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# The Causes, Consequences and Coping Strategies of Streetism in Shashemane Town

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**Abstract:** The main purpose of this study was to assess the Causes, Consequences and Coping Strategies of Streetism in Shashemane Town. The research method used in this study was mixed method, in order to collect the data and analysis the research quantitatively as well as qualitatively. In this study Purposive and availability sampling technique was used. The participants were 150 street children in Shashemane town and five key informants in Shashemane town which consists in the town women and children affairs head and District Social Welfare Officers, NGOs working in the study area and Police officers in the town. The main data gathering instruments/tools used for this study were questionnaire, interview, document analyses and FGDs. The data pertinent to the study was gathered through questionnaire and analyzed by using descriptive statistics (percentage, frequency,). The result of the study revealed that children came to the streets for searching job, poverty, parental disintegration, peer pressure, family influence, city life attraction, school failure. This study also shows that street children are engaged in diverse livelihood activities that to earn income by shoe shining, involving in petty trading, carrying of goods and other activities. Most children in the study area pass through tremendous problems while living and working on streets. some of the problems they encounter include; lack of basic needs including (food, clothing and shelter), lack of access to services such as education and other services, exposure to aversive weather conditions (sun heat, cold rain), encounter abuses; physical, psychological and sexual.

**Keywords:** Shashemane, Causes, Consequences, Coping Strategies, Street Children, Of Street, On Street

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## 1. Introduction

The problem of child streetism has grown over the years and has in fact become a recognized global problem [42]. That is to say that this phenomenon is not limited to only certain category of nations, but it is experienced in all nations or countries; especially, in developing countries [35]. They represent a marginalized, vulnerable, and victimized segment of society. Their rights to protection and access to basic rights such as education, healthcare and development are limited.

There are different sets of factors that may prompt a child to leave home. These factors could be economic factors such as poverty, a low standard of living, the child being sent to work at an early age; familial factors such as conflicts in the family, having a step-parent who was abusive, lack of love and attention; social factors such as pressure from peers to move away from home, attraction of city life as compared to

the life of the rural areas; psychological factors such as the need to assert one's independence, the need for more attention [1].

There is no accurate estimation of the number of street children worldwide, and estimation varies from one source to another. The United Nations estimates the population of children on the streets worldwide to be about 100 million, with the number rising daily. Of these, 20 million are in Africa; 40 million are in Latin America; 25-30 million in Asia; and 25 million in other parts of the world [44, 6]. At least one million children in Africa alone sexually exploited in bars and on the streets for commercial purpose. Many of them are doing difficult and dangerous jobs and are injured in serious accidents [14].

It is an undeniable fact and general knowledge that street children are part of the urban scene of Ethiopia. These

children depend on the public for their daily survival: they scrounge off the public, they serve as porters at market places, bus and railway stations; they shine shoes, and some of the children steal from the public [31]. The most rapidly increasing child welfare problem within Ethiopia is that of street children. This group has been conceptualized as consisting of deprived children, rejected children, survivalist children and runaway children who migrate to Ethiopia's urban areas [17]. The vulnerability of the street children in Ethiopia and particularly in Shashemane is not only caused by the absence of family protection, but also because of the community and the government do not offer them alternatives.

As global picture street children in Ethiopia is very limited; and studies and reports on the subject have come up with varying estimations. It is estimated that 450,000 children live on the streets of Ethiopia [34]. However, [44] estimates that the problem may be far more serious, with nearly 600,000 street children country wide and over 100,000 in Addis Ababa. Similarly, Child Hope, an NGO working with street children, claimed that about 500,000 rural children are not given the opportunity to go to school since they are living in extreme poverty.

The number of children aged below 15 years account for 48.6% of the total population in Ethiopia [13]. Even though it is difficult to get accurate nationwide data, there are rough estimates indicating that there were about 35 million children in the country in 2007. Many thousands of children live under especially difficult circumstances [28]. Children in every nation are the future leaders and therefore needs protection by their families and their countries. Hence, it is necessary to address the need of children to adequate basic need and education, security, and love. The magnitudes of the problem of street children are not fully known in Oromia region in general and Shashemane town in particular.

The problems of street children in Ethiopia had got recognition from the government since the era of the Dereg [29]. Just like in many other countries in the world, Ethiopia's urban areas have children who live and earn a living on the streets. Studies about street children have been done in different countries in Africa like Zimbabwe [5], and Ethiopia [18, 23, 47] to mention just few. They confirmed that street children are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Children who live and work on the street face several social and economic problems which may not be experienced by children living within the family environment.

The causes of streetism are the result of social change of varying degrees, changes which destabilize life or disintegrate the family and the community. According to [42], poverty, natural disasters, family disintegration, AIDS and violence are the major reasons why children live and work on the streets. So far as Shashemane is one of most populous town in the country, there are many children living on the street, flowing from different corner of rural areas. Based on survey conducted by CDI in 2014 in the town there were about 400 street children who lived in Shashemane

town. The above survey clearly shows that, the problem of Streetism was still increasing and becoming the social and economic problem of the town. Recognizing the alarming rate of the problem, the researcher initiated to conduct study with a particular emphasis on the town.

### **1.1. Research Questions**

Generally, the purpose of this study is to assess the causes, consequences and coping strategies of streetism in shashemane town. This study tries to answer the following questions:

- What are the main causes of streetism in Shashemane town, West Arsi, Ethiopia?
- What are challenge/ problems faced by street children of Shashemane town, Ethiopia?
- What coping strategies do the street children of Shashemane town use?

### **1.2. Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of the study is to assess the causes, consequences and coping strategies of streetism in Shashemane Town, West Arsi Zone, Ethiopia.

In particular, the study has the following specific objectives:

1. To describe the factors that expose children to street life in the Shashemane town.
2. To identify the challenges/ problem faced by street children in Shashemane town.
3. To assess the coping strategies of street children in Shashemane town.

## **2. Review of Related Literature**

### **2.1. The Concept of Street Children**

The definition of the term "street children" was initially proposed by an Inter-NGO program on street children in 1983 and later adopted by the United Nations. It states that "street child" refers to: "any boy or girl who has not reached adulthood, for whom the street (in the widest sense of the word including unoccupied dwellings, waste land, etc.) has become his/her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised or directed by responsible adults." [29].

[40] Defines street children as children under 18 years old who spend most of their time on the street. UNICEF also presents three subcategories of street children: street living children, street working children and the children of street living families. Street living children are those who have lost times with their families and live alone on the street.

Street working children are those who spend all or most of their time working on the street to earn income for their families or for themselves (they have a home to return to and do not usually sleep on the street). The children of street living families are those who live with their families on the street.

## 2.2. Street Children: A Global Overview

Worldwide, there were approximately 100 million children in 2003 that live on city streets without care or shelter [46] a figure that doubled in a three-year period (200 million in 2006). The United States has over two million homeless and runaway (at risk of becoming homeless) youth, 16% of whom have run away more than five times [37]. The abuse and exploitation of children happens in all countries and societies across the world. Children's street work is a global problem affecting the academic, economic, social and health development of millions of children around the world [21].

## 2.3. Street Children in African Context

The problem of Street Children has been growing steadily in the last two decades. An estimated 10 million children in Africa live without families, mostly in towns as 'Street Children' [41]. While the aforesaid estimates tend to be realistically low, it must also be noted that in the last two decades or so, Africa has experienced unprecedented level of crisis ranging from such natural disasters as famine resulting from drought to ethno-religious wars, wars of attrition and the devastating impacts of HIV/AIDS. All these put together have added a quantum leap in the number of Street Children in Africa estimated currently to be in the range of 40 million [43].

## 2.4. Street Children in Ethiopian Context

With a larger portion of traditional society, Ethiopia is one of the populaces and least developed country in sub Saharan Africa. The number of child below 19 year 43m in [10]. Therefore the majority of country's population is essentially within category of child age.

In a social history of Ethiopia, Pankhurst cited in [22] stated that, "Early historical data on Ethiopian children is so scant that it is almost as though they were neither seen nor heard." Although consolidated data is not available, Ethiopian children have suffered and are still suffering the cumulative effects of poverty and underdevelopment. Traditional practices of different ethnic groups are the other worst adversary of Ethiopian children [39]. The infanticide of both legitimate and illegitimate children was documented in studies dealt with child related malpractices in Ethiopia. Child sacrifice also constituted another traditional practice among a few ethnic groups [15].

The situation of children in Ethiopia is one of general malnutrition, poor hygiene, lack or shortage of proper clothing, essential social services (such as health, education, and recreation) and displacement due to natural and manmade disasters. The problems of homelessness (including those of street children) and child labor are quite common. With regard to girls, early marriage and abduction, harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, incisions, cutting the tonsils/uvula and child prostitution are still widespread. In short, the poverty that pervades the society is obviously observed in the living condition of children in the country [17].

## 2.5. The Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this research takes into account the following two theories: the social capital theory and Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory.

### 2.5.1. The Social Capital Theory

The social capital theory offers a beginning point in the theoretical analysis on the plight of street children in the world. According to [8] social capital is defined as resources available within the structure of relations between children and adults within the family, making possible the achievement of certain ends that in its absence would not be achieved. This theory draws a correlation between family structure and home-leaving. For a child to have access to other resources in society, the family should possess some social capital, which should be accessible to the child in the present time and a promising future.

The social capital of the family is the relationship between children and parents. Social capital of a child should include the combination of the family social capital and community social capital [7].

### 2.5.2. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

Maslow's hierarchy of need theory explains the psychological theory of human motivation, which includes five sets of needs, that are (i) physiological needs, (ii) safety, (iii) love, (iv) self esteem and (v) self actualization [26]. According to Maslow's theory of human development as mentioned in [114], the street children will never develop to their full potential and abilities or self-actualization if they continue to live in the streets since the streets are not a good place to their development. Maslow's theory can be used to explain the reason why children resort to live on the street. Human beings are motivated by having these needs fulfilled. According to Maslow all human beings require the first need in the hierarchy to be fulfilled, that is, physiological needs (basic needs), which include, food, shelter and clothing.

In the absence of such (that is lack of food, shelter and clothing), it may lead children to the streets where they think these needs can be met. In other instances, where families have provided basic needs, but the other needs in the hierarchy are not met such as security may also cause children to leave their nesting home for the streets. Lack of love and affection may cause the child to move to the street.

## 2.6. The Causes of the Phenomenon of Street Children

Worldwide, large numbers of children are faced with many problems daily. Normally the cause of street children is multidimensional where several factors play the role of pushing and pulling children into the streets. Push factors that force children to come on the streets include the following examples; intense poverty, family conflicts such as domestic violence and abuse, incurable illnesses and HIV/AIDS, abandonment and bad experience in school. Pull factors that encourage children to leave their homes include; Search of freedom, work and employment opportunities [1].

### **2.6.1. Poverty**

Poverty is the main cause of child streetism and children seek work. Poor parents send their children to work, not out of choice, but for reasons of economic expediency. The hunting grounds for child traffickers are invariably areas of the most extreme poverty where families have exhausted all other strategies for survival. Poverty is also a symptom of child labour. Denial of education blocks the escape route from poverty for the next generation of the household [30]. The disparity between the urban areas and rural areas is largely a function of underdevelopment and societal inequalities. Children who live and work on the streets often come from slums and squatter settlements where poverty and precarious family situations are common, schools are overcrowded with no safe places to stay [19].

### **2.6.2. Rapid Urbanization**

One of the main factors associated with children finding themselves in difficult circumstances in developing country is rapid urbanization. The populations of urban areas in many developing countries are growing at an alarming rate. The causes of this urban demographic explosion are both internal and external to cities. Among the internal causes is the high population growth rate that results from high birth rates. External causes include all factors that favor the exodus from the rural areas. The net effect of the pressures on infrastructures is the development of densely populated peripheral areas and slums, in which many people are deprived of basic services, and the environment becomes so polluted that there is permanent risk of epidemics [11].

### **2.6.3. Dysfunctional Families**

Family disruption, in the form of desertion, separation, divorce and death due to HIV/AIDS or other natural causes, has shrunk the family size among the poor still further, often resulting, in poor single-parent or child-headed households. Parents' behaviors have a big impact on the construction of a child's personality. During this process, parents might, intentionally or unintentionally, harm their children. According to Kars, parents might give more responsibility than a child can deal with and they might make them work in unhealthy conditions [2, 33].

### **2.6.4. Abuse and Neglect**

Apart from disruptive socio-economic conditions which may force children to the streets, verbal and physical abuse and conditions of neglect also drive children from home. Some of the families of street children are headed by mothers who are victims of abusive male partners. The mother has no alternative but to endure the abuse, because she needs the male partner for economic survival. These children run away from home due to poor relationships with their step-parents [3].

### **2.6.5. Inadequate Housing**

There are children who are on the streets in many developing countries because they have no suitable homes. Some have families which live in very cramped conditions,

perhaps one room or even a room shared with another family. As children reach adolescents, they are no longer able to live in such conditions and opt for the streets. [25] States: The dimensions of the accommodation are too small to allow any intimacy.

### **2.6.6. Seeking Independent and Free Life**

There are also studies that report that the aim of some street children's wanderings in the streets is just to seek an independent and free life; they are attracted to the streets by the freedom of the streets. [3] ethnographic study conducted in Columbia disclosed that, most street children were not neglected or abandoned. Based on a systematic review of the literatures from South Africa, [12] also reported that, for some street children, wandering in the street often meant enjoying freedom, which is regarded by them as their life priority.

### **2.6.7. Inappropriate Parenting**

Inappropriate parenting is described as another factor pushing children into the streets [45, 32]. questionnaire survey of 900 street children discovered that, although family financial crisis played an important role in pushing children to drift into the streets, the connection between parenting style and children's running away from homes is stronger. Child neglect and abuse by family members are indicated as the main factors responsible for children's presences in the streets [5, 12, 32].

## **2.7. Coping Strategies of Street Children**

Coping strategies are defined as ways in which people deal with demands of living. The process of coping means that persons create a series of solutions to life's problems, solutions that can be changed in the future. Coping strategies include behaviors that are relevant in an active, effective person dealing with demands, often conflicting, of a biological, psychological and social nature [20, 16, 27].

Other studies have highlighted the strengths of street children, the personal resources they call upon in order to survive. Such studies suggest that these children are creative and resourceful in the face of very difficult circumstances. It is, nonetheless, unfortunate that much of their strength and coping skills come from being survivors of abuse, neglect and other adversities [36]. Street children rely on a diverse range of survival strategies to meet their daily needs. Much of the street child's daily life is purposeful and largely conducted on the move. Studies from many developing countries show that street children's work include, shoe cleaning, singing on buses, vending, carrying loads in markets or at stations, guarding and washing cars, pimping and prostitution [14].

Begging is one of the ways which street children used to meet their daily needs. According to [38], Children engage in begging either full-time or part-time as a way of livelihood or supplementing their income from begging with that from other activities. The main justification for many boys and girls to be involved in begging is horrible household poverty.

In such contexts, begging ensures their basic needs are meeting and that it also enhances their capacity to be significant contributors in terms of family income.

### 2.8. Challenges and Abuse Street Children Encounter

Street children are the casualties of economic growth, war, poverty, loss of traditional values, domestic violence, physical and mental abuse and constitute a marginalized group in most societies. They do not have what society considers appropriate relationships with major institutions of childhood such as family, education and health. The continuous exposure to harsh environments and the nature of their lifestyle make them vulnerable to substance use and this threatens their mental, physical, social and spiritual wellbeing. In many regions, most of these children use alcohol and other psychoactive substances. [19] Mention that life on the streets is difficult. Children are faced very difficult and dangerous circumstances on a daily basis. They are in danger of injury, murder, violence, rape sexual exploitation, drugs, HIV/AIDS and other diseases, hunger, solitude.

## 3. Methods and Materials

Based on the problem under investigation, usually a study tends to be quantitative or qualitative in their nature. Mixed methods research resides in the middle of this continuum because it incorporates elements of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Frequently, researchers that use mixed methods employ a research design that uses both quantitative and qualitative data to answer a particular question or set of questions. The rationale for selecting a mixed approach for the study is mainly due to the nature of the problem under study and the group involved in it. According to [13] conducting a research with street children, the method of data collection should not rely on a single approach.

Description of study area: Oromia is one of the 9 regional states of Ethiopia that constitute the larger population of the country's population and geographical size. The study area, Shashemane town is found in Oromia regional state and located 250 km from the capital of Addis Ababa. It has latitude of 7° 12' north and a longitude of 38° 36' east. There are a number of street children in the town there are about 800 street children in the town. Concerning the sources of data, the study has employed data from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were collected by survey questionnaire, interviews and focus group discussion. And also, the researcher gathered primary data through key informant interview from Shashemane town women and children affairs office, District Social Welfare Office, NGOs working in the study area and Police officers in the town. The secondary data obtained from different documentary review such as government reports, NGOs reports, and newspaper and from different document found in Shashemane town.

The total population of this study was street children who are working and living on the streets Shashemane town. According to information obtained from office of CDI and

Shashemane Social welfare office, the total numbers of street children who are working and living on the streets of shashemane town was about 800 in 2015. The targeted respondents were District Social Welfare Officers, district women and children affairs leader, Representatives of Non-governmental organizations working in the district, Police officers in the town and street children of the area.

In this study, study site and key informant individual participate in the study were purposely selected. Purposive sampling is preferred to select key informants who had rich information to the central issues being studied [22]. The reason that researcher used purposive sampling for selection of study site was: the selected study site (Awasho, Abosto and Arada) were selected because of the presence of a high concentration of street children in the town. The Street children included in the survey questionnaire were selected by Availability sampling. The reason that researcher used Availability sampling were because of most of the street children not constantly settle in one place, move from place to place because of different reasons.

The sample size of this study was, 150 out 800 street children in Shashemane town administration of the Oromia regional state. These street children were selected through Availability and purposive sampling. This constitutes 18% of the target population. Concerning this [4], has assured that it is advisable to take 10 – 20% samples to the total population in survey or relational design. Five key informant were selected purposively one from Shashemane town women and children affairs office, one from District Social Welfare Office, two participants from NGOs working in the study area and one from Police office working with child right and protection in the town. From selected sample of street children, 120 respondents were involved survey questionnaire, 10 respondents were included interview and 20 respondents were included in focus group discuss.

In gathering the required data for the study, interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), document analyses and questionnaires were used. Data collection instruments were designed for identifying information related to: Social and demographic characteristics of participants, including age, gender, place of residence, level of education, parental living status, educational level and occupation of street children families, The main causes of streetism in the study area, Challenges or problem faced children on the street, Coping or survival strategies used by street children on street and Present living situation and addiction status of street children.

The researchers trained six people as the research assistants and one interviewer. The training focused on the objectives of the research, nature and types of data to be collected, and on their role as interviewers.

Both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis used. For quantitative analysis of data obtained through questionnaire survey SPSS (statistical packages for social science) version 20.0 software and Microsoft excel program used to present the result by descriptive statistics mainly frequency and percentage.

## 4. Results

**Table 1.** Demographic Characteristics of Street Children.

No.	Variables	Frequency	Percent
1	Sex		
	Male	85	70.8
	Female	35	29.2
	Total	120	100.0
2	Age		
	7-10	6	5.0
	11-14	61	50.8
	15-18	53	44.2
	Total	120	100.0
3.	Birth place: region		
	Oromia	38	31.7
	SNNSP	74	61.7
	Amhara	4	3.3
	Other	4	3.3
	Total	120	100.0

As it is indicated in Table 1, among 120 respondents 85 (70.8%) of them are male and the remaining 35 (29.2%) are females. This shows that, there are a higher proportion of street boys than street girls in the study area. Cornering age of street children, most of the children who had been included in survey questionnaire are 11-14 years old that comprises 50.8% of the total respondents. The forty four percent of total respondents were belongs to 15- 18 years of age and only 5.1% belongs to the age group of 7-10 years. This indicates that, there are a higher proportion of street with age 11-14 year age in the study area. Cornering to the place of birth/region of street children's out of 120, 74 (61.7%) of the street respondents responded that their birth place were SNNPS region, 38 (31.7%) Oromia region, 3.3% from Ahmara region and 3.3% are from other region of Ethiopia. This shows that, there are a higher proportion of street which came from SNNPS region in the study area (see Table 1).

**Table 2.** Demographic Characteristics of Street Children.

S/N	Variable	Frequency	Percent
4.	Ethnicity		
	Amhara	10	8.3
	Oromo	20	16.7
	Woliata	58	48.3
	Gurage	14	11.7
	Other	18	15.0
	Total	120	100
5.	Level of education		
	Illiterate	11	9.2
	Read and write	19	15.8
	Elementary (1-6)	57	47.5
	Junior (7-8)	26	21.7
	High school (9 – 12)	7	5.8
	Total	120	100.0
6.	Parental survival status		
	Both live	55	45.9
	Both died	31	25.8
	Father died	16	13.3
	Mother died	11	9.17
	I don't know	7	5.8
	Total	120	100.0

With regard to the ethnic composition of street children out of 120, 58 (48.3%) of the street children respondents were from Woliata ethnicity, Oromo 20 (16.7%), Gurage 14 (11.7%) Amhara 10 (8.3%) and the remaining 15% of the street children's were from different ethnic groups (Tigray, Kembeta, Hadiya, Sidamo and others).

One can easily see that these children in shashemane are composed of different ethnic groups coming from various geographical areas and most of street children came from Woliata ethnic group. (see table 2).

The key informant interview stated that majority of street children came from SNNPS region and the majority of street children were woliata ethnicity. The reasons of these children were poverty, searching jobs, peer pressure and land scarcity in the region.

Concerning parental status, About 55 (45.9%) of the street children came from of them two-parent headed families. The remaining had either lost both parents and one of them. 31 (25.8) have mentioned that both of their parents have died, about (13.3%) had lost their fathers whereas slightly above ten percent (9.17%) had lost their mothers. The remaining slightly 5 percent was not aware of the status of their parents (see Table 2).

**Table 3.** Distribution of Demographic Characteristics of Street Children.

S/N	Variable	Frequency	Percent
8.	Currently living with		
	Step mother	2	1.7
	Step father	4	3.3
	Father/mother	15	12.5
	Father only	3	2.5
	Mother only	3	2.5
	Relative	17	14.2
	With friends of street	48	40.0
	Alone	16	13.3
	Other	12	10.0
	Total	120	100.0
9.	Current living place of parents		
	In this town	21	17.5
	Out of this town	65	54.2
	No resident parents/both parents died	27	22.5
	I don't know	7	5.8
	Total	120	100.0
10.	No. of house hold size		
	< 4	29	24.2
	4-6	78	65.0
	7-8	11	9.2
	> 8	1	.8
	Not responded	1	.8
	Total	120	100.0

With regard to the living condition of the participant street children about 48 (40%) respondents mentioned currently living with friends, 17 (14.2%) live with relatives, 15 (12.5%) live with father/mother, 16 (13.3) live alone and rest are live with father (2.5%) or mother only (2.5%), step father, step father and with other people (see Table 3).

Concerning current residence place of Parents of Street Children, out of 120, 65 (54.2%) respondent mention that their family currently live out of shashemane town whereas 21 (17.5%) mention their parents are currently living in

shashemane town and 27 (22.5%) respondents mention that there was no resident parents, the remaining 7 (5.8%) was not aware of the living place of their parents.

**Table 4.** Socio-Economic Characteristics of Street Children's Parent.

No.	Variable	Frequency	Percent
1	Family contact		
	Yes	54	45.0
	No	62	51.7
	Not responded	4	3.3
	Total	120	100
2.	How often do you see/contact your family		
	Daily	20	37.2
	Weekly	4	7.4
	Monthly	5	9.2
	Yearly	25	46.2
	Total	54	100.0
3	Reason for not contact		
	Both parents died	31	49.95
	Cannot manage visiting cost	7	11.29
	Don't know their address	6	9.7
	No desire/attraction to visit them	12	19.36
	They don't like me to visit	6	9.7
	Other	0	0
	Total	62	100
4	Mother's educational level		
	Illiterate	62	51.7
	Primary school	35	29.2
	junior school	3	2.5
	High school	5	4.2
	College	1	.8
	I don't know	14	11.7
Total	120	100.0	

Regarding family contact of street children the survey found that 62 (51.7%) of the children did not visit their parents while as 54 (45%) of children visit or contact with their family at different time and 4 participant didn't responded. Among 54 street children, 25 (46.2%) visit their parent yearly, 20 (37.2%) visit their parent daily, 9.2% and 7.4% of street children visit or contact with their parent monthly and weekly respectively. Among 62 street children 31 (50%) did not visit because of family dysfunctional (death, family breakdown), 12 (19.36%) of street children did not visit because they had no attraction to visit parents, 7 (11.29%) of the street children because they cannot manage visit cost and 9.7% because their parents did not want their children to visit them and 9.7% because they did not know address of their family (Table 4).

By the informal discussion and FGDs held with children, the researcher learned that most of them preferred to visit their parents during holidays.

**Table 5.** Socio-Economic Characteristics of Street Children's Parent.

No.	Variable	Frequency	Percent
5	Father's educational level		
	Illiterate	23	19.2
	Primary school	53	44.2
	junior school	15	12.5
	High school	10	8.3
	College	2	1.7
	I don't know	17	14.2
	Total	120	100.0

No.	Variable	Frequency	Percent
6	Parents occupation		
	Farming	43	35.8
	Petty trader	37	30.8
	Daily labor	4	3.3
	Other occupations/not mentioned in the list	36	30
	Total	120	100.0
7	Estimated family income per month		
	< 150 birr	8	6.7
	151- 200 birr	4	3.3
	201- 400	10	8.3
	401 – 500	7	5.8
	>500	15	12.5
	I don't know	76	63.3
Total	120	100.0	
8	Kinds of house parents/guard live in		
	Owned houses	58	48.3
	Private rented houses	36	30.0
	Kebele rented houses	5	4.2
	I don't know	17	14.2
	Not responded	4	3.3
Total	120	100	

With regard to parental education, nearly 52 percent (51.7%) of the respondents' mothers and (19.2%) of their fathers are illiterate, 44.2% fathers and 29.2%mothers had primary level education.

Nearly 13% fathers and 2.5%mothers had junior level education.10% father and 4% mothers had secondary level education. The occupation of children parents reflects socioeconomic status of their families. out of 120 street children the survey shows that that most of the study children's parents live in rural areas and are largely small peasant farmers 43 (35.8%), petty traders 37 (30.8%) and daily laborers 3.3%, and 36 (30%) parents engaged in other activities. Majority of the study children have come from the poor families living with subsistence agriculture (Table 5).

Out of 120 respondents responded that nearly 7% of the families of street children earn less than 150 birr per month, 8.3% of families earn b/n 201-400birr, and nearly 13% of family of street children greater than 500birr and 63.3% respondents' response do not know family income.

Concerning kinds of parentally houses a common feature of the respondents' families is that they live in Kebele rented houses 4.2%, 48.3% of the respondents' families own houses. 30% of the respondents' family is the live in private rented houses. 14% of respondents' response I don't known and 3.3% of respondent were not responded (Table 5).

#### 4.1. Factors Responsible for Street Life Involvement on Street Children

**Table 6.** Reasons Given by Street Children for Leaving Home.

Reasons	Frequency	Percent
disagreement with family	13	10.8
one or both parents dead	4	3.3
searching for job	54	45.0
I want to be independent from my family	14	11.7
peer pressure	6	5.0
poverty/hunger	23	19.2
Some other	6	5.0
Total	120	100.0

The children were asked why they were on the streets. Different causal factors contributed for child streetism in this study. Some studies carried out on street children in the country shows a multiplicity of factors that lead to the emergence and development of street life. Among them are: searching for work, poverty, family breakdown, parental death, disagreement with family, the influence of peers and other factors were the causes for child streetism. The majority (45%) reported that they had left home in to search of jobs. Ninety percent (19.2%) children reported that they were homeless, that they because of poverty. 12% report that they live home because of need of independent from their family. Other factor such as disagreement with their family, dysfunctional family, peer pressure and their other factor such as attracted by city life were the main causes of children living to the home (table 6). The findings of this study show that searching for work takes the lead for children's decision to leave home and followed by poverty and disagreement with family.

FGDs and interview confirm that the majority of children came to the town in search for better jobs. This shows that children's background is from farming communities. The majority of children on live and work on the street are from Wolayta zone where the landholding per person is <0.25ha, large family size, level of degradation of natural resource is high and population pressure is a real threat in relation to the potential resource base to support the inhabitants. Children assume better living conditions in towns; they make decisions to move out of their villages using all possible means to reach the destination. The decision is usually made collectively if they are very young or may be also influenced by peers. About 68% of interviewed and FGD children responded that they came to Shashemenne seeking for improved living conditions while 19% of children said they were influenced by peers. The results of FGDs and key informant interviews also confirm poverty being the main reason for rural-urban migration of children in the area. This implies that more and more migration is taking place, aggravated and hastened by rural poverty and poverty forces children into streetism to work to support them or supplement their rural families.

Through interviews and FGDs the researcher found out that the children left out their home while they face different types of physical and labor abuse from their families.

Some children complained about physical abuse they suffered either from their stepparents or their biological parents. In this respect children, see migration as a means to gain freedom and liberation from family neglect or violence of any type.

As a 14 year old female explained:

*"I do not want to live with my parents at the moment condition. This is due to reasons that my parents are very poor and do not have the capacity to accommodate my basic needs (food, clothes) and to my brothers and sister too. In addition my father is very alcoholic and I afraid of his physical abuses. He frequently used to punish along with my brothers and sister"*

This implies that sometimes lack of real parents, separation or divorced of parents also can be causes for children to flock out street life. Besides, the physical, sexual and psychological abuses happened on the children at home environment are also the other reasons for being on the street [16].

#### 4.2. Survival Strategies and Activities Done by Street Children

Table 7. Coping Strategies and Related Variable of Street Children.

No.	Variable	Frequency	Percent
	Activities to earn money		
	Begging	6	5.0
	Selling different item on the street	37	30.8
	Shoe polishing	38	31.7
1	Broker	2	1.7
	Carrying luggage	22	18.3
	Other	9	7.5
	Not responded	6	5.0
	Total	120	100
	Daily working hour		
	1-3	1	.8
	4- 6	34	28.3
2	7-9	68	56.7
	10-12	8	6.7
	Other	2	1.7
	Not responded	7	5.8
	Total	120	100.
	Income earn per day (ETH. birr)		
	None	2	1.7
	5-10	10	8.3
3	11-15	50	41.7
	16-20	35	29.2
	>20	7	5.8
	Not responded	16	13.3
	Total	120	100.0

Concerning activities to earn money, as shown in the table street children in the study areas are engaged in a wide variety of activities. Out of 120 street children, most frequently mentioned activities are: shoe polishing (31.7%), selling different things (30.8%), carrying luggage (18.3%), begging (5%), other activities such as collecting dust bin and paper and any other activities with small frequencies have been grouped as others where (7.5%) and 5% of street children are not responds (Table 7).

In the interview and FGD, children were asked about activities used to earn money to live on the street, majority of the engage in Shoe polishing, carrying luggage, selling lottery tickets, selling 'kolo', cooked potatoes and loading and unloading are among the types of work available for children.

The aforementioned activities were reported by the street children at the time of interview. The street children, particularly who are involved in activities not approved by the society suppressed the nature of their works. They did not report correctly. The key informants mentioned some activities, which were not mentioned by street children. These activities are: Theft, pick pocketing, snatching, sex work, drug business, informer of anti social people etc.

The majority of children of the street children (56.7%) said

that they was worked between 7-9 hour a day, 28.3% worked between 4-6 hour a day, 6.7% reported to have worked between 10-12 hours a day where as nearly 6% of children not responds daily working hours. As shown in the table majority of street children (41.70%) earn 11-15 ETH birr, 29.2% earn daily 16-20 ETH birr, 10 (8.3%) of the study participants earn less than 10 ETH birr per day and 16

(13.3%) of the study participants were not responded. The mean average income of study subjects is 3.3ETH birr per day.

Out of 120 respondents majority of street children spend their time on the street with their street friends (78.3%), while, 17.5% spend their time alone and 4% spend their with relatives (Table 8).

**Table 8.** *Sleeping place, length of time being on the street and Related Variable of Street Children.*

No.	Variable	Frequency	Percent
4	With whom do you spend your time on street		
	Alone	21	17.5
	With relatives	4	3.3
	With friends	94	78.3
	Other	1	.8
	Total	120	100.0
5	Sleeping place at night		
	At home with parents	22	18.3
	At home with relative	11	9.2
	Rented home	24	20.0
	Abounded building	23	19.2
	On Street & plastic shelter	35	29.2
	Not responded	5	4.2
	Total	120	100.0
6	Length of time you have been away from home (year)		
	0-1	26	21.7
	2-3	45	37.5
	4-5	40	33.3
	6-7	3	2.5
	>7years	6	5.0
		Total	120

Concerning sleeping place of street children table above shows that 22 (18.3%) sleep at home with parent, 11 (9.2%) home with relative, 23 (19.2%) of street children sleep in abounded buildings, 35 (29.2%) of children sleep on street and plastic shelter (Table 8).

During interview and FGDs most of street children mentioned that they used to sleep on street and in Kesha houses. The majority of interviewed children in Arada and Abosto said that they sleep on streets while those from Awasho said that they sleep in bounded building and station.

Out of 20 included in focus group discussion and 10 street children included in interview, majority of street children

said that they were sleeping in a where it is not secure open space. With regard to time of staying on street out of 120, 26 (21.7%) have been on the streets for at least two to twelfth months. The table also shows that 45 (37.5%) have been on the streets for two to three years. 40 (33.3%) have been on the street for four to five. 3 (2.5%) have been on the street for six to seven year. 6 (5%) have been on the street for more than seven years.

This table has shown that at least majority of the streets children have been on the streets for more than one year. (Table 8).

**Table 9.** *Survival Strategies and Related Variable of Street Children, Shashemene.*

No.	Variable	Frequency	Percent
7	Currently attending school		
	Yes	23	19.2
	No	97	80.8
	Total	120	100.0
8	Reasons for currently not attending school		
	No person to pay their fees and other school materials	20	20.6
	Because of work	63	64.9
	Parent died& School is not important and others	14	14.5
	Total	97	100
9	Sources of food		
	I buy	96	80.0
	I beg	7	5.8
	I collect loft over	3	2.5
	Other	13	10.8
	Not responded	1	.8
	Total	120	100.0
10	Frequency of having meals		

No.	Variable	Frequency	Percent
11	two meal	39	32.5
	three meals	28	23.3
	as available	52	43.3
	Not responds	1	.8
	Total	120	100
	Where from do you get clothes		
	I buy	108	90.0
	I beg	10	8.3
	Others	1	.8
	Not responded	1	.8
	Total	120	100
12	Do you have extra cloths		
	Yes	57	47.5
	No	62	51.7
	Not responded	1	.8
Total	120	100.0	

The majority of children “of the street 97 (80.8) of street children was not attending school currently where as respondents, 23 (19.2%) of street children were attending school currently.

According to the response, 63 (64.9%) of the respondents indicated that they cannot currently attend school because of work, 20 (20.6%) dropped out because there was no person to pay their fees and other school materials. 14 (14.5%) indicated they dropped out of school because they had no parents and that they were not interested in attending school (Table 9).

concerning sources of food the majority of children “of the street” (80%) bought the food they ate, 2.5% ate leftovers from restaurants and drop in the centers. while 5.5% ate by begging, and nearly 11% of children ate food by other (from family home, stealing etc). Thus, street children are mainly meeting their own food requirements through purchase from their own earnings or through scavenging, 52 (43.3%) out of 120 children had ate as available. 39 (32.5%) of the respondents had two meals a day while 28 respondents (23%) had three meals a day (Table 9).

In the interview and FGD, children were asked the source and frequency of obtained food and how they fulfill their basic need, in terms of fulfilling basic needs except one respondent, all of the children mentioned that they have problem. The children do not have sufficient proper clothing to go well with the weather. They explained that they are constantly exposed to heat and cold without proper clothing.

The study revealed that many of the interviewed children feed themselves. Out of 20 included in FGDs children only 6 children ate three time, 5 children ate two times and 9 children ate as available and the food intake depends on the daily income they earn.

#### 4.3. Substance Used, Health Problem, Harassment and Related Variable of Street Children

**Table 10.** Substance and types of substance used by Of Street Children.

No.	Variable	Frequency	Percent
1	Do you have different habit		
	Yes	53	44.2
	No	66	55.0

No.	Variable	Frequency	Percent
	Not responded	1	.8
	Total	120	100.0
2	Types of substance used by street children		
	Drinking Alcohol		
	Yes	47	39.1
	No	73	60.9
3	Total	120	100
	Chat chewing		
	Yes	35	29.1
	No	85	70.9
4	Total	120	100
	Cigarette smoking		
	Yes	41	34.
	No	79	65.6
5	Total	120	100
	Other substance use		
	Yes	16	13.3
	No	104	87.7
Total	120	100	

Concerning habits out of 120, 53 (44.2%) of the respondents responded that they are exposed to various kinds of habits. 55% of respondents does not exposes to any habit. Chat chewing, smoking and drinking are almost common to most of these category of respondents. Other substance and sniffing petrol are also entertained. A key informants explained that street children who are working and living on the street develop and feel effects including fear, depression and blaming themselves are some psychological problems that affect streets and lead them to alcoholism and drug abuse in order to forget their fearing and to be happy. Additional a key informant interview explain that street children uses substances such as alcohol, Cigarette, shisha, cannabis, marijuana, ganja because of peer pressure and other factors.

As seen from table 11, more than half (57% out of 120) of the street children reported that they felt sick. The results of survey shows that 11 (9.2%) street children were infected with malaria while 9 (7.5) suffered from typhoid and 16 (13.3%) headache sick. 24 (20%) sick other diseases. The remaining 50 (42.8%) children did not encounter major illnesses that need treatment (Table 11). As seen from the table the findings of the study indicated that children faced different types of difficulties during their presence in the streets. Types of abuse varied, from physical abuse 30

(36.5%) of children, psychological and verbal (swearing, expulsion, insulting, scolding etc), as indicated by 18 (22%) of street children. Ten (10) children admitted to having been exposed to sexual abuse. Through interviews and FGDs the researcher found out that the children left out their home while they face different types of physical and labor abuse from their families.

As shown in the table 11, the presence of a child in the streets exposes him/her to numerous problems and difficulties. Findings of the study revealed that 82 (68.3%) of children out of the total sample of 120 children have faced difficulties and problems during their presence in the streets, while 38 (31.7%) of the children indicated they did not face any difficulties or problems. FGDs discussants have reported that they do not get advantage from living on street. They are facing hardships of rain, cold, hunger, diseases (relapsing fever) and shortage of cloth and rape. All of the participants reported there is high rate of physical abuse by police and the society has negative attitude towards them so that they don't give them job opportunities. The society including the police considers street children as thieves. They have agreed that the freedom they have on street is the only benefit.

The results of FGDs and informal conversations indicate that some street children sometimes suffer from nose bleeding, headache, diarrhea, trachoma and skin diseases. The researcher also observed some of the street children coughing during the interviews and FGD sessions. Additional in the interview and FGDs, children were asked that problem they have interims of fulfilling their basic needs except three respondent, all of the children do not have sufficient and proper clothing to go well with the weather. The explained that they are constantly exposed to heat and the cold without proper clothing and many of interviewed children feed themselves.

**Table 11.** Health problems, harassment and problem faced street children on the street.

<b>Are you sick</b>			
	Yes	69	57.5
1	No	50	41.7
	Not responded	1	.8
	Total	120	100.0
	Types of illness		
	Diarrhea	3	4.3
	TB	1	1.4
	Malaria	11	15.9
2	Headache	16	23.9
	Typhoid	9	13.04
	Stomach pain	5	7.2
	Other	24	34.7
	Total	69	100.0
	Do you face problem		
3	Yes	82	68.3
	No	38	31.7
	Total	120	100.0
	Types of harassment/difficult		
	Physical	30	36.5
4	Psychological and verbal	18	22
	Sexual	10	12.25
	Not responded	24	29.25
	Total	82	100

<b>Are you sick</b>			
	Yes	69	57.5
1	No	50	41.7
	Not responded	1	.8
	Total	120	100.0
	harassed by		
	Relatives	10	12.25
	Other street children	25	30.4
5	Police	18	21.9
	Parents	11	13.4
	Other people	14	17.25
	Other	4	4.8
	Total	82	100
	Arrested by police		
	Yes	26	21.7
6	No	91	75.8
	Not responded	3	2.5
	Total	120	100.0
	Reasons for arrested		
	Involving in delinquency	1	3.8
	Peddling petty commodities	10	38.46
7	Begging around traffic lights	5	15.23
	Fighting with other street children	6	23
	without any reasons	4	15.4
	Total	26	100

Out of 120, 26 or nearly 22% of respondents were arrested by police while as 91 (75.8% of street children were not arrested by police. 3 respondents was not responded whether arrested or not arrested by police. out of 120 respondents 1 respondents responded that they had been arrested by the police for involving in delinquency such as truancy, petty theft. 10 respondents responded that they had been arrested by police because of peddling petty commodities, 5 respondents responded that they are arrested by police because of begging around traffic lights, 6 respondents responded that they are arrested because of fighting with other street children on the street and 4 respondents responded that they are arrested by police without any reasons. See (Table 11).

## 5. Discussion

Concerning the age of street children, the findings of this study show that the majority of street children in shahsmane are age between 11 to 18. The finding of the study indicates that 50.8%, were 11 to 14 ages, 44.1% were 15 to 18 ages and 5.1% were 7 to 10 age. This implies that most of street children the study area was in adolescent age. In contrary to the current research finding [3], illustrated that the age of street children, for reasons which have generally remained unexamined and unexplained; it has been assumed in the literature that the majority of street children worldwide are aged between 9 to 14 years.

Concerning gender of street children in study area the findings of this study show that majority of children was male (70.8%). and only 29.2% was female. The result of interview with officials of Bureau of Labour and Social affairs and Office of Women, Children and Youth Office of shahsmane town also shows that, the majority of street children in the town were male. This finding implies that

there was large number of male street children than female street children in the town. This confirms previous studies which claimed that there are more boys than girls who work and live in the streets of Addis [17, 38]. In other words, girls are unpaid workers who immensely contribute to minimize the burden of the household work both indoor and outdoor (fetching water, herding, working on farms). It seems that rural households calculate the benefits of retaining girls at home than sending them out to earn income outside home. In addition, it is assumed that cities are dangerous for girls as it entails various physical, social, psychological, and urban related hazards and risks

In the present study result shows that the majority of street children came from rural area. Concerning the original place of street children, the finding of the study show that majority of street children (61.7%) of street children in the study area are came from rural area of SNNPS region and 31 percent were from rural and urban area of some part of Oromia region. The result of interview with concerned governmental bodies and NGO working with street children show majority of street children came from rural area of SNNPS region. This finding implies that even the problem of street children were the urban problem, the majority of street children were originated from rural area. The findings of the present study are consistent with the findings of other studies conducted on the street children. For example, [23] conducted a study on life of street children at Adama. Their finding revealed that most of street children at Adama were come from rural area of Ethiopia. Majority street children (48.3%) of street children in shashamane town have come from woliata ethnic poor families living with subsistence agriculture. Children's parents are living in rural areas and are largely small peasant farmers.

Concerning education of street children present study result shows that the majority of street children were enrolled in education. The finding of the present study revealed that 47.5% of study subjects are in primary education level and 21.7% had some junior level educations. This result is almost comparative with a study conducted on health and social problems of street children in Nazareth town [47]. The finding the present study indicated that majority of street children in the study area were drop out from the school because of different reasons.

Concerning the parental status of street children, the finding of study result shows that the 45.9% of street children came from two headed family, 25.8% of street children had either lost both parents, 13.5% had lost their father and slightly 9.17% had lost their mothers. The findings of this study implies that majority of street children in the study area had both parents. This implies that the presence of both of the parents by itself does not protect their children from the street life (rural to urban migration) and from facing very dangerous livelihood conditions in the city. These findings match previous research findings [18] which showed that the availability of both parents doesn't guarantee that children may remain at home since many rural children come to the city to support their family and/or solidify household

income and others abandoned their families as a result of neglect, domestic abuse, and lack of love, and of protection among others.

Concerning family size, the finding of study show that 75% of street children in the study area came from large family size with 4 -8 family sizes. This indicates the fact that the majority of street children come from large family size. The large family size might be a bottle neck to family heads to feed and educate their children. It also implies that families of the children fail to provide them proper care and guidance. These findings match with previous research findings [27] which showed that (80%) of the respondents came from households with more than four children.

According to the findings of this study the main causes of streetism life in Shashamane town were searching for work, poverty, and parental disintegration due to separation, divorce and death were the reasons for children involvement in street life. In similar situation, the present research also discovered additional factors like need of independent from family, peer pressure, city life attraction and school failure behind the beginning of street life. Moreover, searching for work (45%), poverty (19.2%), need of independent from family (11.7%), disagreement with family (10.8%) and dysfunctional family were mentioned by participants of this research as the reasons to leave home and involving in to the streets.

From this finding of the study one can understand that, an examination of the factors explaining as to why one was on the street are due to circumstances beyond their control which is due to socio-economic problems. Many children live and work on town streets and still many choose street life as the alternative to search jobs and poverty. It is a harsh choice - with constant threats of hunger, exploitation, violence, abuse and even death.

According to the findings of many researchers likewise, [23], there are varies interconnected factors (both pushing and pulling) factors linked with economic, family and child related problems for the emergence and increasing number of street children in many towns and/or cities of the world. Researchers like [27, 18] listed out the basic reasons of children for coming to street life without specifying the order of regularity as poverty, large family size, family violence, use and exploitation at home, inadequate parental guidance, family dysfunction and disintegration.

The findings of this study show that more than half of the respondents are living alone and majorities of street children do not get any type of support either from family, caregivers or organizations, they are forced to engage in street activities to support themselves. This study has found out that higher proportion of street children are engaged in shoe shining (31.7%), petty trade (selling small items) 30.8 percent and carrying luggage (18.3%) as a source of income. This implies that most street children in the study area engaged in different activities in order to survive. These findings match somewhat with previous research findings [17, 47] which showed that high number of children engaged in shoe shining and petty trade and working as taxi drivers' assistants. In

contrary to the current research finding, another investigation illustrated that half of the study participants of Bolivian street children are engaged in begging and robbery [20].

Concerning sleeping place of street children majority of the respondents' i.e. street children in shashamene town, sleep in open space such as available building (19.2%) and on street (29.2%). The finding of this study implies that most children in the study area sleep in secured places.

Street children in shashamane experienced health problem. The findings of this study show that out of 120, 57% of street children sick during working and living on street of shashamane. These findings match with previous research findings [41, 38, 47] which confirm that street children face numerous health challenges; this could be due to the fact that Street children mainly consume left over foods from hotels and rotten fruits from fruit stores and garbage when they have no money to buy foods.

Concerning the difficulty facing street children the finding of study indicates that majority of street children in the study area face different effects when they live and work on the street. Physical, verbal and sexual abuses are the main difficulties face the children on the street. The difficult face street children in the street face various difficult including physical, psychological and sexual abuses [37, 44]. The result of study also show that Violence by elder street children, family, relatively and other members of the community especially by police is a common phenomenon among street children in Shashamane. This is reported by FGD participants by saying that the police always consider them as robbers and trouble makers. The children are bitten by police even for a material which is stolen by somebody who is not a street child. Some of the children consider police violence as a health problem because it was happening frequently and they were injured.

In reference to the degree of substance use like chat, cigarette and hashish, and alcohol taking and intoxication among street children, majority of respondents in this research were not involved in it. The finding show that 53 (44.2%) of respondents' have different habit (use substance like chat, smoking cigarette, alcohol and other).

This finding is in one way or another deviating from the previous study conducted by [45], revealed that 60% of street children use drugs and almost half drink alcohol; of these, 81% drink alcohol and half use drugs intermittently.

Additionally, [23] also reported that large number of street children use chat, cigarette, benzene, glue, shisha, cannabis, marijuana, ganija. Half of the children spent the night on the streets permanently and the others will be on the streets for the day time. Due to the harsh environmental condition and peer pressure they face, they are prone to use alcohol and other substances.

## 6. Conclusion

The problem of Streetism exists at higher level in shashamane town. The profile of street children in the study area shows that the proportions of boys who have

joined street life were higher than girls. These children are living under very poor economical condition without complete adult supervision. From this, we may conclude that there are higher numbers of boy street children in shashamane.

The findings of the study indicated that the prime causes that force children to work and resort to the street is the wide spread poverty of families and other causes such as disagreement and lose of families. Family breakdown, peer pressure, attracted by cite life and large family size were also another significant factors contributing to street life as found in this study. Additionally, the interview finding indicates that scarcity of the farm land and high population pressure in Sidama, Wolayta zone, Kambata and Timbaro zones and recurrent droughts in the Rift Valley woredas of West Arsi zone have increased the vulnerability of farming communities in these parts of the country. The situation of children on the move in Shashamane has been increasing from time to time with the expansion of the town. Thus, it is possible to conclude that there are no single factors for children streetism in shashamane town. There are different pulling and pushing factor for children streetism in the study area.

The findings of study also indicate that street children are vulnerable to physical, verbal and sexual abuses. Harassment by police and by elder street children is common problems faced by the street children. Hence, from this it may conclude that Street children faced a wider range of challenges and immeasurable exploitations and sufferings while they were working and living on the street. In addition, from the research finding we can conclude that street children resort to street life due to different reasons and at the same time they pass through tremendous problems while living and working on streets. some of the problems they encounter include; lack of basic needs including (food, clothing and shelter), lack of access to services such as education and other services, exposure to aversive weather conditions (sun heat, cold rain).

The findings of study indicate that majority of street children in study area engage in different activities like shining, carrying luggage, begging, petty trade, etc in order to survive. From this is it may conclude that most street children don't get full support from either organizations or family. Street children support themselves and may be their family by engaging in different activities in the street to earn money.

The findings of the study indicate some street children in study area have different habit due to lack of adult supervision, peer pressure and harsh environmental conditions. They are prone to use alcoholic drinks, khat, smoking cigarette and other related substances. The street children issue can best be addressed through preventive programs and policies that will strike at its social and economic causes. Special protection measures are also needed to increase development opportunities for young person currently suffering the hardships of street life.

## 7. Recommendations

Based on these major findings of the study, the following are recommended:

The findings of this study indicate that street children are marginalized, vulnerable, and victimized segment of society. Their rights to protection and access to basic rights such as education, healthcare and development are limited. They have a problem to meet their basic needs. They are also becoming more and more vulnerable to a wide range of problems such as physical, verbal and sexual abuses. Building a protective environment for street children in Shashemane should mainly focus on preventing adverse impacts of urbanization and ensuring an immediate response towards violence and abuse. In this regard, the city administration, and other community development actors should play a vital role in the process of strengthening commitment and capacity to fulfill children's right to protection and promoting the establishment and enforcement of adequate legislation.

The study also reveals that alternative employment and place of work and housing facilities are very crucial needs which would protect the working children from the existing vulnerability conditions in the city, so the city administration and other stakeholders need to pay attention for this issue.

According to the finding of this study, though the problem of street children is considered a city/town problem, the factors exacerbating the problem have rural origins in different woredas of SNNP region and Oromia region in some woredas. So, the problem is not solved only through the effort of Shashemane town administration. Rather through the concerted efforts of all stakeholders and major efforts need to be done by concerned government offices at grass root level to solve the problem from its source. It is plausible to recommend for governmental and non-governmental organizations to create work opportunities for children in their own original residence before coming to the streets for searching work and reunite street children with their families where they still exist and improve the economic status of the families of street children by providing support. Street children should have access to education and solution for addressing the need for assistance in the form of educational supplies and school fees. Street children should also have access to health services; priority to health care services for children must be reentered. To organize community based activities between social workers, volunteers, government organizations and the public at large to facilitate and promote appropriate mechanisms that add to street children's effort to secure their basic survivals. To create opportunities that can provide street children's access to proper shelter.

One of the problems observed in the study area is a shortage of different studies in relation to the causes, consequences and coping strategies of streetism. Therefore, there is a great need of research to be carried out that could be as an intervention programming for different government and civil organizations to protect the wellbeing of the

children.

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