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An Exploratory Study on the School Related Challenges Faced by Street Children in Harare

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Abstract

The present study sought to explore the school related challenges faced by street children in Harare. Psychoethnography, a qualitative approach was employed in this study. A total of 22 participants took part in this study. Key informant interviews, focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, participant and non-participant observations were the data collection methods. The data were analysed using thematic content analysis. Data analysis revealed factors that cause disaffiliation of street children from schools such as: their migratory nature, low achievement in schools, substance abuse, pregnancy, very active sexuality and lack of birth certificates. The street children, therefore, appear to be estranged from social institutions particularly schools. Among other recommendations, the study suggested that the education system in Zimbabwe should equip street children with life and vocational skills that empower them to eke a living without affecting their access to formal education. Consequently, there should be reforms in the education system in Zimbabwe to make schools attractive and to produce employable and skilled graduates.

Introduction

The institution of street children is global, alarming and escalating (Casa Alianza [CA], 2000) to become an indelible mark in cityscapes in most countries like Zimbabwe (Muchini, 2001). This paper argues that the streets are harmful for the healthy development of children. Researchers like Muchini (2001), Ruparanganda (2008), Rurevo and Bourdillon (2003) have chorused that the street environment is risky for normal human development. This paper therefore seeks to determine the challenges faced by street children regarding schooling.

Background information

The population of street children punctuating the urban morphology

worldwide is almost impossible to know; nevertheless, the United Nations estimates the numbers to be around 150 million, and swelling daily (CA, 2000). In recent years, there has been mounting disquiet over the exponential explosion of the 'uncouth' street children population in Zimbabwe. By 2000, street children in Zimbabwe numbered 12 000, and almost 5 000 of whom were dwelling in Harare alone (United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], 2003). It is plausibly assumable that the current actual population of street children in Zimbabwe may have surpassed the 12 000 digit. With this in mind, it is indisputable that the street children phenomenon has reached epidemic levels both globally and locally.

Rationale

Researchers such as Ennew (1994, 2003), Muchini (2001), Ruparanganda (2008), and Rurevo and Bourdillon (2003); argue, for instance, that the street poses a risk to normal child development. Ennew (2003) argue that the contemporary world which claims to be child-friendly, should afford development opportunities to street children. It is inarguable that schooling is one factor that affords development opportunities for children particularly in Africa. Schooling is linked with positive outcomes like longevity, healthy lifestyles, stable career, higher income, better coping skills and strong social networks (Wedgwood, 2005). It is interesting to note that schooling itself can be seen as a factor that spurs street childhood. Once in the streets, schooling is unpalatable since it can interfere with their work. Muchini (2001) writes that children's work is generally assumed to impair their educational and intellectual development as work leaves them with little time and energy for school. It is imperative, therefore, to explore the psychological implications of street childhood. The current study aimed to explore the indicators, nature and effects of adolescent street children's self-image, in an effort to suggest possible recommendations that may assuage the plight of these children.

Literature review

The recent unprecedented rise in street children population in Zimbabwe is not without causes. It has been highlighted that the

phenomenon of street childhood develops in transactional relationship between individual functioning and the environment. In Zimbabwe factors that have been credited with the emergence of the street children institution include poverty, orphanhood, problems with schooling and lack of school fees, crumbling of the traditional extended family system, the HIV and AIDS scourge, unemployment and disciplinary problems in school (Muchini, 2001; Rugaranganda, 2008).

Aetiology of street childhood and education

It is interesting to note that schooling itself can be seen as a factor that spurs street childhood. Some factors that can lead to street childhood located in the education system in Zimbabwe and South Africa include: failure, ruthless disciplinary measures, feelings of meagreness associated with not having school books or uniforms, negative view towards schooling, negative peer influence and learning problems (Muchini, 2001). Hence, street childhood is a manifestation of the failure of the education system. Furthermore, in Zimbabwe, education has lost its valence as a guarantor of future employment, pushing many drop-outs into the street (Rurevo & Bourdillon, 2003). Other aetiological factors for the rise in street children population include sexual and physical abuse at home, step parenthood, the need to raise money for daily sustenance, and the lure of excitement in the streets (Muchini, 2001; Rugaranganda, 2008).

Educational attainment, or lack thereof, among street children

Research on street children in Zimbabwe has shown that street children have low levels of educational attainment (Mella, 2012; Muchini, 2001). Some street children have no schooling while only a few have gone beyond primary school. Muchini (2001) reports that 53.1% of street children have no schooling. Mella (2012) shows that 67% of the street children have dropped out of primary school and moved into the streets.

Family context for the street children and schooling

Research has revealed that household constitution and context affect learning. Orphanhood often exacerbates financial constraints for poorer households and increases the demands for child labour and drop

out (Muchini, 2001). Orphanhood is prevalent among street children hence it can have a telling effect on their education. Once on the streets most of the children stay with friends and peers (55%), with 23.2% claiming to be on their own (ZNCWC, 2004). Hence there is no adult monitoring and supervision on schooling. Indeed, Ennew (1994) observes that street children are emotionally immature and attention-seeking due to their failure to form emotional bonds during early childhood.

Schooling is linked to the financial status of the family or the child involved as it incurs upfront and hidden costs. Upfront costs of schooling include school fees, while hidden costs include uniforms and travel. Mella (2012) argue that street children are in the streets primarily due to the interaction of multiple underlying influences such as poverty and economic inequality that increase their social marginalization. ZNCWC (2004) reports that about 29% of street children got into the streets because of lack of money for school fees.

Child work and schooling among street children

It should be highlighted that street children principally in the streets to work for their sustenance. Schooling can interfere with their work. Muchini (2001) writes that children's work is generally assumed to impair their educational and intellectual development as work leaves them with little time and energy for school. However, their work may be an important component of their socialisation process as they gain the skills necessary for future employment.

Pregnancy

Pregnancy is a significant cause of dropout for teenage girls from school. Sex is both coercive and unprotected among street children resulting in many unwanted pregnancies (Makope, 2006). Ruparanganda (2008) also found that street children engage in unprotected sex, do not use birth control methods and abortion is rife. Furthermore, a report by ZNCWC (2004) shows that pregnancy and early mothering are rampant in the streets.

Low achievement

Street children seem to perform poorly in school. Tudorić-Ghemo (2005), for example, reports of language deficiencies and multiple neurological deficits among street children. This was mainly due to glue sniffing. Scholars suggest that street children, relative to their non-street peers, have nine times the likelihood of repeating a grade; four times the likelihood of dropping out of school; and three times the likelihood of being assigned in special education classes more than non-street children (National Coalition for the Homeless [NCH], 2009). Other researchers have also found that only a few learning street children attain proficiency in reading and mathematics as street children are twice more likely to be expelled, have high levels of suspensions, high dropout rates, are frequently incorrectly assigned in special education classes and have a low graduating rate of less than 25% (NCH, 2009).

Nature of street children's lives and lifestyles

Ruparanganda (2008) writes that street children are highly migratory between and within urban centres in Zimbabwe. Street children are exposed to schooling challenges because they are footloose, live in deserted buildings and makeshift shelters. These challenges also include securing space to do homework, have a physical address, enrolling in school, and meet school requirements like immunisation or obtaining the prerequisite birth certificates. Of the 413 children that responded in the ZNWCC research, 55% had no birth certificates (ZNCWC, 2004), yet birth certificates are important and necessary in the registration of school children.

Arrest and imprisonment

Street children are regarded as a nuisance and dangerous mini-criminals by members of the public and the police (Muchini, 2001). Indeed these children appear to commit a social transgression by becoming street children hence they are rounded up and arrested by police. Tudorić-Ghemo (2005) argues that in Columbia, 2190 street were murdered as part of social cleansing. Mella (2012) reports that 60% of street children were once imprisoned.

Theoretical framework

The current research situates the analysis of street childhood and education in the context of social estrangement theory. Research on street childhood has begun to focus on societal estrangement (Piliavin, Sosin, Westerfelt, & Matsueda, 1993). Piliavin and his colleagues conceive that sustained street childhood reflects greater estrangement from societal institutions. The scholars consequently developed a conceptual model that identified four sources of estrangement: (1) institutional/societal disaffiliation, (2) psychological dysfunction, (3) cultural identification with homelessness, and (4) human capital (Piliavin et al., 1993). For the current study, the author focuses on institutional or societal disaffiliation to understand street children's education or lack thereof.

Institutional disaffiliation has been defined as the weakening of ties to societal institutions. Among the street children, disaffiliation involves insecure employment, fragile relationships, and social isolation (Piliavin et al., 1993). Street children demonstrate social disaffiliation by poor school attendance, conflict with the law, and isolation from family.

Methodology

The present study, being qualitative and explorative, utilised the psychoethnographic approach. This study was conducted as part of a Master of Philosophy study by Samson Mhizha on adolescent street children in Harare. The study investigated adolescent's street children's self-image. The MPhil study focused on many things which include school-related experiences and challenges, and academic self-image among the street children in Harare. In psychoethnographic research, the researcher completes the study through observing, listening and asking questions. The approach was pioneered by Aptekar (1988) in a study on Columbian street children. Aptekar, a cross-cultural researcher with interests on street children in developing countries, measured emotional and intellectual functioning of street children using participant observations and psychological tests. Data collection

methods for this study included key informant interviews, focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, participant and non-participant observations.

A total of 22 respondents participated in the current study. Adolescent street children numbering 10 participated in focus group discussions. Five were female while the other five were male. The focus group discussion lasted an hour per session. Another six adolescent street children participated in in-depth interviews. Six key informant interviewees were interviewed in this study. The key informants were officials at Streets Ahead, the Drop-in Centre, the Department of Social Welfare, the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) and two former street children. Snowballing was used to recruit key informant interviewees while purposive sampling was used to recruit participants for focus group discussions, in-depth interview, and participant and non-participant observations. The street children participants were drawn from their hideouts, streets and the drop-in centre in Harare. Thematic content data analysis was used for data analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that thematic content analysis is the most appropriate method for psychological interpretation of data. Apart from the informed consent obtained from the gatekeepers, the researcher also sought informed consent from the individual street children and key informants who participated in the current study. Anonymity and confidentiality were spelt and respected during research. The participants were also debriefed on the nature and findings that emerged from the study.

Findings

The following findings emerged from the data.

Schooling challenges faced by street children

Stigma

It appeared that the street children did not want to go to school because of the ill-treatment and labelling they faced during their interactions with members of the public especially at schools. Sometimes the street children were enrolled at schools in Epworth and Chiredzi through the efforts of Streets Ahead which sourced their funding. At such schools,

however, the school authorities and fellow school children knew that they were street children and denigrated them. A 17-year old male street child who once learnt at a school in Chiredzi complained that street children were labelled by staff and other pupils as *mabvungweni* (street kids in *ChiShangani*). When this particular street child tried to join a school in Epworth, the school officials rejected his application because he was a 'street kid.' One street child aged 17 years lamented that: “*We are derided at for being street kids*”. One 15-year old female street child absconded from a foster home where she had enrolled for schooling after one of the administrators at the foster home accused her of being too sexually active. This street child reported that the administrator had said: “*You street kid, you are now hollow that you make a uh-uh-uh-uh sound, and the penis penetrates without any hindrance*”. This aspersion enraged her that she dropped out of school altogether.

Streetism

One issue that emerged from focus group discussions was the development of streetism tendencies in the streets. Participants agreed that streetism is an addictive state among street children as opposed to home life where they are under the 'strict' control of parents, guardians or school authorities. One 17-year old male street child claimed: “*We have freedom in the streets since nobody controls our life*”.

Another aspect related to streetism is the migratory nature of street children. Street children change bases and towns frequently. Most of the times street children change towns after committing a crime; they then flee to another place to avoid arrest. For example, one 15-year old female street child stole her sister's clothes; sold them and in fear, fled into the streets of Harare. In the streets of Harare she stole clothes of her fellow street children and departed for Bulawayo streets. Again, a 16-year old male street child stole a mobile phone from a Streets Ahead staff member, risking the arrest of other staff members (and the researcher) as suspects.

Some street children consider working as security guards as the only career open to them. Typical statements by male street children were: “*Where will I be employed? I can't speak in English so how will I*

interact with the employer?” Some street children chorused: “Have you ever seen a street child being having a respectable job?” A 17-year old male street child despairingly enquired: “What will I give my future children? What of my future spouse? Will I be given food everyday while I am idle? I am illiterate, and where will I be employed?”

Negative perceptions of schooling

It was interesting that some street children wanted better paying jobs but did not want going to school. Many street children dissuade those interested in sending them to school by asking: “*Are you sure to send me a street child to school when I fled home because I didn't want to go to school?*” Most of the street children said: “*I hate schooling that is the reason why I fled home*”. Some charitable organisations in Harare offered some of the street children opportunities to go to school. However, the children spurned these offers.

Streets Ahead provided some street children with informal lessons. A few attended these informal lessons but most street children preferred Streets Ahead skills training lessons in basket making, knitting, sewing and making shoes from tyres.

It appeared that some of the street children were unwilling to go to school because of the negative experiences and problems they had with schooling. The problems include lack of school fees, disciplinary problems, failure in school and repeating grades which seemed to shame them. Some of the street children cited disciplinary problems after having stolen other pupils' possessions like books. A key informant interviewee said: “*Most of these children are dull academically while some ran into problems at the schools where they learnt that they do not want to go back*”. One street child claimed that she was not good at mathematics and the teacher always beat her for failing the subject. Interestingly, when Streets Ahead secured her a schooling place at one of the foster homes, she fled complaining of ill-treatment.

The street children also appeared to hate schooling but sometimes made money lying that they were street children in need of money for

schooling. The researcher saw a 13-year old street child with a letter stamped by a deputy headmaster from a public school in Chitungwiza. The letter stated that he was an orphan staying with his grandmother who was unable to sponsor his education and was therefore appealing for money for stationery, levy, fees and uniforms. Apparently, this particular street child admitted that he did not attend school and was feigning to be a school child.

Some street children wanted to work in prominent posts and jobs but did not want to go to school. The most noteworthy examples were some street children who wanted to become doctors, pilots or 'Gono' (the current Reserve Bank Governor). One 12-year old male street child optimistically pronounced: "*Brother I want to become Gono. Have you ever seen him? Is he dark or light in complexion? Is he tall or short?*"

Blaming evil spirits

Data from the current study also indicated that the street children believe that they are haunted by evil spirits which even foil their learning efforts and prospects. One particular key informant believed that these evil spirits drive the children into the streets saying: "*Children stray in the street under the influence of the evil spirits*". The street children themselves concurred with this belief. One 16-year old male street child claimed: "*In the street there are certain evil spirits which influence you to foil any efforts tailored to help. Whoever wants to reunify with your family or get you back in school will stop because you will thwart them*". Sometimes the street children believe that they are bewitched by their relatives. One 17-year old street child blamed the work of evil spirits in his earlier behaviour in which he refused to go school. He reported that at one time he had two white donors interested in sending him to school, but he rejected the offers. In retrospect, the boy regretted that behaviour, and blamed the role of evil spirits.

Problems with birth certificates

One issue that emerged from the data is that most street children do not have birth certificates. Such street children could not be enrolled in schools because birth certificates are demanded upfront. Such street children saw no bright vocational future ahead of them since they had

no birth certificates. Some street children had their own children who also could not obtain birth certificates. Other street children left their birth certificates when they fled home and did not want to collect them. One 17-year old street mother wearily lamented: “*My life is destroyed since I do not have a birth certificate. My child's life is going to be destroyed too since he does not also have the birth certificate*”. Most street children had no access to birth certificates as they had no parents or guardians to help them obtain such essential birth registration papers.

Criminal tendencies and police arrests

Street children abused drugs and consequently this problem hinders any efforts to educate them. Street children use glue to offset hunger, stress and the usually extreme cold weather. It, moreover, diminishes senses of shame such that they can do any activity, otherwise, deemed shameful. Substances usually used by street children include: glue, tobacco, marijuana, *maragadu* (intoxicating medical pills), alcohol and illicit alcoholic stuff like ZED.

The street children also commit many crimes in the streets. The crimes include rape, sodomy, stealing and public fighting. One 17-year old male street child was nicknamed *Karuoko* (a small fishing hook) for thieving. Apparently, the boy thief stole from a police official. Consequently, many street children seem fearful of police as they have pending cases and dockets. In the focus group discussion, the street children were especially fearful of one police official they accused of wantonly rounding up and dropping them in distant places. Some street children claimed that they were rounded up in Harare and dropped in distant places like Mutoko in Mashonaland East Province and Mvuma in the Midlands Province.

Sexuality, illness and pregnancy

Street children are often assumed to be very sexually active. Some of the street children proudly described themselves as: “*People who can competitively engage in sex*”. For male street children, sexual intercourse is a symbol of status, virility and power. It is also a pastime for recreation and procreation. For example, some male street children engage in masturbation competitions to identify a champion, i.e., one

who can ejaculate faster and more frequently than his peers. Such a champion is given material awards like 10 plastic bottles by each losing competitor. Among female street children, sex appeared to be a survival strategy, an addiction, and as a way to cope with the stressful street life. Sex for these street children was unsafe and risky; and hence predisposed them to sexually transmitted infections. These street children engaged in intimate relationships with multiple sexual partners. The sex seemed to be unprotected as many children claimed that they preferred unprotected sex as the most pleasurable. The negative attitude towards using prophylactics was summarised by a 15-year-old street child who asked if people ever eat sadza while wearing gloves.

It was also realised that most street children were often ill which made it difficult for them to regularly attend school. One Cuban doctor came to Streets Ahead to treat the ill street children. The adolescent street children appeared prone to sexually transmitted diseases such as gonorrhoea, syphilis, genital warts and HIV and AIDS.

For street children, the occurrence of pregnancies, particularly unplanned teenage pregnancies, was too frequent and made it inappropriate to engage in schooling. It emerged that male street children would test their fertility by impregnating a female street child and desert them. Sometimes pregnant female street children sought to abort pregnancies risking their health with serious medical complications and illnesses. Some 'married' female street children admittedly bemoaned: "*We street children are Rastafarian pots which are shared frequently.*" Male street children impregnate and 'divorce' their 'spouses' regularly. What causes divorces is fear of responsibility once the spouse is pregnant. However, the former husband would not want the ex-wife to abort and would beat her if he discovers that the ex-wife has aborted the pregnancy.

Work and time

Most street children seem to have adapted to street work such that they cannot spare time for schooling. Day and night, street children eke a living in the streets by vending, stealing, transactional sex and begging.

Some of the street children would sleep during informal classes at Streets Ahead. These street children find themselves too busy at their work such that they have little time to spare for schooling. Some street children spend their nights at Mai Musodzi Hall, a municipal community hall in Mbare Township, where they are shown films, and offered overnight shelter especially during the rainy season.

Positive academic behaviours

There were some street children who work very hard to go back to school. These pestered charitable organisations to help them secure schooling places. An example is the case of a 17-year old male street child who struggled to get assistance from Streets Ahead and enrolled at a School in Epworth. Though now older than his classmates (he was 17-years old, yet in Form 1), he persevered and sat for his Grade 7 examinations in 2006. The boy attained 13 units. Two other male street children, both 17-years old, wrote their Grade 7 examinations and both attained 13 units. One 17-year old male street child had to skip grades at primary in order to catch up with age mates and still performed well. Inspired by such successes, some approached charitable organisations appealing for educational assistance. Interestingly, an 18-year old street child published a book about street life while in the street. This child had never attempted ordinary level education.

Some street children cherished prestigious jobs and pestered charitable organisations to organise schooling opportunities for them. One 14-year old girl confidently proclaimed: *"I want to become a president so that I will govern the country, and board the aeroplane going out of the country at will, and am intending to go to school to reach this goal"*. Other street children realised that they have to return home and start schooling. Such street children successfully reunified with their families. However, there are cases of other street children who fail to adapt to life at home and these revert to life in the streets. One 18-year old male street child went back home but almost hit his step-mother with a brick after a misunderstanding. His step-mother had argued that he had not successfully reformed to warrant his return home.

It is telling to realise that some motivated street children toiled for their education and consequently some passed O-level while others passed A-level. Some of the street children secured jobs in the army and others became social workers. A number of them returned to thank their benefactors at Streets Ahead. During the course of this research, one street child passed her A-levels and secured a place in the Faculty of Social Studies at the University of Zimbabwe.

Some of the street children were very fluent in English. Some could be observed reading novels while waiting to clean cars or securing parking bays for customers at car parks. One street child proudly claimed that he was the only child in his family to complete Form 4. Some of those seemingly intelligent street children wanted to learn and use Streets Ahead computers. One 18-year old street child had a book full of poems he had personally written. Another street child, who always came first in her class, was said to be so intelligent that Streets Ahead officials claimed she successfully taught a child with disability to speak and do menial jobs at home within a week.

Discussion

Generally, the study revealed school related challenges that face street children in Harare. The challenges include stigma, as the street children are ill-treated and labelled if they enrol in schools. The ill-treatment and labelling come from both school authorities and fellow school children. Another challenge, streetism, involves addictive street life such as constant migrating, use of psychoactive substances and committing crimes. Streetism makes schooling appalling. Another challenge involves the general detest for the schooling institution. Many street children echoed that they fled home because of schooling. Another challenge is that street children believe that they are not in total control of their lives as their street life was reportedly caused by evil spirits. Indeed, the street children believe that evil spirits haunt street children most of the times.

Other challenges for street children include lack of birth certificates, constant conflict and brushes with the law, rounding up by the police, sexually active lifestyles that do not commensurate with schooling,

poor health and pregnancy. Failure to balance work and schooling is another challenge that makes schooling very difficult as street children are used to earning money in the streets. Nonetheless, there are some street children who circumvent such challenges and enrol in school. The study revealed that there are a number of street children who have passed Grade 7, O-level and even A-level examinations. There are some street children who, after attaining their high school education while in the streets, enrolled at the University of Zimbabwe. Some have passed their O-levels and secured jobs in various sectors of the economy.

The findings from the current study have shown that street childhood is beset with a number of school related challenges such that only a few street children are enrolled in school. These findings concur with those by Muchini (2001) and Mella (2012). Nonetheless, available local literature had not linked the negative perceptions with schooling related challenges. For example, with regards to streetism, Muchini (2001) and Rugaranganda (2008) had already written that street children abuse psychoactive drugs, are footloose and commit crimes but these two authors had not tied such lifestyles to failure to proceed in school. Perhaps another significant finding is lack of birth certificates. Muchini (2001) and the ZNCWC (2004) echo that street children generally lack birth certificates. The lack of birth certificates may be due to orphanhood or leaving birth certificates after fleeing home.

Makope (2006), Muchini (2001) and Rugaranganda (2008) have shown that street children generally face poor health while the female street children are frequently impregnated in the streets. Nonetheless, such an observation does not clearly relate poor health and pregnancy as challenges to schooling as envisaged in this study. The current study has also shown that street children face problems balancing work and schooling. This observation was made by Muchini (2001) who clearly stated that street children have little time left to schooling because of their street work. Available research had not clearly focused on street children who excel at their school examinations. This study seems to be ground-breaking as it has shown that some street children have proceeded well in their schooling and in the process inspiring others to enrol in schools.

The findings from the current study seem to tally with the theory by Piliavin and his colleagues that street childhood reflects greater estrangement from societal institutions. These scholars noted that street children face estrangement from society particularly from societal institutions like schools. Some school authorities as well as fellow street children are not inclined to accepting street children in their institutions. This study has shown that fewer street children attend schools which most of them hate anyway. Indeed, some street children profess that they are in the streets because they fled school at home. More still, the fact that most street children lack birth certificates also illustrates the social estrangement. Indeed, the disaffiliation from school seems to be also related to the estrangement from family and lack of access to health facilities. Thus, findings from the current study seem to support the social estrangement theory.

Recommendations

The following recommendations emanate from observations made after examining the views of participants during the fieldwork of this study:

- ❖ There should be reform in the schooling system in Zimbabwe.
- ❖ The schools should offer relevant education that guarantees future employment opportunities.
- ❖ Harsh enforcement of rules which scare children away from schooling should be reversed while children from a poor background must be made to learn free of charge.
- ❖ School authorities should be conscientised, and trained to detect, rehabilitate and counsel risky children who may drop out of school or drift into the streets.
- ❖ Life and vocational skills should be offered in the streets to the street children.
- ❖ Schooling should meet individual experiences and preferences, as some street children may require education at formal schools, while others may need flexible informal learning in the streets while others may need vocational training depending on personal needs, dreams and experiences.
- ❖ Schools should stop stigmatising and labelling street children.

- ❖ While informal and employment oriented education should be offered; skills to be taught should include manual printing, agriculture, candle-making, brickwork, sewing, carpentry, craftwork, knitting, computers literacy and programming, welding, sporting activities and car mechanics to enhance children's economic self-sustenance.
- ❖ A reformed education system should proffer information on sexuality, reproductive health, criminality, child rights and responsibilities, gender-based violence, child exploitation, sexually transmitted infections and psychopharmacology.
- ❖ Education and vocational skills training should be made compulsory for the street children and should be provided by child-friendly teachers.
- ❖ Street children should also be imparted with knowledge on decision making, responsible behaviour, creative and critical thinking, interpersonal relations, self awareness and coping with stress.

Conclusion

The current study has shown that street children face many challenges regarding schooling. These street children seem to dislike schooling because they had negative schooling experiences prior to street childhood. These street children in turn blame evil spirits for their experiences and dislike of school. Indeed, street childhood involve dropping out of school. Other challenges faced by street children include frequent and unwanted pregnancies, sexually active lives, substance abuse, illness, stigmatisation, conflict between street work and schooling, their migratory nature, lack of birth certificates and constant conflict with the law. Nonetheless, these street children dream of working at prestigious jobs though most end up as security guards and vendors. Some street children, however, are clearly gifted and work very hard at school passing their school examinations. There are cases of street children who end up at universities while one street child has published a book.

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Challenges to Quality Education

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Abstract

The survey and discussion focus on the challenges to quality education in Uganda. It is over 136 years since the British colonial era in Uganda by the Christian Missionary Society, Anglican and Roman Catholic churches. A plethora of implicit and explicit challenges to the education system and its product have not fully played its role in transforming the country. The inceptors of education hoped it would work in Northern, Eastern, Western and Central Uganda. Data collected using questionnaires and interviews in a sectional survey design involved 1000 respondents in each region; key stakeholders (DEOS), inspectors of schools, (MoES) officials, and parents. The findings revealed that although student and pupil numbers both in primary and secondary education have increased, many challenges. The challenges are economic and philosophical. It is recommended that there is need to address these in terms of pedagogical and school structures.

Introduction

There might be no single government policy of great importance to the education system in SSA) there are two types of education: Formal and Informal education, though not



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