

**FACTORS INFLUENCING STREET CHILDREN'S RESISTANCE TO
REHABILITATION IN NAKURU TOWN, NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA**

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of the Requirements for the Award of Master of Arts Degree in Sociology
(Community Development and Project Planning) of Egerton University**

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DECLARATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Declaration

This thesis is my original work and to the best of my knowledge, it has not been presented in this or any other University for conferment of degree or award of diploma.

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Recommendations

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our recommendations as University Supervisors.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the following special people in my life; my dear husband Rev. Brian Ezekiel Rop, for all the support and encouragement throughout my study period, my sons Nathan and Mark for giving me a reason to work hard and to my parents who gave me the educational background and have been my cheerleaders all the way.

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ABSTRACT

The phenomenon of street children in urban centres globally has been increasing at an alarming rate. However, the efforts to resolve it have failed partly due to lack of adequate knowledge by the concerned stakeholders on the strategies to employ because of the street children's way of life in the street. Children in the streets face many challenges as the life they lead is largely inhumane with unending abuse and suffering that affects their lives. Hence, it is important to understand the reasons why they resist rehabilitation and choose to continue with suffering in the streets. Limited studies have been done on the factors that make street children resist rehabilitation and choose to continue with hard life in the streets. The main objective of this study was to examine the factors that influence street children's resistance to rehabilitation in Nakuru Town. Specific objectives of the study were; to establish the social factors that make street children resist rehabilitation in Nakuru town, to find out the economic factors that make street children resist rehabilitation in Nakuru town and to determine the coping mechanisms of street children to hard life of the streets in Nakuru town. The study was informed by the social network and resilience theories. The target population of the study was street children living in Nakuru Town. The unit of analysis was the street child in Nakuru Town. The study applied multi-stage sampling techniques that comprised of purposive, stratification and snowballing in selecting the respondents. Data analysis used both qualitative and quantitative methods where analyzed data was presented in tables, pie charts and cross tabulation followed by interpretations and discussions in order to address the objectives and research questions. In addressing social factors that make street children resist rehabilitation, the study established that street children are organized in groupings called bases; this is a survival group system with formal structure of leadership. It enables them to have a sense of belonging, identity, and security. The study recommends that interventions targeting rehabilitation of street children should understand the social economic and coping mechanisms of street children to street life in order to apply appropriate intervention.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CAC	Child Advisory Committee
CEDC	Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances
MHANH	Ministry of Home Affairs and National Heritage
NACOSTI	National Council of Science, Technology and Innovations
NCBDA	Nairobi Central Business District Assessment
NMSS	Nakuru Municipal Social Services
OAU	Organization of African Unity
UNICEF	United Nation International Children Education Fund
UNYC	United Nation International Year of Child
ZNS	Zambia National Service

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The street children phenomenon has continued to be a major social problem in the world. The phenomenon is not new and not restricted to certain parts of the world (Connolly, 1990). It is one of the greatest challenges of urbanization as well as political and economic growth. Social inequalities and deprivation are prominent features in the contemporary societies, and the presence of vast numbers of children living and working in the streets in unsupervised and unprotected situations provide a typical example of this phenomenon (De Moura, 2002). However, its' existence, the problem and nature of street children varies from country to country depending on the size and the level of urbanization.

The street children phenomenon is universal (UNICEF, 2004). Past studies have estimated that there are 100 million street children in the world (Volpi, 2002). The United Nations International Children's Education Funds (UNICEF) estimates that out of 100 million children who call streets their home, only 20 million children live in the streets, without their families. In South America alone, there are 40 million street children (UNICEF, 2004), there are an estimated 10,000-12,000 homeless children in South Africa (Save the Children, 2005), while in Kenya, there are 250,000-300,000 children living and working on the streets with more than 60,000 of them in Nairobi (UNICEF, 2004).The number has increased in recent decades because of wide spread recession, political turmoil, civil unrest, increasing family disintegration, urban and rural poverty, natural disasters and rapid industrialization (De Moura, 2002). In Africa particularly, street children is relatively a recent phenomenon that reflects the patterns of urbanization and advent of capital economy (Kopoka, 2000; Ayuku, 2003; Sorre, 2009).

In Kenya, the rise in the number of street children is attributed to the disintegration of the family institution. This has been caused by the breakdown of the extended family, stresses on the nuclear family, the failing of intimate love, changing roles of women and sexual permissiveness (UNICEF, 2004). When the children lack someone to take care of them, then the street becomes one of the alternative places for survival since the family environment is full of conflict, violence, deprivation and loneliness, it is

the children who suffer most and may find companionship of other street children on the streets, hence will resist any intervention targeting at their welfare (UNICEF, 2004). The street life affects children's health, the children are a threat to public order and safety. They also develop fear due to one's own position in the streets facing adult world. This in the long term produce poor, helpless and powerless children.

As the children move to the streets, they become disconnected with their families for some time or forever (Sorre, 2009). The life of street children in the street is not always haphazard, but they adopt a life that is accommodative to hard life situations in an effort to enhance survival. In order to improve their resilience and adaptations, they form patterns of interactions, livelihoods, formation of substitute families as a way of survival for them through sharing of resources and information. Whyte, (1955) in his street corners society study, argued that "North end" was not the "slum," and that its people had a social organization, which while different from that of the American middle-class was nevertheless well ordered. Whyte, (1955) further demonstrated that a poor community need not be socially disorganized. The street gangs were socially organized in their daily activities; they divided up the various tasks amongst themselves and were guided by norms and regulations they created for themselves that guide their lives while in the streets.

The street children organize themselves while in the streets, they develop leadership structures and power relations; these guide their living arrangements and social welfare and responsibilities amongst them. Therefore, the street life has a great impact on the character of the street community as a whole as it affects the social relations among themselves. Whyte, (1955) points out that as a result, these structures dictate the pattern of behavior among them as well as their perception towards outside community. This structure is well knit and therefore has an effect on rehabilitation. However, Street children phenomenon has attracted public concern as well as governments as a major priority area to address both national and international organisations (Panter-Brick, 2003). However, little has been done on the factors that make street children resist rehabilitation. The aim of rehabilitation is to alleviate the suffering of the children in the streets and to give them a better life yet they resist it.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Children who work and live in the streets have posed a great challenge in Kenya. It is an undeniable fact that these children are part of the urban scene in the country. The street children cope with harsh realities of the street every day. It is apparent that efforts directed towards alleviating this phenomenon in order to help the street children have achieved very little success as large numbers of children are moving to find an alternative life on the streets. Available literature on the phenomenon of street children in Kenya focuses on the challenges that street children faces on the streets, health and nutrition among street children, the activities they engage in, their family background and other concerns. However, limited studies have been done on the factors that make street children resist rehabilitation.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 Broad Objectives

The broad objective of this study was to examine the factors that influence street children's' resistance to rehabilitation in Nakuru Town, Nakuru County, Kenya

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this study were:

- i. To establish the social factors that make street children resist rehabilitation in Nakuru Town.
- ii. To find out the economic factors that attracts street children to resist rehabilitation in Nakuru Town.
- iii. To determine the coping mechanisms of street children to hard life of the streets in Nakuru Town

1.4 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- i. What are the social factors of street children that make them resist rehabilitation in Nakuru Town?
- ii. What are the economic factors that attract street children to resist rehabilitation in Nakuru Town?
- iii. Which survival mechanisms aid the life of street children to continue living in the street in Nakuru Town?

1.5 Justifications for the Study

The phenomenon of street children is a social problem and a major challenge facing urbanization. This problem needs to be addressed as it touches on the society and especially children. Hence this study revealed the social factors that make street children resist rehabilitation therefore helping in dealing with intervention that target their social lives. It also gave insights on the economic factors that make street children resist rehabilitation and continue with the hard life on the street. The study informs the community and all the stakeholders of the coping mechanisms among street children, which sheds more light on how it strengthens street children's existence on the streets, which affect negatively on interventions aimed at rehabilitating them. The study revealed the reasons why they have not been able to get a breakthrough in interventions targeting to remove street children from the streets, hence useful to agencies dealing with children's welfare.

The study also filled a knowledge gap left by other researchers since it addresses the factors that make street children resist rehabilitation and continue to live in the streets where life is much undesirable compared to the rehabilitation centres. The study by Phiri, (2009) incorporated children's viewpoints of street life and concluded that social networks, friendship, survival strategies, and interaction with members of the public have implication on interventions. However, he does not point out that these interactions contribute to making the street children resist rehabilitation, in order to fill the knowledge gap, the study focused on factors from the street children's view that make them resist rehabilitation.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study was carried out in Nakuru Town, which is the headquarters of Nakuru County. The town is growing very fast with low income estates emerging such as Shauri Yako, Industrial Area, Ponda Mali, Rhonda, Lake-View, Kivumbini, Afraha, Langa Langa, Bondeni, Gioto, Kaptembwa among others (Nakuru Municipal Social Services, 2014). These low income estates have become major source of street children in the town, hence Nakuru town is an ideal context for this study. The study was carried out in, Shauri Yako, Bondeni, Gioto and Kaptembwa. It targeted both gender of street children aged 18yrs and below who were at least once in the street, rehabilitated, but went back to the street. The study focused on social and economic

factors that influence these children rehabilitation as well as coping mechanism of street children to street life.

The study faced difficulties from some respondents especially among the street children who were under the influence of drugs and substance abuse. To overcome this limitation, this study only interviewed the street children who were not under the influence of drugs. Another expected limitation is where the respondents were unwilling to respond. This was dealt with by explaining to the respondents on the positive benefits of the study and allowing them to respond on their convenient time.

1.7 Definition of Terms:

Base: It is an organization among street children that enable them live in the street just like people living in a home.

Base Leader: A base leader is a team leader among street children organization who organizes them in the streets and the leadership is acquired through social orientation.

Chokora: It is a Kiswahili word literally translated as “scavengers” or “pokers at dustbins, or garbage heaps in search of food and other valuable items” (Kilbride & Kilbride, 1990). This study adopts this as a working definition.

Factor: According to Oxford Dictionary 8th Edition, (2008) a factor is one of the things that affect an event, decision or situation. In this study, a factor is one of the things that influenced street children rehabilitation.

Influence: According to Oxford Dictionary 8th Edition, (2008) it is the power or ability to make other people agree with an opinion or idea. This study adopts this as a working definition.

Initiation: Means a rite or period of instruction that marks entrance or acceptance into a group or society (Allen, 1967). In this study, initiation means either formal or informal admission into the street community.

Rehabilitation: According to Oxford Dictionary 8th Edition, (2008) rehabilitation is intervention offered in order to get street children off the streets and back to what is considered a normal life. This study adopts this as a working definition.

Resistance: According to Oxford Dictionary 8th Edition, (2008) is a refusal to accept change or new thing. In this study, resistance means street children’s refusal to be rehabilitated.

Social Organization: It refers to an enduring system of norms and rules, network of relations, status, roles and social arrangement that create a pattern of social structures.

Social Structure: Ways in which street children are organized into predictable relationships and the way they respond to each other. The patterns of interaction existing in the group exert a force which shapes behavior and identity among members.

Street Children: Individuals under the age of 18 years, boy or girl for whom the street has become his or her habitual abode and who are inadequately protected supervised or directed by a responsible adult.

Street Family: Refers to children who are living together on the streets as a social unit

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The chapter covers the concept of street children, social and economic factors among street children that hinder rehabilitation and the coping mechanisms of street children to street life that contributes to rehabilitation resistance. Theoretical and conceptual frameworks conclude the chapter.

2.2 The Concept of Street Children

Over three quarters and as many as 90% of the children on the streets in various developing countries work on the streets but live at home and are working to earn money for their families (Ennew, 1986). The term 'street children' came into general use after the United Nations Year of the Child (UNYC) proclamation in 1979 (Mayhew, 1968). The proclamation was aimed at drawing attention to problems affecting children throughout the world such as malnutrition, lack of access to education and other basic child rights (UNESCO, 2008). Before the proclamation in 1979, street children were referred to as homeless, abandoned or runaways (Scanlon, Tomkins, Lynch & Scanlon, 1998).

Cosgrove, (1990) has used two dimensions to define street children: the degree of family involvement and the amount of deviant behavior. According to Cosgrove's (1990) argument, a street child is "any individual under the age of majority whose behavior is predominantly at variance with community norms, and whose primary support for his/her development needs is not a family substituted." Benitez, (2003) comments that, there is no universally accepted definition of street children and several interpretations are in common use. UNICEF, (1997) managed to concretely delineate three categories of street children: Children 'on' the streets, Children 'of' the streets and Children for the street (UNICEF, 1997). Chukwuma and Aniekwe, (2011) points out that this is a pitiable situation of out-of-school/street children where they alert the interest and the attention of many Non- Governmental and International Organizations which get involved in the rehabilitation, rescuing and returning of street children.

The term 'street children' is controversial, some authors choose not to adopt it and instead use alternative terms. For example, Dallape, (1996) uses the term 'community children', emphasizing that street children are part of the world community (Soale, 2004). Ennew, (2003) on the other hand, points out that some African countries have created their own synonym for the word 'street children'. For example, the term 'urban out-of school children' that is used in Kampala or the word 'skadukinders' (Afrikaans for shadow children) that is used in Johannesburg (Ennew, 2003). Another commonly used term is 'Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances', with the acronym CEDC. Ennew points out that although this term used to refer to a group that includes refugees, children with disabilities, children affected by organized violence and unaccompanied children in disasters, CEDC now seems to be almost synonymous to the term 'street children' (Ennew, 2003). However, UNICEF, (2001) defines a street child as any girl or boy for whom the street in the wildest sense of the word (including unoccupied dwellings, wasteland, etc) has become his or her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised, or directed by responsible adults" (International Catholic Children's Bureau, 1985). This definition defines who a street child is with one limitation that it should have pointed out on the age limit of the child.

In Kenya, the term used for a street child is *chokora*. This is a Kiswahili word literally translated as "scavengers" or "pokers at dustbins, or garbage heaps in search of food and other valuable items" (Kirlbride et al, 2000). Majority of the street children in Kenya and most parts of the world, fall in the category of children who have family ties, so they hawk or trade their goods or render menial services to some residents in the street for a morsel of food and thereafter return to their homes or families at night. Kilbide et al, (2000) continues to assert that the Kenyan street children are classified with the usage of drugs, they are often observed sniffing glue and perceived as trouble makers and a nuisance in the society. However, as this is a common feature with the street children in Kenya, the author seems to be put a general view that these children are a nuisance to the society. They are also perceived as troublemakers who lack decorum. The study concurs with the above author considering this is major mark used to distinguish the street children in Nakuru town.

According to Le Roux, (1996) no country and nearly no city in the world today is without the presence of street children. Both developed and developing countries face a broad spectrum of problems posed by these children, yet few steps have been taken to address the issue. The approach that views street children as a problem reduces them to unfortunate victims, fails to recognize the remarkable initiative, social structures, resiliency and ingenuity shown by street children in coping with difficult circumstances (Panter & Brick, 2003). As has been pointed out clearly by Panter & Brick, the community ought to change their perception of street children that they are useful members though circumstances have forced them to be where they are. The study concurs with this view and advocates for rehabilitation to restore them to where they ought to be.

Worldwide, the estimate number of street children sums up to 300 million who live without the basic human needs such as food, clothing and shelter (UNICEF 2001). The UNICEF report approximated in the year 2007 that the population of street children residing in the streets all over Kenya to be between 250,000-300,000 with a fourth of this number residing in Nairobi (Consortium for Street Children). The number of street children has been on the increase; it increased from 115 in 1975 to 200 in 1976 and to 400 in 1977 (Wanaina, 1977). The Undugu Society estimated a 10 percent annual increase on the number of street children. (Undugu Society, 1989). Other sources indicate that in 1988/89, there were approximately 3600 street children in Nairobi alone, while the national estimate was approximately 16,300 street children, (Ministry of Home Affairs and National Heritage, 1990). The rapid increase of street children is alarming as per the above statistics. However, interventions targeting to get children out of the streets have been in place, hence a need to find out why even with several interventions by different actors it seems that the numbers are still increasing.

Increasing poverty, war, famine and disease occurring singly or in combination have been attributed as the main cause of children leaving for the streets. In the 1990s, UNICEF estimated that approximately 100 million children and adolescents were growing up on the streets of large cities (UNICEF, 1989). Kenya as well as other African countries have had a high prevalence of street children. The adverse situation posed by economic deterioration over the last 20 years has resulted in increasing

family disintegration, triggering off a much greater number of children leaving for the streets; some come from poverty stricken homes in the Peri-urban slums (Ayuku, 2003). With an increase of children orphaned by AIDS, there is a likelihood of an increase trend of children leaving for the streets. This is so alarming hence a need to intensify interventions in order to curb the phenomenon.

The factors attributed to this phenomenon have been divided into push and pull factors. Push factors refer to factors that ‘push’ children away from their homes and onto the streets, while pull factors include factors that ‘pull’ children toward the streets. Push factors that are often mentioned include low family income, homelessness, neglect and abuse, school failure and the loss of parents (Volpi, 2002). Pull factors often include attraction to the city; children can be drawn to the streets because they believe they can find a job there and make money, or because there is more entertainment in the city (Young, 2004). As observed by the above authors both pull and push factors play a big role in street children phenomenon. However, while targeting to get the children out of the streets, both push and pull factors should be put into consideration in order to come up with an informed, sustainable solution.

Street children phenomenon is more prevalent in poor nations of Latin America, Asia and Africa (LeRoux, 1996). According to LeRoux, (1996) what has been referred to as “worldwide phenomenon of street children” has neither vanished from sight nor effectively been solved. This is a gap that the study sought to fill. However, it has been found out that throughout Africa, male street children outnumber female street girls because girls are generally expected to stay home and care for the young children (Boakye-Boaten, 2006). The study sought to understand the background details of the street children as this gave more light to understanding the underlying reasons for seeking alternative life in the streets.

However, several factors, such as the children’s fear of officials and authorities, their fear of violence and their involvement in criminal activities, cause the children to hide away from the public and the authorities (Pare, 2003). Therefore, in many cities around the world, street children have become almost invisible. They tend to move from one place to the other, and they often stay away from public places where they could be noted and instead hide on rooftops or underground places (Young, 2003).

This obviously create problems for researchers, NGO's or government authorities who try to make a realistic estimate of the number of street children. The study concurs with the above observation that the exact numbers of street children have not been found hence a challenge in planning programs to target them.

2.3 Interventions for Street Children

2.3.1 Various Categorizations

The American Heritage Dictionary (2009) defines rehabilitation as the means to restore to useful life through therapy and education or to restore to good condition, operation or capacity. (Calhound et al. 1995) describes rehabilitation as an intensive insidious and deliberate strategy intended to equip one with new skills to cope with rapid changes in the world. The introduction of the children's Act Cap 586 gave the government, Non-Governmental Organisations, Faith Based Organisations the mandate and responsibility to protect all children especially those in difficult circumstances. These institutions have endeavored to devote all the means possible to provide rehabilitation after being rescued from the streets to the main stream of social life (Mohammed, 2002). Street children end up in the streets because of different factors that account for it. They therefore need to be rescued and restored through the rehabilitation process.

Rehabilitation therefore is a form of resocialization for the children for them to learn new norm, values, attitudes and behaviors to match their new situations in life. Resocialization occurs by learning something contrary to our previous experience (James, 2013). The author continues to point out that, street children go through various difficult circumstances that make them loose so much as self-esteem, formal learning, values and norms, rehabilitation therefore is meant to restore them. The study agrees with the intention of the rehabilitation, that if done well it is intended to restore a lot that is lost by the children in the street.

Basically what rehabilitation centres does to children from the street is to provide them with a home where the child can be re-directed back to the norms of the society and to help them achieve their dreams in life. In other words, rehabilitation is achieved through de-socialization where the individual unlearns inappropriate behavior and through re-socialization, acquires new and appropriate cultural norms,

skills, values, roles and self-image (Preston et al. 1989). The rehabilitation environment thus provides adequate diet, shelter, basic sanitation, hygiene and clothing to the street children (Dallape, 1987). The rehabilitation environment can therefore be described as safe and free of dangers appropriate for unlearning all the behaviours previously learned.

According to Chaturvedi, (2008), a well rounded rehabilitation program for street children cuts across several factors such as medical care for children, training on health and hygiene such as cooking, laundry. There is also counseling at individual level as well as group therapies and recreational activities, vocational training and other life skills empowerment activities. In counseling, play therapy, role playing (Chaturvedi 2008) has been known to help in rehabilitating children because first and foremost children love fun and through such interactions, cohesion and trust is created. A well designed rehabilitation centre should be attractive to the children, this is a gap for another study.

However, rehabilitation programs face several challenges, this is a suggestion for another study. The problem of street children relapsing from the rehabilitation centres and going back to the street is adamant. This is attributed to so many factors, which this study categorized as social, economic and the coping mechanism to street life. The street children often times resist the rehabilitation programs and run to the bases where they belonged. Sometimes they relocate to other bases especially if they do not want to go back to the rehabilitation center.

According to Dybicz (2005), the activities of NGO's involved with street children can be categorized into three different approaches: primary prevention, secondary prevention and tertiary prevention. Primary prevention focuses on children who have not entered street life yet, but who are living in poverty. The goal of these interventions is to 'reduce the influence of factors that 'push' and 'pull' a child into street life'. The study concurs with this approach by limit chances of a child slipping into the streets.

Moreover, Dybicz (2005) further points out that, secondary prevention is aimed at children who work on the streets but still have regular contacts with their family. The

goal here is to 'make street life into one of the phases which the child passes safely through into adulthood'. Tertiary prevention is intended for the group of children who are already living on the streets, a group that is assumed to be considerably smaller than the other two groups (Dybicz, 2005). Rehabilitation, or 'rehabilitative care', therefore can be said to refer to activities that can be categorized into tertiary prevention. Although this author points out the various categorization of rehabilitation, with the trend of street children pointed earlier, it seems most interventions target children who are already in the streets. It is therefore important to understand the underlying factors to reduce the street children phenomenon.

Commenting on the effectiveness of rehabilitation, Munene and Nambi, (1996) points out that, most programmes however do not fit into these categories because they use a combination of different approaches. For instance, NGO's sometimes offer shelters, 'transitional rehabilitation homes' or 'walk-in centres'. Although these homes and centres can be considered as institutions, street children are often allowed to come and go as they please, they walk in and out hence, not fully institutionalized. Rehabilitation ought to meet the needs of the street children, therefore a comprehensive research should be done on a particular approach's effectiveness in rehabilitating the street children.

The categorizations mentioned above are two examples, but there are many more (Rizzini & Lusk, 1995; Karabanow & Clement, 2004), states that there are many more categorizations of rehabilitating street children which contributes to the elusiveness of the term 'rehabilitation'. The authors further point out that, another problem regarding the rehabilitation of street children has to do with the activities carried out by NGO's and the evaluation of these activities. There are hundreds of NGO's working with street children, and each of them has adopted a different practice. One major issue of concern is that most of these practices are not based on research, which is probably due to the general lack of knowledge when it comes to rehabilitating street children. The study concurs with this statement as it looks at the reasons why the approaches mentioned above, though they seem good have not adequately solved the problems of street children.

It is observed that many researchers seem to concentrate on street children's lives and the many problems these children experience, and the literature often revolves around topics such as the 'places and spaces' of street children (Young, 2003; Ennew, 2003), street children's identities (Beazley, 2003; Young, 2003) and the marginalization of street children (Van Blerk, 2005). Although these studies provide an insight in street children's lives, and therefore play an essential role in understanding street children, there is a need for further research that concentrates on how to turn this better understanding into effective rehabilitation programmes. Hence a conclusion that "there is no discussion or research concerning the ranking of importance or impact of various dimensions in terms of efficacy". Dybicz, (2005) Karabanow and Clement (2004), commenting on the same, point out that the reason for lack of success is because of the transient nature of the population and the difficulty in developing precision - based outcome measures. The study established from street children's point of view why rehabilitation has not succeeded even with the concerted efforts by various stakeholders.

Commenting further, Dybicz, (2005) raises another issue regarding the research on rehabilitating street children. He concludes that "noticeably absent was the voice of practitioners themselves and their valuable insights from front-line experience in the field" (Dybicz, 2005). Likewise, the voice of the consumer is also not considered, the street children for whom the programmes are designed have not been heard. Dybicz, (2005) continues to argue that these data need to be gathered first in order to 'effectively target and address the needs of this population'. The current study interviewed the street children who gave their views on rehabilitation and why they resist it. However, as observed by the above authors children relapse because the rehabilitation does not often meet their needs.

On the other hand, Ansell, (2005), Rizzini and Lusk, (1995) asserts that, childhood notion can have an impact on rehabilitation programmes, created and implemented by NGO's and other organisations. "Street children represent highly visible challenges to idealized (Western) notions of childhood" (Ansell, 2005). Similarly, the notion of children as innocent, naive, hopeful young people does not match the idea of children living on the streets in poverty without any adult supervision. Street children are often portrayed as both victim and deviant, and their families are represented as negligent,

which Agnelli, (1986) claims that their lives are full of misery and destitution. It is sadly unfortunate that children have to face this kind of life. However, rehabilitating them is a solution offered to restore them back to life the ought to live.

Rizzini and Lusk, (1995) lists four basic approaches that are being developed and implemented by governments, NGO's and other organisations in order to deal with the street child-phenomenon: the correctional model, the rehabilitative approach, outreach strategies, and prevention. The correctional model is based on the notion that street children are a public nuisance and a risk to security, and therefore they need be deterred from a life of crime through supervision and structure. The model has been adopted by several governments and police forces. As part of the correctional approach, street children are locked up in correctional institutions, juvenile centers or prisons (Rizzini and Lusk, 1995), Karabanow and Clement, (2004) argue that the correctional response tends to blame the individual for 'being a street kid'. The study concurs with the above authors on the need for correction, however, the challenge is using excessive force on the children with the intention that it is the only way to rehabilitate them.

Commenting further, Karabanow & Clement, (2004), points out the second approach being the rehabilitative approach, this is based on the view that street children have been damaged by the circumstances of their lives. In order to help these damaged street children, programmes that focus on drug detoxification, education, and the provision of a family-like environment are implemented as part of the rehabilitative approach. The rehabilitative approach is usually funded by churches or NGO's. According to Karabanow and Clement, (2004) the approach is gentler than the correctional model, but it maintains to see personal pathology as the root cause for homelessness (Karabanow & Clement, 2004). The implication for this therefore is that the children are not to be blamed for the circumstances and outcome of their choices. Although this approach sounds gentler, this study still maintains a balance with the correctional approach.

The third approach listed by Rizzini and Lusk, (1995) consist of outreach strategies, which are based on Paulo Freire's model of education. Street children are regarded as oppressed and therefore street teachers are sent to the street to provide outreach

education to street children, to empower them, and to create support groups in which the children can participate. These strategies are often funded by NGO's and church groups. The preventive approach recognizes that children are on the streets because of social and economic forces, and therefore this approach focuses on empowering and employing people living in poverty through community-based programmes, and on campaigning for street children's rights (Rizzini & Lusk, 1995). NGO's and other organizations working with street children use a combination of the models/approaches listed above. The study therefore examined the approaches used by rehabilitation centres in Nakuru and the implication they have had in maintaining and retaining street children as well as helping them to restore their lives.

According to Ansell, (2005) none of the approaches listed in the previous section has been entirely successful. For example, when a correctional approach is adopted, most children later return to the streets because nothing is done to address the problems that caused them to end up on the streets. Rehabilitative approaches can be successful, but can help only a small proportion, and removing children from the street can cause the breaking up of support networks. Outreach strategies are said to provide education appropriate to street life, but sometimes do nothing to help children leave the streets. Preventative programmes address the reasons why children go to the street but can overemphasize and even stigmatize the role of families (Ansell, 2005). However, it is evident that no one single approach addresses the needs of the entire group (Rizzini & Lusk, 1995). Hence, different approaches can be used by different rehabilitation centres with an objective of achieving effectiveness in rehabilitation. .

Although there might not be a clear solution, many authors seem to agree on the lack of success regarding forced institutionalization, which can be placed in the category of the correctional model described in the previous section and is a common intervention implemented by governments. Several authors have argued that this type of intervention is not effective (Lewis, 2001; Dybicz, 2005) and that in some cases, it can even do more harm than good. According to Dybicz, (2005) institutionalization is very resource-intensive, and successful reintegration tends to be low when children are institutionalized because they are removed from the community. Ennew and Swart-Kruger, (2003), in agreement points out that, it is important to let go of the constructed necessity to remove children from the dirt and danger of the street

environment. Furthermore, in some cases, children who have been forcibly institutionalized have reported sexual abuse and corporal punishments. Not only does this damage the children in question, it may also lead to the children still living on the streets feeling even more marginalized (Sexton, 2005). The study examined from the street children's point of view if such cases were among the reasons why they resisted rehabilitation.

Panter-Brick, (2002) comments that, the way children are portrayed can have an impact on the types of intervention used contrary to what is listed by Rizzini and Lusk (1995), as it does not provide long-lasting solutions as children are perceived as victims or as dependent. Such approach "tend to ignore children's own views and all that they have already accomplished for themselves" (Ennew & Swart-Kruger, 2003). Establishing the best way among the alternatives and caring that children are not stigmatized is a gap suggested for more research in this study.

On the contrary, Munene and Nambi, (1996) argue that successful interventions employ four main strategies: befriending the children and building trust, reclaiming them from the street, rehabilitating them by providing resources 'to live like normal members of society', and resettling them by assisting them to return to mainstream society (Munene & Nambi, 1996). Thus, they seem to be more in favor of the rehabilitative approach. Van Blerk, (2005) observes that although rehabilitation and resettlement can be beneficial, resettlement can be a difficult process and is not always successful. Movement out of street life is voluntary, that children have to take the initial decision and cannot be forced (Van Blerk, 2005). However, in an ideal case, the street children are supposed to desire an intervention that makes their lives better, this is a challenge to the rehabilitation centres that their programmes should be desired hence a reduction in the relapse of the street children to the streets.

Additionally, Volpi, (2002) suggests that it is better to 'reach children where they are'. In a Working Paper for the World Bank, effective programmes cannot succeed without 'a number of essential ingredients', which include among others: trained professionals; a focus on integration into the family, school, and labour market; individualized attention and tailor-made services and children's participation. Furthermore, it is essential to provide street children with physical and mental care,

and to involve the community and their family (Volpi, 2002). On the same note, Soale, (2004) mentions the same key ingredients, and emphasizes the importance of integrating different services. The author further states that, “the health, education, survival, and emotional needs of street children should be addressed as an integral part of the child’s wellbeing” (Soale, 2004,). This study however, examined the presence or absence of these essential key ingredients in rehabilitation centres since more focus is on the children’s wellbeing.

It can be seen from the above analysis that, interventions for street children points in different directions. Most authors agree that locking children up in correctional facilities is not an effective way of dealing with the problems concerning street children, but they seem to disagree on the effectiveness of rehabilitative approach and the outreach approach. While some argue that institutionalization, rehabilitation and resettlement can be successful, others believe it is better to reach children where they are, and thus advocate for shelters, drop-in centers and community empowerment programmes. The study established some of the approaches used by rehabilitation centres in Nakuru Town and sought to find out why the street children relapse.

2.3.2 The Social Factors Hindering Street Children’s Rehabilitation

Social factors have a great impact on the street children. These factors are categorized as pull factor that makes street children resist rehabilitation. As the street children get to the streets, they form alternative families as a group that enhances networks of relations. This is a way in which these children restructure their lives that were impacted by different factors such as poverty, abuse and many other factors. By using their agency, children leave their homes and live in the streets. Their day to day running of affairs, managing their own lives and being able to meet their daily needs clearly demonstrates the use of an organized agency. Even if children are seen as “eyesores” to the public, these children as normal children successfully use their agency and being resilient in otherwise very difficult circumstances on the street (Zutt, 1994). They regard their fellow members (street children) as ‘brothers or siblings’ or have shown themselves fully able to replicate the roles and processes of family life in their interactions with each other. This therefore, gives them sense of belonging and attachment to each other making street life bearable to them.

In addition, a variety of unique personal goals are achieved by street children's participation in the group. The need for identity is one of these goals. By identifying or belonging to a group, they may gain prestige and a sense of self-importance. According to Ochola (2000), the groups also serve as family substitute for those without families or seeking 'new' families to identify with. The study concurs with the observation by the above author as the children in the street are proud to be identified with their peers. They gain what was lost through their friends. This however, contributes to resistance to rehabilitation because they feel safe with their friends.

Street children also suffer from lack of physical and emotional support, which the group provides. Also pointed by Undugu society of Kenya, (2002), street children find security and relief from life's anxieties within their groups. These include those who left their original families due to family breakdown, divorce, verbal and physical abuse. Although these circumstances are thought to have damaged them, they get the emotional support from their peers that enables them to bear the challenges that they encounter.

As pointed out by Rantalaiho & Teije (2006), the street children form families and are able to identify with them. Social capital is one of the variables that enable them to live together. The first dimension of social capital is 'social networks and sociability'. Sociability here is understood as the ability to maintain and use one's social network as a feature of social capital. The author further points out that, the key principle of this dimension is that 'actors need to recognize their networks as a resource in order for these networks to constitute social capital' (McDaniel & Nicole, 2004). Sociability is no less a central concept in children's social capital as well. The street children's way of life in the streets is a well-knit form of social networks, they depend on it for their survival in facing the difficult life in the street.

The second dimension of social capital is 'trust and reciprocity'. According to McDaniel and Nicole, (2004) in order for a member of a social network to gain from the relationship he/she has with the other members and to use them as resources, he/she should be able to trust that network members are providing correct helpful information and honest support. For example, in the case of this study, street children

need to create trustful relations with their friends within their social networks and that is; their friends and other people who assist them. Scott (1976) concurs with the fact that street children stay together for mutual assistance. Although the findings point out that the network is important, it should be noted that street children have informal leadership to check on this quality.

Finally, the last dimension is the sense of belonging and place attachment. The sense of belonging refers to an individual feeling of belonging after attaching symbolic meaning to a certain environment, but in this case, it refers to an extent to which individuals feel that they are part of a collective community. That is, be it at home, school, work place and in the case of this study, on the streets or indeed just about anywhere (McDaniel & Nicole, 2004). As mentioned earlier in the study, street children replicate the roles and processes of family life in their interactions with each other. The study however, found out how their sense of belonging has contributed largely to resistance of rehabilitation.

As with the concept of bonding and bridging social capital in mind, it is 'not completely reducible to individuals but that its existence requires a social structure i.e. social networks and other dimensions of social capital for individuals to be connected to (Rantalaiho & Teige, 2006). Overall, social capital encompasses norms and networks furthermore it facilitates collective actions for the benefits of the members. Boakye-Boaten (2006) agrees with the fact that, individuals create social capital by investing in social relationship they have with others, making social capital a resource that individuals use to improve their life conditions and wellbeing which otherwise would have been difficult to do on their own. This study agrees with the above authors, on the much that social capital has been a resource to the street children.

Social capital is not only applicable to children from families whose parents are major sources of social capital but it is also a survival mechanism that can be employed in other settings such as street children who live without parents. Childhood social capital is mainly viewed and defined in terms of parents' aspirations for their children, and parents' individualistic orientations and involvement, and academic achievement. (McDaniel & Nicole, 2004) Social capital in childhood is therefore understood and viewed in consideration of children's' interactions with adults, not their social

interactions with each other and this makes social capital an asset to children living in intact families (Rantalaaho & Teige 2006). Considering street children without parents or guardians, it is interesting to investigate how children are able to stock social capital and use it to their collective and individual benefits without adults' guidance and support and also how social capital is bridged across gender, age and 'territories'. This therefore, forms a strong bond among the street children which becomes hard for any intervention to reach out to them.

Street children are able to start and maintain reciprocity and solidarity networks amongst themselves. This can be understood as a defense against marginalization, and also a method of individual survival, which Swart, (1990) terms as 'mutual credit loan systems,' a symbolic economy between the children that is constantly appraised and balanced in subtle ways through a system of social contracts and returns. As this is vital for street children survival, they therefore learn to fully partake in expected actions and performances of solidarity. This therefore encourages their stay in the streets even though life is unbearable. In this study's view, though the fact of solidarity is positive to the street children it is a hindrance to rehabilitation.

2.3.3 The Economic Factors Hindering Street children's Rehabilitation

In analyzing the plight of street children in developing countries, inaccessibility to decent livelihood has been attributed as the main cause of child mobility centres (Boakye- Boateng, 2006). Writing on the role of family in the life of a child, (Nzimande, 1996) defines the family as a support system. In terms of this definition, the family is the ideal support system for any child's needs to be met. Its role is to provide a base where a child feels; loved, cared for, valued and esteemed by belonging to a network of mutual obligation. Depriving a child of the support system forces them to find fulfillment external to the family unit. Many of the street children are an example of this process-disintegration of the family and as a result, they turn to the streets. It is in the streets that they find their source of livelihood through various means. This study, concurs with the above author that the street children are just an example of the process – disintegration of the family unit.

According to Abebe, (1999) children engage in begging either full time as a way of livelihood or part-time as a way of complementing their income from begging with

other activities. However, as they grow older, they no longer attract public sympathy hence adults stop giving them money or food (Phiri, 2009; Aptekar, 1984 & Abebe, 1999). This forces them to a gradual progression to move from begging to stealing. In that case, they find all alternative means of livelihood. Some of their choices occasionally put them under threat with the authorities.

As observed further by Abebe, (1999) it is obvious that street children do not have a constant source of material and financial resources. This forces them to go to great lengths to make sure that they have food by engaging in menial jobs e.g. begging, scavenging, washing cars, looking after cars in parks, throwing garbage or drawing water. They engage in these activities to meet their daily needs. Swart-Kruger, (1990) says that it is only possible through social networks. He goes further to point out that reciprocity and solidarity between the children is understood as a defense against marginalization and a strategy of individual survival. They have a relationship of ‘mutual credit loan systems,’ a symbolic economy between the children that is constantly appraised and balanced in subtle ways through a system of social contracts and returns as observed earlier. It is an undeniable fact that the street children have to look for different ways of survival.

However, Abebe, (1999) further points out that street children work as car-parking boys, car washers, guards for the cars, shoe shiners and baggage loaders. Some older girls exchange sex for money (Lugalla & Mbwambo, 1999). Some of them rely on selling goods and begging in traffic for making an income. Others are involved in illegal work like drug dealing (UNICEF, 2002). In order to secure their daily basic needs, they set up a system whereby each group has a zone where they undertake their activities to avoid any kind of competition for available resources (Lugalla & Mbwambo, 1999). Acquiring a territorial space gives them a sense of empowerment as they are assured of their daily needs being met. Often they fight over who is supposed to dominate which area and who should have access to which resources. For instance, a group involved in scavenging for waste materials in a given area would not allow a rival group to engage in a similar activity in their territory. Competition between groups tends to increase cohesiveness within a group i.e., the greater the cooperative effort within a group, the more likely it is to develop competitive friction with other groups pursuing similar objectives.

Despite street children being vulnerable, they can manage to afford their daily life needs due to being very well organized. For example, they know worshipping places and times so that they can go there at prayer time to gain money or food. They are also aware of religious festivals and celebrations, as these days bring them good sources of income. They also use tourist sites and NGOs as a good source for survival. However, being chased by police and state authorities hinders their activities (Lugalla & Mbwambo, 1999; UNICEF, 2002). The main aim of doing all these, for the street child, is to look for a source of income to be able to meet their basic needs. This study concurs with the above observation, in that the street children are aware of ways of obtaining their livelihoods.

Street children have adopted the “culture of consumerism” (Lugalla & Mbwambo, 1999). Not all street children earn enough money to buy their food, and are reduced to eating leftovers from restaurants, bars and hotels. In Bombay, some street children live near muslim shrines in order to get free food. (Kombarakan, 2004). Other children steal to survive, and although this usually amounts to petty theft, they can also be taken on as drug couriers or work in prostitution. They work more than 40 hours a week (Rizzini & Lusk, 1995) and “live a day to day life” (Kombarakan, 2004). Sometimes children live near places of work. For instance, in Tanzania, children of the street live on pavements near their working places (Lugalla and Mbwambo, 1999). Such proximity affords opportunities and gives them an advantage over other working children. Competition for acquiring better working places however, is more often regulated by violence. In order to preserve their advantage in a specific area of the city, the older children of the street, adults and policemen, all exert physical violence against the younger children to force them to work in less lucrative areas (Lalor, 1999; Kombarakaran, 2004). This makes it particularly difficult for young children to survive on the street.

Street children groups often live and operate in designated territories within the towns. Different groups usually compete for territorial space and resources. It is therefore important for the interventions targeting to rehabilitate these street children and maintain them in the centers to understand that economic pull factors of street influence the retaining them in rehabilitation centres, because they have been exposed to money and they have learnt to use it the way they want. The study established ways

where different groups have access to different territories in the street and how this has affected the alternative life in the rehabilitation centres.

2.3.4 Coping mechanism to street life

Resilience among street children helps us to understand how street children and youth adapt to their environment. As Street children adjust to life in the streets, rather than being the most victimized, the most destitute, the most psychologically vulnerable group of children, they display resilience and create coping mechanisms for growing up in difficult environments (Veale et al. 2000). This view is also pointed out by Boyden, (1994), who comments that, evidence shows that growing up in the context of constant change and contradiction can for some children be a source of strength. He further observes that regardless of being continuously exposed to risk factors such as poverty, the harsh conditions on the streets, they operate within the structures they create on the streets which promote resilience and teach them how to solve problems and successfully handle challenges. The study established the specific coping mechanisms by street children in Nakuru Town.

Mtonga, (2011) argues that even though children are considered to be vulnerable, studies indicating the dynamic, interactive nature of child development and highlighting children's coping strategy in adverse settings, challenge the assumption that all or even most children are helpless in the face of turbulence and strife. The street children display resilience which is understood as how people react and cope when faced with adversity. It is used exclusively when referring to the maintenance of positive adjustments under challenging life conditions; resilience is therefore the manifestation of positive adaptation despite significant life adversity (Boyden & Mann, 2005; Boyden, 1994). The street life is full of challenges that affects them in different ways. However, their resilience to this challenging life helps them to survive the life in the streets.

Responses to adversity are understood and described in terms of exposure to risks and positive adaptation. Risks refer to variables that increase individuals' likelihood of psychopathology or their vulnerability to negative development outcomes (Boyden & Mann 2005). Risk encompasses negative life situations that are known to be associated with adjustment difficulties. Ayuku, (2005), points out that emotionally;

the greatest risk to which most street children are exposed to is the loss or lack of an adequate relationship with an adult caregiver. The risks that children on the street encounter include factors such as poverty, hunger, abuse, exposure to weather elements etc. Positive adaptation is defined in terms of behaviorally manifested social competence or success at meeting developmental stage risk (Boyden & Mann, 2005, Boyden 1994). The current study established some of the coping mechanisms among street children that enable them to respond to negative life situations.

Societies have their own approaches to the management of adversity and to healing, depending on their concepts of causality in misfortune, of wellbeing, power, personhood and social ties. These notions tend to structure the way people experience and are affected by environmental stresses (Heinonen, 2000, Boyden 1994). Based on this notion, Boyden (2003), stresses that as we are looking at children, it is important to note that although their responses may not be the same as adults', their way of responding to adversity should always be understood with reference to the social, cultural and moral contexts in which they live. The study sought to understand these variables as regard to street children response to adversity. The findings showed that street children though young respond to adversity and are able to deal with the challenges that they face.

Even though children are considered to be vulnerable, studies indicating the dynamic, interactive nature of child development and highlighting children's coping strategy in adverse settings challenge the assumption that all, or even most, children are helpless in the face of turbulence and strife, children have considerable inner resources as individuals and collectively for coping with different challenges. Street children as any social entity, have distinct culture with a structure that defines roles and responsibilities of each member. They depend less on their families and more on the meaningful ties they have established within their groups (Ochola, 1999). It is important to find out their structure and how it binds them together in Nakuru Town. The study established that street children are organized hence collectively, they are able to cope with challenges that they face.

According to Ayuku (2005) street children organize their psychosocial attributes primarily within the framework of the realities available to them and the support

existing in those realities. They seek constructive adaptive patterns, even though their own lives have been marred by loss, abuse and exploitation. The street children have formed strong supportive ties and caring relationships and they cope actively with their lives on the streets rather than homes or institutional environments. The reason for this is because they have no one to provide for their needs

The general notion held that children exposed to adversity and hardships cannot cope and adjust properly compared to adults is not all true as a significant proportion of children exposed to difficulties within their families and communities remain resilient although the experience of multiple stressors is likely to have a cumulative effect which ultimately may overwhelm coping capacity. There is evidence that growing up in the context of constant change and contradiction can for some children be a source of strength (Boyden, 2003). This study established that street children go through many challenges but they manage to survive them.

Commenting on the street children resilience, Boyden (1994) states that, street children could be said to be one category of children that adapt with contradictions in their lives. Despite the fact that they are being continuously exposed to risk factor such as poverty, the harsh conditions on the streets, they operate outside structures such as the family, the community, and the school that promote resilience and teach them how to solve problems; however, they successfully handle challenges in life. In the absence of these structures, street children demonstrate the ability to meet their basic needs through the achievements of positive adjustments in the face of adversity, encapsulating the view that adaptation in a child experiencing new life “trajectories” defies “normative” expectations (Boyden, 1994). The complexity of the stress being faced by street children means that no one coping response may be appropriate, but different strategies over time may be more efficacious (McAlpine, 2010). This study concurs with the above author’s observation that street children adopt different strategies on the street that enables them to cope with challenging life.

According to Psychological researchers in South Africa who were studying on the characteristics of street children put forward that, street children tend to be tough since they have social support from their street friends and these can be inform of being accepted, understood and also having company (Le Roux, 1999). On the same

note, Boakye – Boaden (2006), points out that, street children in Ghana put forward that they trusted their friends more than adults and were always curious about their intentions. Whatever the street children do, they do it as a team for example they work together to earn money and also in search of food which is shared amongst themselves (Suda, 1997). As this enhances solidarity, the study found out how it is exactly carried out in Nakuru Town by the street children to enhance their survival. It is important therefore to note that friends to them are like part of their family.

Street children have strong and influential peer relationships. Likewise, Ali (2004) points out that, street peers sustain and assist one another to survive daily. In Latin America and Guatemala street children were mentioned as main source of trust. In these areas it was evident that street children lived as a family caring for one another and taught one another various ways and methods for survival. They have good communication skills and problems are solved amongst themselves (Ali, 2004; Raffaelli, 1997). However, to the street children, this aspect is positive in regard to their welfare, on the other hand it counters the interventions intended to alleviate suffering for these children.

The situation of disadvantaged children in Africa is particularly precarious. OAU/UNICEF, (1992) report has put the plight of Africa's disadvantaged children in especially difficult circumstances as those who represent one of the continent's most urgent and devastating problems that denies our children of their childhood and our societies of their future, denying too many Africa's sons and daughters their inalienable rights, their most basic needs and fair chance at life worth living. If countries do not act now to rescue those who suffer and sacrifice the most, future human and economic losses from such inaction are intolerable and perhaps irreversible. The report continues to point out that, the process of children going to the streets to work in legal or illegal businesses to supplement family income contributes in part to the later phenomenon of street children. Thus, 'children can be best understood as a product of their context and socialization, and this includes aspects of their families and socio- economic background. This therefore is an urgent call to rescue the children from such devastation.

2.3.5 Street Children Resistance to Rehabilitation

The number of children with or without family migrating to the harsh reality of street life is increasing. They live in an environment devoid of affection, love, care and comfort of a family life, circumstances have forced them to struggle in order to fulfill their most basic needs like food and shelter at a very tender, impressionable age. However, several actors have come up with ways to prevent this occurrence but the sad reality is that the street children phenomenon is still evident in most towns.

A publication by Ednica, an organization in Mexico City that not only work with street kids but also partners and trains local organisations to work with street children shows that realization of success in rehabilitating street children has not been seen due to lack of inclusion and addressing all factors that contribute to children going to the streets (Orphans Foundation Trust, 2012). An adequate research on the reasons why street children relapse from rehabilitation is an urgent need that if carefully addressed, the prevalence of street children could reduce, according to this study, it is assumed that every rehabilitation centre started with the objective of dealing with the street children phenomenon.

It was reported that over 600,000 children in Kenya were in need of special protection (UNICEF, 2013). With increase in trend of street life, both Government of Kenya and Community Based Organisations have intensified efforts to address the street plight. In 2003, there was a street children rehabilitation program initiative that saw various social halls transformed into rehabilitation centres and for the street youths, they were enrolled into the National Youth Service (NYS) program. These efforts although commendable have proved to be insufficient (Argarwal, 2010). It is likelihood that most of the street children were not ready for the rehabilitation process which account to the reasons why the process was not successful and it was not sustained.

There are over 351 registered homes and rehabilitation homes in Nairobi alone (NCBDA, 2001). Sponsored by different intervention actors like the government, NGO's, FBO's, CBO's and privately owned organizations engaged in rescuing children, rehabilitating and reintegrating them back into the society. A survey on Nairobi crime and street families in Eastlands, Nairobi on June 2001, stated that street children are vulnerable to various forms of exploitation and abuse. They are deprived

not only of their rights as children but also of their childhood. They live without guidance, concern, love, education and security. (UNICEF, 1996) points that rescuing children from the streets could prevent dangers such as drug abuse, physical and sexual abuse, crime, diseases and infection of HIV/AIDS and other infections (Agarwal, 2010). The number of street children in the street increases on a daily basis; this eventually affects the economic status of the country. Therefore, a concerted effort between all stakeholders should be in place.

The main reason is that children are still growing and they need much help and assistance in various ways in order to catch up with what they have gone through especially the loss they have had of not having a family, dignity, self-esteem and formal learning. However, as efforts are made to restore these children, they themselves resist it. This problem of street children relapsing from the rehabilitation centres and going back to the street is adamant in many institutions. Usually they run to the “base” where they were living before rescue and it is possible to go and get them back to the rehabilitation process again though some children are clever and opt to relocate to another “base” especially if they do not want to go back to the rehabilitation. One can look for those children in many bases while they are locked in police stations. It is preferable for police to take children back to rehabilitation centres after relapsing to the streets, rather than locking them up in Police custody (UNICEF, 1996). There is therefore a need for a close working relationship between the police and the rehabilitation institutions.

Interventions for street children are usually hampered by a weak understanding of the phenomenon of street children and their families of origin. In order to formulate successful intervention strategies aimed at alleviating challenges faced by street children in any given society, it is very important to have knowledge about the social, economic factors and the coping mechanisms that continues to keep them in the streets and makes rehabilitation to be hampered. It is also important to know the dynamics surrounding the community in which the problem occurs (Aptekar, 1988). Good knowledge of the surrounding assists in coming up with a sustainable solution.

Regardless of the interventions targeting street children marginalization and harassment that they face when they are on the streets, street children have proved to

like the streets so much that even when placed in institutions they adopt strategies to cope with the harsh realities of their lives. For many, these strategies include developing a tough exterior and strong independence to hide their vulnerability UNICEF (2012). They live in survival-mode, constantly having to be aware of their surroundings and fight for their safety Bose (1992). These circumstances lead children to engage in behaviors that children in families typically do not, such as creating a new identity, using aggression frequently, and valuing relationships based on what can be gained from them. Railway Children, (2008) or shelter, they time and again escape and go back on the streets. Children repeatedly escape institutional care regardless of most of them being located in isolated places outside the city where they have been strategically located so that children are not lured to return to the streets. Locations of rehabilitation centres were asked in the interview schedule, if it has any implication on resistance. The study established that the proximity to the city is one of the pull factors of street children to the streets.

This study sought to investigate reasons why some street children resist rehabilitation and choose to stay in the street where they face hardship. By understanding their survival and factors key to their resilience, economic and social factors it shed more light on the privileges they get while on the streets as identity with the group, socially protected by the group members, freedom of doing anything without restriction of laws as well as adhering to street norms and rules that bind them within a group. Most interventions that do not recognize the social, economic and coping mechanisms of street children as factors that keep children in the streets are doomed to make no or little impact while undertaking programs to rehabilitate street children.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

This study is supported by the social network theory. Kvale, (2009) observes that developing of a conceptual and theoretical understanding of the phenomena to be explored, establishes the base to which new knowledge is added and incorporated. This theory therefore explains the situation of street children way of life in the streets.

2.4.1 Social Network Theory

The theory was propounded by John Barnes in 1954; Social network theory is the study of how the social structure of relationships around a person, group, or

community affects beliefs or behaviors. It assumes that relationships are important hence maps and measures formal and informal relationships to understand what facilitate or impede the knowledge flow that binds interacting units. Casual pressures are inherent in any structure. Network analysis provides ways for detecting and measuring the magnitude of these pressures. It focuses on the relationships between people, rather than on characteristics of people. These relationships may comprise the feelings people have for each other, the exchange of information, polity, order or more tangible exchanges such as goods, money and other possessions.

In relation to the study, social network theory provides conceptual and methodological guide to the research on elements of social structures, networks of relationships and how to measure them in the target population. As Pattison, (1981) puts it in Ayuku et al. (2003), “the structure of this collective consists of the other persons (network members) and ties that give shape and substance to the fulfillment of the key person’s focal basic psychological needs and this structure can be divided into various groups.” The street children individually draw support from one another hence fulfilling their goals.

According to Aptekar (1988), Campos et al. (1994) and Evans (2006) street children get into groups or form social networks and use them to meet their basic needs. Nevertheless, street children experience very different social networks and daily activities because they live in an environment of decreased adult presence and intervention. Street children befriend other street children, individuals and institutions they consider beneficial to their survival. The relationship they get from their peers and the public in general fills a gap that they could not get from their families. They rely on one another for money, food, love, encouragement, security and emotional support. The social network theory refers to how street children’s network has the ability to perform functions that are usually fulfilled by the family. The limitation of this theory is that it does not recognize that even with the presence of networks, street children have to bear a lot of hardship as individuals in the streets. Therefore, resilience theory complements the social network theory.

2.4.2 Resilience Theory

Resilience theory is a multifaceted field of study that has been addressed by social workers, psychologists, sociologists, educators and many others over the past few decades. In short, resilience theory addresses the strengths that people and systems demonstrate that enable them to rise above adversity. It has its roots in the study of children who proved resilient despite adverse childhood environments.

Resilience theory refers to a dynamic positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity. This theory was propounded by Norman Garmezy in 1971. He stated two resilience phenomena as good outcomes in high – risk children, sustained competence in children under stress and recovery from trauma. He further states that children who experience chronic adversity fare better or recover more successfully when they have positive relationship with a competent adult, they are good learners and problem solvers and have areas of competence and perceived efficacy valued by self or society. Human beings are not passive recipients of their environmental stimuli (e.g., internal and external), instead they seek out environments consequent to their experiences (Tarter & Vanyukov, 1999). Some factors such as social support and family cohesion are considered to contribute towards positive adaptation; however, it is plausible that individuals' contribution to these factors may confer upon them the status of resilience. For instance, a resilient person may have an ability to seek and extract support from others as well as enhance his/her social support.

Similarly, a person may contribute to the cohesion of his/her family (Hoge, Austin, & Pollack, 2007). Hence it is not the mere availability of support, but it is the active engagement of a person with the relationships which may have the protective effects of resilience. This is where the concept of human agency arises in relation to the construct of resilience. The street children display a lot of resilience owing to the fact that they are still children yet able to get their needs met by extracting support from others as well as enhancing their own social support.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

The study argues that as children leave home for the streets, they enter into an established system of life; they are initiated into the street life through a process. The social, economic and the coping mechanisms to street life facilitate their stay in the

street and they learn several ways of survival, all these factors hinder them from an alternative life that they are being offered. When rehabilitation is successful, children have a chance of reintegration and finally reunited back to their homes shown in figure 2.1 below.

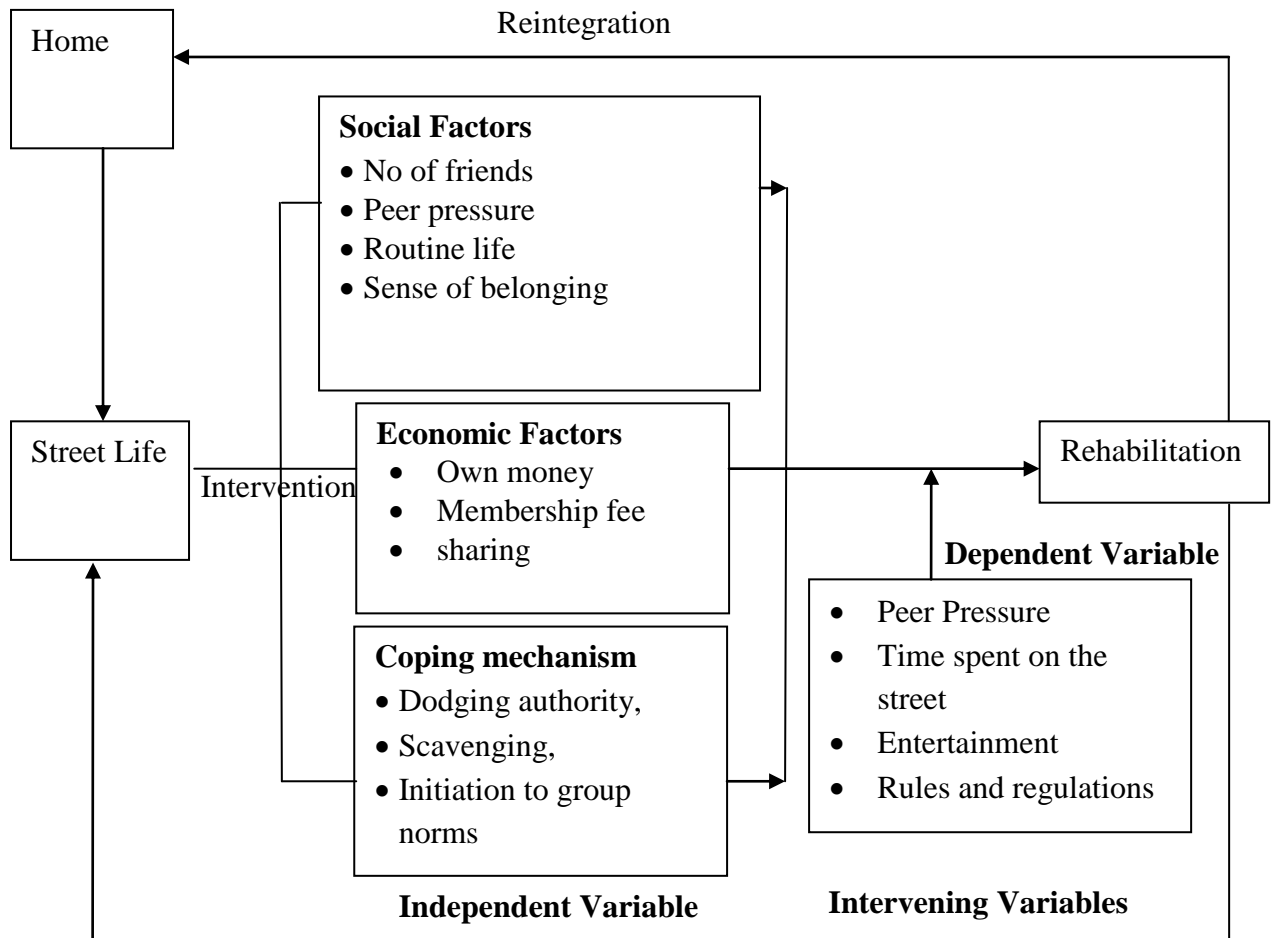


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Independent variables are categorized as social, economic and coping mechanisms. The operational variables are acceptance, freedom; money and number of friends. They are conceptualized to make street children resist rehabilitation as indicated in Figure 2.1. Dependent variable is resistance to rehabilitation. It is depicted by perception of rehabilitation and the number of times rehabilitated. Intervening variables are represented by peer pressures and rules and regulations. These are conceptualized to have the potential to influence the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the study area, research design, target population, sample size and sampling design, data collection instruments, validity and reliability, data analysis procedures and ethical considerations.

3.2 Description of the Study Area

This study was conducted in Nakuru Town Kenya. Nakuru town is the capital of Nakuru County in Kenya and former headquarter of the Rift Valley Province. It has 307,990 inhabitants making it the fourth largest urban center in the country and the largest urban center in the Kenyan mid – west (Kenya Bureau of statistics, 2009). It is an agricultural town and also a transit to not only western Kenya and most Eastern African countries like Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, DRC and Southern Sudan. The town is one of the fastest growing town in Kenya and as a result, it has attracted street children who have been pushed and pulled by various factors as poverty, HIV/AIDS, tribal clashes/ wars, emergence and expansion of low income estates and the autonomy of life that street children so desire. This study focused on the street children, children's rehabilitation centers, and children's department.

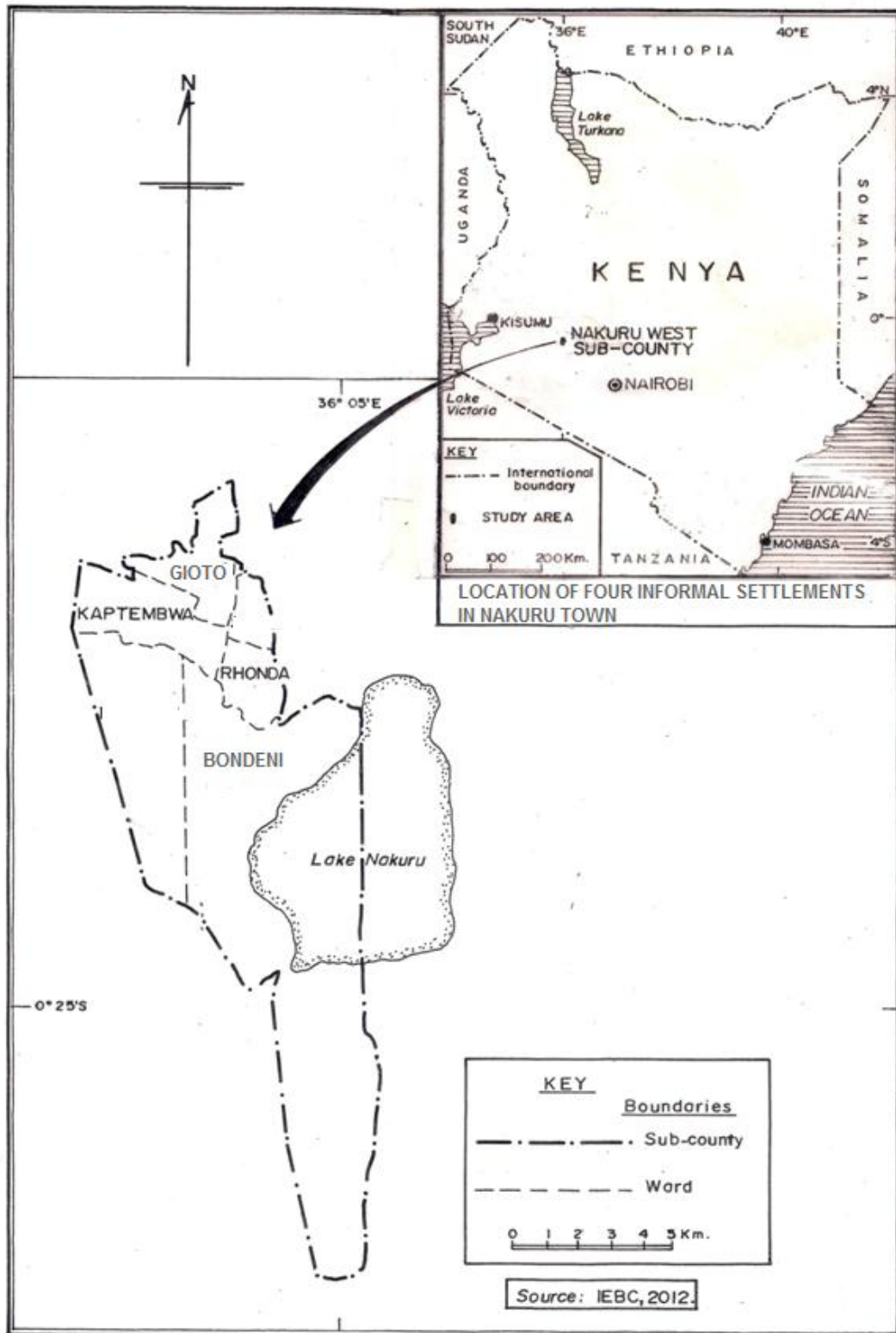


Figure 3. 1: Map of Nakuru town

Source: Cartographer devised

3.3 Research Design

The research design that the study adopts is descriptive survey design. This is because descriptive survey design provides information about naturally occurring characteristics of a particular group. It also gives account of social life and culture in a defined social system, based on qualitative and quantitative methods. It is a story that brings the research and its meaning to life (Kothari, 2008).

3.4 Population and Sampling Procedure

3.4.1 Target Population

The target population was 1500 street children in Nakuru Town, (Nakuru Municipal Social Services, 2014). Accessible population comprised 80 street children, 50% drawn from each gender, having fulfilled the criteria as having at least once been in rehabilitation centres and relapsed. However, for the purpose of collaboration of information, the study interviewed 10 key informants each drawn from the rehabilitation centres and County children's office in Nakuru Town.

3.4.2 Sample Size

The sample size of the number of respondents was obtained using coefficient of variation. Nassiuma (2000) asserts that in most surveys or experiments, a coefficient of variation in the range of 21% to 30% and a standard error in the range of 2% to 5% is usually acceptable. The Nassiuma's formula does not assume any probability distribution and is a stable measure of variability. Therefore, a coefficient variation of 21% and a standard error of 2% was used in this study. The lower limit for coefficient of variation and standard error are selected so as to ensure low variability in the sample and minimize the degree of error.

$$n = \frac{N(CV^2)}{CV^2 + (N-1)e^2}$$

Where:

n = the Sample Size

N = the Population Size

CV = the Coefficient of Variation

e = Standard Error

Therefore, the sample size of respondents was:

$$n = \frac{1500(0.21^2)}{0.21^2 + (1500 - 1)0.02^2} = 102.77 \approx 103 \text{ respondents}$$

3.4.3 Sampling Procedure

The study applied multi-stage sampling techniques that allows the researcher to divide the population into groups or clusters where one or more clusters are selected at random and consider everyone chosen in the cluster as a sample. From the groups of eight wards in Nakuru Town, four wards were selected purposively and members included in the sample. The selection criteria considered those wards with informal settlement that are considered to be the breeding ground for street children. Street families that comprise of street children operating together were identified with the leader of each group sampled purposively. Street children in every group were stratified categorically according to their gender into males and females. In every stratum, representatives were selected using snowball sampling in reference to those street children who happen to have been enrolled in rehabilitation centers and later came back to the streets. Social workers in street children rehabilitation centers as well as the county children officers in Nakuru Town were selected purposively to give more information concerning the factors influencing street children resistance to rehabilitation.

3.5 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis in this study was the street children of both genders between 8-17yrs who relapsed from rehabilitation centres. They are conceptualized to be aware of why they do not want to stay in rehabilitation centers, yet it is known that life in the rehabilitation centers is better than life in the streets.

3.6 Instruments of Data Collection

3.6.1 Interview Schedule

Data was collected using open ended interview schedule with structured questions. This was preferred since some children were illiterate hence found a challenge in filling in the interview schedule. It also allowed respondents to air their views that might have been overlooked by a researcher. Appendix 1 is sample of the interview schedule that was used. It has three parts; Part A collected data on background information, B on social factors, C on economic factors and D on coping mechanisms of the respondents, E and resistance to rehabilitation. Appendix 2 is an interview schedule that guided county children officers and social workers from rehabilitation centres.

3.7 Methods of Data Collection

3.7.1 Observation Method

Observation involves a situation where the researchers' presence in a social context is maintained for scientific investigation. The researcher observed their living arrangements, gender dynamics, language used, activities they engage in, division of roles, street children daily chores and their non – verbal reactions. Observation however was used to verify information produced during interview.

3.7.2 Life Histories

The main aim of life histories is to focus on major life events, motivation to street life and street children experiences in the streets. This gave more details to street life experiences by children who show distinctive experience in the street.

3.8 Data Analysis

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative analysis. The interview schedule had structured questions which generated data that required descriptive analysis to back up the qualitative data. In qualitative analysis, the analysis was presented by use of quotes and narrative descriptions. Quantitative analysis involved derivation of statistical descriptions and interpretation of data by use of descriptive statistics that purely relied on numerical values. In order to establish these statistics, data was coded and analyzed using SPSS. The analyzed data however was presented in form of frequency tables, pie charts, percentages and mean.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The research permit is subscribed to ethical standards hence after getting the permission from Graduate School and National Commission for Science and Technology (NACOSTI); it is believed that an ethical standard considering children's issues was adhered to. The County children's department was also informed before carrying out the study. The researcher sought consent from base leaders who are considered authorities among street children before administering the interview schedule. The researcher also gave assurance of confidentiality to the street children on the information that they were going to share.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

The chapter contains qualitative analysis in the form of narratives and quotes as well as quantitative analysis, relying mainly on descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages. Frequency tables and pie charts have been used to present the quantitative results.

4.2 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Street Children

4.2.1 Age of Respondents

This study recorded 12 years as the minimum age and 18 years as the maximum age of the respondents who participated in the study. The arithmetic mean age of the 97 respondents interviewed was 15 years. Table 4.1 presents the summary of the distribution of respondents by age.

Table 4.1: Distribution of the Respondents by Age

Actual Age	Frequency	Percent
12.00	13	13.4
13.00	20	20.6
14.00	11	11.3
15.00	20	20.6
16.00	21	21.6
17.00	9	9.3
18.00	3	3.1
Total	97	100.0

Table 4.1 indicates that majority 53(55%) of the respondents in the study were aged between 15 to 18 years. Most of the children at this age are adolescents and susceptible to peer pressure and also exhibit deviance behavior leading to many of them leaving home and even dropping from school. According to the study, 44(45%) of the children were within the age range of 12-14 years, an age considered as early teens who are likely to go to the street due to lack of facilities or seeking easy opportunities. Some small number of the children in the street claimed that they were born by the street parents and therefore had not experienced life in a home.

4.2.2 Gender of the Respondents

Understanding the gender of the street children is important as it gives a clear picture of the number of boys and girls who end up in the street. It also sheds more light in understanding the surrounding factors of each gender to street life phenomenon. Results are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	74	76
Female	23	24
Total	97	100

Results in Table 4.2 presents the results of the analysis of the gender of respondents indicating more male 74(76%) than female 23(24%) street children who were interviewed. According to information gathered on this parity, girls are more vulnerable compared to boys and therefore are protected by their families. They also psychologically fear being on the street because of being predisposed to such activities as rape, beatings and other discrimination. Girls generally comply with the rules in the family, a fact that make them more resilient and therefore find staying at home more acceptable regardless of the tough rules by caretakers.

4.2.3 Ethnic Affiliation of the Respondents

This study also examined the ethnic affiliation of the respondents. It was found out that Nakuru town is a cosmopolitan with people of diverse ethnic backgrounds, languages, religions and customs. However, not all who come searching for employment are absorbed in the job opportunities hence giving rise to many of them living in low income estates such as Bondeni, Shauri Yako, Kaptembwo, Rhonda, Kivumbini, Lakeview, Gioto. Table 4.3 represents the ethnic affiliation of the respondents in the study.

Table 4.3: Ethnic Affiliation of the Respondents

Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent
Kikuyu	55	57
Luo	17	18
Luhya	10	10
Kalenjin	6	6
Kamba	2	2
Meru	2	2
Masaai	2	2
Turkana	2	2
Somali	1	1
Total	97	100

Table 4.3 above, indicates that the street children come from diverse background, suggesting that the problem of street children is spread across the tribes in Kenya. Majority of the street children 55(57%) came from Kikuyu Community, followed by a far distance of 17 (18%) who were from Luo community, 10 (10%) were from Luhya community, (6%) came from Kalenjin community 2(2%) came from Kamba, Meru, Masaai and Turkana communities respectively with only 1 (1%) coming from the Somali community.

4.2.4 Religious Affiliation of the Respondents

Responding on their religious affiliation, out of the 97 respondents interviewed, 9(9%) did not belong to any specific religion but enjoyed the services of any religion that offered help compared to 88(91%) who belong to some religion. Table 4.4 below summarizes the religions the street children affiliated themselves with.

Table 4.4: Religious Affiliation of Respondents

Religious Affiliation	Frequency	Percent
Protestant	31	32
Catholic	49	51
Muslim	4	4
No religion	9	9
Others	4	4
Total	97	100.0

Table 4.4 shows that majority 49(51%) of the respondents belonged to Catholic, 31(32%) are protestants, 4(4%) belonged to Islam and other religions respectively. The children were affiliated to Catholic more because Catholic Church was running several projects dealing with children and more so was able to provide for them food, counseling and spiritual needs. The church also gives medical support whenever any one of them falls sick. This is explained by Sorre, (2009) who asserts that in the Christian context, many of the churches especially the protestant denominations preach individualistic relationship with God such that when members are in times of need, they are not adequately attended too unlike the Catholic church that emphasizes on collective efforts and meeting the social needs. Majority of the street children gave reasons why they belong to a certain religion they are in. Some claimed that this was the religion that their parents belong to while others said that they follow their peers or whenever they hear that there is free food or clothes given out in one of the churches, they join them in the name of worship but with a motivation of material benefits.

4.2.5 Number of Siblings in the Household

This section analyzed the number of siblings in particular homes where these children come from in order to ascertain if a particular number of siblings in a home contributes to street life phenomenon summarized in Table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5: Number of Siblings the respondents had

Actual Number	Frequency	Percent
1.00	2	2
2.00	1	1
3.00	14	14
4.00	9	9
5.00	14	14
6.00	30	31
7.00	22	23
8.00	3	3
12.00	2	2
Total	97	100.0

Table 4.5 above is the presentation of the results of the number of siblings the respondents had. The study established that majority of respondents 30(30%) had 6 siblings followed by 22(22%) who had 7 siblings. 5(5%) of the respondents had 8 siblings and more whereas 14(14%) had 5 and 3 siblings respectively. 9(9%) had 4 siblings whereas 3(3%) had less than 3 siblings. The findings indicated that majority of the street children interviewed had large number of siblings mostly from the *Peri-urban* settlement like Bondeni, Rondha, Kivumbini, Kaptembwo and others characterized by low income, poor housing and lack of basic amenities. Families living in *Peri-urban* settlement with little resources for the household contribute as a push factor for their children to the street to fend for themselves.

4.2.6 Respondents' on Birth Order

This section analyzes the birth order of the respondents to ascertain whether one birth order contributes to their choice of resorting to street life or not. The order analyzed is from 1 to 7 which is common in large households as shown in Table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6: Birth Order of the Respondents

Order	Frequency	Percent
1.00	22	23
2.00	32	33
3.00	28	29
4.00	11	11
7.00	4	4
Total	97	100.0

The study found out that majority of the respondents 32 (33%) were second born followed by 28 (29%) who were third born and 22 (23%) who were first born. 15(15%) were fourth born and above. This finding indicated that majority of the children living in the street were first, second and third born. First born children are normally given many tasks to do at home which can be a push factor making them to go and live in the streets compared to younger siblings whom they are meant to protect and provide for. The families leave a lot of burden to the children that they cannot bear, since they are young and overwhelmed; they resort to something that is easy for them which is to run to the street.

4.2.7 Respondents' School Attendance

This section presents the analysis of the respondents' school attendance. It is crucial to understand the respondent's level of education because street children represent one of the most vulnerable groups of children in the country who have no access to education.

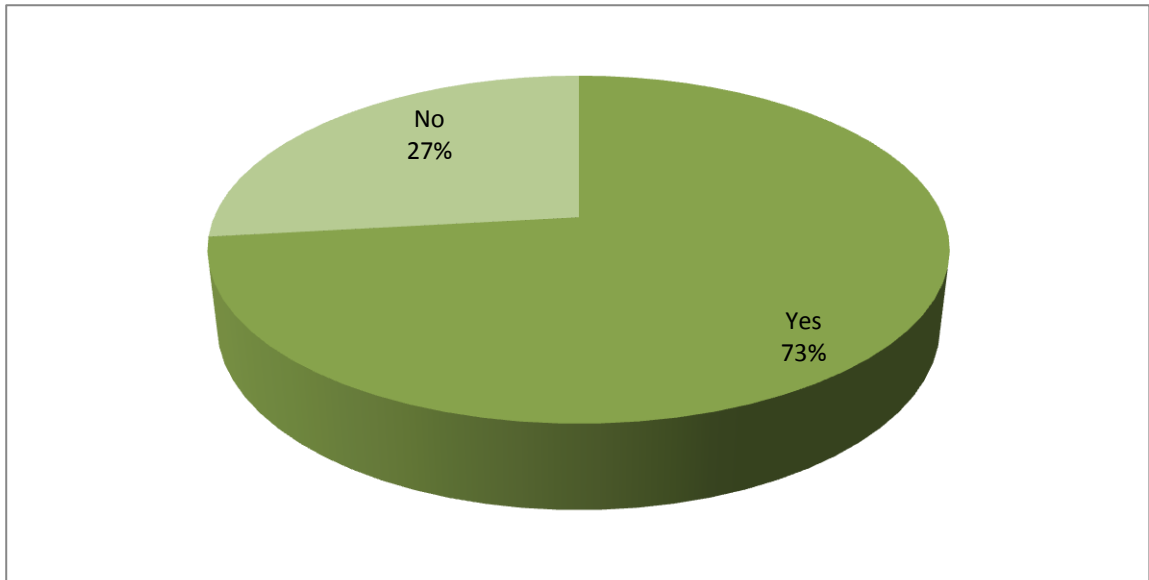


Figure 4.1: Respondents' School Attendance

From figure 4.1 above, majority of the respondents 73% had been to school compared to 27% who had not been to school. This finding indicated that street children in Nakuru were actually school drop outs, a situation caused by many factors as was narrated by one of the street girl interviewed who narrated that;

When I was four years of age, my parents took me to a nursery school which was one of the public schools located where we lived. I decided to drop out of school because every time I came home for lunch, my mother was not there, there was no food left so I stayed hungry several days. One day, I was invited by another young boy who looked full with food and was happy. He suggested that we go to the street where according to him had plenty of food, some of which are thrown to the dust bins. I accepted and that was the last time I attended school in my entire life till to date.
(Street girl, 14 years)

Peer pressure is attributed as one of the pull factors that drove the children to the street leading to high school dropout rate, as narrated above. The children being in the peri-urban settlement are influenced by their peers who dropped out of school several years ago as one boy narrated when he was asked why he no longer attend school;

4.2.8 Respondents Highest Level of Education

The researcher sought to investigate and understand the street children's highest level of education which the results are in Table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7: Respondents Highest Level of Education

Level	Frequency	Percent
Nursery	19	20
Primary	67	69
No School	11	11
Total	97	100.0

The statistics above indicate the street children's highest level of education, majority of the respondents 67(69%) dropped out of school at primary level, 19(20%) dropped out of school at nursery level and 11(11%) did not attend school at all. For any child to develop and function both economically and socially during their childhood, education is a very essential process. It is a basic right to every child in Kenya. However, street children represent one of the most vulnerable groups of children in the country who have no access to education. There is a substantial research literature on various aspects of child labour and educational access, including the relationships between child labour and poverty; the types of work children are carrying out (paid, household-unpaid, agricultural); household structure, educational access and work; whether child work hinders or helps access to schooling; the gendered and location aspect of working and access, etc. While conclusions made should be embedded within the contexts of the research, a number of studies have produced similar findings which are drawn upon here. There are some studies which look specifically at the relationships between school dropout and child labour specifically, and how child labour might contribute to both processes of dropping out and in enabling retention. Research indicates that vulnerable households can withdraw children from school as part of their coping strategy to deal with shocks to income, often in order to work, save on costs or to free other household members up to work (Boyle *et al.*, 2002). A situation that most street children find themselves in.

4.2.9 The Frequency of the Respondents Visits to their Homes

The researcher sought to investigate and understand if the frequency of the respondents visits to their homes and if they meet with their caretaker. This was important in analyzing whether the respondents had completely made street a second home summarized in Table 4.8 below

Table 4.8 Respondents occasional visit to their previous home

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	53	55
No	44	45
Total	97	100.0

The study found out that majority of the respondents 53(55%) occasionally go back home compared to 44(45%) who never went home. This finding indicate that street children phenomena in Nakuru town is vocational with the children migrating to the street either in the morning or some other day then back home in the evening with the number who never go back home and had lost contact with their caretakers a bit high.

Most of the street children come from single mother family with the mothers literally sending the children either to go and beg or go to the street and get some money to buy food at home as one street boy narrated;

I come from a single mother family. My mother told me that my father one day packed and went away never to return again. Ever since my father left, life has been very difficult with my mother totally unable to fend for our up keep. She sends me to the street to look for money through any means and bring it home for the purchase of food. While on the street, my colleagues and I carry luggage, sometimes steal or rob by force in order to go back home with some money. My mother does not have a formal job nor a stable business. She depends on odd jobs like washing peoples' clothes to get some money for our family. (A street boy from Gioto base, 15 years)

The study further established that children who do not go back home either do not have parents or have their parents on the street. When asked to comment why they do not go back home, one of the girl narrated that;

Ha ha ha! You are talking about home? This street is my home. I was born in the street and my parents live on the street. The street is my home, comfortable with all I need. Our friends who go back home tell us how they are mistreated at home. Even if you offer me a free home, I will not accept it, I am on the street to stay. (A street girl, from Goto, 14 years).

The absence of biological parents or presence of uncaring relatives and guardians subject children to untold suffering.

4.3 Social Factors that Hinder Rehabilitation among Street Children

The first objective of the study was to establish the social factors that make street children resist rehabilitation in Nakuru Town. The factors analyzed in this section included; the period on the street, knowledge of rehabilitation, experience on rehabilitation, social grouping in the street, police response to street children, action in case of danger, feeling as a family availability of food on the street and influence by peers.

4.3.1 Period Spent on the Street

This section analyzes the period the respondents have spent on the street. Majority of the respondents spent at most three years in the street.

Table 4.9: Period Spent on the Street

Actual years	Frequency	Percent
1.00	23	24
2.00	26	27
3.00	22	23
4.00	14	14
5.00	3	3
6.00	3	3
7.00	1	1
8.00	2	2
9.00	3	3
Total	97	100.0

The study categorized the street children period on the street into three years interval to fit the possible maximum of 9 years. Within the first 3 years interval, the study established that majority of the street children 71(74%) have been on the street between 1-3 years, 20(20%) have been in the street between 4-6 years and 9(6%) have been in the street between 6-9 years. The finding concurs with a study by Mtonga (2011) who established that after spending three years on the streets, Makaiko was taken to an orphanage within Lusaka. Two months later, he could not withstand the rules and regulation. He narrated that;

“They control everything you do, they want to know where you are and what you are doing and they make you do things that you don’t like, you are always watched and told what to do. And when you break the rules, you are pushed” says Makaiko; he says he is more free on the streets than being under the authority of an institution. (Makaiko, Lusaka)

As street children are recruited to street life, they spend their time with their peers having no adult authority and supervision. In order to cope with the harsh life in the street and to resist rehabilitation, they develop survival mechanisms and form social networks that sustain their lives in the absence of a parent figure. Most of them have stayed in the streets for a very long time such that they call it a home, this aspect of familiarity, contentment and survival skills have been a great influence to rehabilitation. The more the years spent on the streets, the more the likelihood of resistance to rehabilitation. This implies if the street children are encouraged earlier to be enrolled in a rehabilitation centre, there’s a likelihood of success and few cases of relapse. It was evident from the study that street children, were not ready to be told what to do. This is a factor that contributed to their attainment of freedom and lack of accountability to anyone hence resulting in resistance to an alternative that take them away from their peers and what has been familiar to them.

4.3.2 Who encouraged Children to Join Street

Though many children face hardships in their homes, some of them persevere as they do not have alternatives. Unless they are introduced by someone, many of them are not aware that the street is an alternative life. The respondents shared the people who encouraged them to join street life summarized in the Table 4.10 below.

Table 4.10: Who encouraged Children to Join the Street?

Person	Frequency	Percent
Through a friend	16	16.5
Parent/caretaker	65	67.0
Others	16	16.5
Total	97	100.0

Majority of respondent 65(67%) agreed that they were forced to join the street by parents and caretakers compared to 16(17%) who were influenced by friends and 16(17%) who were influenced by other sources. According to Ezgi (2008), when the reasons of children's being on street are considered, children's own thoughts about themselves and social workers' ideas mostly coincided. They pointed out that, migration, financial deficiencies, effects of family relations; which can be expanded with such factors as low education of parents, traditional family structure and significance of having a family; and both physical and emotional abuse and neglect would appear as the factors that push children to the street.

While interviewing the children, the main reason and thus most important 75% factor of their situation seemed to be the financial deficiencies as they mostly started to work on streets to help substitute family income. However, a key informant who is a social worker argued that migration is the most important factor since it is just the beginning of a lot of troubles in the urban life. Due to migration, families are with adaptation problems, unemployment, and financial deficiency. Specifically, the push factors include; family relations, migration, low education status of the parents, financial problems, and the impact of deprivation and the existence of various alternatives. These coupled with the pull factors, encourages children to live and work in the street.

The finding is similar with what Ali et al. (2004), observed stating that, causes for being on the street differ in developed countries, where the majority of street children leave home to reside or work on the street to escape dysfunctional families, physical battering, neglect, or sexual abuse or out of a desire for freedom, and not because of socio-economic problems. The pull factors for leaving home and going to live on the streets include the excitement and glamour of living in a city, hope of raising living

standards and financial wellbeing. It is particularly difficult to convince children to get off the street because of the amount of money that they make from begging is a lot higher than what they can make from entry level vocations. Therefore, they would like to be in control of their lives by making their own money and spending as they wish.

Research done by Munene and Nambi shows that Ugandan children come to the street for several reasons: extreme poverty in the homes, broken families where children live with hostile step-parents, and single parent families where the parent is unable to shoulder the burden of parenting (Munene & Nambi, 1996). Thus, poverty and internal conflict within the family play a central role in children's reasons for migrating to the street, and the two are often interrelated; poverty can lead to or worsen the conflict within households, causing children to find their way to the streets. One of the key informant reported that children in most cases would not withstand conflict and poverty in their homes, they rather have an alternative family in the street that supports them and accept them as they are.

Although poverty is identified as a direct reason for migrating to the streets by a quarter of the children interviewed, it can be assumed that also the other reasons mentioned, including the pull factors, are strongly related to poverty. The death of a parent can in some cases be related to poverty, for instance, if the family does not have access to health facilities or is not able to provide for medical facility for their family, there is a likelihood of death to occur. Moreover, the fact that children are attracted to the city can be linked to the idea that there is more wealth in the larger cities leading to more of them being pulled ((Munene & Nambi, 1996).

4.3.3 Have you Been to Rehabilitation Centre(s)?

There have been concerted efforts by different organisations, Government agencies, religious organisations and many other groups to deal with street children phenomenon. The respondents were interviewed to ascertain whether they have been to rehabilitation centre(s) or not summarized in Figure 4.2 below.

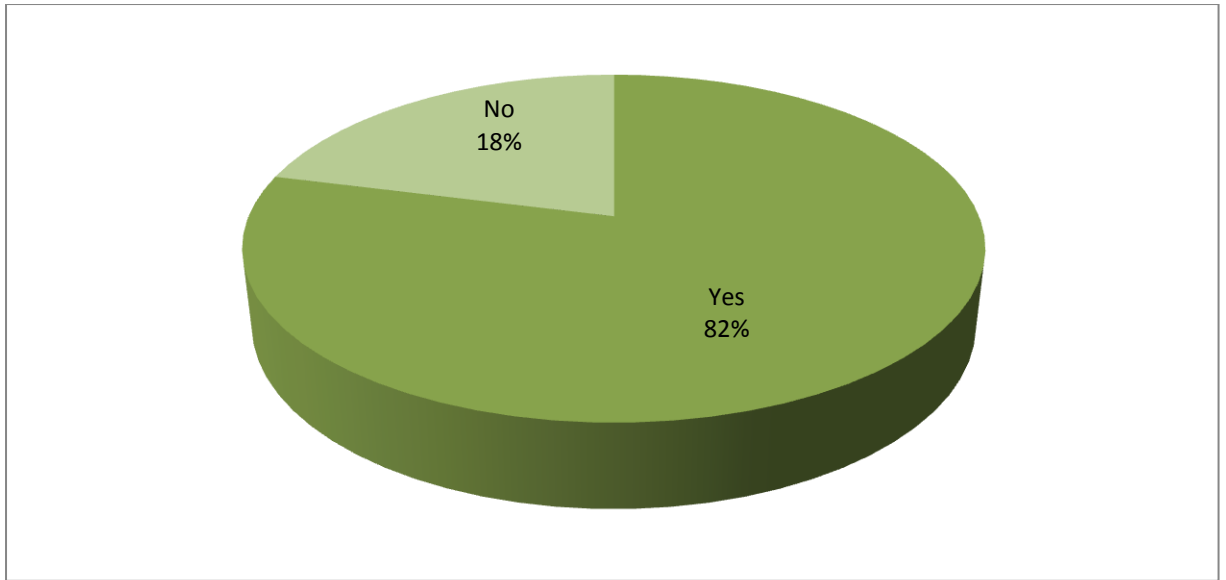


Figure 4.2: Have you been to Rehabilitation centre(s)

The study established that majority of respondents 80(82%) had been to rehabilitation centres compared to 17(18%) who have never been to such centres. These findings show that different agencies have exerted efforts to settle street children to various rehabilitation centres with the aim of eradicating street children phenomenon.

The introduction of the Children’s Act Cap 586, gave the government the mandate and responsibility to protect all children especially those in difficult circumstances and provide for their rights. There is recognition of the need to have clear policies to implement actions to address the phenomenon of street children. Most importantly, they need to be steered back to the main stream of social life, through proper education opportunities, reformation, care and rehabilitation (Mohamed, 2002). It is however, important for the government to involve all the stakeholders in addressing the need of offering an alternative life to the street children.

This implies that it is important to study care-giving approaches and management styles employed in rehabilitation centres for street children. Such studies are largely lacking in Kenya. Children are going back to the streets from the rehabilitation centres resulting to increased number of children in the streets. There is a possibility that the low sustainability of street children in rehabilitation centres could be due to use of inappropriate care-giving approaches and management styles. One of the key informants from Nakuru Children protection program noted that;

Without proper understanding of these approaches, management styles and their relationships could deter the objective of sustaining street children in rehabilitation centres long enough to equip them with skills for self-reliance. (Children Protection Program Officer, Nakuru County, July, 2016).

The main objectives of the centres are to rehabilitate, educate and train these children within the framework of a wide range of community development to improve the conduct and prospect of all local children whose future appears uncertain (Ouma, 2004). During the interview with the focused group discussion with social workers in rehabilitation centres, they claim that most children who are brought from the streets run back after their experience at the rehabilitation centres, the reason that they have analysed for the relapse are strict rules, lack of freedom, lack of money, separation from friends, drug addiction among other reasons make them miss street life. They attested to the fact that life at the rehabilitation centres is better than the street but still wonder why children ran back. In the rehabilitation centres, there are employees whose duty is to provide care to the children and help them as they come to terms with their difficult situations.

A key informant from one of the rehabilitation centres asserts that,

There are different programmes in place which children are involved in such as vocational training, sporting, guidance and counseling, medical services among others. (Social Worker, a Rehabilitation centre, Nakuru County, July, 2016).

In these programmes the aim is to help children participate in their daily activities more actively, confidently, acquire new skills, knowledge and develop personally and socially (Ouma, 2004). The key informant further acknowledged that the children are the ones with issues claiming that when they think of sniffing glue and other drugs, they can even jump out of a very long fence.

4.3.4 Why Children Escape from Rehabilitation

The study established that majority of the street children who had been to rehabilitation centers before and escaped are likely to repeat it. The children had many reasons why they escaped and one of the street boys in an interview narrated the following circumstances that forced him to escape from the rehabilitation center;

It is true that I have been to rehabilitation Centre before. One morning I escaped before people woke up. I cut the barbed

wire and ran away back to the street. That place according to me is like prison where all your freedom is taken away and your ideas are never needed at all. The rules there are too much beyond what a human being can bear. I was forced to clean everywhere, carry water, fire wood and sometimes forced to cook but given very little food to eat. Fine the place is cleaner than the street but threatening to my life. I will never go back there again. If those people want us to live there, they must know that we are still children not grown up. They must reduce the amount of work they give us and treat us as their own children not as foreigners who do not have any value. (A street boy 14yrs old)

It is clear that the children acknowledge that the rehabilitation centres are better in terms of clean environment, assurance of food at least every day, warmth and everything else that any child would wish for as they are growing up. The reasons that they gave for running away somehow cannot be understood with the kind of life they lead, hence it is good to understand the management styles and approaches used by the rehabilitation centres in caring for the street children. According to Niagra (2004), rehabilitation centres provide re-integration, which enables the children to fit well in society which is a contrast from what the street children alluded to. There should be a low staff turnover to reduce any anxiety caused by changing faces and styles of handling the children (Niagara, 2004). Ratio of adult to child is very important due to the individual attention that the care-givers provide to the child, which enables them to learn better to perform to their potentials. If the ratio is high, the care-givers are not able to perform to the expectation as a result of the workload, which can impact negatively on the development of the children, and, the quality of care giving services in the rehabilitation centres (Niagara, 2004) which is not the case according to the information provided by the children.

The findings from the study by Kings and Hayslip (2005) observed that management styles such as authoritarian, democratic styles are effective if employed appropriately by the care-givers in the rehabilitation centres. This implies that it is important to study care-giving approaches and management styles employed in rehabilitation centres for street children. Such studies are largely lacking in Kenya. Children are

going back to the streets from the rehabilitation centres resulting to increased number of children in the streets that go through untold number of suffering.

There is a possibility that the low sustainability of street children in rehabilitation centres for street children could be due to use of inappropriate care-giving approaches and management styles. The need to establish care-giving approaches and management styles used in the rehabilitation centres and the relationship between these approaches and management styles is imperative. Without proper understanding of these approaches, management styles and their relationships could deter the objective of sustaining street children in rehabilitation centres long enough to equip them with skills for self-reliance. As one of the street child observed that;

Yes I can say life in the rehabilitation centres is good. I can agree but you need to know that what you see outside is actually not happening inside. One of the worker used to report us for any small mistake that we do and the manager will come and sometimes beat us. We felt mistreated instead of being understood and helped to overcome our challenges. “maisha ya majango’s ni afadhali.” To mean life being a street child is better. (A street boy, 17 years old).

The negative attitude that the children have developed about the rehabilitation centres has even made it difficult for new recruits to be rehabilitated. As shared in the above narration, the children preferred to live the hard street life than to be mistreated. This implied that even if the approaches differed among the care-givers, the difference was not significant. The adults need to give individualized attention to the children depending on their needs and avoid routine way of carrying out their responsibilities. Gichuru, (1987), and Alexander (2005), on the same note stated that the care-givers need to be responsive to all children needs in their care.

The researcher established that there is lack of proper utilization of caregivers’ skills and knowledge on the use of the approaches which impacted negatively to the development of the children in the rehabilitation centres. Care-givers were not giving individualized attention and they had a routine way of carrying out their daily responsibilities. Though the children are aware of hardships awaiting them, they

prefer the street life without restriction than comfort with so many restrictions. Having lived on the street where there are no rules and no one to tell them what to do, it seems that children get used to living without adult rules and control and when they are taken to an institution, they constantly break the rules.

The researcher established that children resist the beatings and other disciplinary measures as they term them as degrading and not done with love. From the key informants' discussion, the study found out that the street children have learnt so much independence such that any little authority asserted on them makes them to resist it. It was also established that as they come in, they have a good attitude but any small correction on them makes them to develop very negative feeling making all other corrections to be difficult on them. This finding is similar to a study by UNICEF which states that street girls who like street boys were used to independence on the street, hence rejecting restrictive predominantly Christian institutions and escape once more to freedom of the street (Phiri, 2009). The street children enjoy the freedom to do what they want to do which has contributed more to them resisting rehabilitation since they attach it with restrictions.

Similarly, fighting among the street children is another way that makes them run from the rehabilitation centres. One of the street boy narrated as follows;

While in the rehabilitation centre, we realized that we came from different street gangs, since we had a history of enmity, there was no way we could live in harmony. We always competed for territory and acquisition of resources. After fighting one morning, we were seriously punished by the manager of the home and I ran away. (A street boy 15 years old).

From the above finding, reasons that make children to fight is because they come from different street gang groups before the rehabilitation. When they find themselves placed under one roof, fighting is inevitable. The fighting is normally real hence they can even hurt themselves, when found and disciplined; they find a reason for running away.

The researcher established that another reason that makes street children to run away from rehabilitation centre is because of failure to adjust to life without the use of drugs. A key informant from the rehabilitation centre said that:

Children have a hard time withdrawing from drugs when they are brought here, they show a lot of agitation and attempt to escape at several occasions. (A Social worker of NGO, Female, 42 years).

This means that most street children have had drug addiction such that when they are taken to the rehabilitation centres, they suffer withdrawal symptoms causing them to use any means to escape. Most of the street children claimed that when they sniff glue, they forget about their hardships on the street. Proximity to the city centre draws these children more back to street life, unlike centres located far from the city centre. The children feel that the rehabilitation centres feel more like detention camps, they hate waking up early and a controlled life of being given household chores to do. They want to go back to life of freedom without accountability and to enjoy the money they earn by using it as they please.

4.3.5 Grouping among the Street Children

This section analyzes groups among the street children and how the grouping hinders rehabilitation process. As indicated in figure 4.3 below.

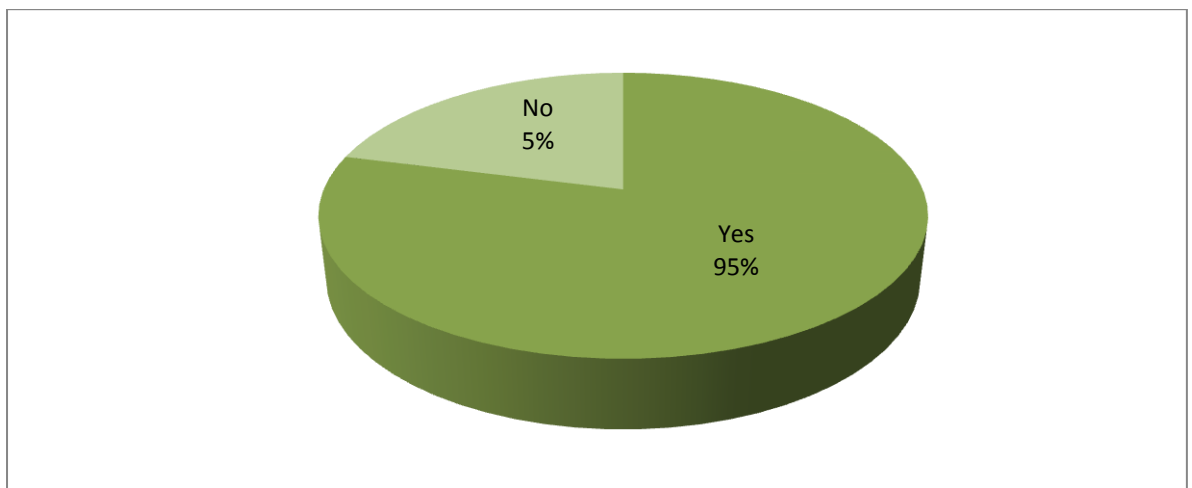


Figure 4.3: Street Children Belonging to Groups

Majority of the respondent 92(95%) belong to some social groups while on the street compared to 5(5%) who did not belong to any group. The researcher established that the street groupings have become alternative families for the street children that

though they face untold suffering, they find solace in their friends who have replaced family for them. They genuinely care for one another bringing out a well knit group cohesion which is hard to break for any alternative, however good it is.

This finding concurs with a typology developed by UNICEF (cited in Aptekar, 1994) that classified street children in relation to their development. It reflects the belief that the experience of children who work on the street is considerably different from children who must look to a peer group or gang for the fulfillment of primary needs, such as protection, sustenance, and nurture. Aptekar (1994) noted that some researchers classify street children by the different types of experiences they have, including the quality of their play and work and their relations with peers and authority figures.

However, street children can be broadly defined into two groups: Those who spend the day on the streets but return home at night. Those who spend all the time in the streets, it being their home, where they eat, sleep, make friends, work and play. In order to survive, these children do odd jobs, drifting from one place to another. They can be found washing cars, selling newspapers, street vending, and scavenging, shining shoes. They have learnt to support on one another and depend on each other for their survival.

Street children are subjected to physical assault, sexual abuse, harassment from the public, intimidation by gang members and criminals, and arrest by the police (Richter, 1988). This victimization frequently repeats what has occurred in the home. Though often victims themselves, street children, according to Swart (1990), are regarded as irresponsible and lawless and a serious financial burden to society. They therefore find protection from their peers.

The street children belong to groups and carry out many activities. As was reported by Police key informant;

Street children have various grouping called bases, which are headed by base commander called jango. This is a survival grouping system on the street where members can get protection from other gangs. Members of the groups also have

time in the day when they play together as a way of bonding and socially integrating together. The groups look for food; bring them to the base where the base commander administers equitable distribution of food. The people in one base also sleep together, but vigilantly in case of any danger they quickly wake one another and act. Within the group, the female children are wives to the base commander and other line leaders where they have sex and even give birth to children. The groups also provide them with psycho-social support whenever any one of them is physically or emotionally injured. When one is sick or badly injured, the group members carry him to the hospital where they are treated and discharged free of charge. (Police Key informant)

This illustrates that, like any society, street children have morals and norms, which help them to live together as a community in their bases, therefore, each of the respondents interviewed belonged to a base affiliation. Friendship among the respondents was found to be one factor that encourages social bonding among members of the group. It also increases harmony and solidarity. Every street child need friends and create relationships from the base that help them pursue street life. This relationship bestows a sense of belonging and identity; they feel confident because of the friends who are always there for them. The strong networks are important for their continued survival on the streets but negatively affect rehabilitation.

4.3.6 Action in Case of they face danger as a group

Street children face dangers of many kinds, the study found out their responses when faced with danger, summarized in Table 4.11 below.

Table 4.11: Actions in Case of Danger

Action	Frequency	Percent
Nothing	11	11
Avenge	40	41
Run and hide	46	47
Total	97	100

The study established that majority of the respondents 46(47%) reported that they run and hide in case of any danger, 40(41%) avenge whereas 11(11%) do nothing in case of any danger.

There is always the importance of determining the best times to visit the place as well as obtaining valuable information about dangerous places of where to avoid at night and even during the day. During field work, the researcher observed that the street children were always cautious and very alert just in case it was police, an opposing gang or sweeps that are occasionally made. This has become a survival skill that helps them avoid being taken to dangerous places. This provided an insight into what was going on in the streets as well as an idea that street children can never be free and relaxed as they are always alert of any danger in order to determine whether to flee or revenge.

In fact, current welfare literature indicates that, street children belong to a category of “children at risk”, risks being both physical and psychosocial. Children on the move in general are often vulnerable to the worst forms of exploitation – coercion, violence, physical and mental abuse and exhaustion. Street children can, for example, end up in work that is highly dangerous. In terms of engaging in drug-taking, sex and other HIV risk behaviors. Studies show that street youth, especially street girls, belong to a risk category (Reale 2008) especially girls can also be forced to have sex introduced to commercial sex work or can be trafficked.

Because of many dangers surrounding the street children, they avoid walking alone in the street. One of the street boys narrated their pattern of movement on the street as follows;

Madam, we have learnt from experience never to walk alone on the street in order to avoid any danger that may threaten our lives. We always walk in our group in a pattern that makes us detect danger and act immediately. Our team leader walks behind and another leader in front. Us young children we walk in the middle. When danger occurs, the leaders use coded language or signs to warn us. Immediately everybody runs away in a pattern to make sure that we are safe. If it is an attack from another gang, the leaders very quickly assess the situation and give us signal whether to flee or to avenge. This is survival technique we have mastered all the years round. (A street boy, 14 years old)

The street children are well coordinated and they are never caught unawares, this is a survival tactic that they master and they get better at it with many years of experience that they stay in the street.

Street life is a socially organized life with responsibility by everyone. There are those whose work is to beg, others go to work in the market, others collect food from bins in hotels and others keep watch on the properties. One of the street children leaders categorized the responsibilities during an interview;

We are organized and we know what we are doing. Each person has a responsibility that must be done. When one fails to do his responsibility, there is a way of punishing him by denying access to food or threatening to throw him out of the group. In the morning the base commander give duties to different sub-groups. In the evening each sub-group must give an account of the responsibilities given. Some go to the market to do manual work, others take care of the base, others look for food and others beg, especially the younger ones. (A base leader, 17yrs old)

Like any human being, food is a source of life that unites street children. It introduces them to a new culture which they learn to bear and be a part of it.

4.3.7 Sharing Food amongst themselves

Street children are human beings who are in need of a sense of belonging, love, social identity, emotional and moral support, which are important aspects of survival in the street. The researcher sought to understand whether the street children share food amongst themselves.

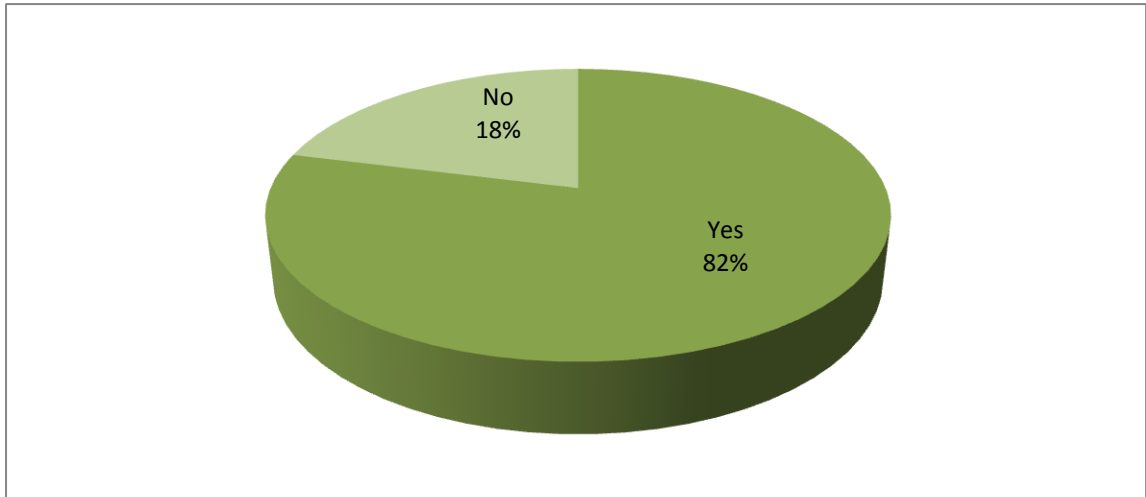


Figure 4.4: Street Children Sharing Food among Themselves

The study established that majority of respondents 80(82%) shared food among themselves compared to 17(18%) who did not share food. The sharing of food among the street children was comparable to what takes place in African societies and in particular the Ndebele society whose heartland is Bulawayo. Nyathi (2005) describes how the traditional Ndebele society was organized with members of the family working together in all aspects of life. This shows that the street life was a mirror on how the wider society functions with sharing food together as a symbol of belonging.

Street children live as a community; most of the things such as food, shelter are shared among them. It was amazing that in spite of being homeless they knew each other's whereabouts. Actually, Suda (1997) observed that street children in Ghana trusted their friends more than adults and were always curious about their intentions. Whatever the street children do they do it as a team for example they work together to earn money and also in search of food which is shared amongst themselves.

Sharing food is a sign of friendship and extension of love just like family. It was observed that during the day, everyone searches for their own food but they carry some to their bases so that they can share with their friends who were not lucky to

have anything during the day. This acts as a social security system based on reciprocity and mutual trust. Since they cannot be sure of how their lives will be every day, they can rely on their friends who they trust that they invested someday on them. But on the other hand, Marraria (2011) commenting on street children sharing of drugs observed that, street children rely on it as it helps them do things that a sober mind cannot do for example eating garbage and rotten food in those smelly unsightly dumping sites that people cannot dare go. It also gives them strength and reduces their hunger. They are also a very good remedy for helping them not think about the hardships of this life.

4.3.8 Feeling as family

Street children have found an alternative family in the street which is summarized in figure 4.5 below.

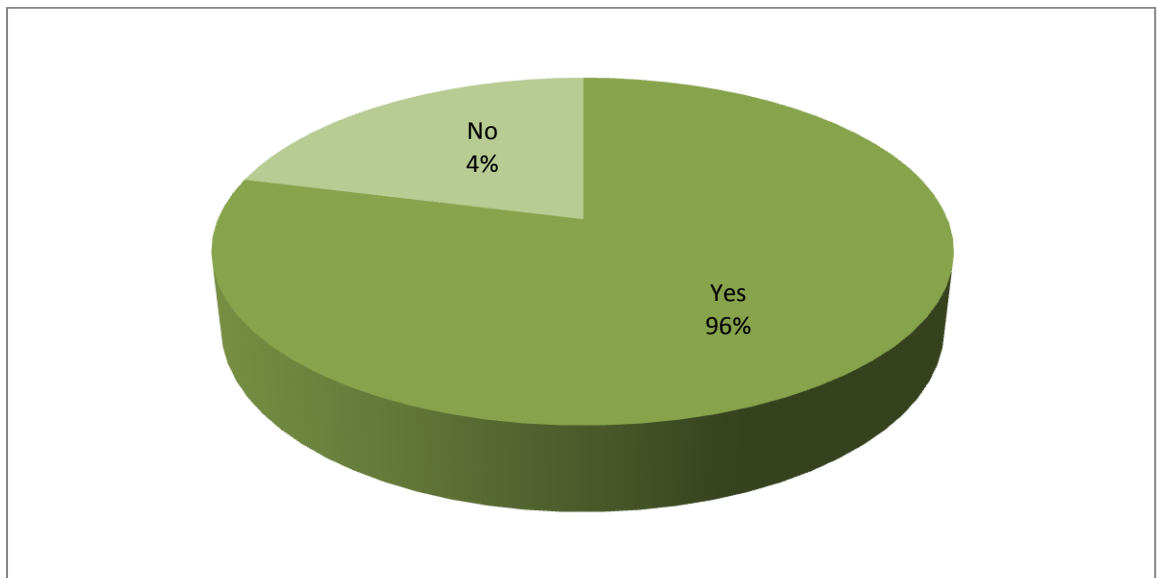


Figure 4.5: Feeling Like a family

Majority of respondents 94(96%) felt living on the street as a family compared to 4(4%) who did not feel part and parcel of the street family. This finding indicated that the street children felt at home just on the street and therefore saw street life just as a socialized family. The researcher further engaged one of the street girls to find out why she felt the street life as a family and this was her narrations;

People think that street life is difficult and should be done away with. But most of the time I find it better than home. We have our leaders that we look up just as it is at home. We

share food as a family. We love one another as a family. Some of us are married and are enjoying marriage life just as a family. We work for the common good of everybody just as a family. We give one another social support just as a family, so we are here to stay. Anybody who wants to help us should not think of taking us back to any home because we are home. They should ask us what we want but and even help us from the street, we do not want to be taken away because we are home here and we are used to street life. (A street girl, 16 years old).

The street children have lived together in a well-knit social system that makes them feel part of one another. They perform functions done by families and are happy to be together wishing that no one will interfere with what they have. From the above findings, street children have strong social networks which enable them live together as a family. The life in the street reflects what happens in a family. In order to propagate the feeling of a family, the street children ensure that they have created social bonds that hold them together. As new recruits join, they are initiated into the groups immediately by being given orientation as well as peer support. Ennew (1994) notes that in the absence of parents, street children bring each other up and develop supportive networks, coping strategies and meaningful relationships outside adult supervision and control. This has been a major hindrance to rehabilitation.

4.3.9 Do you face discouragements from friends to leave street life?

As street children get used to life in the street, they make it their home and do not want any alternative life apart from what they are familiar with. During the study, the researcher was interested in understanding whether they might one day leave the street life and get reintegrated or rehabilitated. The results are summarized in figure 4.6 below.

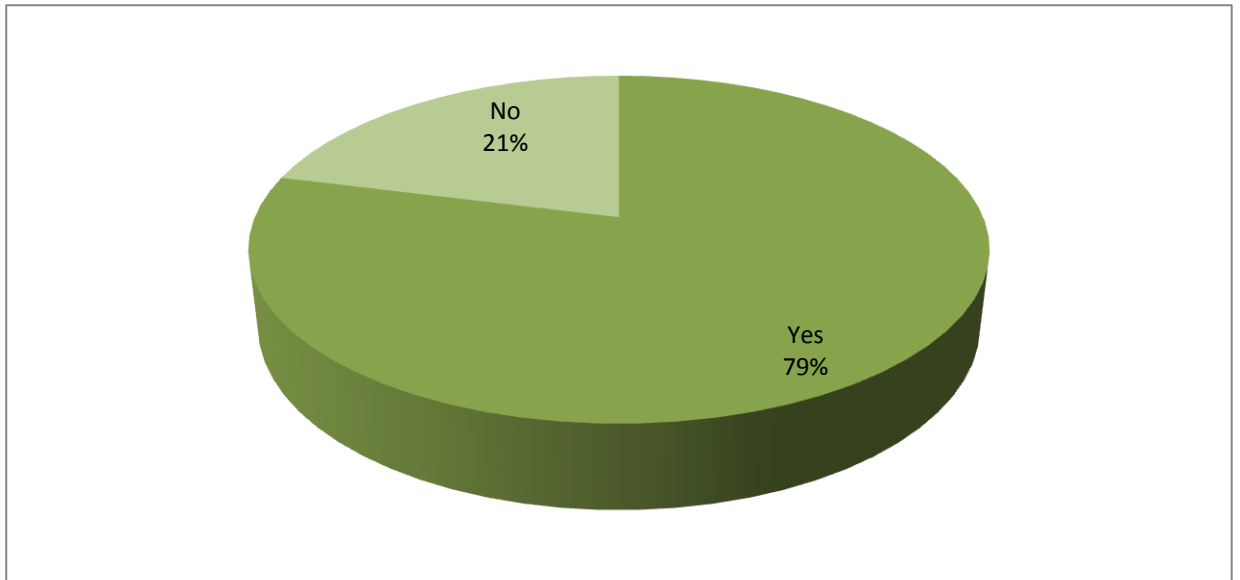


Figure 4.6: Do you face discouragements from friends to leave street life?

The study established that majority of respondents 92(95%) observed that their friends discourage them to leave the street compared to 7(5%) who are not influenced by their friends to remain in the street. When asked whether they were willing to leave the street, majority of respondents 75(79%) were not willing to leave the street compared to 20(21%) who were willing to leave the street. Among those willing to leave the street, they would rather go and live some independent lives but not to go to rehabilitation centre nor back home.

Regardless of the interventions targeting street children the marginalization and harassment that they face when they are on the streets, they have proved to like the streets so much that even when placed in an institution or shelter, they time and again escape and go back to the streets. Children repeatedly escape institutional care regardless of most of them being located in isolated places outside the city where they have been strategically located so that children are not lured to return to the streets.

From the foregoing discussion, it is clear that social network plays a major role in influencing the children to run away from rehabilitation centres. The children learn to depend on each other to meet their needs such as food, clothes, giving a hand when one is sick as well as depending on each other emotionally. When taken away from the streets this relationship and cohesiveness is disrupted and some children cannot cope without their friends from their networks on the streets. This makes some street

children run away and go back to their friends on the streets despite the challenges awaiting them.

Similarly, Mtonga (2011) observes that for children that live under institutional care, the platform to use social capital is limited due to restrictions on activities that they can engage in and the fact that institutions meet most of their needs that require them to employ social capital, their social capital and networks are as not so useful. This makes them feel lonely hence desire to go back to what holds them tight.

From the foregoing discussion, Mtonga (2011) further observes that drug addiction is another factor behind the tendency of running away from institutional care. Some children have become very dependent on drugs and alcohol such that when they are institutionalized, they cannot withstand the withdrawal process and eventually they give up, escape and go back to the street to continue using drugs. Apart from drugs, the desire to earn money and buy what they want is also one of the reasons street children prefer the street for the institutions. Under institutional care, all the basic necessities for children are provided and in most cases, they are not allowed to have money. Their previous exposure to money makes some children to go back to the street and earn money in order to buy the things that they want, including alcohol and other drugs.

Strict rules that institutions have can also be a hindrance to achieving success in removing street children from the streets. Some of my participants felt very restricted by the rules in institutions and hence returned to the streets where no one constantly told them what to do or restricted them. Since most of children's institutions are guided by rules and schedules, some children felt bored in these institutions. While for children that live in institutions with few activities and entertainment to continuously engage them, returning to the streets becomes a better option. Finally, the location of an institution can have an influence on children to return to the streets. The findings indicated that children living in institutions close to the city easily walk back the street. This is because the proximity to the city centre attracts and reminds them constantly of what they are missing, sometimes, they are enticed by other children on the streets hence will easily find ways to run away.

4.4 Economic Factors that Hinder Rehabilitation among Street Children

The second objective of the study was to examine the economic factors that make street children resist rehabilitation in Nakuru Town. The key variables analyzed under economic factors that make street children resist rehabilitation included; children assurance of getting their daily bread, alternative sources of income, membership fee to the groups the street children belong, ability to earn own income, ability to spend money earned, economic activities the street children are engaged and where they spent the earned income. Discussions in the previous section have established that social factors have become a hindrance to rehabilitation among street children. However, it is important to understand how economic factors influence the resistance of street children to rehabilitation.

4.4.1 Are You Assured of Getting Your Basic Needs?

Provision of basic needs to the street children creates a sense of self-sufficiency. This section presents the analysis on the street children assurance in getting basic needs on the street. Basic needs were classified as; food, shelter and clothing the summary is illustrated in figure 4.7 below.

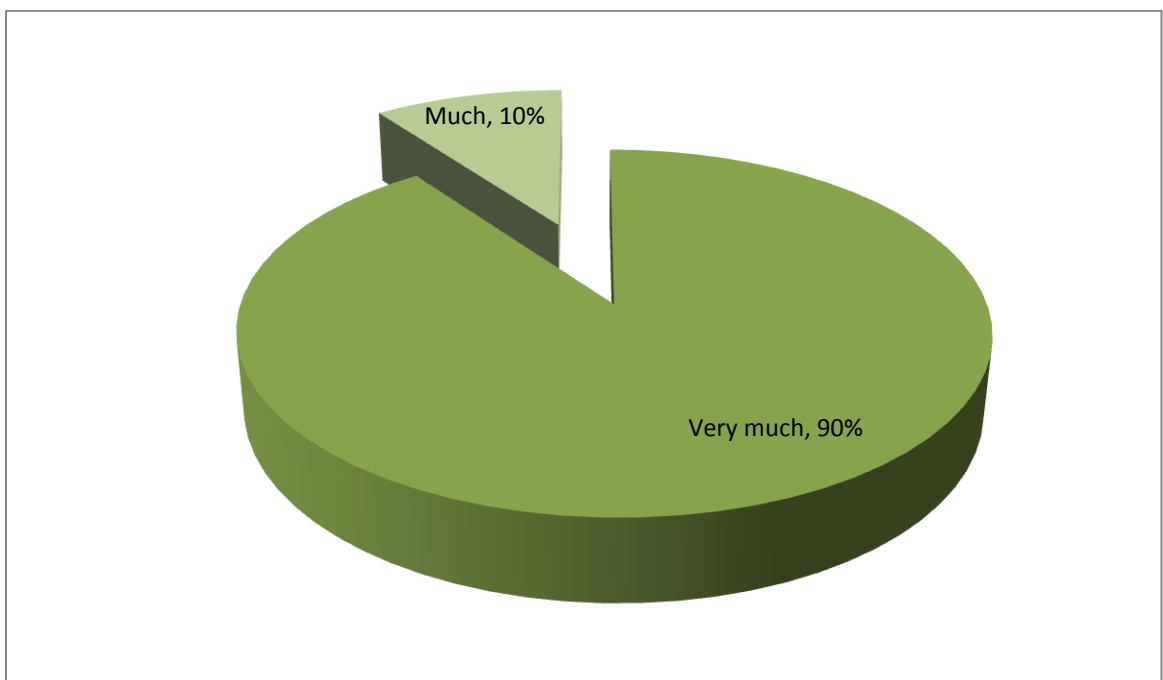


Figure 4.7: Are You Assured Of Getting Your Basic Needs

The study found out that majority of respondents 90(90%) were assured of getting basic needs on the street compared to 10(10%) who were not assured. For the

10(10%) who were not able to get basic needs on the street, they would go to their friends within their base and share with them whatever they had. One of the street boys sensationally narrated what he would do whenever he did not get food for the day or lacked clothing;

Sometimes the day turns out to be very dry with no job and sometimes people refuse to give me handouts. When it reaches 5pm and I have no money and no food at the dust bins, I simply go back to the base where our members converge in the evening and then beg the commander to allow me to share with the rest what they had on condition that I must work hard the following day. Life in the street is about friendship sharing and being part of a functioning base where your problems can be solved. After sharing with those who have, I am under obligation the following day to get something to share back with them. (A street boy, 14 years old)

It can be concluded that every street child has created a set of organization and relationships while living in the streets. These relationships bestow a sense of belonging and help once one is socialized into the street culture. In their groups, they ensure that they have social bonds that hold them together.

The major basic need for every living being is food. Street children buy food using the money obtained during begging, selling of collected items and from menial jobs. During a focused Group Discussion, one of the respondents said that:

We beg for money, collect scrap metals, cartoon boxes, scavenge and sell so that in return, we are given money to buy food as a priority. (A street boy, 15 years old).

Sharing of food among the street children increases their bond and social networks. It also fosters the spirit of reciprocity creating a very deep sense of mutual indebtedness strengthening social ties hence a strong force to resist rehabilitation or anything that will break their bond.

4.4.2 Membership Fees

This section analyzed whether street children were under any obligation to pay membership fees to any group shown in figure 4.8 below.

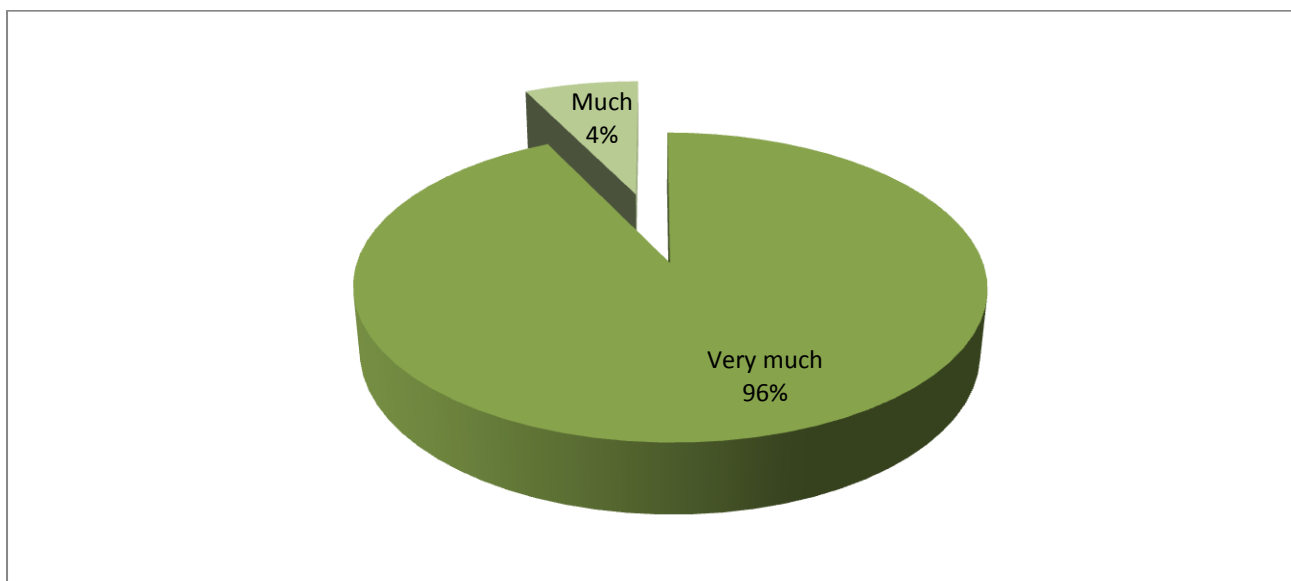


Figure 4.8: Are You Obligated to Pay Membership Fees?

The study established that majority of respondents 93(96%) agreed that they were obliged to pay membership to the existing authority at the base. The membership fee was paid to the base commander who was the base leader. The United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (2001) observes that many street children indicated that peers acted as supportive means for their existence on the street and helped develop their ability to cope with street life, with regard to food, shelter, entertainment, earning money and protection especially during their early days on the street. One of the younger street boy narrates how life in the street is not for free;

The life on the street is hard earned with the base commander demanding membership money in order for one to become a member of his base. They demand up to Kshs. 50 in order to be allowed in the base territory. New members pay this money once to the base leader as a kind of registration fees which is compulsory to all the new comers. If one fails to pay this money then he is first given grace period to look for it. If he fails to pay then he is brutally beaten and chased out of the base. Even still while on the street, such a child who fails to pay the money is an enemy whom when seen must be chased out of the street. The

membership fee not only allow one to be part of the base but indirectly a fee that allows you to beg within the territory, do manual work and even get food from the dust bin. (A street boy, 14 years old)

This implies that authority and reporting procedures in street is well coordinated. When asked about the benefits of payment of membership fee, the respondents said that the base leader together in collaboration with the members address the needs among street children that arise as, sicknesses, support of one of them during burial times and any emergency among them that arises.

The street children derive benefits from paying membership fees. It was clearly observed by the researcher that they were all in agreement that membership fee was very necessary part of the street life. Membership fee according to the respondents gives them social identity, security, protection, ability to earn from a specific territory and all support that one requires. One of the key informants confidently put it that failure to adhere to membership fee makes an individual to be subjected to sanctions approved by all the group members.

4.4.3 Ability to earn their own money

The researcher was interested in understanding the street children's ability to earn their own money as well as finding out if they like it. The responses are summarized in figure 4.9 below.

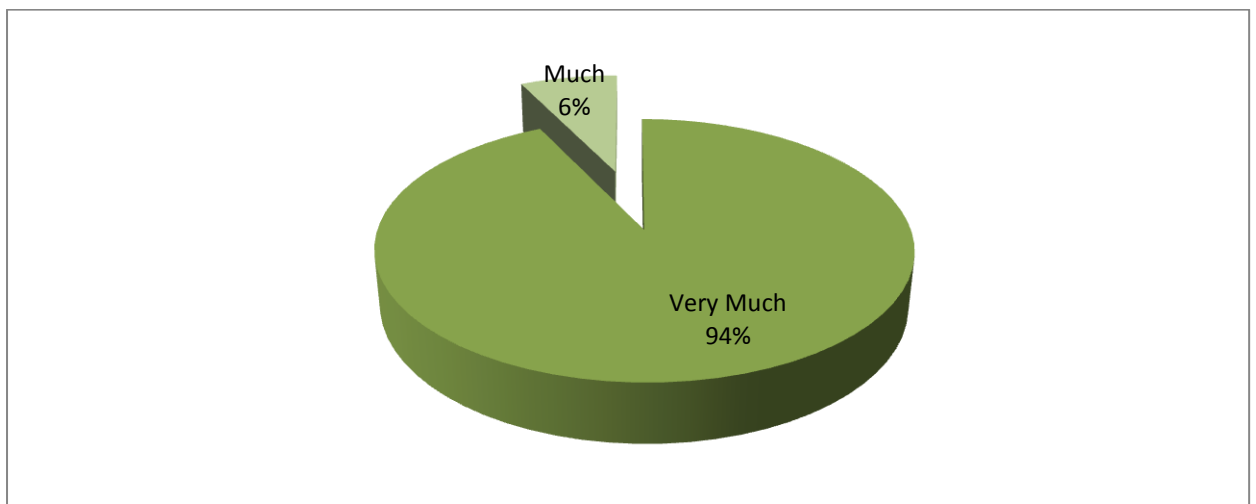


Figure 4.9: Do you Enjoy Earning Your Own Money?

Majority of respondents 93(94%) were able to earn their own money compared to 6(6%) who were not able to earn their own money. The desire to earn some money and have the independence of buying what they want is one of the children's motives for going back to the streets. Children spend the money they earn on basic items such as food and clothing and in some cases use it to contribute to the family household income, they also use the money they earn to buy alcohol, drugs and inhalants. During my observations, it was common site to see money exchanging hand for sticker among most children. Street children escape institutional care so they earn money on the street and have the freedom of purchasing whatever they could afford, children on the streets usually spend their money on food, clothing drugs, alcohol etc. to some extent, addiction is attributed to their escape from institutional care. One of the street boys confessed that;

We are used to having our own money and buying what we want, but when we live in some of the centres, you are not allowed to have money, you have no choice of the cloths you want, they buy them for you or they give you donated clothes, when it comes to food, you eat what has been prepared, but here on the street, I choose the clothes I want to buy and we also choose the type of food we want to eat. (A street boy, 15yrs old)

Because boys are able to earn more compared to girls who have limited income-generating activities, it implies that boys buy a variety of nutritious foods such as peanuts, bread, bananas and many more and they buy them anytime they have money while girls fate of acquiring such foods are determined by the boys (Heinonen, 2003). Boys are therefore better fed and less likely to starve than girls. In addition, early exposure to the "outside world" also helps boys develop social skills which are important to their survival as they can negotiate for jobs; these social skills help boys to be more resilient than girls.

Apart from drugs, the desire to earn money and buy what they want is also one of the reasons street children prefer the street for the institutions. Under institutional care, all the basic necessities for children are provided and in most cases, they are not allowed

to have money. Their previous exposure to money makes some children go back to the street to acquire more money to buy things they want including alcohol and drugs.

Strict rules that institutions have can also be hindrances to achieving success in removing street children from the streets. Some of the respondents felt very restricted by the rules in institutions and hence returned to the streets where no one constantly told them what to do or restricted them. They also enjoy their money that they spent as they wish. The institutions do not allow them to have money making it so hard for the street children who are used to spending as they wish to be retained.

4.4.4 Spending earned money

Street children living on the streets have the ability to earn money depending on their tact and hard work. The researcher further inquired how they like spending what they have earned which is summarized in figure 4.10 below.

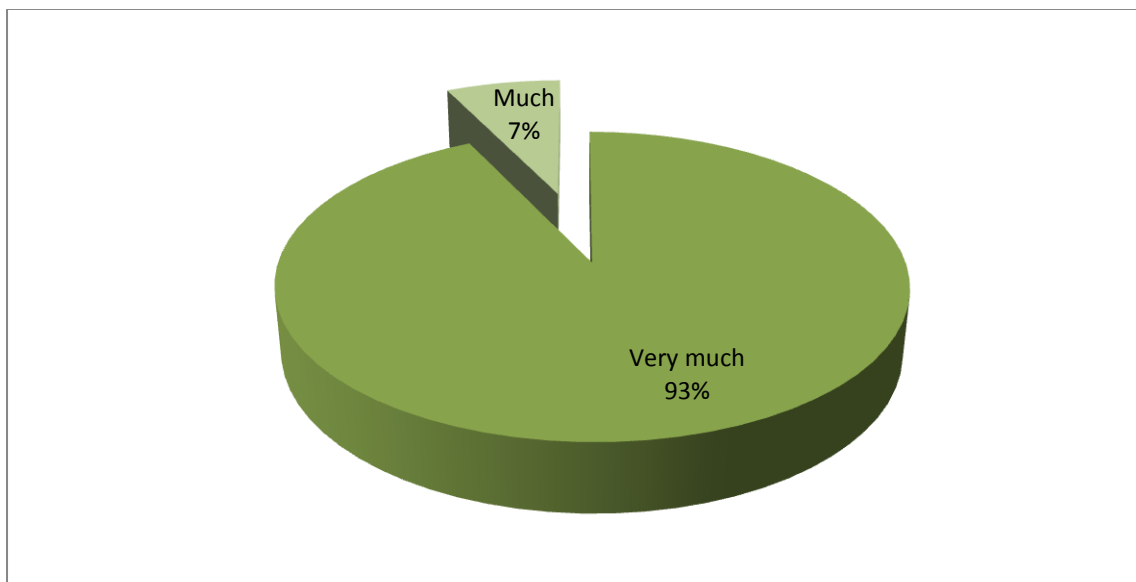


Figure 4.10: Do You Like Spending Your Earned Money?

Majority of respondents 90(93%) like spending their money very much compared to 7(7%) whose priorities were different. This personal inclination of independence on the street children like spending their earned money as they wish is a hindrance to their rehabilitation. It is also feared that if they have money, they might use it to buy alcohol, inhalants and drugs. But because most of the children had been on the streets for a considerably long time, they are already exposed to handling cash and they find it hard to live without money, the desire to have money and buy what they want, is a cause for some children to escape from institutions and go back on the streets. They

can buy the food and clothes they want, a choice, which they do not have under institutional care, where what they eat and wear is decided and provided for by adults. They also spend the money in buying glue for sniffing and reselling it to other colleagues who may not have and make much more money for other subsistence. During one of the among the street children, one of the respondents said that:

We beg for money, collect scrap metals, carton boxes and plastic bottles where we sell them to dealers who go and recycle them. Most of the time we are found scavenging especially when we see a truck emptying the garbage in the dumpsites. The money we get from selling can even help us for some days. We enjoy doing this and that has made us who we are. (A street girl, 13 years old)

From the above finding, street children work hard to earn a living while on the streets. They however, do not consider it as challenging because they know that what they earn, they are the ones to spend as they wish. The challenge with the rehabilitation centres is that they will not have opportunities of earning their own money and spending as they want.

4.5 Coping Mechanisms among Street Children that make them resist Rehabilitation

In the previous discussions, it is clearly seen that over time, street children adjust to street life however difficult it is. The discussions stated that children create networks of relationships and use them to enjoy the street life. The third objective of the study was to establish the coping mechanisms of street children to hard life of the streets in Nakuru Town. The copying actors analyzed include; activities they perform on the street, how they appreciate life on the street, survival techniques on the street, social support from the *base* leadership, experience on the street, challenges and how they overcome them on the street, best survival technique and their long term plans on the street.

4.5.1 Activities performed by the Street Children

In order to understand the coping mechanisms of street children to street life and that make them resist rehabilitation in Nakuru Town, the study first sought to analyze activities performed by the children that keep them on the street. The analyzed

activities included; moving in groups for protection, looking for food, mugging people, manual work and stealing.

Table 4.12: Activities Street Children Were Involved with

Activity	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.
Move in groups	97	1	2	1	0.14
Look for food	97	1	2	1	0.32
Mug people	97	1	2	2	0.44
Manual work	97	1	2	1	0.32
Stealing	97	1	2	2	0.51

Table 4.12 was used to analyze the activities street children were involved in within their groups. The first column is list-wise of the activities followed with the number of respondents who responded to the question, minimum was the minimum response 1 represented by yes which meant that the street children were involved in such activities, 2 represented no which meant that they were not involved in such activities. Mean was the mean between 1 (yes) and 2 (no) and their respective standard deviations. The study established that the respondents agreed that the street children were involved in the following activities; moving in groups for protection, looking for food and doing manual work.

However, the street children were not so open to talk about stealing and mugging. This finding is in contrast with other researchers. As for the dangers of street-life, involvement in illegal activities should be considered as the most significant. Researchers have shown that there is a relationship between being a street child and criminal behavior (Baron, 2001). The longer a child stays on street; the more likely it is to enter into illegal activities either as being the illegal or a victim; boys are likely to involve in petty crime while girls might engage with prostitution. These are attempts to support themselves on street, which is why they try to find work, seek money, deal with drugs and engage in theft (Kidd 2003). From the observation, this was one of their coping mechanisms that they were not proud of. They probably thought that if they let people know that they mug and steal from others, they will be arrested.

The study by Lalor et al. (2000) states that, in most third world cities, they are the shadowy presences who fill the background of daily life, doing odd jobs, scavenging for food, begging and stealing. Street children are involved in various other odd jobs such as jobs in parking areas, working as petty-hawkers, peddlers, messenger boys, and shoe shiners, cleaners, helpers in shops and establishments, gas stations, garages, as labourers in construction sites, small factories and institutions. All these occupations have a destructive effect on their behaviour pattern and social living.

Once children are on the street they have to work in order to survive. The work done by street children appear to be very similar worldwide and the differences reflect the economic development of the country concerned (Brink, 2001). Within the environment of the street, children compete to find the best opportunities for work, which means that they are often located in places where there is dense economic activity such as market places, taxi stands, railway stations and in city centres. In such places they can offer their services to passengers, shops, restaurants, and hotel owners (Kombarakaran, 2004). The different gangs in the street possess these specific places as their own territory thus having it as one of the survival strategy for the street children.

More often than not those who cannot find work beg and steal to earn a living, and they acquire considerable understanding and coping skills to help them survive (Foley, 1983; Aptekar, 1989; Kombarakaran, 2004). One of the key informant clearly stated that new recruits are oriented on street tricks such as respect, politeness and ways of begging as a survival strategy for them. It is evident that they have all identified specific places in the streets where they earn more money and they guard it as their territory. Sometimes, others move from one place to another searching for job opportunities and trying their luck in begging. For instance, a street boy narrated how this happens on a daily basis

When I wake up in the morning around 6a.m, I first of all rush to the market where I help a certain lady to off load her luggage to her stall, she normally gives me kshs.10 and a cup of tea with a banana. After that I come to the parking lot and help drivers, I earn something like kshs.50. That is somehow enough to carry me throughout the day. So I just move around within the town and

even end up around lunch hour watching Televisions in shops that sell electronics. (A street boy, 15 years).

Most of the street children have gotten used to a routine life everyday as their coping skill, they mark the territory hence being assured of a consistent income. This enables them feel that they have power and cannot be put under the control of an adult.

From the foregoing discussion, survival strategies are specific behaviors and actions that make street children develop positive adaptations crucial for enduring street life. Car washing is organized according to age group. The groups consisting of older children strategically occupy the most lucrative geographical locations, whereas the younger age groups occupy less and less profitable locations as their age decreases. The ability to occupy and earn from these territories provides a sense of self pride and ownership. This also creates independence and assurance of getting daily needs.

Children move on from one group to the next as they get older. The gangs provide them with the protection that they have lost by leaving home or never received from their parents. The gang is a substitute for parental protection, and is considered to be a family when the ties between the children are strong. Oliviera Ribeiro & Trench-Campone, (2001) find evidence in Porte Alegre, Brazil, that children neglected by the parents or who are victims of abuse, form a new family with other children of the street. The street family is organized like a real family, with a mother and father, uncles, aunts, brothers and sisters. All the members of the family have a specific role to play, and respect the rules of the family. However, these rules are not as constraining as they can be in a normal family.

Children in gangs support each other when they are attacked, and younger children in particular, are less likely to have their earnings or goods stolen (Lalor et al. 1999; Kombarakaran, 2004). Gangs protect children against police aggression and harassment, and sometimes against the population. In all developing countries, children of the street are subjected to assaults from the police. The reason for this is that majority public opinion considers children of the street to be delinquents who are a threat to society. Gangs fulfill the affective needs of its members, and protect them in times of illness and pain. Gangs constitute a family, and like a family its role is to care for and love, and protect and emotionally support its members.

In street children's gangs rules are of great importance; the rules represent a pointer of what kind of social action is expected in that area. Rules can be connected to a regulating role with sanctions embedded, or they can play a part in constituting meaning. Sharing is one example of the rules and expectations which constitutes meaning to the group and makes the group a part of a survival strategy. One of the key informant stated that, if a child refuses to share with any of the other children in the group the child may experience exclusion from the group as a sanction.

The gang represents part of the basis from which the street children mobilize. In that way the gang is part of both their strategy and their mobilization. In one of the discussion with the county children officers, the street children use the gang to fulfill their strategy of material and emotional safety. However, conformity and obedience to the norms and regulations is highly upheld, this promotes peer acceptance into the street sub-culture, strengthening their networks of relationships and social bonding that impact positively on the survival of these children in the streets.

In the gang the street children do the work that suits their age and they help each other with money. As we have seen, the big boys often have control because they are stronger. But even the street children whose lives are characterized by freedom have rules. Rules represent the power aspect of routines and daily life. Mostly, it is the eldest boys who are on top of the hierarchy because they have the highest status. One of the rules for the younger children is restriction of information. Whatever the big boys have done either to them or to others, they should keep it to themselves. As mentioned, the older boys have ways of sanctioning if the behavior of younger or weaker boys does not please them. These ways of sanctioning provide the older boys with a moral imperative to control the younger boys.

The study interviewed one of the street boys at Railways base concerning their coping mechanism and recorded the following:

We are highly organized on the street with rules, commanders and distributed duties. Our commander is called jango and his work is to make sure that we are safe from attacks from other gangs, give signals to avoid police sweeps, equitably distribute resources, and discipline those who do not follow the rules. Jango commands us to move in gangs for self-

protection, look for food and bring it to the base for sharing, do any manual work for example carrying luggage and bring the income to jango. Occasionally we are forced to mug and steal when things are tough in order to survive although this vice is highly discouraged. (A street boy, 17 years)

The role of the leader is to maximize the networks in order to enhance communication. They encourage the street children to avoid places and activities that compromise their survival on the streets. This is a continuous practice that enables the street children to attain their collective goals on the streets without being interfered with. If there is a deviant member of the group, the leader has the authority to administer punishment based on the crime committed.

4.5.2 Survival on the street

This section presents the analysis on how the street children survive on the street. Through a discussion with key informants with the Count Children Remand the following were the observed survival techniques by the street children;

When children come to the street, they come in with high hopes; living easy life, plenty of food, free clothing and protected shelter. Immediately they are ushered into the street life, their high hopes all over sudden deems as reality on the street dawn on them. They therefore must develop survival techniques in order to continue with their lives on the street. One of the survival techniques is to be tough because street life is equally tough. This means that the child is trained the para-military survival skills. They are taught how to fight mercilessly, how to run and how to hide. They are also taught how to be dirty so that people naturally avoid touching them. The second induction step is taught how to move in gangs to avoid being attacked by other gang members. In the gang, they are taught chains of command and leadership within the gang. The gang leader commands them to go out and look for food in the dust bin and bring it to the base for sharing. They are also taught how to identify both plain clothes and uniform police and which direction to

run. They are taught how to go to the market and do manual labour and bring back the money to the base. They are taught how to move swiftly in search of competitive opportunities in the streets. During hard times they are taught how to steal from people, how to mug especially women and also how to forcefully beg from the public. (Nakuru County Children's Remand Officer, July 2016).

From the above findings, street children are initiated into survival techniques, the researcher was interested in understanding how all this is done, and one of the base leaders who was a key informant, informed that, they have organized rules and regulations that guide them and there is minimal deviances towards it. If one of them goes against the rules, they are either expelled from the base or beaten up by the others.

The established networks of relationships and communication among the street children ensure that new recruits go through the system. One of the group leaders attested to this and further added that other survival skills include code of dressing where the members are encouraged to wear dirty and tattered clothes for them to look desperate in order to lure the public to give them something when they beg. However, their clean clothes are kept safely in their hiding places so that whenever there are feasts, parties or holidays, that is the time they put them on.

Another survival skill as reported by the respondent is the art of telling lies so as to attract assistance from the public. The information they give to organisations and other well-wishers often do not reflect their true life. In addition, they also have codes of identity where they change their original names in order to conceal their identity. The researcher observed that during the interview, they were could not discuss freely unless they were assured of safety. They also gave a warning that no photos or videos were going to be taken of any one of them. These findings show that the street children have learnt basic survival skills that enable them to survive the street life. One of the respondents reported that:

Sometimes we do not know the intentions of people who approach us and wants to engage us in a discussion. For security reasons, we never tell them details about us unless

we get to know their objectives. Some people have bad intentions while others gain money through our desperate situations. (A street boy, 17 years old).

The researcher established that the street children have coded language which helps them in their survival in the streets. One of them reported that:

We need to have our unique language that describes our lives here in the streets, for example, for a policeman we call karau, our group leader is mbuyu, money is called doo, to feel hungry is kukuwa na maubao. When there is a possibility of attack we say ni kungori, to eat in the coded language is kumanga. (A street boy, 16 years old).

The coded language is a survival skill that brings about coordination of their daily activities as well as helping them avoid incidences of danger. They can warn themselves of the presence of a security officer without being noticed. The researcher established that the street children have learnt to identify the security officers both uniformed and un-uniformed. They also uphold the principle of confidentiality on matters that concern each and every one of them. This minimizes their chances of being suspected or arrested.

4.5.3 Challenges of Street Life

This section presents the analysis of the challenges facing street children while on the street. An interview with a street boy identifies the following challenges;

Street life is challenge to many of us. We seem not to have an option and that is why we live here on the street. One challenge I face is social exclusion that is the society sees me to be a contributor to its major problem while we see the society as the cause of our problem. This difference in perspective has led us to hate the society on one hand and the society hating us on the other hand. The next challenge we face is living in dirty environment starting with our clothing. We sleep on the pavements, cages, sacks, cartoons and polythene houses. In the night when it rains, we do not sleep at all. We take cover under some buildings but in most cases we are chased by the watchmen. We eat food left overs thrown

in the rubbish bins which in most cases are contaminated. When we fall sick, nobody cares; some of us die and are dumped into mortuaries. We face challenge of being fought by other gang members who live in other bases. They do this to show their might and to raid and take our property including food. Police can arrest us any time and therefore we have developed survival techniques of passing coded messages whenever the police pass by. (A street boy, 16 years).

From the above findings, it is noticeable that while in the street, children face uncountable challenges; Azad Foundation (2001) observes that street children are defenseless victims of brutal violence, sexual exploitation, abject neglect, chemical addiction and human rights violation. Also these children are target of local business owners who force them to vacate their place of living (occupied by the children illegally) for having space for the purpose of buildings or offices. Sexual Transmitted Diseases (STDs) are common among these children, causing very hard survival of their teenage. The report states that the future of the street children is loaded with many dangers, as there is every chance of such children being accomplice or victims of crime. They are vulnerable to the environment where they live as they have no shelter from heat or cold. Normally, these children beg for food at various places - although a vast majority of these are young boys who can earn it by working or being given minor employment.

The researcher observed that, though these children face a lot of challenges, they are initiated into their groups by their peers by being exposed to hardships. This makes them to be resilient to street life. For example, they are exposed to violence and fighting and encouraged to eat food from the rubbish bins and to share what they get with their peers. The children become hardened and are therefore able to survive street life.

Street life is tough and challenging to the children, Murtaza and Rana (2008) observes that in addition to the above challenges, children frequently experience violence at the hands of police and other law enforcement officials. Street children are more easy targets as they are poor, ignorant of their rights, and lack a support system. Police beat them in order to extort money, and street girls may be forced to provide sex to avoid

arrest or to be released from police custody. Seen as vagrants or criminals, street children have been tortured, mutilated, and subjected to death threats and extrajudicial execution. Police, without sufficient cause, subject street children to brutal interrogations and torture and often detain them in order to elicit confessions or information. Once placed in juvenile and criminal correctional institutions, children are frequently mistreated and abused, enduring severe corporal punishment, torture, forced labor, denial of food, isolation, restraints, sexual assaults, and harassment. In many instances, children are detained with adults, leaving them at increased risk of physical and sexual abuse.

As discussed above, Naz (2007) notes that most children are exploited by different kinds of abusers, many admitted that they indulge in sexual activity merely to satisfy their physical urge. The study notes that male children become sexually active at the age of 11 years, and urge to satisfy sexual desire leads to a large number and varied sexual partners. This exposes them to sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/ AIDS among many other related illnesses. During field work, the researcher established that both boys and girls sleep together, exposing themselves to unsafe sex which leads to the Sexually Transmitted Illnesses.

The researcher was further interested in understanding whether the respondents even few of them knew about the sexually transmitted illnesses, they admitted that they recognize the disease HIV/AIDS, but they do not completely understand how it is transmitted nor are they aware that there is a provision for safe sex. Children are at alarmingly high risk, and from home to all related circumstances physical, psychological and emotional abuse preceded their hopelessness, the transition from family life to street life is neither sudden nor easy, but it is the process that takes place over an extended period of time.

From the foregoing discussion, it was observed that street children learn to cope with street environment very quickly. They expressed their observation that stigma and discrimination, illicit drug use, low self-esteem, emotional disorders, poverty are linked with their day to day existence which makes them vulnerable to violence, drugs, petty crime, conflict with law, sexual exploitation, abuse, neglect and doing commercial sex work.

The researcher established that the livelihood and survival of street children, inclusion of resilience is aimed at highlighting the adversities they face and how they manage to survive in environments and circumstances that are deemed difficult. Resilience is now used in several fields to understand how people react and cope when faced with adversity. It is used exclusively when referring to the maintenance of positive adjustments under challenging life conditions; resilience is therefore the manifestation of positive adaptation despite significant life adversity. (Boyden & Mann, 2005; Boyden, 2003) Resilience is hence generally understood as positive adaptation in circumstances of difficulties, personal, familial or environmental extremes that we would expect a person's cognitive or functional abilities to be impaired.

The researcher established that, street children develop these positive adaptations through their actions and behaviours by belonging to a group for identity; they embrace the new code of dressing, language. They learn to eat unclean food, fight, carry heavy luggage, learn the art of begging and follow all set of rules and norms to survive in the group.

There is a general held notion that children exposed to adversity and hardships cannot cope and adjust properly compared to adults. However, this is not always the case, several researchers have found, for example, that a significant proportion of children exposed to difficulties within their families and communities remain resilient although the experience of multiple stressors is likely to have a cumulative effect which ultimately may overwhelm coping capacity. There is evidence that growing up in the context of constant change and contradiction can for some children be a source of strength (Boyden, 2003). Street children could be said to be one category of children that adapt with contradictions in their lives.

Regardless of being continuously exposed to risk factor such as poverty, the harsh conditions on the streets, they operate outside structures such as the family, the community, and the school that promote resilience and teach them how to solve problems; however, they successfully handle challenges in life. Regardless of the absence of these structures, street children demonstrate the ability to meet their basic needs through the achievements of positive adjustments in the face of adversity

(Boyden, 1994). This has in a great way been a hindrance to rehabilitation as they find ways of coping with the challenges that they face.

4.5.4 Survival Tactics

Street children have designed several ways of survival while in the street illustrated in table 4.13 below.

Table 4.13: Survival Tactics by Street Children

Tactic	Frequency	Percent
Dodging authority	24	25
Scavenging	43	44
Stealing	30	31
Total	97	100

The study established that majority of the respondents 43(44%) observed that street children survived through scavenging, 30(31%) survived through stealing and 24(25%) survived through dodging the authorities. This finding therefore indicated that street children use various tactics to survive on the street with scavenging in the highest priority followed by stealing and dodging the authority. The study by Mtonga (2011) observes that a common coping strategy that street children employ is scavenging, street children may survive by scavenging for food in waste bins and rubbish dumps. During field work, the researcher established that Gioto was the biggest dump site in Nakuru Town and that is where most street children scavenge from. It was further observed that scavenging earns them more money as they get scrap metals that they sell to recycling companies.

However, regardless of the resistance children face, some of them rely on scavenging. It is common to see street children, especially young boys scavenging through the garbage in the hope of finding something to eat, mostly leftover food or spoiled food thrown away by restaurant owners. They pick all kinds of foodstuff ranging from fruits to discarded raw meat from the butchers shops, which they cook in cans. As bad and deplorable the situation the children were in, they seem to have little or no options but survive through scavenging and some of them seemed content with whatever food they found.

On stealing as a survival tactic Mtonga (2011) observes in his interview that; when children cannot find money through begging or trading, they turn to stealing in order for them to have it. During an interview it was revealed that picking pockets in the crowded places was a major source of money. Moyo, a participant in the group discussion had this contribution:

“We all steal from people in the market and the streets, sometimes we get luck, and someone can steal and get a lot of money if he or she is not found. Someone can be lucky and steal a nice cell phone and sell it at a good price. Sometimes we attack people who walk alone in the night, especially women, and then get their money and other valuable belongings they might have and sell them to get money.” (A street boy, 16 years old).

The researcher established that most of the time, the group or gang leaders discourage stealing because when found, the police will do sweeps and it will hinder their harmonious living. The respondents attested to their leaders’ perspective even though they maintained the fact that if they are not lucky in begging, they have one alternative of stealing or pick pocketing but claim that they do it careful to avoid being caught and taken to police custody. Mtonga (2011) further supports the finding by observing that Children are able to meet their basic needs through begging, stealing, scavenging, trading sex and so forth. Both boys and girls employ their agency in their everyday lives on the streets. Although, boys have a wider range of alternatives and options of meeting their basic needs while girls seem to mainly depend on boys for money and food which they acquire from an exchange with sex. This was put clear by one of the girls thus:

Let me tell you the truth, here in the streets, if you are girl, there is only one main way of getting money, you have to sleep with the big boys. If you don’t have sex with these boys, you will not have money to buy food. So during the day they will give you money and then at night, they expect you to have sex with them. (A street girl, 15 years old).

The reason girls do not have a wide range of alternatives to meet their needs on the street is due to social norms that perceive certain activities not to be appropriate for

girls and on the streets, there are very few activities that are considered suitable for girls. This leaves girls with no choice but to trade sex for food or money.

In support of this finding, Mtonga (2011) interviewed Police officer in Zambia to establish why they arrest street children and this is what they said;

Street children in Zambia were a threat to the security of the citizens and were a “time bomb” and need to be dealt with before they got out of control. “Most people are afraid to walk at night because of these children attack them and steal from them. And sometimes breaking into shops to steal, this why we arrest them and discipline them. We don’t beat to kill them, we just want to control them” (A police Officer, Zambia).

To him, the beatings are purely punitive or “correctional” in approach: as he had put it, they are used to “teach the children a lesson”. From the discussion with the respondents, street children know what is required of them. They work hard to avoid incidences that will compromise their survival in the streets.

4.5.5 Plans of Reintegration with care takers

The researcher sought to establish if the street children have plans of reintegration with their care takers. The responses are recorded in figure 4.11 below:

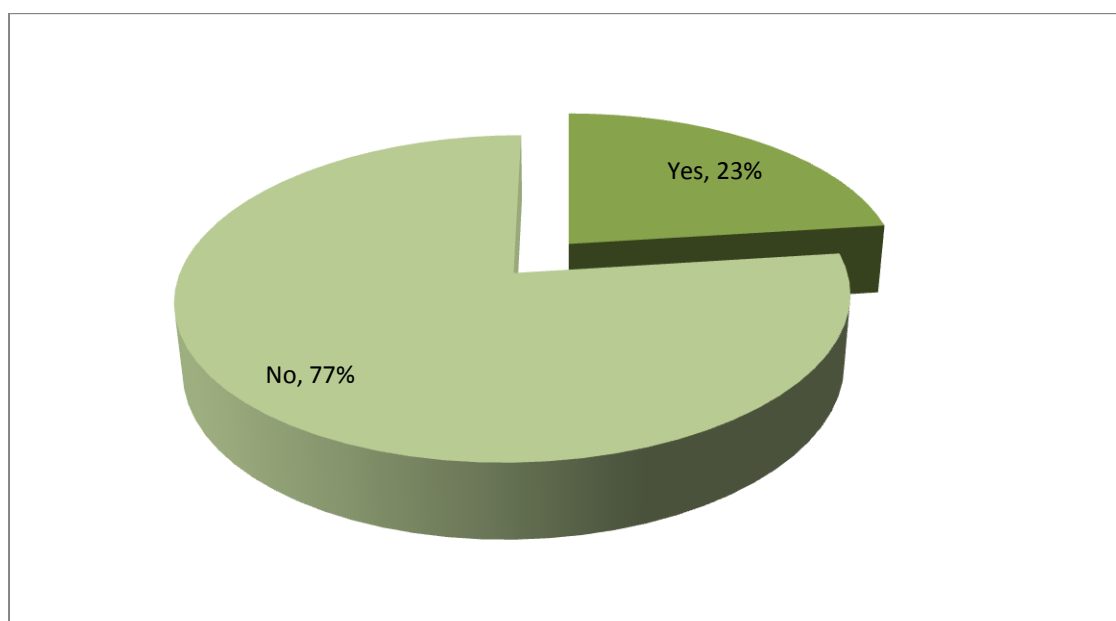


Figure 4.11: Do you wish to go back home someday?

Majority of the respondents 77(77%) observed that the street children did not wish to go back home compared to 23(23%) who wished to go back home. Some of the reason they listed included; lack of freedom at home, others said that they did not want to overburden their caregivers who were already struggling. The researcher observed that majority of street children had cut links completely with their caretakers. Depending on the circumstances that pushed them to the streets, the street children remember and do not wish to go back to the same life. One of the female participants in the clearly stated that:

Why do we want to go to our homes and yet we already have our street families. We came here long time ago and our lives are better than it was with our caretakers.(A street girl, 16 years old).

Similarly, one of the boys said the following:

I cannot go back to my mother, how do I go back to that one room and stay with the rest of my 8 siblings. I am now a man and I don't wish to overburden my mother. Let her take care of the young ones. (A street boy, 17 years old).

This clearly indicates that the children remember the circumstances that pushed them to the streets and cannot imagine going back to it.

On the other hand, one girl who still feel that one day she will be reintegrated had this to say:

If it wasn't for my father who disowned us, we would be living with my family. I came here to look for a source of livelihood for my mother and siblings. One day I went to see them and I did not find them, I miss them. (A street girl, 13 years old).

From the above findings, it is clear that some children went through experiences which made them to detach themselves completely from their families. This shows that when children lack emotional support, they feel psychologically, socially and emotionally unprotected which in this case their peers in the street have filled this gap and therefore they do not want to lose it.

Moreover, some children lost touch with their caretakers during the post-election violence in 2007/2008. The violence caused displacement of families and the innocent

children ended up in the streets. Others claimed that they were abandoned in the streets which show that they were a burden to their families.

One street boy narrated the following:

My mother really struggled to raise the 8 of us at home. When she died, we were left under the care of my grandmother who struggled a lot to feed us. As soon as I was old enough I decided to get out of home in order to fend for myself. Even if I want to go home, the struggle will be harder than what I go through in the streets. (A street boy, 15 years old).

The children have found substitute family. This has helped them to have a sense of belonging and a strong bond that holds them together. Their friends have become a source of solace and they trust that though they will not have their biological family, their street family is good as well.

The 23% who wish to go back home to their families someday are those who occasionally visit them and support them by sending money or food. They live wishing that their family situations would change and they will be reunited back to them. The children reported that their parents might not allow them to come home until they have managed to accumulate a specified amount of money, these children feel obliged to beg and work on the street as a way of contributing to their household economies (Abebe 2008). As it was found in the study, both push and pull factors disrupts every aspect of family life damaging the physical and emotional health of the members. It interferes with the education and development of children and worst is that family life becomes disintegrated.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the summaries, conclusions, and recommendations drawn from the study.

5.2 Summary of the Study

The first objective was to establish the social factors that make street children resist rehabilitation in Nakuru Town. Findings from the study showed that majority of the street children had been on the street between 1-3 years. The street has become their home and the networks of relationships that they have developed guarantees them security, protection and identity. They are forced to join the street due to financial deficiencies, which affects family relations leading to social instability or disintegration of the families, which one of the consequence is children running to the streets.

The study established that majority of street children had been to rehabilitation centres before. Different agencies have exerted efforts to settle street children in various rehabilitation centres whose main aim is to eradicate children from the streets. There is a possibility that the low sustainability of street children in rehabilitation centres could be due to the use of inappropriate care-giving approaches and management styles. The study established that majority of the street children had been to rehabilitation centres before, indicating that they escaped from the rehabilitation centres.

The second objective was to examine the economic factors that make street children resist rehabilitation in Nakuru Town. Findings from the study indicated that majority of the street children were assured of getting basic needs on the street and the few who were not able would go to their friends within their base and share with them whatever they had. When it reaches 5 p.m. and they have not got any money and no food at the dust bins, they simply go back to the base where other members converge in the evening and then beg the commander to allow them to share with the rest what they had on condition that they must work hard the following day. Life in the street is about friendship sharing and being part of a functioning base where problems are

solved collectively. This assurance makes them resist rehabilitation since their basic needs are met.

Majority of respondents of the street children were obliged to pay membership to the existing authority at the base. This membership fee payment was also flexible where they are given a grace period to look for the money and pay. They believe that the life on the street is hard earned with the base commander demanding membership money in order to become a member of his base. They demand up to Kshs. 50 in order to be allowed in the base territory. New members pay this money once to the base leader as a kind of registration fees which is compulsory to all the new comers. If one fails to pay this money, then he is first given grace period to look for it. If he fails to pay, then he is brutally beaten and chased out of the base. Even still while on the street, such a child who fails to pay the money is an enemy whom when seen must be chased out of the street. The membership fee not only allow one to be part of the base but indirectly it is a fee that allows one to beg within the territory, do manual work and even get food from the dust bin. Membership fee makes the street children to feel that they have already been assured of security and protection.

The third objective was to establish the coping mechanisms of street children to hard life of the streets in Nakuru Town. Findings from this objective showed that the street children were involved in the following activities; moving group for protection, looking for food and doing manual work. They disagreed that the street children were involved in mugging and stealing from people. The children are highly organized in the street with their commander *jango* well obeyed and give instructions on what should be done with clear line of feedback and reporting mechanisms.

The study established the following to be some of the survival techniques by the street children; one of the survival techniques is to be tough because street life is equally tough. This means that the child is trained the *para-military survival skills*. They are taught how to fight mercilessly, how to run and how to hide. They are also taught how to be dirty so that people naturally avoid touching them. Another induction step is teaching on how to move in gangs to avoid being attacked by other gang members. In the gang, they are taught chains of command and leadership within the gang. The gang leader commands them to go out and look for food in the dust bin and bring it to the base for sharing. They are also taught how to identify both plain clothes and

uniformed police and which direction to run. They are taught how to go to the market and do manual labour and bring back the money to the base. They are taught how to move swiftly in search of competitive opportunities in the streets. During hard times they are taught how to steal from people, how to mug especially women and also how to forcefully beg from the public.

5.3 Conclusion

Understanding the vulnerability and resilience of all categories of children including street children is important to designing appropriate interventions. Institutionalization is to remove the children from the streets with fear that living on the streets has the potential to emotionally overwhelm children both emotionally and psychologically. This is because of the understanding that children are dependent and of limited competence and is almost inevitably overcome by massive environmental adversities associated with living on the streets. This assumption is not very true, since the children have devised ways of survival in the street.

As children face untold challenges in the streets, the risks they encounter have made them to explore survival mechanisms that allow them to survive. Resilience to this hard street life is a factor that is important for every child. As they are recruited and oriented into street life, they are taken by their group members through survival techniques that enables them have a very smooth entry into the street life.

The common view states that children's needs are best met in a family setting which is believed to be a source of stability, support and protection for children than they can independently provide for themselves through their own energy and initiative. This lacks familiarity with the children's own coping strategies during periods of adversity when the family cannot support them. Such views that consider children as passive have to a greater degree led to the development of interventions that are actually inapplicable as they fail to acknowledge children's resilience when faced with adversity.

5.4 Recommendations

- i. The government should devolve the issues of street children to the community by establishing Child Advisory Committee (CAC) mandated to assess possibility of a child slipping into the street and preventing such occurrence. The committee will function as a social system that prevents children going to the street.
- ii. Rehabilitation agencies should benefit from the findings from this objective by making the rehabilitation centres not only child friendly but also socially acceptable by children. Children's opinion should be sought on how the centres should be built and operated.
- iii. For any rehabilitation to succeed, it must understand the existing social organization which hinders rehabilitation process.
- iv. The rehabilitation centres must provide conducive environment where adult street children can be involved in education geared towards economic activities to entice them. Such activities should make the children responsible in generating legitimate income and spending it willful based on existing guidelines
- v. The rehabilitation centres should develop vocational training like carpentry, farming, metal works, electrical works where children can develop technical entrepreneurship skills and nurture them positively.
- vi. Rehabilitation agencies should understand group dynamics of the street children and offer alternative acceptable groups for the children for them to freely stay in the centres. They should not tear the exiting social fabrics already created by the street children but use it to succeed in their rehabilitation process.
- vii. The already culture of hard work through manual work by the street children should be earnest and transferred to the government rehabilitation institution. The government should economically reward the hard work exhibited by the street children for their benefits and acceptance to rehabilitation.

5.4.1 Recommendations for Further Research

- i. A study should be undertaken to evaluate factors in the rehabilitation centres that make street children resist rehabilitation. This study concentrated on the street life but did not consider the centres. Findings from such a study will shed more light whether or not the centres are street children friendly or not.
- ii. A study should be carried out to analyze how coherent are the rehabilitation agencies as far as rehabilitation is concerned. The findings from the study may expose some breakdowns between the agencies that hinder the success of such rehabilitation. The study did not dig deep into the rehabilitation coherency.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY OF DATA ANALYSIS

Research questions	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Statistical Analysis
What are the social factors of street children that make them resist rehabilitation in Nakuru Town?	No of friends (Networks of relations) Peer pressure (Reciprocity) Routine life Sense of belonging	Perception of rehabilitation. Number of time rehabilitated	Mean Frequencies
What are the economic factors of street children that make them resist rehabilitation in Nakuru Town?	Money Membership fee Division of roles Sharing Free spending	Perception of rehabilitation. Number of time rehabilitated	Mean Frequencies
Which survival mechanisms aid the life of street children to continue living in the street in Nakuru Town?	Dodging authorities Scavenging Stealing Initiation to group norms	Perception of rehabilitation. Number of time rehabilitated	Mean Frequencies

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR STREET CHILDREN

SECTION A: Respondent's Background Information

Demographic

1. What is your gender? Male Female
2. What is your age in years? 7-9 10-12 13-15 16-18
3. Have you ever been to school? Yes [1] No [2]
4. If yes, which class did you reach? Nursery Lower primary Upper primary
Secondary

SECTION B: Social Factors That Hinder Rehabilitation among Street Children

6. For how long have you stayed in the streets? <Year 1-3 4-6 7-9
> 9 years
7. Who encouraged you to join street life?
I came by myself A friend brought me Parent /Caretaker
Others? Specify.....
8. Do you belong to a certain group while living in the street? Yes [1] No [2]
9. How do you benefit from your friends? Share meals Sleep together
Protection
10. In case of danger from the public, police or attack by big boys, what do you do?
Nothing Organize and avenge Any other? Specify.....
11. A normal day for you means you move around; Alone As a group
Any other? Specify.....
12. Do you put targets for foodstuffs and other basic needs for every member of the group? Yes [1] No [2]
13. Do you like street life? Yes No
14. Do your friends discourage you from leaving street life? Yes No

SECTION C: Economic Factors that Hinder Rehabilitation of Street Children

15. Are you assured of getting daily basic need? Yes [1] No [2]
16. Are you able to earn your own money? Yes [1] No [2]
17. Are you able to spend your money the way you want? Yes [1] No [2]
18. How do you like spending your money as you like?
Very much Much Do not know Do not like Do not like very much
19. Are you supposed to pay money as a member of a group?
20. If Yes, to whom do you pay? Big boys' group Authority
21. For what purpose do you pay this money? Protection do not know

Any other?

Section D: Coping Mechanisms among street children

22. Do you perform the following activities as members of the same group of street children?

Move in a group	Yes []	No []
Look for food	Yes []	No []
Mug people	Yes []	No []
Manual work	Yes []	No []
Steal	Yes []	No []

23. Do you have rules and regulations that guide the sleeping arrangements?

Yes [1] No [2]

24. What roles do your friends on the street play in your life?

25. What would you say is the worst experience on the streets and how do you overcome it?

26. What other setbacks do you consider challenging on the street and how do you overcome them?

27. Which is your best survival tactic in street life? Dodging authority [] Scavenging [] Stealing [] Mugging []

28. Do you wish to go back home someday? Yes [] No []

Section E: Resistance to Rehabilitation

29. How long have you been on the streets?

30. How long were you in the rehabilitation centre?

31. How was life in the rehabilitation compared to life on the streets?

32. Why did you leave the rehabilitation centre?

33. What changes do you think should be made at the rehabilitation centre to make your stay better?

34. Is where the rehabilitation centre located a problem to you?

APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SOCIAL WORKERS IN REHABILITATION CENTRES AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

1. What are your views on the situation of children in Nakuru Town?
2. Do you think street children are ready for rehabilitation and reintegration?
3. What are social factors that hinder rehabilitation of street children in Nakuru Town?
4. What are economic factors that hinder rehabilitation of street children in Nakuru Town?
5. What are coping mechanisms that hinder rehabilitation of street children in Nakuru Town?
6. Do the services you offer them meet their needs?
7. Are you aware of things that hold them from accessing your services?
8. What is the prevalence of the following;
 - a. Children running to the street
 - b. Street children murdered in the street
 - c. Children being rehabilitated and reintegrated to families
 - d. Children relapsing from the rehabilitation centres.

APPENDIX 4: LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION FROM NACOSTI



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,
2241349, 3310571, 2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying Please quote

9th Floor, Utalii House
Uhuru Highway
P. O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref: No.

Date:

NACOSTI/P/16/40763/14275

13th October, 2016

Betty Chepngetich
Egerton University
P.O. Box 536-20115
EGERTON.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Factors influencing street children's resistance to rehabilitation in Nakuru Town Nakuru County Kenya,*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nakuru County** for the period ending **13th October, 2017.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nakuru County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.



**BONIFACE WANYAMA
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO**

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Nakuru County.

The County Director of Education
Nakuru County.

**APPENDIX 5: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FROM THE MINISTRY OF
INTERIOR AND CO-ORDINATION OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT**



**THE PRESIDENCY
MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND
CO-ORDINATION OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT**

Telegram: "DISTRICTER" Nakuru
Telephone: Nakuru 051-2212515
When replying please quote

DEPUTY COUNTY COMMISSIONER
NAKURU EAST SUB COUNTY
P.O. BOX 81
NAKURU.

Ref No. EDU.12/10 VOL.V/179


27th June 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**RE:- RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION
BETTY CHEPNGETICH**

The above named person has been authorized to carry out research on "**Factors influencing street children's resistance to rehabilitation in Nakuru Town**", Nakuru County for the period ending 13th October, 2017

Please accord the necessary support.


**ANGELA MAKAU
FOR DEPUTY COUNTY COMMISSIONER
NAKURU EAST SUB COUNTY**

**APPENDIX 6: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FROM THE MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION**

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
State Department of Basic Education**

Telegrams: "EDUCATION",
Telephone: 051-2216917
Fax: 051-2217308
Email: cdenakurucounty@yahoo.com
When replying please quote
Ref. NO.
CDE/NKU/GEN/4/1/21 VOL.V/89



COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
NAKURU COUNTY
P. O. BOX 259,
NAKURU.

27th JUNE, 2017

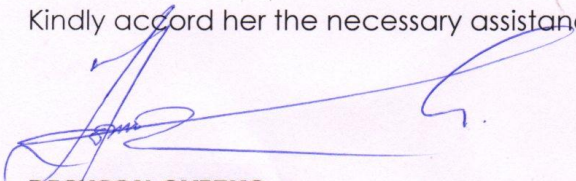
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION:
BETTY CHEPNGETICH
NACOSTI PERMIT NO/P/16/40763/14275**

Reference is made to letter ref. NACOSTI permit
No.P/16/40763/14275 dated 13th October, 2016.

Authority is hereby given to the above named to carry out research
on "**Factors influencing street children's resistance to rehabilitation in
Nakuru Town Nakuru County Kenya.**" for a period ending
13th October, 2017.

Kindly accord her the necessary assistance.


**DICKSON OYIEKO
FOR: COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
NAKURU COUNTY**

Copy to:

✓ Egerton University
P.O. Box 536 - 20115
EGERTON.