

**THE SITUATION OF SCAVENGING CHILDREN
ON
THE WASTE DUMPING SITES OF ADDIS ABABA**

A MASTER'S THESIS
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Abstract

This research is conducted on the situation of scavenging children on the biggest waste dumping site of Addis Ababa. Currently there are more than 458 scavenging children with the age range of 4 – 18 years old. While we have such big number of vulnerable children who are scavenging on the waste dump site, waste is dumped by anyone with no control mechanism. So, the researcher has made an attempt to investigate the impact of such uncontrolled waste disposal practice, the psychosocial impact of being scavenging children, their group dynamic, family background, problems and causes of scavenging, risk factors including the possibility of being exposed to hazardous chemicals including lead, and radio active elements, laws and regulation related to children and waste management and the policy gaps, poor waste disposal practice and its adverse effect, on the life of children. As a result of this, it is found that the life of the children is at absolute risk because of higher possibility for exposure to hazardous chemicals and vector of diseases. The policy gaps with reluctant position of governmental institutions are identified. Important and affordable as well as applicable recommendations, policy alternatives, and operational suggestions are given in this research work including laws ratification, institutional strengthening, start up of new projects for psychosocial rehabilitation and preventive intervention on the site are suggested. At the end the implication of the problem to the social work profession is also mentioned.

INTRODUCTION

This research investigates the situation of hundreds of school age children and youths who are scavenging food, clothing, and other marketable waste products to escape from starvation and death at the place the local people call Koshie (meaning dirty or waste), here in metropolitan; Addis Ababa. These children are forgotten for the last so many years and life has continued as some thing normal in the waste dumping site without anyone's intervention to improve the situation. The research also calls governmental and non governmental organizations, and the private sector for further intervention to improve the situation. Scavenging on such a waste dumping site is full of risk and particularly affects the well being of children. Hence, to disclose the situation and to improve the living condition of the children an immediate intervention is necessary. To this effect, this research is to contribute information to the readers including policy makers and policy implementers.

The research is unique in its nature. Other available studies focus more on waste management practice rather than the most vulnerable human group who are children involved in waste landfill for scavenging. To the best knowledge of the researcher, the work done in the area is little and not as such broad.

The term scavenging children is used in this research work. There are other synonyms names such as trash pickers, garbage or waste collectors etc. However, all the literature used in this research work and as witnessed in the experience of Latin America, Asia, and Africa, the universal name for people working on waste collection or pick wastes for personal consumption or for recycling are called scavengers or rag pickers in English language (Medina, 1997). The term is also used in this research.

Scavengers are humans who are looking for waste materials, which could be eaten or sold for recyclers from the waste disposals. Since this research work uses literature from international readers and resources, the researcher uses the universally known term; scavenging, scavenger/s, and scavenging children. Similarly, to identify children from the whole scavenging population, the term scavenging children is used particularly for this group of scavengers.

1.1 Addis Ababa and its Waste Dumping Site

The waste dumping site is located at the Southwestern part of Addis Ababa in *Nefas-silk lafto* Sub City, which is the biggest waste dumping site of the city. Hence, this research is designed to investigate the situation of the children in this particular place and identifies the risks and recommends some risk averting measures.

According to Environmental Development Action in Ethiopia (ENDA Ethiopia), which is the Ethiopian branch of Environmental Development Action in the Third World, Addis Ababa unlike other African cities of formerly colonized countries, is characterized by its spontaneous growth as an indigenous city with very little impact from external forces. The city began to develop as a political, economic and cultural centre in the years after its founding. Services such as piped water, electric light, better employment opportunities and other facilities attracted migrant populations from other parts of the country. As a result of this, the high rate of rural-urban migration created problems of unemployment and congestion on the existing inadequate social services in Addis Ababa.

Geographically, Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia, was founded in 1887 by Etegie Tayitu Bitul, the wife of emperor Menelik II. It is located in the central highlands of Ethiopia; covering an area of 530 km² with an elevation ranging from 2000-2800m above

sea level. Its topography is constituted by hills, valleys, rivers and streams. The temperature is fairly constant throughout the year, with variations between 20 to 25°C. The average rainfall is 1200mm per year, with the major rains occurring between July and September (ENDA Ethiopia, 1999).

According to the projection made by the Central Statistical Authority (CSA) of Ethiopia (1999), currently Addis Ababa has an estimated total population of 2,973,000, which consists of 1,428,000 (48.03%) males and 1,545,003 (51.97%) females. The city accommodates 24.24% of the total urban population in Ethiopia. Other sources give higher estimates (3.5 - 4 million). However, the 1984 population census gave 2,112,737 as a total population of that time. This shows that the population has increased by 29% over two decades, at an annual growth rate of 2.92% for a year. According to the National Population Office (NOP), population density reaches 632 inhabitants in the slum. 25% of the Addis Ababa's population is below 15 years old, 72% of the total population is from 15 – 64 years old and the remaining 3% is above 65 years old. In terms of ethnic groups, 48% of the city population is Amharas, 19% are Oromos, Gurages are 13.5% and then Tigrians were 7.6% in year 2005. 82% of the population was Christian orthodox, 12.7% were Muslims, and the remainders were followers of other various religions and beliefs (NOP, 1999).

The literacy rate in Addis Ababa is 83%. Net enrolment ratios in primary, junior and senior secondary school are 73, 35 and 36% respectively in total, with a very similar representation for both boys and girls.

Regarding the economic aspects, according to the projection made for the year 2005, the working age population of Addis Ababa is 71.8% of the whole population with the age range of 15 - 64 years. This includes both men and women and all persons engaged

in household chores, food preparation, house cleaning, daily labor, taking care of children, collecting fire wood. Income is below the poverty line for 60% of the households (NOP, 1999). The biggest employer is the public service sector, which employs 42% of the economically active population. 67% of Ethiopia's industries are found in Addis Ababa, but the sector accounts for only 13% of the city's economically active population. According to the sample survey conducted by the CSA and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, the informal sector, which is defined as household type of establishments are mainly engaged in marketed production and employed 166,405 people in 1996. This includes those small business companies or cooperatives, which are not registered, have no license or appropriate book of accounts. These represent 26% of economically active population of Addis Ababa. According to ENDA Ethiopia's (1999) citation made to the work of Bigston and Negatu, one-fifth of the total income is shared by 63% of the city's population, while less than 2% share another quintile.

Women and children engaged in small economic activities, which are the main source of income for 41% of the households belonging to the poorest segment of the society (Christian Relief and Development Association, 1997). As a matter of fact, the population age considered to be "economically active" starts from age 10.

Since Addis Ababa is the capital city of Ethiopia, modern economic activities, social and infrastructural services are found to be relatively in a better condition than other cities of Ethiopia. However, the existing socio-economic and infrastructural development of Addis Ababa is too slow to meet the demands of the increasing population due to both natural growth and rural-urban migration (ENDA Ethiopia, 1999). The rapid population growth and huge influx of rural migrants to Addis Ababa has put a severe stress on services

and infrastructures. According to the 1994 population census, 4.4% of the houses have tap water in their own private compounds. More than 45% obtain drinking water from water vendors, outside of their compounds. The remaining population has tap water service within their commonly shared compounds for collective use.

Administratively, in 1991 Ethiopia was divided into 14 Regional States. Addis Ababa, which is located in Oromia regional State (Region 4) was granted its own autonomous administrative status, and named Region 14. During that time it was including 23 Farmers' Kebele Associations from its neighboring state of Oromia known as Addis Ababa rural in statistical documents. Currently, as an autonomous regional entity, the city is vested with legislative, executive and judicial powers. It is governed by Addis Ababa City Council. The city is divided into 10 Sub cities and 100 Kebeles excluding those 23 rural Kebeles. The Kebele is the smaller administrative unit of the government in Ethiopia both for rural and urban. *Nefas-Silk Lafto* Sub city is one of the 10 sub cities, where the biggest open waste dumping site is found at Southeast of Addis Ababa. This is the area where this research was conducted.

According to the information obtained from Health and Life Supporting Development Organization (HLSDO), which is a local NGO operating with the children in the area, about 500 children were scavenging on the open waste dumping site and on garbage trucks one year ago. Currently, HLSDO has registered 458 scavenging children. These children are living and spending much of their daily life in the same area. The majority of the children including girls are scavenging on the waste dumping site for everything that seems important for their life. Besides scavenging on the dumpsite, the

grown boys run after the garbage trucks and climb over the trucks and start scavenging the wastes before it is dumped.

1.2 The Research Objectives

Since this research is dealing with the over all situations of scavenging children, its objectives are to identify the existing condition of scavenging children, their problems and causes, and the consequence of poor waste dumping practice on the waste dumping site of *Koshie*. Additionally an attempt is made to identify policy gaps, to provide research based policy alternatives with operational considerations.

1.3 Review of Literature on Poor Waste Dumping Practice and Scavenging Children

With regard to the literature, the researcher has taken opportunities, to review some important works on the issue collected from various sources through the contact he made with the visiting professors who came from America, Europe, Middle East, and Australia and found research materials with the experience of several developing countries including Far east Asian and Latin-American countries. In this regard, this research work seems complete with cross cultural backgrounds, practices, and perspectives of the international community.

Waste and its management are global issues and a threat to all countries of the world while human population is increasing at an alarming rate (Susan & Zenaida, 1992) particularly in developing countries like Ethiopia. Scientific and technological advancements are growing fast in developed countries. In turn, these have made human existence more complex and brought increasing number of industries and wastes. In poor countries, there is growth in industrialization and urbanization with poor waste management practices. Consequently, wastes are produced in large quantities. These huge

quantities of waste need special handling so that it does not adversely affect the human existence. Waste is not only trash materials taken from ones home. It includes hazardous chemical and radio active elements that could cause serious health problems. Any thing that affects environment directly or indirectly can make an imbalance of nature and cause unexpected results in the environment. Most of the literature considers only waste management, recycling, dumping etc and its economic role. In the process of waste management the most important aspect, the children are ignored.

When we talk of waste management, we may raise the issue of poor waste management practice, which is common for developing countries. In such countries wastes are dumped in open field at some corners of cities. As a result of this poor waste management practice, no one thinks of recycling, proper handling, appropriateness of dumping sites. Children are prime victims of such poor waste management and experience contamination and illness, paralysis, blindness, malnourishment. They also suffer from trauma due to being insulted, neglected, abused, and abandoned (Medina, 1997).

Throughout cities in the world, particularly, in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, thousands of people survive by scavenging materials from the waste stream. These people recover materials to sell for reuse or recycle, as well as diverse items like food for their own consumption. Those individuals are generally, known as scavengers. But, scavengers could have different names depending on the local language on the place where they work, and on the items they collect (Constance, 2004). For example, they are called *yekoshie lijoch* in Addis Ababa, which means children of garbage or in some rare cases *tinb ansawoch*; means vultures or dead body collectors. In Ethiopian context and in developing countries

generally, scavenging is seen as a low status occupation and scavengers are disparaged and called derogatory names and socially marginalized.

1.3.1 The Problem of Scavenging Children

Hundreds of children and adults pick through fields of rotting garbage for food and bits of metal and plastic to sell. Their limbs are darkened by burning trash and dusty wind. The dumpsite is home, work place, play ground, and everything for scavenging children. Disease, danger, broken bottles and old tires, grazing cattle, dogs, cats, screeching bulldozers and loaders, and smoke that often obscure the sun, are seen together and seem their life long companions in waste dumping sites like *Koshie*.

It may be hard for many people to imagine what it would be like to live in such conditions, but that is the daily reality for hundreds of scavenging children who live at dumpsites and garbage collection points. Many of the residents of the waste dumpsite make their living by digging through the influx of trash, scavenging for plastic, cardboard, paper, wood, glass, metal and other items that can be eaten or sold to recycling agents. The meager earnings made by one person are not enough to buy food even for a day. Families are forced to climb the hills of garbage each day, hoping that together they can earn enough to feed everyone in the family. Children as young as four years old must work in their daily struggle for survival (Svenningsen, 2000) in third world countries like Ethiopia.

In such struggles, the whole family moves to the waste dumpsite and spends the whole day. The children live without education, care, affection, and guidance of parents. They have no time at all to manage family. No time for disciplining children. The children experience abuse from nearly everyone. The community treats them with contempt, and the older scavengers and street children brutalized them. They are easy victims to drug dealers,

who turn them into addicts and force them to peddle drugs. They are exploited by parents as well as by others. In short, these children are inadequately clothed, fed, or loved; they are victims of family violence, including physical and sexual abuses. They are unloved, undernourished, underweight and uneducated. Society often tries to forget them, or ignore them, or sometimes even deny that they exist (Svenningsen, 2000).

Pringle (1974) has grouped the psychosocial needs of children into four main areas: the need for love and security; the need for new experiences; the need for praise and recognition; and the need for responsibility. If these needs are frustrated, children may be at risk for emotional and behavioral problems. Because of the prevailing poverty no one fulfills these needs of the scavenging children.

The International Conference on Environmental Threats to the Health of Children, Hazards and Vulnerability (ICETHCHV) declares that there are various health and environment related risks for scavengers, including exposure to lead, mercury, pesticides and organic pollutants, and even there is a possibility of exposure to radiation (Reports and Documents of ICETHCHV, 2002).

Scavenging in waste dumping sites, could result in exposure to lead that may cause anemia and nervous system disorders in children under five years of age, and has been found to be correlated to subnormal IQ. A researcher found that exposure to lead is associated with antisocial behavior, low birth weight of infants with lower parental intelligence. According to another researcher who participated on the conference, children exposed to lead have significantly greater odds of developing delinquent behavior with higher possibility of school drop outs, lower IQ scores, short attention spans and poor language skills (Reports and Documents of ICETHCHV, 2002).

There are also a number of ways in which children and adults may be exposed to lead. Most children who suffer from lead poisoning are exposed to invisible lead dust that is released when older paint is peeling damaged or disturbed, or by eating chips of lead paint. Drinking water that comes from lead pipes or lead soldered fittings can expose children to lead, as breathing air contaminated by the lead smelting, refining and manufacturing industries (Reports and Documents of ICETHCHV, 2002).

Tobacco smoke contains some lead, and leaded glass ceramics, eating contaminated food grown on soil containing lead, or food covered utensils. Lead containing dust is another source of exposure to lead. A study by researchers at Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health, found that lead exposure on the job can cause progressive declines in memory and learning abilities. Another study, from Case Western Reserve University and University Hospitals of Cleveland, Ohio, demonstrated that people who have worked in jobs with high levels of lead exposure are up to 3.4 times more likely to develop Alzheimer's disease. Research suggests that over 40% of the global burden of disease happened due to environmental risk factors on children under five that constitute about 10% of the world's population (Reports and Documents of ICETHCHV, 2002).

As stated by WHO representative on the International Conference on Environmental Threats to the Health of Children, Hazards and Vulnerability, 3 million children die every year because of problems related to unsafe drinking water, indoor air pollution, accidents, injuries and poisonings. 1.3 million Children under five in developing countries died from diarrhea diseases caused by unsafe water supply, poor sanitation and hygiene in year 2000. According to the statements made by WHO, on the same international conference, 60% of the 2.2 million deaths of the year in children under five

are caused by acute respiratory infections, which is associated with indoor air pollution caused by the burning of biomass fuels in small, confined spaces, lack of adequate heating and/or other unsanitary living conditions. Accidental injuries – including road traffic accidents, drowning, burns and poisonings - are the causes of over 400,000 deaths per year in children under five (Reports and Documents of ICETHCHV, 2002). In this regard, scavenging children have poor housing conditions, which do not have access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, and poor parental care. So that they are the ones who are exposed to the problems related to environmental contamination, pollution, poisoning, and risks related to wastes in their home and environment where they scavenge, play, and work.

Since children are still growing and their immune systems and detoxification mechanisms are not yet fully developed, they are especially vulnerable to chemical, physical and biological hazards carried by air, water and soil. In industrialized as well as developing countries, the normal growth, the health and well being of children is threatened by unsafe food and chemicals in household products and consumer goods (Reports and Documents of ICETHCHV, 2002).

Open waste dumps throughout Southeast Asia have serious health hazards for scavengers, who are often children. Everywhere, where there is a garbage hill, in poor nation of Asia like Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, there are also hundreds and thousands of scavenging children. These countries are known as the most hazardous countries.

According to the World Health Organization, economic development has a higher priority than the need for environmental protection. That is why, waste becomes a serious

threat for human being particularly in the developing countries (Levering, 2002) like Ethiopia.

Global estimates state that more than one quarter of the global burden of disease can be attributed to environmental risk factors. Over 40% of the environmental disease burden falls on children under 5 years of age. The growing number of diseases in children linked to exposure of contaminated environment including water and food borne diseases and acute respiratory infections, asthma, cancer, injuries, certain birth defects and developmental disabilities. Exposure to contaminated environment is increasing in many countries and new emerging risks are being identified that more and more children are being exposed to unsafe environments where they are conceived and born, where they live, learn, play, work and grow. Unique and permanent adverse health effects can occur when the children are exposed to environmental pollutants during the periods of special vulnerability. In developing countries environmental health problems affecting children are exacerbated by poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, indoor and outdoor air pollution, lack of access to safe water and sanitation, exposure to hazardous chemicals, accidents and injuries (Medina, 1997).

As a result of such exposure to risky and contaminated environment, the life expectancy of scavengers reduces at an alarming rate. Medina (1997) cited Castillo's work and disclosed that in Mexico City the life expectancy of scavengers remained at 35 years, while the larger population is 67. In Port Said, Egypt the infant mortality rate is very high, and it is one death in every three children before reaching year one for the scavenging community called Zabbaleen (Serb, 1982). In Cairo one in four babies born in the scavenging community dies before celebrating their first birthday (Meyer, 1987).

Medina (1997) cited the work of Adam and his associates and disclosed that in Manila more than 35 diseases have been identified in the scavenging community and slums including diarrhea, typhoid fever, cholera, dysentery, TB, anthrax, poliomyelitis, skin disorders, pneumonia, and malaria.

While considering the Ethiopian situation, the children from the poor segments of the society are highly exposed to hazardous environment including those who are scavenging and street children and generally children who are living under difficult circumstances. Among these, scavenging children of Koshie waste dumping site are exposed to a hazardous environment due to scavenging for the whole day. This situation exposes them to all kinds of health, social, psychological and economic problems at their younger age in the absence of well developed strong preventive immune and detoxification systems.

All these happen due to poor waste management practice and unemployment, rural –urban migration, inadequate child rearing practice, insufficient income, and poverty as a whole.

1.3.2 Causes of Children's Scavenging

Children's scavenging has at least nine main reasons, which could be classified under push and pull factors. Insufficient family income, helplessness or homelessness, inadequate or poor child rearing practice, deterioration of kin-based or traditional support system, streetism, family pathology, and societal stress associated with rapid industrialization and urbanization are the main reasons that directly or indirectly related to form children scavengers. These are the push factors, which makes children scavengers. In addition to these reasons, the extended use of waste and psychological problems are the

pull factors that pull children from their home to waste dumpsite and attract children to become scavenging children.

All the push and the pull factors are shared factors or related factors with streetism. Being found on street and becoming street children is the major source of scavenging children group. All street children, directly or indirectly are involved in scavenging, particularly in crisis time where there is no means to maintain life. Street children are the ones who are scavenging wastes from garbage boxes found on community garbage collection sites, and when hardship comes, which means when there is no business like begging and vendor, on street to feed oneself, they go to the waste dumpsite for scavenging.

Insufficient Income: Desperate families often rely on their children and encourage them to gather more wastes from dumpsites in order to maximize their earning and maintain family life. Some families could not survive without every member's contribution. Poor parents cannot meet the needs of a growing family. This forces children to go to waste dumping sites to scavenge, with the aim of increasing family income and maximizing its purchasing power (Le Roux et al., 1998).

The experience in Rwanda shows also homelessness or being an orphan as one of the causes for being street children (Veale & Dona, 2003) and working as scavengers. The prolonged civil war, emigration, imprisonment of parents, and poverty in general contribute to these problems. No one is there to fulfill parental roles due to the fact that their parents either died or emigrated. Therefore, they became street children, and for their daily consumption the children do street businesses like begging as well as scavenging. So, in

Rwanda homelessness or being an orphan is one reason for becoming a scavenger (Veale and Dona, 2003).

Poor and inadequate child rearing practice: It is one of the many reasons for being scavenger as a push factor that forces the child to go away from home and join street life and scavenging on streets and dumpsites. According to the data obtained from the research carried out in Yaoundé, Cameroon, there is high positive relationship existing between home-rearing patterns and the child found in the street. Authoritarian parenting, which involves 62.86% of parents, is revealed as the major factor responsible for children running away from home (Matched, 1999). Furthermore, being found as street children by it self is a fertile condition to be scavenging and in the absence of wastes on the street to be scavenged. Street children go to towards garbage dumpsites (Matched, 1999) and join scavenging groups.

The expanding use of paper, plastic, glass packaging in food and other consumer products and parallel growth of industries that recycle these materials and unemployment has led thousands of people to begin garbage picking full or part-time (Matched, 1999),

Economic and social upheavals have led to the breakdown of traditional family structures and values. The reduction in family size, from extended to nuclear, has led to the availability of fewer child-support resources. Family disruption, in the form of death, abandonment, separation, and divorce, has shrunk family size still further, often resulting in poor, single-parent often mother-headed households. This leaves children vulnerable, and with the general absence of community and governmental support, they have few options in times of crisis. One option is becoming scavenger on streets and waste dumpsites. This is the result of urbanization, more generally modernization. Modernization is the major cause

to dismantle the traditional or kin based support system. Hence, children become helpless and homeless. So that they are forced to go to waste dumping sites for scavenging in search of food, clothes, shelter ...etc (Soda, 1996).

In circumstances where there is alcoholism, physical or sexual abuse, or neglect, children are motivated to leave home, or may even be driven out. Other reasons for turning to the streets include overcrowding, social disruption caused by frequent relocation (migrant labor), as well as parent-child friction in reconstituted families. Family pathology, which is linked to socioeconomic factors, also drives many children from home (Le Roux et al., 1998). According to Swart (1990), street children in Guatemala, as in Peru, may have been abandoned or left home because of physical or sexual abuse, poverty, or general parental neglect. Such push factors leads the child to street and then to scavenging site, where there is little chance at last to get food and shelter with children of similar identities.

Problems associated with boredom, humiliation and failure experienced by children in school are some of the psychological factors. Others are drawn to the streets to be "part of the action," or are motivated to seek a better life than the bitter one to which they would be destined at home (Le Roux et al., 1998).

In industrialized countries, chronic unemployment accompanying economic downturns are causes of scavenging (Medina, 1997). In agricultural societies, small landholding and natural calamities may be blamed for displacement and migration of huge families who become scavengers in urban areas.

Summary of Push and Pull Factors of Scavenging

Push Factors	Pull Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Insufficient Income ❖ Helplessness or homelessness ❖ Streetism ❖ Poor or inadequate child rearing practice ❖ Deterioration of kin based or traditional support system ❖ Family pathology ❖ Societal stress associated with rapid industrialization and urbanization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The extended use of wastes making it a source of income ❖ Psychological problems due to observing excessive freedom their friends do exercise

1.3.3 Characteristics of Scavenging Children

Scavenging children often seem younger than their chronological age, due to acute and chronic malnutrition, which has an impact on their growth (Le Roux et al., 1998).

The majority of scavengers found on the dumpsite are males due to the fact that females are generally more protected and used for domestic work. Large numbers of scavenging children, who are forced to go to dumpsite because of economic difficulties, are between 6 and 17 years old and are scavenging for the whole day to supplement family income. Female scavengers who have been sexually abused often turn to prostitution rather than continuing as scavenger, while males are prone to violence, including rape (Silva, 1991).

Children merely working on the dumpsite in order to supplement family income and who return home regularly are loyal and have a positive relationship with family members when compared with permanent children of the streets. Many scavenging

children have unfavorable family histories. They often come from families of the lower income group (Le Roux et al., 1998).

Although there is high level of school dropouts, most would like to go back to school in order to secure a better future. Usually, they desire educational opportunities to improve their chances of obtaining a stable job, but their prospects are dim due to lack of competent skill and academic achievements. The longer they spend on the dumping site the worse their prognosis for educational achievement (Le Roux et al., 1998).

When the abandoned scavenging children, those who are homeless come together, they develop a companionship system, which replaces the family as a source of emotional and economic support. The group offers protection, support, friendship, and solidarity. Its members generally show strong loyalty to each other. These neglected scavenging children who are treated as dirty and unwelcomed are often condemned by the indifference or hostility of others; they struggle to support themselves and have low self-esteem as a result of their negative experiences (Le Roux et al., 1998).

Scavenging children also experience neglect, abuse, while they are out of the scavenging children's group. Drug addiction and various medical problems are also common in scavenging children's group (Le Roux et al., 1998).

The psychological characteristics of scavenging children have been identified as the need for freedom, and autonomy. Scarf et al. (1986) have described this as "freedom from institutions, freedom of movement, freedom to choose activities and daily rhythms, and freedom from commitments" (p. 272) in relation to street children, which is also similar to the group of scavenging children. Although the emotional sacrifice involved in achieving these freedoms may be high and the value placed on them may, in part, be a defensive

denial of that cost, the exercise of such freedoms does have implications for sense of autonomy and self-reliance. In the overall development of children, these may be extremely important attributes. The need for love, as well as for security, is a powerful motivator of behavior (Brandt et al., 1990). Alienated youths, experiencing harsh social conditions, may seek alternative ways to fulfill these needs, including running away to street and dumpsites for scavenging. Young people also desire autonomy. For many children, freedom from adult control is the most important attribute of their adopted way of life.

1.3.4 Patterns of Waste Management and the Involvement of Children

Waste management has lots of patterns depending on the skill of the waste collectors. In addition to this, waste management goes through various processes again depending on the skills of garbage collectors, technology used, the type of waste and the existing waste management policy of countries. According to Medina (1997) there are four major types of waste management patterns.

First the pattern begins by waste separation at household level or at initial waste generating place. At least in developing countries like Ethiopia, waste separation is not as such a well developed practice due to lower level of skills for recycling. For instance, newspapers are sold for packaging to shop owners. Used cloths are given to poor relatives or sold. Then the trash swept out and stored in waste basket at household level. Here the children are the ones who do the cleaning and removing the waste to the waste basket at least in developing countries like Ethiopia. If the waste is in large quantities, big garbage boxes are used to store waste till garbage collectors come and remove the waste using pushcarts or other means of waste collection.

Second, the waste stored in waste basket found at household level is collected, by garbage collectors using garbage boxes and transported to garbage collection points before it is taken by municipality sanitation workers. Garbage collection points are a central place assigned for a given neighborhood groups where the Municipality's big garbage collection boxes are placed for communal use to store wastes. Even at this stage waste separation continues by garbage collectors according to the commercial and industrial need of the buyers. And then the trash goes to the garbage collection points. In this process of garbage transportation to the collection point, those who can not afford the cost for garbage collectors are still using children for dumping the household waste to the garbage collection point. Since the children are working with little payment, during waste separation process, they are the ones who are doing the majority of the work. They are carrying and transporting the waste and also doing the waste separation for reuse and recycling.

The third pattern is the transporting pattern, again depending on the level of development, the municipal sanitation workers clean the city and also transport garbage from the collection point and from companies to the waste dumping site. Transportation of waste to the dumpsite could take place in various ways. Some countries like Egypt, well organized garbage collectors are doing the whole patterns of waste management altogether starting from household waste collection to the end of waste separation and recycling processes while municipal sanitation workers are working side by side (Medina, 1997). During waste transportation, still waste separation goes on unlawfully by gang groups while the garbage trucks move to the dumpsite, gang scavengers jump on and climb over the truck and start scavenging.

The fourth pattern is dumping the waste at the site. This is the last pattern where the final and the major waste separation is carried out and ended up. This is the major pattern where many children are doing scavenging. In some Latin American Countries even the ash of the waste after it is burned is used for agricultural development (Medina, 1997). In the waste dumpsite children are the main actors in waste separation work. Since children are the major sources of cheap labor, and have no power to negotiate on their sales, they maximize the profit of the middle merchants who are those serving as a bridge between the children and the recyclers. This is also the actual practice of waste management pattern in Addis Ababa.

As clearly pointed out, scavenging takes place at all stages along the waste management system, by all scavengers including children. In all these tracks of the waste management pattern, children are forced to accept the workload, and to do the most stressful type of work, which are imposed by parents, older siblings, and employers.

1.3.5 Major Perspectives of Waste Management Practice

Concerning wastes, there are at least two major influential thoughts. On one hand, waste is believed to have various devastating effects on environment and human life in most developing countries where there is no adequate waste control policy, strategy, or planned activities for waste management in scientific and systematic ways. It is also the biggest challenge to maintain healthy society. As it has been seen in Asian countries, the damage caused by inappropriate waste handling is incalculable and unexpected. In this regard no one denies the minimal economic importance obtained from recycling, composting, and scavenging. But, in the developing countries where garbage collection,

processing, recycling are so backward, its adverse effect does not balance economic importance. This happened due to unplanned and poor waste management practices.

Garbage picking is among the most dangerous and socially marginal occupations. Through constant exposure to hazardous materials and toxic fumes at landfills, garbage scavengers face a high risk of injury and disease. Because of their association with trash, they tend to be ostracized. The result of such ostracism goes to the extent of prejudice, animosity and violence against scavengers. As it has been cited by Medina (1997), Anon disclosed that starting in early 1980s 'social cleansing' campaign carried out by organized groups in some Colombian cities and killed, kidnapped, and transported indigent individuals to countryside that they consider 'disposable' such as beggars, prostitutes, and scavengers. As cited by Medina (1997), Anon reported that only in the year of 1992 in one of the Colombian cities 40 scavengers were killed. As cited by Medina (1997), Anon witnessed that approximately 2,000 'disposable' individuals had been killed by the end of 1994 as a result of the social cleansing campaign in Colombia. From this, one could understand that waste scavenging is repulsive and atrocious in some countries.

Many garbage scavengers are illegal immigrants or recent migrants from rural areas (Meyer, 1987; Katz man, 1989).

In some cities, garbage scavengers also deal with criminal groups that control access to recycling middlemen and determine who can work around municipal dumps and other favored collection points. These criminal groups hold down the prices paid to scavengers, and they sometimes use violence or intimidation to enforce control of their waste dumping territories (Constance, 2004). This thought magnifies the adverse effect of waste on health, environment, and its social catastrophes related to crime and violence. In

general while considering such bad consequences of scavenging, wastes are seen as something bad and immoral to significant number of people.

However, for the other opponent viewers, waste is believed to be source of income, resources, inputs of industries, and agricultural productivity. According to Medina it is also considered as an area that renders vast employment opportunities and reliable coping mechanism to escape from poverty. For instance, in Brazil local companies recycled 87 percent of all the aluminum cans consumed in that country in the year 2002. According to the Brazilian Aluminum Association (ABAL), the total amount of recycled aluminum cans amounted to 121,100 tons, which was approximately 9 billion units in the year. ABAL estimated that some 150,000 Brazilians earned their living in 2002 by collecting aluminum cans. Also in Mexico, recycling business has become a significant source of income to scavengers (Constance, 2004). Even in some better off countries, like Egypt where wastes are managed in organized manner and sustainable way, scavenging is one of the profitable and sound areas of work. In Cairo, Egypt the well organized garbage collectors are earning three times more money than those of the civil servants of the country. This could happen if and only if waste is handled and managed in safe, sustainable, and civilized ways.

In well developed countries, there are also various social movements aimed at dignifying waste collection and recycling works, and to educate their society about the socio-economic benefits of scavengers and recyclers. This happened due to various reasons. First informal recycling generates real incomes for hundreds of thousands of people and thus helps to reduce poverty. Second, it provides a surprisingly efficient means of reusing valuable resources, reducing costs for domestic industries and improving economic competitiveness. Third, it reduces the amount of trash being dumped, thereby

cutting back on pollution and benefiting the environment. This thought is also widely accepted and an observable fact. Both of these popular perspectives are well recognized within the socio- economic contexts of the countries as developed and developing ones.

However, still no one points out children as a cardinal issue and as victims of waste both in industrialized and non industrialized countries. In all countries children are still prime victims related to wastes. In industrialized countries they are a good source of profit because of providing their labor cheaply. They are forced to work in garbage and recycling industries with minimal wage. In developing countries, where there is no such advanced recycling industries, they are the ones who spend the whole day in scavenging food, and other marketable wastes to sell them cheaply.

It is common to see many tragic impacts of wastes on human and environment because of its inadequate or poorly planned handling. The sudden appearance of the radioactive waste on municipal dumpsite of Thailand, the uncontrolled export of hazardous chemicals to Cambodia, and the collapse of the Palates waste dump mountain in Manila, Philippines are some of the tragic event that killed tens and abandoned in hundreds are good warning signals to the increasing number of waste related risky incidents (Andrews, 2000).

1.3.6 The Situation of Scavenging Children in Addis Ababa

To the knowledge of the researcher, as it has been said earlier, nothing was written as such on scavenging children of Ethiopia at least for official use. Most of the materials are on waste management. The annual statistical abstract of CSA (1995), shows that out of the total 54,939,000 people of Ethiopia in 1994, the children under 15 were 26,675,000

(48.6%). Among these children, 5,535,200, which means one in every 5 children are living under difficult circumstance. This figure includes scavenging children of Addis Ababa.

According to the Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA), the uncontrolled population boom without a corresponding level of economic growth heavily affected the overall progress of the people (1996), and accelerates the rural – urban migration. The ever increasing socio-economic problems, unemployment, and uncertainty of life put Ethiopia on the threshold of social disasters and incurable poverty-born diseases. MOLSA pointed out that the effect of this socio-economic disaster intensifies the severe problem of children, youth, women and the elderly, who belongs to the vulnerable segment of the society (1996). Among the children, the problem of street and scavenging children is getting worse.

According to the projection made by NOP (1999) for the year 2005, the children below 14 years old account about 25% of the whole population of Addis Ababa. This includes the homeless children who are about 5,962 in number and accounts for 0.28%. These are children who live throughout the city without a definite place of residence.

According to the information obtained from the focus group discussants, the scavenging children living around the dumpsite, the area which was allocated for the city waste dumping was out of the city just some 40 years ago. The establishment of the specialized hospital, which is All African Leprosy Education and Treatment hospital (ALERT) in the nearby area forced people who are affected by leprosy to make their residence and live nearby for continuing treatment. In the last 25 – 30 years due to the rapid growth of the population in the city and the availability of land for house construction with

free and low cost land of the area has attracted residents who are not people with leprosy. In the same years the establishment of the biggest Korie Military Recovery Center for patients and wounded soldiers made the area an important place for the homes of poor people by providing better employment and business opportunities. Also, in the last 15 years the area became highly important place of residence for the displaced soldiers, who have been living in and around their former recovery center. Since then, families and some unaccompanied children, many of whom were displaced from Eritrea due to the Ethio-Eritrean war and other orphans started to camp around in their small plastic shelters. Currently the area is also highly popular for internally displaced people having children. They are known as *Shebelaw or Komchie*, and they migrate from the Northwestern part of the country. As a result, the former waste dumping site of the city is encircled by a poor population.

This specific place of people with leprosy in the earlier time, and the name associated to this group of people, gradually was forgotten. Nowadays, the area is known as Korie in its earlier local name, or Koshie, which means dirty due to the presence of the biggest waste dumping site in the area. Its area is estimated about 50,000 m² of open field with the height of 3 – 20meters. It is full of waste dumped for the last 40 years. Since then the surrounding poor, orphaned, unaccompanied, neglected and abused children regardless of their sex, ethnic and religious backgrounds have been scavenging everything of any value on the site.

According to ENDA Ethiopia (1999), garbage reaching a dump in a developing country has already been well picked over: first, by workers at the point of origin (servants, children), then by street or pushcart scavengers who sift through the bins, next by the

official city sanitation workers as they load it on to garbage trucks. Then it is transported and dumped on a dumpsite. Once there, the children start scavenging for food, for the small valuable things like jewelry, or coins and for the plastic, scrap wire and broken glass which are bulky and bring a lower return. A series of buyers then receive and weigh the materials at the dumpsite, package them for sale, pull them down to the base of the dump, and then compress, store and later transport them to the ultimate recyclers, usually to Merkato. The problem for children doesn't occur, only in dumping site. From the very beginning, while wastes are collected and removed from home, children are the ones who are involving in waste collection and transportation to the garbage collection point. In this process, children are forced to work beyond their physical capacity and level of maturity at very early ages.

THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 The Methodology and Technique

In order to carry out this research, the researcher has used the descriptive method, particularly the exploratory method of research. An in depth interview was used as the research technique. To this effect, about 90 questions were prepared as an interview checklist under 12 major headings. These are questions related to demographic data, family background, housing, clothing, availability of food, educational situation, family social background, health related requirements, early childhood upbringing, personal engagement and experiences in scavenging, and their future orientations. While the interview check list was prepared, the potential readers were also considered. For instance questions related to tape recorder, TV and radio sets, number of windows and doors, areas of the room/s in the houses are related to this concern. According to the Ethiopian context the tape recorder, TV and radio sets are unthinkable to be found in scavengers home. But to show the situation of the children in comparison to scavengers of advanced western countries, such type of questions were added to the check list. When the check list was prepared, absence or fulfillments of basic needs of the children were taken as the major frame of reference. The participants were selected among the 458 registered scavenging children population through purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling technique is used to select the children with better capacity to provide adequate information, willingness, good representation of both boy and girl scavengers, and based on their experience of scavenging. In addition to this, a focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted with 5 parents of scavenging children. They were selected through availability sampling technique. The discussion with this group was held after the interview with the children

was completed. Basically, the FGD was conducted to ensure the reliability of the information given by the participant children, to get additional new information, and to include parents' views in the research. Information related to the availability of the waste and the dumping site, and absence of good modeling, which leads the children to another area of work in the area, was the outcome of FGD. A separate interview check list was also prepared for the FGD following the same procedures.

An interview was also conducted with concerned government officials to identify the policy environment and related issues. Since waste scavenging and related behaviors are the outcome of waste management, attempts were made to contact the three most involved government offices. These were the Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority, Addis Ababa Environmental Protection Authority, and Clean and Green Addis Ababa office, which is one of the big offices of Addis Ababa regional Administration. However, after several attempts, it was clear that Clean and Green Addis Ababa office wouldn't be willing to participate in the interview due to absence of the assigned public relation officer and closure of the information center. But, the two other offices were willing and gave important information about the policy environment and provided some documents including the environmental policy and proclamation.

Besides the interview and the FGD, observation was used to carryout this research. Data related to geography and topography of the site, the interaction among scavengers, their ways of communications and understandings are the result of this observation method. Notes were recorded and informal talks took place with the people found around the site. Prior observation and the informal talks were also used to develop the interview check lists.

2.2 Participants

The participants of the in-depth interview were 20 scavengers age 5 – 17. Among them 9 were females and 11 of them were males. They were selected from the list of the 458 scavenging children. In order to identify them as participants for this research, the researcher approached them through the local NGO known as Health and Life Supporting Development Organization (HLSDO). The workers who assisted the researcher know the children very well and work with them in the area. HLSDO was used as facilitator, observer, and representative of parents and guardians of the children since it is an agency working for them. The participants were selected by HLSDO as per the guidelines and the criteria given by the researcher. Criteria such as gender and ethnic composition, being between 4 and 18 years old, good communication ability and willingness to be interviewed were used. The participants are from four ethnic groups. Eight of them are Amharas, six Oromos, three Gurages, and three Tigres. Interviews were conducted at HLSDO's office. When the children reached at HLSDO's office for the interview, they were provided water for bathing and tea with loaf of bread to eat and rest before the beginning of the session. Then after the interview, the researcher paid each of them their daily maximum earning, which is Birr 15.00 as an incentive for their cooperation and for the time they spent with the researcher. The staff of HLSDO brought them to their office where the researcher was waiting for them with adequate preparation for one to one interview session in the presence of HLSDO's representatives, who are responsible for the children by the consent of their parents and guardians. All of the participants, the FGD discussants, and the key informants were involved in the research with their verbal consent.

2.3 The Research Procedures

Since the major data collection technique is an in-depth interview, an interview check list was prepared for the participant of the research. Focus Group discussion was also conducted with parents. The discussants were also selected in the same procedure that was used for children's selection. The concerned government officials and HLSDO's staffs were interviewed individually and separately. An interview was conducted with children, parents, concerned authorities, and professionals, to include their perspectives. Finally, the collected data was discussed and analyzed as presented. During the interview session, the children were not asked for their names, addresses and other specifics that could identify them. Their responses were also not recorded using electronic equipments like tape-recorded and photographs were not taken for the purpose of ensuring confidentiality. The researcher took notes during the interview on separate sheets of paper for each child.

2.4 The Significance of the Research

To the best knowledge of the researcher, considerable research has been conducted on waste management systems. However, the research was carried out with limited scope and exclusion of children. This research attempts to link waste management with the issue of scavenging children. It is also expected to serve as a resource material to other researches with similar objectives. This research should also help to motivate other people, government and non-governmental agencies, and policy makers to take constructive action in favor of scavenging children. It is also important to disseminate information about the current state of the children found in the waste dumping site and the general effect of poor waste management system in Ethiopia and particularly in Addis Ababa. This research is also expected to enhance the general public awareness and increase concern and raise

question among citizens for policy dialogue and better waste management policies adoption. This research would play certain important roles in identifying the responsibilities of the people and the various institutions of the country in managing wastes for the best benefit of children who are shouldering the responsibilities and the wellbeing of the country in future. In addition to this, the research also serves as parental guide for parents, community leaders, and social workers to keep children away from waste dumping areas and to manage wastes appropriately.

THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

Koshie is found in the middle of residential quarters where the villages encircled the waste dumping site and people live around it at short-distances of 10 to 20 meters. In these closely packed shanties and slums, more than 700 households are found with a large number of children residents. In a real sense it is hard to know the exact number of scavenging children at the dumping site. The number fluctuates depending on the availability of other work in the area. According to the data collected in 2005 by HLSDO, the total numbers of child scavengers are 458 including both sexes, youth and children with the age range of 4 - 18 years. All of the children are from the surrounding villages.

Table 1 *Number of Scavenging Children by Age and Sex*

Group of the Children	Male	Female	Total
Below 5	22	13	35
5-10	93	41	134
10-15	183	71	254
16-18	29	6	35
Total	327	131	458

Source: Health and Life Supporting Development Organization (HLSDO)

Out of the total number of scavengers identified by HLSDO, 327 (71%) are males; and the remaining 131 (29%) are females. Out of this group of females, 107 of them are small girls with the age range of 8 – 12, who are scavenging with their scavenging parents, or elder siblings. The rest of the girls whose ages lie between 13 and 17 are not scavenging on regular basis. Usually well grown girls are not scavenging due to the cultural prohibition, the need for domestic service, risk of rape and other forms of abuses.

The following findings are based on the interviews of 20 scavenging children who are the research participants that are selected from 458 children through purposive sampling technique in collaboration with HLSDO. The participants are girls and boys below 18 years old. This age limit is used to refer the scavengers as children using the Convention on the Rights of Children.

Table 2 Age and Sex composition of the Participants

Age Group of Children	Male	Female	Total
5 -10	3	2	5
10 – 14	5	7	12
15 -18	3	0	3
Total	11	9	20

During the interview session girls found between age 15 and 18 were not shown up at the dumpsite and couldn't be participant for this research.

With regard to the family back ground of the children, 11 of them have both parents, 4 have only fathers, 2 have only mothers, and 3 of them are orphans.

Table 3 *Family Background of the Children*

A. Occupation of parents	Number of Children
Children whose parents are daily laborers	9
Children whose parents are guards	2
Children whose parents are <i>enjera</i> vendors	2
A child whose parent is Firewood collector	1
A children whose parent is scavenger	1
A children whose father is a beggar	1
A child whose mother is not working due to chronic sickness and aging	1
Orphaned Children	3
Total	20
B. Number of family members	
Children whose family members are 10	1
Children whose family members are 9	1
Children whose family members are 7	5
Children whose family members are 6	8
Children whose family members are 5	2
Children whose family members are 4	2
Children whose family members are 3	1
Total	20

Table 4 *Housing condition of the scavenging Children*

Housing condition	Yes, we have	No, we do not have	Total
Living in one room privately owned rented houses	18	2	20
Living in Kebele owned rented houses	2	18	20
Privately owned houses	0	20	20
Houses that have common kitchen	14	6	20
Houses that have at least common dry pit latrine	15	5	20
Houses that have beds for children	5	15	20
Houses that have their own tap water	0	20	20
Houses that have cemented floor	0	20	20
Houses that have at least one electric lamp without their own meters	20	0	20

Regarding clothing of scavenging children, to reduce smoke and dust inhalation, usually they cover their face and feet with pieces of clothing. To provide some protection against burns or cuts from broken glass or jagged metal, they wear also a long shirt, long heavy socks that cover the knees and rubber shoes at the waste dumping site and use a bent wire tool, to probe or pick up items without touching them. However, out of the waste dumping site, the situation of their regular clothing shows their poor living status and is pointed out here below as one of the indicators that show the situation of the children.

Table 5 *Clothing of the scavenging Children*

Housing condition	Yes, we have	No, we do not have	Total
Getting one new daytime cloth annually	3	17	20
Getting one used daytime cloth annually	8	12	20
Children having bed sheets	2	18	20
Children having at least one blanket	20	0	20
Children having cotton made mattress and pillow	4	16	20
Children having grass made mattress and pillow	15	1	16

Food is one of the three important basic needs for human being. So, getting regular meals is used as an indicator of the situation of children in the study area. The following table shows how often food is available. Since the families of scavenging children are expected to be poor, the response was given and presented here below regardless of the food quality and its nutrition contents. It refers the usual Ethiopian food found in the home of the marginal people; mainly like *enjera*, *shiro wat*, bread, tea, *ambasha*...etc.

Table 6 Availability of Regular Meal at Home

Regular meal that could be available	Number of children accessed for the meals	Remark
Three time daily	5	All of the children belongs to this group are students.
Two times daily	11	For this group of children, regular meals are only breakfast and dinner. During lunch time they are at dump site and they are not coming for lunch.
Once only	2	This group of children is scavenging for the whole day.
Uncertain	2	Food is not available on regular basis.
Total	20	

With regard to the educational status of the participants, 40% of the children have discontinued their education at primary school grade levels. The remaining 60% of the children are attending school from grade 3 – 7.

Table 7 Reason for School Dropouts

Reason for school dropouts	Number of children
Absence of uniform and educational materials	4
Absence of family support for school work	2
Family supporting responsibility	2
Total	8

Some family background indicators were also used to investigate the social status of the families of these children. In this regard, these children have reported that their parents are not active in various socio-economic engagements and community services like working in Idir, which is the traditional support system in Ethiopia. The children said that their parents have no special effort to change their situation and improve their lives.

The health situation of the children is also used as one of the indicators to identify their living condition. Likewise, the following table depicts some major diseases as reported by the children.

Table 8 The Health Situation of the Children

Type of Health Problem	Number of children
Typhoid	4
Cough	4
Diarrhea	3
Ear related illness	3
Eyes related illness	2
Different feelings of illness like stomach ache, and ameba	1
No significant health problems	3
Total	20

According to the data collected from the participants, the scavenging children do not have adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities. They do not have proper water and health services in the area.

Table 9 *Early Childhood Living Situation*

The Earlier Situation	Better than this one	The same as now	Worst than this one	Total
The home, economic, and life situation in general	10	10	0	20
The growth of the child	12	8	0	20

The following table shows number of scavenging children in the household of each child. The work done in this area shows the family is trying to enhance their family income by increasing number of children, who are scavenging on the dumpsite.

Table 10 *Number of Scavenging Children at Household Level*

Number of Scavenging Children	Household
4	1
3	6
2	9
1	4
Total	20

With regard to the personal engagement of the children in scavenging, years of scavenging, items to be scavenged, income and how to use it, feelings associated with scavenging life were identified. Also, all of the children have mentioned similar reasons and backgrounds that push them to scavenging life.

Table 11 Personal Engagement of the Children in Scavenging

A. Years of scavenging	2 – 6 years
B. Income from scavenging wastes	2 – 8 Birr/day
C. Reasons	Number of children
The death of both parents and being helpless	3
Insufficient income of parents to support the whole family	9
Fathers are abusing money and witnessing the serious problem of mothers to maintain family life	3
Parents are aged, weak, and also chronically sick	3
Early poor background and forced to pass through scavenging as a normal way of life.	2
Total	20

According to the responses of the children, pieces of metal, plastic and glass bottles of drugs, bottle of mineral water, broken glass, water pipes and corrugated iron sheet, glucose feeding tubes and bags, plastic bags, used shoes, food items are the major items of scavenging. The scavenged items are used as a source of income by selling them to recycling agents in the nearby areas. Usually food items are eaten immediately on the site.

The participants also mentioned to the researcher that the money earned from scavenging is used to support themselves and their families. All of the children have mentioned to the researcher about their feelings as scavenging children. According to them they feel sad, worry, inferior, and generally bad feelings due to being scavenger, discrimination and symbolized with vulture.

They were also asked about their happiness and sources of their happiness. Some mentioned to the researcher that they feel happy and the others do not feel happy at all.

Table 12 Causes of Happiness for Scavenging Children

Causes of Their Happiness	Number of Children
Getting enough money from the sale of scavenged items	9
Supporting parents in their effort to improve the family life	2
When their sick mothers are feeling better	2
When getting new cloths	1
When attending school	1
When getting peace of mind	1
There is no happy feeling at all	4
Total	20

The children have also reported the bad treatment they face due to their engagement in scavenging life. One of the four participants, who did not feel happiness in his life said:

We are named vulture. Our neighbors and shop keepers told us that we stink. Shop owners never let us to buy from their shop and do not allow us to stand around; because they consider us as a reason for the deterioration of

their business. In the school, no children play with us and insult us by saying “yekoshie lij”, which means the child of the waste. It really hurts me badly. Our parents are also treated badly. There is nothing that makes me happy. The work itself is challenging. The surrounding non scavenging people have prejudice about scavenging children. So, it makes me always sad.

The children have listed a number of socioeconomic problems. Out of the lists of these problems they were asked to identify seven of them that they consider as the most serious ones. These are lack of access to appropriate clothing, shelter, food, education, medical treatment, and problems related to exclusion and discrimination that are common through out the community they live around and in their schools as sever problems. In addition to these, they have also mentioned to the researcher, some other problems that they usually encounter on the waste dumping site. These are:

- Forced to serve the gang scavengers for the whole day. This was presented by scavenging boys.
- Witnessing rape, and being abused
- Prohibition of gangs to scavenge whatever is found in the site; except some items with low commercial values
- Risk of death – last time 2 children died by bulldozers that were clearing the site, while children were scavenging
- Illness and lack of treatment
- Absence of power and alternatives to negotiate on the price of scavenged items,

- Increasing number of scavenging children in weekends. Their number reaches up to 200 that would cause getting lesser money.

With regard to their future aspiration, as indicated in the following table the children revealed that they wish to be rich and help vulnerable children like them.

Table 13 *Future Orientation of the Children*

A. Future Orientation	Number of children
Stop scavenging, Attending school and engaging in other job	20
Being rich and helping vulnerable children	20
The need to be self supportive children at their early age	16
B. Expected support to stop scavenging	
Children who needs financial support	8
Children who needs educational support	5
Children who needs foster family support	7

According to the information obtained from the participants and researcher's observation, the whole scavenging population found on the waste dumping site could be classified into six major groups based on their age, scavenging activities and patterns of behavior. These are:

- 1) The group of scavenging old women and men: These are old scavengers who have been there for decades and used the income for their own consumption. The majority of them have no families or few family members. Usually they stay longer on the site but still their income is the smallest of all scavenging groups. They

slowly walk through the site with strong concentration and watchfulness focused on their scavenging mission.

- 2) The group of scavenging families with their small children: Scavenging families of this group are those with large number of family members who are largely dependent on the income obtained from scavenging on the dumping site. The members are moving together during scavenging and support each other and discuss their family matters and lives. The members are life long friends. Usually do not stay on the dumping site and return home to fulfill other family duties. Relatively the income of this group is better than the group of old men and women scavengers.
- 3) The scavenging boys: These are active scavengers. But do not do scavenging very well. They are overused by the gang group and serve them as messengers and also mistreated. There are times when they could handover what they scavenged fully or partially to the gang scavengers. In addition to that, they may also play games with their group mates and lack strong concentration on scavenging.
- 4) The group of scavenging girls: These are the active group of scavengers among the young children with the age range of 8 - 12. They scavenge in group. To some extent they are free from mistreatment of gangs and hooligans. So, they do the scavenging very actively for the whole or half day based on their school attendance. These are the ones who earn more among the young scavenging groups. In the waste dumping site, girl scavengers are small in number. This group accounts 15 - 20% of the whole population of scavenging children and often accompanied by their scavenging brothers or friends and may not be exposed for mistreatment.

- 5) The group of gangs and hooligan scavengers: These are the group who earn much without scavenging much by taking the advantage of the other children. These are the stronger and more aggressive youth who scavenge occasionally but spend the whole day in the dumping site sitting at strategic corners to see what is going on around and to order one of the children to bring the wastes they want. The group members have strong bond and resist police pressures while they are committing crimes. No one challenges them. Since this research considers only those children below 18 years old, the gang group members are excluded from the scope of this research. Because, almost all of them are above 19 years old. Some are between 24 and 28, and others are about 30s.
- 6) Group of new comers and migrants: There are new comers and recent migrants from rural areas. These are isolated groups, who are physically weak and scavenging far from the fresh waste. They are searching for the old materials such as metals, jewelries, coins ...etc from the ash after the waste is burned.

The information obtained from the participants show that usually scavenging takes place at the dumping site in two major ways. The well grown children run fast and climb garbage trucks so that they scavenge from the trucks while the trucks are coming closer to the site. The smaller and physically weaker ones and the female scavengers are those who are scavenging from the site after the garbage trucks finish dumping.

Even though, scavenging children are from different social backgrounds, such as being from family of leprosy affected people, beggars, daily laborers, displaced people, ex-soldiers, private guards, servants and cooks, sanitary workers, from poor families of earlier settlers, and from migrant families, they scavenge together in harmony and in

companionship at least without noticeable differences in ethnicity, religious, social backgrounds, economic status, and other form of affiliations within their own subgroups.

According to the information gathered from the focus group discussants, who are parents of the children, all of the children of the poor families of the area are scavengers, and the economy of such families is greatly dependent upon the collection, repair, cleaning, transportation and sale of wastes. Since scavengers are spending the whole day on the site, wastes dumped from hotels are the main source of their daily meal. The children knew and associated each garbage truck to various hotels found in the city. For instance, the children know very well a garbage trucks coming from Sheraton Luxury Hotel and Ethiopian Airlines before they come closer to the dumpsite. They expect everyday to get their daily meal from these highly ‘popular’ wastes from these hotels. As soon as these garbage trucks are seen far off everyone starts to run towards the trucks. Those with better physical strength and the grown children jump over the trucks and get ‘fresh’ waste food before the garbage is dumped and searched by others.

According to the information obtained from two key informants, who are from the Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority, and Addis Ababa Regional Environmental Protection Authority, there is no executive body that controls unlawful waste dumping practice. There is no mechanism that controls the type, the nature, and chemical combination of the health threatening wastes in the country.

DISCUSSION

4.1 Discussion on the Findings

The size of the scavenging population is increasing from time to time not only because of the economic problem of the surrounding community, but also due to having additional number of scavengers from rural to urban migrant groups. As it has been presented by Meyer (1987), and Katzman (1988), these are new comers and recent migrants on the dumping site.

With regard to availability of daily meals to the scavenging children, as it has been identified during the interview session, the children do not get regular meal with good quality and nutritional content. Regardless of its quality some of the children are even uncertain to get their regular meals at home once daily. So, to fulfill the severe scarcity of this basic need, the children usually scavenge food from the dumpsite.

Regarding the housing condition, among the 20 participants of this study, 85% of them are living in privately owned rented houses. The remaining 15% are earlier settlers and live in Kebele owned rented houses. 90% of the houses have one small room of poor quality for the whole family. In the houses of 15 children who are 75% of the participants, there is only one bed for the entire family of 5 -7 members. 1 house has no bed for four family members. Only 5 of the households have two beds, which is a good indicator for their poor living condition. This shows that there are large numbers of children who sleep on floor or share beds with others in the houses. 75% of the households do not have windows. 75% of the households use common dry pit latrine and 25% of them do not have latrine at all. All of them do not have their own tap water in the place they live.

In the situation of the scavenging children, they live in a single room. The single room serves for all purposes of life. Their homes with the single, narrow and congested room could be the reasons of their sickness due to having poor hygiene and sanitary levels. As it has been reported on the international conference on environmental threats to the health of children, hazards and vulnerabilities (2002), such housing conditions do strongly affect the health condition of children and instigates acute respiratory infection caused by indoor air pollution, which affects the children living in having one door and no windows as the scavenging children found in Koshie experience.

With regard to clothing, as witnessed on the research participants, 85% of them do not get new daytime cloths even once in three years. 90% of the children cover their own cost of daytime cloths and buy used cloths for themselves or find clothing in the waste dumping site. The clothes they wear are salvaged.

All of them said that they do not have alternative clean clothes. All of them have only one torn out blanket, which is not enough to keep them warm and healthy. So, 75% of the children use shared blankets with their siblings and other family members. According to their report 95% of the participants have torn out and over used cotton and grass made mattresses. One of them has no mattress at all.

In terms of education, 12 of the 20 research participants go to school and work on scavenging primarily in order to earn money for their books, uniforms, meals and family support. Older children, who are attending schools do scavenging for half a day. However, the majority find that they are unable to maintain such a pace and dropout of school usually takes place at the age of 12 to scavenge full time. As a result of this, few scavenging children reach secondary school.

Regarding their sense of happiness and sadness, four of the participants mentioned that they have never been happy due to the challenging nature of scavenging and the discrimination they face as scavenging children. However to 9 of the children, getting “enough” money is the cause of their happiness in their life. Having healthy families and being able to support them make four scavenging girls happy. All of them have revealed that outsiders’ discrimination is one of the reasons that make them sad. Considering the children as something dirty and ostracizing them from all sorts of children’s engagement, affects the initiative of the children to associate themselves with the larger group of non scavenging children.

According to the researchers observation, scavenging wastes on the dumping site followed by children’s alienation and being indifferent, asocial behavior, differential social opportunities including exclusion and sense of inequity, susceptibility to serious health hazards, poor family ties, selfishness, sense of irresponsibility for family and community matters, poor scholastic achievement, thoughts/feelings of enmity towards the external environment, and such types of psycho-social problems are commonly seen on scavenging children.

All scavengers have coherent group, support and understand each other. In all the groups, loyalty, mutual understanding and support are common within their own reference groups. This could serve as a defense and source of their comfort and a means to escape from the discrimination.

The children have also listed out their most pressing needs. The need for clothing, better housing, food, education, care and protection, and the need to avoid the problem of

discrimination took the top priorities. 70% of the children are breadwinners for their entire family. So, such families do encourage scavenging as a means of survival.

This is one of the typical indicators for their poorest living condition and also as a factor that pushes the children towards waste scavenging site.

4.2 Problems of Scavenging Children

Regarding the problem of scavenging children, the problem of basic needs and discrimination take the top priority, and followed by the need for money to cover cost of education, medical treatment. In the scavenging site, forced service to gang scavengers, rape; abuse; limited access of scavenging; risk of accidental illness and death; absence of power to negotiate with recycling agents were mentioned as problems of site, which are emanated from being physical, mental, and social vulnerability. Increasing number of children especially on weekends was also mentioned as a reason to decrease their income. This happened due to the fact that those students, who are attending schools regularly in weekdays, become involved in scavenging during weekends to cover their cost of living and education. According to the data obtained from the research participants, normally the dumpsite is open to everyone. But, no one is allowed to scavenge on the dumping site without the permission of the gang scavengers. Everyone, who is scavenging on the site should be obedient and serve these gangs. The disobedient scavengers are forced to leave from the site, or forced to handover all the collected wastes and often beaten brutally. These gang groups have also their own assigned wastes. 'Highly valuable' wastes like paint containers, metals, aluminum cans, glucose containers, plastic pasteurized milk containers, ink containers, plastic sheets, sandals, rubber and plastic shoes are taken by these gangs. These items are not taken by others particularly during the weekdays. Anyone who picked

these items for his/her own benefit is beaten harshly and forced to leave from the site.

The remaining wastes are relatively invaluable. That is why after the whole day of scavenging, their average income does not go much beyond Birr 5.00 per day. Actually their income is dependent upon their scavenging skills, knowledge of garbage trucks that bring 'important' wastes, physical strength, the time spent on the site, and the will of gang scavengers. The income of scavenging boys generally ranges from Birr 2.00 to 8.00 per day. On weekends the gangs are likely to stop scavenging the valuable items and do not stay around the site. That is the best opportunity for the scavenging children to scavenge whatever available wastes to maximize their earning to Birr 10.00. But to reach this limit the increasing number of scavenging children is the other challenge to attain maximum earning.

According to the information obtained from the children, usually girls earn more than their boy age mates. This happened due to the fact that the small girls are scavenging with high concentration and they are not mistreated much by gang scavengers.

Usually, in Ethiopian tradition, girls and mothers are not exposed to such kinds of 'stressful' works, to be done outside of home. Fathers as heads of their families and respected member of the community and males in general should work outside of home and bring income for the family and they do not tolerate children when they are seen in such types of 'dirty' areas. If children become orphans, their close or distant relatives are responsible to give care and protect them. In the absence of relatives, the children are taken by volunteers from their own community for further care and protection as adopted children. But, as it has been said by Suda (1996), this important human, humanitarian, and traditional values and prides are eroded due to poverty and modernization. Then as the

situation of the children and the whole scavenging community is observed on the waste dumping site, child neglect becomes the usual practice and scavenging takes place side by side with dogs, rats, cats, vultures ...etc.

In the dumping site all kinds of solid wastes are dumped including recyclable and non recyclable, organic and non organic, reusable and worthless wastes, wastes from hotels, industry and households. Examples are tin cans, plastic and glass bottle, glass jars, perfume and nail polish containers, paper, cartons, rubber shoes, scrap metals, old clothes, old iron sheets, old car parts and carcasses are dumped in huge quantities. Among the hazardous wastes, hospital wastes including used dressings, needles, syringes, and pharmaceutical rejects such as drugs and caustic substances, and explosives, combustible and decayed materials, remnants of demolished buildings and paints are also dumped. Children do not know the risks of hazardous wastes. The smoke from burning plastics, the stench caused by decomposition of organic refuse, the flies and other vermin create an almost unendurable living situation in the dumping site.

Each year, additional tens of children are at risk of becoming scavengers on the waste dumping site. All of them are exposed to danger daily. Scavenging on the waste dumping site is closely related to health hazards.

Residents are also tainted by the area's reputation as a heaven for criminals and other gang groups. This has happened due to frequent violence, hooligans' attack, rape and robbery of people passing across the waste particularly in the evening and night. Alcohol is widespread, and family ties are often in loose, strained, and broken. The uncontrolled behavior and undisciplined growth of the hooligans and loose control of security forces in the area are some of the reasons for violence. The residents are also treated as unwanted

ones by societies due to their life in and around the waste dumping site. In reality, most residents gravitated there after a string of personal misfortunes, often by economic and other unfortunates.

Scavenging on the waste dumping site leaves a long lasting social and psychological mark in the life of the child due to involvement in this most 'stressful and dirty' area. Being found in such 'dirty' areas by itself is considered as being 'dirty' and exposed the children for exclusion and discrimination by non scavenging children in school, playground, and youth gathering corners ... etc, regardless of ones socio-economic status.

As one of the characteristics of scavenging children, school dropouts are common. Out of the 20 children only 12 of them are in school. Forty percent of them have pointed out economic, educational material, and uniform problems as reasons to drop out of school. These might not be the only reasons. It is so important to investigate further the appearance of other reasons including their potentials for scholastic achievement and educational interest, which could have a relationship with the impact of exposure to lead wastes.

Occasionally an accident caused by bulldozers and loaders working on the site is one of the major causes of death for child scavengers. For instance, two died of such accident in year 2005 alone.

The children look dirty and unhygienic at least in the dumping site due to the nature of the work done and conditions on the site. They live under very difficult situation and extreme poverty.

According to the information obtained from the focus group discussants, in the waste dumping village, all forms of child maltreatment including child battering,

abandonment, abuse and neglect are the most common and the major reasons children move to scavenging where they could declare their independence at their early age of 6 – 8. Le Roux et al. (1998), reports this happens due to family pathology and economics.

4.3 Causes of Scavenging

With regard to the problems of scavengers, many reasons were identified that lead children into scavenging. These are economic problems, family pathology, harsh living condition, which is closely related to economic problems, having vulnerable family background, parental death, and parental chronic sickness were identified by the children.

As stated by Le Roux et al. (1998) economic problems are the major causes of scavenging. This is manifested in the way that scavenging is considered as the only best possible coping mechanism in the context of the surrounding community. To this effect, the availability of the waste itself in that locality is a contributing factor. Another factor is absence of good modeling for better living. This has forced the children to accept scavenging as something normal and acceptable.

In Koshie, scavenging is a culture as well as an occupation. There is coherence and continuity to the lifestyle. As young as 4 or 5 years old, children begin to accompany their parents or older siblings to the dumpsite for scavenging. By age 10, they work eight to 12 hours per day. As the children increase in proficiency, adult members of the family often parents and well grown girls stop scavenging in order to work at other tasks, or not to work at all. Unfortunately, growing through such a process and experience, forces the children to accept scavenging as normal way of life.

As it has been mentioned by Le Roux et al. (1998), 3 children pointed out family pathology as the reason for cases of scavenging children of Koshie. This behavior is

manifested in the form of poor or lowered parental/community responsibility for their own children and wasting the meager resource or income by parents. Fathers spend money for alcohol and other trivial things. This is coupled with family conflict, disruption, divorce, and abandonment of children. Consequently they are found on scavenging site. High rate of school dropouts, poor clothing, poor parental control in disciplining their children are results of such family pathology. The reasons for scavenging have direct and indirect relationship with economic problem.

4.4 Discussion on the Policy Environment

4.4.1 Discussion on the Situation of the Children and the Ethiopian Law

To analyze the Ethiopian law in relation to the rights of children, it is important to identify the available laws, policies and programs. In this regard, Ethiopia has made lots of progress in issuing important national laws and regulations. Among these, The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Constitution, and the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) are the most important instruments and one of the strong initiatives taken by the Ethiopian government.

However, if we examine the provisions of the convention, lots of things are ignored. Among the 54 articles of CRC, at least 11 articles such as article 1,2,3,6,14,17,18,24,28,32, and 36, show the presence of child right violations. For instance if we consider, article six, which is strongly related to the well being of the child is totally denied. According to this article, “state parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child”. While CRC has such strong provisions, no one has applied this to the existing situation of the scavenging children particularly in Koshie, and other similar areas, where children are exposed to various hazards, indoor and out door pollutions, risks

associated with unsafe environment. Article 24 consists some of the most important provisions related to diminishing child mortality, the need for rendering medical assistance and health care, the need for combating disease and malnutrition, and the need for proper care of children. All these are expected to be implemented according to the level of the country economy for the well being of the children. Also the rest of articles of CRC similarly demand for maximizing the role of parties, governments, and the public in general to care and protect children. However, in this regard, the case of scavenging children who are under difficult circumstances is not yet well addressed. The problem of not addressing the issue should not be justified in relation to economic problem of the country. Beyond economic problems, they are neglected. As it has been witnessed on the situation of Koshie, it is possible to say that at policy level, no one has given them consideration and knows about the critical situation of the children in the dumping site. There is high probability of being exposed to hazardous chemicals and lead waste materials, which could kill the children automatically. While the situation needs immediate intervention, it is a question of death and life. The researcher has discussed the issue with Officials of the Environmental Protection Authority and the Addis Ababa Environmental Authority. They disclosed that they do not have any means to control the waste dumped in the waste dumping site. In the absence of such controlling mechanisms, the life of the children is at absolute risk. So, the right to live and wellbeing of the children is denied. The intervention on managing the situation of waste dumping site should be one of the priority areas. If the government has the will there is a means to address the problem. Absence of concern and proper protection for children, prohibition of their essential provisions like

education, health ...etc are denial of their rights. Absence of priority for such urgent issue by it self, is neglecting children and violating their internationally recognized rights.

The obligations of the state in the implementation of CRC fall under three broad categories: the need to respect, to protect the child right and to fulfill essential demands of the children without discrimination.

The state is also denying the constitutional provision mentioned on article 36, which guarantees the rights of children with other important provisions.

4.4.2 Discussion on the Waste Disposal Practice and the Ethiopian Law

The issue of waste management has a strong link with addressing the problem of scavenging children and associated risks. Environmental sanitation and solid waste management is addressed in several policy and strategy documents of the country. The researcher is also considering these policies as remedies for problems related to scavenging children. According to the discussion made with the officials of Environmental Protection Authorities, many policy documents are identified. The constitutional provision of article 44 of the Ethiopian constitution, the Ethiopian Environmental Policy, The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Environmental Pollution Control Proclamation (Proclamation No. 300/2002), and The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Public Health Proclamation (Proclamation No. 200/2000) are the major legal documents. The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Environmental Pollution Control Proclamation (Proclamation No. 300/2002), given legal provisions on control of pollution, management of hazardous wastes chemical and radio active elements, management of municipal wastes, Environmental standards, with offence and penalties on those who violate the proclamation. The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Public Health Proclamation

(Proclamation No. 200/2000) also has legal provisions to protect against pollution including quality control on food, water, Occupational health, waste handling and disposal, and the like. These laws and legal provisions show that there is a good will and initiatives to address the issue of environment in proper order. The establishment of the Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority is also an indicator for its strong will to address associated problems with environment. As it has been mentioned earlier the most important element of the environment, the human being and particularly the most vulnerable the children are not yet getting proper attention in practice. If they would have been given attention, their problems would have been addressed earlier since we have such strong legal foundations.

The 1994 Constitution of Ethiopia incorporates a number of provisions relevant for the protection, sustainable use and improvement of the environment. Under Article 44, it provides that all persons have the right to a clean and healthy environment and Government and citizens shall have the duty to protect the environment. The incorporation of those important provisions recognizes the strong need to protect environment for the well being of humans including children. The issue of solid waste management is also addressed in the Environment Policy and in the Conservation Strategy of Ethiopia. Basic policy elements on sustainable city development, polluters' pay, preventive approach, recycling, and sound waste disposal and treatment are included in those documents.

There are also other legal documents related to the protection of environment with the establishment of various related ministerial and sectoral institutions. According to Addis Ababa City Government Charter, Proclamation 41/1997, and Volume II of the Conservation Strategy of Addis Ababa Government ensure the need for addressing the

problem of solid waste management at regional level. The Administration of Addis Ababa also issued regulations on sanitation and environmental health. These regulations repeated a number of public health regulations that had been enacted in the country starting from 1943.

According to Sanitation and Environmental Health Regulation No. 1/1994 of Region 14 Administration, all persons, be it natural or judicial, have a duty to store their garbage within their premises and by their own containers until it is collected. Added to this, no one is allowed to throw or deposit any solid waste at a crossing or public place or any other place that is prohibited.

The Addis Ababa Administration Health Bureau has a mandate to appoint and assign inspectors. The main functions of a designated inspector are to follow up and inspect the compliance of the particulars mentioned under the regulations.

Enforcement mechanisms sought by the Addis Ababa Administration Sanitation and Public Health Control regulations include an administrative decision and penalty. Other than these both the Ethiopian Civil and Penal Codes have legal provisions with sanctions and penalties to ensure the protection of environment and public health. From all these legal provisions and documents one can understand that there is proper policy for environment at national and regional levels. However, the implementation capacity of the lower bodies is still below the expected standard in staffing and financing.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusion

This study has revealed some facts which many studies didn't. In the discussion the researcher had with some officials of Environmental Protection Authority, he made an attempt to point out the possibility of being victim of hazardous chemicals and radio active elements due to the uncontrolled waste disposal practice and absence of appropriate policy in the country. Similarly the high possibility of being exposed to lead wastes is also pointed out.

This study has also shown the gap, limitations and absence of governmental control mechanism to control the type of wastes, chemical contents, magnitude of their impacts and urged for immediate intervention. The other achievement is that the research has shown the forgotten human group and the prime victims, who are scavenging children. To the knowledge of the researcher, none of the waste management studies have tried to address the issue of scavenging children, their problems and the high possibility of exposure to hazardous chemicals in Ethiopia.

The other work done in this research is that the study is conducted in relation to the laws of the country. Therefore, the situations of the children as well as the waste management practice are examined in view of these laws. As a result, human right violations and unlawful waste disposal practices are identified partly because of lack of resources and reluctant position of concerned authorities. This has never been conducted before.

In the meantime this research has identified 458 scavenging children in Koshie. No one controls all the wastes dumped in the site. So, there are unlimited possibilities to dump

hazardous chemical wastes including lead waste materials. Since the children are scavenging on the dumpsite, they could be exposed to these hazardous wastes.

Children's scavenging life has lots of ups and downs. The waste and the number of the children are not proportional. So the chance of getting enough income to maintain life at a minimal level is rare. In addition to this, the small and young scavengers are mistreated by gang scavengers and forced to serve them. This is an additional burden of young scavengers in their struggle for survival. Poor waste management is one of the external factors that exposed the children for such risky and miserable life.

Scavenging children are involved in all patterns of waste disposal practice. If waste is managed in sustainable and civilized way, it plays a vital role in the economy. If wastes are handled poorly, the adverse effect is enormous and followed by socio-economic disaster including chronic health hazards. In Ethiopia, particularly in Addis Ababa, thousand of tons of waste are generated every year. However, the waste management system is poor and contributes to environmental pollution, which affects anyone particularly scavenging children's life. Poor waste management is a threat to the entire population.

The Government of Ethiopia as the highest responsible body to its people has made various attempt to address the problem by issuing constitutional provisions, laws and regulations both at national and regional levels. Based on this, policies, adequate strategies, programs and action plans were developed for implementations. However, poor implementation capacity of the lower bodies, laws not accompanied by adequate resources, and absence of skilled manpower with the existing policy gaps jeopardize the initiative of the government and halted its movement. The question of poor waste management is the

question of life and death particularly for scavenging children. The issue is not yet taken seriously by governmental bodies and other development partners. No one has given top priority to the issue for intervention. No one has developed control mechanism. This has serious repercussion on the well being of the whole population mainly on scavenging children. All these reluctance and further neglects of the issue considered as violation of the convention of the rights of the child, which Ethiopia has ratified in 1991. Since child right has legal provision on article 36, of the Ethiopian constitution, it is also denial of the constitutional right of children and disregard of the constitution.

5.2 Recommendation, Alternative Policy Suggestions, and Operational Considerations

Based on the findings of this study and the conclusion made above, recommendations are made with various alternative policy suggestions and operational mechanisms to be carried out at policy, regional and community levels. Since the government has resource deficits to implement sustainable and civilized way of waste management in practices such as organizing waste treatment plant, landfill site, and other high standard waste disposal facilities, implementing simple, affordable, participatory, and integrated approach is highly recommended to address the problem of scavenging children as well as poor waste disposal practices through mobilizing the local resources including resources of the private sector, individual citizens, resources of NGOs, and the international community through bilateral and multilateral agreements.

The suggested recommendations, policy alternatives and operational considerations might be too much in number. Basically it is believed that such number of recommendations gives variety of opportunities to follow alternative operational modalities. So, if it is possible it is acceptable and highly recommended practice to have

such detail recommendations with alternatives. This is the reason why such long list of recommendations is given in this study.

5.2.1 Recommendation at Policy Level

1. Formulate policies and strategies with their plan of action or programs of implementation, which gives wide opportunity for the active participation of the community, the private sector, NGOs, and other institutions. The policy has to be formulated in participatory way after a series of discussions at regional, local, and grassroots level. The local people might have important contributions based on the local reality, and the experience they had from their life long experiences. Their roles and responsibilities, the benefit they get from the intervention should be defined in the policy document. This ensures the program more sustainable with last long positive impact.
2. Promote environmental health policies that protect children rather than focusing only on waste management separately.
3. Promote integrated waste management policies: It is so important to draw the attention of concerned authorities to appropriate policies, which can be implemented to achieve safe and sustainable waste management system. The ever increasing population and rapid urbanization causes the explosion of wastes. At the same time the complex relationship between waste generations, sustainable development, sustainable livelihood and environmental protection needs an integrated approach that takes all aspects into consideration including economic and social dimensions.
4. Encourage waste consuming plants, like charcoal processing industries from organic and non organic wastes. Attention should be given for reusable household wastes.

However, to be reused, all wastes should be sorted out in accordance with its reusable nature. In this regard, organic and non organic wastes should be dumped separately in its similar identities, if so it is easily reused for various industrial, agricultural and commercial purposes. The materials used for such purposes are aluminum canes, plastic bottles, plastic shopping bag, plastic shoes, steel ...etc.

5. Develop adequate policy and strategy to collect, process, and dispose garbage, where individuals, private and business sectors, NGOs, take part side by side with the government.
6. Design various integrated development projects, which benefit the scavenging community that could give them better benefit than scavenging to keep them away from the dumping site. These projects should create access to free education, health, clothing, supplementary food provision, hygiene and sanitation, and residential facilities, with awareness creation on waste related hazards, and education on moral, civic, and ethics, etc. To this effect, mobilize NGOs and Community based organizations.
7. Work on the preventive and curative aspects of the intervention and develop projects that could work on the social rehabilitation and reintegration of the children with positive thinking.
8. Reduce or eliminate exposure to toxic metals such as lead, mercury and arsenic, to fluoride, and to hazardous anthropogenic chemicals such as toxic wastes, pesticides and persistent organic pollutants. Also take action to reduce or eliminate exposure to known and suspected anthropogenic carcinogens, neurotoxicants, developmental and reproductive toxicants, immunotoxicants and naturally occurring toxins.

9. Reduce the incidence of accidents, injuries and poisonings, as well as exposure to noise, radiations and other factors by improving the physical environments of children at home, in schools and in all environments where children spend time
10. Raise the awareness of decision-makers and potential donors about children's environmental health threats and work with them and other stakeholders to secure the necessary resources to implement interventions as well as decide on priorities to safeguard children.
11. Work with the media to disseminate information and use them effectively with permanent air time for awareness creation, on all child related environmental health issues and on safe, suitable and profitable waste management practices.
12. Conduct experience sharing visits and exchange programs with countries that overcame similar problems. Identify also the best practices for the same purpose from those advanced countries. Utilize the lessons learned from this countries to prevent environmental illness that affect children, for example by promoting legislation for the removal of lead from all paints and ceramics. Also use the experience obtained for safe and sustainable waste management practice.
13. Building the institutional capacity of implementing agencies and concerned organizations, and create networks and coordinate their efforts of waste management, risk management, natural resource management, environment protection, prevention of pollution, in order to build safe environment where the children could live in safely with pride and dignity.

5.2.2 Recommendation at Regional and Local Level

1. Organizing the well grown scavenging children and parents of the young scavengers in waste management cooperatives for income generation activities with adequate and better waste management and sort-out skill training for industrial and commercial needs and enable them to be involved in full waste management package. This includes waste separation at household level, waste collection, transportation, recycling, sales of reusable wastes and finally waste disposal. This will enhance their income and maintains their family life without the involvement of the children. Furthermore, such organization would enable scavengers to coordinate their activities with municipal sanitation officials and enhance their negotiation skills and power.
2. Organize Anti Poverty and Discrimination Clubs in every community unit of the waste dumping area and scavenging children's' problem solving council at district level, which is constituted by voluntary professionals, big government officials, influential people, leaders of civil societies, Heads of international and national NGOs, leaders of professional associations, well known musicians and artists, journalists, business people, socially important institutions, and the likes to work on poverty reduction programs.
3. Organizing an awareness raising sessions and trainings to the surrounding scavenging community including scavenging children on the type of wastes, the economic importance of wastes, how to maximize profit from garbage, signs and symbols of hazardous chemicals with their chemical properties, risk mitigating skills, waste sorting out skills, knowledge on primary health care, first aid skill training are so

important to reduce risk factors of scavenging and maximize their benefit from the waste dumping site.

4. Currently, there is no a single mechanism that controls hazardous waste dump on Koshie dumping site. Anyone could dump anything they have. Formulate regulations and strategies that could prohibit such decentralized waste dumping practice. Also establish a well organized field office at the dumping site to control the type of wastes to be dumped.
5. Identify sources of big waste streams like hospitals, big educational institutes, laboratories, companies and industries, which could generate hazardous and non hazardous wastes and building their capacity, encourage and support them technically and if possible financially to build their own standard waste disposal facilities, to manage and to dispose their wastes in safe, sustainable and civilized way.
6. Organizing series of neighborhood discussion groups at community level to the entire community members on how to solve the problem of scavenging children, and related problems of discrimination. For this effect beyond the regular neighborhood group discussion sessions, use the traditional coffee ceremonies and the monthly regular Idir conferences
7. Collect data on the existing scavenging children population, and those who are expected to be trash pickers like street children, and siblings of trash pickers for preventive purpose.
8. Networking the program with community based social and economic institutions and with organizations having similar goals, and identities, for sharing information,

experiences, best practices and to replicate the intervention broadly at local, regional, and national level.

9. Revitalize community based support system and promote local adoption to those children who are forced to be scavengers due to being homeless and orphan. The intervention with waste scavenging children should focus also on adequate parenting skills and on how to treat children.
10. Develop sense of voluntarism and mobilize idle hands especially during summer to make campaign against demolishing big waste hills and keep clean the environment without the involvement of children.
11. To provide a safe, healthy and supportive environment to all children, provide environmental health education through schools and adult education initiatives.
12. Empower the community to identify toxic threats to children and to work with local authorities in developing prevention and intervention programs.
13. Recycling produces inputs for industrial and agricultural purpose and reduce the quantity of waste in the city in profitable ways. So, consolidate the recycling sector and train the local people in recycling wastes.
14. Put enough waste baskets, barrels, and garbage collection boxes having special design, color codes, and nametag in public places and on streets to collect different types of wastes separately.

5.3 Implication for Social Work Practice

In this research, it is identified that the life of the children is at risk due to poor waste management practice. Poor waste management has heightened the possibility of exposure of children to hazardous chemical that could bitterly affect their lives. The vulnerability of the children and their immature level of immune and detoxification ability makes the children more susceptible to diseases caused by hazardous chemicals, like lead which could easily affect anyone and could be found on the waste dumping site. The children are socially ostracized, economically highly deprived, psychologically wounded because of being scavenger. Absence of proper waste management policy and practice, the poorest life of children coupled with environmental threat, poor institutional capacity of executives are the challenges of social work profession and to its practice.

Therefore, the profession is strongly needed to advocate for the well being of children and to their internationally recognized child rights, to have adequate environmental policy that could mitigate environmental threat, to develop operational mechanisms, to develop workable and cost effective projects, to mobilize resources, to revitalize the children as an important assets of the country through counseling and psychosocial rehabilitation programs.

Generally, social work as a profession stands for marginalized groups of society. Social work is the most qualified profession to counter the problem of children as well as to work on having safe environment, and also to ensure the well being of people. All these responsibilities and activities to be carried out makes the social work profession more vital.

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RESEARCH ON **THE SITUATION OF TRASH PICKING CHILDREN OF** **ADDIS ABABA WEST DUMPING SITE**

INTERVIEW CHECK LIST FOR THE INDEPTH INTERVIEW **TO BE CARRIED OUT WITH THE CHILDREN**

Note to be disclosed to the interviewee

Dear children,

The interview check list is prepared to find out the overall situation of the trash picking children at the waste dumping site of Addis Ababa. So, the research is expected to be a complete research work to show the correct situations of their life. So, the result is highly dependable on their responses. If their responses are false, it leads to wrong direction and conclusion. If your responses are correct enough, the result will be correct and leads to the right conclusion and discloses your correct situation.

So, the children are kindly requested to give their right response. In doing so, I would like to assure them that nothing would affect them. All the responses are absolutely confidential. For the reasons of confidentiality, you shouldn't tell your names and addresses except some other demographic data, which may serve the researcher for further statistical analysis.

A. Demographic data of the child:

1. Sex Female _____ Male _____
2. Age _____
3. Religion _____
4. Ethnic background: _____
5. Educational grade level: _____
6. Weight: _____
7. Height: _____
8. Physical condition: _____

B. General Questions about the family of the Child

1. Living parents: Father _____, Mother _____, Both _____
2. If they alive what do they do to maintain income for the family consumption? _____
3. What is their annual earning? In Birr _____
4. The health condition of father: very good __, good, __, fair _____, unhealthy _____, bed ridden _____.
5. The health condition of mother: very good __, good, __, fair _____, unhealthy _____, bed ridden _____.
6. Number of family members: _____
7. Number of children in the family: _____ Female: _____ Male: _____
8. Who is the bread winning person in the family? Father, Mother, Both, Children like you

C. Housing condition of the child

1. Ownership of the house: their own property, Kebele owned, private renters
2. The house has _____ rooms
3. The house has an area of _____ m²
4. The materials it is constructed from are : _____
5. Is the house with sealing: yes, __, No, __
6. Is the floor cemented? yes, __, No, __
7. Is there any compound and fenced? yes, __, No, __
8. Is the house with tape water supply? yes, __, No, __
9. Is the house with shower? yes, __, No, __
10. The house has _____ doors

11. The house has _____ windows
 12. The bed room has an area of _____ m²
 13. The living room has an area of _____ m²
 14. Number of beds with separate rooms: _____
 15. Does the house is with proper kitchen? _____
 16. Does the house is with proper and clean toilet? _____
 17. Number of dinning table _____ and chairs _____ in the dinning room
 18. Availability and number of electric lump and its type are _____ in the house,
 19. Availability and number of electric plugs are _____ in the house,
 20. Availability and number of TV, Radio, Tape recorder, others in the house, _____
21. How often you get shower? _____
 22. What do you have from the following?
 1. TV, _____
 2. Radio _____
 3. Tape recorder _____
 4. others in the house, _____

D. Clothing condition

1. For the whole family,
 - i. once in a _____ new cloths are available
 - ii. once in a _____ used cloths are available
 - iii. _____ are available
2. Number of bed sheets _____ and blankets _____ in the house
3. Availability and number of mattress and its type _____ given for the children
4. Availability and number of pillows and its type _____ given for the children
5. Availability and number of bed sheet and its type _____ given for the children
6. Availability and number of blanket and its type _____ given for the children
7. School uniforms are available: _____ once, _____ twice, _____ in a year or _____ two years.
8. How many alternative day cloths do the children have in the family? _____
9. Are you dressing well? _____
10. How often you buy new cloths? _____
11. How often you buy used cloths? _____
12. Who buys the cloths for you? _____

E. Availability of Food for the family

1. Availability of the family for daily regular meals regardless of its quality:
 - a. three times
 - b. twice
 - c. only once
 - d. uncertain
2. The regular meals are , _____ , _____ , _____ , _____
3. Availability of the family for meat, age and related food staffs on weekly _____, monthly _____, yearly _____ base.
4. How often you get quality food like; like meat, egg, milk, vegetables, and fruits? _____
5. Are you getting regular meal? _____

F. The Educational Situation of the Child

1. Are you attending school now? _____ Your grade _____
2. If not why you discontinue your school? Because of _____

G. The social aspect of the family

1. The family involvement in social engagements of the neighborhood groups
Very strongly, strongly, poorly, no involvement
2. The family involvement in various social engagements of the family in the society at large
Very strongly, strongly, poorly, no involvement
3. What kind of associations does the family involve? _____
4. Earlier attempts made to improve the family life: _____

5. Recent attempts made to improve the family life: _____

6. collaborative efforts of the whole family to improve the family situation: _____

7. Health facilities and accessibility for medical treatment: The family is _____

H. The Health Related requirements

1. Have you ever been sick? _____
2. What kind of sickness you were suffering from? _____
3. What are the causes? _____
4. Where have you been treated? _____
5. What do you feel now about your health? _____
6. Is there any one who was sick among the family members? _____
7. What are the most common sickness affecting the whole family? _____
8. What causes the health problem in the family? _____
9. Is the surrounding environment favorable for healthy living? _____
10. Where to go for treatment in case of sickness? _____

I. Child care and upbringing - Early childhood experience,

1. What was the home, economic and life situation look like when you were at early childhood? _____

2. How were you grown up? In what condition? _____
3. How many children do scavenging among the family on the waste dumping site or on the garbage truck? _____
4. What were the coping mechanisms of the family? _____

J. Personal engagement of the child in scavenging at the west dumping site

1. How long you scavenge trash at the site? _____
2. What do you feel while you scavenge on the waste dumping site? _____
3. At what age you start trash picking? _____
4. What are the usual important items to be scavenged? _____
5. How often they are available? _____
6. What do you do with the items scavenged? Are you use them directly for individual consumption or sold on market? _____
7. If it sold, how much money do you get from your total sales of a day? _____
8. For what purpose do you use it? _____

9. What do you feel about your living situation as scavenging child?
 - a. Happiness
 - b. Fear,
 - c. Loneliness/isolation
 - d. Any other feeling like: _____

10. What makes you happy as a scavenging child? _____
11. What are your most serious problems? Please list out from the most serious to the less serious ones.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
 - e. _____
 - f. _____
 - g. _____
 - h. _____
12. Have you ever been faced problems related to your scavenging life? _____
13. Have you ever being treated badly because of being scavenging child? _____
14. How are you treated by your neighborhoods in particular
a. very friendly, b. friendly, c. fairly, d. badly d. very badly
15. Have you ever been accused of committing crime? _____
16. If yes, what kind of crime was it? _____

K. Future orientation of the Child

1. What has to be done to escape from poverty? _____
2. What do you expect from any one else to change your life to better situation? _____
3. What do you aspire about your future destiny? _____
4. What kind of assistance do you need to improve you life?
 - a. Financial _____
 - b. Material _____
 - c. Information _____
 - d. Educational _____
 - e. Communication _____
 - f. medical services _____
 - g. Counseling _____
 - h. Training _____
 - i. Employment _____
 - j. Recreational _____
 - k. Legal Protection: _____
 - l. Transportation: _____
 - m. others: _____
5. What are the most pressing needs/problems of scavenging children? _____
6. What do you suggest to avert the problem of children at scavenging site? _____
7. What kind of child would you like to be? _____
8. Who is your role model? _____
9. What would you like to be? _____

RESEARCH ON **THE SITUATION OF TRASH PICKING CHILDREN OF** **ADDIS ABABA WEST DUMPING SITE**

Interview check list for the in-depth interview to be carried out with parents of the scavenging children

Note to be disclosed to the interviewee

Dear Parents,

The interview check list is prepared to find out the overall situation of scavenging children at the waste dumping site of Addis Ababa. So, the research is expected to be a complete research work to show the correct situations of their life. So, the result is highly dependable on you responses. If their responses are false, it leads to wrong direction and conclusion. If your responses are correct enough, the result will be correct and leads to the right conclusion and discloses your correct situation.

So, you are kindly requested to give you right response. In doing so, I would like to assure you that every thing of your personal identity is absolutely confidential. For the reasons of confidentiality, you shouldn't tell your names and addresses except some other demographic data, which may serve the researcher for further statistical analysis. You are not also recorded or photographed without you will.

1. Sex Female _____ Male _____
2. Age _____
3. Religion _____
4. Ethnic background: _____
5. Educational grade level: _____
6. Physical condition: _____
7. Occupation _____
8. Means of income for the family consumption? _____
9. What is their annual earning? In Birr _____
10. The health condition: very good _____, good, _____, fair _____, unhealthy _____ bed _____ ridden _____
11. Number of family members: Female: _____ Male: _____
12. Who is the bread winning person in the family? Father, Mother, Both, Children
13. Ownership of the house: their own property, _____, Kebele owned, private renters
14. The house rent to be paid for the owners: Birr _____
15. The housing condition: _____
16. Furniture in the house: _____
17. How often you provide new or used clothes for the family? _____
18. How about the availability of night cloths? _____
19. How available food for the family and its quality? _____
20. Do your children attend schools? _____
21. If not why you discontinue your school? Because of _____
22. Have you made any attempt to improve your family situation? _____
23. How is life now? _____
24. What was the home, economic and life situation look like before, just 10 or 20 years back _____
25. What were the coping mechanisms of the family? _____
26. What do you feel while your child is scavenging on the waste dumping site? _____
27. Have you ever been scavenged on Koshie? _____
28. What are your most serious problems? _____

RESEARCH ON
THE SITUATION OF TRASH PICKING CHILDREN OF
ADDIS ABABA WEST DUMPING SITE

Interview check list for the in-depth interview to be carried out with Government officials and professionals working on Environmental protection

Note to be disclosed to the interviewee

Dear Sir,

The interview check list is prepared to find out the overall situation of scavenging children at the waste dumping site of Addis Ababa. So, the research is expected to be a complete research work to show the correct situations of their life. So, the result is highly dependable on you responses. If their responses are false, it leads to wrong direction and conclusion. If your responses are correct enough, the result will be correct and leads to the right conclusion and discloses your correct situation.

So, you are kindly requested to give you right response. In doing so, I would like to assure you that every thing of your personal identity is absolutely confidential. For the reasons of confidentiality, you shouldn't tell your names and addresses except some other demographic data, which may serve the researcher for further statistical analysis. You are not also recorded or photographed without you will.

1. Have you ever seen Koshie waste dumping site?
2. Have you seen children who are scavenging there?
3. If not there are more than 458 children who are scavenging daily on the site. Are there any threats that affect them?
4. Have you ever been thought the situation of the children?
5. If yes, what kind of threat you think happen?
6. How waste dumping takes place?
7. Who is dumping waste ?
8. Do we have a threat related to dumping hazardous chemicals and radio active elements?
9. Is there any mechanism to control the waste dumping practice?
10. Do we have all the necessary policies and legal provisions?
11. Do you have institutional capacity to control the waste dumping practice and the environment to keep clean and safe? Include not only financial constraints. But also man power and knowledge,
12. What are the gaps?
13. How they are going to be tackled?
14. What resources are required?
15. Is there any attempt to mobilize resources from available sources?

Annex 4

Consent

Introduction: “My name is...DERIBE ABERA..... .. Currently, I am working research on “The Situation of Scavenging Children on the Waste Dumping Site of Addis Ababa” to understand the situation, problems, and threats of the children. So for this effect, I make an interview to the people like you who know the area very well in order to assess the situation. The main purpose of the research is to collect information, to analyze and to propose actions to be taken aiming at improving the situation of the children. So, the result of this research is highly dependable on your honest and genuine participation in this interview session by responding questions correctly. Your genuine participation is highly appreciated and considered as a contribution to the fact finding mission of the researcher and to the problem solving initiatives.

Confidentiality and consent: “I’m going to ask you some very personal questions that some people find difficult to answer. Your answers are completely confidential. Your name and addresses are not asked and there will never be recording and photographing without your permission. Any of your identities will never be used in connection with the information you disclosed to me. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer, and you may end this interview at any time you want to. However, your honest answers to these questions will help us better understand the real situation of the scavenging children including their problems. I would greatly appreciate your help in responding to this research. The survey will take about an hour. We will have enough break time during the session. Will you be willing to participate in this interview session?”

Annex 5

Declaration

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university. That all sources of materials used for the thesis have dully acknowledged.

Full Name of the Candidate: Deribe Abera

Signature: _____

Date: 21/06/2006

Conformed by:

Name of the Thesis Advisor: Professor James E. Rollin

Signature: _____

Date: 21/06/2006