# ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
# SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
# COLLEGE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

## THE LIVELIHOOD AND SURVIVAL STRATEGIES OF MIGRANT STREET CHILDREN IN BAHIR DAR TOWN

BY
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# Abstract

*Many of the street children in the study area, Bahir Dar, are rural-urban migrants. The present study investigates the livelihood and survival strategies of migrant street children. It further looks at the causes of migration of children and the social networks they maintain among themselves and to their rural villages. Structuration Theory and Livelihood Approach are adopted to look at the issues to get insights about how street children are making a living in the study area. Structuration Theory has been applied to look at the research problem from different perspectives. It is employed to realize the factors that shape the life of street children in the urban social system. Children make part of the structure of the urban life and as actors are striving to adjust themselves to livelihood outcomes. Livelihood approach has been adapted to look at the diverse street based economic activities of children and how they adapt survival mechanisms to meet their basic needs.*

*In this study qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection are used. The qualitative method is used to understand the view of migrant street children and their lived experience while the quantitative method is used to supplement the data collected through qualitative one. Interviews, focus group discussion, and observation are used as instruments of data collection. Migrant street children as the subjects of this study were selected from Bahir Dar Town, using purposive snowball sampling to get insights about their lives. The data collected are triangulated and cross-checked to check reliability and validity of information.*

*The study shows that children drifted from different parts of the country into the study area and the children left their rural villages on their own and without any parental say on their decision to migrate. They also come from families with large size in their rural localities. Migration does not lead them to lose contact with their rural folk except in few cases. Children migrate into the study area as a result of interwoven and various factors including poverty, disagreement with their families, death of parents (either both or one of their parents), in search of education and others. It has been found that increased migration of rural children was aggravated due to rural poverty. This study also shows that street children are engaged in diverse livelihood activities that require different types of assets of which labor is the most decisive one that enables them to earn income either directly in wage employment or indirectly through the production of goods and services sold in the informal market. In their day to day survival scenario, street children interact among themselves through various informal social networks characterized by hierarchies. Their social networks are also important to strengthen the capability of groups' members to reduce vulnerability and be more beneficial to livelihood outcomes.*

**Key- Words**: Livelihood, Survival Strategy, Strcturation Theory

# Acknowledgements

**Acronyms**

ANRS        Amhara National Regional State

BDCA        Bahir Dar City Administration

BoFED       Bureau of Finance and Economic Development

CSA         Central Statistical Authority

EPRDF       Ethiopian Peoples Revolutionary Democratic Front

FGDS        Focus Group Discussions

M.A.S.L     Meter Above Sea Level (m.a.s.l)

MoLSA       Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

NGOs        Non Governmental Organizations

SDPRP       Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program

SLFA        Sustainable Livelihood Framework Approach

SPSS        Statistical Package for Social Sciences

UNAIDS      United Nations Program for Aids

UNFPA       United Nations Food and Population Agency

UNICEF      United Nations International Children Emergency Fund

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# Chapter One

# 1. Introduction

**1.1 Background**

Ethiopia is located in eastern Africa with a surface area of 1,112,000 square kilometers and has varied landscapes including rugged highlands, dense forests, and lowlands as well as plains. Depending on the elevation the average temperature ranges from 55 Degree Fahrenheit to 73 Degree Fahrenheit. Ethiopia is the second populous country in the sub-Saharan Africa next to Nigeria with an annual growth rate of 2.73 percent. The total population of the country is estimated to be 75.04 million (CSA, 2006). The majority of the people that accounts 85 percent of the population lives in the rural areas and 90 percent of the total labor forces are engaged in agriculture.

Ethiopia is one of the least developed countries of the world that has faced huge resource exhaustion and human distress due to a variety of manmade and natural calamities. As a result of this, a large portion of its population especially children suffer from social ills such as disease, famine, exploitation, poverty, displacement and family instability (Habtamu, 1996).

There are many poor, displaced, unaccompanied, and abandoned children in Ethiopia. A considerable number of these children are also forced to work and live on the streets without any adult care and supervision in their formative years (FSCE, 2003; Veale, 1996, Habtamu, 1996, MOLSA, 1988). The presence of children on the street impacts their development and the society at large which compromised their potential to evolve in their capacities and talents, to assume responsibility and promote economic and social progress (Innocenti, 2002).

Since 1980s the problem of street children has become a threat in major towns of the country and started to grow frighteningly including in the study area (FSCE, 2002, 2003; MOLSA, 1988, 1995; Veala, 1996; Valor, 1997). Abject poverty in the rural areas, the hope of rising one's standard of living, excitement, and attraction of living in great towns have increased the migratory flow of people from rural to urban areas (Kopoka, 2002). The rural- urban migration of children have a contribution for the rise of a number of street children in major towns of the country.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Rural-urban migration is known to account one-third to half of the urbanization of the developing countries. Large cities and towns in these parts of the world are often characterized by unfavorable social and economic settings. Particularly, they are burdened with inadequate social services, poverty, the rise of overcrowded slums and squatters. Besides all these problems in the urban areas, the migration of people from rural areas has not halted (Nguyen, 2003). Accordingly, an increasing number of people, including children, look to the cities for a livelihood (UNFPA, 1996).

The levels of migration in the rural and urban areas in the Amhara Region vary substantially. The percentage of migrants in the urban areas amounted to 43.1 percent of the total urban population, while the corresponding percentage in the rural areas turned out to be only 7.5 percent (CSA, 1995:176). This lopsided distribution of migrants in the region could be described in terms of relatively less attractive job opportunity in rural areas (CSA, 1995:176). The level of migration at the zonal level also shows significant variation ranged from 6.6 percent in South Gonder to 54.1 percent in Bahir Dar special zone (CSA, 1995). As the capital of the Amhara Region, Bahir Dar has become a center of attraction for rural urban migration of people in the area.

A number of young migrants who work and live in the streets have considerably increased in the last recent years in the study area (FSCE, 2003). Children who belong to this group often come in search of livelihood in the town and a way out of the poverty trap. There is a high level of rural urban migration of children and more than 63% of the street children in Bahir Dar Town are migrants (FSCE, 2003). Thus many of the street children are rural urban migrants. The problem of street children is an urban phenomenon exacerbated by migration of children from rural areas. Migrant children face hardships in the urban centers to adjust themselves to sustain their livelihood and survive in a new environment.

Given the accelerated move of rural children and the attendant change they face in urban areas in their entire life, little is known about their livelihood and survival strategies. Moreover, previous studies were dominantly conducted from the perspective of examining character, cause and nature of the problem of street children.

The justification of the study of migrant street children emanates from the fact that these groups of children have their own livelihood and survival strategies living in the town. It also comes from the fact that there is a massive increase of migrant street children engaged in the informal economic sector to meet their basic needs.

## 1.3 Objectives of the Study

### 1.3.1 General objectives

The general objective of this study is to investigate the diverse livelihood and survival strategy of migrant street children in Bahir Dar Town.

### 1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this research are to:

i. Identify the origin of migrant children and the way they negotiate with their families to make decisions to migrate.

ii. Find out the causes that force children to migrate into the streets of the town.

iii. Map the livelihood of migrant street children.

iv. Look at the survival strategies of street children to meet their basic needs.

v. Assess the social relations they maintain among themselves.

vi. Explore how the street children are integrated with or marginalized from the urban community.

### 1.4 Research Questions

i. Where did street migrant children come from?

ii. How do they negotiate with their families to move into the town?

iii. Why do children migrate into the town?

iv. What are the livelihood activities of the street children?

v. What are their survival strategies to be employed to meet their basic needs?

vi. How do social networks work within the street children themselves?

vii. How do they integrate with or marginalize from the urban community?

## 1.5 Significance of the Study

The problem of street children is a growing phenomenon that attracts the focus of governmental, nongovernmental, national, regional and international agencies. Thus street children are the agenda of discussion of various agencies working on them. However, the literature that exists on street children is an aggregate demographic data of their cause, family structure, drug use, delinquency, age and sex ratio. It is also poor and a quantitative outline of findings that fail to provide an account of their lived experience.

This research is expected to produce knowledge on the diverse livelihood and survival mechanisms of street children in the study area. This study also serves as a bench mark to initiate further studies in the field. Moreover, it fills the gap of knowledge observed during the fieldwork by those organizations working on street children and the public in general. It will also help the government, non-governmental organization, the public and academia for country level to design policy and strategy that enable street children to look for other opportunities.

## 1.6 The Structure of the Thesis

This thesis has six chapters. Chapter one is background information that consists of the research problem to be treated, the objectives, significance and limitation of the study. Chapter two deals the context of the study area and Chapter three is about literature review. Chapter four is methodology of the research that shed lights the processes of the data collection, interpretation and analysis, validity, reliability and the field experience. Chapter five is about the results and analysis. The final chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations.

## 1.7 Limitation of the Study

The researcher attempted to get and recruit children through snowball purposive sampling methods which meant that the sample was not representative and thus not fully random. It was also evident that building up relationship with migrant children to establish trust prior to the interview was a difficult task. I observed that some street children do not know their accurate age and may present their age by guess. This probably affects the validity of the data and the choice was either to accept or make a mere guess as they do not have documents that witness their actual birth date.

Time and resources were also other potential limitations of this study. The issue of study of street children is somewhat very complex that needs time and resources to conduct the research work. Resource limitation was very critical for this study. Street children also demand money to cover their daily cots or to be compensated for the lost working hours while they quit their jobs to help and contribute for the purpose this research. In this respect, I tried to compensate the lost working hours with 2 Ethiopian Birr for each street child during interviews and focus group discussions. However, this pay was not sufficient and satisfactory for them.  It so happened due to the limited resources I had for conducting this research work. Time was also another limiting factor. Street children were engaged in their works for long hours and selection of appropriate time for interviews and focus group discussions was a difficult task for the researcher.  As Overa (1998) noted that the degree of openness of one's life is decided by the relationship built over time and the kind of questions asked rather than by explanations or objectives of the study. The degree of closeness with street children depended on the span of time spent with them.

# Chapter Two

## 2. Context of the Study Area

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the socio-economic and physical features of the region in general and the study area in particular. It has two major sections that explain the overall socio-economic and physical characteristics of the Amhara Region and Bahir Dar Town respectively.

### 2.2 The Profile of the Amhara Region

The Amhara region is one of the nine member states of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. The ANRS is located between 9 Degree 21' to 14 Degree 0'North latitude and 36 Degree 20' and 40 Degree 20' East. The total area of the region is estimated to be 17,752 km square. The region has eleven administrative zones including Bahir Dar Special Administration and 114 woredas. The region shares border with Afar and Oromia Regions in the East, Oromia in the south, Beninshangual and the Sudan in the West, and Tigray in the North.

The region has diverse topographic features. The most common are lowlands, highlands, plains, mountains, rugged and undulating land forms. The low lands (500-1500 m.a.s.l) cover mainly the north western part of the region neighboring the Sudan and the eastern parts the Afar. The highest peak in the country is found in the ANRS estimated to be 4620 m.a.s.l at Ras Dashen (BoFED, 2004).

The land use pattern of the region is 28.2 percent arable land, 30 percent pastoral land, 2.1 percent forest land, 12.6 percent bush land, 7.2 percent settlement, 3.8 percent water bodies and 16.2 percent unusable land. The annual rainfall is recorded in the range of 598.3 mm in Lalibela and 1692 mm in Chagni. The annual mean temperature ranges from 12.4 Degree Centigrade to 27 Degree Centigrade (BoFED, 2002).

#### 2.2.1 Demographics of the Region

ANRS is inhabited by the Agaws, Amhara, Argoba, Oromo, Tigre and others. The religious composition is made up of Christians, Muslims and others. The population of the region is estimated to be 19.2 million. Males and Females constitute 49.97 and 50.3 percent respectively. The annual growth rate is 2.67 percent (BoFED, 2006). The age structure of the population depicts

unbalanced distribution. 43.1 percent of the population is between age limit of 0- 14 years being very young. The age range of 65 years and above is 3.0 percent being old age population. These figures shows that the young and old dependency ratio being nearly 93 percent in the region. Thus there is one person who depends on the economically active person (BoFED, 2004 &2005).

Almost 87 percent of the people reside in the rural areas in the region. Agriculture is the main sources of livelihood for the majority of people. The ANRS is one of the poorest in the country due to various biophysical and socioeconomic barriers. The regional head count index (number of people living below absolute poverty line) is estimated to be 54 percent. This figure exceeds the national and the sub-Saharan average by 8 percent and 15 percent respectively (SDPRP, 2002). The low performance of agriculture is mentioned as the factor for high poverty incidence in the region.

## 2.3 The Profile of the Study Area: Bahir Dar Town

Bahir Dar town is located in the Northwestern Ethiopia at a physical distance of 565 km away from Addis Ababa through Dabramarkos and 490 km through Motta. It is situated at the southern shore of Lake Tana, the source of the Blue Nile (or *Abay*), at latitudinal and longitudinal coordinates of $11^0 35'$ $30''$N and $37^0$ $23'$E, respectively. The altitude of the town is 1801 m.a.s.l. (BDCA, 2004).

Oral traditions assert that Bahir Dar was established as a religious settlement since the 14th century (Seletene, 1988). It was by this time that the church of Kidane Mihret (St. Marry Church) was erected around Lake Tana. During the reign of Iyasu I (r.1682-1706), the settlement came to be Bahir Dar Giorgis instead of Bahir Dar Kidane Mihret. Since then Bahir Dar appears both a settlement and a religio-administrative centre of the locality (Seletene, 1998). During the Italian occupation period, Bahir Dar began to serve both a military base and an administrative center for the Italians. Following the Italian occupation, Bahir Dar showed a new phase of development. The former religio-administration came to an end and secular administration was established. Basic urban infrastructures and other facilities such as air field, drainage system, motor roads, and telegram were introduced (Seletene, 1988; BDCA, 2004).

It was in the 1940s, post liberation periods, Bahir Dar showed a remarkable improvement in both social and economic activities. It was by this time that the Ethiopian government introduced various reforms on social, economic and administrative activities. Moreover, it was during this time that Bahr Dar was registered as a municipality (BDCA, 2004). During the Imperial period, the government enhanced the infrastructures of the town by improving the air field, constructing modern schools and hospital, providing pipe water, and other services (Seletene, 1988). During the *Derg* period, the military government of Ethiopia made the town the center of socio-economic and political activities which enhanced the development of the town (Seletene, 1988; BDCA, 2004).

Bahir Dar is now the capital town of the Amhara National Regional State. Currently, the nearby rural *kebeles* and other satellite towns of Meshenti, Zeghe and Tis Abay were put under the Bahir Dar Town Administration and the total population is estimated to be 209,564. Out of this, 176,727 people live in Bahir Dar Town proper whereas 32,837 people live in those recently incorporated rural *kebeles* and satellite towns (BDCA, 2004).

It was during the Italian occupation and in the post liberation periods that the town showed a significant growth in terms of urbanization and other socio-economic development (Seletene, 1988). After the end of the Italian rule, the Imperial government established textile mill, bank, hydroelectric power, and other institutions in the town. During the *Derg* period, many development activities were carried out in the town and these enabled the town to become the centre of many economic activities (ibid). Currently, there are many factories in the town such as flour, tannery, soap, plastic, metal and furniture workshops (BDCA, 2004).

In the 1960s, different educational institutions, including the Bahir Dar Polytechnic Institute, were established in the town. A Polytechnic Institute, built by the Soviet Union at a cost of Ethi $ 2.9 million, opened in 1963, with courses in agricultural mechanics, industrial chemistry, electrical technology, wood-working and processing technology, textile technology, and metal technology. In the 1970s, the Bahir Dar Academy of Pedagogy was established (Seletene, 1988; BDCA, 2004). After 1991, following the coming of EPRDF to power, educational institutions has expanded in the town. Today, there are fifty-five educational institutions in the town. Out of this, twenty-four are governmental whereas thirty-one of them are private. Regarding health institutions, at present,

there are forty-six health institutions in the town (BDCA, 2004). The town is home to Bahir Dar University.

The town is equipped with an airport and Ethiopian Airlines operates scheduled flights between Bahir Dar and the capital as well as with Gondar to the northwest. The town is also connected through roads (and bus lines) to these cities. Bahir Dar is an important starting point for tours of the Falls. The Blue Nile Falls (*Tis Abay*) are located about 30 km to the south..

The town is now serving as a centre of various social, economical and political activities. There are many construction works undertaken in the town. As a result of the expansion and development of the town as well as the availability of job opportunities, it attracts many rural people to migrate to the town.

# Chapter Three

# 3. Literature Review

## 3.1 Introduction

This section of the thesis has two parts each intended to provide insight on the existing literature on street children and the theoretical framework employed to investigate the research problem. The first part starts by investigating the phenomenon of street children that discuss the magnitude, causes, characteristics and social networks of street children. The second section examines the theoretical framework in which the research problem is based on. After the discussion of the situation of street children in the literature, the theories employed to underpin the research problem that helps to understand and explain phenomenon of migrant street children are briefly presented.

The systemic understanding and scrutinizing of the livelihood and survival strategies of migrant street children in the study area requires having a clear concept about what is meant by street children and why they are in the streets. Informally, street children have been explained by the societies in which they have evolved. The names that have emerged for street children present important insight into the perception that exists about them in the societies. However, it is important to base this study in line with the definitions offered by various international agencies and the academia. This would undoubtedly reduce ambiguity to use the term street children for the purpose of this research work.

## 3.2 Definition of Street Children

Initial studies on street children considered them as a uniform category that have no distinction among those children who work on the street and children who actually live and work on the street and children who keep family contact and children who have lost their ties with their family (Kobasyashi, 2004).

The most common definition used today is "boys and girls for whom 'the street' (including unoccupied dwellings, wasteland etc) has become their home and or source of livelihood and who are inadequately protected or supervised by responsible adults," as defined by the United Nations

(cited in Volpi, 2002). The term street child is very broad that has been used to describe children and youth whose live and work are closely associated with the street. However, the conditions and needs of street children are not always homogeneous and efforts were made to further categorize street children (Kobayashi, 2004).

In the 1980s UNICEF made efforts to categorize street children and came up with four distinct categories. UNICEF has developed this nomenclature on the basis of the involvement of children in the street life and the level of contact with their families. This definition builds up a taxonomy distinguishing the types of street children depend on the nature of their involvement in street life and the degree of contact they have with their family. The four distinct categories of street children by UNICEF are children at high risk, children on the street, children of the street and abandoned children (Veala, 1996).

Children at High Risk: - are normally urban children who may for example work at high risk to join the street because of extreme poverty and deprivation in their homes or inadequate care and supervision by parents.

Children on the street: - are children who spend most of their day time on the streets or markets usually as child workers. They keep strong family bond, perhaps returning home at night having spent all day a way. The families are usually poor and highly disadvantaged, living in home setting that lack basic necessities. These children can be described as having principally an economic attachment with street life may be making a considerable contribution to the overall family income or attaining basic necessities for them. These children may join the rank of children of the street if situations do not change in a positive direction from time to time.

Children of the Street: - are those children who have chosen to fully participate in street life not just at an economic level but all the time day and night. They usually have family that they can easily visit them from time to time but the street is their primary home. There may be a developmental continuum from a child on the street to a child of the street and any child may be located at a point along this continuum and may move along it.

Abandoned Children: - are homeless children because of either the death of parents or rejection by their parents or absence of extended families. In some cases, the rejection may be response to deep economic disadvantage as much as rejection of the child per se.

The other definition presented in the literature about street children is that of Lusk's classification. Lusk (1992) developed four categories of the street children found in the street. Each group has its own characteristics. First category is the poor working children returning to their families at night and is likely to attend school. Second, independent street workers whose family ties are beginning to breakdown and their school attendances are declining. Third, children of street families who live and work with their families in the street whose conditions are closely attached to poverty. Finally, children who have broken off contact with their families and residing in the streets full time.

A street child, therefore, can be defined as one who lives in the streets most of the time, work in the streets on occupations of low status and income, lives in the exposed conditions of the street, has no or little parental supervision or other social protection, has either regular or irregular or no family contact at all, and is vulnerable to the hazards of urbanization and urban living conditions (Volpi, 2002). Therefore migrant street children are those children who migrate from different parts of the region or the country to the research area. These children may not have family to contact, works in the informal sectors with a low status job and exposed to challenges of the urban settings as new comers or migrants. They also lack social protection and parental care due to the absence of their family around them in the urban areas.

This study has employed this definition of street children in order to understand and explain the lived experience of street children, the vulnerability context and their social networks in the urban settings. This study considers migrant street children at the age range between 7 and 17 years. This study did not cover children who are working or living with their parents in the streets. For the purpose of this study, the term "street children" can be used in lieu of "migrant street children" or interchangeably in order to discus and explain life experience of street children in this literature.

### 3.3 Magnitude of Street Children

There is no exact data on the actual number of street children working and living in the streets of the world today. Some accounts estimated the number of street children from several millions to over one hundred million but are certainly rough because of shortage of reliable data, extensive use of purposive sampling methods, the mobility of street children population and the fact that many street children refrain from revealing information or give inaccurate data when they are interviewed (Apetaker & Henionen, 2003; Montgomery et al., 2004).

It is estimated that 40 million children in Latin America, 25-30 million in Asia and 10 million in Africa live and work on the streets of cities and towns. The majority of the street children are in developing countries (Tacon, 1991; FSCE, 2003). It is inevitably accepted that the phenomena of children living, working and surviving on the streets of cites are a global agenda observed in the developed and developing countries (Embet et al., 2000; MOLSA & Reda Barnen, 1998). However the enormity of the phenomena of street children varied between developed and developing countries.

In Ethiopia the problem of street children has become clearly a country wide menace with over 100-200,000 children living and working on the streets of the cities (FSCE, 2003). Another 500, 000 rural children (Tacon, 1991) are not enrolled in school and living in extreme poverty generating the potential for thousands and more children to head into the cities streets. In major towns of the country children drifts onto street work to support themselves or their families.

Nobody knows how many street children there are exactly around the streets of Bahir Dar Town, but some estimates put their number as high as 6 to 7 thousands.

### 3.4 Causes of Street life for Children

A multiple of factors can be stated that make the life of the child difficult at home to lead a respectable life and contributes to the child being on the streets. The causes of street children are multifaceted with some being experienced worldwide and others culture specific (Kopoka, 2002; Kobayashi, 2004; Volpi, 2002). Poverty, economic hardship, population growth, war, politically activated violence (Veale, 1996), family breakdown, physical abuse or neglect, HIV/AIDS, rural

to urban migration (Mambwe, 1997), and displacement push children onto the streets of the cities (Kopoka, 2002; Lugalla & Kibassa, 2002; UNICEF, 1996).

Several studies conducted in Latin America, Africa and other parts of the world came up with different findings that support the above stated factors for the involvement of children in street life. A study on the Brazilian street children from 9 to 18 years of age revealed that 82 percent of the children left home for economic reasons (Rosa, de Sosa & Ebhrim, 1992, in Veale, 1996). Another study in Latin America conducted in Juarez and Rio de Janeiro, Columbia, Peru and Dominican showed that children left home and are on the streets to work and earn money due to the fact that they have no enough at home (Lusk, 1992).

 A study conducted in the four towns of Ethiopia found out that 56.4 percent of the children left home and were on the streets to work due to the lack of basic necessities at home – conditions of chronic poverty (MOLSA & UNICEF, 1993:36). In the study of 55 street children in Nigeria under the age of 15 who were begging for a living disclosed that the children were on the streets because their families were poor and required the money they earned (Ojanaga, 1990). Wainaina's study (1981) as cited by Veale in 1996 stated that economic factors were the primary reason in Kenya pushing children on the streets. In a Colombian study, Pineda et al (1978) found out that 36 percent of children were on the streets because of poverty, 26 percent because of family dispute, 20 percent because of physical abuse or neglect, 10 percent to seek out adventure and 7 percent for other reasons ( as cited by Veale, 1996: 34). Apteaker (1988) came up with the similar findings. Veale and Dona (2003) in Rwanda found out that 38 percent economic factors, 26 percent family problem, and 18 percent lack of guardian as responsible factor for children involvement in the street.

However, the poverty hypothesis is not absolutely supported by all studies. Patel (1990) in a study on one thousand children on the streets in Bombay found out that the principal reason for street children was not poverty but family violence. Another study in Indian street children showed that even if poverty was important trait of the children being on the streets, family discord was the principal problem (Veale, 1996). Beside this, Brazilian study that attributed economic factors for children being on the street as the principal cause also asserted that it was twice as frequent as to

have fathers absent from the homes of street children from that group of poor working children. Other studies in Latin American countries have underlined the harmful effects of stepfathers who abuse their stepchildren as the factor for children being on the streets (Tacon, 1983). The failures of an extended family and an increase in extramarital affairs have also been implicated in the origins of street children in Latin America (Veale, 1996, Apteaker & Heinonen, 2003).

Many developing countries experienced rapid rural- urban migration and population growth. Rural underdevelopment and rural poverty keep on forcing families to move to urban areas looking for employment and better life (Kopoka, 2002). Thus the rural to urban migration is another side adequate to explain the origins of street children in the literature (Apetaker, 2000; Kopoka, 2002; Veale, 1996; Munzon & Pachon, 1980). Apteaker (1988) in Columbia found out that 66 percent of children in the study area were born in the state, 10 percent were in adjacent areas, and 18 percent were migrants from different parts of the country. However, Lusk et al (1998) as cited by Veale (1996) in border city in Mexico found out that street children were more frequently product of families that had recently migrated to the city and 57 percent of his sample had migrated with their families.

Veale and Dona (2003) in a study conducted in Kigali, Kibungo and Butare towns of Rwanda found out that 38 percent of children are migrated from rural areas. In Ethiopia a study conducted by MOLSA & UNICEF (1993) in Addis Ababa, Bahirdar, Mekele and Nazareth revealed that 44.8 percent, 50.9 percent, 60 percent and 26. 5 percent of the family residences of street children were respectively from rural areas. The majority of street children who migrated from rural areas live either alone or with peers (MOLSA & UNICEF, 1993: 47-48; Veale, 1996). Emebet et al (2000) about children working on the streets of Ethiopia conducted in Addis Ababa, Awassa, Bahirdar, Dessie, Nazareth, and Shashmene came up with the findings that attributed poverty, broken family, early marriage, death of parents, rural-urban migration, unemployment in the family and large family size as factor for children being on the streets. The study also revealed that 26 percent of the children were migrants in Bahir Dar who came from nearby towns and far way villages in search of opportunities. Some of them migrated by themselves and others moved with their parents (Emebet et al, 2000). In Bahir Dar, most of the migration of children was in search of work (MOLSA & UNICEF, 1993; Veale, 1996; FSCE, 2003). The proportion of children being on

the streets in search of work or for economic reasons was also high in Addis Ababa and Nazareth (MOLSA & UNICEF, 1993).

The difficult situation of street children is a result of social changes of varying degrees that disintegrate the family. In developing countries these changes are a natural outcome of rural-urban migration, incipient revolutions and social unrest (MOLSA& Reda Barnen, 1988: 6-7). The number of children on the streets has also increased hastily in areas of armed conflict (like Freetown in Sierra Lone, and Monrovia in Liberia) or famine where parents have been killed, economy disrupted, family and community attachment cut (Kopoka, 2002).  In the 1980s and 1990s, civil war and famine in Ethiopia and Somalia increased the population of dreadfully poor people, particularly children and women in urban centers (Blanc, 1994). Veale (1996) found out that civil war and displacement caused for the origin of street children in the Sudan. War and political violence also contributed to the presence of street children in the urban areas of Northern Ethiopia (MOLSA & UNICEF, 1993).

The study conducted by MOLSA & Redda Barena (1988) and MOLSA & UNICEF (1993) showed that some of the street children in Ethiopia were orphaned, rejected, abandoned or for what ever reasons had no one to support them. Orphans accounted for 7.9 percent of the sample of street children in Addis Ababa, in Bahir Dar 7.7 percent, Nazareth 3.8 percent and Mekele 19.4 percent respectively (MOLSA &UNICEF, 1993: 39; Veale, 1996). In Ethiopia children who are orphaned by HIV/ ADIS, war, poverty and children who have disabilities live on the streets alongside children who have been abandoned or who abandoned their home (Habtamu, 1996). An increasing number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS are living and working on the streets. Recent study conducted in Zimbabwe revealed that half of the street children are orphans, the majority of them are the result of HIV/AIDS (UNAID&UNICEF, 2002). In Ethiopia a study conducted in Mekele found out that war or displacement was the major pushing factor of children being on the streets that accounted nearly 41 percent of the street child population (Habtamu, 1996). The 12.8 percent, 15.2 percent, and 23.2 percent of children in Nazareth, Mekele and Bahir Dar were respectively being pushed into the streets due to family problems (Habtamu, 1996).
Furthermore, these children joined the street being pushed out of their home due to family problems and being pulled towards the street to harbor from their problems. For some street

children the streets in the cities are a margin of practicing freedom and stimulation. Freedom, excitement, friendship ties, identity and inventive approach appear to attract children to make their life in the street (Volpi, 2002). A study conducted in Ethiopia by MOLSA (1998) showed that children came to the streets to work to support their schooling or pressurized by parents. Children are likely to leave if they experienced physical or sexual abuse at home which is frequent in many societies. Lalor (1997) found out that of the sample of 69 street girls in Addis Ababa 25 girls left home and being on the streets due to abuse from families. This study also revealed that girls experienced abuse at home from mother, stepmother, stepfather, aunt, father and uncle and most of the time by their mothers and stepmothers (Lalor, 1999:763).

## 3.5 Street Children and Street life

At the outset the term "street child" has been used to refer to children in variety of circumstances causing misunderstanding about who are and what kinds of experience brought them in to the streets (Apteaker & Heinonen, 2003:1). The terms "on" the street and "of" the street are commonly used to classify street children in many countries of the world (MOLSA, 1988 & 1995; UNICEF, 1996; Heinonen, 1996). Street children neither form a homogeneous group, nor do their life circumstances stay constant. Involvement of children in street life and family attachment varies due to natural shift from childhood to adolescence and adulthood. The majority of street children are "on the street" that they live with or keep up regular contact with their parents. Of all street children, merely an estimated number of 5-10 percent is children of the street (Tacon, 1992). Two thirds to ninety percent of street children in Latin America are working children who live at home and make financial contribution to their family (Tacon, 1984). In Colombia a study found out that 61 percent of street children had close attachment with their families returning home every year (Felsman, 1981, in Veale, 1996). On the other hand in Peru, Lima only 3 percent of street children lives on the streets. In Kenya a study on street children came up with the findings that revealed 85 percent of street children living with their family (Veale, 1996).

Kopoka (2002) clarified that everywhere, children living and working on the street are 'ignored, scored, mistreated, and misunderstood' by the society and the governments. The laws in a number of countries including Ethiopia sort, street children as inactive and violent persons and thus liable to criminalization, leaving them open to abuse, discrimination and harassment by the police and members of the public. Most street children show an image of misery, suffering, neglect,

deprivation and even torture. Studies from Africa, Latin America, and North America found out that violence by police, sexual exploitation, and use of drugs are major problems among street children (Ali et al, 2004). Kenyan (Ayaya & Esamai, 2003, in Ali et al, 2004) and Indian (Nigam, 1994, in Ali et al, 2004) study reported that malnutrition to be rampant among street children.

Street children face abusive actions, dangerous and difficulties living and working on the streets. However, the majority of street children often appear positive and even optimistic in the face of their diversities (MOLSA, 1988; FSCE, 2003). Street children are apparent in large cities and towns engaged in occupations that keep on contact with the public, both the local urban populations and others coming into the city for different purposes. A study conducted by Emebet et al ( 2000) in six major towns of Ethiopia revealed that the types of wok street children engaged in consists of street vending, car washing or parking, shoe shining, collecting, fishing, carrying goods, messengers, collection of rubbish for recycling, scavenging, begging and theft (that is invisible). They are from all sectors of the population leading their life in marginal occupations. These types of activities available are very much gender biased, with the above being performed mainly by boys. Studies in Ethiopia, Tanzania, Brazil, and Kenya have shown that girls often face a much greater risk of being physically or sexually exploited and frequently have to engage in survival sex in order to generate their livelihood (Lalor, 1997).

At global level the frequency of street boys is higher than street girls. A study of 103 street children in the city of Juarez in Mexico found out that 80 percent of the sample to be male (Veale, 1996). In Rio de Janeiro, a study conducted by Rizzini 1991 as cited in Veale (1996) reported that only 10 percent of children are female. A Kenyan study by Onyango et al (1991 cited in Veale 1996) reported that 90 percent of street children were boys and noted that girls ended up on the streets often become removed from the streets being involved in prostitution. Moreover, girls are more strictly managed by their families particularly in cultures where arranged marriage is the norm (Lalor, 1999). Street girls join the entertainment industry as barmaids, hotel attendants, or prostitutes if they grow up and become more independent (Veale, 1996; Lalor, 1997) but they are still invisible and tend to hide themselves from the public. Street boys and girls in Ethiopia comprise an estimated number of 75 percent and 25 percent respectively of the street child population (Azeb & Veale, 1992). Parent's uncertainties' on hazards of street life to female children is also explained to be a cause for lesser number of street girls (Apeteker & Heinonen,

2003). A study carried out by Veale (1996) on 23 families of street children in Ethiopia came out that parents worried about uncertainties and risks that resulted from working on the streets. Her findings depicted that 70 percent of the parents were not pleased with having their children on the streets.

Street children have often used substances and drugs usually glue, marijuana, and alcohol to stem hunger, numb pain, or stay alert for work or possible violence. A study conducted in Brazil found out that 80 percent of street children used drugs (Lucchini, 1993b, cited in Lalor, 1999, p.766). Lalor (1997) found out that street children in Ethiopia consumed drugs though little indication was found for the use of hard dugs. Street children use drugs in Addis Ababa once a week or less (Lalor, 1999). Practices such as child prostitution, exposure to all weather conditions and the lack of sanitation facilities pose significant health risks to both male and female street children. Long working hours, exposure to bad weather condition, insufficient nutrition and abuse affected physical, mental and social development of street children (Azeb & Veale, 1992: IV).

The majority of street children have their roots on the socio-economic situations of their families. The families of street children are disorganized and chaotic with a predominately of broken and single parent if they are compared to two parents normal family structure (Veale, 1996: 23; Apteaker & Henionen, 2003). Lusk et al (1989) argued that family structure of street children tend to come from a broken family. Brown (1987) in Kingston, Jamaica found out that 90 percent of street children came from female headed families. Flesman (1981) found out that 84 percent of street children had biological mother in the home but in nearly three-fourth of cases the biological fathers missing. In Kenya 85 percent of the 'parking boys' of Nairobi were brought up by a single parent in a female headed family (Wainaina, 1981, in Apteaker, 2003). In Sudan the prevalence of polygamy was higher among the families of street children than was the statistical norm (Veale, 1996). In Angola the proportion of female-headed families of street children was higher than the norm for female headed households in urban centers (Veale, and Dona, 2003). Lalor (1999) found out of a sample of 69 homeless street girls, only 16 percent came from two-parent household, 30 percent from a female headed household and the rest lived in a variety of other guardian arrangements such as with stepfathers, aunts, uncles, grandparents, neighbors and adopting families.

MOLSA & UNICEF (1993) found out that in the four major towns of Ethiopia such as Addis Ababa, Nazareth, Bahir Dar and Mekele 42, 47, 37 and 24 percent of street children were respectively from two-parent families. In most cases, all over the world street children have been found out to be predominately the product of poor families irrespective of their rural or urban origin (Veale, 1996: 230). Ali et al (2004) found out that sixty percent of street children in Pakistan attended school for some time but 7 percent of girl street children and 53 percent boys did not attend. In Brazil, Rizzini et al ( 1992) cited in Veale in 1996 found out that most street children were enrolled in school and at the same time attended classes but found it difficult to bring together the nature of their street life with school ( Veale, 1996: 35). This study also came up with the fact that street children dropped out of school due to the need to work and financial difficulties and dislike of school teacher (Rizzini et al, 1992, in Veale, 1996).

The mass of street children in the world are aged between 10 and 14 years. In a study of 300 street children in Reo de Janeiro in Brazil depicted that children were generally initiated to street life between the age of 7 and 12 years with the average age of initiation being 9 years (Rizzini, 1992, in Veale, 1996). It is found that most remain on the streets until they are about 15 or 16 years and only 17 percent of the sample are over 14 years. Studies conducted in Ethiopia, Brazil, Afghanistan, and Columbia show that street children range in age from 9 to 12 years (Lalor, 1999).

Emebet et al (2000) found that in Bahir Dar more than 55.9 percent of street working children were below the age of 14 years. It also reported that the age of the working street children in the six major towns of Ethiopia (Addis Ababa, Awassa, Bahir Dar, Dessie, and Shashemene) was between 9 and 13 years. Ritcher (1991) found out that the street children in South Africa to be between 7 and 18 years of age, the majority of them between 13 and 16 years. He also found out that the ages of street children in poor third world countries 11 to 16 years. A study in Botswana, Gaborone in 1995 came up with the findings that depicted the age range of street children between 5 and 19 years (Campbell & Ntsabane, 1995). The study conducted in Bahir Dar by FSCE (2003) came up with results that showed the majority of street children aged between 13 to 15 years and the 16-18 years of age group constituted 22 percent where as only 4 percent in the 7-9 years age group ( FSCE,2003).

### 3.6 Marginalization and Social Networks of Street Children

Street children signify some of the most helpless social groups in the world today (Lugella & Kibassa, 2002; Habtamu, 1996). These children undergo through variety of social evils as children in general and street children in particular. Street children are marginalized section of the urban poor who inquire help and guidance but they are the least assisted, supervised and protected in the society (Veale, 1996; 1998; Innocenti, 2002). A study conducted in a sample of 69 street girls in Addis Ababa by Lalor (1997) found out that street children belong to a certain group. The study also reported that the activities of street girls such as sleeping, working, eating and recreation took place in groups and the group was crucial in times of hardships (Lalor, 1997).

To sum up the empirical evidence that existed about street children has been generally descriptive in nature with little endeavor to develop a coherent conceptual account of children's lives. The empirical study is fairly found as detailed profile of origins of street children, their background, family condition and reasons for their involvement in street life (Veale, 1996).

Literature on the issue of street children is thin and categorized into two main sources. These two categories are differentiated on the basis of the objectives they demand. The first is the welfare and social policy literature that is intended to generate concern and as a result of this, money to give remedy to the hardships street children face. The main area of concern of this literature is the rights of the child or the deprivation of the rights of street children. The second literature is limited but the growing literature (Veale, 1996). It is mostly an academic work about street children. This academic work on street children originates in Latin America.

During the early 1980s in Latin America, Tacon opened up the term street child (UNICEF, 1986). Academic literature in Africa particularly in the Horn of Africa is very limited and there exist gap in the research work. In Ethiopia the literature about street children is very limited and thin that focus on street children's profile. Academic work about children is very limited and failed to see the livelihood of street children. Most of the works are also concentrated on Addis Ababa and there is a literature gap on the life of street children in other parts of the country though the situation is a country wide problem.

**3.7 Theories of the Research Problem**

Structuration theory and livelihood framework approach are used to shape the theoretical underpinnings of the research problem for this study. Theories present certain ways of looking at the world and are essential in defining a research problem. Theory consists of credible relationships produced among concepts and sets of concepts. Theory provides both a framework to critically understand phenomena and a basis for considering what is known might be organized (Giddens, 1984). Therefore, I used structuration theory to understand the power, action, social systems, institutions, agency and the time space dimension of the various forces that shape migration of children into urban centers and street life. Moreover, livelihood framework approach is used to realize the diverse livelihood of street children and the survival strategies for coping with vulnerabilities.

**3.7.1 Structuration Theory**

It is an approach to social theory concerned with the intersection between knowledgeable and capable social agents and the wider social systems and structures in which they are involved. Antony Giddens (1979) developed structuration theory as a general theory of social systems. He developed structuration theory as an attempt to resolve the basic division in the social sciences between naturalistic and interpretative tradition. Structuration theory provides an optional view of social phenomena that incorporates both subjective and objective interpretation of the world. Structuration theory seeks to go beyond the dichotomies of objective versus subjective and socially constructed versus material that has existed for years in the social sciences by asserting the duality of structure (Giddens, 1979; 1984; 1992).

Giddens advances view of the mutual interaction of human agents and social structure rather than conflicting independent agents. Human agents produce, reproduce or modify social structures via their actions; and social structure enables or disables human actions. The theory proposes a duality of structure that the structure is both the rules and resources (Giddens, 1984:374). Structuration theory has six basic elements: agency, structure, and the duality of structure, power, institutions, and time-space relations. In recognition of the significance and for better understanding of the use of structuration theory to this study, each of these six points needs to be discussed and elaborated.

**Agency**

Human agency is the capacity to make difference (Giddens, 1984:14). In Gidden's thought the agent is a "knowledgeable and capable subject" in that the agent knows what he or she is doing and why he or she is doing it. All actions are intentional or purposeful (Giddens, 1979:56). The concern that agents are knowledgeable and their actions are intentional is one of the bases of structuration theory. The knowledge ability of human actors is always bounded by unconscious and unintended consequences of action (Giddens, 1984:282). Actions have intended and unintended consequences. Unintended consequences of action are the result of activities that produce an outcome that is different from the expected (Giddens, 1984:10). Actions are continuous flow of intervention in the world that is instigated by self-ruling agent.

The idea of agent in structuration theory gives a significant idea into the individual migrant child. According to Giddens theory of structuration the agent performs both intentional and unintentional actions. The intentional action could be classified as immediate determinants of migration of children. These could be economic prospects, previous migration history, and employment. Giddens thought of the concept of intended and unintended actions of the agent that are very essential to the purpose of this research work in clearing up the reasons for migration of children in the study area. In Giddens theory, people use a cost benefit analysis to make decisions. This concept also helps to explain the decisions of the agent or migrant street children during the times of stress, shocks and strain.

**Structure**

After agency, the second element in Giddens structuration theory is the role of structure in social change. It is the rules and resources directly implicated in social reproduction. Rules cannot be conceptualized apart from resources that refer to the modes whereby transformative relations actually incorporated into the production and reproduction of social practices (Giddens, 1984). Structure only exists in memory traces, the organic basis of human knowledgeability; and as instantiated in action (Giddens, 1984:377). In other words; structure includes the rules that govern the society. Societies have certain laws and resources that influence social change. Structure is not external to 'individuals'. Structuration has no continuation free of the knowledge that agents have about what they do in their day to day activities (Giddens, 1984).

Structure is both the medium and outcome of the social practices constituting social systems (Giddens, 1979:69; 1984:374). This implies that human agents produce and modify social structures through their actions and in turn social structure enables or constrains human actions. Thus structure is both influenced by and influences social change.

Structures are constituted by mutually sustaining rules and sets of resources that empower and constrain social action and tend to reproduce by that action. Agents are empowered by structures by both the knowledge of rules that enables them to mobilize and by the access to resources that enables to enact the rules (Giddens, 1979; 1984 &1992).

Another key element of Giddens thought is the differentiation between structure, structuration and social systems. Structure is the rules and resources that constitute the structural properties of social system (Giddens, 1979:66). It is the set of rules that exist in the society and the ability of individuals to change the laws of the society. A social system refers to the relation between individuals and group of actors'. Social system is the pattern of interaction between actors. Social systems are regularized patterns of interaction involving individuals and groups. Structruation refers to the condition governing continuity or transformation of structure and therefore the reproduction of system. It is the method by which society is changed (Giddedns, 1979&1984). Stucturation is an ongoing process rather than a static property of social systems.

These three points together explain the patterns of social change that are influenced by or influence the structure of society. Society is also an important influence on the migration decision of children. In the study of migration as a livelihood strategy structural determinants of migration represent the influence of structure on migration decisions. It helps to explain how street children employ or produce mechanisms in the social structure through their actions and how the social structure enables or constrains them to get their livelihood in the streets. Moreover, the concept of structure is decisive to conceptualize the socio-economic background that forces children to opt for migration, their livelihood, why they opt for street life as well as their lived experience.

### Duality of Structure
Giddens identifies self-regulating concepts of structure and agency as 'duality'. The duality of structure is one of the most important aspects of structration theory. The duality of structure

speaks about mainly the recursive character of social life and articulates shared dependence of structure and agency. Formation of agent and structure represents a given set of phenomenon: duality. Duality of structure is always the basis of continuity in social reproduction across time and space (Giddens, 1984).

According to Giddens (1979), the theory of structuration involves that of the duality of structure, which relates to the fundamentally recursive character of social life, and expresses the mutual dependence of structure and agency (1979:69). The rules and resources drawn upon in the production and reproduction of social action are at the same time the means of system reproduction or the duality of structure (Giddens, 1984:19).

The duality of structure is the relationship and interaction between structure and agency with each other to influence change in the society. For an individual or agent to cause change in the society, based on the duality of structure, rules and resources are drawn upon by actors in the production of interaction, but there by also reconstituted through such interaction (Giddens, 1979:71). Individuals use the available resources and rules in the process of social change. Agents in their actions constantly produce, reproduce and develop social structure which both constrain and enable them. It is important to notice that both structure and agency interact to change society.

This discussion held on duality of structure provides an important insight on how agents or individual street children interact with the structure of the urban life to draw their livelihood and how they are influenced by the structure. It also gives insight about how a multiple of factors in their origin force them to move into the towns and how the urban structures induce them to live in. It will help the researcher to show how multiple of factors interact in shaping or influencing the life of street children. Application of Giddens' thought of duality of structure to the research problem is important to understand both the migrant street children and their characteristics in order to get a full picture of migration, livelihood of street children, coping strategies, and social networks. Duality of structure is important to explain the context of migration as livelihood strategies and the social networks available as option for street children to get support.

**Power**

Power is an essential element of structuration theory. In structuration theory, all actors have some power in influencing the structuration of the society. If a person has no power, then the person ceases to be an agent (Giddens, 1984:149). In reality, human agents almost always keep some transformational capacity though it can be small. Power engrosses the use of resources. Resources are structured properties of social system, drawn on and reproduced by knowledgeable agents in the course of interaction (Giddens, 1984:15).

Power is an essential element in Giddens' theory because power is available to all agents and need to know their power source and how to use it. In order to know the power of agents, it is necessary to understand resources available to them. Giddens defines resources as "the media where by transformative capacity is employed as power in the routine course of social action; but they are at the same time structural elements of social systems as systems, reconstituted through their utilization in social interaction" (Giddens, 1984:92).

When agents use resources, it changes society and, at the same time changes the resources that can be used in the future because society adapts to the use of the resources. In structuration theory, all agents have power. Since all agents have the ability to influence societal change, individuals who have no power cease to be agents (Giddens, 1984). This has sounding implications to examine migration of children and their livelihood strategies to this research work. It is when the agent or rural children lose their power to act as actors that they cease to be agents and may consider movement into the urban centers in order to gain better position as agents. The concept of power is important to conceptualize the factors that force children to drift way from home and join the streets of town. It is also vital to realize the power relation among street children, their family and the society.

**Institutions**

Institutions are another set of factors that influences the structuration of social systems. Cohen (1989) defines social institutions as used in structuration theory as "routinized practices that are carried out or recognized by the majority of the members of a collectivity (Cohen, 1989:39). These groups of practices are routine actions that are used by agents for influencing societal change.

Giddens identifies four types of societal institutions. Each of them is influenced by signification, domination, and legitimation (Giddens, 1984:107). The four types of institutions are symbolic orders or modes of discourse, political institutions, economic institutions and law or modes of sanction. Agents utilize each class of these institutions in an effort to influence the structuration of society. Institutions differ from resources in that they are employed more routinely and are deeply ingrained in a society. However both of these sets of events are major influences of the structuration of society.

Institutions are important components of Giddens theory of structuration. The concept of institutions is employed to understand and explain forces that influence migration of children and their livelihood in the urban settings. It is important for this research work to conceptualize the institutions that influence migration, social networks and livelihood of children.

**Time and Space in Stucturation Theory**

All social life takes place in and is constituted by, junction of presence and absence in the context of time and the shadow of space. Time-space provides an important mode of notation of the intersection in day to day activity (Giddens, 1984:132). Structure gives systematic form to social practices across space and time. Structuration theory describes time-space relations as constitutive features of social systems. Social systems are structured by rules and resources (Giddens, 1979&1984). The typical patterns of movement of individuals can be represented as the repetition of routine activities across days or longer spans of time –space.

Given time-space limit, agents move in physical contexts whose properties interact with their capabilities and interact among themselves in a given time space dimension. The interactions of individuals moving in time space compose a definite time –space locations with in bounded regions (homes, streets, cities, states) (Giddens, 1984:112). Giddens' used the term "locale" to refer to the importance of space to provide the settings of interaction. All social activities are positioned in three key relations: the "three intersecting moments of difference" that are classified as temporal, paradigmatic and spatial (Giddens, 1984:54). Therefore social systems are temporally and spatially binding and time-space consecutive.

The children migrate into the city and strive to generate their livelihood on the base of time –space dimension. In this study it is necessary to look at the livelihood activities in relation with time and space. Street children perform their menial jobs in a definite time and space. The time –space relations are also very important to look at a set of unique origin and destination forces that influence migration of children and their livelihood activities. The concept of time-space is also important to explain the characteristics of the migrant at the origin and it's lived experience in the urban settings. I therefore attempt to conceptualize and explain the activity of children depend on temporal and spatial dimensions.

### 3.7.2 Criticism of Structuration Theory

Though accepted as a substantial social theory, structuration theory is not without its critics in some respects. A central reservation about structuration theory in the critique of other social theorists has centered on the conflation of structure and agency. Conflation concerns the problems of reducing structure to action or vice versa and the difficulty of documenting institution apart from action (Barely & Tolbert, 1997; Archer, 1996).

Giddens conceptualization of structure (rules and resources existing only in memory traces and instanciated in action) is some what rarefied or loose and abstract (Thompson, 1989) in comparison to the structuralist tradition of social thought, where structure has a far more tangible function constraining human action. This has lead to criticism of subjectivism which Giddens does not so much resolve the dualism of action and structure, as offer victory to the knowledgeable human actor. Giddens view of structuration offers conceptual mechanisms for explaining the reproduction of social structure (Held& Thompson, 1989). However, the tenets of structuation theory are applied to help understand street children as social actors and their interaction and relationships among themselves and with other social actors in the study area.

### 3.7.3 Structuration Theory and Street Children

The basic concepts of structuration theory are agency, structure, social system, power, institutions and action. Structuration theory is employed in this study to realize the forces that shape the life of street children to generate their livelihood in the urban social system. Children also make part of the structure of the urban life and as actors are striving to adjust themselves to livelihood outcomes. This study assumes children as competent social actors who have certain freedom of

choice and action (Giddens, 1984:162-163). Structuration theory is also important to understand the extent that street children are integrated or marginalized with in the structure and the way they influence their life in the urban context.

According to Giddens (1984), structure gives shape to social life. Social life is represented through social practices and social practices connect structure and agent that enable the transformation of rules and resources in the social system. For Giddens concept of actions represent the routine action of daily life considered as a continuous flow rather than series of isolated single actions with specific intentions. Street children adapt survival mechanisms of obtaining shelter, clothing, and food. These are the routine actions of daily lives of migrant street children. Their daily routines are also subjected to continuous actions and capability to cope up with vulnerabilities.

Social life is constituted through social practice. Structures give form and shape to social life. Social practices link agents to structures. Social practices enable street children to develop skills for transformation of rules and resources over time and between various locations. Consequently social practice is a meditating concept between agency and structure; individual and society. Through it is possible to see the relationship among street children and the urban society. It is also likely to observe the meditating forces that assist street children to draw their livelihood. Overall, structuration theory is used for this study to be more pragmatic to understand and interpret the factors that shape migration decision, livelihood, and the survival mechanisms of street children in the study area.

### 3. 8 Sustainable Livelihood Approach

Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA) adopts a distinctive perspective on the understanding of poverty and how to mediate to improve the conditions of the poor. Sustainable Livelihood Approach to poverty eradication is one that acknowledges that poverty is a condition of insecurity rather than only a lack of wealth (Chamber&Conway, 1992). Broadly a 'sustainable livelihood is a means of living which is resilient to shocks and stresses which does not adversely affect the environment. Livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and manage to enhance its capabilities and assets

both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base (Chamber & Conway, 1992).

### 3.8.1 Livelihood Framework in the Urban Contexts

At the outset the concept of livelihood approach was rural in focus. Currently it is becoming increasingly used in both Peri-urban and urban contexts (Moser, 1998). An understanding of the particular nature of the urban context is so critical when examining the specifics of urban sustainable livelihood. The urban poor, whether or not they are migrants survive through undertaking a variety of activities which mainly take place in the informal sector.

Urban centers present economic opportunities that attract rural or peri-urban migrants to the towns in search of work and the chance to improve their livelihood. Many migrants also experience burdens as well as the rewards of the city life. Living in urban contexts is apparently a different experience from life in rural areas or setting. Despite the prevailing contrasts in terms of contexts, there is one factor that is left unchanged, the people themselves. Weather in rural or urban settings people live, they keep basically the same human needs, and the need for the same entitlements or rights.

They require accesses to productive resources such as land, knowledge and capital and from these incomes to support consumption needs. They require food, shelter, clothing, accesses to medical facilities, the ability to educate children and the ability to participate in the society which they are part of it. Therefore these requirements amount to the claim each person has to lead a life that secure him or her in respect to both basic needs and the broader social and psychological sense of a livelihood. The livelihood of the urban poor are defined in large part by the opportunities and constraints under which they are operating. Thus it is necessary to understand the nature of the urban context to examine the nature of sustainable urban livelihood.

A livelihood is considered to consist of the assets, activities and entitlements that enable people to make a living (Chamber & Conway, 1992). Assets include human capital, social capital, natural capital and physical capital. According to (Ellis, 2000:10), livelihood comprises the assets (natural, physical, human, financial and social), the activities, and the accesses to these (mediated

by institutions and social relations) that determine the living gained by the individual or household.

### 3.8.2 Livelihood Assets

Assets are resources and stores (tangible assets), and claims and access (intangible assets), which a person or household commands and can use towards a livelihood. The resources people employ as part of their livelihood strategies in order to achieve their livelihood outcomes. Increased assets can empower people to influence the policies, institutions and processes that affect their livelihood. The types of livelihood assets are human, natural, financial, social and physical capital. They range from social assets, such as relationships of trust, and membership of informal organizations to physical assets such as infrastructure and manufactured goods (Ellis, 2000; Scoones, 1997).

Natural capital: - are the natural resource stocks and environmental services from which resource flows and services are useful for livelihood. There is a wide variation in the resources that make up natural capital, from intangible public goods such as the atmosphere and biodiversity to divisible assets used directly for production (land, trees, etc) (Ellis, 2000).

Financial capital: - it is the capital base (cash, credit, or debt, savings and other economic assets) which is essential for the pursuit of any livelihood strategy. There are two main sources of financial capital such as available stocks which can be held in several forms as cash, bank deposits, liquid assets like livestock and jewelry or resources obtained through credit providing institutions; and regular inflows of money including earned income, pensions, other transfers from the state and remittances.

Human capital: - represents the skills, knowledge, ability to labor and good health that together enable to pursue different livelihood strategies. At a household level human capital is a factor of the amount and quality of labor available which varies according to household size, skill levels, leadership potential, health status etc.

Social capital: - are social resources (networks, claims, social relations, affiliation, and association) up on which people draw when tracking different livelihood strategies. Social capital is taken to mean the social resources upon which people draw in pursuit of their livelihood. These are developed through networks, connectedness, membership of more formalized groups, and relationships of trust, reciprocity and exchanges that facilitate co-operation, reduce transaction costs and may provide the basis for informal safety nets amongst the poor.

Physical capital: - the basic infrastructure and production equipment and technologies essential for pursuing any livelihood strategy. It comprises the basic infrastructure and producer goods needed to support livelihood. Producer goods are the tools and equipment that people use to function more productively. Infrastructure consists of changes to physical environment that help people to meet their basic needs and to be more productive. The following components of infrastructure are usually essential for sustainable livelihood: affordable transport, secure shelter and buildings, adequate water supply and sanitation, clean, affordable energy and access to information and communications.

### 3.8.3 Livelihood Strategies

Livelihood strategies are the range and combination of activities and choices that people undertake in order to maintain their livelihood. This is a dynamic process which people combine activities to meet their various needs at different times. Agricultural intensification, diversification and migration are the three core livelihood strategies (Ellis, 2000). In this section, the concept of diversification and migration are discussed as they are relevant to this research problem. The idea of diversification helps to look at the diverse activities in which street children are engaged in to fulfill and sustain their livelihood and migration as a strategy of rural children.

Livelihood Diversification: - refers to attempts of individuals and households to find new ways to raise incomes and reduce environmental risk, which differ sharply by the degree of freedom of choice (to diversify or not), and the reversibility of the outcome. Ellis (1997) defines livelihood diversification as the processes by which rural families construct a diverse portfolio of activities and social support capabilities in their struggle for survival and in order to improve their standard of living (1997:5).

Migration: - it is defined as permanent or semi-permanent change of residence by an individual or group of people. Migration means physical movement of people from one place to another for the betterment of life. Rural-urban migration is the migration of people from rural areas to cities. It is both temporarily and permanent movement of people (individual and while family) from rural to urban areas and have involved in some informal works in the city.

### 3.8.4 The Context of Vulnerability

Vulnerability has been defined as the insecurity of the well being of individuals or communities in the face of changing environments (ecological, social, economic or political) in the form of sudden shock, long term trends or seasonal cycles (Moser, 1996).

The vulnerability context is especially about how people adapt to and cope with stresses and shocks. People's livelihood and their access and control can be affected by events largely beyond their control. The vulnerability context firstly frames the external environment in which people exist. For example: trends in population growth, national and international economics, natural resources, politics, and technology; sudden shocks or events such as health problems, earthquakes, floods, droughts, conflict, agricultural problems such as pests and disease, economic shocks; and seasonal vulnerability of prices, production, employment opportunities or health can impact on livelihood (Chambers & Conway,1991:11). Shocks, trends, and seasonality represent the conditions that are out of the control of the people.

### 3.8.5 Street Children and Livelihood Framework Approach

In the preceding discussion the essential features of urban livelihood and its implication for the urban poor have been revised. The livelihood framework approach is used to understand the livelihood activities of street children who draw their daily income necessary for survival on the streets. Street children as the urban poor are also vulnerable for a variety of trends and shocks while they strive for living and working on the streets. They also adapt a diverse economic activity in order to gain a means for living. This framework is essential to help to understand and examine the very life of street children and their livelihood.

In this subsection the necessity of employing the livelihood framework approach is discussed. The use of Livelihood framework analysis for this study is aimed to spotlight the core characteristics,

elements and constraints of street children to earn their livelihood. Street children have been the focus of attention for aid agencies, the government organizations, nongovernmental organizations, the academia, policy makers and civil society (Lalor, 1999). The concern is not only emanated from the fact that there exist a growing number of street children in the streets of cites of the world and dearth of resources to lessen poverty but also to recognize street children who have their own socio-economic interests and rights.

SLFA is used to set up a wide understanding of the lived experience of street children making their living on menial street based activities. This framework is essential for analyzing and understanding the strategies of street children being adopted to survive in various urban contexts. They lack family care, guidance and social support during their seminal years in the street that worsen their poverty situation. As a matter of fact their efforts are primarily to fulfill their basic needs required for survival and meet their livelihood.

The livelihood of the poor are made up of activities, assets, and entitlements that together comprises coping and adapting strategies that the person set it out during shocks and stresses. The activities, assets, vulnerability contexts, coping and adapting mechanism have an undesirable effect on the outcomes of livelihood of street children. SLFA is then important to underpin those factors that bounded street children's access to resources, assets, entitlements and strategies. It also presents the strategies employed by street children to deal with the challenges of urban life.

Children migrate into Bahir Dar town from different parts of the country with a hope of rising their living standard and earn income to support themselves or their families. Assets are resources and stores (tangible assets), and claims and access (intangible assets), which a person or household commands and can use towards a livelihood. People employ resources as part of their livelihood strategies in order to achieve their livelihood outcomes. Increased assets can empower people to influence the policies, institutions and processes that affect their livelihood. The types of livelihood assets are human, natural, financial, social and physical capital.

Assets range from social assets, such as relationships of trust, and membership of informal organizations to physical assets such as infrastructure and manufactured goods (Ellis, 2000;

Scoones, 1997). The intangible assets are available sources for the lives of street children to track their livelihood because of the fact that migrant children have their labor, skill and relationships of trust at hand to make a living. By doing so SLFA is used in this study in order to analyze the type of assets that migrant children do have or lack to track their livelihood. Besides, it helps to look at the extent to which street children have access and control or limit to resources in the urban structure.

The concept of diversification as livelihood strategy of the poor would have weight to uncover children's diverse activities. It is valuable to understand and explain the diverse street based activities through which street children keep up to generate their livelihood. The urban livelihood of the poor is basically dependent on cash economy often in the informal sector. Therefore, this enables to show how street children make their efforts to earn income through diversification of activities and cut their own expenditure.

The vulnerability context is another important concept of livelihood framework approach. The vulnerability context is used to understand street children's lived experience in the study area. Poverty is a common phenomenon both in the urban and rural areas induced by various factors. It also exerts wide ranging shocks and stresses (vulnerabilities) which in turn put up pressure for the people to look for copying or adapting mechanisms. The urban poor are vulnerable to a variety of shocks and stresses leading their life by the cash income they earn from the informal economy. The urban poor also live in the slum, squatter, shanty, marginalized and periphery of urban areas (Innocenti, 2002). The situation is worse for migrant street children who come from different context and lives in new settings that may expose them to vulnerability. Their lack of social support, low wage employments, increasing food prices, poor sleeping places, bad and aversive weather conditions, poor health and sanitation among other things make them more and more vulnerable to shocks (Innocenti, 2002).

Street children are the most vulnerable group of any society and nature of street lives expose them to the most incredible potential of vulnerabilities of different kind. Street children work long hours on the fringes of the economy for the bare minimum pay often in dangerous conditions (Lalor, 1999:333-34). In a situation where achieving  a subsistence income is a daily struggle for street

children, any lessening of that income or any circumstance that reduce the potential of children to earn an income must be viewed in terms of vulnerability context. Therefore, it is crucial to understand how street children make efforts in order to cope up and respond to shocks and stresses. The researcher has employed vulnerability context as a matter of fact, it helps to understand and explain shocks and stresses that affect the livelihood of street children and if street children have resourceful or resilient feature adapting different survival strategies.

**3.9 Summary**

This chapter has discussed the literature that exists about street children and the theories employed as analytical framework. The literature about street children was reviewed and presented to know the gap and limitations of the previous empirical findings. The theories were used to understand and explain the various concepts of the research under study in the whole parts of this thesis. It is aimed to depict and provide a clear picture on the situation of street children and the theories applied to understand and explain the research problem.

# Chapter Four

# 4. Methodology

## 4. 1 Introduction

This chapter is intended to brief the whole process that I went through during fieldwork. It highlights how data is collected, organized, interpreted and analyzed throughout the different phases of the research work. It gives a clue for the use of multiple research methods to this research work. It also presents an account of qualitative and quantitative research techniques in social research and looks at why a blend of methods is employed to understand and explain the research problem. This chapter also presents how respondents were selected and further describes the sources of data that consists of primary and secondary data. Finally, it deals with the methods of data analysis, the question of reliability and validity, and field experience as well.

## 4.2 Research Design

It is a concept of ideas to frame the study in a way to understand some meanings by specific methods and methodology to the specific issues. Research design is like a philosophy of life, no one is without one but some people are more aware of than others and thus able to make more informed and consistent decisions (Maxwell, 1996). The general principle is that the research strategy or strategies, and the methods or techniques employed must be appropriate for the questions you want to answer (Robson, 1993:39). An appropriate research design is therefore important to any research as it guides the process for collecting the desired data and also the process for analyzing that data.

## 4.3 Case Study

Case study is a strategy for doing a research which involves an empirical investigation of particular contemporary phenomena with its real life context using multiple sources of evidence (Robnson, 1993: 52). The case is the situation, individual, group, organization or whatever it is that we are interested in (Robnson, 1993: 51). It is an in depth explanation of one person's or one group's life experience with an issue. Case studies make easy to put pieces of information into their appropriate perspective and make a greater touching impact on the research. Case study is essential to describe individuals or subgroups.

It is not actually a data collection technique but a methodological approach that comprises a number of data collection methods that ranges from general field observation to interviewing an individual or group. In this study, the researcher employed case study as the research strategy to realize the research objectives and try to uncover the where about of street children, their livelihood, social networks and vulnerability to shocks by working and living in the streets of the research area.

## 4.4 Choice of Research Methods

Research methodology is a logical set of rules and procedures, which can be used to investigate a phenomenon. It refers to more than a simple set of methods; rather it is the rationale and philosophical assumption that bring about a particular study. Research methods are the means by which knowledge is acquired and constructed with in the discipline (Robinson, 1993; Maxwell, 2005).

Methodology can be viewed as the interfaces between methodical practice, substantive theory and epistemological underpinnings. Thus it is an oversimplification to relate all quantitative research methods to positivistic and all qualitative methods to interpretive methodology. Methodology is a foundation for research practice. It is clear that practices cannot simply be combined without considering the methodological differences between these practices.

The choice of methods in a given research influences the way in which the researcher collects and analyses data. However, there are no strict rules as such for the choice of methods but a researcher needs to strike a balance between the cost and time available for the research, and depth and breadth of information needed to be analyzed either by qualitative or quantitative or both methods (Tashakkori & Teddile, 1998). Thus, I employed both qualitative and quantitative methods as a basic tool of the research for this study. Data collection techniques such as interviews, focus group discussions, guided interview and observation (field or participant observation and non-participant observation) were used.

## 4.4.1 Qualitative and Quantitative Methods

Studies could be a combination of qualitative and quantitative in nature, and researchers may decide to use either qualitative or quantitative methods in conducting a research (Mwanje, 2001). The choice of methods is dictated by the nature of the research problem. The nature of the

research problem lends itself to different methods and techniques of research. Qualitative research is defined as any kind of research that produces findings not arrived by means of statistically procedures or other means of quantification. Qualitative research uses a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand phenomena in a given specific settings.

In this study, qualitative research method is chosen to understand the view of migrant street children about their street life, the causes that force them to migrate and why they choose street life, how they make their livelihood on the street and to get into their lived experience. Quantitative research is used to inquire some demographic data that supports those data gathered through qualitative research methods in the study area.

I employed both qualitative and quantitative methods though the study dominantly used qualitative methods. Gatrell (2002) explains qualitative methods in the sense of learning first-hand information about people, observing and analyzing the real life and studying actions and learning about ideas as they occur. Qualitative method helps the researcher to assess the ideas, feelings, beliefs, and motives related to the individual's action. It is a means to acquire the lived experiences, beliefs and traditions and helps to analyze the understandings and meanings of the existing realities. It also provides access to motives, aspirations and power relationships that account for how places, people and events are made and represented.

The dominance of application of qualitative methods' is due to the fact that the researcher wanted to understand and reflect on the perceptions, views, and lived experience of children, how they are capable to generate their livelihood on the street and their shared social networks. These realities would be difficult to understand and interpret the lived experience of migrant children using quantitative methods in the whole area of the research work. The questions related with the life experience and livelihood of migrant street children are largely in favor of qualitative methodologies. The in-depth and breadth understanding of these questions can be answered by employing more qualitative methods than quantitative which gives more concern for statistical descriptions and prediction of events or actions.

## 4.5 Selection of Study Site and the Respondents

Selection of the appropriate informant with appropriate number is the most challenging task for a researcher. It is when the researcher gets the right informant that he or she could collect a reliable data and finish the research work according to the time frame. The researcher may choose whom to talk, where and when to observe and the information source to concentrate on. However, making a binding decision to get an appropriate sample for the purpose of any study has influence on the whole process of the research work. Maxwell (1996) in this regards says that 'even a single case study involves a choice of this case rather than that case, as well as requiring sampling decisions with in the case itself'. This is because one cannot study everyone and everywhere doing everything. So sampling is needed in essence to fulfill the objective of a research work in a time set and accordingly the available resources.

The target population of this research is migrant children living and working in the streets of the town of Bahir Dar. Thus I selected the sample from the migrant street children. The sample was purposively selected from the entire population. I used purposive snowball sampling in order to find the research subjects. Purposive sampling, also called a criterion based selection in which particular settings, persons, or events and area are selected deliberately in order to provide important information. The logic and power of purposive sampling depends on the selection of information-rich cases for the study in depth. Cases that are considered to have rich information are those from which one can acquire and learn a great deal about issues essential for the rationale of the research (Kumar, 1996). Purposive sampling targets a particular group of people. If particular groups of population are rare or difficult to locate and recruit for a research work then purposive sampling is an ideal option.

In this study I used purposive sampling primarily in the selection of study area. I was interested to study the rich and lived experience and livelihood of street children in the towns of north western parts of Ethiopia and therefore I selected Bahir Dar intentionally. I deliberately selected Bahir Dar for variety of reasons such as Bahir Dar is the capital of the Amhara Regional State and attracts a number of people to migrate into the town in search of their livelihood. I have also known the area since 1995 and from then on I have observed an increasing number of children working and living in the streets of the town that exerted a pull on me to conduct this study in Bahir Dar.

To identify my research subjects I used snowball sampling. Snowball sampling is defined as a technique for finding research informant. In this sampling technique, one informant gives or introduces the name of another informant, who again introduces the name of a third person and extra. The term snowball tells using one contact to help you select another contact, who in turn can put the researcher lay a hand on with some one else. In snowball sampling the first contact can be a friend, relative, neighbor or someone from a social organization or any other forms of organization. Accordingly in this research method, selection gains impetus that enables the researcher to construct layers of contacts or informants. Snowball sampling may be used as informal method to contact the informants and as a more formal methodology for making inferences about a group of individuals who have been difficult to specify by using survey methods.

The selection of research subjects/respondents was made quite possible through people I have known in the town. I had a relative who is vending clothes in his shop in front of the bus station who have had contact with some street children working around his shop and I told him that I need to reach migrant street children to study their lived experience in the town. I had also a street child whom I have known very well during my stay in the summer break in 2007 who shone shoes and when I went there for my field work I met him and told him why I was there, the purpose of my study, and the life experience in Addis Ababa and my education. We had a conversation while he cleaned my shoe and I had an appointment with him to introduce me to migrant children. On the other hand, I was introduced with a police woman who is working on child rights and protection. I had the chance to have a conversation for 30 minutes with her and I told her about my study, the purpose of the study and my educational background. She was very useful for me to find and introduce me to migrant street children in the study area. As a matter of fact, through these people I got general idea of migrant street children in the study area. I purposively recruited some of the migrant street children and I asked them for an interview.

I choose 65 street children for the purpose of administering guided interview. Out of this, I recruited 28 street children for focus group discussion on the basis of their representation on their street occupation, sex and survival activities and 15 street children for an in-depth interview based on their gender and livelihood activities representing their lived experience. Some migrant street children were selected for an in-depth interview during the informal conversation I had with them

and when I fulfilled the questionnaire of the guided interview, and then I made appointments to get them for an in-depth interview.

## 4.6 Nature of Data and Data Collection Methods

Field work is the key that influence for collecting the primary data in social science research work. Secondary data also have important role to play while interpreting and analyzing the data based on empirical knowledge. This study is based on primary and secondary data. Data collection methods are largely decided by the types of questions to be answered, the type of research to be conducted and also the nature of the research problem. The collections of primary and secondary data are discussed separately in the coming sub-sections.

## 4.6.1 Primary Data Collection

I used various techniques of primary data collection. These were interviews, observation, focus group discussion, and guided interview. Interviews employed include key informant, informal conversational and semi –structured open ended in-depth interview. Primary data were collected by a two month and fifteen days field work in the study area.

### Guided Interview

I employed a guided interview with 65 rural migrant children working and living on the streets of the town. The purpose was to generate some supportive descriptive quantifiable and other valuable data about street children that may consolidate the qualitative data. The questionnaires were intended to acquire demographic data including family background, their involvement to street life, their present conditions and their earnings. Questions asked to street children about demographic data include sex, age, religion, birth place, family occupation, marital and survival status of their parents, educational background of their parents and themselves, family size, their health conditions and if they work to support themselves. Questions concerning street involvement include the type of work they engaged in, amount of their earnings, why they are on the streets and how many hours do they work and how many years did they stay on the street and sleeping places. They were also asked about their future aspiration whether they need to escape out from street life, continue working or living on the street or reunion their family.

Prior to doing the actual interview, researchers have to be clear and transparent to the subjects and allow them to open up completely to make the interviewer- informant relationship calm and

trustful (Alston et al., 1998). As such I first introduced myself and thank the interviewee for being with me for the interview. I briefly informed the interviewee on the following points in order to develop trust and confidence.

- The purpose of the research;

- Why s/he has been chosen;

- Her/his rights- e.g. not to answer questions if s/he does not want to;

- How subjects confidentiality will be protected;

- What will be done with the data once the study is completed; and so on?

After a brief introduction of these issues, I started the actual processes of the guided interview. The questions were arranged from simple and concrete questions and went generally into difficult ones. I filled the responses on the paper. The same procedure was passed through semi-structured in-depth interviews, key informant interviews, and FGDs.

I made efforts to include street children having diverse geographical areas, livelihood activities, gender, ethnic, religious, working and living backgrounds. I had research assistants/enumerators who facilitated the interviews while I completed the guided interview. I personally filled the questionnaire in order to create chance to recruit children for an in depth interview and if children could raise questions not incorporated in the questionnaire so that it could help me to get additional information. I was very careful to avoid double interview that could result due to the mobility and potential character of street children in the town.

**Semi –Structured Open ended in-depth Interview**
It is a kind of guided conversation that the researcher carefully listens so as to hear the meaning of what is being expressed. Interviews were conducted with street children and people who have a special contact with street children mainly police to get information about the life of street children.

In this study I had an in depth individual interview with 15 street children independently. The interviewer asked the same questions to each respondent with basically the same words having the same sequence. I applied the same procedure as the guided interview before the actual process of interviewing the informants. I did the interview by asking first simple and concrete questions, and

went gradually into the difficult and general ones. Questions are open-ended concerning the livelihood of street children, migration and the social relations that exist among themselves and the society, and the problems they face attending an urban life.

**Informal Conversational Interview**

Informal conversational interview may occur unexpectedly in the course of the field, and the respondent may not know that an interview is taking place. Questions emerged from the immediate context, so the wording of questions and even topics are not predetermined. The unstructured format let's respondents to talk about an issue within their own frame of reference and thus provides a greater understanding of the interviewees point of view (Kitichin & Tate, 2002). The importance of this technique is that the interview is highly individualized and relevant to the individual. Therefore, it is likely to produce information that the researcher could not expected.

I had conducted some informal conversational interviews with some people in the bus station, shop keepers, guards, owners of small restaurants whom I thought have had strong ties with street children around their working and living place. I had also informal conversation interviews with tax drivers and five police to know about the situation of children, how they came to the street of the town and livelihood activities. This informal conversation also enabled me to know the perceptions of these people about street children and their relationship with the informants. I also made informal conversational interview with many children that covered their lived experience in the study area.

I tried to carry out informal conversational interviews wherever possible and most of the time in their own tasks and attempted to minimize interference for their daily routine. For example, I had informal conversation interview with many street children while they practice their daily routine (shoe shining, carrying goods or doing other activities). During the informal  conversational interviews that I had with street children I discussed issues like the relation between local and migrant, newcomers and older ones, 'on street' and 'of the street children', livelihood activities, their experience and etc.

**Key Informant Interview**

The key informant interview is a powerful data collecting instrument in qualitative research. The key informant may be an expert or knowledgeable person with first hand information about street children, who tells important information to the interviewer. The logic is that key informants know the issue very well to talk with relevant issues to get reliable and valid data about the subject. The interviewer performs like someone impressed to learn from the informant and should not react to information against the informant with term of criticism. The techniques of key informant interview differ significantly in individuals personal interviewing skills.

Six key informants were identified and recruited for the purpose of this study. Included were an official from Bahir Dar Special Zone working on the issue of children, three police (two working on Child Rights and Protection and one police working on Child Trafficking and Protection Center in the bus station) and two people from NGOs working on the issue of children. The same procedure was employed like the guide interview with the informants before doing the actual interview. The interviews were conducted with them in order to gather their experience and views towards the life of street children. Similar questions were asked during the interviews in which the interviewer was free to ask follow up questions to get as much information as possible from the key informants.

**Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)**

A focus group discussion, if used for research purpose, is rather like a conversational interview, but with a group of about 6 to 12 individuals, who are usually all the same type of people- in other words, all street children or others (Ennew, 1994:65). FGDs share similar advantages to interviewing but have additional gain of allowing the researcher to explore how meanings and experiences are talked and matched between participants (Ennew, 1994).

Four focus group discussions were formed with migrant street children: three groups were of male street children and one group female street children. The formation of FGDs is based on gender and engagement in similar street activity. Street girls are separated from boys in the formation of FGDs because they often have different lives from those of street boys in many respects. I formed one FGD for street girls since their number is smaller on the streets and have different experience than boys. The Focus group discussion was held with 28 children having four groups on the basis of their street based economic activities and gender.

During the discussion the researcher had an interview guide to direct a dialog among the focus group discussion in order to find out their experiences, perceptions and views in a given ideas or issues. At the time of the dialog, I was not stiff to measure their discussion absolutely on the criteria of the predetermined interview guideline and so was not rigid. The researcher provides children with sufficient time and opportunity to express their issues. I closely moderated the groups to ensure participation of group members and to make sure that the discussions targeted the given guidelines. The FGDs were so vital for an in depth inquiry of the lived experience of street children such as their main concern, challenges, prospects and views.

The focus group discussion was held with children in a relatively comfortable area and all the discussions took place at Bahir Dar Meskel Square. It was an ideal place for children as well as the researcher since it was free, quite, and safe to express their views and feelings freely. It was also accessible for the children. The procedure of the FGDs was simple and easy that did not maintain or keep a formality. The purpose was to encourage active participation of children during the discussion. The researcher used tape recorder and take note during the time of discussion. Therefore, the data during the focus group discussion were collected with the help of tape recorder based on consensus with participants and latter transcribed to ensure that the ideas of street children were not erroneously recorded or forgotten.

**Observation**
It is the key to good research that offers background information on the context. Observation can be of structured and participant observation (Ennew, 1994:61). Street observation is a valuable means of checking the accuracy of information. Participant observation means going to where the children are, watching, recoding and reacting. It is important to learn about the place of work children lives as a whole (Ennew, 1994:63).

Observation entails being present in a situation and making a record of one's impressions of what takes place. It is also clear that directness is the major advantage of observation which provides a degree of validity as it concentrates up on what people really do as opposed to what they say they will do. The researcher watches what they do and listens to what they say, rather than asking people about their feelings and views. Both participant and non participant observation can be used for research work.

In participant observation the researcher becomes a member of the community or population being studied. The researcher participates in community activities, observes how people behave and interact with each other and outside community. The purpose of such participation is not only to observe what is happing but to feel what it is like to be part of the group. The researcher, therefore, experiences and seemingly better understands any issues. But ethical issues may arise if the participant observer misrepresents himself or herself in order to be recognized by the target population being studied. Non-participant observation is just the systemic recording and reminding of activities, behaviors and physical objects as inconspicuous observer. The researcher becomes a passive observer. It is important that if participants are not aware of being observed then they are less likely to change their behavior and compromise the validity of the data.

In this study, I employed both observation methods to collect data. At the outset observation was very fundamental to help the researcher know the right informants or migrant street children. Participant observation was important to collect the preliminary information to identify ideal informants or migrant street children. I decided to play the role of a client just buying items sold by them or getting services rendered by street children so that I could be part of the study subjects and record events. I went to the bus station, market area, playing areas, verandas, feeding places, and sleeping places where street children congregate and observed their clothing, physical appearance and different walks of life of street children in the town. I had observed the sleeping places of street children on the veranda, house or floor but I did not sleep with them which could be unrealistic due to personal security. Besides this, I could not perform or act like street children to practice their activities due to differences on my physical and social condition with them. I had conducted non participant observation in order to know the occupations of street children for their livelihood and how they cope up with shocks and participate in social relations.

### 4.6.2 Secondary Data Sources

Secondary data are data collected by others for different purposes. Secondary data were used from various sources produced by different government and non governmental organizations according to their relevance to the purpose of the study. These data are helpful to conceptualize and provide clear ideas to analyze the research work. Secondary data also help to gain better insight of the issue under study before getting into the fieldwork.

I used secondary data from different sources that comprises published and unpublished sources, newspapers, articles, websites and etc. I used population data produced by the Central Statistics Authority in Ethiopia and the Amhara Regional State in order to know the overall situation of the population of the Region and with the assumption to get the in-migrants condition and the socioeconomic features of the study area. Furthermore, I used documents produced by different organizations that are working on street children such as MOLSA, FSCE and others that are required to collect data important for the study.

## 4.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of linking data based on their relationships. Kitchen and Tate (2000) explained that data generation and analysis are not separated and both need to be considered carefully before starting the research. The explanation of how data of particular research problem is interpreted and analyzed accounts a major constituent of research work that demands the researcher's knowledge and understanding of the subject.

### 4.7.1 Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative research is concerned more about expressions, meanings, words, contexts and contents. Thus at the data analysis phase in qualitative research the ways of examining, contrasting, comparing, discerning and interpreting the meanings of data into significant patterns are very important to link the relationships.

The data analysis in this study is based on the livelihood of migrant street children lived experience by linking the research questions, objectives and research setting. The data collected using different techniques of data collection methods were analyzed through direct quotations, transcribing, and organizing from primary sources. The data collected were also compared, contrasted and examined to make a meaningful analysis of the qualitative data. Furthermore, perceived and observed realties during the field work are also analyzed.

### 4.7.2 Quantitative Data Analysis

In quantitative data analysis the numbers are the principal components of analysis to make meaningful patterns of relationship among the data acquired for the study. I employed some descriptive statistics to analyze the quantitative data. The quantitative data can be interpreted and analyzed without the application of SPSS. The quantitative data are simply figures that are

intended to show some demographic information in order to cement the information of the qualitative data. In this study the quantitative data were applied to support and give shape to the qualitative data.

## 4.8 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are two basic concepts that are essential to define and measure bias and distortion of any study. I used a blend of qualitative methods (observation, interviews, FGDS and guided interview) that helps me to avoid any kind of biases and ensure their validity. On the other hand, information of the respondents was cross-checked and triangulated to ensure validity. I employed the whole processes of the research work based on the research questions, objectives, and theories that helps me to confirm the validity of the study.

I used a multiple sources of information to ensure the reliability of the data. I used both male and female street children, newcomers and older ones, "on the street" and "of the street", community members, government official, social workers and police and various ways of data collection techniques such as interviews, focus group discussion and observation to make this study more reliable and realistic. In order to secure the validity and reliability of the research, I personally observed what was exactly happing and interviewed the informants being in the field and discussed the issues with children and other informants. I tried to crosscheck the validity and reliability of the information by asking probing questions and triangulated information of the child informants by crosschecking others who engaged in similar livelihood activities. I also crosschecked their age when they report events in terms of calendars. It is also attempted to rule out the possibility of distortion and inconstancies by checking informants' information by asking children in different occasions during the field work. Thus I argue that it could make the research results dependable and credible.

## 4.9 Filed Experience

I conducted this research work in the north western part of Ethiopia in Bahir Dar town. I stayed there for two months and half. The two months were spent totally for the purpose of the data collection in the study area and fifteen days interpreting and organizing the data and to see if there are gaps in the data collection processes. It does not mean that I have not tried to interpret and

organize the data collected amidst of the data collection processes. Therefore, the organization of data collected were the researcher's daily routine tasks in the whole stages of the field work.

The data collection processes has brought the researcher with a lot of challenges and experience that can be able to help to handle such kind of research work in any time. Therefore, I can say that the field experience have had a lot of pictures that would be impossible to attain in a class room settings. The field work switch on me with a lot of practical experiences that helps me to have a greater insight and understanding to the broader reality of the research work. The filed experience really was very interesting and challenging at the same time that required me to be self adjusting in search of new techniques, skills and attitudes in dealing with problems that may a rise in the processes of the field work.

During the field work a lot of questions were posed by the street children, police, and public and sometimes from government officials. To mention a few, who are you to be responsible to study this issue, where are you from, why do you prefer to choice to study street children, why you select children came from other places( or migrants), what do your study do for the subjects to be studied, etc. I met a lot of challenges especially from adult street vendors, youth and from some police that these people simply thought that I was a protestant person to preach children about religion and they also thought I conducted the study to reveal the situation they are in. Other times, they complained that I was paid by organizations to do at the expense of them while they did not get any thing as subjects of the problem. These things were very common in the first two weeks of my field work. In this respect the most challenging task was not from those children whom I contacted as my research targets but from others who were not part of the study either because of their migration history or age limit. Some times passer by also asked why I do this study.

The first time I started to fill the guided interview I was caught by the police in Keble 7 around Papyrus Hotel. The police caught me that I was carrying out the interview to find out children to traffic them to Addis Ababa. I told him that I am a student from Addis Ababa University and I was there to undertake my research study. I also informed him that I selected street children having rural background to see the pattern of migration in the area and its link with street life and to learn from their lived experience when they are in the streets of Bahir Dar Town. He was not convinced

for the time being. Thus I told him that I could show him the letter of support I took it from the Institute of Development Research at Addis Ababa University to undertake this study.

The police looked it but he did not want to take it for grant and he preferred to take me to the police station found around the place I was undertaking my work. At the moment, I tried to convince him that I was doing my research work. However, he did not want to listen to me and told me that I was doing that to take children to Addis and told me that he would charge me by the crime of child trafficking. He took me to the police station. In the police station he directly took me to the commander and gave him my letter which I took it from my Department. The commander read my letter and asked me some questions to know the truth. I told him all my objectives and he convinced then. To be more realistic I gave him the telephone number of the Department if he needs to call to know more about me. He called to the Department and got the truth. Finally, the commander told to the police that I was there to undertake my research work and told him to introduce me for other police's to assist me during the whole processes of my field work. From then on, I was able to collect the data without any interference from any one else. I communicated to the officials working on children at the regional and the city administration office but it was not enough. From this I have learnt the importance of reporting to the police or any other government organ before the actual data collection processes is started.

I often used tape recorder and short notes in order to gather data. However, I was flexible to use tape recorder and I used it while I found it convincing to record the data or when my informants were voluntary to do it. I attempted to record information using tape recorder during the focus group discussion. I took notes and record events while the discussion was going on. In the whole processes of the data collection I took notes or recorded events if I got permission from the subjects understudy. This helped me to get trust from street children and enhance my credibility that cements the relationship between the researcher and the researched. Street children were curious and suspicious of happing or events around them and their life. So I was reserved to manifest any kind of behaviors that might cause disruption of our relation. I told the children that I undertake this research work without direct material benefits for them.

During my initial field work though I contacted the research subjects through snowballing some of the street children did not welcome me and they suspected me if I were from NGO people or someone else to take advantage from them. I encountered a lot of practical problems in the fieldwork that included learning how to deal with the behavior of some of the street children and their initial suspicion that they will be preached by me. My regular inquiring about their life would rarely irritate a few of the participant street children and I expressed my appreciation for their time and patience to contribute to the study. Sometimes, they also demanded some unrealistic promises such as if I contacted people to help them and I was careful not to make any kind of promise to do something that I would not be able to fulfill. Some street children have some disillusions from outsiders whose help to cover their daily costs. So I told them that the study would not have any direct reward for them and I conducted it for academic purpose to fulfill my MA thesis. Through time most of the subjects of the study came to know me very well and this meant I could narrate the lives of children and often wittiness the activities of street children on the spot. My relation with street children became stronger as the field work advanced and they started to be more free and relaxed to deal with me all their social life.

I took notes to facilitate the more detailed writing up that include observation of the interview settings, the reaction of the interviewee to the questions and to the researcher. I often interviewed children without the presence of many others so as to enable children not hide information to tell stories in the presence of others. I tried to record the ideas of the informants according to their own choice of words to cement the richness of the data. I did not use a tape recorder while I carried out informal conversational interviews with street children. I found some children especially girls uncomfortable and unfamiliar being interviewed using tape record. Therefore, I designed my own mechanisms such as taking shorthand notes to prompt my memory, to write quickly keeping eye contact and the flow of conversation. Since my first language is Amharic, it enabled me to take advantage to understand each other.

**4.10 Summary**

This chapter is aimed to show the whole process of the different phases of the data collection, interpretation, and analysis of the research problem. It is all about how primary and secondary data are organized and linked to achieve the objectives of this research problem. The researcher made a

filed trip to Bahir Dar to collect data. Key informant interviews, informal conversational interviews, focus group discussions and observation were made to fulfill the objective of the research. It also illustrated the field experience of the researcher in the study area. The question of validity and reliability has also been presented and discussed in this chapter.

# Chapter Five

## 5. Research Results and Analysis

### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the data collected during the fieldwork is discussed and analyzed. The analysis is done to explain the features of the subjects under study. It has five major sections. The first section of this study covers the overall demographic information and the second is about the migration history of the informants. The third and the fourth parts include the portfolio of street children's livelihood and their survival strategies respectively. The last section of this chapter is about the social networks of street children.

### 5.2 Socio-Demographic Characteristics

#### 5.2.1 Sex and Age Profile

During the fieldwork the researcher observed that street boys and girls with varying age range working and living in the street. Through informal conversational interviews I had with street children, I realized that the ages of street children range from 5 to 18 years. These age limits are for all children working and living in the streets of Bahir Dar Town.

Asked about their ages all the 65 children told to the researcher how old they are. Accordingly, 17 children (26 percent) are 16 years old. Besides, 16 children (25 percent) are 14 years of age and the same number of children is 15. While 4 (6 percent) are 13 years old and the same number of children are 12, only 2 (3 percent) are 11 years of age. The largest number of children is at the age of 16 years followed by 14 and 15 year olds. This indicates that most of the migrant children are teenagers. The youngest children sampled for this study are 11 years old and the oldest 17. Generally, female migrant children in the sample tend to be slightly older than their male counter parts. The average age for the sample children in the study is 14 years. One can assume that these children might be the cheapest sources of labor in their rural village for their families.

The socioeconomic situation of street children could not be explained without considering the gender situation in the study area. Thus this study considers both male and female street children to be part of the sample population. From the sample of 65 street children 59 (91 percent) are boys and 6 (9 percent) of them are girls. Over the entire sample included boys are over nine times as many as girls. I met 15 female street children during the fieldwork. However, some of them were beyond the age limit of this study and others were not interested to take part. Generally speaking, street boys are greater than girls in the study area. The presence of smaller proportion of street girls could be partly explained by the invisibility of the occupations of street girls and also by the role that girls play at home in the rural family in the region. It is possible to assume that most of the time girls are liable to lead their life in the cities as housemaids, barmaids, babysitters, prostitutes and etc which are highly unseen to reveal the exact proportion of street girls. Also rural parents' often rear female children in traditional manners that make girls to assume their traditional gender role subjected to laborious domestic works.

### 5.2.2 Ethnicity

Of all the study subjects, 58 (89 percent) migrant children are Amhara. Agaw migrant children account for 3 (5 percent) while the 2 Oromo and 2 Tigrean children constitute 6 percent. One can easily see that these children in Bahir Dar are composed of different ethnic groups coming from various geographical areas. However, the ethnic composition of street children is still dominated by the Amhara who came from different rural villages into the town. This will be discussed in detail under the subsection entitled "The Origin of the Migrant children."

### 5.2.3 Religion and Language

The researcher's field work assessment for the religious background of street children has it that they fall under Christianity and Islam. Asked about their religion, 61(93 percent) of the children responded that they are Orthodox Christians and 4 (7 percent) of them are Muslims. This indicates that a great majority of the street children are Orthodox Christians which in turn shows that they came from the areas that are dominantly Christian population. It is also found that most of the migrant children speak Amharic where as a few speak Tigregna, Afan Oromo and Agewegna.

### 5.2.4 Education

I tried to find out if children have ever attended school, be it in their rural village or at their destination, and if there exists a linkage between street life and children's enrollment in education. It is learned that 29 children (45 percent) attended school while at home, 31 children (48 percent) did not attend school at home, and 5 children (7 percent) attended church education. Out of the 31 (48 percent) children who did not attend school while at home, 6 (19 percent) were girls. This shows that all the girls did not go to school while at home and now in the town. Only 10 (15 percent) out of the total sample are currently going to school. The children who did not join school at home frequently mentioned poverty for not being sent to school. Labor and family inconveniences were also stated. This shows that the inability of parents to send their children to or keep them at school is partly explained by increasing poverty.

It is understood that none of the girls has ever gone to school in their whole life. During the FGDs and interview sessions, the children have repeatedly attributed lack of finance and the inconvenience of street life which dictates them to handle their laborious work for indefinite time as the main factors that hinder them not to go to school. Account from the FGDs and interviews indicate that engaging in street life with menial income makes it difficult for migrant children to attend school. They explained that they give priority for food and shelter as opposed to education. So they naturally prefer to work for long hours than to go to school so as to generate more income to make their livelihood sustainable. In this regard, it is reasonably possible to argue that securing ones livelihood is the key point for street children. Therefore, it can fairly be argued that multitude of reasons justify the scenario whereby street children remain either school dropouts or non-school goers.

Those children who joined school at home have different grade levels. The lowest grade level attended by children at home was 2 while the highest grade level was 10. The data obtained during the field indicates that 5 (17 percent) children dropped out after grade 2, others 5 (17 percent) at grade 3, 3 (10 percent) at grade 4, 7 (24 percent) at grade 5, 4 (14 percent) at grade 6, 2 (6 percent) at grade 8, 1 (3 percent) at grade 9, and 2(6 percent) made it up to grade 10. This indicates that school dropouts with different grade levels migrate into Bahir Dar Town.

The children may dropout from school as a result of the inability of families to finance the education of their children due to entrenched rural poverty. This pattern may reflect that when rural families are unable to supplement the education of their children and offer basic necessities the children opt for migration and join the street of the city life. Giddens concurs that it is when the agents ceased to act as agents that they prefer to move and look for options to maintain a better status (see Giddens, 1984).

At destination, migration and street life have mixed effects on the education of children. In this respect, this study found out that some of the children who were enrolled in school at home become dropouts at their destination. A few others did not attended school at home but they are now attending at destination. These children attend school by either allocating half a day for school to be enrolled as regular students or by attending at night.

The lower level of education of migrant children has become a challenge that hinders children from getting chance to work in those occupations that demand skilled labor and training in the urban centers. Most of these children being school dropouts or non-school goers, they expressed their deep concerns on how they could in a way go to school to eventually escape street environment and shape their future. This indicates that street children are eager to escape out of street life and being enrolled in the formal sector of the economy by advancing their education.

### 5.2.5 Parents Occupation

The occupation of children parents reflects socioeconomic status of their families. According to the demographic information obtained from the interview session, 52 (80 percent) children have their parents engaged in farming of which 10 (19 percent) earn income by sharecropping. The parents of 9 (14 percent) of the sampled children live on petty trade in the rural areas. 3 (4 percent) street children said they have parents working as daily laborers while 1(2 percent) told the researcher that his parents are engaged in both daily labor and petty trading. Simply put, the children come from families with various occupations. All of the children whose parents are alive also responded that their families still reside in their respective localities.

The majority of the families of street children is engaged in agriculture and generates their livelihood from their farm income. Others generate their livelihood from off-farm or/and non-farm income. Some children move to the city streets in order to supplement the poor or inconsistent incomes of their families or parents. Many respondents also show that their parents are dependent on farming and related activities in the rural villages with small income to support their kids.

**5.2.6 Parents Education**

I was also interested to look at the educational background of parents of street children to understand and explain the socio-economic variables that may be linked with the migration of children and if their parents have attended some level of education thus children are most likely to be educated. In this regards, this study found out that 52 (80 percent) parents of children are illiterate, where as 8 (12 percent) of them can read and write, 3 (5 percent) parents can only read a simple letter, and 2 (3 percent) attended regular elementary education. All these figures represent only male parents of the street children.

This study found out that the vast majority of the parents of migrant children are illiterate. One of the most likely consequences of illiteracy of most of the parents of children is low level of school attendance and illiteracy of many migrant children. The illiteracy of the parents of street children was higher for their mothers than the fathers as none of the mothers of street children attended regular school.

**5.2.7 Status of Parents**

Children were asked about their parents' status. 37 (57 percent) children said their parents are alive. Of these parents, all but 11 (17 percent) spouse live together. On the other hand, 10 (15 percent) children informants are orphans, 5 (8 percent) have only their biological father alive of whom 4 of them have stepmothers while 1 does not have a step mother. Besides, 13 (20 percent) children have only their biological mothers alive of whom 9 have no step fathers and 4 have step fathers. It is also evident that 11 children (17 percent) came from female headed households.

Many studies found out that the family structures of street children are often chaotic and disorganized. It also indicated that most street children come from female headed households and/ or from families having stepfathers and step mothers as dominant members of their families. Other studies also show that most street children moved to the street since they have lost their parents (Apteaker & Henionen, 2003; Lalor, 1999; Veale, 1996; Lusk et al, 1989; Brown, 1987). Contrary to such assertions, this study finds out that the majority of street children come from male headed households and or from families with both biological parents alive. However, the presence of both parents in a family could not be an assurance to halt children's move from the rural areas into the town. Still there are a number of children coming from female headed households and the proportion of children from separated parents due to divorce is not negligible as well.

### 5.2.8 Family Size

Street children were asked about how many brothers and sisters or siblings they were living with in their rural villages before they migrated into Bahir Dar Town. This was mainly meant to know about the family size of street children so as to draw the relationships that exist between family size and various socioeconomic variables that force children to migrate and engage in street life. Out of the 65 children, 3 (5 percent ) have one brother or sister, 10 (15 percent) have two siblings, 11( 17 percent) have three brothers and sisters, 11 ( 17 percent) have four brothers and sisters, 9 ( 14 percent ) have five brothers and sisters, 9 ( 14 percent) have six brothers and sisters, 8 (12 ) percent have seven brothers and sisters, 3 ( 5 percent) have eight brothers and sisters, and 1 ( 1 percent) nine brothers and sisters. The great majority of children also come from male dominated siblings while the numbers of female siblings are far smaller (148 to 128).

The results of the data show that 37 percent of the children have between 1 brother and sister to 3 brothers and sisters. On the other hand, 63 percent of the children have between 4 brothers and sisters to 9 brothers and sisters. This indicates the fact that the large majority of migrant street children come from large family size. The large family size might be a bottle neck to family heads to feed and educate their children. It also implies that families of the children fail to provide them proper care and guidance. Needless to say that having subsistence agricultural economy, children live in highly impoverished situations which, more often not, lead them to migration and streetism in desperate attempts to better their livelihood.

## 5.3 Migration History of Street Children

### 5.3.1 The Origin of Migrant Children

With regard to the origin of migrant children, this study reveals that the highest proportion of children move into the streets of the town from South Gonder and West Gojam rural villages. The key informant interviews held with the police, social workers, and an official from the City Administration confirm the fact that many migrant children definitely came from the rural areas of these two zones. This pattern of flow may also reflect the differences in poverty levels in various areas which in turn could reflect differences in children's perception of livelihood options available to them in difficult circumstances.

The results of the key informant interviews have also agreed with the findings from guided interview in that most of the children are from South Gonder and West Gojjam. More specifically, children from South Gonder largely move into Bahir Dar from Estie woreda (16 percent), Dera (9 percent), and Gayient (9 percent). Most of those children from West Gojjam zone are specifically from Adet (16 percent) and Merewi (6 percent). A fairly significant number of children also migrate to Bahir Dar from Ebenat, Woreta, Dengilla, Feresbet, Tilili, Chageni and other districts of the region. Very few children come from other regions such as Tigray and Oromyia.

This study indicates that a substantial number of children move to Bahir Dar from Adet and Estie that accounts 32% of the total sample followed by Derra, Gayint and Merewi. The result of discussions with children shows that there is a notable difference between girls and boys in the distances they covered to make their way to Bahir Dar, as girls generally come from relatively near locations. It can be assumed that girls are unwilling to travel as far as boys to start a new life in new geographical settings.

### 5.3.2 Cause of Migration of Children

In this study, the researcher tried to find out the reasons for children to migrate into Bahir Dar and engage in streetism. This is to understand and explain the process and patterns of migration of children from the rural areas and to see the relationship between rural-urban migration of children and street life. Rural children come to Bahir Dar from different areas in varying degrees. The children who migrate into the area have had a multiple of forces they attribute to their migration.

The data obtained through guided interview illustrates that the reasons for children migration are poverty that accounts 26 children (40 percent), disagreement with their families (with stepfather, stepmother, father, mother, sister or brother) 20 (31 percent), and the death of parents 10(15 percent) while 5 (8 percent) children missing their father or mother. The remaining 3 (5 percent) children migrate in search of education while one child is due to divorce of parents. Unlike adults' migration, the movement of rural children is not limited to job seeking or finding labor.

The results of FGDs and key informant interviews also confirm poverty being the main reason for rural-urban migration of children in the area. This implies that more and more migration is taking place, aggravated and hastened by rural poverty and poverty forces children into streetism to work to support them or supplement their rural families. Children in those poor areas look migration as means to break out of severe and deep-rooted poverty in their respective rural villages. For those children who migrate to supplement poor income of their rural families, migration can be taken as part and parcel of rural households' livelihood strategy. The migrant children could be economic agents who may make contribution to their families living in their respective poor rural villages. Moreover, children may also migrate with the desire to generate their own income for some aspects of consumption such as clothing while their families are so poor to provide them with suitable cloth. However, migrant children end up with street life and exposed to vulnerabilities.

This study also illustrates that children migrated to Bahir Dar Town due to disharmony with their parents which forces them to engage in street life. Through interviews and FGDs the researcher found out that the children left out their home while they face different types of physical and labor abuse from their families. Some children complained about physical abuse they suffered either

from their stepparents or their biological parents. In this respect children, see migration as a means to gain freedom and liberation from family neglect or violence of any type.

The data obtained during the field work also reveals that rural children migrate into the study area as a result of being orphaned or missing one's father or mother that activates the migration of children. This could be explained in two ways; children who are orphaned migrate to Bahir Dar Town when they did not have either any one to care for them and guide or not sufficiently cared or treated by their parents' relatives, grand parents or their elder sister or brother. On the other hand, the children who missed their father migrated either in order to support a widowed mother or being insecured. Azemeraw, 16 years old child, said: "I migrated to Bahir Dar due to my father's death. I was sad and disappointed with the death of my father. I felt I was without anyone to care and guide me. I was without a father (abat yelelew liji). So I moved to Bahir Dar."

Moreover, there are still some other children migrated in search for education. In this respect, the children migrated to the study area to get either formal or church education. Some children told to the researcher that they come to the area being disappointed by their parents for not sending them to school. Some other children still migrate to further their education.

The researcher observed children who come to the area to be trained for church education working on the street to support them. Rural children also come there to go to attend church education in other centers in the surrounding areas of Lake Tana. This implies that Bahir Dar being found on the shore of Lake Tana (which is the heart of a lot of religious monasteries) attracts children to migrate to be trained as deacons and priests. On the way to go somewhere to attend church education or to attend there, children engage in street life to earn income to support their education costs or to get their provisions. This shows the inherent relation between Orthodox Religion and movement of children who often need to attend church education, which is a common practice to become *kollo-tamari* (church student). Children choose churches among the congregation in Bahir Dar and its surroundings to go to become *kollo-tamaris* and in order to have a spiritual experience and ideally return and become a deacon. But most of the children end up living on the streets.

### 5.3.3 Decision to Migrate

The children were asked whether they do negotiate with their parents or guardians or they took decision independently to move into Bahir Dar Town. The interviews, FGDs and informal conversation held with street children reveals that nearly all (99 percent) make independent decision and 85 percent of the rural children move into the town alone. The results of the guided interview also depicts that very few children come to Bahir Dar Town with friends. In short, the children who migrate to the study area are independent child migrants. They also flee their localities without any parental say in their decision making to migrate. Although migrants are more usually considered as adults or families, this study found out that many street children are distinct migrants. It can be said that majority of children migrate into the study area on their own desire to seek work, or to escape poor family relations, or rural poverty without the knowledge of their parents or guardians.

### 5.3.4 Children's Choice of Bahir Dar

Children were asked for their reasons to choose Bahir Dar as their destination during the informal discussions, FGDs and interviews the researcher had with them. The children frequently respond that their perception to the availability of work, getting information about attraction of the town, its proximity to their rural villages and their desire to get compatriots or relatives as the main ones.

It might be said that rural children choose their destination purposefully taking into account the prevailing conditions around them. The migrant children also basis's their selection criteria dependent on information they have from other people. Through the FGDs and interviews they told to the researcher that they take into account of various socio-economic forces that help them to adjust their life and maintain their linkages. As such the presence of friends or neighbors or compatriots might also contribute to their choice of Bahir Dar to live in.

The majority of them are taken up by the proximity of the town that involves small transportation costs from their rural village and by a relative availability of work. Also, it is discovered through informal discussion that some children were trafficked by adults (without the knowledge of their parents) owing to the latter's unfulfilled promises to provide these children with education and employment in Bahir Dar. The researcher observed rural migrant children at the Child Trafficking

Protection Center in the bus terminal trafficked by individuals and dealt with the social workers to help them to return to their rural villages.

### 5.3.5 Length of Stay on the Street

The length of migrant children's stay in the street varied from two weeks to 8 years. Out of the sampled children, 42 percent (of which those children who stay for six months accounts 20 percent) were found to live in the streets of Bahir Dar from six months to a year. This indicates that recent migrants have substantial number. Some 13 percent have been out there for about 2 years while 9 percent have been street children for 4 years. About 7 percent stayed in the street for 3 years. There are others who have made a living on the streets for as long as 5, 6 and 8 years.

Generally, the presence of children with a varying length of time in the street having a rural background signals a continuity of movement of children into Bahir Dar Town. Therefore, the researcher argues that migration of children into the study area is not a seasonal activity. The move of rural children is not also dependent on peak or slack agricultural seasons. This is to mean that children do not come to the town during slack agricultural season and back to their home in peak time.

### 5.3.6 Children's Contact with Family

In this section of the study, the researcher mainly tries to highlight the family contact children could possibly maintain with their families in the rural areas. Accordingly, it is found out that the state of migrant street children's contact with their families ranges from complete negligence of their rural families to occasional visits once in four, three or two years and to relatively frequent visits every year or even every six months.

The data obtained from guided interview reveals that 27 percent of the children visited their parents once every three or two years while other 23 percent visit once every year. 20 percent of the street children do have contacts with their families only through letters. On the other hand, 14 percent of the children completely break up their contact with their families. Some 7 percent of the children visit their families in every six months; where as 9 percent of the children visits their family once in every four years. This indicates that only a few children who visited their families every six months and most of the street children often visit their parents in a space of three year or two. Street girls relatively made frequent visits to their families than boys.

By the informal discussion and FGDs held with children, the researcher learned that most of them preferred to visit their parents during holidays. Particularly for Christian children, they go on a family visit on Epiphany or *Timiket* while Muslims go around the end of Ramadan. The children were asked if they provide gifts or money for their parents while on a visit. The majority of girls buy and take something like coffee beans, sugar, soap, clothes (although not very often) for their parents. Boys, on the other hand, rarely make such provisions to their parents. As a result of this pattern, one can assume that girls are more socially responsible than boys.

Despite the variations in durations and complete negligence for some of them, the migrant street children generally maintain continual contact with their rural families while living in the urban centre. This pattern indicates that significant number of children did not interrupt family contact due to migration although there seems to be a tendency for orphans and some children having stepmothers or stepfathers to break linkages with their rural origin. So their migrations do not completely interrupt linkages with their socio-economic roots in their rural villages.

### 5.3.7 Health of Children

The researcher is interested to look at the health situations of children and how they adapt survival strategies to health problems. The results of guided interview shows that 35 (54 percent) migrant children were infected with malaria while 20 (31 percent) suffered from typhoid and other waterborne diseases. The remaining 10 (15 percent) children did not encounter major illnesses that need treatment. The results of FGDs and informal conservations indicate that some street children sometimes suffer from nose bleeding, headache, diarrhea, trachoma and skin diseases. The researcher also observed some of the street children coughing during the interviews and FGD sessions.

Children were asked where they get treatment when they are taken ill. Out of the sampled children, 40 percent paid to receive medical treatment at public clinics while 16 percent received free medical services from the state clinic or health centers. Other 30 percent of the street children buy medicine from pharmacies or shops with no prescription while 14 percent use traditional medicine. 85 percent of those children who paid for medical treatment got contributions from their friends.

Through interviews and FGDs on the issue of the status of their health they complain about the poor hygienic environment of their sleeping and working conditions that expose them to varieties of health hazards. The most common types of health problems of street children are malaria and typhoid which indicates the prevalence of malaria in the study area, and the unhygienic sleeping and working places of children as well.

The patterns of health seeking behavior of street children are almost identical. Through the interviews, FGDs and informal conversations, it is found out that almost all agree that public clinics are relatively the most affordable places to seek treatment from. It is also evident that self prescription of medicine by street children who often consult each other when sick and the use of traditional medicine are mentioned.

## 5.4 The Livelihood of Street Children

Engaged in a day to day survival scenario, street children develop resourcefulness, self reliance and independence, and survival skills in an unfriendly and insupportable street environment. Street children have different activities through which they generate and sustain their livelihood in the urban centers. Although the portfolio of street children is typically characterized by diversified economic activities in the informal sector it was clearly observable during the fieldwork that their occupational mobility towards the formal sector is very limited because of lack of education, training, skills, finance and capital.

They are engaged in different activities in order to earn income often using the public space for economic and social niche in different ways. Most economic activities of street children occur where there are concentrations of people, such as in market places, in bars or streets, at shopping centers, at a bus station, at car and taxi stops, and around hotels. Other places of operation in the study area include university campuses, church yards and around offices. I have observed that girls are more likely than boys to operate in bars or on the streets while boys are more concentrated and active in the markets, bus station, and shopping centers. The economic activities in which street children are engaged in to earn their livelihood include shoe shining, carrying goods, lottery vending, petty trade, daily labor in construction areas and fieldwork, scrap collection, begging, prostitution, parking, car washing, serving as taxi assistants and other related activities.

### 5.4.1 Shoe Shining

I have observed a number of largely male children who shines shoes lining up in various parts of the town. The shoe shiners are more concentrated around busy centers such as the bus station, offices, universities and other public areas. Street shoe shiners are almost practicing their day to day activities in fixed places. I observed that children from similar geographical background work in a permanent place and shine shoes adjacent to each other. Most of the shoeshine boys (*listeros*) had experience in carrying goods in the town prior to their working as shoe shiners.

The shoe shining business is not an easy task that someone could join and do it as soon as he or she came from the rural village. This is because beginning a shoe shining activity demands some kind of shining skill. It has to do with the fact that starting the business of shoe shining demands capital to buy the shining accessories. Added with this is getting admission from strategic site occupants who are already in control of the shoe shining business. The challenges that these children face in negotiating with customers to make them want to have their shoes polished is not also negligible.

The shoe shiners often work from 8 to 10 hours every week day, and 20 hours every weekend (Saturdays and Sundays). The results of the interviews and the focus group discussions shows that they earn 12 to 13 Birr per day on average on week days and 15 Birr on each day of the weekend. Some shoe shiners do such businesses as carrying goods and street vending along with their shoe shining activity.

### 5.4.2 Lottery Vending

Lottery vending is the other economic activity for many migrant street children. It is a task for children who have acquired some level of literacy. The study reveals that lottery vending is an activity of street children who have particularly some knowledge of numbers. It also requires initial capital to start the business. Children buy the lottery tickets from the Lottery office in Bahir Dar town and sell it to customers with a small profit.

Lottery vending is a very competitive business for children and the vendors cannot be concentrated around certain locations. As a result, in order for the vendors to sell more lottery tickets, they need to be as highly mobile to get customers nearly from all parts of the town. A child

informant, for instance, told the researcher that he sometimes needs to travel as far as Tis Isat (30 Kms), Hamusit (30 kms from the study area), Woreta (50 kms from Bahir Dar), and Meshenti (20 kms) to sell the lottery tickets.

> *Mikir, 17: I came from Gayint. I can read and write. Therefore, the moment I got here I embarked on working as a lottery vendor with my cousin. I got money from my cousin who was working as a lottery vendor. After a while I began working on my own. I started with 102 Birr. I have now all four kinds of lottery notes or tickets (which cost 402 Birr). I sometimes go to Hamusit, Tis Ist and Woreta to sell my lottery tickets.*

### 5.4.3 Scrap Collection

Collecting scrap is another means of earning their livelihood in Bahir Dar Town. Rural migrant children who are engaged in this activity walk around neighborhoods in the town and nearby rural villages calling out *biret yalew, korkoro yalew or kongo yalew*, which literary means "those who want to sell metal, iron sheet or plastic". The researcher found children who do this business by themselves or for adults on daily pay basis. The scraps these children collect include iron sheets, plastics, bottles, glasses, mirror, old coins, shoes and other materials over used or no more serviceable by households. The street children collect these scraps and sell it to customers who would recycle them into serviceable items.

> *Chale, 16: I come from Estie. I am here because my father died. I live on collecting scrap from households in the town and the surrounding villages. I earn good money. At times I got enough to save. At other times, I go bankrupt. In such cases, I use my savings. I thank God that I did not face major crisis as such. I need to change this work and engage in other business in the future.*

Scrap collection requires mobility of street children from place to place. Children are also expected to carry the heavy load of collected materials on their back and move around from place to place still looking for more. During the informal discussion, scrap collectors told the researcher that some residents in the rural villages at times sympathize with their situation and provide them with some food. The dogs in such villages often come offensive to these children unlike their masters though. The researcher observed that the scrap collecting children are generally slightly

older than children engaged in other activities. This implies that scrap collection needs more physical strength to bear the load carrying, long distance travel on foot and standing in defense of themselves from dogs.

Collecting scrap is relatively a profitable business. In fact, the children some times suffer significant losses from bad sale of scraps. Scrap collection also needs relatively high initial capital that many child migrants do not have. Given higher initial cost and active engagement, however, the children are likely to make more money than they do from other economic activities. This is achieved, among other things, at the cost of working in very unhygienic, unsanitary and hazardous environment. Children sell the scraps in the market center of Bahir Dar town. The researcher observed that the scrap collectors usually move around the town and at the suburbs in groups of two or three.

### 5.4.4 Carrying Goods and Luggage

This is an activity that most of the new migrant street children are involved in, a spring board to eventually make way to other activities. Clearly, carrying goods does not require initial capital and skill. So it naturally follows that most new migrant children become engaged in this economic activity. Street children mostly hang around the bus station in the town where many passengers make arrivals and departures and in the market to render carrying services for small money.

Street children also carry goods to and from mill houses and construction sites. Migrant street children also carry goods in places where taxi and Bajaj stops. Street children carry bricks, cement, steel, water and other construction materials in the construction sites. One can not fail to see street children carrying construction materials in the construction sites in every corner of the town. At mill houses, migrant children carry sacks of flour that weighing from 25 to 50 kilos. Children often compete among themselves over loads apart from difficulties of carrying beyond one's capacity and abuses and assaults from adult competitors. At the bus station and the market place, street children sometimes suffer deep mistrust from passengers and inhabitants who stereotype these children as thieves and pick pockets. In effect, the passengers choose to carry their goods themselves. Hence, it narrows children's opportunities to get jobs to earn their livelihood.

### 5.4.5 Begging

The researcher observed female and male adults and children engaged in begging in the streets, market areas and around churches. Thus begging is another portfolio of economic activity of migrant street children in the area. They often beg for money and food on the streets. The researcher also found street children begging at memorial and wedding ceremonies in residences. I discovered Wondemu and Mulubirhane moving around Keble 14 on 16, *Yekatit* (February), 2000 E.C begging for food. By the time I met them, they told me that they were wondering around residential areas in search of food. As it was Sunday, they said they had no job, so they often spend their time sleeping around Meskael Square and at lunch time they move around to find food. Begging, according to Wondemu and Mulubirhane, is a practice they are engaged in only when they are not working on Sundays. However, the number of children engaged in begging is very low as compared to adults in the study area. Beggars do not tell the amount of money they earn and the number of hours they stay in the street to beg. The children who are in the streets for begging are dominantly assistants of disabled adults or elderly engaged in begging.

Street children have their own skills to exert a pull on people whom they beg. They are aware of each and every religious day that they can get alms being offered by Orthodox believers. They beg different strata of the urban society. Migrant children also beg alms from foreigners who often come to visit Lake Tana, the Blue Nile Fall (Tis Ist) and the Castle of Gonder. They beg foreigners saying, "Madam or Sir", give me money, I am poor. According to the informants, children prefer to beg because begging does not require hard labor and some times make good money in a day during religious days.

### 5.4.6 Petty Trade

Bahir Dar is the center of Northwest Ethiopia that is rapidly growing to entertain street trade. The researcher observed children selling different commodities in the streets of the town. The type of petty trade that street children engaged in include selling books, magazines or newspapers, clothes, ornaments, mirror, clocks, wallets, papyrus reed, sugarcane, belts, candles, incense (*etan),* cassettes of hymn, spiritual pictures (of Jesus Christ, Saints and Angeles), prayers books of any kind (Psalms, books of Saint marry and others), cross, and neck band (*yenget kier)*. They also engage in selling small items such as chewing gum, bread and roasted cereals. The majority of petty traders move from place to place. Petty trade requires initial capital and persuasion power to

convince and attract the buyers. The researcher observed that street girls are engaged in selling small items. Ennana, a 17-year old girl, was born at Hamuswonz rural district. She shared her account of life as follows:

> *I was married when I was a little kid without my knowledge and consent. When I got back to my family abandoning my husband, my parents would force me to go back to him and when I went back to him he would beat me. I also wanted to go to school but I was not allowed to. All these abuses made me the unhappiest person that I fled to Addis Zemen to my aunt and lived for sometime. Then a friend of my aunt's brought me to Bahir Dar to make me his housemaid. I was not comfortable with him and I left him to live by myself selling roasted grain on the street. I also spin raw cotton for making traditional clothes and lace grass into traditional house utensils.*

Moreover, street children provide services in public places. They render services like checking weights of passers by, and exchange of paper money into coins at commission for taxis, public phone users and cafeterias. The researcher also observed elderly persons exchanging money into coins.

Street children also engaged in selling papyrus reed and sugarcane in the streets. Those who sell papyrus reed (grass like material used to garnish the floor of the house) have fixed place to prepare a small bundle to sell for customers. They sickle the papyrus reed at sides of Blue Nile or Lake Tana. Street children who can swim often go to the river or the lake sides to sickle the grass. The researcher also observed adults who sickle the grass and distribute it for street children engaged in this activity. Street children collect the papyrus reed into the market by cutting on the sides of the river and lake or buying from adult distributor. The street children who buy the papyrus reed from adults' pay 15 to 20 Birr to a large bundle depending on the availability of grass, market situation and holidays. They make five or six Birr profits and they may sell three or four bundle of papyrus reed per day. The street children sell a thin and small bundle of the grass 0.50 cents to 1 Birr. They stay in the street working 7 to 8 hours per day.

**5.4.7 Parking, Washing and Watching Vehicle (Car or Bicycle)**

Street children are engaged in different vehicle related activities to earn income to live in. The interviews, focus group discussions and the researcher's observation reveals that they are involved in car washing, watching, and attendant of parking for cars and bicycles (working as car attendant is not very visible in the study area). They watch cars in the restaurants and hotels earning little coins. In many occasions, the owners refuse to accept children to watch the vehicle and may not pay.

Street children are also engaged in bicycle parking around offices, parks, and other public places. They park and watch bicycle side by side other activities. The street children earn 0.15 cents from the owners parking a bicycle. The park attendants told to the researcher that there is no time limit for parking a bicycle. They park bicycle in groups (2 or 3 children) or alone which is relatively dependent on the number of customers. The researcher also observed some children who park and watch bicycle while shining shoes. Working as bicycle attendant is recently a new economic activity that offers option for street children to earn income in Bahir Dar.

Street children also work as taxi and *bajeji* (having three or six seats) assistants. They call passengers for taxi and *bajeji*. The children who call passengers for *bajeji* move together when it has five seats. They earn 0.25 cents for single trip to call passengers for a *bajeji*. Street children also sit and wait in the taxi to attract passengers to come in. If the taxi is full the children get out of the taxi and earn 0.50 cents for single trip. The children told to the researcher that car washing is a rewarding business in vehicle related activities but it is competitive to find car to wash.

Street children are also engaged in pulling carts. They pull mules or horses cart which carries fuel wood, grass and other materials from surrounding rural villages or areas into the town. Other activity of street children working as pulling cart assistants is loading mule or horse with flour of cereals or *teff* and construction materials. Street children do this work with support from adults. They earn money on daily basis from the owners and often get their lunch free of charge.

Street children also work as broker connecting passengers and drivers who travel from Bahir Dar to Addis Abba. Street children often compete with adult brokers who are engaged in this activity.

The passengers pay 120 Birr for single trip from Bahir Dar to Addis and children earn 10 Birr for their services (from both sides). The researcher observed drivers paying 20 Birr for adult brokers while paying children 10 Birr. Some street children told to the researcher that it is their strategy to get drivers and minimize adults' competition.

**5.4.8 Daily labor in Construction Sites and Fieldworks**

It is common to see construction of buildings in various parts of the town and the number of migrant daily laborers coming in search of daily labor is arising phenomenon in Bahir Dar Town. During the fieldwork the researcher observed adults, the elderly, women, and children (boys and girls) engaged in construction activities as daily laborers.

Many migrant street children are engaged in daily labor in construction sites in the town. They earn 12 to 13 Birr per day. However, they complain about the competition they face to get daily labor, the physical abuse from adult daily laborers or from employees, sometimes get no full pay and working long hours. The researcher also observed street children digging hole for water and telephone pipelines, working in the construction of roads in the town, watering and digging in chat fields.

**5.4.9 Prostitution**

Prostitution is one of the challenging features of the life of girls in general and migrant girls in particular. Rural migrant girls join the business of prostitution for a variety of reasons. In some cases migrant girls are forced to join prostitution trafficked by illegal brokers and owners of small restaurants while they arrive at the bus terminal. They traffic migrant girls deceiving them through their unfulfilled promises of searching jobs as housemaids, barmaids or babysitters. Traffickers' often drop girls at small restaurants or brothels. So migrant street girls have no option and involve in commercial sex to earn income to sustain their lives. The income of girl prostitute is not exactly known and they are not also interested to reveal their earnings per night or per individual. The key informants told to the researcher that the girl prostitutes also share their income for owner of the brothels or small restaurants.

Through informal conservation, a female girl child told to the researcher that some girls join prostitution when they are unable to get jobs as housemaids, cook, and babysitters. They may not

be able to get these jobs due to some skills required in cooking, child care and lack of warranty. It is when they have lost other options that girls join commercial sex work to sustain their livelihood.

A girl who works as barmaid may join prostitution step by step if the situation she is in does not change. In this case the processes are voluntary that the girls themselves practice prostitution. Some of them are also influenced by their friends or others who practiced prostitution. Those who experience prostitution know the possible income they earn from it and push their fiends to join. However, whether they are forced to join or practice it voluntarily, female children do not enjoy being involved in commercial sex business.

According, to the key informants a girl child accepts being a prostitute when she is dissatisfied with her life as barmaid or some times housemaid. The key informants told to the researcher that most of the time the possibility of girls working as barmaids have greater chance to be prostitutes than housemaids. Some female migrant children also engage in prostitution while serving as barmaids. The researcher's observation indicates the migrant child prostitutes in Bahir Dar Town are not more visible at night as they do not stand in the street and wait for customers. The types of female prostitutes are house prostitutes and rarely street walkers.

Though, it is hard to take it as granted, one of the key informant told to the researcher that some rural migrant female children often experience prostitution. After that, they drop it and engaged in other activities that require their labor. Prostitution is not by itself a permanent livelihood activity that female children willingly and openly declare as socially accepted so as to depend on earning one's income.

The results of interviews also reveal that there are some male migrant children who draw their earning from the commercial sex work. In this regards, the male street children do earn income engaged in the activity of middlemen by working as pimps. The children told to the researcher that they connect female children prostitutes with men. According to the child informants, the men have varying socio-cultural backgrounds such as age, profession, rural or urban, passenger or permanent resident of the town. Street children earn money from both sides, though varies in amount. They earn 5 Birr from each side if the man pays 55 to 65 Birr to the prostitute while they

earn 10 Birr form each if more than that. They told the researcher that it is a though business and require skills to get customers.

To sum up, the livelihood and survival strategies of street children show different types of asset such as labor, skill and social capital. The economic activities that street children draw or generate their income are mainly in the informal sector of the urban economy. The street activities that street children engaged in often pull a bad attitude or perception by the public.

Street children perform their activities in a given place and time. The employments of the street children are entirely in the informal sector. The jobs in which they engaged in do not as such require any special skills or sizable capital investment which indicates street activities being open for newcomers from rural areas. Therefore, it is seemingly easy for migrant children to involve in street life than searching for other options. The welcoming (by less demand of skill and capital) environment of the street occupations in the town is pinpointing for the attraction of street life to migrant children.

They engaged in a work requiring some skills and the working hours fluctuate from 8 to 10 hours. Children's labor is very vital asset that help them earn income directly via wage employment or indirectly through the production of goods and services which are sold in the informal market. The research found out that street children's income is between 10 and 13 Birr per day but it is not regular. Some street children engaged in street vending, shoe shining, taxi assistant, and scrap collection earn relatively better income than others.

Most children earn very small amount of money and they consume most of their menial income to meet their basic necessities. This does not hold true for all children because the results of the interviews and informal discussion reveal that children who do not consume or spend all he or she earns in a day do exist. During the FGDs children often cite the incompatibility of rise of living cost with their own income they earn per day. This in turn deters them to save.

## 5.5 Survival Strategies of Street Children

Street children have their own survival strategies to cope up with urban vulnerabilities. They adapt various mechanisms to fulfill their basic necessities such as food, shelter and clothing essential for their daily existence. The experience of Chernet, a 14-year old street child, is a good case in point.

> *I came from Adiet. I came here because of the death of my parents. When they died, my elder brother and sister denied me the share of my parents' wealth. I fled the place since they did not care for me. When I first arrived here I used to sleep alone on the veranda. Other boys used to attack me. Now we got used to each other and have become friends. If I could not find any job I help my friends in selling sugarcane and papyrus reed. They invite me either to lunch or dinner in return. I also sleep with the same friends and share many things with them. I am exposed to many problems while on the street. I could not get proper shelter, job and food. Look at what I am wearing now. I even can not attend school. I am leading a degraded and impoverished life. I am unequal to in terms of living standard.*

### 5.5.1 Searching For Food

Street children's main priority among other things is securing their daily food. Of the sample children 99 percent of them respond that getting food to eat is their daily worries. So every child invests his or her labor directly or indirectly to the get food. They make their efforts to meet their need to food in different ways in the study area. The survival mechanisms they adapt to feed themselves range from buying food from small cafeteria, tea room, and street vendors to begging in the church yards during holidays, residents house and searching leftovers from restaurants, hotels and cafeteria.

Street children who find leftover to meet their daily meals are expected to provide some kind of services for the owners of hotels and restaurants. The kind of services are chopping firewood, washing utensils, carrying goods from market, serving as messenger, cleaning, bed making, dropping garbage and often bringing materials from owner's home to the restaurants and hotels. The children negotiate with barmaids, owners and cooks to do this to get food.

They also search food moving around individual residence and deal with residents to get food during holidays and religious festivals. In these days street children get food and drinks as Orthodox Christians give alms to the poor in honor of Jesus Christ, Saints and Angeles. Street

children search food from residents in weeding and memorial days. They negotiate with guards of the wedding ceremony while they join with people who came to attend the funeral ceremony at times of death and other memorial days. Street children are knowledgeable agents as to how, when, and where they employ this survival strategy to get food.

Others also buy food from small restaurants, cafeteria, tea room or roasted food from the street vendors. They usually buy and eat bread with tea, Injeria with Shiriowot (Ethiopian staple food) and roasted cereals. The results of the self-guided interview reveals that majority of children eat three times a day. The researcher observed children buying food in small restaurants, tea room and cafeteria at the lowest prices. These areas are niches of migrant street children to find food. They often do cost benefit analysis to buy food. If they find the cost of food prices in a given place beyond reasonable prices they change it and find another place to buy.

During the FGDs Street children complains about the quality and quantity of food they buy in small restaurants and hotels. They told to the researcher that the food they eat do not satisfy them. The rise of food prices is also the daily worries of the majority of them. They state the incompatibility of food prices with their small income which has a bearing in their sheer survival. Street children also share a meal with friends to minimize costs of food.

The interviews and FGDs result also show that street children share their own meal if children do not have money to buy food. Through interviews and FGDs, street children complain that they are unable to get nutritious food with their small incomes they earn. Generally the majority of them eat bread and a cup of tea for breakfast while lunch and dinner *injeria* with *shirowot*. This is an implication for the sheer survival of most of street children in the town. It can also be said that the earning of migrant children is a kind of hand to mouth which does not fulfill their basic needs.

### 5.5.2 Shelter
The classification of street children as "on the street" and "of the street" is dependent on children's contact with families and whether children live in the street on daily basis and do  or do not spend their time at night. Housing or shelter is major problem that challenges different strata of the urban society in Ethiopia. The situation of Bahir Dar is not peculiar with other parts of the country. The

newcomers who come to the town for various purposes may face the challenges of securing shelter. Rural-urban migrants aggravate the problem of proper shelters in the town. Therefore, migrants including children may face a challenging situation since their arrival into the town. Street children have different survival mechanisms to the problem of housing in Bahir Dar town.

They do not confine themselves to a single territorial space to find shelter. They adapt a range of skills that help them to get a safe and cheaper place to sleep or shelter. They shelter themselves in rented rooms and floor, street corners, church yards, bank yards, veranda of hotels or shops, bus station, main roads and other places. Children who sleep in the street side at night told to the researcher that they prefer to sleep around the bus station, verandas, church yards and roads that provide them relative security at night. These children spend the whole night sleeping in groups. Street children deal with owners or guards to get permission to sleep in the side of the veranda of shops, hotels and restaurants. They face the problem of appropriate sleeping places during the rainy seasons and some return to rent floor.

Other children rent rooms and pay 40 to 60 Ethiopian Birr per month. They rent house in a group of two or three and share the cost. These groups of children sleep on mattress made up of sacks and straw. Street children engaged in shoe shinning, lottery vending, and petty trade do often rent house. This implies that children with relatively good income rent house. Still others rent floor and share the floor with other children or adults. They pay between 0.15 to 1 birr to sleep on the floor. Street children rent floor on daily basis from owners of small restaurants or local alcohol sellers. They sleep on sacks, animal skins and carton boxes. Street children complain sleeping on the floor crowdedly with many adults which may expose them for communicable diseases. They do not have enough carpets to sleep on the floor. The floor of the house is also dirty and not aired.

The interviews, FGDs and informal discussion results shows that migrant children shift from sleeping on the floor to the street corners due to bad and unhealthy condition on the floor. They also told to the researcher that owners of floor of house also put a time limit. If a child rents a floor where the owner sells local alcoholic drinks or tea, he or she is expected to buy or come at 3 or 4 o'clock. This is to keep the safety of customers who drink alcohol in the house. In this case, some children resort to sleep on veranda. The researcher observed recent migrant children often sleeping on floors with or without adults. On the basis of similar geographical areas they jointly

rent floor or room. However, this is less common for street children who sleep in the street at night. Overall, the sleeping place or shelter of street children is uncomfortable to their physical and mental growth. Street children told to the researcher that their shelter lacks proper toilet room, fresh air, light and water to keep them healthy. As such street children are without proper or reliable shelter in the study area.

### 5.5.3 Clothing and Hygiene

Clothing is one of the basic necessities for street children. The researcher observed that they do not wear proper and sufficient clothes to withstand weather conditions of the street environment in places of their operation. Most of the migrant children are usually bare footed and very few wear old shoes without socks. Migrant children also wear one and the same cloth day and night.

The researcher observed that recent migrants often wear *Gabi* and towel. The older ones do not wear *Gabi*. The new migrant children also do not have trousers. They wear shorts. I observed that their clothes are also often infested with some pests. However, there are street children whose clothing are not dirty, worn out or old and afford to buy better clothes at the market. Street children buy items of clothing from garment shops and tailors sew it for them. They also buy second hand clothes from the market place. Street children rarely get new clothes from individuals in the form of gift. New and small migrant children may not buy new clothes afraid of being looted by older adult street children and non-street adults.

Street children are in general working and living in an environment that exposes them to health and social risks. Many of the street children do have poor hygiene condition which results from their working environment and economic conditions. The researcher observed that children hairs are not properly combed and washed. Some of the body of street children are skinny, faded away and prey to every physical problem vulnerable to health crisis. The researcher also observed their body is not clean that shows lack of hygiene. Many street children do not care about their hygiene and clothing. Some street children have unhealthy personal habits, poor personal hygiene due to working in various unhealthy environment and sleeping places, and washing in Blue Nile (Abay) and Lake Tana.

**5.6 The Social Networks of Street Children**

The migrant street children with rural origin do not have families to contact with and to get support or guidance from. Therefore, social networks or social relations are very important to help them to secure sustainable livelihood or generate their earnings. The social networks of children are also very useful to share their lived experiences and provide mutual support. Street children interact among themselves through various social networks to deal with or share their street life experiences. The researcher's observation and accounts of informal conservation partly attest to this in that children who inhabit similar places of occupation and those coming from similar areas of origin or ethnic groups (though the latter is less visible) exhibit active interaction and support among themselves. Street children are economically at the margin of the lower strata of the urban life or dwellers but they do have their own social capital dependent on interaction, support and competition.

The social networks of migrant children are formed by virtue of socio-economic activities, personal characteristics, their similarity in place of origin and street occupation to fulfill their basic needs and goals. The social networks are also maintained based on the proximity of the places in which they sleep.

Street children's social networks play a vital role in various socio-economic aspects which help the children to be resilient to the dynamics of street life. The most common responses of street children to the researcher's question of what these social networks need to them relate to sharing food, helping each other while sick, avoiding loneliness, ensuring security, sharing money and ideas, and getting guidance and care from one another. The networks are also meant to help develop resilient and coping mechanisms for their increased vulnerability in the streets. The Interviews and FGD results indicate that social networks of street children are the only means of support for the majority of them in their struggle to survive or generate livelihood.

The street is the place where migrants, residents or others are engaged in various economic activities to earn their livelihood. It is a public place in which street children earn income to make a living and compete with one another. Some children also view it as a source of freedom, adventure, socialization and solidarity. No doubt that, there is also violence and vulnerability, neglect and abuse on the street. This indicates that street children may have a mixed reaction about

street life relating it to their experiences. Contrary to the prevailed situation against street children, the majority of children in the study area have developed resourcefulness, entrepreneurship and resilient features.

Despite all the challenges, street children are found to be purposeful actors who have managed to win their livelihood and set up social networks by virtue of their communal solidarity. This situation is well explained by their social groups. The social groups create commonness and belongingness for the street children to act as family. These social groups could be of importance to provide security and care for children against undesired intruders. After the wrecked family experience, the street becomes the only place of socialization in which solidarity among the kids becomes a kind of family substitute. The street environment in turn harms them physically and morally and deprives them of their childhood.

The social networks of children provide an operative economic niche which protects group members from vulnerability. Therefore, the social networks of children in the street can strengthen the capability of group members to reduce vulnerability and be more beneficial to livelihood outcomes. They create informal purposeful social groups reliant on friendships. The social groups formed on the basis of one's peers or friends offer migrant children with feeling of strength and security in the street.

Migrant children lived experience depends on the existed networks of associations and relationships to earn sustainable livelihood. During the Interviews and FGDs children mentioned that being with member of social groups was important for their security and safety, showing their increased vulnerability on the streets. The notion all the children gave was that their networks of social groups or friends were indispensable to their survival on the streets as rural migrants.

Through associations and interactions that prevail among street children there is competition and violence for resources. The street is the sources of livelihood for the increasing number of migrants and local inhabitants of different group who strive to get their daily basic needs in Bahir Dar Town. However, the street present's very limited opportunity for all who draws their income from street based informal economic activities. It is possible to assert that the limited opportunity of the street and people's interest to exploit it leads to stiff competition and conflict among

themselves. Street children are actors who simply act in different manners to cope up with the stiff competition to earn their livelihood. The need for street children to construct a living makes them vulnerable to hazards and or exploitative labor situations. I observed that many established business in the informal and sometimes formal sector depend on children as a chief source of labor.

Street children are of widely different ages and live in groups characterized by hierarchies among themselves. The presence of hierarchies of street children reflects the existence of some form of power relations among themselves. I observed that street children are at the sate of continuous interaction and competition among their peers and other social groups. These hierarchies exist on the basis of the length of stay on the street, gender and occupation. This is between boys and girls, new comers and older one's and working children and of the street children.

Gender difference is one of the power relations observable among street children in the street of Bahir Dar town. Street boys and girls are not equal in their prevalence on the street. Street girls like boys set up a set of social networks based on support, friendship and competition. The researcher's personal observation in the field asserts that they are highly networked for their survivals in the street. Those street girls engaged in street vending move in group around various sides of the street in the town. Street girls share their life in different social condition such as they share money, materials, food, and provide emotional or moral support. They also defend themselves from street boys, residents or other individuals collectively. Life in the street is competitive and demands one's active skill to earn money to keep up their livelihood. Street girls do not only compete with each other but also boys, adults and other street vendors. Non-street adults and street boys put up their feasts against street girls. Therefore, they face exploitation and abuse or violence from various groups. Overall, the competition street girls' face in the street is very greater than the boys.

The researcher tried to observe and had conversational interviews and discussions with street children to see the social networks or supports that recent migrants and older ones do maintain. The researcher observed the social support they set up and the way they channel each other. Accordingly, recent and old migrant street children know each other based on several existing contexts in the study area. The recent migrants are identified by those who stayed more years in

Bahir Dar by their occupation, clothing, sleeping places, movement, and mechanisms of searching work.

The results of FGDs and informal conservations also show that the seniors' identify new migrants on basis of occupation in which they are engaged in carrying goods or loads in the market and other areas. The newcomers also move into those areas in groups and they usually stay together. This is an implication of their means of adapting themselves to urban life. The seniors also identify newcomers on the basis of the pay they demand from customers. They need to be paid high amount of money and are eager to make much money with a short period of time. They are also identified by their wearing styles. They wear shorts with *Gabi* or towel. The newcomers also sleep on floor paying coins or Birr.

However, the researcher observed that the newcomers are not absolutely in different with the social supports they may take it from the older ones. They make efforts to get entry into the prevailing social networks of the older children. They also attempt to form their social groupings to develop new social networks to support one another. The older migrant children offer new migrants with different kinds of social support like where to find work, how to deal with the public, where to get cheap prices of food and shelter, where to buy clothes, how to interact with one another and other services they need to get. By doing so the older street children provides the information needed to the recent migrants. Moreover, the social supports of the older migrant children go beyond that and integrate recent migrants to their already existed social networks. They socialize the recent migrants to specialize in similar occupations.

This interaction and social support is not without competition among themselves. As a result of this, recent migrants face challenges of finding appropriate working place to work on the side of older children. The older sometimes refuse to admit recent migrants in their territories which deter recent migrants to occupy strategic working areas to carry out their economic activities.

### 5.6.1 Street Children and the Public

In this sub section, the researcher is interested to look at the social relations or networks street children have with different social actors. They work and live in a given space and time while they engage in earning their livelihood. In the long term process of making their livelihood, they

develop contact with neighbors, shop owners or keepers, owners of the cafeteria or small restaurants (including barmaids), and institutions (church, NGOs and the Police).

The researcher observed that the shop owners or keepers and street children have a very strong social interaction or network while they practice their day to day economic activities. Street children need to have strategic place to occupy in order to carry out their works. Quite a number of children perform their jobs around shops. They shoeshine or do other business. The verandas of shops are of an ideal place to generate income or to sleep (for some children).

Shop owners or keepers socialize street children in various respects. They give street children permit to work at the free space in front of their shops. They also put their working equipments at shops when they finish their works. The shopkeepers or owners also give them guidance as to how they handle their job and lead their life. They also keep money for children who would like to save from their small earnings. Besides, street children gain credits or loans from the shop owners or keepers without interest.

> *Gebayehu, (16): I kept some money with Ato Getaneh Admasu, a shop owner. I also get loans while I run out of money to pay for my house rent. Right now, I saved 300 Birr at Getaneh's. I shine shoes in front of his shop and I work for him when there is some carrying job at his shop.*

Moreover, street children carry goods in shops that crate them additional jobs to earn income. The researcher observed street children making an appointment with their friends and customers by taking shops as point of reference to meet. Shops also provide security for children. Street children serve as cleaners, messengers, gatekeepers, guards, porters, and brokers (rarely) for owners of shops. They also buy working materials, food and other goods from shopkeepers or owners who have links with them. Thus their social networks function typically based on mutual interaction, support and meditation. Truthfulness is an important social norm expected from children while they interact with them.

The researcher observed that street children obtain a lot of benefits around church yards and engaged in a lot of street vending activities. They sell candles, incense (*etan*), papyrus reed (grass), cassettes of hymn, spiritual pictures (of Jesus Christ, Saints and Angeles), prayers books of any

kind (Psalms, books of Saint marry and others), cross, and neck band (*yenget kier*). They sell having either fixed place or move from church to church in religious days and in the street. It is also the sources of food or alms offered to the poor during religious days. Believers go to church to pray and attend the chant ceremony of the church and give alms for beggars on their way to attend. This provides a street child who begs with an opportunity to get food. They also get shelter to sleep around the church yards.

Moreover the spiritual value that street children got from the church or mosque can not be valued only in terms of their material lives. They get sense of strength and security from the street environment through their faith in God. The informal conversation the researcher had with some street children confirms that their religion is a grantee for all their lives. They also told to the researcher that it is by the miracle of God they are living in and drawing their livelihood. The researcher observed that street girls are more concerned than boys in their religion and attendance.

> *Azemeraw, (16): I have been here for 6 years. I eat and live, which comes to be possible in the street by the Mercy of Jesus Christ/ God. Street life is harsh but I can manage to live with the blessings of God.*

Generally, the religion of street children is an important mediating factor to earn their livelihood by securing them with mental stability, security and to be free from daily anxieties through their spiritual things.

Migrant street children also develop social networks or links with the police, gatekeepers or guards in different respects. The street children have both interacting and conflicting interests with them. The police, gatekeepers or guards protect children from one or different kinds of abuse. The police protect children from physical abuse by different strata of the society. The police also provide security to street children while they sleep around verandas, hotels and other public places. The researcher also observed police patrolling those places where street children sleep at night. This provides the *Beranda adrewich* (of street children) a feeling of security while spending the whole night without shelter.

> *Daniel, (15): I sleep at the veranda with my friends around the bus station. I get police protection from gangs while I sleep at night. One night the gangs attempted to snatch my money. I cried and called the police, who were patrolling, and they came in my rescue. I am a poor and powerless child. Their help meant a lot to me.*

Some street children also report to the police if they see people who committee crimes. In this case, the social networks of them are mutually supportive. However, these situations do not always hold true. Street children face both physical and verbal abuse from some police particularly "of street children". Some children see police as a threat for their survivals. Some police also see them as pickpockets, thieves and vandals to be asked for crimes committed. There is a perceived association of all criminal activities with street children.

> Alemu, (15): *I was beaten by the police while I slept by the veranda of Papyrus Hotel. I slept     with my friends and it was around 10 o'clock while the police beat me and my friends. At that time somebody was snatched his mobile by other gangs but I and my friends were suspected just because we were sleeping there. Up on the investigation of the case, we were finally found not guilty. I would never forget that sad moment.*

The results of key informant interviews and FGDs depict that bad image among street children and the police have recently witnessed positive changes of its kind. Key informants from police told to the researcher that training provided to the police on child rights help to realize the rights of children which changes the situation. The researcher observed some police giving care for some street migrant children while they face labor abuse grinding stone by mill. The researcher also observed a female police advising children to form association to save money and to engage in better  economic activities to escape from *Berandaderent* ( of street activity).

> *Birhanu, (16):  I was of the street child who slept at night in the Veranda. I got support and advice to stop sleeping at verandas at night from a policewoman working on Child Rights and Protection. I agreed and she helped me to join school and be engaged in bicycle parking and shoe shining tasks. I am now sleeping with my friend paying 60 birr for a room. I attend my school properly and I support myself better than I did before.*

The gatekeepers or guards also provide street children with sleeping place at the verandas and safeguards them while they sleep at night and work in day time. The gatekeepers or guards also allow street children to work in the hotel or restaurants in return for leftovers or in the form of pays.

> *Aberraraw, (17):  I work around Protection House in front of Saint George Church. I am friendly with the guards of the bank and they allow me to attend the bicycle of the of the Bank's customers and earn money. I also deal with the gatekeeper of Agar Café who assists me to get some leftover from the Café. I also carry loads of goods of people who sell goods at Protection House.*

Street children were asked if they receive any kind of help from NGOs which are working on children or street children in Bahir Dar. Almost all of the respondents underlined that they have no any kind of contact with any of the organizations working with street children and were not aware of any organizations helping children. I found two street children who had been in an institution in Addis Ababa for some time and left the institution due to breaking rules and regulations repeatedly, and quarrel with peers.

> *Daniel, 15:  I went to Addis Ababa and I was assisted by Hope Enterprise but I failed to live up to the rules and regulations of the organization. I often went there, where I was provided with shelter, late. Even worse, I once spent a nigh out with friends. I was given warnings which I didn't take seriously. I kept on misbehaving with my friends and coming late to receive more cautions. Finally I had a quarrel with another child and left the enterprise by myself. I stayed one week in the street of Addis Ababa and finally moved to Bahir Dar.*

### 5.6.2 Street Children's Integration or Marginalization

The results of the interview and FGDs show that street children are excluded from the majority of the urban society in Bahir Dar town. Although the length of time children spend on the streets influences their survival skills, extended street life likely may result in significant alienation from conventional social life. This implies that it is increasingly difficult for street children to effectively reintegrate into community life. This is due to the wrong and bad perception that has been existed among the public towards them.

A child informant told to the researcher that people's bad attitude and perceptions that are labeled against them sometimes challenges to ensure sustainable income. According to him people undermined and abused them that they are thief and pickpockets. This shows that there exist exclusion and marginalization of street children from the mainstream urban society. Street children do not only scavenge for food from restaurants but they are also chased away from some shops and big hotels by owners and customers. They are treated without any respect, and their views and opinions are seldom taken into consideration by others. They are unlikely to posses' identity cards or other forms of identification as well.

> *Wubalem, (17): I am interested to open a shop business around the bus station and I want to rent a container from the city administration and lunch my small business. So I applied for an identity card from the Kebele but I could not get one. Despite my three-time application for an identity card, the Kebele turned a deaf ear to me. Now I just quitted further appeals out of boredom. If I got the card, it would also help me get free medical care service*

This explicitly shows that the lack of identity cards prevents street children from gaining access to social services that might be free of charges or result in them having to pay higher charges. It also makes them not to set up their own legal and formal business.

The researcher observed that street children have marginalized position in different situations in the study area. They are found in the lower strata of the society leading a desperate urban life without any support rendered from the mass in an organized way. Their occupations are also labeled in the informal economic sector that offers a small income that could only help children's sheer survival. They are, therefore, treated negatively by the society and lack care. Informal conversation interviews the researcher had with some people shows that street children are on the street because of their misbehaving activity at home. The socio-economic problems that force them to be there are not known. However, this does not hold true for all the social strata of the town people and there are others who consider street children as responsible social groups.

The researcher's observation and informants interview indicates that street children maintains good relations with the owners of shops, shopkeepers, barmaids, owners of house or floor where

street children sleep and the owners of small tea houses and restaurants. The results of FGDs also show that there exists good relation with these groups of the society.

Street children were asked about their future whether they stay there or go back to their rural villages. They have different perceptions and attitudes. The majorities do not want to get back home and they want to make money there and develop themselves into another business. They need to acquire the skills of mechanic, builder and carpenter etc. However, there are some children who need to go back to their rural villages when they earn enough money to buy sheep, goats, and cow and when they are able to accumulate money to rent land.

# Chapter Six

# 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

## 6.1 Introduction

This section presents the conclusion and recommendations. The first subsection of the chapter provides the conclusion and the second forwards relevant recommendations.

## 6.2 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate the diverse livelihood and survival strategies of rural migrant street children in Bahir Dar Town. It also attempted to see the cause of their migration.

Structuration theory and Sustainable livelihood framework approach were employed to explain and understand the research problem. Structuration theory was used to understand the research problem from different perspectives. Sructuration theory has its own basic elements essential to explain the study. Included are agency, structure, the duality of structure, power, institution, and time-space relation. Sustainable livelihood framework approach was used to appreciate diverse livelihood of street children and their survival strategies. It also looked at vulnerability of street children to trends and shocks and their coping mechanisms.

Qualitative and quantitative research methods of data collection techniques were applied. Qualitative method was used to get into the lived experience of children. On the other hand, quantitative method was employed to inquire demographic data which fills the data gathered through qualitative method. Interviews, focus group discussions, guided interview (used to extract demographic data) and observation were employed in data collection. The sample children were selected purposively from the entire migrant street children population. Purposive snowball sampling was used to find out the research subjects. The data collected through different data collection methods and data sources are triangulated and cross checked to keep up or maintain the validity and reliability of the information.

One of the objectives of this study is to see the origin of migrant street children and check if they negotiate with their families or not to make decision to migrate. Accordingly, children drifted from different parts in varying degrees into Bahir Dar. The majority of children migrated to the study area from rural localities in South Gonder and West Gojjam Administrative provinces as opposed to children from other areas. The two rural districts (Estie form South Gonder and Adet from West Gojjam) account 32 percent of the migrant children in this study. Very few children also come from other regions such as Tigray and Oromyia.

There is gender difference in the distances they covered to come into Bahir Dar. Generally, girls come from relatively near locations than boys. The children make decision to leave their rural localities by their own and 85 percent of them moved to the town alone. They are also independent child migrants. Their parents have no say on the decision to migrate. The children migrate to the town on their own desire to seek out work, to escape poor family relations or rural poverty without the knowledge of their parents or guardians.

Most of them come from families with large size in their rural localities. Most are from male headed households with both parents alive and living together. Despite the variations and complete negligence of very few of them, the migrant children generally maintain continual contact with their rural families while they are living in Bahir Dar. So, migration has not led them lose contact with their families or the rural folk.

There is no single factor that can be taken as the cause of rural-urban migration of children into Bahir Dar. Various factors can be liable to the migration of rural children including poverty, disagreement with their family, being orphaned, in search of education, and divorce of parents. Of these, poverty accounts 40 percent of the causes of migration of children followed by disagreement with their family that accounts 30 percent of the study sample. Moreover, 23 percent of the rural children migrated to Bahir Dar Town due to death of their parents. Finally, 5 percent of the children migrate in search of education. Although, these are the causes of child migration in the study area, more and more migration is taking place, aggravating and accelerating due to poverty that pushes children to leave their respective localities and involve in streetism. Discord with family is also another determining factor for migration of children. Rural children migrate

while they experience physical or labor abuse. They see migration as a means to gain autonomy and emancipation from family neglect or violence. Most of the children decided to choose Bahir Dar Town due to its proximity to their rural villages involving small transportation cost and the relative availability of work.

Street children engage in diverse livelihood activities in a day to day survival scenario. They practice different economic activities through which they can generate and secure their livelihood using the public space. Most of their activities take place where there are concentrations of people such as in the market places, in bars, at shopping centers, at car and taxi stops, and around hotels. Other places of operation are university campus and church yards. The portfolios of livelihood activities of street children are normally labeled in the informal economic sector. The economic activities in which children are involved include shoe- shining, carrying loads or goods, lottery vending, petty trade, daily labor, scrap collection, begging, prostitution, parking, washing, and serving as taxi or *Bajaj* assistants. Of course, they often do not have one and the same job or occupation. Children move from one occupation to another according to their peer influence, assets and experience. However, their occupational mobility towards the formal sector is very limited due to lack of education, skills, training, finance and capital.

The livelihood and survivals of street children require having different types of assets such as labor, skill, and social capital. The labor of migrant street children is the most decisive asset that enables them to earn income directly through wage employment or indirectly through the production of goods and services sold in the market. The occupations they involve in do not demand any special skills and considerable capital investment. This has left street activities to be open for migrant children. Street children stay at their occupations working for long hours. However, the income they earn does not compensate their long working hours. A large number of children earn below the poverty line and they consume most of their daily earnings to survive. However, the life of all street children is not only sheer survival as there are children who are investing on their human capital through education and save money for better future.

Street children adapt their own survival skills to cope up with vulnerabilities and meet their basic needs. They have various survival strategies in their struggle to fulfill their basic needs (food,

shelter and clothing). Their main priority among other things is securing daily food. So they invest their labor and skill. They have different survival skills and mechanisms to secure their daily food ranging from buying in the small restaurants, cafeteria and tea rooms to begging and searching for leftover.

Housing is another major problem that challenges different strata of the urban society in the country. The condition is not different in Bahir Dar town. Lack of shelter is a challenging task for migrant street children in their daily survival. They are vulnerable to the problem of shelter. They shelter themselves in rented house, floor and verandas of different kind. They opt to house themselves on the basis of their geographical similarity and occupation. There is mobility of children in their sleeping place as result of experience, income, peer influence, and weather conditions. They negotiate with owners, guards and barmaids to get shelter. Their shelter lacks proper sleeping place, toilet, light, water, and fresh air to keep them healthy. Therefore, street children are without appropriate housing conditions to get safety and protection. This situation is the worst for children sleeping on veranda. Street children are working and living in an environment that exposes them to health and social risks. They wear inappropriate clothes to weather conditions.

Social networks are very important to assist migrant children secure their livelihood by negotiating with friends/groups or other social actors. They interact among themselves through various informal social networks to deal with their life experience on the street. The social relations or networks are generally formed in terms of similarity in occupation and area of origin. Various kinds of informal social networks exist among street children to support themselves to fulfill their basic needs and goals. Social relations of street children are significant in many ways. Children share food, money, ideas, shelter and help each other when sick. They also maintain their security, avoid loneliness, guidance and care from one another. It also helps to develop resilient and negotiating power to adjust them against increased vulnerability. Moreover, social networks of children in the street strengthen the capability of group members to reduce vulnerability and be more beneficial to livelihood outcomes.

Street children developed several forms of social relations that are characterized by hierarchies. The existence of hierarchies indicates some form of power relations among street children. The hierarchies are formed on the basis of length of stay, gender and sleeping places (at verandas or house). The hierarchies of boys and girls, new comers and older one's and working children and of the street children exist. Gender difference is one that indicates the existence of power relation among them. Like their male counterparts, street girls form a set of social networks based on support, friendship and competition. They share money, shelter, food, and provide emotional and moral support among themselves. They also cooperate in defending themselves from street gangs, residents or other individuals. Street girls compete not only with other female children but also with boys, adults and non-street adults.

Street children also maintain social networks on the basis of length of stay in the town. This is to mean the power relations between recent and old migrants. The older migrants identified the recent migrant street children on the basis of occupation, shelter, clothing and movement. The older migrant street children provide various forms of social support based on mutual interaction and competition. As such, they provide information important for survival of recent migrants and socialize them to be member of already existed networks. The recent migrants also provide services to older ones in different respects.

In the long term process of making their livelihood street children develop social relations with various social actors, including neighbors, owners or keepers of shops, owners or maids of small cafeteria and restaurants, institutions (police, church, NGOs). Street children perform economic activities in an ideal place to ensure their survival. They operate their jobs around shops. Through time they establish social relation with shop owners or keepers. Shops (owners or keepers) give advice to street children on how to handle their job, put their equipments, save money and get loans. They also provide security to street children. On the hand street children buy working materials, serve as gate keepers, messengers and carry loads. The social support street children gain from church could not only be explained in terms of socio-economic values but also has spiritual or moral values. They get sense of strength and security through their faith. The police and guards provide street children security though the police sometimes fail to make their relation mutually interactive and supportive.

Street children are marginalized in some respects. It is not always easy for them to scavenge food from restaurants as some people, if not all, chase them away from shops and hotels or restaurants. They do not often possess identity cards or other forms of identification that would have helped them to get free services from public institutions. However, generally street children maintain good social relations with shopkeepers or owners, barmaids, residents, owners and waiters of small restaurants and cafes. This social relation is based on mutual interaction and support.

## 6.3 Recommendations

- To intervene, at a government level, in the economic activities of street children and organize them in the way they develop into formal businesses that sustain their livelihood.
- To organize community based activities between social workers, volunteers, government organizations and the public at large to facilitate and promote appropriate mechanisms that add to street children's effort to secure their basic survivals.
- To develop technical training centers that could assist street children to acquire basic skills so that they can adjust them to move into the formal sector.
- To create opportunities that can provide street children's access to proper shelter.
- To make education more attractive and relevant to their needs and encourage them to go to school.
- To also conduct studies on the effects of children's migration on their households as a whole so as to address their exposure to migration.
- To consider social networks of street children while designing future interventions in the affairs of street children.

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# Appendices

**1. Guided Interview**

I thank you for taking time to take this interview. I am a student studying for MA in Development Studies in Addis Ababa University and this interview is part of the processes of generating data fro my thesis work. To do this, I selected migrant street children living and working on the streets of Bahir Dar Town and this is the reason why I requested to do an interview with you. Thus the information I will get from you is purely for academic purposes and will not be used for other purposes. As we progress in the interview I shall be taking notes. I shall appreciate your comments on all issues I wish to know about in case there are areas on which you feel uncomfortable to comment, kindly feel free to indicate so and we shall proceed to other issues.

1) Age:

   a) 7-10

   b) 11-13

   c) 14-17

2) Religion:

   Muslim, Orthodox, others, specify_____

3) Ethnic

   a) Amhara

   b) Oromo

   c) Agaw

   d) Tigriean

   e) Others, specify_____

4) Where were you born:

   a) Kebele

   b) Woreda

   c) Zone

   d) Region

5) Where do your parents live now:

   a) Kebele

   b) Woreda

   c) Zone

   d) Region

6) How do your parents earn their livelihoods?

   a) farming

   b) daily labor

   c) petty trading

   d) crafts work

   e) Fishing

   f) Others, specify

7) Are your mother and father alive?

   a) Only father is alive

   b) Only mother is alive

   c) Both are alive

   d) Others, specify_____

8) If they are not alive, who supports your family?

   a) Grand parents

   b) Elder brother

   c)  Elder sister

   d) Relative

   e) Others, specify_____

9) What is the educational background of your parents?

   a)  Illiterate

   b)  can read and write

   c)  can read only

   d)  regular education

   e)  others, specify_____

10) What is the highest grade that your parents have completed?

    a) Primary education

    b) Secondary education

    c) Other, specify_____

11) Have you ever attend school at your rural village?

    a) Yes    b) No

12) If your answer to Q11 is yes, what type of education did you attend?

    a) Regular education

    b) church education,

    c) Korean education

    d) Others, specify_____

13) If your answer to question 11 is no, why you did not attend school at your rural village?

    a) Economic problems

    b) Lack of awareness of family

    c) Child labor

    d) lack of access to school

    e) others, specify_____

14) What grade have you completed?

    a) 1-4

    b) 4-8

    c) 8-10

    d) others, specify_____

15) Are you attending education in this town?

    a) Yes

    b) No

16) If your answer to Question number 15 is no, why?

    a) Financial problem

    b) lack of support

    c) lack of time

    d) others, specify_____

17) How many brothers and sisters do you have?

    a) Brothers___

    b) Sisters_____

18) How long do you live in the streets of Bhair Dar?

  a) 15 days to 6 months

  b) 1-2 years

  c) 2-4 years

  d) 5-7 years   e) 7-8 years

19) Did you know anyone in Bahir Dar before coming to the streets?

  a) Yes   b) No

20) If your answer to question number 19 is yes, what type of relation do you have?

    a) family member

    b) friend

    c) neighbor

    d) other, specify_____

21) Who often help you when you have faced problems in the streets?

  a) my friends

  b) police

  c) NGOs

  d) relative

  e) Others, specify_____

22) What is your source of livelihood on the street?

  a) carrying goods  c) street vending  d) washing or watching or parking

  b) shoe shining  f) prostitution  g) daily labor in construction or fieldwork  h) others, specify_____

23) How much do you earn per day from your economic activities?

    a) 3- 5 birr

    b) 6- 8 birr

    c) 9- 11

    d) 12- 15

    e) others, specify_____

24) How do you spend your income?

    a) to buy food

    b) to buy clothes

    c) to rent shelter

    d) to help families

    e) others, specify_____

25) Do you maintain contact with your families?

    a) yes b) No

26) If your answer to question no.25 is yes, how often do you do?

    a) Once in every 6 months

    b) Once in every 1 year

    c) Once in every 2 year

    d) Once in every 3 year

    e) Once in every 4 year  f) others, specify_____

27) Have you been sick? If your answer is yes, what type of disease?

    a) malaria

    b) typhoid

    c) diarrhea

    d) others, specify_____

28)  Where do you get treatment while you get sick?

    a) public clinic

    b) traditional  medicine

    c) buy medicine at shops     D) others, specify_____

29) Why did you choose Bahir Dar?

    a) information

    b) transportation cost

    c) presence of family

    d) availability of work

    e) others, specify_____

30) Why did you migrate?

    a) Poverty

    b) disagreement with my families

    c) death of parents

    d) in search of education

    e) Others, specify_____

31) Where do you usually sleep?

    a) at verandas

    b) rent room

    c) rent floor    d) others, specify_____

32) Where do you sleep at other times?

33) How many times do you eat?

    a) One times

    b) two times

    C) three times    d) others, specify_____

34) What do you usually eat?

    specify_____

35) Where do you usually or other times get your food?

    specify_____

## 2. In-depth Interviews

## a. Migration History

1) How did you deal with your parents to leave your home?

2) Why did you migrate?

3) When did you come to this town?

4) Who were you living with before you migrated into this town?

5) What was your cost to migrate in to this area?

6) Was there any one from your family, friend or neighbor migrated with you to this town?

7) Why did /do you choose to migrate into this town?

## b. Street Life

1) What made you move into the streets?

2) How did you join street life?

3) How old were you at that time?

4) Where do you usually sleep?

5) Where do you get your income?

6) Do you work on the streets?

7) How much Birr do you earn in a day?

8) How many hours do you usually work?

9) What did you do with the money you earn all together in usual days

10) What are the most difficult problems that you have to deal with in the urban and street life?

11) How do you usually deal with these problems?

12) How do you cope up with your daily worries?

13) How did or do you try to respond to adjust yourself to adopt the urban and street life?

## c. Social Relations

1) Did you have family contact?

2) How often do you visit your families?

3) Do you offer gifts to your family when you visit them?

4) With whom do you sleep?

5) Who do you see to help to find shelter or place to live or work?

6) Where do you get information

7) With whom do you spend your time?

8) How do you maintain your relations with other street children?

9) What kind of relation do you have with the urban community?

10) What kind of contact do you have with the organization working on street children?

11) Have you ever involved in sexual acts for means of gaining income to survive (for street girls)?

12) Have you ever been harassed by the police or others?

## 3. Interview guide for key informants-

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fro my thesis work. To do this, I selected migrant street children living and working on the streets of Bahir Dar Town and this is the reason why I requested to do an interview with you. Thus the information I will get from you is purely for academic purposes and will not be used for other purposes. As we progress in the interview I shall be taking notes. I shall appreciate your comments on all issues I wish to know about in case there are areas on which you feel uncomfortable to comment, kindly feel free to indicate so and we shall proceed to other issues.

- Where do migrant street children come from?

- How many children live in the streets?

 -What are the major problems of children?

 -What are the major causes of children that lead them on the streets?

- How serious is the problem of street children?

 -What is your relation with street children?

-What are the major problems of street children?

-How do people perceive street children?

- What kind of relation street children do have with other people?

- What are the sources of livelihood of street children?

- How do street children get their shelter, food and other basic necessities?

- What is the relation of your institution with them?


**4. Focus Group Discussions**

**-** What made you move into the streets?

-Why did you choose to migrate to this town?

- With whom did you migrate?

- How do you see street life?

- What are the possible job opportunities in the streets?

- What do you do and how much you earn daily?

-What do you do with the money you earn?

- How do you find food and shelter?

-How often do you visit your families?

-  How do you maintain social relations among each other?

- What is the significance of these social relations?

- What kind of relations do you have with other people in the town?

-What are the major problems of street life?

- How do you usually deal with the problems?

- Where do you get support in time of difficulties?

- Do you want to go back home or want to stay here?

-Finally, do you have any thing to say?

**5. Check lists for observation**

- Children's  area of operations
- Street children living and working places
- Children physical conditions, clothing and others
- Street children interaction among themselves, with other social actors the police, shop keepers or owners, barmaids or  cafeteria and restaurants
- Shelter, feeding places and where they wash their clothes
- How they compete for resources?