure

The researcher designs a questionnaire for the survey and interview process. The primary aim of the questionnaire is to compare the lives of street children and those children who are living a normal life. This research will use a mixture of closed questions and comments that are more open in the questionnaire. A closed question is one that has pre-coded answers. The simplest is the dichotomous question to which the respondent must answer yes or no (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2003)

Through closed questions, the researcher will be able to limit responses that are within the scope of this study. For example, the researcher intends to ask the respondents what they think of business value in general. Using a multiple-choice method, the answer of the respondents would be within the one of the limited expected answers of the researcher. Thus, the researcher design a closed question type to remain focused on the statement of the problem and on the main purpose of the study. However, the researcher nevertheless extends the closed questions with the comment option to be able to gather qualitative data for this study.

In addition, closed questions will be used in the survey because the answers are easy to analyse and are straightforward as target respondents are mostly busy that they do not have enough time to give attention to open questions. Closed response questions save the respondent having to think of possible replies.

While interacting with street children, the researcher sometimes informally steered ongoing conversations in the direction of interest to him, sometimes unfortunately cutting off the flow of "natural conversation." Nevertheless, in time and with more patience,

much was learned by listening to and participating in conversations among the children. Formal interviews were set up with specific children to explore special topics or to learn directly about their life stories.

Such interviews conducted in places familiar to the children were useful occasions to get at social interpretations and experiences meaningful to the children. These interviews were useful compliments to data collected more formally and around specific focused questions described in our focus group and survey research. In our field research, the researcher systematically sought to discover any social similarities and differences among street children by age, residence, and gender. In sum, ethnographic techniques served as an informative way to understand street children from our perspective of participant observation and interviews that emphasized their own voices and shared experiences arising from social life in the streets.

Specifically, the methodology sought to provide a variety of opportunities for street children and others closely involved with their lives to speak directly to us about our understanding of their observed behaviour and to express to us their own views on matters related to their lives. Street boys and street girls who participated in our focus group discussions were selected from among those whom we were involved with in our ethnographic research. Thus, they were familiar with us and at ease during the focus group interviews.

3.6 Data analysis and presentation

The study utilised first hand data, which comes from the chosen respondents who answered the survey-questionnaires given to them. First-hand data consists of the information on the survey results. The study also utilized secondary data. *Secondary data* include raw data and published summaries, as well as both quantitative and qualitative data. Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2003) deduced that secondary data fall into three main subgroups—documentary data, survey-based data, and those compiled from different sources.

Documentary secondary data, accordingly, are the ones often used in research projects that also use primary data collection methods. This type includes *written documents* about gifted educational programs that can be important raw data sources on their own right that includes the following: storage medium for compiled data, qualitative data and statistical measures. The second type is *non-written documents* (like tape and video recordings, pictures, drawings, films and television programmes, digital versatile disks and CD-ROMs) that can be analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. This type of data is also useful to help triangulate findings based on other data such as written documents and primary data collected through observations, interviews and questionnaires (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2003, pp. 190-191).

With this particular study, the researcher utilized documentary secondary data (in the form of articles from books, journals, magazines, and newspapers) that are generally about the street children, the factors that cause street children phenomenon as well as relevant literatures and survey-based data in order to meet the objectives of this study.

In order to analyze the data gathered from the survey, the weighted mean for each question item was computed. Weighted mean is the average wherein every quantity to be averaged has a corresponding weight. These weights represent the significance of each quantity to the average.

To compute for the weighted mean, each value must be multiplied by its weight. Products should then be added to obtain the total value. The total weight should also be computed by adding all the weights. The total value is then divided by the total weight. Statistically, the weighted mean is calculated using the following formula:

(Source: Creswell, 1994)

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n w_i x_i}{\sum_{i=1}^n w_i} \quad \text{Or} \quad \bar{x} = \frac{w_1 x_1 + w_2 x_2 + w_3 x_3 + \dots + w_n x_n}{w_1 + w_2 + w_3 + \dots + w_n}$$

3.7 Independent samples t-test

The t-test is the most commonly used method to evaluate the differences in means between two groups. For example, the t-test can be used to test for a difference in the perception between a group of respondents (i.e. children in normal family homes and street children).

Theoretically, the t-test can be used even if the sample sizes are very small (e.g., as small as 10; some researchers claim that even smaller n's are possible), as long as the variables are normally distributed within each group and the variation of scores in the two groups is not reliably different.

As mentioned before, the normality assumption can be evaluated by looking at the distribution of the data (via histograms) or by performing a normality test. Actually, the researcher opted to use independent sample t-test analysis to determine the difference between the answers of the respondents. Statistically, the weighted mean is calculated using the following formula:

(Source: Creswell, 1994)

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n w_i x_i}{\sum_{i=1}^n w_i} \quad \text{Or} \quad \bar{x} = \frac{w_1 x_1 + w_2 x_2 + w_3 x_3 + \dots + w_n x_n}{w_1 + w_2 + w_3 + \dots + w_n}$$

In addition, the p-level reported with a t-test represents the probability of error involved in accepting our research hypothesis about the existence of a difference. Technically speaking, this is the probability of error associated with rejecting the hypothesis of no difference between the two categories of observations (corresponding to the groups) in the population when, in fact, the hypothesis is true.

Since this study would like to compare the differences of two groups (children in normal family homes and street children), the use of independent samples t-test is considered. If the p-value is less than .05 the researcher may conclude, the two groups are significantly

different in their means. To assist the researcher in the statistical analysis of the gathered data, the researcher used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The SPSS is one of the most widely available and powerful statistical software packages that cover a broad range of statistical procedures. SPSS procedures allows a researcher to summarise data (e.g., compute means and standard deviations), determine whether there are significant differences between groups (e.g., t-tests, analysis of variance), examine relationships among variables (e.g., correlation, multiple regression), and graph results (e.g., bar charts, line graphs) (Einstein and Abernethy, 2000).

3.8 Validity

In order to test the validity of the evaluation tool, which used for this study, the researcher tested the questionnaire to ten respondents. These respondents as well as their answers were not part of the actual study process and were only used for testing purposes. After the questions have been answered, the researcher asked the respondents for any suggestions or any necessary corrections to improve the instrument further.

The researcher modified the content of the questionnaire based on the assessment and suggestions of the sample respondents. The researchers excluded irrelevant questions and changed vague or difficult terminologies into simpler ones to make the survey more comprehensive for the selected respondents.

3.9 Ethical considerations

As this study utilized human participants and investigated on company practices, certain issues were addressed. The consideration of these issues is necessary for ensuring the privacy as well as the security of the participants. These issues were identified in advance so as prevent future problems that could have risen during the research process. Among the significant issues that were considered included consent, confidentiality and data protection.

3.10 Gaining consent

Securing permission and gaining the consent of the participants for this study is an important ethical consideration. In order to do so, the researcher relayed the aims of the research clearly among all selected participants. Each participant was asked to accomplish a consent form, stating in detail all the activities involved as well as the purpose of the study.

The reasons why they were selected as participants were also stated so as to enable the selected participants to connect the aims of the research with that of the participant qualifications. In the consent form, the researcher also discussed in detail all the treatments or procedures that will be done during the research process.

Building rapport and gaining the trust of the participants has been considered essential throughout the research process. These helped in ensuring the cooperation and willingness of the participants to give dependable and sufficient data that were relevant to the study. Although the participants may initially give their consent for the research process, the researcher also gave the assurance that they are allowed to withdraw from the study even without providing any reason. By giving this freedom, the participants did not feel forced to participate in the process.

The possible risks that may be included in the research were also discussed to the participants to gain their consent. More importantly, the methods or mechanisms that are to be used to prevent these risks were also included. The researcher practiced openness and honesty all throughout the study to assure the research respondents that their security and safety is of utmost priority. All of these factors to gain the consent of the research participants were discussed in the most comprehensive manner based on their level of understanding.

3.11 Confidentiality

The privacy of the respondents as well as the confidentiality of their responses was prioritized by the researcher as well. In order to do so, the names of the participants were kept confidential. All details that are related to the study were the only ones included in the final report. The researcher sent a copy of the research proposal to all participants of the study to emphasize that all information obtained had been accurate and properly credited. The researcher also ensured that all data gathered for the study were protected from unauthorized access.

3.12 Data protection

The researcher protected the data obtained from the research process as well. In order to do this, the researcher protected all files with passwords. This prevented unauthorized people from accidentally accessing the confidential files of the study. The completion of gathering all data and generating analysis were within the school or university premises to ensure the security of transferring data.

3.13 Statistical treatment of the data

After the collection of information from self-administered questionnaire, and related studies, the researcher collated all the data. The statistical analysis for the information from semi-structure questionnaire was conducted using Microsoft Excel where the data is tabulated, graphed, and evaluated.

The testing of the level of significance was conducted using the SPSS and tabulated in the Excel files. The SPSS is the standard software in conducting statistical analysis.

Percentage – to determine the magnitude of the responses to the questionnaire:

(Source: Creswell, 1994)

$$\% = \frac{n}{N}(100)$$

Where: n = number of responses

N = total number of respondents

Weighted Mean: (Source: Creswell, 1994)

$$x = \frac{f_1x_1 + f_2x_2 + f_3x_3 + f_4x_4 + f_5x_5}{x_t}$$

Where: f – weight given to each response

x – Number of responses

xt – total number of responses

To evaluate the information gathered, the percentage analysis and mean analysis are used:

3.14 Procedures

This study of street children and of children in normal family homes in major cities of Sierra Leone was conceived and done within a period of twenty four months time frame, that is June, 2005 to July, 2007. The literature review and the fieldwork were done during the first ten months. The remaining months were set aside to analyze data collected and to finish the rest of the write-up.

During the first two months of work, available Literature dealing mainly with street children in Latin America, Asia and Africa were compiled, the idea of conducting research on the phenomenon in major cities of Sierra Leone was borne, and a corresponding plan of work made.

The fieldwork took the form of interviews and the administration of survey questionnaires. To accomplish these tasks, the researcher sought permission from the social welfare ministry and the town councils of each of the research locations, which allowed street children in the central market area to be interviewed.

The interviews were conducted over a two –week period in all locations simultaneously. The researcher engaged the services of enumerators. The enumerators were educated and oriented on the use of interview schedules and the procedures for data collection in each of these locations. Each of the respondents children selected had the opportunity for an interview that lasted for about ten minutes. The conduction of interviews is using the language *Krio*, which is the most widely used language spoken by almost every Sierra Leonean.

Similarly, the researcher sought permission from the head teacher in all the primary schools in the different research locations. All schools selected are co-educational schools. The interviews where conducted during school hours (8:30am -2pm) which each interview lasting for almost ten minutes. All interviews where done in English. This exercise is purely for children living in normal family homes with the opportunity of attending school.

The last two months of work dealt with the analysis of the information obtained during the interview session and from the survey questionnaires. The results of the research where then presented in the form of narrative interspersed with frequency distribution tables and percentages.

As already stated, the instruments used in this study to collect data were questionnaires and interview schedules. Some amount of observation was also conducted. Two separate standardized survey questionnaire were developed, one meant for street children and the other for children in normal family homes.

The two questionnaires facilitated the collection of a uniform set of information pertaining respectively to the lives of street children and the lives of children in normal family homes. The information sought by the questionnaires centred on a child's name, age, sex, educational background, family background, peer group and violence in the street.

The interview schedules were designed to fill the gaps left by the questionnaires. They particularly facilitated a direct, human contact with the children under study, thus making the research a lively and interesting academic endeavour.

3.15 Data summary

As stated in this methodology part, the research underwent stages. In the research design, the researcher collected secondary data, formulated, and developed the self-administered questionnaire. In this stage, these instruments were subjected to approval and validation. During the information collection, the researcher collated and summarised the data obtained from the self-administered questionnaire and survey. The researcher then analysed this information and from these, the researcher came up with findings and recommendations that shall be presented in the next chapters.

4. Data analysis and presentation

4.1 Introduction

This chapter includes the analysis and presentation of data gathered from respondents. Thus, this chapter discusses the results of the survey questionnaires given to the 109 children living in normal homes and the result of the interview with 616 street children in the four major cities of Sierra Leone.

Before the initiation of the survey process, the researcher explained towards the respondents the purpose, the importance, and objectives of the study. The researcher guaranteed respondents of privacy of personal information. All questions asked in the survey questionnaire pertain only to the respondents' insights on the topic of the study.

For the purpose of lucidity, this chapter includes graphs and tables corresponding to the findings of the survey (original data from SPSS). To give an appropriate flow of discussion, this chapter also includes certain two divisions or sections for clearer presentation. First, is the presentation of the data gathered from the answers of the children living in normal homes and the second part is the presentation of the data gathered from the street children.

4.2 Data analysis

4.2.1 Part 1 profile: Children in normal family homes

This part discusses the profile of 109 children living in a normal family home who answered the survey questionnaire sent by the researcher. The description of the respondents includes their gender, age, and religion, place of residency, educational background, and tribes. Other information includes the estimated monthly income and the age of the parents and place of birth, number of meals taken everyday, type of house and materials and others.

1. Age of the respondents

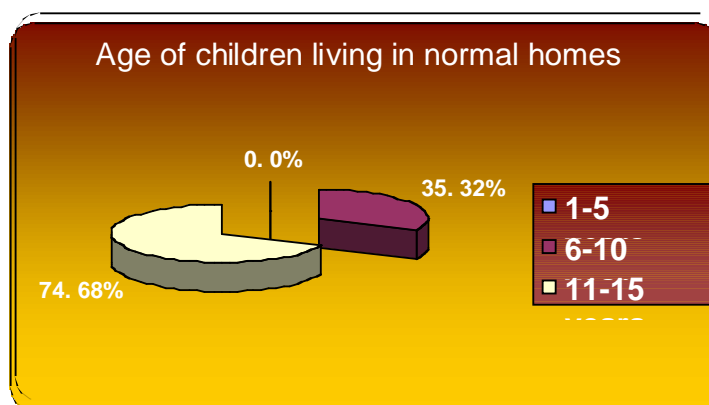
An important variable examined in this study is the age group in which the street children interviewed fall. The age group is a very important factor that plays an important role in the lives of street children and children in normal family homes.

Age of the children living in a normal home

Table 1a

age in years	frequency
1-5 years	0
6-10 years	35
11-15 year	74

Total	109
--------------	------------

Figure 1a

The table and figure above shows the distribution of age of the children living in normal family homes. It shows that most of the respondents who participated are aging from 11-15 years, which comprises 68% out of 109 children.

2. Gender of the respondents

Gender of the children in normal family homes

Table 2a

gender	frequency
Male	51
Female	58
Total	109

Figure 2a

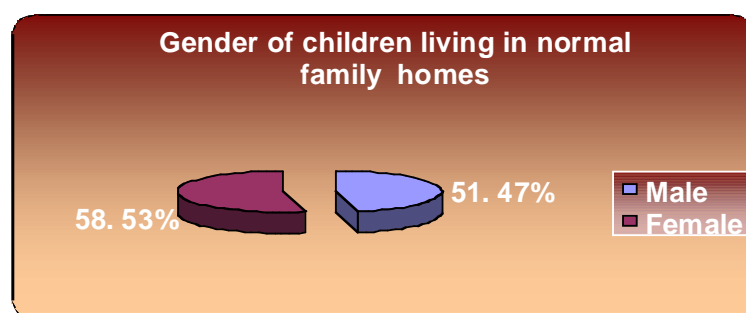


Table 2a and Figure 2a show the distribution and the percentage of the children who participated in the study in terms of gender. Out of 109 respondents, it shows that 58 (53%) were female and 51 (47%) were male. This may indicate that most of the children living a normal family home who participated show a close distribution. Further, this is also an indication that more female and girls lived with their parents in normal family homes.

District codes * sex cross tabulation – children in normal homes

Table 2b

		sex		total
		male	female	
District Codes	Kenema	13	9	22
	Kono	9	14	23
	Makeni	6	14	20
	Bo	8	14	22
	Freetown	15	7	22
Total		51	58	109

Figure 2b

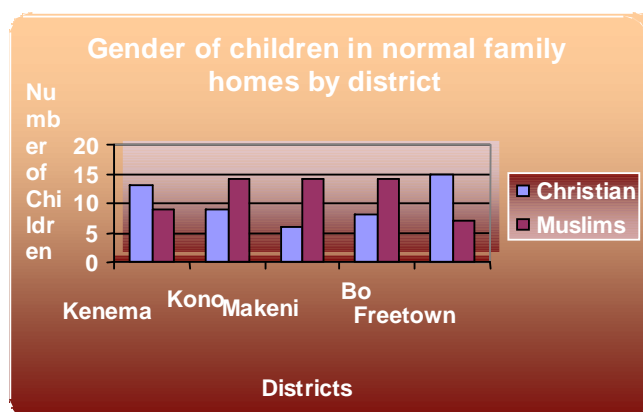


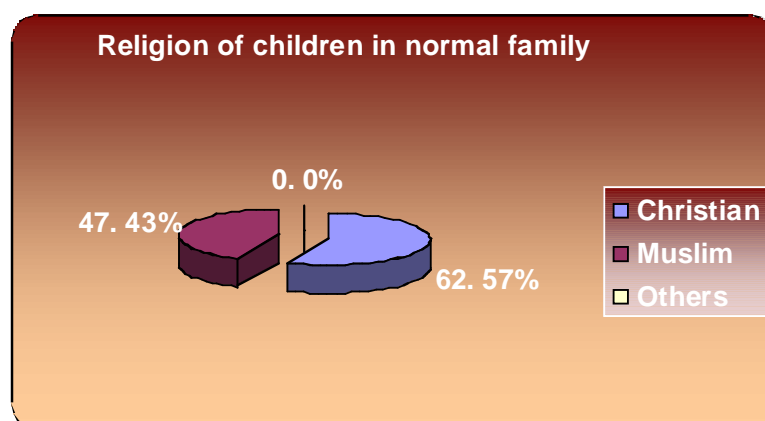
Table 2b shows the frequency distribution on sexes in the various Districts where the survey was done. The table shows that Kono has the highest number of children followed by Kenema, Bo and Freetown as the second highest while Makeni as the third highest with 18% children out of 109.

3. Religion of children in normal family homes

Table 3a

religion	frequency
Christian	62
Muslim	47
Others	0
Total	109

Figure 3a



In the table and figure above, it shows that children living in normal family homes are Christian and represent (56.9%) while the Muslims constitute 43.1%. These findings have shown that majority of the children living in normal family homes come from the Christian religion. The remaining children come from the Muslim religion.

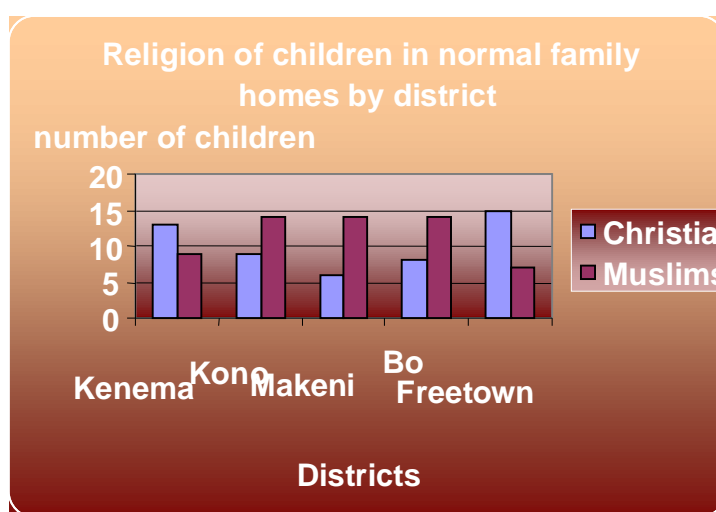
Religion of children in normal family homes by district

Table 3b

		What is your religion		Total
		Christian	Muslim	
District Codes	Kenema	6	16	22
	Kono	14	9	23
	Makeni	12	8	20
	Bo	19	3	22
	Freetown	11	11	22
	Total	62	47	109

Figure 3b

Figure 3b



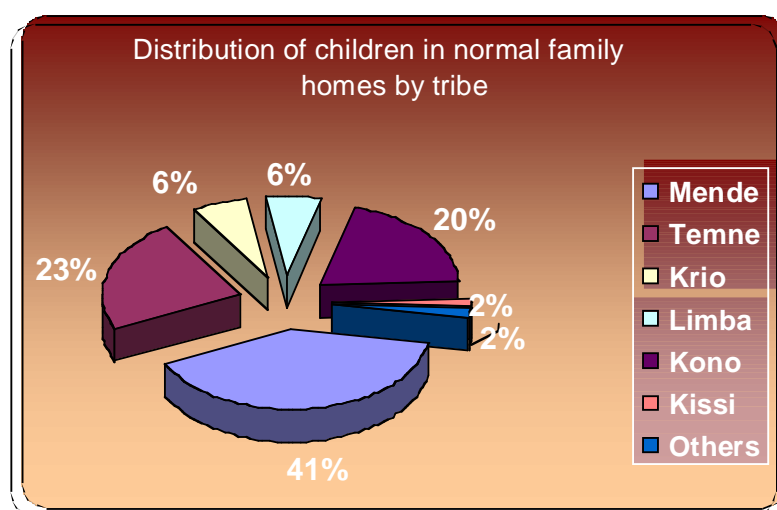
We see that table 3b and figure 3b shows that the majority of children in normal family homes formed the highest with Bo town taking the lead. Muslims represent the lowest of children living in normal family homes.

4. Distribution of children in normal family homes by tribe

Table 4a

tribe	frequency
Mende	44
Temne	25
Krio	7
Limba	7
Kono	22
Kissi	2
Others	2
Total	109

Figure 4a



The table and figure above shows the distribution and percentages of children living in normal family homes in terms of their tribe. The above table shows that majority of the children in normal family homes belongs to Mende and Temne tribes followed by Kono. The remaining tribes (Krio, Limba, and Kissi) form the lowest of children living in normal family homes.

Town distribution of children in normal family homes by tribe

Table 4b

		What tribe do you belong to							total
		Mende	Temne	Krio	Limba	Kono	Kissi	Others	
District	Kenema	15	3	0	0	1	2	1	22
Codes	Kono	2	1	0	0	19	0	1	23
	Makeni	2	13	1	4	0	0	0	20
	Bo	20	1	1	0	0	0	0	22
	Freetown	5	7	5	3	2	0	0	22
	Total	44	25	7	7	22	2	2	109

Figure 4b

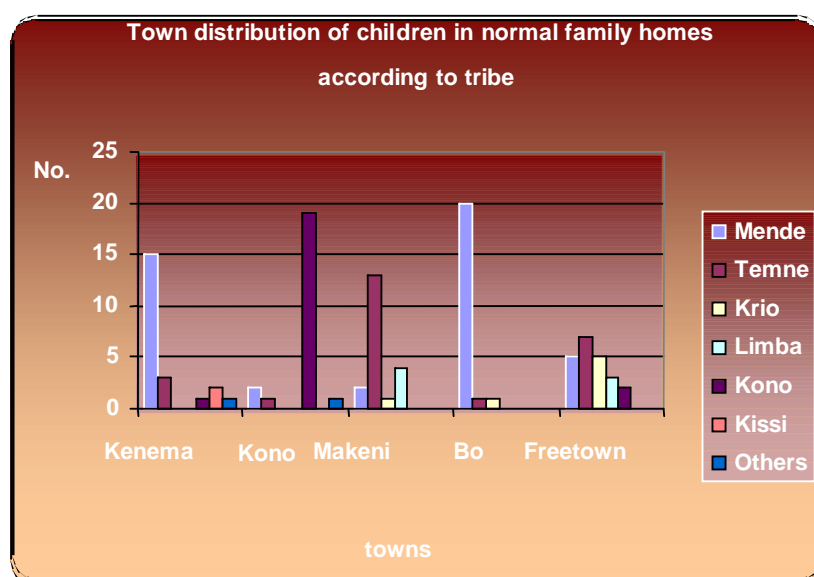


Table 4b and Figure 4b above shows the town distribution of children in normal family homes according to their tribe. Herein, it shows that Bo town has more children who are Mende than any of the other tribes. Furthermore, Kono has more children who also belong to the Kono tribe than any of the other tribes followed by Kenema town. Freetown has a small portion of some of the other tribes, Mende, Temne, Krio, Limba and Kono distributed in various parts within Freetown.

These findings revealed that majority of the district towns do have a small number of the other tribes present in their various towns. However, the vast majority of the tribes do come from the regions and district towns.

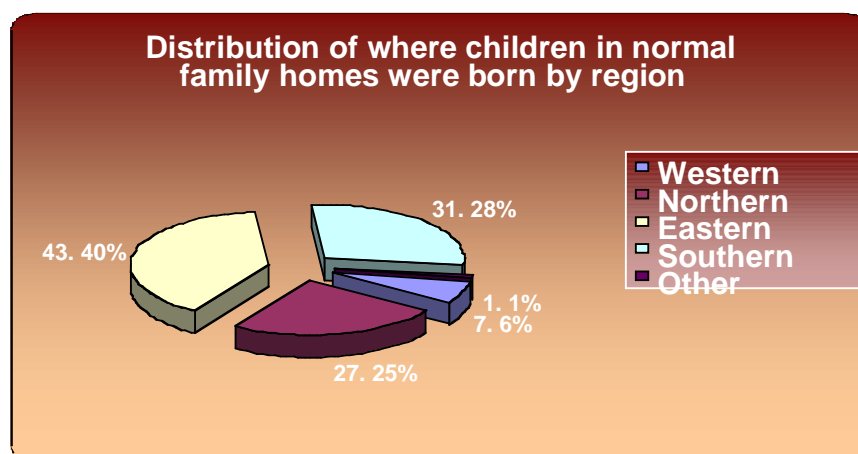
5. Place of birth of children in normal family homes

**Distribution of where children in normal
family homes were born by African region**

Table 5a

African region	frequency
Western area	7
Northern region	27
Eastern region	43
Southern region	31
Other	1
Total	109

Figure 5a



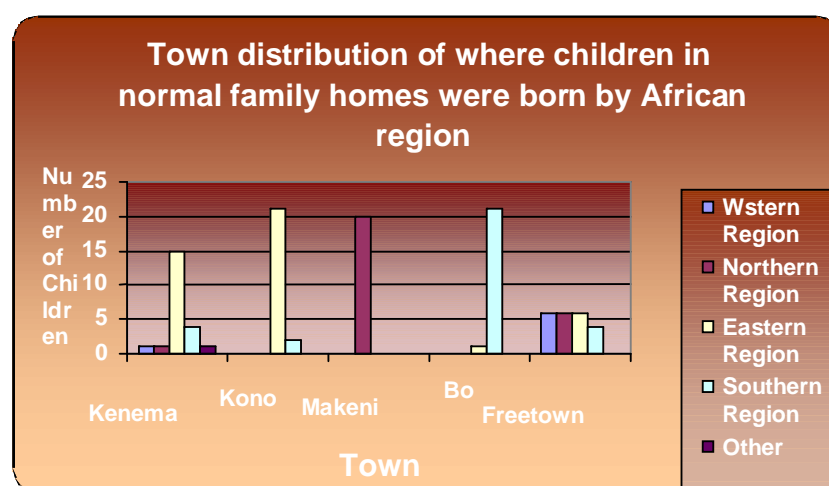
The table and figure above illustrates the distribution and percentage place of birth of children in normal homes according to their region. The table shows that 43 (40%) of the children were born in the eastern region, 31 (28%) southern region, 27 (25%) northern region and seven (6%) come from western area.

These findings show that a large number of children in normal homes were born in the eastern region followed by the southern region. This survey results further reveal that there are more children in normal homes born in the eastern and southern region.

Town distribution of where children in normal family homes were born by African region
Table 5b

		Where were you born					total
		Western area	Northern region	Eastern region	Southern region	Other	
District Codes	Kenema	1	1	15	4	1	22
	Kono	0	0	21	2	0	23
	Makeni	0	20	0	0	0	20
	Bo	0	0	1	21	0	22
	Freetown	6	6	6	4	0	22
	Total	7	27	43	31	1	109

Table 5b



The table above shows District Codes of places of birth for children living in normal family homes. The table shows the distribution of children in normal homes by regions. It

shows that more children were born in the Eastern region and Southern region unlike the street children that have majority of them born in the Northern and Southern region.

6. Educational background/ friends/friends activities

The following tables and figures present the educational background of the children living in normal family homes as well as the distribution of those with friends and the activities they usually do with their friends.

Distribution of children in normal family homes attending school

Table 6a

	frequency
Yes	108
No	1
Total	109

Figure 6a

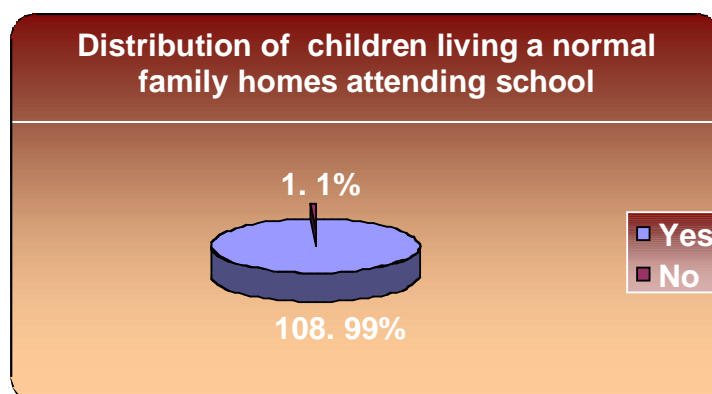


Table 6a and figure 6a shows the distribution and percentage of children living in normal family homes attending school. As shown, 99% of the children who have participated in this study are attending school while only one percent is not attending school. The result

indicates that children living in normal family homes have parents who can afford to send them to school.

These findings revealed that children with parental attention, leaving with parents have more opportunities to send their children to school unlike children on the street. The fact is that education at all levels be it private or public is expensive and not many parents can afford to send their children to school.

Town distribution of children in normal family homes attending school

Table 6b

		Are you attending school		total
		Yes	No	
District Codes	Kenema	22	0	22
	Kono	23	0	23
	Makeni	20	0	20
	Bo	22	0	22
	Freetown	21	1	22
	Total	108	1	109

Figure 6b

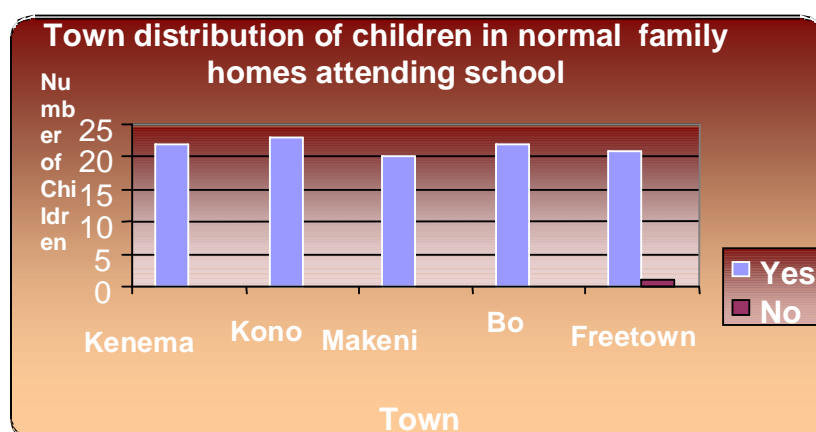


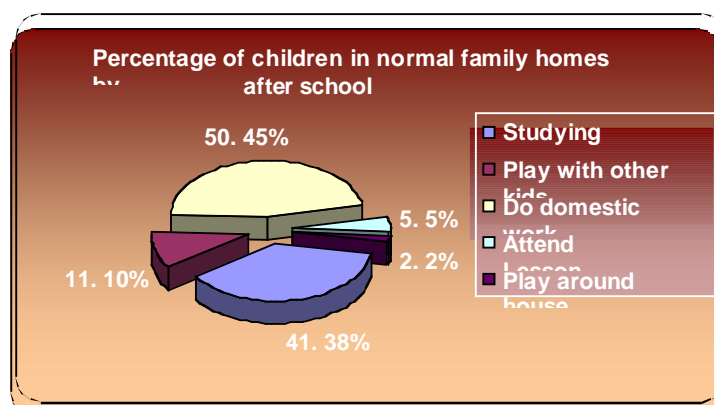
Table 5b and Figure 5b shows the sequence of children in normal family homes base on District towns. In the various towns, there are a large number of respondents attending school. The highest being Kono followed by Kenema and Bo. This has shown that children in normal family homes in those towns do send their children to school.

Distribution of children in normal family homes by activities after school

Table 6c

activities	frequency
Studying	41
Play with other kids	11
Do domestic work	50
Attend lesson	5
Play around house	2
Total	109

Figure 6c



The table and figure above provides the distribution of children in normal family homes by activities after school. Herein, it shows that 109 respondents interviewed, 50 (45%) do domestic works, 41 (37.68%) are engaged in studying, 11(10%) plays with other kids, five (5%) attend lesson while two (2%) plays around the house.

This findings has shown that at least all of the children in normal homes do engaged themselves in something after school at least to keep them busy and preventing them from being idle. Unlike children in normal homes, who engaged themselves in meaningful activities, street children are busy with activities that will provide them with food and necessities of life.

These findings have shown that children in normal family homes have better opportunities to engage themselves in various activities after school. Apart from those who engaged on studying, attend lessons and play around, we see large number 45.9% who are also engaged in domestic work at home helping their parents and guardians

Distribution of children in normal family homes with friends at school

Table 6d

	frequency
Yes	106
No	2
Missing	1
Total	109

Table 6d

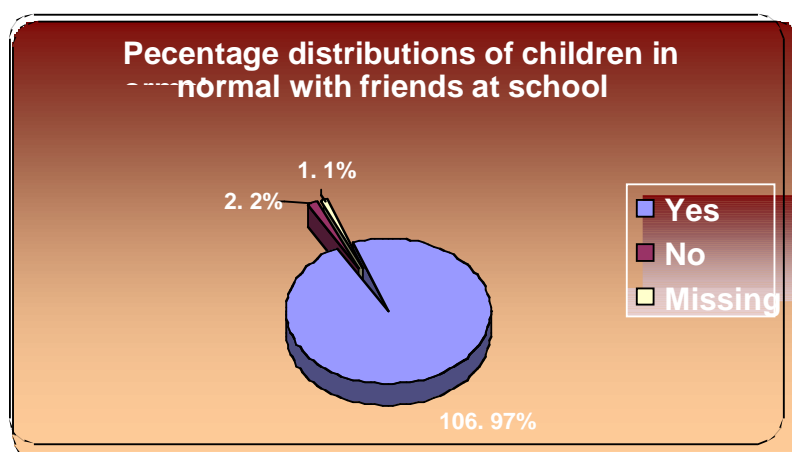


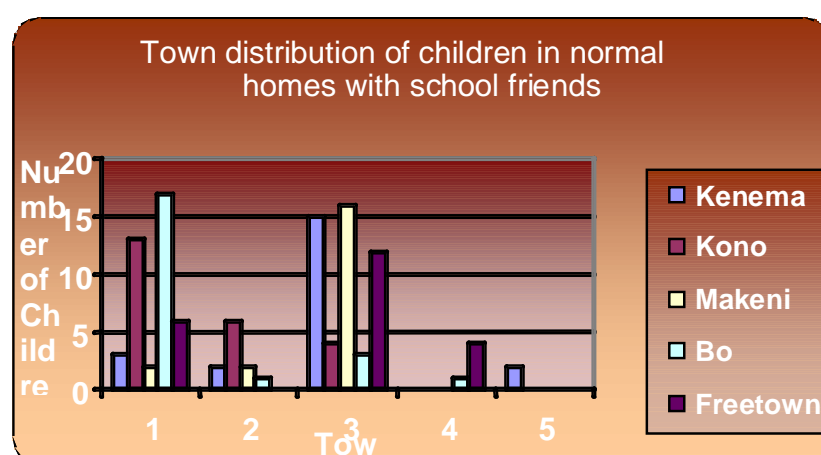
Table 6d and Figure 6d presents the distribution and percentage of the children living normal family homes in terms by friend. It shows that 97% of the 109 children have friends, and two percent or two children have no friends. This indicates that children living in normal family homes are sociable.

Town distribution of children in normal family homes with friends at school

Table 6e

		What kind of activities do you do after school					Total
		Studying	Play with other kids	Do domestic work	Attend Lesson	Play around house	
District Codes	Kenema	3	2	15	0	2	22
	Kono	13	6	4	0	0	23
	Makeni	2	2	16	0	0	20
	Bo	17	1	3	1	0	22
	Freetown	6	0	12	4	0	22
	Total	41	11	50	5	2	109

Figure 6e



This table and figure above shows the type of activities children in normal homes engaged in after school base on district codes. It shows that among the district towns, most of the respondents have the highest number of children engaged in domestic work with studying being the second highest.

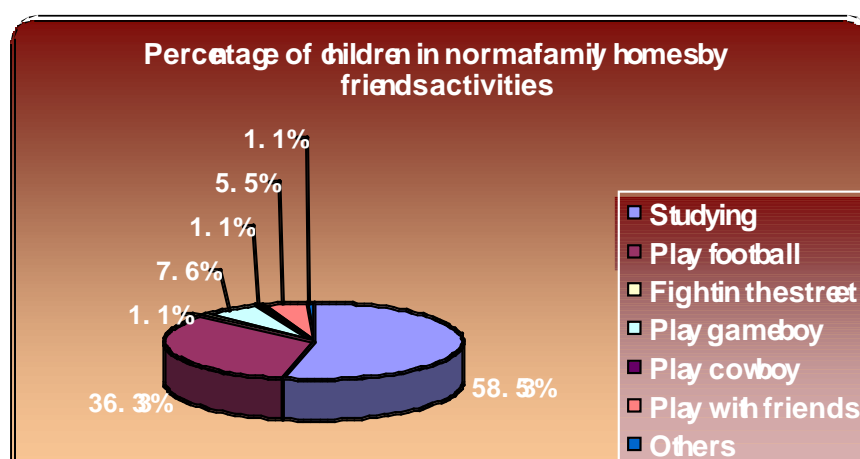
These findings have shown that in the entire districts we have more children in normal family homes who are engaged in domestic work followed by Bo, with children engaged in studying. These findings have also shown that children in normal homes have the advantaged of being involved in household activities in all of the districts towns which provides an opportunity for child parents interaction. Unlike children on the streets, the family relationship and interaction did not exist, as most of them are not involved in domestic or household work.

Distribution of children in normal family homes by friends' activities

Table 6f

Activities	Frequency
Studying	58
Play football	36
Fight in the street	1
Play game boy	7
Play cowboy	1
Play with friends	5
Others	1
Total	109

Figure 6f

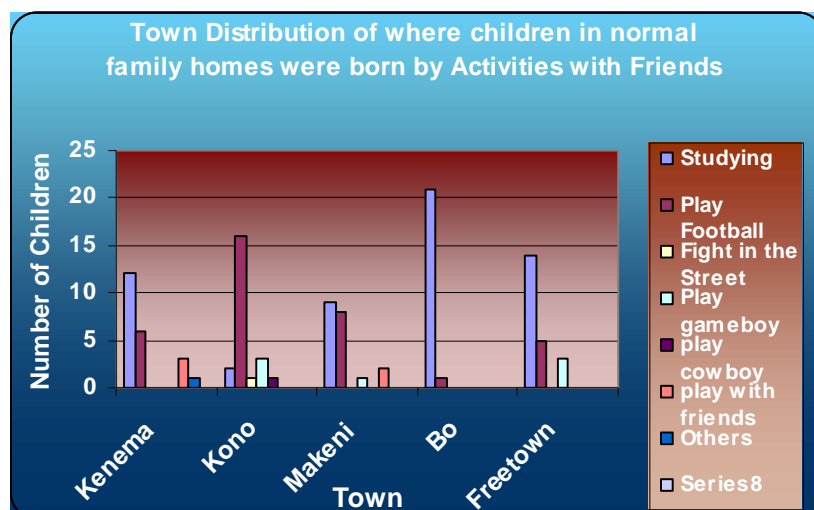


The table and figure shown above shows the distribution and percentage in normal family homes by friend's activities. The table shows that activity that the children living in normal family homes usually do with their friends is studying comprising 53% of the total respondents. The next top most activity that these children do with their friends is to play football, which comprises 36% of the total participants.

Town distribution of children in normal family homes by friend's activities
Table 6g

		What are some of the activities you do with your friends							Total
		Studyin g	Play footbal l	Fight in the street	Play game boy	Play cowb oy	Play with friends	Othe rs	
District	Kene	12	6	0	0	0	3	1	22
Codes	ma								
	Kono	2	16	1	3	1	0	0	23
	Make	9	8	0	1	0	2	0	20
	ni								
	Bo	21	1	0	0	0	0	0	22
	Freeto	14	5	0	3	0	0	0	22
	wn								

Total	58	36	1	7	1	5	1	109
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Table 6g

The above shown table and figure shows the town distribution and percentage of children living in normal family homes by activities with friends. It shows that out of the 109 children interviewed, 58 of them in the various districts indicated that their friends are mostly engaged in studying or attending school. On the other hand the remaining are usually found playing football and other games.

7. Profile about parents of children living in normal family homes

Distribution of children in normal family homes living with both parents

Table 7a

	Frequency
Yes	44
No	65
Total	109

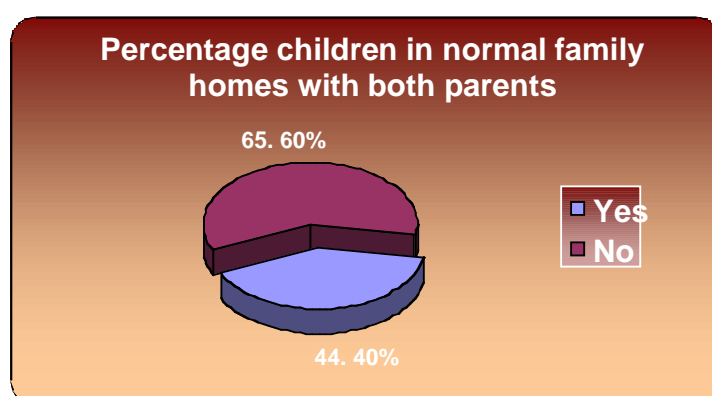
Table 7a

Table 7a and figure 7a gives us a clear picture of the children in normal family homes that lived with their parents. Out of 109 children, interviewed 44 or 40% lived with both parents while 65 or 60% lived with the father, mother or a guardian.

**Distribution of in normal family homes with both parents
by parents employment**

Table 7b

	Frequency
Yes	44
No	19
N/A	46
Total	109

Figure 7b

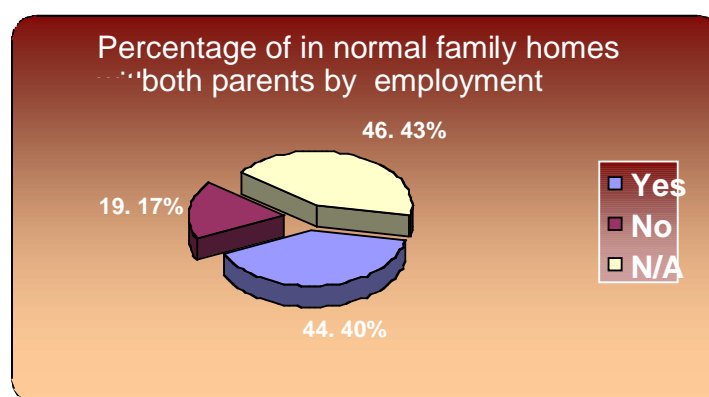


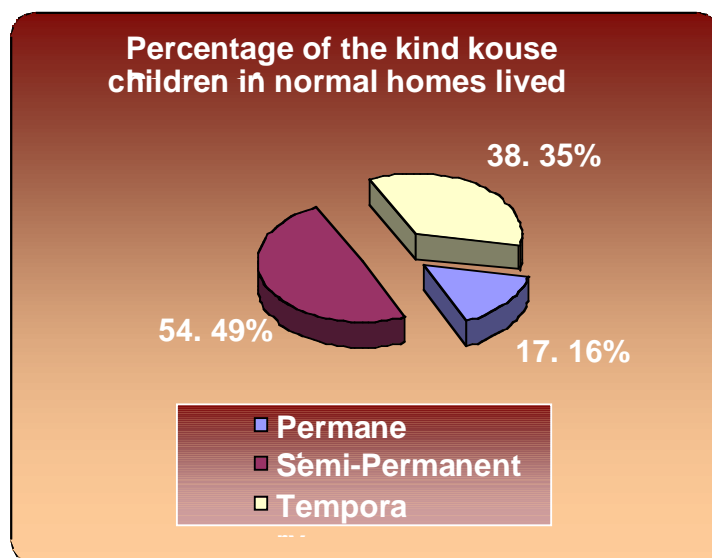
Table 7b and figure 7b shows employment of children in normal homes. The table indicates that the parents of 44 or 40.4% are not in employment while 19 or 17.4% are in employment. The remaining 46 or 42.2% indicated not applicable.

This finding shows that at least most parents of children living in normal family homes are in employment. This is an indicator that parents of children in normal homes are mostly in employment and stand a better chance of providing their children with proper care and protection.

8. Type of house and materials used in building materials of their house
Distribution of the kind of house parent of children
in normal family homes live in
Table 8a

	Frequency
Permanent	17
Semi-Permanent	54
Temporary	38
Total	109

Figure 8a



The table and figure shown above presents the distribution and percentage of the kind of house parent of children in normal family homes lived in. It shows that the type of house that these children lived in is mostly semi-permanent which comprises 49% or 54 out of 109 participants. On one hand, 38 or 35% of 109 are living in a temporary type and only 16% are living in temporary type. This further indicates that most of the family living in fours districts or towns of Sierra Leone do not have permanent type of house to live in.

Distribution for materials used in building houses you live in

Table 8b

	Frequency
Bricks	12
Mud Blocks	79
Timber	17
Zinc	1
Total	109

Figure 8b

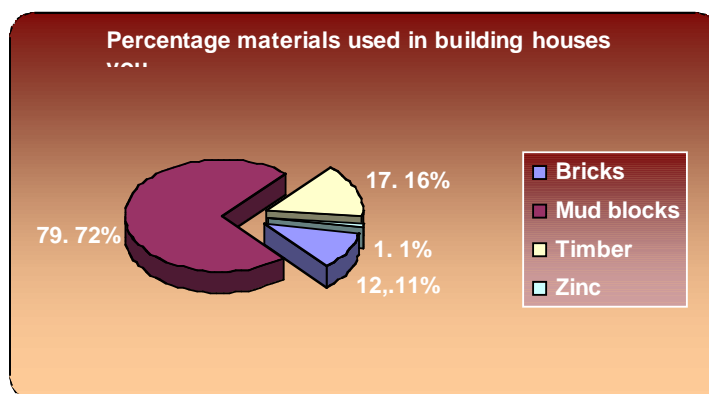


Table 8b and figure 8b above shows the type of houses parent with children in normal family homes lived and the type of materials use for construction. Herein, it reveals that most of the children and their family lives in a house built with mud blocks which comprises 72% put of 109 participants. This further indicates that most respondents belong to below average and average class.

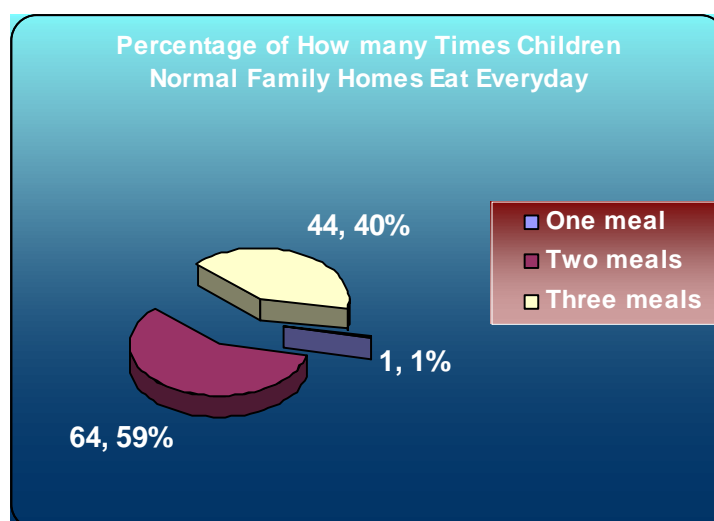
9. Number of times children in normal family homes eat everyday

Distribution of how many times children normal family homes eat everyday

Table 9a

	Frequency
One meal	1
Two meals	64
Three meals	44
Total	109

Figure 9a



The table and figure above shows that in contrast to their counterparts in table 16b, 44 out of 109 in normal family homes (40.4%) had three meals a day. Sixty-four or 58.7% at least had two meals a day while only one respondent nine percent received one meal a day. These findings indicate that the greater earning power of the parents of children in normal family homes enables the children to enjoy better lives.

**Town distribution of how many times children in
normal family homes eat everyday**
Table 9b

		How many times do you eat everyday			Total
		One meal	Two meals	Three meals	
District codes	Kenema	9	13	0	22
	Kono	22	1	0	23
	Makeni	19	1	0	20
	Bo	12	9	1	22
	Freetown	2	20	0	22
	Total	64	44	1	109

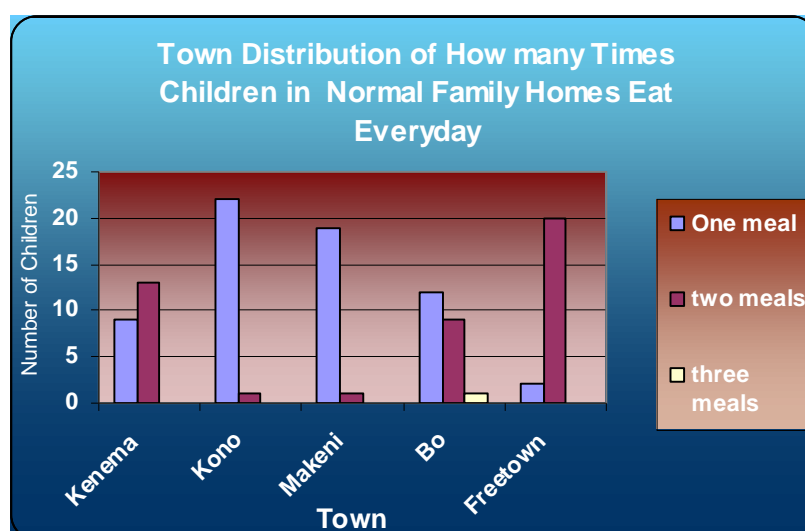
Figure 9b

Table 12e above looks at the number of times children in normal family homes eat based on District Codes. Only one respondent has three meals a day. Freetown district has 20 out of 109 children in normal homes with two meals a day, followed by Kenema 13 and then Bo with nine. Kono district has 22 respondents with one meal a day, followed by Makeni 19, Bo 12 and then Freetown with two respondents having one meal a day.

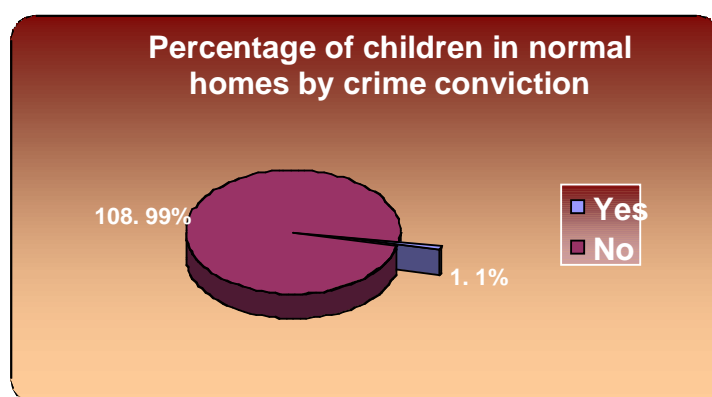
10. Profile of children in normal homes by crime conviction

Distribution of children in normal homes by crime conviction

Table 10a

	Frequency
Yes	1
No	108
Total	109

Figure 10a

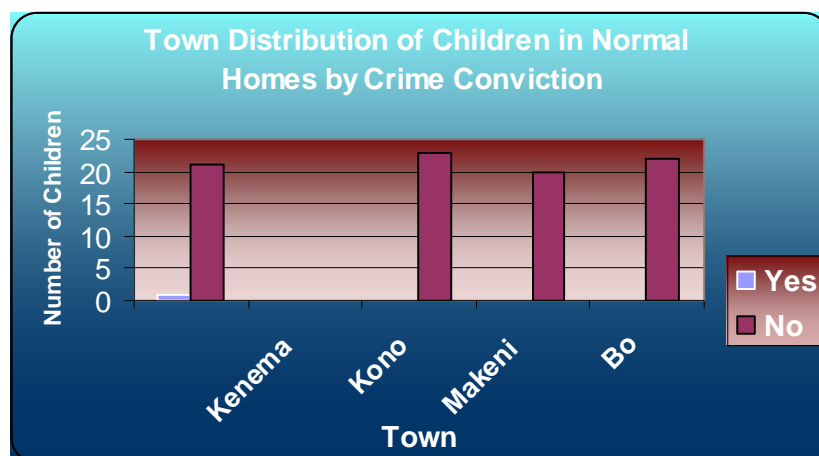


The above table and figure shows the percentage and distribution of children in terms of crime conviction or arrest. It shows that out of the 109 respondents interviewed only one respondent have been arrest and convicted. Most of the respondents interviewed (99.1%) where not arrested for crimes committed. The finding provides a clear justification that children in normal homes have less to do with crimes and arrest. This is because they are kept busy at the house doing something and do get more parental attention and care.

Town distribution of children in normal homes by crime conviction

Table 10b

		Have you ever been arrested for any crime		Total
		Yes	No	
District				
codes	Kenema	1	21	22
	Kono	0	23	23
	Makeni	0	20	20
	Bo	0	22	22
	Freetown	0	22	22
	Total	1	108	109

Figure 10b

The above table shows regional distribution of children in normal family homes who were arrested for crimes committed. The table shows that only one respondent from Kenema has been arrested for crimes committed. Unlike the majority of the respondents from Kono being the highest, followed by Bo and Freetown that were never been arrested for crimes committed.

The table also exposes the nature of crimes committed and if at all, they were convicted according to district towns. The table above shows that all of the towns have almost equal numbers of respondents who have not been involved in crimes committed because of crimes committed. These findings have shown that children who come from normal family homes hardly involved in crimes. In all regions, as well the table shows that majority of the children interviewed in the various towns have not been involved in crimes. Consequently, they were not convicted since they have not committed crimes.

4.2.2 Part two profile: Street children

This part will discuss the profile of 166 children living in the street that answered and participated in the interview questionnaire set by the researcher. The description of the

respondents includes their gender, age, and religion, place of residency, educational background, and tribes. Other information includes the estimated monthly income and the age of the parents and place of birth, number of meals taken everyday, type of house and materials, the activities they usually do in the street and others.

11. Age of the street children

Age of the street children

Table 11a

Age in Years	Frequency
5-10 years	33
11-15 years	75
16-20 years	58
Total	166

Figure 11a

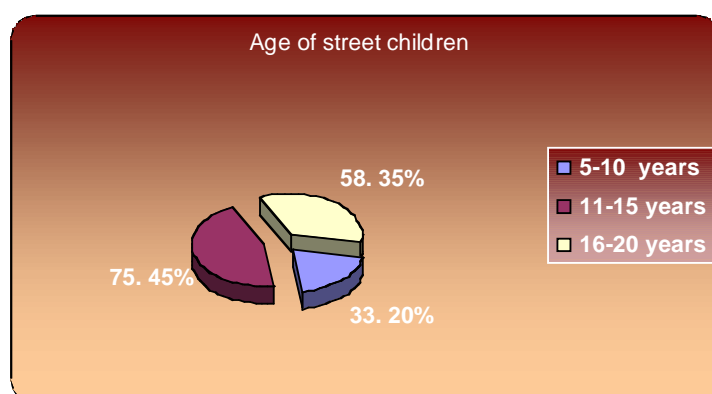


Table 11a and figure 11b shows the distribution and percentage of the age of street children. It shows that most of the children who had been interviewed are 10-15 years old that comprises 75 or 45% of the total respondents. Thirty-five percent out of 166 belongs to 16-20 years of age and only 20% belongs to the age group of 5-10 years. This indicates that most of the street children in the towns of Sierra Leone are adolescents and teenagers.

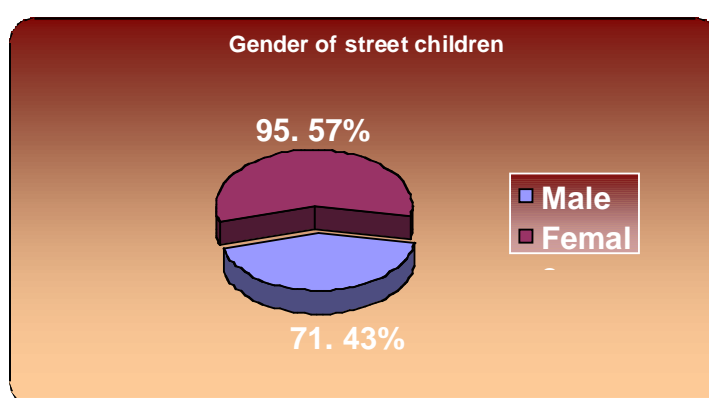
12. Gender of respondents

Gender of the respondents

Table 12a

Gender	Frequency
Male	71
Female	95
Total	166

Figure 12a



This table shows that majority of the street children interviewed are made up of female or girls with a percentage of 95 or 53 % unlike the males which is 71 or 43%. This finding is an indication that there are more girls on the street as compared to boys in the major cities or towns of Sierra Leone.

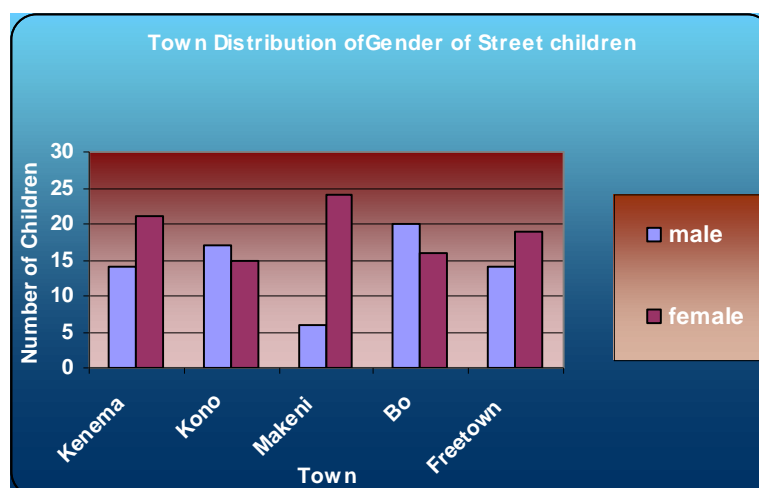
District codes * sex cross tabulation – street children

Table 12b

	Sex	Total

		Male	Female	
District codes	Kenema	14	21	35
	Kono	17	15	32
	Makeni	6	24	30
	Bo	20	16	36
	Freetown	14	19	33
	Total	71	95	166

Figure 12b



The table and figure above shows the sexes of street children interviewed according to district towns. The table shows that Kenema, Makeni and Freetown have more girls as street children as compared to the other towns Kono and Bo. There are more street boys in Bo and Kono. There is no significant reason for this but one can sense that it is because these towns are mining areas therefore attracting more boys to be on the street helping miners so that they too can survive.

13. Religion of street children

Table 13a

Religion	Frequency
Christian	66
Muslim	100
Others	0
Total	166

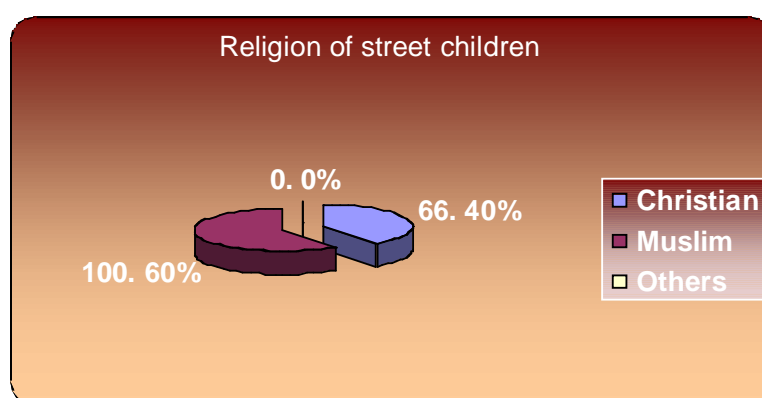
Figure 13a

Table 13a and Figure 13a shows that majority of the children belongs to the Muslim religion. There are more Muslims representing (60%) while the Christians represent (40%). This also indicates that at least all the children belong to a recognized religious group.

Religion of street children by district

Table 13b

		What is your religion		Total
		Christian	Muslim	
District	Kenema	3	32	35
Codes	Kono	12	20	32
	Makeni	11	19	30

Bo	27	9	36
Freetown	13	20	33
Total	66	100	166

Figure 13b

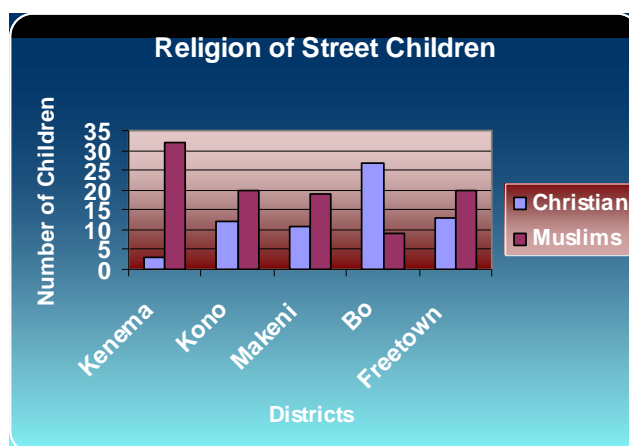


Table 13b and figure 13b above illustrates the religion of street children by district towns. The table shows that Kenema town has more children who are Muslim followed by Kono and Freetown. There are more street children who are Christians residing in Bo followed by Freetown. In all, there are more Muslims from the various towns as compared to Christians. It shows that most of the district towns with street children are Muslims.

14. Tribe where street children belong

Distribution of street children by tribe

Table 14a

Tribe	Frequency
Mende	65
Temne	51
Krio	18
Limba	2
Kono	22
Kissi	8
Others	0
Total	166

Figure 14a

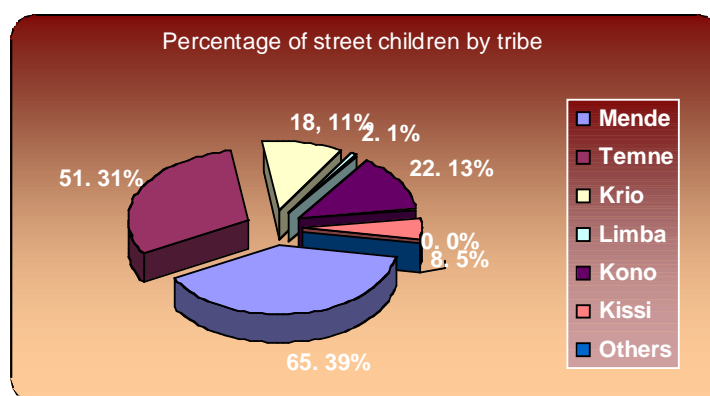


Table 14a and figure 14a shows the percentages of street children by tribe. From the table we see that children who are Mende and Temne form the highest number of street children followed by Kono, Krio, Kissi and Limba as the lowest.

Town distribution of children in normal family homes by tribe

Table 14b

	What Tribe do you belong to							Total
	Mende	Temne	Krio	Limba	Kono	Kissi	Others	

District codes	Kenema	31	1	0	0	0	3	0	35
	Kono	2	11	0	0	19	0	0	32
	Makeni	1	23	4	0	0	2	0	30
	Bo	29	6	0	0	1	0	0	36
	Freetown	2	10	14	2	2	3	0	33
	Total	65	51	18	2	22	8	0	109

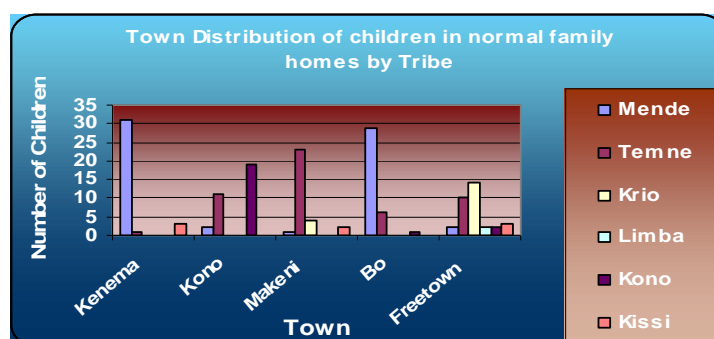
Figure 14b

Table 14b and Figure 14b above shows the distribution of tribes according to District Towns. The table shows that the Mendes form the largest tribes followed by Temnes, Kono, Krio and Kissi. These findings have shown that Kenema town has more Mendes than any of the other tribes followed by Bo. Makeni town has more Temnes than the others. Freetown has a distribution of all of the other tribes with Krio being the highest. The findings further reveal that the different tribes are present in all the district towns. This is an indication that people from different tribes are base in each of the towns.

15. Educational background

Distribution of street children who have attended school

Table 15a

	Frequency
Yes	130
No	36
Total	166

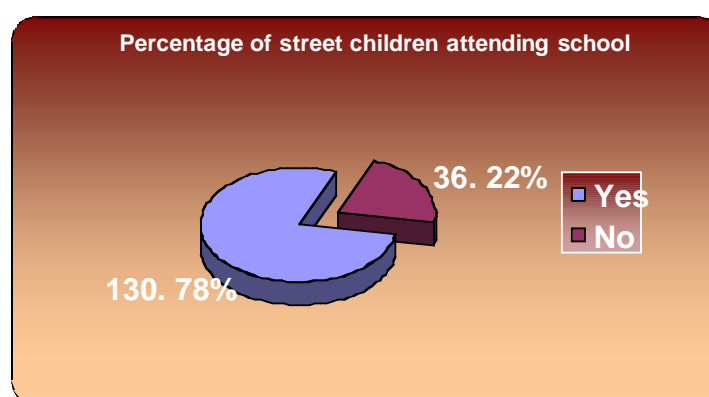
Figure 15a

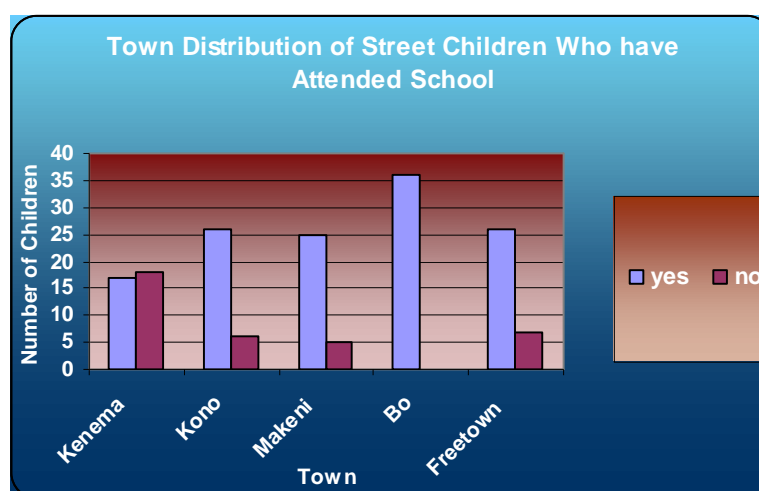
Table 15a and figure 15a gives an explanation on the percentage of street children who have been to school and those street children who have never been to school. The table shows that from 166 respondents interviewed, 36 (23%) were street children who had never been to school. The other findings show that 130(78) used to go to school but eventually became dropouts, and the highest level of schooling attained was class four.

District codes * have you ever attended school?

Table 15b

		Have you ever attended school		Total
		Yes	No	
District	Kenema	17	18	35
Codes	Kono	26	6	32
	Makeni	25	5	30
	Bo	36	0	36

Freetown	26	7	33
Total	130	36	166

Figure 15b

The table and figure above illustrates street children who have been to school looking at the District Towns. It points to the fact that majority of the street children in the various towns have attended school before. Bo and Freetown are the two towns with the highest children who have attended school before, followed by Makeni, Kono and Kenema. In total, 130 street children attended school before out of a total of 166 interviewed.

These findings have shown that majority of the street children in the various towns have attended school before. Those who have never attended school before form the lowest number, which is 36 out of 166. It is not surprising that such a large number of street children are not in school any longer. Being on the street is highly incompatible with going to school.

Reasons why street children stop schooling

Table 15c

Figure 15c

Tribe	Frequency
No parents	15
No one to pay fees	105
Not interested	8
Other (Specify)	2
No Answer	36
Total	166



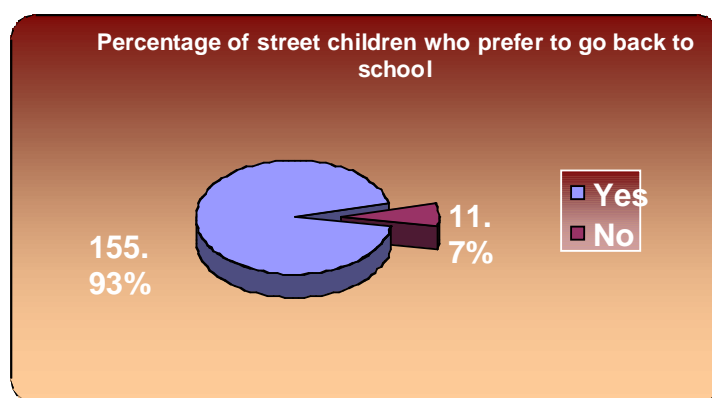
Question 4e of the questionnaire was design for street children to find out why street children dropped out of school. According to the response, 63% of the respondents indicated that they dropped out of school because there was no person to pay their fees and other school materials. 15 or 9 % indicated they dropped out of school because they had no parents, while there were five percent who mentioned that they were not interested in attending school.

Distribution of street children who prefer to go back to school

Table 15d

	Frequency
Yes	155
No	11
Total	166

Table 15d



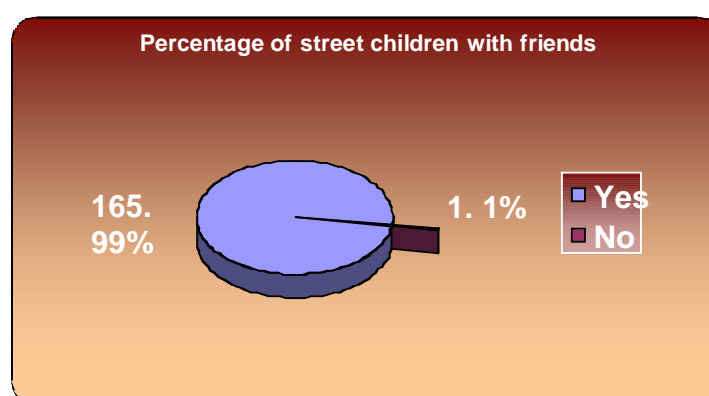
The table and figure above shows the distribution and percentage of street children who wants to go back schooling. Herein, it shows that out of 16 interviewed street children, 93% or 155 wants to go back to school while the remaining 11 or 7% do not prefer to be back to school.

16. Profile of street children by friends

Distribution street children with friends

Table 16a

	Frequency
Yes	165
No	1
Total	166

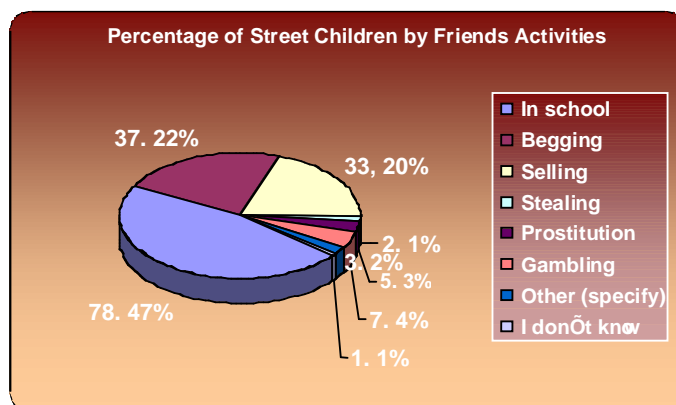
Figure 16a

In the above table and figure, it shows 165 or 99% of the street children interviewed responded that they have friends and only one percent has no friend.

Distribution of street children by friends' activities

Table 16b

Activities	Frequency
In School	78
Begging	37
Selling	33
Stealing	2
Prostitution	5
Gambling	7
Other (specify)	3
I don't know	1
Total	166

Figure 16b

Question 11b of the questionnaire design for street children, was set out to further look at the relationship between the friends of street children and the type of things they are currently doing.

Table 15f and figure 15f above shows that 47.0% are going to school while majority of the others 50.6% indicated that their friends are involved in begging, selling, stealing, prostitution and gambling. The remaining 1.8% does not know what their friends do.

Distribution of street children by friend's activities

Table 16c

		If Yes, what are your friends doing								Total
		In school	Begging	Selling	Stealing	Prostitution	Gambling	Other (specify)	I don't know	
District	Kenema	16	8	7	0	1	2	0	1	35
Codes	Kono	2	20	6	0	1	3	0	0	32
	Makeni	21	4	3	0	1	0	1	0	30
	Bo	23	0	7	2	2	2	0	0	36
	Freetow	16	5	10	0	0	0	2	0	33

n									
Total	78	37	33	2	5	7	3	1	166

Figure 16c

Distribution of street children by their friends' activities such as gambling, stealing, etc.

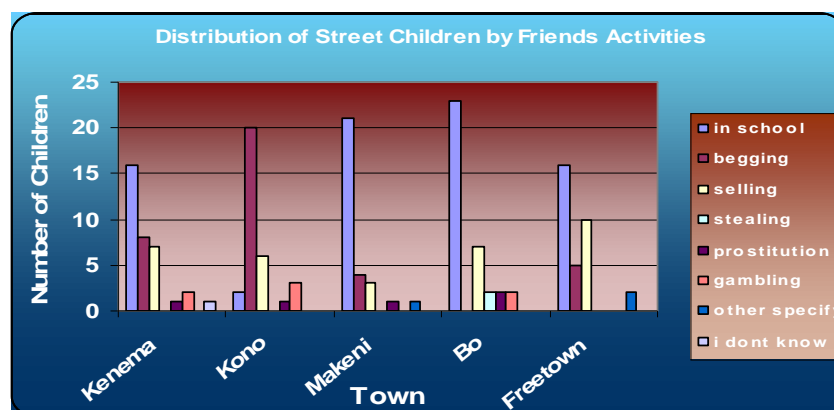


Table 16c and figure 16c shows the activities of street children in the different districts for street children interviewed. From the table it shows that in Kenema out of the 35 street children interviewed 16 are in school while the majority of the others are engaged in begging, stealing, selling, prostitution and gambling.

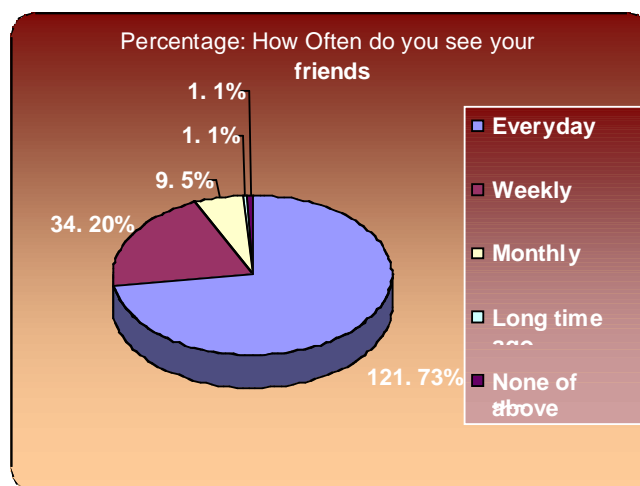
In Kono 20 out of the 32 interviewed are involved in begging while only two are in school. The rest are involved in selling, stealing and gambling. In the other districts, Makeni, Bo and Freetown we see that majority of their friends are in school while a cross section of them are involved in begging, stealing, selling and prostitution. Additionally, the researcher sees that 78 out of 166 street children interviewed had friends who attend school. The rest of the friends are involved in child labour deviant or unfriendly behaviours.

How often street children see their friend

Table 16d

	Frequency
Everyday	121
Weekly	34
Monthly	9
Long time ago	1
None of the above	1
Total	166

Figure 16d



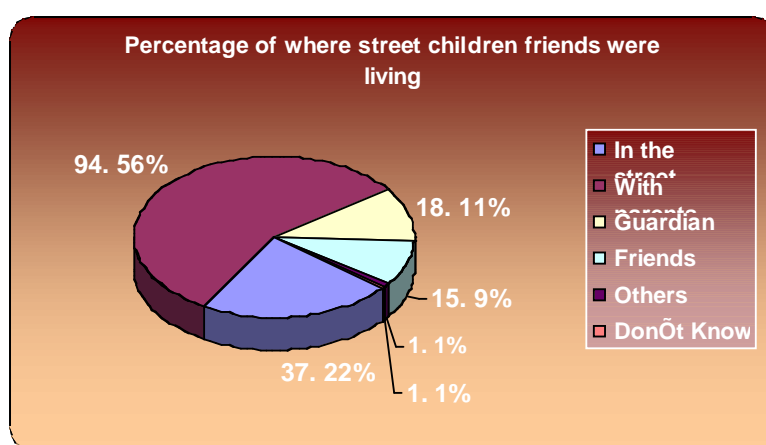
In table and figure above question 12 intends to find out how often street children see their friends. Table 16d and figure 16d shows that out of the 166 respondents interviewed, 121 see their friend's everyday while 34 see their friends on a weekly basis. The remaining 11 respondents either have seen their friend's long time ago or have not seen them at all. These findings show that majority of the street children 93.4% do see their friends at least every day or weekly.

Distribution of where street children's friends are living

16e

	Frequency
In the street	37
With parents	94
Guardian	18
Friends	15
Others	1
Don't Know	1
Total	166

Figure 16e



The table and figure above shows the distribution and percentage of where the friends of street children currently lived. The table shows that majority of their friends which comprises 56% of the interviewed children are still living with their parents. 22% or 37 are living in the street. Only 11% or 18 interviewed children mentioned that their friends are living with guardians and nine percent or 15 said that their friends are living with

their friends. This indicates that most of the children have friends who are still living with their parents.

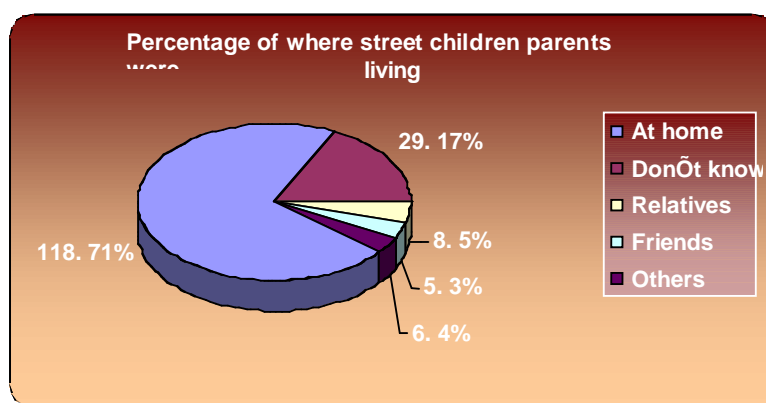
17. Profile of street children by parents

Distribution of where parents of street children are living

Table 17a

	Frequency
	118
Don't know	29
Relatives	8
Friends	5
Others	6
Total	166

Figure 17a



The above table and figure highlight the frequency and percentage distribution of street children parents and their living conditions. The table shows that out of the 166 respondents interviewed 118 (71%) have homes they lived, 29 (17%) indicated do not know, eight (5%) lived with relatives, five (3%) lived with friends while six (4%) lived with some other people other than those mentioned in the table above. These findings have shown that majority of the street children do have their parents living at home.

During the survey whilst talking to some of the children, majority of them expresses that, their parents lived in houses even though it might not be conducive. Only few of the parents lived with relatives and friends.

Town distribution of where parents of Street children are living

Table 17b

		Where are your parents living					Total
		At home	Don't know	Relatives	Friends	Others	
District Codes	Kenema	30	4	1	0	0	35
	Kono	17	15	0	0	0	32
	Makeni	18	4	3	1	4	30
	Bo	25	5	3	2	1	36
	Freetown	28	1	1	2	1	33
Total		118	29	8	5	6	166

Figure 17b

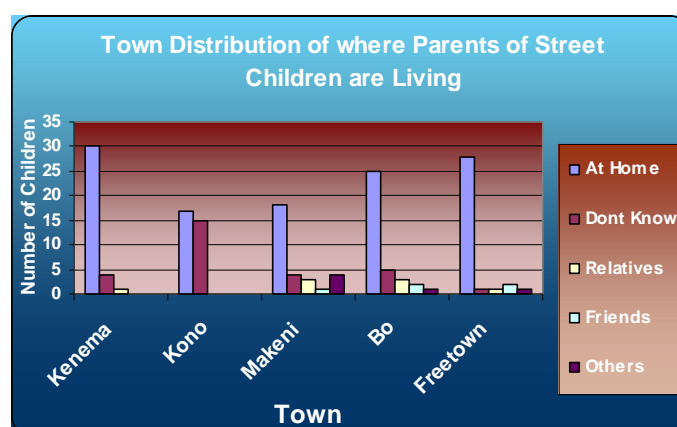


Table 17b and figure 17b above shows a distribution of the living conditions of street children parents in District towns. All of the district towns have majority of the street children parents living in houses even though the houses may not be permanent. Kenema

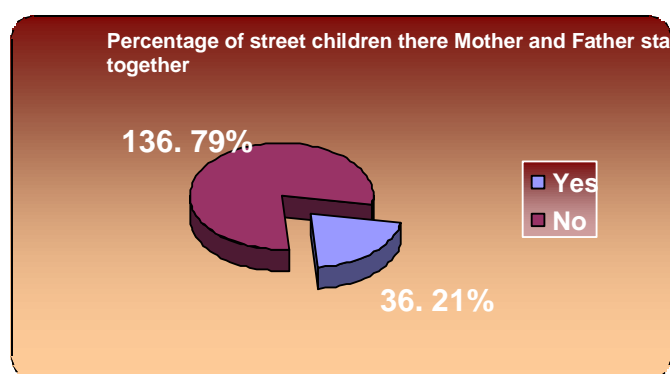
town has the highest number of street children parents living in their own houses other than living with other relations or friends.

Distribution of street children with parent staying together

Table 17c

	Frequency
Yes	36
No	130
Total	166

Figure 17c



This table and figure above illustrates the frequency and percentage distributions of street children staying together. The table shows that 130 (79%) of the respondents interviewed indicated that both parents are not staying together; 36 (21%) said they have both parents living together.

These findings reveal that majority of the parents of street children do not lived together as indicated in table 8a above. According to research reviews, children of divorce, when compared to children from dual-parent families, exhibit more "acting-out" behaviours (e.g., aggression, conflict with school authorities) as well as maladaptive, internally directed behaviours (e.g., depression, anxiety, and withdrawal) (Aro & Palosaari 1994).

Children of divorce also are more likely to perform less well academically, have a lower academic self-concept (but not lower self-esteem), and are less motivated to achieve. These adjustment difficulties are sometimes directly divorce-related, and sometimes due more to problems in parents' functioning (Miller., Ryan & Morrison, 1999). There may be age-related divorce concerns that are linked to children's levels of cognitive and emotional development. Preschoolers are more likely to focus on maintaining emotional security and relationships with both parents, and to need routines in their school and home environments (Wallerstein & Lewis, 1998).

In middle childhood, issues that originated during the preschool years can be compounded by children assuming guilt, blame, or responsibility for the parents' divorce, or by children holding unrealistic expectations about their ability to influence parental behaviour, such as bringing their parents back together. High school students are more likely to deal with divorce-related concerns cognitively, and to express these concerns in terms of their own identity, capacity for relationships, and life-choice issues (Wallerstein & Lewis, 1998).

Data from the survey that contains examination on whether parental conflict prior to divorce can explain why children with divorced parents exhibit more academic and adjustment difficulties compared to children with parents who stay together. Results show that children with divorced parents have exposure to more conflict and acrimony compared to children who grow up in stable marriages, and this may explain why the former achieve less than the latter (Miller, Ryan & Morrison, 1999).

The relationship between marital conflict and adolescent adjustment is particularly complex because of the difficulty of isolating the effects of age and exposure to conflict, and other historical variables. Marital conflict in families with adolescents is unlikely to have arisen suddenly and may have already disrupted many facets of family functioning. However, apart from these complex factors, in a few longitudinal studies, researchers have suggested that the association between marital fighting and childhood problems may

become stronger with age, in part because children seem to become sensitised to conflict with repeated exposure (Gilliom, 2004).

The results indicate that parental conflict is partly but by no means completely responsible for the association between divorce and child welfare. The results also suggest that, for four of the sixteen measures of child well-being examined, children exposed to high levels of parental conflict are neither better off nor worse off, on average, when their parents divorce, while those exposed to low levels of parental conflict appear to suffer severe disadvantages when their parents separate.

This suggests that, in some areas, marital relations prior to divorce help determine when the consequences of divorce are particularly harmful for children and when the consequences of divorce are relatively benign (Kasen, Cohen, Brook, & Hartmark, 1996). The findings reveal that children who live with single parents tend to drift into the streets. One should however be curious to know the reason why these parents tend to drift into the street.

Town distribution of street children there mother and father staying together

Table 17d

		Are your mother and father staying together		Total
		Yes	No	
District Codes	Kenema	19	16	35
	Kono	5	27	32
	Makeni	4	26	30
	Bo	3	33	36
	Freetown	5	28	33
Total		36	130	166

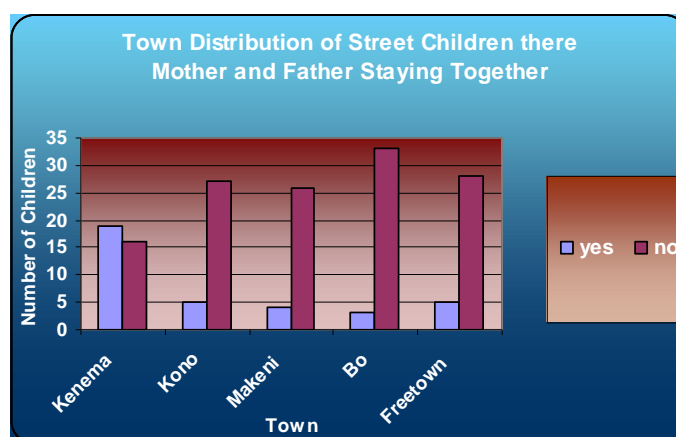
Figure 17d

Table 17d and figure 17d above shows parents of street children staying together base on District towns. In the various district towns there are large numbers of respondents interviewed who do not have their parents staying together.

Bo has the highest number of parents not staying together followed by Freetown. Freetown and Bo are the two biggest towns with more economic activities that could have been one of the reasons for parents not staying together.

Distribution of street children who live with a mother or father

Table 17e

	Frequency
Mother	72
Father	44
None	50
Total	166

Figure 17e

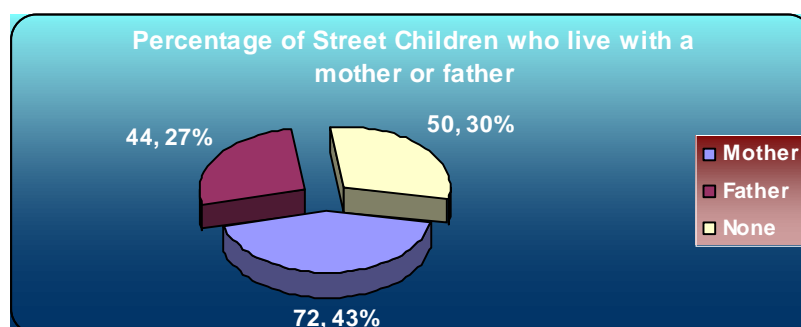


Table 17e and figure 17e above shows which of the parent's street children lived with. From the table 72 (43%) lived with their mothers, 44 (27%) lived with their fathers while 50 (30%) mentioned that they stayed with either the mother or the father.

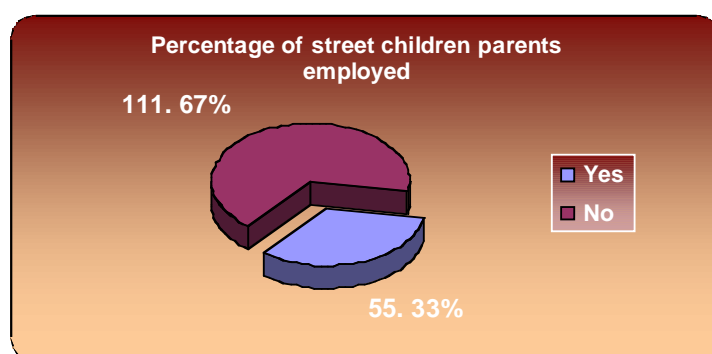
These findings reveal that majority of the children stay with their mothers. This demonstrates a direct link between single parenthood and the street children phenomenon.

Distribution of street children's parents employed

Table 17f

	Frequency
Yes	55
No	111
Total	166

Figure 17f



The table and figure above shows frequency and percentage distribution of street children whose parents are in employment. The table shows that out of the 166 respondents, 55 or 33% of the parents are in employment. 111 or 667% are not in employment. The table shows that majority of the street children's parents are not employed.

Distribution of which street children parents are employed

Table 17g

	Frequency
Mother	12
Father	32
Both	12
None	110
Total	166

Figure 17g

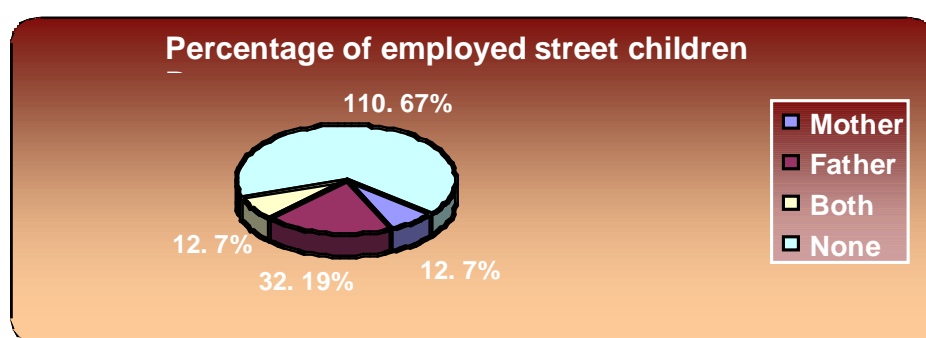


Table 17g and figure 17g shows that 12 or 7% mothers are not in employment, 32 or 19% fathers employed while 12 or seven percent of both parents not employed. The remaining 110 or 67% were not employed.

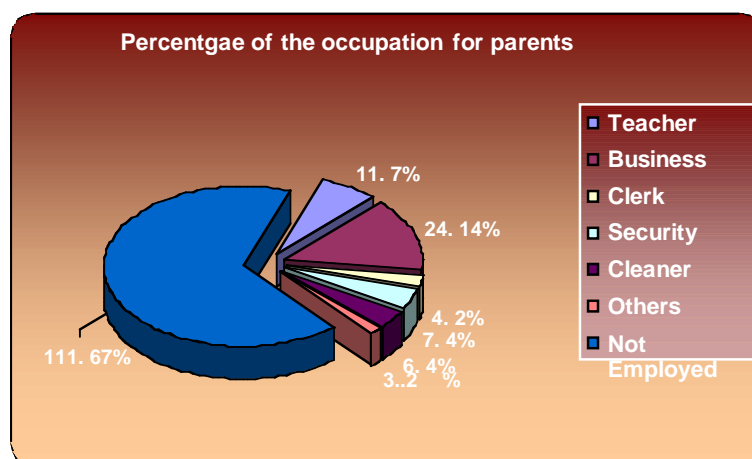
From the above information gathered, it is clear that majority of the respondents 67% of the streets children parents are not employed. The findings have shown that majority of the street children parents without employment finds it difficult to generate income to support their children, which further depicts that unemployment of parents may be considered as one of the factors for street children phenomenon.

Further findings also reveal that those who are in employment are self employed and engaged in activities such as, petty trading, driving, hairdressing, selling firewood and vegetables. These activities generate very low income, hardly adequate to sustain the family.

Distribution of the occupation for parents of street children employed

Table17h

	Frequency
Teacher	11
Business	24
Clerk	4
Security	7
Cleaner	6
Others	3
Not Employed	111
Total	166

Figure 17h

The table and figure above identified street children parent's occupation base on their employment.

The table shows the distribution of occupation within the various employment sectors. Teachers are 11 (7%), business 24 (14%) and clerks 4 (2%). The rest is made of security, cleaner, and others are the majority, which form those of meagre positions and occupations within their various employment.

These findings reveal that majority of the parents employed are employed in low sectors thus income received from their wages is low to sustain an entire family. This could be one reason why street children abandon their homes and end up on the street.

**Town distribution of the occupation for parents
of street children employed**

Table17i

	What is the occupation of the parent who is employed							Total
	Teacher	Business	Clerk	Security	Cleaner	Others	Not employed	

District Codes	Kenema	9	16	2	0	0	2	6	35
	Kono	0	0	2	1	1	0	28	32
	Makeni	0	0	0	4	1	0	25	30
	Bo	2	4	0	2	4	0	24	36
	Freetown	0	4	0	0	0	1	28	33
	Total	11	24	4	7	6	3	111	166

**Town distribution of the occupation for parents
of Street children employed**

Figure 17i

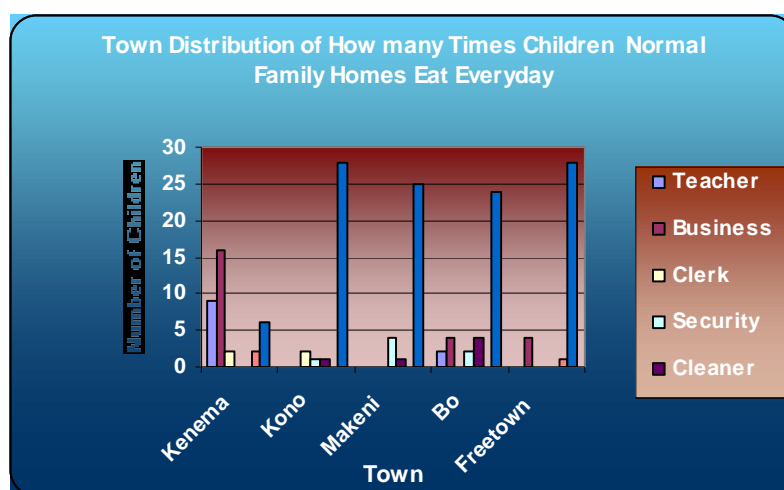


Table 17i and figure 17i looks at the various occupations for street children in the Districts locations. In looking at the above table, we see Kenema with nine parents employed as teachers, 16 Business, and two clerks. None of the parents are employed as teachers or in Business in Kono same for Makeni. In Bo, two of the parents are working as teachers, four in Business, and four as security guards. In Freetown, only four parents are in employment in Business. Further, we see that 11 parents work as teachers, 24 in business, four as clerks, seven as security guards, six as cleaners and the remaining three have other jobs. One hundred and eleven are not employed which forms the majority.

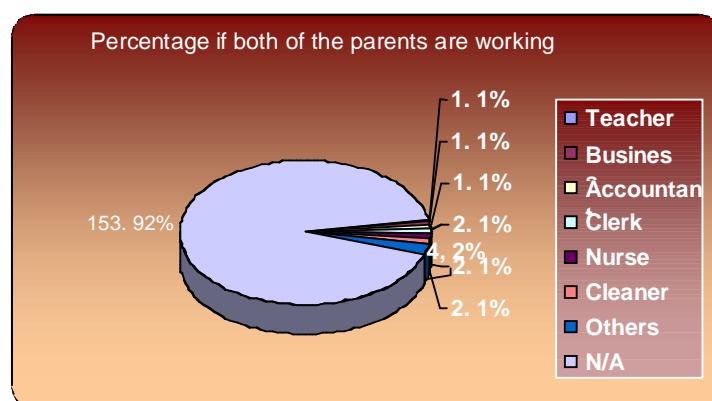
The findings show that Kenema District has majority of parents with street children employed in private sectors with at least regular employment. Most of the other District do not have parents with regular employment or are not in any form of employment.

Distribution if both of the parents are working, select the second option: Street children

Table17j

	Frequency
Teacher	1
Business	1
Accountant	1
Clerk	2
Nurse	2
Cleaner	2
Others	4
N/A	153
Total	166

Figure 17j



The table and figure above shows the distribution and percentage of both parents in employment and the type of occupation they found themselves. The above table shows that nine (6%) out of the total interviewed of the respondents are in sectors like Business, Accounting, clerk, nurse and cleaner. There are four (25) respondents with other forms of employment not mentioned. Majority of the respondents 153 or 92% mentioned it is not applicable which means that they are not employed.

The above findings have revealed that a large number of the parents are not engaged in any form of employment. Those in employment constitute a small number and are engaged in very low-income jobs. This could be the reason for many of the parents and relatives leaving their homes in the morning and coming back late at night in search of money to feed their families.

Distribution of the type of house parent/guardian lives in

Table 17k

	Frequency
Permanent	26
Semi-permanent	48
Temporary	92
Total	166

Figure 17k

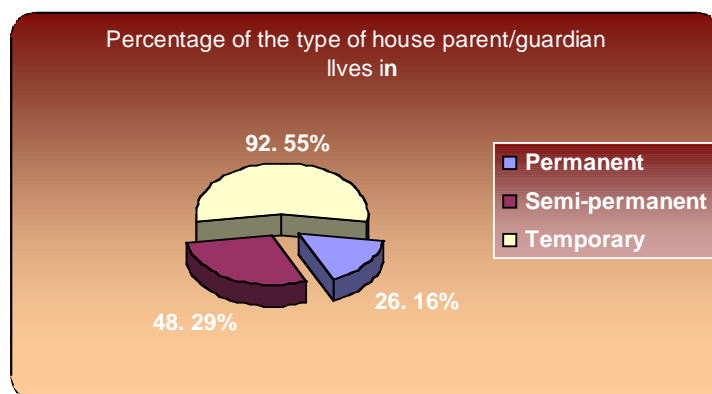


Table 17k and figure 17k above shows the type of house in which the parent / guardian of street children lived in. The table shows that out of 166 respondents interviewed, 26(16%) lived in permanent house, 48 (29 %) lived in Semi-permanent house while 92 (55 %) lived in Temporary houses.

These findings have shown that majority of the street children 55 % lived in Temporary houses. This is a clear indication of the poverty level of the families in which street children in Sierra Leone belongs.

It is not surprising that parents and guardians lived in temporary houses, as they could not afford the means to stay in proper houses, since most or majority of them are unemployed.

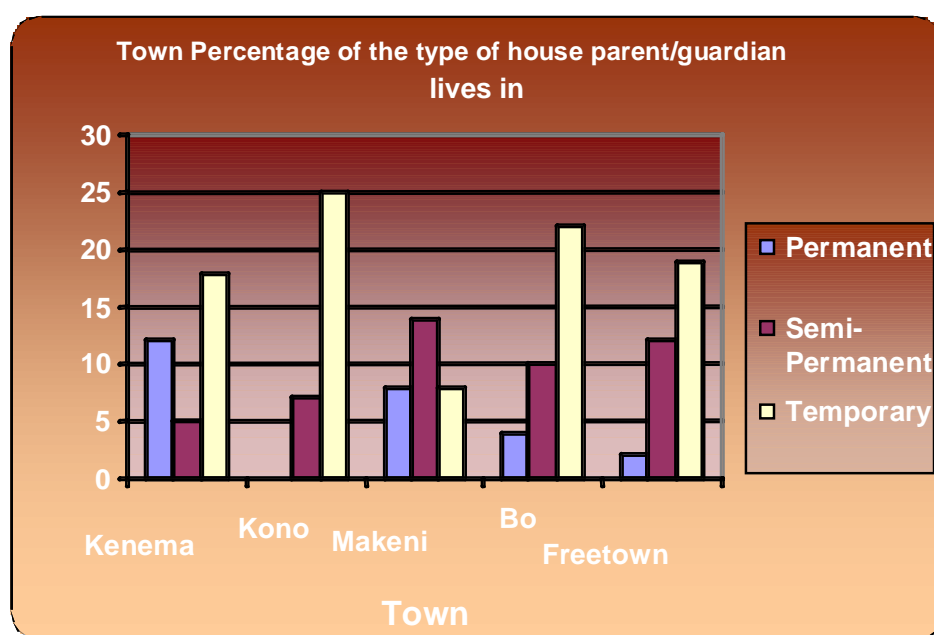
Town distribution of the type of house parent/guardian lives in

Table 17l

		What kind of house does your parent/guardian live in			Total
		Permanent	Semi-permanent	Temporary	
District Codes	Kenema	12	5	18	35
	Kono	0	7	25	32

Makeni	8	14	8	30
Bo	4	10	22	36
Freetown	2	12	19	33
Total	26	48	92	166

Figure 171



The table and figure above gave a description of the type of houses parents and guardians are living base on district locations. The table shows that parent and guardians who lived in permanent houses are mostly parents of street children from Kenema, followed by Makeni, Bo and Freetown.

For Semi-permanent, Makeni with the highest followed by Freetown, Bo, Makeni and Kono. Kono town has the highest 25 for temporary houses, followed by Bo 22, Freetown 19, Kenema 18 and Makeni.

The findings show that 92 out of the 166 respondents lived in temporary houses. A high number of these parents come from Kono, Bo and Freetown whole the others have the lowest. It is clear that out of the five major cities, the three leading towns Freetown, Bo

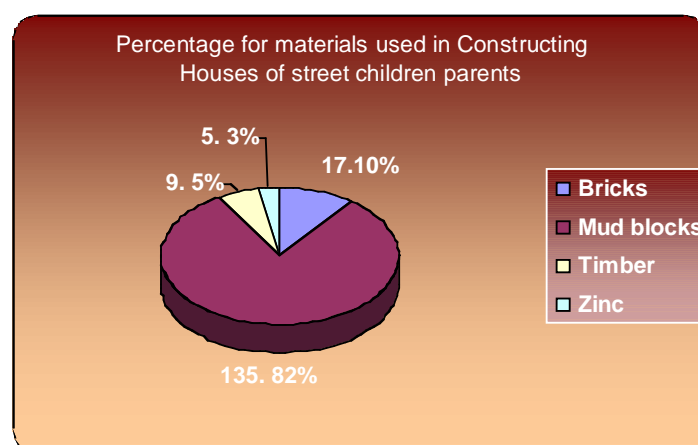
and Kono have the highest number of parents living in temporary houses. One of the reasons for this could be the high living standards in these towns and high cost for housing.

**Distribution for materials used in constructing
Houses of street children parents**

Table 17m

	Frequency
Bricks	17
Mud blocks	135
Timber	9
Zinc	5
Total	166

Figure 17m



Question 19 of the street children questionnaire was to find out the type of materials used for the construction of the houses in which the parents or guardians lived in. Table 17m and figure 17m above shows the frequency and percentage of the various materials used in the construction of houses.

From the table it can be seen that 135 out of 166 or 81% use mud blocks, 17 or 10% use bricks, nine or 5% use timber while 5 or 3% use Zinc. By all indication, we see that the majority 81% has mud blocks use in the construction of their houses. This is a further proof that mud blocks are one of the cheapest materials available for the construction of houses. This shows that majority of the parents lived in mud blockhouses because they are not too expensive to build and it is mostly the cheapest that can be located in big cities for rental. The other materials timber, zinc and bricks are usually expensive for low-income earner to purchase.

18. Number of times street children eat everyday

Distribution of how many times street children eat everyday

Table 18a

	Frequency
One meal	109
Two meals	41
Three meals	16
Total	166

Figure 18a

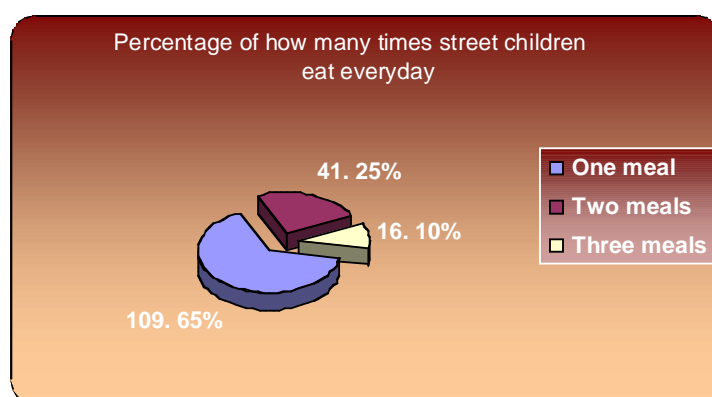


Table 18a and figure 18a illustrates that 109 Out of 166 (65%) had one meal a day. Forty-one respondents (25%) of the respondents had two meals a day while 16 respondents (10%) had three meals a day.

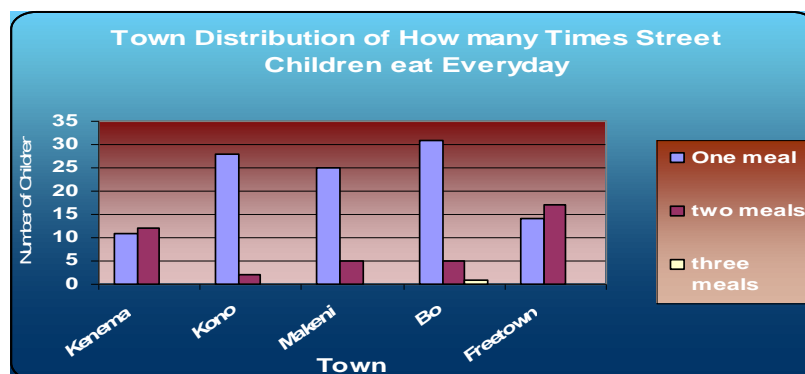
These findings indicate that most street children do not have the recommended three meals per day. The findings are of course a direct consequence of the low incomes of their parents.

**Town distribution of how many times street children
eat everyday**

Table 18b

		How many meals do you have on the street			Total
		One	Two	Three	
District	Kenema	11	12	12	35
Codes	Kono	28	2	2	32
	Makeni	25	5	0	30
	Bo	31	5	0	36
	Freetown	14	17	2	33
	Total	109	41	16	166

Figure 18b



This table illustrates District Codes base on the meals a street child gets while on the streets. The table indicate that Bo town has more respondents who get one meal a day, followed by Kono 28, Makeni 25, Freetown 14 and Kenema 11. Freetown has the highest respondents having two meals a day, followed by Kenema. Kenema is the only town that has 12 respondents having three meals a day. Both Kono and Freetown has two respondents having three meals a day. These findings have shown that in all of the District head quarter towns, majority of the street children only have one meal a day. This can be associated to the level of poverty and low income of their parents and guardians.

Distribution of how children on the street eat

Table 18c

	Frequency
Stealing	10
Selling	55
Gambling	13
Begging	69
Prostitution	8
Others	11
Total	166

Figure 18c

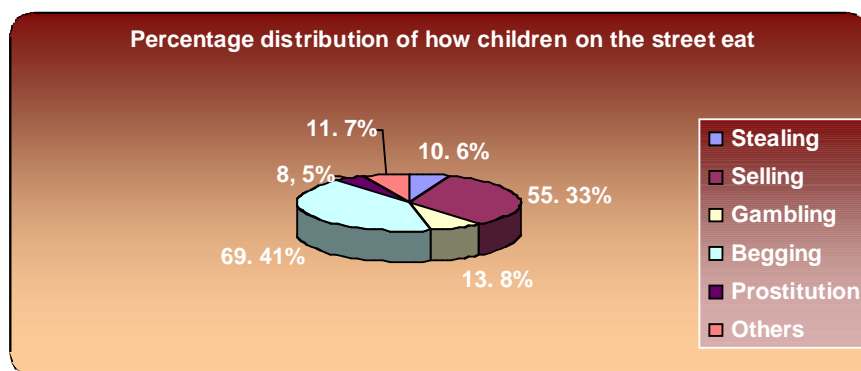


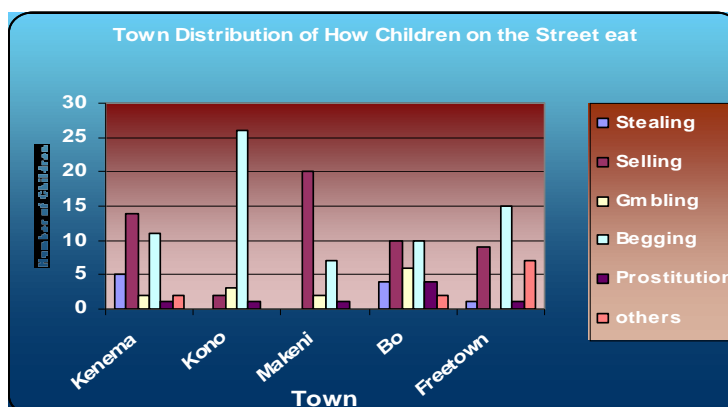
Table 18c and figure 18c shows how street children eat while in the streets. The table illustrates that 69 or 41% depends highly on begging for their survival and food for the day followed by 55 or 33% involved in selling. The rest being the lowest are engaged in stealing, gambling, and prostitution for their survival and food for the day.

These findings indicate that most street children had to depend highly on begging and Selling for their daily survival. Furthermore, the result indicates that majority of the children living on the streets survive and eat through several improper means that is not healthy for the development of children. The findings are of course direct consequences of the low incomes of their parents.

Town distribution of how children on the street eat

Table 18d

		How do you eat						Total
		Stealing	Selling	Gambling	Begging	Prostitution	Others	
District	Kenema	5	14	2	11	1	2	35
codes								
	Kono	0	2	3	26	1	0	32
	Makeni	0	20	2	7	1	0	30
	Bo	4	10	6	10	4	2	36
	Freetown	1	9	0	15	1	7	33
	Total	10	55	13	69	8	11	166

Figure 18d

This table illustrates how children eat base on District Codes. The table shows that in Kono more respondents lived on begging while on the other hand more children lived on selling in Makeni for survival. In Bo, more children eat through selling and begging and this goes the same for Freetown. This finding shows that majority of the street children in the District Towns eat through begging and selling.

19. Length of stay of street children in the street

Distribution of how long street children have been on the street

Table 19a

	Frequency
Less than 1yr	31
1yr	31
2yrs	54
3yrs	22
4yrs	16
5yrs+	12
Total	166

Figure 19a

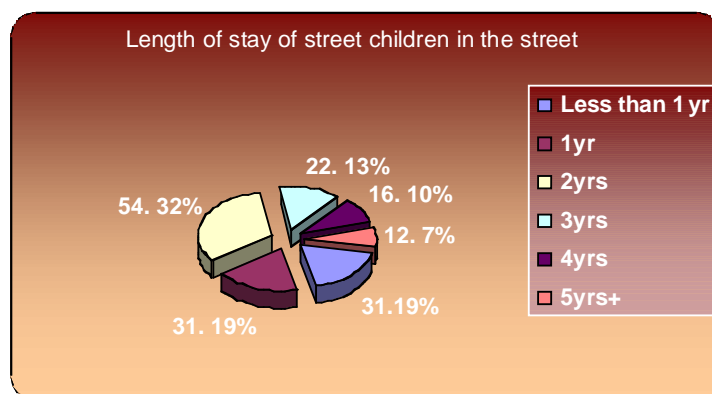


Table 19a and figure 19a above shows data on how long street children have been on the streets. This data shows that at least 54 or 32% have been on the streets for at least two years. The table also shows that 22 or 13% have been on the streets for three years. 12 or 7% have been on the street for more than five years.

This table has shown that at least majority of the streets children have been on the streets for more than one year. The high poverty prevalence is a major factor for the children taking to street life.

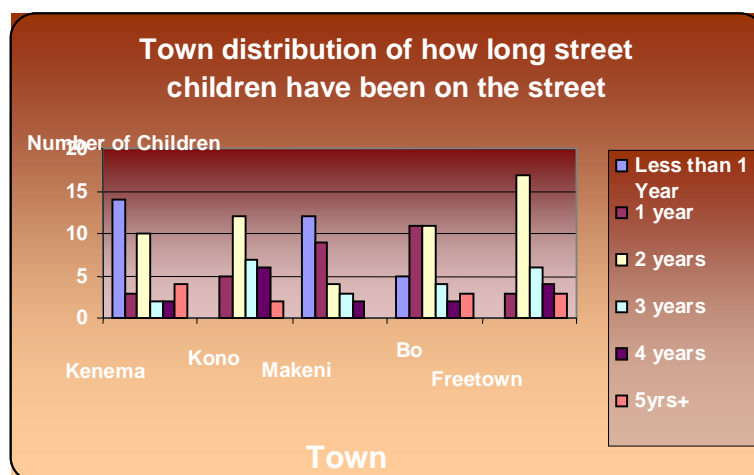
Town distribution of how long street children have been on the street

Table 19b

		How long have you been on the street						Total
		Less than 1yr	1yr	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs+	
District Codes	Kenema	14	3	10	2	2	4	35
	Kono	0	5	12	7	6	2	32
	Makeni	12	9	4	3	2	0	30
	Bo	5	11	11	4	2	3	36
	Freetown	0	3	17	6	4	3	33

Total	31	31	54	22	16	12	166
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Figure 19b



The table and figure above highlight the year's street children have spent on the streets base on District Codes. This table shows that most of the street children living in the various district locations have lived on the streets for more than one year.

In Kenema 21 out of 35 responded they have lived on the streets for more than one year, followed by Kono 32 out of 32, Makeni 18 out of 30, Bo 31 out of 36 and Freetown 33 out of 33 all have lived on the streets for more than one year.

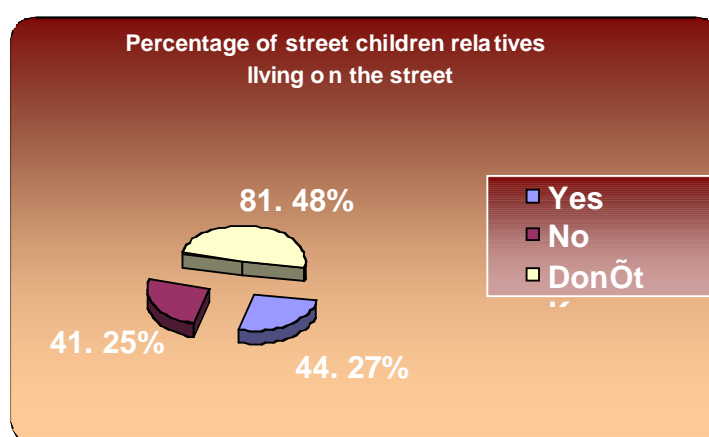
20. Profile of street children by relatives

Distribution of street children relatives living on the street

Table 20a

	Frequency
Yes	44
No	41
Don't Know	81
Total	166

Figure 20a



This table has shown that out of the 166 respondents interviewed, 44 (27%) indicated that they have relatives who are also on the streets. 41 responded they have no relatives on the street while 81 (48%) said they do not know if they have relatives on the streets. Relatives include cousins, aunts, uncles and grandparents.

This finding has revealed that at least majority of the streets children have relatives on the streets. 81 or (48%) said they do not know. The same economic conditions may be responsible for relatives of street children being on the street.

Town distribution of street children relatives living on the street

Table 20b

		Do you have your relatives on the street			Total
		Yes	No	Don't know	
District Codes	Kenema	8	24	3	35
	Kono	7	4	21	32
	Makeni	0	0	30	30
	Bo	5	5	26	36
	Freetown	24	8	1	33

Total	44	41	81	166
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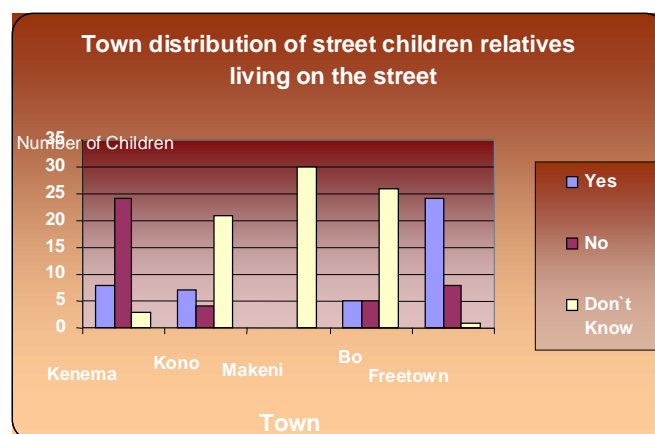
Figure 20b

Table 20b and figure 20b shows relatives of street children on the streets base on District Codes. The table shows that Freetown area has more respondents with relatives on the street, followed by Kenema and Kono. Only Makeni area does not have respondents who have relatives living on the streets. This findings show that majority of the respondents in the various locations with the exception of Makeni do have relatives on the streets. In all the four major towns, Freetown and Kenema has the highest number of relatives on the street.

Further question developed to find out who are the other relatives. Other relatives include, cousins, uncles, and aunts. It was clear that there are more brothers and sisters on the street. The same economic condition may be responsible for brothers / sisters and parents being on the street.

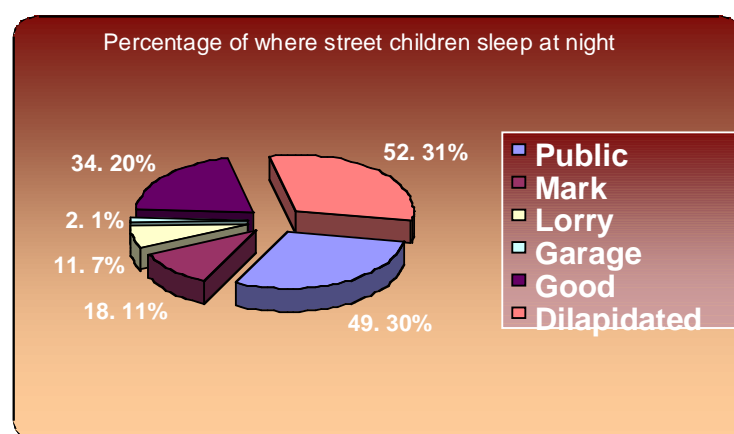
21. Profile of street children by where they sleep at night

Distribution of where street children sleep at night

Table 21a

	Frequency
Public buildings	49
Market	18
Lorry pack	11
Garages	2
Family house	34
Dilapidated house	52
Total	166

Figure 21a



The table and figure above shows the frequency and percentage distribution of places street children sleep at night. The table illustrates that 52 (31%) sleep in dilapidated houses, 49 (30%) sleep in Public buildings, 34 (20%) sleep in good houses, 18 (11%) sleep at the market place, 11 (7%) sleep in lorry parks while two (1%) sleep on garages.

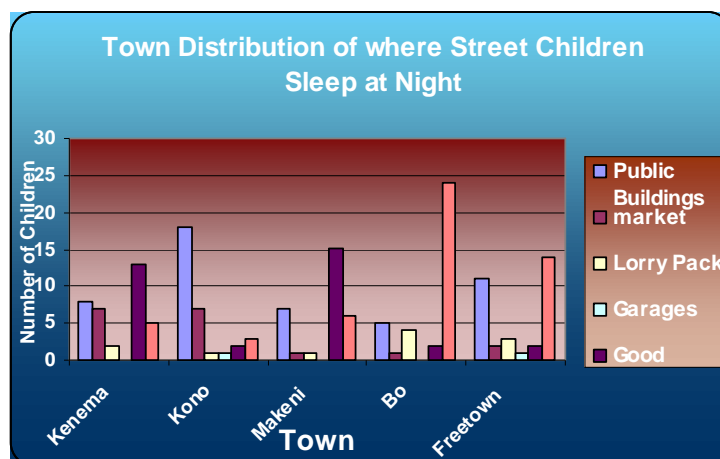
These findings indicate that majority of the street children do not have proper places or houses to sleep. The survey reveals that street children sleep in all type of odd places base on the above table.

Town distribution of where street children sleep at night

Table 21b

		Where do you sleep at night						Total
		Public building s	Marke t	Lorry pack	Garag es	Good house	Dilapidate d house	
District codes	Kenema	8	7	2	0	13	5	35
	Kono	18	7	1	1	2	3	32
	Makeni	7	1	1	0	15	6	30
	Bo	5	1	4	0	2	24	36
	Freetown	11	2	3	1	2	14	33
	Total	49	18	11	2	34	52	166

Table 21b



The table above shows the places street children sleep as shown in the various District towns. This table has shown that Bo town in the Southern province has more street children sleeping in various places ranging from the lorry parks, public buildings, market and dilapidated houses.

In all we see that all of the towns have street children who sleep in different unhealthy places. This same reason maybe associated to the poverty situation in which these children found themselves resulting to them sleeping in various places.

**Distribution of children who would like
to be removed from the street**

Table 21c

	Frequency
Yes	163
No	3
Total	166

Figure 21c



The table and figure above shows frequency and percentage of street children who would like to go off the streets. The table illustrates that 163 (98%) indicated that they would like to go off the streets. Only three (2%) said they do not want to go off the street.

These findings show that majority of the respondents expressed their desire to go off the streets. This shows that the vast majority of the street children do not actually enjoy being on the streets. However, not all of those that expressed their desires to go off the streets

want to go home. They prefer going to other places other than there previous locations or dwellings.

**District distribution of children who would like
to be removed from the street**

Table 21d

		Would you like to go off the street		Total
		Yes	No	
District	Kenema	35	0	35
Codes	Kono	31	1	32
	Makeni	30	0	30
	Bo	35	1	36
	Freetown	32	1	33
	Total	163	3	166

Figure 21d

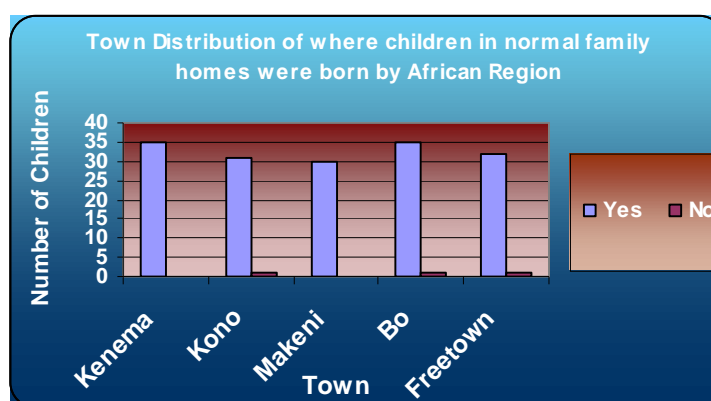


Table 21d and figure 21d shows District Codes for street children who would like to go off the street. The table shows that almost in all District towns, all of the respondents mentioned that they would like to go off the streets. Three of the towns, Kono, Bo and

Freetown have one respondent each indicating that they would not want to go off the street.

These findings have revealed that all the respondents in each of the districts have majority of the street children willing to go off the streets. The desire of a majority of them willing to go off the streets should be linked with the fact that they hate being on the streets.

**Distribution of street children showing
What they would like to do if removed from the street**

Table 21e

	Frequency
Go to School	118
Skills training	40
Tec/Voc	8
Total	166

Figure 21e

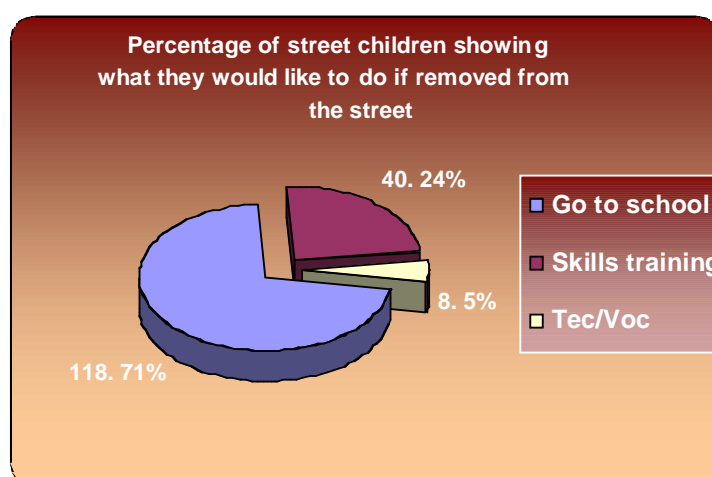


Table 21e and figure 21e illustrates what street children are interested in doing if remove from the street. The table shows that 118 (71%) out of 166 respondents would like to go back to school. Forty or 24% would like to undertake skills training while eight or five percent would like to attend a technical or vocational institute.

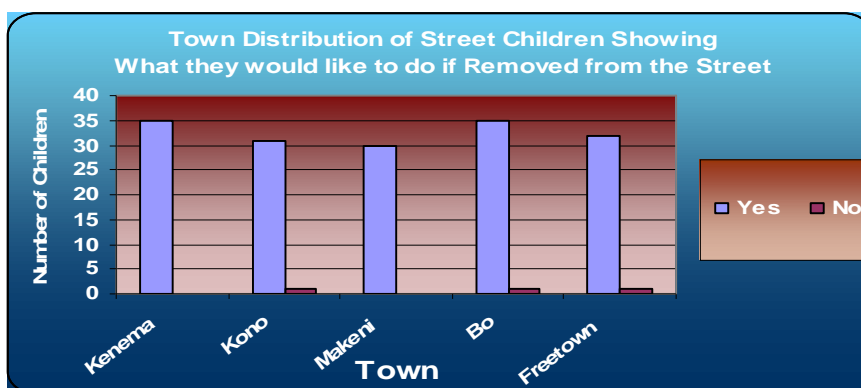
The findings show that all of the street children are interested in going back to school in different educational background. This is an indication that street children are willing to attend school if the opportunity is available to them giving the circumstances of their plight.

**Town distribution of street children showing
What they would like to do if removed from the street**

Table 21f

		Would you like to go off the street		Total
		Yes	No	
District Codes	Kenema	35	0	35
	Kono	31	1	32
	Makeni	30	0	30
	Bo	35	1	36
	Freetown	32	1	33
	Total	163	3	166

Figure 21f



This table shows District Codes for street children who would like to go off the street. The table shows that almost in all District towns, all of the respondents mentioned that they would like to go off the streets. Three of the towns, Kono, Bo and Freetown have one respondent each indicating that they would not want to go off the street.

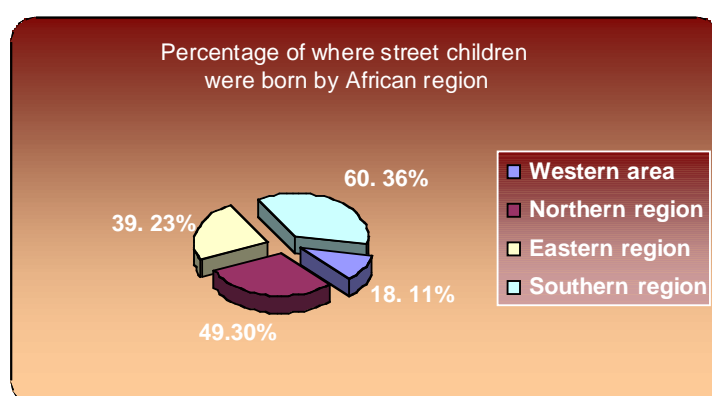
These findings have revealed that all the respondents in each of the districts have majority of the street children willing to go off the streets. The desire of a majority of them willing to go off the streets should be linked with the fact that they hate being on the streets.

22. Place of birth of street children

Distribution of where street children were born by African region

Table 22a

African Region	Frequency
Western area	18
Northern region	49
Eastern region	39
Southern region	60
Total	166

Figure 22a

This table shows street children and the location they were born. The table illustrates that 60 (36%) of the respondents were born in the Southern region, 49 (29.5%) in the Northern region, 39 (23%) in the Eastern region and 18 (11%) born in the Western area.

These findings have shown that majority of the street children (36.1%) were born in the Southern region followed by the Northern region (30%). Both the Southern and Northern region has the highest number of street children.

**Town distribution of where street children
were born by region**

Table 22b

		Where were you born				Total
		Western Area	Northern region	Eastern region	Southern region	
District codes	Kenema	0	0	2	33	35
	Kono	0	8	2	22	32
	Makeni	0	30	0	0	30
	Bo	0	2	33	1	36
	Freetown	18	9	2	4	33

Total	18	49	39	60	166
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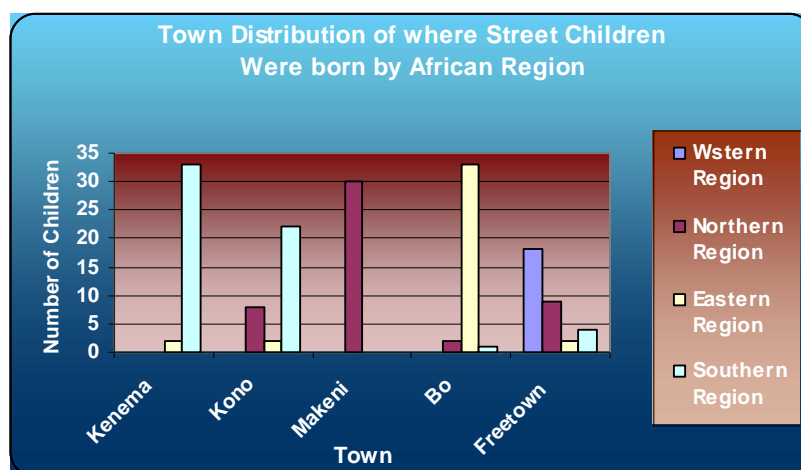
Figure 22b

Table 22b and figure 22b shows the places where street children were born based on regions and towns. This table shows that more children were born in the Southern region (60) followed by the Northern region (49), Eastern region (39) and then Western Area (18). These findings have shown that a large number of street children interviewed were born in the southern and Northern region.

23. Profile of street children by drugs

Distribution of drugs by street children

Table 23a

	Frequency
Capsule	2
Marijuana	9
Gunpowder	4
None	143
Other	8
Total	166

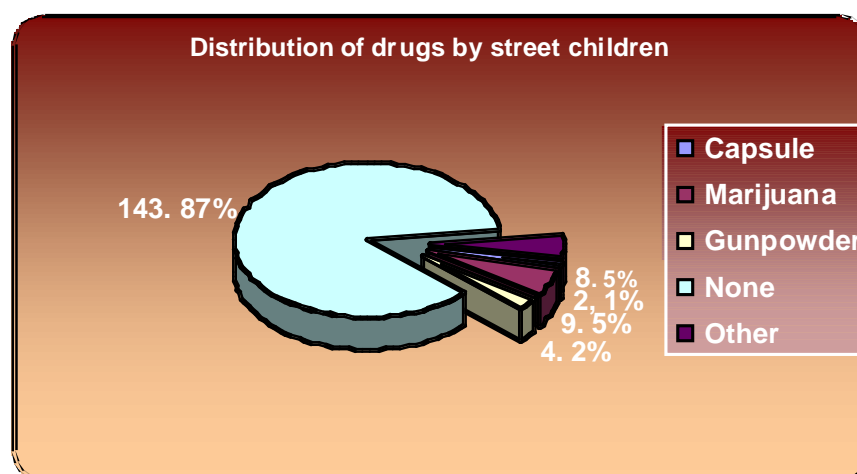
Figure 23a

Table 23a and Figure 23a shows the percentage and frequency distribution of street children who take drugs. The table shows that out of the 166 respondents 143 (87%) have never use any drugs before. Nine of the respondents use Marijuana, four-use gunpowder while two use capsule. Eight of the respondents use other drugs that are not included in the table above. These findings have shown that majority of the street children (87%) actually do not use drugs as indicated in table 23b and figure 23b.

The finding is a clear indication that majority of the street children have stayed out of using drugs. This is a fine example demonstrating that street children can be easily become useful citizen if they are given the opportunity to go off the street.

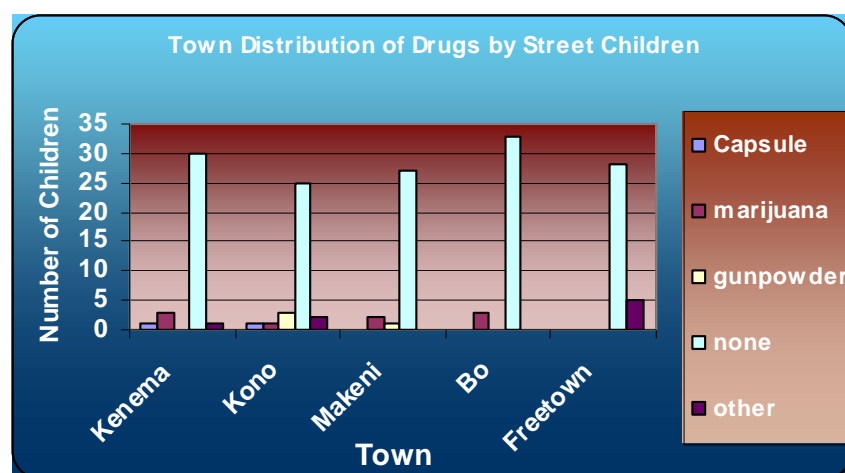
Town distribution of drugs by street children

Table 23b

		Are you taking any of the following drugs					Total
		Capsule	Marijuana	Gunpowder	None	Other	
District Codes	Kenema	1	3	0	30	1	35
	Kono	1	1	3	25	2	32

Makeni	0	2	1	27	0	30
Bo	0	3	0	33	0	36
Freetown	0	0	0	28	5	33
Total	2	9	4	143	8	166

Figure 23b



The table above shows regional distribution of street children involve in drug use. The table illustrates that not all of the children in the various towns have use any of the drugs in the above table. The table further shows that children in Kenema, Kono, Makeni and Bo had few children who have use drugs like marijuana, capsule and gunpowder.

Considering the regional distribution, these findings have shown that all of the major District towns have majority of the children who have not use drugs before. This is a good sign for additional protection and counselling provided for these children to continue to stay out of drugs.

**Distribution of offences for which street children
were arrested and convicted**

Table 23c

	Frequency
Yes	6
No	160
Total	166

Figure 23c



This above table and figure show the frequency and percentage distribution of arrest made on street children for crimes committed. The table shows that out of the 166 (96%) of the respondents were never been arrested for crimes while six (4%) respondents have been arrested before for crimes committed on the street. Further, the street children who were also arrested have answered they were also convicted for the crime they have done.

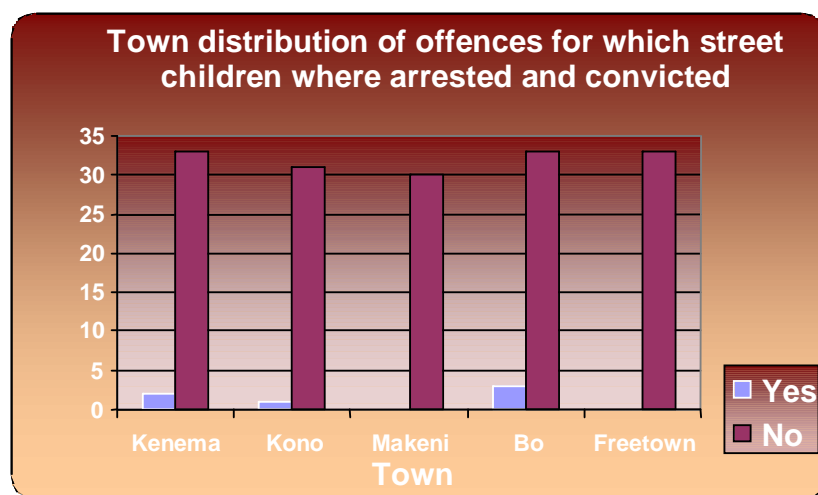
The findings have shown that majority of the children have never been arrested for crimes committed. Those arrested for crimes committed form a small percentage of (4%) as compared to (96%) of children not arrested for crimes. Further investigations revealed that the percentages of children arrested did not go through conviction.

**Town distribution of offences for which street children
were arrested and convicted**

Table 23d

		Have you ever been arrested for any crime		Total
		Yes	No	
District Codes	Kenema	2	33	35
	Kono	1	31	32
	Makeni	0	30	30
	Bo	3	33	36
	Freetown	0	33	33
	Total	6	160	166

Figure 23d



This table illustrates the regional distributions of children arrested for crimes committed. From the table above, majority of the respondents in the district towns said no arrest had made for crimes committed. Only six of the respondents where arrested for crimes

committed and these children have also been convicted. This finding shows that children on the street in all of the District towns have a good record for not being involved in crimes on the street.

4.2.3 Part 3: Cross analysis children in normal family homes and street children

In this section, the researcher will attempt to compare the life of children in normal family homes and street children. The questionnaires consist of the same questions indicated earlier. For the cross-analysis, the research will use some variables. These variables are critical to determine the difference of life of children in normal family homes and street children.

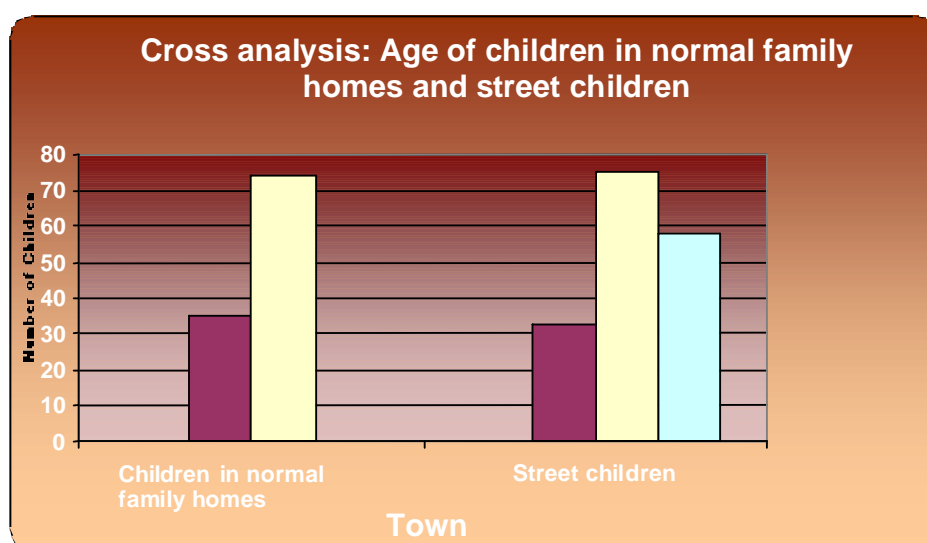
For this dissertation that variables will include age, gender, religion, tribe, educational background, friends activities, parents, and the type of house living in, number of meals taken, drug and crime arrest and conviction. To determine the difference, Independent Samples t-test will be used for each of the cross analysis.

Cross analysis: Age of children in normal family homes and street children

Table 24a

	Frequency				
	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	Total
Children in normal family homes	0	35	74	0	109
Street children	0	33	75	58	166
Total	0	68	149	58	275

Figure 24a



The table and figure above shows the distribution of the surveyed and interviewed children in terms of their age. Herein, it shows that majority of the children who participated in this report belongs to 11-15 years old. On one hand, there is a closer distribution of children, which belong in 6-10 years old.

Cross analysis: Gender of children in normal family homes and street children

Table 24b

	Frequency		
	Male	Female	Total
Children in normal family homes	51	58	109
Street children	71	95	166
Total	122	153	275

Figure 24b

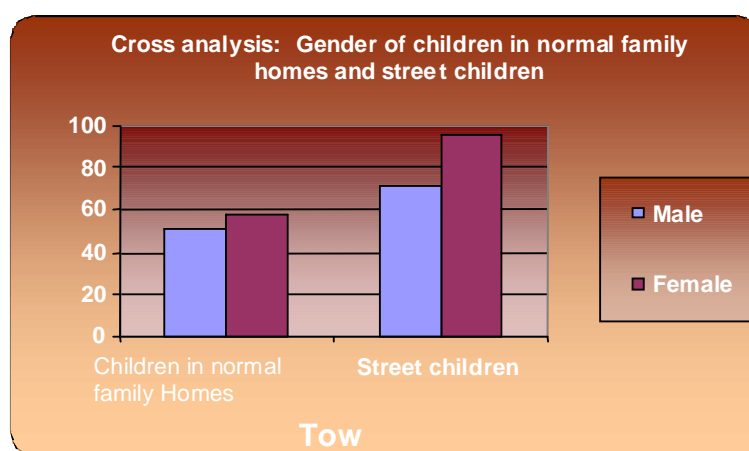


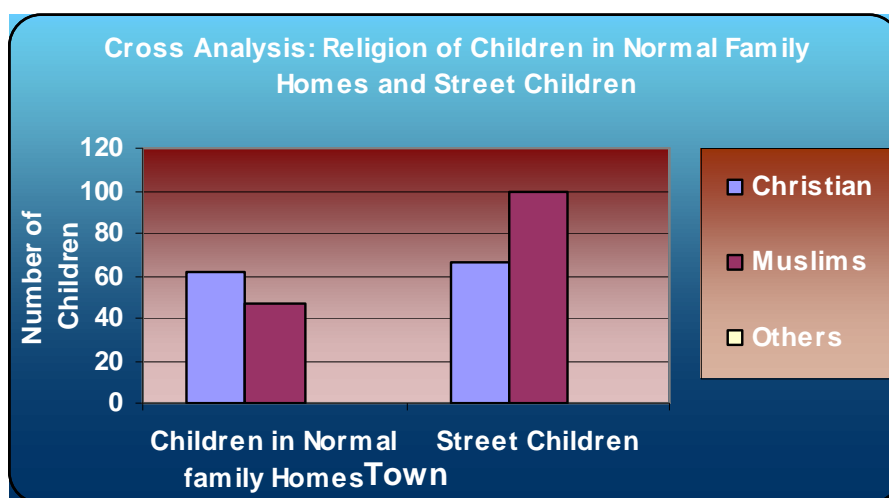
Table 24b and figure 24b shows the distribution of all the children who participated in the study. This shows that most of the children who took part in the study are children, which comprises of 153 females. This indicates that female children are more willing to participate in research studies than their male counterparts are.

Cross analysis: Children in normal family homes and street children by religion

Table 24c

	Frequency			
	Christian	Muslim	Others	Total
Children in normal family homes	62	47	0	109
Street children	66	100	0	166
Total	128	147	0	275

Figure 24c



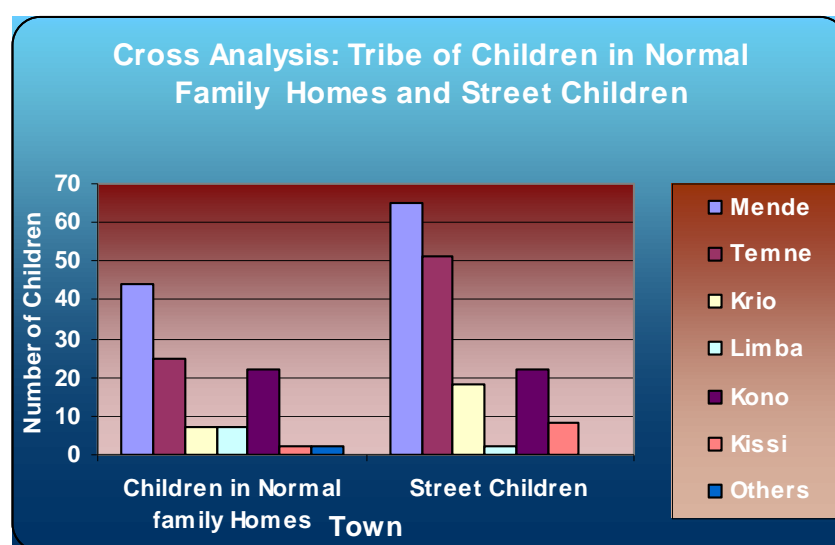
The table and figure above shows the cross analysis tabulation of street children and children in normal family homes by their religion. From there, it shows that majority of the children who have been surveyed and interviewed are belongs to Muslim religion which comprises of 147 children out of 275. This indicates that most of the people in Sierra Leone are Muslims.

Cross analysis: Children in normal family homes and street children by tribe

Table 2

	Frequency							Total
	Mende	Temne	Krio	Limba	Kono	Kissi	Others	
Children in normal family homes	44	25	7	7	22	2	2	109
Street children	65	51	18	2	22	8	0	166
Total	109	76	25	9	44	10	2	275

Figure 24d



The table and figure above shows the cross tabulation of the distribution of 275 children by tribe. Herein, it shows that most of the children belong to Mende tribe, which comprises 109 children out of the 275 participants. Seventy-six out of 275 total respondents belong to Temne tribe. The table and figure also shows an equal distribution of children from normal family homes and street children who belong in Kono, which consist of 22 children for each groups.

Cross analysis: Where children in normal family homes and street children were born

Table 24e

	Frequency					
	Western Region	Northern Region	Eastern region	Southern region	Other	Total
Children in normal family homes	7	27	43	31	1	109
Street children	18	49	39	60	0	166
Total	25	76	72	91	1	275

Figure 24e

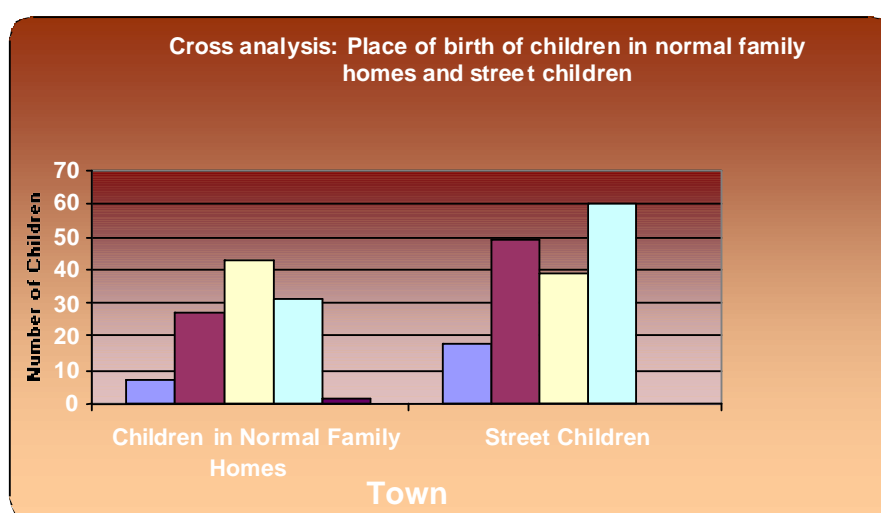


Table 24d and Figure 24d presents the cross analysis of the children in terms of the place where they were born. Herein, it shows that majority of the children who participated in this study were born in Southern region which comprises of 91 out of 275 respondents. 76 and 72 out of 275 total participants were born in northern and southern region respectively.

Cross analysis: Educational status of children in normal family homes

and street children

Table 24f

	Frequency		
	Yes	No	Total
Children in normal family homes	108	1	109
Street children	136	30	166
Total	244	31	275

Figure 24f

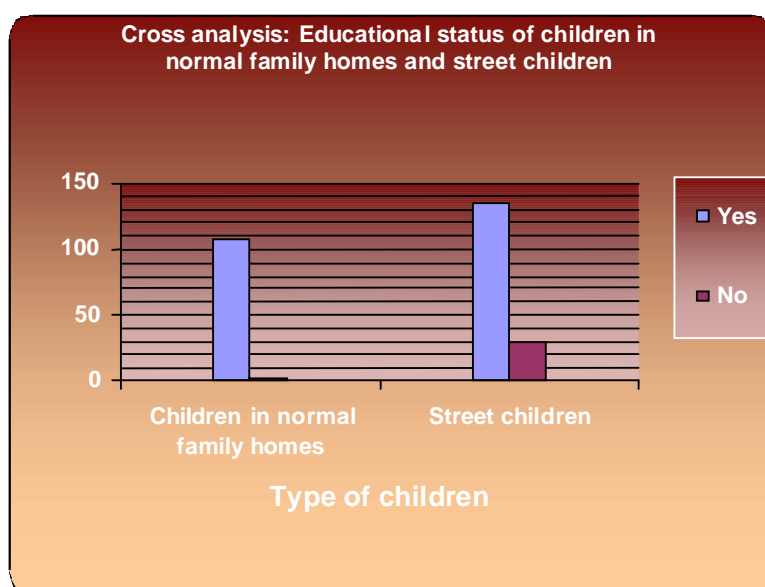


Table 24a and Figure 24a shows the cross tabulation of the distribution of children who have been in school or to school. It shows that majority of the children from normal family homes and street children have been able to study. Although in lieu with the street children, it must be noted that these children are not proven that they are still studying until this point of the research. This may further indicate the both parents and guardians of children living in normal family homes and street children enable them to go schooling. However, due to some circumstances, which has been shown

**Cross analysis: Children in normal family homes
And Street Children with friends**

Table 24g

	Frequency		
	Yes	No	Total
Children in Normal family Homes	106	2	108
Street Children	165	1	166
Total	271	3	274

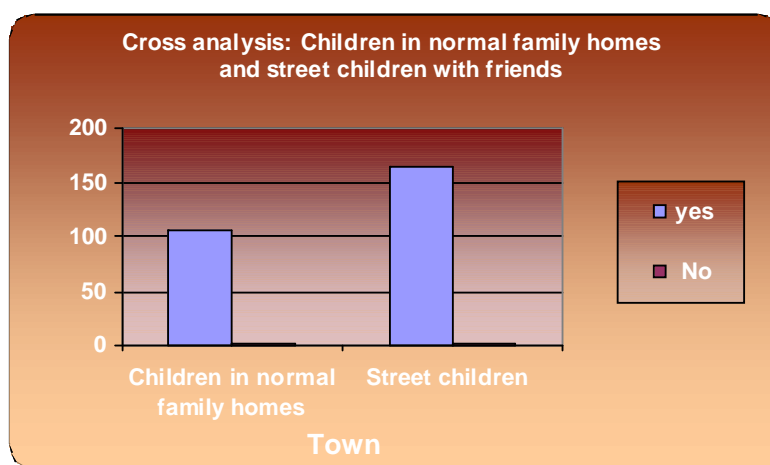
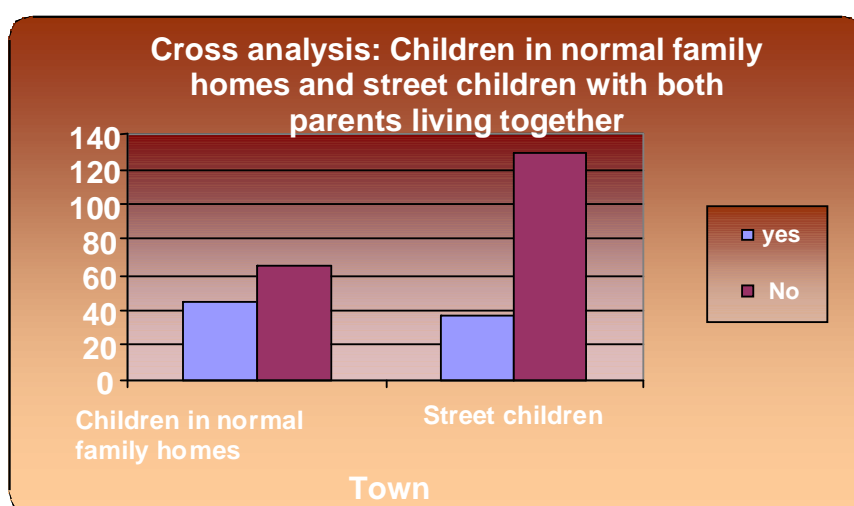
Figure 24g

Table 24f and figure 24f shows the distribution of children in normal family homes and street children with friends. It is obvious that most of the children who participated in this study have friends, which comprise of 271 out of 275 respondents, and only three children have not friends. This may indicate that most of the children in this study are sociable and considered as a part of a group or peers.

**Cross analysis: Children in normal family homes
and street children with both parents living together**

Table 24h

	Frequency		
	Yes	No	Total
Children in Normal family Homes	44	65	109
Street Children	36	130	166
Total	80	195	275

Figure 24h

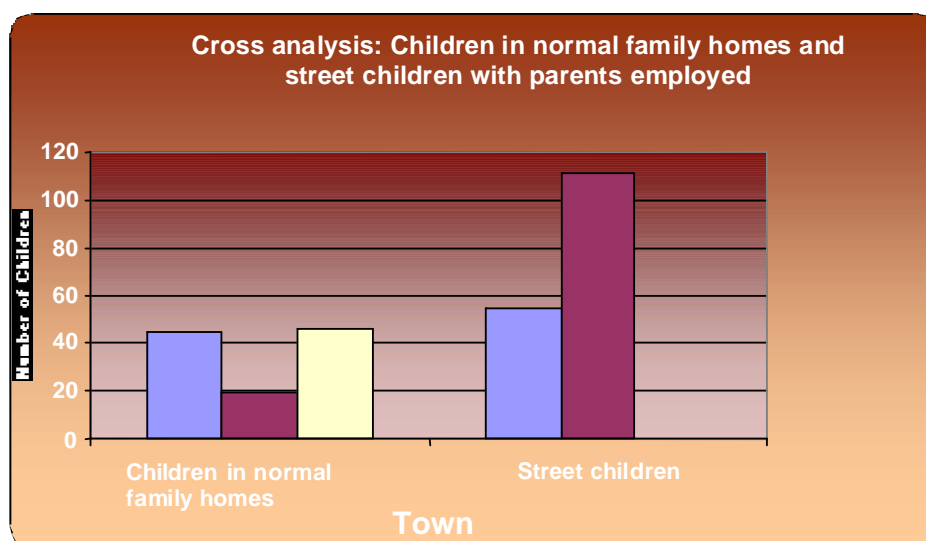
The table and figure above shows the cross analysis or tabulation of children in normal family homes and street children with both parents living together. Herein, it shows that majority of the respondents belongs to broken family, which means that their mother and father are separated. Out of 275 surveyed and interviewed children, 195 of them answered that their parents are separated. In line with street children, 130 participants mentioned that their parents are not living together. This may indicate that the separation of parents leads to have street children phenomenon.

Cross analysis: Children in normal family homes and street children with parents employed

Table 24i

	Frequency			
	Yes	No	N/A	Total
Children in normal family homes	44	19	46	109
Street children	55	111	0	166
Total	99	130	46	275

Figure 24i



The table and figure above presents the frequency of the respondents by parents' employment. In this, it shows that majority of the parents of the children surveyed and interviewed are unemployed, which is 130 out of 275 total respondents. This is an indication of the Sierra Leone has a poor economic performance because of the number of unemployed individuals based from the study. This further indicates that most of the children interviewed belong to poor families because of unemployment.

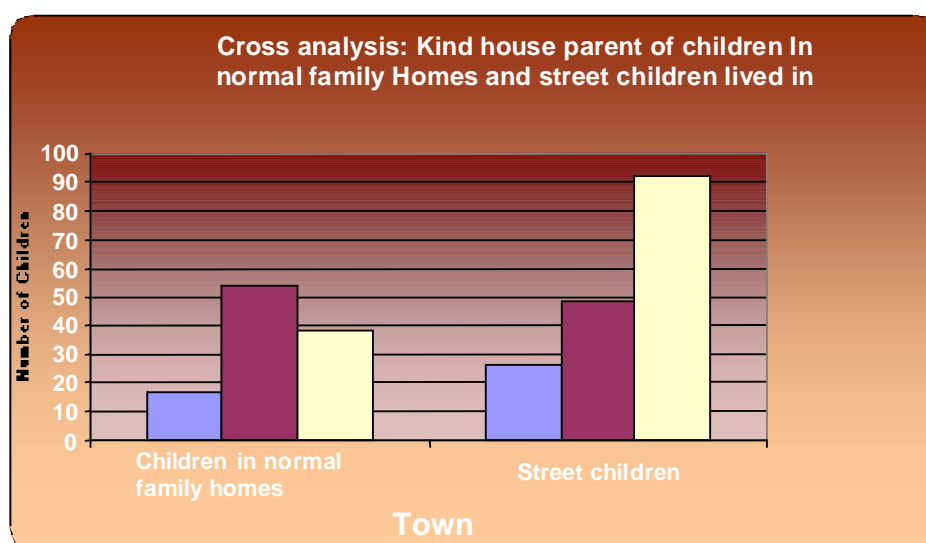
Cross analysis: Kind house parent of children

**in normal family homes and street
children lived in**

Table 24j

	Frequency			
	Permanent	Semi-Permanent	Temporary	Total
Children in normal family homes	17	54	38	109
Street children	26	48	92	166
Total	43	102	130	275

Figure 24j



The table and figure above displays the distribution and frequency of the respondents in terms of their kind of house their parents are living in. As can be seen, it shows that majority of the family of the children interviewed and surveyed are living in temporary houses, which comprises 130 out of 275 children. This is an indication of the status of the

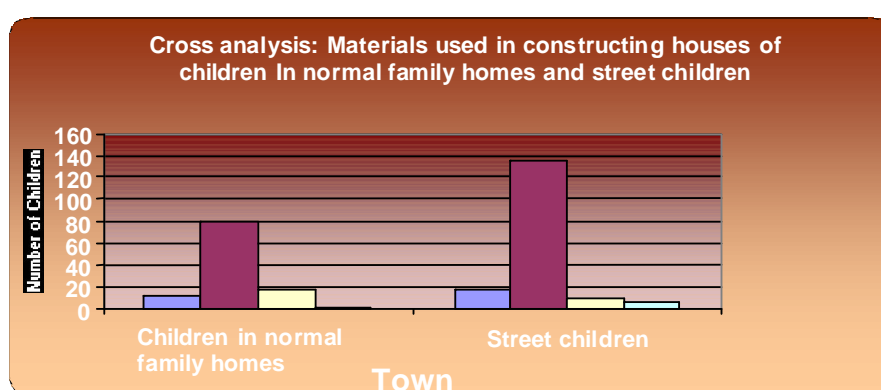
family in Sierra Leone. The lack of permanent houses may be concluded to have an effect on the street children phenomenon in most of the cities in the country.

**Cross analysis: Materials used in constructing houses of children
in normal family homes and street children**

Table 24k

	Frequency				
	Bricks	Mud Blocks	Timber	Zinc	Total
Children in normal family homes	12	79	17	1	109
Street children	17	135	9	5	166
Total	29	214	26	6	275

Figure 24k



The table and figure above shows the frequency of the materials used in constructing houses of children in normal family homes and street children. It reveals that out of 275 children surveyed and interviewed 214 of them are living in a house built from mud blocks. Since mud blocks are considered as one of the cheapest materials available for

the construction of houses, this is an indication that that majority of the parents lived in mud blockhouses because they are not too expensive to build and it is mostly the cheapest that can be located in big cities for rental. The other materials timber, zinc, and bricks are usually expensive for low-income earners to purchase. The unemployment of the parents may also affect the situation of the children in Sierra Leone in terms of housing.

Cross analysis: How many times children in normal family homes and street children eat everyday

Table 24l

	Frequency			
	One Meal	Two Meals	Three Meals	Total
Children in normal family homes	1	64	44	109
Street children	109	41	16	166
Total	110	105	60	275

Figure 24l

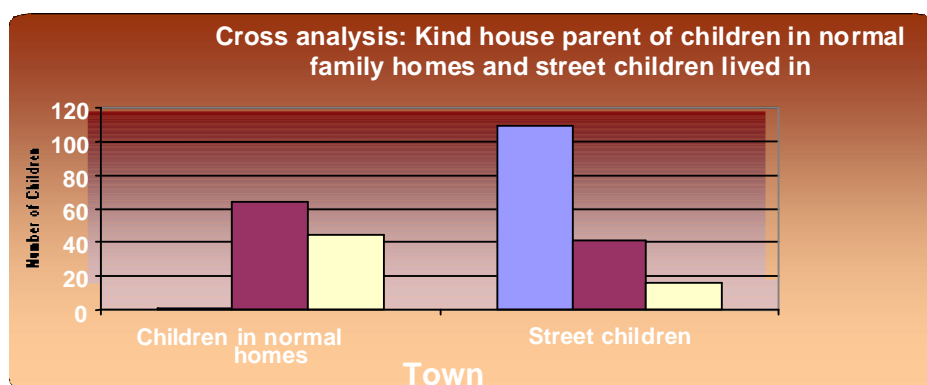


Table 24k and figure 24k displays the distribution of children in terms of number of meals they are eating everyday. It shows that majority of the street children interviewed which comprise of 109 out of 166 is eating one meal a day compared to children in normal family homes with only 1 out of 109 children.

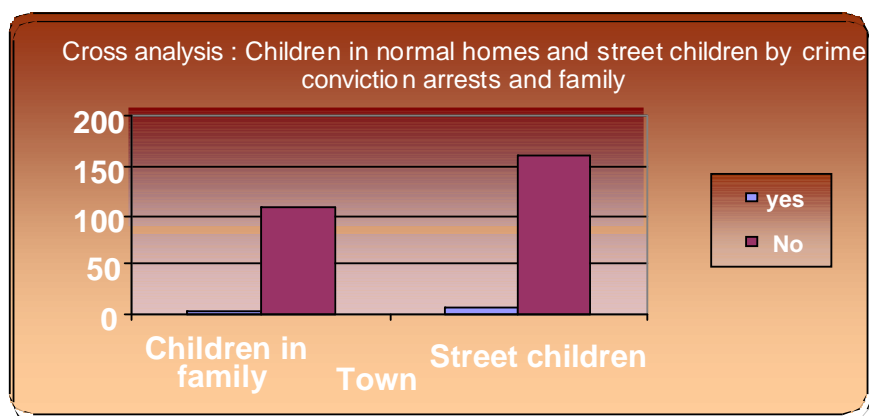
On one hand, majority of children in normal family homes are eating twice a day with 64 out of 109 respondents. This shows a greater difference on the condition of both children in terms of number of meals taken a day.

**Cross analysis: Children in normal family
homes and street children by crime arrests and conviction**

Table 24m

	Frequency		
	Yes	No	Total
Children in normal family homes	1	108	109
Street children	6	160	166
Total	7	268	275

Figure 24m



The table and figure above reveals the distribution of children in terms of crime arrests and conviction. Herein, it shows that majority of the children interviewed and surveyed in this study which comprises 268 children out of 275 have not been arrested nor convicted

for a crime. Only seven children from both groups experienced arrest and conviction for the crime that they have made.

4.2.4 Part 4: Independent sample t-tests for each cross analysis

As mentioned, the main objective of this study is to determine the difference of the condition children living in normal family homes and street children. In order to achieve the objective of the study, the researcher used independent sample t-test described in chapter three.

For this section of the study, the independent sample t-test will measure the difference of the condition of children in different groups through their age, gender, tribe, religion, educational status, friends, parents, employment of parents, types of house parents lived in, materials used in houses, number of meals taken and crime arrests and conviction.

Descriptive statistics: Age of children in normal family homes and street children

24a₁

	Statistics			
	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Standard deviation
Children in normal family homes	74	0	27.2	35.3
Street children	75	0	41.5	32.6

Independent samples t-test

24a₂

Confidence level:	95%
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Mean_a-Mean_b	-14.25
T-value	-.59
df (degree of difference)	6
One-tailed	.288
Two-tailed	.577
Standard error of difference	24.01
2-tail confidence level:	99.93% (Significant)

As mentioned, independent samples t-test will be used to determine if the two groups (children in normal family life and street children) differs in terms of age variable. As can be seen, the p-value and the statistical significance is .577, which shows that in terms of age of the respondents the difference is noted to be statistically insignificant. Furthermore, the means of the two groups are significantly different at 95% confidence interval.

**Descriptive statistics: Gender of children in normal family
homes and street children**

24b₁

	Statistics			
	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Standard deviation
Children in normal family homes	58	51	54.5	4.95
Street children	95	71	83	16.97

Independent samples t-test

24b₂

Confidence level:	95%
Mean_a-Mean_b	-28.50
T-Value	2.28
df (degree of difference)	2
One-tailed	.075
Two-tailed	.15
Standard error of difference	12.50
2-tail confidence level:	100%

The identification of mean difference of two groups in terms of gender variable is seen in the above tables. Herein, the p-value and the statistical significance is .15, which shows that in terms of gender of the surveyed and interviewed children the difference is noted to be not statistically significant. In addition, the means of the two groups are significantly different at 95% confidence interval.

Descriptive statistics: Children in normal family homes and street children by religion

24c₁

	Statistics			
	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Standard deviation
Children in normal family homes	62	0	36.33	55.33
Street children	100	0	32.35	50.85

Independent samples t-test

24c₂

Confidence level:	95%
Mean_a-Mean_b	-.19
T-value	-.55
df (degree of difference)	4
One-tailed	.306
Two-tailed	.613
Standard error of difference	34.79
2-tail confidence level:	45.96%

The determination of mean difference of two groups in terms of religion variable is seen in the above tables. Herein, the p-value and the statistical significance is .613, which shows that in terms of religion of the surveyed and interviewed children the difference is noted to be not statistically significant. However, given that the researcher chooses 95% interval, the means of the two groups' shows 45.96%, which means that there is no difference in the means.

Descriptive statistics: Children in normal family homes and street children by tribe

24d₁

	Statistics			
	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Standard deviation
Children in normal family Homes	44	2	15.57	15.57
Street children	65	0	23.71	25.05

Independent samples t-test

24d₂

Confidence level:	95%
Mean_a-Mean_b	-8.1429
T-value	-0.73
df (degree of difference)	12
One-tailed	.240
Two-tailed	.480
Standard error of difference	11.15
2-tail confidence level:	99.73%

The analysis of mean difference of two groups (children in normal family homes and street children) in terms of tribe variable is seen in the above tables. Herein, the p-value and the statistical significance is .480, which shows that in terms of tribe of the surveyed and interviewed children the difference is noted to be not statistically significant. In addition, given the 95% confidence interval, the result of the samples shows 99.73%, which means that the two groups in the study, is significantly different.

Descriptive statistics: Where children in normal family homes and street children were born

24e₁

	Statistics			
	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Standard deviation
Children in normal family homes	43	1	21.8	17.41
Street children	60	0	33.2	24.16

Independent samples t-test

24e₂

Confidence level:	95%
Mean_a-Mean_b	-11.4
T-value	-0.86
df (degree of difference)	8
One-tailed	.207
Two-tailed	.415

Standard error of difference	13.32
2-tail confidence level:	100%

The analysis of mean difference of two groups (children in normal family homes and street children) in terms of the place of birth of children is shown in the above tables. Herein, the p-value and the statistical significance is .415, which shows that in terms of tribe of the surveyed and interviewed children the difference is noted to be not statistically significant. In addition, given the 95% confidence interval, the result of the samples shows 100%, which means that the two groups in the study, is significantly different.

**Descriptive statistics: Educational status of children in
normal family homes and street children**
24f₁

	Statistics			
	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Standard deviation
Children in Normal family Homes	108	1	54.5	75.66
Street Children	136	30	83	74.95

Independent samples t-test

24f₂

Confidence level:	95%
Mean_a-Mean_b	-28.5
T-value	-0.38
df (degree of difference)	2
One-tailed	.370
Two-tailed	.741
Standard error of difference	75.31
2-tail confidence level:	99.77%

The analysis of mean difference of two groups (children in normal family homes and street children) in accordance with the educational status of children shown in the above tables.

The tables shows that the p-value and the statistical significance is .741 which shows that in terms of educational status of the surveyed and interviewed children the difference is noted to be not statistically significant. In addition, given the 95% confidence interval, the result of the samples shows 99.77%, which means that the two groups in the study, is significantly different.

**Descriptive statistics: Children in normal family homes
and street children with friends**

24g₁

	Statistics			
	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Standard deviation
Children in normal family homes	106	2	54	73.54
Street children	165	1	83	115.97

Independent Samples T-Test

24g₂

Confidence level:	95%
Mean_a-Mean_b	-.29
T-value	-.3
df (degree of difference)	2
One-tailed	.400
Two-tailed	.792
Standard error of difference	97.098
2-tail confidence level:	97.9%

The analysis of mean difference of two groups (children in normal family homes and street children) in accordance with friend variable of children shown in the above tables.

The tables shows that the p-value and the statistical significance is .792 which shows that in terms of friends of the surveyed and interviewed children the difference is noted to be not statistically significant. In addition, given the 95% confidence interval, the result of the samples shows 97.9%, which means that the two groups in the study, is significantly different.

**Descriptive statistics: Children in normal family homes
and street children with both parents living together**
24h₁

	Statistics			
	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Standard deviation
Children in normal family homes	65	44	54.5	14.85
Street children	130	36	83	74.95

Independent samples t-test
24h₂

Confidence level:	95%
Mean_a-Mean_b	-28.5
T-value	-.53
df (degree of difference)	2
One-tailed	.325
Two-tailed	.650

Standard error of difference	54.03
2-tail confidence level:	99.99%

The analysis of mean difference of two groups (children in normal family homes and street children) in accordance with the situation of parents if both are living together variable of children shown in the above tables.

The table presents that the p-value and the statistical significance is .650, which shows that in terms of the situation of parents of the surveyed and interviewed children the difference is not statistically significant. In addition, given the 95% confidence interval, the result of the samples shows 99.99%, which means that the two groups in the study, is significantly different.

Descriptive statistics: Children in normal family homes and street children with parents employed

24i₁

	Statistics			
	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Standard deviation
Children in normal family homes	46	19	36.33	15.04
Street children	111	0	55.33	55.5

Independent Samples t-test

24i₂

Confidence level:	95%
Mean_a-Mean_b	-19
T-value	-.57
df (degree of difference)	4
One-tailed	.300
Two-tailed	.600
Standard error of difference	33.20
2-tail confidence level:	99.94%

The analysis of mean difference of two groups (children in normal family homes and street children) in accordance with the parent's employment variable of children shown in the above tables.

The table presents that the p-value and the statistical significance is .600, which shows that in terms of the situation of parents of the surveyed and interviewed children. It is important to note that the difference is not statistically significant. In addition, given the 95% confidence interval, the result of the samples shows 99.94%, which means that the two groups in the study, is significantly different.

**Descriptive statistics: Kind house parent of children
in Normal Family homes and street**

children lived in

24j₁

	Statistics			
	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Standard deviation
Children in normal family homes	54	17	36.33	18.56
Street children	92	26	55.33	33.61

Independent samples t-test

24j₂

Confidence level:	95%
Mean _a -Mean _b	-19
T-value	.857
df (degree of difference)	4
One-tailed	.219
Two-tailed	.438
Standard error of difference	22.16
2-tail confidence level:	100%

The analysis of mean difference of two groups (children in normal family homes and street children) in accordance with the kind house parent of children in normal family homes and street children lived in variable of children shown in the above tables.

The table presents that the p-value and the statistical significance is .438, which shows that in terms of the situation of parents of the surveyed and interviewed children the difference is not statistically significant. In addition, given the 95% confidence interval, the result of the samples shows 100%, which means that the two groups in the study, is significantly different.

**Descriptive statistics: Materials used in constructing houses of children
in normal family homes and street Children**
24k₁

	Statistics			
	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Standard deviation
Children in normal family homes	79	1	27.25	34.14
Street children	135	5	41.50	62.53

Independent Samples T-Test
24k₂

Confidence level:	95%
Mean_a-Mean_b	-14.25
T-value	.397
df (degree of difference)	6
One-tailed	.176
Two-tailed	.351

Standard error of difference	35.87
2-tail confidence level:	96.95%

The analysis of mean difference of two groups (children in normal family homes and street children) in accordance with the materials used constructing houses of children in normal family homes and street children variable of children shown in the above tables. The table presents the p-value and the statistical significance is .351 that shows that in terms of the situation of parents surveyed, and interviewed children the difference is noted to be not statistically significant. In addition, given the 95% confidence interval, the result of the samples shows 96.95%, which means that the two groups in the study, is significantly different.

**Descriptive statistics: How many times children in normal family
homes and street children eat everyday**

24l₁

	Statistics			
	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Standard deviation
Children in normal family homes	64	1	36.33	32.19
Street children	109	16	55.33	48.13

Independent samples t-test

24l₂

Confidence level:	95%
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Mean_a-Mean_b	-19.00
T-value	.568
df (degree of difference)	4
One-tailed	.300
Two-tailed	.600
Standard error of difference	33.43
2-tail confidence level:	99.97%

The analysis of mean difference of two groups (children in normal family homes and street children). The number of meals children in normal family homes and street children variable as shown in the above tables.

The table displays that the p-value and the statistical significance is .600, which shows that in terms of the number of meals taken everyday of the surveyed and interviewed children, the difference is not statistically significant. In addition, given the 95% confidence interval, the result of the samples shows 99.97%, which means that the two groups in the study, is significantly different.

**Descriptive statistics: Children in normal family
homes and street children by crime arrests and conviction**

	Statistics			
	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Standard deviation
Children in normal family homes	108	1	54.5	75.66
Street children	160	6	83	108.89

Independent samples t-test

241₂

Confidence level:	95%
Mean_a-Mean_b	-28.5
T-value	.304
df (degree of difference)	2
One-tailed	.396
Two-tailed	.792
Standard error of difference	93.76
2-tail confidence level:	98.2%

The analysis of mean difference of two groups (children in normal family homes and street children) in accordance with the crime arrests and convictions of children in normal family homes and street children variable above.

The table displays that the p-value and the statistical significance is .792, which shows that in terms of the number of arrests and convictions of the surveyed and interviewed

children the difference is noted not statistically significant. In addition, given the 95% confidence interval, the result of the samples shows 98.2% which means that the two groups in the study, is significantly different.

Chapter 5 Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

5.1 Summary

The behaviour characteristics of the street children are those who spend a substantial amount of time out of their parent's or guardian's homes, unsupervised by responsible adults, and growing more estranged from their parents as well as peers, schools, and other social supports. In this research, street children may be categorised into three:

1. Street children who leave their homes (or institutional placements), usually because of conflicts with parents (or guardians);
2. Street children who are forced from, or locked out of, their homes by their parents or step-parents; and
3. Street children who feel they no longer have a home to which they can return, either because of irreconcilable differences with their parents or because they have lost track of their family's whereabouts. Street children should not be confused with "homeless children," who are part of homeless families. Homeless children live with their families, in shelters, cars, or on the streets. Street children are not only homeless but also family-less.

Most of the research on street children focuses on a narrower group than "federal-definition of street children. Practitioners and researchers refer as street children to these children. They are estranged from their families and they spend substantial periods living in places other than the family home (or court-approved placement). The children whom we will refer to as "street children," are the focus of this study.

There are many reasons that have been seen as factors that influence children to leave their homes and live in the street. Families from which street children run—or from which they are expelled by parents—are often characterized by an inability to communicate and peacefully resolve conflicts: both the typical conflicts that arise during adolescence and more serious conflicts resulting from family dysfunction. As conflicts accumulate and intensify, family life becomes intolerable and the children leave home, or is physically locked out or taken to a social service agency or police station by parents.

It has been said that a significant number of families from which children chose to live in the street are subject to problems more serious than an inability to communicate. Many of these families have histories of violence, criminal activity, and the abuse of alcohol and other drugs by both parents and children. A majority of street children have left homes in which they are physically abused.

A substantial proportion was sexually abused. street children who have been sexually abused tend to leave home more often and stay away for longer periods than other street children. They are less trusting of adults and social service institutions (who often return them to abusive homes) and thus avoid contact with social service agencies or shelters. The psychological consequences of sexual abuse (and the desperation to avoid their homes) often put these children at risk of further sexual exploitation while out of the home.

The research found that children are at greater risk of abusing alcohol and other drugs. That, in turn, elevates their risk for sexual exploitation, violence, unintended pregnancy, depression, and infection with HIV or other sexually transmitted diseases. A disproportionate number of street children are gay, bisexual, or lesbian. These young people are often subject to ostracism by family, peers, and other adults (such as teachers) at a period in their lives when they are in need of increased support to come to terms with a sexual identity not yet accepted by mainstream society.

An unanswered question is why some street children will leave homes characterized by severe conflict or emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, while others with similar home lives will continue to live with their families. Researchers and practitioners continue to explore the reasons that children can respond so differently to similar family environments.

Single parent or blended families are especially prone to the stresses that can lead to a child running away or force out of the home. Less than one-third of all street children come from families in which both biological parents were present. However, consensus has been reached on two points.

The first is that once a street children has spent a substantial amount of time out of the home (or “on the street”), he or she is so alienated and distrustful that specialized programs are required to reconnect these children with society (if not their families of origin). The second is that, with increasing levels of urban violence and new and more deadly drugs, life outside of the home is so dangerous that more programs are needed to provide an immediate refuge to young people who feel they need to, or are forced to, leave their homes or families and spend time “on the street”.

Best estimates indicate that at any given time, three out of ten children are living out-of the home in unstable and unsupervised environments. Other estimates place the street children population at anywhere from 400,000 to two million. These discrepancies in data reflect the difficulty of accurately counting a population that is, by nature, secretive, as well as the differing definitions used to count these children. Many agencies serving street children are not federally funded and do not submit data. In addition, many street children meet either type of agency. Thus, the federal reporting system fails to count a substantial number of street children.

The average age of street children is usually reported to be 14 or 15 years old. The age at which children start to run away from home is largely a product of child development. Children under the age of 11 or 12 are generally afraid to leave home. During

adolescence, a child's desire for self-autonomy escalates. Adolescents characteristically rebel against parental authority.

This can create an intolerable level of conflict in families with poor communication and negotiation practices. Adolescence also brings about changes in the nature of incest and sexual abuse. Children who have been sexually abused since they were very young may begin to object to this treatment as they enter adolescence. Moreover, as girls develop during adolescence, they may attract the attention of a sexually predatory stepparent or sibling.

Institutional and legal forces also influence the age of the street children populations. Unaccompanied young children on the streets at unusual hours are quickly noticed and apprehended by the police. Parental fear of criminal neglect or abuse charges also plays a role. A parent who may not report a 16-year-old who has left the home will report the absence of a younger child.

Parents are unlikely to lock a very young child out of the house during a family conflict. These factors work together to limit severely the number of street children under the age of 12 (Posner 1994, 1993).

The upper age limit of the street children population is a legal, rather than developmental, phenomenon. Most federally funded street children programs must exclude children older than 18. Many states set the age of emancipation even lower. In some jurisdictions, a 15-year-old can legally leave home. Programs for homeless families often exclude boys over the age of 13 or 14, forcing these children to remain on the street when their mother and siblings seek shelter. When children living on their own are counted as "street children," and when they are counted as "homeless adults," is the consequence of rather arbitrary legal definitions.

Studies done at shelters often conclude that street children girls outnumber boys by about ten percent. This may be a function of the number of young girls fleeing sexual abuse.

Alternatively, it may be a reporting phenomenon. Girls tend to seek help at shelters more often compared to boys. They also tend to be interdicted by police or social workers, who see them as more in need of protection than their male counterparts.

Although the often-repeated statement that children run away from homes of all income levels is certainly true, it conceals the fact that the majority of street children are from working-class and lower-income homes. While families at every economic level experience problems, the lack of income and resources in poorer families places an additional stress upon their members.

Although the abuse of alcohol and other drugs, spousal abuse, and the physical and sexual abuse of children cut across class lines, these problems also affect lower-income families more than others. Lower-income families also have fewer resources to muster to combat the causes of social and economic stress than their wealthier counterparts do.

Middle and upper-income families can afford counsellors (for both children and parents), as well as summer camps, private schools, and private inpatient mental institutions to separate parents from their children and reduce family stress. Although putting a child into a private school or inpatient mental institution sometimes unfairly places the blame for family dysfunction upon a child, it is an alternative to having that child turn to the streets.

Alternative living opportunities for children from lower-income homes are usually state institutions or foster care homes. About half of all street children have spent time in foster care or group homes. Victims of sexual abuse or of homophobia do not necessarily find alternative placements to be supportive, or any safer, than their homes.

One study found that 40% of street children who have spent time in residential placements report that they were sexually or physically assaulted in that setting. Given the realities of an inadequate foster care system along with the behavioural habits of the

children within such settings, a substantial percentage of street children have fled from foster care or group homes.

Since the late 1980s, the street children population has tended to reflect the ethnic and racial composition of its community. The changing face of the street children population also reflects changes in minority communities. For example, African traditionally has often resolved generational conflicts by sending children to live with extended family members, especially grandparents. This has become less of an option as older generations die and ties with extended families and “the South” loosens.

At the same time, the creation of an impoverished underclass, characterized by families with single mothers or transient step-parent surrogates, living in small apartments in neighbourhoods plagued by alcohol, drugs, and social fragmentation, contributes to the types of family stress and conflict that result in youths running away, or being expelled, from their homes.

Immigration has also contributed to the ethnic and racial diversity of the street children population. Impoverished immigrant families (especially undocumented immigrants) are subject to high levels of economic, as well as cultural, stress. Children who immigrated at a very young age (or are the first generation born in this country) assimilate bad habits, notably the abuse of alcohol and other drugs.

All of these factors create stress and intensify conflict within families. Since many immigrant families are extremely mobile, changing residence, moving from city to city and sometimes back and forth to their country of origin, it is easy for children and families to lose track of one another during street children episodes.

The lives of most street children involve a series of street children episodes, extended stays with the other parent (in the case of divorced spouses), relatives, or friends, or in foster care, residential, or juvenile justice facilities.

Divorce is an unpleasant fact, occurring in thousands worldwide (Waller stein & Lewis, 1998). Divorce can be a devastating experience to both the parties involved. When there are children involved, the divorce becomes a much more complicated situation since the divorced parties must think not only for themselves but for their children also.

Many issues in divorce research apply to studies of family or child development in general, research on children's own account of their experience of divorce seems little important to researchers. At current rates, 1 in 4 children will experience parental divorce before the age of 12 (Waller stein & Lewis, 1998). Divorce affects children psychologically, economically and socially.

In one study by Waller stein and Lewis (1998), half of the young people, for example, were involved in serious drug and alcohol abuse, many before the age of 14. They were also likely to become sexually active as early adolescents, particularly the girls. Studies also found out that the legal system does not address the needs of children as they mature and that custody is based on the adults' wishes. The child's perspective is ignored in most cases.

Adolescents are likely to be angry with their parents and to feel socially embarrassed by the break-up (Waller stein & Lewis, 1998). Many children, whatever the age, seem to emerge from the experience without permanent ill effects if the parents are able to help them adjust reasonably well (Waller stein & Lewis, 1998). One way of coping with broken families is to be away from their home. Youth who run from, or are thrown out of, their homes return when they get cold, hungry, and disillusioned with their newfound freedom. This pattern can keep a family together until the youth is old enough to find a job and live independently. However, some children develop a "street children career."

As the children grow older and more accustomed to life on the street he or she stays away from home for longer periods. Parents also grow less tolerant as children ages, and they gain confidence in their child's ability to survive outside the home. In some cases, the

children will no longer return home (or the parents will no longer allow the child into the home) unless forced to by police or the courts.

Often, street children will begin his or her “career” by staying with friends, relatives, or, in the case of divorced parents, the non-custodial parent. However, the behavioural patterns learned by these children in their homes eventually make them unwelcome. After exhausting these options, street children live where they can. When they can scrape together enough money, street children youths will band together and rent rooms in cheap hotels.

They will spend time in street children shelters, foster placements, and with older young people who have apartments. At worst, they live in makeshift camps under overpasses, in county parks or wooded areas, or simply spend the nights walking city streets, huddled in doorways, or sleeping anywhere they can find a place in which they feel they are relatively safe from predators and the police.

Most street children stay within ten miles of their homes; only 25% go further than 75 miles from their homes (Finkelhor et al. 1990). While street children are thought of as being an urban phenomenon, children leave home at about the same rate in urban, suburban, and rural areas. While local authorities may claim that their town or county does not have a “street children problem,” experienced practitioners maintain this is simply because authorities do not know how to recognize street children youth.

All street children spend a great deal of time outdoors. Many street children programs are either shelters that are only open at night or drop-in centres that only provide services during the day. Few street children can afford a long-term stay in even the cheapest hotel. Street children are exposed to the elements. They are always hungry. Their food often comes from dumpsters behind restaurants or groceries.

When they can afford food, they make the same poor nutritional choices made by their more affluent peers: fast food hamburgers, snack cakes, and soda. They do not have

access to bathrooms or baths. They lack warm clothing and anything resembling proper medical care. They are malnourished and suffer the effects of exposure. Many of them fight persistent colds, viral infections, and digestive problems.

The majority of street children and homeless youth abuse alcohol and other drugs. In addition, they suffer the medical consequences of these habits. In the world of the street children youth, alcohol and other drugs are used to “self-medicate” to alleviate the pain of survival, sex, prostitution, exposure to the elements, and hunger. At the same time, alcohol and drugs compound these problems and siphon what little money street children have for constructive uses, such as food or clothing.

The world of the street children is often violent. Physical and sexual assault are prevalent, especially among street children who work as prostitutes. The margins of society through which street children move are places with scarce resources. Street children are often the prey of adults, and younger, more recent street children, become the prey of older, more experienced ones.

The use of alcohol and other drugs contributes to the violence of this world. In recent years, street gangs have added to the danger. Unlike street children, gang members are organized, armed, and predatory. As gangs expand their turf, the neighbourhoods in which street children are even marginally safe contract.

While fleeing their homes may resolve immediate family conflicts, the conditions of life out of the home do little to improve the emotional lives of street children. Psychological problems are endemic among street children. In some cases, these problems were at the root of the family conflicts that caused them to flee their homes. In many, mental health problems are the consequence, rather than the cause, of family conflict.

This is especially true of the victims of physical or sexual abuse. Street children, both before and after they leave their homes, are characterized by depression and suicidal thoughts. Many have attempted suicide. The alcohol and drugs they use to cope with their

lives exacerbate their emotional problems. Their transitory lifestyles and lack of trust of adults reduce their willingness to seek professional help.

Most street children are sexually active. They are unsupervised at a time in their lives when they are undergoing physical and emotional changes of adolescence. Sexual acceptance is also a way of trying to boost the low self-esteem that often results from family conflict (and physical or sexual abuse). This sexual activity leads to elevated rates of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, as well as unintended pregnancy. Few receive proper and consistent medical care for these or other conditions.

While street children can certainly form strong, supportive, and even loving bonds with their peers and other members of marginal cultures with whom they interact, evidence suggests that “street families” are not necessarily any more functional than the families from which these children fled. Relationships formed on the streets, although sometimes supportive, are often transitory and exploitative. “Boyfriends” are often pimps. “Friendships” can turn violent in disputes over scarce resources: food, money, or drugs. Many street children have learned to be social isolates, not fully trusting peers, and very suspicious of adults. There is little reason that children from families characterized by conflict and violence should spontaneously produce positive relationships even on unstable environment of “the street.”

Contrary to the popular myth perpetrated by sensational television shows and exploitation movies, only a minority of street children engage in explicit prostitution. This proportion increases in some urban areas. Both male and female street children turn to this method of surviving on the street. There is evidence that a large proportion of, if not most, adult prostitutes begin as teenage street children. A larger number of street children engage in what practitioners call “survival sex,” explicitly or implicitly trading sex for food or a place to live, often with older men.

While these men are sometimes considered as “boyfriends,” there is little doubt that these liaisons are economic in nature. Children who have been sexually abused in their

homes are far more likely to engage in prostitution and survival sex than other young people are. They are already sexually active, even if this activity was forced upon them. They do not want to return home and face resumption of their sexual abuse. Prostitution or survival sex gives them the illusion of being in control of their own lives, as well as the illusion of being loved or wanted. Both forms of sexual activity carry risks. Surveys indicate that the bulk of young prostitutes have been raped or assaulted.

Street children are trapped in a world between adolescence and adulthood. They are excluded from much of that world to which their peers have access. Their most primary exclusion, of course, is from family and home. However, exclusion from family usually breaks the social bonds connecting youth and children to other social institutions that could play a healthy and helping role in their lives.

The most primary of these institutions is the school. School provides children and adolescents with more than an academic education. The contemporary school is a place that readies children for a vocation, providing health, mental health, and nutritional services. Extracurricular activities encompass a broad range of athletic, intellectual, and artistic pursuits. Perhaps most importantly schools strive to help children grow and mature in an environment of positive peer relationships supervised by caring adults who act as positive role models for children and adolescents.

The bond between street children and homeless youth and school is fragile. The problems encountered by these children in their home often adversely affect their behaviour at school. They bring the behaviours learned in their conflict-ridden and chaotic homes to school. These behaviours do not contribute to learning or to positive relationships with their peers or teachers.

While some children attempt to remain in school while they are out of the home and on the streets, most do not. Their lives are taken up in a search for food and shelter. They often are malnourished, dirty, and tired from staying awake through the night. Even the most motivated teenager is likely not to attend school under such circumstances.

In most cases, street children and homeless children and adolescents will cycle through their schools as they cycle through their homes. This often leaves them perpetually behind their classmates in both their academic and social development. In addition, the hard lessons of the street (and their home lives) often cause these children to be stereotyped as “bad” or “delinquent” by peers and staff, reinforcing their sense of social isolation and making the school an uncomfortable and unwelcome place.

As the bond between the child and his or her family grows ever more fragile, so does the bond between the child and the school. As a result, the child’s relationships with positive peer and adult role models are affected. Eventually, both these bonds break, leaving these youths without the support systems and social attachments available to most adolescents. At the same time, their legal status as minors bars them from living independently in the adult world.

We know remarkably little about what happens to street children after the age of 21. Street children programs are not funded to conduct long-term follow-up with their clients. The transitory nature of these youths (and the families from which they come) makes it exceedingly difficult for research projects to track and document them for more than a few months.

Few studies of adults, mainstream, homeless, or institutionalized, have attempted to explore the issue of how many of them experienced street children episodes when younger. We can understand that street children who manage to reintegrate into mainstream society might not reveal these experiences (even if anyone thought to ask). Thus, we do not know how many street children return to their families and how many stay homeless into adulthood. We do not know how many manage to transcend their predicament and find jobs and places to live.

We do not know what happens to those youth who return to their homes, who stay on the streets until they reach the age of emancipation, or who enter foster care, group homes, or

transitional living programs. We do not want to underestimate the resiliency of the human spirit. It is possible that some street children transcend their hardships and achieve stable, healthy, adult lives.

However, limited studies of former street children reveal substantial levels of emotional problems, problems at school and work, abuse of alcohol and drugs, and marital problems. Studies of children (including street children) rose in environments characterized by conflict, sexual or physical abuse, and the abuse of alcohol and other drugs find that many of them replicate these attitudes and behaviours as adults and pass them on to their children as a harsh legacy of their own youths.

Yet, much of what happens to street children as they enter adulthood is only speculation. It is a tragic irony that street children of whom we often catch only fleeting glimpses, completely disappear when they reach the age of 21, leaving little behind except the knowledge that they will not be the last generation to spend their troubled formative years at the very edge of our collective peripheral vision.

5.2 Conclusions

This study also examines the phenomenon of street children in major towns in Sierra Leone. To determine in particular how badly disadvantaged these children compared with children in normal family homes in these cities.

It emerges from the data collected through interviews and survey questionnaires that the following factors should be verify. These factors include adaptation to street life, not likely to be failures in society, peer group influence and its effect living on the street, are street children likely to be violent and activities done by a child, and are of crucial importance in understanding the street children phenomenon in Sierra Leone.

More precisely, the study has shown that most street children in major towns in Sierra Leone surveyed fell between the age five and 15 years. The findings also revealed that

there are more female children on the streets than males. It should be borne in mind that infancy and early adolescence are key formative periods in a child's life.

This is a period for a child ought to be in school, acquiring the knowledge and skills needed for a fuller and more profitable adult life. This is the case of children in normal family homes, as opposed to the five to 15-year-old street children in the cities.

There are more street children in Makeni, Freetown and Kenema towns than the other provincial towns. Street girls are the majority present in these towns. The survey revealed that a large number of children on the street survive on the street by begging, gambling and engaging in child labour. Their survival depends mostly on begging and carrying goods and working for market women and men.

The war caused lots of disruption leading to many children taking to the street. Street children interviewed appear to be comfortable living on the streets especially those who have been on the street for more than six months. On the other hand, it is obvious from this that the children are desirous for proper care and protection.

They realize the need for them to be out from the street and become like other kids living in family homes. The problem is when is this going to happen and what help they can get to improve their lives and returning back to their family homes.

One of the factors this study was set to look at is whether children on the street are more likely to become failures in society. This could be determined by the numerous answers and response received during the studies. Children on the street are face with difficult living conditions, lack of basic facilities and in many cases are not place in school. Going to school is link to becoming an educated person who can lead out in society or your communities.

Many of the street children lack the opportunities that can lead them to develop their personal self. Their counter parts on the other hand as indicated in the studies, revealed

that more attention and opportunity for schooling is available for children in family homes. This is an important aspect in a child's life to enable him or her to become and grow up to become a good citizen and not a failure in society.

Most of the social infrastructures were destroyed during the war. Education was one of the social facilities that were greatly affected by the war. Children and their parents became displaced persons within their own country leading to a total disruption in family ties. The long periods caused a lot of children who were or might have been in school end up in camps doing nothing. This situation leads many of the children forming peer groupings and finally ends up on the street with their peers. Indeed, as the study has further revealed, most of the street children have one time or the other been to school and later become school dropouts. They had to drop out because of the inability of their parents or guardians' economic conditions in raising money to pay fees and buy other school materials.

These children are therefore ill prepared for the independence lives they are to live so early. To survive, they cannot but beg or do odd jobs at best, for which they are usually very poorly paid. Majority of the street children indicated in the study that they would be happy to return to school if given the opportunity. Getting these children back to school will take into account the economic situation of their parents who themselves are too poor.

The ten years civil war caused a lot of disruptions and undue hardships on families, whose financial status was already at low ebb. There has been an upsurge in one-parent families with many of the children losing at least a parent to the war. In this difficult situation compounded with the low economic status has worsened the burden on poor parents mostly, women (mothers) who should strive to take care of these children.

Similarly, the large displacement of the population during the war disrupted normal social life resulting into people being resettled in new communities where livelihood has become very difficult leading to some of the children going out in the street in order to

help fend for themselves and their families. This is one reason that may have aggravated the problem of street children in the major provincial headquarter towns.

The study looks at the issue of what street children engaged themselves in while on the street. A large number are engaged in begging, gambling, prostitution and child labour. While on the other hand, children in normal family homes engaged themselves doing schoolwork or helping their parents with domestic work at home. This in itself is a clear indication that children on the street has less control at home and do things more freely on their own.

Additionally, the parents of street children are themselves primary school dropouts at best. This poor educational background compromises their chances of finding gainful employment. Most of them are unemployed or self –employed at best with of course low incomes. They are in consequence unable to provide for their children the quality of life children in normal family homes enjoy.

The parents of children in normal family homes are gainfully employ as lawyers, doctors, teachers, and accountants, whose incomes are adequate for the up, keep of their families. In sharp contrast, parents of street children require the children to hand in their meagre earnings for the up keep of their families.

Furthermore, most street children live with single parents, while children in normal family homes live with both parents, and are thus in a position to enjoy the warmth, care and security within a stable and cohesive family.

One important factor is the issue of the effect the war has caused on street children and the effect it has on the children themselves. A major factor this study was set to look at was if children on the street were more likely to be violent. Findings revealed that majority of the children have been free from violent and crimes on the street and character that is exhibited by children in normal family homes.

One would have thought that the influence on the street backed with the influence of the war would have led street children to be violent. However, this turn out to be the opposite. This portrays a positive sign that if street children where provided with the right type of support it will be easier for their lives to change completely.

Finally, many factors together with the war have contributed to the problem of street children in our communities. Poverty, lack of basic social amenities, separation of parents, single parenthood, and peer pressures are some of the causes for children leaving home for the streets. Homelessness and poverty have robbed street children of a good part of their childhood. They have been forced to worry about the things that most children take for granted--food, safety, and a roof over their heads. Some become "little adults" in their efforts to help themselves and their families to survive. Yet, as the street children remind us, they are children. They cherish their toys, they play at the hint of any opportunity, and they rush to get lost in the world of fantasy. They think in the magical and concrete ways of children, constructing their world with the logic of childhood. In addition, it should be noted as children they would like to be treated as children--to be less burdened by worry and more able to depend on adults for the basics of survival.

Ultimately, the study of children is as much about poverty as homelessness. As these children tell it, the burden of poverty is not simply the lack of material possessions. It means facing full square the psychological and social ills that accompany poverty in our society. These children confront family dysfunction, substance abuse, and violence. They have known poor schooling, inadequate medical care, and substandard housing. They experience the frustration resulting from a lack of resources to help them and a lack of opportunity in the larger society to make things better.

Some sense the generations of hopelessness in their own families that have kept them moving in search of a better life. They know a society that, in some corners, is inclined to believe that they are poor because they choose to be.

They have an acute awareness of the shame of poverty and the degradation resulting from society's moral judgments of the poor. Ultimately, their pain is their utter powerlessness--as children and as poor people--to do anything about the fate that has befallen them.

In this context of pain and struggle, the stories also reveal an extraordinary capacity for survival in difficult circumstances. When describing how they or other homeless children manage to get through the experience, the children often use the phrase "I make the best of it." Some street children states that being homeless, one should look on the bright side of things, even though he confessed he didn't know exactly what that bright side is.

In spite of their fundamental discontent, many children manage to find some redeeming feature of the shelter. When the motel has nothing by way of amenities, they enthuse about the swimming pool. When the shelter offers only food and a roof, they are happy that their room is close to the kitchen so that they can get snacks. When they are looking forward to months in a crowded room, they get excited about the free clothes from donations. Their optimism does not lessen their pain, but it keeps them going from one day to the next. The study also reveals these children's hopes for the future. They have not given up, thus, they find themselves continuing to wish and often to believe that things will get better.

Many are able to imagine a happier life for themselves, in either the immediate future or when they get to be adults. Like all children, they nurture their dreams for what and who they might be. However, unlike most children, their dreams are not casual and often-changing wishes, but rather the stuff of their souls, which keeps them going.

In this study, these children often unknowingly, offer clear suggestions for how adults might help them. They ask that we understand their ambivalent feelings about living in a shelter. They want us to know that taking their complaints, as a lack of appreciation for the roof over their heads is not what they want.

It is not the efforts of the shelter staff subject of complaints but rather, the fact of having lost their home and living in this or any shelter. They grumble about "the rotten food" or "the lady in charge" because it is less painful than reminding them of what has happened to them. They ask that as helping professionals, we not judge them. They are terrified of being labelled as poor and homeless, because they know that so often, poor means "bad."

As young as some of these children are, they ask the adults who work with them to honour their trust. It is critically important to them that the adults who know of their plight protect their confidentiality. Most, for example, are willing and even want to have their teacher know about their difficult circumstances, but worry that the teacher might tell. "My teacher might tell another teacher who might tell some kids," and the dreaded word that they are "homeless" would spread among their peers. The taunting and derision that they assume would result terrifies these children. They ask that we respect their privacy, while not leaving them alone. They clearly assert their right to be in charge of when they tell what to whom. However, they also do not want us to ignore the place they are coming from or pretend that it does not exist.

Helping professionals employs a delicate balancing act with these or any children—to respond to their obscure invitation to come into their lives, yet at the same time to avoid crossing the threshold without an invitation. The children are ambivalent about the telling and look for a clue that the other wants to listen, but will not pressure them to do so. Haydn, in telling his story and expressing his feelings, said he chooses not to talk about his feelings: "I just keep them trapped inside." He sees himself as similar to his brother Dana, who is also "quiet about those things. He doesn't say anything about it"--but "if you ask him, he'll tell you."

Even though respondents do not articulate it very clearly, homeless children also ask for reassurance that they are not alone. They want and need to recognize their struggle as one that is shared in different ways by many children and families. They respond with eager curiosity when helping professionals point out that other kids have these worries too.

Seeing their problems against the backdrop of the common human struggle helps them to relieve the loneliness with which their circumstances have surrounded them.

As they risk telling their stories, they hope against hope that helping professionals will not react in horror and walk away from hearing more. At some level, they sense that if their story does not shock adults, then they do not have to get shocked by it either. To be "blown away" or to suddenly break contact with them, in their eyes, is to judge them. They ask that we educate children and adults about who homeless families really are. These children are heavily burdened by what they see as society's negative perception of the homeless.

In their stories, they take significant pains to point out that other families they meet in the shelter are "nice people." In their childlike way, they would like the world to know that people in the shelter "are nice people just like us." Particularly when they are older, they are clear about asking helping professionals and other adults to advocate for the needs of homeless children and families.

Finally, they ask helping professionals to recognize the worth of their stories and the value of their lives. While most children are embarrassed about so many aspects of their lives, and tell their stories only to those whom they trust, they often express a pride about being able to disclose what is in the heart of a homeless child and family. These problems needs checked, while on the other hand, an environment that is conducive for these children are available to allow them grows up as responsible adults.

5.3 Recommendations

First, the problems of street children are global and appear to be related to irreversible changes in both economic and family structures. Second, girls are especially at risk, because the nature of street life itself offers chronic exposure to violence--as a witness, victim, or perpetrator--but especially to sexual victimization.

Third, although youth shelters are no panacea for the multiple problems of street children they deserve much greater public support than either country offers. Some nations is far more advanced in the fundamentals of shelter care for this vulnerable and often difficult population--although they have far to go to develop a humane and appropriate long-term youth care system.

On the other hand, some nations offer a sharp contrast in terms of human right in the matter of human rights. Whereas developed nations, subscribe to the basic human right to shelter, many government does not recognize the international right to adequate housing. The different organisations, which have lobbied for an end to homelessness, points out that homeless people apparently, have the right in the country to be educated, as well as to sleep in public.

However, they have no right to indoor or adequate shelter. To meet the special needs of young people, shelters should be organized to offer flexible programming at various stages of homelessness; and preferably in age- and gender-segregated settings, especially for younger females.

At the very least, intervention should provide immediate relief from the unbearable stresses that homeless and runaway adolescents experience while living on the streets. This necessitates a policy of immediate relief for adolescents who are raped, assaulted, suicidal, or at risk of contracting the AIDS virus. Additionally, street-level clinics, observed in Sydney, should offer multidimensional treatment plans for coping with adolescents with chronic posttraumatic stress disorder, drug problems, mental health problems, and other illnesses.

Whereas homelessness for young people may be the ultimate form of powerlessness, and a visible symbol of social abandonment, alcohol and drug involvement throws up a far more confused set of images. Not only do alcohol and drug abuse patterns lend themselves to competing definitions, as we show in the next chapter; but also, in the

midst of a government-waged war on drugs, young people from all lifestyles pursue chemical highs as normal adolescent behaviour.

Attempted solutions to the problems of street children in Sierra Leone abound in numerous governmental, NGO, church and private programs specifically concerned with rehabilitation and preventative programs. , In spite of goodwill and expensive programs, the street children population continues to grow along with an increasing consensus that rehabilitation programs have not proven to be effective.

Instead, programs are now addressing preventive strategies designed, for example, to intervene not directly with street children but instead at the family level to enhance the family's capacities to better cope with the social and economic factors well known to contribute to the movement of children from homes to the street in the first place.

More rarely now do programs or private individuals give money directly to street children for fear that such gifts will be converted into glue or other substances. Basically, researchers, theorists, and practitioners agree that the family functions as an interactive unit in which anything that affects one member will have a ripple effect on every other member.

In Sierra Leone and other parts of Africa, interventions stress both rehabilitation and prevention with a focus on community-based organizations (Cobs) empowered with resources to provide money not directly to the child, but rather support for schooling, training for employment, and recreational activities such as sports, art, and music. The child is largely nowadays understood as an active agent, one who must be motivated to participate willingly in his own rehabilitation.

Attempts, for example, to forcibly relocate street children into "homes" have not worked. Instead, street children overall flee from such institutions, where disciplinary regimes and required labour are emphasized.

Nevertheless, programs that do conform to a concept of family and child reciprocal interactions frequently are less effective than one might hope; but this is understandable, given the limited resources and sheer numbers of available programs. There is much overlap and duplication of effort, which is further exacerbated by distinct levels of social organization, often with incompatible assumptions and knowledge bases about street children and their aspirations.

International, national, and local programs of intervention and prevention are often active without vertical linkages and sometimes without any shared cultural assumptions about causes, solutions, and other ideas pertaining to the overall social environment within which the street child and his family operate.

As mentioned above, we believe that a full understanding of street children intervention programs require following the concept of levels of social organization. We also believe that their model, specifically intended for Africa, requires the addition of a "family level" given the importance of the family, specifically the extended family in social life throughout the continent.

This is especially relevant for programs for children, including street children. In fact, scholars intend their inductive model to be "grounded" in specific cultural context and therefore subject to the sort of adjustment proposed here by us for application in Sierra Leone and perhaps elsewhere in Africa where family values are significant.

Early attempts to assist street children in Sierra Leone were frequently motivated by good will, charitable, and other humanitarian motives. Street children were seen almost entirely as victims with no agency of their own, such as a capacity to figure out appropriate strategies to maximize benefits to be gained by manipulating those seeking to help them. In short, there was little vertical linkage between donors' motives and those of the children perceived by them exclusively as "victims." Previously, we have documented the consequences of giving shoes, for example, which are often converted to glue or again begging strategies that sometimes maximize misfortune. Current thinking about

intervention strategies generally reflect a tighter vertical fit between the child as an active participant with a keen sense of multiple survival strategies, including frequent manipulation of public community level benefactors.

Government of Sierra Leone through the Ministry of Social Welfare should encourage those children who have dropped out of school to return to school. This will help in improving the majority of the poor and deprived street children in the major provincial towns in Sierra Leone. Since most of them are in fact quite willing to go back to school if given the opportunity.

Some children who have never been to school should be encouraged to attend vocational institutions, where they can acquire skills in carpentry, masonry and tailoring to better themselves. Government should provide the infrastructure and school materials in order to augment the efforts of teachers and parents.

An alternative to formal schooling is an integral part of all trauma-healing centres to give opportunity to children expressing interest in non –formal education. Secondly, parents of street children should be encouraged to undertake private business through the support of government and non –governmental organizations. This will enable them to earn better incomes, which will empower them to provide adequately for their children.

Also the Government through its Ministries of Trade and Social Welfare should encourage single parents (the majority of whom are women) to get involved in income generating activities through self –help women groups. Such activities will enhance their individual income generating capability and will thus enable them to provide for their children.

The Government through the Ministry of Social Welfare should enact laws to protect the basic rights of children enshrined in the United Nations convention on the rights of the child. Such laws should forbid parents or guardians from deliberately allowing their children or wards to abandon school to take up begging or odd jobs.

Non –governmental organizations concerned with the welfare of children should lay more emphasis on programs directed towards street children. These programs should include meaningful activities through which street children can acquire knowledge and skills they will put to use better themselves.

The government through the Ministry of Social Welfare and non –governmental organizations should provide valuable information and sensitization on the dangers and problems related to prostitution. There should be provision of counselling centres, and rehabilitation plan to encouraged girls and women in prostitution to embark on skills training.

Government through the Ministry of Social Welfare and the judiciary should enact a law that will prohibit any one person to engaged street children in odd jobs or child labour. This will discouraged children from staying on the street for a longer period.

Child protection agencies should work with the Ministry of Social Welfare in providing infrastructure like juvenile homes and prisons for offences committed by juveniles. Child protection agencies should identify certain categories (vulnerable groups) of children and essential services for these vulnerable groups of children. In addition, poverty alleviation programmes should be develop to assist poor families or foster parents to have better opportunities to improve their socio –economic wellbeing. The government should formulate a policy and criteria for opening of homes/orphanages for children.

When a teenage runaway first occurs, it is desirable that the parent or parents report the matter to the police and to a social agency, and seek professional help. Unless the youngster has stolen or otherwise broken the law, in many states, the police no longer have the power to hold the youth, but it is worthwhile to advise the police of the youth's runaway. According to the figures, reporting the street children is the exception rather than the rule. In approximately three out of four cans, the runaway voluntarily returns home, often making the first contact by telephone.

When a street child is reported to a social or professional agency for help, it is desirable that all members of the family of a runaway be interviewed, as well as friends and associates, teachers, and other adults who are important in the life of the child. When the child surfaces, careful interview with the child are desirable, and will need to be done on more than one occasion.

Some reasons for street children, such as physical or sexual abuse, are often easy to identify; but one should be aware that an insecure child might seek to protect an abusive parent. Sexual abuse in the home is a frequent problem, especially with girls. In cases in which a parent has been abusive, and especially in cases in which a parent has been or is rejecting, the possible alternatives to the return of the child to the home should be canvassed and considered.

Of course, it is necessary to work with the parents, who are frequently angry, frustrated, fearful, and more defensive than cooperative, especially at first. Assigning blame is to be avoided and implying blame may result in a withdrawal of cooperation.

Failure to resolve a family conflict is likely to result in a repetition of runaway behaviour. It may become clear that this runaway adolescent cannot make an adjustment in this home. Then the alternatives of the home of a relative (a grandparent?), a foster home, a group home, or an institution may have to be considered.

If the street children runaway in a repetitive manner, then sooner or later the runaway will have some collision with the law, which will give the juvenile court jurisdiction. When there is a basis for juvenile court intervention, the problem is somewhat simplified for the power of the court may be needed.

Naturally, the homes of runaways are more frequently in conflict than the homes of children who do not run away. The child is especially likely to have conflict with a new member of the household, such as a stepparent or stepsibling, or transient members of the household, such as boyfriends of the mother.

Runaway children are especially frequent in households lacking strong and dependable parent-child and child-parent bonding. Street children tend also to be lacking in friendships and in peer bonding. They are seldom well adjusted in school. Any ties to home or community that can be cultivated by and for the runaway improve his or her chances of not becoming a repetitive runaway. Of course, if street children engage repetitively in serious delinquent behaviour, the juvenile court may find it necessary to commit such youth. Also included are events that happen outside the home, such as school experiences, extracurricular activities, social pressures, and professional intervention. The potentially diverse influences of environmental circumstances can work in concert or individually to either promote or hinder resiliency.

Although the chapters contained in this volume cover different topics, each describes important findings about why some children succeed despite the odds. In many cases, regardless of the topic under discussion, there is collaboration about which factors help to "insulate" children from potentially dire consequences. A review of these findings may provide a clearer perspective of what factors promote resilience in at risk youth.

Certainly, family experiences play a paramount role in how children handle life's adversities. Children with the good fortune to experience two-parent homes in which there are stable relationships, solid communications, appropriate role models, consistent expectations, and support have an ideal foundation upon which to build their lives. These and other positive family experiences help protect children from succumbing to hardship.

Family experiences play a major role in child development. This is true in regard both to causing stressful events and helping children cope successfully with them. The events that happen within the family can pose difficult problems for children; however, the character strengths learned from family members (most specifically, parents and other primary caregivers) can help determine how children adapt to, and consequently deal with, their difficulties. Furthermore, the support provided by family members--or lack thereof--can profoundly affect success or failure.

Personal characteristics include innate and acquired abilities and circumstances. Such factors as age, gender, intelligence, personality, special needs, individual strengths and weaknesses help determine the relative "vulnerability" of children to specific types of crisis situations.

The interplay of these personal characteristics greatly influences how individual children adapt to different situations. In other words, the personal characteristics of some children make them better equipped to cope with and surmount certain events that for other children may prove devastating.

Environmental circumstances encompass events external to the child's nuclear family and his or her personal makeup. They include relationships with extended family members, friends, peers, teachers, coaches, clergy, and others. Also included are events that happen outside the home, such as school experiences, extracurricular activities, social pressures, and professional intervention.

Finally, the government through the Ministry of Social Welfare should make the training of more social workers a priority in order to address the issue of the growing number of street children in the city. The training should provide a thorough grasp of the street children phenomenon and the skills necessary to handle the social ills inherent in the phenomenon. The trainees should, upon completion of their courses be able to provide counselling services to street children and their parents.

Other alternative strategies for at-risk street children

Dependence on the support of others begins at conception, but even as people become increasingly self-sufficient, they continue to require assistance from others in one form or another throughout life. Young people struggling to become social beings and unique individuals at the same time are in particular need of the various forms of social support.

When that support is missing, the resulting isolation from others increases the potential for progression from normal youthful dissonance toward more dangerous consequences that can include death or lifelong social and emotional disturbances and sometimes tend to be involved in different things that may even try to make worst of their situation such as substance abuse (Colby, 2004). In response to the increasing numbers of at-risk youth, numerous programs have been developed to cope with problem.

Here are some basic examples of approaches. Stephen (1997) states that positive reinforcement is one of the approaches that works well on at-risk youth. He states that children crave attention more than anything else does, especially positive attention does. "A baby who is cuddled, talked to, and stimulated in the first six weeks of life is much more likely to be intelligent and well adjusted than a baby ignored and simply fed and cleaned up in silence.

Later, the child who is rewarded with praise for accomplishments is much more likely than others to become optimistic and achievement oriented" (Stephen, 1997). He also states that one extinguishes unacceptable behaviour by ignoring it and eliminating the child's ability to gain attention.

On the other hand, pats on the back, awards, and ceremonies to celebrate accomplishments are particularly effective in fostering pro-social behaviour and giving at-risk youth a stake in society, helping them overcome lack of hope and lack of faith in the future. He then suggested that using positive reinforcement must become a way of life for parents, teachers, and others.

Teaching positive reinforcement to potential parents has been successful in reducing the at-risk population. Parent education can offer information and skills to assist the parent-to-be with incentives to learn and use good child-rearing practices.

The National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse launched a similar program called Healthy Families America, in 1992. The purpose of the program is to help establish home

visitation programs, service networks, and funding opportunities so all new parents can receive the necessary education and support regarding proper child rearing so as to prevent the involvement of children in risky matters such as substance abuse (Stephen, 1997).

Stephen (1997) also states that mentoring is one the effective ways to prevent or stop children or adolescents to engage in abusing substances. He cites the, leaders in Kansas City that are on a quest to recruit, train, and assign 30,000 mentors - one for every at-risk child in the city.

Zimmerman, et al (2002) states that, researchers have suggested that natural mentors may play a vital role in adolescent development. Young people often attribute their safe passage through the tumultuous years of adolescence to the influence of significant non-parental adults such as teachers, extended family members, or neighbours. Zimmerman, et al (2002) has found empirical support for the proposition that having a natural mentor may play a vital role in the lives of adolescents.

It has also found out that having a natural mentor was also associated with lower levels of problem behaviour, and youth with natural mentors had more positive attitudes toward school across the range of friends' negative school behaviours. However, natural mentors had somewhat larger direct effects on school attitudes than they did on problem behaviours.

Nevertheless, having a natural mentor may play a vital role in the lives of adolescents. "Respondents with natural mentors reported lower levels of problem behaviour, including marijuana use and non-violent delinquency, than did those without mentors. This was true even after we adjusted for demographic variables and known risk factors such as problem behaviour norms and friends' problem behaviours.

Having a mentor partially offset the effect of these negative peer influences, providing evidence of a compensatory effect" (Zimmerman, et al, 2002). In addition, they suggested

that programs that create settings that provide opportunities for youth to interact with non-parental adults might help adolescents foster the development of natural mentoring relationships.

McWhirter (2004) states that, programs are now appearing in schools and community centres to provide attitudes and skills necessary to resolve conflict among children and adolescents non-violently. Models have been developed by the American Bar Association and the Justice Department, as well as by educators. He further states, "One of the best models involves training school staff - teachers, administrators, custodians, bus drivers, and cafeteria workers - in creative non-violent conflict-resolution methods." He concluded that older students learn these techniques, and they in turn teach younger students, turning peer pressure into a positive rather than negative force.

Community school programs are also effective because most youth spend their time at school. Stephen (1997) gave some examples of successful Community school programs. One of the programs is in Missouri, where 6,000 volunteers keep 675 schools open for extra hours. Another examples are the Boys' and Girls' Clubs that offer mentoring in New Jersey schools and the Safe Haven programs in New York that provide safe environments and positive after-school tutoring and enrichment programs.

Another program that is effective in the prevention of children and adolescents in substance abuse is the Life-skills training. Life-skills training have been defined as the formalized teaching of requisite skills for surviving, living with others, and succeeding in a complex society. It is reported that life-skills training was "proposed as the treatment of choice" when applied to prevention with adolescents.

In addition, life skills, which assist in the development of an adolescent's self-efficacy "include the ability to solve problems, to communicate honestly and directly, to gain and maintain social support, and to control emotions and personal feelings." Life-skills programs vary in the types and quality of services they provide.

McWhirter (2004) stated that essential components of any life-skills curriculum are based on the development of fundamental, generalized interpersonal skills. Successful life-skills programs appeared to have similar core elements. Effective programs addressed developmental needs, health promotion/problem prevention, and high-risk groups.

This program involves adventures as a self-esteem enhancer. The overall goal of adventure-based activities and programming appears to be the enhancement of participants' self-esteem or self-concept. Accordingly, adventure programming activities and experiences include excitement, risk taking, cooperation and competition, trust, communication, physical, mental, and emotional challenges, physical activity, problem-solving and creativity, group and individual skill development, and fun. With all these prevention programs, children and youth initiative is obviously an important factor for at-risk recovery for street children.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1: List of Schools Interviewed/ letters of permission

The Head Teacher

SDA Primary school

Waterloo

March 15, 2006

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ref: Permission to conduct interviews in your school

I write to request permission to conduct interviews with selected school going children in your school. I am currently a PHD student undertaking a research on Street children and children living in normal family homes.

This research is in partial fulfilment and completion of my PhD degree carried out at the St Clements University.

Thank you very much for your understanding and I look forward to your approval as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully,
Prince Cummings
PhD Student
St Clements University

The Director
Ministry of Social Welfare
New England
Freetown
March 15, 2006

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ref: Permission to conduct research on street children in Sierra Leone.

I write to request permission to conduct a research on street children in Sierra Leone in five major towns, Makeni, Freetown, Bo, Kenema and Kono.

This research is in partial fulfilment and completion of my PhD degree carried out at the St Clements University.

Thank you very much for your understanding and I look forward to your approval as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully,

Prince Cummings
PhD Student
St Clements University

The Deputy Mayor
City Council
Freetown
March 16, 2006

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ref: Permission to conduct research on street children in Freetown

I write to request permission to conduct a research on street children in Freetown especially those located in the main city centre in Freetown. The research will look into the lives of street children as compared to those children living in normal family homes.

This research is in partial fulfilment and completion of my PhD degree carried out at the St Clements University.

Thank you very much for your understanding and I look forward to your approval as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully,

Prince Cummings

PhD Student

St Clements University

The District Chairman

Makeni Council

Makeni

March 16, 2006

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ref: Permission to conduct research on street children in Makeni Town

I write to request permission to conduct a research on street children in Makeni especially those located in the main city centre in Makeni. The research will look into the lives of street children as compared to those children living in normal family homes.

This research is in partial fulfilment and completion of my PhD degree carried out at the St Clements University.

Thank you very much for your understanding and I look forward to your approval as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully,

Prince Cummings
PhD Student
St Clements University

The District Chairman
Bo Town Council
Bo
March 16, 2006

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ref: Permission to conduct research on street children in Bo Town

I write to request permission to conduct a research on street children in Bo especially those located in the main city centre in Bo. The research will look into the lives of street children as compared to those children living in normal family homes.

This research is in partial fulfilment and completion of my PhD degree carried out at the St Clements University.

Thank you very much for your understanding and I look forward to your approval as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully,

Prince Cummings
PhD Student
St Clements University

The District Chairman
KenemaTown Council
Kenema.
March 16, 2006

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ref: Permission to conduct research on street children in Kenema Town

I write to request permission to conduct a research on street children in Kenema especially those located in the main city centre in Kenema. The research will look into the lives of street children as compared to those children living in normal family homes.

This research is in partial fulfilment and completion of my PhD degree carried out at the St Clements University.

Thank you very much for your understanding and I look forward to your approval as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully,

Prince Cummings
PhD Student
St Clements University

The District Chairman
Kono Town Council
Kono.
March 16, 2006

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ref: Permission to conduct research on street children in Kono Town

I write to request permission to conduct a research on street children in Kenema especially those located in the main city centre in Kono. The research will look into the lives of street children as compared to those children living in normal family homes.

This research is in partial fulfilment and completion of my PhD degree carried out at the St Clements University.

Thank you very much for your understanding and I look forward to your approval as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully,

Prince Cummings

PhD Student

St Clements University

Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research on Street Children in Four Districts of Sierra Leone

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the town involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the District Chairman confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

Permission has been granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met, and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted:

- 1. The District Chairman concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Department of Education to conduct the research study.*
- 2. The District must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.*
- 3. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the town chairman that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission to conduct the research study.*
- 4. On completion of the study the researcher must supply the Senior Manager: Strategic Policy Development, Management & Research Coordination with one Hard Cover bound and one Ring bound copy of the final, approved research report. The researcher would also provide the said manager with an electronic copy of the research abstract/summary and/or annotation.*

5. *The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research to the Town Chairman and the schools concerned.*

6. *Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Senior Manager concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.*

The chair of this town wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind Regards

District Chairman

Appendix II: Research Questionnaire

Children in Normal Homes

1. What is your name? (Optional)
.....
2. How old are you?
01. 1-5yrs 02. 5-10yrs 03. 10-15yrs
3. Sex: 01Male 02 Female
4. What is your religion?
01 Christian 02 Muslim
5. What tribe do you belong to?
01. Mende 02. Temne. 03. Krio. 04.Limba 05. Kono 06. Others (Specify)
6. Are you attending school?
01. Yes 02. No
a) If yes, what class are you in?
01. class 1-2 02. 3-4 03. 4-5 04. 5 and above
- 7.a. Do you have friends at school?
01. Yes 02. No

- 7.b. What are some of the activities you do with your friends?
01. Studying 02. Playing 03. Going to street 04. Others (Specify)
- 8.a Do you live with both of your parents?
01. Yes 02. No
- 8.b. If the answer is yes, are both parents employed?
01. Yes 02. No
9. How many times do you eat every day?
01. One meal 02. Two meals 03. Three meals
10. What kind of house do your parents lived in?
01. Permanent 02. Semi Permanent 03. Temporary
11. What material is use in building your house you lived in?
01. Bricks 02. Mud blocks 03. Timber 03. Zinc
12. What kind of activities do you do after school?
01. Studying 02. Playing 03. Do domestic work 04. Attend lesson 05.
Others (Specify)
13. Do you usually go out with your friends?
01. Yes 02. No
14. What is the estimated monthly income of your parents/ guardians?
01. Le 50,000 – 100,000
02. Le 100,000 – 250,000
03. Le 250,000 – 350,000
04. Le 350,000- 450,000
05. Le 450,000 - Above
15. How old are your parents / Guardians?
01. 15yrs – 20yrs
02. 21yrs - 25yrs
03. 26yrs – 30yrs
04. 31yrs – 35yrs
05. 36yrs – above

16. Where were you born?

01. Western Area 02. Northern region 03. Eastern region 04. Southern region

17. Are you taking any of the following drugs?

- 01 Brown – Brown
02 Cocaine
03 Capsule
04 Marijuana
05 Gun powder
06 None
07. Others – (Specify)

18. Have you ever been arrested for any crime?

01. Yes 02. No

Questionnaire for Street Children-Interview Schedule

1. What is your name?

2. How old are you?

- A) 5 –10yrs B) 10 – 15yrs C) 15 –20

3. Sex: Male / Female

4. What religion do you belong to?

- a) Christian b) Muslim c) Any other

5. What tribe do you belong to?

- 6a. Have you ever been to school?
- a) Yes b) no
- 6 b. If yes, what was your last class?
7. When did you stop attending school?
- a) 1-5 month ago b) 6 – 12 month c) 1 – 2yrs d) 3- 5 yrs.
8. Why did you stop attending school?
9. Would you like to go back to school?
- i. Yes b) No
10. Do you have friends?
- a) Yes b) No
- B. If yes, what are your friends doing?
11. How often do you see your friends?
- a) Everyday
b) Often
c) Seldom
d) Long time ago
12. Where are your friends living?

13. Where are your parents?

14. Are your mother and father staying together?

a) Yes b) No

B. If No, which of the parents are you staying with?

15. What is the occupation of your parent /guardian

16. What kind of house does your parent/guardian live in?

- a. Permanent
- b. Semi permanent
- c. Temporary

17. Where do you live?

18. How do you eat?

19. How many meals do have while in the street?

20. What kind of activities do you do while in the street?

21. How long have you been in the street?

22. Where do you sleep at night?

a) House b) Street c) friends d) others

23. If you were to be removed from the street, what would you like to do?

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