



WWJMRD 2019; 5(1): 17-21
www.wwjmr.com
International Journal
Peer Reviewed Journal
Refereed Journal
Indexed Journal
Impact Factor MJIF: 4.25
E-ISSN: 2454-6615

Mala Kharel
PhD Scholar, Mewar
University, Rajasthan, India

Dr. Shambhu Kattel
Professor, Tribhuvan
University, Kathmandu, Nepal

Causative Factors of Street Children: A case study of Kathmandu Valley, Nepal

Mala Kharel, Dr. Shambhu Kattel

Abstract

Street children come from the different rural areas from the different motives and reasons. They have no specific place to stay and no any management of food and cloth. They spend their day and night in street by begging with travelers. The study was conducted to identify the causative factors of street children. The study was conducted among the 234 street children of Kathmandu valley. The structured questionnaire survey was done to identify the causative factors. The children were purposively selected on the basis of some selection criteria. The study found that poverty was one of the major causative factors followed by ran away from home to see the city, no one to care after because of death of parents, punishment and abuse of step father or mother etc. The majority of children came in street with friends without consent of parents. Poor family relation and regular conflict between the father and mothers were more reported by the children. The study had not measured the present life styles of street children so further research can be assessed the current status of children in street.

Keywords: Causative, Children, Factors, Street, Kathmandu, Nepal

1. Introduction

Very simply, we know the street children are those who spend their maximum time in street. Street children itself is not a problem; but problems lie in the control and management of street children. Nobody is street children by birth but different socio-economic and environmental are responsible to make one children more vulnerable. Family conflict, peer pressures, personal interest creates the enabling environment for the children to come in street. Various literatures have identified and explained about the causative factors of street children. Poverty, social conflict, psychological trauma are the major causes that made the children street children. Therefore, the causes of this phenomenon are varied, but are often related to domestic, economic, or social disruption including, but not limited to: poverty; breakdown of homes and/or families; political unrest; acculturation; sexual, physical or emotional abuse; domestic violence; lured away by pimps, Internet predators, or begging syndicates; mental health problems; substance abuse; and sexual orientation or gender identity issues.

According to UNICEF, Children who run away from home or children's institutions frequently end up on the street since they rarely return home due to dysfunctional families, or physical, mental, and/or sexual abuse. In several areas of the world, disabled children are commonly abandoned, particularly in developing countries. There are several cause that made children street children are family breakdown, armed conflict, poverty, natural and man-made desire, famine, physical and sexual abuses, exploiting by adults, dislocation through migration, urbanization and overcrowding, acculturation, disinheritance or being disowned etc (British Council , 2018). Structure and extreme poverty, Financial debt, landlessness, illiteracy, underdevelopment, culturally and socially embedded discrimination (amongst others against girl children) are some of the major underlying factors that make child labour and the street children (Maclagan, 2005, p. 20). Parent's loss through death or abandonment and/or family conflict or shortage of housing may force children onto the streets (Hickson & Gaydon, 1989).

Correspondence:
Mala Kharel
PhD Scholar, Mewar
University, Rajasthan, India

According to Baker and Panter-Brick (1997), due to family problems like alcoholism, mental, physical and sexual abuses, or neglect etc. motivates children to leave home. Similarly, economic reasons, excessive workloads, family stress and a desire for independence, most of the boys leave home before the age of 12 (Baker, Panter-Brick, & Todd, 1997). According to Subedi (2002), there is no single reason to explain why street children leave home. He states that the adverse family situations such as the death of parents, presence of a step mother and domestic violence were the major reasons while poor household economic conditions and the desire for modern consumerism were the other reasons for children leaving home (Subedi, 2002). Economic need is often cited as being the cause for children to live and work on the streets as parents cannot afford the costs of education and are forced to send their children to the streets (Densley & Joss, 2000). The situation of children becomes more miserable in the street because of the lack of food and shelter then they have to involve in different types of wrong activities like theft, robbery and sex trade. It is reported that street children most commonly use cigarettes, inhalants, alcohol, and marijuana. Other substances included kola nut, coca paste, cocaine, amphetamines, and heroin (Towe, Hasan, Zafar, & Sherman, 2009) (Tiwari, 2007; Carvalho, et al., 2006; Morakinyo & Odejide, 2003; Jutkowitz, Spielmann, Koehler, Lohani, & Pande, 1997; Noto, Nappo, Galduroz, Mattei, & Carlini, 1997; Avila, et al., 1996; Raffaelli, et al., 1995; Campos, et al., 1994; Pinto, et al., 1994; Porto, et al., 1994). From the health perspective, street children have many risk of health hazard because of their drugs and food habit.

In the Nepali context, literature shows that children and women were the most vulnerable groups, displaced by the Maoist Army cross-fire and related violence. Many of them are sent away from rural villages to the cities to protect them from the violence that may arise, and from being recruited by the Maoist insurgents. Life in the city areas is not easy for the children. Many of them were not able to go to school nor were they capable or qualified to seek formal employment. These people faced various problems and

consequently end up on the streets and in slum areas (Maclagan, 2005, p. 27). Other social and environmental factors might be more effective to determine the situation of street children. There is no actual data of street children in Kathmandu valley because street children are the mobile population; moving one location to another location. There was no accurate information of causative factors of street children so, with the aim to identify the causative factors of street children, the study was conducted among the street children of Kathmandu valley.

2. Materials & Methods

The study was based on the quantitative design because data was collected from the structured questionnaire survey from the 234 street children of Kathmandu Valley. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the children. The study had selected only those children who was leaving since last 1 year back in the street and was able to listen, speak and response the questions of researcher. It was the cross-sectional study; data was collected in single time visit in field. Individual consent form was fill out from each child to ensure the maintenance of privacy of children. The collected data was analyzed from the statistical software (SPSS Version 20) and presented in the tabular form.

3. Result and Discussion

The study has presented the analyzed data in tabular form following the objective of this study. The study had focused on the causative factors of street children. There were total 234 children; among them 81.2% male and 18.8% female participated in the study. From the division of caste, the maximum numbers of street children were belonging from Janajati caste along with 49.1% followed by 22.2% Chhetri, 9% Brahamin, 15% Dalit, 3.8% Madhesi, 4% Muslim, and 4% other caste.

3.1 Duration of living in street

The following Table 1 shows the year of experience of street children living in the street.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics				
	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Duration of leaving original home town	1.0	17.0	5.009	3.5745

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Survey among the street children, it was explored that children were living in street since minimum 1.0 to maximum 17 years. They were enjoying the street life because they had full of freedom to do the work as their will.

3.2 Cause to leave original home

Many children are on the streets because they are ill-treated by families simply because the families are poor and are ignorant of good parenting skills. Among the various reason leaving the home by street children, the following

table shown that the majority of street children leave or escaping from their original home due to the various region like poverty/hunger, step mother torture, no one care about them, along with parents, abuse by elders and parents, Parents sent them away, relatives bought them here, came to earn money and many other reasons. However, the research upon Kathmandu street children found that 35.9% street children reported the poverty and hunger as a causative factor to came to Kathmandu and spending their life in street.

Table 2: Cause to leave original home

		Caste				Sex		Age				Total
		Brahmin/ Chhetri	Janjati	Dalit	Others	Male	Female	5-10 Years	11-15 Years	16-20 Years	21-25 Years	
Poverty/hunger	%	39.1	36.4	33.3	63.6	37.3	41.9	56.7	27.6	56.6	0.0	35.90
Because of step-father/mother	%	7.2	5.6	12.1	0.0	5.6	11.6	0.0	8.2	5.7	33.3	6.41
No one to look after me	%	15.9	10.3	15.2	18.2	14.7	7.0	6.7	14.9	13.2	0.0	12.39
Father/mother coming here	%	0.0	1.9	9.1	0.0	2.8	0.0	3.3	3.0	0.0	0.0	2.14
I ran away	%	15.9	16.8	21.2	18.2	15.8	23.3	13.3	19.4	9.4	100.0	16.24
There was abuse	%	5.8	5.6	18.2	18.2	6.8	14.0	13.3	9.0	3.8	0.0	7.69
Parents sent me away	%	1.4	2.8	0.0	0.0	2.3	0.0	0.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	1.71
A relative brought me here	%	1.4	.9	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	3.3	.7	0.0	0.0	0.85
came to earn money	%	1.4	1.9	3.0	9.1	1.7	4.7	10.0	1.5	0.0	0.0	2.14

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Similarly, 16.2% street children ran away from their original house. In the same way 12.3% street children said that there was no who care about them so they do not want to stay at home and came here in street of Kathmandu. Abusing by their elders and parents also one of the major cause to compel them to leave the home which is supported from the data that 7.69% street children chosen street of Kathmandu because of abusing by their elders and parents. The cause to come in street was the torture from the steep mother. After the death of street children mother, father brought step mother for them who torture them and compel them to run away from there was also clearly found in the study because 6.41% reported the same cause of leaving home. Came with parents and earn money was even the major cause for all caste group like Brahmin/Chhetri, Janajati, Dalit and Others either male or female or from 5 to 25 years street children had same cause along with 2.14%. Street children were sending by their parents from their original home also another cause has been identified in the study along with 1.71%. Relatives who shown greedy dreams about city and try to bring them in city is also one reason, however, a very few number (0.85%) of street children had cause to come Kathmandu and living street following the relatives.

On the basis of caste, Brahmin/Chhetri, Janjati, Dalit and Other, the maximum Street children had cause to living the street life at Kathmandu was because of their parent's poverty along with 39.1%, 36.4%, 33.3%, and 63.6 % respectively. In the same way, negligence by their family was also one of the major causes for them to live the street life along with 15.9% from Brahmin/Chhetri, 10.3% from Janajati, 18.2% from Dalit 14.7% and other 18.7% respectively. The another major cause was that they ran away from their original house to get the freedom and living city life along with 15.9% from Brahmin/Chhetri, 16.8%, from Janjati, 21.2% from Dalit and 18.2% other

caste group respectively.

On the basis of Sex, the street children cause behind leaving their original house shown various results. The data presented in the above table shows that the majority of female street children were leaving their original house due to their poverty along with 41.9%, on the other hand 37.3% male street children leaving their original house due to the poverty. The other causes reported by male and female as 'ran away from the home' along with 15.8% and 23.3% respectively.

Similarly, the study of the above table shown that due to the poverty factors maximum street children leave their original house even from 5-10, 11-15, and 16 - 20 years' group along with 56.7%, 27.6% and 56.6% respectively. However, 100.0% street children from 21-25 years age group were ran away from their original home due to the various reasons and living the street life at Kathmandu. Similarly, Street children from 11-15 years age group along with 19.4% even ran away from their home.

3.3 Partner/Friends to come in street

Street children had various reasons to come in the city of Kathmandu where some of them come with friends or some with relatives, parents, etc. The given data shows that the majority (38.9%) street children came with friends without consent of parents whereas only 1.7% street children came only after their parents' consent. Besides that 14.1% street children came with their parents, 10.3% street children follow their siblings, 3.8% street children came with the dream of having delicious food and free life given by broker, 19.2% street children eloping from the home, 3.4% street children came with friends but only after the consent of their parents, 2.6% street children had the objectives to join relatives in Kathmandu and 6.0% street children had various other medium to come Kathmandu.

Table 3: Partner/Friends to come in street

	Caste				Sex		Age				Total
	Brahamin/Chhetri	Janjati	Dalit	Others	Male	Female	5-10 Years	11-15 Years	16-20 Years	21-25 Years	
With parents	19.2 %	13.0 %	5.7%	18.2 %	13.7 %	15.9 %	32.4 %	13.4 %	5.5%		14.1 %
With siblings	9.6%	8.7%	8.6%	36.4 %	10.0 %	11.4 %	29.4 %	7.7%	5.5%		10.3 %
With broker	1.4%	2.6%	14.3 %		3.2%	6.8%		4.2%	5.5%		3.8%
Came alone with consent of parents		.9%	5.7%	9.1%	1.1%	4.5%		2.8%			1.7%
Came alone without consent of parents	20.5 %	18.3 %	22.9 %	9.1%	20.5 %	13.6 %	17.6 %	22.5 %	10.9 %	33.3 %	19.2 %
Came with friends with consent of parents	4.1%	1.7%	8.6%		4.2%			4.9%	1.8%		3.4%
Came with friends without consent of parents	39.7 %	43.5 %	25.7 %	27.3 %	38.4 %	40.9 %	11.8 %	35.9 %	61.8 %	66.7 %	38.9 %
Came to join relatives here		3.5%	5.7%		2.1%	4.5%	5.9%	2.1%	1.8%		2.6%
Others	5.5%	7.8%	2.9%		6.8%	2.3%	2.9%	6.3%	7.3%		6.0%
Total	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %	100.0 %

Source: Field Survey, 2017

The table elaborated that the majority number of Brahmin street children were came in the street of Kathmandu by eloping from their home with their friends along with 39.7%, on the other hand minority (1.4%) street children were agreed that they came with broker in Kathmandu city. Similarly, 43.5% Janjati Cast group had reported about the eloping from the home with their friends to come Kathmandu. On the other hand, only.9% street children came Kathmandu with consent with their parents. In the same way street children from Dalit community were came Kathmandu by eloping with their friends without consent with their parents along with 25.7%. Other from different caste group even had same medium to come Kathmandu to enjoying the city life along with 27.3%.

The data reported that the 40.9% female and 38.4% male street children came Kathmandu by eloping from their house. In contrary, 1.1% Male and 4.5% female street children came street of Kathmandu with their parent's permission. The data shows that 4.5% children came to join relatives in Kathmandu.

The majority of age group between 21-25 years' street children came with friends without consent of parents along with 66.7%, similarly, 61.7% street children from 16-20 years' age group had majority to come Kathmandu by eloping from their home. The study shows that the street children came in Kathmandu through different medium; with parents, with siblings, with broker, eloping from the house with their friends the age group between 11-15 along with 13.4%, 7.7%, 4.2% and 4.9% respectively. Similarly, the age group between 5-10 years, who came Kathmandu along with their parents, siblings, came alone without consent, came by eloping from the house with their friends and came to join relatives, was 32.4%, 29.4%, 17.6%, 11.8%, and 5.9% respectively.

Conclusion

From the field observation, discussion and analysis of data, it was found that poverty was one of the major causative factors to be a street child. Majority of children shared that the main occupation of parents was wage labor work which was not adequate for the survival of whole family. On the other hand, conflict between the parents due to drunk habit of father, second marriage of mother, because of regular punishment and abuse of step-father/mother, death of both father and mother and interest of earning of money were reported as causative factor. Majority of street children ran away from the house with friends without consent of parents. Some of the street children come with parents also for the search of work in Kathmandu city but it is not so easy to get the job so due to lack of job, children chose the easy job of begging in street. There are some hidden factors like, freedom, romance, entertainment, easy earning, sexual intercourse etc. which has attracted the children to come in the street. Many children were found involved in the sexual trade, robbery, theft to earn the money. They spent those earning in entertainment (eating, clothing, movies). The daily life style, income, expenditure, health status is still unknown so further researcher can study on that aspect too.

References

1. Avila, M., Casanueva, E., Piccardo, C., Liberatore, D., Cammarieri, G., Cervellini, M.,... Libonatti, O. (1996, Oct). HIV-1 and Hepatitis B virus infections in adolescents lodged in security institutes of Buenos Aires. *Pediatr AIDS HIV Infect*, 7(5), 346-349.
2. Baker, R., Panter-Brick, C., & Todd, A. (1997). Homeless Street Boys in Nepal: Their Demography and Lifestyle. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 28, 129-46.
3. British Council. (2018). *Mission statement: Street children*. Kathmandu: British Council.

4. Campos, R., Raffaelli, M., Ude, W., Greco, M., Ruff, A., Rolf, J.,... D. (1994, April). Social networks and daily activities of street youth in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. *Child Dev*, 65(2), 319-330.
5. Carvalho, F. d., Neiva-Silva, L., Ramos, M., Evans, J., Koller, S., Piccinini, C., & Page-Shafer, K. (2006, July 16). Sexual and drug use risk behaviors among children and youth in street circumstances in Porto Alegre, Brazil. *AIDS Behav*, 10(4), 57-66.
6. Densley, M. K., & Joss, D. M. (2000). Street Children: Causes, consequences, and innovative treatment approaches. *Work*, 15(1), 217-225.
7. Hickson, J., & Gaydon, V. (1989, April). "Twilight Children": The Street Children of Johannesburg. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, 17(2), 85-94.
8. Jutkowitz, J., Spielmann, H., Koehler, U., Lohani, J., & Pande, A. (1997, Jun). Drug use in Nepal: The view from the street. *Substance Use Misuse*, 32(7-8), 987-1004.
9. Maclagan, D. (2005). *Study of policies and programmes addressing the right of street children to education*. Kathmandu: Child Welfare Scheme UK.
10. Morakinyo, J., & Odejide, A. (2003). A community based study of patterns of psychoactive substance use among street children in a local government area of Nigeria. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 1-8.
11. Noto, A., Nappo, S., Galduroz, J., Mattei, R., & Carlini, E. (1997, Apr-Jun). Use of drugs among street children in Brazil. *Journal Psychoactive Drugs*, 29(2), 185-192.
12. Pinto, J., Ruff, A., Paiva, J., Antunes, C., Adams, I., Halsey, N., & Greco, D. (1994, March). HIV risk behavior and medical status of underprivileged youths in Belo-Horizonte, Brazil. *Journal of Adolesc Health*, 15(2), 179-185.
13. Porto, S., Cardoso, D., Queiroz, D., Rosa, H., Andrade, A., Zicker, F., & Martelli, C. (1994, Nov). Prevalence and risk factors for HBV infection among street youth in central Brazil. *Journal of Adolesc Health*, 15(7), 577-581.
14. Raffaelli, M., Siqueira, E., Payne-Merritt, A., Campos, R., Ude, W., Greco, M.,... Halsey, N. (1995). HIV-related knowledge and risk behaviors of street youth in Belo-Horizonte, Brazil. *AIDS Educ Prev*, 7, 287-297.
15. Subedi, G. (2002). *Trafficking and Sexual Abuse among Street Children in Kathmandu*. Kathmandu: International Labor Organization.
16. Tiwari, P. (2007). Life on streets. *Indian J Pediatr*, 74, 283-286.
17. Towe, V. L., Hasan, S. u., Zafar, S. T., & Sherman, S. G. (2009). Street life and drug risk behaviors associated with exchanging sex among male street children in Lahore, Pakistan. *Journal Adolesc Health*, 44(3), 222-228.