

CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Background

Nepal is a landlocked country. Gifted with the invaluable natural resources it is situated in the lap of Himalayas. Geographically, it lies in 26°22' to 30°27' North latitude and 84°5' to 88°12' East longitude and its elevation ranges from 305 meters to 8,848 meters with the total area 1, 47,181 sq. km, with the length 885 km and the width ranging from 144km to 240km.

The Human Development Index (HDI) produced by UNDP and computed for Nepal for the year 2004 is 0.527 (HDI lies between 0 to 1). Nepal ranks 138 and falls in the low human development category. (Source: HDR 2006 UNDP).

Many visible and invisible factors are associated with the homelessness of children. Some of the main factors are: family breakdown, poverty, natural and manmade disasters, physical and sexual abuse, exploitation by adults, urbanization and overcrowding etc. which in fact force them to spend their life on to street.

Because of the high poverty level, chances of being street child is high since the parental support to their children is difficult to fulfill their demand and thus it drives them to live independent. It is therefore that the researcher has chosen thesis on "A Socio-economic case study of street children in Nepal" (A case study of New Road and Ratna Park area). This is because the New Road and Ratna Park is the gateway of Kathmandu where almost all districts' children can be seen. This is one of the rational sites in the capital city where heterogeneous composition of ethnic background people and different age group children can be observed, Because of the limited time and resources the researcher only sticks with the area, New Road and Ratna Park in the study.

Street children are the common problem that has been occurring throughout the world for a long time. In the context of Nepal, the problem of street children has emerged as a major social problem. The change in the political system also did not bring much difference in terms of addressing this serious problem as it was expected.

Many children come from structurally disadvantaged homes where poor living conditions result in many difficulties. Parent's loss through death or abandonment and/or family conflict or shortage of housing may force children onto the streets. In many cases the move to street life is an adaptive response to the stress and severe oppression experienced by families living in a society of conflict. Thus, the move to the streets often represents a desire to take control of one's life and displace old values and conditions with new ones (Hickson and Gaydon, 1989).

According to the swart the street child phenomenon is directly linked to rapid industrialization and urbanization with the concomitant breakdown of extended family ties: "Harsh or neglectful treatment of children by their families frequently derives from parental depression, anger, anxiety and frustration at life circumstances" (Swart 1998, p.34).

Children are an integral part of the society and they deserve the childhood, as it is their in born human right. The UN convention on the rights of the child has ensured that every child in the world has right to survival, development, protection and participation (ILO, 1997).

However, an overwhelming majority of children in the world are deprived and denied of their fundamental rights. Nepal is one of the examples of nation plagued by the problems of street children. As mentioned above, rigid socio-cultural norms, illiteracy, economic backwardness and ignorance of basic human rights are the major determinants of street children.

Being a street child does not only exploit the childhood of a child, but it also comes as a major obstacle in their development process.

According to children Act and labor Act of Nepal (2048) the groups of under age of 16 years old are known as children. According to Central Bureau of statistic (1999) there is over 12 million children population of which child labor at risk is about 2.6 million. According to the CWIN, there are 5000 street children and out of them around 2000 on the street and 3000 off the street, among which 800-900 street children are in Kathmandu valley. The same report also mentioned that there are about 32,000 children in India and 5,000 children within Nepal and below 16 years are involved in trafficking and child prostitution. Though there is no investigation and

study made by the government to verify the above mentioned street children increasing trend, it is envisioned that the number has been increase because of high poverty level and unstable political turmoil.

Government of Nepal has signed the CRC on children right and this indicates that the government has promulgated some rules and laws but specifically not addressed the problems and issues of street child. We talked about Juvenile Justice in Nepal for Children right. We regard children as the "Foundation stone of the nation" but generally we do not treat children well in practice. Children have been entitled as the "future stars" and the "rising sun" in most of the societies since the time immemorial; survival and protection. It is therefore utmost important to develop a concrete future plan so that the street children problem can be minimized. The quotation mentioned below is felt meaningful by the researcher and it shows how important a concrete plan is to achieve significant achievement. The quotation should be a motto of the concerned governmental organization to control over street children problem.

“If you think of one year ahead

Plant a seed.

If you think of ten years ahead

Plant a tree.

If you think of hundred years ahead

Educate children”.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Because of the low GNP, high population growth rate and limited resources for entertainment, crude birth rate are becoming significantly high as compared with other countries in the world forcing people of Nepal to survive in difficult situation. Because of the religious and cultural trends, early marriage makes the situation even worse. In the other hand, poor trend of sending girls to school and limited job opportunities; it is extremely difficult in order for them to raise their children with the basic necessities, such as food and education. To cope with the ever-increasing financial pressures, more and more children from the low income generating family are being pushed onto the street. It is also quite common for children from middle

class and rich families if they do not meet demand of their child. CWIN a NGO in 1992 had carried out a research study on street children and since then there has not been any research by any organization. It is therefore not known exactly how many street children are on the street and put in shelter homes in Nepal and particularly in the capital city.

Street child problem is universal and they are the reflection of a growing social tragedy in the world. The world child population static published by different reports in 2000 shows that there are 250 million-child labor, 150 million street children, 1 million children in prostitution 35 million refugee women and children who are victimized by wars and 10 million women and child victims of domestic violence in the world. These numbers are rising daily. These young people are more appropriately known as community children, as they are the offspring of our communal world. Ranging in age from three to eighteen, about 40% of those are homeless. The other 60% works on the streets to support their families. They are unable to attend school and are considered to live in “especially difficult circumstances”. Increasingly, these children are the defenseless victims of brutal violence, sexual exploitation, abject neglect, drug addiction, and human rights violations.

The statistics of children population of Nepal (Statistic of Bureau, 2000) showed that there is over 12 million children population below 18 years. However it is unknown that what fraction of such population are street child. It is therefore important to know about street child status, reason of being street children and their involvement depending on the age group and ethnicity background.

Those who have run away from home may experience unpleasant and traumatic home environment. They experience family problems they are unable to solve i.e. alcoholism, child abuse and ill treatment by stepparents, unemployment and poverty. Their tolerance level has been far exceeded, leading to the drastic decision to leave their family. Those who have run away from home, who wanted to study/work but were not allowed and came to experience the exciting experiences of city life, glamorized by magazines and movies.

Root causes of the street child problem are family causes, social causes, economic causes, political causes and other causes. Kamaiyas were freed from the unjust

bondage of slavery. It was indeed a great achievement for Nepal in the field of human rights and social justice.

However, the state didn't seem to be well prepared to address the deep rooted problems of poverty and unemployment of the freed kamaiyas. They were freed but they had no place to go, and no place to turn to for their survival. This might have been an important factor to add the numbers of street children in our country. Similarly, the conflict that Nepal was mired into for twelve years claimed the lives of so many people. So many people were made homeless, and so many of them were displaced. It might have been another important reason for the numbers of street children to rise in Nepal. A child being in a formative stage can be molded in any shape in terms of behaviors. It is the period to provide them with proper care; food, affection, love, education and shelter that will help them develop their physical mental and social development. As a result, they will be able to contribute to the national development endeavor. Today's children are the leaders and the nation builders of tomorrow. Therefore, the child of today must be regarded and treated as the future of a society. The prevailing view is that child should be protected from the hazards of the adult world. The present condition of Nepali children is far from satisfactory. If we do not spend little time to think on street child there would be devastating problems to be faced by the government in the future.

Lack of street children study in the past as well as in the present makes it difficult to estimate the number of children in the Kathmandu valley. However, it is thought that the number is increasing because of high pull factor but it is not possible to quantify the increasing rate. Every year hundreds of children leave their home and migrate to urban areas for a better future. However due to lack of contacts and relatives in the cities they ultimately find themselves homeless, helpless and forced to be on street. Having no other alternative, they then choose to spend free life onto street and do what they feel themselves appropriate.

The government and non-government organizations have taken some initiatives to combat the street child problem in Nepal. However, the problem of street child has not yet stopped. The problem is gaining momentum continuously in another acute form. Hence, keeping in mind the misery of the street child, the proposal study aims to open a line of sociological inquiry into the world of street child.

The Street child situation in Nepal strike the researcher to conduct a research study in this sector and recommend at least something to the concerned government agencies and other NGOs and INGOs who have chosen this field as their service area. The proposed study will focus on the

Following research questions:

- What are the influencing factors of children being onto street and what ethnic and cultural backgrounds do street children represent?
- What are the major problems faced by them? What are their activities for survival? How do they spend their life?
- Which age groups mostly influence the street children?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The problem of street children is universal and the problems associated with these children are various in economical, social, and geographical ways. Street children are not good or bad by birth, but they are made so by the society. They are made bad by the circumstances of their lives and their exposure to negative influences. So, this study simply tries to point out the basic problems and help the concerned agencies and organizations to address the problem in the future.

Following are set as the objectives of the research study:

- To identify the problem of street children.
- To find out the root causes for being street children.
- To assess the legal provisions and steps taken by government for the Welfare of street children.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study gives information about street children and their rights. It provides the knowledge and necessary information concerning with the street children in Nepal. It helps to get an idea regarding current situation of the street children, which will ultimately help in the development of the children's welfare. This study also disseminates information to the people and other organizations about the working of CWIN that can be helpful to inspire others.

But above all this, the study aids in creating awareness among people in terms of eliminating all forms of abuse, exploitation and injustice against children.

Hence, the proposed research topic would be useful for further research or formulating policies for the welfare of street children in particular and poverty alleviation in general.

CHAPTER-II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents the review of related literature as well as definition of street child both in the national and international contexts. Some of the facts, opinions, principles and study reports directly related to the street child are also reviewed. Relevant literatures from internet have been reviewed and referred.

2.1 General Overview

Street child is a common problem and has been occurring throughout the world for a long time since even before written history. Developed countries have managed to protect, however it is not fully controlled. One of the serious problems, which influence becoming street child, is the poverty level. Moreover it is also connected with the unstable political situation, closure of border between the countries, gender and race etc. Sometimes children want to be free from their parents and their wish to stand independently drives them to be onto street.

Children's right to participate in the social and creative works and in the decision, which affect their lives directly, are still an ideal thing in most of the society. We talk a lot about children right but these days street children are proactive and take part into various activities.

Children were used to be neglected and their issues were undermined in most of our societies. Whenever children's issues had been taken into consideration, they were guided by the principles of charity and welfare. This had never become a political agenda even for discussion till the Convention Right of the Child (UN-CRC) was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989. Since then the right of the child have been emerged as a powerful political agenda in national, regional and international level.

2.2 Specific Review

In this section the researcher has tried to review root causes of being street children, people's attitude towards them, street children's behavior etc. in different countries of the world including Nepal. The government's plans and programs and role of other organizations and institutions are discussed in the following sections.

2.2.1 Street Child Status in the World

Street children throughout the world are subjected to physical abuse by police or have been even murdered outright, as governments treat them as a blight to be eradicated rather than as children to be nurtured and protected. They are frequently detained by police simply because they are homeless, or criminally charged with vague offences such as loitering, vagrancy, or petty theft. They are tortured or beaten by police and often held for long periods in poor conditions. Girls are sometimes sexually abused, coerced into sexual acts, or raped by police. Street children also make up a large proportion of the children who enter criminal justice systems and are committed finally to correctional institutions (prisons) that are euphemistically called schools, often without due process. Few advocates speak up for these children and it is also observed that family members of the street children or concerned individuals are not willing and are unable to intervene on their behalf.

The term street children refer to children for whom the street more than their family has become their real home. It includes children who might not necessarily be homeless or without families, but who live in situations where there is no protection, supervision, or direction from responsible adults.

While street children receive national and international public attention, that attention has been focused largely on the social, economic and health problems of the children - poverty, lack of education, AIDS, prostitution, and substance abuse. With the exception of the massive killings of street children in Brazil and Colombia, often by police, which Human Rights Watch reported in 1994, very little attention has been paid to the constant police violence and abuse from which many children suffer. This often-neglected side of street children's lives has been a focus of Human Rights Watch's research and action.

The public view of street children in many countries is overwhelmingly negative. The public has often supported efforts to get these children off the street, even though they may result in police round ups, or even murder. There is an alarming tendency by some law enforcement personnel and civilians, business proprietors and their private security firms, to view street children as almost sub-human.

In several countries such as Brazil, Bulgaria and Sudan, the racial, ethnic, or religious identification of street children plays a significant role in their treatment. The disturbing notion of "social-cleansing" is applied to street children even when they are not distinguished as members of a particular racial, ethnic, or religious group. Branded as "anti-social," or demonstrating "anti-social behavior," street children are viewed with suspicion and fear by many who would simply like to see street children disappear.

In Bulgaria, Guatemala, India and Kenya Human Rights Watch has reported that police violence against street children is pervasive, and impunity is the norm. The failure of law enforcement bodies to promptly and effectively investigate and prosecute cases of abuse against street children allows the violence to continue. Establishing police accountability is further hampered by the fact that street children often have no recourse but to complain directly to police about police abuses. The threat of police reprisals against them serves as a serious deterrent to any child coming forward to testify or make a complaint against an officer. In Kenya, Human Rights Watch has worked with NGOs and street workers to encourage the establishment of a network for documenting and reporting police abuses against street children, and to improve children's treatment by police. Yet even in Guatemala, where the organization Casa Alana has been particularly active in this regard and has filed approximately 300 criminal complaints on behalf of street children, only a handful have resulted in prosecutions. Clearly, even where there are advocates willing and able to assist street children in seeking justice, police accountability and an end to the abuses will not be achieved without the commitment of governments.

(source: <http://www.infonepal.com>)

2.2.2 Children in UK

Street child problem is a universal problem all over the world. Despite of being rich country in the world, UK is facing a sever situation and has been trying to resolve the street children problem. Government of UK has established Children Charity throughout the country to record children about their problems.

According to the Children Charity record, they were saying that they are physically or sexually abused. The number is significantly high and which is 1/5 1h of the phone

call received at children's charity helpline desk. This indicates that they were harassed by the people. (source: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi.uk/45980.stm>)

2.2.3 Romanian Street Children

In Romania the street children problem was most serious when the regime of President Nicolas Ceausescu was collapsed. Because of lack of food and poor living conditions in Bucharest, the capital city of Romania, many children were struggling to get food and massive numbers of children came out on the street. Their principal station place was railway station. During wintertime, they managed to sleep on top of hot tap to protect them from cold. They went to market areas scavenging for food and stealing from passers-by. This was the normal life of street children during cold winter in Romania.

Some of the girls are involved in child prostitutes. This is the most terrible situation when they do not have anything to eat and it seems an easy way to survive. Street children are also taking glue sniffing from plastic bags-a substance they call Aurolac, which they get from meal shoe Polish. They also start to take cigarette just for temporary relief from their harsh existence. These are some of the behavior of the Romanian street children. The root cause of the problem is mainly the political turmoil and unstable political regime.

(source: <http://news.bbc.uk/1/hi/world/from-ourpcorrespob/43486.sym>)

2.2.4 Brazil

In developmental terms, Brazil is defined as an emerging economy: it is at the upper end of income category. The scale of the Brazilian economy, the country's abundance of the middle natural resources and land, its diversified manufacturing structure and its high degree of industrialization all point to successful development. Yet these factors also obscure the pronounced disparities that divide the country,

Because of the huge gap between rich and poor the gap between modern industrialization and colonial-feudal agricultural and ownership structures are more extreme in Brazil than in almost any other country. It is as if the people of one and the same nation were living in two different worlds. According to the UN Development Program, nearly half of Brazil's population lives in absolute poverty. With a

population of 168 million (mid-1999) Brazil is among countries that have the highest absolute number of people living in poverty. 43.5% of Brazil's population ekes out a living on less than US\$ 2 per day. The situation of these people is not much different from the circumstances in which the poorest of the poor live in other parts of the world. Thus, over one million children under five are undernourished. Health care, sanitary facilities and food resources are inadequate for most of the population, while education is the privilege of a select few.

Extreme population density and crowded living conditions in the slums, combined with the struggle to survive, generally lead not only to social disintegration but also to violence within the family and to broken families. This makes the situation even more difficult for children and young people, and at least partly accounts for their increasing presence on the streets. The growing number of children who work on the streets, or even live there permanently, is one of the most pressing development problems worldwide.

In conclusion Brazilian street children are due to high level of poverty and which infect is being created by high contrast between rich and poor. This leads a serious family problem, which drives children being onto street.

(source:<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/from-ourcorresponent/43486.stm>)

2.2.5 Pretoria, South Africa

The street child problem in South Africa is quite severing. There is a high contrast between black and white children. Ross illustrates in her study (1991, page 70) that the vast majority of an estimated 9,000 street children in South Africa are black. There are virtually no white street children in South Africa, but there are 10,000 white children in 160 states- register red and subsidized children's homes. The street children phenomenon is merely the outcome of Political system of racial segregation that has been in place since 1948. According to the Johan Le Roux, 1996, the average age of street child population is 13-14 years. There are only a few girl street children according to Johan. Richter's (Le Roux, 1993) profile on South African street children shows that about a third of the children return home within a short period of time. Another one third stays on the streets for periods of 6 to 18 months, while the remaining third remain on the streets for more than two years. Many street children do not have a clear concept of time. They often do not know how old they are or how

long they have been on the streets. They can talk only in terms of specific events, like how many Christmases they have eaten on the streets.

The street children number in the urban area in comparison to the rural areas is high due to high pull factor of the urban areas. According to the study made by the different researchers in different dates, the following are the reasons why the Pretoria of the South Africa has tremendous numbers of street child.

- Socio-economic factors such as abuse of alcohol and drugs, financial problems and poverty, family violence and family break up, poor family relationship, parental unemployment and resulting stress, physical and or sexual abuse of children, parents' absence from home, collapse of family structures, collapse of extended family, and emergence of vulnerable nuclear families in urban areas
- Harsh and neglectful treatment of their families frequently derived from parental depression, anger, anxiety and frustration at life circumstances,
- High Push-pull factors,
- Structurally disadvantaged homes from where poor living conditions result in many difficulties,
- Desire to take control of one's life and displace old values and conditions with new ones,
- Rapid industrialization and urbanization with the concomitant breakdown of extended family ties,
- Migrant labor and racial segregation as well as unrest and violence in black residential areas in South Africa.

2.2.6 India

India is one of the largest countries in the world both in terms of the country's size and Population density. There is also a high gap between rich and poor. The poor economic conditions and violence in the family leads children being onto street.

According to the program launched by Ministry of Welfare, India in different areas in 1993 found the following information in regards to the street children. The abstract is taken from the Indian Street children website.

AGE GROUP

The average age of street children as found in the study is presented in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1 Age wise population of street children

S. N.	Age Group	Percentage
1.	6-10 Years	33%
2.	11-15 Years	40%
3.	16 Years and Above	27%

(Source: <http://www.hrw.org>, published date 1990)

The average age group of Indian street child is about 13 years.

WORK CONDITION

Most street children find themselves some work, even though they may not be steady and lose jobs regularly. Many think of rag picking as a "job". The finding of the study is presented in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2 Work condition of street children in India, 1989

S. N.	Age Group	Percentage
1.	Working children are paid inadequately	39.3
2.	Being forced to overwork	34%

(Source: <http://www.hrw.org>, published date 1990)

Many children are lured into bonded work or "work-camps" that they are unable to escape from, due to unscrupulous and cruel proprietors or middlemen.

HEALTH CONDITION

The health condition of street children is generally poor. Many suffer from chronic diseases like TB, leprosy, typhoid, malaria, and jaundice and liver/kidney disorders. Venereal disease is rampant among older ones (13 + Yrs.). Scabies, gangrene, broken limbs and epilepsy are common. HIV & AIDS cases are now widely seen. Most street children are exposed to dirt, smoke and other environmental hazards. They are constantly exposed to intense sun, rain and cold,

Though there are supposed to be "free" Government / Municipal Hospitals in all cities, street children do not have easy access to them due the need to pay bribes to enter, or the indifferent or hostile treatment meted out to them by the staff. Bangalore, Vijayawada and Hyderabad report extreme conditions in this regard.

DESIRE

The study in Madras shows that many street children would like to live in a secure place. The vast majority of them have a survival instinct and the tenacity that helps them survive the day to day trails of street life.

Table 2.3 shows the desire of street child in madras

S. No.	Desire of Street Child	Percentage
1	Like to live in a secure place	45.6%
2	Eager to change their present life	71%
3	Ambition to do something meaningful in their future	63%

Source: Indian Street Child Website, 1989

Street children are found totally ignored by the relevant authorities. They are constantly arrested, locked up, tortured and abused in all ways because there is none to take responsibility for them.

- They live in fear of arrest and long detainment.
- They have no faith in the police or the judicial system.
- They disrespect the legal authorities because they have rarely experienced any kindness or understanding from anyone at that level.

2.2.7 Nepal

Country's Reflection

Population is rapidly growing and shall be one of the densely populated areas in the world within a decade or so. Literacy rate is only 48.6% (Source: HDI Report2006), which is significantly low as compared with other parts of the world. Per capita GDP is about 252 US\$ (source: HDI Report 2006), which is merely sufficient for the parents to feed and for schooling of their children. Population is increasing in geometric progression while income is increasing in arithmetic progression. It is

therefore utmost important to develop both aspects in a balancing way so that the street child problem in the future could be reduced significantly.

Because of the insufficiency of food production and poor quality of drinking water facilities, health problems of people are significantly increasing. In the other hand one doctor is available for 874 peoples Most of the doctors are based only in the urban areas and only few numbers of Compounded Health Assistants are available in only some places of the remote rural areas. One can estimate how vulnerable the health situation in Nepal is. It would be a difficult time to be faced by the Nepalese people in the days ahead if not planned in a planed way.

Table 2.4 shows the economic indicator. Better the economic indicator lower the number of street child. No doubt the lower economic indicator affect living standard of a family. If a family does not have sufficient money to support their family, they will force to carry on the following activities:

Abuse of alcohol and drugs; financial problems and poverty; family violence and family break-up; parental unemployment and resulting stress; physical and/or sexual abuse of children; parents' absence from home as a result of personal or financial reasons; collapse of family structure;

Table 2.4 Economic Indicator of Nepal

Item	2001	2002	2003	2004*	2005*
GDP growth ¹	4.6	-0.4	2.6	4.0	5.0
Gross Domestic investment	42.1	25.6	26.9	25.5	25.0
Merchandise export growth	-	-20.3	-14.9	10.0	12.0
Merchandise import growth	-	-15.3	8.1	10.0	12.0
Current account balance/GDP	4.5	4.2	1.8	1.0	0.5

Source: Asian Development Outlook, 2004-page no.87

Estimated

Above table shows that import is significantly high as compared with export, which implies that there is lack of industrial development and less production. Around 1965 we were the rank Vt of the Jute supplier in the world but now we have to import from other countries. Similarly we were one of the highest rice exporters to the other countries. Now we have to import from the other countries. Rice forms a major % of expenditure in poor household. Earlier rice could be produced for subsistence. However, now poor people need to spend money. This reduces their purchasing power for buying other essential item. This indicates that the poverty level of Nepal is significantly high.

Definition of Child

There is no universal definition of child. In many countries a child is defined in terms of age, limit, which differs with various activities. United Nations Children's Fund Declares, "age limits are a formal reflection of society's judgment about the evolution of children's, capacities and responsibilities (UNICEF 1997)."

The Children Act 1992 defines "Child" means every human being below the age of 16 years But the Labor Act 1992 and Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS 1995) define the age limit of child at 14 years whereas the Nepal Citizenship Act 1963 considers a person below 16 years of age as minor. Similarly the Civil Code (Muluki Ain) 1963 consider the legal age of marriage for boys and girls at 18 years with parents' consent and 18 years for boys and girls with no consent of parents.

However, the researcher has set the children's age between 6-16 years as child. The rational for selection of children of this age group was to enable the researcher to interview them independently.

State of Child Right

Child right violations are predominantly incurring in the forms of economic, social, physical, emotional and sexual abuse. The statistics, cases recorded and analysis as shown in Table 2.5 shows how the traditionally ingrained unfair social systems such as child labor exploitation, racial and caste discrimination, gender and social

discrimination and sexual abuse have infected our society. Despite people with conscience and children themselves raising voices against such social anomalies, the government has failed to safeguard children's rights and their best interests.

Table 2.5 Nature of case and incidents

S. No.	Nature of Cases/incidents	Numbers
1	Violence against children	145
2	Child labor exploitation	71
3	Child Sexual abuse	73
4	Corporal punishment in schools	188
5	Abandoned children	23
6	Neglected children	82
7	Children without families	16
8	Infant killing	28
9	HIV infection	41
10	Children affected by natural calamities	107 (36 deaths)
11	Death from communicable diseases	121
12	Accident	284 (215 deaths)
13	Serious illness of street children	52
14	Abandoned and maltreatment of physically and mentally challenged children	21
15	Children migrated from rural areas	458
16	Inappropriate care of children in care centers	29
17	Children directly affected by the armed conflict	18 (11 deaths)
18	Trafficking in children	42
19	Child suicides	29
20	Cases published for children's for adoption	177
21	Child marriage	25
22	Children in conflict with laws	42
23	Missing children	521
24	Found children	228
	Total cases of Recorded	2866

Source: CWIN Nepal, 2005

It should be noted that these incidents or cases are just a fraction of incidents of violations of children's rights in Nepal. Majority of incidents of child rights violations

still goes unreported due to inadequate mechanism, lack of access to such mechanism and awareness among people. Many other cases are also covered under the influence and pressure from various forces.

There is a continuous conscience and growing voice against violence and the strong voice in favor of peace. The children are zone of peace campaign has in fact, appealed all conscious and peace loving people.

This campaign should not be only limited in the city centre but has to spread all over the country including remote villages. But sadly the peace workers are still not allowed to operate in their full potential.

It is true that after Nepal ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the child rights horizon has widened in Nepal.

However, Nepal has again failed to meet the deadlines of submitting its initial and periodic reports on the children's rights to the UN CRC committee. Though government of Nepal has committed to resolve Right of the Child but questions come who is doing what for the benefit of these children.

HMG/N has committed itself to series of national and international conventions and commitments such as protection from child labor exploitation, commercial exploitation and trafficking, bonded labor, elimination of polio, drastic decreases in the infant -mortality rate, ensure education to all children, establishment of juvenile court and stop child soldiers.

In New Road and Ratna Park, there is Child Protect Centers and Services (CPCS) with a motto of "a raise of hope for child workers," which has been established to provide shelter for street children. The CS has 15+years-average ages street children. No one less than 8 years of age has been sheltered in the CPCS. At present there are over 100 children taking shelter. The CPCS is funded by locally and internationally.

2.3 Empirical Orientation

In fact there are no empirical formulas established to count or to crunch the numbers why this happens or why this is not happening. It is therefore purely a theoretical approach, which is verified by survey of 50 respondents.

Here the researcher tries to find information and data from the sample that what the driving forces to become street child were. It is purposive type of study and thus tries to summaries reasons of being street child and their composition.

2.4 Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

The high level of poverty is believed the most influencing driving factors for children being onto street. Social causes, family causes and economic causes and economic causes are the outcome of the poverty and are the leading causes that in-forced child being onto street. Cultural background might be the other influencing parameter creating confrontation and violence in the family.

There is no any theoretical framework which influence being child onto street. However, it is purely qualitative analysis and therefore no quantitative analysis is possible. Because of the unlimited variables associated with the topic, the researcher has no control in the study. It is therefore that the researcher has set the boundary of the study area according to the set research questionnaires.

The researcher envisioned that the leading problem of being street child is due to the family problems especially due to the poverty. Lack of sufficiency to generate more income and bad habit of taking alcohol could be the prime leading factors creating violence in the family.

The researcher believes that New Road and Ratna Park is the most appropriate area to acquire more realistic information and data and thus has been chosen as the study area. It is the area where we can find heterogeneous composition of street child population with different ethnic background, which thus felt the study, would be more rational.

Street child is a kind of social problem and which need to be addressed to resolve in long term basis. This highlights the importance of the topic and thus it is believed that

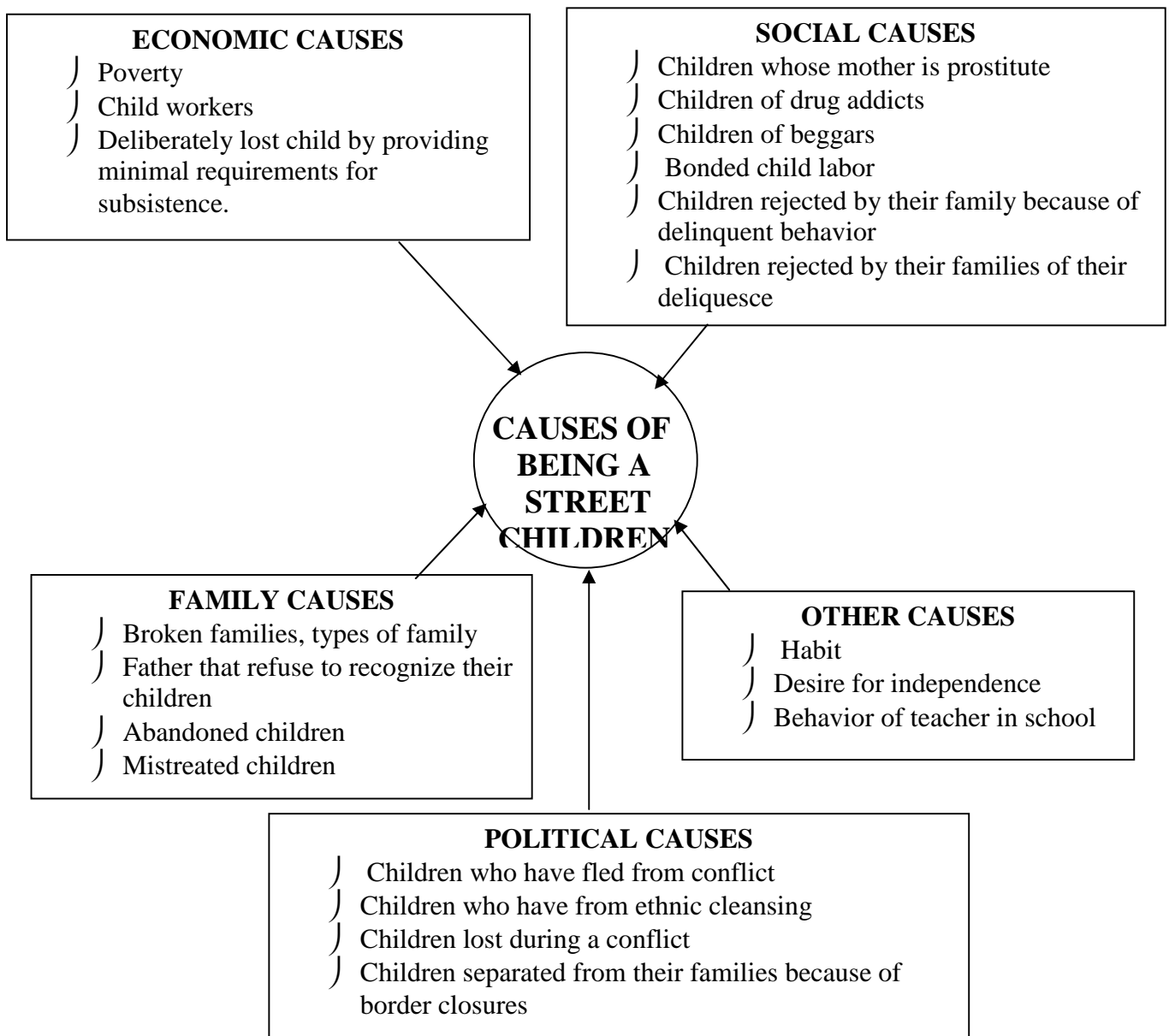
the conclusions drawn from the study to some extent will help to make people aware about the right of children and the planner to make plans and programs.

2.5 Causes of Being Street Children

There are several reasons that influenced children being on to street. The most influencing parameter is due to the high level of poverty and affection with chairs. However, we cannot put aside the cultural background and colonial-feudal agricultural and ownership structures.

Generally speaking, the root cause of being street child could be as shown in the Figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1: Root cause of child being onto street



In the chart mentioned above, there is some duplication in the points in heading with other. However, it is felt possible in duplication because of the causes. Historical study of the causes as mentioned in figure 2.1 are briefly described below illustrating how the children are influenced/driven to be on street.

2.5.1 Social Causes

Social cause is one of the leading parameter that influence child being onto street. Reasons of being on to street from the social causes are briefly discussed hereunder.

- Children whose mother is prostitute

Many prostitutes 'children, even though they are generally well taken care of, run away when they discover what their mother does for a living. This is a tragedy with significant psychological consequences.

Sometimes a mother spoils her child with presents or money in order to be "forgiven" by them, but this just creates additional problems.

- Children of drug addicts

When parents are drug addicts, life can be unbearable for their children who may decide to go away. Unfortunately, drugs have been demystified for the child, who is at great risk of becoming an addict too, and will be very difficult to get treated. This is more serious problem in middle class and higher class family. Such children are quite young of age above 13 years or so. They look terrible in nature and thus it was difficult to ask them so many questions.

- Children of Beggars

Children whose parents are beggars are in danger of becoming like their parents. This prospect may seem so grim that the child may prefer to run away. They normally do not speak while begging. It is quite common in beggar's family. Their parents ask them to beg and at the end of the day they have to give their parents what they have earned. It is quite common for disabled child.

- Women trafficking

All acts involve in the recruitment and/or transportation of a person within and across national borders for work or services by means of violence or threats of violence, abuse of authority or dominant position, debt bondage, deception or other forms of coercion. They are forced to involve in activities such as farming, child camel, jockeys, carpet factories, forced beggary, domestic service, criminal activities, forced marriage, sex market, illegal adoption etc. This is one form of the source of street child since the children born from such parent are not socially accepted in our culture. Therefore, the children are forced to leave their home.

- Bonded child labor

Bonded labor takes place when a family receives an advance payment, which perhaps significantly low, to hand a child-boy or girl-over to an employer. In most cases the child cannot work off the debt, nor can the family raise enough money to buy the child back. The workplace is often structured so that "expenses" and/or "interest" are deducted from a child's earnings in such amounts that it is almost impossible for a child to repay the debt. In some cases, the labor is from generations, that is, a child's grandfather or great grandfather would provide the employer with a new worker-often with no pay at all.

They are asked just to accomplish what they have asked to be performed. It is a kind of jail since they are innocent. It is therefore that have changed their mentality to leave the place and join with other street child onto street.

Bonded labor, normally debt bondage or peonage is outlawed by the 1956 UN supplementary convention on the abolition of slavery, the slave trade, and institution and practices similar to Slavery.

- Children rejected by their family because of delinquent behavior

In this case the child has shamed the family publicly and the solution has been to throw the child out of the family home for several years.

Yet possible future imprisonment is ALWAYS catastrophic for children, especially if the child is placed in a cell with adults.

The offence may be theft, drug addiction, or child prostitution. Whenever there is a case of child prostitution, it is always disastrous for the child. On the other hand, it's necessary to expose the guilty parties and bring them to justice. The children felt guilty and thus prefer to stay alone and ultimately came onto street to spend rest of his/her life.

It often happens that the parents are put in prison, and nobody bothers about their children, who are left to their own device. As a result, the street is often only place left for these children.

- Children rejected by their families because of their delinquency

In these cases, the child is a source of public shame for the family in one way or another. One solution can be to separate him/her from his family for a few years. On the other hand, imprisonment, especially if put with adult prisoners, is ALWAYS catastrophic.

- The shame caused could include:
 - Theft
 - Drug addiction
 - A child who is ashamed to return home after being in prison
 - A child prostitute known in the neighborhood.

It's a matter of conscience: to publicly denounce child prostitute is always catastrophic for the child concerned; on the other hand, one should denounce and judge the perpetrators of the crime.

- Handicapped children forced to beg

Handicapped children are often used as beggars. This is a profitable activity but it is also humiliating. Certain children prefer to run away and end up in the street in the hope of finding another way to earn money. Some children were also sold in the market as property. There are few such children on the street.

- Child beggars or guides for the blind

In third world countries, begging is a profession, as is being a guide for the blind. Children who earn money in this way run away to keep their earnings. Some children

are forced to beg by their adoptive families, who keep all the taking. This is a modern form of slavery or procuring.

- Child slaves

Higher-class family normally prefers to keep child servant with them. They normally do not allow going out when they are at home. The frustrated child from such behavior would like to come out if an opportunity found. Child slavery is quite common in many African countries.

- Children who have escaped from a Koranic school

In many Moslem countries in Africa, children are entrusted to a mar about to study the Koran for a number of years. They leave their families at a very young age and often do not know where they originally came from.

Normally everything is fine, but in certain cases the system has become corrupt. The mar about no longer teaches, instead sends the children out to beg or work for him. It is a true case of temporary slavery. If the child returns empty-handed, he is severely beaten.

When confronted with such treatment, a child may want to escape but may not know where to go or where his family is, he or she begins wandering.

2.5.2 Family causes

This is also one of the influencing factors to drive children being onto street. Some of the major causes are mentioned below:

- Broken families,
- Type of families
- Fathers that refuse to recognize their children,
- Abandoned children,
- Orphan,
- Gifted children in a poor, sick family,
- Children who need to be reconciled with their family after a family
- crisis,
- Mistreated children

BROKEN FAMILIES

This is basically because of the two reasons which are discussed below.

- **A child may have been rejected by a stepfather or stepmother**

This is a very frequent problem. For majority of the street children as various reports highlight, the root cause of the problem is broken families.

- **Both parents have disappeared**

It is quite frequent in other part of the world. Sometimes we wonder whether the child ever had parents. The most appalling stories are possible. A 13-year-old child in Somalia who had never seen his parents happened to obtain the telephone number of his father who is a great singer in a foreign country. He called him and said: "Hello, are you my father? If people are not going to take care of their children, they shouldn't have them". And then he hung up.

TYPES OF FAMILIES

Children are innovative and creative. They want to do what they feel themselves appropriate. Bigger the family size less fulfillment of their child requirement, however this is always not true. Income generation highly influences whether to stay in joint family or separate out. Whatsoever the type of families, insufficiency to fulfill demand of their child leads the children to be on to street.

FATHERS THAT REFUSE TO RECOGNISE THEIR CHILDREN

In countries where marital fidelity is not exemplary or where there are frequent alcohol-ridden orgies, there often exist situations where a father cannot be sure of his paternity. This situation is particularly painful for the child, because he or she must endure both the handicap of not having a father, and the belief that his or her mother is not respectable.

ABANDONED CHILDREN

There are many cases of abandoned children and the reasons for these vary. This is quite common in unmarried boys and girls who gave birth and later on left them onto street when they are about 3-4 years of age.

ORPHAN

If a child is being raised by a grandmother, the child will be orphaned again when she dies. But there are other reasons a child may be an orphan:

- **Orphans of war**

The other example could be Rwandan children in Goma, Liberians in Conakry or children who survived the Senegalese-Mauretania massacres in April 1989.

- **Orphans as a result of AIDS**

These are the children born from HIV/AIDS suffering people. In fact they are not accepted in the society and are forced to be a street child. This is most terrible in African countries and some part of the south Asian countries as well.

GIFTED CHILDREN IN A POOR, SICK FAMILY

This case is more frequent than one might think. A clever child in such a family may be tempted to take their chance alone. This type of child is more likely to leave than his grandparents. This is quite common in poor families.

CHILDREN WHO NEED TO BE RECONCILED WITH THEIR FAMILY AFTER A FAMILY CRISIS

A tragedy may have occurred for which the child feels in some way responsible.

MISTREATED CHILDREN

- **Beaten children**

In some countries beating a child is considered almost normal. As a consequence, the children are so terrified that they may run away, even very far away, and never return.

- **Children who are punished too severely by well-meaning parents**

Sometime such situation has to be faced for not understanding the psychology of the child. This is the situation from South Africa, the mother said: "When my son was 7, he went out every night. I tried everything: I burnt him with a red-hot iron, I broke his arm, but he always ran away. I don't know why".

- **Children who have been thrown out of the house after misbehaving**

One child that we took in was thrown out of home because he accidentally poked out one of his younger brother's eyes. His father threw him out permanently and never forgave him.

- **Victims of rape or incest**

When a child has been a victim of sexual abuse, their psychological reactions to this abuse remain for years. Especially this sort of cases can be noticed at the age group of 13 years and above. During survey only one case was noted. The child who raped her sister once was asked by his family to leave home permanently.

- **Children of mental-illness**

This is a quite common phenomenon among mentally ill children to leave their home while nobody is in house to take care of them. It is difficult to determine whether mentally-ill children are street children or not. They are the children who escape from their home and enjoy their life in the street.

2.5.3 Economic Causes

The reasons of leaving their parenthood are discussed below.

FAMINE

- **A rural child discovers that he is one too many mouths to feed.**

Poverty level in rural area is quite high where production is only sufficient for three months of a year; they normally struggle to find food. This may be differed from place to place. The example given below is the case from African continent.

In periods of drought or famine, many children who realize that they are just one more mouth to feed jump into a truck going to any direction. These children, even the very young, may travel great distances. The day the opportunity arises for one of these children to travel to Europe, they will do so; some of them know many countries.

➤ **A child lives in extreme poverty in a slum**

This is quite common in urban areas. In Kathmandu Valley we can see much family living around temples, riverbank with small hut etc. It is extremely difficult to count the exact numbers in short duration and limited resources.

The extreme poverty of slums around African capitals with the resulting malnutrition or hunger of the residents leads to children leaving their families. Such children move around less than rural children but are more inclined to delinquency.

CHILD WORKERS

Even if working voluntarily, children who work too far from home gradually stop going home and no longer need to. A child who is forced to work is usually well treated. In human or humanities treatment is tolerated only for so long and then the child generally escapes.

CHILDREN THAT ARE DELIBERATELY "LOST" BY PARENTS INCAPABLE OF PROVIDING MINIMAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBSISTENCE

The majority of children claim to have been "lost" during a visit to urban area. Such parents are from rural area who visits the Kathmandu during festival time. It is hard to say whether they lost their children deliberately or unknowingly.

2.5.4 Political causes

This is the most violent situation that forces children being in the street and some of the causes felt important are discussed below.

CHILDREN WHO HAVE FLED FROM WAR SITUATIONS

This is common when the country is facing a terrible war situation. This is very horrible situation in African countries. Liberians in Conakry, Targuis in Mali or

Niger, Rwandans in Goma, refugee children in Sudan or Somalia are some of the examples that forces children to leave their home and being onto street. It was also found that Ethiopian children ran as far away as to Guinea.

CHILDREN WHO HAVE ESCAPED FROM "ETHNIC CLEANSING"

This is also a common phenomenon where there is struggle in religious matter. The list is all too lengthy in this case too: repatriated children from Senegal, children chased from Mauritania, Hutus and Tutsis from Burundi and Rwanda, and so on.

CHILDREN LOST DURING A WAR OR MASSACRE

Psychologically, the case is different between a child who has fled and one who has got lost. Lost children don't even necessarily know who they are: for example a child took refuge for years with people who had massacred his parents.

CHILDREN SEPARATED FROM THEIR FAMILIES BECAUSE OF BORDER CLOSURES

The situation is somewhat different in African countries. This is what happened in Mauritania, which had closed borders for years. Entire families were taken by surprise and separated. Similar situation developed when East and West Germany built Berlin Wall. We saw many Korean people meeting their family after years when government allowed meeting their family.

2.5.5 Other causes

Besides above-mentioned four causes there are some other reasons the children are forced to be onto street. Some of the major influencing forces that children move onto street are discussed below.

HABIT

After spending years living on the streets, a street child is sometimes happier there than at home. We have to remember that these children are easily influenced. It is quite common to get reply from street children when they are told they are not allowed what they wish to do.

DESIRE FOR INDEPENDENCE

Sometimes we're confronted with adventurous children who have come from distant cities or even foreign countries and are pursuing their dream of traveling. One of them had learned the names of all the states and governors of the United States in the hope that this information would be useful when he got there, which he claimed would be soon.

BEHAVIOUR OF TEACHER IN SCHOOL

For many children around the world, violence is a regular part of the school experience. In some countries, school officials routinely use corporal punishment to maintain classroom discipline and to punish children for poor academic performance. In other countries, authorities fail to intervene to protect minority children from harassment and attacks by other students. The failure of school officials to protect children from violence in school denies them their right to be free from all forms of physical or mental violence and the full enjoyment of their right to education.

CHAPTER-III

RESEARCH METHODS

This Chapter deals with the approaches, research design, nature of data, sampling procedures and data collection methods applied during the study. In order to achieve the objective of the study the following methodological approach has been followed.

3.1 Research Design

The researcher in this study has selected the research topic on street children at New Road and Ratna Park of the Kathmandu Valley. The study tries to cover the driven forces of child being street child. Why are they come to urban area? To cover all this aspects in short period of time and limited resources, the researcher has chosen "descriptive cum exploratory study" since the researcher has no control over variables.

3.2 Rational of Site Selection

Street children are found in almost all urban areas of the country. The trend of rapid urbanization because of industrialization is inviting rural people to the urban areas to find opportunities. It is not that all people are getting equal opportunities. Those who are unable to find opportunities may leave their child onto street and then they will start begging. Katmandu Valley has the highest pull factor for all kinds of people. Street child is one of them who come to the Kathmandu Valley to enjoy their life.

The researcher has chosen New Road and Ratna Park of the Kathmandu Valley (see Figure 3.1 and 3.2) as a research study area. Normally New Road and Ratna Park is considered as the gateway of the Kathmandu Valley where we can see people from all districts of different ethnic groups. It is one of the rapidly developing areas in the Kathmandu Valley where one can have easy access of long and short distance transportation facility. Flow of passengers is significantly high and incoming and outgoing from and to the Kathmandu Valley is tremendous. The pull factor of the Kathmandu Valley is comparatively very high and therefore more numbers of people are attracted to the valley to find more opportunities.

In the New Road and Ratna Park area, several types of peoples and their behavior can be observed while standing couple of minutes alongside the road. Which in fact attract the researcher to carry on research study giving special attention to cover street child.

However, there is practical reason too. The researcher is an inhabitant of Kathmandu from the last several years. The researcher is quite familiar with the local conditions, which will make it easy for the researcher to acquire relevant data and information both from local and street child. Hence this was an appropriate idea for the selection of study area near one's own home, which in fact saves energy, and resources to conduct the study.

3.3 Universe and Sampling Procedures

As the street child is mobile, the exact population of the street children of the study area is unknown. Due to the unknown universe or the unknown total number of street children in New Road and Ratna Park, the study area, the researcher has applied non-probability and accidental sampling technique based on to achieve purpose as set three in the objectives. The researcher took 50 samples from the study area. Emphasis has given to cover different age group, ethnic composition, their involvement area, daily life style, etc.

3.4 Nature and Source of Data

Different types of quantitative and qualitative data has been collected and analyzed. Both primary and secondary data were used in the study.

The primary data has been collected from the field by administering semi-structured close and open-ended questionnaires for interview. Direct observation was also conducted while acquiring data.

The secondary data has been collected from available materials such as books, journals, project reports, internet, reports and published articles.

The researcher also referred data from other countries of the world as a case study. Definitions of street child cause of being street child and approaches of government's plans and programs to minimize such problems where felt relevant are added as reference.

3.5 Data Collection Method

3.5.1 Interview

Mixed type interview method was applied to collect primary information from the street child. The questionnaires have been prepared on the basis of the study objectives. To acquire more relevant information the researcher has put on the spot questions to make the set questions more clear. The set of questions for interview was semi-structured, close and open-ended questionnaires. Typical set of questions used in the interview process is included in Appendix A.

3.5.2 Observation

Beside interview, partial observation was also carried out parallel for their behavior analysis, age group classification with whom they are extending their friendship, fooding and clothing that they are using.

3.5.3 Internet and website

The researcher has extensively used relevant website and Internet to acquire secondary data and information. Case study from different countries has been abstracted from internet and website to make study more rational. Definition of street child, root cause of street child, race and gender, age and sex, activities and their involvement area are taken and referred where felt important.

3.6 Data analysis

The data collected through various tools and techniques has been analyzed in the subsequent chapters using both descriptive and statistical method of analysis. The data processing has been done by appropriate coding interpreted to make the meanings and implication of the study clear. The main aim of the analysis was to establish relationship between root cause of street child, their behavior, age group and ethnic composition.

3.7 Limitation

The limitations of the research study are as follows:

- Since this study was confined only within New Road and Ratna Park of the Kathmandu Valley, the result obtained from the study cannot be generalized for all the other urban areas.
- The study was done over a short period of time and therefore has limitations in terms of time that was spent with each respondent interviewed.
- This study includes only those children who are under 16 years of age.

In spite of all these limitations, it is hoped that with all the effort and dedication that has been put forth the study would still be a significant and useful one.

CHAPTER-IV
FINDING OF THE STUDY

This chapter focuses on the survey conducted on 50 street child respondents at New Road and Ratna Park of the Kathmandu Valley. This studies mainly deals with the causes of street children.

4.1 Age Group

Among the 50 street children who were selected for this study were between 6 to 13+ years. Table 4.1 below shows the age group distribution of respondents. Figure 4.1 shows the pictorial representation of age wise population composition of street children.

Table 4.1 Age wise population composition of child

S. No	Age group	Number of respondents	
		Total numbers	Percentage
1	6-7	3	6%
2	7-8	4	8%
3	8-9	7	14%
4	9-11	11	22%
5	11-13	17	34%
6	13+	8	16%
Total		50	100%

Source: Field survey 2009

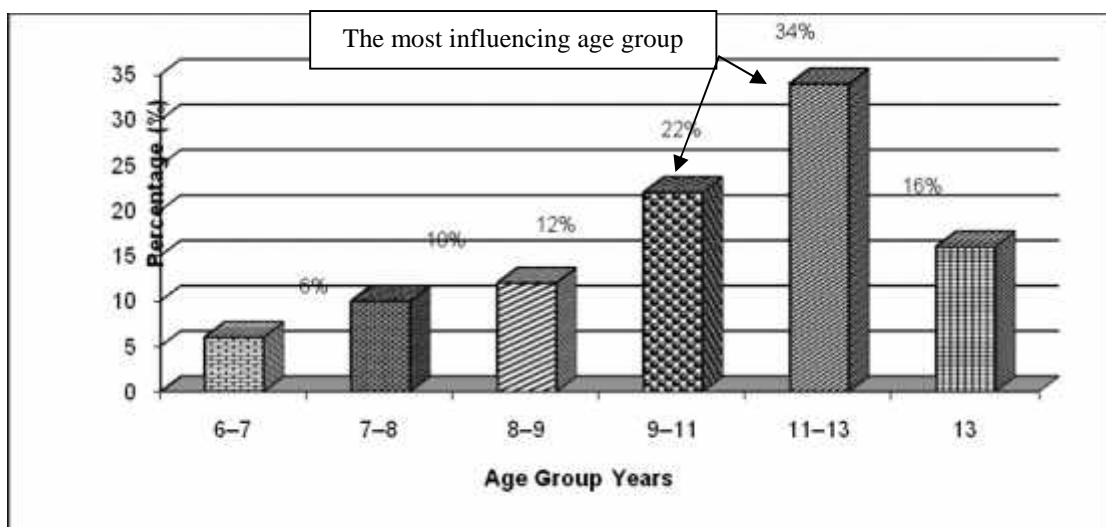
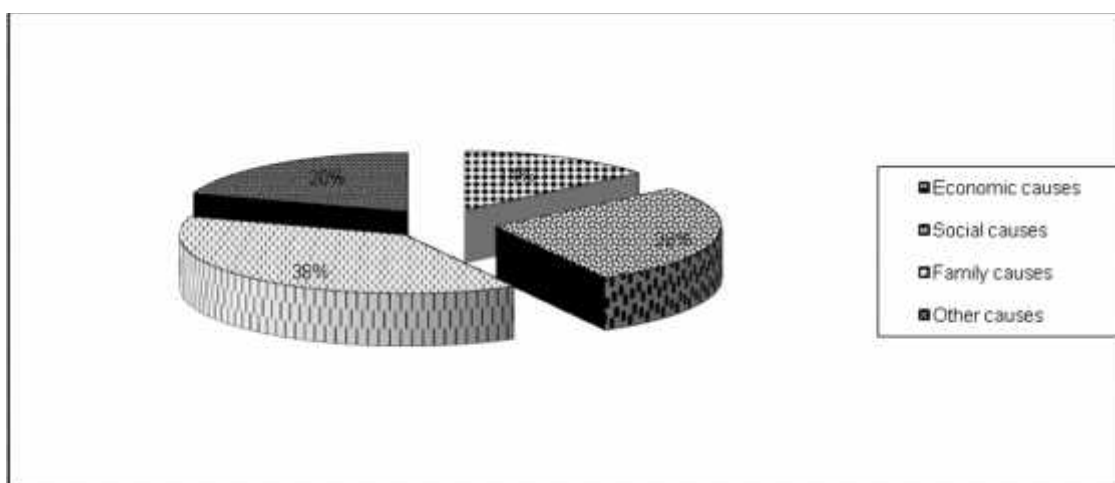


Figure 4.1 Pictorial diagram of age wise group distribution of child

Out of the 50 respondents majority were found with an age group of 11-13 (34%) followed by 9-11 years (22%) and 13+ years (16%). This statement supports the finding of the present study since children as 6-7 years. From these data one could draw the inference that the average age of street child is 13 years.

4.2 Cause of Being a Street Child

Open-ended single question was asked to all respondents. The question was “Why you become street children?” The response from all respondents were collected and then grouped. The researcher categorically divides into groups the root causes and driven forces as obtained is presented in Figure 4.2.



Source: Field survey 2009

Figure 4.2 Pictorial representation of reason of being children onto street

The details of findings and observation as mentioned in the above figure are described further in the subsequent subsections.

4.2.1 Social Causes

This is one of the most influencing reasons of children being onto street. The photograph in Figure 4.3 below shows a girl who was born from a HIV/AIDS affected parents and now she is on the street because of delinquency behavior of the community.

Reasons of being onto the street due to the social causes as observed in the study are tabulated in Table 4.2 below. The pictorial presentation of the data/information is presented in figure 4.4

Table 4.2 Street child due to social problems

S. No.	Social causes	Interviewed numbers	
		Numbers	Percentage
1	Children whose mother is a prostitute	3	21.4%
2	Children of drug addicts	1	7.1%
3	Children of beggars	3	21.4%
4	Bonded child labor	4	28.6%
5	Children rejected by their family because of delinquent behavior	3	21.5%
Total		14	100%

Source: Field survey 2009

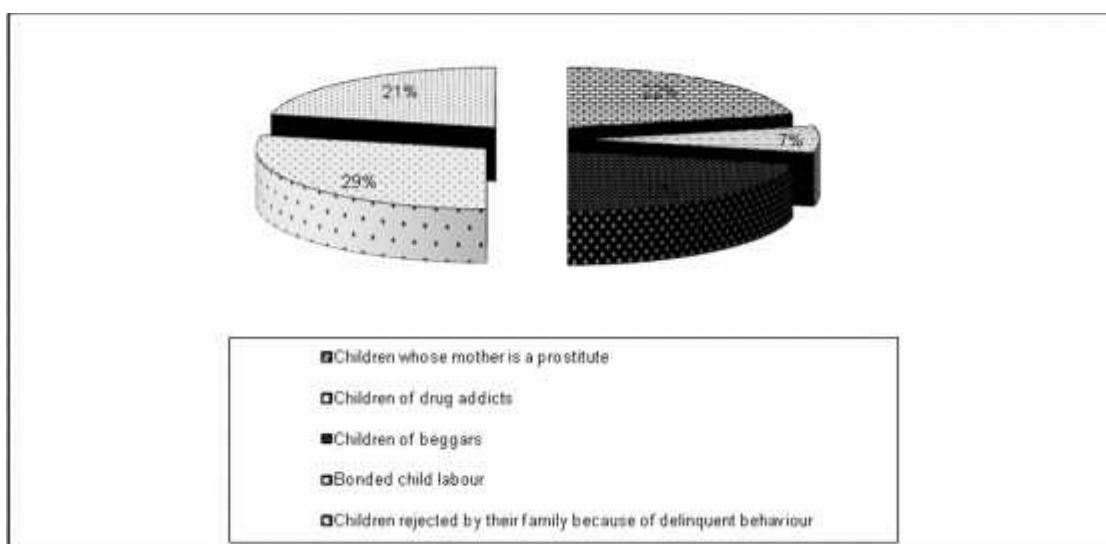


Figure 4.3 Pictorial representation of street child being on street due to social causes.

From the 50 respondents who were asked questionnaire it was found that 28% street children were influenced by the social causes. Out of those situations the bonded child labor (30%) is the most influencing causes followed by children of beggars and children whose mother is a prostitute (21%). Children's deliquesces behavior (14%) followed by children of drug addicts and rejected children by their family due to women trafficking. It can be concluded that social problem is one of the root causes

that drives child being onto street. Figure 4.5 below is the picture of a girl who did activities, which made her parents ashamed of her and thus they asked her to leave home. This is quite common when offspring does activities that parents can feel shameful for.

4.2.2 Family Causes

This is other prime factor, which influences children being onto street. Due to lack of economic support and high level of poverty, parents will not in a position to support their family and then start taking alcohol. Intolerable situation can be created within family and the children try to be free from such home. The main root causes as observed during survey are presented in the Table 4.3 showing number of respondents and their representation in percentage. The pictorial representation can be seen in Figure 4.6 below.

Table 4.3 Causes of being street children due to family problems

S. No.	Root family causes	Number noted	Number in %
1	Broken families	2	10.5%
2	Father that refuse to recognize their children	2	10.5%
3	Abandoned children	3	15.8%
4	Orphan	3	15.8%
5	Mistreated children	9	47.4%
	Total	19	100%

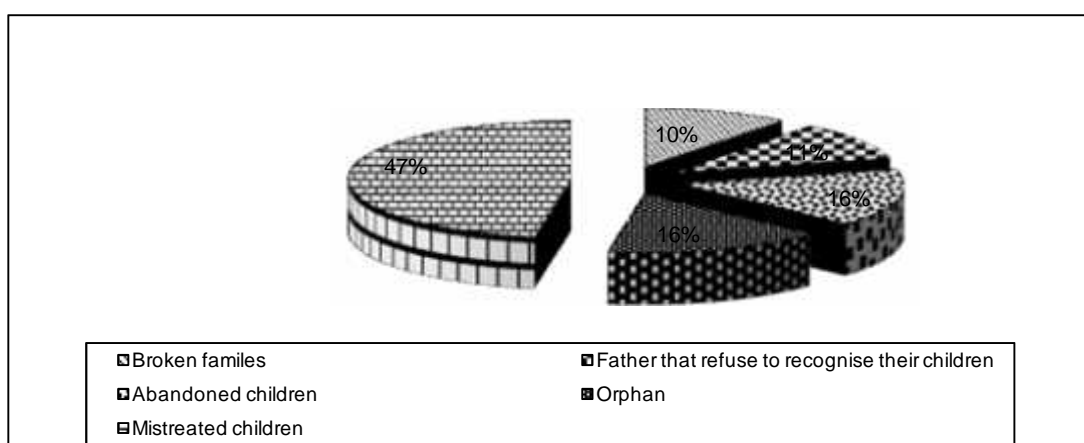


Figure 4.4 Pictorial representations of family problems

The root cause of the street children is due to mistreatment from their parents. About 47% street children are from those families where children are not treated with good environment (Discrepancy in Table 4.3 and Figure 4.6 is due to rounding error). Abandoned children and orphan children (15.5%) followed by father that refused to recognize their child (10.5%). No one observed due to gifted children in a poor and sick family and children who need reconciling with their family after family crisis.

4.2.3 Economic Causes

Economic cause is another important cause of street child. Population is increasing quite significantly but economic status of people is becoming poor day by day. It is therefore difficult to feed their children. Based on the survey, the researcher classified economic causes in the following ways.

The reasons of leaving their parenthood are discussed below.

- Lack of food security
- A rural child discovers that he is one too many mouths to feed.
- A child lives in extreme poverty in a slum
- Child workers
- Children that are deliberately “lost” by parents incapable of providing minimal requirements for subsistence

Table 4.4 and Figure 4.7 summarized the finding of the economic causes, which drive children being onto street.

Table 4.4 Street child due to economic causes

S. No	Root economic causes	Interviewed numbers	
		Numbers	%
1	Lack of food security	3	42.9%
2	Child workers	2	28.6%
3	Deliberately lost children by parents in capable of providing minimal requirements for subsistence	2	28.6%
Total		7	100%

Source: field survey 2009

Based on the survey data and information, famine (42.9%) is the most economic influencing cause of being child onto street followed by child workers and deliberately lost children by their parents(28.6% each).

Deliberately loss of child is basically occurring during festival time because of their inability of providing minimal requirement for subsistence.

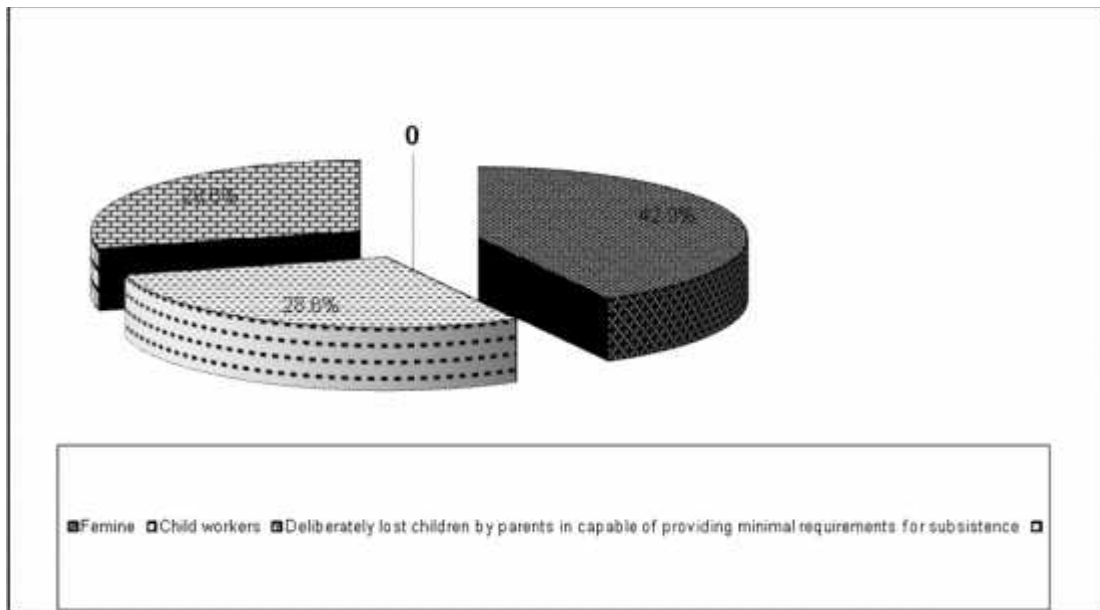


Figure 4.5 Pictorial representation of economic causes that influence child being on street.

4.2.4 Political causes

This is the most violent situation that forces children being onto street. The researcher tries to find out the real situation in the following areas.

- Children who have fled from war situation
- Children lost during a war or massacre

However no single respondents were observed during field survey. The reason could be that they were reluctant to mention the political cause as the root cause or there were no such street children in real situation.

4.2.5 Other causes

Besides above mentioned four causes these are some other reasons that forced children to be onto street. Here are the some causes found during survey. Behavior of their parents and social institutions and child's desire for independence that drive them onto streets are the major causes found in the survey. Table 4.5 and Figure 4.8 show the result from the survey.

Table4.5 Other causes of child being onto street

S. No	Root other causes	No. of respondents	Number in %
1	Habit	4	40%
2	Desire for independence	3	30%
3	Behavior of teacher in school	3	30%
	Total	10	100%

Source: Field survey 2009

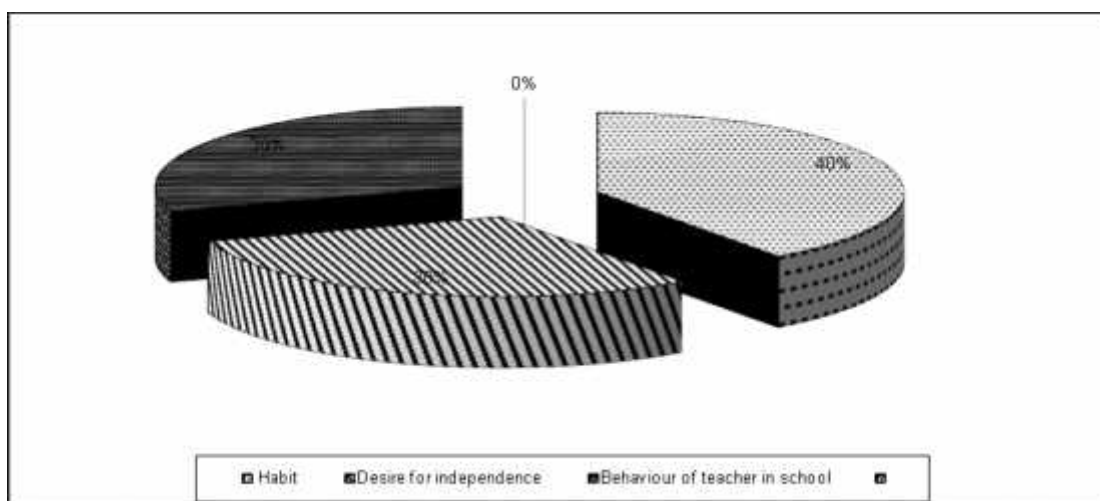


Figure 4.6 Pictorial representations of other causes that influence child being on the street

Habit of the child is the most influencing cause. About 40% of respondents are influenced by their habit. The reason could be they do have plenty of time where no one disturbs to carry out their plan as they wish to do so. Behavior of teacher in school and desire of independence (30% each) is the other cause that influenced children to be onto street. Bonded child is one who wants to be free from their house owner. Teacher in school routinely used corporal punishment to maintain discipline and to punish children for poor academic performance. One of the respondents was saying that he was punished in front of his classmates that made him feel guilty and

thus consequently left the school. He was saying that he is reluctant to rejoin school. The reason could be age factor.

4.3 Ethnicity

Unity in diversity has been considered as the main characteristic feature of Nepal. Population wise, Brahmin and Chhetri are the most dominant population in the country. The researcher in this study wanted to know the most influencing street children population and therefore a research study focused in this sector. The finding of the study is presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Population wise Ethnic Composition

S. No	Ethnic composition	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Brahmin	13	26
2	Chhetri	10	20
3	Tamang	8	16
4	Newar	4	8
5	Gurung	4	8
6	Tharu	4	8
7	Limbu	3	6
8	Sherpa	1	2
9	Other	3	6
Total		50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

The number of street children corresponds to the percentage of different ethnic groups in the total population of the country. The largest populations are from Brahmin (26%) followed by Chhetri (20%), Tamang (16%), Newar/Gurung/Tharu (8% each), Limbu (6%), Sherpa (2%) and other (6%). The other group comprises from the so-called scheduled untouchable castes and minorities, which are more or less similar as estimated by CWIN 1992 (7.23%).

The Figure 4.9 shows the ethnic composition of street child since Nepali society is composed of diverse ethnic group with varying cultural traditions.

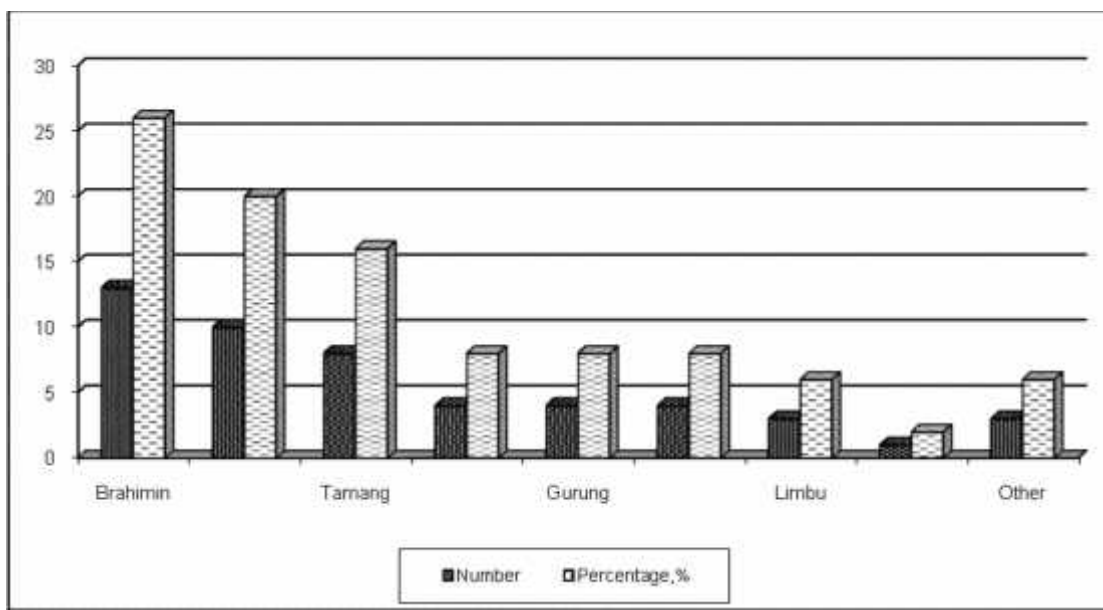


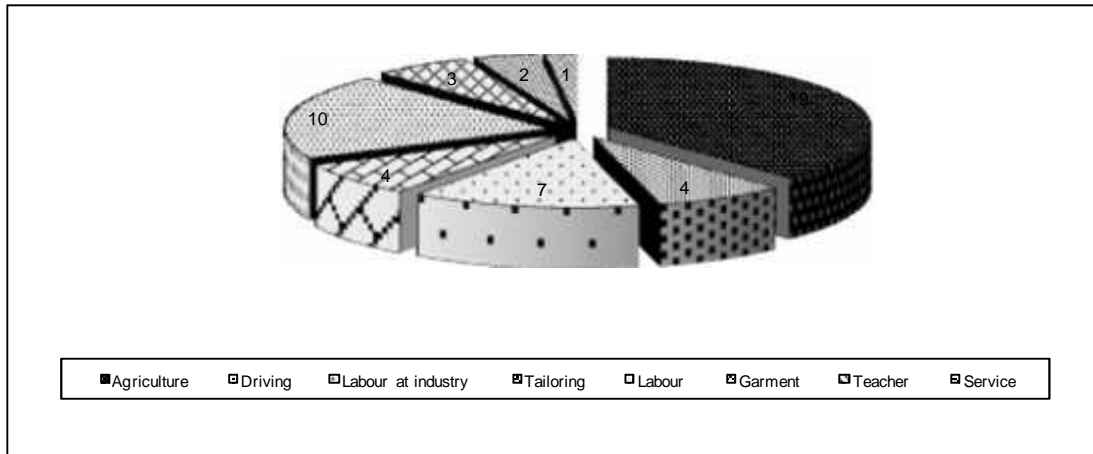
Figure 4.7 Ethnic compositions of street children

4.4 Occupation of parents

Most of the street children have come from the poor farmers or agriculture workers. The rest of the children's parents are involved in several low income jobs such as construction labor, driving, carpet and tailoring. Only a few children belong to the middle class families. When we talk about parents' occupation, we normally understand the occupation of the father simply because of our male dominant culture.

Table 4.7 Occupation of parents

S. No	Parent's occupation	Respondents	
		Numbers	Percentage
1	Agriculture	19	38
2	Driving	4	8
3	Labor at carpet industry	7	14
4	Tailoring	4	8
5	Labor	10	20
6	Garment	3	6
7	Teacher	2	4
8	Service	1	2
Total		50	100



Source: Field survey 2009

Figure 4.8 Pictorial diagram of occupation of street children’s parents

As can be seen from the Figure 4.10 that the agriculture is the most dominant occupation (38%) followed by labor 20%, carpet industry 14% and so on. This indicates that the main influencing factor of being street child is due to the high level poverty and low economic level of family.

About 48% of the street children were admitted school at one point, but most had dropped out before they learnt their alphabets and number. As a result, some 37% were literate from school, which means they could recognize Nepali alphabets and write their own names. 4% of street children recognized Nepali alphabet in spite of joining school at home.

Though they are from schooling background they were shy to speak. The reason could be that they didn’t want to disclose their conditions that they are onto street from early stage causing no memory about their past history. The illiteracy is about 48%. However, it was observed that they know little bit in many topics.

4.5 Literacy status of street child

The literacy status of street child is significantly low. They only recognized Nepali alphabet. More importantly, though they had not joined school but learned Nepali alphabet at home. Table 4.8 shows the information about literacy rate of street child.

Table 4.8 Literacy status of street child

S. No	Parent's occupation	Respondents	
		Numbers	Percentage
1	Agriculture	19	38
2	Driving	4	8
3	Labor at carpet industry	7	14
4	Tailoring	4	8
5	Labor	10	20
6	Garment	3	6
7	Teacher	2	4
8	service	1	2
Total		50	100

4.6 Area of origin

The street children of New Road and Ratna Park of the Kathmandu Valley seem to be a homogeneous mixture of all places in Nepal but it is heterogeneous composition if we look at the ethnic background. In fact, the street children in Kathmandu represented 62 of the 75 districts of Nepal. There were children from all five geographical divisions of Nepal. Kathmandu is now gradually becoming a melting pot because the main attraction to all kinds of people such as job seeker, street child, migrants etc. Table 4.9 shows the place of origin of the street child.

Table 4.9 Place of origin of Kathmandu street child

S. No	Area of origin	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Dhading	9	18
2	Makwanpur	6	12
3	Nuwakot	5	10
4	Chitwan	4	8
5	Kathmandu	3	6
6	Dhanusha	2	4
7	Jhapa	2	4
8	Lamjung	2	4
9	Tanahu	2	4
10	Kavreplanchowk	2	4
11	Rajbiraj	2	4
12	Sindhupalchowk	2	4
13	Sunsari	2	4
14	Nawalparasi	2	4
15	Baglung		2
16	Lalitpur	1	2
17	Syangja	1	2
18	Gorkha	1	2
19	Solukhumbu	1	2
Total		50	100

Source: Filed survey2009

The Table shows that most of the street children are from adjoining district of the Kathmandu Valley. The street child number from Dhading is 18% followed by 12% from Makwanpur and 10% from Nuwakot. Street child from Baglung, Lalitpur, Syangja and Solukhumbu is just 2% each. This indicates that the adjoining districts have more influence on the street child possibly because of more opportunity to explore, to withstand independently and to enjoy with development.

The result is more or less tailed with the street child trend as published by CWIN in 1992. According to the CWIN 1992; there were only 16.97% street children from the Kathmandu Valley with only 11.45% from the Kathmandu city itself. Rest came from other districts with 44.16% coming from the surrounding districts of Kathmandu.

4.7 Behavior and Problems of Street Child

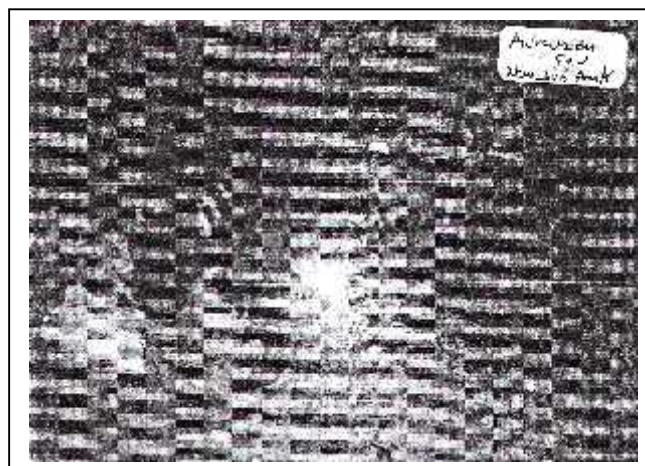
4.7.1 Problems Faced

As discussed in the previous section that street children are a homogeneous group formed by collection from throughout the nation in the Kathmandu Valley and heterogeneous in nature if we look at the cultural and ethnic background. Figure 4.11 shows that the street children are fighting for survival.

Generally, the street child's life is vulnerable especially because of street pollution. Most of their illness is due to pollution and lack of food. One should not forget the delinquency behavior of the community and government agencies towards the street child. The heavy traffic at New Road and Ratna Park makes it much difficult for them to cross roads and therefore chance of accident is high. Some of the problems according to the respondents are mentioned below.

-) **Fooding areas**
-) **Clothes problems**
-) **Night stay problems**
-) **Community treatment**
-) **Government treatment**
-) **Medicinal problems**

Figure 4.9 Firing in the cold night to Prevent from cold



Source: Chandrodaya website.

FOODING AREAS

This is one of the most important aspects of human being for their living. Depending on the income of the street child they prefer to take food in different places. According to the survey conducted on 50 street children, their preferable food taking places is shown in Table 4.10 and pictorial representation of street child population going in different places is shown in Figure 4.12.

Table 4.10 Preferable food taking places by street children

S. No	Food taken place	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Restaurant	7	14
2	Bhatti	23	46
3	Begging	6	12
4	Food stalls	14	28
	Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey 2009

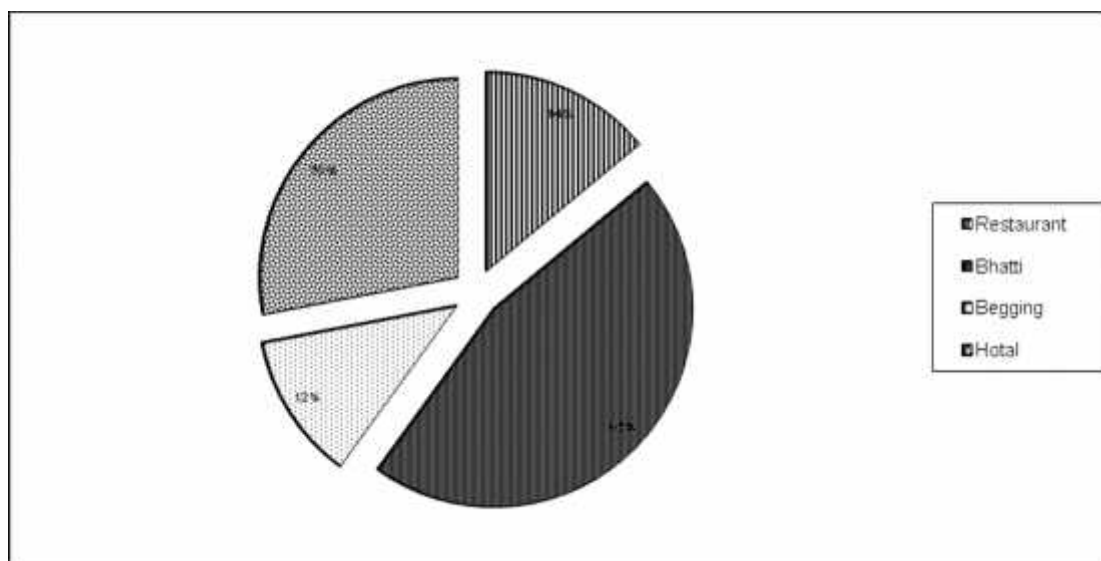


Figure 4.10 Pictorial representation of street child food taking places

46% of the street children goes to Bhatti and followed by Food stalls (28%), Restaurant (14%) and begging (12%). During it was observed that adult street children prefer to go either hotel or restaurant since they do have comparatively higher earning than smaller children. Small children and new street children were found begging for their survival.

CLOTHES PROBLEMS

Clothes are equally important as food since they have to spend almost

24 hours on to street. They need clothes for the protection from sunburn, insect bites and polluted environment. Street children are struggling to get clothes. The Table 4.11 shows the clothes that the street children at present do have and Figure 4.13 represents the population distribution of the street children who have cloth sets.

Table 4.11 Clothes that the street children do have or manage

S. No	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	One set of clothes	21	42
2	Two sets of clothes	19	38
3	More than two sets of clothes	10	20
Total		50	100

Source: field survey 2009

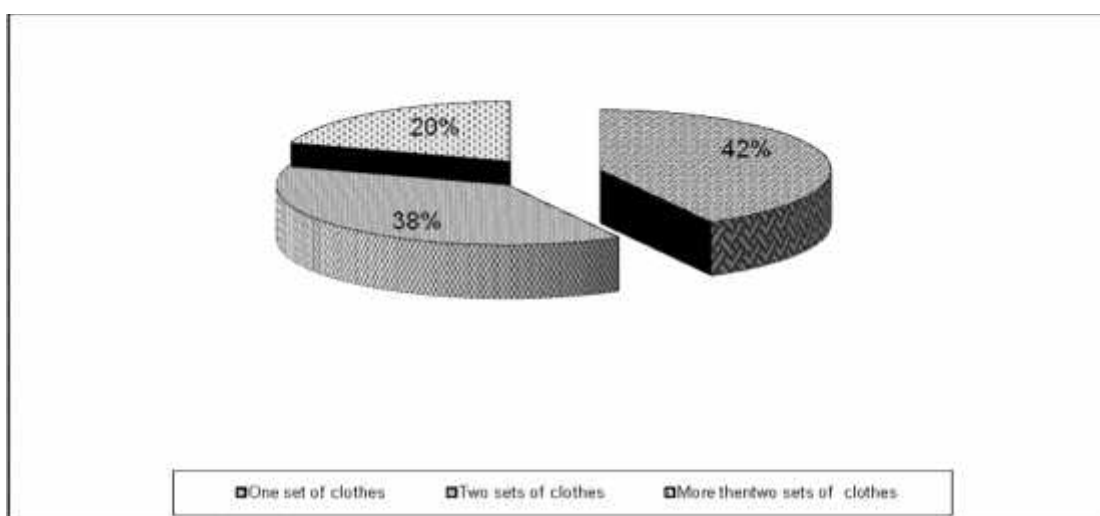


Figure 4.11 Pictorial representation of cloth distribution in street children population

According to the survey it was found that 42% of the street children only have one set of cloth i.e. what they are wearing at that time during the interview. 38% of street children do have two sets and 20% do have more than two sets.

SLEEP AREAS

This is another big problem being faced by the street children. The night stay problem especially in the winter season is horrible. The survey results of the 50 respondents are presented in Table 4.12 and pictorial representation in Figure 4.14.

Table 4.12 Sleep location of street child

S. No	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Street	5	10
2	Temple	15	30
3	Dharmashalas	12	24
4	Shelter at NGO's who works for street child	7	14
5	Sheared room	11	22
Total		50	100

Source: field survey 2009

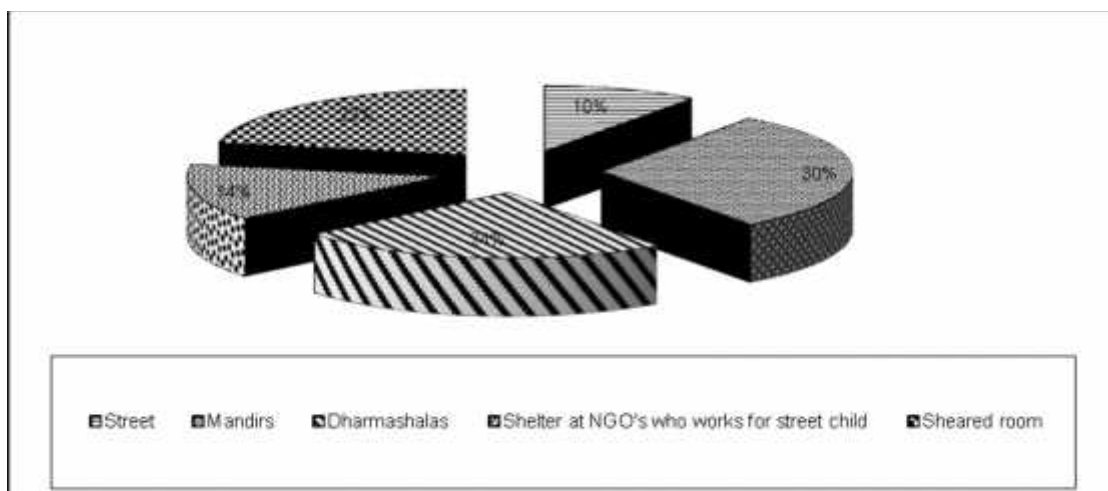


Figure 4.12 Pictorial representation of sleep location of street child

According to the respondents, 30% of the street children manage to sleep in Mandirs followed by Dharmashalas (24%), shared room (22%), Shelter at NGO that works for street child (14%) and onto street (10%). Those who have more income rent a big room and share the cost equally.

There is one NGO which provides food and accommodation to the street child. The result in the above table and figure suggest that some of the respondents are from the shelter and therefore about 14% of the respondents were found to have accommodation at shelter. There is no any hard and fast rule for being at Shelter and it serves on first com first come basis.

PEOPLE BEHAVE

The researcher in the study tries to find out the attitude and behavior to the street child. According to the respondents, the people behave towards the street child is presented in Table 4.13 and pictorial diagram in figure 4.17.

Table 4.13 People behave on street child

S. No	Community treatment	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Hate to the street child	8	16
2	Social and helpful	7	14
3	Social but miser for giving economic support	10	20
4	Delinquency behavior	16	32
5	Not fully paid for their labor	5	10
6	Don't know	4	8
Total		50	100

Source: field survey 2009

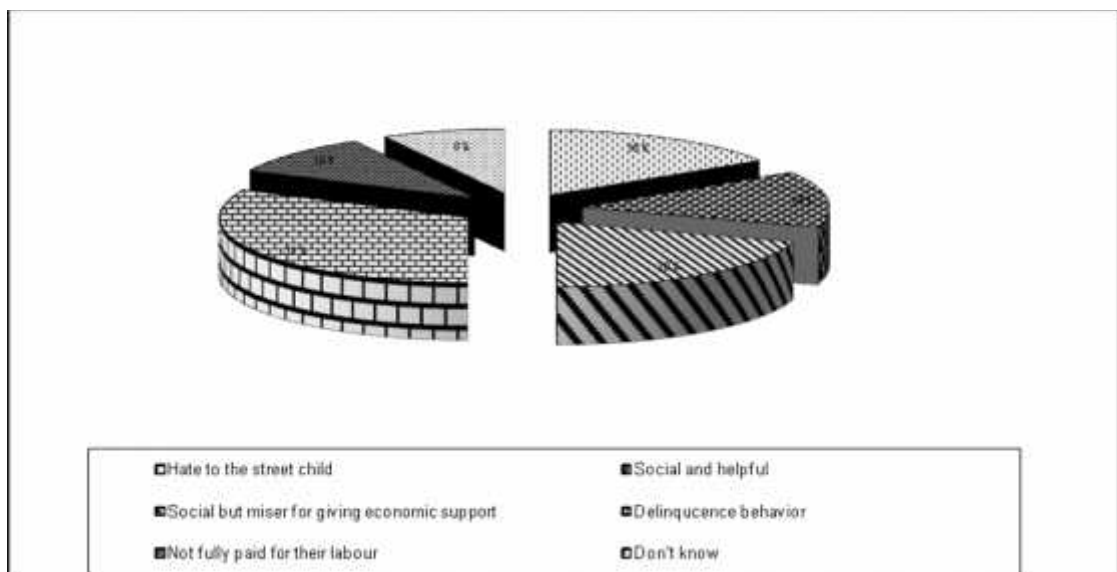


Figure 4.13 Pictorial diagram of people behave on street child

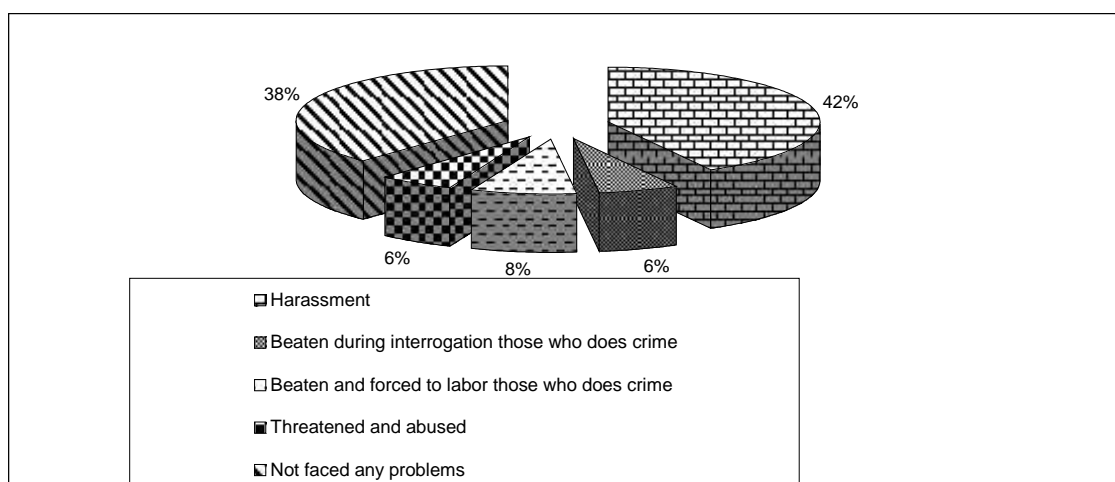
32% of the respondents were saying that community has shown their delinquencies behavior to the street child. 20% were saying they are social but miser of giving economic support followed by hate to the street child (16%), social and helpful (14%), not happy for less payment (10%) and don't want to comment (8%).

GOVERNMENT TREATMENT

Though there is Juvenile Justice for Child, no street child laws and policy as such have been implemented so far. It is therefore, government agency especially police is treating them differently than the children. They pose unnecessary questionnaire to harass them. According to the respondents, their feeling toward government agencies is presented in Table 4.14 and pictorial diagram in Figure 4.18.

Table 4.14 Police Treatment to the Street Child

S. NO	Police treatment	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Harassment	21	42
2	Beaten during interrogation those who does crime	3	6
3	Beaten and forced to labor those who does crime	4	8
4	Threatened and abused	3	6
5	Not faced any problems	19	38
Total		50	100



Source: field survey 2009

Figure 4.14 Pictorial diagram of police treatment to the street child

As it can be seen from the Table 4.14 that 42% of street children felt harassment followed by 38% who never faced any problems by government agencies. It is seen from the above Table that 10 street child were caught for their crime and the treatment by police was beating during interrogation (6%), beaten and forced to do labor (8%) and threatened and abused (6%). The researcher felt that it is hard to get crime information of the street child since they are reluctant to disclose more information on it.

After having a new law for the administration of Juvenile Justice of Child Right in Nepal, most of the cases are either unreported or resolved in the local and community level. Therefore the number of street child involvement and police treatment has been significantly reduced these days.

The Children Act 1992 prohibits for illegal detention, torture and any form of bad treatment, which hamper children development, however the law enforcing agencies do not seem serious in this regard. It is reported in 1996 that a four-year-old boy was imprisoned in Jail. This is a tip of the iceberg. There are so many such problems existing in our society neither recorded nor reported for public knowledge.

ILLENES

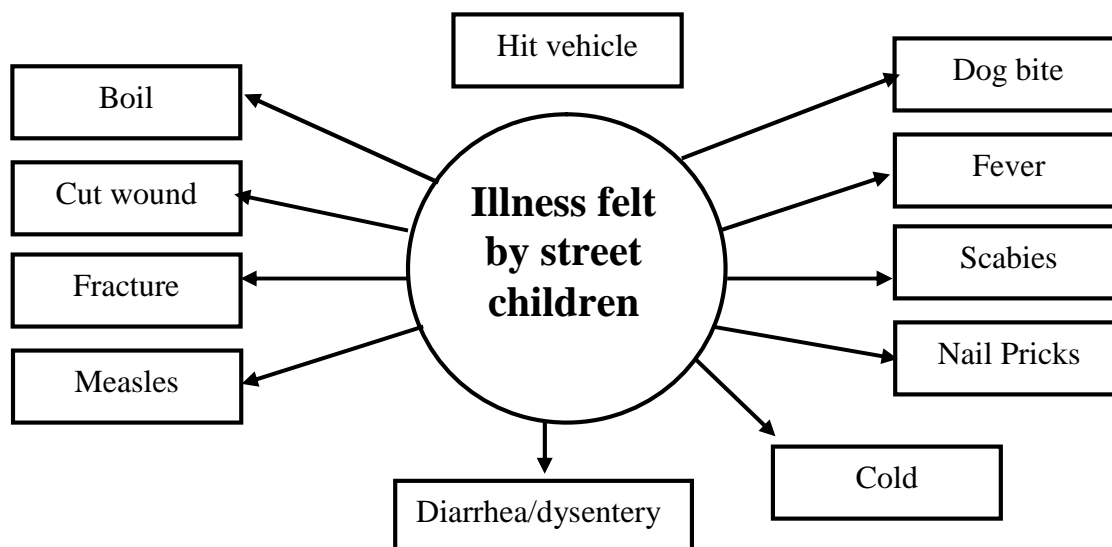
50 street children were asked about their illness and impact on their health. Using the health complaints by respondents and made a table (Table 4.15), ranked each one on a scale of 1 to 5 according to frequency, degree of pain, and earning.

Table 4.15 Street children showing impact of illnesses

S. No	Illness	Frequency	Degree of pain	Effect of earning
1	Boils	4	5	5
2	Dog bite	5	4	3
3	Wound	5	3	1
4	Scabies	3	3	0
5	Diarrhea	5	3	5
6	Hit by vehicle	2	5	3
7	Cold	5	2	2
8	Fracture	3	4	5
9	Illness	5	5	2
10	Fever	3	6	5
11	Not suffer from illness	10	N/A	N/A

Source: Field survey 2009

Figure 4.15 shows the illness children were suffered



Source: Field survey 2009

Figure 4.15 Spider diagram of ill-health of street child

Illness due to dog bite, diarrhea, cold and hunger is quite frequent whereas hit by vehicle is not so severe. The respondent was saying that hunger is the most vulnerable part of illness which in fact invites unwanted behavior to be done to get food. According to the respondents, they are earning maximum of Nrs 100 per day, which is not sufficient for treatment especially for the case of fracture,

boil, fever and diarrhea. Therefore, treatment is based on the income-generating activity and the social relations formed in the work context and varied person to person how much he/she is earning. The role of adults in guiding health-related behaviors is the most influential in comparison with the child. The adult street children demonstrated knowledge of both the conditions and the means of seeking treatment. Overall, many children knew the health risk that their work and living conditions exposed them to and could identify means to minimize them for example washing regularly, wearing shoes or slipper while rag-picking and drinking clean water. The regular rag-picker keeps soap while irregular doesn't keep soap with them. They normally go to regular eating spots but large numbers of children are very mobile.

TREATMENT

It is quite common for the street child to be caught by diseases. The survey result is presented in the Table 4.16 and the pictorial diagram in Figure 4.20 below.

Table 4.16 Preferred treatment places of street child

S. No	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage, %
1	Government hospital	19	38
2	Ayurvedic hospital	11	22
3	Treatment by friends	9	18
4	Health Camp	6	12
5	Don't care	5	10
Total		50	100

Source: Field Survey 2009

This is becoming the most severe conditions since they do not have sufficient earning to support their treatment. They preferred to go to government hospital (38%) and Ayurvedic hospital (22%) because they are cheap where as treatment by friend is very common (18%). Friends go to medicine shop and then ask medicine according to the sickness they understand. About 10% were saying that they don't care about illness. This indicates that they don't bother much about their life.

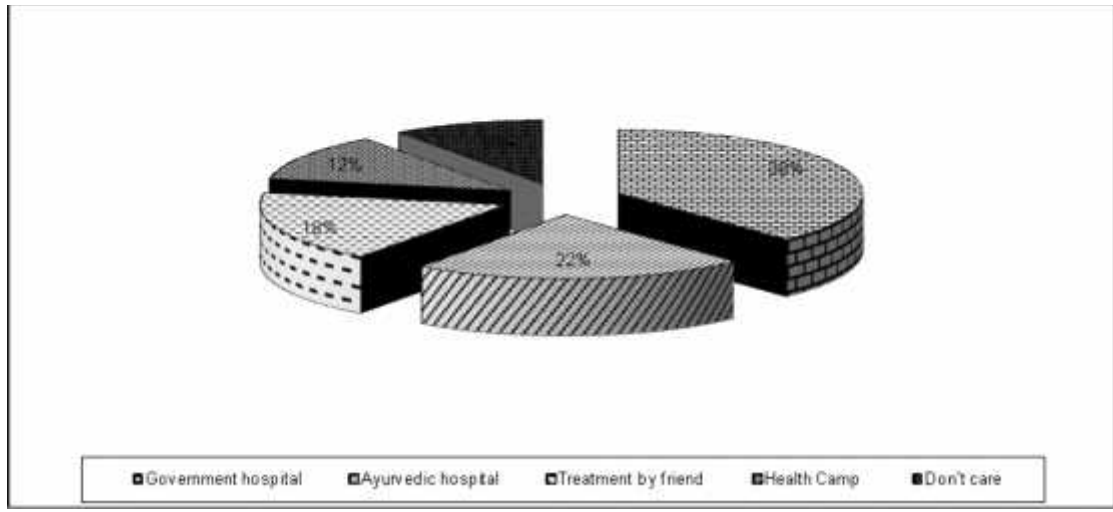


Figure 4.16 Pictorial diagram of the respondent population from where they are getting treatment

BEHAVIOR

According to the observation during field survey the psychosocial behaviors of street children have been found as follows:

- ❖ Very little span of concentration/ mobile population,
- ❖ Aggressive,
- ❖ Short tempered and reactive personality,
- ❖ Bear grudge and hatred towards their homes and police,
- ❖ Inclined to violence,
- ❖ Have care-a-dam attitude,
- ❖ Irresponsible about future and many more,
- ❖ Hard working and mature,
- ❖ Street smart, enterprising and loyal,
- ❖ Street addiction
- ❖ Conceal their true identity,
- ❖ Use of drugs and substances, culture and silence,
- ❖ Sexually exposed,
- ❖ Mobile and change their base.

They are only able to earn about NRs 100 per day if they worked right from the early morning to evening according to the respondents. They are quite comfortable in daytime but it is horrible in night especially in the winter and rainy season.

INVOLVEMENT

As discussed in previous sections that street child are involved in different activities. The problem in urban area is quite serious and their involvement in different types of crime is increasing so rapidly. They are found to have been involved in different types of crime such as stealing, pick pocketing, robbery, sexual abuse, child prostitution, drug abuse, and arson and public offences. From the survey it can be concluded that the children of 11-13 age groups are the one who have involved the most in different forms of delinquencies. Table 4.17 shows the delinquencies behaviors of street child of various age groups.

Table 4.17 Child involvement in different forms of delinquencies

S. No	Involvement in different form of delinquencies by age group	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	13+ years	21	42
2	11-13 years	14	28
3	9-11 years	11	22
4	8-9 years	3	6
5	6-8 years	1	2
	Total	50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

Street children are struggling for survival though it is common to all. They are busy early from in the morning to late evening to make some earning. The researcher in the study put questionnaire to know their income generation activity and the population distribution according to the survey is presented in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18: Income generation activity of the street children

S. No	Activity of street child	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Rag picking	7	14
2	Khalasi	3	6
3	Road side stall (such as tea stall)	6	12
4	Road side repairs shop	6	12
5	Hotel and kitchen	8	16
6	Coolie	10	20
7	News paper seller	2	4
8	Flower seller	2	4
9	Beggar	6	12
Total		50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

The most easily involved area is the coolie. Almost all beginners get involved in this field. Because of low investment they are involved in rag picking (14%) Whereas to feel safer, it is quite common to work for hotel and kitchen as kancha (16%). 12% of the respondents are involved in road side stall and road side repair shops. Khalasi is the other attraction for street children (6%) where as flower seller and news paper seller is about 4% each. Some of them are very lazy and therefore such group prefers begging (12%) which is quite significant.

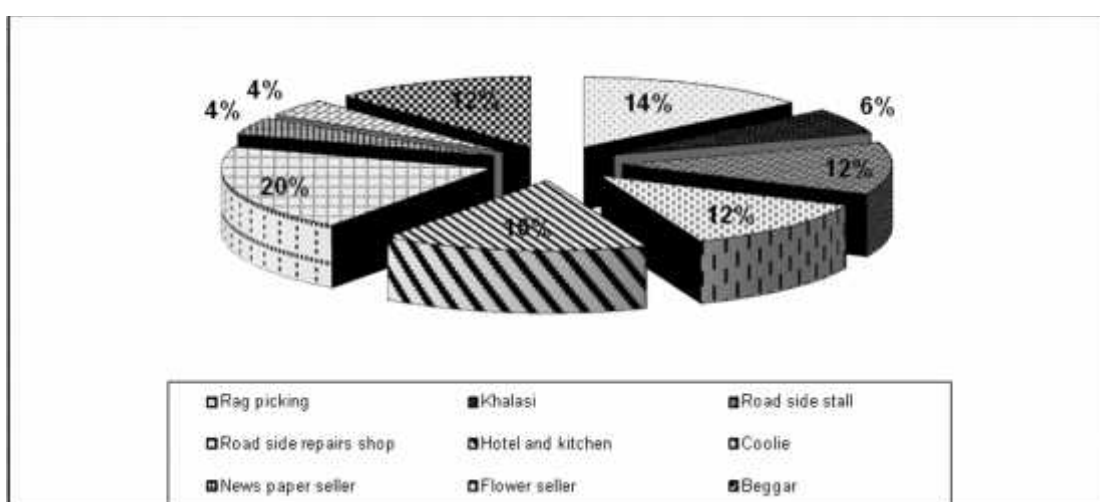


Figure 4.17 Pictorial diagram of street child involved area to generate income

FUTURE ASPIRATION

An attempt has been made to find out the aims of life of the street children. Table 4.19 summarized respondent's aims and future plan.

Table 4.19 Aims of street children

S. No	Aim of the respondents	No. of respondents	Percentage,%
1	Don't know	15	30
2	Driver	9	18
3	Soldier	6	12
4	Politician	5	10
5	Mechanics	4	8
6	Police	3	6
7	Actor	3	6
8	Social workers	3	6
9	Teacher	2	4
Total		50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

The survey reveals that majority (30%) of the respondents has not expressed their future aim or wish. 18% were found interested to become driver and the reason for choosing driving profession is that they would have very happy life because they can travel as they wish to visit. 12% of street children have shown their desire to join soldier where as 10% were interested in politics. 8% are interested to be mechanics whereas 6% are interested in becoming police and actor. 6% are inspired to be involved in social works and only 4% are interested in teaching profession. Very small percentage of children has shown their wish of becoming teacher.

4.7.2 Changed scenario of the study area

God has created human beings as social animals and therefore the situation makes the people to behave differently. During the field survey the following interesting parameters was observed:

- ❖ Increase in number of street children at New Road and Ratna Park in comparison with the previous years because of rapid urbanization,(obtained by questing street children)
- ❖ More facilities for street children,
- ❖ Influence by sex tourism,
- ❖ Debt bondage,
- ❖ Child delinquency,
- ❖ Reduction of police harassment,
- ❖ Increasing social harassment,
- ❖ Progressive change in social attitude,
- ❖ Growing change participation,
- ❖ Some inspiring outcome,
- ❖ Dying due to drug addicts,
- ❖ Glue sniffing,
- ❖ Alcohol, tobacco and drug experience,
- ❖ Not interested to rejoin school,
- ❖ Beggars from slum family is quite dominating,

The above-mentioned observation was made at New Road and Ratna Park in different dates during study period. Because of the limited information and samples it was difficult to compare what % of street child involved in what activities. Some of the above listed activities are fairly new such as glue sniffing. Therefore only few respondents mentioned this activity. Street children were shy to tell the truth and thus it was extremely difficult to get real feeling of the study.

GLUE SNIFFING

This is quite new phenomenon and hardly can found such child onto street during daytime. No one was observed taking glue during survey.

These glue-sniffing children either pour glue onto a piece of cloth which they then rollup and sniff or they pour the sticky substance into a shopping bag and hold it near their face. After sniffing glue, one start feeling dizzy, light-headed and drowsy and sometimes it gives a feeling of pleasure by distorting the senses and heightens carnal cravings.

It can be termed as group activity among street children. It was observed that the older street children are influencing the younger ones to sniff glue. It was also found that the younger ones are attracted to inhale glue after seeing the entertainment as being taken by the older age children.

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND DRUG EXPERIENCE

Tobacco and drugs experience among street children in Nepal is a common phenomenon. The use of alcohol has become common among different caste/ethnic groups, gender and among all age groups in Nepal. During observation and interview no one admitted that they were taking alcohol, tobacco or drug but it was noticed that they were at least taking one item almost regularly. This is based on the fact that their body was giving some kind of smell. The researcher recorded that the respondents after finishing interview were taking tobacco and drugs in several occasions. They usually go to the closed area to feel secure while taking drugs.

4.8 Characteristics of street child

Street children are very active and carry out things what they find right for themselves. They can differentiate what is to be done or what are the things not to touch. If someone praise them for their good or scold them for bad habits they take action quite quickly without making any judgment.

Street children learn to cope with life on the streets very quickly. They learn to live off the street. They take up a number of jobs available in the streets. A street child may have varied working experiences. It is therefore extremely difficult to analyze their character individually because of heterogeneous composition of respondents. However, here are some of the findings about respondent's characters:

- ❖ They are shy to tell their behavior,
- ❖ They don't want to disclose the truth of being street child,
- ❖ Some of them are talkative but had no connection with what they said earlier,
- ❖ Older age street children force younger to follow them,
- ❖ If it is known some street children are from untouchable caste, other upper caste children hate him/her,
- ❖ Small age group street children are looking for possible opportunities,
- ❖ Working as helpers for bus or tempo
- ❖ Begging, pimping, pick pocketing, stealing,

- ❖ Selling news papers and flowers in streets and temples,
- ❖ Working in roadside stalls or repair shops,
- ❖ Concentrating in the areas like junkyards, temples, market centers, cinema hall, bus terminals, hardware shops, tourist centers etc.

4.9 Knowledge on street child law

Street children were asked about relevant laws in relation with street child. The result obtained during survey is tabulated in Table 4.20 below.

Table 4.20 Knowledge on street child related laws

S. No	Knowledge about laws	No. of respondents	Percentage,%
1	Yes	12	24
2	No	28	56
3	Heard about it	10	20
Total		50	100

Source: Field survey 2009

The study reveals that only 24% knows about it while 56% does not know. 20% of the respondents only heard about it and they are basically the followers. During survey it was observed that young children were aware of the street child laws whereas small children never cared about it.

This is the group who is easily influenced and motivated by any organization of Nepal such as political party, student group, and any other organization. One can say they are the front liner of the activities organized by the above-mentioned parties.

This indicates that they are becoming quite serious about their right. Even the activities they are performing these days reveals that they know little bit about street child laws and government commitment. Figure 4.28 show the street child took part procession in the Children Day.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter portrays the summary of findings of being street child conducted on 50 street children at New Road and Ratna Park as well as the conclusions drawn thereof.

5.1 Summary

The problem of street children is universal. Because of high push and pull factor of urban areas, it is believed that the number of street could have been in increasing order. Street children are the reflection of a growing social tragedy in the world. The reason of increase in street child number is due to widespread recessions, political turmoil, and civil unrest, increasing family disintegration, natural disaster and growing urbanization.

The objective of this research study is to determine possible causes of being street child and their age wise population composition, ethnic background and their life style.

For the study both descriptive and exploratory research design was adopted. 50 samples were selected on the basis of non-probability, and accidental sampling technique. The researcher has also used semi observation to analysis respondents' behavior and to acquire relevant information. Semi structured closed and open-ended questionnaires were prepared and asked to make study more flexible and rational. The findings of the study based on 50 respondents are summarized below.

Summary of Findings

All respondents were boys and no single girl during field survey was recorded. Based on the field observation and interview the following findings have been drawn but it could not be generalized to other urban areas. The summary of findings of the study is briefly described herein:

Age Group

The most influencing age wise population composition of street children is 9-13 years. The average age of street child is 13 years.

However the study infers that children as young as 6-7 years are on street.

Cause of street child

The study depicts that there are four categories of causes that influence child being onto street. They are social causes, family causes, economic causes and other causes. The study revealed that the most influencing causes is the “family causes (38%)” followed by social causes (28%), economic causes (14%) and (20%) other causes. In the family causes group mistreated children (47.4%) is the root cause noted during field study. Children of beggars and child born from prostitute (21.4% each) is the root cause of the social problems. Famine and poverty (42.9%) is the most influencing root causes as found in the economic causes. Despite of these causes habit (40%), desire for independence and behavior of teacher in school (30% each) is the other causes of child being onto street.

Ethnicity

The largest population is from Brahmin (26%) followed by Chhetri (20%), Tamang (16%), Newar/Gurung /Tharu (8% each), Limbu (6%), Sherpa (2%) and rest are (8%).

Occupation of parents

This is one of the most influencing causes that might drive children being onto street. According to the respondents, 38% are from agricultural profession followed by labor in construction industry (20%), labor at carpet industry (14%) and driving/tailoring (8%). This can be inferred that street children are from agriculture background family.

Literacy status

The literacy status of child is significantly low. 48% of the respondents were admitted school at one point and then left school where as 63% continued for some time but left before being literate. 48% of street children never joined school and are illiterate but only 37% street children recognized Nepali alphabet and it can be said that they know Nepali alphabet to read and write.

Area of origin

Most of the street children at New Road and Ratna Park are from adjoining districts of the Kathmandu valley. One can say that Dhading(18%), Makwanpur (12%) and Nuwakot(10%) are the most influencing districts. Little influence for other 16 districts was observed in the field survey.

Behaviour and problem of street child

The life of street children is vulnerable because of street population. Most of their illness is due to pollution and lack of food. Some of the problem depicted during observation is presented in bullet form:

-) **Fooding areas:** Due to significantly low income, they desperately need to choose fooding areas. 46% of the respondents usually go to Bhatti for food followed by 28% at hotel, 14% at restaurant and 12% manage by begging.
-) **Clothes problems:** Most of them have (34%) one set of cloth followed by 24% of respondents have 2 sets, 14% have more than 2 sets, and 10 are managing by begging.
-) **Sleeping area:** 30% of respondents usually go to Mandirs for sleep followed by Dharmashalas (24%), shared room (22%), shelter at NGO (14%) and on street (10%).
-) **People behave:** 32% of respondents were found saying that they are facing delinquency behavior from people. 16% were feeling hate from people but in contrast 14% were saying that they are social and helpful. They also expressed that they are not fully paid for their labor.
-) **Police treatment:** Harassment by the government organization according to the respondent is 42% followed by 8% to those who do crime and were beaten by police. However 38% were saying no interrogation was made by such organizations/authorities.

J **Illness:** The occurrence frequency of illness due to dog bite, diarrhea, cold and hunger is 5 in a 1-5 scale followed by boil (4%), fracture, fever, and scabies (3%), Degree of pain is 5% for boil/hit by vehicle/hunger but could be minimized if they do have good earning.

J **Medicinal area:** They preferred to visit government hospital for medical treatment if they do need treatment. According to survey, 38% goes to government hospitals followed by 22% in Ayurvedic hospital, 18% get treatment from their friends and 10% don't care about diseases.

Behavior

They are mobile population and therefore do have little span of concentration. They are short tempered and reactive in nature inclined to violence and irresponsible about their future. They prefer to stay in a group of 4-8 numbers. Normally they conceal their true identity and don't want to disclose.

Involvement

They are mobile and always struggle to survive. They are involved in crime and the most influencing age group is 13+ year children. For survival 20% are engaged as a coolie followed by 16% at hotel and kitchen, rag picking (14%), roadside repairs (12%), beggar (12%), Khalasi/tempo conductor (6%).

Future aspiration

30% respondents were saying that they don't know about their future plan. However 18% expressed their desire to become driver followed by soldier (12%), politician (10%), mechanics (8%), and social workers (6%) and so on.

Knowledge on street child law

56% does not know about children law and they are blind followed or they are easily influenced by others. However, only 24% know about such law whereas 20% have only heard about it.

Glue sniffing

It is new drug addiction technique, which is by inhaling smell of glue and similar materials. They prefer to stay in a group but they are hardly seen in open areas and in daytime. It is quite common to take it in the evening so as to have easy sleep.

5.2 Conclusions

It needs to be emphasized that street children represent a worldwide phenomenon despite cultural differences. Examination of the literature also indicates that the backgrounds of street children, despite some difference are remarkably similar. Although findings presented in the present study reflect aspects of street children in the New Road and Ratna Park of the Kathmandu Valley. It is envisioned that the findings can be regarded common among street children internationally.

Based on the field survey, available material and extensive literature review the following conclusions are drawn. Because of short period of time and limited resources it is extremely difficult to draw firm conclusions. However, materials, data and information available from the various NGOs working in this field and field survey point toward serious problems in the days ahead if the concerned government organizations, and other social organization who are working in this field do not take it positively.

- ❖ The most influencing population wise group is 9-13 years and average age is 13 years.
- ❖ Children interviewed cited the following reasons for leaving home: family violence, parental alcoholism, abuse, poverty, personal reason, social causes, economic causes etc.
- ❖ Most of the street children are from adjoining districts of the Kathmandu Valley.
- ❖ Brahmin and Chhetris ethnic background street children are higher than the other background.
- ❖ Street children are normally mobile population. However, generally they have made certain areas their base when they do their business and sleep at night.
- ❖ Street children take up a number of jobs available in the street such as rag picking, begging, tempo conducting, porting, flower selling, street vending, shoe shining etc.

- ❖ Almost half of the street children are literate. They only know Nepali alphabet to read and write.
- ❖ The preferable area of food places is Bhatti but it depends on income they are able to generate.
- ❖ Most of them have one set of clothes i.e. the cloth they are wearing.
- ❖ Mandirs and Dharamashalas is the preferred area for night stay.
- ❖ Community people are treating delinquency behavior to street children.
- ❖ Street children are harassed by government organization.
- ❖ Government hospitals and ayurvedic hospitals are the preferred area for treatment.
- ❖ Becoming coolie and hotel kancha is the common area to be involved for survival.
- ❖ Older age group street children force new comers and younger age group street children to follow them.
- ❖ Glue sniffing is a relatively new drug addiction technique adopted by Nepali street children.
- ❖ Street children are found to be not interested for schooling.
- ❖ Behaviors of street children are totally different from the other children. They start with smoking cigarettes, tobacco-chewing, alcohol and then it leads to hashish, tablets. Then they begin syringe. Eventually they develop diseases and die from Hepatitis 'B', HIV/AIDS, drug-overdose, etc.
- ❖ Street children know about children right and Juvenile Justice little bit.

5.3 Recommendations

All we know that street child is becoming one of the social problems. It is therefore that the government has to come up with a concrete plan and program that should address to resolve street child problem. However, we all know that street child problem could not be fully resolved. In this study the researcher has proposed that the government should start short-term and long-term plan to resolve this issue. Otherwise this would be a disaster since population is increasing drastically but no resources are available to feed them all round the year and no mechanism has been developed to cope with the situation. The short term and long term plan based on the study finding is presented herein.

SHORT-TERM PLAN

- ❖ By establishing peace in the country
- ❖ Control over selling of drugs,
- ❖ To conduct research study and identify those communities from where massive street children are coming. Different NGOs' and INGO's experiences could be a basis of research study.
- ❖ By opening street child care centre,
- ❖ By launching awareness program,
- ❖ Strictly following the CRC recommendations with needful action from government side,
- ❖ Providing job opportunity to all,
- ❖ Commitment from all political parties

LONG-TERM PLAN

- ❖ Compulsory provision of enforcement body in VDC and municipality level concerning elimination and regulation of street children.
- ❖ Capacity building, income generation activities programmes for self sustainability should be launched by the NGOs and INGOs.
- ❖ Indigenous solution needs to be sought to address the problem areas of the community which could minimize the number of street children,
- ❖ Free education program to all children without any discrimination between girls and boys,
- ❖ Infrastructural development should be carried out in the nations with people's participation approach so that ownership can be felt,
- ❖ Social security program should be launched by the government,
- ❖ Clear cut street child policy should be promulgated to meet the CRC recommendations and child helpline desk should be established.

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A Questionnaire on

“Problem of Street Children In Nepal”

QUESTIONNAIRE

I. Personal Details

QN	<i>Questions</i>	<i>Response Category & Code</i>
01	What is your name?	_____
02	How old are you?	5 to 10.....1 10 to 14.....2 15 to 17.....3
03	What is your caste/ethnicity?	Brahmin/Chhetri.....1 Newar.....2 Rai/Limbu/Tamang/Magar/ Sherpa/Gurung/Lama.....3 KDS (Dalit).....4 Others.....
04	Sex of the child.	Boy.....1 Girl.....2
05	Address (Birth Place)	_____ District _____ Village (VDC) _____ Town (Municipality)
06	Main Working Area	_____

II. Education

<i>QN</i>	<i>Questions</i>	<i>Response Category & Code</i>
07	Can you read and write?	Yes.....1 No.....2
7a	If literate, completed grade.	Primary.....1 (Grade 1-5 complete) Secondary.....2 (Grade 6-10 complete) Above Secondary.....3
08	Have you ever been school?	Yes1 No.....2
8a	If no, causes of not joining school?	Poverty.....1 No school around.....2 Not interested.....3 Death of parent.....4 Negligence of parent.....5 Other specifies.....
09	Do you want to rejoin school?	Yes.....1 No.....2

III. Family Situation

<i>QN</i>	<i>Questions</i>	<i>Response Category & Code</i>
10	Do you have a family?	Yes.....1 No.....2
11	Are your parent alive?	Yes.....1 No.....2
12	Relation with parents	Good1 Not so good.....2 Separate.....3 Divorced.....4
13	Do you have any contact with your family?	Yes.....1 No.....2

13a	If yes, how many time?	One time.....1 Two time.....2 Four time.....3 More than five.....4
14	Do you have step parents?	Yes.....1 No.....2
14a	If yes, which one do you have?	Step Father.....1 Step Mother.....2
15	How does he/she treat you?	Good.....1 Bad.....2 Normal.....3 Worse.....4 Other (Specify)
16	Parent's Education (Father)	Literate.....1 Illiterate.....2 Don't know.....3
17	Parent's Main Occupation (Father)	Agriculture.....1 Service.....2 Porter / Worker / Driver.....3 Business.....4 Domestic Work.....5 Wage labour.....6 Don't know.....7 Others.....
18	Do your parents earn sufficient for survival of your family?	Sufficient.....1 Just Sufficient2 Insufficient.....3 Don't know.....4

IV. Causes of Leaving

QN	Questions	Response Category & Code
19	When did you leave your home?	Year _____ Month _____ (_____)
20	Why did you leave your home?	Due to poverty.....1 Misbehave of step parent....2 Due to alcoholic father.....3 Too much work at home....4 No schooling.....5 Influenced by others.....6 Others.....
21	Did you go to school at the time you left your home?	Yes.....1 No.....2
22	Who brought you here?	Broker.....1 Self.....2 Friends.....3 Parent / Step parent.....4 Others.....

V. Working Condition

QN	Questions	Response Category & Code
23	Do you work?	Yes.....1 No.....2
24	What type of work you do?	Ragpicking.....1 Begging.....2 Dishwashing & cleaning in hotel/restaurant and other.....3 Tempo/Microbus conductor..4 Domestic work.....5 Street Vender.....6 Other types of work.....
25	How many hours do you work per day?	_____ hours
26	How much money do you earn daily?	Rs. _____

27	Could you earn sufficiently to survive?	Yes.....1 No.....2
28	Do you save money?	Yes.....1 No.....2
28a	If yes, how much did you save during the last one week?	Rs._____
28b	If not, why?	No idea.....1 Lost.....2 Fear of police.....3 Robbed by others.....4 All spent.....5 Others.....
29	Where do you use your income?	Food.....1 Clothing.....2 Alcohol.....3 Lost.....4 Smoking.....5 Medical treatment.....6 Entertainment.....7 Others.....
30	Are you satisfied with your work?	Yes.....1 No.....2
30a	If yes, why?	_____
30b	If no, why?	_____
31	What is the main cause that made you to do so?	Domestic violence.....1 Lack of food.....2 Abuse and exploitation.....3 Deprivation from education...4 Poverty.....5 Others.....
32	Did you work in any private houses/enterprises in Kathmandu before you started living in street?	Yes.....1 No.....2
33	Why did you leave that place of work?	_____

VI. Living Condition

<i>QN</i>	<i>Questions</i>	<i>Response Category & Code</i>
34	Are you living recently with your parents?	Yes.....1 No.....2

35	If no, why aren't you living?	They aren't here.....1 Poverty.....2 They beat me.....3 Because of step parent.....4 Other (Specify)
36	How long have you been living on the street?	_____ months
37	Where did you live before you started living on the street?	Home.....1 Other place.....
38	What did you do there at the time you leave the previous place of residence?	_____
39	Where do you sleep?	Stupa/Temple.....1 Rented place.....2 Public place.....3 No fixed place.....4 Others.....
40	Do you feel secure on the street?	Yes.....1 No.....2
40a	If not, what problems you have to face in the street life?	Police.....1 Adult/young people.....2 Drunkards.....3 Dogs.....4 Stranger/outsider.....5 Other (Specify)
41	Are you happy staying in the street?	Yes.....1 No.....2
42	Who are others living with you?	None.....1 Friends.....2 Family members.....3 Other relatives.....4 Others
43	How people treat you as a street children?	Good.....1 Bad.....2 Neglect.....3 Other

VII Health and Hygiene

<i>QN</i>	<i>Questions</i>	<i>Response Category & Code</i>
44	Where you used to have your meal?	_____
45	What is your everyday meal?	Dal-bhat.....1 Bread.....2 Biscuit.....3

		Others.....
46	Did you spend any day without food during the last week?	Yes.....1 No.....2
46a	If yes, how many days?	_____
47	What do you do if you have nothing to eat?	_____
48	How many meals usually per day do you have?	One meal.....1 Two meals.....2 Three meals.....3 > Three meals.....4
49	Have you suffered from any kind of disease?	Yes.....1 No.....2
49a	If yes, what kind of disease?	Waterborne disease.....1 Respiratory problem.....2 Fever.....3 Tuberculosis.....4 Skin disease.....5 Back pain.....6 HIV.....7 Other (Specify).....
50	Do you feel the disease is associated with your work or life style?	Yes.....1 No.....2
51	How did you get better?	Hospital.....1 Self.....2 Others (Specify).....
52	From whom did you get financial help?	Tourist.....1 Nepali2 Others.....
53	Have you use drugs?	Yes.....1 No.....2
53a	If yes, what kind of drugs?	Smoking.....1 Tobacco.....2 Alcohol.....3 Dendrite.....4 Others.....
54	Why do you use drugs?	Just for relax.....1 Killing sadness and fear.....2 For energy.....3 Others.....

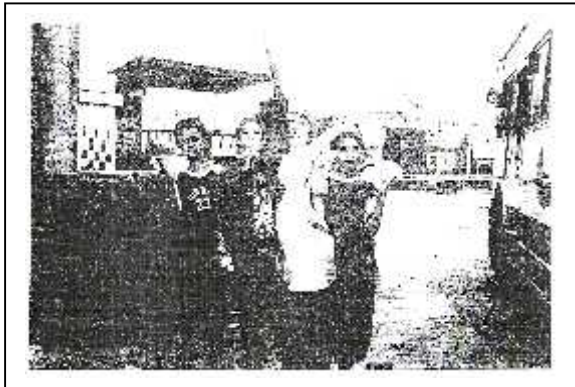
55	How did you learn about using drugs?	From friends.....1 From parents.....2 From others.....
56	Did you face any accident associated with your work?	Yes.....1 No.....2
56a	If yes, type of accident.	_____

VIII. Attitude towards Job

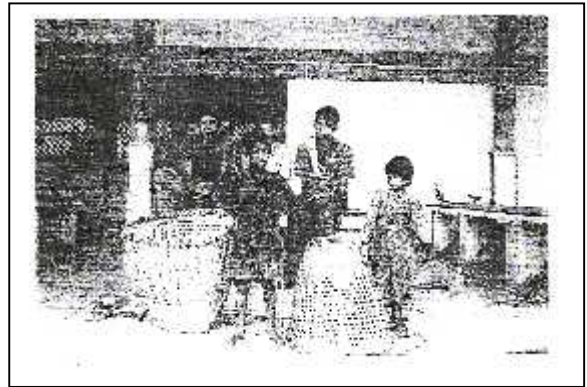
<i>QN</i>	<i>Questions</i>	<i>Response Category & Code</i>
57	What do you feel about your work?	Good.....1 Bad.....2
57a	If bad, why	_____, _____
58	What sort of work do you like?	_____
59	Do you know about any organizations working for welfare of street children (shelter home, rehabilitation center, etc.)?	Yes.....1 No.....2
60	Have you joint such organization?	Yes.....1 No.....2
60a	If no, why?	_____
61	What is your future aim?	_____
62	What do you need to fulfill it?	_____
63	Do you have any suggestion for the betterment of your life?	_____
64	What are the Problem facing by Child	- Sleeping on Road - Fooding -Health Problem -others

**A CASE STUDY ON PROBLEMS OF STREET CHILDREN IN NEPAL (CASE
STUDY OF NEW ROAD AND RATNA PARK AREA)**

APPENDIX B: PHOTOS



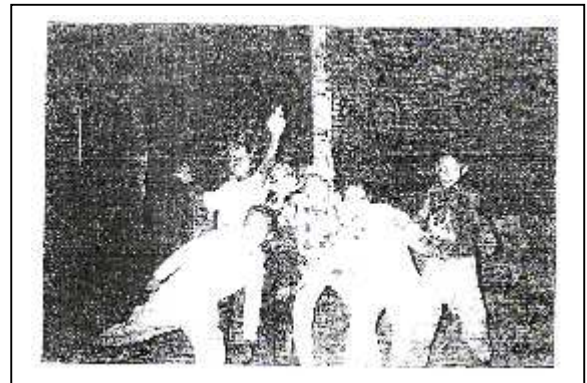
Selling Water Bottles and Other Goods at New Road and Ratna Park, Kathmandu



Porters at Kalimati Fruit and Vegetable market



Few Children Hiding their Face



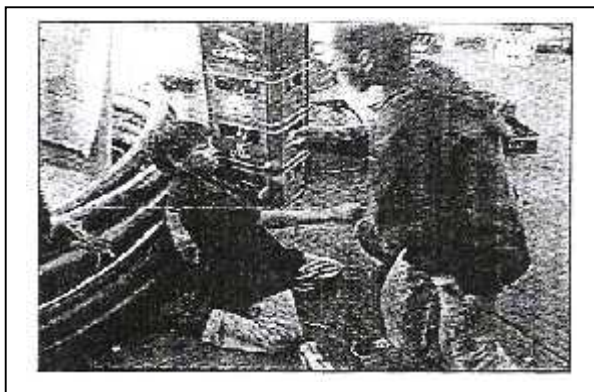
Street Children Enjoying with Peer Group



Street children, their sleeping area and sleeping materials



Street child sniffs glue from a baby food jar in the Super Market in Kathmandu while his friend pulls his own jar out of this shirt.



Two boys who abuse glue and solvents fight on a street in Kathmandu Mall. They exhibit the aggression typical of inhalant abusers. The fight started over a game of pickup sticks.



Nepal police Searches two street boys in Managua's Oriental market. The police Confiscated two jars of glue from the boys and smashed them against a nearby brick wall.



One of Kathmandu's street children winces as a medical worker treats an open sore on the boy's foot. The conditions that contribute to inhalant abuse also mean infrequent medical care.