

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS ON STREET CHILDREN IN

PIAZZA AREA, ADDIS ABABA

By:

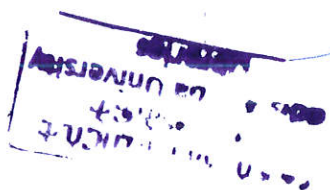
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October, 2015

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



Addis Ababa University

School of Social Work

Community Perception on Street Children in Piazza Area, Addis Ababa

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A Thesis Submitted to the School of Social Work, Addis Ababa University, in Partial Fulfillment  
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## Dedication

This work dedicates to all street children who are in the world!

## Declaration

I, the undersigned, ID. No. GSR/0373/06, do hereby declare that except for references to other people's work, which all sources utilized for this research have been properly acknowledged, this thesis is my work conducted under the supervision of Dr. Mesele Mengsteab at the School of Social Work, Addis Ababa University (AAU). This work has neither been submitted ex ante in full nor in part for a degree in this University or elsewhere.

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

AA:	Addis Ababa
AACAILIC:	Addis Ababa City Administration Integrated Land Information Center
AAU:	Addis Ababa University
CBOs:	Community Based Organizations
CRC:	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRDA:	Christian Relief and Development Association
CSA:	Central Statistics Agency
DRC:	Declaration on the Rights of the Child
FAE:	Fundamental Attribution Error
FDRE:	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FHIDO:	Future Hopes Integrated Development Organization
FSCE:	Forum on Street Children-Ethiopia
GOs:	Governmental Organizations
IPT:	Implicit Personality Theory
LSAWT:	Labour and Social Affair of <i>Wereda</i> Ten
MoWCYA:	Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs

MoLSA:	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
NGOs:	Non Governmental Organizations
UN:	United Nations
UNDHR:	United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNDP:	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF:	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNNGLS:	United Nations Non Government Liaison Service

## ***Abstract***

*This study focuses on perception of the community towards street children in Piazza area confined to wereda ten. Sketching and choosing multiple research participants purposively on the basis of interviews and group interviews with the households, shopkeepers, police, policy initiators, employees of women, youth and children, labour and social affair, religious leaders, high school teachers and students, taxi drivers and health employees helped to understand community perception about the conditions of street children in the study area. The study has employed a qualitative descriptive method. A semi-structured interview was utilized as a data collection tool. Having used non-probability sampling, the primary data were collected from the interviewees, using personal observation, informal interviews and focus group discussion. The collected data were transcribed, translated, coded and analyzed. The ethical values and consent of the participants were also maintained. Findings of this research have indicated absence of social exclusion, and the presence of positive perception on street children. It is concluded albeit the community supported street children in different ways; it did not bring prolonged change on their life. As a result, it recommends that the communities, NGOs, GOs and other concerned institutions to do more to prevent exclusion, abuse and negligence of street children that must act to look after who fall victim. It requires donating their resources to those children in order to lift out from streetism. Enactment of specific child policy should also take into account to protect the rights and wellbeing of all children in the country.*

Key Words: Community perception, street children, Piazza, qualitative descriptive method

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research is to investigate community perception on street children in Piazza area with respect to *wereda* ten. This study elucidates how street children are perceived and described by the public, what feeling is in the mind of community, how they are being treated, cared or supported, to realize social inclusion or exclusion towards them, what impacts do have streetism on their life, to notice the difference between street and non-street children, in what activities these children are engaged for survival on the streets, what social problems would cause due to the alarming rate of such children in Piazza, Addis Ababa (hereafter, AA). Further, it identifies the legal frameworks for implementation, and what policies are enacted regarding to all children, and street children. This research has employed qualitative methods to analyze the raw data. It is a descriptive qualitative method with which the community perception towards street children is illuminated in the study area. This study has utilized the instruments of in-depth interview, FGD, informal interview and direct observation for data collection.

#### 1.1. Background of the Study

A community perception is the process through which sensations are interpreted, using knowledge and understanding of the world and become meaningful experiences to what they see, hear and touch (Bernstein, Clarke-Stewart, Roy, Srull and Wickens, 1994). The community perception in the ecological view provides information by the environment, whereas in the constructionist perspective it stresses how people make inferences about that environment. The computational community perception has focused on how the nervous system manipulates

signals (Bernstein et al, 1994). Community perception allows people to understand the other people in their social world. In other words, individuals make impressions and judgments about other people such as perceived street children positively or negatively which primarily based on observation even if pre-existing knowledge influences how we perceive an observation (Allen & Santrock, 1993).

The trend towards greater urbanization has soaring social effect for all segments of the society mainly for children who migrate to cities so as to improve their livelihood. Children face multifarious difficulties and interwoven socio-economic problems. Street children remained as the most vulnerable groups of people. Rural children migrate to metropolitan city of AA either alone or together with their family members. Therefore, exposure of children to streetism is high in both sexes with predominantly of boys. A person who walks on the streets of AA city does not fail to observe street children who live and work on the street (Ege, Aspen, Birhanu Teferra & Shiferaw Bekele, 2009).

The United Nations declaration brought into focus the plight of and the need to ensure the wellbeing of street children, orphans, working children, vulnerable children and others found at risk circumstances all over the world (Black, 1986; cited in Quarshie, 2011). Street children and homeless people in general is a major social problem encountered in different nations. Due to poverty and other troubles, numerous children are exposed to streetism; spending part or whole of their time in city streets by working, begging and engaging in various illegal and criminal activities in their attempt to adapt street life (Heinonen, 2000). The condition of street children should be considered not only in terms of informal child labor, exclusion of children from social

institutions, but also it has to be examined as a result of negligence, abuse and exploitation by their families and communities at large (Altintas, 2003; cited in Pehlivanli, 2008).

For different reasons, street children face exclusion in a community and are perceived as deviants (UNICEF, 2006; cited in Mustafa, 2010). They are outcasts; invisible members of society whose lack of protection sets them at greater risk of facing diverse forms of abuse, exploitation, violation and deprivation of their rights. Albeit street children can be exceptionally visible in their features, then again their invisibility in society suggests a rather paradoxical conception. This is because street children are shadows existing in society whose rights is not only violated but their presence is also denied and excluded by the general public (UNICEF, 2006; cited in Mustafa, 2010).

Hence, the situation of street children is a social problem with nationwide strand. Various capital cities and urban centers across the world are now a haven of survival for those of children living in anguish. This difficulty is more of viewed in Africa. The children and young people need to be protected from adverse circumstance, community exclusion and influences capable of disrupting their meaningful development into healthy adulthood (Boakye-Boaten, 2006; cited in Quarshie, 2011). Many of them do not experience a childhood where they need to assure protection, safety and care from adults and community. Rather, the day to day survival of these children is driving into a kind of instant adulthood for work. The general public's obligation in shielding one of its most vulnerable people, street children are neglected and abused with vacuity filled by the ill-equipped NGOs that lacks the crude understanding of children's conditions (Boakye-Boaten, 2006). A study conducted by Le Roux and Sylvia (1998) as cited in Boakye-

Boaten (2006), indicated that street children is at alarming rate and escalating worldwide problem. Street children are maltreated, imprisoned and in some countries are even killed.

In comparison with Europe, Latin America and Asia, the problem of street children is relatively a new phenomenon in Africa. It is noticeable that the sub-Saharan Africa is the least urbanized regions of the developing world although it is currently experiencing the highest urban growth rates mounting large number of street children (Urban management programme, 2000; cited in Kibrom Berhe, 2008). Like in other parts of the world, the situation of street children is experienced in Ethiopia as major social problems; ignored and negative perception within the communities (Tadesse, 2006). There is no accurate information of about the number of street children worldwide and it often varies from one source to another. Comparing with the global pattern, the information of street children in Ethiopia is very limited. On this part, studies and reports on the subject have come up with different ballpark figure.

More than 500, 000 children are not in school and live in extreme poverty. This creates the potential for thousands more children to move to the cities and onto street, which join ranks of the country's growing number of street children (Forum on Street Children in Ethiopia (hereafter, FSCE) 2003; cited in Kibrom Berhe, 2008, p. 1). A report also by Christian Relief and Development Association (hereafter, CRDA) estimated that approximately 200,000 children were working and living on urban streets of which 150,000 dwell in Addis Ababa (CRDA, 2006; cited in Kibrom Berhe, 2008). Utilizing different sources, it estimates the problem may be far more serious with nearly 600, 000 street children countrywide (UNICEF, 2000; cited in Ege, Aspen, Birhanu Teferra & Shiferaw Bekele, 2009). However, the assumption is even that the number could be higher than this given the influx of migrants and displaced people into the main

urban centers of the country (FSCE, 2003; cited in Ege, Aspen, Birhanu Teferra & Shiferaw Bekele, 2009). In Ethiopia, studied literatures on the perceptions and attitudes of community with respect to street children are very limited. As a result, in this study the researcher attempted to explore the perceptions of community towards street children in pizza area, Addis Ababa (hereafter, AA).

## 1.2. Statement of the Problem

The community perception is a subsequent organizing of information or process by which sensations are organized, interpreted and forming an inner representation of the world (Rathus, 1993). Community perception gives individuals the tools to recognize how others affect their personal lives. While social perception leads to perceive an individual through observation of certain traits in another person; she/he tends to assume that his or her other personality traits are concurrent with the initial trait. These assumptions make people for quick judgments about the character of an individual. It also inclines to categorize people like street children so that we can infer information about them and predict their behaviors positively or extreme negatively (Allen & Santrock, 1993). However, the perceptual interpretations of the community on street children may be sometimes illusive or mistaken (Bernstein et al, 1994).

At the moment, the conditions of street children are a pervasive social problem in urban areas of the developing world. It is estimated that tens of millions of children live or work on streets of the world's towns and cities; and the number is rising with global population growth, migration and increasing urbanization (UNICEF, 2012). The growing number of street children is one of the most serious urban social problems which uncovered to streetism and face different

problems in Ethiopia. In Africa the number of studies on street children is little known (Lalor, 1999). Street children are vulnerable to risks of abuse, neglect and exploitation. Those children are viewed as awful and excluded (but not at all) by the community. Their daily survival relies on the public. Street children scrounge off from the people and serve as concierges at market places, bus and railway stations. They shine shoes and work as daily labourers and some of them steal from the communities for survives (Orme and Seipel, 2007, cited in Quarshie, 2011).

There are not sufficient available literatures (if not at all studied) regarding to community perceptions on street children in Addis Ababa and Ethiopia as well. Most of the researches and existing studies on the conditions of street children have largely focused on how they cope with the harsh realities of street life, the activities they engage in, reasons being at street, their family background and health status, role of various organizations in meeting street children's interests, their situations, how they cope up and way of survive, their perceptions, attitudes, ambitions and other concerns (Boakye-Boaten, 2006). It shows a very few literatures existing on street children from the perceptions of communities towards street children (Boakye-Boaten, 2006). The street children are often marginalized and feel excluded in society where they are a part. Marginalized children in unfamiliar milieu are without sufficient resources and the majority is forced to work on some sort of self employment such as shoe shining and petty trading. The marginal groups of society that is chiefly street children, confronted with shortage of food, clothing and shelter while living in the streets. These children face exclusion, lack of access to basic necessity from their family, community, GOs and NGOs. They do not have education and basic skills to deal with the risk factors and to deal with hardships of streetism (Ege, Aspen, Birhanu Teferra and Shiferaw

Bekele, 2009). Therefore, their biological and psychological needs are neglected in different parts of Ethiopia (UNICEF, 1991; cited in Kibrom Berhe, 2008).

The international Street Children Conference held in Washington (2000), indicated that street children require preventive interventions, to be integrated into school, family environment and labour market (Volpi, 2002). Holman and Tabor (n.d., p.4-6) portrayed their major findings empowering and assisting local community to ensure the welfare of all children and remain them at family home, and is vital to create awareness around those critical areas. Benitez's (2011) analysis has discussed the social protection, care and support, formulation of general policy frameworks and interventions to protect children from the street. It also discussed street children are perceived as delinquents, excluded and rejected by communities. The analysis of Heinonen, (2000) depicts cultural context, nurture and physical environment matters for children to save from streetism. It also revealed street children are often affected due to social exclusion, lack of basic necessities, emotional and physical abuse that requires care and intervention to respond for psychosocial or health needs. Lalor (1999) has signified his analysis that street children become victimization and delinquency due to the negative perception of community and family related problems such as poverty or disintegration.

The major findings of Emmanuel Nii-Boye Quarshie (2011) revealed positive public perception on the phenomenon of street children conducted in Ghana. Alamaz (2008) contributed in her analysis that street children are excluded and affected by the communities. Tadesse's (2008) finding has revealed the public perception on street children is negative and ignored. All in all, there is lack of existing literatures, and researches of community perception towards street

children in Ethiopia. Thus, the researcher believed to conduct that perception of the communities towards street children from the cultural context and practices of the country has concerned.

### 1.3. Research Questions

In this study, the principal guiding questions to address the issues of street children is:

1. What are the perceptions of community towards street children?
2. How is the street children treated in the community?
3. What measures should be taken to ameliorate the situations of street children suggesting from the community at large?

### 1.4. Objectives of the Study

#### 1.4.1. General Objective

In general, this study aims to explore perceptions of the community about street children in Piazza area, AA.

#### 1.4.2. Specific Objectives

Based on the main objective, the following are specific objectives under this study;

- a. To investigate the perceptions of community about street children in the study area;
- b. To explore the living conditions of street children;
- c. To provide possible suggestions based on the findings obtained from the participants;

### 1.5. Significance of the Research

This study will have the following contributions:

- Through this research it will identify perceptions of the community towards street children; that may give some ideas and help for social workers, practitioners, policy makers, NGOs, government institutions and others as source of information as well as provide awareness to the public on this issue; therefore, it may possibly maintain the welfare and interests of street children and lift out them from the street life conditions;
- Furthermore, this study may help the mainstream of advocates, GOs, CBOs and NGOs religious institutions and others that working with the treat street children in the development of relatively holistic intervention strategies that may take the cognizance of and incorporate public perception on the conditions of street children.
- Findings of the study may promote perceptual change of the community towards street children's circumstance;
- It may also use as reference materials and help for further study in the field of School of Social Work to investigate in depth the perceptions and attitudes of the community on street children at large;

### 1.6. Delimitation of the Study

This scheme has comprised the spatial and conceptual delimitation to identify perceptions of the community towards street children in piazza area. Regarding to the geographical scope it is limited to explore community perceptions to address the conditions of street children in Piazza area with regard to *wereda* ten. But the study was not comprehensive to appraise every aspect of

the community perceptions on street children. The conceptual scope of the research is confined with street children and community perceptions. However, although this study has been designed based on community perceptions towards street children, it was very difficult to ignore pertinent social aspects which have direct and indirect relations in line with the public perceptions in the respective study site. The conceptual delimitation of population study are high school teachers and students, police, households, policy initiators, health employees, labour and social affairs, and women, children and youth employees of *wereda* ten, religious leaders/priests, taxi drivers, shopkeepers and employees from the NGO.

### 1.7. Limitation of the Study

To complete this thesis, the researcher has obtained perceptual information from the research population to explore their behaviour of perceptions on street children. The limitations encountered during the field work were, however, it has been difficult to appraise and measure public perception towards street children. Inadequate specific reference materials (shortage of literatures) pertaining to community perceptions about street children in AA and/or Ethiopia.

By and large, this research had operational and methodological limitations. The former limitation is unwillingness of certain interviewees to provide detail information like shopkeepers. Inability of some interviewees to articulate their views properly during the interview period was part of the problem in this study. In addition, policy initiators, taxi drivers, police, shopkeepers, employees of LSAWT were difficult to access them easily for providing relevant information which in turn has affected the research to lag behind the allocated occasion and resources given.

This study has employed qualitative approach with which it encountered methodological limitations. In qualitative research there is no generalization and representation that would be a viable problem for this study. Using qualitatively can be recognized ambiguities in the analysis which is inherent in human language (Atieno, 2009). Besides, qualitative approach to corpus analysis is that their findings could not be extended to wider populations with the same degree of certainty that quantitative analyses can. This is because the findings of the research are not tested to discover whether they are statistically significant or because of chance (Atieno, 2009).

#### 1.8. Organization of the Study

This study has six chapters of which are arranged in the following way:

The first chapter comprises introduction, background of the study, problem statement, study objective, research questions, operational definition; study limitation, research significance, delimitation of the study and conceptual framework;

The second chapter consists of meaning and concept of community, definition and theories of perception, community perception, protection of children under legal instruments, concept of street children and social exclusion;

Chapter three comprises research design, philosophical stance, research approach, research method, background of study site, research participants, selection criteria, sampling method, sample size, data collection procedure and instruments, trustworthiness and triangulation, data analysis and ethical consideration;

Chapter four contains presentation of the results and findings;

The chapter five encompasses interpretation, discussion and analysis;

Chapter six includes conclusion, recommendation, implication and future research direction;

### 1.9. Operational Definition of Terms

Community-is a collection of people who live in a contiguous or particular area which interact among people with common social, economic, political and other interests regardless of residency.

Community-the term community in this study refers to employees of women, youth and children as well as labour and social affairs from *wereda* ten, police, health employees, policy initiators from MoWCYA, religious leaders, taxi drivers, shopkeepers, high school students and teachers, employees of NGO and households that helps to identify perceptions of the community towards street children in Piazza area;

Children-those who are recognized and defined under the international legal instruments of the United Nations on the CRC younger than the age of 18;

School children-in this study school children includes between the age range of 14 and 18.

### 1.10. Conceptual Framework

#### 1.10.1. Implicit Personality Theory

Many scholars explored the concept of impression formation. On this part, Solomon Asch was one of the first psychologists who provided a substantial amount of the initial data explaining factors that affect impression formation which made his research, dating back to the mid of 1940s (Schneider, 1973). According to the implicit personality theory (hereafter, IPT), community pays attention to variety of cues including visual, auditory and verbal sign to predict and understand the personality of others. The IPT portrays that the specific patterns and biased

judgment of individuals used when forming impressions based on a limited amount of initial information about unfamiliar person (Pedersen, 1965). IPT is commonly associated with social perception because it identifies the biases we show based on the limited information we know about different people. As discussed in the literature section, social perception refers to the initial stages that people process information to determine another individual's mind set and intentions.

When there are context dependent parts of impression formation processes, communities tend to exhibit certain tendencies in forming impressions across different situations. There are components of IPT found within individuals or groups of similar society. These components are of particular interest to social psychologists as they have the potential to give insight into what impression one person will form of another (Srivastava, Guglielmo & Beer, 2010). This theory contains two groups of that the central (primary) and peripheral (secondary) traits. The former is termed as highly influential traits which have a strong effect on the overall impression of individuals like on street children. The peripheral traits are those less influential and produced smaller effects on the overall impressions. Thus, IPT helps to explain social perception through the use of central and peripheral personality. It also helps people to socially perceive others by generating broader outlook on their behavior using these traits. These in turn use to categorize people to predict their behaviors as a good or bad (Asch, 1946).

#### 1.10.1.1. Automaticity

Unlike controlled process, automatic processes are mental life activities that believed to occur outside of awareness mainly involuntary, unintentional and effortless manner. Even though uncontrollable in theory, it turns out that most automatic operations are controllable in practice,

in the sense that an observation of daily experience confirms on a regular basis. It has remarked, 'automatic reactions can be modulated by attention and intention; they can be inhibited and suppressed; and they can be coherent and planful' (Macrae & Bodenhausen, 2001, p.245). The implicit or implied is one of the most essential characteristics of IPT. In this context, implicit is meant automatic. It is a common belief that most of the process of social favoritism is automated. The social bias is prejudicial perceptions towards particular group of communities, races or religions that include the conscious or unconscious expressions (Bargh & Chartrand, 1999). In terms of impression formation, it means an observer may perceive another person's behavior positively or negatively and automatically make trait conclusions from that behavior without aware that these inferences are being made (Winter & Uleman, 1984).

#### 1.10.1.2. The Halo Effect and Logical Error Fallacy

Even if there are virtues to utilize IPT while forming impressions, there is some danger to rely intensely on these theories. This is because one of the most common misuses of IPT is when observers believe two traits are more highly correlated than they are in reality (Murphy & Jako, 1989, p. 4). This fallacy includes the halo effect and logical error. The halo effect elucidates that the propensity of perceivers to form a generally favorable, unfavorable or average impression of ~~specific person on the basis of single characteristic and to allow that general impression to have~~ an exaggerated effect on their judgments of that person along other trait dimensions (Murphy & Jako, 1989, p. 4). When an observer considers attractiveness as favorable trait, and then assumes that a very attractive person whom he meets is also extremely friendly or helpful because these traits are also favorable.

On the other hand, a logical error fallacy is made when perceivers make judgments about trait relationships based on correlations they believe make sense logically, instead of forming these connections based on observations of real life trait relationships. It is misperceived of the reality. An example of the logical error would be assuming that a person who is physically strong and muscular is also athletic. Although this trait relationship makes logical sense, it is without observations to back it up, assuming this relationship would be making the logical error. This is also true for street children perceived them as harmful and threat in the absence of real situations. (Balzer, and Sulsky, 1992, p. 4).

#### 1.10.1.3. Attribution Theory

In 1950s, researchers have tried to understand and explain why people do what they do. This theory has been first introduced by Fritz Heider in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (1958) as naive psychology that helps to explain the behaviors of others by describing ways in which people make casual explanations or judgments for their actions. Afterward it was developed by Harold Kelley (1967) and Bernard Weiner. A large component of social perception is attribution. Albeit this theory suggests that people rationally consider the causes of others' behaviour, they do not always process information gathered by observation about others like on street children in a logical fashion. People make attributions to understand the world around them in order to seek reasons for a particular individual's behavior. When people make attributions they are able to make judgments as to what was the cause of certain behaviors. Consequently, it deals with how the social perceiver uses information to explain events (Feldman, 1996).

In fact, studies show there tend to be consistent biases in the way attributions are made. The attribution and stereotyping processes are making inferences about the personality, attitudes, intentions and moral status of others in which attribution focused on behaviour and stereotyping on group membership. One of the most typical errs in the public attributions is the fundamental attribution error (hereinafter, FAE). It is also called correspondence bias. This means the original explanation for actor's behavior is misidentified which observers overestimate the importance of traits and underestimate the importance of situations. Thus, FAE is the tendency to over attribute others behaviour on the basis of dispositions, whereas there is corresponding failure to recognize the importance of situational factors (Rathus, 1993). We inclined to be exaggerate the worth of personality/internal traits (dispositional) in producing others behaviour and minimizing the influence of environment/external (situational factors) (Feldman, 1996). In general, people see other people only in a small set of situations, but it is merely when you see them in many settings the factual variability in their behaviour becomes apparent. More generally, FAE may lead communities to blame the victims of unfortunate conditions. For example, unemployed workers are sometimes seen as lazy as well as homeless people or street children in particular are viewed as irresponsible, trouble maker or awful; and when women who are raped are sometimes accused of having been seductive (Feldman, 1996, p. 616).

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#### 1.10.2. Perceptual Ambivalence

Ambivalence is a dominant theme in theorizing about racial, ethnic and gender or other related prejudice issues of like on street children. Holding ambivalent perceptions show to affect judgments and behavior in a deep manner. It is argued that ambivalence shrinks the confidence of community in their perceptions toward behaviors involving the attitude object and suggested

that ambivalent attitudes are associated with more systematic information processing. As a result, foresee intentions are better than non ambivalent perceptions. However, communities may perceive others personality traits on the basis of ambivalence. In a broad sense, ambivalence reflects the coexistence of positive and negative dispositions towards an entity. This can result from simultaneous accessible conflicting beliefs within the cognitive component or from conflict between cognition and affect (Ajzen, 2001, pp.39-40).

### 1.10.3. Perceptual Set

The notion of perceptual set is vital to the active process of perception. This is defined as perceptual bias or readiness to interpret stimuli in a specific way on the basis of expectations, experience and psychological state. It is predisposition to perceive some aspects of the available sensory data and ignore others (Bootzin, Bower & Crocker, 1991, p. 124).

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.1. Meaning and Concept of the Community

A community can be described in many myriads. The word community is first defined by Aristotle as a group of people established by men having common values (Boyles, 1996). This initial definition has been refined and expanded through the years. To recognize the people can belong to a number of different communities such as communities of place, cultural communities and communities of memory in which people who may be strangers shared “a morally significant history”, and psychological communities “of face to face personal interaction governed by sentiments of trust, co-operation and altruism” (Boyles, 1996, p. 1). The concept of community does not have a universally accepted definition. But most scholars agreed on its meaning that geographically bounded physical place with people living together and meeting their livelihood that comprises a group of populations coexist in space and time including social interactions directly or indirectly (Phillips & Pittman, 2009). Communities are combination of social units and systems which perform the major social functions and the organization of social activities. Therefore, they interact among themselves with common interests who live in a contiguous area that includes a collection of people with common social, economic, political and other interests regardless of residency (Phillips & Pittman, 2009).

When community is described through physical location (communities of place), it has precise boundaries that are readily understood and accepted by others. But defining communities in terms of geography is only one way of looking at them. The communities can also be defined by common cultural heritage, tradition, language, beliefs and joint interests or as a collection of

individuals with common interests and ties whether in close propinquity or widely separated. These are sometimes called communities of interests. Community refers to the focus of interest. Community of interest implies more than just a physical place even though it can and often does include a geographic element. However, it specifies various collection of persons about which a common interests are shared. These communities made up of diverse perspectives surrounding a common issue (Phillips & Pittman, 2009).

Notwithstanding community refers to geographical location, it does not always include everyone within the confined area. For instance, many aboriginal communities are part of a larger non-aboriginal geographic community. In larger urban centers, communities are often defined in terms of particular neighborhoods. Thus, an individual can be part of neighborhood community, religious community and community of shared interests all at the same time. Hence, relationships whether with people or the land, define a community for each individual. That is, people who live within a geographically defined area and who have social and psychological ties with each other as well as with the place where they live in (Phillips and Pittman, 2009). In general, community is defined in two broad social science perspectives.

#### 2.1.1. Structural Perspective of Community

Under this theory, community is defined in terms of the spatial, geographic and political identities. It views the community as a structure such as city, village or neighborhood that carries out the political or social functions and mediates between individuals and other social structures (Miley, O' Melia and DuBois, 1998, p. 373).

### 2.1.2. Socio-Psychological Perspective of Community

In this respect, community is expounded as a network of social bonds, emphasizing the degree of member (individuals) belongingness. According to this view, it focuses how people interacting or relating to one another and the sense of belongings defines community rather than the place and function (Miley et al, 1998, p. 373).

## 2.2. Community Perception

### 2.2.1. Perception

There is a perplexity between the terms of sensation and perception to draw a clear line. The psychologists and philosophers have argued for years over the distinction. Despite some scholars consider the terms sensation and perception to be synonymous, more traditionally, they are viewed as a continuum from the simpler sensations to the more complex perceptions, without clear demarcation point separating the two. Because of this, the distinction between sensation and perception has blurred over the years. But they are designed as distinct from one another (Dworetzky, 1994).

Distinguished by psychologists, sensations are considered to be activation/stimulation of sensory receptors and the transmission of sensory information to the central nervous system (the spinal cord or brain) by patterns of physical energy such things as pure tones or lights (the initial message from the senses), and what the brain made or constructing of these sensations into a meaningful mental representation of the world is perceptions. Thus, sensation refers to the earlier stages of processing, whereas the term perception connotes to the latter stages, in which the results of the earlier process are brought together to form more complexly processed experiences

and through which from the senses are given meaning (Dworetzky, 1994). Perception is actually part of the continuum of information processing by the central nervous system. The continuum begins with sensations, which blends into perception, which blends into attention, which blends into working memory, which blends into thought. Therefore, it is often difficult to define the precise point at which one process leaves off and the next begins (Bootzin et al, 1991, p. 118).

However, it can be defined as sorting out, interpretation, analysis, and ability to recognize or in some way make sense of that input and integration of stimuli from human sensory organs. Perception is directed at finding out how people take stimuli and form conscious representations of the environment (Feldman, 1990). In this view, sensations are interpreted to produce mental information of the original stimuli or objects and events; using knowledge and understanding of the world and they become meaningful experiences of reality. Perception is not a passive process of simply absorbing and decoding incoming sensations but rather an active process through which human being can make sense of sensory stimulation. But perceptual interpretations of the environment are sometimes mistaken or illusory (Bernstein, Clarke-Stewart, Roy, Srull and Wickens, 1994).

As discussed earlier, perception is an outgrowth of sensation which sometimes difficult to differentiate them. The primary difference is that sensation can be thought of as an organism's first encounter with a raw sensory stimulus, while perception is the process by which it is interpreted, analyzed and integrated with other sensory information (Feldman, 1990, p. 127). Human brain continually interprets information from own senses and permits to make response appropriate to the environment. On this part, perception is explicated as the way of thinking of the various people in their life; therefore, is hold different attitudes toward individuals. This can

be ranged from highly positive to an extremely negative perception of the people like on street children (Feldman, 1990, p. 127).

Consequently, perception reflects the needs, expectations, attitudes, values and beliefs of the perceiver. Subjective perception can nurture the personal vision on others. For this reason, human behavior can be pro and anti-social, which individuals possess their perceptions depends on. The former is dealt with any behavior that has a positive impact on other people. On the other hand, anti-social is any behavior of tending to have negative impact on other people emanating from the public perceptions (Coon and Mitterer, 2010). The social psychology is very important to define social perception in particular and social cognition in general.

### 2.2.2. Social Perception (Cognition)

Allen and Santrock (1993) illuminated that:

*A social perception is our judgment about the qualities of individuals, which involves how we form impressions of others, how we gain self-knowledge from our perception of others, and how we present ourselves to others to influence their perceptions of us (p. 495).*

The social perception as part of perception allows people to understand the other people in their social world. In other words, it is the study of how people form impressions of and make inferences about other group of people. For instance, we learn about other's feeling and emotion by picking up on information we acquire from their physical appearance, verbal and nonverbal communications such as facial expressions, hand gestures, tone of voice and body position. An important term to comprehend about social perception is attribution. Moreover, social perception

is shaped by individual's motivation at the time, their emotions and cognitive load capacity. All of these combined determines how people attribute certain traits and how those traits are interpreted. This sort of perception is defined as a social cognition which is the ability of brain to store and process information. As a result, individuals make judgments and impressions about other people. Social perception is mainly based on observation although pre-existing knowledge influences how we perceive that observation (Allen and Santrock, 1993). More importantly, Bootzin et al (1991) has been defining social cognition in this manner:

*A social cognition refers to the way we think reason about ourselves, about other people, about relations between people, and about the various groups to which we and other people belong. When we deal directly with other individuals, we try to discover their intentions, attitudes, beliefs, abilities, preferences, personality characteristics, and the like. When we deal with social events and situations-with larger groups, with communities, or with national and international relations-we try to understand the conflicts, alliances, commitments, loyalties, values, rules, norms, expectations, and indeed all the social and cultural forces that may control behavior (p. 639).*

### 2.3. Theories of Perception

The human being is equipped with sense organs in order to receive information from the environment. Each sense organ is part of sensory system which receives sensory inputs and transmits sensory information to the brain. A major theoretical issue on which psychologists argued is the extent to which perception relies directly on the information present in the stimulus. Because some argue that perceptual processes are not direct but rather depend on the perceiver's

expectations and previous knowledge as well as the information available in the stimulus itself. This controversy is discussed among psychologists like Gibson (1966) who has proposed a direct theory of perception, while Gregory (1977) proposed constructivist theory of perception. Even if psychologists agree on the complexity human perceptual work and on many of the principles that govern perception, there are some disagreements about where and when this work takes place.

### 2.3.1. Ecological View of Perception (Bottom-Up Process or Direct Theory of Perception)

Here, it is argued that most of the time what is perceived is already present in the array of stimulation that the environment provides. According to this theory (founded by psychologist James J. Gibson), the primary goal of perception is to support actions, like walking, by “tuning in” to the part of the stimulus array that is most important for performing the tasks at hand. When we observe the behavior of others, we focus excessively on their actions and too little on the contexts within which their actions take place. Therefore, it focus on what the perceptual system does correctly, often automatically, rather than on the ways in which it fails (Bernstein et al, 1994, p. 176).

### 2.3.2. Constructionist View of Perception (Top-Down Process or Indirect Theory of Perception)

In this notion it argued that the perceptual system must often construct an image of reality from fragments of sensory information, much as a paleontologist constructs an entire dinosaur from a few bits of bone. On this part, it is possible to predict what people will perceive because perceptual processes do not build reality randomly. The constructional idea is influenced by past experiences and knowledge, which builds up expectations what people, will see or hear. When individuals look at an object, their experience leads them to make hypotheses and assumptions

about what they sense (see, hear, touch and taste). These expectations make perception easier, particularly when sensory evidence is weak or ambiguous like by interpreting indistinct sounds or distinguishing words, relying on their context. In this regard, constructionists argued that most aspects of perception involve inferences about reality on the basis of the available sensory information. Hence, many constructionist psychologists are less concerned about how perception supports action than about how perception supports people's understanding of the world (Bernstein et al, 1994, pp. 176-177).

### 2.3.3. Computational View of Perception

This is a recently emerged approach of perception. It focuses on how perception occurs and tries to explain how computations by the nervous system might turn raw sensory stimulation into an experience of reality. Unlike the ecological view, this new approach assumes that the nervous system creates reality by altering incoming stimuli. Further unlike the constructionist view, the computational approach places a relatively greater emphasis on how the perceptual system will compute the expectancy of a given perceptual category; given the number of times that category has been experienced in the past (Bernstein et al, 1994, p. 177). This approach relies partly on research in the neurophysiology-a research that is identifying structures and mechanisms in the nervous system that analyze basic features of the perceptual scene. It also depends on computer models capable of making the computations that, according to the computational view, are like those carried out by the human brain (Bernstein et al, 1994, p.178). Generally, perception in the ecological view emphasizes the information provided by environment itself, the constructionist perspective focuses how people make inferences about that environment, and the computational view emphasizes on how the nervous system manipulates signals (Bernstein et al, 1994, p.178).

#### 2.4. Conceptualizing and Representing Street Children

Even if some common definitions are used for the street children, it is an ongoing debate among scholars, researchers and international organizations. Looking at the center of research on the phenomenon of street children is controversial to have an accepted and common definition to them. For this reason, there is difference in the attempt to provide all encompassing meaning and typology. The issue of measurability and accessibility, the elements of time and space, and the idea that research individuals are active agents in the construction of social reality have made researchers hesitant to accept anyone particular definition for street children as universal (Ennew and Swart-Kruger, 2003). Compared to other categories of children who might be identified by their physical and mental abilities, street children cannot be described by precise criteria.

The street children are generic term that denotes young people with a special relationship to the street, their families and the community at large (Baron, 1997). The term street children are commonly used in Africa and South-America, whereas in Europe, North-America and Australia, the terms homeless children, runaways, throwaways and push-outs are more common utilized (Le Roux & Smith, 1998). As cited in Benitez (2011), the UNICEF has defined street children in this way:

*Any girl or boy for whom the street in the widest 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 (p.7).*

For Corsaro and Johannesen (2007) children actively make contributions to culture and cultural change but do not merely internalize society. The word street children are a repository of various typologies. UNICEF defines three types of street children: children "at" risk, children "on" the street and children "of" the streets. Children at risk live in families but work on the streets to supplement the family income. They are poor children with particular risk factors such as poverty and lack of schooling that may lead to their expulsion from the home and spending their life on the street. This is the largest group of urban poor children and they form the reservoir from which street children spring (UNICEF, 1984; cited in Lalor, 1999, pp.1-2).

Children on the street work on the street during the day and return home at night time. Their jobs often consists of menial labor like shoe shining, selling of confectionery, lottery tickets, magazines and news papers, carrying goods and peddling cigarettes, and so on. A significant number of children attend school on a part time basis (Lalor, 1999). And they sometimes have some family support but usually they live, sleep and work on the street with no any family assist. Children of the streets have very limited family contact and remote family ties. The main abode place of the children is the street. A subgroup of this category is 'abandoned street children', who have no contact with their parents and carers that includes orphans, runaway refugees and others. In case of lifestyle and daily activities, abandoned street children are very similar to children of the street. They are distinguishable, in that, all ties with family have been severed, either through death, displacement, or abandonment. This affects street children their living and working conditions (UNICEF, 1984; cited in Lalor, 1999).

Further, an author maintains that street children in Africa are the victims of short-sighted policies lack of policies "they are victims of an uncaring community that is increasingly being

characterized by poverty, breakdown of family life, violence and economic hardships” (Kopoka, 2000, p.8). Orme and Seipel (2007) found that typically, children end up in the streets owing to the death of their parents, poverty, mental and sexual abuse, violence at home, negligence by parents or community, divorce of family (family reasons), searching for job, economic problems, rural-urban migration, displacement and to obtain freedom. The reasons for going to street are thus due to push and pull factors. Like in other parts of the world, the problem of street children is not exceptional in Ethiopia. Therefore, a research conducted in Addis Ababa shows, the major social troubles of streetism are noticed in urban areas of the country (Heinonen, 2000).

It is explicated that neither street children nor their behaviors should be seen as deviant without critical evaluation because uncritical conclusion can engender stigmatization, exclusion and the formation of community policies that provide no benefits to street children (Orme and Seipel, 2007). Moreover, Tipple and Speak (2009) found that people living on the streets are perceived and secluded by the wider society as villains, beggars, immoral, transients, non-citizens and loners. In different ways, street children are denied their rights such as personal security, political representation and their disadvantages conflict with the principles of equality for opportunity and the rule of law. They are remained to be among the homeless, the vagrants, the informal street traders and the chronically unemployed. Thus, street children are viewed as socially excluded population (Pehlivanli, 2008).

These street children require substantial protection beyond what their families can offer. This is because they can have respective troubles that need to be addressed above all. The problem of poverty due to socio-economic stagnation, poor governance, environmental degradation coupled with rapid urbanization, drought and famine, armed conflict, destabilization

of families, have left tens of thousands of children without physical and emotional care living in extreme difficult environment in poverty-stricken homes, on the streets and institutions (Kibrom Berhe, 2008).

#### 2.4.1. Concept of Social Exclusion and Street Children

The social exclusion theory provides a valuable framework within which to examine the situation of street children in line with the community perception because it has exemplified by substantial and diverse community psychological works on homeless people. This works include typologies of homelessness, accounts from the homeless, access to services, community attitudes to homelessness, mental health, paths to, through and from homelessness, policy analyses and social support (Kagan and Burton, 2005). Theoretically, social exclusion is a wider concept than poverty, encompassing both low material means and the inability to participate effectively in economic, social, political and cultural life and in some characterizations alienation and distance from mainstream society (Duffy, 1995; cited in Muddiman, n.d).

Social exclusion implies the limited/inequitable opportunities of individuals to participate in basic political decision making, gain access to meaningful livelihood and social services due to discriminatory institutional practices in political, economic, social spheres based on gender, ethnicity, geographical location, age, income/health status, educational attainment and disability. However, the concept of social exclusion is multidimensional in nature as it does not only relate to the lack of material resources, which focuses issues on inadequate social participation, lack of cultural and educational capital, inadequate access to services and lack of power. It shows that social exclusion is associated with the lack of capacity of the excluded groups to act on their own

behalf. Thus, the social exclusion framework captures multi-dimensionality drivers of exclusion; both material and relational dimensions (Duffy, 1995; cited in Muddiman, n.d).

According to the United Nations Development Program (hereafter, UNDP), some of the key material drivers of social exclusion are insecure livelihoods, rural/urban disparities, income poverty and resource degradation. The relational dimension includes discrimination (cultural norms, gender, age, disability, health status etc.), low political capital and access to information. Yet it is the relational dimension or social relations perspective rather than the commonly held view about poverty as a cause of exclusion that emerged from the survey (UNDP, 2007). Besides, manifestations of the social exclusion in a society are deprivation, isolation, marginalization, stigmatization, poverty, vulnerability, weak coping mechanisms, lack of status and recognition. The list of manifestations of social exclusion focuses much on issues of rights and discrimination and reflects processes by which street children fall out of the mainstream of society (UNDP, 2007).

It is stated that at the core of exclusion is the marginalization from fulfilling and full social life at the individual, interpersonal and societal levels. They contend that individuals who are marginalized have relatively little control over their lives and the resources at their disposal; they may become stigmatized and are usually at the receiving end of negative community attitudes like on street children (Kagan and Burton, 2005, p.296). Their chances to make social contributions may be limited and they may develop low self-confidence and self-esteem. For instance, if street children do not have work and live with service supports, they may have limited opportunities for meeting with others and can be isolated. Hence, a vicious circle is established whereby their lack of positive and supportive relationships means street children are

prevented from participating in local life which in turn leads to seclusion (Kagan and Burton, 2005). The suggestion using theory is to serve as a lens for finding answers to the research question and providing broad explanations (Creswell, 2009; cited in Quarshie, 2011).

## 2.5. Protection of Children under Legal Instruments

The notion of children's rights was first formally recognized in 1924 when the League of Nations published Declaration on the Rights of the Child (hereafter, DRC). Afterward, in 1948, and in 1959, the UN released separate versions of their DRC. These early declarations were considered "statements of moral and ethical intent" and were not legally binding instruments (Campbell, 2004, p.55). However, the rights of children are entrenched and guaranteed in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (hereinafter, CRC) under the UN declaration. It was therefore during the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 (hereafter UNDHHR), that the rights of the children have been given more due emphasis and special care to protection in which international community was collectively agreed. In principle, all children without any color, language, national or social origin, are protected their rights from any harm and abuse against them under the international human rights instruments (UNNGLS, 2008)

As intimated supra, the UN has adopted the international instruments for human rights. Accordingly, it recognized the rights to protection of children in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) of 1976, in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights( ICESCR) of 1976, in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) of 1969, in the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment/Punishment, and particularly the CRC of 1990

(UNNGLS, 2008, p. 4). The CRC provides the legal and social rights of children and stipulated under Article(12(1 & 2)). This is expounded in the following manner by the CRC (1990):

*States parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceeding affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national (p.301).*

Regarding to this Convention, a child should not be abused and exploited. It is endorsed in article (3(1)), and portrayed that all actions undertaken concerning children should be kept as primary consideration. Thus, every action which would be taken on behalf of the child has to be respected the best interests of the child (CRC, 1990). It is therefore a guarantee for the rights of children to be obtaining the accessibility of education, health services and other assistance. To protect children, the preamble of CRC elucidates “every child should grow up in a family environment in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding”. More important, as provided per article (3 & 9) of the Convention, “every child has a right not to be separated from parents unless it is in their best interests” (CRC, 1990). With regard to social policy and development of children, Allen and Santrock (1993) elucidated in this way:

*Social policy is a national government’s course of action designed to influence the welfare of its citizens. When more than 25 percent of all children*

*and more than half of all ethnic minority children are being raised in poverty, when between 40 and 50 percent of all children born in a particular era can expect to spend at least 5 years in a single parent home, when children and young adolescents are giving birth, and when the spectre and spread of AIDS are present, our nation, needs revised social policy related to children (p.217).*

Social policies and practices may denote they have relatively limited access to valued social resources such as education and health services, housing, income, leisure activities and work. Generally, street children (or all homeless) suffer from three dimension of marginalization: poverty/economic dislocation, disempowerment/social dislocation and psychosocial-ideological threats (Kagan and Burton, 2005). Campbell and Williams (2007) explained that street children are marginalized and rejected by virtually all sections of the urban community and are relegated, that inevitably, to the position of social reject. Tipple and Speak (2004) found that these negative attributions and ill-informed perceptions of the society about street children are self-reinforcing and serve to keep homeless children, which the people excluded from the society and that tend to affect how those children are treated by the community.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODS

#### 3.1. Philosophical Stance

The qualitative research is grounded in constructivist philosophical position. It concerned with which complexities of the socio-cultural world are experienced, interpreted, and understood in a particular context. Unlike the quantitative philosophical approach which relies on positivist paradigm, it makes sense that the qualitative paradigm aims to the nature of multiple realities comprising diverse perspectives of participants (Payne & Payne, 2004). Hence, this research is designed on the basis of methodological assumptions of which the researcher believed on the constructivist viewpoint of qualitative approach with respect to multiple respondents; and on the philosophical assumptions of that reality is subjective.

#### 3.2. Research Approach

This research focuses on a qualitative descriptive approach. It has specified issues of community perception on street children. The very nature of this research requires more of qualitative one to identify community perceptions. It is justified that qualitative research explores perceptions, attitudes, behavior and experiences of individuals through the techniques of in-depth interviews and focus groups (Dawson, 2002). Qualitative study also seeks to answer questions framed with 'what' and 'how' of a given phenomenon. Therefore, if the focus of study is to understand how a community or individuals within it perceive a particular problem such as on street children, then qualitative approaches are often appropriate (Brikci & Green, 2007, pp. 4-5).

### 3.3. Research Method

The study has employed a descriptive qualitative method. A qualitative research method is characterized by its aims that relate to understanding some aspect of social life, covering the contextual conditions, experiences, community perceptions and its method in general produce words rather than numbers for data analysis (Brikci & Green, 2007).

### 3.4. Background of the Study Site

In order to conduct this study, the researcher has visited the field setting prior prearranged questions and scheduled plans. Established during the reign of Emperor Menelik II (1886), Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia, is the largest country located almost at the geographical center of national territory (AACAILIC, 2006 E.C., pp. 6-7). It is the seat of national government and different international organizations and embassies, which covers an area size of 51948.85 hectare, and estimates a total population of 2, 738, 248 persons, of which comprise 1,304, 518 men and 1,433,730 women. This is about 60 percent of the total urban population of Ethiopia with the growth rate of 3.7 percent (AACAILIC, 2006 E.C., pp. 6-7). The AA, one of the largest urban centers in sub-Saharan African States, is built on the steep escarpment of mountain Entoto in the north 2900 and south with an average altitude of 2400 meters above sea level. Geographically, AA is located between  $8^{\circ} 49' 55.929''$  and  $9^{\circ} 5' 53.853''$  North latitude and  $38^{\circ} 38' 16.555''$  and  $38^{\circ} 54' 19.547''$  East longitudes (AACAILIC, 2006 E.C., p. 7).

The administrative divisions of AA city has been changed and restructured into ten *Kifle ketema*-literary meaning the 'town divisions' or sub-city administrations and the number of *kebele* is reduced from 305 to 116 *weredas/kebele* in 2003 (AACAILIC, 2006 E.C., p. 6). Arada

sub-city or Arada is mentioned the name with AA regarding historical foundation. Historically, Arada is chosen as the place to be the seat of Emperor Menelik and Empress Taitu Butil, and diverse modern institutions and building monuments were established. Arada, famous and big-market place, is situated at the nucleus of AA city. It is the place of meeting where the Ethiopian people from different groups of community. Currently, different institutions/buildings are built and Arada is one of the ten sub-cities of AA where the seat of federal government of Ethiopia and city government of AA found therein. Thus, Arada sub-city has many land marks/villages such as Dero manekya, Eri bekentu, Dejach Wubie, Abakoran, Bashawolde, Gedam sefer and Talian sefer etc (AACAILIC, 2006 E.C., pp. 21-23).

The topography of Arada sub-city is the altitude ranged from 2343 to 2545 meters above sea level. It covers the land area of 949.86 hectares. Following the census of 2007 E.C, the total population of Arada sub-city is 211,501, of 99,165 male, whereas 112,336 are female. Thus, females comprise fifty three percent and males forty seven percent of the total population as well as the land area of this sub city is 950 hectare (AACAILIC, PP. 30-31). And there are more than 32 NGOs (AACAILIC, 2006 E.C.). In AA, the age structure of the population covers about 32 percent of children below the age of 15 and very small about eight percent of old age people above 64 years. The proportion of the population aged 15-64 is usually high and constituted about two-third of the total population. This could be partly owing to high in-migration of population in the working age group (AACAILIC, 2006 E.C., p. 14). The study site was selected due to the reason that the researcher has known the area that there are many street children and homeless people. On this part, there were 220 street children of which, 113 are male, and 107 female (Communication affairs of the *wereda* ten, 2007 E.C.).

### 3.5. Research Participants

The target research population was community of piazza area selected based on judgment sampling. This research has incorporated selected participants from the multiple respondents. On this part, the eligible research respondents were police, employees of NGO, policy initiators from MoWCYA, health employees, employees of women, children and youth as well as LSAWT, taxi drivers, shopkeepers, households, high school students and teachers and religious leaders/priests.

### 3.6. Trustworthiness and Triangulation

The objective for building trustworthiness and credibility is that qualitative research be done in a publicly manner. In Qualitative research, trustworthiness should be taken into account to ensure quality and transparency of the study. In establishing trustworthiness of findings from the qualitative research the researcher has utilized credibility, transferability; dependability and confirmability (Yin, 2011).

As a qualitative case study, the researcher concerned to employ various methods, which will help to reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation. Triangulation is considered as a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning. It is a means of corroboration that allows the researcher to be more confident of the study conclusions. In this regard, multiple methods of data collection to achieve the objective of study are vital to obtain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study. In qualitative research, triangulation pertains to the goal of seeking at least different ways of verifying a particular event, description, or fact being reported by a study. Such corroboration serves as another way of strengthening validity of the study. In collecting data, the ideal triangulation would not only seek confirmation various sources but also would try

to find different kinds of sources from the participants (Payne & Payne, 2004). Hence, in order to validate the quality of data or study, the researcher tried to avoid biased judgments by utilizing different participants.

### 3.7. Selection Criteria of Participants

Regarding to inclusion criteria, it was made based on the research objectives and problem under study. Accordingly, the selection criteria for police, policy initiators, employees of women, children and youth, health employees, religious leaders/priests, workers from the labour and social affair was relating to the critical case sampling. The researcher can choose cases who believed to be especially important due to the position they hold such as due to their particular place within an organization or because they are particularly well able to articulate their views in the given issues (Hancock, Windridge & Ockleford, 2007, p. 22).

The taxi drivers have more revelation and interactions with street children owing to the nature of their work often available on the street. The participant of teacher is assuming that they would be well able to realize and express their views between school and street children. This can help the researcher how street children are perceived and signify the difference in between. On the other hand, the communities feed street children. Their daily lives are often depending upon the society. So, the researcher has selected households in order to identify their perceptions about street children.

The reason that has included shopkeepers and school students are related to their social interactions. Compared to churches and other stations, street children are mainly found at market places. On this part, some of them scrounge off shopkeepers; serve as porters to the patrons of

those shopkeepers (Agarwal et al., 1997; cited in Quarshie, 2011, p.4). Some of the street children are also employed as vendors and sales assistants to shopkeepers for commission, and some are hired as laborers particularly teenage boys to convey goods from lorries to replenish booths of shopkeepers, and others are retailers whose activities are seen as business threat to shopkeepers. Moreover, some of the children sleep under the canopy sheds or in the open spaces at market cubicles (Beauchemin, 1999; cited in Quarshie, 2011, p.4-5). The shopkeepers can interact with and play key roles in the daily lives of street children. As a result, exploring of the shopkeepers perception on street children would bring to bear how they are perceived within the informal sector of society.

School children were selected between the age ranges of 14-18 from grade nine and ten by referring/checking their roster. To selecting students below the age of 18 are hitherto children going on through socialization. They grow to the mirror of world that they live in and our understanding of the 'flow of life' (Cunningham & Baker, 2007; cited in Quarshie, 2011). Students who share the same locality with street children are probably share recreation ground with them given the fact that rapidly growing number of street children (CAS, 2000; cited in Quarshie). Thus, students can interact with or have friends who are street children or have cohorts who have dropped out of the school and are now street children in the same locality (CAS, 1996; cited in Quarshie, 2011, p. 5). In this regard, identifying perceptions of the school students about street children will give better understanding as to how other children in the society perceive to street children. Moreover, the interviewees and focus group discussants of school children were selected between the age ranges of 21-73 and 14-18 years old respectively. Educational levels of the interviewees and FGD have been considered from grade nine-degree.

To authenticate the study, male and female participants were included. The interviewees were selected having the service year of (but not the FGD) above ten month to 30 years.

### 3.8. Sampling Method

The researcher has employed a non-probability sampling procedure in selecting the participants and study area in which street children and homeless people are highly concentrated. This sampling method is designed with respect to different sample respondents. The selected site is Arada sub-city with particular reference of piazza area; *wereda* ten.

### 3.9. Sampling Size

To increase or ensure validity of the findings, the researcher has chosen informants deliberately from a wide range of sources and compared findings from those different sources. The included total group of the community twelve; where the sample size of these participants is 35 for one-to-one interviews and FGD. The sample respondents were selected purposively from various institutions. Using different participants in qualitative research can help to have more holistic understanding of the situation of street children from the community perceptions. In a qualitative study, the researcher could know having an adequate sample size when it occurs the sampling frame is full and reached data saturation. As discussed in the in-depth interview section, for qualitative studies analyzed using constant comparative approaches data saturation will probably be reached after 20-60 interviews (Hancock, Ockleford & Windridge, 2009). In this research, data saturation was reached after the interviews made with the 35 respondents.

### 3.10. Data Collection Instruments

This study employed qualitative descriptive research method. A variety of combination of data collection tools is utilized. These instruments (primary sources) are personal observation, informal discussion, FGD and in-depth interview. And the secondary source of information is used like books. In order to identify the conditions of street children from the perceptions and experiences of the community multiple participants have been applied.

#### 3.10.1. Instrument Development

An interview guide was developed for the in depth interviews and FGD. The interview guide was designed to attempt to understand the perceptions of community about street children in Piazza area. The instruments were used interview guides, FGD guides, informal interview and personal observation in order to investigate more information from the research participants and respond to the research question. The instruments were first developed in English and then translated into the local language of Amharic. This enables the community to understand and respond all questions easily. Before the data collection has begun the interview and FGD guides were developed by the researcher. With the facilitation of *wereda* ten labour and social affair head (Tesfanesh Tilahun-pseudonym) respondents of the research were obtained as well as time and place was set to conduct the interview for data collection.

#### 3.10.2. Procedures of Adapting the Instrument

In this regard, subjects of the study were community of Piazza area on street children. When the interviews were conducted, the researcher made sure that the questions were appropriate to the participants. A various approach was developed when conducting the interview to obtain further information from the participants. This includes considering the

duration of interview that has been utilized the standard interviews of more than an hour and presenting questions in line with the topic of which the participants were familiar to discuss. Besides, all necessary efforts were made in order to conduct the interview easily such as it made more informal discussion with the participants. On this part, the items in the interview guideline were pre-tested and re-written based on the results of the pretest findings. In order to modify the questions, the pre-test interview has been conducted with two sample communities. Based on their response, unclear or vague and repeated questions were modified. Pseudonym of the participants, duration of time interview and place of interview are attached in the appendix. The major primary instruments or techniques used for data collection are listed hereunder:

#### 3.10.3. Direct Observation

In this research, observation was used as a check against what the community reported about street children. To explore perceptions of the community on street children, the researcher has observed support of the community through the prepared check list to the children in piazza where they are found more concentrated. The observation has been held at different places by sitting at café, restaurants and verandah. At the same time Behaviors, activities, their relationship or interactions of the children with one another and community was observed. All the necessary information and field notes were also recorded during the field observation.

#### 3.10.4. Interview of Informal Conversation

The researcher has made informal discussion with the diverse communities in order to identify their perceptions they have on street children. The mechanisms for informal interview was done by taking coffee at coffee houses, sitting at chat selling places and market areas.

### 3.10.5. Focus Group Discussion

According to the literature (Patton, 2002), FGD is an interview making talk with a small group of people on a specific topic or issue. The groups are typically 6 to 10 people with similar backgrounds who participate for one to two hours. This can help to obtain different information and increase confidence in a study. In this regard, the researcher has conducted one FGD with the school children where eight participants were involved. This method helps the researcher to gather the data; to capture the necessary information and reconciling by utilizing diverse methods of data collections. In FGD, the participants can talk about their feelings, opinions and experiences. Conducting FGD helps to confirming the views of interviewees.

### 3.10.6. In-Depth Interview

In-depth interviews may cover only one or two issues of which a topic guide may not be used, or may just have a few broad questions on it. This type of interview is used to explore in detail the participant's perceptions and accounts. This method is used on topics for which little is known and where it is important to gain an in-depth understanding (Brikci & Green, 2007, p.12). In this research, in-depth interview were made with two police, two taxi drivers, two shopkeepers, two from LSAWT, and two from women, children and youth, two policy initiators, two health employees, two religious leaders/priests, two households, two teachers, two NGO employees, eight school children in piazza area. Using this technique augments the profundity of information about the perception of community to street children. The face-to-face interview method of data collection is viable to understand the non-verbal feelings of the participants. These instruments are developed and prepared with respect to the research questions and

objectives of the study. The researcher has facilitated a comfortable environment both for the interviews and FGD to sustain the interests of participants. During the interview, the aim was to be as non-judgmental as possible, and not to lead the respondent to their particular answers.

### 3.10.7. Secondary Sources

The researcher has utilized different sources such as books, journal articles and legal instruments, inter alia. These sources were relevant published and unpublished materials.

### 3.11. Data Collection Procedure

All prior to doing my fieldwork, I have done the initial contact with the responsible staffs they worked with different institutions. As formal procedure, making site visit is a way of doing fieldwork. Using site visits as a fieldwork modus operandi is the ability to collect data from the field setting. The term fieldwork in most policy, organizational and evaluation studies refers to making site visits. In this situation the site visit directly connotes in a qualitative research portion of study. Even few specialists in other scientific disciplines recognize that they may perform site visits routinely. In doing site visit, collecting and analyzing data, it is actually doing qualitative research. Thus, the researcher has been visiting the study site and observing behavior of the community without predetermined questions and conducting an interview in which the individual is allowed to talk plainly about the topic in the absence of using specific questions (Yin, 2011, pp. 125-126). 3.12.

On this part, collecting data for qualitative study usually implies interacting with real-world situations and the participants in them. While making rapport to collect data, qualitative researchers need to consider how they are perceived by interviewees and the effects of personal

characteristics. The interviewees need to trust the researcher in the sense that showing your interest in them and what they have to say. During the data collection period, the researcher made rapport with the participants by introducing himself, displaying interests in their views, aims of the study and the interviews can stop at any time when the interviewee (s) feel uncomfortable (Payne & Payne, 2004).

In this qualitative data collection process, purposeful sampling is used so that individuals are selected because they have experienced the central phenomenon (Schostak, 2006). For the purpose to complete this thesis, the researcher has contacted individuals and received the information using email, through telephone, and contact employees of NGO (FHIDO), LSAWT, Arada sub-city health center, Yekatit 66 primary and secondary school, religious leaders/priest of St. George Church, MoWCYA and the police, and personal acquaintances that all facilitated to make contact with the participants for data collection. To collect the data snowball has been also used. For the successful completion of the interview process and FGD, a tape recorder device was used based on the participants' willingness.

### 3.12. Data Analysis and Interpretation

After the data was collected, it has been first translated from Amharic to English by the researcher. Afterward, it was transcribed and narrated. It has been summarized by using and categorizing the research concepts according to the main thematic issues. The themes have been brought together by a method known as the triangulation of content analysis. The data were also coded from the in-depth interviews and FGD transcript using coding categories where code categories were analyzed. Data organized was shown in that fashion and transcribed carefully

and coded for drawing conclusions and there were an analysis of interviews from the individual participants, as separate cases that considered the matter of cross case analysis. The researcher also prepared the data analysis by describing briefly each of the participants view, and by using direct quotes from the interviews. This is illustrated common theme as well as typical responses. Transcripts from the FGD were utilized primarily as a check for confirmation of the experiences of participants across the sample in which the researcher included in the study short pieces of writing of dialogue that demonstrate important points of consensus or disagreement. In order not to miss any information the audio tapes (original recording) were transcribed into verbatim written format.

### 3.13. Ethical Considerations

A comprehensive code of ethical standards, values and ethical principles should take into account which provides an element of validation to the profession of social work. These are relevant to any situations in which ethical judgment is guaranteed. Social workers should be aware of the impact on ethical decision making of their clients, participants, their own personal values, cultural, religious beliefs and practices. On this part, they must be aware of any conflicts between personal and professional values and deal with them responsibility. Thus, decisions and actions of social workers should be consistent with the spirit as well as the letter of the code In other words, ethical decision making in a given situation must apply the informed judgment of the individual social worker (NASW, 1996).

Accordingly, this study was conducted in accordance with the code of ethics regarding the perception of the community towards street children. Generally, the ethical requirements were pertained to scientific validity, welfare of the participants, and respect for the dignity of

participants. Thus, ethical norms for this study has been designed to respect human dignity, respect freedom as well as self determination of the participants, obtain informed consent, inform participants about the research purpose, and keep the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. Research participants were informed that they can refuse to participate, or withdraw in the middle of the interview and group discussion process. Besides, respondents were provided a written consent documents that give details about the research, responsibilities/duties of the researcher, the rights of respondents, and the use of the research results. Interviews and group discussions have conducted after ensuring that the participants understand the message and securing the signed consent form. The interview was made with the mutual agreement between the researcher and participants in the place where the participants choose comfortable for them.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS AND FINDINGS

#### 4.1. Demographic Profiles of the Research Participants

##### 4.1.1. Profiles of the Interviewed Community Groups

The research participants were asked about their name, age, sex, educational level, service year, position and the place where they work. In this regard, the sample population revealed not to use pseudonym. However, as shown under table 4.1, although the consent of all participants to use their actual name, the researcher has utilized pseudonym.

Table 4.1. Sample of the interviewees included in the Study Area

No.	Name of Participants	Age	Sex	Level of Education	Service	Work Place	Position
1	Masresha Atnafu	29	M	BED	6 years	Yekatit 66 primary and secondary school	Teacher
2	Meklit Million	27	F	Degree	5 years		
3	Saron Endris	25	F	Diploma	5 years	Arada sub-city administration health center (Arada health center)	Health extension profession
4	Tamrat Worku	28	M	Degree	2 years		medicine health administration control authority
5	Teka Sitotaw	25	M	Degree	1 year	Women, children and youth of <i>wereda</i> ten	Organizing and participation
6	Selam Melaku	29	F	Diploma	5 years		Supporting and care children officer
7	Zufan Assefa	34	F	Grade 10	8 years	FHIDO	Voluntary at FHIDO (NGOs)
8	Temesgen Seyum	21	M	Diploma (10+4)	4 years		
9	Yosef Mekonnen	73	M	Diploma (12+2)	30years	St. George Church of Arada sub-city	Welfare association manager
10	Abraham Mola	40	M	Grade 12, and TTI in TVET	25years		Assistance work coordinator
11	Senait Abay	26	F	Grade 10	3 years	Dero manekya	Self-employed
12	Getachew Fiseha	43	M	Diploma	14 Years	Bank	Security and guard
13	Ashebir Belay	30	M	TTI(10+1)	6 years	Piazza community policing police station	Piazza police station <i>wereda</i> 10 community policing coordinator
14	Hiwot Ayalew	28	F	Diploma	6 years	Jan Maida community policing police station	Jan Maida police station <i>wereda</i> 6 community policing coordinator
15	Mohammed Nassir	34	M	Grade10	6 years	Dero Manekya	Shopkeepers
16	Fitsum Kiros	24	M	Grade10	5 years		

17	Alula Moges	34	M	Grade12	9 years	Megenagna to Piazza (mostly)	Taxi drivers
18	Bereket Negussie	26	M	Grade 9	3 years		
19	Bezabih Sisay	45	M	Degree	26years	FDRE ministry of women, children and youth affairs	Program/project preparation and resource mobilization case team coordinator
20	Muluken Tadesse	50	M				
21	Endale Kebede	23	M	Degree	10 month	Labour and social affairs of <i>wereda</i> ten	Advocacy and community mobilization officer
22	Tesfanesh Tilahun	23	F	Degree	1 years		LSAWT office head

This table indicates that multiple participants were included. This in turn helps to triangulate the study from the different views of participants about their perception on street children. The youngest and eldest age, educational level, and service of the respondents are between twenty one and seventy three years, grade nine to degree and ten month to thirty years respectively. With this regard male and female participants were incorporated.

#### 4.1.2. Profiles of Focus Group Interviewees of School Children

As portrayed below both sex were included that may help to substantiate the study. Similar to the aforesaid; it is the pseudonym that the researcher utilized about the school children participants. All names that are employed in this research are alias.

Table 4.2. Age, Sex and Educational Status of the Group Interviews of School Children

No.	Name	Age	Sex	Level of Education
1	Solomon Degefa	18	M	Grade 9
2	Aster Dereje	14	F	Grade 9
3	Mekdes Asmelash	15	F	Grade 9
4	Remla Jemal	17	F	Grade 9
5	Seid Ibrahim	16	M	Grade 10
6	Elias Beyene	17	M	Grade 10
7	Bayush Daniel	17	F	Grade 10
8	Filmawit Alemayo	16	F	Grade 10

Table 4.2 showed that the school children were selected from grade nine and ten. Having checked school roster with the help of vice director Behailu, the researcher has chosen such students as sample respondents between 14 and 18 years of age. These are still children socializing with street children which in turn help to identify their perceptions.

#### 4.2. Community Perception on Street Children

During the fieldwork, the participants were asked about their perception towards street children in Piazza area. Accordingly, they have been elucidating their views hereunder.

##### 4.2.1. Street Children in the Eyes of Participants and Social Expulsion

The interviewees revealed that street children are creature just like any person. However, they could be described as beggar, snatcher, misbehavior and speak out dirty words/awful talking; the most addicted people with shisha, chat and cigarette where their livelihood is on the street doing nothing. They are living out of the family system and grow with non biological parents. Those children face lack of basic necessity, poor personal hygiene; involved in criminal activities, using psychoactive substances. Selam Melaku has explained: “before we have been

known in poverty and now if the condition of children living on the street is augmenting and not solved for prolonged change we will be described as the home of street children and homeless people.” Hence, the interviewees and FGD of school children have defined street children are those who do not learn or work but rather spend on stealing, gnawing and looting. They utilized street as home and led their life separated from their family and did not have fixed home to sleep. They are living and moving in their own way and thought.

Further, Street children are unable to get the love of their families which suffered and exposed to different problems. It is worrying largely in Piazza area. Nevertheless, most of the participants illuminated that even if street children might be defined in such a way this does not mean that we have had negative image on them. Accordingly, majority of the interviewees and FGD of the school children revealed they have perceived street children positively. As the respondents stated the environment they live matters and it is problem that leads on street and forced them to beg, use narcotic drug, steal and misbehave. Two interviewees had negative perceptions. One interviewee and two focus group discussants of school children have explained the perception they have on street children is moderate or balanced that is positive and negative. The reason for having negative perception was justified because of their ‘evil-activities’ and ‘very bad behavior.’

#### 4.2.2. Emotion and Behaviour

During the data collection period, the respondents were asked about their interaction with and sense of feeling on street children. Although most of the interviewees’ perception was positive and felt poignant, they confirmed that there are no more visiting, contact and interaction

with them. Street children sleep in chilly, rainy, and sunny weather and spend on the street without basic necessities and love of parents including brothers and sisters. They might or might not eat food per day. The interviewees also revealed there is time that feels grief-stricken (very sad) about street children. Those children are abused physically, sexually and psychologically in the streets and do not get supporter. Therefore, the interviewees corroborated that it is sorrowing when our brothers and as citizens found on the street. Therefore, they sought street children to return back with their family and wish to learn and become good citizens of the country. The group interviews of school children have confirmed the aforementioned points of all interviewees.

#### 4.2.3. Care and Support

The participants have treated and helped street children that are confirmed by most of the interviewees and FGD of school children. It is expounded street children are human and it is good to support them for the betterment of their life. They could be changed. Showing the route how they change can their life is really caring a generation from bad situations of streetism. As was reported, this should also function for elder people.

##### 4.2.3.1. Community Support

As the participants reported, street children have obtained assist for short time survival. For instance, they invited them like tea, lunch, dinner and give them food that is *frifari* or *bulie* from hotels and restaurants. They also give them cloth, shoe and small amount of money for provisions in the respective study area. This is one way of abet albeit it cannot bring long life change. But there was no as such well organized group of people to help street children more

than providing bread. It is individual and through religious groups that supported them. Behailu reported most of the time; street children were told to bring attitudinal change. In this sense, he stated they have been working on awareness creation of street children. While he was working at legetafo he advised children to leave street life. Sending to elshaday he made 47 street children and adult to have a job. Further, 17 street children were gathered for work at parking and paid 70 birr per month and save 30 percent. Yosef Mekonnen also illuminated “there were two street children whom I knew and employed at DSTV. Those street children were credible in their work and paid salary monthly. This indicated that the community helped them directly and indirectly.” In this respect, Tamrat Worku said that:

*When I met street children I approached and advised them at least to keep their moral, to work and help themselves, effort to go back home with their family and I assisted them what I have like my shoe, trouser, money for lunch or supper, cloth and others. As an individual I supported them in different ways and I feel happy because it gives me mental satisfaction while they obtain even little help from me.*

As noted supra, the interviewees expounded that the community has supported street children in different manner. Temesgen stated his assist and experience on street children:

*“I had friends of street children and helped them from what I have. I gave greetings saying that “hey are you peace.” In fact, although it is difficult that my families are not interested to be seen and walk with street children, as much as possible I have approached compassionately and treated them psychologically.” I was representative of youth in wereda ten and working*

*on the forum of Arada sub-city. During conference I called street children in order to participate and get money for any per diem per day. In addition, when they come to my tanker house at Dero manekya to buy chat I granted them with some discount.*

Tesfanesh has also portrayed that there were Community's organizational (*yehibreteseb aderejajet*). The members have been selected from the community; consisting of youth league, youth forum, community forum, members of *edir* and others. These were working representing the communities and contributed to street children in shared effort of the labour and social affair of *wereda ten* (hereafter, LSAWT). In this regard, priorities have been given for street children. Moreover, Filmawit (school children) said that there is welfare association known as *yekidane mihret mahber* which deals with vulnerable groups of community including street children. The communities come having various support like food, cloth, soap, bag, exercise book, pen and pencil. She has participated in this association and helped to those disadvantaged community. Explained its importance, the needy have been taught and given awareness in the program. However, the interviewees stated notwithstanding the community advised them to work to help themselves and to return back with their family, they do not hear and deemed as you are joking.

#### 4.2.3.2. Institutional Support

The interviewees have been asked about the role of institutions in helping and meeting demands of street children in Piazza area. On this part, the interviewees reported it is more concerned to the LSAWT even if it did not have designed plan. However, the LSAWT has worked and helped them directly and indirectly. It has also advised and done on awareness

creation of street children. With the joint of Arada sub-city, having prepared conferences and brochures, it would have sent them into Elshaday (defense engineering), Afar region (Amibara) for training in textile and mechanical. Of elshaday has covered the budget, blanket, bed sheet and clothing. And with the cooperation of police, employees of LSAWT have recruited and registered those children on the basis of their willingness and persuasion at night (3:00-9:00 local time) on the street.

Further, women, children and youth office of the *wereda* helped in various ways. For example, there was a street girl seventeen years old who was HIV positive and patient of lung and gave birth on the street. Having seen the problem of the girl, the women, children and youth has assisted her child. The babe was given to AA city of women, children and youth. Besides, a street boy was helped by the *wereda* in order to go back into Dire Dawa with his family. The Arada sub-city health center did not regularly support and no health intervention is made on the issues of street children. But, they are told to check tuberculosis, polio and other disease for free medical treatment. Hence, because of various risks, they are rarely obtained therapeutic cure there. FHIDO (NGO formerly called CCF) would not have any program to support street children. Regarding to St. George church in helping street children Yosef has explained that they are not disciplined in their talk, ethics and activities. Due to this behaviour, religious staffs of the church have been discussing street children should learn the “word of God”. Hence, he revealed that street children are helped mainly through the students of school of Sunday. These students collected money in the name of the Church and granted to them. This is referred to as welfare support. There was also “fund raising day” prepared by the church of which celebrated on

September one yearly. This is aimed at gathering people to help street children. On this celebration day, the community contributed money, bag, pencil, exercise book and cloth.

The church also supported them once a week every Sunday. In other words, children are raped particularly street girls during night so that while they give birth the church helped to their progeny. It has also reconstructed house of the mother street girls and boys. The police as institution has asked and examined how and why children are being on the street. It is reported that Piazza community policing police station did not give as such special support to them. But it has been working in collaborating with LSAWT and other concerned institutions and sector offices. For example, there was a discussion regarding to street children at the concert of cinema where Behailu have participated. Through collaboration of police, the labour and social affairs has gathered street children at night and granting awareness on education. They were also registered between the ages of 14-18 so as to get job and educational opportunity. This indicates positive perception of the community towards street children.

#### 4.3. Daily Activities of Street Children

Pizza is a center of market place of which individuals transacting and exchanging different commodities. During the fieldwork, all of the participants have been asked about the activities of street children. This helps the researcher to explore survival of the children on their daily life. The interviewees and FGD of school children responded that both male and female street children mainly engaged in begging saying that “I do not have bread to eat, give me coin for bread.” Besides, chewing chat, smoking cigarettes, shisha or ganja, serving as messenger, theft, vendors, selling mobiles, washing or keeping car,

removing wastage, carrying objects, commercial sex work, sniffing benzene, labour work, loading and unloading items, working as taxi assistance, collecting piece of metals (*kuralle* or *diza*) from around buildings and rivers, spending in video house, searching food locally called *bulie* or *frifari* from hotels, gathering rotten fruits from trash areas and garbage containers. They also involved in the formal and informal economic activities. In this respect, all of the FGD school children have confirmed the views of interviewees.

#### 4.4. Characteristics of Street Children

Informants were asked to explain the difference street and other children. Accordingly, the interviewees have explicated that street children had any characters. Although both of them are human being, they have certain distinction in between. Street children may be characterized by their indiscipline, loneliness on the street, loss of parental contacts, love, care and protection, shelterless and squalid. Children at family environment are more of disciplined and treated than street children. The street children do not reverence old people, for instance, looking old people with white hair they did not use honorable name (*antu*). The participants also revealed street children are distinguished on the basis of their sanitation (poor personal hygiene), exposed to addiction, psychological problem, lack of supporter, lack of nutrition, un-access to education and odd behaviour learned from the environment.

It is reported that the opportunity they could have matters because street children spend on street, whereas home children are not. Due to the environment they live, street children could be also identified by their way of chatting; who speak out with informal language (indirect talking) the so called mood language. Unlike street children, other children that grow at family

environment may have hope, better awareness about their health, plan and vision in their future life and the country. Alula stated that street children may have one question “what will I eat tomorrow that is the query of abdomen.” Views of the interviewees were also revealed by all of the focus group discussants of school children.

#### 4.5. Social Problems

According to the interviewees, once children come onto street there will be no more of the love of and respect to their family as such they adapt other environment. The greater the number of street children bears the utmost social turmoil in the country that may harm people. They could be source of crises, bottleneck for development, proliferate to commit offense and troublemaker. They possess sharp materials like knife; they can beat individuals and use various obsession things. They can also change into gangster groups and hang comportment. The mind of those children is deteriorating which may lead to community crisis by killing individuals and robbing public’s property. For example, they steal properties such as money from patient people who travel to hospitals and who come from different regions of the country are hanged.

The respondents revealed that street children could become mental nuisance of the community in various ways. It also creates the spirit of dependence of street children on the community. A transgression operation is committed in which children learned misconduct on the street and the country would not have a good name. As a result of such children, unemployment could be increased at all levels. It will also enhance the culture of begging. In addition to the extension of criminal activities, prevalence of HIV could be

one reason making unsafe sex within street children. These children may become sellers of magic (*ye'ets azewawari*) and brokers of ill-activities.

The interviewees revealed having increased street children and utilized narcotic drug will create mentally unhealthy, useless and unproductive citizens. This in turn may produce social crisis: instability, lack of peace, political, cultural and economic problems, insurrection against the government, disobedience to the existing rule, multiply plundering activity especially at night, uproar, fighting and conflict which extends illegal practices within the communities. This causes difficulty of care taker of the country's next generation (*ager terekabi tiwliid*), ruin of development, exacerbated security problems. Further, as street children urine and defecate outside, it will cause rubbish and insanitary that may pave the way into backwardness. This generates unattractiveness of the feature of AA city which in turn affects the country as a whole. Thus, considering as medina of Africa, it creates bad image on the city of AA at international and regional levels. If the city becomes station of street children, it will distract attraction of tourists.

By and large, street children can spoil and encumber to the family, environment and the country. In congruence with the interviewees, the FGD of school children have confirmed. Tesfanesh Tilahun has revealed that street children may be burden for all. While government spends more budgets in rehabilitation program of street children it may cause economic problems. They may also cause political troubles. For example, when they relocated before the coming of 2007 Ethiopian general election to Afar region, they have been saying bye, bye we are going to depart from the blue party. It seems it has political connotation and propaganda in the sense street children are used as utensils of political

agenda. And if it starts throwing of stone, they will be the first actors in wrecking. This in turn leads to social and cultural problems of the country.

#### 4.6. The Impact of Streetism

The interviewees stated that Piazza area is concentrated with a lot of street children and homeless people. Street children are already found out of family and social value system. The interviewees revealed that the influence of streetism is numerous on children. It has negative impact on street children because they have no home to sleep, no food to eat, thirsting, uncomfortable livelihood, desperation or boring of life, expose to illness, no schooling and cloth to wear. They learn and adapt awful behaviours on the street like substance (*adenzaz ets*) and inhaling benzene. They spend on street, dark, rainy, sunny and public places.

They also face problems of parental care and love. They have used food from hotels and drink various alcohols. They wear dirty cloth; there are children being taken by flood; and some are burned when they drink (intoxicated) or fatigue and slept in deep inside of pipelines. It is confirmed that the street life is more of severe for street girl children because they are abducted cruelly and harassed sexually and exposed to a variety of ailment and unwanted pregnancy. The children come to street early that faces car accident. Street children are found passed away under the ruins of buildings. On this part, there is no one follow up with respect the law. In other words, the issues of street children are not given attention, which the concerned body did not reach to protect them.

With this bad living condition, they become hopeless; their live is worse; hence, they may not have vision and futurity. They also reported HIV, (*ye 'abelezer beshta*) and other STD is seen

most of the time on street children. Meklit Million has revealed that, “if street children are not rehabilitated, I think it is one generation that will be remained dead and the country can loss productive citizens.” As street life is very bad living condition children face physical and mental mess-up. All in all, the participants revealed that streetism endangers to children such as stress, suicide, hopelessness, behavioural, psychological, spiritual, moral, lack of confidence (feel inferiority), emotional, and health problems that effect on their lung due to lack of food. While children are on the street it will cause to their lives a total damage. Rights of the street children are violated in which individuals or brokers have abused. The FGD of school children confirmed the ideas of interviewees. Bereket has reported the influence of streetism on children:

*Police and security keepers (rondi) have removed and beaten street children. The local people (Ethiopian citizens) treated falsely of which street boys and girls are sold for sex to black and white men with very low ransom or edible thing. Homo sexuality (gibresedom-Amharic term) has killed generation of the country. This is taboo, and not an Ethiopian culture and sin before the God. Biblically it is condemned because in the outset male was created for female, just as God rightly made Eve for Adam. As a result, street children are spoiled psychologically, physically and morally when they are put for sale in their own country and abducted on the road where they slept. Further, they are easily sick owing to the environmental exposure. While they are ailing no one can reach soon to help them because they do not have father and mother on the street. Although close observation indicates that there is a gap in supporting and caring, the possibility to become street children's parent is administration*

*of wereda ten, particularly of the labour and social affair, women, youth and children, GOs and NGOs to retain from bad conditions of streetism. All in all, they are influenced and felt empty being in the streets, which requires several hands to lift out them.*

#### 4.7. Legal Existence and Protection towards Children and Street Children

Let alone specific policy for street children the interviewees reported general child policy is not yet enacted. It was only available in the form of draft proposal. The draft policy as principle has included prevention, curative aspect, rehabilitation and rationality. It is the CRC and other legal instruments utilized as guide lines to protect the rights and interests of all children. The draft policy was designed on the initiation of MoWCYA. The MoWCYA has proposed a draft child policy before five years and submitted to the council of ministries although it is not approved and implemented in practice. The interviewees confirmed ministry of federation has submitted to the parliament but we did not know the matter of delaying. However, priority issue was given to street children when the proposal of child policy has been drafted. On this part, street children were considered and included within orphan and vulnerable children (OVC) because separate policy could not be designed. This is because all of the OVC and street children are disadvantaged groups of the community; who are abused psychologically, sexually, physically, morally, neglected and excluded from society.

It is revealed, the legal frameworks on children are FDRE Constitution, family code of Ethiopia, international and regional conventions like CRC and ACRWC, that are used for implementation and protection of child rights and wellbeing. The interviewees have also

confirmed that the issues of street children become the agendas of communities, religious institutions and individuals. Such issues were discussed in every meeting where different questions have been raised. In this view, the main increment of children's trouble is due to the absence of child policy in the sense that at least there has to be legal protection. The rationality to ratify child draft policy was; therefore, to maintain welfare of children and all vulnerable people. The other rationality to propose such child draft policy is Ethiopia has reported about children to the UN. The UN always said that there is no child policy in Ethiopia and issues of street children are raised in the conference of different nations.

The UN has argued Ethiopia does not have direction and stance on this issue. Hence, MoWCYA decided to intend child draft policy and presented to the council of ministries for implementation. The interviewees revealed various federal ministries have been participated while the draft on child policy was proposed. For example, local and international NGOs, MoLSA, justice, health, police commission, education and more of at national level from women, children and youth were involved. Moreover, the children, community, parents of the children and others were included in the discussion. There was no implementation process of child policy because the proposed draft was not approved by the council of ministry. But, even if there is no child policy, the way of implementation is evaluated annually. While evaluation is found necessary, the ministry sector of women and children become secretary or leader (*sebsabi*), and others like from the ministry of education, health, justice etc become members to discuss on the shared issues.

The ministries have had meeting every two months which is a means of monitoring system. The purpose of meeting was to detect weaknesses of the implementation process

concerning children and to take actions. Besides, there is an idea to include children in the committee. There is also evaluation every five years. The evaluation and implementation system are different in objective. The implementation modus operandi is always made within two month or once annually to identify weakness of the activities in which constructive ideas and comments are given in order to lessen the problems. The rationale of every five year evaluation is aimed to discuss on policy change if it is found necessary or to improve and modify the existing policy. Whether it requires policy change, modification or not the evaluation is mandatory to see the operation, importance and result.

#### 4.8. Remedial Measures

Participants have been asked what remedial actions should be taken in order to solve the problems of street children in Piazza area in particular and in AA or the country in general. On this part, they have suggested their own views in the following way:

To resolve problems of street children short largely long term remedial measurements has to be considered. Local and international NGOs are ill-equipped to support street children. The NGOs come across regions to Ethiopia should work genuinely to assist street children and homeless people. It was solely Abebech Gobena's NGO that has been working to help street children aptly. The local NGOs are doing nothing on street children in which their contribution is hardly supporting. Consequently, by establishing well-equipped NGOs it requires to providing priority for disadvantaged groups of the community like street children. Religious institutions must also play on their own part to protect children from streetism.

Further, children come onto street at their very young age are exposed to unwanted addictions; films, cigarette, hashish and chat, that requires psychologists and social groups to treat them. On the other hand, the 'haves' like investors should not focus only on constructions of buildings but also to spend part of their resources on those children to lift out from the conditions of street life. Street children have to be taught and supported by different sector offices and professionals. The community must also help and advise them in order to restore their normal life and return with own family or facilitate to engage in occupation. It is better the government to create capacity, granting land for house construction and mini shops for trade, prepare institution, assist for waifs (orphanage), street children and all homeless people. Rules and regulations has to be also designed regarding to street children.

Facilitating suitable environment to learn and providing their identification card. The *weredas* found within the sub-cities of AA, religious or health institutions and other organizations should effort to help street children. However, family as basic institution should have knowledge for children's parenting, and concern to their children because the role of family in fostering and maintaining the interests of their children at home environment is decisive to keep them from streetism. Considering street children as citizens of the country, all stakeholders must function and contribute for the good of street children. Further, it requires the stance of Ethiopian government; for example, sharing experience with the African countries and cities about street children. In order to protect from streetism, children remained without family should be gathered by the government and facilitate institutional protection. Tadele has expounded for the issues of street children that:

*I did not believe in that some institutions could alleviate street children's problem as required like foreign NGOs because they are badly-equipped; they come with their hidden motives and missions. In the name to help disadvantaged groups, overseas NGOs transplanted bad cultures while they come to Ethiopia that can adopt by children and adults; for example, homo sexuality, bad way of dressing style, kissing, unwanted films and fashions that derive from foreign cultural invasion; at present to be found virgin is considered as taboo due to bad alien culture and diverse religion. This may bear conflicts within the communities and children are chased easily for money. Thus, the possible solution for street children is better only by the Ethiopian indigenous NGOs although lack of capacity in finance, ill-equipped and un-genuine functions in caring and supporting street children and homeless people in general.*

Providing awareness to the family and communities, and training to youths and children. As responsible body, the government should take the required measure on households against child labour. An economic problem of street children has to be largely solved. On this part, the government had better investigate the problem of unemployment for solution. Further, the house of *shisha*, dance (*chifera bet*), chat and other unnecessary stations of addiction must be decreased because such addiction can kill the generation; spending all the time in vain places. Using family planning and each household should send their children to school and foster appropriately. It is better to have the experiences of Westerners and Europe that is to say there has to be social service workers (social supervisors) in family system; for instance, cash is granted to households

in Germany under the supervision of social workers. To return and support street children, it is indispensable the community to pay balanced tax through persuasion. As is in agriculture and health extension, there has to be social workers in labour and social affairs to protect security of street children and homeless people. Those people who have been living abroad for years like Diaspora must help vulnerable societies including street children.

Preserving and sustaining essential aboriginal Ethiopian cultures like India and Japan. Hence, adopting of foreign bad cultures should be given critical emphasis by the government to avoid it. Moral education (*menfesawi timhirt*) must be included in curriculum which is canceled. Street children are not disciplined. Hence, they should learn religious education to have the fear of God that can make them to respect people and refrain from bad behaviour. On this part, to grow children through religion and good ethics, religious institutions and all pious leaders ought to operate on street children; and then must teach the community regarding to children. Granting informal education is imperative within the family system. To create responsible family and protect children from preferring street life, make marriage through family bondage. The incoming of films to Ethiopia are not selected that can have effect on children; therefore, unnecessary films should be prevented. Government should create job opportunity for street children. Finally, to save children from street life and homeless people, it requires working on human development.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### INTERPRETATION, DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

#### 5.1. Understanding Community Perception on Street Children

This section further discusses the perception of community towards street children which are found from the study. The literature indicates that human brain interprets information from own senses and permits to make response to the environment. People hold various perceptions toward individuals that are ranged from highly positive to an extremely negative. Exploring community perception on street children is important because it gives different understanding and perceptual inferences in their social world and acquiring from physical appearance, actions, verbal and nonverbal communications such as facial expressions, hand gestures, tone of voice and body position of street children (Allen & Santrock, 1993).

In this research the interviewees and FGD of the school children have explained their perception on the basis of their needs, expectations, attitudes, psychological state, values and beliefs (Bootzin, Bower & Crocker, 1991). Accordingly, they have revealed in the finding that street children are human beings but could be described as addicted, poor personal hygiene, beggars, snatcher, loss love and care of parents, immoral, troublemakers, naughtiness; exposed to health problems, face lack of basic necessities and place to sleep on the street and may cause social problems. It is illuminated, “before we have been known in poverty and now if the condition of children living on the street is boosting and not solved for prolonged change we will be described as the home of street children and homeless people.”

However, majority of the interviewees and FGD of school children have ensured in the finding that they had positive perceptions, two interviewees perceived negatively, whereas three others consisted of positive and negative perception. Participants of this research have revealed that supported to street children in the form of bread, shoe, cloth etc. The findings of Quarshie (2011) also revealed positive public's perception on the phenomenon of street children in Ghana. The researcher also believed street children are softhearted (but not at all) while we approach and interact with them friendly. They need treatment and help from the communities because they are beaten by poverty and a variety of problems. In this regard, there is even more unethical, thief and bad behaviours of children who grow at family home than street children. However, it is important to consider the environmental or situational factors for street children.

Attribution theory (or FAE) is essential and related to discuss on this issue. While exaggerating the personality traits, street children's behavior is misidentified that observers overestimate internal traits and underestimate the situations. The communities blame the victims of unfortunate conditions of street children. To specify unemployed workers are sometimes seen as lazy and homeless people or street children in particular are viewed as irresponsible, troublemaker or bad; and when women who are raped are sometimes accused of having been seductive (Feldman, 1996). Further, those interviewees who perceived street children negatively is matched with halo effect and logical error fallacy because the interviewees judged street children as danger and harmful which is misperceived the reality. For example, when an observer considers unattractiveness as unfavorable trait it assumes that a very unattractive street child whom he meets is extremely unfriendly or unhelpful because these traits are also unfavorable.

This general impression leads to have an exaggerated effect on their judgments of that child on the basis of single characteristic along other trait dimensions (Murphy & Jako, 1989).

According to IPT, community pays attention to variety of cues including visual, auditory and verbal sign to predict and understand personality of others (biased judgment of individuals) based on a limited amount of initial information (Pederson, 1965). An observer perceives another person's behavior positively or negatively and automatically makes trait conclusions from that behavior without aware that these inferences are being made (Winter & Uleman, 1984). During the fieldwork, the researcher has repeatedly contacted and invited street children for lunch and breakfast in order to understand their behaviours. It was also observed in the informal interviews that they were sociable and cheer even if the condition forces to do something and makes them anger. If we close them positively they are good like anyone or community. What they need is health care, basic necessities because they lack food, shelter and clothe on the street. A proverb says that do not judge a book by its cover. Therefore, despite their cloth is dirty, poor personal hygiene and unattractiveness it is not fair to ignore and perceive them in a total negative way. Having revealed this, neither street children nor their behaviors should be seen as deviant without critical evaluation as uncritical conclusion can engender stigmatization, exclusion and the formation of community policies that provide no benefits to them (Orme & Seipel, 2007).

On the other hand, the finding portrays that few interviewees perceived children living on the street both positively and negatively at the same time. This is correlated with the concept of perceptual ambivalence. As is revealed in the finding, this implies children who are found on the street are neither good nor bad which shrivel the confidence of community in their perceptions because it results from conflicting beliefs. While conducting the interview, the participants stated

that street children could be seen in a positive and negative way at the same time on the basis of their activities and behaviours they show. This leads difficulty of conclusion on their perception.

Tipple & Speak (2009) stated that people living on the streets are perceived and secluded by the wider societies considered as villains, beggars, immoral, transients, non-citizens and loners. And particularly street children are denied their rights such as personal security, political representation and their disadvantages conflict with the principles of equality for opportunity and the rule of law. But in this finding, the community has positive perception because it supports them different things.

## 5.2. Feeling of the Community

Community behavior can be either pro-social or anti-social which individuals possess their perceptions relies on. Further, people learn about other's feeling and emotion by picking up information from their physical appearance and actions. Hence, individuals make judgments and impressions about other people like on street children mainly through observation (Coon & Mitterer, 2010). In this regard, unlike interaction, the finding of the study exhibited the sense of feeling of interviewees' and FGD on street children was sad. They illuminated children spend on the street is without shelter, food and love of their parents where physically and psychologically are abused. The participants confirmed it is sorrowful when our brothers, sisters and as citizens found on the street. On this part, they sought street children to return with their family, to learn their education and become productive citizens of the country.

The researcher also realized the feeling and emotion of the participants that most of them have responded "if I were a rich I would support street children to work to help themselves and

to improve their life.” Besides, when Tesfanesh Tilahun took the researcher in front of *wereda* ten to show and introduce with street children, the place where they sleep was full of rubbish and moisture with very bad smell. After we met and talked them, the researcher said that this area is not good let us go somewhere else for interview, and the children responded “it is our home where can we go.” Feeling of the researcher was, therefore; too poignant and a kind of weeping.

### 5.3. Survival Mechanism of Street Children

The street children’s daily survival rests on the people. They beg from the public and serve as concierge at market places, bus and railway stations. They also shine shoes and work as daily laborers and some of them steal for survives (Orme & Seipel, 2007, cited in Quarshie, 2011). In this regard, street children have obtained various supports for survival of their life from the community and institution of which the finding has revealed in the study area. During the interview and FGD, all of the participants responded that they provided to street children such as cloth, shoe, money, inviting breakfast, lunch and dinner, treated psychologically, and so on.

But, most of the time those children depends on hotels and restaurants of the community for food in Piazza area. The finding portrayed, there was community’s organizational (*yehizb aderejajet*) that comprised youth league, youth forum, community forum, and members of *edir* which have been working representing the communities and supported street children in joint endeavor of the LSAWT. Regarding to the institutional support, LSAWT has helped them in many ways. For example, in collaboration with the Piazza community policing police station they have sent street children into Elshaday, Afar region, for the purpose of training in textile and mechanical. Arada sub-city health center has also treated them for tuberculosis, polio and other

disease when it is if found necessary but not frequently. Unlike the FHIDO, St. George church of piazza has helped street children by using different means like school of Sunday and fund raising day. During the field work, the researcher saw while Tesfanesh has discussed with street children many times for help. Further, after the completion of interview with Yosef and Abraham, they displayed him (to the researcher) a child who has mental problems whose mother was street child helped by the St. George Church. These interviewees have explained problem of the child is not as previous as the present that he is recovering. Consequently, the researcher has observed that the communities and partly institutions contributed to assist children living on the street directly and indirectly although it is not as required.

#### 5.4. How Streetism Affects Children

As was seen, the condition of street children should be considered not only in terms of informal labor, exclusion from social institutions but also it has to be examined because of negligence, abuse and exploitation by their families and communities at large (Altintas, 2003; cited in Pehlivanli, 2008). They are distinguishable in that, all ties with family are severed, either through death, displacement or abandonment. This affects street children in their living and working conditions (UNICEF, 1984; cited in Lalor, 1999). In analogy way, all of the participants (interviewees and FGD) revealed in the finding that street children are found out of family and social value system which in turn affects on their life. They are unable to get parental care and love. Street life has negative impact on children because they have no home to sleep, face lack of food, shelter, boring of livelihood, the individual's insulation or exclusion, expose to health problems, unable to learn, adapting bad behaviours, their rights are violated, addicted, they are

beaten, arrested and removed by police from the street, abused physically and psychologically, being taken by flood, they are burned and harassed sexually.

All in all, the participants revealed that streetism can endanger to children stress, suicide, and hopelessness, spiritual, moral and emotional failure that may cause to their lives a total damage. The researcher also confirmed that although street children tried to help each other in everything in order to cope up their problems, all of the above points can affect them. During the fieldwork, the researcher observed and interviewed that few street children were working on vendor while sharing one to ten birr for mutual benefit and utilized what they have. On this part, the researcher made informal conversation with street children. It was also revealed; they were always coming into the compound of *wereda* ten and sat to spend their time and hide from the police. Having explained their experience on the street they revealed street life has soaring impact.

#### 5.6. What do Children Work on the Street?

Informants explained considered as daily activities, street children are engaged mainly in begging in the streets. But it is revealed in the findings that chewing chat, smoking cigarettes and ganja, serving as messenger, working as vendors, washing car, removing wastage, stealing public properties, carrying objects, sniffing benzene, labour work, collecting piece of metals and gathering rotten fruits are also some activities of street children. The activities they have worked are formal and informal economic sectors. The researcher also observed while the street children stood in front of *wereda* ten, individuals call and pick for work in various deeds. In addition to this, the participants differentiated between street and non-street children. Accordingly, albeit

both of them are human, street children are distinguished from other children through their poor sanitation, chatting (mood or informal language), exposed to health problems, face lack of basic necessity, bad behaviour, unable to access education and hopeless, among other things.

#### 5.7. How Street Children Cause Social Troubles

During the fieldwork, respondents have been asked how social problems could happen due to street children in piazza area, AA and the country. In this respect, the participants reported that when street children loss care and love of their family, exposed to a variety of risks, faced lack of basic necessities and supporter, they may become hopeless. Further, the condition of hopelessness forced them to engage in illicit activities. This may cause social unrest. In the finding it is revealed that, the greater the number of street children could bear the highest social chaos. Street children could be source of crisis, bottleneck of development and troublemaker.

They use narcotic drugs and loot public property forcefully to survive. Street children may grow into gangster groups. Unemployment could also be increased at all levels. This can create insurrection against the government and lead to the culture of begging. Informants also revealed street children may be sellers of magic and collaborators of crimes that would cause different problems. To sum, due to the alarming rate of street children, social troubles such as instability, security, political and economic problems, and illegal activity can be increased.

#### 5.8. Legal Guarantee of Children

Although international legal instruments guaranteed and protected, the interviewees from MoWCYA reported specific child policy is not enacted hitherto. They confirmed it is available in the form of draft proposal in which as principle it included prevention, curative, rehabilitation

and rationality aspect. In this view, they revealed that even if the ministry proposed child draft policy before five years and submitted to council of ministries, the parliament have not approved. The CRC, ACRWC, FDRE Constitution and family code of Ethiopia are utilized as guidelines for implementation and protection of the wellbeing of all children. The interviewees confirmed the ministry of federation has submitted to the parliament but they did not know the matter of delaying. However, they illuminated priority issues were given to street children when the proposal of child policy has been designed. Street children were considered and included within orphan and vulnerable children (OVC) because separate policy could not be enacted. This is because all of the OVC and street children are disadvantaged groups of the society.

In order to corroborate different views of participants and to validate this study, the researcher interviewed important people regarding to legal aspects of all children. Accordingly, Aklilu Kasa (pseudonym), capacity building and information service coordinator of ministry of labour and social affairs (hereafter, MoLSA), has explicated that at the moment MoLSA do not have the mandate to propose child policy because it is MoWCYA that has the power to enact. However, there is social security which aims to rehabilitate people who are already found at risk situations. This includes every vulnerable society including elders and children. Besides, he confirmed even if social policy is at a progressive way, the problem lies on government that has less commitment of which provides to social security or protection (*mahiberawi tibeka*). But the main concern of social protection is to care and minimize risks of individuals before they entered the vulnerability condition. The researcher fairly concluded it requires specific policy regarding to all children in the Ethiopia.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

#### 6.1. Conclusion

As was seen in the literature, even if different international and regional legal instruments entrenched to guarantee all children, there is no enacted specific child policy in Ethiopia. The community has abused, exploited, marginalized, mistreated, imprisoned, denied their presence, violated their rights, and excluded, neglected and perceived street children as deviants. Street children faced challenges on the street are also lack of food, clothing, shelter, adequate resources, and education and basic skills. They are, therefore, biologically, physically and psychologically abused. However, in this research, the participants revealed their perceptions focusing on their treatment, care and support. Accordingly, the researcher derived the following conclusions from the study.

The interviewees and focus group discussants of school children, who have participated in this study, described street children as beggar, loss love and care of parent, snatcher, misbehavior, addictive, exposed to health problems, loneliness, lack of basic necessity, poor personal hygiene, engaged in illicit activities, and so on. Majority of the interviewees and FGD of the school children revealed that they perceive street children positively. And their sense of feeling was poignant with none of interaction. The interviewees and group interviews of school children reported, they treated street children psychologically and helped them in diverse ways; for example, inviting tea, lunch or supper, providing food in the form of *bulie*, cloth, shoe, advising to work or return with their family. Youth league, youth forum and community forum

were embellished in the study area in order to help street children in joint with the LSAWT. The welfare association such as school of Sunday and fund raising day of St. George church supports vulnerable groups including street children. However, although the participants or community supported street children in many ways it is not for long life change and the institutional support displays insignificant. This will lead to the conclusion that the aforementioned supports are not always a guarantee to care street children.

It is revealed in the finding that street condition impacts children on their life. Children experienced cold, sexual harassment, dark, trash, hunger, lack of shelter and place for sleep, health problems and feel loneliness in the streets. Thus, the situations of street cause can suicide, stress, hopelessness, and psychological, spiritual, moral and emotional troubles to children. This will endanger to their lives a total damage. Further, daily activities of the street children are largely focus on begging. But as noted in the findings, the participants explained that street children engaged in various activities such as gathering *kuralle*, vendor, carrying objects, involving in illegal deeds, washing car, inter alia, formal and informal economic sectors. The participants also distinguished street children from other children on the basis of their bad behaviour, low own hygiene, un-access to education, lack of shelter, food, addiction, exposure to different risks, etc.

Further, the participants in this research expounded that street children could cause social problems in piazza area, AA city and the country. For example, rampant of HIV, extending criminal activities, stealing public property, enhancing begging/unemployment, instability, political, security and economic problems, violation of law and revolt against government, which in turn paves the way for social troubles. Because of the large number

of street children it may also create unattractiveness or bad image on the respective study area, and city of AA at international and regional levels. The findings of this research depicted that there is no specific child policy for all children and street children in particular. The interviewees of MoWCYA have reported child policy is not enacted up till now. This will lead in conclusion, there is no specific legal guarantee regarding to all children as child policy is not yet implemented in the country.

## 6.2. Recommendations for Future Programming

The findings and analysis discussed on the community perception towards street children in Piazza area is bestowed on the subsequent conclusions and recommendation regarding the topics under discussion, objectives, theoretical and conceptual frameworks. Accordingly it suggests:

- It is better if all stockholders work hand in hand in creating job opportunity and facilitating fund raising to lift out children from street life.
- As the most responsible organ, government should exert to rectify problems of street children at all levels;
- Supporting and rehabilitating vulnerable groups including street children through NGOs, communities, business groups, CBOs, private sectors, GOs and religious institutions;
- This research finding shows lack of child policies regarding to children that requires enacting and implementing specific and clear policy with respect to knowledge sharing across nations to maintain their interests, rights and protect from streetism. In this regard, albeit the absence of such policy would not prevent from implementation because of the existence of legal frameworks, there should not be even legal frameworks for implementation before the enactment of child policy;

- In collaboration with the community, police of Arada sub-city and other institutions, women, youth and children as well as LSAWT should work intensively on street children for persistent solutions;
- To evade social exclusion it requires creating awareness within the community to bring attitudinal change on street children. In other words, perceptions, attitudes and practices that are harmful to children should be challenged. Moreover, they have to have access to information and life skills including a voice to be heard. On this part, they can play a part in protecting themselves and developing better community;
- Sustaining social workers and intervene at micro, meso and macro levels to support and retain children from risks; and it needs the contribution of all individuals;
- Children should grow at family environment to obtain the love of parents and care, and it is better to make discussion in order to realize the needs and interests of their children;
- Reinstate from street conditions by creating capacity through training of children and youth in diverse modus operandi;
- Establishing institutional care to generate healthy and productive citizens in the country;
- Organized communities in the form of associations for the welfare of street children; and
- Introducing flexible long-term packages to street children's protection and support;
- MoWCYA should work on caring of all children including street children;
- Condemning harmful cultural practices to children and strengthening the worth mores;
- Street children should not be forgotten; therefore, it is important if they are organized to work in the form of different co-operatives;

- Displaying the community its ally and compassionate to the vulnerable group of people in the sense paying greater attention to the voices, welfare, personalities and experiences of street children;

### 6.3. Implications for Social Work Practice

From its inception the hallmark of social work relies on supporting and protecting the poor, oppressed and vulnerable groups of people in which social workers considered as indispensable component and of a paramount importance (Coady & Lehmann, 2008). As prime responsible, social workers could be able to engage in holistic social systems and perform on preventive, restorative and remedial functions to save the life of individuals (Hepworth et al, 2010). Consequently, social workers could address the individual's genetic endowment, physiology, psychology, family, home, community, culture, education, religion, ethnicity/race, gender, sexual orientation and economic status (Saleebey, 2001). Findings of this research entailed that social workers can intervene in many aspects to save and/or to lift out children from street life. An intervention area is creating awareness at family levels and supervising children by providing supports based on the strengths and assets of family; granting counseling services of the street children's psychological, social and spiritual needs.

Social workers can advocate expanding such services especially in economic troubles at all levels. They can also play great role within the community to help street children and in order not to exclude them. Another area for social work practice is opening a door or opportunity to work in collaboration with other organizations such as NGOs, GOs and religious institutions to assist children who are exposed to streetism due to different reasons. This is one area where preventive and rehabilitative programs to street children must be consolidated. As indicated in

the findings children living on the street are very bad conditions that face numerous challenges. As a result, through social work practice street children could be helped by business groups, community associations and other support groups in general so that such children can change their life for long-term. Moreover, as the social work is still in an infant stage in Ethiopia, it portrays to promote social work education in the country is necessary and the crucial one.

#### 6.4. Implications for the Community

As was seen, perception of community towards an object could be positive or negative. As in the views of participants, this research has clearly identified majority of the respondents' perception is positive in the study area. Yet due to the environment they live, street children face many problems in the streets like shelter, food, psychological and physical. The study indicated that the available of supports given from the participants or community focuses mainly on short-term supports such as food (*bulie*); invitation of tea or lunch, cloth, small amount of money and shoe that uses only for temporal survive.

But it is clear that even if positive perception of the community and provided such assists which is affirmative this would not change the life of street children. They have stated that they need protracted supports where the community must be organized into associations to help street children for long-term. Involvement of the community to protect street children is vital. This is because the community can potentially provide street children with attachments, resources and opportunities to develop skills. The community which exists as part of help, preparing awareness creation, design projects and help programs at various levels of which the community members work, contribute and cooperate with other institutions for the good of street children. By doing

this, they will have opportunity to leave streetism and return with their family. This in turn paves the way to improve their health status, education, housing condition and basic necessities as well. Therefore, treating and supporting street children should be strengthened within the community.

#### 6.5. Implications for Social Policy

Although the international agreements on legal instruments are made on consensus and used legal frameworks for implementation, Ethiopia's child policy is not ratified until now. This indicates that there is policy gap regarding to all children and street children in particular. One of the gaps is failing to address the conditions of street children relating to policy. On this part, the policy could address the problems of street children on the measure to care and support as well as to maintain their rights, interests and wellbeing.

#### 6.6. Recommendations for Future Research Directions

The ramification of this research denotes the need for further quantitative research to be conducted on the subject so as to have in depth understanding of community perception on street children. A further utilitarian area of research is to explore the role of institutions in supporting and rehabilitating street children with particular of those NGOs. It would also be essential to investigate the perceptions of street children using large sample respondents about the public taking into account care and support both in quantitative and qualitative researches. As separate child policy is not enacted in Ethiopia, so that another future research area requires investigating on the basis of child protection with respect to policy; and to what extent priority is given to all children, how legal frameworks are existed before the ratification of child policy. .

## APPENDIX

### Annex One

#### Semi-Structured Interview Guiding Questions to Sample Respondents

Interview Questions to the households, taxi drivers, shopkeepers, police, teachers, religious leader, school children, employees of LSAWT, women, youth and children, NGO and health employees

##### I. Understanding the Conditions of Street Children in Piazza Area, Addis Ababa

1. How do you describe street children living in Piazza area?
2. What do you think of the social exclusion on street children?
3. What are the major daily activities of street children engaged therein?
4. What effect do you think of living on the street has on the life of children?
5. How do you think of children living on the streets of Addis Ababa affect the metropolitan city and the country in general? What social problems could bring due to the alarming rate of street children?
6. What differences have you observed between street and other children in the community?  
(In what ways do you distinguish street children from the other categories of children?)
7. To what extent the street children are treated? What are the basic contributions of the community to street children in your locality?

##### II. Emotional and Behavioral (or Perceptual) of the Communities towards Street Children

1. What perceptions do you have on street children?
2. How often do you interact with street children? Could you tell me about your experiences if you have had any with them?
3. How often do you see and feel while you encounter street children?
4. How do you treat street children when you meet them?
5. What do you think of are the remedial measures should be taken on street children?

Do you have any additional suggestions to say please?

## Annex Two

### Interview Questions for Policy-Initiators

1. Is there any policy relating to children? If yes,
2. What are the legal frameworks? And what are the specific policies of street children?
3. What is the rationality to enacting child policy?
4. Who were involved in the initiation of the children's policy?
5. How is accomplished the implementation process?
6. Who is the responsible body in monitoring the implementation process of the policy?
7. What measures should be taken to solve the problems of street children?

## Annex Three

### Informed Consent Form

#### Information

My name is Redae Tesfay Fisehay, a Master of Social Work (MSW) student in the graduate programme of School of Social Work, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia. I am currently conducting a research and collecting my data on the selected area of study. The topic of my research is: Community Perceptions on Street Children; Piazza Area, Addis Ababa. This study has included interviews and FGD with the sample respondents of shopkeepers, taxi drivers, high school teachers, women, youth and children of *wereda* ten, police, law/policy-makers of MoWCYA, health workers, religious leaders, NGO employees, households, LSAWT as well as school and street children under the age of 18 years. In order to record their responses accurately, audio record is used during the interviews and FGD. The audio recording would be used on the basis of your interests. This will enable the researcher to review the topic and analysis of the participants' response without missing of any details. Participation of the interviews and group interviews would be made on the willingness of respondents. Thus, participation is possible only if you are willing to have the interviews and FGD.

#### Benefits

~~This study is crucial in that the perceptions and attitudes of the larger community about~~ street children can help reverse or perpetuate the diabolical conditions of these children in the study area, AA or the country as a whole. Knowing the perceptions of communities is imperative used as the first step to undoing the damaging effects they may have on reversing the conditions of street children. In additional, little is known through research about street children from the

perceptions of wider community in Ethiopia. Hence, this study may help different academicians to conduct further studies concerning to street children.

#### Confidentiality

On this part, participation will be rigorously anonymous. You would not be identified by your name, address or organization unless you confirmed to do so. All information which is given in this study will be held in absolute confidence and the records will remain in the custody and control of the researcher. It would not be also granted out for any purpose to anyone who is not working directly with the researcher. The researcher will not share information that could identify you with anyone. Thus, the researcher is responsible not to release any information which is not suitable for you.

#### Participation

In this study, your participation is completely voluntary. While you decide to participate, you would have the right not to answer question (s) you feel uncomfortable with the raised issues and you can withdraw from participation at any time if you do not want to continue.

#### Contact the Researcher

For any further questions and concerns you have, please contact me through my email address and telephone: Redaetesfay12@yahoo.com or 093 1181209.

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(Signature of the researcher: Redae Tesfay Fisehay)

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(Date)

### Consent of the Respondents

I assure for all of the sample respondents I understand that any information which is obtained from you for this research will be kept confidential. And to insure your further privacy, I have the option of using a pseudonym. I appreciate and realize that the participation will be voluntary as well as refusal to participate would have no penalty or loss of benefits to which the area of under discussion is otherwise entitled and the issue may discontinue participation at any time. I agree to participate in this study.

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(Respondent signature)

(Date)

Thank You in Advance for Your Cooperation!

Redae Tesfay Fisehay

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### **International Legal Instrument**

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This table comprised all of the participants which utilized pseudonym, duration of time while conducting the interview and the place where those participants were interviewed.

Name of Participants	Duration of time Interview	Place of Interview
Yosef Mekonnen Abraham Mola	An hour and thirty one minutes	In the office of St. George church
Bezabih Sisay Muluken Tadesse	An hour and seven minutes	In the office of MoWCYA
Endale Kebede Tesfanesh Tilahun	Two hours and three minutes	In the office of LSAWT
Alula Moges Bereket Negussie	An hour and twenty seven minutes	At the veranda of Dero Manekya
Mohammed Nassir Fitsum Kiros	Fifty four minutes	In their own shop
Ashebir Belay Hiwot Ayalew	An hour and thirty seven minutes	In the office of Arada police commission
Senait Abay Getachew Fiseha	An hour and thirty five minutes	In their own home
Zufan Assefa Temesgen Seyum	An hour and thirty six minutes	Inside the compound of FHIDO (NGO previously called CCF)
Selam Melaku Teka Sitotaw	An hour and twenty one minutes	In the women, youth and children office of <i>wereda</i> ten
Tamrat Worku Saron Endris	An hour and thirteen minutes	In the office of Arada health center
Meklit Million Masresha Atnafu	An hour and ten minutes	In the office of yekatit 66 primary and secondary school