

**Exploring Forms and Trends of Violence against Children**

**The Case of Kirkos Sub City, Addis Ababa**

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**May, 2016**

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**A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Addis  
Ababa University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree  
of Master of Social Work (MSW)**

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**May, 2016**

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## **DECLARATION**

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for degree in any other university, and that all sources of material used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I would like to express my gratitude to my thesis Advisor Commander Demelash Kassaye (PhD) who genuinely dedicated his time and professional knowledge to keep me in the right track through providing me his valuable guidance, immense motivation and encouragement.

I am also indebted to child abuse investigators and prosecutors working in Kirkos Sub City Child Protection Unit, especially Meketele inspector Tigist Tesfaye and Enguday Woldeyesus .I am also grateful for Wana Sajene Anteneh Markos, a statistician in Kirkos Sub City Police Directorate. Next my deepest gratitude goes to all Federal prosecutors working in Women and Children Directorate in the Ministry of Justice, notably W/O Marta Girma, and Tebelete Bushera.

I am also thankful to Ato Dereje Meteke, Ato Antenehe Mitiku and Ato Demelash Ejeta for their valuable support, finally I would like to thank my family for their precious support particularly my husband Ato Yirgalem Addis for editing the manuscript.

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
Acknowledgment-----	i
Table of Contents-----	ii
Acronyms-----	v
Abstract-----	vi
<b>Chapter One: Introduction-----</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background of the Study-----	1
1.2 Statement of the problem-----	3
1.3 Research Questions-----	5
1.4 Objectives of the Study-----	6
1.5 Significance of the Study-----	6
1.6 Scope of the Study-----	6
1.7 Limitation of the Study-----	7
1.8 Operational Definitions of Terms-----	7
<b>Chapter Two: Review of Literature-----</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Nature, Cause and Magnitude of Violence against Children-----	9
2.2 Socio Demographic Background of Perpetrators-----	14
2.3 Effects of Violence against Children-----	15

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

2.4	Global, Regional and National Response -----	16
2.4.1	Global and Regional Response-----	16
2.4.2	National Response -----	18
2.5	Violence Theories -----	22
<b>Chapter Three: Methodology -----</b>		<b>27</b>
3.1	The Study Design-----	27
3.2	Sources of Data -----	27
3.3	Research Participants -----	27
3.4	Sampling -----	27
3.5	Methods of Data Analysis -----	28
3.6	Ethical Considerations -----	28
<b>Chapter Four: Findings and Discussion -----</b>		<b>30</b>
4.1	Findings of the Study-----	30
4.1.1	Forms of Violence against Children -----	3
4.1.2	Trends of Violence against Children -----	37
4.1.3	The Socio Demographic Background of Perpetrators -----	39
4.1.4	Challenges of Law Enforcing Institutions -----	43
4.2	Discussion of the Findings -----	45
<b>Chapter Five: Conclusion, Recommendation and Social Work Implications -----</b>		<b>49</b>

**Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

5.1 Conclusion----- 49

5.2 Recommendation and Social Work Implications ----- 50

**References ----- 52**

**Appendices----- 57**

Appendix A: Consent Form ----- 57

Appendix B: Interview Guide ----- 58

Appendix C: Violence Report ----- 59

Appendix D: Perpetrators' Profile----- 60



**ACRONYMS**

ACPF	African Child Policy Forum
ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of a Child
CPU	Child Protection Unit
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSA	Central Statistical Agency
DHS	Demographic health survey
ECPAT	End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes
FRDE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FSCE	Forum on Street Children
GO	Governmental Organization
IFSO	Integrated Family Support Organization
ILO	International Labour Organization
MOLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAC	Violence against Children

**ABSTRACT**

*The purpose of this study is to explore forms and trends of violence against children in Kirkos Sub City from September, 2013– August, 2015. It also attempts to identify the socio demographic back ground of perpetrators of violence against children and challenges of law enforcing institutions in addressing child abuse. To deal with the problem under investigation descriptive exploratory research design was employed. The statistical data gathered from the Sub City's Child Protection Unit archival records was analysed using descriptive statistics. The qualitative data which was collected through conducting semi structured interview with 8 purposely selected participants was analysed using thematic interpretation. The findings of the study portrayed corporal punishment, rape, attempt of rape and violence against the emotional wellbeing of a child were the most prevalent forms of violence against children in the Sub City. Regarding trends of those reported violence, fluctuation in terms of prevalence was observed in the findings of the study. The research also depicted young, married and unemployed individuals with lower educational level had high participation in committing violence against children. Moreover, lack of public awareness about legal protection of child right and welfare; gaps in existing legal frame work in addressing child abuse; Shortage of trained personnel; Technical and financial constraint were identified as challenges of law enforcing institutions in addressing child abuse. Based on the findings of the study, educating the public about child right and welfare, reviewing the existing legal framework and allocating adequate technical and financial resources for the Sub City's Child Protection unit are recommended.*

**CHAPTER ONE**  
**INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Background of the Study**

Children are categorized under the most vulnerable groups of human beings for their incapability of protecting themselves from various forms of physical and emotional abuse. They are also vulnerable to sexual abuse compared to adults because of their age, physical maturity and innocence which makes them to be easily cheated or persuaded (Belay, 2006). Violence against children is a brutal violation of children's right, and it results in serious hazard to children's life, survival and development. Violence wear away family structures, creates social timidity, endanger children's education and consumes valuable national resources (ACPF, 2014). Violence against children may take different forms; physical, psychological and sexual abuse. And they are manifested through insult, beatings; being deprived of basic necessities such as food or clothes, being made homeless, abduction, early marriage, female genital mutilation and labour exploitation (UNCRC, 1989).

Violence against children has a gender dimension with girls at risk of sexual violence and boys of severe physical punishment and gang related violence. Girls vulnerability to sexual abuse is caused by the existing inequality in power relationships between men and women. In some societies men and women hold the belief that the male sex drive is uncontrollable, and that men need a great deal of sex and variety in their sexual partners. This encourages a certain degree of forbearance for the use of physical force in sexual relations, including rape (ACPF, 2014).

Violence against children takes place in different settings: at home where they should feel safe, loved, comfortable and happy; in schools and institutional care where they are intended to promote the development and protection of children; in justice system; in work place and in the community .Though children experience all forms of violence in all settings

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

,physical and emotional violence is practiced at home and in school mainly to impose good behaviour as a means of child disciplining(Ibid).

Age, ability, gender of a child, the socio economic status of the family, the existence and lack of a family support system, broader socio cultural norms, and the efficacy of existing child safety services have their own impact on children's vulnerability to violence (Ibid).Harmful traditional practices, the spread of commercialized sexual images via communication technology, urbanization and deepening poverty contributes for prevalence of violence against children. For instance, corporal punishment, female genital mutilation, early marriage and abduction are deeply rooted in the existing traditional practices of most African communities including Ethiopia.

Violence against children results in long term physical and mental or psychological damages or harms. Sexually abused children may find themselves experiencing unhappiness, dejection, extreme dependency, inability to judge trustworthiness in others, distrust, rage and hostility (Russel, 1987).Taking into account the long term impact of child violence, the United Nations Convention on the Right of a Child (UNCRC, 1989) and the subsequent Palermo and Optional Conventions for its enforcement were signed globally to address violence against children. Regionally most African countries ratify African Charter on Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC, 1999) in combating violence against children.

In the presence of those global and regional instruments, studies reveal that children's right is being violated in alarming rate everywhere. For instance, every year between five hundred million to 1.5 billion children of the world bear some form of violence. Moreover, 168 million children around the world are engaged in child labour and 85 million children are vulnerable to risky work that causes a danger to their health and safety. In addition between2007 -2010, the number of child victims of trafficking rose from 20 to 27 percent.

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

Three million girls are also at risk of female genital mutilation each year and 1 million children are forced, kidnapped, sold and deceived into child prostitution or child pornography each year (UN, 2013).

Based on the above findings, this study focuses on assessing the magnitude and prevalence of violence against children living in Kirkos Sub City, Addis Ababa through exploring forms and trends of violence against them. Kirkos Sub City is one of the ten sub cities of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It is located at the centre of Addis Ababa. The Sub City covers a surface area of 1,472 hectare and has a population size of about 220, 991, and it is one of the densely populated sub cities in Addis Ababa with a population density of 150 persons per hectare. The Sub City is one of the oldest of Addis Ababa, occupied by poor household and is also known for slum proliferation (CSA, 2007).

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Ethiopia ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (Proclamation No 10/1992). Furthermore, the government ratified the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (Proclamation No283/ 2002) and International Labour organization Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (ILO). According to Article 13 of the Ethiopian Constitution all international instruments ratified by Ethiopia are made an integral parts of domestic laws ,and all branches of the government have a responsibility to enforce those provisions of Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms. And the Constitution has recognized rights of a child under Article 36, and a better protection has been afforded to children in domestic family, criminal and labour laws.

A number of governmental institutions in Ethiopia are working on the prevention of violence against children .These include the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education which is concerned with eradicating violence in schools, and the Ministry of Information

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

which is engaged in disseminating information on prevention of violence against children. On the other hand, the Ministry of Justice as well as the Judiciary enables victims of violence get civil as well as criminal redresses. Moreover, civil society organizations (CSO) working on child right and welfare issues has increased over the years in the country .Some of these institutions are registered as an indigenous nongovernmental organizations and others are international nongovernmental organization (NGO). And there are also associations and community based organizations engaged in advocacy, awareness raising and research (MOLSA, 2005).

So, though there are legal and institutional frame works in the country, studies reveal that children's rights are severely violated in the country. A number of factors contribute for the vulnerability of children. Firstly, the population of Ethiopia is growing in alarming rate, and working for protecting and respecting the right of children is becoming beyond the capacities of families, communities and the government. As a result, its outcome is already manifested in the level and depth of poverty which results in the expansion of vulnerable groups, including children (Debebe, 2007).Secondly, Since many children in Ethiopia live in crowded and slum areas of urban cities, they are exposed to different forms of abuse and violence, and the risks of abuse are even greater compared to those with a better living standard (Ephrem, 2009).

Some forms of violence against children including beating and corporal punishment are deeply rooted in traditional child upbringing of most African countries including Ethiopia. Moreover, the adverse effects of globalization and exposure to foreign cultures have a significant influence on individuals' sexual behaviour which makes male children more susceptible to homosexual acts (Debebe, 2007).

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

Children in Ethiopia are experiencing different forms of physical and emotional violence. Studies reveal that the magnitude and prevalence of child violence is very high. According to MOLSA (2006), sexually abused children constituted 74 % of all children treated in Yekatit 12 Hospital from July 2001 to June 2002. Corporal punishment can also be categorized among the most practiced violence against children in Ethiopia. Out of 1223 interviewed children in one study, only 17(1.4%) responded that they have never experienced corporal punishment at home (ACPF, 2005).

Though it is not prevalent in urban setting, the prevalence of female genital mutilation in rural setting is 80 % in the country. Moreover, marriage of girls in violation of the legal minimum age is also widespread in the country (DHS, 2000). According to the study conducted by African Child Policy Forum (ACPF), half of children in Ethiopia experienced physical chastisement from family members. 12.1 % percent of them also face negligent treatment (ACPF, 2014).

Therefore, this study aims to fill the knowledge gap in existing researches through investigating forms and trends of violence against children in the Sub City. Furthermore, the socio demographic background of perpetrators and challenges of law enforcing institutions in addressing violence against children are also examined.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The research aims to answer the following questions:

- What are forms of violence against children in Kirkos Sub City?
- What is the trend of violence against children?
- How is the socio demographic background of perpetrators related to those violence?
- What are the challenges of law enforcing institutions in addressing violence against children?

## **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

### **1.4.1 General Objective**

The general objective of this study is to explore forms and trends of violence against children in Kirkos Sub City, Addis Ababa from September 2013- August 2015.

### **1.4.2 Specific Objectives**

The study is intended to achieve the following specific objectives:

- To explore forms of violence against children in Kirkos Sub City.
- To assess trends of violence against children in Kirkos Sub City.
- To identify the socio demographic background of perpetrators of violence against children.
- To distinguish challenges of law enforcing institutions in addressing violence against children.

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The research will hopefully assist governmental and nongovernmental organizations working on child right and welfare to adjust their intervention strategies based on the gaps observed in the findings of the study. It will also advocate for reviewing and enhancing the existing legal and institutional framework for addressing violence against children.

Furthermore, the study will serve as a tool for awareness creation about child right and welfare. It will also either fill the gap left for further studies by previous researches or extend their findings. Above all, the findings of the study will serve as a spring board for other researchers to carry out a detailed study on the area under investigation.

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The scope of this study is reported violence against children in Kirkos sub city, Addis Ababa from September 2013-August 2015.



### **1.7 Limitation of the study**

During data collection, annual violence report prior to 2013 was not available in the Sub City's Child Protection Unit .Therefore the researcher was compelled to limit the scope of the study in to a three years report. The socio demographic back ground of perpetrators in their relation to victim children is also dealt with using key informants interview due to secondary data constraint.

### **1.8 Operational Definitions of Terms**

**A Child:** for the purpose of this research is a person of either sex who is 18 years of age or under.

**Violence against Children:** for this study is all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation including sexual abuse.

**Violence Forms:** for this research refers to types of violence perpetrated against Children.

**Violence Trend:** for the purpose of this study refers to violence against children either on rise or decline from September, 2013- August, 2015 in Kirkos Sub City, Addis Ababa.

**Victims of Violence:** for the purpose of this study refers to those children directly affected by violence.

**Perpetrators of Violence:** refers to those individuals who inflict violence against children.

**Physical Violence against Children:** refers to all forms of harm involving physical force which, deliberately or incidentally, cause pain or damage to the child, including all

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

forms of corporal punishment, negligence and maltreatment, and harmful traditional practices such as female genital cutting.

**Mental Violence (also called Psychological or Emotional violence):** refers to verbal cruelty and abuse, threatening behavior, and the unscrupulous use of adult power to terrorize, exploit, or dominate a child in such a way as to jeopardize his or her development.

**Sexual violence against children:** refers to violence of a sexual nature, including harassment, abuse, being forcibly exposed to pornographic material, trafficked into commercial sex work, or made subject to coercive sex and rape.

**Sub City:** refers to Kirkos Sub City.

**Child Protection Unit:** refers to Kirkos Sub City's Child Protection Unit.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Children are vulnerable to various forms of violence; it can be physical violence when harm is inflicted on their body or mental violence when the harm damages the child's emotional health and wellbeing. They are also vulnerable to sexual harassment and abuse. Some types of violence against children are society sanctioned violence as they are deeply grounded in traditional practices of societies. Other forms of violence can be caused by a number of vulnerability factors.

Violence against children is perpetrated in all settings, in children's' their home, at school and in the community, and potential perpetrators are individuals who have close relation with victims. Since violence against children is an important area of concern, different studies have conducted to reveal the type and extent of violence against children.

#### **2.1 Nature, Causes and Magnitude of Violence against Children**

Violence against a child can be inflicting harm either on the body of the child or on the psychological wellbeing of a child. It also includes harassing or sexually abusing the child. Violence against a body of a child is termed as physical abuse or violence. Physical violence against child refers to all forms of harm involving physical force which, deliberately or incidentally, cause pain or damage to the child, including all forms of corporal punishment, negligence and maltreatment, and harmful traditional practices such as female genital cutting

A verbal or mental abuse against the mind of the child is termed as emotional or psychological child abuse (Dante & Sheer, 2004). Mental violence (also called psychological or emotional violence) refers to verbal cruelty and abuse, threatening behavior, and the

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

immoral use of adult power to terrorize, exploit, or dominate a child in such a way as to jeopardize his or her development.

Sexual violence against children refers to violence of a sexual nature, including harassment, abuse, being forcibly exposed to pornographic material, trafficked into commercial sex work, or made subject to coercive sex and rape. If a girl or boy is under the age of consent, then sexual act with that child is taken as statutory rape.

### **Physical Violence**

Physical violence against children takes many forms, including hitting with a hand or other objects; kicking, punching, shaking or throwing the child; pinching or pulling hair; caning or whipping; tying with a rope or chains; or other acts involving physical force. Harmful practices with a bearing on the physical integrity of the child, such as female genital mutilation, are also included in physical violence (ACPF, 2014).

Though the purpose of the attack might vary, physical abuse is an assault directed at a child by an adult or by older children, and it is an injury resulting from physical attack. (Howe, 2005; Mara & Winton, 2001). Physical Abuse can also result from severe discipline measures such as using a belt to hit a child, or physical punishment that is inappropriate to the child's age or physical condition (FSCE, 2006; Howe, 2005; Mara & Winton, 2001).

The use of violence as a means of giving a lesson and enforcing good behavior is practiced in most African children's upbringing as a norm and absorbed into their personal value systems (ACPF). There is cultural or religious justification for some forms of VAC, which includes physical chastisement of children, female genital mutilation and abduction. According to the study conducted by ACPF, half of children in Ethiopia experienced physical chastisement from family members (Ibid).

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

Female genital mutilation contains a number of diverse habitual rituals that may involve surgical removal of parts or all of the most sensitive female genital organs. In some African societies, the practice is deemed to be part of girls' and women's cultural gender identity, ensuring class, family reputation and marriage ability. The rationale quoted for upholding the practice include religion, custom, preserving female chastity and loyalty, protecting her from too much sexual sensation, hygiene, aesthetics and fertility-related issues. The practice goes against the girls' rights to protection from violence, self-esteem, privacy and bodily integrity, among others (UNICEF, 2010). Three million girls are at risk of genital cutting and it is rampant in 27 African countries (ACPF, 2014; UNICEF, 2013). This statistics indicates how genital mutilation is prevalent and a deeply rooted problem in the continent though it is not prevalent in urban settings.

### **Child Neglect and Maltreatment**

Child neglect is the most commonly reported form of child abuse nowadays (Dante, 2004). According to Mara and Winton (2001), Child neglect is perpetrated when the in charge adult fails to provide sufficiently for a child various demands including physical (failure to provide adequate food, clothing or hygiene) emotional (failure to provide nurturing or affection), educational (failure to enrol a child in school), or medical (failure to medicate the child or take him or her to the doctor) (Lowenthal, 2000; Mara & Winton, 2001; Kebede, 2002). Child abuse and Neglect includes not permit to sit and talk in front of Adults, not providing medical care and supports, expulsion from the home, not allowing them to join to school, failure to make available learning materials and uniforms, not giving love, attention and respect to the child (Admasu, 2010). According to the study conducted by ACPF, 12.1 % percent of children in Ethiopia experienced negligent treatment (ACPF, 2014).

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

### **Sexual Abuse**

Sexual abuse of children refers to any form of sexual relationship between adults and children for the sexual gratification of the adult and that interferes or have the potential for interfering with a child's healthy development (Goldman,2003,p.14).Sexual abuse includes any sexual act of fondling, touching or exposing genitals penetration, intercourse, incest or rape (FSCE,2006 ,Lowenthal,2000).

In urban settings, families face greater financial and social demands and often become fragmented. Traditional systems of child protection in rural settings have become eroded or feeble, as parents go out to work and are not able to care for and protect their children and supervise their passage to adulthood (Debebe, 2007). The nature of urban life in slums and shanty towns also means that children and young people are at greater danger of exposure to several forms of violence including sexual abuse, organized crime, including drugs, gang violence and other high risk situations (ACPF, 2014).

An estimated 17.1 million children under the age of 18 have lost one or both of their parents to AIDS and millions more have been affected, with a vastly increased risk of poverty, homelessness, school dropout, discrimination and loss of prospects (UN, 2013).Thus all of these factors increase the likelihood of a child being exposed to violence, abuse or exploitation.

Poor households in most cases have large families, which, in addition to poor housing, may result in overcrowding and a greater risk of children being exposed to sexual violence. (ACFP, 2014).In Ethiopia also, the family size of 84.7% of sexually abused male children is found to be above four persons (Debebe, 2007).

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

According to the study conducted by ACFP, children from low income family have been found to be more vulnerable to sexual violence (ACFP, 2014). Similarly, Debebe in his study confirmed that a majority of sexually abused male children came from families with monthly income of less than Birr 401 (Debebe, 2007).

The abuse of children through commercial sex work is a worldwide mounting industry. It is also destroying the lives of millions of girls and boys in rich and poor nations. An estimated 300,000 young people below the age of eighteen are involved in commercial sex work in the united states, and child prostitution and pornography are major problems in parts of Europe and the Russian Federation (Munir& Yasin, 1997 as cited in Dargie,2009) .A number of South and South -East Asian countries are magnets from elsewhere in the Asian region for commercial sex work(Ibid).

Certain types of sexual predation in the wider African community are escalating. These include child sex tourism, child pornography and the use of virtual images or sexually abusive representations of children (ACPF, 2014). These are aggravated by the increase of the internet, the globalization of communications, and lack of know-how in addressing these risks. Kenya, Senegal, morocco, South Africa and Ethiopia are becoming hotspots of child sex tourism (Ibid).Specially in our country, the unfavourable effects of globalization on our society have exposed the young population to overseas cultures like video films that might have a considerable influence on individual's partnership formation and sexual behaviour, and this might have exposed male children to sexual abuse (Debebe, 2007; ECAPT, 2013).

Sex tourism, mostly involving men from Western countries, is largely responsible for the growth in the number of child commercial sex workers. Apparently some even use computer networks to communicate information relating to sex and its cost (Munir&Yasin, 1997cited in Dargie, 2009).

### **Emotional Violence**

In Africa, types of aggression other than the infliction of physical injury are rarely accepted as violence. Thus injury committed by non-physical means on the mental or psychological well-being of a person is consequently rarely documented (ACPF, 2014). Children are exposed to a sort of emotional abuse ranging from insults and name-calling to bullying, intimidation and threats. Psychological violence is frequently used as a means of child discipline, with threats used to stop children from repeating undesirable behaviors (Ibid). Child victims of mental violence may face a greater degree of trauma from ongoing emotional abuse than from physical assaults. The long-term effects of emotional abuse and emotional maltreatment of children include chronic trauma, and the persistence of long fear after the threat has subsided (Davis Frieze, 2002). Fifty three percent of Children in Ethiopia experience psychological and emotional, abuse (ACPF, 2014).

### **2.2 Perpetrators of Violence against Children**

Perpetrators of VAC are most often someone the child knows and trusts; they are most often male relatives, including fathers, brothers, grandfathers, uncles and cousins, friends of the family; or neighbours .Perpetrators can also be female, including mothers, sisters, aunts, babysitters, and grandmothers (ACPF, 2014). They have easy access to the child because she or he has sole responsibility for the child, or take care of or visit the child and trusted by the child's parents (Debebe, 2007).

According to African Child policy Forum (ACPF) (2014) majority of females and males who reported physical violence experienced this violence by their fathers and mothers. Mothers were cited as those most frequently practicing physical punishment in the home, followed by fathers and older brothers (ACPF, 2014). And this is not astonishing, given that women have the key role in child-raising in most African communities (Mekonen & Weigers, 2011).



## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

According to Integrated Family Support Organization (IFSO)(2003), perpetrators who committed sex with minors are mostly persons who have close relation or contact with victims such as family members, friends, neighbours etc. but it is not verified with empirical facts and studies (Cited in Debebe,2007) . In a recent study conducted in Addis Ababa, 43.75 % of perpetrators of sexual abuse against children found to be members of the community including neighbours, 43.75% strangers ,6.3 % friends and school mates, and close relatives counts for 6.3 % (Belay,2006,p.23;Debebe,2007).Regarding their socio demographic background majority of perpetrators of sexual abuse against male children found to be under aged, unemployed, addicted to various kinds of substances, alcohols and watching pornographic videos (Debebe, 2007).

### **2.3Effect of Violence against Children**

Early foundations are decisive experiences tend to endure and form the thoughts, habits, and patterns of behaviour in most individual at their later life (Erickson, 1987; White, 1976).Adolescents who experienced abuse and neglect during childhood periods have problems in their physical and emotional status(Child Welfare InformationGateway,2008;Daniel&Gobena,1997;Lacharite,et.al,2004;Mara&Winton,2001;Shumet,2006) Physical violence has consequences beyond bodily harm; in addition to wound and deformity, it can have psycho-social and emotional effects, such as everlasting feelings of embarrassment and harm to children's sense of worth(ACPF,2014;Mara &winton,2001).Physically abused and neglected children found to be in problems of psychosocial adjustment during their adolescence periods like problems of communication in general, loss of trust on other people ,feeling of inferiority ,interaction problem with peers and family, fear of control in relationship, fear to talk in front of class mates and in public gathering ,not freely participate in neighbourhood social activities, hostilities towards people, inability to function at home and School activities(Admasu,2010).

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

Harsh and frequent physical chastisement often has permanent detrimental consequences on children's healthy growth and psycho-social behavior. Parents who frequently beat their children as a punishment may injure both their minds and bodies and compromise their future as adults. Children who are anxious about being physically punished may be reserved from exploring their physical and social worlds, and the development of their cognitive skills may be correspondingly impaired (Straus, 2001).

Besides the long term psychological and emotional effects, sexual abuse of children results in bruises, burns lacerations and broken bones and it might cause brain damage, haemorrhage, and permanent disability (Debebe, 2007). Survivors of child sexual abuse often experience trauma that is difficult for them to transcend and the scope of the problem and pervasiveness of the crime are particularly grave concerns to crisis workers (James, 2001).

Sexual violence in particular has a number of long-term implications, especially for girls. A pregnant girl may be compelled to drop out from school, forced into marriage with the perpetrator, or widely considered to be 'a damaged good' and hence unsuitable for marriage. Girls who are kidnapped and forced to become the sexual slaves of rebels or warlords, if rescued, may not be accepted back into their own families and are often unable to reintegrate in their own societies. Girls engaged in transactional sex as a means of survival are often exposed to drugs and violent life-styles (ACFP, 2014; Azeb, 2003).

## **2.4 Responses to Violence against Children**

### **2.4.1 Global and Regional context**

The international legal recognition of children's right was first acknowledged in 1919 in response to World War I post-war strife on children in Europe. Since then, the League of Nations which later on was named as the United Nations (UN) adopted ten declarations and

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

conventions involving a progressive and qualitative account that exclusively addresses children's right (UNICEF, 2005).

According to UNESCO (1979), the UNCRC was put in to force to broaden particular care to the child that has been stated in the General Declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1924, and in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted by the General Assembly on November 20, 1959 which states that mankind owes to the child the best it has to give (as quoted in Sebsebie, 2009).

More countries than ever before have policies in place to avert and deal with violence against children. In 2006, 47 countries had some form of policy agenda on this issue – today, there are more than 80. Many more countries have a precise and inclusive legal ban on violence against children, in many cases, described in the Constitution itself. In 2006, only 16 countries had legislation prohibiting violence in all settings. Today, 38 have an inclusive legal ban on violence against children.

There has been momentous progress on the legal protection of children from sexual abuse, an estimated 90 per cent of governments have legislation on sexual violence against children. Momentum is also increasing to ban violence against children as a form of sentencing. More than 60 per cent of governments confirmed the ban of inhuman sentencing for children and youth, including life imprisonment and capital punishment, and many others have introduced a moratorium to this effect (ACFP, 2014).

Though African governments have made considerable improvement towards enhancing the protection of children over recent years, violence against children, in all its forms remains persistent. Progress has been too slow, too uneven and too fragmented to bring violence against African boys and girls to an end (UN, 2013).

### **2.4.2 The National Response**

Ethiopia ratified the United Nations Convention on the right of a child in 1991. The country also ratified other conventions such as the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child in 2002 and ILO Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour in 1999. In an effort to protect and promote the rights of children with disabilities, Ethiopia ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) on 7 July 2010.

Ethiopia has not ratified but acceded to Optional Protocol to the CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography adopted by the UN in May 2000 and entered into force on 18 July 2002. Optional Protocol to the CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflicts adopted by the UN in May 2000 and entered into force on 12 February 2002.

Being the supreme law of the land, the Federal Constitution provides the basis for the protection of children from violence. Firstly, it domesticates all international human right instruments, which Ethiopia has ratified by stating "all international agreements ratified by Ethiopia are an integral part of the law of the land" (Article 9(4) of the FDRE Constitution). Secondly, it has incorporated specific provisions protecting children from various forms of violence by stating "children have a right not to be subject to exploitative practices, neither to be required nor permitted to perform work which may be hazardous or harmful to his or her education, health or well-being" (Article 36(1)(d) of the FDRE Constitution). And "to be free from corporal punishment or cruel and inhuman treatment in schools and other institutions responsible for the care of children" (Article 36(1) (e) of the FDRE Constitution).

The major forms of violence against children are criminalized under the criminal law of the country as discussed under the following topics:

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

### **Infant killing**

A child's survival is protected from violation starting from infancy as it clearly provided under Article 544 of the revised criminal code which states "A mother who intentionally kills her child during her labour or while still suffering from the effect thereof, is punishable, according to the circumstances, with simple imprisonment".

### **Sexual Abuse**

Different forms of sexual violence against children are punishable under Ethiopian criminal law which states: Rape on a girl child of 13-18 by a person of the opposite sex will result in an aggravated case punishable with rigorous imprisonment up to 20 years (Article 620(2) of the revised criminal law). Other than young age of the victim, one of the aggravating circumstances is the commission of the offence on an inmate of alms-house, asylum, hospital, any establishment of education, correction, internment or detention under the supervision or control of the accused person or on a victim who is dependent on, or is under the direct control or custody of the accused.

Sexual intercourse with a girl of 13-18 years by a person of the opposite sex will be punishable with a maximum rigorous sentence of 15 years regardless of the girl's consent for the act. (Article 626(1)) The punishment will be aggravated to 20 years in the cases where the victim is the pupil, apprentice or servant of the offender, or is in any other way directly dependent upon or subordinate to the offender. Any act corresponding to a sexual act with a boy of 13-18 by a person of the opposite sex is punishable with imprisonment not exceeding 7 years (Article 626(2)). Sexual offence on a female child below the age of 13 is punishable with rigorous imprisonment of 15 to 25 years (Article 627(1)). Any act corresponding to a sexual act on a male child below the age of 13 is punishable with a rigorous imprisonment of not exceeding ten years (Article 627(2)).

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

Any sexual act on a female or male child of age 13-18 by a person of the same sex shall be punishable with a rigorous imprisonment of 3 to 15 years (Article 631(1) (a)). Any sexual act on a child below the age of 13 by a person of the same sex shall be punishable with a rigorous sentence of 15 to 25 years (Article 631(1) (b)).

### **Maltreatment, Neglect, Negligent Treatment**

A person who neglects, ill-treats, over tasks a minor under his custody or charge is punishable with simple imprisonment up to three months. In cases where the offence has impaired the health, security, education, physical or psychological development of the child, the punishment is simple imprisonment for not less than one year. Simple imprisonment under the law ranges from 10 days to 3years. The criminal punishment may be coupled with revocation of one's' family right over the victim child (Article 576(1) (2)).

Corporal punishment against children is not explicitly prohibited in the criminal law as Article 576(3) of the criminal law reserve for the right to parents or guardians to administer lawful and reasonable chastisement. In the general parts of the law article 68 lays down the principle that acts required or authorized by law don't constitute an offence. Among such list is found "acts reasonably done in exercising the right of correction or discipline". The act is allowed in the family law as the guardian may take the necessary disciplinary measures for the purpose of ensuring the minor's upbringing to protect the child from excessive punishment (Article 258 of the Revised Family Code)

### **Female genital mutilation**

Circumcision of a girl of any age is punishable with a minimum penalty of 3 months or a fine of 500 birr (Article 565). The maximum penalty is three years. In the case of infibulation, the penalty is 3-5 years (Article 566). If due to the infibulation the victim suffered physical or health damages, the punishment could go as high as 5-10 years save for a higher punishment in any other relevant provision of the penal law. As regards the persons

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

subject to punishment, the law targets principal offenders, instigators, and accomplices. This may refer to the parents, relatives, neighbours, etc.

### **Other Harmful Traditional Practices around child delivery and infancy:**

There are two provisions in the revised law (Articles 562&563) to the effect that whosoever, intentionally or by negligence caused death, bodily injury or mental harm of a pregnant or a delivering woman or that of a newly born child as a result of application of harmful practices such as massaging the abdomen of a pregnant woman, shaking a woman in prolonged labour, soiling the umbilical cord of a baby, keeping a newly born child out of sun, feeding it fresh butter, milk teeth extraction, excising the uvula shall be punishable with a maximum sentence of 6months.

### **Sexual exploitation of children**

Exploiting the prostitution of others directly or by keeping a house for such commerce is punishable. The punishment is simple imprisonment and fine (Article 634).Trafficking in women, infants and young person's to make them engage in prostitution is punishable with rigorous imprisonment not exceeding five years and a fine not exceeding ten thousand Ethiopian birr ( Article 635). The offence becomes aggravated with a penalty of three to ten 21years rigorous imprisonment and a fine of 20,000 Ethiopian birr when the victim is a minor below the age of 15( Article 636).

### **Trafficking in Children**

Trafficking in minors for labour purposes is punishable with a rigorous imprisonment of 3 to 20 years and a fine of 50,000 Eth. Birr (Article 597). The provision includes internal as well as external trafficking (Article 598)

### **Public Indecency and Outrages against Morals**

A sexual act or any performance against good morality and behaviour in a public place is punishable with a simple imprisonment of three months to one year or a fine of 1000

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

birr. If the offence was committed in the presence of a minor, the punishment increases to a minimum of 6 months and a maximum of 5 years (Article 639). Likewise, a person who makes, imports, exports, transports, receives, possesses, displays in public, offers for sale or hire, distributes or circulates obscene or indecent writings, images, posters, films or other objects, is punishable with simple imprisonment of not less than six months and a fine. If such objects were exhibited, delivered or handed over to underage persons, the penalty is simple imprisonment of not less than one year and a fine up to ten thousand birr (Article 640).

### **Protection of Minors from Indecent Publicity and Advertisements**

There is also a special provision for the protection of minors. Offering for sale, lending, giving or displaying of writings, images or other objects that have the effect of unduly stimulating, misdirecting the sexual desires in minors, or that arouse antisocial behaviours in minors is a criminally punishable act. The incriminating object may be forfeited where appropriate and the responsible person subject to imprisonment of not less than six months and not more than three years (Article 644).

A better protection is afforded to children in the country's family and labour laws: Workers of ages 14-18 (Young workers) are protected from economic exploitation and entitled to special protective measures (Labour Proclamation No.377/2003). According to Article 256- 260 of the revised family code proclamation No.213 /2000, the guardian of a minor is made responsible to work for the best interest of the minor in making any decision.

### **2.5 Social Theories of Violence**

For the study purpose three most commonly cited theories of violence are discussed. These are Functionalism, Social Constructionist and System theory:



### **Functionalism**

This theory is based on "organic analogy", that the society is like human body. While the body is made up of various parts such as the organs, muscles and tissues that need to work together for it to be healthy, society is also comprised of many parts that must function together in order to work properly. Each part needs to be in a state of equilibrium, or balance. Just as the human body has evolved over time, so has society (Suzanne & et.al). According to this broad theoretical tradition, individuals commit violence when the various mechanisms of society fails to address social needs, high stress levels, rapid technological, social, and economic change (Parsons, 1977).

Functionalists propose violent behaviour is driven by our efforts to conform to the moral code of society. The purpose of such code is to constrain human behaviour in ways that promote the common good. The purpose of an organism is to survive; in order for a society to survive the subsystems must function in ways that promote the maintenance of the society as a whole. Functionalists suggest the key to societal survival is the shared norms and values held by its individual members. Deviation from those norms leads to disorganization, which threatens the survival of the system (Ibid). They also propose understanding the violence may help to identify what is broken in the society and to coordinate intervention. However, the theory is criticised for failing to explain how to set priorities since its terms, beliefs, and basic assumptions were never fully developed (Parsons, 1977).

### **Social Constructionist**

This theory focuses on the way in which individuals with violent behaviour construct social reality and violence that results from such construction. According to this theory violent individuals are free, active and creative to construct social reality and there is no singular objective reality, only the shared subjective realities that are created as people

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

interact. Thus social reality is created when actors in social interaction develop a common understanding of their world (Hutchison, 1999).

Social Constructionists suggest social interaction is grounded in language customs, as well as cultural and historical contexts developed in changing configurations of persons and environments. This theory proposes violent individuals acquire their behaviour through socialization and shared cultural patterns of behaviour and they keep doing what they have learned to do. Socialization also plays a role in our internalization of institutional norms for conduct and it is through this process that socially acquired ways of doing things develop what seems to be an existence of its own (Ibid).

For Social Constructionist theory, once our subjective reality is created by internalization, we then justify the uncertain external world by ascribing validity to it and come to perceive it as though it were separate from the human process that created it. Therefore, Constructionist theories of violence focus on discourse themes-shared meanings – that justify violent acts or else redefine violence so that it is acceptable behaviour. Unlike the functionalist approach, which focuses on the objective social system and call for changing the situation, constructionist approaches call for changing socially construed views of the situation (Sarbin&kitsuse, 1994).

This approach is known for its ability to identify and describe many different discourse themes that contribute to violence. This theory also suggests a strategy for change though it is criticized for failing to describe what changes should take place to produce a discourse that does not support or encourage violence (Ibid).

## **Systems Theory**

Systems perspective sees human behaviour as the outcome of reciprocal interactions of persons operating within organized and integrated social systems. According to Systems

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

approach, the nature of interactions among the individuals, families or groups that make up the system that should be studied to understand the cause of violence (Straus, 1973).

There are five basic principles of Systems perspectives to describe violence and they are discussed as follows:

### **Holism**

Holism reflects the idea that entities cannot be explained nor understood from their separate parts or properties but only when regarded as entire unit. This principle is anti-thesis of reductionism and it proposes there must be hierarchy for order to exist within a system and to organize its complexity; higher levels direct the lower levels. This principle offered an appreciation of individuals with violent behaviour and their inter-dependency with one another and the environment; has inherent humanistic and ethical qualities (Ibid).

### **Level of System Ecology**

This principle of Systems theory proposes for understanding the violent behaviour taking in to account the smallest social interactions within primary relationships (Micro system); the relationships of perpetrators of violence with their immediate social network (Mezzo system); and the interactions of individuals with violent behaviour with the upper levels of bureaucracy including values, cultural ideals and concerns of society on a large scale (Macro System) (Hutchison, 1999).

### **Systems are connected**

Based on this principle defining a system and its internal operations or considering the system boundary is important in understanding violence. Therefore ascertaining whether individuals with violent behaviour exchange resource with external Systems (Open System) or not (Closed System) is important in addressing violence (Ibid).

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

### **Systems Maintain equilibrium**

According to these principles of Systems theory, Systems are always in a state of change but the changes do not disturb the stability of the system. And this principle suggests that direct efforts to change any system element will fail; the system will restore the missing piece or replace it- often in a more exaggerated form. This approach suggests addressing the issue of violence requires a coordinated approach that includes understanding of how violence fits in to the system (Ibid).

### **Systems Exist in Context**

Based on this principle of Systems theory, understanding the time and place context helps to understand violence. Biological, historical and political time(Time Context) and geographical ,political and psychological place(Place Context) have their own impact on violent behaviour(Straus, 1973).Though Systems theory is strong in its ability to describe the relationships among events and actors or understanding human behaviour, it is criticized for vagueness and ambiguity since many concepts were not clearly defined. Thus other theories are needed to suggest desired directions to deal with violence (Ibid).

Based on the findings of the reviewed researches on factors which aggravate children's vulnerability to violence, Systems theory helps to understand why perpetrators of violence against children become violent and the reason for children become victims of such violence. Consequently the researcher employs Systems theory to be the theoretical framework of this study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Study Design**

In this study descriptive exploratory design is employed. This design is employed to generate research questions when there is scarcity of ample information on a particular study of social phenomenon and to describe in detail about the phenomenon (Royse, 1999). Thus the design helps to explore forms and trend of violence against children and to provide a detailed picture about the subject.

#### **3.2 Sources of Data**

The researcher used both secondary (statistical) data and primary (qualitative) data to respond to the research questions under investigation. The statistical data was obtained from Kirkos Sub City Child protection archival records. The researcher has also referred to different books, policy and legal documents. The qualitative data was obtained through conducting semi structured interview with key informants. And it is used to clarify and deeply understand the issue under study or to fill the information gap observed on the secondary data.

#### **3.3 Research Participants**

Child abuse investigators and prosecutors working in the Kirkos Sub City's Child Protection Unit were key participants in the study. The other participants were federal prosecutors working in Women and Children Directorate in the Ministry of Justice.

#### **3.4 Sampling**

Purposive non probability sampling design is used to recruit participants in the study. According to Kumar (1996), this sampling technique helps to select participants based on predefined criteria relevant to the topic at hand. Thus experts working directly or indirectly

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

on child violence were selected to participate in the study. The sample size in purposive sampling may or may not be fixed prior to data collection because purposive sample sizes are often determined on the basis of data saturation (Ibid, 1996). Having this in mind though the researcher initially intended to reach 12 participants, only engaged with 8 participants because of data saturation. Regarding the secondary data, three years (From September 2013- August 2015) child abuse report is taken from Kirkos Sub City Child Protection Unit.

### **3.5 Method of Data Analysis**

The secondary data collected from the Sub City's Child protection unit is analysed using descriptive statistics (percentage) and displayed using tables and graphs and pie charts. Moreover, the socio demographic background of perpetrators is analysed using age, educational, occupational and marital status analytical tools. Regarding the qualitative data analysis, the tape recorded interview is transcribed and re-read carefully to comprehend the manuscript data which helps to ascertain the quality of data and the information is categorized to give meanings to the organized information. Thematic interpretation data analysis method is used in this study with which data analysis were simultaneously done during data collection.

### **3.6 Ethical Considerations**

The study was conducted in an ethical manner. To this end, formal letters were secured from Addis Ababa University, School of Social Work to access individuals and organizations which are affiliated with the research. Moreover an explanation was given to all interview participants about the research's purpose and objective. To this end an informed consent was secured about their voluntary participation before the interview commenced. Moreover, all private information disclosed during the interview was kept confidential, and

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

pseudonyms are used not to disclose individuals' identity. In addition, all materials used during the interview are handled carefully.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Findings of the Study

4.1.1 Forms of Violence

Violence against Children reported to Kirkos Sub City’s Child Protection Unit from September 2013 - August 2015 is presented as follows:

**Table 1: Forms of Violence**

Forms of Violence	Annual Violence Report			Total	Percentage
	2013	2014	2015		
Rape	18	20	25	63	28.12 %
Attempt of Rape	6	12	7	25	11.16%
Psychological Violence	16	4	-	20	8.92%
Abandonment	6	4	7	17	7.58%
Sexual Harassment	2	9	5	16	7.14%
Homosexual Act	3	-	2	5	2.23%
Corporal Punishment	28	18	30	76	33.92%
Labour Exploitation	-		1	1	0.44%
Homicide	-	-	1	1	0.44%
Total	79	67	78	224	100%
Percentage	35.26 %	29.91%	34.82%	100%	

Source:Kirkos Sub City Child Protection Unit

As table 1 indicates rape, attempt of rape, psychological violence, abandonment, sexual harassment, homosexual act, corporal Punishment, labour exploitation and homicide are forms of violence perpetrated against children in the Sub City.



### **Corporal punishment**

Corporal punishment is the most prevalent form of violence against children. A total of 76 cases of corporal punishment were reported during the three years period. It accounts the largest share (33.92 %) of all reported violence against children to the Sub City's CPU.

According to the interview held with child abuse investigators and prosecutors, corporal punishment includes hitting with a stick or other instruments, kicking, Slapping, Pinching or pulling hair, canning or whipping with a belt, tying up a child with a rope or electrical wire, forcing to inhale the smoke of burning chilli peppers and forcing to kneel down. It is mainly practiced in all settings, at home and in schools and in the community. Parents, guardians, relatives and teachers are principal perpetrators of corporal punishment against children.

As it had been revealed in the interview, corporal punishment is commonly practiced at home and in school in a belief not to cause harm on children but to correct their behaviour for the purpose of promoting their personal development. Parents or guardians perceive they are legally allowed to punish their children, and they believe physical punishment is effective way of child disciplining. According to an interview held with child abuse prosecutor, there is a noticeable gap on public awareness about legal protection of children from all forms of violence in general and corporal punishment in particular.

Participants in the interview pointed out corporal punishment against children results in physical injuries, bruises, burns laceration and broken bones. It may also result in permanent detrimental consequences on children's healthy growth and psycho-social behavior.

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For the question how do parents react towards the consequences of corporal punishment, one of the interviewees stated the following:

*After punishing their children, most parents or guardians regret seeing injuries, bruises, burns and laceration on their children body. Seeing the consequence, they swear not to punish them again, and they admit they lost their temper during the chastisement. Every parent wants his child to show good behaviour but they are not aware of non-violent means of child disciplining (Hiwot).*

Even if physical punishment against children is intended to correct the behaviour of a child, the desired behaviour may not be achieved through punishing. An interview held with an investigator can be taken as evidence. He stated the following:

*Most victims of corporal punishment repeatedly experience beating. If the first punishment was effective, they might not be engaged in wrongful acts again. Those who experience frequent beatings talk about running away from home to lead a street life. Some of them may quit the undesired behaviour fearing the punishment but not accepting the reason why they are punished. Others may be reserved from exploring their physical and social worlds fearing the punishment (Abera).*

Despite the fact that corporal punishment is the most prevalent form of violence against children, practicing it in a family is not clearly banned in domestic laws of Ethiopia. According to the interview held with investigators and prosecutors, this is in breach of Article 19 of the UNCRC, which bans corporal punishment in all settings.

In Ethiopia, Parents or guardians are allowed to take the necessary disciplinary actions for the purpose of ensuring the minor's rearing (Article 258 of the Revised Family Code,

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

Proc.213/2000).The revised criminal law of Ethiopia also reserves for the right to administer lawful and reasonable chastisement, and acts reasonably done in exercising the right of correction or discipline don't constitute an offence (Article 548 and 64 of the Revised Criminal code) .Thus accusations could not be lodged against perpetrators of corporal punishment for the act is not explicitly prohibited in the country's legislation.

For the question how do you understand the term 'reasonable' or 'necessary disciplinary measures'? One of the interviewee stated the following:

*The term 'reasonable' or 'necessary disciplinary measures' is ambiguous. It is difficult to judge if disciplinary acts are reasonable or not. The judgment will be subjective. What kind of measure will be taken against a perpetrator if a certain disciplinary act is found to be unreasonable? The law does not have a response. It is clear that a loophole exists in outlawing corporal punishment (Betelehem).*

## **Sexual Violence**

According to the interview held with child violence investigators and prosecutors, sexual violence includes approaching or speaking in a sexual manner, touching or pinching in sexual manner, purposely exposing to private parts, forcing to look at sexual acts or pornographic materials and forcing to have sex or rape.

## **Rape**

Rape is having sexual intercourse by the use of violence or grave intimidation having rendered the victim unconscious or incapable of resistance. Rape is the most prevalent form of violence in the Sub City following corporal punishment. A total of 63 rape cases were reported to the Sub City's CPU during the three year period. Rape comprises 28.12% of all reported violence against children in the sub city.

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

According to the participants in the interview, most victims of sexual violence are girls. They live in poverty stricken areas of the sub city; dwell in slum villages and overcrowded houses where their wellbeing is at risk. Majority of them were also belonged to a family in which conflicts of spouses are common and some of them lost one of their parents due to divorce or death. One of the participants explained the following during the interview:

*I remember some rape cases, victims were sharing the same bed room with their step fathers who were perpetrators as well (Hiwot).*

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is the act of being spoken to in a sexual manner or received sexual comments. A total of 16 cases of sexual harassment were reported to the Sub City's CPU during the three years period. It takes the sixth position in terms of prevalence, and it accounts for 7.14 % of all forms of reported violence.

According to the participants in the interview, even if sexual harassment is categorized as one form of psychological violence, the act is not regarded as crime under the criminal law of the country. One of the interviewee emphasizes this point stating that:

*Girls experience sexual harassment everywhere. Many individuals take it as a normal.*

*But it may result in low Self-esteem in the long run .The act should be legally prohibited like other forms of sexual abuse (Abera).*

### **Homosexual Act**

Homosexual act is performing sexual intercourse with another person of the same sex. A total of 5 cases of homo sexual act was reported to the CPU .It is the least prevalent forms of VAC in the Sub City as it accounts for 2.23% of all forms of violence reported to the CPU. Though the statistical data shows homosexual act is among the least prevalent forms of violence, participants in the interviewee strongly disagree with this figure.

According to the interviewee held with one of the participant he stated that:

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

*In Ethiopia, talking about sex with a person of the same sex is against societal norms. Therefore all victims or their parents are not expected to report if their children sexually abused by homosexual individual (Daniel).*

### **Psychological Violence**

Psychological violence is the act of shouting, insulting, frightening, threatening, ridiculing and embarrassing of a child. A total of 20 cases of psychological violence were reported to the Sub City's CPU during the three years period. It takes the fourth position in terms of prevalence, and it accounts for 8.92 % of all forms of reported violence.

Although psychological violence is among the most prevalent forms of violence in the sub city, the qualitative data revealed that the act is not legally banned in the country's criminal law. In explaining the gap one of the participants in the interview stated the following:

*Degrading word or insult hurts more than beating, threatening or terrorizing also erodes one's self-esteem. Thus these kinds of acts should be legally prohibited (Temesgen).*

### **Abandonment**

Abandonment is the act of exposing a child thereby putting him in imminent danger of life or health. A total of 17 cases of abandonment were reported to the Sub City's CPU during the three years period. It takes the fifth position in terms of prevalence, and it accounts for 7.58 % of all forms of reported violence.

### **Labour Exploitation**

Labour exploitation is forcing a child to perform a laborious work. It is the least prevalent form of violence against children in the Sub City. It accounts 0.44 % of all forms of violence reported to the CPU.

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### **Homicide**

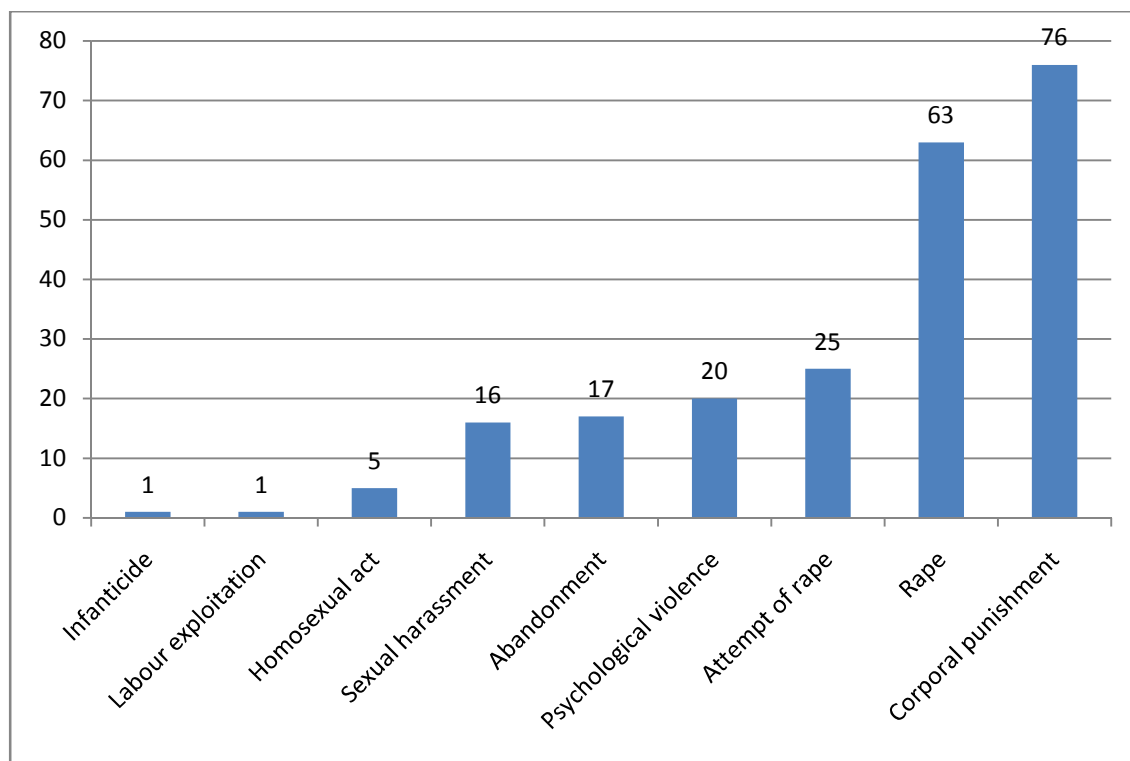
Homicide is causing the death of a human being intentionally or by negligence.

Homicide against a child is the least prevalent form of violence against children in the Sub City. It accounts 0.44 % of all forms of violence reported to the CPU.

Several wrongful acts against children are regarded as violence on United Nations Convention on a right of a child (UNCRC). To this effect most of these acts are also criminalized under the criminal law of the country. But as the data shows, limited forms of violence against children were reported to the Sub City's CPU during the three years period. For instance, indecent publicity and advertisement against children is common in the Sub City and the community is not aware of the illegal nature of such acts though the act is criminalized under the criminal law of the country and the law is rarely enforced.

Therefore, as statistical data has its own limitation to depict the real magnitude of those reported forms of violence in the Sub City, underreporting of violence against children is expected for various reasons including lack of public awareness about legal protection of child right and welfare; failure to recognize all forms of violence against children except sexual abuse; lack of evidence to support accusation or complaint ; losing trust in the justice system; due to economic dependency of victims up on perpetrators and the desire to maintain the healthy relation with perpetrators.

Figure1: The ratio of each form of violence out of the total in a year 2013-2015



#### 4.1.2 Trends of Violence against Children

Regarding trends of major forms of VAC in the sub city, the sum of reported cases of corporal punishment against children is declined to 18 in 2014 compared to 28 cases reported in 2013, though it was increased by 30 cases in the year 2015.

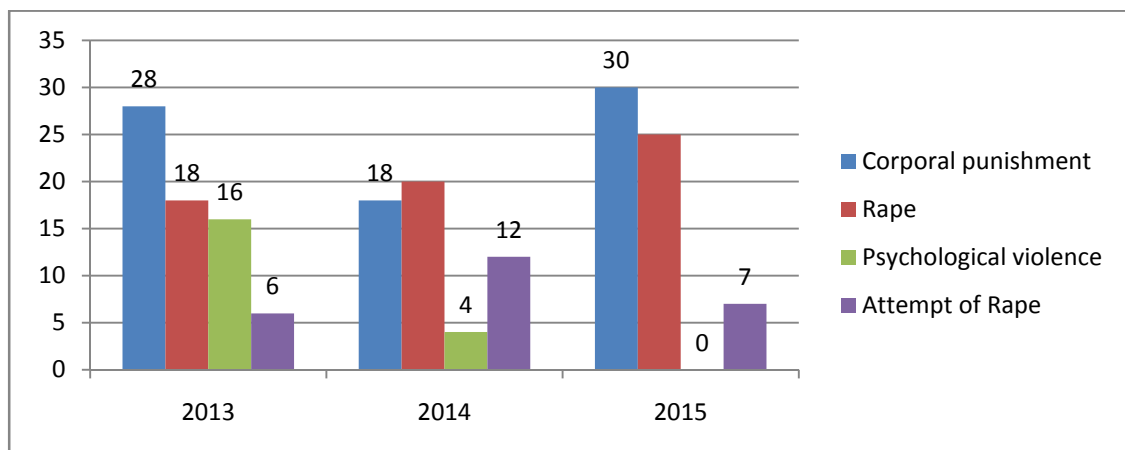
The sum of all rape cases against children reported to the Sub City's CPU was mounting during the three years period; 25 cases were reported in 2015 compared to 2014 and 2013 which were 20 and 18 cases respectively.

Reported cases of attempt of rape against children were about 12 in 2014, and 6 and 7 in 2013, and 2015, respectively. This shows that the rape case against children has increased in 2014 while compared to the official reports in 2013. The report could indicate the decrement in 2015 as well.

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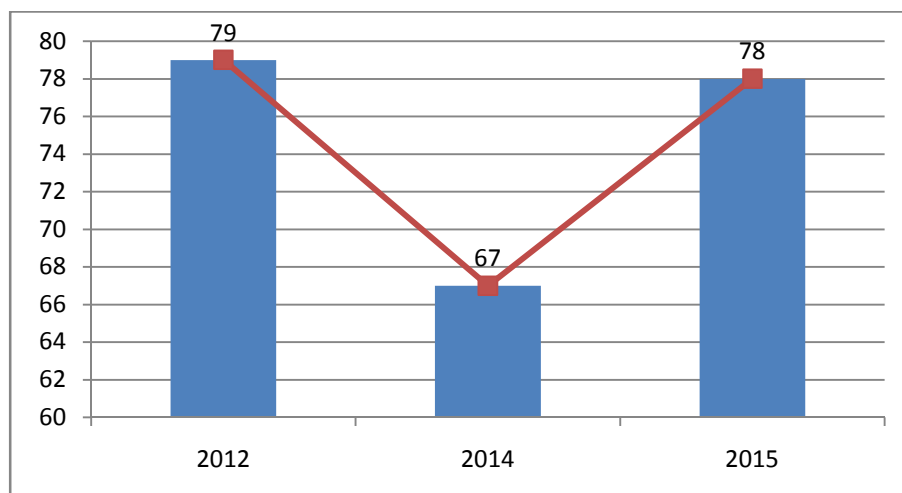
Reported cases of psychological violence against children were 16 and 4 in 2013 and 2014 respectively. This shows that psychological violence against children has decreased in 2014 while compared to the official reports in 2013. The statistical data shows there was no reported case of psychological violence in 2015.

**Figure 2: Trends of Major Forms of Violence against children**



According to the statistical data, trend of total reported violence portrays unstable conditions, the unstable trend of VAC sometimes happening when the favourable environment becomes inhospitable. Evidence in this regard shows in the year 2014 was about (29.91%) while in 2013 and 2015 are 35.26% and 34.82%, respectively.

**Figure 3: Trend of Total Reported Violence**





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According to the interview held with child violence investigators and prosecutors, a detailed survey should be carried out to evaluate trends of violence against children in the Sub City. Even if the level of violence remains the same, the increase in child violence report due to efforts taken to encourage reporting may be wrongly concluded that violence against children is mounting.

Most of the participants in the interview believed that homosexual acts against children are increasing nowadays:

*In earlier times, perpetrators of sexual abuse against children were individuals with different with victims. Currently exposure to deviant sexual attitude due to globalization results in new sexual behaviours of individuals. Accordingly homosexual act against children, particularly male children is growing these days (Degu).*

### 4.1.3 The Socio Demographic Background of Perpetrators of VAC

The age, educational, occupational and marital status of perpetrators of those reported VAC during the three year period which is collected from the Sub City's CPU archival record is presented if it has some implication on violence against children:

**Table 2: Perpetrators by Age and Educational Status**

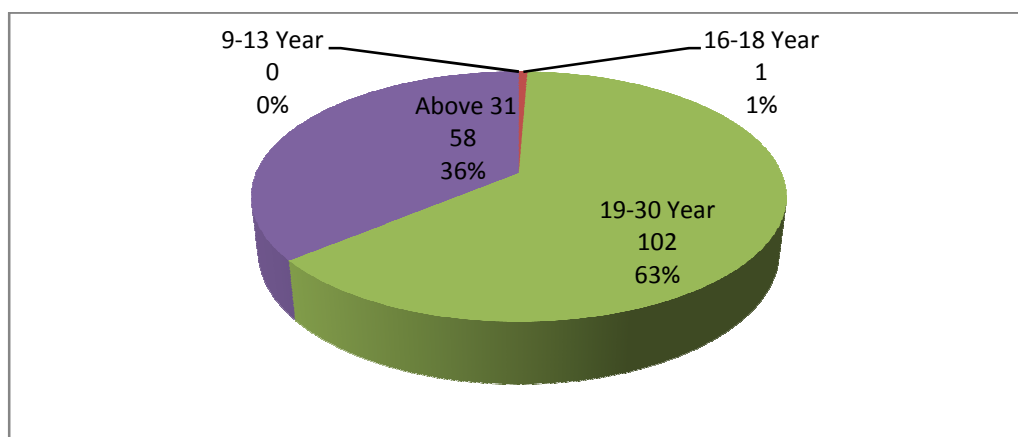
	Age				Educational status				
	9-13 Year	16-18 Year	19-30 Year	Above 31year	Illiterate	1-6 grade	7-8 grade	9-12 grade	>12 grade
	0	1	102	58	0	47	0	74	40
Percentage	0	0.62 %	63.35%	36.02%	0	29.19%	0	45.96%	24.84%

Source: Kirkos Sub City Police Directorate

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As indicated in Table 2, children in the age category of 9-13 has no participation in perpetrating VAC. Only one individual in age category of 16-18(0.62%) participated in committing VAC. Thus the involvement of adolescents in committing violence against children is rare. Perpetrators in the age category of 19-30 year took the largest share (63.35%) among individuals of all ages. Adults above the age of 31 were also more involved in perpetrating VAC since their participation was 36.02 % of all perpetrators. Therefore young individuals are dominant perpetrators of VAC as statistical data shows majority of perpetrators of VAC were under the age of 30 year (63.97 %).

**Figure 4: Age of Perpetrators**



As indicated in table 2, illiterate individuals and individuals who are between 7-8 grade has no participation in committing VAC. Perpetrators who are between 1-6 grade make up 29.19 % of the total figure. Almost half of all perpetrators of VAC (45.96%) are individuals between 9-12 grade. Individuals with higher educational level (>12 grade) represent 24.84 % of all perpetrators of VAC. Thus statistical data reveals individuals in lower educational level (75.15%) are principal perpetrators of VAC in the Sub city.

Figure 5: Educational Status of Perpetrators

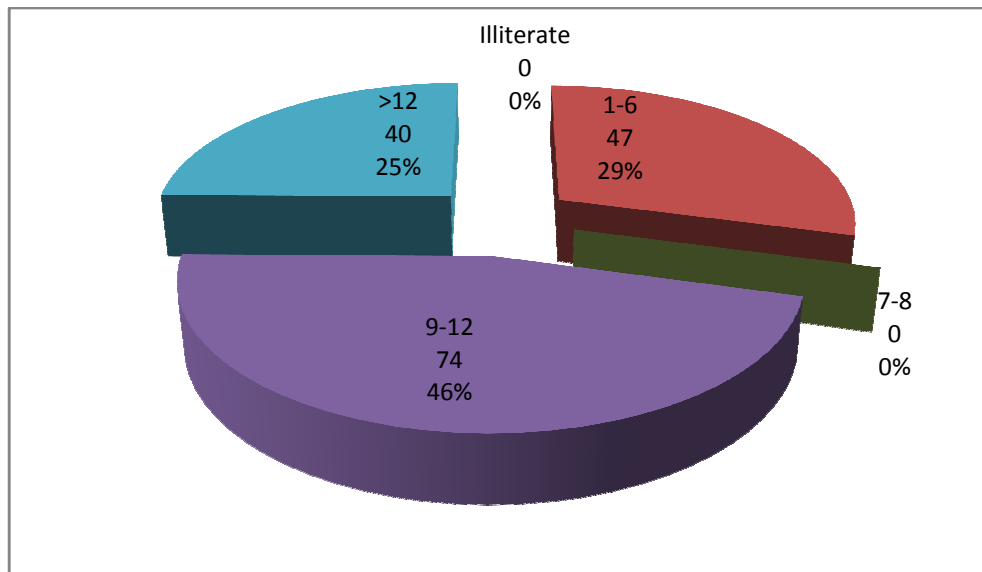


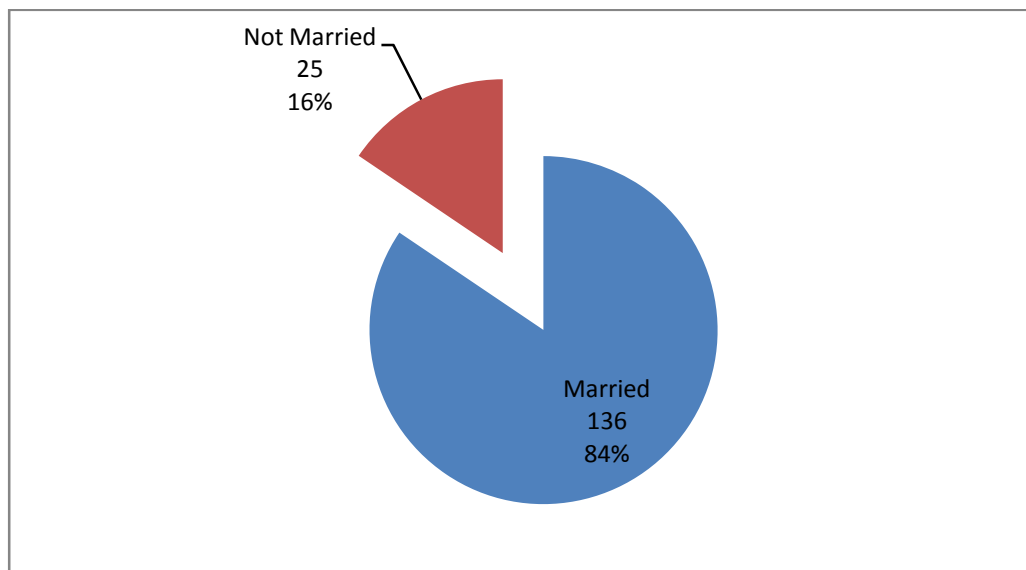
Table 3: Perpetrators by Marital and Employment status

	Marital status		Employment status	
	Married	Not Married	Employed	Unemployed
	136	25	68	93
percentage	84.47 %	15.52%	42.23 %	57.76%

Source: Kirkos Sub City Police Directorate

Regarding the marital status of perpetrators of VAC, the data shows married individuals (84.47%) were more involved in committing violence against children. Unmarried individual's participation is very limited as they represent 15.52% of all perpetrators of VAC. Accordingly married individuals are major perpetrators of violence compared to unmarried ones.

Figure 6: Marital Status of Perpetrators



Based on their employment status, unemployed individuals represent 57.76% of all perpetrators of VAC. And employed perpetrators consist of 42.23% of the total number of perpetrators.

As it had been revealed in the interview, majority of perpetrators of VAC are individuals who are authorized to take care and look after them. They are parents, other family members, relatives, neighbours, friends and teachers. Hiwot during interview explained it as follows:

*In handling most rape cases, what was painful to me were not the acts, but*

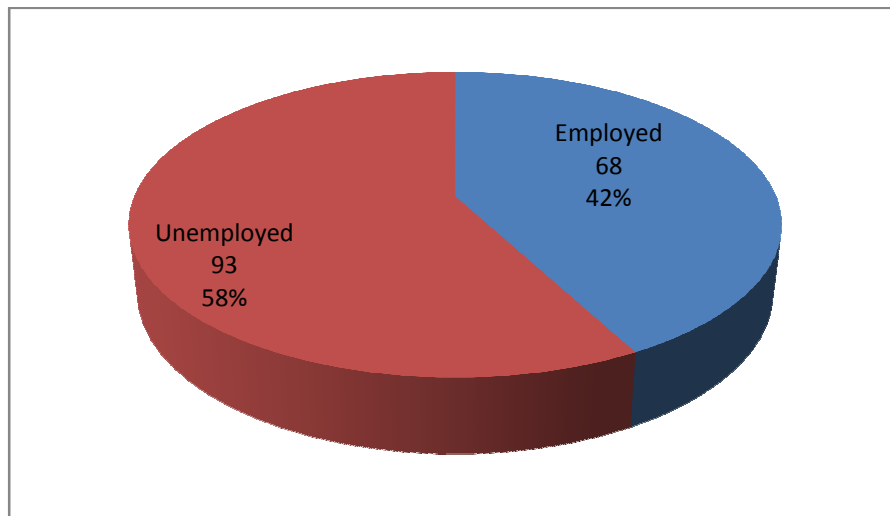
*realizing the perpetrators were fathers, step-fathers, brothers and uncles to victim girls.*

Participants in the interview asserted that unemployed individuals are more involved in perpetrating violence against children compared to employed ones. In an interviewee held with one investigator, the interviewee stated the following:

*I have spent several years on this job. During interrogation, I observe that most*

*perpetrators are unemployed and illiterate. They are also substance and alcohol addict (Temesgen)*

Figure 8: Occupational Status of Perpetrators



#### 4.1.4 Challenges of Law Enforcing Institutions in Addressing Child Violence

##### Lack of Trained Personnel

According to the interview held with child violence investigators and prosecutors, the child violence investigation unit suffers from inadequate skilled human resource. Child violence investigation needs special knowledge and skill, and victims of violence have to be provided counselling services. Most investigation of child violence is carried out using similar investigation technique which is applicable in investigating crimes against adults. Thus it is costly and time taking to collect evidences to lodge accusations against perpetrators. In agreement with this an interviewee asserted that:

*Children are incapable to understand the nature of the wrongful act committed against them. And they get disturbed when they are asked to remember what happened to them. It is difficult to obtain evidence from victims unless you have a special skill. You have to help them to reconstruct memories, and the task is more than investigation (Helen).*

The other interviewee also stated that:

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

*Most perpetrators of violence against children are individuals who are close to victims. Consequently perpetrators can easily distract evidences. Victims are also expected to testify against persons they love most. They will be terrorized or threatened by perpetrators not to talk about anything .All these scenarios make the investigation tough. Thus you have to be brave enough to win the case (Daniel).*

### **Technical and Financial Constraint**

According to the interview held with investigators and prosecutors, a limited budget is allocated to law enforcing institutions. As a result the Sub City's child protection unit is not well equipped with office facilities. Moreover, the overall investigation process is carried out manually and it is not supported with modern technology. There is no data collection and management system and violence cases are not properly filed. In explaining the challenge one of the interviewees stated:

*Financial constraint critically hampers work. Adequate budget is a basic resource in addressing child violence. A due attention has to be afforded to the Sub City's child protection unit. Children are not like adults. They are interested in attractive things everywhere. Dolls and games should be available in child protection unit. It has to be a child- friendly unit like the child friendly -courts (Sara).*

### **Lack of Public Awareness**

The interview revealed that there is a gap on public awareness about legal protection of child right. There is also a knowledge gap in understanding the reason for legal protection of child right and welfare. The community do not recognize other forms of child violence except sexual abuse. Worse, majority of individuals including parents are not willing to lodge accusation or complaint and to testify against perpetrators.

### **Gaps in the Law**

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

According to the interviewees, there is no comprehensive legal frame work to address all forms of violence against children. Provisions regarding child violence is scattered under different chapters in criminal law. Besides, corporal punishment and psychological violence against children are not outlawed. In addition, there is no specific regulation concerning reintegration and rehabilitation of victim children regarding their basic needs: food, shelter, education, medical care and counselling.

### **Lack of Coordination**

As the interview reveals, there is lack of co-ordination amongst the different stakeholders in child protection. Currently, though there are a number of governmental and nongovernmental organizations working on child right in the country, they are working in a fragmented manner. And, this has become a challenge for law enforcing institutions in delivering effective services.

### **4.2 Discussion of the Findings**

The study reveals that corporal punishment, rape, attempt of rape and psychological violence are major forms of violence against children in the Sub City. Corporal punishment is the most prevalent form of violence against children in the Sub City as it accounts for the largest share in violence report. And this correlates with the finding of other research which showed that half of children in Ethiopia experienced physical chastisement from family members (ACPF, 2014).

The study showed corporal punishment against children is practiced to correct undesired behaviour. Consistent with the findings of the other research that physical punishment of children as a way of giving a lesson and imposing good behavior is implemented in most African children's rearing as a norm and engrossed into their personal value systems (Ibid,2014).

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

The findings of the study revealed, though corporal punishment is mainly perpetrated to impose harsh discipline, it is not an appropriate way of child disciplining. And this goes in line with the findings of the study undertaken by African Child Policy Forum(ACPF)that majority of children participated in the study did not believe corporal chastisement as an efficient way of disciplining children. And as a substitute they recommended alternative ways of disciplining including advising children and using other non-violent means of disciplining (ACPF, 2006).Even if corporal punishment is the most prevalent in the Sub City, practicing it in a family is not clearly banned in domestic laws of Ethiopia. Therefore there is no legal frame work to make perpetrators liable for their wrong deeds.

The study revealed girls are more vulnerable to sexual abuse in the Sub city compared to boys. And this shows males supremacy with regard to sexual entitlement in culture of many African societies, and this culture and its connotation are accepted within families, schools, policy-making and religious institutions (Padmini and Clyde 2010).The findings of the study revealed most victim children of sexual violence live in poverty stricken areas of the Sub City; dwell in slum villages and overcrowded houses where their wellbeing is at risk. And this is the feature of several developing countries, where urban parents and children frequently bear the extra burdens of absolute poverty; insecurity of tenure, and poor or nonexistent infrastructure, as well as insufficient social, education, and health service (Blanck, 1994).

The findings of the study also depicts most victims of sexual and other forms of violence came from dysfunctional family where by conflicts of spouses are common or victim children lost one of their parents due to divorce or death.And this confirms that the harmful impact of social change influence and weaken family solidarity and functioning .As a result, failure to carry out its responsibilities to provide appropriate socialization ,fostering



## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

and protection to their children bring an overwhelming consequence on the family in general and children in particular(Debebe,2006).

The study reveal that psychological violence is among the most prevalent forms of violence in the Sub City .This supports the findings of the study undertaken by African Child Policy Forum (ACPF) ,in which of all children participated in the study, more than half of them experience psychological or emotional abuse in Ethiopia (ACPF,2014).

The study revealed homosexual act against children is increasing in the Sub City even if the probability of underreporting of homosexual act is very high due to the relatively intact traditional cultures, beliefs and public attitude where sex between the same sex is considered forbidden or abnormal (Debebe, 2006).Violence against children may not be reported for various reasons, and economic dependencies of victim children up on perpetrators may holdback them from reporting. And this correlates with the finding of the national survey undertaken in Tanzania in which, of all participants involved, half of the victims did not tell anyone about the violence they experienced (United Republic of Tanzania, 2011).

The findings of the study reveal sexual abuse against children is increasing due to exposure to pornographic images as a result of globalization .Thus nowadays the nature , patterns or trends of crimes are highly related to the environmental factors associated with business and flow of capital ,manufacturing industries, technology, access to new knowledge causing social differentiations (Doherty,2002).

As to the socio demographic background of perpetrators of those reported VAC, the findings of the study depicts young individuals were dominant in committing violence against children compared to adults. And this validates the finding that majority of perpetrators of sexual abuse against male children found to be under aged (Debebe, 2007).

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

Regarding the perpetrators' relationship with the victim, most perpetrators of child abuse were individuals who are authorized to take care of them including parents, relatives, neighbours, friends and teachers. And this supports the findings of other researchers that perpetrators of child violence are most often individuals the child knows and trusts (ACPF, 2014; Debebe, 2007; Belay, 2006; IFSO: 2003; Mekonen & Weigers, 2011).

Therefore boundaries should also be preserved between the family and the outside world to protect children from violence caused by non-family members. The boundary should be neither excessively rigid not to create seclusion for the family nor poorly defined to allow non-family members to float in and out of the family which aggravates children's vulnerability to various forms of abuse (Tower, 2000, p.23).

The findings of the study indicated individuals who are below grade 12 were dominant perpetrators of violence against children. This indicates criminal behaviour is more reflected on individuals with low or negligible levels of education. Regarding their employment status, unemployed individuals were principal perpetrators of violence against children compared to employed perpetrators. Thus adverse social circumstances, joblessness and poor prospects for the future can be factors to get involved in socially undesirable or illicit activities (Sakalauskas, 1999).

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATION AND SOCIAL WORK IMPLICATIONS**

#### **5.1 Conclusion**

The study reveals the most prevalent forms of violence perpetrated against children in Kirkos Sub City and trends of that violence. It also identifies the socio demographic background of individuals who get involved in perpetrating violence against children. Moreover the study depicted challenges of law enforcing institutions in addressing child violence.

In terms of volume a sum of 224 and a total of nine forms of violence against children were reported to Kiroks Sub City's child protection unit from September 2013- August 2015). Corporal punishment, rape and emotional violence are the most prevalent forms of violence perpetrated against children in kirkos Sub City.

Corporal punishment is practiced in the Sub City as a means of child disciplining at home and in school. Even if the statistical data depicts corporal punishment is the most prevalent form of violence in the Sub City, it is not explicitly outlawed in Ethiopia.

Sexual violence is also widespread in the sub city, and the living standard of most children in the sub city makes them vulnerable to sexual abuses. Children in the Sub City experience emotional violence in their daily lives. For instance sexual harassment against girls is common in the sub city though emotional violence against children including sexual harassment is not legally prohibited in the country.

Since numerical data does not demonstrate the precise intensity of violence against children in the Sub City, the study reveals factors for underreporting of violence against children. Those factors include lack of public awareness about legal protection of child right; failure to recognize all forms of violence except sexual abuse; economic dependency of victims up on perpetrators; losing trust in the justice system; settling the issue of violence

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

using arbitration; fearing revenge from perpetrators and the desire to maintain the smooth relationship with perpetrators.

According to the finding of the study, trends of violence against children fluctuate during the three year period and the possibility of increment in terms of reporting of violence against children is expected due to various efforts taken to encourage reporting. Regarding the socio demographic background of perpetrators, the study reveals young, married and unemployed individuals with lower educational status were more involved in perpetrating violence against children. In addition, shortage of trained personnel; technical and financial constraint; lack of public awareness on legal protection of child right; lack of coordination and gaps in existing legal framework are identified as challenges of law enforcing institutions in addressing child violence.

### **5.2 Recommendation and Implications for Social Work Practice**

The findings of this research have a number of implications for social work practitioners, policy makers and researchers. Firstly, comprehensive and qualified victim survey should be carried out to obtain the precise magnitude of child violence in the sub city as statistical data has its own limitation. Further research can be undertaken to investigate the causes for the instability of trend of child abuse in the Sub City.

Secondly, educating and disseminating of information on child abuse and its consequence to the public in general using mass media is advisable. Moreover, Non- violent child disciplining alternatives should be promoted through arranging awareness creation campaign involving all stake holders including parents or guardians and school communities.

Thirdly, all legal provisions dealing with child violence but found scattered under different chapters of the criminal law should be compiled together. Moreover, the existing legal framework addressing child violence has to be revised to address all forms of violence including corporal punishment and psychological violence.

## **Running Head: Exploring Forms...**

Fourthly adequate technical and financial resources must be allocated to law enforcers for addressing child violence. And Krkos Sub City's Child Protection Units should also be equipped with the essential office facilities, and the child abuse investigation process should be supported with modern technology. There must be a data management supported with data base by which a comprehensive data about child violence has to be archived and be accessible to users.

In addition a child- friendly violence report receiving mechanism should be developed in the Sub City's child protection unit. Furthermore a sustainable capacity building training should be provided to child abuse investigators and prosecutors to upgrade their knowledge and skill in investigating child violence.

As working for vulnerable group and alleviating poverty are core values of social work, social workers should manage and take part in organizing awareness creation campaigns on violence against children. Moreover, social workers should improve the living standard of vulnerable children in the Sub city through building the economic capacity of the community living under poverty.

At last, children's own participation is pivotal in addressing child abuse, but their physical and mental incapacity inhibit them from bringing their issue in to concern. In order to act in such a manner they need to be empowered and among the most important tasks of social workers empowerment takes greater share. Thus, they should work towards empowering children to speak for themselves.

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**APPENDICES**

**Appendix A: Consent Form**

I am MistirieDessie . I am studying forMastersdegree at Addis Ababa University, School of Social Work .Now I am conducting a research on the title Exploring Forms and Trends of Violence against Children in kirkos sub city for partial fulfilment of my Masters degree, and the purpose of the research is purely an academic. The interview will be conducted based on your free will and consent, since it is a voluntary one, you can withdraw at any time whenever you feel not comfortable or no more interested to be part of the interview .All private issues disclosed throughout the interview will be kept confidential, and all the instrument which will be used to record the interview will be stored with due care until they damaged permanently. Since your response is a key ingredient for the research’s output, you are requested to respond genuinely.

Thanks in advance!

Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewee \_\_\_\_\_

Signature Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix B: Interview Guide**

**General Background**

**Date of interview** \_\_\_\_\_

**Socio-Demographic information**

**Gender** \_\_\_\_\_

**Age** \_\_\_\_\_

**Educational Level** \_\_\_\_\_

**Occupation** \_\_\_\_\_

1. What types of Violence are being committed against children? What do you think the vulnerability factors for that violence?
2. What do you think about the trend of Violence against children? Is it rising or declining? Why?
3. What kinds of challenges do law enforcing institutions face in addressing child violence? What do you suggest to tackle those challenges?
4. What kinds of individuals get involved in perpetrating violence against children? Do you have any observation about their socio economic background /Age, educational, marital and employment status/? Why?

**Appendix: C Violence against Children Reported to Kirkos Sub City Police Station**

**From September, 2013 to August, 2015**

**Person completed \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_**

No	Form of Violence	Year		
		2013	2014	2015
1	Rape	18	20	25
2	Attempt of Rape	6	12	7
3	Psychological violence	16	4	0
4	Abandonment	6	4	7
5	Sexual Harassment	2	9	5
6	Homosexual Act	3	0	2
7	Corporal punishment	28	18	30
8	Labour Exploitation	0	0	1
9	Infanticide	0	0	1

**Appendix D: The socio Demographic Characteristics of Perpetrators of Violence against  
Children Reported to Kirkos Sub City Child Protection Unit from  
September, 2013 to August, 2015**

**Person completed \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_**

Age				Educational status				
9-13 Year	16-18 Year	19-30 Year	Above 31year	Illiterate	1-6 grade	7-8 grade	9-12 grade	>12 grade
0	1	102	58	0	47	0	74	40

Marital status		Employment status	
Married	Not Married	Employed	Unemployed
136	25	68	93