CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Children and Society

In any nation, children are considered to be a socio-cultural asset, both by the families and the communities where they live. Childhood is viewed as that noble stage in life when the young boys and girls learn the skills of leading productive, happy and accomplished lives. They receive immense love and affection from the parents, who guide and discipline them and nurture their needs and aspirations till they are able to stand on their own feet. Unlike the animal society, the human child takes longer to be able to learn the skills of life. Moreover, because of the diversities of human societies, these skills vary between groups, cultures, castes and religions. Even within a group, there are regional differences in the ways a family raises its children. Overall, there is no society that has ignored the upbringing of children and the process of socialization has embarked upon the duty of teaching the children, ways of living in a particular social group and internalizing the values, norms and nuances of social life.

The family emerges as the most significant social institution for upbringing the children, by providing the necessary food and other security, protection and shelter, till they are able to live on their own, and learn the skills of survival in a given society. Family is the primary institution, which grooms and trains the children through the rigorous process of socialization. Family provides, thus, the socio-cultural and economic climate for the children to groom themselves. Hence, this process is universally found in all the societies and cultures at all the ages.
The parents in the family play a crucial role in socializing the child. Besides them, the relatives and siblings further help the parents in accomplishing their duty of upbringing the child. The numerous ways and customs and cultural practices of family life, religious, economic, social and cultural traits are passed on to the young members, guided by numerous and diverse social norms and ethos for transferring knowledge about these practices to the successive generations of youngsters.

Another significant element in the socialization process is the transfer of appropriate and accepted forms of behavior – in the sense of what is suitable and desirable to each age and gender. In other words, the family teaches its young members, from infant stage itself, the essentials and mannerisms of growing up as boys and girls and get into adult roles of men and women. These are considered necessary for the proper upbringing of the children so that they are able to get into adult roles when they grow up, without getting confused about, or without any ambiguity and conflict with the established gender roles in the different spheres of activity - work, family life, religion, leisure etc. The different gender roles (masculine and feminine) are taught by the parents and others in the family from childhood itself to prepare the youngsters to fit into appropriate gender roles when they grow up as adults.

A point to remember here is that the above duties of the family in the wider context of a society are operative chiefly in the realm of ensuring proper social control and order in the various institutions of the social system. Any deviation and non-conformity to the established rules in any of the societal institutions results in disequilibrium and instability. Any malfunction of the family in raising the children leads to calamities, such as the children becoming anti-social elements, non-
conformists and thereby a burden on the family and ultimately on the society. Thus, if a child becomes a worker (child labourer) or a criminal, is lazy, a drug addict, gambler, or disease stricken at a young age due to indulgence in smoking and other vices, the ultimate burden is on the society. They tend to get into deviant habits and hobbies which should have come to them much later in their lives. Such children, who are out of parental control and care, become a problem not only to the family but to the society and its law and order system.

1.2 The Phenomenon of Street Children

When the children are not in the right institution where they should have been, such as the family or school, and taken care of by them, then they are a burden on the society. When the family fails to take care and control of the young and dependent members (the children) the latter go astray. A family that fails to take care of the younger ones is in itself disintegrated or disorganised. There are several reasons that lead to the lapse of the duties of the family, the details of which are discussed in the subsequent sections.

While the adult members tend to leave the family, to either join another family\(^1\) or to set up independent family of one’s own\(^2\), it is taken to be a normal course of life. But the problem arises when the children desert the family and the parents or are thrown out of the house due to a range of crises and calamities (such as death of both parents or of the father - the earning member). This lands them in the street as orphans and with no one to their rescue and offer protection and love. This shift from the warmth and protection of a family and parents to the cold street life may also happen all of a sudden due to a calamity (such as a disaster – tsunami,

\(^1\) as it happens to girls when they are married off and leave natal home to live in husband’s home, in a patriarchal set up
\(^2\) like, by the boys who marry and prefer to set up nuclear families
floods, famine, accidents, war, civil strife, etc). As unprepared civilians, the children will find it virtually difficult to cope up with the situation that lies on the streets.

The phenomenon of street children is more linked or traced to the urban areas than the rural. The reasons for this are obvious and understandable. Rural communities are supposed to be more closely knit and characterized by a ‘we’ feeling, at least traditionally, as defined by Ferdinand Tonnies (Gemeinschaft). The small size of the village (as compared to the city), the physical proximity of the people to one another, relative homogeneity, simple life and closely knit ties – all are considered to have led to a relatively ordered society, where social change is more transparent. People are expected to adhere to social norms and follow them strictly. Interdependence between people nurtures interrelationships that are more binding and act as social cement.

The cities or urban areas are supposed to be relatively more formal and bound by ‘They’ feeling, in Tonnies’ words (Gesellschaft). They are supposed to be characterized by more anonymity, impersonal relationships, huge populations, varied lifestyles and different ways of land use (Lingaraju, 2004). Although a majority of people in the developing world live in rural societies, the trend of urbanization has been contributing to an unprecedented increase in the population of cities and towns. As per estimates, the rise in urban population has been high in the Third World countries (2.1 billion in 2007 and 5 billion by 2010, quoted by Satterthwite). Rifkin calls this trend as ‘Population of the world becoming Home Urban in nature’ (Rifkin 2007). Non-agricultural occupations, high density of population, changes in residence and land use patterns - all characterize the process of urbanization. The process of urbanization also involves a series of changes in the nature and life-styles of people. It
is the process where large movements of populations from communities, chiefly from agricultural background, shift to work in the government, trade, manufacturing and allied sectors.

The large exodus to urban areas happens during crisis situations such as mass migrations caused by partitions of countries, major natural calamities etc. For example, the partition of India in 1947 witnessed one such major shift of an estimated 10 million refugee population into India (Mohanty, 1993). Mass migration is also caused by industrialization and establishment of business centres.

One of the biggest outcomes of such rapid expansion of urban areas is the overcrowding of people in the cities and towns. Both push factors (at village level) and pull factors (at the urban level) are found working in this context. Pavement dwelling, squatter settlements and unhealthy residential areas have become inevitable features of the urban agglomerations. The slums account for a major share of the surplus population to the cities (Yadava, 1987; Mitra, 1993; quoted in Lingaraju, 2004).

The slums, thus, gain importance with the emergence and expansion of the cities. This direct relationship with the slums and the process of urbanization is both a cause and consequence of the haphazard and unplanned growth of the cities, particularly metropolitan cities. It is estimated that about one-fifth of the urban population lives in slums and squatter settlements. According to Sundari (2003), the exodus of labour force from the rural to the urban areas is in search of better livelihoods or bare employment requirements. But owing to poor and irregular income flow, these immigrants tend to live in dilapidated and make shift accommodation set up on vacant government or even private lands, relatively close to their work place. It
is an established fact that the rapid growth of slum population is the consequence of the sharp upsurge of the urban population.

1.3 The Shady Environment of the Urban Areas

India is the second most populous country in the world. There has been a steady increase in the proportion of urban population\(^3\) (Visaria, 1997). Urban population for India, on an estimation (excluding Jammu & Kashmir) was about 217 million in 1991 and it is estimated to be 377 million by the census 2011. Besides China, India and USA, Urban India would have been the fourth most populous country, had it been formed as a separate country!!! (ibid).

1.4 The Darker Side of Migration and Urbanization

The above explanation about the formation of urban areas and the formation of slums places before us the issue of migration. Rapid migration (either from rural to urban or from rural to another semi urban area) is thus influenced by population distribution. In other words, migration is not always occurring with the intention of benefiting from the economic facilities that a city offers. There are also non-economic reasons to it. A number of social, environmental, political (besides economic) factors displace people from their original habitations. Poverty, lack of employment, famine, floods and droughts - act as push factors, whereas urbanization, coupled with new developments in the market, acts as the pull factor.

It is estimated that in India, about 98 million people resorted to migration from place to place (mostly from rural to urban) in the decade 1991-2001. Of these people, 33 million were males and 65 million were females. Employment was the major reason for male migration while marriage was instrumental for women migrating

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\(^3\) from 11 per cent in 1901 to 18 per cent in 1951 and to 26 per cent by the time of 1991 census
from native homes towards a city (ibid). The combination of push and pull factors is identified to be very active in driving to such migration.

Experts in the field have wondered about the dynamics of migration. It is not happening only due to economic causes. Direction and magnitude of migration is helpful in giving vital clues on the reasons for and the type of migration taking place in a region. A study by Kundu and Gupta (1996) has wondered as to while different regions and States have registered a major growth and expansion in their economies in recent years, the same has not generated a rise in out-migration rates from poor States or in-migration rates to better off States.

### 1.5 Sociological Understanding of Economic Theories of Migration

Lewis showed in his study of 1954 that rural-urban migration is the result of geographic differences in supply and demand for labour. Urban areas provide better wages than the rural employment sector. In 1970, Hariss and Todaro introduced their model, extending the Lewis argument of migration taking place for economic gains, particularly in the developing societies. Extending the “Economic Gains Theory” of Lewis, Hariss and Todaro brought out an explanation that people migrate from rural to urban also due to other choices. These include land markets and trade and welfare policies of the government. These are also important in motivating people to migrate. Migration was further argued to be the result of collective endeavour enabling rural households to diversify incomes. Social networks came to be recognized by the economists as influencing migration decisions and even destinations. Lucas (1997), for example, argued that the migrants tend to chose destinations where they are well connected. But this theory was refuted by Banerjee (1983), who found no differences in the propensity for migrants to seek any assistance from relatives or friends in the
village. This study emphasized upon strong locational ties rather than network access among the migrants. A further dimension is linked when a few more studies argued for linking the labour market with a network of relations (Holmstorm, 1984 & Sarala, 2010).

There is a further distinction made between permanent and temporary migrants (Lingaraju, 2004). This is happening in many developing countries where the urban population of rural origin is increasing in a steady pace. While the former type of migrants come to the city to settle down permanently and definitely, the latter (i.e., temporary migrants) are those who have no definite intention, but come to the city with a short-term occupational option with the opportunities available in the city. Such migrants of the latter type tend to retain their ties with the place of origin, i.e., the village, and keep alternating between the places as the need arises and situation warrants. Such migrant’s physical and social life is resting in both the worlds - rural and urban.

1.6 Urbanisation in Karnataka: Trends and Problems

Sociologists have emphasized that urbanization is a relatively recent, but by far the most dominant form of social transformation of our times. It is, as predicted, fast growing and even over shadowing the other upcoming changes and transformations in the rural and urban areas.

Karnataka is a pioneering State in many respects. It is known for its social, economic, political and cultural history; is rich with growth, social justice and prosperity\(^4\). After independence, the State came to have a number of state and

\(^4\) During the Princely Rule, as the Princely State of Mysore, it was also known for its economic development under such rulers as Sri Krishnaraja Wodeyar Bahadur and Dewans like Sir M Visvesvaraya and Zanab Mirza M Ismail Saheb. It is also well known for some of the historical social
centrally sponsored welfare policies and programmes. It witnessed speedy
development and expansion in its rural and urban areas with remarkable changes in
both agricultural and industrial sectors; non-farm activities, fishing, arts and crafts etc.
A notable development here is its urban expansion and development leading to the
emergence of mega cities and towns. Each decade has left behind an impressive
growth of the urban areas, with industrialization, processing, service sector etc, and
spearheading further expansion.

A large influx of population from the rural side has entered into Karnataka’s
cities in the last few decades. In a way, such urbanization of Karnataka has, according
to scholars, overshadowed other developments. However, urbanization in Karnataka
presents a highly chequered and complex picture in terms of size, pace, pattern,
history and consequences. There is striking spatial diversity in resource base as well
as in the development levels.

Karnataka is one of the states, which have demonstrably experienced high
levels of urbanization. It is well above the all India average and the trend continued
throughout the last century (ibid). For example, it registered an urban population of
12.56 per cent in 1901, which declined to 11.56 per cent during the next ten years i.e.,
by 1911. But soon after, the significant increase happened during 1941-51. The same
share was maintained in 1951-61. During 1981-91, the state experienced a decline in
the growth rate of urban population (of 36.09 per cent). This decline is attributed to
under-enumeration of urban population in 1991, particularly in major urban centres.

protest and reform movements like the one led by Lord Basaveswara in the 12th century and the
backward classes movement of the pre-independence era in the 1910-1920s culminating in the
establishment of the first backward classes commission in the state, viz., The Miller Committee
(headed by the then Chief Justice of Mysore High Court, Sir Leslie F Miller).
1.7 Growth of Urban Population in Karnataka

One of the significant indicators of the degree of urbanization is the percentage of urban population to total population. Decade-wise, the state has had good population growth as is evident from the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Year</th>
<th>No. of Towns</th>
<th>Total Population in millions</th>
<th>Urban Population in millions</th>
<th>Percentage of Urban Population</th>
<th>Decadal Growth Rate of Urban Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>13.05</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>12.57</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>13.53</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>11.67</td>
<td>3.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>13.38</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td>13.75</td>
<td>16.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>14.63</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>15.31</td>
<td>21.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>16.26</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>16.91</td>
<td>22.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>19.40</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>22.94</td>
<td>61.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>23.54</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>22.39</td>
<td>18.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>29.30</td>
<td>7.12</td>
<td>24.30</td>
<td>35.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>37.04</td>
<td>10.71</td>
<td>28.91</td>
<td>50.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>44.81</td>
<td>13.85</td>
<td>30.91</td>
<td>29.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>52.85</td>
<td>17.96</td>
<td>33.99</td>
<td>30.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>61.10</td>
<td>23.63</td>
<td>38.57</td>
<td>31.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Registrar General of India, (Various Years).

According to the 2001 Census, the level of urbanization in India increased from 25.7 per cent in 1990-91 to 27.8 per cent in 2000-01. The urban population in the State increased likewise in big proportions from 1981 onwards. While it was 28.89 per cent in 1981, the share of urban population of the total population by 1990-91 was 30.92 per cent. This further increased to 34 per cent in 2001 and 37.55 per cent by 2011.

Thus, it is very clear that Karnataka State has been experiencing rapid urbanization all through the decades. It is especially so from 1980s onwards when the state came to be modeled towards meeting the challenges of the global market by

\footnote{which is a projected figure}
adopting highly competent policies for developing the IT and BT sectors. This has resulted in large-scale migration from the rural to the towns and cities as well as from the semi urban to cities and mega cities.

As expected, the enhanced population size has led to steep increase and demand for various urban infrastructure and services, resulting in demand overtaking supply of essential commodities, services and facilities or amenities. Large influx of population began to reside in all possible residential areas and the surplus poor and labour class got into the already established slums or formed new ones. Urban planning and infrastructure development projects were initiated with great zeal and urban development became the buzz word. Poverty was no longer characteristic of only rural areas. Urban poverty caused by migration and high cost of living coupled with joblessness led to its taking an edge over rural poverty.

A major landmark decision and intervention through structural changes at this juncture was the introduction of Decentralized Planning and Governance as the new system of political administration. Just as the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1993 placed the villages under a system of self rule in the name of Panchayat Raj System, the towns and cities were brought under the Nagar Palika Act through the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act. It assigned a crucial role for public participation in urban governance. The new system is participatory in nature where decisions are taken based on people’s opinions. Representatives are elected and there is opportunity for all to contest without differences of caste, class, gender etc. The system has aroused high expectations about service delivery level by citizens. The system has also placed a multifold increase in the responsibility of public representatives. They are expected to provide excellent leadership by planning at grassroots level and
implementing them effectively. Thus, they have multifold responsibilities satisfying varied needs of a heterogeneous set of people or citizens. In particular, the Nagara Palikas are responsible for the most essential duty of providing basic amenities to the people from all classes – rich, poor and middle class. They have to be supplied with access to core services such as drinking water, sanitation, housing and roads.

However, despite all these efforts, it is quite disappointing to note that (according to the 2001 Census) only 44 per cent of the households have access to sanitation. This is a depressing situation. Sanitation in terms of toilets is very essential and are one of the basic needs. It is more disheartening to see that urban areas lack proper housing facilities also, particularly for the poor and very poor.

Table I.1 also shows the situation of population of the state that has been approximately the average for the country as a whole. The urban population was 28.91 per cent in 1981 as against 30.91 per cent in 1991. However, the total population of Karnataka increased from 13.05 million in 1901 to 44.81 million in 1991. Urban population in the same period grew from 12.56 per cent to 30.91 per cent of the total population and urban growth rate almost doubling to 35.10 per cent during 1961-71. A further spurt in the growth rate was experienced during 1971-1981 to 50.42 per cent, but decreased to 29.32 per cent in 1981-1991. The state showed a lower decennial growth rate than what was there for the All India level.

Urbanization in Karnataka has been very rapid. It also accelerated sharply in the last couple of decades. Such rapid urbanization, in India and even abroad, is a characteristic of large-scale structural and institutional changes occurring in the developing societies, especially in the 19th and 20th centuries. Sociologists have

6 Karnataka’s rank in the increase of population has come down from the 10th rank in 1981 to the 11th in 1991
argued that a major trait of this transformation has been the shift of the rural population to the urban areas for want of better livelihoods and other economic and social needs.

The state experienced considerably high standard of living with better access to modern amenities and services in the spheres of trade, infrastructure, education, health etc. There was also noticeable increase in the percentage of population that began to live in the urban areas. One of the prime reasons for such an unprecedented increase in the population of urban areas was the substantial flow of migrants from rural and semi-urban parts to urban areas. This has also led to a steep rise in the number of urban agglomerations (from 1827 urban areas in 1901 to 5161 in 2001).

1.8 Slums and Social Implications

The rise/emergence of slums and other illegal squatter settlements in the urban areas is argued by scholars in the field as a direct result of the incapability of the urban formal sector in creating jobs and affordable infrastructure for people. The migrants are often ill-equipped to adopt or match the required urban skills and education, which would in the long or short run have an adverse effect in pushing migrants to adversities of unemployment and under employment (Murukadas 1998). Poverty and distress push the new settlers to occupy such areas which are discarded by others who can afford to live in better areas or places. Usually, the former are the squatter and slum areas that are available for the very poor to settle down because of their unhygienic and poor infrastructure facilities.

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7 For example, the number of people living in urban areas was 2.58 crores in 1901 that rose to 28.53 crores by 2001. It is predicted that nearly 50 per cent of India’s population will be urban by the year 2030 (Global Report on Human Settlements, 2003).
There is, thus, a rapid growth and expansion of slum areas in Bangalore and other cities in Karnataka. For example, in 2001, it was estimated that 1 billion people or 32 per cent of the world’s urban population were living in the slums of the developing countries alone. In India, mega cities witnessed a tremendous growth of slums compared to smaller towns and cities. It is not an exaggeration that the slum population of urban India alone was more than the total population of most countries in the world. The slums housed 28 million people in 1981 which increased to 45.7 million in 2001 (Chandrasekhar 2005). The Census of India 2001 has estimated a figure that falls closely with this, that is, 40.6 million. The Government of India brought out an estimate that astonishingly reveals that every seventh person residing in an urban area is invariably a slum dweller!! And the trend is growing ever since.

The social implications of having such a large-scale slum dwelling population is that it continues to be the ‘cancer of the city’ (Venkatarayappa, 1971). It houses a number of ills and evils of modern society in particular. The impoverished residents resort to a number of vices to eke out a living in the new destination after their distress migration. The social implications of all the above forms of housing, settlement and poverty-stricken life could be diverse. They could also manifest in several dimensions. Unemployment, child labour, underemployment, crime, prostitution, ill health, poor housing, lack of amenities, such as access to clean and potable drinking water, sanitation, housing, electricity, education, health amenities, social security to the old, orphans, poor, unemployed, physically disabled and such others; broken homes, juvenile delinquency, beggary -- a whole lot of social and pathological conditions may be reported due to the above situation. The worst of all the social implications of migration, staying in slums, poverty, assetlessness, broken homes, poor socialization, and such others, is the problem of street children.
1.9  The Street Children of the Urban Areas

Who are the Street Children? Are they simply those who live on the streets? Are they children who are normal in all other respects like going to school etc? Or are they employed to work on the street? What types of problems do the street children encounter? What are the proposed measures taken to prevent them from such a situation of street living?

Street Children are considered to be a social undesirables or problem in the developing nations than in others. According to estimation by the United Nations Center for Human Rights, by 2000, half of the world’s population will be under 25 years of age and living in the cities. Not just this, a large proportion of them will be living in poverty. It is also estimated that there will be 250 million urban children of 5-9 years’ age group. More than 90 per cent will be living in the developing nations. It is further estimated that by 2020, there will be many millions of minors who will be living on the streets. The term ‘street’, as a place to live in, is not unknown in the developed countries. But a vast number of unsupervised and unprotected children are a phenomenon of mainly, and visibly, only the developing countries.

A number of studies as well as the media have shown interest in the lives of street children. They have highlighted a number of social and health related risks suffered by the children. These are in addition to the economic challenges that they face like poverty and impoverishment, isolation and alienation. For example, the children are reported to be addicted to the use of inhalants, marijuana and cocaine and valium among others. A few children in the West use coca paste also. Universally, the street children who are adolescents face sexual assault and exploitation as they are on
the streets without any shelter and protection. Unsafe or unprotected sex leads to sexually transmitted diseases\(^8\).

1.10 Extent of the Problem

1.10.1 Defining Street Children

Scholars in the field have feared that defining who a ‘street child’ has always been very vague and tough. It is also highly variant and differing from society to society. An effort is made below to define the street children based on existing studies. An operational definition of street children used in this work defines them as those “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 different categories of children on the streets have been distinguished, while still recognizing that children’s complex experiences are difficult to define. Scholars in the field have developed four categories of children on the street from his research: (a) children who work on the street but return to their families at night, (b) children who work on the street but whose family ties are dwindling, (c) children who live and work with their families on the street, and (d) children who work and live on their own on the street.

In this study, the term “street child” is used to refer only to the last group and is based on the definition by UNICEF that defines a street child as, “…any girl or boy... 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

\(^8\) For example, HIV exposure risk is high among them
important to distinguish the group of children that live on their own on the streets because their lives vary greatly from those of children who simply work on the streets; they thus have different needs and require targeted attention. UNICEF makes a categorization of street children into street living, street working and street family. In the Indian context, it is estimated that 18 million children work on the streets and only 5-20 percent of them are truly homeless being disconnected from their families. They also suffer from certain unique vulnerabilities - the amount of time they spend on the street, their livelihood depending on the street, and their lack of protection and care from adults - they are a subgroup of the Indian population that deserve specific attention in order to ensure that their needs are known. Thus, “Street children” in this work is used to denote mostly the homeless street children who work, live and sleep in the streets, often lacking in any contact with their families. The definition includes children on the streets from the age of 6-18 years resorting to petty theft, petty sale and casual labour, prostitution and begging for survival. The definition also includes attributes of these street children such as vulnerability to sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS and addiction to inhalants such as shoe glue and paint thinner, which cause kidney failure, irreversible brain damage and, in some cases, death.

1.10.2 Estimating the Street Children

Nobody knows exactly how many street children are there in the different countries. They are not easy to count because they move around a lot, within and between cities; and they are often excluded from ‘statistic-friendly’ infrastructures (schools, households etc.). A further problem is that the number of ‘Street Children’ is often been deliberately exaggerated and misquoted by some agencies which are assigned to estimate them. This is done as a practice by both the government and non-
governmental agencies. Both have been doing so for differing purposes. This is as it occurs in estimating child labourers. The government is interested in underestimating the number lest it would signal that not enough work is done by its labour and other departments responsible for addressing the problem. The government officials are expected to crack down on such unfortunate residents of urban areas. Their task is to identify and rehabilitate them suitably and later mainstream them. Bureaucratically, this runs as a target and achievement approach.

The civil society organizations have a different mandate here. Their task also is to do the same, i.e., identify and rehabilitate the street children (as they do in the case of the child labourers). In fact many, or most, voluntary organizations receive funding from the government to meet their expenses towards these tasks. They are expected to address the situation and bring relief to the children by suitably rehabilitating them. In addition to the above two, in recent years, the media also has been busy sensationalizing the issue. In the opinion of some scholars, in a way, it is also victimizing the street children.

Whatever it is, the efforts portray the norm that the street children have the right to be accurately represented. City-level surveys conducted by local organizations (and supported by a clear definition) are more reliable in many countries. There is anecdotal evidence that the numbers of street children are increasing (instead of decreasing) due to uncontrolled urbanization process. This is linked to poverty, family conflict and internal strife in many nations. These render the children being orphaned.
Globally too, scientific location of street children is not happening and statistics about them are not accurate\(^9\). The exact number of street children is impossible to quantify, but the figure almost certainly runs into tens of millions across the world\(^10\). It is likely that the numbers are increasing. The 100 million figures are still commonly cited, but have no basis in fact. Similarly, it is debatable whether the numbers of street children are growing globally or whether it is the awareness about street children within societies, which has grown. While there are understandable pressures for policies to be informed by aggregate numbers, estimates of street child populations, even at city levels, are often hotly disputed and can distract rather than inform policy makers.

UNICEF’s estimate of 11 million street children in India is considered to be a conservative figure. The Indian Embassy has estimated that there are 314,700 street children in metros such as Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, and Kanpur, Bangalore, Hyderabad, and around 100,000 street children only in Delhi. A survey among 100 street children at the New Delhi Railway Station revealed that 86 per cent of boys in the age group 14 – 18 years were sexually active. However, a very low number of these children knew about safe sex, protection and condom usage. Not one of them reported having ever used a condom\(^11\). Regardless of the statistics, even one child on the streets is too many if their rights are being violated.

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\(^9\) Most statistics are just estimates. For e.g., Kenya claimed it had 250,000 street children while in the other African countries facing backwardness such as Ethiopia, they were estimated to be around 150,000; in Zimbabwe 12,000; in Bangladesh 445,226; in Nepal: 30,000; and in India 11 million street children (these are based on broad definitions of ‘street children’).

\(^10\) In 1989, UNICEF estimated that 100 million children were growing up on urban streets around the world. 14 years later, UNICEF reported that the latest estimates put the numbers of these children as high as several millions.

\(^11\) A study conducted by UNICEF in 2007 in India found the following:

1. 65.9 per cent of the street children lived with their families on the streets. Out of these children, 51.84 per cent slept on the footpaths. 17.48 per cent slept in night shelters and
1.10.3 Gender Divide among the Street Children

In general, there are fewer girls than boys actually living on the streets (studies indicate between 3 per cent and 30 per cent depending on the country). This is for several reasons. In many cultures, there is much greater pressure for girls to stay at home than boys. Research shows that girls will put up with abuse at home for longer period, than the boys, but, that once girls make the decision to leave home, the rupture is more permanent for them, than for the boys. Girls are also less visible on the streets as they are often forced or lured into brothels. Even though, there are fewer street–living girls than boys, they are extremely vulnerable to human right abuses, both on the street and when they are arrested. However, it is important to note that street boys are also at risk of sexual abuse and exploitation as well as girls.

1.10.4 Are all Street Children Orphans?

Relatively speaking, only a few street children are actually orphans\textsuperscript{12}. According to studies and reports on them, a majority of street children are still in contact with their families and/or extended families. Many of them work on the streets in order to contribute to their family’s income. Those who run away often do so because of physical, psychological and/or sexual violence and abuse at home. Family breakdown is also common in the case of re-marriage and problems with step-parents. Importantly, many projects try to reunite street children with their families.

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\textsuperscript{12} although their numbers are increasing in some countries due to the incidence of HIV AIDS

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30.67 per cent slept in other places including under flyovers and bridges, railway platforms, bus stops, parks and market places.

2. The overall incidence of physical abuse among street children, either by family members or by others or both, was 66.5 per cent across the states. Out of those affected, 543.62 per cent were boys and 45.38 per cent were girls.

3. Out of the total number of children reported as being forced to touch private parts of the body, 17.73 per cent were street children. 22.77 per cent reported as having been sexually assaulted.
Identification and mainstreaming are complex and frustrating tasks requiring specialized counseling to address the root causes why the child ran away in the first place. Unfortunately, in many cases, reunification with the family fails, or is not in the best interests of the child. In these cases, alternatives such as fostering, group homes and residential centers are needed. It is also established that street children are rarely alone, even if they have no family contact.

1.10.5 Risks and Threats to Street Children

Ironically, street children are often at greatest risk of violence from those that are responsible to protect them – the police and other authorities. Police often beat, harass, sexually assault and even torture street children. They may beat children for their money or demand payment for protection, to avoid false charges, or for release from custody. They may seek out girls to demand sex. For many street children, daily beatings and physical assaults by the police are a routine part of their lives as they engage in stealing and other crime. Some such assaults on street children also result in their death, but very rarely are these made public and those responsible are punished.

Many images and stories portray street children either as helpless victims, dangerous criminals or heroic survivors. However, the reality is usually somewhere in-between these qualities. The street children have reportedly shown incredible resiliency and initiative in the face of desperate circumstances. They have to be resourceful and strong in order to survive. But some do not survive. Others can only do so by breaking the law. One should respect their individual stories and characteristics. Each child is unique.
1.10.6 Situation in India

Studies in India have reported not only the incidence of street children but also considerable extent of abuse - physical, sexual and emotional. According to a government study it is estimated that tragically, a vast majority of street children face sexual abuse in India, which is already also home to the world’s largest number of destitute children. A study by the Ministry of Women and Child Development reports that the overall incidence of physical abuse among street children was 66.8 per cent. The majority of the street children facing physical abuse are in the age group of 5-12 years. Around 55 per cent of the street children reported having undergone sexual abuse. This study covering 13 States\textsuperscript{13}, was carried out with a sample size of 12,447 children\textsuperscript{14} out of whom 2,317 (18.6 per cent) were street children. Estimates by international agencies put the number of street children in India at 18 million, which is the largest in the world. The Women and Child Development ministry introduced a centrally sponsored scheme, namely Integrated Child Protection Scheme for such children. There is also another scheme called ‘An Integrated Programme for Street Children’ introduced for the welfare and rehabilitation of street children.

To conclude on this section, one cannot disagree that the issue of street children is a very serious social and sociological problem needing attention – both research and policy. Undoubtedly, it deserves immediate attention of researchers and government policy - that too the right policy intervention to identify and rehabilitate these unfortunate victims of social decay. The present research is a sincere attempt in the direction of studying the problems and prospects of street children taking the city

\textsuperscript{13} Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal
\textsuperscript{14} They included children in family environment, those attending schools, those in institutional care and street children.
of Bangalore as a case representing other such mega cities and cosmopolitan urban agglomerations.

1.10.7 Street Children in Bangalore City

The city of Bangalore is chosen to be the setting of this study because the conversion of Bangalore into a metropolis in the recent years, has led to a number of changes in its structure and characteristics. For example, it has registered the highest rate of urbanization in the entire country, in recent years, obviously due to the setting up of Information Technology and Bio-Technology hubs. Despite these positive features, the city has just not escaped the treacherous clutches of expanding commercialization, market led economy, crime and destitution, slum formation, child labour and, street children. The prevalence of street children has become quite extensive in the recent past.

1.11 Objectives of the Study

The above discussion proves that the issue of street children is very significant, attracting the attention of scholars and Urban Sociologists of the 21st century. It has to be appropriately addressed for the attainment of a welfare state goal with social equity and a healthy civic life in the urban areas. The present study was undertaken with the intention of exploring the genesis of the problem of street children, to understand the extent, dimensions and problems faced by these children and to suggest policy recommendations.

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- To understand the concept of street children in the context of a developing economy like India and the factors leading to their existence;
- To identify the factors leading to the formation of ‘street children and youth’ or street living among children and to trace the history and development of the problem in the growing metropolis of Bangalore;
To examine the present social, economic and cultural aspects of the life of street children in the study area;
To understand the gender, regional and caste/religion-specific vulnerabilities among them, both in early life and after becoming street children;
To critically look into the various interventions from both the State and civil society to address the problems of street children;
To document the perceptions and aspirations of street children about their lives and rehabilitation measures; and
To link the situation of street children to broader issues of urban development and poverty (as a Millennium Development Goal) and to suggest preventive, remedial and rehabilitative programmes for policy formulation.

1.12 Importance of the Study

Building a trusting relationship with street – involved children and youth takes not only patience but a lot of time also. For this reason it is important for organizations to hire staff or project implementers with appropriate backgrounds and individuals who have the necessary insights, exposure and commitment and who will stay with the organization for a long time. Implementing activities that enhance the self-confidence and self-awareness of street–involved children before they join economic strengthening programs could be effective. Designing group activities and making the most of existing solidarity among street – involved children and youth could also enhance their participation.

1.13 Methodology and Tools of Research

Considering that the topic or issue on hand is a sensitive one and collecting information from the street children would be struck by field level constraints, both quantitative and qualitative methods of research were used in the present study. Both secondary and primary sources of data were explored to have an understanding of the
situation regarding the subject. Secondary sources included not only published books, research papers, journal articles, census reports and government documents, but also reports of studies and work carried out by the civil society organizations (NGOs) on the street children including related issues. These were looked into to gain the requisite insights and have first-hand information about the subject. This helped in carrying out a situational analysis that was useful in designing the tools of primary data collection.

A variety of research tools were employed to obtain the required data from the stakeholders ranging from the street children themselves, their parents (if traced), the neighbors, staff of the NGOs, state government departments of labor, health, education, and so on; the police personnel, the employers of the working children among the street children, owners of the space used by the children to reside during the night, and many others related to the issue.

Interview Schedules were used to collect information from the above-mentioned stakeholders. Street children were contacted using the random sampling method. Based on secondary sources of data, different localities with concentration of such children were identified. These sources included both state and civil society organizations working for the identification, rehabilitation and betterment of such children. 300 children were identified covering gender, different age groups, religion and caste background, the present sector where the child is employed and the streets of different localities/areas/wards in the city of Bangalore in which they stayed.

Wherever necessary, case studies of select children were made. Besides questionnaires and case studies, focused group discussions were also conducted with a cross section of stakeholders. Non-participatory methods of data collection were used,
as the subject of study is quite sensitive and is not always amenable for interviewing and oral interactions. Observation was essential to document the day-to-day life of the children, their activities and problems. As the street children were expected to hail from a heterogeneous socio-cultural background, language at times was a barrier in communicating with the children.

1.14 Process of Data Collection

Fieldwork was carried out in phases. The details are as under:

Phase I

To begin with, the children living on the streets were identified and interviewed moving from one ward/area to another. Here, while doing so, residential to non-residential and less precarious to very dangerous areas and occupations were carefully selected.

Phase II

The second phase began when the data from the questionnaires administered to the sample respondents was coded and analyzed. With insights emerging about the socio-economic conditions of the street children, a few questionnaires were identified for carrying out case studies. Such in-depth case studies were planned to help in exploring the situation with some of the street children in Bangalore City and to know their points of view about the situation and to understand exactly their problem about living on the streets.

Phase III

The results (tentative) of the questionnaire based survey were derived to obtain insights. Based on them, a few select stakeholders such as the police personnel,
officials of the relevant government departments\textsuperscript{15} and the staff of the civil society organizations were interviewed using alternative schedules.

**Phase IV**

Likewise, the employers of the working street children, neighbours in the spaces, sheds etc., where these children resided and such others were also interviewed with a third type of questionnaire. Once the data collection was complete, it was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative techniques.

1.15 **Sampling and Universe of Study**

Tracing and continuous follow-up of stray Street children was a herculean task. The city of Bangalore was selected considering that a large number of children were on the streets here. Its metropolitan nature was expected to provide ample opportunities to explore the various dimensions of the life of street children. As the capital city of a premier state, it is also an interesting field site to understand the effectiveness and utility of the institutional support received by the children. The City has numerous NGOs dealing with street children such as – APSA in Thippasandra, PARASPARA in Yeshwanthpur, DON BOSCO in Chamarajpet and ACTION AID INDIA on Richmond road. It was estimated that altogether about 15,000 street children were assisted by these institutions. On the basis of age, sex, educational level, skill they possess and other such criteria, a sample of 300 street children was selected for the purpose of the present study using stratified ‘Proportionate Sampling Method’. Different localities in Bangalore city were identified using secondary data and street children were selected from them. There are varieties of localities, some being the ‘Hub of Street Children’ where a large number of street children were

\textsuperscript{15}Labour, Women and Child Development, Education, Housing, Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) Development Corporation, Employment & Training, Youth Services etc
found. They were preferred by the children as these places provided quick employment to earn daily food. They also have a lot of public buildings/places where the children can rest in the night. The city has expanded much in the last 20 years. This is in particular due to the introduction of IT and BT Hubs in these outskirts of the city. It has seen a lot of migration of both white collar and blue collar workers from far and wide. Some areas are inhabited by migrants to 90 per cent. Examples are Koramangala, Electronics City, extensions on the outer ring roads etc.

1.15.1 Problems and Difficulties in Tracing the Sample

Identifying the street children from a large setting (area), i.e., Bangalore city, was a Herculean task. Discussions with officers of relevant government departments and with the staff of NGOs working for the cause of street children were of great help and indispensable. It was the latter, i.e., the NGOs like DON BOSCO, who provided secondary data regarding the number of street children in different pockets of the city. The lists of street children picked up by the NGOs gave us clue about the density of street children in specific strategic points in the city. It was a very difficult task to trace the street children who were evading public eye. The children were aware that there are agencies like the government staff, police and the staff of the NGOs who are behind them. It was strange to learn that the children loved to be on the streets instead of being rehabilitated. They had adjusted with street life and thus hated any protected place with supervision, control rules and restrictions. Thinking that the researcher was also a staff of the government or NGO, in a few cases, they violently attacked her with blades and knives!!!!

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16 These were rough estimates that the NGO collected for its own purpose of tracking street children, or identifying them and then follow it up with rescue taking if necessary help of the police. The children thus rescued are kept in the NGO-run Homes and suitable action towards their education or vocational skill training will take place.
The above note is to make it clear that tracing street children was not an easy task. It was not even a safe task, but was characterized by much risk taking and getting into dangerous situations. The street children lived in gangs and often worked or operated also in gangs. Therefore, it was difficult to talk to them in isolation from one another. Any attempt to talk to them was always misunderstood as someone trying to catch them and hand over to the police or NGO. There were many who had run away from state sponsored Homes for destitute children and NGO run shelters etc.

The 300 sampled street children were identified across the eight zones of the city of Bangalore. The number of street children thus selected is uneven in these areas, both in terms of their total number and the presence or absence of girl street children. Bangalore West Zone is the Hub area that consists of important business and communication centres in the city. It also has the largest presence of street children amongst all the other zones. This zone which could be titled as the Hub Area for Street Children’s activities consists of the prime centre of the city, such as Subashnagar or Bus Stand and Railway Station. It also consists of the business hub of Gandhinagar and the city market called as Krishna Rajendra Market (refer to Table 1.2 & Map 1.1). Bangalore East zone has Shivajinagar area where a large number of business establishments, bus station and large areas with Muslim and Christian residential pockets are located. As could be expected, it is these areas that provide some sort of economic means to earn a living as well as shelter to the street children. The two zones, Bangalore west and Bangalore South zones are known for commercial, transport, business, market, hospitals, judicial, entertainment and government official work; hence they are always filled with a large segment of floating population consisting of workers, students and others in need of these services – which comes to the city on work and return home in the night. The resident
population also joins them in visiting this area for various types of activities. Provision of a good transportation system has enabled this type of daily commuting. As a result, there are backward and forward economic linkages in these areas such as hotels, road side eateries, petty traders etc.
The street children find it convenient to stay in such busy lanes engaged in begginng, rag picking, crime (theft, pick pocket etc) in such busy lanes. As these areas are more or less non-residential ones, except the interior parts of Shivajinagar, Kalasipalyam (near city Market), in the rest of the areas, the children have somehow found place to spend their nights. Pavements, underpass, pedestrian crossing lines, empty spaces of all kinds are used by the children to spend the night.

The table shows that the maximum number of our sample street children have hailed from the two zones – Bangalore West and South. There are a total of 223 children in the sample who have been selected from the 25 areas of these two zones.
In our sample, out of the total 223 from these Hub Areas, 69 are from the area with the largest number of street children, i.e., the Subashnagar area that is popularly called as the Majestic\textsuperscript{17}. This area is also one with the largest number of girl street children (21 out of 69). 19 children were from the K R Market area (of them 17 are boys) and from the City Railway Station there were 11 children.

The second zone to contain a large number of our sample children is Bangalore South zone. There are 69 boys and 32 girls in the 15 areas of this category. Most of the children are living out of income earned from begging near traffic signals, petty trade, etc. Girls are mostly into prostitution. All these children stated that the opportunity to get one or the other type of employment in these areas motivated them to seek shelter in them as street children\textsuperscript{18}.

\textsuperscript{17} after the name of an old cinema theatre by the same name that is now demolished and converted in to a shopping Mall

\textsuperscript{18} The children tend to arrive by train and settle down there as they are ignorant of the other parts of the city
The highest number of street children in this zone (22 children) was identified at Jayanagar 9\textsuperscript{th} Block (near Ragigudda temple). The next area with the large number of street children in this zone is Panthara Palya with 13 children. Even here boys are more than girls. Electronics City and Shivajinagar follow with 11 and 9 children. The former has more girl children (6) while from Shivajinagar only one child is female (refer to Table 1.2). There are a large number of IT and BT companies located in Bangalore South and a few others in Bommanahalli, Mahadevapura and Bangalore East zones. These areas are also those with a large scale expansion of business and residential areas.
This is a broad zone where 12 areas have a large segment of poor hailing from minorities, SC and other vulnerable sections. Examples are Illyaznagar, Dairy circle, Jayanagar 9th block, Viveknagar Slum, Pantharapalya, Madivala and so on.

Bangalore East zone comes after Bangaloe West (Hub area) and Bangalore South zones in so far the percentage of street children in them is concerned. There are 26 children identified here with 11 among them being girls, which is quite a high proportion as compared to the other zones and areas in them. Dairy circle has been represented by 4 girls and the rest of the areas in this zone have 1-2 girls as street children.

Although the next zone, viz., Mahadevapura has only 3 areas in its jurisdiction, it has come up with as many as 14 street children of whom only 2 are girls. K R Puram, Mahadevapura and HAL near Mahadevapura are the areas in this zone (refer to the table). It is also unique as girl street children were not present in many of its areas. For example, data about Mathikere, Mavalli (Urvashi theatre area), Yeshwantpur and Tilaknagar (near Jayanagar) somehow did not report having girl street children in these places.

The remaining zones of Bytarayanapura (having Yelhanka with 5 children and Hesaraghatta main road with two children (one girl child), Raja Rajeswari Nagar zone (with 5 street children in our sample in its 2 areas, viz., Kengeri and Uttarahalli Main Road) and Bommanahalli zone with Bommanahalli and Hulimavu (with 5 children) have relatively less number of street children.

On the whole, the table makes it clear that the street children tend to reside and work in such zones and areas in them where they get an opportunity to be gainfully employed and relatively safe with fellow street children. There is a pressure on the new areas of the city with IT and BT services are located as well as near the city rail station market and the central bus station (refer Table I.2 and Map I.1).
Table I.2: Distribution of Sampled Street Children Across Different Zones and Areas of Bangalore City

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of the Place</th>
<th>Number of Street Children Interviewed in the City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>Byatarayanapura Zone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Yelahanka</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>Dasarahalli Zone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Hessaraghatta Main Road</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>Bangalore West Zone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Subhashnagar (Majestic Bus Terminal)</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Bangalore Central Railway Station</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Gandhinagar near Movie Land Theatre</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Viyyanagar Surroundings</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Yeshwanthpur</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Mattikere near M. S. Ramaiah College</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Palace Road</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Rajajinagar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>R. T. Nagar</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Hegdenagar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>K. R. Market</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.</td>
<td>Bangalore East Zone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Shivajinagar</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Bangalore Dairy Circle</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Viveknagar Slum</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Ulsoor Road</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Agara ITPL</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Banasavadi-Kammnahalli</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.</td>
<td>Bangalore South Zone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>J P Nagar</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Banashankari Market</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Jayanagar 9th Block near Ragi Gudda Temple</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Madivala Market</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Panthara Palya near Mysore road</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Illiyaznagar near Kanakapura Main Road</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Mavalli (Near Urvashi Theatre)</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Koramangala</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Tilaknagar Jayanagar</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>South End near Jayanagar</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Gandhi Bazaar</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Hosakerehalli Cross</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Hanumanthanagar</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Jagajeevanramnaggar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Electronic City near Hosur Road</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.</td>
<td>Mahadevapura Zone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Mahadevapura</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>HAL near Mahadevapura</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>K R Param</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII.</td>
<td>Raja Rajeshwari Nagar Zone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Kenegeri</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Uttarahlali Main Road</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII.</td>
<td>Bommanahalli Zone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Bommanahalli</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Hulimavu</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>NICE Road Junction near Banneraghatta Main Road</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey
1.15.2 Gender Issues in Sample Selection

Most of the girls worked as street sex workers and were not found or could be traced on the streets during day time. Hence, the task of identifying them for purposes of drawing a sample (and later on for interviewing them) was difficult. Having worked in the night, most often they would be sleeping in the dens and dungeons where they are kept by the pimps and their owners. It was next to impossibility to gain access to these dens and prostitute homes, which were always guarded with spies who would go and inform the local goonda or the leader that someone is trying to locate the girls. In some cases, the girls, after they gain some experience in the profession, would be sold to agents from Mumbai and other cities for a price - based on their beauty, age and charm. On the whole, irrespective of a boy or a girl, tracing street child was a herculean task. The 300 children, who finally made the sample, are the result of much concerted effort to trace them and later to interview them on their problems and prospects.

Details of the number of children from different areas in the different zones of Bangalore city are given in Table 1.2 above. One can see from the table that there is disproportionate distribution of children in the areas shown there. This is because of the facilities the respective area or ward offers to the children who are run-away from their homes and mostly from rural parts of Karnataka and its neighbouring states.

Out of the total 85 girls in the sample, the maximum number is found in Majestic area. This is followed by Bangalore South with 27 girls interviewed for the study. The 17 areas making up what is categorised as ‘Other Places’ have 23 girls out of the total 69 street children in the sample drawn from this category. The areas where girl children stay on roads are somewhat typical. They are not essentially residential
in nature, but business hubs and give protection to the girl children in their activities, mainly sex work.

Thirdly, the table also mirrors the gender divide or structure of the number of street children interviewed for the study. There are two significant issues to be noted in the table as far as the gender divide or distribution of the sample is concerned. One is that the girl street children are far less in number than the boys. The reasons are explained in the thesis later at appropriate sections. The earlier thinking was that girls are better behaved; do not desert parents and run away from home; try to put up with all trouble and difficulties that poverty presents to them; their mothers are strict with them and keep under control etc. But as explained later in the chapters, girls also have run away from homes. It is not restricted to only boys to do so. Where are the girls then in the street???. Have they been rescued and taken to rescue homes or children homes? Have they been taken back to parents and rehabilitated by reuniting with family and parents and siblings?

A host of such questions arise in our minds when we look at the table that presents less number of girls among the street children. It is not true of only the sample but is a general feature of the street children situation in the city. The girls are definitely less or fewer in number among street children as compared to the boys. Our discussion with the representatives of the government and civil society organizations has told us that the girls are no doubt there emerging from homes to be ‘of’ and ‘on’ the streets, just like the boys. But, the cruelty of their gender character, i.e., being of the female sex, they are quickly lured into the age old profession of prostitution. Case study of one Sukanya that is presented in Chapter V tells us vividly as to how it is totally impossible for a girl to live on the street, without being vulnerable to the sex trade. She is helpless and victim of her lonely life on the road; is physically
assaulted to force her to get into the sex trade. Branding with hot iron, beating, kicking and denying food, forced intercourse etc are common acts of road ruffians who first use the girls to satisfy their own lust for sex and then transfer the girls to a brothel. The case of Ifthekar and a few others proves that safety and security are missing or lacking even for boys, let alone for the girls. Boys of such young age of 12-14 years are forced to be sex partners by males. These males are none other than the road ruffians (goondas) and the police who are in fact supposed to protect these girls. Therefore, the situation of the girls is only to be understood, when the vulnerable status of boys is not any way different.

1.16 Data Analysis and Presentation

The data collected from the sample street children was analysed using SPSS software. Qualitative data collected through Focussed Group Discussions (FGDs), interviews, observations etc from the officials of government department, NGOs, Police and general public were analysed and integrated as explanation for various findings. The findings based on the analysis of data are presented throughout the thesis in the form of statistical tables, charts, graphs, and are interpreted and attributed through explanatory writing. Wherever feasible, case studies have been generated, using information from qualitative methods like FGDs, observations etc.

1.17 Limitations of the Study

The present study was undertaken for the purpose of pursuing the degree of Doctor of philosophy in Sociology. It purports to study the street children in the city of Bangalore. The sensitive nature of the topic of research has made the process of research difficult. The views of children on their own lives and situations, as they narrated them, have been taken. It was not possible to conduct field survey like in normal thesis work as the topic is highly sensitive. Sufficient time was spent to
establish rapport with the children who had to be assured that they will not be sent to police station or Resettlement Home. The research data generation had to depend upon the scope given by the children or it had to take the assistance of the NGOs working in the area. The strict implementation of the rule that there should not be any street child traced or found abandoned anywhere, led to a situation where there were hardly street children who could be met freely. Most of them were in the rescue homes and hence became ineligible to be interviewed for the study. But taking the children who are already identified and rescued did not serve our purpose. Intervention by the NGO definitely corrects the child’s appearance, its behaviour and even livelihood. Thus, the NGO rescued children were considered to be ineligible to be taken up.

Secondly, there were a large number of children of the street. They nevertheless had their parents also living in Bangalore, but not supporting their education due to extreme poverty. The children were left to the street to work on whatever came their way. They returned home in the evening or night, as the case may be. It was difficult to trace such children as they stayed in slums, with no electricity and connecting roads. The parents usually did not approve of their street work status or exaggerated their problems. Another limitation is that the study was undertaken in the city of Bangalore and its conclusions are relevant to only the universe of study may not be applicable to a wider area.

1.18 Chapterisation

The findings of the study or the thesis are presented in eight chapters. The details of contents of these chapters are as follows:

Chapter I is the introduction to the study. It presents the problem that is
studied or selection of the topic, need for the study, objectives, methodology and scope and limitations of the study. It also presents the chapterisation and presentation of findings.

In Chapter II, a detailed review of literature is made highlighting the various theoretical and conceptual issues in the context of street children, globally and locally. At the end of the review, some questions are raised and critically reflected upon. The framework for the present study is thus delineated in this chapter.

Chapter III provides a detailed background note on the universe of study, i.e., Bangalore city. It is done against a wider canvas-global, Indian and State picture is supportive of the universe of study and the vital issues in the subject. It also examines the government programmes for poverty alleviation and protection of women and children in rural Karnataka with the hypothesis that the rural poverty and problems faced by men and women in the rural areas are the prime cause of pushing them to migrate to cities and towns. In course of time, such deprivation and continued poverty in the urban areas resulted in the children getting out of the families and living on the streets. Rural poverty is viewed here as the genesis for urban poverty and destitution of children.

Chapter IV looks into the socio-demographic profile of the respondents, in terms of their parentage, family history, age, education, gender, region, caste, class and organizational history if any. It also presents the household details of the street children, the size of their family, details of siblings, type of house, access to basic amenities like drinking water, toilets, electricity etc.

Chapter V discusses the causes for becoming street children as narrated by the respondents, government, NGO staff and others. The study findings in this regard
are critically presented here. The chapter also presents the economic activities or work-profile of street children. The nature of their employment or wage work, exploitation at work and, working conditions, remuneration, sexual violence on girl street children and such other problems are discussed here as emanating from the findings of the study.

In Chapter VI the problems and challenges faced by the street children are examined. The discussion reflects the various diversities of gender, caste, age, education and poverty among street children. The chapter also examines the health related problems and challenges encountered by the street children covered in the sample of the study.

Chapter VII provides a detailed account of the various interventions made in the past by different actors – state and civil society- for the betterment of the street children. It critically evaluates the performance of these measures in identifying the street children and addressing their problems. The perceptions of the children about these interventions are also documented. It also draws upon the above findings and presents a situational context taking into account the views and opinions of all stakeholders.

A summary of findings of the study are presented in Chapter VIII. It also offers a few policy suggestions or recommendations for ameliorating the living conditions and rehabilitation of street children.
1.19 Conclusions

Thus, the thesis is an attempt to understand the phenomenon of street children in a growing metropolis. The location of study is the city of Bangalore. A sample of 300 street children were interviewed or covered in the study using scientific data collection and analysis methods. The findings are presented in chapters 4-7 in the thesis. The last chapter (chapter 8) provides a summary of findings and offers a few policy suggestions.

In the next chapter (Chapter II) the various studies and academic works, which have been carried out in the context of street children are reviewed. It makes a detailed note of the complexity involved in defining street children based on a detailed review of available literature. Global and national definitions are presented as conceived by several studies. It also reviews the extent of the problem of street children with a theoretical framework for study and analysis in the rest of the chapters of the study.