A STUDY OF STREET CHILDREN IN COASTAL ANDHRA PRADESH

ABSTRACT
1. Introduction

A street child in India is someone "for whom the street (in the widest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings, wasteland, etc.) has become his or her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood; and who is inadequately protected, supervised, or directed by responsible adults. It is estimated that more than 400,000 street children in India exist. Mainly because of family conflict, they come to live on the streets and take on the full responsibilities of caring for themselves, including working to provide for and protecting themselves.

Many of the street children who have run away from home have done so because they were beaten or sexually abused. Tragically, their homelessness can lead to further abuse through exploitative child labour and prostitution. Not only does abuse rob runaway children of their material security, but it also leaves them emotionally scarred. Such damage can take years to recover from in even the most loving of environments, the large-scale presence of street children is a symptom of social disease. It has acquired a gigantic dimension in the wake of rapid industrialisation and urbanization especially in the developing countries such as India. It is attributed to exploitative socio and economic structure, lopsided development and iniquitous resource ownership, large scale unemployment, rapid urbanization, rural to urban migration, rapid population growth, extreme poverty, increasing disparities in wealth and income, cutbacks in government social and education budgets, high level child abuse by the parents and society, and the breakdown of traditional family and community structures etc. Consequently children are forced to live on the street, and earn livelihood for themselves and also in support of their families losing valuable time in life and forgoing all the opportunities for development in life. The risks of children living street life are great and their vulnerability to exploitation is enormous. In India, the seventh largest country in the world, the country future depends upon the quality of present day children. Hence, there is every need to attend to this problem. Migration of families from rural areas in order to earn their bread, working children, of every poor parents, abandoned, dealing eats orphans and maladjusted street children are found in Andhra Pradesh generally, street children are found in railway station, bustard, hospitals, all India radio station,
hotels and Pretty shops etc. and they have been undertaken in coastal Andhra Pradesh in order to examine the miserable conditions of street children.

2. Problem of the Study.
There is a need to address the issue of street children as a global problem. The street children problem is a serious problem at national and state level. It has many dimensions. The present survey is an attempt in this direction, which will help understand the socio-economic characteristics of the street children. The present study summarizes the identified characteristics of street children in coastal Andhra region of Andhra Pradesh.

The number of children living in the streets, railway platforms, bus stations and other busy centers etc., in various large and medium cities, is very large. The large-scale presence of these children has many repercussions on the society. The street children spend a separate way of life. They need to be studied in respect of the family background, parental status, education, health, nature of work, earning, day to day physical and psychological problems encountered by them.

This particular part of the study will provide us with a precise and comprehensive picture of street children of Ananthapur, Tirupati, Kadapa, Kurnool, Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam municipal corporations of Andhra Pradesh. Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada

There is a need to make in-depth study on street children, as they are the most vulnerable group even among child labour category. The present study is in this direction. The present study contributes to an understanding of street children’s lives through the riveting testimonies of the children themselves. There are many researchers, officials and social workers who work directly with disadvantaged children in urban areas. There have also been many studies and reports on this issue with various purposes and methods. Based on these existing works and studies, the researcher would like to analyze the problem of street children further with a special attention on the dynamic implications of Indian economic growth.

3. Objectives
The objectives of the study area are as follows
1. To study the socio-economic conditions of street children.
2. To find out the reasons for leaving the home.
3. To identify the deprivation of basic needs and exploitation of human rights and
4. To evaluate the occupational pattern of street children.
4. Hypotheses

1. Most of the street children are not from backward classes
2. Low income levels and the parental attitude are not the factors to become street children.
3. There is no significant impact on the denial of basic needs and exploitation of human rights of street children and
4. Low earnings are not the cause of miserable conditions of street children.

5. Research Methodology

A research design is considered as the framework or plan for a study that guides as well as helps the data collection and analysis of data. The research design will be experimental for the study. The data will be collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary source of data will respondents concerned and collected by using a predefined questionnaire.

5.1 Sources of Data

The present study intends to survey the socio-economic and occupational patterns of the street children. Both primary and secondary data will be made use of in the present study for analysis, Drawing inferences and arriving at conclusions keeping in view the objectives of the study, primary data are to be collected by administering a pre-tested questionnaires to sample respondents data pertaining to the study on street children will be collected by administering separate questionnaire from selected cities in Andhra pradesh.

5.2 Secondary data

The secondary data will be collected from Andhra University (Visakhapatnam), Osmania University (Hyderabad), and Acharya Nagarjuna University (Guntur). Recent publications unpublished doctoral theses and articles from journals, edited publications and seminar volumes is to be carefully chosen for collecting useful information., Rural labour cell, New Delhi, , Newspapers, and Websites.

6. Significance of the Study

Presently, the rights of the children have been violated and the children are deviled of their basic amenities like food, clothing, shelter, education, participation of public life etc. in spite of UN declaration of Rights of Children in 1989, still the problem is going on increasing instead of decreasing. It is due to urbanization, economic backwardness or low levels of incomes among the poor people, particularly among the rural poor people, we can’t check this problem, unless
we achieve better levels of income, better standards of living for these groups. Hence this type of study is necessary

7. Relevance of the Study

The vast majority of street children are on the streets to make a living for their families and/or for themselves. The returns may be meager and be in kind or in cash for these children, the streets are the working places they spend a lot of time on the streets because of the low returns to their labour. Most of them have the occupations like begging, bogie, cleaning, labour in auto mobile shops and hotels etc. By nature of their work and life, they are normally on their own, largely, unprotected by adults, for these reasons they are vulnerable to many dangers and abuses and they tends to receive few services essential to their protection and development. So they have been habituated to bed habits like alcohol, smoking, use of drugs, gambling and sometimes they become auto-social elements. So, their rights must be protected and basic needs must be provided to them in order to avoid them indulging in anti-social activities and have better social and economic life.

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1. Introduction
A street child in India is someone "for whom the street (in the widest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings, wasteland, etc.) has become his or her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood; and who is inadequately protected, supervised, or directed by responsible adults .It is estimated that more than 400,000 street children in India exist. Mainly because of family conflict, they come to live on the streets and take on the full responsibilities of caring for themselves, including working to provide for and protecting themselves. Though street children do sometimes band together for greater security, they are often exploited by employers and the police. Their much vulnerability require specific legislation and attention from the government and other organisations to improve their condition
Many of the street children who have run away from home have done so because they were beaten or sexually abused. Tragically, their homelessness can lead to further abuse through exploitative child labour and prostitution. Not only does abuse rob runaway children of their material security, but it also leaves them emotionally scarred. Many of the abused children India encounters are traumatized and some refuse to speak for months. To aggravate matters, children often feel guilty and blame themselves for their mistreatment. Such damage can take years to recover from in even the most loving of environments; on the streets it may never heal.

The phenomenon of street children is an off-shoot of complex interplay of various socio-economic and cultural factors, religious, cultural, linguistic and geographical diversity. The large-scale presence of street children is a symptom of social disease. It has acquired a gigantic dimension in the wake of rapid industrialisation and urbanization especially in the developing countries such as India. It is attributed to exploitative socio and economic structure, lopsided development and iniquitous resource ownership, large scale unemployment, rapid urbanization, rural to urban migration, rapid population growth, extreme poverty, increasing disparities in wealth and income, cutbacks in government social and education budgets, high level child abuse by the parents and society, and the breakdown of traditional family and community structures etc. Consequently children are forced to live on the street, and earn livelihood for themselves and also in support of their families losing valuable time in life and forgoing all the opportunities for development in life. The risks of children living street life are great and their vulnerability to exploitation is enormous. In India, the seventh largest country in the world, the country future depends upon the quality of present day children. Hence, there is every need to attend to this problem. Migration of families from rural areas in order to earn their bread, working children, of every poor parents, abandoned, dealing eats orphans and maladjusted street children are found in Andhra Pradesh generally, street children are found in railway station, bustard, hospitals, all India radio station, hotels and Pretty shops etc. and they have been undertaken in coastal Andhra Pradesh in order to examine the miserable conditions of street children.

2. **Problem of the Study.**

There is a need to address the issue of street children as a global problem, it is possible to find various patterns of street children even though they differ in terms of push and pull factors, lifestyles and social problems. The street children problem is a serious problem state level. It has
many dimensions. The reasons for the prevalence are many. They have specific socio-economic background. They have many issues, and there is a need for greater concern for these people. The present survey is an attempt in this direction, which will help understand the socio-economic characteristics of the street children. The present study summarizes the identified characteristics of street children in coastal Andhra region of Andhra Pradesh, and it also documents the dire consequences of a street lifestyle for children’s health and development. The present study fulfills the gap in literature as it forms the area in specific study. Street children are not a homogeneous group. Each child has a different family background, a different reason for being on the street, a different education level, and different requirements to be filled. An effective categorization will bring a better understanding of the problems and the needs of each group of street children. Even though the country has progressed significantly in the areas of child survival and child development, there is still a long way to go for ensuring child protection. The children in difficult situations, working children etc. are groups requiring special interventions of protection. Orphans, street children, child beggars, child victims of crimes, child offenders, children of prisoners, prostitutes, children with disabilities, sexually abused/exploited children, children affected by HIV/AIDS etc. are some important groups of children in difficult situations. There is a pressing need for specific data depicting the various facets of the lives of children in difficult situations for effective planning and formulation of specially designed interventions to save such children. The study provides an overview of the major forces and social factors that impact the lives of street children. For many of the categories listed as ‘children in difficult situations’. Even the results of the nation-wide surveys/reports on some of the related topics like disability, morbidity, violence etc. have given underestimates as they are based on the household survey approach/administrative records (e.g. police records), and those surveys do not cover vulnerable children who are mostly out of households staying in orphanages, special homes, night shelters, in streets etc. India has the largest number of street children in the world. The number of children living in the streets, railway platforms, bus stations and other busy centers etc., in various large and medium cities, is very large. The large-scale presence of these children has many repercussions on the society. The street children spend a separate way of life. They need to be studied in respect of the family background, parental status, education, health, nature of work, earning, day to day physical and psychological problems encountered by them. This particular part of the study will provide us with a precise and comprehensive picture of street
children of Ananthapur, Kadapa, Karnool, Tirupati, Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam municipal corporations of Andhra Pradesh. Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada corporations have a high concentration of street children as compared to other cities in Andhra Pradesh. The main reasons behind the concentration of these people in these corporation areas are the frequent crop failures due to flood and draught, uneconomic land holdings, dearth of employment, and above all the lure of the city life, which pushed rural people more and more to city. The parents who came with their children to these cities are large in number. The poor parents who could seldom earn enough to feed themselves allowed their children to grow-up unprotected and uncared for. There is a need to make in-depth study on street children, as they are the most vulnerable group even among child labour category. The present study is in this direction. The present study contributes to an understanding of street children’s lives through the riveting testimonies of the children themselves. There are many researchers, officials and social workers who work directly with disadvantaged children in urban areas. There have also been many studies and reports on this issue with various purposes and methods. Based on these existing works and studies, the researcher would like to analyze the problem of street children further with a special attention on the dynamic implications of Indian economic growth.

3. Review of literature:

1. Unicef (2007) India has also ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which came into force in 1990. This ratification implies that India will ensure wide awareness about child issues among the government agencies, implementing agencies, the media, the judiciary, the public at large and the children themselves. The Government's endeavor is to create a conducive climate for acceptance of the goals of the Convention, and to amend all legislations, policies and schemes to meet the standards set in the treaty framework.

2. Shilpa Hassani, (2008) many of them who have run away from their homes were either beaten or sexually abused. Tragically, their homelessness leads to their further abuse through exploitative child labour and prostitution. Most Indian street children work. Children who work, are not only subject to the strains and hazards of their labour, but are also denied the education or training that could enable them to escape the poverty trap. Poor health is a chronic problem for them. Half of all children in India are malnourished, but for street children, the proportion is
much higher. These children are not only underweight, but their growth has often been stunted.

Such homeless kids are seen begging, some near a ticket-counter, some near a food store, some at traffic signals, selling flowers or books. Mumbai, a city that gives place to each and every one, doesn't have place for them. Their plight is getting worse day by day. A small deed can get millions of smiles. Therefore, people should wake up now. Give these sweet and innocent children, a better life to live and show them a proper path towards a bright future.

3. **Prajwala (2008):** Thousands of women and children are globally trafficked for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation every year. Within India, women and children procured from different parts like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Bihar, and trafficked to major red light areas. A sizeable number in these areas are also trafficked from Nepal and Bangladesh. Commercial sexual exploitation is not just confined to red light areas. It has spread its fangs in the form of pornography, sex tourism and cybercrimes. Trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation is one of the largest organized crimes. Thousands of young girls are deceived, forced or coerced to enter this trade every year. It is, perhaps, the most degrading form of human rights violation. Victims of sexual exploitation are subjected to irreversible pain and trauma that Handicaps them psychologically and becomes a major block in their social reintegration.

4. **Meena, Mathur (2009)** carried out a detailed study with an aim to map the socio-economic realities of street children in Jaipur City, India. The field scenario indicated that majority of street children were boys (71%) and in 8–12 years age group. Incidence of migration was observed and 70.5% of these children Lived with their families. Gambling, watching films and television, smoking and drinking, and taking drugs were common modes of entertainment and relaxation for these children.

5. **Javid, P, Toyama, K. and Biswas, M. (2009)** observed that street children typically live independent of families in makeshift living arrangements, and survive on little. They estimated that there are 100 million street children in the world. To better understand the lives of street children, they conducted 150 days of ethnographic investigations in and around Calcutta, with an emphasis on street children who live in train stations.

6. **Bernardo Turnbull, Raquel Hernandez and Miguel Reyes (2009)** analyse the interaction between street children and youth and the people who try to help them. They seek to understand outsiders’ role in the children and youths’ career on the streets and to provide ideas for programs and interventions. A group of volunteers in a Mexico City bus station gathered data in field
diaries as observations and interviews with street children, youths and helpers, and analyzed them using the Grounded Theory method over a period of 4 years. This retrospective uses the core concept of Social Interface, which is a point of encounter between two social systems, to understand the relationship between the children and their many helpers. The data revealed that the children use the programs and services in their own way and the helpers try to make them use it.

7. Prakash, Satya and Singh, Lata (2011) identified that several of runaway children come to cities mostly through railways. Therefore, the need for Special safeguards and care for children around Railway Stations is important. This is the point where they can be contacted, treated with respect and their rights to protection and development guaranteed lest they join the huge numbers of Invisible and vulnerable children.

4. Objectives

   The objectives of the study area are as follows
   1. To study the socio-economic conditions of street children.
   3. To find out the reasons for leaving the home.
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5. Hypotheses

   5. Most of the street children are not from backward classes
   6. Low income levels and the parental attitude are not the factors to become street children.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Name of the district</th>
<th>Name of the city</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rayalaseema</td>
<td>Ananthapur</td>
<td>Ananthapur</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chittoor</td>
<td>Tirupati</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kadapa</td>
<td>Kadapa</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kurnool</td>
<td>Kurnool</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coastal Andhra</td>
<td>Krishna</td>
<td>Vijayawada</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Visakhapatnam</td>
<td>Visakhapatnam</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1**

Selection of Sample of the Cities

6.3 **Analysis Of Data**

The data collected from primary and secondary sources will be analysed by employing appropriate statistical tools such as percentages, averages, Chi-Square Test and test of significance will be used for cross tables. *Operational Definition of a street child* For purpose of the research study a street child has been defined as one who is 6 years and above and up to 18 years of age, and who has been on the streets for at least a period of three months with the minimal or no contact with family or with any significant other member in the family. The minimal contact with the family is defined as not more than one visit in three months prior to the
time of interview, paid mutually by the child or a member of the family including the Parent or a significant member of the child’s family. A significant other is one who has been taking care of the needs and supervision of the child till the child’s last contact with

6.4 Selection of the Sample Respondents

Selection of the respondents has been selected through a purposive sample at a few places of concentration of street children in the selected six cities. For the research study, total samples about 500. Full-filling the operational definition mentioned above has been selected from each city. The places of concentration selected are seven in each city these include railway station, bus stand, busy centres, market centres, temples, hotels, and parks as mentioned in below tables.

The Places of Concentration are selected in Each City

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>places</th>
<th>samples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Railway station</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bus stand</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Market centres</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Busy centres</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Temples</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Hotels</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Primary data

Out of the total sample of 450 street children from six cities 57 are street children. The street children are scattered over different places pursuing a variety of work activities for their livelihood. They rarely stay for a long period at a fixed place; as such no official estimates are available about the exact number and status of street children in the selected cities. Major concentrations in the respective cities were identified, and an interview schedule was administered on the children. It is noticed that street children are involved in various work activities in the three cities. These include rag pickers, beggars, vendors, auto mechanics etc. As many of the street children were less expressive in responding to an interview situation, the researcher developed rapport with the children by observing and interacting with them on a few occasions. He elicited the required information

Through an observational and participatory field study which was carried out during the months January to April 2010. Perceptions of street children were gathered by regulatory keeping in
touch with them over a period, and these discussions were supplemented through the observation and discussion with adult street workers, train ticket examiners, personnel of the railway force, police, scrapdealers, canteen owners and with such other people who generally come into contact with street children. The interview schedule used for the study covered aspects related to identification data of the street children which includes the children’s family background, parental treatment, reason for leaving home, life on the street, work and earning, peer group, networking, mobility, previous work, past institution's experience and awareness about institutional facilities for street children. An exploration into the future aspirations and plans of the sample street children was also made.

7. Limitation of the Study
There are very few studies conducted on street children in order to understand the magnitude of the problem, causes and consequences of the problem. Therefore, these issues are beyond the confines of the study, which is limited to living pattern of the street children in Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam, and Tirupati, Kadapa, Kurnool, Ananthapur. Further, this study attempts to understand the background street children living on the streets, and families in Andhra Pradesh.

9. Significance of The Study
Presently, the rights of the children have been violated and the children are deviled of their basic amenities like food, clothing, shelter, education, participation of public life etc. in spite of UN declaration of Rights of Children in 1989, still the problem is going on increasing instead of decreasing. It is due to urbanization, economic backwardness or low levels of incomes among the poor people, particularly among the rural poor people, we can’t check this problem, unless we achieve better levels of income, better standards of living for these groups. Hence this type of study is necessary.

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10. Chapter Scheme

The research project is divided into five chapters.

The first chapter will deals with introduction, methodology, significance and relevance of the study.
The second chapter will provides the selected review of literature.
The third chapter will discuss the profile of coastal Andhra Pradesh.
The fourth chapter evaluates the socio-economic conditions of street children in selected cities and towns of coastal Andhra Pradesh.
The fifth chapter will summarize the major findings, conclusions and suggestions.

11. References

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