"The Street Children of Kolkata: A Socio-Spatial Study with Special Reference to Sealdah Railway Station Area"

Thesis Submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Geography

By

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This is to certify that the work embodied in this thesis titled "**The Street Children of Kolkata: A Socio- Spatial Study with Special Reference to Sealdah Railway Station Area**" is solely based on original contribution of the research, free from plagiarism, carried out by Sri Sibnath Sarkar towards the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Geography under my supervision. This work or any part of it is not submitted for any other degree/diploma or for any other academic award to this or any other University anywhere before.

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PREFACE

Research a scientific and systematic search for pertinent information on a specific topic, is an art of scientific investigation. Social research dealing with the social phenomena is the systematic method of discovering new facts and/ or verifying old facts, their sequences, inter-relationships, causal explanations, etc. It studies the behaviour of human beings, their feelings, responses, attitudes under different circumstances- as members of the society. The study can be thus applicable for the whole society through a representative sample.

The motivation behind this research is *among* many other things the: desire to get a research degree along with consequential benefits*;* desire to get intellectual joy of doing some creative work; desire to get respectability; desire to face the challenge in solving the unsolved problems   (as the concern over practical problems initiates research) and finally the desire to be of service to the society.

 Due to the sensitive nature of the study while designing the research work the ethical issues were first identified, and then addressed through informed consent and through arrangements made for protecting the confidentiality of the street children in the data analysis. As a result the street children responded well and were very much co-operative. The potential ethical issues were kept in mind while sharing the findings along with their photographs. The potential benefits of the research work hopefully will reach out to the community in general and street children in particular.

The cauterization of the thesis broadly reflects the stages involved in the research. The thesis begins with an introductory **Chapter 1** providing with the background information to contextualize the research The focus of the study being the street children working definitions to make the concept clear have been given here . This chapter provides an overview of the study and addresses the following: need for the study, nature of the problem, background of the problem and significance of the study**. Chapter 2** conceptualizes the study through relevant literature, identifying the research gap, followed by Statement of the Problem and research questions being framed, the study area and target population decided upon and finally the hypotheses formulated. **Chapter 3** is an account of the   research

strategy adopted : the methodology and the methods adopted in order to constitute the research design. Chapter 4 deals with the empirical evidences gathered from the target population from the area chosen as sample study. The next **chapter 5** explores the reasons for the children being on the street as urban phenomena. The consequences for being on the street, the coping strategies adopted by the children to overcome the challenges faced are put forth through the empirical evidences analyzed in **Chapter 6**. Analysis of the functioning of the service providers for addressing the various problems of the street children has been considered in **Chapter 7** after giving the details of these service providers. The final chapter **8** is a recapitulation of purpose and findings of the research thus highlighting the significance of the work and its implications; along with future research direction.

ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Action Aid
AIDS	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
BSF	Border Security Force
KMC	Kolkata Municipal Corporation
CCL	Children in Conflict with Law
CEDC	Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances
CIF	CHILDLINE India Foundation
CINI	Child In Need Institute
CIF	CHILDLINE India Foundation
CLPRA	Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act
CNCP	Children In Need of Care and Protection
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CWC	Child Welfare Committee
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
JJ Act	The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act 2002
JJB	Juvenile Justice Board
GRPF	Government Railway Protection Force
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Services
ICPS	Integrated Child Protection Scheme
ILO	International Labour Organization
MWCD	Ministry of Women and Child Development
NCPCR	National Commission for The Protection of Child Rights
NGO	Non-Government Organization

SJPU	Special Juvenile Police Unit
SSA:	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
SCWC	State Child Welfare Committee
TTE	Travel Ticket Examiner
UNCRC	United Nation's Convention on The Rights of The Child
UNICEF	United Nation Children's Emergency Fund
UNESCO	United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
WBMWCD	West Bengal Ministry of Women and Child Development
WHO	World Health Organization

GLOSSARY OF THE LOCAL TERMS USED IN THE THESIS

Local term	It's meaning in English
Bidis	Smoking tobacco
gutkha	Chewing tobacco
Athar Nesha	Glue addiction
Khal Par	Along the Canal
Pacca	Concrete
Khaini	Chewing tobacco
Chun	Liquid limestone
Masala	Spices
Pan masala	Chewing addictive substances
Gaali to amader sab samay sunte hai	We have to always listen to their curse
Dhaba	Roadside food stall
Mandaps	Temporarily temples for worship of God.
Sadak	Road or street
Sadak Chap	Lad belonging to the street
Dargah	Mosque
Mal	Alcohol
Mandir	Temple
Vagban	God

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CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Abstract: In this chapter the background information has been discussed in the context of categories of children away from the mainstream society with special reference to the street children for formulating the research statement. For doing so it is necessary to first define them based on literature search and then adopt the criteria best suited for this study. These have been done and the significance of the investigation has also been emphasized. The chapter provides a general overview of the research study.

1.0 Introduction:

The phenomenon of street children, widely acclaimed as an urban one, is a worldwide problem emerging as alarming and escalating, it being a social disturbance too. This phenomenon is not a recent issue worldwide. It attracted the attention of humanitarian aid agencies and governments for many years. The term was first used in 1951, by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to refer to vagrant children after World War II . The phenomenon of street children was keenly discussed in the wake of the International Year of the Child (1979) resulting in the formation of the Inter- NGO Program on Street Children and Street Youth in 1983 (Lalor, 1999).The United Nation's Department of International Economic and Social Affairs estimated the population of street children world -wide to be 150 million (2007), with the number rising daily. Estimating the correct number of street children is a very difficult, daunting and complicated task anywhere in the world. An accurate estimate of children on the street is critical at the policy level as it informs on the intensity of the issue and for addressing a child's need and right to survival, protection, development, and participation, including the right to the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illnesses. It also includes the right to education, which is directed at the development of a child's personality, talent, and mental and physical abilities to her/his fullest potential, and the right to benefit from social security.

The street children constitute a marginalized population in most urban centres of the world in both developed and developing nations, more so in the latter. As early as in 2001 the WHO mentioned in its report that most of research study undertaken globally regarding the prevalence of street children indicates that poverty is the single most important factor in people leaving their homes and migrating to the cities. Poverty drives some families to push their children to work, and among them the street appears as a 'promise of rewards'. Rapid urbanization is one of the major causes for their migration to street situation (Barrette, 1995). Urban poverty in India is over 25 percent; some 81 million people live in urban areas on incomes that are below the poverty line. Children are the most vulnerable portion of the urban poor population as they are suffering from exclusion or are at risk of exploitation (UNICEF, 2012). The United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Urban Poverty Report 2009 cited the incidence of a street population as an outcome of the inability of urban planning to accommodate the rapid inflow of people into a city.

Historically, accounts of street children can be traced in literary works of Charles Dicken's 'Oliver Twist'; Stephen Crane's 'Maggie: A Girl of the Streets' and our famous Indian author R.K. Narayan's 'Malgudi Days'. Street children were also portrayed in films such as Luis Bunuel's 'Los Olvidadas' (1950), Hector Bebenco's 'Pixote'(1981) . Film makers collaborated with UNICEF, the World Food Programme and the Italian Government to produce seven short films portraying lives of children from different regions of the world. These were presented as '*All the Invisible Children* 'during the 62nd Venice Biennale Film Festival with the intention of raising awareness of the need for a global commitment towards helping in protecting the rights of all children across the world. Yet another documentary directed by Hanna Polak 'The Children of Leningradsky' was Oscar nominated :it portrayed the stories of the homeless in Moscow. The film showcased that a different life is possible for these children , that they had alternatives and were not doomed to a life spent on the streets. This boosted these hapless children that they can have a better life in future if they so wished and tried. Since the 1980s with the growing global concern for the rights and welfare of children, attention has been diverted towards children in difficult circumstances, especially the problem of increasing numbers of street children in urban areas mostly within the developing world such as Mira Nair's Salam Bombay (1989) and Danny Boyle 'Slumdog Millionaire'(2008). The latter an Academy award winning movie with street

children as the main actors caught global attention depicting the life and lifelessness of street children in Mumbai.

There are several categories of children away from the mainstream society. They are referred to as abandoned children, children at high risk, children of street families, and the houseless children. Abandoned children are children without a family who either live on the street or in institutions. Children at high risk are children living in absolute poverty in households that are not able to satisfy their basic human needs. These children often spend a considerable time in the streets and are at a risk of becoming street children, and are thus similar to children on the streets. Children of street families are children who are living on the streets with one or both of their parents. They are either born on the streets or they have moved to the streets with their family. These children are sometimes referred to as second-generation street children, and they are a growing concern for authorities and NGOs working to promote the social conditions for children. The Census of India defined the persons who are not living in 'census houses', referring such houses to 'a structure with roof' in the notion of 'houseless population.' The enumerators were instructed to take note of the possible places where the houseless population is likely to live such as on the roadside, pavements, in pipes, under staircases, or in the open, temples, *mandaps*, platforms, etc.

Street children are found in most cities around the world. They live in the streets, sleep in the open or in empty buildings, and they have no one to support them in their daily struggle for survival. Street children are probably the most visible face of child labour. They can be classified as a group of children in especially difficult circumstances, and are an extremely vulnerable group in all aspects of life and difficult to reach populations. Determining who the street children are, is the first step in designing policies to identify them, understand their needs, improve their life in the cities, or reintegrate them into their home communities. Deciding which approach to pursue is the responsibility of policymakers; the researcher's task is to provide the information necessary to help them make these decisions, find a lasting solution for the children. These children struggle daily to find food; illness and crime are their constant threats, their lack of any proof of identity or official government documentation means they are not able to participate in government

schemes designed to help the poor. Hence an effort to include these 'invisibles' into the forefront of economic progress is the main aim of this work. It is first essential to identify and specify the category of the children away from the mainstream society intended for the study. For this defining them is crucial . Literature on definition of the Street children by different agencies and policy makers at the local –national and global interface have been scrutinized and illustrated hereby as follows:

1.1 .Defining the street children:

Definition is required to familiarise the term(s) used. Definition sets up a larger frame of reference or context and is used to make the concept clearer to the readers. An extended discussion is required: and hence, a formal and concise statement of the meaning of **street children** as commonly understood in the academic and non-academic arena has been put forth. First defining the two words separately; and then its combined phrase have been explained based on the criteria adopted by different institutions and nations. Some definitions include the behaviour of a street child as differing from the community norms; others have classified the street children into some typology (based on which assistance/intervention would be rendered).

1.1.1. Defining the street:

The Dictionary meaning of the word street is 'A public way or thoroughfare in a city or town, usually with a sidewalk or sidewalks'. Space must be seen as social construction. As such, space is involved in the production and reproduction of social relationships, and is linked to political struggles of inclusion and exclusion. Geographically the concept 'street' is in the sense of a physical space, with a location identity. However, in the case of street children the word 'street' used in a broad sense means the 'outside homely atmosphere.' If we consider the concept of third space to examine the distinctive interplay between the urban landscape and children living on the street situation (in shaping the streetscape or street-space, and how it creates and maintains a street child's identity); Soja's theory of 'Third space' is very significant. He examined the lives of adolescents on the street, and the space in which children explore, adopt, and develop an attachment to street life and that makes a street child's identity. He discussed how the public place utilized by children is

very important. Public spaces has its other purposes or prospects but the street children make the space in their own way, that place becomes their survival space : the 'Third Space' (Soja, 1996).

1.1.2. Defining the children:

The legal definition of children adopted at varied levels has been considered in defining the children. Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989,states 'a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier'; and 192 of 194 member countries sanctioned this. The Committee on the Rights of the Child, the monitoring body for the Convention, encouraged States to review the age of majority if it is set below 18 and to increase the level of protection for all children under eighteen. UNICEF defines a 'child' as a person below the age of 18, unless the laws of a particular country set the legal age for adulthood younger.

There are number of legislations **in India**, which define the term 'Child' depending upon the purpose: These are:

(i) The Indian Majority Act, 1875 specifying the age of majority to be eighteen years & if it is related to property the age of majority is twenty-one years.

(ii) Under the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulations) Act, 1986, child means a person who has not completed his fourteenth year of age. The Constitution of India protects children below the age of 14 from working in factories and harmful jobs, but they can however, work in non-hazardous industries below this age.

(iii) Under the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929, child means a person who, if a male, has not completed twenty one years of age and, if a female, has not completed eighteen years of age.

(iv) Under Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act, 2000, 'Juvenile' or 'Child' means a person who has not completed eighteenth year of age.

1.1.3. Terminology commonly understood and associated with street children:

In the developed countries like the USA, the street children are termed as **homeless children/ street youth/ runaway children**. The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) in USA defines 'homeless youth as individuals, who are not more than 21 years of age, for whom it is not possible to live in a safe environment with a relative and who have no other safe alternative living arrangement.' According to the Children's Society, UK (2001), there are three main groups of young people, who share many characteristics of street children; these groups are—

Runaways: Children or young people, who run away, leave home or who are thrown out.

Homeless: Children detached from their families and living in temporary shelters.

Street Homeless or Rough Sleepers: Within the broad category of 'homeless', there is a further sub-category of street homeless, that means literally sleeping rough on the streets, or at other outside locations.

In India, the children were classified under those who **earn their living off the streets. Living and/or working on streets** were classified in Pakistan. Sierra Leone**, a country of Africa while enumerating their total figure identified them as those who are **living full time on the streets.** In Indonesia, they were identified as **living on the streets.** Australian youth were listed as **homeless** while in Russia they were children **without supervision.** In Latin America there are two categories of street children: **home based** and **street based** while the data collected in Brazil was based on those who **work or sleep on the streets**. The UNESCO mentioned that **destitute children** are forced to earn a living on the streets, 'scavenging, begging, and hawking in the slums and polluted cities of the developing world.' Those **who work on the streets**: the streets being their source of earning may have family ties/network returning home at night while those deprived of it stay on at night on the streets itself. Mark W. Lusk's research findings (1989) categorized children into four but his defining a street child is one who lives on his/her own without any supervision or guidance. Whatever be the category, the street born, runaway, the street orphan and lost children were part of the 'urban landscape' during the process of urbanisation and industrialization in post-war Europe (Agnelli, 1986)**.

1.1.4 Criteria adopted in de**fining the street children**:

Street Children are a diverse and heterogeneous population, because of the diversity of their backgrounds and personal history, leading therefore to different definitions, and to an overabundance of debates. Many researchers and academicians define street children in different ways. The term "street children" was first used by Henry Mayhew in 1851 when writing London Labour and the London Poor (cited in William Thackeray, 1851) although it came into general use only after the United Nations Year of the Child in 1979 (Scanlon et al,1998).

In 1983, the Inter-NGO Programme for Street Children and Street Youth defined street child as--"Any girl or boy who has not reached adulthood, for whom the street (in the broadest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings, wasteland, etc) has become her or his habitual abode or source of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised or directed by responsible adults" (Hatloy and Huser, 2005; Ennew, 2000). In the late 1980's, witnessing the diversity characterizing street children, other definitions began to emerge, mainly in Latin America, where street children's presence was spectacularly felt on the public areas.

Lusk (1992) developed four categories of children found on the streets; each category with its own psychological characteristics. First, there are poor working children returning to their families at night; they are likely to attend school and not be delinquent. Second, there are independent street workers whose family ties are beginning to break down. Third, there are children of street families who live and work with their family on the street. Their condition is related to poverty. In India, they are referred to as pavement dwellers (Patel 1990). Finally, there are children who have broken off contact with their families and reside on the streets full time and, hence, are the real street children.

According to Blanc (1994), street children are of two types 'visible' and 'invisible.' The 'visible' refers to those children who are easily seen occupied in marginalised and unorganised informal economically gainful occupations on the street. The 'invisible' on the other hand , are children in more hidden and more exploitative circumstances, for instance domestic labour, factory workers, child workers in hazardous or illegal trades.

Agarwal (1999) mentioned that the term street children and street labourers, who are sometimes referred to synonymously, are in fact two different groups. He however acknowledged a considerable portion of overlapping between the two. He defined not all street children are street workers and not all child workers are street children. Street children include non-working children who are beggars, gamblers, etc. The child labourers who work on the streets and are tied to their homes and work in the family economic activity without losing the advantages of parental love, care, affection, support and protection, are not the street children.

Some experts have defined "new categories", for example 'children for the street', who comprise 'candidates for the street who live in the slums and suffer from family break-up, abuse, and who do not go to school' (Dunford, 1996).

1.1.4.1 Definition criteria adopted by International Agencies:

In 1994, the National Children's Committee in Mongolia organized a National Conference on Street Children, involving representatives from Parliament, the Ministry of Science and Education, Juvenile Police Department, Juvenile Prison, the Amiga Centre for Children, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Save the Children, United Kingdom (UK). The Conference adopted three categories/definitions of street children:

1. Children who work on the streets during the day, usually returning to their homes in the evening; thus maintaining links with the family

2. Children who have some contact with their families, but spend most of their time on the streets, especially during warm seasons; and

3. Children who have lost contact with their families and live permanently on the street.

UNICEF in 1996 adopted a broader definition of a street child as "any minor for whom the street (in the widest sense of the word) has become his or her habitual abode, and who is without adequate protection." In 2001,it mentioned street children as "boys and girls for whom, the streets have become their home and source of livelihood, and who are inadequately protected or supervised by responsible adults." UNICEF categorized three types of street children (2006): street family, street working, and street living. **Street family**

or children from street families: These children live on the streets with their families. **Street working-children:** Children who spend most of their time on the streets, fending for themselves, but usually returning home on regular basis. **Street living children:** Children, who have run away from their families and, live alone on the streets. This group consists of children living on the streets without the traditional institutional support of the family.

The UN Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in 2000 identified the street children belonging to the category of 'homeless' population (www.unchs.org). The street children have been broadly categorized into three groups: (a) children 'at high risk,' who are living in the households that do not satisfy their basic needs; hence the children spend most of their time in the streets, are exposed to street culture and is at risk of becoming street children; (b) children 'of the streets 'who have severed family ties and are actually homeless. (c)children 'in (or on)the streets' with a strong family link; The first two categories are being at risk of homelessness.

The World Health Organization (WHO, 2000) classified the street children into four categories: (a) Children who live in the streets, (b) Children who leave their families and reside in the streets and abandoned places, (c) Children living in the protection centres or orphanages and, (d) Children, who have weak relations with their families.

The United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2003) defined street children as "children who have found the street their only home, the street where they stay daily. All face the same danger such as becoming involved in drug addiction, prostitution, and their presence in the streets gives them a sense of freedom."

The United State Agency for International Development (USAID, 2007) divided street children into four categories-

(i)   A 'child of the streets': children, who have no home but the streets, and no family support. They move from place to place and, live in shelters, and abandoned buildings.

(ii) A 'child on the streets': children who visit their families regularly and may even return every night at home but spend most days and some nights on the streets because of poverty, overcrowding, or sexual or physical abuse at home.

(iii) Part of a street family: these children live on sidewalks or city-squares with the rest of their families. They may be displaced due to poverty, wars, and natural disasters. The family often live a nomadic life, carrying their possessions with them. Children in this case often work on streets with other members of their families.

(iv) The institutionalized care: children in this situation come from a situation of homelessness and are at risk of returning to a life on the street.

The **most common definition** which gained credibility among practitioners and academics is the "ON/OF terminology" of UNICEF (1986).The terminology suggests dividing street children into two main categories: "children of the streets" and "children on the streets, the distinction being mainly based on the degree of "disconnection" with their family. "**Children of the streets**" are children (i.e. persons under 18 years old), who work and live on the streets without family support, the street being therefore a place for living 24/7 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week); "**Children on the streets**" work on the streets spend most of the time there, but return back to their families/relatives at night. These two definitions are useful as long as their limitations are taken into account (O'Connor, 2003). However, the complexity of the phenomenon leads to overlaps and grey areas (Hatloy and Huser, 2005) being present in both categories. Since the terminology of UNICEF contains diversity and "grey areas", local organisations adapted the definition according to their local context.

1.1.4.2. Definition Criteria adopted by Non-Governmental Organizations:

According to Non Govt. Organizations (*inter –NGO,1983*) 'street children are those for whom the street are more than their family, has become their real home , a situation in which there is no protection, supervision or direction from responsible adults.'

CINI (Child in Need and Care Institute), an NGO (2001) working for street children at Sealdah station area divided street children into the following categories. These are:

A) Fresh children- it stands for fresh children whose duration on the railway platform is within 24 hours or a day

B) New children- It stands for new children, whose duration on the platform is within 30 days or a month.

C) With family-It stands for those children who stay on the platform with family.

D) Without family-It stands for those children who stay on the platform without family.

1.1.4.3 Magnitude of the problem of defining:

In the defining criteria adopted by the UNICEF (1986), some "children of the streets" may have cut all contacts with their family and others may still visit their family occasionally before returning to the street. On the other hand, some "children on the streets" may alternate between street and home, sometimes sleeping at home, sometimes on the streets. Some may stay with distant relatives (and not their parents). One particular category, found in third world countries like India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh is the **children living on the pavement** (i.e., pavement dwellers) with their families, the street being their "home" and their family being present, creating therefore categorizing problems.

Considering all these elements, a "typical" street child is difficult to define; however, all the definitions do indicate that, a street child has "a special relationship to the street, among other domains of their lives" (Glauser, 1990; Connolly and Ennew, 1996) and Ennew (2003) warned all to be cautious on the way "street" is defined and indicate that it is only one sphere among others (such as family homes, schools, welfare programmes, etc) and has a variety of meanings and connotations in different contexts. Indeed, street children's world cannot be distinguished between "home" and "street", and it is necessary to take out the hidden assumptions in the way we use the words "child", "family", "home" and "street" (Ennew, 2000).

The street children with its multifaceted dimensions are very difficult to define. The consequence of this difficulty in the definition of the term is the inability of governments and aid agencies to quantify their exact numbers.This difficulty in identifying the sub group has policy implications: the service providers and policy makers' inability to assist such a target group. Although difficulties do exist, still a proper definition becomes the need of the hour so that the policy benefits can be implemented as per the specific need of the target

groups. "The task of identifying, with any real precision, all the factors which define who is and who is not a street child is difficult, given the relative lack of systematic study of the phenomenon. What is possible is to select key indicators for each of the dimensions" (Cosgrove, 1990, quoted in UNCHS, 2000: 73) and this has been done in the present study.

1.1.4.4. Defining criteria used in this research work:

Regardless of definition, the phenomenon of street children is not new and neither is it restricted to certain geographical areas (Connolly, 1990). The issues of street children are related with urban problem or urban landscape. Hence the definition of 'streets' is not in the literal sense as stated by the Childline India Foundation. It means the railway station, temples, *dargahs,* markets, parking area, under bridge, bus stands, railway car sheds, dilapidated buildings, footpath etc. The present research study has followed the UNICEF's classification and that adopted in India, viz., those children whose abode are the street (with its usage in the broadest sense of the word 'street') **i.e., children without stable home or shelter and are without adult guidance**. "**Children of the streets**" are those children whose abode are the street (with its usage in the broadest sense of the word 'street') **i.e., children without stable home or shelter and are without adult guidance**. "**Children on the streets**" work on the streets but are connected with their families.

1.2 Need for the study:

A child on the street is a reflection of the complete lack of social, economic and emotional security. The Convention of the Child Rights by the United Nation almost thirty years back in November 1989 expressed their concern about the constant rise in the number of street children across the world. Street children form a major area of a concern for any urban planning authority, which has to mainstream and rehabilitate them. These children are widely treated as 'juvenile delinquents' by society at large and also by the authorities and hence stigmatized. The constant overlap of concepts about the age of childhood, children without families, high-risk children, children in need of care and protection, and abandoned children only indicate the magnitude of the crisis that a street child deals with every moment of his or her life. They are vulnerable because they are young, small, poor, and ignorant of their rights, many having no family members to defend them when in need. They are a

critical part of society, very few of them are on the street by their own choice; most being forced to make such a choice.

In most third world cities, they are the shadowy presences who fill the background of daily life, doing odd jobs, scavenging for food, begging and stealing (Lalor et al., 2000). The higher rate of crime in the cities indicates that children in the cities are not only particularly vulnerable to crimes and violence but also become part of organized crime rackets, especially when faced with circumstances such as disruption in schooling, a broken family, lack of parental care and exposure to drug addiction. The National Crime record stated that there was a 24 % increase in crime against children between 2010 and 2011 and a further 52.5% increase from 2012 to 2013 in India. The UNICEF (2002) pointed out that there are more than 5 lakh street children in India who are at high risk of drug addiction. These children as drug users can be injured or affected, while they are intoxicated (Crowe, et al. 2000). Sometimes serious cardiac and neurological complication may develop, as well as sudden death may happen. Insufficient and inadequate institutional support to incorporate all the needs of the vulnerable children aggravates the challenges faced . The struggles of street life have been associated with high risk coping strategies such as drug abuse for many years (Foster et al. 1996). They are exposed to high level of violence, victimization, sexual exploitation and to the use of harmful substances. Substance abuse and use of drugs is a social behavior dilemma related with street children all over the world. Bond (1992) in his study showed that the age of 13 is becoming the average age for early criminal participation through the early use of drugs. WHO (1997) estimated that globally 25% to 90% of street children are prone to the use of various substances.

The UNICEF's (2005) Report on India pointed out that about 63 percent of Indian children go to bed hungry and 53 percent suffer from chronic malnutrition. "Right to health care, to safe drinking water, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help them stay healthy" is one of the fundamental rights of children stated by the UN Convention on Rights of Children, to which India is a party and signatory. In India, more than half of street children live and sleep under the open sky (UNICEF, 2012) in unhygienic, dirty and shanty surroundings, thus their living conditions are terrible .The poor living and working conditions of the street children and their hazardous occupations make them highly

vulnerable to injury and illnesses. Since street children are not from the background of 'mainstream' society and live their life without any social status; they are not trusted. This creates an adverse affect on the attitude they develop towards the society. Such stigma multiplies the social exclusion of street children. Hence to address these issues the study is essential.

1.3 Nature of the Problem:

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR, 1993) Report stated India to have the largest population of street children in the world. According to Ministry of Home Affairs Report (2014) in 2012, the number of children went missing was 135262 (male) and 68869 (female)in India i.e., a total of 2,04, 131 and among them 26896 children (13.18%.) untraced. According to the Planning Commission of India, (2015), around 40 percent of India's children are vulnerable or experiencing difficult circumstances. Such children are vulnerable as they are without family support, or are children forced into labour, abused/trafficked children, children on the streets, children affected by addicted material use , by armed conflict/ civil unrest/natural calamity etc. as well as children who, due to circumstances, come into conflict with law.

The Union Ministry for Woman and Child Development acknowledged the lack of reliable data on street children. Over one third of children in urban areas go unregistered at birth, they have no birth certificate or an official identity proof document stated the UNICEF(2012) and hence are invisible in governmental policies. The current level of birth registration in the country is 70 per cent. Thus around 8 million newly born children are not registered even within one year of birth. This is leading to difficulty in getting access to basic services and protection, including prevention of child labour, trafficking, countering child marriage, and providing appropriate care and protection (UNICEF,2007). Limited numbers of beneficiary children have the possibility to sleep in the day care centres (DICs)

Efforts to study street children have largely been in the form of sample studies to understand their profiles and reasons for their being on the street. Government and development agencies have conducted such sample surveys mainly to formulate rehabilitation policies and programmes for children on the streets of Kolkata . This is

because any effort to control street children, without any rehabilitation strategy has only led to criticism from various corners. There is an urgent need of coordination among these various development agents working for the rights of street children and information sharing among all stakeholders to enhance implementation strategies.

1.4 Background of the Problem:

The increasing phenomenon of street children have been linked with several related factors like urbanization, economic recession, poverty, unemployment, rural to urban migration, breakdown of family tie-up, increasing slum and homeless population. Being the most visible in the urban landscape yet the street children are invisible and the hardest to reach population by the intervening authorities   due to the lack of possession of any identification documents. Consequently they face difficulty in getting access to basic needs, services, care and protection. The troubles that these children face for their survival coupled with stigmatization by the society develops in them the feelings and emotions of insecurity, mistrust and fear. The ineffectiveness of the authorities in providing official identity proof document till date reflects the lacuna in sincere efforts towards the cause of these vulnerable children.

1.5 Significance of the study: Postmodernism has contributed towards making research on marginalized groups fashionable (Valentine, 2005:114) and one such group is the street children. Since geographers are now providing understanding of complex processes, identifying connections between places and eliciting the meanings of phenomena through people's lived experiences, the street children's lived experiences would be analyzed.

There has been a shift from a conception of spaces as 'essential' to a conception of space as 'constructed'; specially, there has been a shift away from the idea of space as homogenous, continuous, objective, Cartesian and knowable towards a view of space as fragmented, imaginative, unknowable and subjective. This thesis seeks to take up this challenge and offers a preliminary discussion of the debates about 'space', which characterize contemporary human geography. This work points to the ways in which places are constructed through competing spatialities after Massey (1995) who noted that different social groups may have distinct spatialities, different abilities and propensities to travel and

mobility, or different levels of commitment to places. This research discusses the implications of seeing space as socially constructed, multiple and contested for the development of a critical pedagogy of space. An effort will be made to draw attention to the ways in which geographical knowledge is socially constructed. The 'local' struggles over space (by the street children) which is related to the politics of identity and difference is central to the critical notion of space to be put forth in this work.

Data available for developing policy advocacy and programmes are inadequate. The present study will therefore be an attempt to bridge the information gap about the street children in Kolkata and to justify the need for contributing to an enhanced understanding of the varied street children's issues. The study intends to create awareness among the public, as it is not the problem of street children only but that of the entire society; the children being the future citizens of our country on whom our development depends.

1.6 Organization of the Thesis:

The chapterization of the thesis broadly reflects the stages involved in the research. The thesis begins with an introductory chapter providing with the background information to contextualize the research The focus of the study being the street children working definitions to make the concept clear have been given here . This chapter provides an overview of the study and addresses the following : need for the study, nature of the problem, background of the problem   and significance of the study**.** Chapter 2 conceptualizes the study through relevant literature, identifying the research gap, followed by Statement of the Problem and research questions being framed, the study area and target population decided upon and finally the hypotheses formulated. The rest of the chapters are organized as follows: Chapter 3 is an account of the research strategy adopted : the methodology and the methods adopted in order to constitute the research design. . Chapter 4 deals with the empirical evidences gathered from the target population from the area chosen as sample study. The next chapter , Chapter number 5 explores the reasons for the children being on the street as an urban phenomena . The consequences for being on the

street, the coping strategies adopted by the children to overcome the challenges faced are put forth in Chapter 6. Analysis of the functioning of the service providers for addressing the various problems of the street children has been considered in Chapter 7 after giving the details of these service providers   .The final   chapter is a recapitulation of purpose and findings of the research thus highlighting the significance of the work and its implications; along with future research directions .

1.7 Conclusion: The background information has been discussed in the context of categories of children away from the mainstream society. The rationale of the study is emphasized after deciding upon what data is to be collected and analyzed after scrutinizing the defining criteria best suited for this study. Various agencies have come up with their own definitions to deal with the issues of street children. However, the approach basically centers on a certain set of working and living conditions. Regardless of the definition or category in which they are placed such as with family, without family, orphan, working, or non-working, street children tend to spend a major part of the day on the streets with other children during their adolescence. The forthcoming chapter will   provide a conceptual framework for   the study through relevant literature on the varied facets of the   street children based on the defining criteria adopted in this work.

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CHAPTER-II

CONTEXTUALIZING THE RESEARCH

Abstract: The chapter conceptualizes the study through relevant literature, then the research gap has been identified, followed by statement of the problem and research questions being framed; the study area and target population decided upon and finally the hypotheses formulated. This chapter is divided into three broad sections: the first one reviews the research literature on the different aspects and issues related to street children. In the second part the different concepts to be adopted thus resulting in constituting the conceptual framework has been done. The third section specifies the research work intended to be carried out.

2.0 Introduction:

A literature review is a text of a scholarly paper which includes the current knowledge along with substantive findings, as well as theoretical and methodological contributions to a particular topic. Literature reviews are secondary sources, and does not report new or original experimental work (Lamb, 2014). Previous literature study is one of the essential parts of any research work. A careful review of the research journals, books, dissertations and other sources of information on the research problem hence needs investigation. This is an important method in the planning of any research study (Koul, 2013). The review of related literature enables the researcher to define the limits of his/her field. It helps the researcher to delimit and define the research problem (Ary, et al. 1972)

The conceptual framework can be viewed as providing a theoretical overview of intended research and guiding the entire research process. It refers to the ideas and beliefs the researcher holds about the phenomena studied. Such frameworks offer a self-audit facility to ensure cohesion and appropriate conceptualization for research conclusions (Shosh Leshem and Vernon Trafford, 2007). This conceptualization is 'meaning making' in research. The framework fulfills two roles: providing a theoretical clarification of what the

researcher intends to investigate, and, enabling readers to be clear about what the research seeks to achieve, and how that will be achieved. It thus conveys a methodological rationale whose explanation clarifies understanding of the research design. A concept is an intellectual representation of some aspect of reality that is derived from observations made from phenomena. The concepts thus identified helps in guiding the research.

2.1. Literature Review:

Various literature, documents, study reports, and policies have been thoroughly reviewed to get conceptual ideas about the topic. The review of past documents related to various issues on street children have been discussed elaborately in each of the chapters and hence here just a brief overview is given .Literature search has been done on the following issues: defining who the street children are; their situational analysis, intervention policies adopted, etc for the conceptual background of the study .

The criteria adopted in **defining the street children** by international agencies such as the UNICEF in 1996 and in 2001; the WHO(2000), UNESCO(2003), the USAID (2007) all broadly categorized the street children into two main categories based on 'on and of' terminology into : "Children of the streets" and "Children on the streets"; the distinction being mainly based on the degree of "disconnection" to their family. "Children of the streets" are children (i.e. persons under 18 years old) who work and live on the streets without family support, the street being therefore a place for living. "Children on the streets" work on the streets and spend most of the time there, but return to their families/relatives at night, the street being therefore their major point of reference.

Regarding the salient features of Street children, the UNICEF in 1992 reported street children as those for whom the street **is more than their family,** has become their real home, a situation in which there is no **protection, supervision, or direction** from responsible adults. In 2006 it described these children as the most **'invisible'** and therefore **'hardest children to reach'**. Earlier Blanc (1994) divided street children into two types 'visible' and 'invisible.' The 'visible' being those children who are easily seen occupied in marginalized and unorganized informal occupations on the street. The 'invisible' are those children in more hidden and more exploitative circumstances. Panter-Brick, C. (2000), Van

Blerk and Ansell (2006) described street children as a mobile population due to their floating character. Their numerical presence varies from day to night and with season (Ennew and SwartKruger, 2013).

Barrette (1995) analyzed the reasons of children's migration in street situation to be related to society, community, and family while Conticini and Hulme (2006) discussed on natural/environmental shocks to be the vital reason of such migration. According to Kwankye et al, (2007) migration to the street is found to be an effective coping strategy by children to leave the extreme poverty.

According to Agrawal (1999) and Mahmud, et al, (2010) street children are those who either are working on the street or spending a large proportion of their time, including sleeping and sharing on the street. They create supportive network using street spaces and /or urban landscapes to survive in street situation. They have changing careers on the street over the time, and their increasing age is an important factor in this changing career. Ellingsen (2003) and Lusk (1992) discussed about the lifestyle, values and norms of a subculture of 'street society' and the 'sense of place' which refers how the street children connect with places in their daily life.

Kavitha, (2014) and Gupta (2012) discussed about the unhealthy and unhygienic way of living in street situation. The children are very vulnerable to many adverse health outcomes. Berti et al (2001) pointed out that homeless children are much more prone to experience health problems than the housed children.

Street children have remarkable survival instincts and boldness in daily struggle of street life (Verma, 1999). According to Colby (2000) involvement of street children and adolescents in drug addiction often leads to physiological and psychological problems. WHO (1997) estimated that globally 25% to 90% of street children enjoy the use of various drugs . Glue sniffing is one of the major coping strategies for street children all over the world viewed Rai, et. al. (2002). Mcwhirter, (2004) in his study showed that youth in the age of 13 is becoming the average age for early criminal participation through the early use of drug.

According to World Health Organization's report of 1993, sometimes children escape from a children's institution. The study indicated that street children feel these institutions are like prisons to them as they cannot adjust to rules and regulations of the institution after experiencing the freedom of the streets. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in 2007 while analyzing the intervention policies related to street children mentioned that those under the 'institutionalized care' come from a situation of homelessness & are at risk of returning to a life on the street.

According to Allen and Babbie (2001) in the study on street children a researcher should apply qualitative methods like semi structured interviews with degree of consistency in the use of open ended questions for primary data collection. This is because traditional interviews or surveys are not always fruitful. While doing research with a vulnerable group such as street children, often complex and challenging situations are faced. In order to cope with challenges visual research methods could offer new ways of understanding the research participants in detail (Rose 2012)

2.1.1. Significance of the Literature Review:

Prior research can contribute to the research design in the following ways. First, it can help in developing a *justification* for the study-to show the way in which the work will address an important need or unanswered question. Second, prior research can help in making decision about methods, suggesting alternative approaches, or identifying potential methodological problems or solutions. Third, it can be a source of data that can be used to test or modify theories. Finally, prior research can help *generate* theory. The researcher can see if existing theory, pilot research, or experiential understanding are supported or challenged by previous results. Doing this will often require thinking through the *implications* of the concept/theory or understanding to see if these are consistent with other's findings.

Those, which are the most pertinent, and those, which have been most influential in the field, have been cited. Attempt has been made to relate the various sources to each other and to organize theme wise. The sources which take similar approaches or which discuss similar materials were grouped together. Sometimes a chronological approach is useful in

showing how research themes have developed overtime, but in many cases the best organization of the material may not be chronological and so this approach has been partially adopted. In some parts, there is progression from the more general (global) to the more specific (local). Reviews of material of theoretical importance, of empirical interest, and of methodological relevance were also carried out. The individual contributions have led to partial answers and to new questions being asked. These have been done chapter wise in order to present the literature review section a coherent and sensible structure and it will show how the study is linked to earlier work. Some of the questions unresolved will be dealt with by this work, and it will add a new perspective to the debate on street children.

2.2 Conceptual Framework:

Developing a conceptual framework forces the researcher to be explicit about what he/she thinks is doing, and helps him/her to be selective; to decide which are the important features; which relationships are likely to be of importance or meaning; and hence, what data is to be collected and analyzed. The conceptual framework has been based on space, place and the phenomenon of street children and put forth in this section.

Massey (1993) expressed the proliferation of spatial metaphors blurring the distinctions between different meanings of space. Following the lead of critical urban geographers such as Edward Soja, geographers should be encouraged to explore the spatiality of human life through the trialectics of space, knowledge and power (McLaren, 1999:454). The importance of space earlier largely unrecognized in the historical materialist tradition of social science, began to change with the emergence of a Marxist inspired radical geography from the early 1970s. Henri Lefebvre (1991) argued that space and society are mutually constitutive. His ideas were taken up by those human geographers who adopted a broadly historical-geographical materialization in order to examine the production of space in conditions of modernity and post modernity. Notable among them are Edward Soja who proposed the term 'spatiality' to refer to the fact that space is socially produced and interpreted, arguing for the reassertion of space over time in social theory and David Harvey who pointed to the way in which the production of space is linked with the exercise of economic power. These 'Radical' geographers instead of seeing 'space' as natural viewed

that the production of space is always tied up with questions of power and politics. However, in their critiques it was said that by focusing on class as the most important determinant of space, the diversity of space got lost. There is a whole set of social relationships (linked to capital, gender, ethnicity, sexuality and nationality) that structure people's experience of involvement in the production of space. The 1990s consequently produced a large volume of literature on the ways in which the production of space is linked to the production of identities. Many feminist and cultural geographers argued that space is not simply the product of capital and class relationships, the role of other social relationships in the production of space needs consideration. This is reflected in Soja's work (1996), which has taken up many of the ideas welcoming the new 'postmodernised and spatialised' politics of difference in his notion of Third space. Third space offers the possibility of expanding the scope of our geographical imaginations about the spatiality of life, a dimension as significant as the historical and social ones. This means building on and going beyond a First space perspective which focuses on the 'real' material world, and a second space perspective that interprets 'reality' through representations, to reach a Third space of multiple 'real and –imagined places'. Drawing on 'feminist' and postcolonial theories, Soja conceptualized Third space as a space of 'radical openness', which those marginalized by racism, patriarchy, capitalism, colonialism and other oppressions choose as a speaking position. Third space offers a source of community for those oppressed by the social categories around which society is structured.

The different concepts applicable to this study have been based on the literature search and the situational analysis of the street children in the urban context. A concept is an intellectual representation of some aspect of reality that is derived from observations made from phenomena. The socio-economic life of street children is to be justified with the "social exclusion" and "social practice" theory of Social Geography. The culture or group activities are to be validated with the "Social Cohesion" concept. The survival strategies of street children needs to be explained with the concept of 'social practice' and 'territoriality' and 'Place' or 'Space' concept. This study also authenticates the spatial distribution and time scale as well as relationship of street children with the space or place, where they usually come together. The concept of 'Third Space' (Soja, 1996) is to be applied to justify the spatial relationship of street children in the public place of the urban landscape of

Kolkata in general and Sealdah rail station complex in particular .The following table-1 illustrates the conceptual framework as developed for this work based on Graham (2005).

Table-1 Conceptual Framework:

Geographical Knowledge	Research Questions /Problems	Research design/methods applied
Urban Landscape	Where they are concentrated, why they come to urban situation	Applied mapping and graphics
Space and Time analysis	Spatial distribution and temporal variation of presence	Spatial map & temporal data analysis
Social Exclusion	Lacking of basic needs and deprived of basic rights	Case studies, In-depth interview, Photography, thorough observation
Social Group Culture or Cohesion	What are the group activities and social culture present among them	In-depth interview, Photography, thorough observation
Activity Space	How they use the urban space for their livelihoods	In-depth interview, Photography, thorough observation,
Social Practices	Actions and approaches in relation to social space	Spatial Map, In-depth interview, Photography, thorough observation and video clips
Territory concept	Daily routine or activities	Spatial Map, In-depth interview, Photography, thorough observation and video clips

Concept derived from Literature Review

2.3 Research studies on street children in India:

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR, 1993), India has the largest population of street children in the world. This situation has not changed yet as data of NHRC(2005) indicates India still topping with an estimated figure of 11 million out of a global estimated total of 23,059,023 (47.70%). Street children numbers are increasing on a daily basis reflecting the alarming situation throughout the world (Drane, 2010). The socio-economic realities of street children and demographic

features of street children in India were observed by Mathur, (2009), Guruswamy, (1995), etc. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC, 2005) informed that on an average every year more than 44,000 children are reported missing all over the country.

Studies conducted to assess the situation of street children in Indian context by Arimpoor (1992), Ghosh (1992), etc., illustrates the urban phenomenon. Nigam (1994) , Mathur (2009),among many others   analyzed the causes related to children being on the street. Among many studies those of Singh(1997), Shroff & Rane (1994)are significant in their description of the plight of these children. Nearly one billion children are suffering from deprivation of basic needs around the world (Gordon et al., 2003). According to the UNICEF (2006), the issue of birth registration in India reflects an alarming situation as approximately 9.4 million, or 36 per cent, go unregistered. UNICEF (2012) estimated that India has the highest number of working children under 14 years of age. Sixty five percent of the children are put to work by their parents and 76% of them hand over their earning to their parents it stated.

A   notable study by Gupta & Derevensky (1998) put forth the street children's perception about the social support system in the Railway stations of India. Singh (2000) suggested on the need to concentrate more on the reintegration of children with their families rather than to keep them in shelters and to provide with care and protection.

The report by Save the Children (2004) in Kolkata mentioned that majority of street children (89%) are staying with their parents either single or with both father and mother. About 20% street children live alone in the streets. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC, 2005) estimated that 11 million street children were living in India and most of them in and around the railway stations of Delhi, Mumbai, and Kolkata, approximately 100,000-125,000. Kedarnath, (2003) exposed the situation of street children in Kolkata to be equally bad like other cities of India; they face variety of dangers i.e. hazardous working condition, cruelty, road accidents and harsh behaviour by the police or other adults in the area.   A more recent study by Bal et.al. (2010) on 554 street children (6-18 years) of Kolkata revealed that the overall prevalence of involvement in drugs was 52%.

2.4 Gaps in knowledge:

Most aspects of the world, whether physically or environmentally determined, or politically, economically, or culturally constructed, have been considered as suitable for geographical research. Through the research gaps it is possible to identify the questions required to be answered and the solutions to the problems stated.   Through the existing review of literature the following research gaps have been identified:

- The terminology of UNICEF broadly accepted and applied globally contains overlaps and "grey areas" (Hatloy and Huser, 2005) which has its implications relating to intervention measures . This defining criteria needs local specifications .

- Most have stated that estimating the number of street children is difficult. Consequently there is lack of reliable secondary data, based on which meaningful conclusion can be drawn on these street children.

- Outcome of the various government programmes and non government programmes are little known.

- Finally due to the little academic approach in this context there is lack of research work done in and around Sealdah station from the geographical perspective.

These research gaps give suitable reason to carry out a research work in the study area on the street children as identified by the researcher.

2.5 Statement of the Problem:

 A research starts from a question or problem that defines the topic or subject matter or *what* is to be studied. The research *problem* is a question, or set of questions worth asking, an issue that merits attention or requires solving; is the subject of contemporary interest, either to academics or the public, or to both. The meaning and definition of the street children needs critical up hauling as it is 'contested among academics, policy makers,

politicians and the public'(Thapa et al 2009).This lack of proper consensus will hamper fulfilling the Goals 1 to 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals 2015 as these are somehow related to the street children. Keeping this in mind the ***research problem*** thus identified and stated is :

*"*A Street child living out his/her daily life on the street, with or without family ties , driven to the street with or without his/her choice, is subject to various types of abuses , and consequently facing them and coping with them , being visible to the public but invisible to policy makers". Don't they   need recognition and justice to bring them out of their vulnerable situation by individuals, community/ society and the institutions at large, they being the future national and global citizens?"

"Being poor is itself a health hazard, worse, however is being urban and poor. Much worse is being poor, urban and a child; but worst of all is being a street child in an urban environment." (De La Barra, 1996). This issue is of high social relevance and the topic identified is potentially a   policy relevant one , a societal problem and hence requires investigation for a wider outreach through the academic arena. The research hopefully will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of the 'street child' in the realm of geography.

2.6 Research Questions: Objectives of the Study

The present study focuses on the following issues framed as **Research Questions:**

- To define the street children based on the situational analysis in urban Kolkata;

- To give a broad overview of the scenario in Kolkata related to the street children;

- To give an account of the spatial distribution of the children who congregate in and around Sealdah Station area;

- To understand the socio economic profile of these children;

- To analyze the causes behind the phenomenon of the street children;

- To evaluate the consequences and challenges of living in the street situation;

- To understand the coping strategies adopted for their survival;

- To have an insight into the effectiveness of various government programmes meant for the street children,

- To suggest improvement measures relating to the existing policy and programme guidelines and finally

- To formulate new strategies for the betterment of these children.

2.7 Choice of the target population and its justification :

The target population belongs to the two categories universally accepted and defined as "Children on the streets" and "Children of the streets" . From field observation and based on previous literature survey, the target population included in the study as **street children** is:

1. Children connected with families, staying and working on the street and returning home as and when required or desired.

2. Children belonging to the families who have migrated temporarily residing near Sealdah area ;

3. Children alone or with family commuting daily from suburbs and adjoining villages of the city in the morning, doing some unorganized, marginalized work during the day and going back in the evening;

4. Unattached children, who live alone (include orphans, abandoned children, maladjusted children, delinquent children and run-away children, not connected with families)

The justification of choosing this section as the target population is elaborately given in the next chapter.

2.8 Choice of the Study Area:

Way back in 1982 Stoddard stressed on specifying the area and time period to which the research problem pertains. More than three decades later Parfitt (2005) too mentioned of considering the geographical boundary and the boundary defined by population characteristics in defining the spatial setting.

2.8.1. Need for defining the study area:

When writing a research proposal the researcher needs to describe the characteristics of the study area for the purpose of conveying the context of the research. Two primary objectives for increasing one's knowledge about the research problem are: (a) to understand the general locational principles pertaining to the research phenomenon, and (b) to become familiar with the specific setting in which these principles are to be studied. For obtaining background information about a research problem acquiring background knowledge about the specific location to be studied is essential.

2.8.2 Techniques of defining and justifying the spatial setting:

When the methodological approach involves applying principals to a specific problem, the study areas are effectively defined. Selection of the study area that is representative of a larger area is a critical decision when results of the research are to be generalized. Hence the research plan should discuss the characteristics of the study area that typifies the larger region. The street children across the world are identified in an urban setting, hence Kolkata a megacity has been taken into consideration for generalizing the results of the research in this urban setting.

If the research applies to a specific problem, the study area is usually already defined (Stoddard, 1982). He mentioned that the task of defining the study area is more complex when the goal is the development of locational principles. Choosing appropriate field units is a subjective decision required in solving a research problem. The appropriate field unit chosen is the rail junction stations as the railway stations are within the definition of the 'street'. Why Sealdah and not any other rail junction stations within Kolkata was chosen as the representative sample calls for the researcher to specify the characteristics being

measured as per Stoddard (1982). This decision about the representativeness of Sealdah as a particular study area is based on two contrasting viewpoints. The first viewpoint after Stoddard (1982) follows the normal sampling sequences where the population (here population refers to the spatial unit of study) is defined in terms of the relevant characteristics and their variable limits. This population is composed of all the individual areas that meet the defined criteria; each one is a potential study area. After identifying all the members of the population set (zones of Kolkata), then an individual (the Sealdah rail station) was selected. This individual should be selected randomly but since the sample size is one (in this case it is the rail station), it is better to select an individual that is estimated to be among these that are most typical. Hence, the Sealdah rail station has been specifically considered amongst all the rail junction stations of Kolkata.

The second viewpoint deals with a specific study area (Sealdah rail station). Here the researcher decides what theoretical or conceptual population this area represents. The shady corners, children without adult guidance, loitering and staying at night, availing the food from the long distant express trains arriving in the terminal station, easy job opportunities within the premises of the Sealdah rail station are not found in other rail junction stations of Kolkata. The selection of the study area has been made primarily not for conveniences but is based on making visual comparisons between each individual rail junction stations of Kolkata viz., Ballygunge, DumDum, Barrackpore, Naihati, Dankuni, Barasat along the various rail routes originating/terminating at the Sealdah rail station of the Eastern Railway section.

Both these viewpoints are applicable in this study. The study area chosen should be unique and should be at par with the problem which the researcher wants to study. Sealdah rail station is a unique example so also is the urban landscape of Kolkata. The procedure for making these field (spatial) identifications must be considered prior to data collection as it is an important element in the research plan and hence the spatial setting was first decided upon.

2.9 The spatial setting with reference to Kolkata:

Friedmann (2005) had explained the multidimensional construct of the urban into administrative urbanization, economic urbanization, physical urbanization, socio cultural urbanization and political urbanization. The migrants not only contribute to physical urbanization but also to socio cultural urbanization.

2.9 .1 Issues of Urbanization in India:

Urbanization is generally defined as the convergence process of population to urban area, i.e., it refers to the increasing amount of people that live in urban areas. It predominantly results in the physical growth of urban areas, be it horizontal or vertical. By 2050, it is predicted that 64.1 per cent and 85.9 per cent of the developing and developed world respectively will be urbanized. The million plus cities of India is growing very rapidly, their numbers have increased from 12 in 1981 to 23 in 1991, 35 in 2001 and to 53 in 2011 (Census of India,2011). These large cities are experiencing population explosion and very rapid spreading out of urban area. People are concentrating in million plus cities more and more in search of jobs and earning opportunities, to avail better urban amenities and infrastructure, education, health, entertainment and other services (Gupta , 2012). Urban India has grown five times since 1961 in terms of population. In India, about one third (31%) population lives in urban areas (Census 2011). The country is going through a crucial phase of demographic transition, from dominantly rural to urban country, where most of the people want to live in city areas. By 2030, urbanization in India is projected to reach 50 percent. Poverty in India has become urbanized. Migration towards urban centres has increased. In a country like India, large cities are growing at a very fast rate and experiencing over migration that means excess of population in relation to its available resources. This development means unbalanced regional growth and disparity. Migration is a very significant factor in the growth of this urban population. There are 244 million people worldwide living outside their country of their birth out of which 31 million is children. Globally three out of every five international child migrants live in Asia and Africa as per UNICEF Report (2016). Nearly 12 million of the world's international children migrants live in Asia (representing 39 percent of all international children migrants).

Urbanization in Kolkata: Kolkata is the only mega city in Eastern India. This city occupies a prime position in the urban scenario of West Bengal as well as in India. It covers only 0.2 percent of the total area of West Bengal but has nearly six percent of its population. The urban process of Calcutta (now Kolkata) was initiated with the industrialization process along the river banks of Hooghly during the colonial India. After independence and partition of the country, this city has experienced massive inflow of refugees from East Bengal (now Bangladesh). Kolkata has already reached its saturation point of urbanization. Excessive population pressure, heavy and haphazard urban growth, unplanned urbanization are causing heavy burden on the limited urban amenities and resources, causing deterioration of urban environmental quality. The city is home to thousands of poor people who come in search of food and shelter and are forced to live in poor settlements or are in a homelessness situation (living on the streets of the city); thus producing the houseless population, child labour, street children, and social crime. Street children are the product of this urbanization, which is gradually acquiring a gigantic dimension.

2.9 .2 Street children as an urban phenomenon:

In India the first census on street children was conducted in 1957 in Chennai (Madras) by the Tamil Nadu government, which was followed by another study in Mumbai (Bombay) in 1959. These studies found that nearly 30 per cent of the street population was of children. A recent study by TISS (TATA Institute of Social Science) in Mumbai in 2013 was carried out to estimate the number of such children requiring governmental interventions .According to the United Nation Development Programme (2006), India has the highest concentration of street children; the bigger cities drawing a larger number of street children. Earlier the Human Development Report of the UNDP (1993), stated that our country had the greatest number of street children: New Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata each having around two lakh street children. According to UNICEF 's (1994) estimation in the six major cities of India of Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Kanpur there are about 4,14,700 street children, and of these about 48 percent spend their nights on the open street.

More than two decades ago, Remington (1993) stated that the number of street children in India is increasing at an alarming rate due to rapid unplanned urbanization. Rapid urbanization is one of the major causes for their migration to street situation (Barrette, 1995). They constitute a marginalized population in most urban centres. According to Koller and Hutz (2001) millions of children can be seen working, living on the city streets around the world. In most third world cities, they are the shadowy presences who fill the background of daily life, doing odd jobs, scavenging for food, begging and stealing (Lalor et al., 2000). Many researchers pointed out that rapid rate of urbanization and industrialization strengthen societal stress and increase levels of unemployment leading to the collapse of the family structure, and thus more children end up on the streets of cities (Densley and Joss, 2000).

The most common reason pushing children to the streets is economic poverty (Peacock, 1994). Street children migrate from poor rural areas to the growing urban conurbation to escape poverty. Easy finding of jobs in the informal sectors like hawkers or porters, rag picking, shoe shining are the main pull factors among the rural below poverty level children (UNICEF, 2006). The frequent crop failure due to extreme weather, small economic holdings, unemployment, and above all attraction of city life push more and more people with their children to the cities.

The political, social, and economic framework of the city predominantly shapes the livelihoods of the street children and poor people. They choose their living place according to the assets they can access (Meikle, 2002). One of the assets the urban poor depend on is the **urban public space**. This is not just a physical space, but also their economic and social capital. In the case of young people on the streets, the public space of the city fulfils many different functions. It is their place of work, sleep, recreation, as well as a place of learning, socialization and personal enrichment (Ennew and Swart-Kruger, 2003) and also for relationship and shelter (Connolly and Ennew, 1996).So having access to the public space becomes a question of survival (Brown & Lloyd-Jones 2002).

Therefore, the phenomenon of street children widely acclaimed as an urban one with all its magnitude and dimensions is a real social challenge of urban India in general and

Kolkata in particular. Street life in Kolkata is not different from other cities of India. Very often in Indian cities, these children are called *'Sadak chap'*: *'chap'* means stamp and *'sadak'* means street. Therefore, the term describes those children who carry the stamp of the street. We can find some vagabond children in the railway station complex, near the temples, in markets, under the bridges, near the bus stand etc. in every Indian city and Kolkata is no exception.

2.9.3 Spatial Practices within Kolkata:

Street children do not operate haphazardly in the urban environment. Different groups have different zones or areas in which they operate and any interference by another group can cause serious trouble between the groups. This is hence the evidence of their highly organized activities, their 'Social Space'. This informal zoning area of operation within the city limits competition for resources among the children and ensures their survival. According to the NGO officials, these children tend to follow the normal pulse of urban or city life. They usually wake up in the morning and venture out for their survival. Learning from the children's experiences and stakeholders it can be said that their urban movement are strategic. They frequently visit religious places, market places, and the station area. Street children know by their street experiences that from these places at particular points of time they can easily meet their needs.

2.10 The spatial setting with reference to Sealdah:

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR, 2001) mentioned that street children are largely visible at railway and bus stations, in market places, and near religious places. Railway stations and platforms are very much a preferred place for street children in any urban set-up. The railway stations and platforms located in big cities are home to many street children who either come to work or live. Many children use the transport networks of the railway to run away from their home or get lost while travelling with their families (SATHI, 2014). According to a study organized by Ministry of Women and Child Development (MCWD), 2013 more than 7000 new children start living on railway platforms every year. Sealdah Station is not an exceptional case. This station is a 'hot spot' zone for many street children as it is very much connected with the urbanized

parts of West Bengal. Children come here from other areas of Kolkata Metropolis , and also from neighbouring districts, states and even countries like Nepal and Bangladesh. It is a terminal station of local suburban railway route of southern part of West Bengal. It is one of the major transit points in India for trafficked children (PTI, 6th June 2015) and is one of the busiest stations in India (Railway Ministry of India Report, 2015). The average daily inflow of runaway children in Sealdah is 06 (CINI, Kolkata 2016). It is one of the 20 child friendly stations in India and one of the three terminal stations in the State (besides Howrah and New Jalpaiguri).

2.10.1. Locational attributes of Sealdah Rail Station:

The Sealdah rail station (22°34'02.6"N 88°22'14.9"E) of Eastern Railway is one of the major railway stations in Kolkata and as well as in India. It is also very much connected with all the states of India. A huge number of trains ply everyday to different parts of India. Even Bangladesh is connected by train with this station. Through local and express train services linkage is established with both the northern and southern parts of the state. Suburban railway in Sealdah section has strongly influenced the morphology of the city region of Kolkata. Its emergence in the 19th century (1869) was the basic prerequisite for suburbanization. There are three station terminals at Sealdah . These are Sealdah North, Sealdah Main and Sealdah South. The North section consists of Sealdah North and Sealdah Main buildings. It has thirteen platforms numbering 1 to 4, 4A (Sealdah North), and 5 to 9A 9B and 9C (Sealdah Main). The South section consists of Sealdah South terminal, with 7 platforms (10A, 10-14, 14A). The north and south sections have separate set of emerging tracks. The north and south section is connected by two links, one is Dumdum-Majherhat link (known as Circular Rail), and other is Bidhannagar- Park Circus link (this is extension of circular rail). These two links were constructed to travel quickly between the two sections avoiding Sealdah. Sealdah North acts as the suburban train terminal for two divisions: the main division and the Bongaon division. Sealdah Main is the mail/express terminal for long distance trains to northern, north-western, north-eastern and eastern India, through Dankuni line and Bandel line. Krishnanagar line is also serving long distance interstate trains. The south section, consisting of Sealdah South terminal, acts as the terminal for local trains plying between Kolkata and Diamond Harbour-Budge Budge, Canning, and Namkhana.

Being one of the busiest railway stations in India and, an important suburban rail terminal, it is situated in a prime location of Kolkata in ward number 36,50 and 55 (within Kolkata Municipal Corporation KMC) adjacent to Acharya Jagadish Chandra Bose Road. In Sealdah Station Complex and its surrounding areas, street children are very much visible. There are several contact points in and around Sealdah station area where intervention measures are adopted for the children. Some specific locations are very much preferred by them. These spots within the station complex are the car shed, the railway platform numbers 1, 4A, 6, 9 and 9C and the corridor between North and South section. They also can be visibly seen in the parking area, the neighbouring market area, and canal road and hence this neighbourhood complex is included in the study.

2.10.2. Why Sealdah is preferred by Street Children?

Due to the partition of Bengal and the industrialization process, the city of Kolkata turned to a major hub for migrant population as well as for 'street children'. These migrants gather in large numbers mainly in rail stations like Sealdah. Any large station like Sealdah is very much preferred by the street children due to its accessibility, ease of arrival from various parts of the country, its huge crowd providing them the opportunity to be less easily spotted and also less likely to be abused on the train and station than on the street situation . The other favourable factors are the ready availability of water, shade, sanitation facilities, and night shelter which are not to be found in other rail junction stations. Besides that, children easily avail of different types of income generating opportunities such as waste material collection, loading unloading from trains, bottle collection, shoe polishing etc.. Besides the railway complex the street children can be seen in and around Sisir market, Koley market, Narkeldanga *Khal par* area, for their economic activities. Apart from the train services the station is also well connected through roadways.

2.10.3 Comparison between Sealdah and Howrah Station:

Both Sealdah and Howrah are busy terminal stations of Kolkata. However, Sealdah station is very much connected with the districts of West Bengal compared to Howrah. Sealdah has the easy accessibility to most of the urbanized districts like North 24 Parganas, Nadia and other parts of Kolkata. Besides that, Sealdah is the one of the busiest stations in

terms of daily commuters. Sealdah is the most child trafficking prone railway terminal , with large number of platforms and shady corners , the most accessible one , a 'hot spot' zone for the runaways , that creates the difference. Apart from that, there are many untraced pocket zones in Sealdah Station, where street children easily hide themselves. On an average every day there can be found two newcomers in Howrah railway terminal while the figure in Sealdah area is at least four (Childline, 2016).Howrah railway terminal deals more with long distance trains compared to short suburban local trains and hence with less daily commuting families bringing their children to work on the streets. Long distance travelling passengers along with their families and/or friends are visible within the station complex and since dark/shady corners are almost absent the street children do not easily congregate.

Sealdah thus presents a unique compelling physic-social environment   for investigating the phenomena associated with street children. The purpose of the study is not to debate on Sealdah and other rail stations but to justify the unique opportunities provided to the street children based on their various activities (social, cultural, economic, recreational). Analyzing these geographies which are socially significant with its varied implications and   influence in the cityscape are worthy of study. The spatial coverage of the study also includes neighbouring wards falling under the jurisdiction of Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC).

2.11 Hypotheses formulation:

The main hypotheses formulated for the study are:

- **Male children are more in number than the female children; and most of them are within 15 years of age.**

- **Poverty is the main cause of children's   migration though family problem, home violence also play a significant role;**

- **Almost every child is engaged in economic activity for survival; there is a relation between age and income of the children; and**

- **Family status wise a significant relationship exists in terms of usage of and becoming involved in addiction.**

2.12 Conclusion:

A conceptual framework is the researcher's idea on how the research problem will have to be explored. It testifies the researcher's synthesis of literature in explaining a phenomenon and the understanding of how the variables in the study would connect with each other. It is the researcher's "map" in pursuing the investigation. It guides the entire research process. Developing a conceptual framework helps the researcher to be selective; to decide which are the important features; which relationships are likely to be of importance or meaning; and hence, what data are to be collected and analyzed. Concepts must have relevance to the field of study and hence only the relevant ones have been put forth in this chapter. Since the topic of the research is based on a contemporary issue, the area selected too should be an example of it. Moreover, the research problem is associated with the study area. The study area should be site based or geographical unit based. When it is based on geographical unit its boundary is based within the political (administrative: Kolkata Municipal Corporation, i.e. Urban Local Body and the Railway station complex i.e. Government of India); physical (rail station with its platforms, its lines, the neighbouring canal area); economic management (supported by the researcher's economic condition and time constraint); ecological (e.g. hot spot locations of the street children's activity spaces) and statistical limits (i.e. data availability from different stakeholders). The study area has been chosen taking into consideration the two elements after Parfitt (2005) the geographical boundary; and the boundary defined by population characteristics. It has been based on the two viewpoints of Stoddard (1982).

The conceptual framework has been based on space and place and the background information discussed in the context of categories of children away from the mainstream society. The researcher took an interest on this topic long before being registered to the PhD programme. This is because he had been involved with an NGO doing work on some of these children and felt that they are neglected and deprived of their basic needs and rights. Although there are some media reflections on some of the issues not much has been done in

the academic discipline and so he felt it his moral duty to work as an academician. The rationale of the study is emphasized after deciding upon what data is to be collected and analyzed after scrutinizing the defining criteria best suited for this study.

Research in Geography involves thinking about the relationships between methods, techniques, analysis, and interpretation, the important role of which is filled by the **research design**. Research design results from a series of decisions we make as researchers. These decisions flow from the knowledge of the academic literature, the research questions to be framed , the conceptual framework, and knowledge of advantages and disadvantages of different techniques. The next chapter elaborates critically upon this research design.

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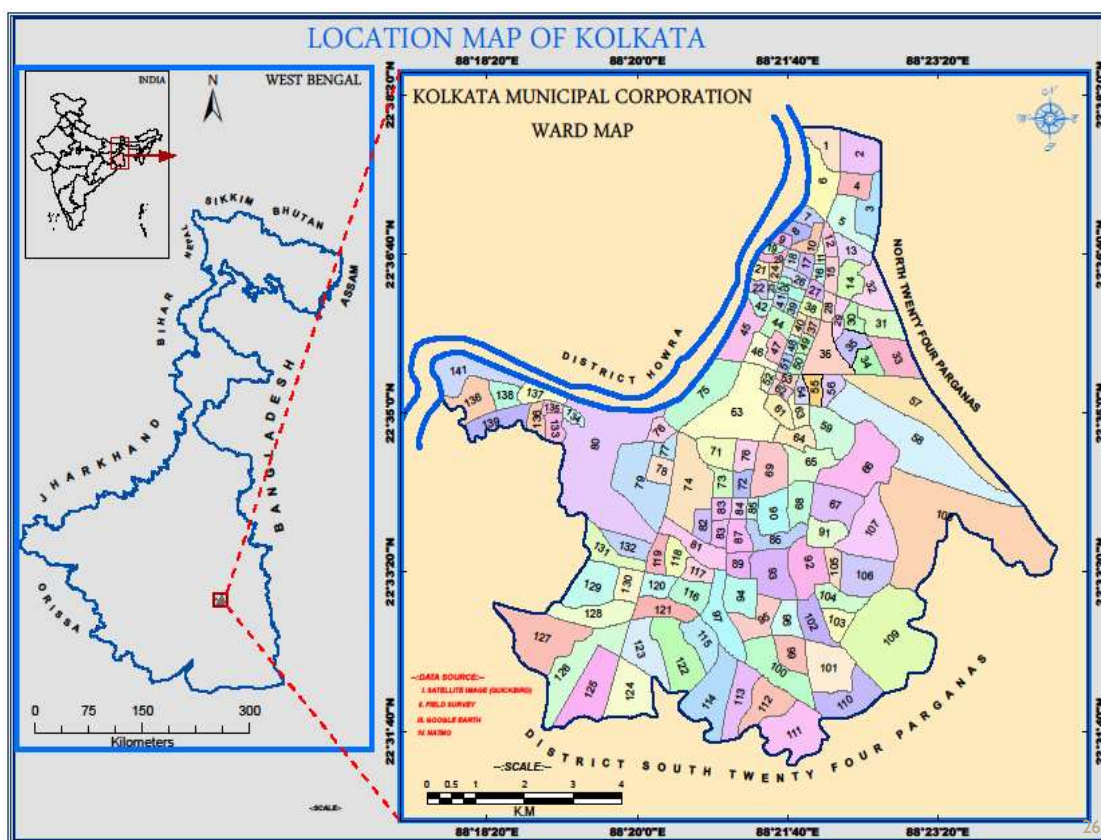
Figure-1:Location Map of Kolkata

Figure-2: The Study Area of Sealdah
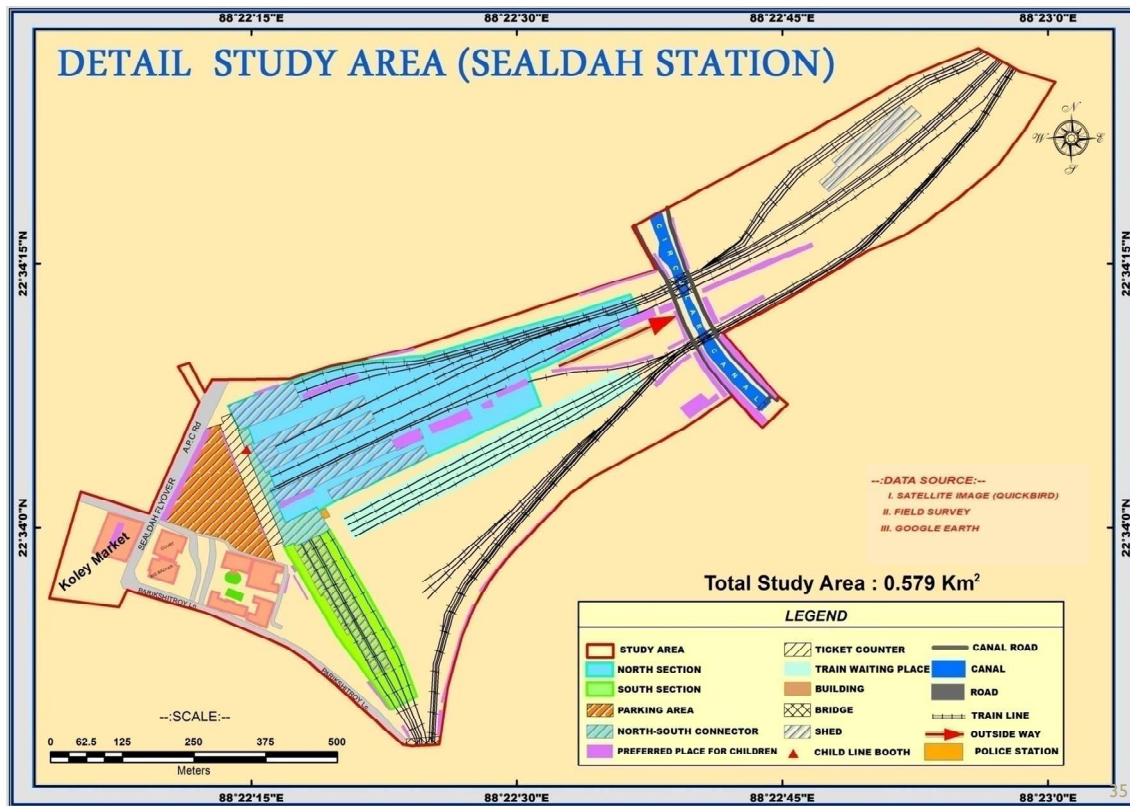
Figure-3: Sealdah Rail Station Complex

CHAPTER-III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Abstract: This chapter describes various methods used in the study and the reasons for choosing such methods. According to Kothari (2000), a researcher generally adopts various steps for studying research problems along with the justified logic behind them. The chapter outlines the target area, the target population of study; the research design, the sampling procedure, the data sources and the data collection instruments used in the study. It also describes how the data has been analyzed.

3.0 Introduction:

A research starts from a question or problem that defines the topic or subject matter or *what* is to be studied. The research *problem* is a question, or set of questions worth asking, an issue that merits attention or requires solving; is the subject of contemporary interest, either to academics or the public, or to both. The challenge for the researcher is to adopt a critical attitude to research design and the key to this lies in the initial formulation of the research problem. The way a research problem is 'framed' informs the choice of research method/s. The approaches and methods used to tackle the research problem i.e. *how* the study is to be conducted needs justification. Hence, these two dimensions of *what* and *why* defines the basic methodological framework and should be appropriate to the question posed (Graham, 2005). **Method** is a technique for gathering evidence, while **methodology** is a theory of how research should proceed through its various stages and phases, discussing the philosophical approach to the work.

Postmodernism has contributed towards making research on marginalized groups fashionable (Valentine, 2005:114) and one such group is the street children. The main criterion of the topic in this study is its originality. This has been done by giving geographical dimension to something not previously thought of as 'geographical' and asking questions of data less explored by geographers.

3.1 Ethical practices adopted in this research work:

While working with deprived or extremely disadvantages groups, ethical issues are to be kept in mind and being an ethical geographer is still more important. It helps to

protect those people and places affected by our research and helps to ensure that we are able to continue to conduct socially and environmentally valuable work (Healey and Healey, 2010). Literature study on the ethical issues and practices in social science has helped in framing the ethical strategies adopted in this geographical research Power in an interview situation may make itself known explicitly or implicitly; either way it challenges a simplistic assumption that power always lies with the interviewer (Thomas, 1996):.Power does not necessarily lie with the researcher but in this study it is so. Hence the ethical issues were first identified and means of addressing them were decided upon. The following are the strategies adopted:

(a) **Informed consent**: Procedure for obtaining informed consent was done through the officials of the NGOs. The street children were informed of the purpose of the research being a purely academic one. Those unwilling to share their views or spare their time were not forced upon.

(b) **Honesty and integrity**: Sincere efforts were made through the ethical practices adopted such as listening, paying attention and being non-judgemental and being honest with the respondents on the intention of the research. The street children were not lured by falsifications such as getting any material benefits while interacting or in the future; but were told that the research work would benefit the researcher the most and that he was not any government or NGO representative ensuring a policy/scheme benefit to them.

c) **Confidentiality and secrecy**: Maintaining confidentiality is crucial as the private lives of the street children (some of whom may be at risk) were discussed and taken into account . So also is assurance and protection of privacy. The principle of confidentiality was adopted since issues such as sex life, addiction and participation in crime are very personal requiring high confidentiality. During the data analysis care has been taken to protect the confidentiality of the target population: pseudo names have been used in case studies besides coding numerically at the time of data input.

d) **Issues of incentives:** False hopes were not given but snacks (biscuit, chips) and cold drinks were offered as a token of gratitude as the interviewees shared private, personal or sensitive information which developed consequently in a trust bonding,

a sensitive understanding of their vulnerable situation. Some children asked for money as a tip for sharing data/information but was not entertained; instead food items were provided.

e) **Conflicts of interest:** The target population's lives may be at risk as they might share their views and comment negatively on the stakeholders such as the government officials (particularly the Government Railway Police, the Vagrancy Department) and officials of non government organizations (such as the field workers and volunteers, the drop- in -centres, the open shelters, the contact points). Hence the work has been done in harmony with all the concerned stakeholders with prior permission letter issued from the Supervisor of the Department of Geography, West Bengal State University, expressing the purpose of work and the nature of data required.

f) To minimize the possibility of **plagiarism** the full bibliographic details of the references were taken down, including, where relevant, the author(s) name(s) and initials, year of publication, title of the book, edition (if not the first), publisher and town/city of publisher (not printer), title of article/chapter, journal title, volume number and page numbers, and names of editors for edited books. All direct quotations were put in quotation marks giving the source, including the page number(s). However, direct quoting was kept to a minimum. The same was applied to material taken from websites, the material information from websites summarized and paraphrased. Care has been taken in citing websites, giving wherever possible the author/organization responsible for the site, the date the page/site cited last updated, the title of the page/site and the date of access of the site, as well as the URL. Concepts which have been adapted in the work has duly recognized the source from where it has been taken.

3.2 Method of Choosing the unit of study and the target population:

Two basic questions to be addressed and answered clearly by the researcher have been suggested by Parfitt (2005). These are:

(i)What are the appropriate units of study? & (ii) what is the target population?

The choice of appropriate units of study is an important part of research design from which other decisions will flow, not least the sampling strategy. In the present work the individual is the unit of study as the individual's responses is of prime interest. 'The organization' is also another unit of study: the NGOs' concerned as it is the main service provider whose impact needs to be analyzed through the individual's responses.

After sorting out the issue of the unit of study, the nature of **the target population** of the chosen units needs consideration. The definition of the target population may include a number of different elements advised by Parfitt (2005) such as:

(i)   A geographical boundary;

(ii)   A temporal boundary: determined by the time in which the research is to be conducted; and

(iii)   A boundary defined by population characteristics.

She also suggested that the survey may have as its target all members of the public within the spatial and temporal boundaries of the study or there may be inclusions or exclusions. However, such inclusions or exclusions if adopted needs very careful consideration as they have implications for sampling procedure and in this study it has been done judiciously.

The *geographical boundary* chosen is Kolkata to give a broad overview of the urban phenomena in general. The neighboring areas, in the vicinity of the rail station of Sealdah, in particular, have been considered to understand the dynamics and various aspects related to the target population. The *temporal boundary* (after Parfitt, 2005) has been restricted to 2013-2016, the pilot study initiated in 2013 after being registered to the Ph.D. programme. As for the *boundary defined by population characteristics*, it is confined to the children loitering within and near the premises of the rail station of Sealdah. The children strategically hang around in a particular area. They confine themselves to a specific territory to get their livelihood benefits. This territoriality concept based on Ellingsen (2003) is the informal way of zoning areas of operation within the urban landscape. It reduces/ limits competition for resources among the children. Territoriality is produced through daily routines and repetitions of social actions of human beings on a time scale in particular socio-spatial surroundings.

3.3 Methods for gathering evidences:

3.3.1 Methods of finding relevant literature:

Literature provides background information, so it is required to find out what other work has been done on the topic. It also helps to design the work avoiding the mistakes of others and to follow up issues, which they have not concentrated on. The relevant literature has already been discussed in the previous chapter. For doing the literature search the subject catalogue of different libraries, bibliographies available in a variety of forms, abstract of journal articles, search using key words, tracing earlier articles through Reference lists, using a citation index for more recent work helps. Finding relevant literature has become easier with the growth of computerization and the development of methods of information retrieval from the internet using a search engine on the web or portal. A portal is a website that does not provide information itself, but is a list of hyperlinks to other websites usually having something in common. The online secondary data is gathered from *single sites*, *maps, portals/gateways* (Clark, 2005).

Traditional secondary data reflect the aims and attitudes of the people and organizations that collected the data. For many geographical investigations, secondary data are an indispensable source of pre–field information. To consider what is already known about a topic the secondary data plays an important role alongside the literature review as it identifies what is already thought about the work. Early examination of available data helps in the formulation of the research question , helps to identify gaps, provides a justification for the choice of the study area, etc. Such uses of secondary data does not mean that the resulting work need follow a positivist-empirical methodology (White,2010). In human geography, there is scope for a consideration of secondary data on contemporary aspects.

3.3.2 The Search Engine for secondary data sources:

The word 'Data' does not necessarily imply that the information being collected has to be numerical (White,2010.). Traditional quantitative and statistical sources are still the most frequently used type of secondary data. However, qualitative and non-statistical (Clark, 2005) sources such as newspapers, photographs, films, sound recordings, and diaries are also significant. The classification systems used in most libraries put geography books in several different sections of the library. The researcher did not

restrict himself to books with 'geography' in the title due to the integrative nature of the research: many books written for anthropologists, sociologists, economists, planners, etc were relevant. Where to start depended on the purpose of the search. For example to see whether the government has any policy documents on the topic the government website was searched.

The documents relating to the vulnerable children of Kolkata were referred from the libraries of CINI (an NGO: Child in Need and Care Institute), Childline Kolkata, SANLAP (the NGO working for trafficked children), Institute of Social Science, Institute of Development Studies, National Library and the Central Library of the University of Calcutta. The entry to these libraries was possible after a formal letter was issued by the Supervisor seeking permission to access these documents, many of which are unpublished in nature. Since careful interpretation is every bit as necessary with qualitative sources as with statistical data, the research work in these libraries enriched the researcher a lot.

3.3.3 Seeking permission for data collection :

(a) The following officials were approached :

  (i)   The Controller, Office of the Controller of Vagrancy; West Bengal under the Ministry of Women and Child Development , West Bengal;

  (ii) Officer-In-Charge: Government Railway Police Force (GRPF) Sealdah Police Station;

  (iv) Officer-In-Charge: Muchipara Police Station (Kolkata Police) near Sealdah;

  (iv) The Director of CINI (Child in Need Institute) Urban Unit, Kolkata; and

  (v)   The Station Master, Sealdah Railway Station.

(b) Offices visited:

Permission from Childline Kolkata to visit the Short Stay Home (here missing and run away children are provided institutional care) was obtained. Here an account / record of missing children or run away children is kept To visit the Open Shelters in different

parts of Kolkata ,applications were submitted seeking permission for visit to each of the concerned NGO offices functioning under the ICPS project for vulnerable children.

3.4 Research design:

Research in Geography involves thinking about the relationships between methods, techniques, analysis, and interpretation, the important role of which is filled by the **research design**. Research design results from a series of decisions we make as researchers. These decisions flow from the knowledge of the academic literature, the research questions to be framed, the conceptual framework, and knowledge of advantages and disadvantages of different techniques. Critically examining the construction of knowledge and discourse in geography (Rose, 1993) has led to an interest in developing alternative methodological strategies coupled with greater reflexivity about the process of research.

The study has used both geographic quantitative and qualitative methods, with a special emphasis on the ethnographical research techniques generally used in Human Geography. For a good survey design, anticipating and minimizing various types of errors that may ruin the reliability or validity of a questionnaire survey is required. Errors may crop up at any stage (Parfitt, 2005) on account of a poor hypothesis formation, improper questionnaire design, during data transfer or at the data processing stage. Sampling errors occur based on how respondents have been selected and on the small size of the sample. A small sample will be atypical of the target population with respect to key characteristics. *Non-sampling errors* are introduced by questionnaire design biases or due to *response errors.* Response errors result due to distortions introduced in the process of interviewing. The questions asked may not be understood in the way intended, the respondent may feel pressured into agreeing with the researcher's own ideas. The response errors are largely attributable to the interviewer (Parfitt, 2005), but the respondent also introduces errors. Most of these respondent and interviewer errors can be attributed to poor questionnaire design; hence, a careful questionnaire design is essential.

3.4.1 Questionnaire design:

Aspects of *question design and format* such as: were the questions properly understood by the respondents, was there enough space to fill in the responses to open-format questions, were the precodes on closed-format questions working or do they need

adjusting was critically analyzed before the final questionnaire was executed. The length of the questionnaire is also a determining factor as outcome of lengthy time consuming ones are not fruitfully effective when administered on the children who are usually restless and busy in their various activities. The choice and applicability of interviewing techniques (the pros and cons) can also be gauged at this stage. It also helps in avoiding or minimizing response errors. Finally, to test out how the data are to be processed and analyzed i.e. the *questionnaire output:* needs consideration before framing the final questionnaire.

The content of the questionnaire needs to be firmly rooted in the research questions or hypotheses under investigation. Only those questions, which are really needed has been included in the questionnaire based on the preliminary ideas drawn up for the main analysis. To identify redundancy or omission in the framed questionnaire, in the year 2013 **pilot survey** was conducted in two study areas: one for having a general overview of the street children numbering thirty in Kolkata and another for Sealdah rail station area (from the drop-in-center numbering twenty five). A pilot study is a small-scale replica and a rehearsal of the main study (Oppenheim, 1992). It is better for the questionnaire designer to have some prior contact with the survey target group (Parfitt, 2005) and this was through the volunteers and outreach workers of the NGOs.

3.5 Research Instrument:

Human geography a social science has shades of both the natural sciences and the humanities and so it shares many of the approaches used by natural sciences and other social sciences.

3.5.1 Quantitative Methods:

The execution of fieldwork was initiated through a pilot survey. The employing of quantitative survey techniques must address the twin issues of reliability (can the results be replicated?) and validity (does the survey measure what it was intended to?) after Parfitt (2005). This has been addressed as follows:

3.5.2 Sampling Technique:

Surveys are usually conducted by sampling from a population rather than contacting all of its members (Parfitt , 2005). Since sampling decisions are governed by the priorities set by the research, the **purposive (non-probability**) sampling technique has been applied after Faugier and Sergeant (1997). As the principal challenge for sampling of street children is in locating them; this survey used two stage sampling method built on **time-location sampling** (TLS) after Nada and Suliman (2010) and **snowball sampling** (SS). TLS is a widely used method to sample populations that are floating in nature while the snowball sampling method is very useful for the data, which is hard to find out or study: i.e. are less likely to be found by researchers . The term snowballing implies, through this method, recruiting gains momentum, or 'snowballs' as the researcher builds up layers of contacts. In this method one contact is used to recruit another contact, which in turn helps the researcher /interviewer to link with someone else (Valentine, 2005). The initial contact may be a friend, relative, neighbor, or someone from a social group or formal organization. Care was taken to use multiple initial contact points (of the NGOs) when snowballing was started so that the informants were not from a very narrow circle. The strength of this technique is that 'it helps researchers to overcome one of the main obstacles to recruiting interviewees, gaining their trust and to seek out more easily interviewees with particular experiences or backgrounds (Valentine, 2005). The area from which the samples were drawn corresponded to a notional catchment radius of approximately one kilometer around the geographical area of Sealdah rail station complex.

3.5.3 The Coding technique used for statistical analysis:

The coding technique or Codebook is used to enter the raw data into a computer The Codebook is a computer based structure file designed to arrange the data. It helps to enter the raw data. Each research question or variable is selected by a specific name or theme and is identified by a number or applicable code and range of valid values applied for the data. The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) Software version 20.0 has been used for statistical analysis. For the data analysis transcription of codes was done from the questionnaires into this computer package. In this method, all the data from the primary survey were listed question-wise subsequently on it. After that, each data was carefully chosen and the variables coded. For example, in the male-female

category arithmetical number-1 code represents male and female by arithmetical number 2.

The important factor to remember is that these numerical codes look like numbers, though they are not really numbers. They are labeled with numbers instead of words. This coding process makes the data easier to understand and it produces lesser errors and maintains confidentiality of the researched individuals.

3.5.4 Techniques adopted in Statistical Analysis:

3.5.4.1. Chi Square Test

The Chi Square Test is a very flexible test, which can be applied in one-sample, two-sample and more than two-sample situations. This has been done to compare relations between two variables. One such relation is that of age and income; another that of family status and addictive materials /substances used.

3.5.4.2 Principal Component Analysis (PCA):

Principal Component Analysis (PCA) is a technique used to emphasize variation and bring out strong patterns in a dataset. It is used to make data easy to explore and visualize. PCA helps in identifying the patterns in the data set. The highest component value is the principle component of the data set and reveals the significant relationship with the data set. If the component values are sorted from highest to lowest, it will provide the components in order of significance (Smith, 2002)

3.5.4.3 Factor Analysis:

The factor loadings give us an idea about how much the variable has contributed to the factor; the larger the factor loading the more the variable has contributed to that factor (Harman, 1976)

3.5.5 Sample Size of the target group:

The researcher has collected survey data by using a semi-structured questionnaire. A total of five hundred and fourteen (514) children were identified and interviewed during different periods of the research work. Out of these 262 (50.97 % of sample) are run away children those who have no connection with their family and 252

children (49.03% of sample) are connected with their family residing in the dwelling units near the Sealdah rail station but spending most of their time on the street alone without adult guidance during the day time.

Table -2 The Target group identified as sample:

SAMPLE SIZE			Gender		Total
			Male	Female	
Family Status	Without Family	Count	232	30	262
		Percentage Value	88.5%	11.5%	100.0%
	With Family	Count	225	27	252
		Percentage Value	89.3%	10.7%	100.0%
Total		Count	457	57	514
		Percentage Value	88.9%	11.1%	100.0%

Source: Framed by the researcher

3.6 Qualitative Methods

3.6.1 It's need:

A questionnaire is often used to survey a representative sample of the population to make generalizations from the responses. A rigid set of simple questions which 'force' or push the respondents' answers into particular categories in questionnaire surveys is one of the reasons why researchers often choose to use interviews either as a supplement or as an alternative to a questionnaire survey Valentine (2005). Although open-ended short written comments may be included in a questionnaire, the explanatory power of the questionnaire can be limited. So conversational-style interviews as a research methodology is an added data collection process she said. Interviews are generally unstructured or semi structured. Sometimes the analysis of interview transcriptions with its informal, sensitive and people –oriented approach, can give greater insights into certain types of research topics (Valentine, 2005) as is relevant in the present study, than

the use of quantitative techniques. According to Eyles (1988) an interview is 'a conversation with purpose'; where interviewees construct accounts of their own experiences, describing and explaining their lives in their own words. To explore issues thoroughly the same questions may be asked in different ways to them and not just once as in a questionnaire. Several issues which may not have been anticipated (Silverman, 1993) can arise. Thus the material generated is rich, detailed and multi layered (Burgess, 1984), producing 'a deeper picture' than a questionnaire survey (Silverman, 1993). The interview is analyzed using a textual approach relying on words and meanings rather than statistics. The fluid and individual nature of conservational-style interviews (Valentine ,2005) means that they can never be replicated, only corroborated by similar studies or complementary techniques. Hence the different methods of data collection by not quantifying measures have also been postulated in the research design and a brief account of them are:

3.6.2 Techniques Applied:

3.6..2.1 Observational studies:

Some research problems may require data that can be collected by observation which are simple to carry out, not very resource intensive and not requiring interviews (Parfitt, 2005). The limitation of observational technique is that nothing is learnt about the underlying factors in the behaviour observed or in the attitudes; motives and explanations said the author. Data collected by observation was done in the initial stage for obtaining the background information (in the spatial context) prior to framing the first ever questionnaire. These included observing the study area, the behaviour of the children in the crowded station complex without them being aware of being watched and studied including other stakeholders such as railway police officials, railway ticket collector, NGO field workers, local shop owners, senior street children, etc.

3.6.2.2 In-depth interviews:

In-depth interviews are alternative means for exploring issues in more depth over the using of questionnaires. Such interviews are commonly tape-recorded for subsequent analysis, are generally unstructured or semi-structured. Fewer respondents are involved in it compared to questionnaire-based data collection for the time constraint issue as the interviews themselves and the subsequent analysis takes much longer time. In this

technique , data is collected from only one person at a time. In- depth interviews are not representative, but they give the researchers deeper insight into respondents' feelings and attitudes (Flowerdew and Martine [ed] 2005).

3.6.2.3 Case study Documenting:

The principles for case study data collection within a science framework (after Anderson et. al. 2005: 673-680) adopted includes : understanding the historical background of the entity (the street children) under study; seeing the minor relationships among actors, emphasizing inter dependencies   and the multidimensionality of relationships among these various actors; looking to see the relation of major outcomes, if any, to small events; etc. Case studies are not representative of the entire populations unlike statistical analysis where generalizing to a population based on a sample, which is representative of that population, is done. Researchers may select cases not only when they are critical (to testing a theory), but also when they are revelatory (reveal relationships which cannot be studied by other means) or unusual (throws light on extreme cases).

Through pattern matching, the researcher attempted to find qualitative or quantitative evidences in the cases, which were taken up for consideration. By collecting a number of brief, factual reports on critical incidents, an attempt to identify common factors associated with effective outcomes has been made. (This documenting is attached in the Appendix)

3.6.2.4 Visual Methodologies:

The disciplines of anthropology and geography have used visual images as research tools since their inception as academic disciplines. The discipline of anthropology used mostly photographs, diagrams and films while geographical study incorporated photos, maps and diagrams. The way an image is interpreted depends on the scholar's point of view . The seeing of an image 'always takes place in a particular social context that mediates its impact. The seeing also always takes place in a specific location with its own particular practices' (Rose 2012). Different locations (such as art gallery, an archive, a drawing room, a street) have their own individual economies, their own disciplines : all these affect how a particular image is seen she said.

Rose (2012) used the term '**visual culture**' to 'refer to the plethora of ways in which the visual is part of social life'. The different types of visual technologies are photography, film, video, digital graphics, TV, etc. The images of these visual technologies are the TV programmes, advertisements , snapshots, Facebook pages, movies, newspaper pictures, paintings, etc The visual effects depends on the ways of seeing the images (i.e., on the objectives of the researcher). The ways these images are seen leads to the production and reproduction of the visions of social difference(i.e., analysis). These effects ' intersect with the social context of viewing' and with the 'visualities spectators bring to their viewing'. So the critical approach to visual culture by the scholar involves as put forth by Rose (2012) :

(i)   Looking at the visual images very carefully;

(ii)   The academic critic –i.e. ., the scholar's own way of 'looking at the image';

(iii)   'Thinking about the social conditions/practices and effects of viewing these visual objects'- which helps in situational analysis; and

(iv)   On the ethics of using images in the research.

3.7 Triangulation:

3.7.1 Triangulation of data:

Often researchers draw on many different perspectives or sources in the course of their work. This is known as **triangulation.** The term comes from surveying where it describes using different bearings to give the correct position. In the same way researchers can use multiple methods or different sources to try and maximize their understanding of a research question (Valentine, 2005:112). Field diary with notes written on paper ('field materials') was maintained, reading through the transcripts was done, and voices taped with permission. Tape recording produced a more accurate and detailed record of the conversation . A **longitudinal study** provides data about the same individual at different points in time allowing the researcher to track change at the individual level. It tells a story about his/her life at a moment in time, but also over time showing how his/her life has changed. This capacity to follow individuals through time and observe how experiences and behaviour are influenced by the wider social and economic contexts in which they find themselves - and perhaps how they in turn

influence those contexts - gives longitudinal studies a major role in understanding social change. Longitudinal study through in -depth interviewing along with particular case study documenting and through primary socio economy data analysis from the questionnaire helped in triangulating the data of **Akash Barui** for example .The case for example shows how he was loitering and later on became a porter thus reflecting the socio economic change in his life , in his contacts , perception , income and life style.

Applying a spatial technology such as Google Earth to studies on sense of place represents a unique and innovative approach to advance the collection of data gathered through interviews and conversations (Wise, 2015). Applying this technology to research presents an alternative dynamic in human (cultural and social) geography methodology, assisting with visual ethnographies of space and place. Such geographically based technologies can be used to store "non-cartographic forms of spatial knowledge, such as emotion," as a way of pinpointing and consolidating data as stated by Cope and Elwood (2009). The documenting of points on Google Earth maps after ground-truthing enabled the researcher to consolidate **multiple points** of view **spatially:** the points being the activity spaces of the target population of street children.

3.7.2 Triangulation of method:

3.7.2.1 Through interviewing:

The venue of the interview: Choice of the exact interviewing location and time of day may introduce biases to the survey. It is advisable not to hold interviews in busy, noisy social spaces (Valentine, 2005) so as not to be disturbed or distracted she said. Talking to people on their own 'territory' facilitates a more relaxed conversation. It offers the possibility to learn more about the person/group from seeing them in their own environment. The time of day was also decided upon after the observational phase of researching on the field during the pilot survey phase.

'The interview is a social encounter, and how the respondent answers the questions will depend to some degree upon what the respondent and interviewer think and feel about each other' (Davidson and Layder,1994:118).

A list of themes were worked out on some key questions such as descriptive questions, which asked for information on activities/experiences; structural questions, which focused on how and when events occurred; and thoughtful questions, which

helped explore meanings, feelings, and opinions. Questions were not asked sequentially as in the questionnaire framed; but it followed their train of thought. The conversational flow was thus adopted and own views were not expressed thus giving scope to the respondents to declare contrary opinions if any. The 'who, what, when, where, how and why' was kept in the back of the mind, while interacting. Asking the questions is only half the skill of interviewing: the other half is learning to listen and respond to the participants (Valentine, 2005). Through semi structured interviewing new and interesting ideas not thought of earlier may emerge and this was kept in mind; to be both alert and sensitive as well.

3.7.2.2 Through Questionnaire Survey:

An introductory statement to attempt to put the respondents at ease was made by the researcher and the questionnaire survey began with the introductory simple easy to answer questions to act as a 'warming up' exercise for the respondents. Neutral type of follow-up questions was asked. Potentially embarrassing questions relating to drug related habits were not asked in a personalized form as people often loath to admit their own anti-social tendencies. A tactic is to word questions in such a way as to suggest that the taboo subject or socially disapproved issue is accepted.

Both closed and open-ended questions had been framed, as the questionnaire design is a semi structured one. The closed questions encompassing a range of more innovative question types, such as Likart scales of satisfaction level and ranking questions were asked. In the Likart-style format statements were provided and respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they 'agree' or 'disagree' using a five-point level of satisfaction scale on the issues of fulfillment of basic needs in children's home situation. Rather than just 'agree', 'disagree' and 'don't know' the use of an extended scale which allows for some measure of the strength of opinion was used. To measure the use of drugs among the addicted street children in Seladah Station, a five point Likart scale to gauge the addiction scenario have also been administered.

Since open questions do not force respondents into giving particular answers it illustrates more work for the interviewer as no 'precodes' are set out (Parfitt,2005) and the answer is written on the space provided on the questionnaire. The comments were later read and a coding sheet drawn up classifying the most frequent responses by creating codes for them.

3.7.2.3. Through data processing:

Transcription of codes was done from the questionnaires into the computer package of statistical software version 20.0.This quantifying was assisted with additional information extracted from the qualitative materials such as the transcripts of 'interviews', the open-ended questionnaire responses, the observations, visual coverage and notes made by the researcher. Such materials generated were thus **processed** for graphical and textual representations.

The *field diary* (attached in Appendix) covered the kind of contexts in which the interview took place; the kind of places in which certain interactions occurred; what were the immediate impressions and how they changed; and so on. Field diary with notes written on paper ('field materials') was maintained, reading through the transcripts was done, and voices taped with permission. Tape recording produces a more accurate and detailed record of the conversation (including capturing all the nuances of sarcasm, humour, etc) than notes and can be listened over and over again. Information that can be missed when the conversation first took place or which did not seem important may be picked up. The quality of the transcript depends significantly upon the quality of recording, the audibility of the respondents and the successful operation of the recording device.

The key points of the conversation and notes of thoughts on how the interview went were jotted down and the tape transcribed soon after the interview. Photographs and video recording enriched the data which were transcribed post field. Newspaper cuttings helped in giving an added and up dated information on the target population at the local- national - global interface and on the service providers .

3.7.2.4 .The Mapping Methodology:

Information on detailing of places relative to one another is available through maps. Additional information on meanings and insight into everyday spaces and places is extracted from **Google Earth.** Google Earth is a tool for storing and spatially referencing qualitative data collected in the field as a means for understanding particular spaces and places. Using easily and readily accessible technologies such as Google Earth encourages researchers to fully develop practical understanding of spatial interactions and to **georeference** meanings in actual locations. Google Earth referred to as "desktop archaeology" by Kennedy (2009) has become a tool to assist social science researchers

mainly through spatial observations and interpretations. Each point marked in Google Earth has a particular association, and the data referenced offer researchers and planners much insight into how people interact in their local settings. Thus the Google Earth as a tool to organize and spatially reference qualitative data has enabled the researcher to allocate subjective meanings of particular landscapes with which members of a community, in this case, the street children interact frequently. Documenting of points on Google Earth map using the GPS (Global Positioning System) enabled consolidating multiple points of view spatially.

3.8 Justification of the methods applied:

Answers to research questions need justification. The philosophical and theoretical choices form part of the justification, along with the details of empirical evidence (or data) collected. Postmodernism has contributed towards making research on marginalized groups fashionable (Valentine, 2005:114) and one such group is the street children. The research topic is of contemporary interest, for both the academics and the public, from the global through the national to the local. The choice of appropriate units of study: the individual child and the concerned interventions through the service providers specially the NGOs; is an important part of research design as from them other decisions will flow. Kolkata has been chosen to give a broad overview of the urban phenomena in general. The rail station of Sealdah is a hotspot location for observing the phenomena in particular.

Secondary data along with literature search provided background information and are an indispensable source of pre –field information. The research questions were framed on their basis, helped to identify gaps, provided a justification for the choice of the study area.

Human geography a social science has shades of both the natural sciences and the humanities and so it shares many of the approaches used by natural sciences and other social sciences.

Traditional quantitative and statistical sources are still the most frequently used type of secondary data. However, qualitative and non-statistical (Clark, 2005) sources such as newspapers, photographs, films, sound recordings, and diaries are also significant.

In- depth interviews are often subject to criticism by positivists as being interviewer/researcher biased but the humanist or post-structuralist approach to research argues that there is no such thing as objectivity in social science research. To them all research work is explicitly or implicitly informed by the experiences, aims, and interpretations of the researcher who designed the questionnaire or the interview schedule. The researchers should treat participants in their research as people and, not objects to be exploited or mined for information mentioned England (1994). Through semi structured interviewing new and interesting ideas not thought of earlier emerged; and for this both closed and open-ended questions were framed in the questionnaire design.

Qualitative materials include transcripts of 'interviews', the open-ended questionnaire responses, the observations, documenting of case studies and notes made by the researcher. In case studies, generalizing to a theory is based on cases selected to present several dimensions of that theory. Through pattern matching, the researcher attempted to find qualitative or quantitative evidences in the cases, which were taken up for consideration. The summery of the case studies through the table of Meta analysis helped in making the theoretical generalizations.

Rose (2012) had written about two approaches in researching with images. One approach is to analyze using 'found' images that are those images, which already exist. The other approach is to the method involving the 'making' of visual images as a way of answering a research question. The visual images can be interpreted through the quantitative and qualitative methods : more appropriate being the qualitative methods. The images have their own visual effects (so images were scrutinized very carefully). Such a research method is now popularly put to use by various disciplines over the past decade stated Rose (2012).

O'Connell Davidson and Layder (1994) explained that the interviewers use the interview as an opportunity to explore the subjective values, beliefs and thoughts of the individual respondent. Instead of pondering on whether, to use an in -depth interview or a questionnaire as a research technique, **a multi method approach** to a research question is a more viable solution. The final decisions about the research design was based on ethical issues and the suitable methodologies which would best answer the research questions. Identifying producing data through multiple sources was followed by employing analytical methods that integrated the diverse data into a comprehensive well

grounded production of knowledge. The term **multi method** indicates integration /combination of different techniques within either a quantitative or a qualitative frame work. Hence a multi method design uses more than one technique within a particular frame work. The **mixed method design** uses both quantitative or a qualitative techniques or data triangulation. The idea of triangulation is based on the classical (positivistic) theory of measurement with the objective of improving the validity of the data and so has been applied in the work.

Examining critically the construction of knowledge and discourse in geography after Rose (1993); has led to an interest in developing alternative methodological strategies coupled with greater reflexivity about the process of research. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups are useful for investigating complex behaviours, opinions and emotions and for collecting a diversity of experiences. These methods do not offer researchers a route to the truth but they do offer a route to partial insights into what people do and think (Laurier, 2010).

Geographers have always employed both qualitative and quantitative methods of research, looked at both the particular and the general, and engaged with multiple series of social and natural processes. Geographers today are increasingly explicit in their use of multiple methods (qualitative, quantitative, cartographic) as a way to weave together data from multiple sources and engage in rigorous, integrative, context sensitive analysis. We are now poised to put into practice the potential of not only multiple methods, but mixed methods, whereby the blending of research practices becomes reflective, and integrated.

3.9 Conclusion:

The history of the discipline of geography reveals the attempt to visualise or make visible both the features, patterns and processes operating in the description of the earth (*geo-* means earth and *graphe* means drawing). Geographical information is presented through use of maps, photographs, visual descriptions, and diagrams (Roadway ,1994). Through the ages geographers prided themselves on being integrative pulling together aspects of the physical and human world to understand places, processes, and people. On a practical level this integration is related to the specific research techniques of triangulation and using multiple methods. On a more theoretical and epistemological level, this integration is about a way of seeing the world through its

relationships, networks, casualties and connections (Healey and Healey, 2010). Geographers are now providing understanding of complex processes, identifying connections between places and eliciting the meanings of phenomena through people's lived experiences. Although human geographers rely on textual representation more recently visual and other forms of representations are becoming more common.

The researcher had to decide which voices would be heard and later represented in the textual representation. Recording raised questions about confidentiality which has been maintained throughout . With regard to the technical aspect about the operating machine –it was made sure that there was proper recording so as to describe the materials afterwards.

This chapter describes the research design, research methods, as well as the ethical consideration of the study. Referencing style has been adopted following the Harvard style. The researcher attempted to eliminate all possible biases to increase truthfulness throughout the data collection process and analysis in order to achieve an optimal level of accuracy. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches remain important within the discipline of Geography. If taken at face value they appear to be incompatible ways of 'doing' research, but these two approaches are not 'binary opposites' (Clifford, et al 2010). Subjective concerns lead to the use of quantitative methods, while work with qualitative materials can be done in scientific ways. The two approaches when combined in research design are through a process known as mixing methods. The appropriate choice of survey technique is of great importance to the overall success of the research. Each means of gathering survey data has advantages and disadvantages, particularly in relation to the different types of errors and these factors have been taken into account while applying the methodology. The type of survey technique to be adopted is a decision which also has important implications for all aspects of questionnaire design and so quantitative survey techniques as the centrally of empirical evidence, the scientific method, has been juxtaposed with the conversational-style interviews as a research methodology giving a mixed method approach. The findings have been based on the smooth application of the triangulation method to enrich the study. The principal of **triangulation** has been applied to minimize errors by drawing from diverse sources and types of data. Care was taken not to sift away from the research topic while adopting and adapting to the varied techniques. The match between research topic, researches (including time) and the use of the various survey techniques were made carefully. A

pilot sample of fifty-five interviews were used to check a number of design aspects: the question design and format, the questionnaire length, applicability issues (the pros and cons) of interviewing technique; and finally to test out how the data are to be processed and analyzed.

For smoothening the progress of the interview process, other factors that affect the data collection process such as the respondent's availability, their work schedule, best time of the day that impact on the process were considered. We tend to overlook many incidents/issues precisely because it is what we take for granted. Just providing a patient attentive description of what is happening is also a first stage towards the analysis, much like tabulating the descriptive statistics from a numerical study. Note taking helped in paying attention while interacting; the most significant use of the field notes were after the event. It helped to recall the details of the situation, which is intended to be described, analyzed or reflected on. The study employed more of qualitative methods (as the nature of respondents is very fragile and very hard to spot for this study). It is very difficult to assemble the street children and study them as a group. Hence, the researcher applied various qualitative techniques, carried out observational studies, case study documentation supported with visual images. Several children were taken up as identical case studies. Adopting visual photography gave a vivid picture qualitatively in the study. With video, audio and still photographs, data was also generated. The researcher met the children individually with the help of volunteers from NGOs (Like CINI, West Bengal Council for Child Welfare) in and around the Sealdah Station area for collecting primary data. In addition, the researcher also interacted with the children in different contact points of Kolkata, drop-in shelters and short stay homes run by NGOs of Kolkata in general and near the station complex in particular. The interview guideline was prepared in English but the conversation was done in local languages of Bengali and Hindi. As interviewers we should not evade the academic and political responsibility of speaking facts on behalf of others (Graham, 2005). So the interview began with personal interactions and the interpretations have been made through the lens of philosophical, theoretical and political frameworks in the following chapter demonstrating the empirical evidences. The productions of divergent results/or contradictions were equally interesting to pursue.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

Interacting with different Officials & Stakeholders

Plate 1: At Vagrancy Department

Plate 2: Talking with NGO official

Plate 3: Interacting with Local People

Plate 4: At Sealdah Police Station

Plate 5: Interacting with parents

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Plate 8: Interacting with NGO

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Plate 10: Interacting with Stakeholders

Photographs: Interacting with the street children

Plate 11: Participation Observation

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Plate 14: Street Boy in local train

Plate 15: At Open Shelter (Childline)

Photographs: Interacting with the street children

Plate 16: Talking with street children

Plate 17: In- depth interview

Plate 18: Interacting with two rag pickers

Plate 19: Street children with family connection

CHAPTER- IV

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF STREET CHILDREN

Abstract: Demographically street children are homogeneous population in any urban situation all over the world though, their presence vary from place to place. In the third world countries presence of street children are more in number than that of developed countries. The chapter focuses on the demographic characteristics of street children, their parental status, their educational achievement, and their economic sphere of life. Two types of street children are included in this study: those who are not connected very well with their family; and those who are living with their parents or other guardians but spending most of their time on street situation.

4.0 Introduction:

Estimating the correct number of street children is a very difficult, daunting and complicated task anywhere in the world. Kumar (1999) examined the magnitude of the problem of enumerating the street children by saying that it is very difficult to estimate the data for most countries, as it is not available. However, given the existing poor socio-economic scenario coupled with the phenomenal growth of cities and towns under the process of urbanization, the number of street children is estimated to be very high. Worldwide there were approximately 100 million children in 1993 living on city streets without care and proper shelter as per World Health Organization (1993). In 1989, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) estimated 100 million children were growing up on urban streets around the world. The United Nation's Department of International Economic and Social Affairs estimated the population of street children worldwide to be 150 million (2007), with the number rising daily (PANGAEA, 2000). The study of Ayaya and Esamai (2001) expressed concern on the rapidly increasing number of street children in urban areas of both developing and developed countries. Similar view was put forth by Drane in 2010 who said that the number is increasing on a daily basis leading to an alarming situation throughout the world . Children living in street situations are an increasing phenomenon in developing countries **(**Panter-Brick C. 2001). With regard to the incidence of street children in

different economics, it is generally presumed that street children are associated with developing nations. However, Boyden's (1991) work shows that street children are also visible in developed nations.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR, 1993), India has the largest population of street children in the world. Agrawal (1999) estimated that India has nearly 20 million street children (approximately 7% of the child population). Over 44,000 children go missing every year all over India (NHRC Report, 2006). According to Ministry of Home Affairs Report (2014) in 2012, the number of children went missing was 135262 (male) and 68869 (female)in India and among them 26896 children remained untraced. Nearly 12 million of the world's international children migrant live in Asia, which represents 39 percent of all international children migrants. Globally three out of every five international child migrants live in Asia and Africa (UNICEF report, 2016). UNICEF with the help of its partner NGOs in 1994, estimated the approximate number of street children living in Delhi, Mumbai, and Kolkata together to be between 100,000-125,000.

In the study conducted in Eastern and Southern Africa in 65 towns and cities Zuberi (2005) revealed that 87% of street children work on the streets during the day and return to their home at night. UNICEF (2002) in the study on street children in Zimbabwe revealed that out of 31.4% on the street most are staying with at least one biological parent while others are staying with extended family members. Kacker (2007) said that in India 65.9% of the street children lived with their family on streets. Earlier Nigam (1994) in the study on India mentioned that 90% of street children are working children with regular family contacts in the age group of 8 to 16 years, and that they were on the streets due to poverty and their parents' unemployment. The remaining 10% were either working children with few family ties who view the streets as their homes or were the abandoned and neglected children with no family ties. Hence it is contextualized that those children with family ties are on the streets on a day time basis.

Reddy (1992) enumerated Bangalore as having about 45000 street children and out of them 25000 were homeless. Singh (2000) indicated that in Chennai and Coimbatore most street children are urban children and most of them are in regular contact with their family. Majority of the street children in Hyderabad are below the age of 15 years and mostly migrate from rural or semi rural areas from all over Andhra

Pradesh (Census Report,2001). Out of its total population 40% are children, and out of these about 2 % are street children.

UNICEF stated that (as cited in Kombararakaran,.2004) about 72% of Indian street children are aged between 6-12 years and 13% are below 6 years of age, the rest only 15% are above 12 years of age. In general, majority of street children in India are boys with little or no education the Report stated. Analyzing the different related literature and documents on the demographics of the street children proves that boys outnumber the girls in the third world countries. Mathur, (2009) in her detailed study of the socio-economic realities of street children in Jaipur city observed that majority of street children in India are boys (71%) and are in the 8-12 years age group. Agnelli (1986) identified the common cause for the lesser visibility of girls on the street to them being taken off the street to become prostitute or may be trafficked . Singh and Purohit((2011) mentioned that girls are more difficult to trace and hence are the most vulnerable. Girls are often taught to be submissive and caring and therefore they tend to have fewer behavioral problems compared to boys. Since girls have fewer behavioral problems, they have less conflict with their families and do not need to leave their home. Moreover many families get rid of girls by other means, e.g. 'marrying them off' when they are as young as only thirteen years of age. Girls may be recruited to do domestic works in private households or to work in the commercial sex industry (WHO, 2000).

The religion of street children in India varies greatly according to area, but in general, approximately seventy percent are Hindus, eighteen percent are Muslims, as discussed in the study by Singh and Purohit (2011).As for their educational attainment in general, street children dislike attending school. Study of street children, for an example in Mumbai, revealed that approximately 60% never attended school, 30% had been to elementary school, while only 10% had been to middle or high school (Kombarakaran 2004).

Dominique (1984) illustrated nicely the city life of Kolkata and pointed out how the children are living on its slums and on the streets. According to the report by Save the Children (2004) in Kolkata, majority of street children (89%) are staying with their parents and the rest live alone. Mukherjee (2014) discussed about the causes and consequences of street children in Kolkata city and on the educational status of these children. Deb and Mitra (2000) viewed that the inadequate food, unhygienic living

conditions and the stress of work affects the health of working street children of Kolkata. On an average in Kolkata the study viewed that about 88% of street children lack in basic sanitation and bathing facilities and that 18% of street children live on one meal a day while the remaining 82% live on the two meals in a day. Kedarnath (2003) exposed that the situation of street children in Kolkata is as bad as those in other cities of India: they face a variety of dangers such as hazardous working condition, cruelty, road accidents and harsh behaviour by the police or other adults in the area. There was focus on street living children in Sealdah and Bowbazar area. According to them majority of the street children are from ten to fourteen years of age and most of the children spend their nights in the shelter home near the Sealdah station.

Keeping this secondary source based published information in the background the following section illustrates the analysis based on the researcher's review of unpublished information from records of NGOs and other government organizations. Primary data which had been collected are also statistically represented here as empirical evidences .

4.1 Need for the study on Demographic Profile:

The Convention of the Child Rights by the United Nation in November 1989 expressed their concern about the constant rise in the number of street children across the world. According to the Convention, street children are considered as vulnerable populations. UNICEF (2002) conducted a study on a sample of 260 street children in Zimbabwe to avail information on the plight of street children in order to facilitate the development of long-term development strategies. Street Children represent the socio-educational challenges in both the developing and industrialized nations of the world (Densley, et al 2002) and hence it is essential to have a focus on the demographics of the street children.

4.2 Significance of the study of Demographic Profile:

The present study is an attempt to bridge the information gap about the number of street children in Kolkata. Literature shows that there has hardly been any focused attempt to estimate the number of street children in Kolkata. Street children are counted either as working children or as beggars. Literature also debates the challenges and complexities involved in estimating street children. The definition, location, timing of

the survey, and climate can alter the figures significantly. Efforts to study street children have largely been in the form of sample studies to understand their profiles and reasons for their being on the street. Government and development agencies have conducted such sample surveys mainly to formulate rehabilitation policies and programmes for children on the streets of Kolkata.

An accurate estimate of children on the street is critical at the policy level as it informs on the intensity of the issue and for addressing a child's need and rights. In order to understand the intensity of the issue and to formulate an intervention strategy to rehabilitate street children; the government, the development agencies and all other stakeholders require dependable information on their numbers, their socio-economic and demographic profiles, and their locations and mobility profiles. This understanding is also critical for initiating evidence based advocacy activities for the enhancement of the status of these children by civil society organizations (CSOs) which work for them. A major lacuna in developing policies and programmes is the lack of credible and comprehensive data on street children. Data available for developing policy advocacy and programmes are inadequate, as it is largely cross-sectional, and city or location-specific within a city.

This study would shed light on their numbers, concentration locations, their demographic profile, conditions, and details about the night shelters available to them. This understanding is critical for developing proper intervention plans; their rehabilitation, and ensuring their rights and basic support.

4.3 Aim and Objectives:

The aim of study in this chapter is to highlight on the demographics of the street children in the two study areas. This is intended to be fulfilled through the study on the following issues:

a) Size and composition of street children, b) age structure, c) religious and caste structure, d) mother tongue or languages spoken, e) place of origin or birth place, f)family type and g) parental profile and status.

4.4 Hypotheses formulated:

      I)   The street children comprise more of boys than girls.

      II)   Most of the street children are between nine to fifteen years of age.

4.5 Methodology applied:

Location selection: The identification of street children was based on their location. The researcher divided Kolkata Metropolitan City into seven different zones where the street children are very much concentrated. Demographic data in the form of secondary data from different unpublished records of NGOs (of 1023 street children) were scrutinized from these seven selected pockets /zones of Kolkata where Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) is functioning. This has been done for a general overview of the street children in an urban setting of a megacity and for understanding the lives, living conditions, mobility patterns, and issues of street children in Kolkata.

For a more specific analysis the primary level demographic data has been collected through semi-structured questionnaire and administered on the children thriving on different parts of Sealdah Railway Station Complex area adopting the purposive (**non-probability**) sampling technique. Two types of street children samples are included in this study: firstly, those who are not connected very well with their family; and secondly those who are living with their parents or other guardians but spending most of their time on the street. The questions relating to the demographics were placed in the introductory part of the questionnaire. Since they were simple easy to answer questions and were quantifiable in nature they were analyzed using simple statistical techniques.

The collection of basic information on the socio-economic and demographic features of street children helps understand their socio-economic and related conditions. Profiling was done with a sample survey to analyze in terms of age, gender, education, religion, occupation, night shelter, and link with family. The status of the street children based on disability, if any , has not been included in the profile because such children are sent to a separate home by the concerned NGOs through CWC(Child Welfare Committee).

The macro picture of the work and lives of street children is shown in the study of Kolkata while Sealdah provides a micro-level perspective. The study does not attempt to compare the macro picture, which is the census data where the ICPS officials counted each child who fell under the UNICEF definition; the micro picture of Sealdah being the sample data. To know more about the children and the locations in which they are concentrated, consultations with policy officials, local people, and social workers was done.

4.6. Empirical Findings and Analysis:

Demographic characteristics of respondents are very much essential in this study as they contribute to an understanding of social and economic problems that drive children to the street situation. The section also helps to understand the most affected group of the society and the possible remedial measures that may be taken to lighten the problems of street children. This study targeted the 'on' and 'of' category of street children within the study area.   The phenomenon of street children widely acclaimed as an urban one with all its magnitude and dimensions is a real social challenge of urban India in general and Kolkata in particular. Street life in Kolkata has been first analyzed followed by a more comprehensive study in Sealdah station area complex.

4.6.1 Demographic features of Street Children in Kolkata:

To understand the dynamics of the target population in a particular study area, different aspects of the social demography are very much important. These aspects are size of population, composition of population, distribution of population according to geographical location, and issue of migration using the age- wise approach . Such an approach has implications in the intervention strategies adopted as the needs and demands and activities of the young children differ from the senior group. Several aspects of the economically active population also plays an important role in understanding the demographics of the target population. In the case of street children, apart from age, their living conditions (including residential and working locations) and their links with their families also become determinant factors.

Kolkata Metropolitan City has been divided into seven different zones on the basis of functioning of the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) . These zones are the areas where the street children are very much concentrated. They are as follows:

Table 3: Spatial Distribution & Religious composition:

Zones	Number of children in Open Shelter	Number of children in contact with NGO	Religious Composition (in %)	Locational Analysis
I	69	100	Hindu-81.89 Muslim-18.11	Kumartuli to Howrah Bridge along the river
II	63	157	Hindu-63.64 Muslim-36.36	College Square, College Street, Medical College area, Surya Sen Street and Bowbazar
III	59	100	Hindu-51.21 Muslim-48.79	Maniktala, Rajabazar, Sealdah and Narkeldanga
IV	62	130	Hindu- 59.37 Muslim-40.63	Tangra, Tiljala, Topsia and Park Circus, Tangra, Tiljala, Topsia
V	49	60	Hindu-80.18 Muslim-19.82	Chitpur, Bagbazar, Sovabazar
VI	25	111	Hindu-59.63 Muslim-40.37	Ballygunge, Jadavpur, Dhakuria, Santoshpur and Kasba
VII	25	55	Hindu-56.25 Muslim-43.75	Taratala and Behala.

Source: Unpublished Secondary data compiled from records of NGOs

A total of 1023 children are staying in the open shelters administered by the NGOs/ or are in contact with the NGOs. As for their spatial distribution zone number one represents the areas from Kumartuli to Howrah Bridge along the river. Zone two includes College Square, College Street, Medical College area, Surya Sen Street and Bowbazar. Zone three represents Maniktala, Rajabazar, Sealdah and Narkeldanga. Zone four includes Tangra, Tiljala, Topsia and Park Circus. Chitpur, Bagbazar, Sovabazar are in zone number five. Zone number six includes Ballygunge, Jadavpur, Dhakuria, Santoshpur and Kasba and in Zone number seven the important areas are Taratala and Behala.

Literature survey of relevant reports and articles establishes the fact that the nature of composition among the street children is more or less similar. Boys are more in number than the girls. The data of street children across the city of Kolkata (as compiled from Registers of different NGOs functioning in the city on street children under the

umbrella of ICPS) indicates that of the total 1023 street children 736 (i.e71.95%) are boys and the rest 287 (28.05%) are girls. Caste wise secondary data is not available. Religion - wise mainly Hindu and Muslim children are found. It is seen that zone number-I from Kumartuli to Howrah bridge along the Hugly river bank and zone number-V Chitpur, Shyambazar, Shovabazar Hindu street children are concentrated. In Zone number –IV i.e. Tiljala, Topsia, Tangra and Park Circus Muslims predominate .

Street children in Kolkata usually speak in Bengali while those hailing from Bihar and other parts of North India use Hindi to communicate with each other. Street children with their family in Kolkata are from different neighbouring states of Bihar, Odisha and Uttar Pradesh; more than one fourth being from Bihar (278 i.e., 27.17%). At the district level, most of the street children (64.03%) are from the neighbouring districts of South 24 Parganas and North 24 Parganas and also from different parts of Kolkata.

4.6.1.1Awareness about Origin and Status of contact with family:

To answer this question it was enquired whether the children knew about their families of origin and locations of origin (i.e. the family/ village location from which they had come to the streets).A majority of the street children were aware of their families and also knew where they hailed from. The question on where they came from specifically indicated whether they hailed from Kolkata or not. Considering the high incidence of 'survival migration' to Kolkata from neighbouring states it is quite natural that migrants' children constitute a significant portion of street children in the city. They migrated to improve their lives, but due to the prevailing inter-generational poverty they were unable to break the survival trap and remained in the category of street dwellers and sent their children to work so that they could contribute to the survival of the household.

Figure-4: Place of Origin
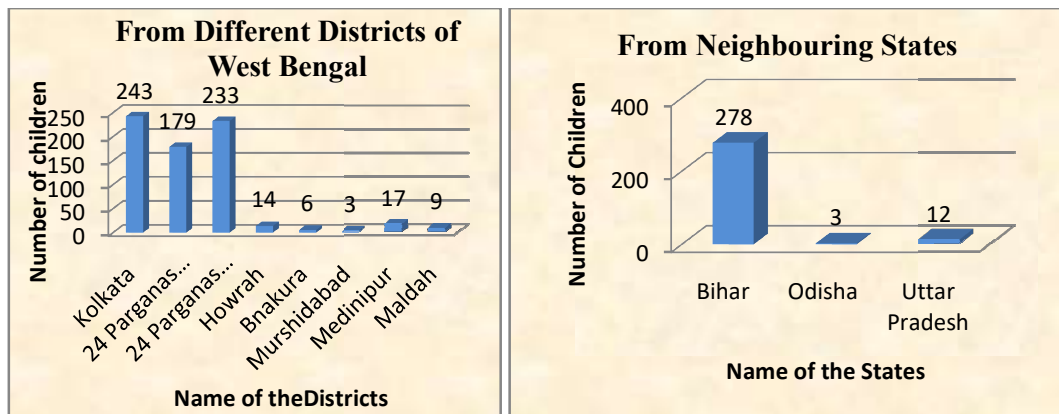
Source: Unpublished Secondary data compiled from records of NGOs

Here in Kolkata almost all the street children are attached with their parents, guardians or are under any other adult supervision. They live in shanties or in unorganized slums along the railway track, river or footpaths. Since the data of street children in seven pocket zones of Kolkata is based on secondary sources where the data is less disaggregated , the parental profile of the children could not be analyzed. Educational status or enrolment in school is not very satisfactory. The information compiled reveals that 47.26% (463) children attained their education from the informal school; 32.36% (331) from formal school and more than one-fifth i.e., 22.38% (229) children have not been enrolled at all in any kind of school. A feature noticed is that there is some primary level enrolment but as they are scaling up the upper primary level or secondary education the dropout rate is increasing.

Figure-5: Demographic Profile
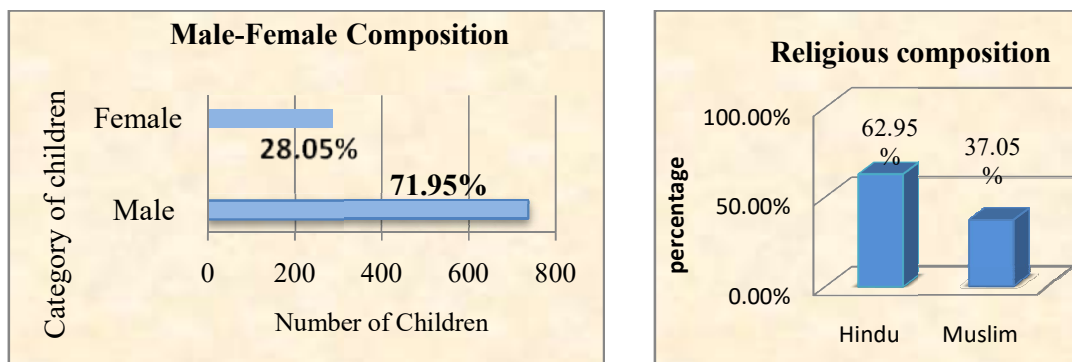
Source: Unpublished Secondary data compiled from records of NGOs

Figure-6: Level of Education among the street children
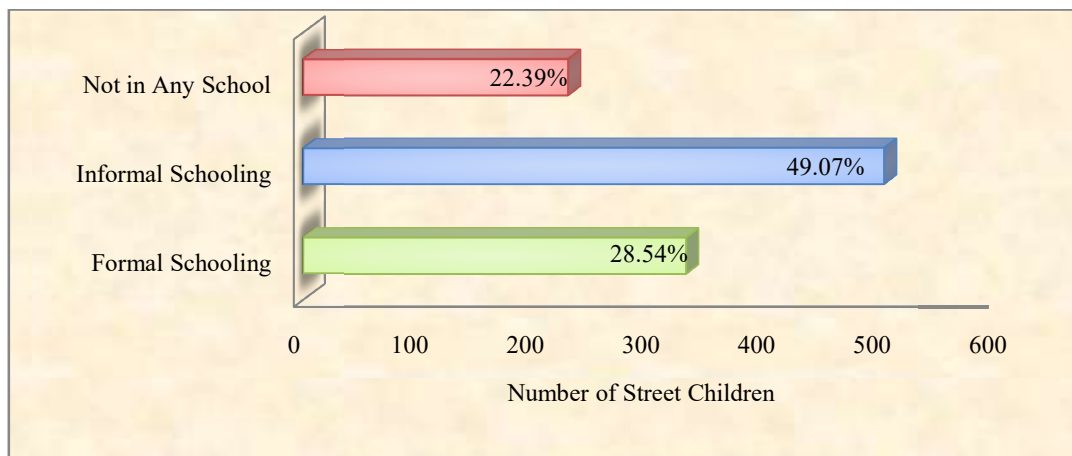
Source: Unpublished Secondary data compiled from records of NGOs

4.6.1.2 Income generating activities:

In Kolkata, children with family connection are not regular workers or labourers. They work if required sometimes helping their parents or other elders in their daily occupational activities like assisting in garbage dumping station (plate 20-21), food stall(plate22), etc. Occupationally two distinct location specific characteristics have been found: one is from Zone number-I (Kumartuli to Howrah Bridge along the riverbank), where street children accumulate burning *ghat*'s materials and collect coins with the help of magnet (plate 29). The other is in zone number- IV (Tiljala, Topsia, Tangra and Park Circus area) where they work in tannery industry or leather works like shoe or bag making(plate 23).

Table 4: Zone Wise Working Engagement

Zones	Working Engagement	Special Remarks
Zone-I	Porter, rag pickers, collecting at burning *ghats*, collecting coins with help of magnet.	collecting materials at burning *ghats* and collecting coins with help of magnet is a unique location specific activity .
Zone-II	Porter, rag pickers, work at food stalls	commonest activities
Zone-III	Porter, rag pickers, work at food stalls	commonest activities
Zone-IV	Rag pickers, porters, work at food stalls, work at leather works like shoe or bag making	work at leather works like shoe or bag making is a unique location specific activity
Zone-V	Porter, rag pickers, collecting coins with help of magnet, begging in front of temples	collecting coins is a unique location specific activity
Zone-VI	Porter, rag pickers, work at food stalls	commonest activities
Zone-VII	Porter, rag pickers, work at food stalls	commonest activities

 Source: Unpublished Secondary data compiled from records of NGOs

The Activity Space (after Mason and Korpela, 2008) of the street children has also been identified based on observational study and its findings are summarized in the following Table Number 5.

Table 5 : 'Activity space'/place adopted by street children in Kolkata city:

'Activity space'	Purpose of the space/activity in that space	Time scale/timing of activity	Location/area
Railway station area (Zone – I)	Working , living, loitering	Whole day and evening	Sealdah, Howrah, Ballygunge, Park Circus and DumDum
Vat or garbage dumping station (Zone---III, IV)	Rag picking	Whole day	Dhapa, different garbage dumping stations
Big Vegetable markets (Zone—V,VI)	Collecting vegetables from trucks	Mainly in the early morning and mid night	Koley market, Barabazar
Along the river (Burning place and rituals) (Zone - I,V)	Collecting other belongings and coins with the help of magnet	Whole day and night	Nimtala, Barabazar
Tannery Industry(Zone-IV)	Work as child labour	Work as demand arises	Tangra, Rajabazar, Topsia, Park Circus
Religious place Zone-V,VI)	Loitering in search of food and begging , sleeping at night	Whole day; and active during special occasions	Kalighat, Dakshineshwar
Bus stand (Zone– I, III)	Begging, collecting food, sleeping at night	Whole day and night	Dharmatalla
New construction sites(Zone–I,III,VII)	Loitering and begging (they are the children of labour)	Whole day and night	East-west metro site

Source: Based on observational study by the researcher

4.6.2. Demographics of street children in Sealdah Station area:

Systematic primary level pilot survey and discussion with NGO officials reveals that in Kolkata the runaway children and those without family are found exclusively only in Sealdah Station area. Therefore, for an intensive study on the particular category of 'on' and 'of' street children, Sealdah Station as a special reference zone of study has been selected. Here focus is on the demographic characteristics of 514 street children, their parental status , and their educational achievement. The two categories based on link with the family has been considered: with family connection (252 in number) and without family connection (262in number) . This is because the parental status, their attitude, responsibility and awareness do play an important role in the life of this target population. Their economic sphere of life has been discussed in the forthcoming chapter.

Age-Sex composition of both categories of street children: The primary level data indicates that girls of all the age categories are less in number. At the upper age group children of both categories are lesser still in number. In the group of without family connection children, almost nine-tenth i.e., 88.5% (232) are boys and a little above one-tenth 11.5% (30) are girls. The age and sex wise composition is illustrated below :

Table 6 Age-Sex Composition of Street Children (Both 'on' and 'of' Category)

Family Status	Age Group	Age group wise Gender data			
		Male children/ boys	Percentage	Female Children/girls	Percentage
Without Family Connection	6 - 9 Years	16	6.11	4	1.53
	9 -12 Years	74	28.24	13	4.96
	12 - 15 Years	95	36.26	8	3.05
	15 - 18 Years	47	17.94	5	1.91
With Family Connection	6 - 9 Years	28	11.11	3	1.19
	9 -12 Years	80	31.75	6	2.38
	12 - 15 Years	94	37.30	8	3.17
	15 - 18 Years	23	9.13	10	3.97
Total		457	88.91	57	11.09

Source: Primary level survey

Mother tongue or languages spoken : Four languages are spoken by the respondents. Bengali is the most dominant one :79% (406), followed by Hindi 15% (77), Bhojpuri 4% (21) and Nepali 2% (10). Most of the children speak in Bengali as it is the local language. Hindi and Bhojpuri speaking children are coming from surrounding states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand.

Religious Composition: Street children are belonging to mainly Hindu and Muslim communities in the Sealdah Station area. Among the 262 street children without any family connection 57.60 % (151) are Muslims, 41.20% (108) are from Hindu community and 1.10% (03) are from other religions. So in this category Muslims are more in number. Among the 252 street children with family connection 50.80 % (128) are Muslims, 48% (121) are from Hindu community and 1.20% (03) are from other religions. In this category too Muslims are more in number.

Table7: **Religious Composition:**

			Religious Composition			Total
			Hindu	Muslim	Other	
Family Status	**Without Family**	**Count**	108	151	3	262
		% value	41.20%	57.60%	1.19%	100.00%
	With Family	**Count**	121	128	3	252
		% value	48.00%	50.80%	1.20%	100.00%
Total children		**Count**	229	279	6	514
		% value	44.60%	54.30%	1.10%	100.00%

Source: Primary level survey

Figure-7: Religious Composition
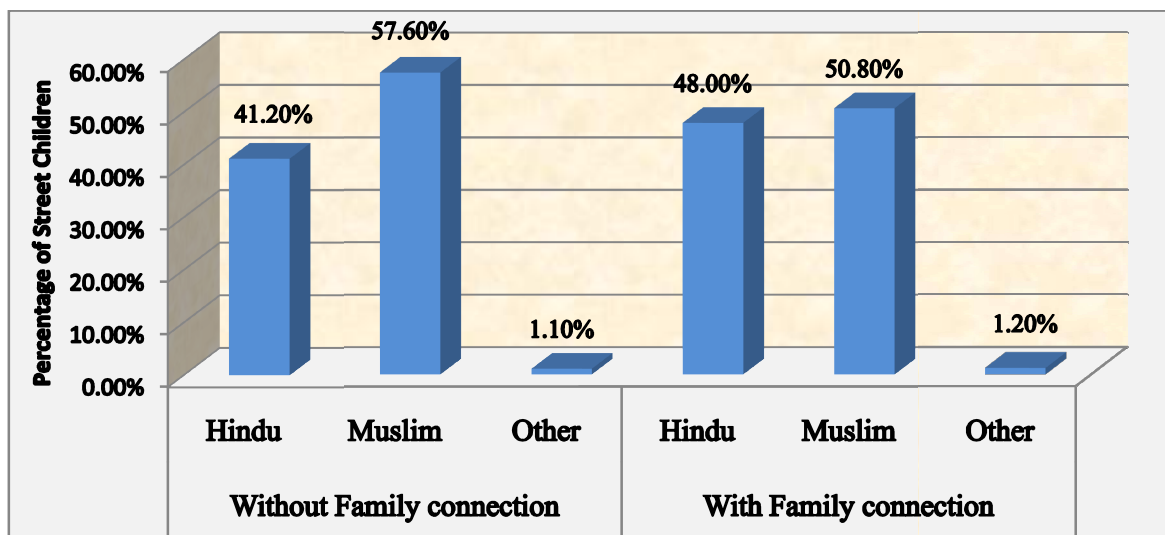
Source: Primary level survey

4.6.2.1 Significance of family and origin details of a street child

The vulnerability of street children is primarily related to three factors: (i) To their being street children; (ii) To their access to a safe saving and remittance mode for whatever little they earn; and (iii) To where they slept at night. To gain an insight into the first factor, the study analyzed the family and background of the street children in detail.

Street children belong to different categories (as per the UNICEF categorization). The background that led them to the street vary , this also influences their link (contact or association) with their families. Queries related to awareness about their families of origin and contact and level of interaction with families provided insights into questions such as what conditions led them to the streets, why they were continuing on the streets, and what intervention strategy could rehabilitate them. It also sheds light on those who were absolutely orphaned or were alone on the streets.

It was observed that most children belonging to the categories of 'children of the street' and 'working children on the street' were in touch with their families. The pattern of contact with their households of origin showed the children's emotional and economic links with their families.

Residential status and link with family: To gain more insights into their links with their families the following information was required: Did they live with their families or not? If not, were they in contact with them? If so, what was the frequency of contact or visit?

4.6.2.2 Demographics of street children living without family connection :

When a child said that he lived alone it meant that he was no longer living with his family and could be living with a friend or a relative. While surveying hardly any child was left completely alone. But cases where a child had left home or had been abandoned by the family due to various circumstances were reported.

Parental status, attitude, responsibility and awareness: Commencing with the street children without family connection or tie up , it is an established fact that in their home situation or within their family situation, they are ill-treated by their parents. In the case of stepparents, the rate of abuse is more. Parents are not very much responsible or

aware of their children's basic needs in daily life. Many children complained about the abuse by their drunkard father. Based on primary survey the parental status scenario indicates that more than half the sample   55.34% (145) children have both parents, 22.14% (58) children have lost both their parents, 9.16% (24) and 7.25% (19) street children lost their father and mother respectively. A few 6.11% (16) street children did not comment on their parental status during the interview, which relates their ignorance on this vital issue. It may be that they were orphaned, or had left their families at a very young age or moved away with a group at a very tender age.

Educational background: The primary level survey data reveals that in the category of runaway children and children without family connection there is good enrolment rate in primary section but as they enter the upper primary or secondary level, they are compelled to come out from school education due to mainly economic hardships. At the primary level up to class-IV category street children found is 44.66% (117), 16.41% (43) are in class IV to VI group, there is no one found within the group of class VI to VIII. More than one-third 38.93% (102) were the never enrolled children: they were not in any kind of schooling: informal or formal.

Food habits and nutrition: The observation and interaction shows that the children are deprived of the basic needs of a human being. Their entire food habit depends on the availability of food and earning of the day. Those who are under the care of NGO's have their morning breakfast from the contact points. Some children depend on the open shelters run by the NGO and food stalls near railway station complex for food. Many street children collect food from Sealdah bound train's pantry car and are deprived of two square meals in a day.

Nutritional status of these children is not up to the mark since they are not getting nutritious diet every day. Most of the children have low weight and height than the standard measure fixed by WHO in 2006. Irregular eating habits and food quality below the standard of nutritional requirement have made these children inclined to health problems. Nutritional deficiency is one of the causes of infectious diseases in an individual because the body's natural system of immunity weakens This condition is worsened by the exposure to sun, rain, and polluted air they breathe in everyday as based on the observation made by the Medical Counselor related to street children(2015).

Living environmental situation: The perception study on the living conditions of street children yields shocking results. The target population is forced to live under harsh conditions and in unhygienic places. They do not have even proper bathing and sanitation facilities. They face many difficulties during the hot summers , the rainy season and the cold winters. There is no surety of their shelter and food and they have no place to keep their belongings.

4.6.2.3.Demographics of the street children with family connection :

Parental status of street children: Street Children living with family connection have better adult guidance than their counter part. The data analysis reveals that less than three fourth 69.45% (175) children have both parents. Thirty-eight street children have lost both their parents but are connected with some other guardian. Among them (4.76%) 12 and (6.75%) 17 have lost father and mother respectively. A few 3.97% (10) did not share his or her parental status.

Educational Background: Understanding the educational levels of street children is crucial for providing them appropriate basic education and skill training. A micro-minority expressed interest in attaining school regularly and wanting to perform better in class; the majority displayed little or no interest or enthusiasm in going to school. The percentage of children who had gone beyond the primary level was minimal.

In the category of children under family guidance, the enrolment in the primary level is high but after that there is a sharp drop out. In the primary level up to class- IV group children's number is slightly less than half i.e., 41.27% (104), from IV to VI category 12.70% (32) , very few enrolled their name in VI to VIII group of 3.18% (08 in number) and almost half 42.85% (108) of the street children never went to school in their life.

Food habit and Nutrition: Most of the children with family tie up do not follow any routine of eating during the day time. Their entire food habit depends on the availability of food and earning of the day. Working parent's children depend completely on others for their day-time food. Usually these children take two meals: one is in the early morning and another at night with the family members.

Living environmental situation: The living conditions of street children are terrible. They are forced to live in harsh and unhygienic places. Their living places are congested, crowded, shanty and without proper ventilation. They do not have even

proper bathing and sanitation facilities and provision of drinking water is not commendable. . They face lots of difficulties during the hot summers, rainy season and in winters.

4.7 Comparative study among the street children with & without family connection

Table- 8: Comparative Analysis

Situational Analysis	Street children with family connection	Street children without family connection
Health	Better than the counter parts	Not at all in a good situation :very vulnerable
Education	Primary enrollment is ok but drop out in upper primary level	Same situation
Income generating	Less inclined to regular income generating activities	Most of them are involved in economic activities for their survival
Addiction	Less addicted	More addictive prone than family connected children
Healthy Habits	Try to maintain the healthy habits.	Not maintained properly.
Vulnerability	Less vulnerable	More vulnerable and needy
Included in ICPS project	Yes most of them are included	Almost 100% are included in the project.

Source: Based on primary observation

Figure-8: Educational Achievement among the children (with and without family connection)
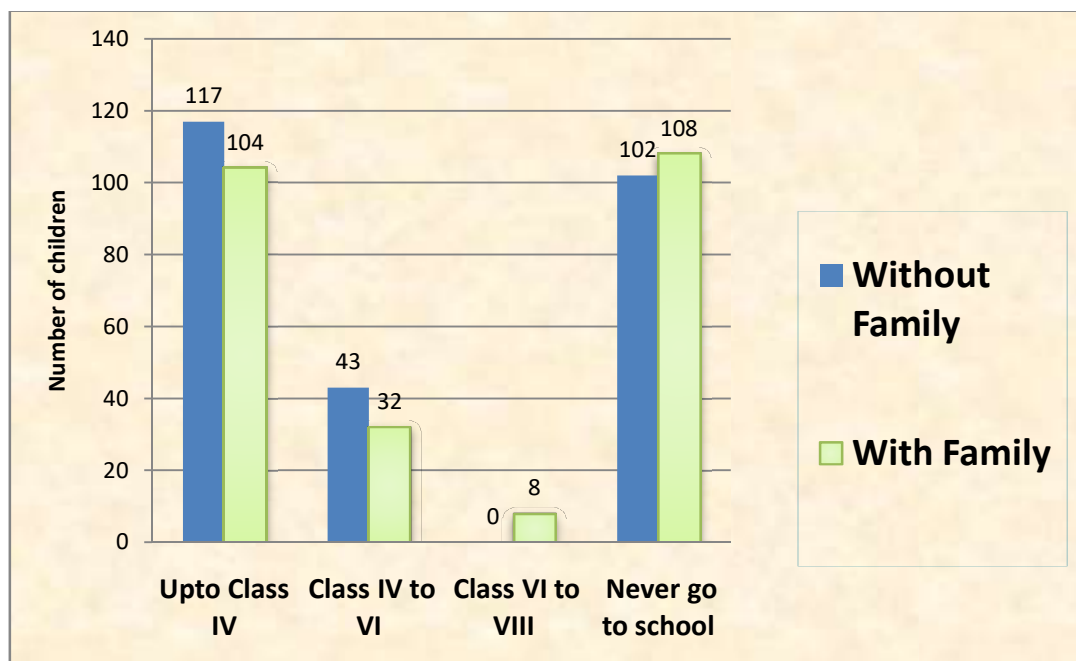
Source: Primary level survey

4.8 Conclusion:

To facilitate the long-term development strategies for the street children it was felt essential to have a preliminary information on their background .According to Johnson (2001), all the surveys across the world usually suggests that the average range of age is between eight to eighteen years. The entering age into the street life is 10 years.

There were some **limitations in the data collection process:** It was very difficult to talk with the children because of their restless nature and floating character. It was very hard to quantify the exact number of street children. Since it was difficult in approaching and in obtaining information about female street children due to their greater invisibility they are not much represented in the study. Only few females are included in this study (70). These female children were mainly interviewed in female home and short stay shelters of the NGOs. Data relating to age of the respondents and their family background particularly income, status of the family, education of the parents, and general home environment may not be reliable since no records were available and children were the only source of information which had to be relied on.

Information of children, who are connected with their home were obtained, when they came to the contact points or their working place at the time of survey

After critically analysing the data highlighting the demographic features of the target population, the research hypothesis is established that female children are less in number. The other hypothesis that most of the street children are within nine to fifteen years old is established. Beyond 15 years of age category these children try to establish themselves in different unorganised marginal activities outside the street situation. The age sex composition, the educational background, the religious structure scenario is more or less the same in both the categories of street children with and without family connection. The family connected children, have better food habits and nutritional level than those of runaway children or children without family connection. The children living without family connection are much more vulnerable.

Recommendations: Social awareness, establishment of more infrastructure for education is needed for betterment of basic education and vocational training among the street children. Related Non Governmental Organisations and Government officials should take necessary initiatives to create awareness among the parents/ guardians whose children are in vulnerable conditions.

The age-wise classification showed that a significant section (82.07%) of the street children belonged to the 6-14 years age group. This critical mass comes under the purview of the Right to Education Act. This indicates the scale of education intervention that is required to mainstream street children.

Since many of the children are not in school, there is an urgent need to provide appropriate education through formal schooling and skill training. On obtaining a positive response towards the need for skill training given by some of the children, they were asked about their convenient time for attaining such training programmes. Many said that they would prefer attending classes in the evening. Age-wise classification showed that the demand for evening and night classes increased with an increase in age, which meant that the older children wanted to study or engage in some skill training only after work. These findings show that a number of street children wanted to get educated and trained properly as they felt that they were somewhat disabled as they were not educated and trained. Though interventions would not be able to mainstream all the children, a majority might want to be mainstreamed and get educated/trained in some skills.

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Photographs: Working Scenario of Street Children in Kolkata

Plate 20: Rag pickers at vat or garbage dumping station	Plate 21: Scavenging for recyclable materials
Plate 22: Helping mother in a Food Stall	Plate 23: Working at leather industry
Plate 24: Begging on the street	Plate 25: Helping to load and unload

Plate 26: Begging sympathetically

Plate 27: Searching on the Bank of River

Plate 28 Porter / loader unloader

Plate 29: Collecting Coins with magnet
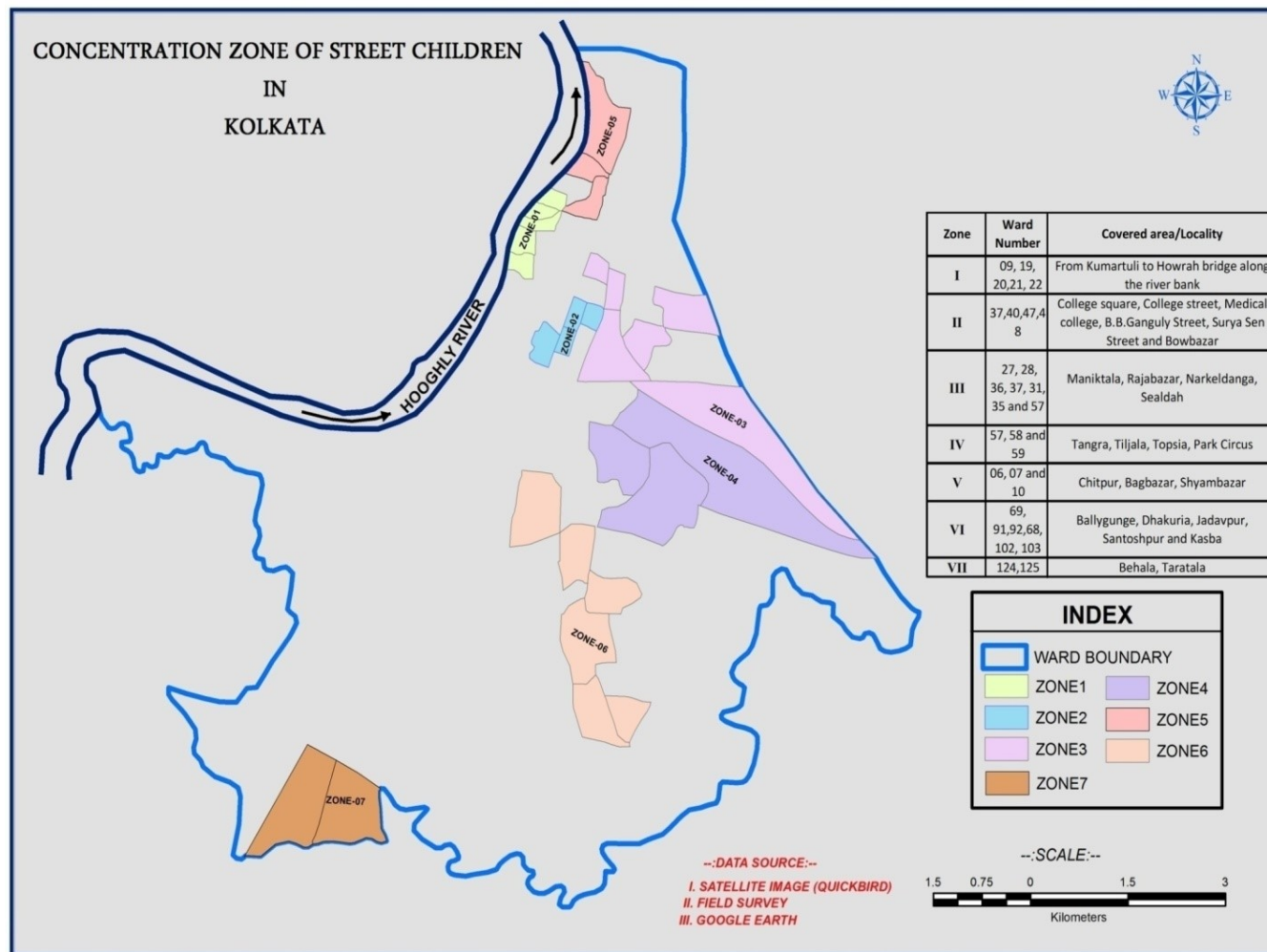
Figure-9: Concentration Zone of Street Children in Kolkata

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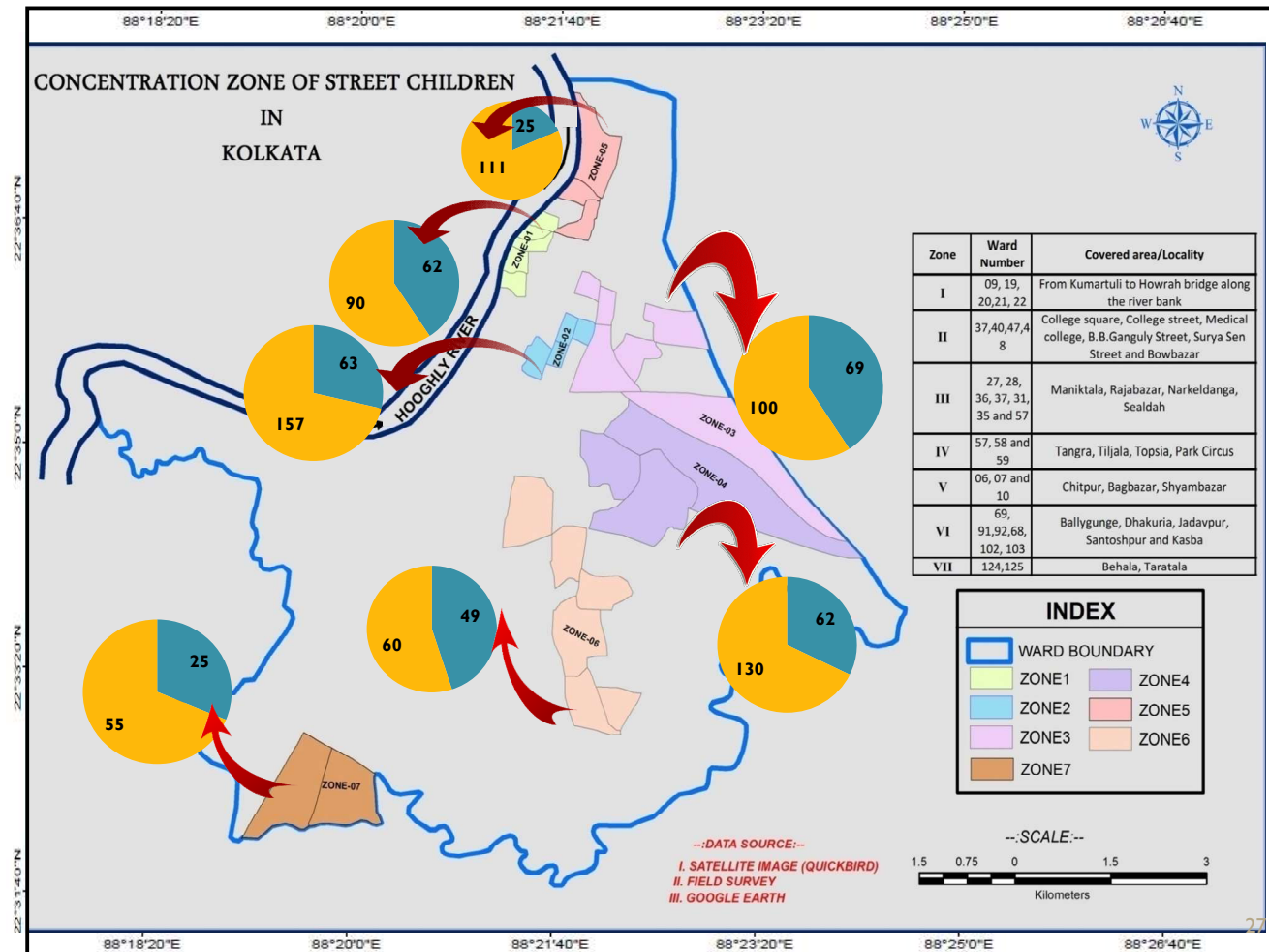
Figure-10 Concentration Zone of street children

CHAPTER-V

BACKGROUND CAUSES OF THE PHENOMENON OF STREET CHILDREN

Abstract: This chapter focuses on the direct and indirect reasons for the phenomenon of children being on the street at the global to local level. This has been done after carrying out a detailed literature survey on this issue followed by a pilot study and then data gathered through semi structured questionnaire administered on the respondents (n=514). The analysis reveals the causes behind such a phenomenon.

5.0 Introduction:

Natural/environmental shocks such as landslide, land erosion, floods, droughts, food insecurity are the main reasons of children's migration to the street as per study by Conticini and Hulme (2005).**Economic** need is often cited as being the cause for children to live and work on the streets as their parents cannot afford the cost of education and are forced to send their children to the streets. Poverty is the main driving force of some families that push the children to work, and among them the street appears as a 'promise of rewards'. According to WHO (2000) most of research study globally regarding the prevalence of street children, indicates that poverty is the single most important factor in influencing children to leave their homes. Most children who leave home to live on the streets come from slums or low cost housing (Mathur & Monika 2009).

An article The Express Tribune (2011) reported that **terrorism** and poverty are the main reasons behind the increasing number of children on streets in Pakistan. Most of such children have lost their parents and have no other option but to come out on the streets it reported . Lack of food availability in the home is another common reason for living on the street in this country viewed Ali, et al, (2004). Lucchini, (1997) and Conticini (2004) pointed out that in Dhaka majority of street children leave their villages because of **abuse,** physical violence, break down of family ambience. Abdelgalil (2005) mentioned **drug use** to be a strong factor pulling children to the streets due to its easy availability and lack of supervision in Brazil. Similar opinion was given by Tufail(2005) in Pakistan where drug addiction and abuse are the main reasons for leaving home.

By the year 2040-50, urban India will constitute 50% of the total population of the country. In India, about one third i.e., 31% population live in urban areas (Census 2011). This country is going through a crucial phase of demographic transition, from a dominantly rural to an urban country, where most of the people want to live in city area. According to the Census of 2011, 17.3% of the urban population lives in slums. Urban poverty in India is over 25 percent; some 81 million people live in urban areas on incomes that are below the poverty line. Children are the most vulnerable portion of urban poor population as they are suffering from exclusion or are at risk of exploitation (UNICEF, 2012). According to the Planning Commission of India, (2015), around 40 percent of India's children are vulnerable or experiencing difficult circumstances. Such children are vulnerable as they are without family support, or are children forced into labour, abused/trafficked children, children on the streets, children affected by addicted material use , by armed conflict/ civil unrest/natural calamity etc. as well as children who, due to circumstances, come into conflict with law (Children In India 2012 - A Statistical Appraisal by the Government of India 2012:8). The increasing phenomenon of street children have been linked with several related factors like urbanization, economic recession, poverty, unemployment, rural to urban migration, breakdown of family tie-up, increasing slum and homeless population. Family violence, maltreatment in the family especially by step parents, lack of supervision and addiction behavior of the parents are some of the common causes of leaving home by the children in India discussed Deb and Senapati(1992). According to Subrahmanayam and Sondhi (1990) street children in Delhi Railway station are coming from different states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Assam due to psychological causes. A study by Pradhan(1990) revealed a range of different and mixed reasons for street children such as: maltreatment by step parents , father's and or/ mother's death, family abandoned by father and or/ mother , lack of proper home and food, neglect or abuse, attraction to city life. According to Dybicz (2005) children choose their street life style because of the attractiveness of the freedom and adventure it offers. Migration too has its impact of on children. In the process of migration, families including children are not only uprooted, but also lose the benefits of state welfare. During the migration season, the family cannot afford the immunization process for their children or any other beneficial programmes related to children. In the entire process of migration children are adversely affected, they are forced to drop out of school or never get to enroll in school. A child out of school is an important indicator of child labour in the country.

The background information obtained thus highlights a myriad of factors such as death of a parent, critical relationship with step parents, separation of parents, addiction of father, insufficient food, abuse, and family violence as the main push factors that take away children from home to street. These are also the direct reasons for the presence of street children.

5.1 Direct reasons for being on the street:

The direct reason for being on the street is related to the adverse situation they face at home where the child originally belongs. To explain the reason why children resort to live on the street the analysis is based on Maslow's hierarchy of need theory (1954). In the theory -the psychological theory of human motivation- five sets of needs are mentioned. These are : (i) Psychological needs, (ii) Safety, (iii) Love (iv) Self esteem and (v) Self actualization. All human beings are motivated on having these needs fulfilled. According to Maslow the first need in the hierarchy to be fulfilled is required by all. This is related to the basic needs which include food, shelter, and clothing. The life of children in the family setting will greatly depend on the fulfillment of these basic needs. In the absence of such needs it may lead the children to the streets where they think these needs can be fulfilled. They may opt to come and work or live on the street in order to get these basic needs. Once these basic needs are met, human beings seek to achieve the next set of needs on the hierarchy. In cases where families have provided these basic needs, but the other needs in the hierarchy are not met with; such as security, may also cause children to leave their nesting home for the streets. Lack of love and affection along with the feeling of rejection may also move the children to the street.

5.2 Indirect reasons for being on the street:

The indirect reasons identified are as follows:

(i)   Increase in child population: India is home to more than 400 million children below the age of 18 years(as per 2011). Of the 377 million urban Indians, 32% (120 million) are children below 18 years of age and more than 8 million children under six years live in the slums.

(ii)   (ii)Rapid rate of urbanization: As the global population is increasing and urbanization continues, the number of street children is increasing (UNICEF, 2005).

(iii) Increase in homeless population: According to Census 2011 Urban India now has 9.42 lakhs homeless people an increase of 1.64 lakh since 2001.

(iv) Rural urban migration: Falling employment opportunities and agricultural production drive people from villages to the million plus cities.

(v) Increasing Slum population: The Census of 2011 stated that 17.3% of the urban population live in slums, the rising population and migration aggravating the situation.

(vi) Poverty: Poverty leads some families to send their children to work, and the street is thus a place of livelihood (Lucchini, 1997) for them .

(vii) Child labour: India is the home of 30% of world's child labor force. The Census (2011) also highlights that, approximately 1.2 crore children are employed in various sectors in India, and most of them are situated in top 10 cities of India.

(viii) Missing children: On an average, over 40, 000 children in India are reported missing every year, of which approximately 11,000 remain untraced (Report on Child Rights, New Delhi 2005).

(ix) Crime against children: A sharp increase in the number of reported crimes against children, with nearly ninety thousand crimes against children being registered in 2014. The higher rate of crime indicates that children in the cities are not only particularly vulnerable to crimes and violence but also become part of organized crime rackets, especially when faced with circumstances such as disruption in schooling, a broken family, lack of parental care and exposure to substance abuse.

(x) School drop-out in both primary & secondary level: The Net Enrollment Ratio (NER) at the Upper Primary Elementary Level in government schools in India is only 58.3% (Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation - MoSPI, 2012). Over 39% boys dropped out from schools before completing elementary education compared to 33% girls in 2013-14 as per the statistics of the Ministry of Human Resources and Development (MHRD). Thus more boys are dropping out of the schools in India due to poor academic performance, lack of interest in studies and need for employment to support family. The causes of the **phenomenon** of street children are thus due to these indirect and direct reasons.

Street children as an **urban phenomenon** (with it the rural to urban migration) has already being discussed in the theoretical framework chapter and so has been intentionally left out.

Figure-11: Schematic diagram showing Background Causes of Street Children

Source: Childline, 2016

5.3 Situational Analysis:

Lucchini (1997) in his study defined three levels of analysis: macro, meso, and microscopic (i)Factors at the micro (individual) level: escape from an individual situation (hunger, shame, and abuse); failure at school, lack of money or feeling unwanted, desire of autonomy, etc. ; (ii)Factors at the meso (family) level: the breakdown or disintegration of the family structure, single- level parent families, remarriage, desertion, poverty, child abuse, child neglect, family violence, lack of adequate care, etc. (iii)Factors at macro level: political, poor economical growth, poor housing, adverse health and welfare services, unemployment, and rapid urbanization, industrialization process. According to

Barratte(1995) the causes of phenomenon of street children are three fold – firstly the Root causes (society): economic problems, social changes like rapid urbanisation, high population growth and high unemployment situation. Secondly, the underlying causes (community): inadequate employment opportunities, uneven distribution of resources, services and prospect, poor working conditions, no access to basic services like housing, transport, water, electricity etc. Thirdly immediate causes (family): high unemployment levels, large and poor families, high divorce or separation rate, low educational level, alcoholism, both physical and mental abuse, lack of care and emotional support. The factors responsible have been identified through PCA as discussed below:

Table-9: Principal Component Analysis (PCA)

Reasons behind their Migration from Home/Effective Variables	Factor loadings	Factor Loading from Highest to Lowest	Order of Significance
Parental Attitude	.532	.899	1
Poverty	.899	.765	2
Home Violence	.765	.532	3
Want to be free	.132	.322	4
Peer Pressure	.268	.297	5
Want to make money	.322	.268	6
Addiction	.297	.132	7

Source: Based on the data compiled

Principal Component Analysis or the PCA is a technique used to emphasize variation and bring out strong patterns in a dataset. This analysis helped in identifying the patterns in the data set. The highest component value is the principle component of the data set and reveals the significant relationship with the data set.

Factor Analysis: The factor loadings give us an idea about how much the variable has contributed to the factor; the larger the factor loading the more the variable has contributed to that factor (Harman, 1976).

Analysis: From the data table of principal component analysis it is found that the factor loadings are larger or greater in the cases of parental attitude, poverty and home

violence. Therefore, it can be said that these components or variables are more dominant. On the other hand, components like peer pressure, want to be free, want to make money and addiction are the less important variables or components.

Following Barratte (1995) and Lucchini(1997) the analysis based on primary survey has been done. The migration pattern of the street children from the specific study of Sealdah Rail Station Complex area has been gauged at the state and national level. The following figure number-12 reveals the migration scenario from different districts of West Bengal including Kolkata. The two neighbouring districts of South 24 Parganas (with 48 boys & 6 girls), and North 24 Parganas (22boys & 10 girls) which are well connected by rail with Sealdah has the maximum children's place of origin. This is followed by Kolkata (27 boys & 5 girls) and Nadia. A notable feature seen is that girls are very few in number as a whole and so also that of boys hailing from far off districts. The distance decay phenomenon is hence noticed which has its implications as well. Those children with family connection can return home easily . The district of South 24 Parganas is well linked through the Sealdah South Section of the Eastern Railway and also by a good road network. Similarly North 24 Parganas is well linked through the Sealdah North Section and Sealdah Main Line Section of the Eastern Railway as well as by roadways. Nadia is well connected by local and express trains through the Sealdah Main Line Section of the Eastern Railway .

Figure-12: Migration pattern from different districts of West Bengal to Sealdah
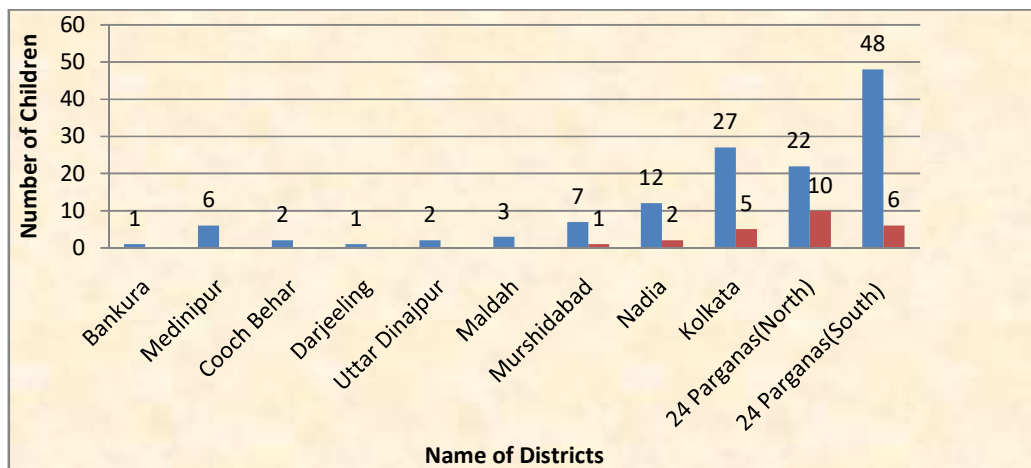
Source: Based on primary survey

From the following figure number 13, it is revealed that apart from neighbouring districts, children also come from states adjoining West Bengal. Most of the children have come from Bihar (14boys & 4 girls) and Uttar Pradesh (8 boys 8 &2 girls). Besides the neighbouring states, international level child migrants were traced: 11 children came from Bangladesh and 9 from Nepal at the time of the primary questionnaire survey.

Figure-13: Migration pattern from outside of West Bengal and India to Sealdah
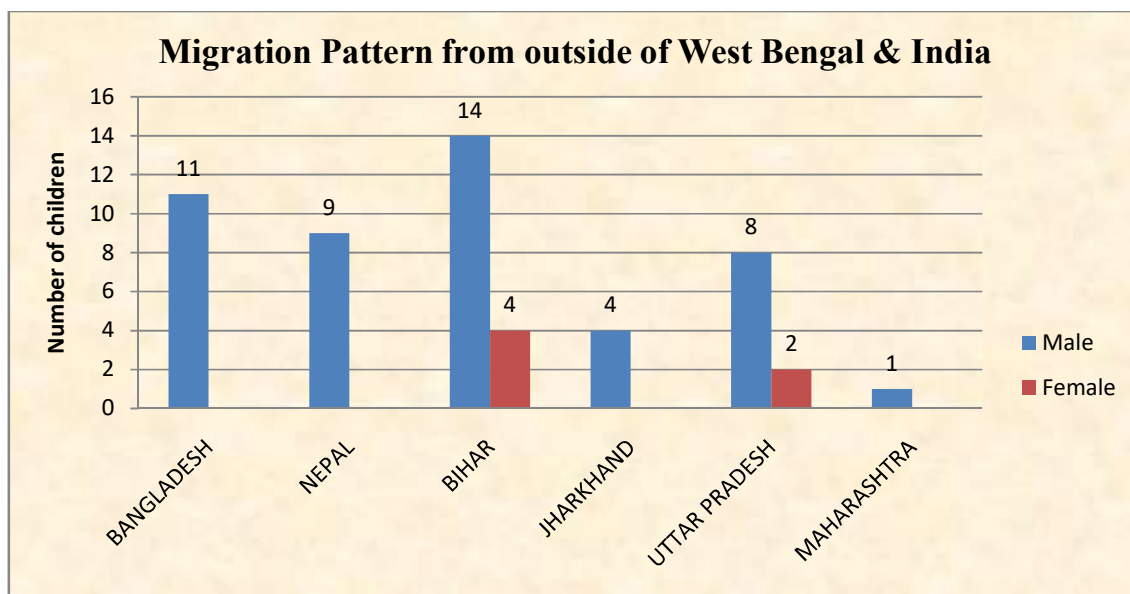
Source: Based on primary survey

Table-10: Causes of Migration from home to street life (without family connection)

			Reasons of Leaving Home or migration to street situation									Total
			Parent's Attitude	Poverty	Home Violence	Want to be Free	Friends' Force	Want to Make Money	Addiction	Not responded	
Age Groups	6 Yrs – 9 Yrs	Count	04	09	05	01	01	00	00	00	20
		% Value	19.6%	43.1%	25.5%	5.9%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	9 yrs – 12 yrs	Count	08	49	21	04	00	02	02	01	87
		% Value	9.3%	58.1%	23.8%	4.7%	0.0%	1.6%	1.0%	0.8%	100.0%
	12 yrs – 15 yrs	Count	18	50	23	04	02	06	00	01	103
		% Value	17.1%	48.2%	22.6%	3.5%	2.0%	5.5%	0.0%	1.0%	100.0%
	15yrs – 18 yrs	Count	11	29	09	01	00	00	00	02	52
		% Value	20.7%	56.1%	17.1%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0,0%	3.7%	100.0%
Total Number of Children		Count	41	137	58	10	03	08	02	04	262
		% Value	15.3%	52.4%	22.4%	3.8%	1.8%	2.8%	1.0%	1.6%	100.0%

Source: Primary level Survey

The above table 10 and the figure14 illustrated below, indicates the major cause of leaving home is poverty or economic hardship among all the age categories of the surveyed street children . This has been identified as the Root cause (after Barratte, 1995). The second most important dominating factor is related to the family. This includes parental attitude (15.3%) and home violence (22.4%). This is related to meso (family) level analysis after Lucchini (1997) and demarcated as immediate causes after Barratte (1995) Other minor reasons for leaving their home are wanting to be free, friend's force/peer pressure , earning money, addiction, etc., (i.e. micro (individual) level after Lucchini (1997). Of these minor reasons the age wise analysis indicates a significant scenario. Earning money is the main motive for the youngest (6-9 years of age) group while the oldest group's (15-18 years of age) priority is addiction.

Figure-14: Why children end up on the streets?
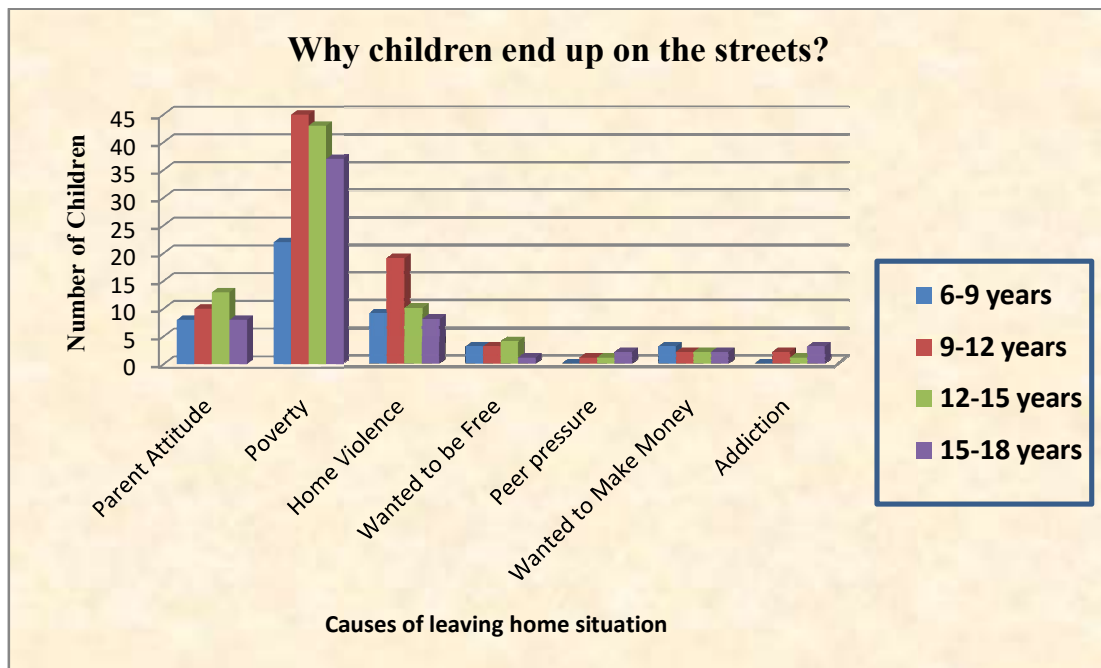
Source: Based on primary survey

There are many families commuting daily with their children. The parents leave them near the station to fend for themselves and while returning home they pick them up. These families are all engaged in the informal sector. The diagram below(Figure number 15 gives this daily commuting scenario the figures are based on the interaction with children of such families.

Figure-15: Daily Commuting Zone

NAME OF STATION	NO OF CHILDREN
HABRA	19
SONARPUR	8
LAKSHMIKANTAPUR	3
CANNING	4
BELGHARIA	5
TITAGARH	7
HOWRAH	19
BARASAT	8
MADHYAMGRAM	3
DAKSHIN BARASAT	4
BARUIPUR	5
NAIHATI	4
KANKINARA	7
SHYAMNAGAR	2
DHAKURIA	6
BARA BAZAR	3
DUMDUM	7
SHYAMNAGAR	2
PATIPUKUR	6
BELIAGHATA KHAL	4
NIMTALA	7
SOVABAZAR	3
TILJALA	20
MALLICK BAZAR	5
RAJABAZAR	16
PARK CIRCUS	12
NARKALDANGA KHAL	48

60 K.M   40 K.M   20 K.M   SEALDAH STATION

Stations shown: NAIHATI, KANKINARA, SHYAMNAGAR, HABRA, TITAGARH, BARASAT, MADHYAMGRAM, BELGHARIA, DUMDUM, HOWRAH, NARKALDANGA KHAL, RAJABAZAR, PARK CIRCUS, DHAKURIA, BASIRHAT, SONARPUR, BARUIPUR, CANNING, DAKSHIN BARASAT, LAKSHMIKANTAPUR

LEGEND
- SEALDAH STATION
- STATION NAME

–:DATA SOURCE:–
(I) Google earth
(II) Google Map
(III) Field Survey

Some children come alone on a daily basis to earn their livelihood in the Sealdah station area. They come from different adjoining areas and are having connection with their family. From the figure-15 it is seen that 48 children from Narkeldanga Khal area, followed by 20 children from Tiljala and 19 from Howrah. This numerical figure is based at the time of the primary questionnaire survey.

Figure-16: Graphical Representation of daily commuting children (based on primary survey)

Street Children with Family Connection

Location	Number of Children
Narkeldanga Khal	48
Tiljala	20
Howrah	19
Did Not Respond	16
Rajabazar	16
Park Circus	12
Barasat	8
Sonarpur	8
Sealdah	7
Nimtala	7
Dumdum	7
Kankinara	7
Titagarh	7
Entally	6
Dhakuria	6
Patipukur	6
Beliaghata Khal	5
Amharst street	5
Mallick Bazar	5
Baruipur	5
Dakshin Barasat	4
Canning	4
Naihati	4
Beliaghata Khal	4
collegestreet	4
Sovabazar	3
Shyambazar	3
Barabazar	3
Madhyagram	3
Laxmikantapur	3
Habra	2
Shayam Nagar	2

Number of Children

5.4 Conclusion:

The increasing phenomenon of street children have been linked with several related factors like urbanization, economic recession, poverty, unemployment, rural to urban migration, breakdown of family tie-up, increasing slum and homeless population. The **push factors** from home to city can been summarized to be : i) domestic violence (ii) abuse at home and society (iii) poverty (iv) rural underdevelopment. The **pull factors** to the city are**: (**i) rapid urbanization (ii) working opportunities (iii) attraction of city life style. (iv) relatives and peer pressure. (v) attraction of freedom and adventures . Three levels of analysis have been incorporated after Lucchini (1997) and based on Barratte's (1995) discussion of the causes of the phenomenon of street children. The study reveals that factor loadings are larger or greater in the cases of parental attitude, poverty, and home violence: these components or variables are more dominant. On the other hand, components like peer pressure, want to be free, want to make money and addiction are the less important variables or components.

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Figure-17: Local Railway Network from Sealdah Station

Figure-18: Railway Map of West Bengal

Figure-19: Road Map of West Bengal

CHAPTER VI

CONSEQUENCES, CHALLENGES, AND COPING STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY THE STREET CHILDREN

Abstract: Living on the street, with no supervision, protection or guidance often makes street children vulnerable to a wide range of problems. Children with family connections encounter many problems while living on the street. The ones living alone are more vulnerable . They adopt many coping strategies to survive in street circumstances. This chapter focuses on three major issues: the consequences of being street children , the challenges they face, and the survival strategies adopted thereof. It is based on application of relevant literature through semi structured questionnaire administered on the target population along with qualitative techniques of observational analysis and case study documenting.

6.0 Introduction:

The Humanistic approach of geographical study has been applied in the present research to assess the consequences and challenges faced by street children. Humanistic approach in geographical study tries to understand how geographical activities and phenomena reveal the quality of human awareness. Humanistic approach does not consider human being as an 'economic man' it considers human beings in the centre of geographical study (Gregory et al. 2009). Through these approaches an effort is made to understand the human world by analyzing human relationship with nature concerning space and place (Tuan, 1976).

Being the most visible in the urban landscape yet the street children are invisible and the hardest to reach population by the intervening authorities due to the lack of possession of any identification documents. Consequently they face difficulty in getting access to basic needs, services, care and protection. The troubles that these children face for their survival coupled with stigmatization by the society develops in them the feelings and emotions of insecurity, mistrust and fear. To cope with these daily occurring challenges the street children of Kolkata in general and Sealdah in particular adopted their exclusive activity space'/place. The forthcoming section discusses the three major issues : the consequences of being street children , the challenges they face and the survival strategies adopted thereof.

6.1 Consequences of being street children:

The concept of social exclusion and invisibility has been applied on the street children.

6.1.1Social exclusion:

The perception and concept of social exclusion is more relevant and useful in understanding the level of exclusion faced by children in street situation . Exclusion is not about graduations of inequality, but about mechanisms that act to detach groups of people from the social mainstream (Giddens, 1998). Silver (1994) included the dimensions of a livelihood; a secure, permanent employment; earning skills; land; housing; cultural capital, the welfare state, citizenship and legal equality. The socially excluded are those who are administratively excluded by the state. The concept of social exclusions and its approach is thus multidimensional. Children in street situation as a community are deprived of family and a secure housing and as a consequence they are out of education system and other basic amenities.

6.1.2 Invisibility:

Street children are invisible and the hardest to reach population. Over one third of children in urban areas go unregistered at birth, they have no birth certificate or an official identity proof document stated the UNICEF (2012) and hence are invisible in governmental policies. The Union Ministry for Woman and Child Development acknowledged the lack of reliable data on street children. They do not have any identification documents or birth certificates, as they are born at home or in non-institutional settings. Sometimes getting these documents is often not in the priority list of the parents.

6.1.3 Lack of Basic Rights and Services:

Identification documents of the Unique Identification Document (UID) and the birth certificates are the legal rights of a child. It is necessary as per article 7 of UNCRC (United Nation Child Right Commission) which states that "the child shall be registered immediately after birth, and shall have the right from birth to a name. Children have the right to acquire a nationality and as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents. The UNICEF (2012) mentioned that apart from being the first legal acknowledgement of a child's existence, birth registration is central to ensuring that

children are counted and have access to basic services such as health, social security and education; the birth certificate is their 'passport to protection.' . A birth certificate as proof of birth can support the traceability of accountability the Report stated.

In India, an estimated 27 million births take place each year. India still now has a huge backlog of children whose births have not been registered and it is very likely that these children will continue to live without a birth certificate during their entire childhood and beyond. The current level of birth registration in the country is 70 per cent. Thus around 8 million newly born children are not registered even within one year of birth. This is leading to difficulty in getting access to basic services and protection, including prevention of child labour and trafficking, countering child marriage, and providing appropriate care and protection (UNICEF,2007).

The rate of birth registration in urban India was 91.8% in 2010 with the urban areas in Punjub, Rajasthan and Hariyana having 100% registration (Census of India, 2011). However even in these states vulnerable children like children on the street are not registered properly. "Save the Children" (an Non governemental Organisation working for child right) noted that no official estimates are readily available in India . So it conducted a survey and in its Report of 2012 on the cities of Hyderabad, Kolkata, Bhubaneshwar and Jaipur revealed that the vulnerable street children do not possess legal documents which would enable them to an access to the basic services. In Kolkata 56.3% children (648 out of 1152) had no identification documents it said.

Educational deprivation: Education plays a crucial role in determining the future of a child. Article 28 of the UN Convention on Rights of Children (UNCRC) states that 'all children have the right of free primary education" mentioned the report of UNICEF(2012). In India the Constitution Act, 2002 inserted Article 21 A in the Constitution to ensure free and compulsory education for all children in the age group of 6-14 years as a fundamental right. According to the Save the Children Report (2012), in India overall 63 percent of the street children are illiterate. The information based on different secondary sources in Kolkata reveals that almost half i.e. 47.26% (463) street children are in the informal school; 32.36% (331) from formal school and more than one-fifth i.e. 22.38% (229) children have not been enrolled at all in any kind of school. Educational status or enrolment in school is thus not very satisfactory. Since they are away from the mainstream society   they are deprived of several educational related benefits implemented through schemes launched by the Government.

Need of capabilities: Due to economic hardship, working hard throughout the day and night for a simple livelihood, many of the street children had no opportunity and time to get basic education and skill development activities for a better life in future.

Health deprivation of street children:

Adeyemi and Oluwaseun (2012: 88) stated that, street children constitute a marginalized group in most societies "*...who do not have what society considers the appropriate relationships with major institutions of childhood such as...health.*" This explains why the majority of the children and even many other urban poor remain invisible in the implementation of various health related initiatives. The UNICEF (2005) Report on India pointed out that about 63 percent of Indian children go to bed hungry and 53 percent suffer from chronic malnutrition. "Right to health care, to safe drinking water, nutritious food; a clean and safe environment; and information to help them stay healthy" is one of the fundamental rights of children stated by the UN Convention on Rights of Children, to which India is a party and signatory. The poor living and working conditions of the street children and their hazardous occupations make them highly vulnerable to injury and illnesses. Having no legal documents they can not avail of the free medical facilities and treatment provided by government health institutions. Many lack the knowledge of what type of public health care is available. The access to health care institutions like hospitals and clinics often presents a challenge for street children. These children often face difficulties in using public health care facilities unless parents, social workers or an NGO representative accompanies them. Street children often do not realize when they are seriously ill, and they may have lack of knowledge about what they need to do in order to maintain a healthy and hygienic lifestyle. Such problems in access to healthcare lead to an on-going spiral of bad health for the street child. This health deprivation further challenges the vulnerable children and aggravates their problem with their use of various substances and drugs.

6.1.4 Lack of Basic Needs:

Lack of access to basic amenities: Due to uncertainty in accessing daily food sometimes the children are forced to stay without food by fasting and skipping meals. They have no secure and safe place of sleeping and so are forced to stay at open places. They use station area, parking place, market outskirts, carts, religious places, bus-stand

as their night shelters. Street children use public toilet for their daily needs. They face many difficulties for bathing, washing clothes and drying them in their daily life.

Lack of Protection and security: The street children feel great emotional threats in their daily life due to the absence of parents or family members, no dear and near ones, no affection and loved ones beside them They carry this insecurity throughout their life.

Lack of recreation or monotonous life: Lack of playing time due to hardship of long hours of work make them frustrated and restless. Most of them use addictive products due to lack of ideal recreation. Sometimes they indulge themselves in wicked thoughts and activities.

Lack of social ties and networks: Street children are very much mobile in nature: they do not stay at any one particular place for a long period. Hence they fail to build proper social ties with others. They lack social relations with them. Mainstream society always tries to avoid them due to their dirty living habits on the street. Moreover, they do not have any union to uphold their needs and rights (Hai, 2014).

6.1.5. Stigmatization:

Since street children are not from the background of 'mainstream' society and live their life without any social status; they are not trusted. This creates an adverse affect on the attitude they develop towards the society. Such stigma multiplies the social exclusion of street children.

6.1.6 Sexual Exploitation:

Across the world several studies have highlighted the incidence of sexual exploitation faced by street children. The National Study on Child Abuse in India, (2007) commissioned by Ministry of Women and Child Development, Govt. of India, stated that sexual exploitation of street children is a very common phenomenon.

6.1.7 Violence among the children:

The National Crime record stated that there was a 24 % increase in crime against children between 2010 and 2011 and a further 52.5% increase from 2012 to 2013 in India. Violence normally takes place through three main channels: Firstly, violence within the small children groups, either by peers or by older street children, especially

when they get drowsy and are under the effect of the substance they consume (plate 63). Secondly, violence from the surrounding community, whether through other people on the street who tend to exploit them or by the community itself as a reaction to their existence in particular settings and areas where their presence is not welcomed. Thirdly, violence while working either through the employers or through other peers working in the same place, such as when selling items on the street in areas where other people or children exercise control.

6.1.8. Substance abuse and use of drugs:

Substance abuse and use of drugs is a social behavior dilemma related with street children all over the world. Bond (1992) in his study showed that the age of 13 is becoming the average age for early criminal participation through the early use of drug. WHO (1997) estimated that globally 25% to 90% of street children are prone to the use of various substances. Many studies explored the type of substance abuse by street children influenced by such use by their family members. Those family members of street children who use tobacco and alcohol; their children are more prone to use drugs and other substances (Benegal et al, 1998).

In Brazil, they use glue to reduce their hunger since, to them, food which is supposed to be a basic need is like a luxury (Pinto,1994). In Asia the exact number of street children addicted to glue sniffing is not known, but it is a common problem among street children in Thailand, Indonesia, Cambodia, Malaysia, Pakistan, India and Philippines. It is speculated that between 100,000 and 125,000 children live on the streets and railway stations of India's major cities, and more than half of them have some form of drug addiction (Save the Children Report, 2012). The UNICEF (2002) pointed out that there are more than 5 lakh street children in India who are at high risk of use of drugs.

It is important to know what kind of substances street children are taking. Various Indian foundations state that children abuse substances for a number of reasons, from curiosity, as a recreation, to cope with stress as personal factors. The following are examples of substances that the street children usually take in their day-to-day life: Alcohol, tobacco (both chewing and smoking) cannabis, marijuana and inhalants. Substance abuse among street children in cities around the world has been characterized by the use of cheap and accessible drugs such as alcohol, cannabis, and solvents

(Meadows ,1996). The types of substances street children use, can be many and various and it is difficult to determine what substances they are using. The most common substance consumed is nicotine as cigarettes or *bidis* (smoking tobacco) and *gutkha* (Chewing tobacco). Inhalant or volatile substance use in the form of sniffing of adhesive glue, petrol, gasoline, thinner and spirit was reported by many children in many areas (Rao ,2007). The use of the five most common drugs by children in India are heroin, opium, alcohol, cannabis, and propoxyphene (Pagare, et al, 2003) Glue sniffing is very popular among street children due to three factors, it is relatively cheap, its' easy legal availability and the feeling of 'high' happens very quickly (UNODC, 2004). These children as drug users can be injured or affected, while they are intoxicated (Crowe, et al. 2000). Sometimes serious cardiac and neurological complication may develop, as well as sudden death may happen.

6.2 Challenges faced:

Aptekar (1988) and Visano (1990) pointed out that the progress of moving from home to the streets is in different stages. It begins slowly but progresses until there is a full matriculation to street life and culture. The troubles that street children face for their survival coupled with stigmatization by the society develops in them the feelings and emotions such as insecurity, mistrust and fear. They lack social relations with the mainstream society. They have no secure and safe place of shelter and so are forced to stay at open places resulting in them being more vulnerable and susceptible to exploitation .Having to search for basic need of food throughout the day for their survival is indeed painful. The lack of proper education and skill development training force them to work odd jobs to maintain their livelihood thus keeping them in the vicious cycle of poverty and lack of capabilities. Having no legal documents, they can not avail of the free medical and educational facilities and treatment provided by governmental institutions.

Behaviour is a result of the continuous interaction with the social environment and an individual should have knowledge of the beliefs and values of the culture , communicate clearly in the language of the given cultural group; maintain active social relations within the cultural group; negotiate the institutional structures of that culture. **(**LaFromboise, et. al. 1993) The Street children in the beginning face individual challenges of being bicultural, i.e., there is a dual cultural adaptation : one that of the family from where they hail and the other the present situation in which they are staying.

Violence is part of the daily routine of street youth by peers, police, and strangers (Alder, 1991) for males, it predominantly involves fights, while for females it involves sexual assaults. A study carried out by the State of World Children (2006) among the migrant child labour in South Kolkata revealed that about 42.5% working children were the victims of mental torture, while 32.5% were abused physically.

According to Hai (2014), the use of drugs by the street children is causing health and other difficulties. The children usually use those drugs, which are most readily available and cheap

Finally insufficient and inadequate institutional support to incorporate all the needs of the vulnerable children aggravates the challenges faced.

6.3 The survival strategies adopted:

Street children are bestowed with remarkable survival instincts and audacity in their daily struggle of street life (Verma, 1999). In response to numerous odds and untidy life course many street children are obliged to make out their coping strategies (Kelletta and Moore, 2003). According to Le Roux (1996), street children get social support from their street friends and they trust their friends more than adults, and also pointed out that whatever the street children do, they do it as a team work ,such as they work together to earn money and also in search of food which is shared amongst themselves. They develop their own activity space and place. For surviving in street life, they constantly and efficiently cross boundaries between childhood and adulthood. Street children are thus child-adults who are neither fully children nor adults. They grow up to become youth and adults with changing needs and vulnerabilities (Ennew and Swart-Kruger, 2003). Rai et al, (2002) pointed out that majority of street children use addictive substances with friends. With this group activity, they feel secure and protected. This type of sharing activity within the group boosts up their confidence and bonding of friendship.

They develop a particular behavioural model of culture: the Street culture through assimilation. Assimilation is the process by which an individual develops a new cultural identity. It is through this process the child from one culture (the culture of origin) develops competence in another culture, the street culture.

The struggles of street life have been associated with high risk coping strategies such as drug abuse for many years (Foster et al. 1996). According to Rai, et al (2002) and Mahmud, et al.(2005) glue sniffing is one of the major coping strategies for street children all over the world. Easy accessibility and availability of glue makes it very popular among the street children.

The literature study has been supported with empirical evidences based on 514 children of Sealdah railway station complex

6.4 Empirical evidences :

6.4.1. On basic rights:

Regarding education it is seen that children living with or without family at street situation are not in very good position . Moreover majority of the respondents had no identification document such as birth certificate or ration card or Adhar card adding further to their vulnerability.

This section focusses on health in particular as hygienic habits, food habits, accessibility to health infrastructure, addiction pattern, all have health related implications. The theories of accessibility applied in this study have been adopted from Penchansky and Thomas (1981). The five A's which always influence the access to health services are Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability, Accommodation and Affordability. In the diagram (fig 20), the wider the circle, the greater the opportunities and fewer the challenges associated with the respective dimension. Thus, the smaller the circle, the more challenges and fewer opportunities of the particular dimension are presented to the children.

Figure-20: Hierarchy of Access to Health Facilities or services
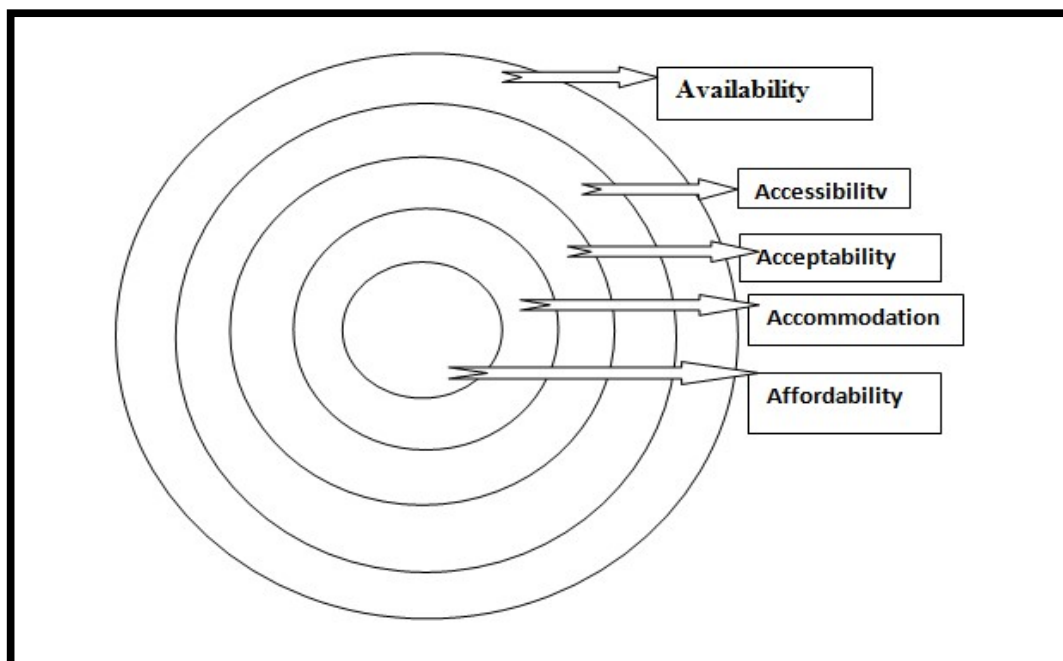
Source: Concept derived from Penchansky and Thomas (1981)

Health related hygienic habits: Street children do not maintain the health and hygiene habits in their daily life. They eat whatever they get and drink water from the tap water of station area and road side, the overhead tank of which is rarely cleaned and disinfected. They do not cut their hair and nail regularly: only one third 33% of the surveyed sample do so. Regular bathing is not in their priority list as just half i.e. 51% of sample population takes bath regularly and only 23% wash their clothes on a regular basis.

Food habit: Street living children generally depend on street food. Circumstances decide which food the children should eat. Most of the respondents usually take their food from roadside hotels and eat twice in a day. If it is compared between the street family children and without family children, it is found that children with family tie-up are more regular than **runaway** children in terms of taking meal. Food is of the second most priority need in their desire list after earning money. They love to eat from the roadside open sky hotels, *dhaba* or restaurants etc. (Fig.-26). Other source of food is the railway pantry of the deluxe trains. When trains such as the Duranto, Rajdhani arrive at the station they become very busy to collect the food from the leftovers of the passengers (Photo plates 47-51). Those children who do not have the capacity of earning take food from garbage, which are thrown away by hotels,

community centres etc. Beneficiary children in drop-in-centres have the opportunity to consume nutritional diet for two times in a day, besides the two times tiffin in the morning and evening provided to them (plate-54). Nevertheless, for the vast majority of the children access to food is uncertain, in some acute cases some of the street children have to pass a day with little or no food at all. In the rainy season, the income level of street children falls down. This is the time, when they have to cope up with the situation. Actually, their sources of food collection also vary from time to time.

Health problems: The secondary data from "Child In Need Institute" (leading NGO in the field of street children in Kolkata) of 2014-16, revealed that most of the street children suffer from gastric and respiratory diseases (cold & cough). Besides that, fungal infection, cut injury and skin problems are present among them.

Figure-21: Health Problems
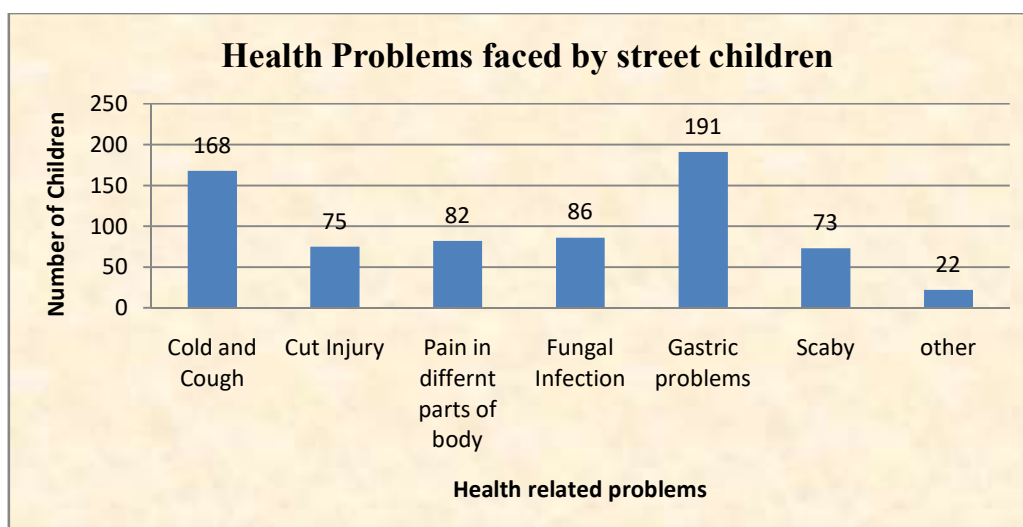
Source: Record book of CINI (Child in Need Institute) health care for Street Children (2014-2016)

Self-management of the health problems: Street children's lives revolve around their survival on the street. To overcome or cope with their health problems they inculcate their own strategies Often they neglect the illness as long as they can so as not to hamper their involvement in their earnings. This often exaggerates their health problems. Sometimes this neglected health problem prolongs on for such a long period that medical intervention cannot treat them properly. Street children often attempt self-medication. The analysis of the primary level data in Sealdah area indicates that near about three fourth i.e. 68% (349) street children prefer self-medicine and 38% (195) remain without any kind of treatment during their illness. They collect pain killer

medicine from medical shops or apply spices ('*Masala'*) like turmeric powder, quicklime ('*Chun'*) to wounds, drinking 'soda water' for gastronomical problems, and taking over-the- counter drugs for all kinds of infections (according to NGO officials). Besides that, addictive substances are seen as an alternative way to deal with all kinds of physical, mental, and emotional health related problems.

6.4.2. On basic needs:

6.4.2.1 Shelter or sleeping place:

Shelter making or searching a place to sleep is the most acute problem of street children. In India, more than half of street children live and sleep under the open sky (UNICEF, 2012). In unhygienic, dirty and shanty surroundings, their living conditions are terrible. Limited number of beneficiary children have the possibility to sleep in the day care centres (DICs). A standard place to live and sleep is secondary; they choose to sleep near the sources of income, food and where they can avoid the police and other officials (Plates 64-71). Most of the girl participants live in the slum areas with their parents and other relatives. As the girls are more vulnerable and subject to abuse if they spend their nights on the streets (Lugalla, & Mbwambo, 1999) they try to find a suitable place to sleep according to their surrounding circumstances. They frequently change their living place and locality. So, most of them have the habit to live and sleep in different places as floating people (NGO officials)

With whom, they stay; can be an indicator of the children's vulnerability and probable link with their families. Many children of the street said that they live alone in the streets. However, the meaning of 'alone' needs to be clarified because it was found that children on the street largely move and live in groups. Mostly they have no fixed and permanent place to live and sleep. This is essential for their safety and security. Working children use the premises of a shop or *dhaba*, which they can use when, shut down and sleep safely.

According to officials of an NGO (**Child In Need Institute),** and senior street children at Sealdah Station there are near about 100 to 120 children aged between 6 to 18 years who sleep at night in and around the station complex. As the station premises close at night between the last local train and first local train of the next day, no street boys are allowed to stay in the station at that time. Although sleeping is not permitted officially

within the station but many children and vagabond people stay at night in the station. Outside the station's main building children stay at night in parking area, in front of ticket counter, between north and south section, vacant places beside platform number nine, in front of closed shops in the nearby market. Station living children have no permanent place to sleep. They frequently change their sleeping place because of railway police. Generally, they prefer the place as night shelter, which are very close to their working place. Those children engage in loading unloading, always sleep on their trolley near the platform areas as they have to catch up the Sealdah bound trains in the early morning from North Bengal for unloading goods.

6.4.2.2 Ownership kit and belongings:

In the study of Kolkata and Sealdah Station area street children were found to have minimum valuables and belongings with them. It was found that children with family had more belongings than those living alone. Most of the street boys wore torn shirt and pant and often of bigger size. Those living alone in the station area keep their belongings in parking areas, rooftop of shops and in and around their night shelter. Those who live in shelter home or in institutional care, are provided with individual lockers for keeping their belongings and other things.

6.4.2.3 Theft of savings:

Though children said that they do want to save money for their future, but most of them expressed their inability to save money while living on the street. Theft of belongings and savings by the senior street children or others make their life often miserable. Such a problem has its impact on various other aspects. Savings insecurity puts pressure on children to spend their daily earnings immediately, whether on food, entertainment, or addiction. Savings insecurity exposes street children to the world of violence since many exploiters think that children save the money in their pockets or under their clothes. Inability to save limits the children's abilities to think of initiating their own income generating opportunities while living on the street. Many street children have tried to save money to start their own income generating projects and failed for this reason. As they are not able to save money, the hopes and prospects for the future are also limited.

6.4.2.4 Clothing:

A majority of the respondent street children do not have more than one set of clothes, often children can be seen without any cloth (plate 59). The clothes are always torn, dirty, and not in proper size. Some children are forced to wear the same clothes even after bath. The respondents also have experience of losing their clothes if kept in an insecure place. It is very common for the street children not to have any secure place; like locker etc, to preserve and save their belongings. They have to suffer a lot in winter season due to lack of warm clothes. In the rainy season sometimes, they are forced to wear wet clothes since there is no schedule time of raining and they have only one set of dress. The family connected children are slightly in a better position than run away children in terms of clothes. Beneficiary children of drop-in centre have more than one set and have personal locker facility.

6.4.3. On addiction:

Most of the street children are exposed to different kinds of addiction in the study area. When a child expressed any discomfort towards the question of being abused, further enquiry was avoided by the researcher .Data received through the interviews indicated that almost 90% of the selected sample of street children consumes different substances or drugs on a regular basis (Fig-22).

Process of sniffing: The most common way to inhale volatile solvents includes sniffing. The technique most used popularly to inhale glue (mainly dendrite) is by dropping it into a thin polythene bag or a piece of cloth and inhaling continuously. Children generally inhale in a group and this can be termed as a group activity or social event among the street children. During the field survey, a large number of respondents (nearly 85%) said that they indulge in addiction mainly due to group influence or peer pressure. **Huffing:** Users soak material, such as a shirtsleeve or a sock, in a solvent and place it over their nose and mouth or right into their mouth to inhale the fumes (plate 84). **Bagging:** Users inhale a concentration of fumes from a bag that is placed over the mouth and nose (plate 85) or over the head (Anderson & Loomis, 2003).

In the Sealdah station area, the street children mainly use glue like dendrite as their prime source of addictive material. Apart from that, they use *bidi, guthka, khaini*, alcohol, etc. '*Dendrite'*, is a favourite among these children in this area (locally they call

it as '*Athar Nesha'*)*. After a hard working day, whatever little money they collect, they spend it for buying *Dendrite*. Dendrite tubes are easily available at any hardware shop, stationary shop, and pan shop near the station surrounding areas following the marketing principles (as seen in Fig-28). Some children may use as many as four to five dendrite tubes a day and one tube is used four-five times. In absence of proper square meals for the day, many use dendrite as a substitute for regular meals. This problem is very difficult to tackle, as one cannot prevent the stores or shops from selling the glue. The next difficult step is to convince youngsters or children not to use Dendrite.

Table-11: Composition and Properties of Dendrite

Components	Its characteristics
Toluene	**It is a mono-substituted benzene**
Methyl Benzene	**Aromatic Hydro carbon**
Sulfonic Acid	**Aromatic Hydro carbon**
Chlorinate	**BTX aromatics**
Xylene	**BTX aromatics**

Source: Derived from Streicher, H.Z. et. al 1991.

Figure -22: Addictive Materials used

Total number of children is 273 [only addicted children are included]

Source: Based on Primary survey

Observation based on the figure 22 reveals that 102 street children out of 273 (37.36 %) consume glue. Twenty one children are involved in tobacco smoking and 30

indulged in tobacco chewing. Girls prefer only glue and *guthka*. Glue sniffing is usually carried out on a daily basis whereas other sources of addiction are consumed occasionally based on income and availability. The study enquired into the frequency of intake of some addictive materials, including *pan* and tobacco. The daily drugs of choice were mainly tobacco and *pan masala* while alcohol was largely consumed on a weekly and or/ monthly basis. The children said that they could afford *pan* or tobacco on a daily basis, but other drugs, including alcohol, were expensive. The whiteners bought by one child were shared among other children.

6.4.4 On Abuses:

The problem related to the basic needs of food and shelter was less serious (often being a joint effort). The search for food was in their own hands and shelter was provided by NGOs working in the area or they availed it from the rail platform and its outskirts .On the street, children experience serious health risks and physical dangers. Street children, particularly those living alone without families, lead harsh, precarious and hazardous lives. They have specific problems like deficiency of basic needs of health, nutrition, education and recreation; are subject to physical and sexual abuse, and harassment. The data extracted reveals that almost one third of their problems were related to a**buse by police followed** by a**buse by elders across both the boys and girls surveyed.** Thirty-six percent of the sample surveyed in the Sealdah Station area feared that they might be arrested by the police, and put behind the bars (in jail)for no relevant reasons during their daily life. Children as well as the families living on the street are very much scared about the police. They take away their belongings and scare them off at night when they want to take rest **Verbal and physical abuse** was largely reported. Verbal abuse was experienced and observed by almost all the children. They even laughed when they were asked about it saying, "*Gaali to amader sab samay sunte hoi*" (they curse us all the time). This form of abuse was very common and the children were less bothered about verbal abuse, but in the case of physical abuse they appeared scared about explaining such situations.

Children normally carry blades to defend themselves in case others attack them. Many children expressed that sexual abuse is a common problem for most of these street children, especially the young new children and females. They are exposed to high level

of violence, victimization, sexual exploitation and to the use of harmful substances. This is illustrated from the data collected, analysed and summarized in the following table-

Table-12: Problems faced by Street Children in Street Situation

Problems faced by Street Children in Street Situation							Total Number of Street Children
Study area: Sealdah station Area/ Complex			Abuse by Police	Abuse by Elders	Shelter Problems	Problems of Food	Others	
G e n d e r	Male	Count	136	120	73	82	40	457
		Percentage Value	30.2%	26.6%	16.2%	18.2%	8.9%	100.0%
	Female	Count	12	22	10	2	1	57
		Percentage Value	34.0%	41.5%	18.9%	3.8%	1.9%	100.0%
Total		Count	154	142	83	84	41	514
		Percentage Value	30.6%	28.2%	16.5%	16.7%	8.1%	100.0%

Source: Primary survey

The next section has focused on the **activities of the street children based on** four dimensions of 'Activity Space' after Mason, et.al (2008) to demonstrate the three major issues discussed theoretically in the literature study.

6.4.5 On Activities of street children:

Street children are a very much active group of population. They involve themselves in different survival activities throughout the day and night. The concept of spatial structure of activity relates to where people choose to undertake their daily activities. The survival activities of the street children have been analyzed using the concept of 'Activity Space' after Mason, et.al (2008). Such spaces are 'the geographical extent in which people move in the course of their daily activities'. It is linked with human activity, participation and mobility in the realm of space and time. Activity space has also been investigated in social geography to analyze various socio-cultural issues. A more recent work by Schonfelder and Axhausen (2010) characterizes activity space as a compound concept that can be approached through different perspectives. The work of Perchoux, et al (2013) provides a comprehensive review on conceptualization of activity space in relation to mobility and discusses how public health research may benefit from the understanding of individual activity spaces. Time geographical theory, emphasizes the impact of individual space-time concept on activity space. Lenntorp (1999) explains time geography as a comprehensive idea that links space and time regularities with human actions.

Street children always adopt different places and various spaces of activity in the urban set-up to survive in their daily life. The choice of their activity locations can be viewed as an outcome of spatial learning processes through which they interact with their surrounding environments.   The urban movements of street children are strategic and the spaces in urban landscape that they adopt are their activity spaces. The **activity space'/place** adopted by street children in Kolkata city has been discussed in the chapter on the target population giving an overall scenario . The specific in- depth study has been done on Sealdah area where the researcher has formulated four dimensions of Activity Space in the realm of the street children's daily life. These are :

a) **Economic Activity Space;**
b) **Socio-cultural Activity Space;**
c) **Recreational Activity Space; and**
d) **Activity Space for Addiction**

6.4.5.1. Economic Activity Space:

Within the street life, street children involve themselves in different income generating strategies using the urban landscape of Sealdah in particular and Kolkata in general. The space conceptualized as the 'Economic Activity Space' is illustrated through:

Economic activities as means of survival / (Occupation): The study captured the process of income-generating activities i.e.**,** how they got jobs/got involved in any activity through qualitative information. Interviews /interaction with   the street children indicated that most of the children are engaged in different economic activities to fulfill their daily requirements. Generally, they are engaged in an unorganized and marginal work. The means of survival adopted are found not to be of a particular pattern. Some of the street children, who live with their parents in the slums or squatters, do different kinds of unpaid household works and income-generating activities mostly on the roads. But majority of the street children practice nondomestic works for living. A considerable number of street children connected with the family were found in marginal occupations like begging, street vending, remnants and edibles picking from dustbins etc. In Kolkata street children who are connected with the family are not permanently engaged in economic activities. They usually help their parents and engage in temporary activities.

Street children of Sealdah Station area are engaged in different economic activities. Rag picking i.e., scavenging for recyclable materials is the most popular occupation as it is one of the easiest jobs to get. Most of the children are involved in waste material collection (like empty bottles, plastic packets, waste paper etc.). The study reveals that more than 41% of children are in the work of rag picking (plate 30). They collect waste materials from trains and garbage near the surroundings of the station and sell these off at *Narkeldanga khal par* (along the canal*)* area (plate 46). Many street children who had started life as rag pickers had moved on to other activities to earn more. Other survival activities are shoe polishing, goods loading and unloading from trains, raw vegetables vending at Koley market, helper in food stall , pick pocketing , begging, etc. Begging is taken up as an activity by the small children, and/ or the physically weaker groups. An age-wise analysis reveals that young children were engaged only in begging. This is because begging does not require any skills and a child beggar elicits more sympathy. Others preferred to work and earn as begging is not a preferred engagement for a child above 10 years of age.

To some children being on the street was for economic freedom and they began their street life with an assumption that they can depend upon themselves and earn a living on their own, little realizing that finding permanent job is a major practical problem. Most street children, were either self-employed (rag pickers, beggars, and street vendors) or worked for others (porters). Their occupations varied according to location, season, and availability of work. In some cases, the same child was seen involved in more than one activity, but overall the trend was that those who worked as street vendors continued in the line.

Figure-23: Economic Activities of Street Children

Source: Primary level survey

   The above figure reveals that children without family attachment are more in the rag pickers' category, while those with family connection are in greater number as porter and shoe polisher. This is because such occupations require some equipments and family support and a safe and secure place to keep at night. The non-workers category has 79 with family connection and 22 from without family connection. This again indicates the vulnerability of those without family connection to be more .

   The analysis of occupational pattern has been strengthened with the daily income earned by the children depicted in the given figure of 24 . The shoe polishers and porters (loader & unloader) are in the highest income group category. They earn Rs 200 to 300 per day on an average(the statement of income figure cited is based on information collected at the time of survey)**.** The beggars are in the lowest income group, rag pickers earning Rs 100 to 200 per day in the middle income group (Fig-24).

Figure-24: Daily Income Scenario in different activities

Figure title: Daily Income scenario in Different Activities*
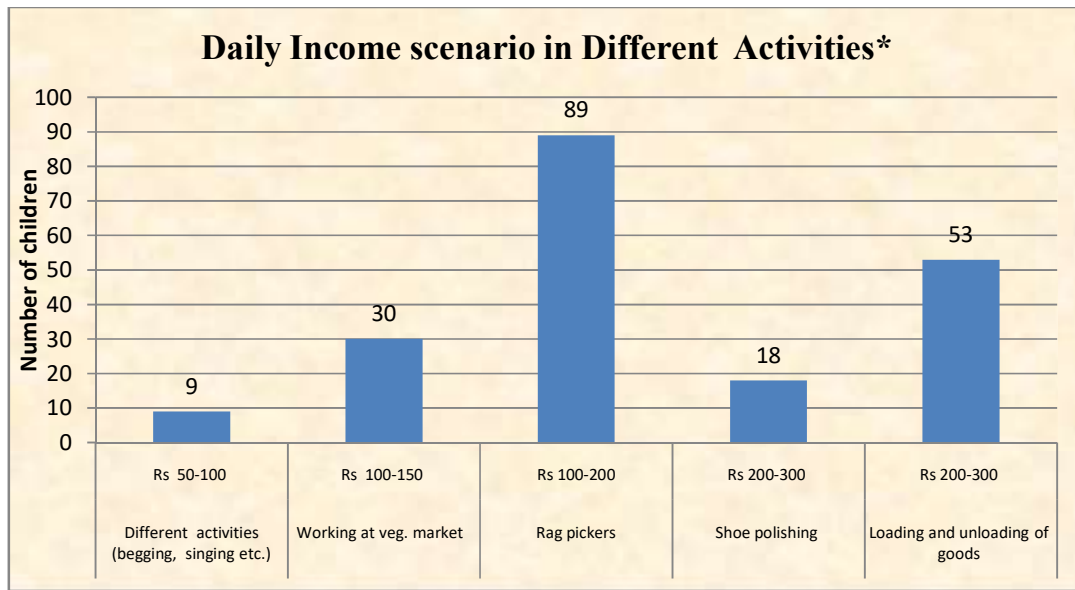
Source: Primary level survey (*Only workers are included in the study & 214 did not respond)

An age- wise income earned has been put forth in the following table 13.

Table-13: Age-Income Relationship

AGE-INCOME RELATIONSHIP							
			Average Daily Income				Total
			Less than Rs. 50	Rs. 50 - Rs. 100	Rs. 100 - Rs. 150	Rs. 150 - Rs. 200	More than Rs. 200	
Age Profile of Street Children	6 Yrs - 9 Yrs	% value	62.7%	17.6%	15.7%	3.9%	0.0%	100.0%
	9 yrs - 12 yrs	% within Age	43.0%	36.6%	15.7%	4.7%	0.0%	100.0%
	12 yrs - 15 yrs	% within Age	13.1%	45.2%	36.2%	5.0%	0.5%	100.0%
	15yrs - 18 yrs	% within Age	6.1%	23.2%	24.4%	42.7%	3.7%	100.0%

Source: Primary level survey

The relationship between age and income has also been statistically proved through the Chi-square testing method. The hypothesis formulated is that there is a significant relationship between the two variables of age and income. To prove this

hypothesis the researcher took the help of Chi-square testing method the analysis of which is shown as:

Table 14-: Chi-Square Test to show the relation between age-income of the children

Chi-Square Tests			
Pearson Chi-Square Likelihood Ratio Linear-by-Linear Association N of Valid Cases	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
	199.514[a]	12	.000
	171.124	12	.000
	113.841	1	.000
	504		
a. 4 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .40.			

Since, p value is less than 5% level of significance; the null hypothesis can be rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted that there is a significant relationship between these two variables.

Table -15: Areas where street children congregate in Sealdah Station Complex

The table 15 reflects the geographic mobility of the street children. They are very much mobile in nature. Data collection was not easy due to their invisibility, mobility, and seasonality.

Area of concentration	Causes/ purpose	Mobility	Time of concentration
Platform- 1	Addiction	Up to Narkeldanga rail bridge	Morning, Afternoon
Platform 4A	Living, begging	Whole station	Throughout the day
Platform 6	Living, addiction, begging	Whole station	Throughout the day
Platform 9	Living, addiction, begging, collecting food	Whole station	Throughout the day, and when special trains are arriving.
Corridor between North and South section	Addiction, rag picking	Whole station and *Narkeldanga khal pad* area	Throughout the day and night
South section	Addiction, begging, playing	Nearby areas	Throughout the day
Parking area	Begging, addiction	Total area, station	Throughout the day

Area of concentration	Causes/ purpose	Mobility	Time of concentration
Sisir market	Addiction, rag picking	Total area and station	Throughout the day
Koley market	Addiction, vegetable collection	Total area	Mainly morning and evening
Railway ticket counter	Begging, pick pocketing	Total station area	Throughout the day

Source: Primary survey and observation

6.4.5.2. Socio-Cultural Activity Space:

In urban landscape, street children create socio-cultural spaces to perform socio-cultural actions as survival strategies or to maintain their daily lifestyle.

Social Cohesion among the street children: Social Cohesion is the set of characteristics that keep a group able to function as a social unit. Social cohesion is also a means that enable citizens to live in societies where they enjoy a sense of belonging and trust. Social cohesion persists among the street children: with their unique society. Children away from mainstream society are said to be completely divided by the lifestyle, values and norms of a subculture of their own- the 'street society' (Lusk 1992). Aptekar (1994) found out that in street situations the children are emotionally intact in their intellectual functioning and achieved high level of self-management. The street network of friendships can reduce their feelings of vulnerability and social exclusion and increase the well-being of children in street situations. This is achieved mainly through the development of a collective identity and feeling of belongingness that gives the child the opportunity to be active in urban sub-culture. Chawla, (2002) mentioned that, the interaction of children in street situations, within neighborhoods and street communities enhance the cultural richness.

As children have left their home, they try to develop social relationships to get the economic opportunities. In the street life, they constantly seek to overcome their emotional vulnerability by developing social connections and friendships. The group has its own language and norms, which facilitates in-group communication (plate-74). Children who stay at drop –in- centers have protective security through building social relationships at the centers. However, according to the social workers, even when the drop- in centers for children in street situation provide them with food, shelter and a basic income, many children 'run away' and return to the street. This is in spite of the

basic needs satisfactions provided by the formal institutions along with their systematic care. Once survival and basic earnings are secured, children in street situations prefer their living environment in terms of trust relations and physical, emotional security rather than economic factors.

The street has its own culture and unwritten norms, and survival approach. The congregation of street children's relationships put together a sub-culture that is unique to the streets. A street child has to fend for himself on the streets. After thorough observation and interaction with them, it can be concluded that indulging in addiction is not a physiological necessity, but a survival strategy. Many times the drug consumption brings him acceptance and initiates him into the mainstream of street culture. Once on the streets, children become part of a different social realm. Activities such as gambling, sexual abuse, drug abuse are a common part of the street culture (D'Souza, 2004).

Street culture & cultural activities: Street living children usually teach one another how to earn a living, where to go for a living, and what to do in case they face problems, which is a clear manifestation of their subculture that comes out as a result of their existence together on the street. The street culture adopted by them is:

- Those street children who have run away from their home, are very restless in nature. They do not want to confine themselves to any one particular place.

- They love the street life very much. Once they flee from home, they do not want to go back to their home.

- Street boys want to follow their own routine. They have no scheduled time of bathing, eating, sleeping etc.

- They rely on their peer group. They do not like outsiders. Street children only interact with other street children and volunteers and / or outreach workers of NGOs.

- Children are to earn money for their daily needs. They love to spend all the earned money each day as they have no safe place to keep it. They want to save their money but cannot because they have no bank account or any other saving facilities. They are very much conscious about whatever they earn throughout the day. They spend most of their money on food. Spending money to meet their addiction needs, watching movies are also in their priority list for entertainment

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- Street fight and quarrels among the street children are a very common incident throughout the day and night.

- They do not want to stay at rehabilitation centers. They love to live independently. They stay there for some days and again run away from there.

- In the study area, street children mainly use Bengali and Hindi as their communicative language. Although the questionnaire has been framed in English but verbal interaction was mainly in Bengali and Hindi.

- Such a street culture gives rise to many economic, social, psychological and health problems that street children come across in their everyday life.

Group identity: The Street children's group has its own language and norms, which facilitates in–group communication. They always love to stay in-group situation and depend on peer groups, as because of security, support, solidarity reason and as well as one of the strategies to survive in street situation. The urban poor section of people in general also set up a sort of social network that provides them with means of support, particularly economic support and cohesion (Burns, 2007). In the study area, the researcher found that street children are always loitering in a group with same categories of children mostly of same age category, whether it is in working place, collection of food, playing, or engaged in addiction. They believe that group situation is suitable for their surviving in the study area. These collaborative and communicative natures create a social system among them that is social cohesion. Street children share their joys and feelings predominantly with their friends. The respondents in the study area mostly stay in groups and share their happiness and feelings, the incidents they come across with each other. They keep themselves aware with the information on raids by police or other officials from helping persons/organizations for the poor people,. Some of the respondents i.e., the target population are part of different gangs and indulge in criminal activities like drug dealing, theft etc. They said that as a gang they have very little chance of not being identified by police or other authorities of doing any offence (plates 77-81).

Table 16: Daily Routine of the street children in Sealdah:

Time	Activities	Responses From Children
Morning	Wake up from sleep	Not any scheduled time.
	Brushing teeth	Not done regularly.
	Breakfast	As per availability.
Noon	Bathing	Not done regularly.
	Lunch	Remnants of Express trains, nearby food stall, open shelter, begging.
	Addiction	Throughout the day (mainly glue).
	Working	Throughout the day.
Evening	Addiction	Alcohol, *bidi, khaini*, glue , *attha*, etc.
	Working	Depend upon the working category.
	Entertainment	Watching T.V at open shelter, cinema hall, gambling, playing cards etc
Night	Dinner	Nearby food stall, open shelter etc.
	Sleeping	Depend upon the available space and weather.

Source: Primary observation and interaction with NGO volunteers

6.4.5.3 Recreational Activity Space:

Street children use different urban spaces as their recreational activity space. They usually spend their leisure time in these activity spaces and always love to involve in many recreational activities throughout the day and night. They love to watch movies on the first show of release in the cinema halls of Bina, Prachi and Jagat.(Fig 28) Younger children enjoy playing in groups at the parking area of Sealdah Station. Elder children like to play cards, many gambling in the process. Besides that very often they go to red light areas. Children in the drop in centres/ shelter homes in the study area involve

in their routine wise recreational activities spending their time watching television, participating in the classes of drawing, singing, karate, etc.

6.4.5.4 Activity Spaces for Addiction:

In response to numerous odds and chaotic life-style, many of the street children always try to adjust with the vulnerable situation by adopting different coping strategies for surviving in the urban space (Kellett and Moore, 2003). The habit of addiction is one such coping strategy. Different groups of children have different areas to operate. They try to utilize the corner or lonely parts and shady corners of different structures of urban areas as their addiction zone (Fig-29). From the primary field survey and interactions with different NGO officials, it is found that those street children with family connection in Kolkata, are not engaged in addiction openly. In Sealdah station complex area, street children are abusers of various substances and drugs. In both the categories i.e. with and without family connection, street children are addicted to various substances.

Table-17: **Addiction Zones or 'Activity Space for Addiction' in Sealdah Station area**

Addiction Zone	Type of addiction	Age of children	Time of addiction
Within platform Number- 01 & also in its adjacent area	Glue sniffing, *biri, khaini.*	8-12 children	Whole day and night
Platform Number-04A	Glue sniffing	4- 6 aged children	Early morning, evening
Platform - 09, 09A, 09B, 09C	Glue sniffing, *guthka, biri* etc.	8 -12 children	Throughout the day, and in the evening
Between North & South section	Glue, *biri,* etc.	8-12 children	All through the day and evening

Source: Primary observation

6.4.5.4.1 Why do they involve in addiction?:

The major reasons given for inhalant use among the street children by Baldivieso (1996) are reduction in hunger, peer pressure, and acceptance, and as a coping strategy for emotional escape The various reasons for substance or drug abuse among these 273 street children, as revealed through the interviews are: 1) try to get relief from the pressure of street life. 2) Peer pressure or influence 3) to sleep easily 4) to be able to avoid physical pain and hunger. 5) For the newcomer this glue- sniffing works as a medium of communication with the existing group. 6) For many of the street children, it has become a habit. Almost three-quarter of all these drug users want to quit but cannot,

due to the associated causes of substance abuse (Gaidhane et al, 2008) and similar is the scenario here.

Table-18: Reasons for using addictive materials:

			Reasons for Using addictive materials					
			Pleasure & Mental Relief	To Avoid Hunger	Forget Everything	Can't resist from being addicted	Don't Know	Total
Gender	Male	Count	122	58	34	19	23	256
		Percentage value	47.7%	22.8%	13.1%	7.5%	9.0%	100.0%
	Female	Count	07	03	02	1	4	17
		Percentage value	41.18%	17.65%	11.76%	5.89%	23.56%	100.0%
Total		Count	129	61	36	20	27	273
		Percentage value	47.25%	22.34%	13.18%	7.33%	9.89%	100.0%

Source: Primary survey

Table-19: Symptoms of Glue Sniffing in Human body:

Human body parts	Symptoms in human body
Eye, ears, nose, and throat	Blurred vision, burning pain, hearing loss
Gastrointestinal	Abdominal pain- severe, bloody stool, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting- possibly blood.
Heart and blood vessels	Irregular heartbeat, low blood pressure
Kidneys	Kidney damage
Lungs	Breathing difficulty, chest pain, cough; rapid, shallow breathing
Nervous system	Convulsion, dizziness, drowsiness, exaggerated feeling of well-being, headache, memory loss, nervousness, staggering, tremors, unconsciousness
Skin	Dry, cracked skin

Source: General Physician's Report at CINI Open Shelter2016

6.4.5.4.2 Effects of glue sniffing:

Childline India Foundation (2010) states that even a single session of repeated inhalant abuse can disrupt heart rhythms. It also causes death from cardiac arrest or lower oxygen levels (Harold, 2002). "It is extremely hard to give up this habit, as it enters the blood stream and both psychology and physiology is impacted making it hard

to exit," says Dr Bhavna Barma, a clinical psychologist associated with short stay home in Childline (2014). According to NIDA (National Institute of Drug Abuse) Research Report (2001), chronic abuse of volatile solvent such as "Toluene" (Methyl Benzene, present in dendrite) may produce harmful effects of glue sniffing related to the brain and nervous system. Like other solvents, toluene is also used as an inhalant drug for its intoxicating properties. It can also cause neurological harm (Streicher.et al, 1981). Deep breathing of the dendrite or using a lot over a short period may result in losing touch with one's surroundings, violent behaviour and loss of self-control, unconsciousness, or even death in extreme cases. *"The dependence on the smell of adhesive becomes very strong and becomes hard for the children to resist. Prolonged inhalation of toxic fumes of the solvent affects blood, heart, kidney, and lungs. The adhesive contains heavy metals like lead, iron, and aluminium, which reduces the oxygen carrying capacity in the blood,"* (The Finance Express , Bangladesh, October 06, 2012)

Table-20: Short and long term effect of Glue Sniffing

Short-term effect of sniffing	Long Term effect of Sniffing
Irregular speech or talk	Muscle weakness, bone marrow damage
Drunk, shaky or unconsciouss	Disorientation, lack of coordination
Shabby Appearance	Irritability
Inability to coordinate movement	Depression
Hallucinations and delusions	Serious and sometimes permanent damage to the heart, liver, kidneys, lungs and brain
Aggression or restlessness	Memory impairment
Apathy	Hearing loss
Impaired judgment, unconsciousness, severe headaches	Death from heart failure or asphyxiation (loss of oxygen)
Rashes around the nose and mouth	Skin Problems

Source: National Institute of Drug Abuse Research Report, 2002

Even though using addictive products may lead to serious problems, many of these street children use them because either a particular substance adds something to their lives or it temporarily solves a problem. There is a connection between the problems of life on the street and the effects that substances sometimes produce. Some affects that street children may desire are:

Table-21: Problems & mitigation through use of addictive materials

Daily problems faced by street children	Involvement in addiction to combat the problems
Starvation	Reduce the pain of hunger
Anxiety in life	Helps to gather courage
Sleeplessness	Helps to generate drowsiness
Communication with a newer group	Medium of communication
Tiredness	Supply energy to work
Lack of emotional care	Helps to forget
Physical pain or injury	To habituate with the pain
Lack of entertainment or dull life	Add some excitement

Source: Primary observation and in depth study

The analysis has also been done based on family connection to understand whether family plays a significant role statistically.

Table-22: Correlation between family status and addiction:

Correlation between family status and addictive materials			Usage of addictive materials			Total
			Yes	No	Don't Know	
Family Status	Without Family	Count	160	55	47	262
		% value	63.5%	21.8%	14.7%	100.0%
	With Family	Count	113	112	27	252
		% value	44.8%	44.4%	10.7%	100.0%
Total		Count	273	167	74	514
		% value	54.2%	33.1%	12.7%	100.0%

Source: Primary Survey

From the above table it is seen that 63.5% children without family connection taking addictive materials regularly while among the children with family connection it is lesser (54.2%); however the figure for the latter is not that low. This is tested through Chi-Square Tests and represented in the following table

Table- 23: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	29.109[a]	2	.000
Likelihood Ratio	29.553	2	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.458	1	.019
N of Valid Cases	504		

The analysis reveals that 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5; the minimum expected count is 32.00; and p value is less than 5% level of significance. In the case of addictive materials usage habit, the children without family are more prone to addiction. On the other hand, children, living with their families are less addicted.

In addition, the researcher used the Likert-Type scale of five points of response to measure the amount of use of dendrite as substance of addiction on 102 street children in Sealdah Area. It has been found that the first three types of response (never used/ almost never used and sometimes used) are negligible. Hence the last two have been considered based on the frequency.

Table-24: Scale of Response to addiction (Likert Scale)

Amount of Use	Number of respondents	Percentage value
Never used	0	00.00%
Hardly used	0	00.00%
Occasionally/Sometimes used	5	04.90%
Almost every time used	84	82.35%
Frequently used	13	12.75%
Total	**102**	**100.00%**

Source: Primary survey

From the table-24 it is revealed that among 102 street children a majority 84 (82.35%) use dendrite as a source of addiction almost every time and 13 of them (12.75%) use it frequently. It has been found that the first three types of response (never used/ almost never used and sometimes used) are negligible. Hence the last two have been considered based on the frequency.

6.7 Conclusion:

Living on the street, with no supervision, protection or guidance often makes street children vulnerable to a wide range of problems. The National Crime Record of 2014 stated that there was a 24 % increase in crime against children between 2010 and 2011 and a further 52.5% increase from 2012 to 2013 in India. Violence normally takes place through three main channels: Firstly, violence within the small children groups, either by peers or by older street children, especially when they get drowsy and are under the effect of the substance they consume. Secondly, violence from the surrounding community, whether through other people on the street who tend to exploit them, or by the community itself as a reaction to their existence in particular

settings and areas where their presence is not welcomed. Thirdly, violence while working either through the employers or through other peers working in the same place. This is when selling items on the street in areas where other people or children exercise control. Violence is part of the daily routine of street youth by peers, police, and strangers: for males, it predominantly involves fights, while for females it involves sexual assaults. A study carried out by UNICEF in 2006 among the migrant child labour in South Kolkata revealed that about 42.5% working children were the victims of mental torture, while 32.5% were abused physically. The children's vulnerability is added by many including the police. Children with family connections encounter many problems while living on the street. The ones living alone are more vulnerable. Street living children generally depend on street food which leads to health problem. There are many drop outs and so their level of educational attainment is low and with it their awareness on various issues. They adopt many coping strategies to survive in street circumstances some are positive and a few are negative ones. .The positive ones include their economic engagements, social cohesion, recreational activities, participation in events, etc. *"The dependence on the smell of adhesive becomes very strong and becomes hard for the children to resist'.* Dendrite tubes are easily available at any hardware shop, stationary shop, and pan shop near the station surrounding areas following the marketing principles. These negative coping strategies adopted by these vulnerable children require interventions and cooperation by all members of the society. This needs to be stopped as the observation and evidence suggests that the problem of glue sniffing and other inhalants is not only the problem among the street children studied but also is increasingly found among the school and college students. Therefore, this problem needs to be checked urgently before it spreads everywhere. Active involvement of the government, non-government organizations are required. The next chapter focuses on these service providers critically assessing their involvement.

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Photograph: Economic Activities of Street Children in Sealdah

Plate 30: Rag Pickers

Plate 31: Singing on train

Plate 32: At Food Stall

Plate 33: Vegetable Collector

Plate 34: Shoe Polisher

Plate 35: Selling balloon

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Photographs: Collection of Waste materials and selling places

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Photographs: Group Activities or Social Cohesion

Plate 72: Playing within the same age

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Photographs: Group Activities or Social Cohesion

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Plate 79: Searching food on platforms

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Photographs: Glue Sniffing and use of Dendrite as addictive materials in Sealdah Area

Plate 82: Taking glue with the help of plastic bag

Plate 83: Taking glue outside the station

Plate 84: Process of Glue Sniffing *

Plate 85: Taking glue with the help of Cloth*

Plate 86: A girl taking glue with the help of handkerchief

Source: phptographs taken by researcher

Plate 84,85 collected from google

Photographs: How street children use Dendrite for addiction

Plate 87: Dendrite available in nearby market

Plate 88: Empty Packets of Dendrite tubes

Plate 89: Pouring the glue on a piece of cloth

Plate 90: Ready for sniffing

Plate 91: Taking Glue with the help of plastic bag
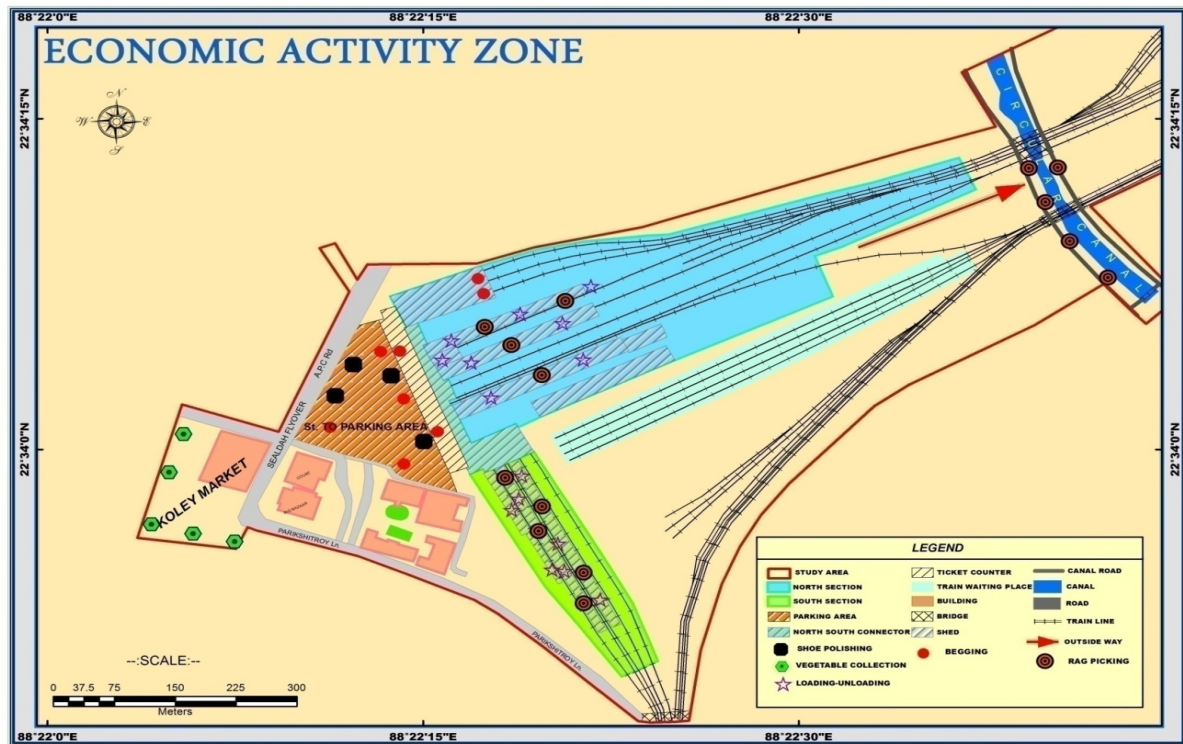
Figure- 25: Economic Activity Zone
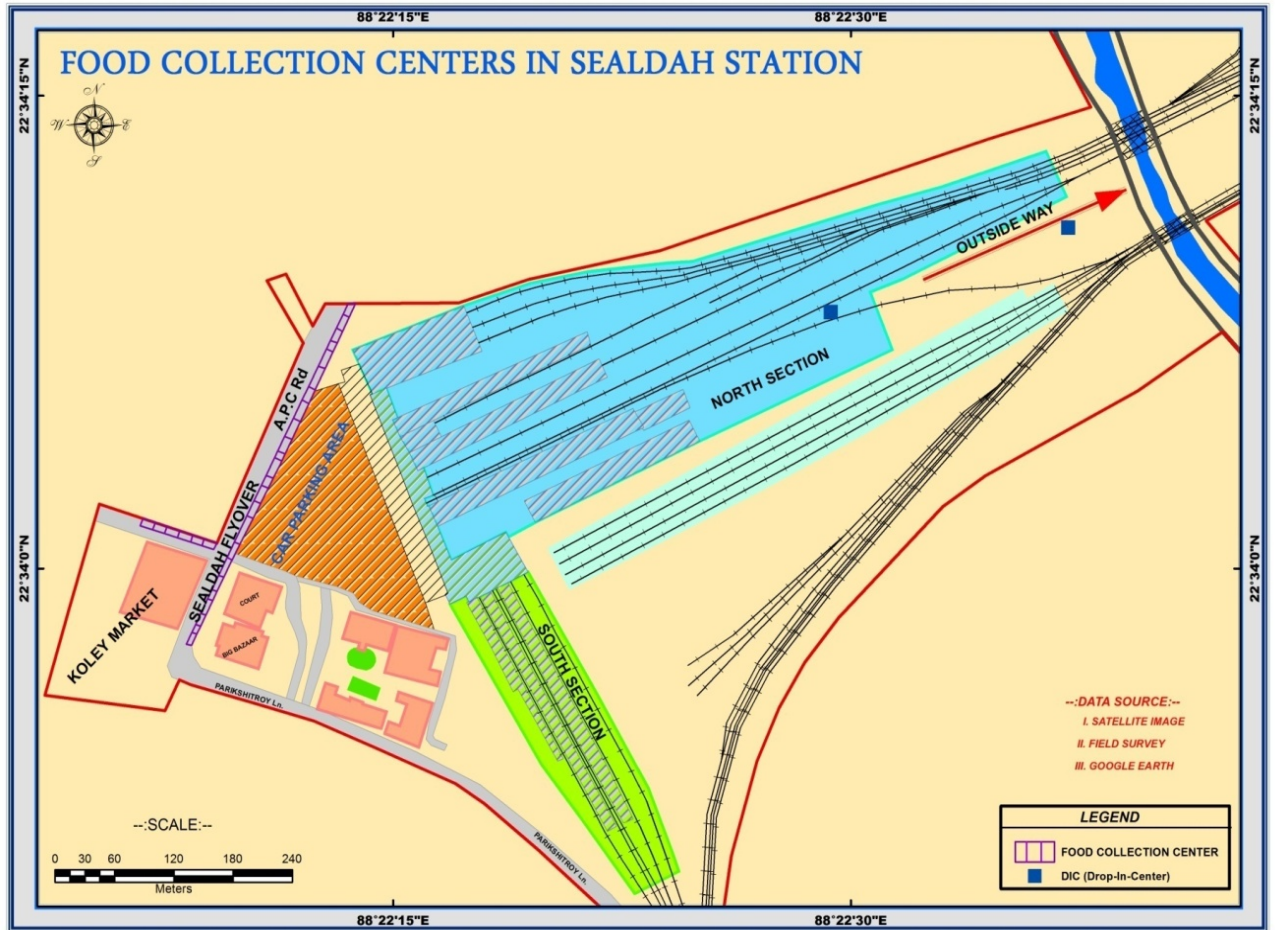
Figure-26: Food Collection centers in Sealdah Station area
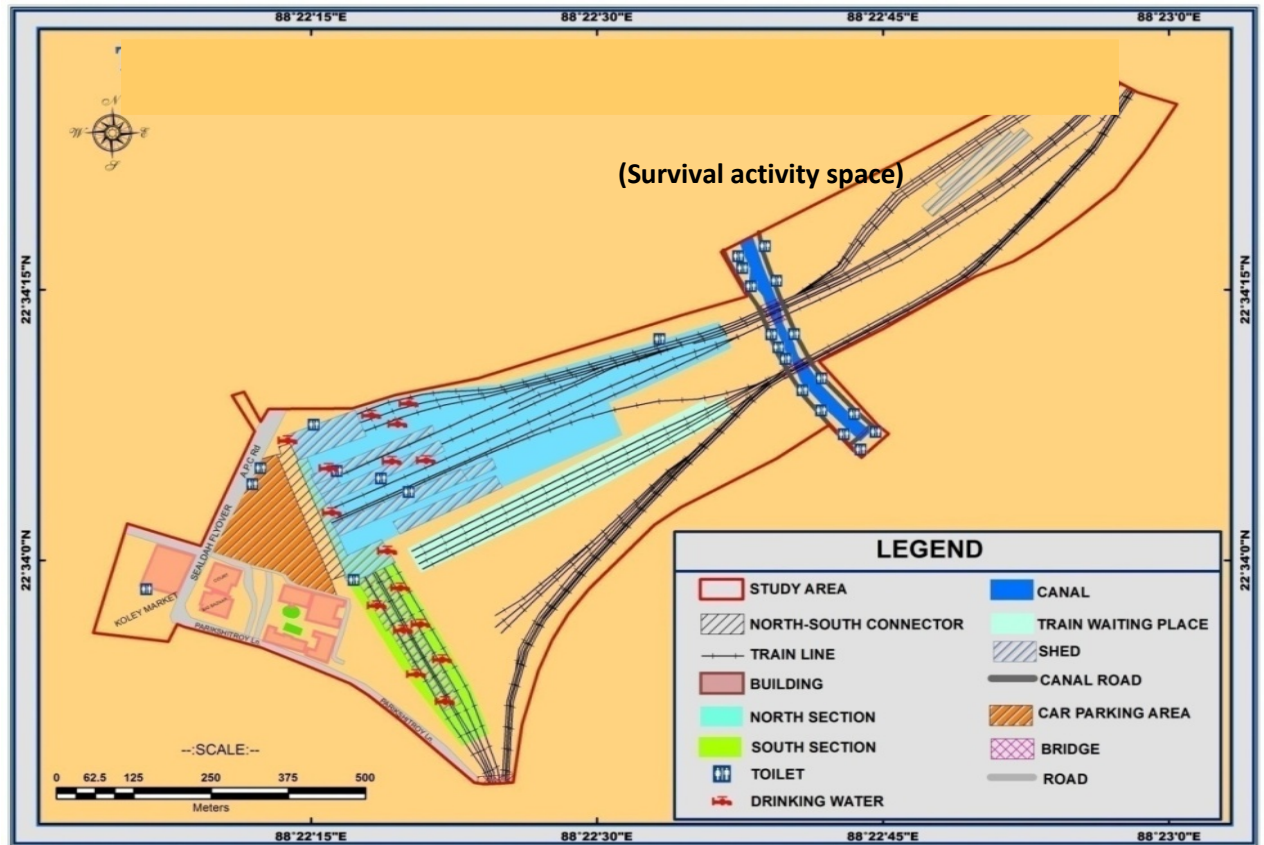
Figure-27: Toilet and Drinking water facilities in the study area
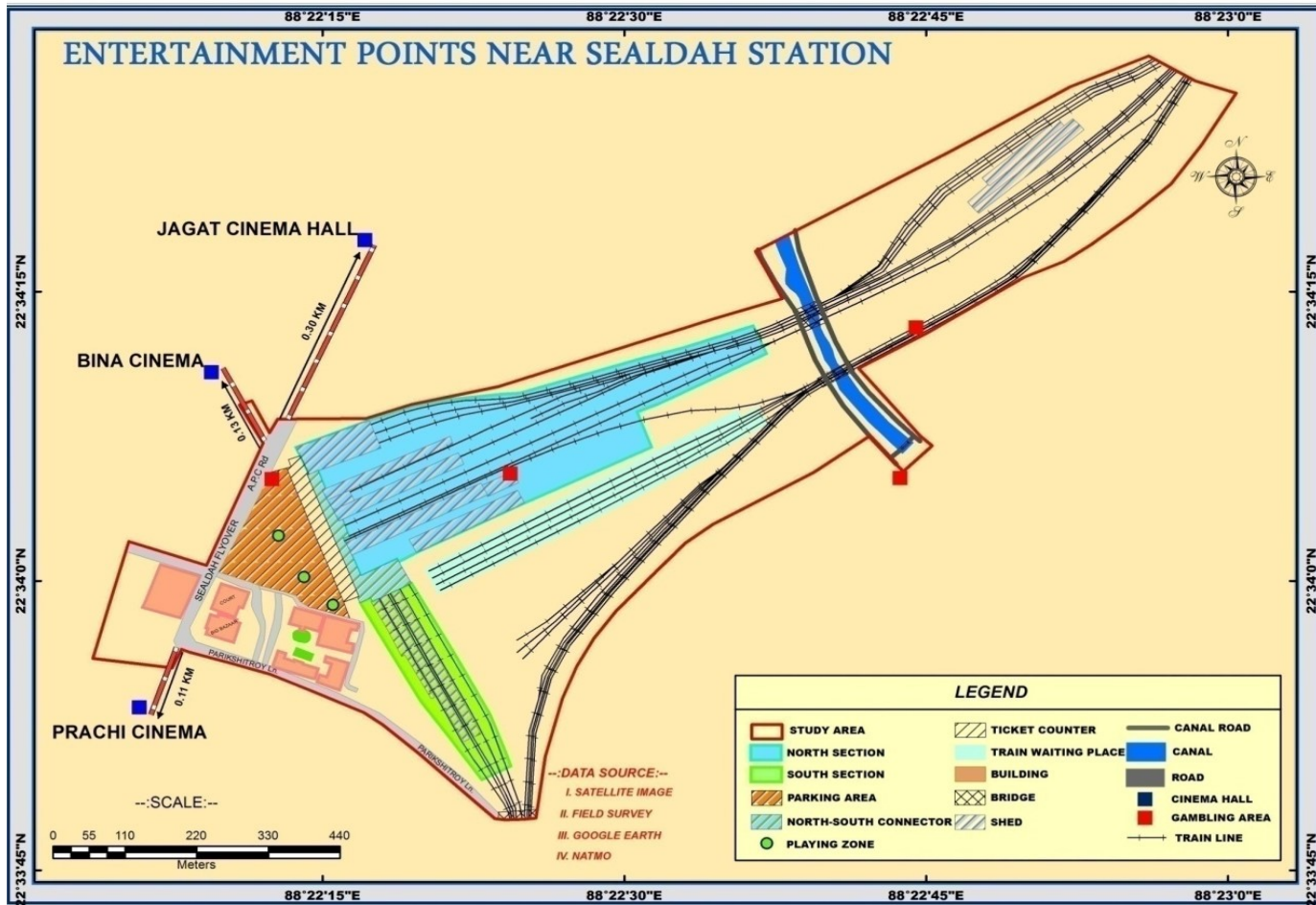
Figure-28: Entertainment points near Sealdah Station
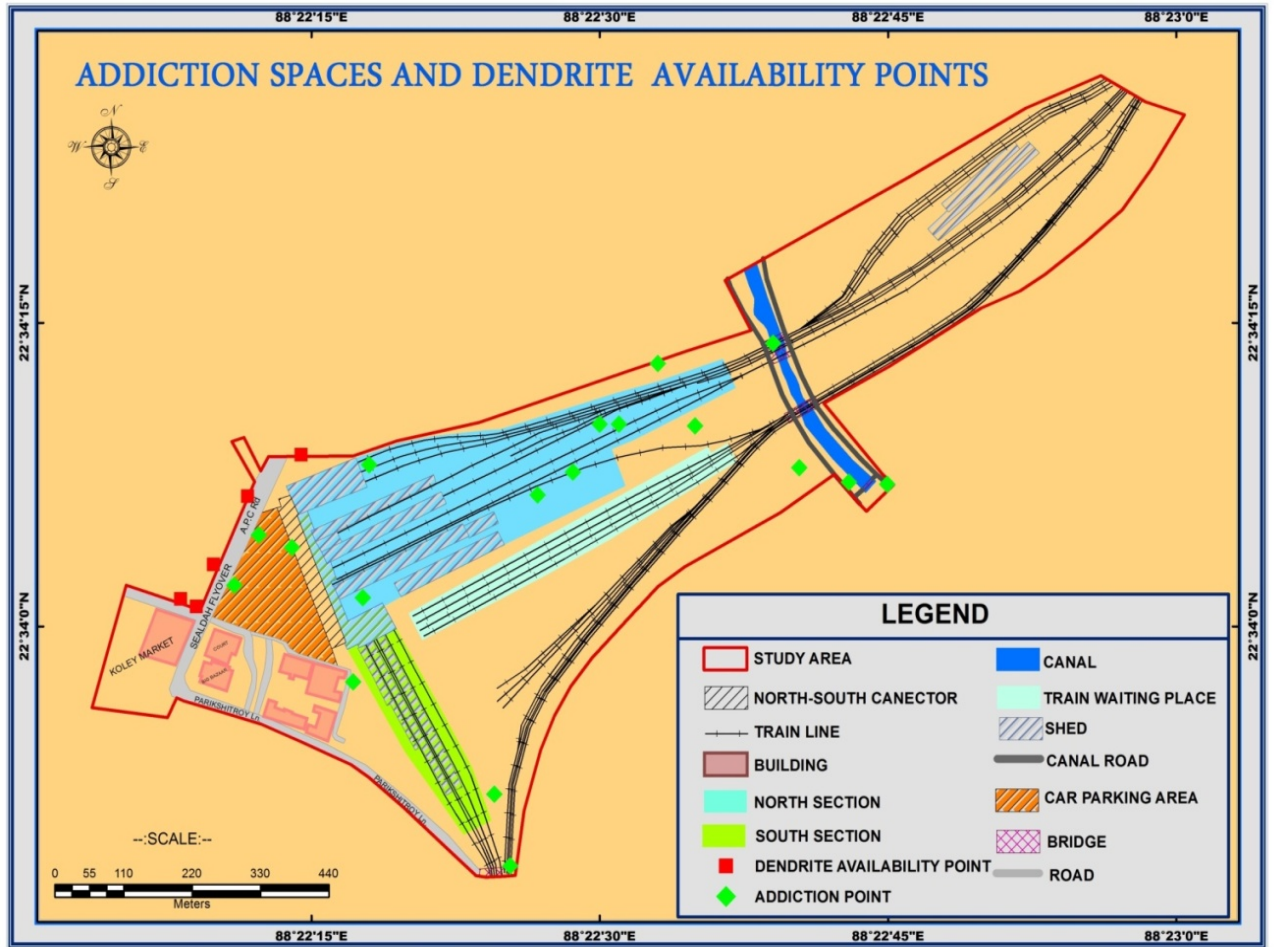
Figure-29: Addiction spaces and Dendrite availability points

CHAPTER-VII

INTERVENTION POLICIES FOR STREET CHILDREN

Abstract: Street children, being one of the most vulnerable sections of our society neither protected, directed nor supervised by adults; require special attention with a sound redressal mechanism. Numerous laws and intervention policies for the betterment of child development prevail and are implemented both at the international and national level. This chapter focuses on the mechanism by which the issue of child rights and protection is dealt with from global to local level. This is because the lives of the excluded and invisible children will depend on the actions we take now. A critical assessment of the implementation by the different agencies is followed by identifying the gaps in such implementation and suggestive remedial measures to be adopted

7.0 Introduction: A number of international treaties and documents that outline the rights of a child are to be found. Prior to World War II the League of Nations had adopted the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1924. The United Nations (UN) (http://www.un.org/) took its first step towards declaring the importance of child rights by establishing the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund in 1996 (The name was shortened to United Nations Children's Fund (http://www.unicef.org/) in 1953, but kept the popular acronym (UNICEF). Two years later the UN General Assembly (http://www.un.org/ga/) adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, making it the first UN document to recognize children's need for protection. The first UN document to specially focus on child rights was the Declaration on the Rights of the Child. However, instead of being a legally binding document it was a moral guide of conduct for governments. It was not until 1989 that the global community adopted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child .(http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx), making it the first international legally binding document concerning child rights. The Convention consists of 54 articles covering all four major categories of child rights: Right to life, Right to Development, Right to protection, and Right to participation. It came into force on 2nd September 1990. The convention has been ratified by 192 countries, becoming the most ratified of all international Human Rights Treaties. India signed and ratified the convention in 1992.

In 1949, the UN Economic and Social Council established the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR). One of its main tasks is the 'Universal periodic review'. This is a tool whereby the Council can review the human rights status and problems faced by all 192 member countries once every four years. It is a state driven process whereby every state declares the steps taken to improve the human rights status and its position with regard to their international human rights status and its position with regard to their international human rights commitments. Each country is given equal treatment during the review of their case. In 2006 the UN General Assembly voted to replace the UNCHR with the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC).

7.1 Background information on Child Rights and Child Protection:

International Mechanism: The policy makers of the United Nations (UN) realized that children under the age of 18 need special care for ensuring their rights (UNICEF,2008) and that they should be treated in a separate way because their needs and contexts are different from the adults. In 1989, the UN General Assembly implemented a Convention for Child Rights, to combine the whole world together, as a global effort, for ensuring the children's rights and as such is applicable to street children as well. This convention specified the age of a child to be 18 and the concept about child rights which was henceforth universally accepted.

The agencies looking into the problems of the vulnerable children at the international level are:

(i)   UNICEF: The United Nations Children's Fund (http://www.unicef.org/), popularly known as UNICEF, is the agency dedicated to help the world realize the rights of children. It is working in all areas concerning children (promoting girl rights, providing care for people affected by HIV/AIDS, immunization of children, child protection in times of conflict and peace, assistance in times of disaster). It aims at improving the life of every child.

(ii)   WHO or the World Health Organization is looking into the health issues

(iii)   UNIFEM or United Nations Development Fund for Women is working for strengthening economic governance in all countries.

(iv) UNHCR or the United Nations Commission on Human Rights works for child rights

(v) UNCRC or the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child works for basic child rights.

(vi) UNHABITAT or the United Nations Human Settlement Programme promotes development of socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements and the achievement of adequate shelter for all.

(vii) UNODC or the United Nations Office on the Drugs and Crime is working for anti-trafficking; on abuse of drugs and crime prevention; against terrorism and political corruption.

(viii) FAO or the Food and Agricultural Organization an agency of United Nations is making efforts to defeat hunger all over the world.

7.2 Overview of International Policy Documents:

7.2.1 International Child Rights provided by United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child:

Those articles dealing with or are related to the street children are identified to be:

Article 2 lays emphasis on protecting the child against all forms of discrimination (i.e. non-discrimination) of children irrespective of age, race, religion, language, culture or abilities, the abode (on the street or not), and the parental occupation.

Article 3: In the best interests of the child it states that the child must be **the primary concern for both public and private institutions** in all actions relating to the child.

Article 4: It is the government's responsibility **to preserve the child's identity** especially for those who live separately from their family.

Article 9 deals with the issue of separation from parents, the government needs to ensure that **children are not separated** from their parents against their will.

Article 12 gives emphasis on **respecting the views of the child** by giving the child right to express his/her views freely.

Article 13 deals with a right for freedom of expression.

Article 19 ensures that children have the right to be protected against both mental and physical violence; yet another **Article** number **34** highlights on the right to protect children from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.

Article 24 focuses on the **basic right to health care**, to the highest standard of health and services for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation.

Article 28 recognizes the **child's right to education** and the overall social development. Governments are gratified under this article to take legislative, administrative, social, and educational measures to ensure the implementation of this right, and will provide for minimum age restriction for employment. **Article 29** is also related to education, **the goals of education** should be to develop each child's individual personality, talents, and abilities to the fullest potential. **Article 32** deals with the issue of **child labour** by stating that children have the right to be protected from all the economic exploitation.

Article 33 is concerned with d**rug abuse.** All children should be protected from the use of harmful drugs and from being used in drug trade. **The need for rehabilitation of child victims** is dealt with in **Article 39** which states that those who are victims of abuse, neglect or exploitation should be provided with special support and care to recover physically and psychologically to reincorporate into the society.

7.2.2 Action Strategies:

7.2.2.1 Millennium Development Goals or MDGs (2000):

Role of MDGs: Through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the world agreed upon a road map to a better future: an outcome of the Millennium Declaration, adopted in 2000 by 189 countries, India being a part. The Millennium agenda is a key step towards meeting commitments to children in the 21st Century. It had defined exclusion and invisibility of children and broadly agreed that exclusion is multi dimensional. .Quantitative targets were set to be met by 2015 with each of the MDGs connected to the well-being of children- from eradicating extreme poverty and hunger to providing clean drinking water. Failure to achieve these goals would have devastating consequences for the children of that generation and for the adults who survive their childhoods at that time. Reaching these children- many of whom being beyond the reach of laws, programmes, research and budgets- all these issues was a challenge to be addressed through a global partnership for

development (i.e. shared responsibility). Reaching these goals meant improving the lives and prospects of millions of children: hence the implications for children of missing these MDGs were grave.

Table 25 :MDGs and Child Protection

Millennium Development Goal	Child Protection Consideration
MDG-1: Eradicate extreme poverty	• Child labour squanders a nation's human capital
MGD-2: Achieve universal primary education	• Child labour prevents children from attending school. • Violence is an obstruction to a safe and protection learning environment • Children without parental care must be placed in a family environment
MDG-4: Reduce child mortality	• Violence against children can lead to child mortality. • Children separated from their mothers at an early age are at greater risk of early death
MDG-6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	• Many of the worst forms of child labour are a cause and consequence of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. • Sexual Exploitation, abuse and violence leads to the infection of girls and boys • Children in HIV/AIDS affected families are particularly at risk of losing the care and protection of their families
MDG-7: Ensure environmental sustainability	• Environmental disasters increase household vulnerability and increase the potential for child labour, as well as for

	sexual exploitation
MDG-8: Develop a global partnership for Development	• Child protection co operation at the national and international level to create a protective environment for children

Source : Based on literature review on MDGs

MDG 2 and 3 in particular called for governments and international donors and agencies to include all children currently excluded from education.

7.2.2.2 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) one of the leading organizations working to achieve the MDGs had funded projects to more than 170 countries thus helping in fulfilling or partly achieving the targets laid in those Goals. Building on the many success of the past 15 years, a new set of goals, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been laid by World leaders, for the land, the oceans, and the waterways for 'transforming our World' by 2030 (sustainabledevelopment.un.org).

A new universal Agenda building on the MDGs to complete what was not achieved with 17 Goals and 169 targets was declared on 25-27th September 2015 and came into effect on 1st January 2016. These goals and targets aim at stimulating action over the next 15 years in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet. It was declared that these goals will be met for all nations and peoples and for all segments of society endeavouring to reach the furthest behind first, particularly in reaching the most vulnerable. These goals are integrated and indivisible and will balance the three dimensions of sustainable development. The vision set is envisaging a world free of poverty, hunger, disease and want, where all life can thrive; a world free of fear and violence; a world with universal literacy, with equitable and universal access to quality education at all levels, to health care and social protection, where physical, mental and social well being are assured; a world where commitments regarding the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation is reaffirmed, where there is improved hygiene; and where food is sufficient, safe, affordable and nutritious; and where human habitats are safe, resilient and sustainable. The Agenda will be implemented for the full benefit of all, for today's generation and for future generations. This new universal agenda

has been guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and is grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International human rights treaties, the Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome.

Means of implementation: The respect and importance of the local, regional and sub regional dimensions along with national policy is stated along with an intensive global engagement. It calls for bringing together the   scientific and academic community, the governments, the private sector, the civil society, the United Nations system and other actors mobilizing all the available resources with a follow up and review at the global level. Since each country faces specific   challenges and has specific tools available , hence   in accordance with its national circumstances and priorities ,different approaches, visions, models have been recognized. Meeting every four years under the auspices of the General Assembly, the high level political forum will provide high level political guidance on the Agenda and its implementation, identifying the progress made and the emerging challenges and mobilizing further actions to accelerate implementation.

7.3 Governmental (National) Mechanism:

India is one of the few countries in the world, to have a written policy for children declaring the children as the 'supreme asset of the nation'.

7.3.1 Constitutional Provisions:

Those articles that address various needs of children as prescribed in the **Indian Constitution** are as follows:

Article 15: Special provisions for children can be made by the State.

Article 21: Provision of free and compulsory education, to all children of the age of 6-14 years; as determined legally by the State.

Article 23: Prohibition of traffic in human beings and beggary , and other forms of forced labour.

Article 24: No child below the age of 14 years shall be employed to work in any factory/mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment.

7.3.2 National Policies:

National Policy for Children 1974: The National Policy on Education 1968 revised as National Policy on Education 1986 emphasizes on education.

National Policy on Child Labour 1987: It is a landmark attempt in the progressive elimination of child labour in India. The policy includes actions in the field of education, health, nutrition, integrated child development and employment.

National Health Policy 1983and **2002** emphasize on health

National Charter for Children 2003: It is a brief re-cap of issues which children face and the duty which the state has towards these children. The Charter identifies the right of every child to existence, life and liberty and the need for the state to protect these rights. It discusses the need for proper health and nutrition services, safe drinking water and environmental sanitation and hygiene related services.

The National Plan of Action, 2005: This is the most inclusive planning document where goals objectives, and strategies to achieve the objectives drawn are clearly outlined based on the four basic child right categories as per the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child.

The National Policy for Children, **2013**: The Policy has been framed for implementing all programmes and schemes for children throughout the country, giving priority to right to life, health and nutrition and, towards development, education, protection and participation.

7.3.3 National Actors:

The National Human Rights Commission and the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights is concerned directly with the intervention for the street children. The implementation agencies are the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Ministry of Human Resource Development and the Indian Railways. Since the study involves Sealdah Rail station mention of the r**ole of the Railways is essential.** A large number of vulnerable children and those in distress come in contact

with the Indian Railways as passengers or as abandoned, trafficked, runaway children from their homes. The missing children travelling in trains and homeless children living at the platforms and working in and around the platforms within the railway station area are also children who are in need and protection. Children living on the railway stations and other transport terminals constitute a highly vulnerable and marginalized section of the society who normally enter the Railway platforms to live there or for the security it offers. In view of these realities, to protect the best interest of these children it becomes imperative for the railways and other stakeholders to act together so as to ensure them protection while within the railway premises. Thus recognizing the role and responsibilities of the Railway authorities, a model Standard Operating Protocol (SOP) was issued by National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) in association with Ministry of Railways & Ministry of Child & Women Welfare Department in July 2015. The Project covers Sealdah, Bidhannagar, Kolkata & Park Circus Railway stations of Kolkata. This has been started in 20 other Railway stations in India with the help of NGO Railway Childline as Government Programmes for the Children in general and for the Street Children in particular **.** The Railways through setting of the SOP for all the stakeholders in safeguarding Rights of Children in contact with the Railways is playing a crucial role. The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation in collaboration with UNICEF is concerned with the establishment of a Forum on Child Statistics with a view to institutionalize coordination and collaboration amongst stakeholders for improving the scope, content, quality consistency, and timely reporting of data on children to enable informed policy decisions and planning.

7.3.4 Child Targeted Schemes and Programmes:

(i) Midday Meal Scheme

(ii) Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) (http://wcd.nic.in/icds.htm) comes under the purview of the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD). Launched in 1975 it has been working diligently to eradicate vulnerabilities to child health and development. It receives aid from various other nongovernment bodies. Three of the main contributors are Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE), UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP).

(iii)Integrated Child Protection Scheme: discussed in details later on

(iv)Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

(v) Operation Blackboard

(vi) Wheat Based Nutrition Programme (WBNP)

 (vii) Rajiv Gandhi National Creche Scheme for the Children of Working Mothers

(viii)Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA)

(ix) Shishu Greha Scheme

(x) Scheme for Working Children in need of care and protection

(xi) National Child Labour Project

7.4 Non-Governmental Organizations or the NGOs:

NGOs are highly diverse groups of organizations engaged in a wide range of activities, and take different forms in different parts of the world. NGOs are difficult to define, and the term 'NGO' is not always used consistently. There are many different classifications of NGO in use. The most common focus is on "orientation" and "level of operation". An NGO's orientation refers to the type of activities it takes on. These activities might include human rights, environmental, improving health, or development work. An NGO's level of operation indicates the scale at which an organization works, such as local, regional, national, or international.

International NGOs have a history dating back to as early as 1839. However, the phrase "non-governmental organization" came into popular use with the establishment of the United Nations Organization in 1945 with provisions in Article 71 of Chapter 10 of the UN Charter for a consultative role for organizations which are neither governments nor member states. The vital role of NGOs and other "major groups" in sustainable development was recognized in Chapter 27 of Agenda 21, leading to intense arrangements for a consultative relationship between the UN and NGOs. In terms of environmental issues and sustainable development, the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992 was the first to show the power of International NGOs, when about 2,400 representatives of NGOs came to play a central role in deliberations. Rapid development of the non-governmental sector occurred in western countries due to the processes of restructuring of the welfare state enhanced further by globalization. International treaties and international organizations such as the World Trade Organization were centred mainly on the interests of capitalist enterprises. To counterbalance this trend, NGOs developed to emphasize humanitarian issues,

developmental aid and sustainable development. A code of ethics was established in 2002 by The World Association of Non Governmental Organizations (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nongovernmental_organization)

The real and identified registration and formation of NGOs emerged in India from the early 1970s. Since the Sixth Five Year Plan, NGOs were given importance in the development process of India. In the Eighth Plan , the government sought to promote nationwide network of NGOs and the Ninth Plan envisaged the primary role of promoting public private partnership model through NGOs .

7.4 .1.The Role of NGOs in India :

India possibly is home to the world's largest number of active not for profit NGOs. Many however aren't formally registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860. They function within a particular spatial extent geographically with an intimate understanding of the local needs, geography, language, culture etc. NGOs act as planners and implementers of developmental plans. They help in mobilizing the local resources to be used for development. NGOs help in building a self reliant and sustainable society. These agencies play the role of intermediary between people and government. They are actually the facilitator of development, education and professionalization. Meticulous work is undertaken, where necessary, for a possible reconciliation with the child's family. A crucial role is being played in sending the school dropouts back to the school. NGOs focus on skill development and livelihood creation by creating entrepreneurial opportunities for them. Some NGOs are based around voluntary labour and are less formalized while some work as in corporate sector in a very professional manner.

7.4.2. The role of NGOs in Kolkata :

A database was prepared **by** Kolkata Konsultants to identify street and working children engaged in different authorized and unauthorized establishments in selected 50 Wards of Kolkata Municipal Corporation **.** The work was supported by Save the Children. The most highlighted success of NGOs is seen in their influencing the government to bring out various development oriented policies and laws including the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS).

7.4.2.1. CINI or the Child in Need Institute:

Internationally known as Child in Need India, this is an international humanitarian organization aimed at promoting "sustainable development in health, nutrition , etc. and was founded in 1974 by Samir Chaudhuri (www.ciniindia.org/:) . While working on poor rural children growing up with families, the Organization realized that another unfortunate group of children that needed help was the '*street children'* of the then Calcutta. In 1989, CINI formed an offshoot organization called CINI Asha to try to improve the lot of this hapless bunch with the goal of *mainstreaming* them. CINI Asha chose to focus on kids in Central Calcutta, a zone with a high level of economic activity and **a natural magnet for many street children.** *Amader Bari* (the name means "our house" in Bengali) serves both as CINI Asha's headquarters and as a halfway house and a hospital ward (health centre) for the street children. *Amader Bari* occupies several floors of a building just off Park Street, a major commercial avenue in Central Kolkata. The kids are housed in various rooms and a part of the area serves as a sick bay(plate number 107) where children who are ill are housed as they recuperate. On a wall at *Amader Bari* hangs a chart containing the names of "graduates" of *Amader Bari*, kids who have successfully been placed in schools around Kolkata , as well as the names of the schools they have been placed in. Each name on the chart is a success story, it is the name of a child at least *some* of whose wounds have begun to heal, a child who has developed some measure of trust in the world and who is poised to rejoin society and lead a productive life. CINI Asha has been renamed just as CINI.

Sealdah Railway Station being a fertile economic field for street children (Sethuraman , 1998), CINI found a creative way of reaching out to these kids at Sealdah. To be successful, the organization realized that they would have to center their activities close to where the kids work. Working with a welfare organization attached to the Indian Railways, they managed to procure a small shed located right between two platforms at Sealdah. They run this as a drop in center for boys: Udan (6-9 years of age) & Uttaran (for 9-18 years of age). They also set up a drop in center for girls in a crowded street very close to the station. The idea of the drop in center is meant to be a nearby place where the kids at Sealdah can simply drop in at if they want to rest, or if they want someone to talk to. The staff members fan out amongst the platforms of the station and talk to the kids about the drop in center,

encouraging them to visit it. This is the first phase of trust building, and it is a difficult phase; the kids need to be convinced that CINI's staff are sincere, and are not just another group of adults out to exploit and abuse them. Once at the drop in center, the kids continue to be suspicious. Constant visits to the centers leads to trust the staff enough to open up and talk about themselves. The staff said that at least they have a chance of reaching out to the kids and letting them know about the possibilities of a better life. Two staff members/ instructors served doubly as guardians and counselors. These children have their own individual lockers (photo plate 95), being rootless and so just by providing each kid with a tiny locker, a small space in the world that he could think of as his own place, something that gives him a small measure of identity, and from that, perhaps some self esteem, some desire to improve his lot.

7.4.2.2. Save the Children

With reference to child rights this NGO enjoys a well earned reputation, as it is a global pioneer in the field ever since its founder, Eglantyne Jebb's wrote what would become the blueprint of UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The NGO has been preventing child labour through lobbying for policy reform and stronger legislation while undertaking grassroots missions to free children from bonded labour. Empowering these children with education, job skills and giving India's vulnerable children, a new lease of life besides working to provide healthcare, and lifesaving aid during emergencies to children, today, Save the Children India is a favoured partner for India's biggest corporates. Not only does the NGO have decades of experience in working with children, but it is also known for transparency and accountability in managing corporate resources allocated for children's rights. It is a well recognised NGO for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. It had set up Mobile Learning Centres (MLC) in Delhi and Kolkata which turned to be successful attempts. A MLC is a bus converted into a classroom equipped with benches, a blackboard, a small library, interactive games, and a TV-DVD player. Its objective is to attract street and working children who have drifted away from school as the learning sessions held in the bus are designed to inspire and prepare them for returning to formal schooling. The focus of Save the Children's health and nutrition programme revolves around ensuring access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).

7.4.2.3 Smile foundation:

Being one of the top ten NGOs in India established in 2002, the organization is committed for better child education and better healthcare and stopping child labour. It runs a national level development program benefitting more than 3 lakh children all across the country. Street Children Welfare Project a branch of "SMILE Society" from Sealdah Station functions from 5:00am in the early morning till 7: 30 a.m. for these needy kids. This station was chosen because it is the main station of Kolkata and there are many needy homeless children who live there. Welfare activities such as washing, cleaning, food supply, education, medical service, cloth supply (time to time) etc. are main regular services provided by this organization.

7.4.2.4. CRY or Child Rights and You, India:

CRY is an independent and social service organization working for child rights. Set up in 1979 by Rippan Kapoor it is one of the top charities in India which aims to fight for better child education, food and health. CRY is headquartered in Mumbai with a branch in Kolkata.

7.4.2.5. **Pratham:**

Established in 1994, **Pratham** works for betterment of education to the underprivileged children of the country. The Charity has set up many schools in the country and provides pre-school education to children.

7.4.2.6. **Happy Home Project**:

Realizing the root of all problems is illiteracy a project of free non formal school on the street services like education(till they are 16 years of age), food, entertainment programs, games etc, for the slum, the **street kids** and destitute children" in India was started. Targeting at "Give Smile to all the needy children", it started welfare activities with the help of its members and volunteers. It has multiple centers located in Kolkata.

7.5 Schemes for Street Children:

Street children in India are "a manifestation of societal malfunctioning and an economic and social order that does not take timely preventative action" (Bose, 1992). Prior to 1993, the "Official Vocabulary" of post independent India did not contain the term "street child," and street children were only helped because they were grouped with other children that worked on the streets (Bose,1992). In the early 1990s, facing pressure from nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), the Indian government created the "Scheme for Assistance to Street Children," which was launched in February 1993(Singh and Purohit, (2011). The Indian Council of Child Welfare has included street children in their programmes, and in the 8th Five Year Plan a scheme for children in 6 metropolitan cities was set in place (Chatterjee, 1992). The Ministry of Labour has also included street children in their livelihood training programmes.

The following section deals with Schemes for Street Children, the mechanism of implementation of the schemes and the agencies involved .

7.5.1 National Level Intervention:

Based on global agendas and policies the Government of India has taken up several initiatives to deal with the issue of street children in the form of schemes and programmes. They are as follows.:

7.5.1.1 Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS):

It is the Government programme for the vulnerable children. In 2006, the Ministry of Women and Child Development proposed the adoption of the ICPS. The purpose of the scheme is to provide for children in difficult circumstances a protective and safe environment, reduce the risks and vulnerabilities these children face in various situations, and reduce the actions that lead to abuse, neglect, exploitation, abandonment, and separation of children. In the case of missing children the most important government entities who are directly involved by law enforcement agencies is at local level. The **specific objectives** of the scheme are:

To institutionalize essential services and strengthen the structures;   (ii)   To enhance capacities of all systems and persons involved in service delivery; (iii) To create database

and knowledge base for child protection services; (iv) To support child protection at family and community level; (v) To coordinate and network with government institutions and non-government institutions to ensure effective implementation of the scheme; and (vi) To increase public awareness about child rights, child vulnerability, and child protection services. This extensive task began in 2009.

Within care, support and rehabilitation services the scheme will provide CHILDLINE services, open shelters for children in need in urban and semi-urban areas, offer family based solutions through improving sponsorship, foster-care, adoption and after-care services, improve quality institution services, and generate grant-in-aid for need based/innovative interventions. Within statutory support services the scheme calls for the strengthening of CWCs (Child Welfare Committee, JJBs ((Juvenile Justice Board), SJPUs, (State Juvenile Police Unit) as well as setting up of these services in each district. The ICPS also outlines the need for human resource development for strengthening counseling services, training, and capacity building, strengthening the knowledge base, conducting research studies creating and managing a child tracking system, carrying out advocacy and public education programmes and monitoring and evaluating of the scheme.

The mechanism of intervention is a bottom up approach. To meet these objectives the scheme felt the need for the establishment of new bodies within a service delivery structure. It outlined a specific implementation plan with the emphasis on the need of convergence of services to give the child an integrated plan. This is being achieved through coordination of all departments and ministries and NGOs involved in the following manner:

At the **national level** (i) Child Protection Division in the national Institute of Public Cooperation and Child development (NIPCCD); (ii) CHILDLINE India Foundation Headquarters; (iii) Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA)**. At the regional level**: (i)Child Protection Division in the four Regional Centres of the NIPCCD and (ii) Four Regional Centres of CHILDLINE India Foundation (CIF)..At the **state level**: (i)State Child Protection Society (SCPS); (ii)State Adoption Resource Agency (SARA); (iii)State Child Protection Committee (SCPC);and (iv) State Adoption Advisory Committee. At the **district level** the District Child Protection Society (DCPS), the District Child Protection Committee (DCPC) and at the Block Level there is Block Level Child Protection Committee.

7.5.1.2 Integrated Programme for Street Children:

This Programme is now under the umbrella of ICPS. The Integrated Programme for Street Children started as an initiative to help children living on the street fulfilling their rights. The programme provides for shelter, nutrition, health care, education, recreation facilities to street children, and seeks to protect them against abuse and exploitation. It aims to build society's awareness of the rights of the child protected in the UNCRC and in the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000. This is achieved through capacity building of the government organizations, NGOs and the larger community these children live in.

The target group of this programme is children without homes and family ties i.e., street children and children especially vulnerable to abuse and exploitation such as children of sex workers and children of pavement dwellers. **This scheme does not include children who live with families and in slum areas.** The state governments, the Union Territories, local bodies, educational institutions, and voluntary organizations are eligible for financial assistance under this programme. The Government of India provides up to 90% of the cost of the project the rest to be borne by the organization/institution concerned. Under this programme those projects that can receive **funding** up to Rs 1.5 million per annum are to be on : city level surveys; documentation of existing facilities and preparation of city level plan of action; Contact programmes offering counselling, guidance and referral services; establishment of 24 hours drop in shelters; non formal education programmes; programmes for reintegration of children with their families and placement of destitute children in foster care homes/hostels and residential schools; programmes for enrolment in schools; programmes for vocational training; programmes for occupational placement; programmes for mobilizing preventive health services; programmes aimed at reducing the incidence of drug and substance abuse, HIV/AIDS etc; Post ICDS/Aganwadi programmes for children beyond six years of age; and programmes for capacity building and for advocacy and awareness building on child rights are also enlisted.

7.5.2 State Government Mechanism:

The Government of West Bengal is implementing the I.C.P.S scheme through the Department of Vagrancy, Purto Bhavan ,a wing of Woman and Child Welfare Department, West Bengal. As in 2013-14, they are looking into 22 open shelters across the state : 17 in Kolkata, 1 in Howrah, 4 in 24 Parganas (N) and 1 in Darjeeling to cover 600 children every year. During the period, the success rate was more than 60% and a good number of children were mainstreamed in formal schools. The aim of the project is rehabilitation, formal schooling and vocational training in tailoring, doll-making, book binding, leather work and carpentry for the children living along the railway line and the along the canal . Bridge courses, special coaching, mid-day meal, supply of educational kits, provision of basic facilities like water, sanitation etc are done. Nearly 4000 vulnerable children are already included in this programme in Kolkata Metropolitan Area.

Child Welfare Committee (CWC): The Committee was set up to deal with children in need of care and protection under the Juvenile Justice (care and protection of children) Amendment Act, 2006. Each Committee comprising of a Chairperson and four other members act as a board of Magistrates and look into the cases of children in need of care and protection, treatment, development and rehabilitation. It also provides for their basic needs and protection of human rights. There were 19 CWCs initially constituted by the Government of West Bengal, one in each district including Kolkata.

Juvenile Justice Board (JJB): The Government of West Bengal had also constituted 19 JJBs one in each district including Kolkata

7.5.3 Non-Government Programme for the Street Children:

Some of the NGOs working in this field are also following the global-national-regional-local interface such as **CINI** and **Save the Children**, .In addition the following list provided by the Controller of Vagrancy Department, West Bengal highlights the role played by NGOs across the state.

Table 26 : List of NGOs working for child development in West Bengal

Sl. No.	Name of the NGO	Field of Work / Activity	Area of work	Address
1.	Alakendu Bodh Niketan	Special School for handicapped children and vocational training	i) Kankurgachi Kolkata ii) College Street Kolkata	P-1/4/1, CIT Scheme VII-M, VIP Road, Kankurgachi, Kolkata– 54
2.	Child-in-Need Institute (CINI)	Shelter home for girls, adolescent and street children. Working in the field of anti trafficking and abuse on women	i)Sealdah ,Kolkata ii)Pottery Road, Kolkata	63, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Road, Kolkata – 17
3.	Gana Unnayan Parshad (GUP)	Short Stay Home for women in moral danger, Street children project; working in the field of anti-trafficking and welfare of the women and children. Help line for women in need.	i) Kolkata ii) Rajarhat iii) 24 Parganas (N)	10, Ganesh lane, Kol -14,
4.	The Indian Society for Sponsorship and Adoption (ISSA)	Shelter home under JJ Act for care & protection: in and inter- country adoption. Sponsorship programme for poor & neglected children.	i) Kolkata ii) Tilajala iii) Rajpur iv) 24 Parganas (S)	1 Palace Court, 1 Kyd Street, Kolkata – 16

5.	Jana Siksha Prochar Kendra (JPK)	Shelter home under JJ Act, Short Stay Home, Cottage Scheme. Partner in ICDS RLA. Working in the field of trafficking and rescue of the trafficked girls. Street children project and other welfare programmes	i) Kolkata ii) Hoogly	57 B, College Street, Kolkata– 73
6.	Liberal Association for Movement of People (LAMP)	Short Stay Home, Street Children project and other welfare projects for women and children	Kolkata	66, Surya Sen Street, Kolkata –09
7.	The Refugee	Providing shelter to destitute and needy children	Kolkata	125 A, B.B. Ganguly Street, Kolkata – 12.
8.	Sanlaap	Shelter home under JJ Act, Short Stay Home, Swadhar Home. Working in the field of anti trafficking, repatriation and rescue of trafficked girls, counselling the women in need. Partner in ICDS RLA	i) Kolkata ii) 24 Parganas (S)	38 B, Mahanirban Road, Kol – 29.
9.	Society for Indian Children's Welfare (SICW)	Shelter home for children under JJ Act . Placing them under In- and Inter-Country adoption and sponsorship programme for children in need	Kolkata	20 & 22 Col. Biswas Road, Beckbagan, Kolkata -19.
10.	Institute for Psychological and	Counselling to addicted and in need women and	Kolkata	39/1, Prince Anwar Shah

				Road, CIT Scheme, 114A, Kolkata– 45.
	Educational Research (IPER)	young people. Street children project and projects for the children of RLA		
11.	Bikash Bharati Welfare Society	Street children project, counselling centre for addicts ;welfare projects for women and children. Home for mentally retarded children	Kolkata ii) Medinipur	20/1B, Lalbazar Street, Kolkata– 10.
12.	Prabuddha Bharati Sishu Tirtha	Drug De-addiction centre, Short Stay Home, Counselling centre for women, ICDS project for children	i) Bankura ii) Paschim Medinipur	Inda, P.O. Kharagpur, Paschim Medinipur - 721305
13.	Institute for Motivating Self Employment (IMSE)	Short Stay Home, Legal Aid, Counselling Centre, AWTC and other welfare progarmmes for women and children	i) Kolkata ii) Burdwan	244, Jodhpur Park, Kolkata – 68,
14.	Calcutta Social Project	Street children project, counselling centre for addicts and many welfare projects	Kolkata	172/3 Rashbehari Avenue, Kolkata -29
15.	Rajabazar Education and Awareness Development Society (READS)	Children in Vulnerable situation, informal education, vocational training	Rajabazar, Kolkata	2B/H/50 Gas Street , Kolkata -09

Source: Controller of Vagrancy Department, West Bengal

7.5.3.1 Functioning of NGO as a Service provider:

7.5.3.1.1 Short Stay Home for Boys: This home provides 24 hour safe shelter services, nutrition, health support, counselling support, informal education and creative inputs for the CNCP (children in need of care and protection) between 5-18 years of age referred by the CWC through CHILDLINE.

7.5.3.1.2 Open Shelter:

These centres in urban and semi urban areas cater to all children in need of care and protection. This programme is particularly for beggars, street and working children, rag pickers, small vendors, street performers, orphaned, deserted, trafficked and run-away children, children of migrant population and any other vulnerable group of children identified. This comprises the target group for an open shelter.

Table 27: Open Shelter near Sealdah station area under ICPS Programme:

Sl. No	Name of the NGO	Location of Open Shelter	Area Covered	Sanctioned Number of children
1.	Tiljala shed	Tiljala	Park Circus, Tangra	25 boys
2.	Forum for communities united in service (FOCUS)	Tangra Road	Topsia	25 boys
3.	Liberal Association for Movement of people (LAMP)	Surya Sen Street	Amherst Street Bowbazar	25 boys
4.	Humanity Association	B.B. Ganguly Street.	Bowbazar	25 boys
5.	West Bengal Council for Child Welfare(WBCCW)	Entally	Entally, Paddapukur	25 girls
6.	Calcutta Social Project	Monohorpukur Road	Sovabazar	25 boys
7.	West Bengal SC, ST & Minority Welfare Association	Beliaghata	Beliaghata, Sealdah	25 boys
8.	Bikash Bharati Welfare	Lalbazar	Bowbazar, Lalbazar	25 boys

	Society			
9.	Center for Social Development	Barrackpore	Sealdah, Maniktala	25 boys
10.	Child in Need Institute (CINI)	Entally	Sealdah, Station, Entally	25 boys
11.	Child in Need Institute (CINI)	Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Road	Sealdah, Dharamtala	25 girls
12.	Child in Need Institute (CINI)	Sealdah Station (UDAN)	Sealdah Area	25 boys(for 6 - 9 years)
13.	Child in Need Institute (CINI)	Sealdah Station (UTTARAN)	Sealdah Area	25 boys(for 9 - 14 years)
14.	TRINIA Society for Social &Health Research	Topsia Road	Topsia, Sealdah	25 boys
15.	National Council for Women	B.B. Ganguly Street	Bowbazar area	25 girls

Source: Vagrancy Department, Purta Bhavan 2014-15

The **main objectives** of these open shelters are: (i)To bring the target group identified from their present vulnerable life situation to a safe environment. (ii)To wean these children away from the vulnerable situation by sustained interventions; (iii)To guide these destitute children away from high risk and socially deviant behaviours. (iv)To provide opportunities for education and develop their potential and talent; (v)To enhance life-skills and reduce their vulnerabilities to exploitation; (vi)To restore these children into families, alternative care and community; (vii)To carry out regular follow up to ensure that children do not return again to vulnerable situations.

Functioning of an Open Shelter:

The open shelters, implemented by both NGOs and the State Government are not meant to provide permanent residential facilities for children but it complements the existing institutional care facilities. Each open shelter is required to have 3 contact points to

communicate with the children in need. These contact points are in the nearby areas of the Open Shelter concerned .

Table 28: Structure of an Open Shelter

Workers pattern in open shelter	Number of workers	Remarks
Co-ordinator	1	
Social worker	1	
Bridge course educator or care giver	2	
Outreach worker	3	For three contact points
Cleaning and cooking staff	1	

Source: primary survey

Table 29: Services rendered by the Open Shelter

Services Provided	Detailed services
• Maintenance	Food, clothing, lodging
• Vocational training	Doll-making, bookbinding, leatherwork, carpentry, black smithy and weaving.
• Non formal education	Bridge courses, special classes etc.
• Medical care	Counselling, regular check-up, free medicine.
• Recreation	Outing, mela, sports activities etc.

Source: Based on primary survey

7.5.3.1.3 Contact Points:

Contact Points (CPs) are day centres administered by NGOs and these are located at railway stations, near bus stand, in crowded places and slum areas, and act as primary links to identify vulnerable children as soon as they arrive in the city or live in the city. Contact Points not only work with runaway children but also with children who are living on streets with their families in vulnerable situation.

How a Contact Point Works For Children: On the street life, children are violent and emotionally fragile, due to lack of care and protection. After a medical check-up and medical aid when needed, they attempt to trace the child's family and understand his/her history. Restoration to the family is always the first choice, but sometimes it is not possible, or it may not be in the child's best interest, when the child is likely to be abused, exploited or neglected at home. In such cases, the child is encouraged to join a full-care residential centre after being referred to a Child Welfare Committee (CWC). Children living on streets with families in vulnerable situation are motivated to become regular visitors at Contact Points through a peer educator. The team members build a strong rapport with these children by lending them a patient hearing, which gives them a feeling of a bonding. They also feel that someone cares for them and has the time to listen to their stories. Education, recreational activities, and vocational training become major pull factors for children to continue their involvement at the Contact Points.

The Key services at Contact Points reaching out to new children include:

These are: first of all counseling children to return to their families and helping to trace their families; then Peer education programme providing an interface between new arrival and children having a long association; providing nutrition, clothing and toilet facilities to these children; education both non formal and formal and open school and bridge course; comprehensive medical support; counseling and referring to rehabilitation from drug addiction programmes; recreational facilities; like art and craft, music, outdoor and indoor games, local excursions and involving in different religious festivals and rituals throughout the year; creating awareness on child rights; spreading awareness among the key stakeholders related to these children; networking with local authorities such as law, local civic bodies and railways; creating awareness of adults who live on the streets with their children; and above all restoring children from street situation back to their families.

Official Worker structure of a Contact Point:

Each NGO (such as the Calcutta Society Project –SUJOG) has three contact points to maintain contact with the children in need and in each contact point one outreach worker is appointed. The outreach worker builds a strong rapport with these children. Two caregivers

or bridge course educators maintain the educational as well as recreational activities among the children. In addition there is one volunteer appointed to conduct an overall observation.

Table 30: **Official Workers' structure of a Contact Point**

NGO Official/ Worker	Nature of work/service rendered	Number of officials
Outreach Worker	Identify the children in need	One for each contact point
Caregiver/bridge course Educator	Maintain the educational as well as recreational activities	Two for three contact points
Volunteer	Appointed to conduct overall observation	One for each contact point

Source: primary survey

7.6 Process of intervention for street children:

The intervention process is of two parts :one is restoration within the country and the other is repartition outside India. After being rescued by the GRPF a street child is first sent to the short stay home through CHILDLINE where after the primary intervention and counseling a report is sent to Child Welfare Committee (CWC). The following figure reflects the Rehabilitation Process of street children within India.

Figure 30: Rehabilitation Process of street children within India

Phase	
Ist Phase	• Missing children located in any area of Kolkata
2nd Phase	• General Diary in Local Police station with the help of Childline, Kolkata
3rd Phase	• Primary intervention at NGO level
4th Phase	• Counselling Report made by concerned NGO
5th phase	• Report produced to Child Welfare Committee of Kolkata
6th Phase	• Restoration within India within 3 days to 3 months
7th Phase	• Repartition Process Outside of India

Source**:** Childline, Kolkata, 2016

Repartition process (of CINI) deals with street children /runaway children coming from Bangladesh and from Nepal boarding the Ruxall & Mithila Express and also via Siliguri and arriving at Sealdah . They are brought to the short stay home and later attempt is made to send them back to their homeland through the process as shown in the figure. (In Nepal dendrite and shoe adhesive is very much in use. Bhutan is less susceptible). The process is shown in figure 33

Figure-31: Repartition Process of street children to Bangladesh

(Those who are from Bangladesh migrated to India)

Phase	
1st phase	• Child Produced to Lalbazar special Branch
2nd phase	• Produced before Border Security Force of India
3rd phase	• Produced beforeBorder Security Force of Bangladesh (B.D.R.)
4th Phase	• Information given to Special Branch & Local police station
5th Phase	• Child sent to Home address with the help of NGOs and Childline of Bangladesh

Source: Childline of India, 2016

7.6.1. CHILDLINE:

CHILDLINE a national, 24-hour, toll free, with its emergency help line (1098) and outreach services for children in need of care and protection was initiated in 1996, as a pilot project in Mumbai. It is currently operating in 285 cities across 31 states/UTs in India reaching out to the most marginalized children with the aim of providing them rehabilitation and care from unsafe situations. It provides relief and rehabilitation in the space of shelter, medical aid repartition, rescue, emotional support, etc. The Union Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) supports the CHILDLINE Projects across India, under the

Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS).Through the ICPS, CHILDLINE India Foundation (CIF) is the umbrella organization for CHILDLINE (1098) in India. Under the ICPS, CIF would be given the status of a "Mother NGO" for implementing Childline services in the country by spreading its wings to all the districts and is expected to achieve this goal within 2017 under the ICPS.

7.6.2 CHILDLINE in West Bengal:

In West Bengal CHILDLINE services are being implemented through CINI (Child in Need Institute) units in Kolkata, Diamond Harbour and North Bengal. In Kolkata CHILDLINE office is situated at 37, Pottery Road. Kolkata-15. CINI founded in 1974 in Kolkata (formerly Calcutta), is working for protection of child rights, education and betterment of vulnerable children in Kolkata and other parts of the state.

7.6.3 The Joint Venture: the NGO-GO :

The government is promoting the development of NGOs through financial aid and assistance programmes. In the last two decades the role of NGOs have become proactive in the social sector development (education, health, etc.), The government and NGOs together made progress to achieve the MDGs. This Public-Private Partnership (PPP) has proved instrumental in improving the quality and reach of the programme. On a global scale, the Indian Government is working hard to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In 2014- Save the Children placed issues concerning children high on the political agenda in the run up to the general elections. Most of the prominent political parties included children's issues in their election manifesto.

There is sufficient evidence of collaboration and linkages amongst the service providers : The Railway Protection Force (RPF), Government Railways Police (GRP), CHILDLINE and State Government work together for the betterment of the vulnerable children. A child in street situation is intervened by the Railway Protection Force (RPF) and the Government Railways Police (GRP) with help of mother NGO like CHILDLINE. The vulnerable children intervened by Child Line (based on CHILDLINE, India Report) includes the Street

children, the child addicts, abused and/or trafficked children and HIV/AIDS infected children. It also incorporates children affected by disasters, the differently- abled children, children with conflict of law and the Child labourers. The Services provided by the Child line are rescuing, rehabilitation and restoration **(the three R's),** temporary shelter (short stay home), emotional support and guidance, medical treatment and support. In addition it produces the child before the Child Welfare Committee (CWC), or refers to other organization as the case may be.

The intervention process involves the active participation by the railway authority, the state government officials of the CWC and the concerned NGO and is as follows-

- Children loitering within a particular geographical area or location of the open shelter are identified;
- Innovative child friendly approaches and outreach activities to make contact with them is adopted;
- Organizations establishing such Open Shelters can and do supplement their services through contact locations that are established on railway platforms, crowded market areas, tourist destinations, bus stands, etc.
- Contact Locations (Contact Points) established by organizations is on a 24-hour basis with open shelters or their partners;
- Techniques like music, drama, storytelling, outing and other child friendly methodologies are used to attract and sustain the interest of the children.
- Once children start participating, these open shelters introduce age-appropriate education, access to vocational training, recreation, bridge education, linkage with the National Open School Programme (NOSP), health care, counseling, etc;
- In order to provide useful vocational training to children, Open Shelter ties up with NGOs and ITIs by sending the children to such NGOs or ITIs or provide such facilities within the open shelters;
- Individual specific needs like substance abuse, behavioural problems and socially deviant behaviour among others is catered to;

- Involvement of social workers, community volunteers, peer educators, students and others are encouraged. This provides opportunity to people with skills and time to mentor, guide and improve the quality of life of these children.

- Life skills to children leading to personality enhancement, raising self esteem, developing a positive approach to life, improving communication skills, ability to deal with trauma, reducing risk and vulnerabilities, is provided;

- Temporary stay facilities for children is provided; and those children requiring long term care referred to the nearest shelter/children's home;

- Each shelter functions as a 24-hour Crisis Management Centre to receive and provide necessary assistance to children;

- Separate Open Shelters have been established for boys and girls;
  Functioning by the NGOs: An NGO can deal with one or more open shelters in the city, based on requirements. The NGOs concerned :

- Provides accessibility to children round the clock;

- Provides accessibility to children of all age groups up to 18 years of age;

- Provides quality toilets, lockers for children to keep their belongings, washing facilities, recreational facilities both indoor and outdoor, etc;

- Provides health care facilities and refer children for specialized services for prevention of drugs and substance abuse, HIV/AIDS/STIs and other chronic health disorders;

- Maintains standards of care and children are encouraged to participate in the activities of Open Shelters;

- Prepares Individual Care Plan for each child which will be monitored by the District Child Protection Society or the DCPS from time to time;

- Maintains electronic data of each child and furnishes the details to the DCPS as a part of the child tracking system.

7.7 Role of the media:

The media has a unique and vital role in raising awareness and monitoring progress on commitments to children**.** Media professionals – journalists, writers, broadcasters and programme developers – are the eyes, ears and voices of society and have great influence on

how children are visualized and portrayed. They can also help by putting children's rights on the news and media agenda and drawing the attention of the general public and opinion makers to the violations of those rights, using their work to hold governments accountable. As the watchdogs of the public, the media has a unique role to play in ensuring that the rights of children are respected and that violators are brought to justice. Media analysis can provide public and independent monitoring of a government's progress towards keeping their commitments to children. Through their work, media professionals can shape public opinion and influence behaviour. They can encourage governments, civil society organizations and individuals to effect change that will improve the quality of people's lives. However, **reporting on children's issues must be undertaken with sensitivity and understanding.** UNICEF has developed principles to assist journalists as they report on issues affecting children. They are offered as guidelines that UNICEF believes will help media to cover children in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner, while respecting their rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The guidelines are meant to support the best intentions of ethical reporters: serving the public interest without compromising the rights of children. **Partnerships with the media can enhance the effectiveness of campaign.**

Table 31: Extraction of Print Media: News Paper Articles

Serial Number	Date of Publication	Original Title of the Article in Bengali	Its English version	Name of the Newspaper	Remarks
1.	12th March,2012	*"Sishu Sramike ditiwa sthane Poshimbanga"*	WB ranks second in Child Labour next to Maharashtra	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Related to child labour
2.	13th March, 2012	*"Parikalpana abong samonnoyer*	Child Labour increasing due to lack of	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Related to child labour

		abhabe Shisu sramik barche Paschim Bange"	planning and co ordination in West Bengal		
2.	15th July, 2013	"*Sishu sramiker khabar rakhe na rajya tiroskar commissioner*"	The state does not keep information on the Child Labour :	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Related to child labour
3.	23rd July, 2013	"*Arther avabe Shisu sramik ganana bandha*"	Lack of funds causing no census on child labour	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Related to Intervention
5	26th December, 2013	" *Shisu sram bandha hok*"	Stop Child Labour	Eai Samay	Related to child labour
6.	20th June, 2014	"*Sishu sramik bidyalayar sikhak ra abahelito*"	Teachers of School for Child labour neglected	Bartaman	Related to street children's education
7.	16th July, 2014	"*Andhyagalir Rupkatha*"	Fairy tales on Blind alleys (focus on ICPS scheme)	Eai Samay	Related to ICPS project
8.	25th July, 2014	"*Sikhai haa hale tabe sishu srame naa*"	If Yes to Education then no to child Labour	Eai Samay	Related to child labour & intervention
9.	21st September,2014	"*Path sishuder schooler udyog*	Attempt of Schooling of	Eisamay	Related to street

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		:puro sabha O nagar unyan daptar"	street children by Municipality & urban development dept		children's education
10.	30th November,2014	"Sishu sram bandha hok kintu kamon kare?"	Child Labour should be stopped but how?	Ananda Bazar Patrika	Related to Child labour
11.	2nd February, 2015	"Khabar o madaker janna bhikkha"	Begging for collection of food and addictive materials	Bartaman	Related to addiction among street children
12.	22nd April, 2015	"Synthetic athar grashe naya projonmo"	The new generation under the clutches of Synthetic Gum	Eai Samay	Related to addiction among street children
13.	14th May,2015	"Sishu sramer sujog barie dilo Natun sishu sram aine"	Opportunity to Child Labourers in view of New Juvenile Justice Act 2014	Eai Samay	Related to Child labour
14.	15th December,2015	"Juvenile Aine"	Juvenile Law	Eai Samay	Related to Child law
15.	21st	"Shisu der	Crime	Times of	Related to

	December,2015	*Prati aparadh barche*"	against Children	India (National Crime Record Bureau)	crime against children
16.	23rd December,2015	*"Juvenile Aine o alochana"*	Juvenile Justice bill	Eai Samay	Related to Child law
17.	26th December, 2015	*"Sishu dibaseo shisu sramiker anagona"*	On the Children's day the prevalence of child labour	Eai Samay	Related to Child labour
18.	1st January,2016	*Juvenile Aine o alochana"*	Juvenile Justice Bill	Eai Samay	Related to Child law
19.	12th June 2016	*"Poschim banger Ak tritiansho sishu sramik nirakhar"*	One third child labour are illiterate in West Bengal	AnandaBazar Patrika	Related to Child labour and their education
20.	6th September,2016	*"Jader janna aaine tarai jane naa"*	Policy for Pavement Dwellers: but they are unaware	AnandaBazar Patrika	Related to intervention policies
21.	20th September,2016	*"Sankhai kam bale patha sishu ra abahelito"*	Being Few in number so negligence of Street Children	Eai Samay	Related to Child labour
22.	25th September,2016	*"Amar Santan jeno thake*	Our child should live in	Eai Samay	How children are

		dudhe vate"	prosperity		affected by war
Source: Collected and compiled by the researcher (2012-2016)					

7.8 Critiques on the service providers :

The key findings and general indicators discovered through this chapter on interventions has been critically summarized as follows:

Context Assessment:

There are no precise estimates of the exact magnitude of the problem of street children in India but all providers believe the problem is growing. There is still a problem related to defining the meaning of "street children". Each NGO uses its own definition when defining its target group (population), although they all seem to agree on major characteristics of street children. The major areas of intervention are with regard to family reunion, drug abuse, education, health, Child Rights and Protection and awareness raising. The schemes included in the section 7.3.4 on the Child Targeted Schemes and Programmes are implemented mainly for those belonging to the mainstream society:

Various "direct" reasons were identified by street children as direct and immediate reasons behind their problem of being on the street. These factors should be used as a guideline for targeting the problem of street children if effective **short-term goals** are to be achieved .Service providers agreed that the problem of street children is connected with a list of structural economic and social reasons, which can be used as basis for the development of long-term planning policies, which included :(a) Low income and educational family level; (b)Family break down;

(c)Unplanned rural-urban migration;

 (d) Dropping out of schools or education: Most street children are either school dropouts or have never been enrolled in a school. This indicates a major need for literacy education and vocational training as two main options, which were also expressed as main needs by street children themselves.

(e) Drug Abuse Assessment: Special restrictions should be made with regard to types of illicit substances. None of the NGOs or GOs came up with a program that deals directly with substance abuse among street children.

(f) Food Aid Assessment: Food is vital to GOs as well as NGOs to feed the number of ever increasing vulnerable children

(g) Intervention and Policy Assessment:

When considering intervention holistically, whether by NGOs or GOs, current intervention strategies seem promising and show various indicators of success. Despite the fact that competition over funds might hinder cooperation, competition also resulted in creative thinking and in new programs targeting the issue. Techniques of data recording in most NGOs as well as GOs need further elaboration. Additional community resources needs to be mobilized for action, including public hospitals, health clinics, community development NGOs, and local public schools

7.9 Recommendations and Suggested Framework of Intervention:

The many vulnerabilities of the street children require specific legislation and attention from the government and other organisations to improve their condition. Being a subgroup of the Indian population they deserve specific attention in order to ensure that their needs are known. Dealing with the problem of street children needs the cooperation of various governmental, non-governmental, and voluntary efforts. The way the problem of street children has been dealt with through both governmental and nongovernmental organizations, their collective validity in achieving an effective decrease of the magnitude of the problem and the vulnerability of street children is insufficient. The fact that street work is not sufficiently extensive is proven as many children who reside in areas where NGOs do not function receive no assistance and are not reached. Accordingly, if intervention is to be carried out, it has to cover all areas simultaneously through an emphasis on the following four baselines or levels of intervention:

The suggested framework of action would be through

1. Structural-based intervention;

2. Community-based intervention;

3. Center-based intervention;

4. Street-based intervention.

7.9.1 *Structural-based intervention***:** At the structural functional levels, there are various intervention options and projects that can be carried out through targeting the following areas:

1. Child rights: Severe penalties should be reconsidered for parents who expose their children to risk and vulnerability and who abuse or exploit them through full application of the provisions of Child Law. Constant monitoring of the application of the UN Convention to the Rights of the Child has to be carried out to ensure safety measures for the street children. Development of effective short, medium, and long-term policies is required to deal with school drop-outs, and developing child oriented literacy education curriculum to ensure their right to education . Coordination and joint action strategies with other GOs and NGOs that address health and nutrition issues are required. The scope of health insurance policies is to be widened so as to include all members of the family, including street and working children. Provision of birth certificates through NGOs is being done but more active participation is required.

2. Urbanization : Development of long-term effective policies to deal with problems related to urban-poverty and carrying out effective rural development programs to decrease the rate of rural-urban migration can reduce the plight of these vulnerable children.

3. Developing projects that include "**hotline telephone**", as part of their outreach strategies to support the legal rights of street children. CHILDLINE International 1098 has already spread awareness through brochures circulated among primary and upper primary schools in India , adding on the milestones along the roadways, on the rail station premises, on the drinking water bottle supplied by the rail . A wider coverage is required.

4 Strict law enforcement relating to the issue of drug abuse: This can be carried out with the help of related ministries, and in cooperation with NGOs through: the enforcement of the laws that prohibit the sale of cigarettes to minors, and monitoring of shops that sell and/or use glue and pharmacies that dispense psychotropic substances to minors, along with severe penalties. Selection and training of police officers who work in areas related to street children is strongly recommended.

7.9.2 *Community Based-Intervention***:**

The problem of street children is strongly affected by community attitudes and perceptions. Communities tend to see the street children phenomenon as an annoying problem in isolation from its causes. Training NGOs in programs related to "community mobilization" and how to make use of community resources especially in areas related to mobilization of voluntary action, raising awareness, and local fund raising can be done .

7.9.3 *Center Based Intervention:*

A center-based approach is needed to develop the capacity-building of NGOs and GOs that provide residential care for children. More active support towards the activities of NGOs that provide residential care to street children, especially children in need of full residence is required. Networking among NGOs and GOs in terms of referral is required. A joint computer program and networking facilities are needed to explore the availability of residential places for children, and to avoid overlapping of services, and for data exchange on cases of street children and their families. The establishment of joint action in terms of family-reunion is there but capacity building is to be stepped up. As the most vulnerable group of children in India according to UNICEF, the street children need to be understood as much as possible.


7.9.4 *Street-Based Intervention***:**

 Street based intervention is recommended for all GOs and NGOs working with street children to fill the gap between center-based activities and the real situation and immediate needs of street children. A Street Education Manual that suits the Indian culture and can act as a main tool for training NGOs can be produced. Street education will play a central role in reaching out to a far greater number of street children who cannot be reached through the center-based approach. Local civil society organizations can perform many tasks to assist excluded and invisible children

To carry out these interventions, it is important to initially consider the institutional framework or the various organizational options available to carry out the four levels of intervention mentioned above. The solution to this challenge lies in making our cities **child-friendly**. Addressing life in India's cities is a central pillar of inclusive growth. The cities

need to have a system of local governance that is committed to fulfill children's rights. This includes influencing decisions about the city, expressing their opinion, social participation, receiving basic services, safety, living in an unpolluted environment and **being equal citizens**. India's demographic dividend can only be realised if our cities improve their performance in areas such as urban governance, health, nutrition, water and sanitation, education, child protection, and urban resilience. Urban schemes need to ensure that it addresses specific needs and allocates **sufficient budget** for **children. A comprehensive national census of street children is required to remove the data gaps on the children. The principles of universality and non-discrimination must govern our interventions for children adopting the human rights-based approach to development and National laws must match international commitments for children.**

According to World Health Organization report (WHO, 1993) sometimes children escape from a children's institution. The study indicated that street children might feel that these institutions are like prisons. They cannot adjust to rules and regulation of the institution after experiencing the freedom of the streets.

Concept derived from Conticini and Hulme, (2006)
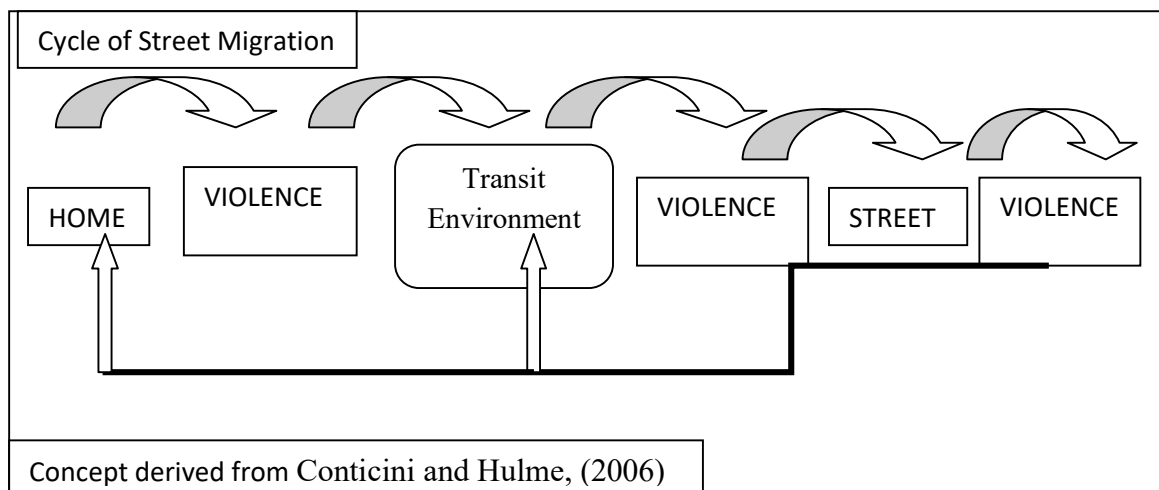
7.10 Conclusion:

Child Rights are minimum entitlements and freedoms that should be afforded to all persons below the age of 18 (UNCRC) everywhere in the world. These rights are interdependent and indivisible: one right cannot be fulfilled at the expense of the other right. The year 2014 saw the birth and strengthening of various institutional partnerships across thematic areas – with

significant funding support from UNICEF, DFID, etc. Despite the difficult fiscal situation, the Government of India has continued to increase allocation in social sector programmes including health and education, in line with its commitment to "Inclusive Growth."The Policy on Early Childhood Care and Development" indicates that efforts for strengthening the rights framework on several fronts by the government may have significant implications for strengthening the child survival and development outcomes for children. The nature of governmental intervention and ways of addressing the issue seem promising and elaborate. However, since the government alone is not able to meet the challenges of the massive enormous tasks in addressing the plight of the street children; the non-profit, voluntary and non-governmental organizations had to be involved in different phases and activities at the global, regional and local levels. NGOs are accepted as a part of the international relations landscape, and while they influence national and multilateral policy making, increasingly they are more directly involved in local action. The Government of India recognized the critical role of the NGOs in the Five - Year Plans, as they have commitment, credibility with the masses and professional approach to the people's issues unlike the charitable organizations of earlier days. Governments at the national, state and local municipal levels (the KMC) have decided that working with NGO's such as Calcutta Rescue, CINI, Save the Children, etc. is a very cost-effective and productive way of delivering services to their poor citizens.

NGOs are now viewed by GOs as "partners in development", who should be contacted and cooperated with. The increase in the number of NGOs targeting the issue has broadened the scale of intervention to reach a far greater number of street children and their families. Cooperation with NGOs shows flexibility in accepting new strategies and ideas. However, it has to reassure its role as a supporter of and partner with NGOs The models adopted by NGOs   reflects the "comprehensive approach" rather than targeting specific problems related to street children. All NGOs have reception centers that perform the same tasks and provide similar services (food, clothes, counseling, referral, family reunion, etc.) with varying degrees of success. Most NGOs currently consider family reunion as the ultimate goal when dealing with street children. NGOs have the ability to raise community awareness, although they do not show signs of either collective action or coordination in this realm, except on a very small scale. Save the Children tracks vulnerable children who are in

need of protection in different parts of India and works towards ensuring that they have a happy, healthy and safe childhood . It works with local NGOs and communities. It has electronic and print media platforms such as www.youtube.com/user/savethechildrenin,www.savethechildren.in;www.facebook.com/india.savethechildren; @stc_india; and plus.google.com/+savethechildrenin

Most street children indicated that the first thing that attracted them to the reception centers/drop in shelters were food, clothing, and recreation (games and play). There is an informal school, a bridge course educational system and a coaching centre   run by someone identified by them as Kartickda. If a student attends this centre ,he/she will be provided with lunch and bathing facility. After giving them food the children's signature is put down (record keeping) tiffin is provided by 'Robert Uncle' . They are popular among the children as they aren't having any institute and hence with no place to stay (so they will not be forced to stay). This indicates freedom to be one of the priorities for some of the street children. Another group Bijoy group of CINI provides medical support –first aid training by 4 boys(health volunteers) on the children loitering on the station. These volunteers are easily approached by the new street children ; the latter are afraid to go to NGOs as they may be kept in the Home run by NGOs. This indicates that in spite of interventions being implemented somewhere there is a lacuna as the children if wishing to run away from the drop in centre does so.

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Photographs: Intervention and Rehabilitation

Plate 92: Taking rest on beds in NGO open shelter near Sealdah

Plate93: Resting place at Short Stay Home of Childline

Plate 94: Having lunch in an Open Shelter near Sealdah Station

Plate 95: Keeping their belongings when Institutionalized

Plate 96: Yoga Class at Open Shelter near Rajabazar, Sealdah

Plate97:Drawing Class at Contact Point near Chandni Chawk

Photographs:NGO help, Support and Interventions

Plate 98: Informal education on the pavement by Calcutta Social Project

Plate 99: Celebration on World Day

Plate 100: Getting new clothes on the eve of Durga Puja

Plate 101: Care Givers taking class at Contact point near Tiljala

Plate 102: Vocational Training at NGO Contact Point

Plate 103: Karate Class at Open Shelter near Pottery Road

Photographs: Illness, Injuries, and Treatment of Street Children in Kolkata

Plate 104: A street child showing her cut injury

Plate 105: A street child showing skin problem on his

Plate 106: Treatment of street children at health center

Plate 107: Sick Bay of CINI, Kolkata

Plate 108: Care-givers taking care of the ill children

Plate 109:Treatment of leg injury of a girl

Plate 110: Open Shelter for boys of 6 to 9 years run by CINI near Sealdah

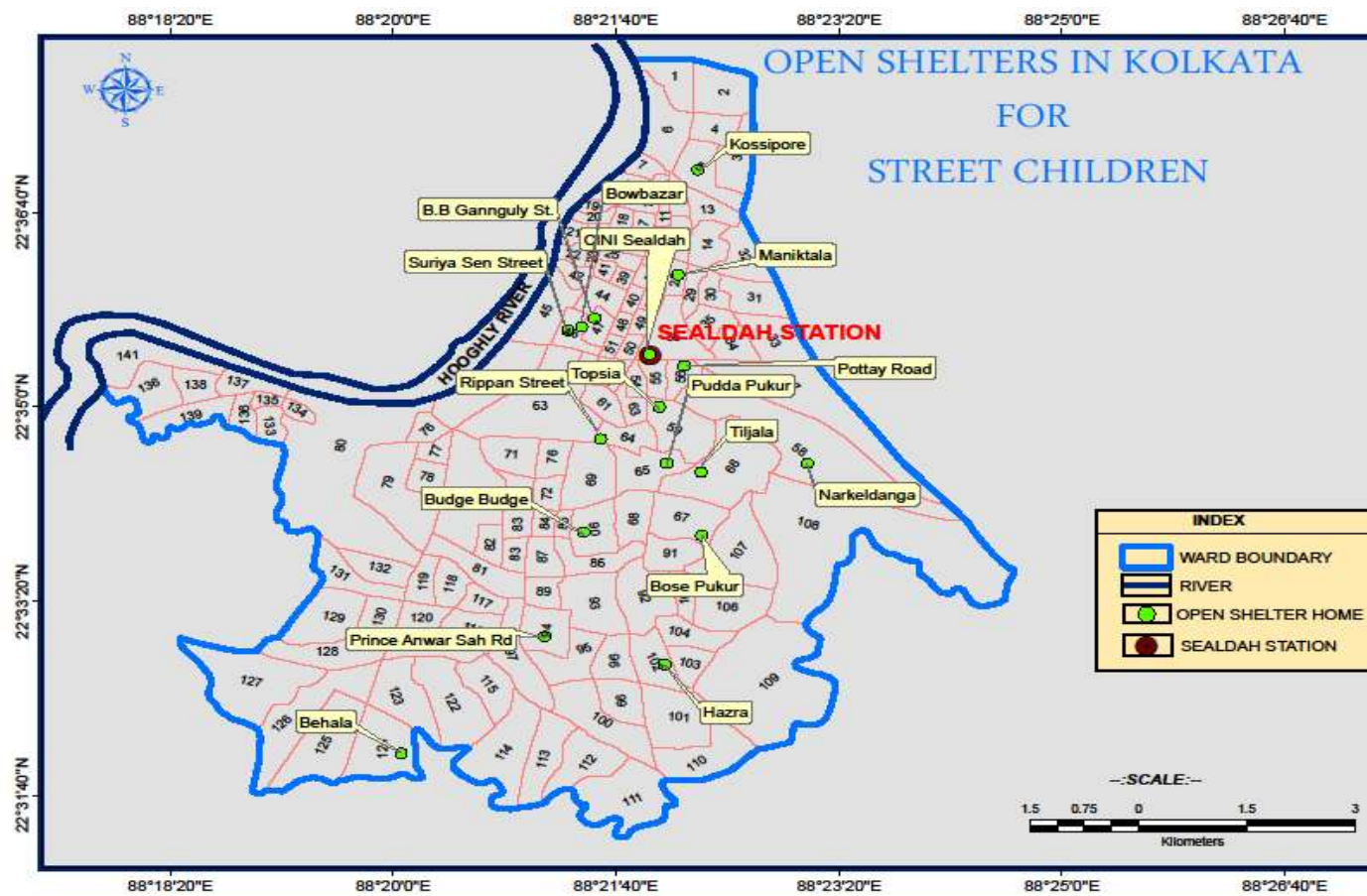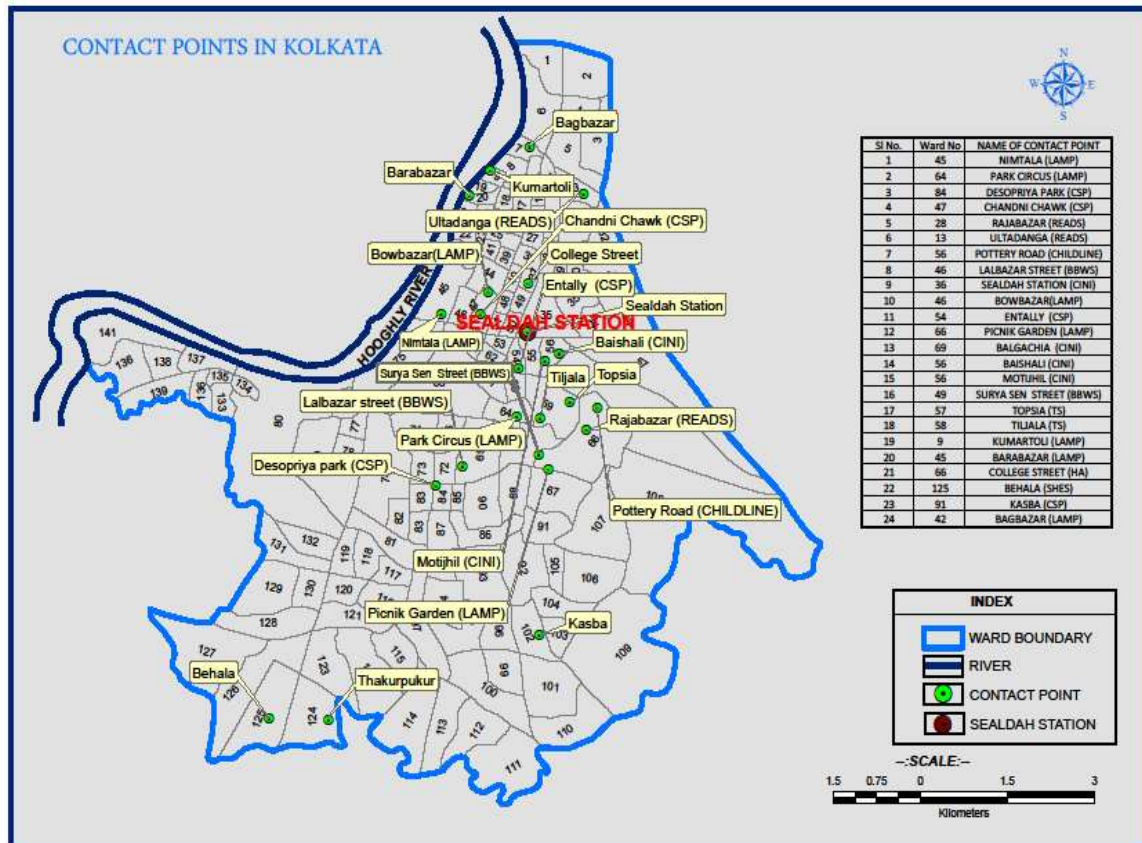**Plate 111: Open Shelter for boys of 9 to 14 years run by CINI near Sealdah**

Figure- 32: Open shelters for street children in Kolkata

Figure-33: Contact points in Kolkata

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Abstract

The chapter reflects the logical outcome of the research followed by *c*urrent gllobal to local scenario and then the summary of main findings , the little Challenges and the few Limitation of the study thus paving the way forward for future research

8.0 Logical outcome of the research

This outcome has been stated by recapitulating the purpose and findings .After providing preliminary background information to place this study in context, the overall research aim and individual objectives have been specified. The value of this research lies in exploring the unknown phenomenon of the invisibility of the street children. Childhood is probably the most critical period of one's life. Good education, nutrition and care are critical during this period for a child's development. Education is not only a right in itself, but an "enabling right" - a critical instrument for bringing about "social, economic and political inclusion and a durable integration of people, particularly those 'excluded' from the mainstream of any society". Ensuring the human rights of children is like granting humanity the right to dream and this is more so for the street children. The findings are based on the mixed and multiple method approach, triangulating through quantitative and qualitative techniques. The ethical issues were kept in mind throughout the work : photos and information gathered with informed consent of the respondents This is because the work is **"for them, of them and by them'.** Since data has been analyzed based on the visual aids   (among many other aids) the photo plates have been enlisted separately and not incorporated in the figure list as earlier decided upon. The methods applied, the study area and the target population have been duly justified. The research question framed has been solved through the empirical evidences .Several problems arose during the research the main one being interacting with the respondents: the little vulnerable children who due to them being exploited and abused by many from the mainstream society were uncomfortable. It took time and effort to convince them. Moreover, these are the children frequently on the move coping positively by seeking opportunities (as indicated in the activity spaces) to earn or negatively through use of drugs.

Their escaping from the secure shelters provided by the various stakeholders itself is indicative of more probing into such issues to give them a permanent way of life . The researcher while working realized the moral duties of the mainstream society –the immediate local communities in lending a positive hand towards these visible children who are ironically invisible in our policies . This research study has also provided some key ideas which have helped him examine his own professional values, and guidelines for possible changes to his own future practice towards these little vulnerable children

In the critical analysis of the service providers to street children from global to local it has been noticed that there is evidence of collaboration between all the concerned agencies/ actors along with inter-sectoral linkages. Awareness raising through some such global to local events is put forth in the forthcoming section.

8.1 Current Global scenario:

8.1.1 International Day for Street Children: The Consortium for Street Children, UK stated that "Children are the future so open your ears" while speaking out on the occasion of the International Day for Street Children on 12th April . This is a platform for the millions of Street Children around the world http://www.streetchildrenday.org (Accessed on 19th July 2015)

8.1.2World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse on 19 November:

The Women's World Summit Foundation (WWSF) launched in 2000 the World Day for Prevention of Child Abuse, a Day to be commemorated every 19 November in synergy with the anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (20 November). Its main goals are to: draw attention to the issue of child abuse and highlight once a year innovative prevention and child protection measures around the world. To make this World Day an annual global call to action, WWSF launched in 2001 an international coalition of governmental and non-government organizations that commit to mark the Day with appropriate events and activities. This coalition was felt essential to catalyze the creation of a culture of prevention of child abuse. Its intention is to be part of a global partnership network for raising awareness, mobilizing public opinion and activities, disseminating prevention programs, and holding world leaders accountable for promises made to the children of the world. All coalition members are to commit to mark the Day with local and

national events and activities; to mention the World Day in their publications and on their web sites; to distribute posters, educational programs and information; to create partnership and national coalitions of organizations working for the promotion and protection of the rights of the child; to generate financial resources for programs; to alert the press and radio stations, to inform local authorities of the existence of the World Day and of planned activities; and to lobby governments for official proclamation of the Day as a National day. This is in accordance with the articles 19 and 34 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child highlighting Child abuse a global problem.

8.1.3.The Street Child World Cup (SCWC): Through a Joint Venture partnership- the Street Child United, a registered UK charity , in association with Save the Children- arranges for tournament participated by many countries across the world with the objective of challenging the negative perception and treatment of street children around the world. This event provides a platform for street children to be heard, to receive the protection and opportunities that all children are entitled to, to change public perception, to promote their rights and challenge negative stereo types of street children.

Being a global movement for street children just ahead of FIFA World Cup, they unite street children from across five continents to play football, participating in art and campaigning, in the International Conference; the outcomes of the first one was published in 2010 as " The Durban Declaration" (since the first street child world cup was held in Durban, South Africa). The Declaration emphasized street children rights to be heard, right to a home, right to protection from violence and right to access to health and education. The participants were either street children or former street children between 14 and 16 years old at the time of the event and all had experience of living fulltime on the street without family. From India the team was brought by the street child Organization the Rurka Kalan and, the Khalsha Football Academy (www. thekfa.com/). The football tournament was won by India where the other participating teams were Brazil, South Africa, Nicaragua, Ukraine, the Philippines, and Tanzania.

The success of Durban Street Child World Cup encouraged the Organization to hold the second cup in Brazil, prior to the FIFA World Cup. India also took part in the Street Child World Cup 2014 where twenty countries participated. After the 2014 World Cup tournament

the team of Pakistani Street children embarked on a ten-city tour, culminating in a visit with the Pakistani Prime Minister. Their efforts encouraged Pakistan National Assembly to pass a resolution for social protection plan for the Nation's 1.5 million street children. In Brazil, Joel Bergner created a mural in support of street children voices. Three SCWC figures made of hexagons within which each child wrote or drew a message considered as personal and meaningful. The mural is a reminder of the hardship and violence these children faced, of the fact that this is a global, rather than a local, problem and those street children have voices to be heard.

Street Child Word Cup is using the world's great equalizer – soccer –to get children of the street and give them a voice. SCWC, in support of the grass roots organizations that sponsors each team for the street child World Cup, has began the important campaign of removing them from the street and providing them a sense of pride and worth through scholarships for education, jobs with sustainable incomes, and programmes to connect street children   with   their   own   families   or   foster   families. **http://www.worldpolicy.org/blog/2014/06/24/streetchildworldcup/**   **[Accessed   on 19/07/2015].**

8.1.4 The 'Street to School' programme:

This was organized by the NGO Save the Children in Delhi and was recognised among the three best urban interventions globally by Save the Children International as part of the 'Best Practices in Urban Programmes' challenge. Two children from their programmes in Odisha and West Bengal respectively - Kwatolu Siba Rao and Anwara Khatun- represented India at the Global Partnership for Education Replenishment Conference in Brussels (Belgium) hosted by the European Commission in 2014. Anwara emerged as Save the Children's star child activist and the driving force behind Children's Groups in West Bengal. Prominent media houses like 'The Hindu' and 'The Telegraph' covered her work extensively.   In 2011, she was honoured by West Bengal's Chief Minister, Mamata Banerjee. In 2012, she was one of three nominees for the International Children's Peace Prize

A Residential school for street children has been opened in Kolkata :The newly opened school in Rani Bhabani School in north Kolkata will go a long way in ensuring education to

these children. This special school has been started by Sarva Shiksha Mission (SSK) Kolkata with the support from the state school education department. Aimed at addressing education rights and protection issues of these underprivileged children, hundreds of children are expected to be benefited by the project http://timesofindia.in,indiatimes.com

8.1.5 Film-makers shine light :

Film-makers are in a unique position to draw public attention to the plight of excluded and invisible children, and the need to speak for those children who do not have a voice was recently recognized by some of the world's most prominent directors in films such as 'All the Invisible Children', 'The Children of Leningradsky', 'Slumdog Millionaire' Mira Nair's Academy Award nominated film, *Salaam Bombay!* (1988), a film about Mumbai's underbelly, prostitution and street children used street children as actors. All these reflect the role of film makers on the lives of excluded and invisible children

8.2 Summary of main points :

- Issue of street children is the subject of contemporary interest, to both academics and the public.

- "Children on the streets" work on the streets but have the support structure of their families while "Children of the streets" have little or almost negligible family ties their abode being the streets .

- The street children across the world are identified in an urban setting utilizing the urban public space. Rapid increasing number of street children in urban areas of both developing and developed countries is an issue of grave concern

- India is one of the few countries in the world, to have a written policy for children declaring the children as the 'supreme asset of the nation '

- India has also the highest concentration of street children in the world (47.70 %).

- Boys outnumber the girls in the world : so also in India and in this study and with little or no education

- About three-fourth (72%) of Indian street children are aged between 6-12 years the crucial age when their individualistic and holistic development begins

- In India overall 63 percent of the street children are illiterate. The introduction of the **RTE (**Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education) **Act** which has earmarked 25% seats for underprivileged children, a clause particularly relevant for slum children,(many of whom are on the street) will change things for the better.

- Growth of cities gives rise to several **child protection** issues. There was a **24% increase in crimes against children** between 2010 and 2011 and a further **52.5% increase** from 2012 to 2013. The million plus cities are major contributors to crimes against children

- There are more than 5 lakh street children in India who are at high risk of addiction

- Among the maladaptive strategies glue sniffing is very popular among street children as it is relatively cheap, its' easy legal availability and the feeling of 'high' happens very quickly

- They develop a particular behavioural model of culture: the Street culture They are child-adults who are neither fully children nor adults as for surviving in street life they constantly and efficiently cross boundaries between childhood and adulthood.

- Life space of the street children reflects the use of **urban space** for several activities reflecting both positive and negative coping mechanisms on this public space.

- Sealdah Railway Station is a fertile economic arena for street children and also a place of **'No pay for a dwelling'**

- Inability to save due to lack of a bank account or a locker for those on the move limits their abilities to think of initiating their own income generating opportunities while living on the street.

- The major areas of intervention in India are with regard to family reunion, drug abuse, education, health, Child Rights and Protection and awareness raising

- There should be a "Code of Ethics" signed by all actors of the basic philosophy and principles adopted when dealing with street children

- There should be an agreement among NGOs and GOs on a proper definition for street children (or the target group) based on situational analysis.

- **Making every child count:** In India, the registration of births and deaths is compulsory and mandated under the Registration of Births and Deaths (RBD) Act, 1969, which came into force in1970.Being a signatory to the UNCRC, India has committed itself to ensuring universal birth registration through national policies, such as the National Population Policy, 2000, and the National Plan of Action for Children, 2005. Yet over one third of children in urban areas remains unregistered at birth, and hence invisible in governmental policies. The current level of birth registration in the country is 70 per cent. In Kolkata 56.3% children had no identification documents.

Table 32: A Matrix for the study of street children in Kolkata and Sealdah Station area

Study Areas	What do I Need to Know? (Research Questions)	Why do I need to know this? Goals	What kind of data will Answer the questions? (Methods)	Analysis Methods	Potential conclusions	Methods to investigate Alternative Explanations
Kolkata as Whole	Socio-economic life , Vulnerability in their life	To know about the street children	Secondary sources of unpublished data from NGOs	Analysis with the help of Microsoft Excel	Street children are more connected with their families	Try to observe the scenario with the help of NGOs
Sealdah Station area as special reference	Integrated and detail study the street children	Integrated and detail study the street children	In-depth Interview: Semi-structured and open ended and close ended questions	Analysis with the single coding and SPSS software	Both with and without family connection children found	Discuss with NGO officials and different related stakeholders

Concept derived from Maxwell, J. (2002)

Table 33: Meta Analysis Cross Case Summary Table based on case study documentation

Cases Documented	Family Connection	Poverty	Home Violence	Type of Economic Activity	Becoming Addicted
Abu	No	Yes	Yes	Rag Picker	Yes
Ahmed Ali	No	Yes	Yes	Porter	Yes
Akash Barui	No	Yes	Yes	Porter	Yes
Reshma and	Yes	Yes	No	Rag Picker	No
Deep Mitra	No	No	Yes	No work	Yes
Puja Das	No	Yes	No	Domestic	No
Sujit	No	Yes	Yes	Rag picker	No
Ali	Yes	Yes	No	Porter	No
Bapi Mahato	Yes	Yes	No	Shoe polisher	Yes
Barkat	No	Yes	Yes	Porter	Yes
Bikash	No	Yes	No	Porter	No
Bijoy	Yes	Yes	No	Vegetable Collector	Yes
Bilal	Yes	Yes	No	Beggar	No
Bittu	Yes	Yes	No	Porter	No
Raju	Yes	Yes	Yes	Rag Picker	Yes
Siraj Mollah	Yes	Yes	No	Porter	Yes
Iqbal	No	Yes	Yes	Porter	Yes

Rana	No	Yes	Yes	Porter	Yes
Sujay	Yes	Yes	No	Rag picker	Yes
Karim	Yes	Yes	Yes	Rag Picker	Yes

Source: Analyzed through field observation (Concept derived from Greenland,S.O. and Rouke, K., 2008)

8.3 Challenges and Limitation of the study:

A scrutiny of existing literature revealed that street children are difficult to study despite being very visible. This is because, as a group, they are rare and elusive. Their way of living means that, unlike other children, they are not registered in the household or the school. So collecting samples of street children upon which statistical estimates can be made is a challenging task. Most statistics on street children are merely estimates, or 'guesstimates' as stated earlier. Like other 'hidden populations', street children are difficult to deal with within ordinary statistics. Multiple definitions of street children exist, and many practitioners fail to specify which group of children they are addressing. So determining the category to be studied by first defining them was itself a daunting task. After doing so the inability of some children to answer certain questions in the interview schedule affected the responses to some extent.

The present research has the following **limitations-**

- The exact number of street children is impossible to quantify and the street children are **excluded and invisible** phenomenon

- The Union Ministry for Women and Child Development in 2014 acknowledged **the lack of reliable data** related to street children.

- Primary survey focused on **certain parts of Kolkata & in adjoining areas of Sealdah station.** So, the outcome of the research can't' be generalized in other contexts.

- Focus is on **socio economic aspects** of street children, so **conclusions on** some other relevant aspects such as **crime** associated with street children are beyond the scope of

the present study;

- Based on primary data, the outcome of the result is greatly influenced by the quality of the data collected. Although, utmost care has been taken to get meaningful data, still some amount of **sampling errors may exist in the data;**

- The data was collected only during the day- time, so **nightlife phenomenon is not reflected;**

- The **female** street children are **not visible in the study area as the male are** so it was not possible to obtain information about them. Only few females are included in this study.

  Research is an ongoing process, so these limited areas of research can be explored in further study.

8.4 The way forward:

Strong research is essential for effective programming of the children. Lessons learned – often from the experiences of other countries and regions can be integrated with **accurate local knowledge**, including the root causes of exclusion and of protection violations that make children less visible, to produce the most effective response. Collecting accurate data and compiling qualitative studies on excluded and invisible children is clearly fundamental to the assessment process. Agreeing on definitions is often the first step towards gathering comparable data and information in areas where systematic research is in early stages. It is also required to pinpoint where interventions might be most effective

Many gaps in data gathering and qualitative analysis remain that must be urgently addressed Lack of firm quantitative data is not an excuse for inaction by policymakers .Legislation and research must be supported by budgetary allocations, institution building and reform since child-focused budgets draw growing interest across the world. This funding will help in carrying out further research with a team Reaching excluded and invisible children will require greater and more targeted financing for services to support them.

Social research dealing with the social phenomena is the systematic method of discovering new facts and/ or verifying old facts, their sequences, inter-relationships, causal explanations, etc. It studies the behaviour of human beings, their feelings, responses, attitudes under different circumstances- as members of the society. This study can be thus

applicable for the whole society through the representative sample. Brief factual reports on critical incidents such as coping strategies adopted, etc has helped in identifying common factors associated with these coping strategies adapted by the children. Documentation has been done based on having connections with or without family. Case studies on cause of running away from the family helped in pattern matching with the theories that poverty and ill treatment at home by a family member are the major forces behind the running away of children. The running away from the interventional shelters justifies the priority of freedom over a secure and sheltered cozy life. This has theoretical /or political insights and implications too on public policies. The judicious case study selection of the street children in and around the Sealdah rail station complex replicates this universal phenomenon existing across all scales from local to global. The findings also has future research prospects in that the generalization of the case based findings of the Sealdah rail station complex can be enhanced further. This case research can be replicated in future if a case researcher selects a case on the basis of the same theories and test these theories through pattern matching elsewhere. By doing so the generalization of case based findings can be enhanced further.

India has set in place various forms of public policy concerning street children but they have partly been ineffective because they are uniformed by sociological, anthropological, and geographical research on street children, meaning they do not always correctly assess and address needs. Bringing invisible children out of the shadows and creating inclusive societies requires that all members of the global community including the academic one – in all their myriad roles – work to ensure that no child is forgotten. International agencies, donors, governments, civil society, the media, and the private sector must all take responsibility for the inclusion and protection of children. The principles of the Convention and recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child must be more consistently integrated into development strategies. The lives of excluded and invisible children will depend on the actions we take now. "Ensuring the human rights of children is like granting humanity the right to dream and this is more so for the street children."

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APPENDIX- A

APPENDIX- A-1

QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME OF SITE: **DATE**

1.Name…………………………………………………..Age: ………Sex…M/F

2. Father's name………………………………………….

3. Mother tongue—(a) Bengali (b) Bihari (c) Urdu (d) Hindi (e) Nepali.

4. Religion : a) Hindu b) Muslim c) Others

5. Nationality : (a) Indian (b) Bangladeshi (c) Nepali (d) Others

6. Are you born in this city-(a) Yes (b) No (c) Don't know

7. From which place have you come?

(a) Kolkata   (b) Other districts of West Bengal (……………………………)

(c) Other states (……………………..), (d) Bangladesh   (e) Nepal

.

8. How long have you been living on the streets?

9. Why did you leave your home-?

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(a) Parent's attitude, (b) Poverty, (c) Home violence, (d) Wanted to be free, (e) Friend's Force, (f) Wanted to make money, (g) Addiction.

10. Where have you been sleeping at night during the past 30 days? (a) Street, (b) park, (c) Footpath, (d) Rail station, and (e) Rehabilitation centre

11. How many other children sleep over there?

12. Are you a part of a group.   Yes/No.

13. What is the number of children in that group?

14. Does the group have a group-leader? a) Yes b) No

15. Have you ever been arrested –(a) Yes,   (b) No, and   (c) Don't Know.

16. Why were you arrested?

17. How many days did you spend in jail……………………..,

18. What kind of problems do you face in the streets…………………….......................

19. Where does your family live?   (a) Streets, (b) Own house and (c) Rented house.

20. How often do you visit your family? (a) Everyday, (b) 2-4 times a week, (c) Once a week, (d) Once a month, (e) More than a month, and (f) Do not go home.

21. How many brothers and sister do you have?   (a) Brothers….. (b) Sisters …

22. What is your birth order in the family?   (a) Eldest (b)Middle (c)Youngest.

23. Are your parents alive? (a) Both alive (b)both died (c)father died (d)mother died.

24. What is the current marital status of your parent?

(a) Living together,(b) Separated, and (c) Divorced.

25. What is your father's occupation?…………………………………………..

26. What is your mother's occupation ?…………………………………………..

27. Can you read or write.   (a)Yes   (b) No.

28. Did you ever go to the school?   (a) Yes (b)   No

29. Up to what standard you have studied (a) Up to class IV (b) IV-VI (c) VI-VIII.

30. Why did you leave school?   (a) Don't like studying (b) Had to work/economic reason, (c) Family problems (d) Did not like teachers, and (e) Violence by teacher.

31. If given a chance would you like to go to school again

(a) Yes   (b) No   (c) Don't know

32. Can you do any technical work?   (a) Yes   (b)   No

33. What is the usual type of work that you do to earn?

34. What are your other sources of income?

35. What is your average daily income?

36. How many hours you spend working in a day.

37. In the past one year have you been working at a specific place?

38. Is there someone who supervises you in your work?   (a)   Yes (b) No

39. What portion of your income goes to your supervisor?

40. Do you ever give any money to your family? (a) Yes (b) No

41. If yes what percent of your income is given?

42. How do you spend your money usually?

43. How many meals do you take in day? (a) Breakfast, (b) Lunch, and (c) Dinner.

44. Where do you get food to eat? (a) Begging, (b) Buying (c) Hotel left over; (d) NGO

45. How many nights do you sleep without eating (number of nights).

46. Have you ever suffered from a major illness in last year?

47. What diseases are you suffering from now?

48. How did you treat your disease?

(a) Govt. hospital (b) Private doctor (c) Self Medication (d)Dispensary, and (e) None.

49. What are your current medical problems?

50. Are you taking bath regularly?

51. Do you brush your teeth regularly?   (a) Yes, (b) No

52. Do you use sleeper or shoes-   (a) Yes (b) No

53. Have you ever used any addictive materials - (a) Yes (b) No
54.If yes then which ones (a) Bidi, (b) Tobacco, (c) Alcohol , (d) Marijuana (e) Guthka (f)
Glue and (g) any other

55. Do you know about glue sniffing?   (a) Yes (b) No

56. Do you sniff glue?   (a) Yes (b) No (c) Don't know.

57. If you use when did you begin

(a) 2yrs, (b) 1yrs, (c) 1month and (d) 1week

58. With whom you use glue? (a) With friends (b) with other users

59. From whom you knew about the sniffing?

60. Which type glue do you use? (a) Dendrite, (b) Paint thinner, (c) spray

61. Where do you buy it?

(a) Nearby market, (b) From friends , and (c) Other sources.

62. How do you get money for glue?

63. Do you sniff glue regularly? (a) Yes (b) No

64. What quantity do you use regularly?   (a) 1 (b) 2 (c) 3 (d) 4 (e) 5 and (f) 6 tubes

65. How long does a trip last?

66. Why do you sniff glue?

(a) To cope with tension, (b) To cope with hunger, (c) To be stronger, (d) To belong to a group , (e) for curiosity (f)for addiction and (g) To have heavenly pleasure.

67. What is your feeling after sniffing?

68. Are you aware of the effects of the glue sniffing? (a) Yes (b) No

69. Do you want to get rid of this addiction?

(a) Yes (b) No and   (c) Don't know.

70. What should be done to save children from this addiction?

(a) Awareness camp, (b) Rehabilitation, (c) Vocational training, (d) Health care/prohibit sales.

71. Why do think street children get easily addicted to sniffing- (a) Affordable, (b) Easily available, (c) Enough money on hand, and (d) kind of high desire.

72.What are your views on the NGOs?

73. What are your views on the GRP officials?

74. What are your views on the Public?

75. Would you like to go back to your home?

Signature of the investigator

With date

APPENDIX- B

FIELD DIARY:

January'13 to July '13

From January 2013 to July 2013, I visited different places of Kolkata, where Street children are concentrated. I visited along the river side, along the circular railway, Terminal Stations like Sealdah and Howrah, large vegetable markets, tannery industry, vat or garbage dumping station. I also observed the Sealdah station's parking place, ticket counter, south section, area between south and north section of the station, market places, and slums adjacent to and near the station.

August'13 to December'13

From August to December' 13, I conducted a pilot survey with 30 (thirty) street children from different places of Kolkata and 25 (twenty five) street children in and around the Sealdah station area. I have interacted with the children at parking place, market area, and platform number nine and the Sealdah South section. The children, who were included in the pilot study, are very much connected with this station.

January'14

Throughout the month on different days, I observed the activities of street children in and around the station. I also tried to find out how the children are associated with this places for their daily Activities .(ask SS)

4ᵗʰ February'14

I revisited Sealdah station parking area, the Sisir market, and Koley market to observe the street children who are engaged in vegetable vending.

12ᵗʰ February'14

I again visited the market places near this station to interact with the children working in different food stalls and other shops. I interacted with 20 children engaged as child labour in these shops.

16ᵗʰ February' 14

I went to the N.G.O office of Bikash Bharti Welfare Society at 20/1B Lalbazar Street, Kolkata to collect the information about street children.

12ᵗʰ March'14

I visited the N.G.O. shelter home for street and child labour at Rajabazar. The name of N.G.O is READS (Raja Bazaar Education and Awareness Development Society) at Rajabazar near Sealdah.

On the same day, I went to the urban shelter functioning under the Maya Foundation at 15A Adhar ch. Lane, Kolkata 700067 near Sealdah Station.

26ᵗʰ March'14

The Office of the Controller of Vagrancy (Undertaking by West Bengal Govt.) was visited to get the permission for open shelters' visit in and around Sealdah Station area.

2nd, 4th, 6th, 13th, and 17th April'14

Throughout the April month and specially on these days , I went to different rail junction stations of Sealdah Eastern Railway section like Ballaygunge, Barasat, Naihati, and Dumdum to observe the scenario of vagabond children in these station areas.

7th May' 14

The CINI office at Pottary Road was visited to seek permission for visiting the shelters for urban street children.

19th May'14

I visited Child Line at Pottary Road to observe tele-call service open for the children in need

 (The help-line number is 1098).

6th and 9th June'14

Two open shelters near Sealdah Station were surveyed where I interacted with 34 street children aged between 6 to 14 years. (There are two open shelters 'Udan' and 'Uttaran'. Udan for 9 to 14 years and Uttaran for 6 to 9 years).

7th July 14

I went to a girl child shelter at 63 Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Road, Kolkata-16 under the care of CINI. There I interacted with 10 girl children who have migrated from their home for different reasons.

16th July'14

I went to the Sick-Bay at 63 Rafi Ahmed Kidwai road, Kolkata-16. This is a small health care unit under CINI. This health care unit is well equipped with medical facility and provision of six beds for seriously ill children.

17th Aug' 14

I revisited Sealdah South Section and interacted with families living with their children of the Station area . I again observed the parking area and open space in front of Sealdah Station.

9ᵗʰ Sep'14

I went to the nearby slum areas of Moulali, Park Circus and Entally around Sealdah Station to study the living condition of slum children.

4ᵗʰ October '14

I re surveyed the entire station area with the help of two N.G.O. volunteers Mr. Shibaprasad Das and Mr. Babu Shaw. I walked through the parking area, along platform number 9 to platform numbers 4, 5, 6; station front area, south section; and the passage between North and South section.

4ᵗʰ November'14

I surveyed the Narkeldanga Khalpad area and interacted with vendors of waste materials. In that area, street children usually visit daily to sell out their collected waste materials like paper, bottle, garbage, plastic etc.

12ᵗʰ November '14

I visited Child Help Center booth at Sealdah Station to watch the mobility of street children throughout the station.

December'14

I went to many street children addiction points, where they gathered and indulged in glue addiction. These areas are platform number 1 and 9, the parking area, under A.J.C Bose road flyover, Sisir Market and Narkeldanga Khalpad area.

I visited different shops in the Sisir Market, where from street children collect the tubes of Dendrite for adhesive inhaling.

FIELD DIARY : 2015

January'15:

I visited at the Sealdah Station area and interacted with the street children. After that, I surveyed surroundings area of Sealdah station such as Moulali, Rajabazar, Ahmerst Street, College Square, B.B.Ganguly Street to observe the activities of street children of these areas.

February' 15:

I went to the Vagrancy Department to collect the data and information about the NGOs near Sealdah Station area.

March'15

I carried out observational studies on platform number 9A at Sealdah Station around 11:30 am, when Rajdhani Express arrived from New Delhi. This time was a very busy schedule for the street children because they were very much engaged in collecting food, bottles, tips and other things.

I also visited a roadside hotel near Sealdah Station, where many street children usually have their lunch. I talked with 12 children then.

April' 15

I visited one of the contact points for street children at 114A Motilal Neheru Road, Kolkata-27. This Contact Point functions by the N.G.O. :The Calcutta Social Project.

May'15

I went to an open shelter under the ICPS project at 226 B.B.Ganguly Street. This open shelter belongs to the NGO, Humanity Association. There I have interacted with 24 street children.

June'15

I visited another open shelter for street children at 66 Suriya Sen Street Kolkata-9. This shelter administered by the NGO Liberal Association for Movement of People. In that shelter, I have interacted with 20 street children.

July '15

I surveyed a contact point for street children at B.B.Ganguly Street situated in ward 47. I have also visited their informal school and rehabilitation centers.

10th August'15

I visited with my research guide Dr. Sukla Basu to some contact points surrounding Sealdah station areas. First, we visited a contact point located at Madan Street in Chandni Chawk area. This contact point is under the care of Calcutta Social Project (NGO). We met twenty-five street children at this contact point called 'Su-Jog'.

After that, we visited another contact point at BowBazar area functioning by the same NGO. At this contact point we interacted with thirty-six street children. Two young lady teachers teach these children. These teachers were also from street children background.

They have completed their graduation and have joined this contact point based school to teach the children.

Then we came to Sealdah station area. We visited two open shelters of CINI ASHA (NGO). The shelters are named as Udan and Uttaran. Udan is for 12 to 16 years old boys and Uttaran is for 6 to 12 years boys. Both the shelters are for boys.

After that, we met the Officer-In-Charge at Sealdah GRPF Police station. The department provided me the data related to the vagabond children in Sealdah Station area from january2013 to August 2015.

21st August 2015

We visited the Vagrancy Department on 21/08/15. This department is under the Ministry of Women and Child Welfare. We met Mr. Timir Roy, Field Officer of this department who provided us the relevant documents and programme and methods of rehabilitation process for the street children.

September'15

The Drop in Shelter or Night shelter near Sealdah station beside 9a platform of Sealdah North Section (the Uttaran and Udan) was observed .After that, we went to the CINI Open Shelter and the Shelter Home situated at Pottery Road. We also visited Contact point at Tangra (22.33.18 N and 88.23.29E) which is run by   LAMP(Liberal Association For Movement of People) under the ICPS .Afterwards we visited the Shishu Sramik Vidyalaya under LAMP and Labour Department, Govt. of West Bengal.

October'15

Drop in shelter at Sealdah (Uttaran)talking with NGO worker at Sealdah Shelter home, at Pottery Home, at contact point at Tangra children with outreach worker .

Case Study Method in Sealdah Station Complex Area

Street Children without family connection		
Serial Number	**Case study details**	**Picture of the children**
1.	**Abu: Abu**: (12 years) is a runaway child. I met him at platform number 08 in 2015. He is from Beldanga, Murshidabad. According to him, poverty and rough behaviour of his stepmother forced him to leave home. He arrived at Sealdah Station by Lalgola Passenger train. He had started his primary education at home and studied up to class three. Abu still loiters here and there in the station area. Usually he is a rag picker. He is no longer connected with his home.	
2.	**Ahmed Ali:** Has completed seventeen years of age. He has been on the street (Sealdah station) for the last six years. His mother expired when he was six years old. His father is a drunkard and usually beats him. This is why he ran away from home. Ahmed is working in the railway station as a loading unloading boy. He is from Diamond Harbor area of South 24 Parganas. He has no connection with his family.	
3.	**Akash Barui**: Akash Barui hails from Krishnanagar, Nadia. He ran away from home due to home violence and poverty. I met him between north and south section. He has studied up-to class V. Generally he is a rag picker, but also works as luggage boy. He is 15 years old. At the early stage of his street life he was taken to a shelter home at Naktala, Kolkata, from where he ran away and permanently lives in the station area. He has very little connection with his family.	
4.	**Deep Mitra:** He is thirteen years old, lived at Barasat, 24 parganas(N) with his mother . His father got involved in some criminal activities, and his parents separated. As he grew up, he wanted to be free. One day Deep ran away from home with one of his friends. I met him in the drop-in-center Udan near the Sealdah Station.	

5.	**Puja Das**: Puja is seventeen years old. She escaped from home Kankinada, 24 Parganas (N) with her boyfriend and lived a life as a street child .. Now she works as a domestic servant near Sealdah Station area and has settled in life. Her husband is working at a roadside hotel near the station. They live in Entally area. Puja has completed her primary level education.	
6.	**Sujit:** He is from Naihati, 24 Parganas(N). He is fifteen years old. I met him in front of the north section of the station. Sujit earns his livelihood by rag picking. He has a step mother: the reason for leaving home was his step-mother who ill treated him. He had to do heavy work with no proper food along with lots of beating(abusing). His father was a drunkard. As this ill treatment and punishments became intolerable he decided to depart from home, boarded the local train and reached Sealdah. As he arrived at the station, NGO officials dropped him at the shelter home of Udan. Within one month he ran away from there and is trying to live on his own. He is addicted to biri, khaini etc.	
7.	**Rana:** He is seventeen years old and hails from Murshidabad. He lives permanently in Sealdah station, works as loader and unloader in station area. I met him at north section of the station. He was found by me on my first survey in the shelter home of Udan .He managed to escape from here when I interacted with him the second time . He is addicted to glue sniffing, khaini etc. He has studied upto class II. Rana escaped from his home due to poverty and ill treatment of his father at age of eleven. He takes his lunch from the nearby hotels.	

| 8. | **Barkat and Bikash:** Barkat is seventeen years old, coming from Bhagabangola, Murshidabad. His father died in his early childhood. He lived with his mother and four brothers and sisters in a very poor condition of life. One day he boarded the train (Lalgola Passenger) and reached Sealdah Station at the age of thirteen years. From that time he is spending his life in the station. He earns his living by loading and unloading. He has never gone to school. Bikash is from Ranaghat, Nadia. He is just eleven years old. Due to his father's ill treatment he flew away from his home at the age of only nine and came to Sealdah station by local train. He has completed his study upto class two. Bikash also earns his livelihood with Barkat. Both are addicted in biri, khaini. They do not take glue as a source of addiction. | |

Street Children With Family Connection

| 9. | **Ali:** He is from Tangra slum area. Ali is fourteen years old. His father went to Delhi for construction work. His mother works as rag picker. Since his mother comes out from home in the early morning, Ali loiters throughout the day. I met him in Sealdah South Section. He works as a begger and some times as a rag picker. He had studied up to class II. Local NGO tried mainsreaming him, but they didn't succeed. In the day time Ali takes his food from dhaba, hotel etc; outside the Station complex . In the evening he comes back to his home at Tangra and spends the night with his mother. He is addicted to glue sniffing. | |
| 10. | **Bapi Mahato:** He lives in Narkeldanga *Khal Par* area, Kolkata with his uncle. He is fifteen years old. Bapi earns his livelihood by shoe polishing with his uncle at the parking area of station. He has never gone to school. Usually he works eight to ten hours. He earns 100 to 150 rupees daily. Bapi gets his food from near by hotels. He has no bad habit of addiction. Now he is involved in an informal education system run by a local NGO (they called it *Kartickdar* school). | |

11.	**Reshma and Karim:** I met them in south section of the Sealdah Rail station . Reshma is 13 years old from Tangra slum area. Her father is an automobile garage mechanic. Reshma is the eldest child among four brothers and sisters. Her mother is severely ill, so nobody looks after them. Reshma usually comes out from home every morning to the Sealdah station. Whole day she spends her time in and around the station area with her boyfriend Karim. She works as a rag picker. Karim is 15 years old runaway child from Canning area, South 24 Parganas. He lives in station area, spends his nights at parking area. He survives and fulfills his daily needs by rag picking.	
12.	**Bijoy:** He is thirteen year old boy, came from Jadavpur at the age of ten. His mother is a divorced woman and lives under poor economic condition. The entire family is living on the street. He is also addicted to glue sniffing. He is connected with his family. Bijoy comes out from his home in the early moning to collect the vegetables at Koley Market near Sealdah Station, then he is vending these vegetables throughout the day or evening market. He is a drop out student of class II. Bijoy wants to become a great business man in his life.	
13.	**Bilal:** Bilal is a seven year old. He has lost his parents. Everyday Bilal comes to Sealdah Station with his grandmother. They earn their living by begging. Spending whole day in the station area, they come back to their home in Narkeldanga *Khal Par* slum. Bilal never went to any school. Local NGO officials are trying to involve him in the informal education system.	
14.	**Bittu and Raju:** Bittu and Raju both are eight years old, living in Sonarpur. They are connected with their family. Both of them are rag pickers. After day long activities they return to their home. Both of them studied upto class-I . I have met them in front of south section. In the day time they usually take their lunch from nearby food stalls. They want to continue their study and become successful men in future.	

15.	**Iqbal:** He is thirteen years old, from Canning. He works as loader and unloader in station area. He is connected with his home. I met him in the north section of the station. He earns between Rs-150 to 200 per day.Iqbal does not go back to his family everyday, he spends his nights in the station on the trolly (which he has hired from a porter) which he uses throughout the day. He uses biri, khaini, guthka and glue as addictive substances. He has never gone to school. He wants to buy his own trolly in the near future. Iqbal takes his lunch from the nearby hotels.	
16.	**Sanjoy:** He is bottle collector in the station area. Sanjoy is fifteen years old, he is from Halisahar, 24 Parganas(North). Due to poverty and wanting to earn money he left his home at the age of eleven; however he is maintaing regular contact with his family. He has no addiction habit. He loves to stay at the station. I have met him in the parking area. He has studied upto class three. He wants to open his own shop. He takes his lunch from the road side hotels and dhabas. He is suffering from skin disease.	

Relevant Extracts from Newspaper cuttings

টাকা নেই, তাই শিশু শ্রমিক নিয়ে সমীক্ষাও করাতে পারছে না রাজ্য

রূপসা সেনগুপ্ত

টাকার অভাব। তাই শিশু শ্রমিকের হিসেব কষে উঠতে পারছে না রাজ্য। পুনর্বাসন তো অনেক দূরের ব্যাপার।

সমস্যাটা ক্রমশ জটিল হয়ে দাঁড়িয়েছে। ন্যাশনাল স্যাম্পল সার্ভের পরিসংখ্যান দেখা যাচ্ছে, এ রাজ্যে শিশু শ্রমিকের সংখ্যা ৫ লক্ষ ৫১ হাজার ৫৮৪। গোটা দেশে এই সংখ্যা ২৯ লক্ষ ৮৪ হাজার।

সম্প্রতি জাতীয় শিশু অধিকার রক্ষা কমিশন কড়া সমালোচনা করেছে জানিয়েছিল, এ বিষয়ে কোনও দায়িত্ব রাখে না রাজ্য সরকার। শিশু শ্রমিক নিয়ে এ রাজ্যের বিশেষ কোনও সমীক্ষাই নেই।

এই অভিযোগ স্বীকার করে নিয়েছেন রাজ্যের শ্রমমন্ত্রী পূর্ণেন্দু বসু। সেই সঙ্গে আঙুল তুলেছেন কেন্দ্রের দিকে। মন্ত্রীর কথায়, "শিশু শ্রম ঠেকাতে গেলে কেন্দ্রের কাছ থেকে আরও অনুদান প্রয়োজন।" সমীক্ষা না করে উঠতে পারার কারণ হিসেবে বলেছেন, "সমীক্ষা চালাতে গেলে অর্থের প্রয়োজন। শিশু শ্রম মোকাবিলার জন্য কেন্দ্র সামান্যই টাকা দেয়। কাজ করব কী করে? কেন্দ্র টাকা দিলেই সমীক্ষা করাব।" এই নাগাপাপনি তাঁর দাবি, শিশু শ্রমিকের পুনর্বাসনের জন্য রাজ্যের হাতে আরও ক্ষমতা প্রয়োজন। না হলে এই সমস্যার মোকাবিলা সম্ভব নয়।

শিশু শ্রম বন্ধ করতে 'ন্যাশনাল চাইল্ড লেবার প্রজেক্ট' (এনসিএলপি) বলা হয়েছে কেন্দ্রের সঙ্গে রাজ্যকে জেলায় জেলায় 'ডিস্ট্রিক্ট টাস্ক ফোর্স' গড়ে তুলতে হবে। এ বিষয়ে তেমন কিছু হয়নি। জাতীয় শিশু অধিকার রক্ষা কমিশন সম্প্রতি অভিযোগ তুলেছিল, এ বিষয়ে এ রাজ্যের কোনও নির্দিষ্ট পরিকল্পনাই নেই।

শহরের বুকে কিংবা শহর থেকে ছিল ছোড়া দূরত্বে অসংগঠিত ছোট কারখানায়, বাজি শিল্পে এবং অন্য...

শিল্পাঞ্চলে এখনও অনেক শিশুই কাজ করে বলে অভিযোগ। শিশুদের নিয়ে কাজ করে এমন একটি বেসরকারি সংস্থার সঙ্গে অধিকর্তা অনিদীপা ঘোষ বললেন...

এই ছবি বিরল নয়।— নিজস্ব চিত্র

"এ বছর দক্ষিণ ২৪ পরগনায় একটা সমীক্ষা করা হয়েছিল। সমীক্ষা অনুযায়ী, ওই জেলায় কমপক্ষে ২০ হাজার শিশু শ্রমিক রয়েছে। এ থেকেই রাজ্যে শিশু শ্রমের...

সমস্যার একটা পরিষ্কার আন্দাজ পাওয়া যায়।"

অথচ, এই সমস্যার মোকাবিলা, অর্থাৎ শিশু শ্রমিকের পুনর্বাসনের জন্য রাজ্যে বিশেষ স্কুল রয়েছে। হচ্ছে আবাসিক বিদ্যালয়। উত্তর ২৪ পরগনা, হুগলি, উত্তর দিনাজপুর, নদিয়া, বর্ধমানের মতো ৭টি জেলায় এই শিশু শ্রমিকদের জন্য আবাসিক স্কুল হয়েছে। অথচ কলকাতায় এ ধরনের কোনও আবাসিক স্কুল নেই। নিয়ম অনুযায়ী প্রতিটি জেলায় অন্তত একটি করে আবাসিক স্কুল থাকার কথা। শ্রমমন্ত্রী এই অভাব স্বীকার করে জানিয়েছেন, টাকা নেই বলেই কলকাতা-সহ আরও অনেক জায়গাতেই এ ধরনের বিদ্যালয় গড়ে তোলা সম্ভব হচ্ছে না।

এ রাজ্যে শিশু শ্রমিকদের পুনর্বাসনের জন্য এখনও পর্যন্ত ২০০৮-এ মতো বিশেষ স্কুল রয়েছে। এগুলি দেখভাল করে স্থানীয় প্রশাসন, জেলা প্রশাসন। কোনও কোনও ক্ষেত্রে স্বেচ্ছাসেবী সংস্থা এই দায়িত্ব পালন করে। স্কুলগুলির জন্য বরাদ্দ কেন্দ্রীয় অনুদান সরাসরি জেলাশাসকদের কাছেই আসে। এই অনুদান সময় কমতে সীমিত বলেই মনে করছে রাজ্যের শ্রম দফতর। কারণেই এই বিষয়ে রাজ্যের হাতে বেশি ক্ষমতা দেওয়ার আবেদন জানানো হয়েছে।

জাতীয় শিশু অধিকার রক্ষা কমিশন রাজ্যকেই শিশু শ্রমিকদের উদ্ধার করে তাদের মধ্যেসংযুক্ত পুনর্বাসনের ব্যবস্থা করতে বলেছে। রাজ্য অবশ্য অন্যদিকে অনুদানের কথা তুলে কেন্দ্রকেই দায়ী করে চলেছে। এতে শিশু শ্রমের সমস্যা কী ভাবে মিটবে, তা নিয়ে গভীর সংশয়ে রয়েছেন শিশু শ্রমিক পুনর্বাসনের দাবিতে থাকা সমাজকর্মীরা। শিশু শ্রমিকের পুনর্বাসনের জন্য একটি বিশেষ স্কুলের সঙ্গে যুক্ত এক সমাজকর্মীর মতে, অনুদান না পেলে এ ধরনের কাজ করতে সমস্যা হয় ঠিকই। কিন্তু হাত গুটিয়ে বসে থাকলে কি সমস্যা মিটবে? শিশু শ্রমিকেরা কি আর পাঁচটা মতো স্বাভাবিক বিকাশের সুযোগ পাবে?

শিশুশ্রমের রমরমায় 'দ্বিতীয়' পশ্চিমবঙ্গ

অশোক সেনগুপ্ত

বিহার, ওড়িশা, ঝাড়খণ্ডকে টপকে গেল পশ্চিমবঙ্গ। উন্নয়নে নয়, শিশুশ্রমিকের সংখ্যায়।

খোদ জাতীয় নমুনা সমীক্ষা সংস্থার (ন্যাশনাল স্যাম্পল সার্ভে অর্গানাইজেশন) ২০০৯-২০১০ সালের রিপোর্ট অনুযায়ী, শিশুশ্রমিকের সংখ্যার নিরিখে সারা দেশে পশ্চিমবঙ্গের স্থান এখন দু'নম্বর। উত্তরপ্রদেশের পরেই। বিহার, ওড়িশা বা ঝাড়খণ্ডের মতো রাজ্যেও পশ্চিমবঙ্গের তুলনায় শিশুশ্রমিক অনেক কম।

অথচ প্রতিবেশী এই তিন রাজ্য বহুদিন ধরে পশ্চিমবঙ্গকে শ্রমিক এবং শিশুশ্রমিক সরবরাহ করে এসেছে। ইটভাটা, ধানকল, চটকল এবং অসংগঠিত নানা প্রকল্পে ভিন রাজ্যের শিশুশ্রমিকের সংখ্যা ছিল চোখে পড়ার মতো। স্বভাবতই এই নতুন রিপোর্ট একাধিক প্রশ্নের জন্ম দিয়েছে। প্রতিবেশী রাজ্যগুলো যেখানে শিশুশ্রমিকের অনুপাত কমিয়ে ফেলেছে, পশ্চিমবঙ্গ সেটা করতে পারেনি কেন? ভিনরাজ্য থেকে যদি শিশুশ্রমিক আসা কমে গিয়ে থাকে, তাহলেও পশ্চিমবঙ্গ শিশুশ্রমিকের সংখ্যায় দু'নম্বরে কেন? তবে কি পশ্চিমবঙ্গের জেলাগুলোতেই বাড়ছে দারিদ্রের প্রকোপ? বাড়ছে শিশুশ্রমের ব্যবহার?

রাজ্যের কোন অঞ্চলে, কী ধরনের কাজে শিশুশ্রমিকদের ব্যবহার বেশি, তার কোনও পূর্ণাঙ্গ রিপোর্ট কিন্তু নেই। কারণ, শিশুশ্রমের ব্যবহার বেশি মূলত অসংগঠিত ক্ষেত্রেই। তার মধ্যে চায়ের দোকান-রাস্তার হোটেল-ধাবার কাজ রয়েছে, বিড়ি বাঁধাই-বাজি তৈরির মতো কাজ রয়েছে। রয়েছে রেলস্টেশনে জুতো পালিশ, কাগজ কুড়োনোর কাজ। বাজি তৈরির কাজ দক্ষিণ ২৪ পরগনায় এক সময় বিপুল সংখ্যক শিশু কাজ করত। গত এক-দেড় বছরে ব্যাপক ধরপাকড়ের পর সেটা কিছুটা কমেছে বলে জানা গিয়েছে। কিন্তু মুর্শিদাবাদের বিড়ি শিল্পে এখনও শিশুশ্রমের রমরমা। কলকাতা-সহ হলদিয়া, দুর্গাপুর, শিলিগুড়ির মতো বড়...

দোকানে যত শিশু কাজ করে, তাদের একটা বড় অংশ পূর্ব মেদিনীপুর থেকে আসে বলে স্বেচ্ছাসেবী সংস্থাগুলির মত।

বিশ্ব শ্রম সংস্থার ঠিক করে দেওয়া সংজ্ঞা অনুযায়ী, স্কুলে যায় না এমন সব শিশুকেই সম্ভাব্য শিশুশ্রমিক ধরে নিয়ে পরিসংখ্যান তৈরি করতে হবে। জাতীয় নমুনা সমীক্ষা সংস্থার রিপোর্ট বলছে, পশ্চিমবঙ্গে শিশুশ্রমিকের সংখ্যা ৫ লক্ষ ৫১ হাজার ৫৮৪। বিভিন্ন স্বেচ্ছাসেবী সংস্থার সঙ্গে যাঁরা জড়িত, এই পরিসংখ্যানে কিন্তু চমকাচ্ছেন না তাঁরা। তাঁদের বরং বক্তব্য— সর্বশিক্ষা অভিযান,

শিশুশ্রম রুখতে কেন্দ্রীয় আইন তৈরি হয়েছে অনেক দিন। কিন্তু শিশুশ্রমিকের সংখ্যা কমেনি। এ রাজ্যেও তার প্রকোপ ভয়াবহ। কেন? কী বলছে সরকার এবং স্বেচ্ছাসেবী সংস্থাগুলো? আনন্দবাজারের প্রতিবেদন। আজ প্রথম পর্ব।

নষ্ট শৈশব ১

একশো দিনের কাজ, শিশুপাচার সংক্রান্ত যে সব কেন্দ্রীয় রিপোর্ট সম্প্রতি প্রকাশ পেয়েছে, তার সব ক'টিতেই পিছিয়ে রয়েছে পশ্চিমবঙ্গ। এবং এই ক্ষেত্রগুলিতে পিছিয়ে থাকার অর্থই হল, শিশুশ্রমের বাড়বাড়ন্তের পথ প্রশস্ত হওয়া। ১০০ দিনের কাজে অগ্রগতি সংক্রান্ত রাজ্যওয়াড়ি তালিকায় (২০০৬-১০) পশ্চিমবঙ্গ ২৭ নম্বরে! সর্বশিক্ষা অভিযানের 'শিক্ষা উন্নয়ন সারণি'তে (ইডিআই, ২০০৯) পশ্চিমবঙ্গ ২৬ নম্বরে। ন্যাশনাল ক্রাইম রেকর্ড ব্যুরোর রিপোর্ট (২০০৯) বলছে, দেহব্যবসার জন্য মেয়ে বিক্রি করে দেওয়ার ঘটনায় দেশের মধ্যে শীর্ষে পশ্চিমবঙ্গ।

মহাকরণ কী বলছে? রাজ্যের শ্রমমন্ত্রী পূর্ণেন্দু বসুর দাবি, এ সব কিছুই বাম সরকারের গাফিলতির ফল। তিনি বলেন, "বাম আমলে এ দিকটা পরোপরি উপেক্ষিত ছিল। তাই এ রকম হবেই।...

শ্রম দফতরের কর্তাদের কাছে, অবশ্য এ ব্যাপারে কোনও স্পষ্ট রোডম্যাপ নেই। রাজ্যে শিশুশ্রমিকের সাম্প্রতিক সংখ্যা কত, তা-ই জানা নেই তাদের। অথচ শিশুশ্রমিকদের পড়ার জন্য এ রাজ্যে জেলায় জেলায় মোট ৯৮৫টি বিশেষ স্কুল থাকার কথা। ৭২টি এখনও তৈরি হয়নি। দার্জিলিং জেলায় যেমন একটিও এ ধরনের স্কুল নেই। বাকি জেলার স্কুলগুলির পরিকাঠামোও সন্তোষজনক নয় বলে শ্রম দফতরেরই এক অফিসার জানান। কেন?

রাজ্যের শিশুশ্রম নিয়ন্ত্রণের দায়িত্বপ্রাপ্ত ডেপুটি শ্রম কমিশনার সুমিতা মুখোপাধ্যায়ের কথায়, "১৫০০ টাকা বেতনে শিশুশ্রমিকদের স্কুলে শিক্ষক পেতে সমস্যা ছিল। গত এপ্রিল থেকে পরিমাণটা বাড়িয়ে ৪ হাজার করা হয়েছে।" কিন্তু টাকা পাঠাতে কেন্দ্র দেরি করছে বলে শ্রম দফতরের অভিযোগ। কিন্তু যে রাজ্যে শিশুশ্রমিকের সংখ্যা সাড়ে ৫ লক্ষের বেশি, সেখানে রাজ্যের হিসেবই বলছে, বিশেষ স্কুলের মোট পড়ুয়ার সংখ্যা ৪৫ হাজার ২৮১ জন। বিশেষ স্কুলের কার্যকারিতা তা হলে কতটা, ধন রয়েছে দফতরের অন্দরেই।

শ্রম দফতরের অতিরিক্ত কমিশনার পশুপতি ঘোষ জানালেন, গত বছর সরকার সিদ্ধান্ত নেয় স্কুলে শিশুশ্রমিকদের পূর্ণ সময় ধরে রাখতে স্কুলকে 'আবাসিক' স্তরে উন্নীত করতে হবে। ইতিমধ্যে সাতটি জেলায় এ রকম আবাসিক স্কুল করা গিয়েছে। উত্তর দিনাজপুর, বর্ধমান, হুগলি, উত্তর ২৪ পরগনা ও দক্ষিণ ২৪ পরগনা, পূর্ব এবং পশ্চিম মেদিনীপুরে কিন্তু শিশুশ্রমিকদের জন্য জাতীয় শিশুশ্রমিক প্রকল্পের (এনসিএলপি) রূপায়ণে অন্যান্য রাজ্যের চেয়ে পশ্চিমবঙ্গ অনেকটাই পিছিয়ে রয়েছে বলে অভিযোগ। রাজ্য শিশু সুরক্ষা সমিতি বা জেসিপিএস-ও কার্যত নিষ্ক্রিয়, এমন অভিযোগ অনেক মহলেই।

মহারাষ্ট্রের কিছু জোরালো রাজ্য সরকার শিশুশ্রমিকমুক্ত করবে উদ্যোগী হয়েছে। এ রাজ্যে কেন এ রকম চেষ্টা হচ্ছে না, পশুপতিবাবু বলেন, "এরকম সিদ্ধান্ত হয় সরকারের সর্বোচ্চ স্তরে। সম্প্রতি দিল্লির বৈঠকে গিয়ে দেখেছি মহারাষ্ট্রের মুখ্যসচিব নিজে এ ব্যাপারে ভয়ানক আগ্রহী।" পশ্চিমবঙ্গ সেই আগ্রহটা কবে দেখাবে...

— শেষ...

সব বাধা তুচ্ছ করে নিরাশ্রয়, সহায়-সম্বলহীন শিশুদের জন্য কাজ করে চলেছেন বহু দরদি ব্যক্তি। প্রিয়জনের মতোই তাঁরা আঁকড়ে ধরেছেন কচি মুখগুলোকে। শুধু অন্তরের টানেই বেছে নিয়েছেন বন্ধুর এই পথ। কলকাতার পাশাপাশি এঁরা ছড়িয়ে আছেন রাজ্যের বিভিন্ন জেলায়। তাঁদেরই কয়েক জনের কথা তুলে ধরা হল আজকের পাতায়। লিখছেন জয় সাহা

বড় মানুষের বৃত্তান্ত

বাড়িকুটো যখন আশ্রয়

শিশুশ্রমিক বিদ্যালয়ের শিক্ষকরা শিশুশ্রমিকদের মতোই অবহেলিত

শিশুশ্রম সামাজিক অভিশাপ। মুর্শিদাবাদ জেলায় বিড়িশিল্পে, ইটভাটায়, রাস্তার ধারে হোটেলে, রাজমিস্ত্রির পেশায়, চা-খাবারের দোকানে— অসংখ্য শিশুশ্রমিক কাজে নিযুক্ত। কেন্দ্রীয় সরকার মাত্র একদশক আগে ঘুম ভেঙেছে। শিশুশ্রম দূরীকরণে তৈরি হয়েছে ন্যাশনাল কমিশন ফর প্রোটেকশন অফ চাইল্ড রাইটস'। ১৯৮৬ সালের শিশুশ্রম নিবারণ ও নিয়ন্ত্রণ আইন অনুযায়ী, বিপজ্জনক পেশা এবং উৎপাদন-পদ্ধতিতে চোদ্দ বছরের কম বয়সি শিশুদের নিয়োগ করলে কুড়ি হাজার টাকা পর্যন্ত জরিমানা বা এক বছর পর্যন্ত কারাদণ্ড অথবা উভয় শাস্তি হতে পারে। গৃহস্থালির কাজে, রেস্তরাঁতে, হোটেলে, বিনোদন কেন্দ্রে, ইটভাটায় এমনকী চায়ের দোকানেও শিশুদের নিয়োগকে বিপজ্জনক হিসাবে চিহ্নিত করা হয়েছে। আইন করে শিশুশ্রম নিষিদ্ধ করা হয়েছে। কেন্দ্রীয় সরকার শিশুশ্রমিক দূরীকরণে গরিব শিশুদের শিক্ষালাভের উদ্দেশ্যে জাতীয় শিশুশ্রম প্রকল্পের অধীনে সারা দেশে শিশুশ্রমিক বিদ্যালয় খুলেছে। চরম দারিদ্রপীড়িত শিশুদের প্রাথমিক শিক্ষায় ...সরকার দিচ্ছে মাসিক ভাতা, জলখাবার,

বিনামূল্যে শিক্ষার উপকরণ দিচ্ছে। সারা বিশ্বের নিরিখে ভারতবর্ষে শিশুশ্রমিকের সংখ্যাটি একবার চোখ বুলিয়ে নেওয়া যাক। সারা বিশ্বে শিশুশ্রমিকের সংখ্যা একুশ কোটির বেশি। এর মধ্যে ভারতেই সর্বাধিক, ৯ কোটিও বেশি। আর পশ্চিমবঙ্গে শুধু নথিভুক্ত শিশুশ্রমিকের সংখ্যাই হল ১২ লক্ষ ৫৭ হাজার (তথ্যসূত্র: রাজ্য বিধানসভায় ১৮/৭/২০০৭ তারিখে শ্রী অনাদিকুমার সাহু প্রশ্নোত্তর পর্বে জানান)। মাত্র ৩২ হাজার ৩৩৭ জন শিশুশ্রমিক প্রকল্পের বিদ্যালয়ে শিক্ষালাভ করছে। যা, খুবই নগণ্য। এ তো গেল সরকারি তথ্য ও পরিসংখ্যান।

এবার বাস্তবচিত্রটি দেখা যাক। সরকারি ঢক্কানিনাদ ঠাহরে ঘুরপাক খাচ্ছে। পরিকল্পনা ও তার রূপায়ণের মধ্যে বিস্তর ফারাক। আগেই উল্লেখ করা হয়েছে জাতীয় শিশুশ্রম প্রকল্পের আওতায় কেন্দ্রীয় সরকার সারাদেশে 'বিশেষ বিদ্যালয়' খুলেছে। এই বিদ্যালয়ে স্কুলছুট শিশুরা (আট থেকে চোদ্দ বছর বয়সি) প্রথম থেকে চতুর্থ শ্রেণি পর্যন্ত পড়াশুনা করে। কিন্তু পরিতাপের বিষয় হল এই ধরনের বিদ্যালয়ে যে দু'জন শিক্ষক পড়ান তারা মাসে

মাত্র দেড় হাজার টাকা পান। এই চরম অগ্নিমূল্যের বাজারে সামনে ভাতাকে সাম্মানিক ভাতা বলা হয়। কিন্তু আজকের দিনে জীবনধারণের প্রয়োজন যা অসম্মানজনক। কোনো স্থায়ীকরণের সুবিধা কিংবা ভবিষ্যকালীন সুযোগসুবিধা নেই। সময়ে ভাতা দেওয়া হয়ে থাকে, মাসের শেষে নয়, পাঁচ বা ছয় মাস অন্তর। নিজস্ব বিদ্যালয়ভবন নেই। ভারপ্রাপ্ত প্রধান শিক্ষক স্বয়ং পরিচালনার সমস্ত কাজ করেন। প্রাথমিক শিক্ষকরা যখন শিক্ষকতার চাকুরিতে যোগদান করেই নূনতম তেরো হাজার টাকা মাসে বেতন পান,

পত্রাঘাত

এমনকী শিশুশিক্ষাকেন্দ্রের শিক্ষকরা পাঁচ হাজার চারশো টাকা ভাতা পান, তখন শিশুশ্রমিক বিদ্যালয়ের শিক্ষকরা মাসে মাত্র এক হাজার পাঁচশো টাকা ভাতা পান। এই শিক্ষকরা এখনও বুনো রামনাথের যুগে পড়ে আছেন। দেশের সাংসদরা যখন নিজেদের মাইনে এবং সুযোগসুবিধা একলাফে তিনশো গুণ বাড়িয়ে নেন, এবং আবার পাঁচশো গুণ করার দাবিতে সংসদে হইহট্টগোল বাধেন তখন ভাবতে লজ্জা হয় কোন দেশে আমরা বাস করছি। এই সরকার কি

দেশের মানুষের সুখ-দুঃখের অংশীদার? সমব্যথী? জীবনের অন্তিমপর্বে পৌঁছে এই শিশুশ্রমিক বিদ্যালয়ের শিক্ষকদের জীবনযন্ত্রণা অসহনীয় পর্যায়ে পৌঁছয়। বৃদ্ধ বাবা-মা, স্ত্রী, সন্তান— সকলকে নিয়ে তাঁরা চরম দরিদ্রসীমা, অর্ধাহারা, এমনকী অনাহারে তিলতিল করে মৃত্যুর দিকে এগিয়ে চলেছেন।

সৌমির সিংহরায়
প্রধানশিক্ষক
নিত্তিপুর শিশুশ্রমিক বিদ্যালয়
মুর্শিদাবাদ

যাঁদের প্রকল্প, জানেন না তাঁরাই

স্কুলে নয়, চশমার কাচ ঘষেই শিশু দিবস কেটে গেল ওদের

ফুটপাথবাসীদের আশ্রয়

শিশুশ্রম বন্ধ করা দরকার, কিন্তু কী ভাবে

অচিন চক্রবর্তী ও জয়ন্ত কুমার দ্বিবেদী

কৈলাস সত্যার্থীর নোবেলজয় শিশুশ্রমিকদের জন্য কতটা তাৎপর্যপূর্ণ, আর মার্কিন বাণিজ্যিক স্বার্থের জন্য কতটা, সেই প্রশ্ন এড়িয়ে যাওয়ার উপায় নেই।

পুষ্টির

বনে,

প্রকল্প

শিশু শ্রমিকদের খবর রাখে না রাজ্য তিরস্কার কমিশনের

নিজস্ব প্রতিবেদন, ১৪ জুলাই: গ্রিন ট্রাইব্যুনাল নিয়ে থকিসির পরে এবার শিশুশ্রম রোধে ব্যর্থতার অভিযোগ।

রাজ্যের উদ্যোগের অভাব দেখে দিন কয়েক আগে কলকাতা থেকে গ্রিন ট্রাইব্যুনাল সরিয়ে নেওয়ার পরামর্শ দিয়েছিল সুপ্রিম কোর্ট। এবার শিশুশ্রমিকদের বিষয়ে পশ্চিমবঙ্গের শ্রম দফতরের কাজকর্মে হতাশ জাতীয় শিশু অধিকার রক্ষা কমিশন।

সন্তানসম্ভবা অনিমার ওজন সন্তানসম্ভবা। অনিমার প্রথম নরণে তাঁর পরবর্তী সন্তানের

কমিশনের সদস্য যোগেশ দুবের নেতৃত্বে এক প্রতিনিধিদল রাজ্যে ঘুরে গিয়ে তাঁদের বিরক্তি গোপন করেননি। কর্তার সমালোচনা করেছেন ওই দফতরের। যোগেশ সংবাদসংস্থা পিটিআইকে জানান, রাজ্যে বহু শিশুশ্রমিক ইটভাটা এবং বিভিন্ন কারখানায় কাজ করতে বাধ্য হচ্ছে। অথচ তার কোনও পরিসংখ্যান রাজ্যের কাছে নেই।

আইন মোতাবেক বিভিন্ন বিপজ্জনক এবং ঝুঁকিপূর্ণ কাজে নিযুক্ত শিশুদের অধিকার রক্ষার যে সমস্ত নির্দেশিকা রয়েছে, রাজ্য তা কার্যকর করতে ব্যর্থ হয়েছে বলে তাঁর অভিযোগ। যোগেশের কথায়, 'শিশুশ্রমিকদের মূল স্রোতে ফিরিয়ে আনতে রাজ্য সরকারের কোনও সুনির্দিষ্ট পরিকল্পনা নেই। তারা শিশুদের উদ্ধার ও পুনর্বাসনে ব্যর্থ।'

কমিশন রাজ্য সরকারকে শিশুদের অধিকার রক্ষার বিষয়টি বিশেষত তাদের শিক্ষার অধিকার সুনিশ্চিত করার জন্য নির্দিষ্ট পরিকল্পনা গ্রহণ করতে বলেছে। শিশু পাচার রুখতে পুলিশের সহায়তায় একটি ইউনিট তৈরি করারও পরামর্শ দিয়েছে কমিশন।

রাজ্যের শ্রমমন্ত্রী পূর্ণেন্দু বসু অবশ্য রাজ্যের হাতে শিশুশ্রমিকদের পরিসংখ্যান না থাকার বিষয়টি স্বীকার করে নিয়েছেন। তবে গোটা বিষয়টিকেই তিনি ঠেলে দিয়েছেন কেন্দ্রীয় সরকারের দিকে। তিনি বলেন, 'জাতীয় শিশুশ্রমিক তহবিল থেকে খুব কম অর্থ রাজ্য পায়। তাতে সব শিশুশ্রমিকের পুনর্বাসন সম্ভব নয়। তবে রাজ্যের ন'টি জেলায় শিশুশ্রমিকদের পুনর্বাসনে আবাসিক প্রকল্প রয়েছে। তা ছাড়া এই অর্থ সরকারি জেলা শাসকের

আইন বদলে শিশুশ্রমের দরজা খুলল কেন্দ্র

শর্তসাপেক্ষে ১৪ বছর বা তার কম বয়সিরা কাজ করতে পারবে ● ক্ষুব্ধ শিশু অধিকার কর্মীরা

ভারতের অন্য চার শহরের তুলনায় কলকাতা-হাওড়ায় পথশিশুর উপর শারীরিক নির্যাতনের ঘটনা বেশি

সংখ্যায় নগণ্য, তাই পথশিশুরা এলেবেলে?

অন্ধগলির রূপকথা

পথশিশুদের স্কুলের উদ্যোগে পুরসভা ও নগর উন্নয়ন দপ্তর

সিন্থেটিক আঠার গ্রাসে নয়া প্রজন্ম

উৎকণ্ঠা সব মহলেই

এই সময়: বাবা-মা চাকরি করেন। দিনে একটা বড় সময় একাই থাকতে হয় উত্তর শহরতলির দমদম জংশনের বিজনকে (নাম পরিবর্তিত)। স্কুলে, পাড়ায় তার ছবি আঁকায় পারদর্শী বিজনের বন্ধুমন বেশ বড়ই। তারা প্রতি সুযোগে বই স্কুলই অবসর যাতায়াত ছিল বিজনের কাছে। সেই স্কুলের পাড়ার পাড়ে এক সময় নেশা হাতেখড়ি হয় তার। প্রথম প্রথম করে দু'চার দিন বারে বারে, পরে নেশা কঠিন হয়ে যায় বিজনের। প্রথমটায় কিছুই বুঝতে পারেনি তার বাবা-মা। ছেলের গাল ভেঙে গিয়েছে, বুকের পাঁজর শক্ত হয়ে উঠছে, যাই বকুক বাই কাকুই বেরিয়ে রাখাই যাবত হয় দাঁড়িয়ে বিজনের। এমনকি চোখের দিকে চোখ রেখে কথা পর্যন্ত বলতে চায় না।

তার পর একদিন বিজনের ঘর লাগোয়া

অবিষ্ক করেন তিনি। এই সিন্থেটিক আঠা প্লাস্টিক প্যাকেট কেস মুখ দিয়ে টেনে একদিন নেশা করতে দেখে কেলেন বিজনকে। মরবে, হাতখরচের টাকা বন্ধ করা, বোরতে নিয়ে যাওয়া—কোনও কিছুতেই কিছু কাজ হল না। নেশার সময় হলেই ভয়ঙ্কর হিংস্র হয়ে উঠে মেলে ভাঙচুর, বাবা-মাকে ধরে পৌলানও বা ছিল না। এই পথ প্রকাশেই চলতে থাকে আঠা সেবনের সেই নেশা। দিনে ৫-৬ বার থেকে বেড়ে ২০-২৫ বার নিয়ে ঢোকে। শারীরিক-মানসিক ভাবে বিজন গুরে আছলে। ঘুম অনিয়মিত হয়ে যায়, ঘুমও যেন মৃত্যুকে পড়ে আছে। হঠাৎ বিজন নেশাসুক্তি কেন্দ্রে পাঠিয়েও কাজ হয়নি। বাবার কথায়, 'ছ'মাস সেই সেন্টারে কাটিয়ে বাড়ি ফেরার নয় দিনের মধ্যে আবার আঠার নেশা গ্রাস করে ওঠে।' বাধা

খাবার ও মাদকের জোগাড়ে রাস্তায় ভিক্ষা করছে শিশুরা

নিজস্ব সংবাদদাতা: দমদম জংশন টিশন চত্বর-ই হোক বা ধর্মতলার সস্টান্ড, চলতে-ফিরতে এক দল ্তর দেখা মিলবেই। পথচারীদের ্ছে কখনও খাবার, কখনও বা ্তার আকৃতি জানায় ্া। এ ভাবেই বছরভর ্ায় ঘুরে ঘুরে নিজেদের ্র জোগাড় করে এই ্ভিক্ষুকরা। শুধু তাই ভিক্ষায় টাকায় মাদক ্র দুশ্যটাও অমিল

্শিশু ভিক্ষুকদের নিয়ে ্ করা বিভিন্ন ্সেবী সংস্থার বক্তব্য, ্রনের শিশুদের ্ বড় অংশ পথশিশু। ্বলা থেকেই রাস্তায় ্ উপার্জন করতে ্া দেওয়া হয়। ্ি শিশুকেও তুলে ্ হয় ভিক্ষুকদের ্যাকে দেখিয়ে ্পয়সা চায় অন্যরা। ্নিয়ে দেখা গিয়েছে, ্টির বিনিময়ে রোজ টাকা ্র বাবা-মায়েরা। পুলিশ সূত্রের ্থশিশু বা রাস্তায় শিশু ্র অনেকেই মাদকাসক্ত। ্ পেটের খাবার নয়, নেশার ্জাগাড় করতেও তারা এই

পথে নেমে পড়ছে। ভিক্ষা করার পাশাপাশি অনেক সময় ছোটখাটো অপরাধের সঙ্গে জড়িয়ে পড়ে তারা। শিশুদের ভিক্ষাবৃত্তিতে নামানোর বিরুদ্ধে পুলিশ কি কোনও ব্যবস্থা

নিতে পারে? পুলিশকর্তারা বলছেন, এ ধরনের আইন থাকলেও তা চট করে প্রয়োগ করা যায় না। ওই শিশুদের মূলস্রোতে ফেরানোর বিষয়টিও ভাবতে হয়। অনেক সময়ই এ ধরনের শিশুদের ধরার পরে

শিশুকল্যাণ সমিতির মাধ্যমে বিভিন্ন স্বেচ্ছাসেবী সংস্থার হোমে তাদের থাকার ব্যবস্থা করা হয়। রাজ্য পুলিশের ডিআইজি (সংগঠন) দিলীপ বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় বলেন, "বিকল্প জীবিকা

এবং থাকার জায়গা না থাকাটা অন্যতম প্রধান একটি কারণ। বিষয়টি এতটাই গুরুত্বপূর্ণ যে এই আইনটি প্রয়োগ করার আগে সব দিক ভাবনা চিন্তা করে প্রশাসনকে নীতিগত সিদ্ধান্ত নিতে হবে।"

পথশিশুদের মূলস্রোতে ফেরানোর জন্য প্রকল্প রয়েছে কলকাতা পুলিশেরও। অতিরিক্ত কমিশনার (৩) দেবাশিস রায় জানিয়েছেন, "নবদিশা নামে ওই প্রকল্পে পথশিশুদের প্রথাবহির্ভূত শিক্ষা দেওয়া হয়। তার পরে সাধারণ স্কুলে ভর্তির ব্যবস্থাও করে কলকাতা পুলিশ।"

পুলিশকর্তারা মনে করছেন, এই ধরনের প্রকল্প ছাড়া আইনের প্রয়োগ করে পথশিশুদের ভিক্ষাবৃত্তি আটকানো সম্ভব নয়। দমদম স্টেশন চত্বরে পথশিশুদের নিয়ে কাজ করেন কান্তা চক্রবর্তী। তিনি মনে করেন, এই ধরনের শিশুদের মূলস্রোতে ফেরাতে গেলে শুধু শিক্ষা নয়, তাদের যথাযথ পুষ্টিও দরকার। একই সঙ্গে নাচ, গান বা আঁকার মতো বিষয়ও তাদের শেখানো দরকার বলে কান্তাদেবী মনে করেন।

সমাজকর্মী মৃণাল বিশ্বাস মনে করেন, পথশিশুদের মূলস্রোতে ফেরাতে হলে তাদের আলাদা করে দেখলে চলবে না। আর পাঁচ জনের মতোই ব্যবহার করতে হবে।

হাওড়ায় জঞ্জালের স্তূপে শিশু ভিক্ষুক। দীপঙ্কর মজুমদারের তোলা ছবি।

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আমাদের সন্তানরাও দুধেভাতে আছে কি?

যুদ্ধে বা বিপর্যয়ে সব থেকে ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত হয় শিশুরা। ইউনিসেফ প্রকাশিত সমীক্ষায় সেই সত্যটিই প্রমাণিত। দুর্ভাগ্যজনক ভাবে, প্রতিকূল পরিবেশে বেড়ে ওঠা শিশুদের সম্পর্কে তথ্য সংগ্রহেরও কোনও উদ্যোগ নেই ভারতে। লিখছেন **অভী আচার্য**

একটা খুব বড়ো ঘটনা, বা অনেকগুলো ছোটো-ছোটো আপাতবিচ্ছিন্ন অথচ আদতে পরস্পর-সম্পর্কিত ঘটনার একটা পরম্পরা যখন অনেকটা সময় জুড়ে আমাদের চারপাশে ঘটে যেতে থাকে, তখন, অনেক সময়েই, সেই ঘটনা বা ঘটনাক্রমের সত্যিকারের অভিঘাত আমাদের নজর এড়িয়ে যায়। ঘটনাপ্রবাহের মাঝখানে দাঁড়িয়ে থাকার ফলেই হোক, কিংবা এরই ধরনের ঘটনা ক্রমাগত দেখতে থাকার কারণেই, তার প্রতি এক ধরনের অভ্যস্ততা কি তৈরি হয়ে যায় আমাদের? প্রতিক্রিয়ার ধার, ফলে, কমে আসতে থাকে? কিন্তু, এমনও কি হয় যে সেই ঘটনাপ্রবাহে কোনও একটি বিশেষ মুহূর্ত, কিংবা তার সঙ্গে জুড়ে থাকা কোনও একটি বিশেষ মুখ, আচমকা লাফিয়ে উঠে আমাদের চোখের সামনে এসে দাঁড়ায়, তার তীব্রতা ধাক্কা নিজেমে মনে পড়ে যায় গোটা ঘটনাক্রম, তার যাবতীয় ব্যাপকতা ও পূর্বাপরতা নিয়ে। ঠিক যেমন ভিয়েতনাম যুদ্ধের পুরো কাহিনিটি ধরা থাকে নাপাম বোমায় বিধ্বস্ত রাস্তা দিয়ে ন'বছরের কিশোরী কিম ফুক-এর ছুটে আসার ছবিতে; সিরিয়ার রাজনৈতিক অস্থিরতার প্রেক্ষাপট লিপিবদ্ধ থাকে তুরস্কের সাগরবেলায় বালিতে মুখ গুঁজে পড়ে থাকা আয়লান কুর্দির তিন বছরের ছোট্ট শরীরে, কিংবা আলেপ্পোয় বোমাবর্ষণের পর ধুলো আর রক্তে মাখামাখি পাঁচ বছরের ওমরান দাকনিশের চোখেমুখে লেপটে থাকা আতঙ্কের মধ্যে। এবং, যদি এই তিনটি ছবিকে পাশাপাশি রাখা যায়, অনায়াসে তা ফুটে উঠতে পারে এক অর্ধশতাব্দী জুড়ে সারা পৃথিবীতে নিরপরাধ শিশুদের যে ভাবে বার বার শিকার হতে হয়েছে হিংসা ও সন্ত্রাসের, তার এক মর্মস্পর্শী মন্তাজ।

এই তিনটি ছবির কথা একসঙ্গে মনে পড়ে গেল 'ইউনিসেফ'-এর সাম্প্রতিক রিপোর্ট 'আপরুটেড: দ্য গ্রোয়িং ক্রাইসিস ফর রিফিউজি অ্যান্ড মাইগ্রেন্ট চিলড্রেন' হাতে আসায়। বিশ্বজোড়া হিংসা, সন্ত্রাস ও বিভিন্ন প্রাকৃতিক বিপর্যয়ের কারণে যে বিশাল সংখ্যক শিশুদের গায়ে 'রিফিউজি' বা 'ছিন্নমূল' তকমা সেঁটে বসে গিয়েছে, তারই বিশ্ব অঞ্চলভিত্তিক খতিয়ান এই রিপোর্ট। সদ্যপ্রকাশিত এই রিপোর্টের পাতা উলটোতেই আরও অনেক কিম ফুক, আয়লান কুর্দি, ওমরান দাকনিশদের সঙ্গে পরিচয় হতে শুরু করে, এবং খানিক দূর এগোতেই অর্থের নানা স্তর-সমেত চোখের সামনে এসে দাঁড়ায় 'ছিন্নমূল' শব্দটি — নিজস্ব শিকড় ছেড়ে নামহীন, ঠিকানাহীন ছড়িয়ে পড়া সেইসব শিশুদের কাহিনিই যেন বা সারি দিয়ে দাঁড়াতে থাকে। ঠিকই যে, সংখ্যা সব সময় গল্পের পুরোটা বলে না। পুরোটা কেন, হয়তো অর্ধেকটাও বলে না। কিন্তু, পাশাপাশি এও তো ঠিক যে, কোনও-কোনও গল্পের ব্যাপকতা ও বিচারকে একমুঠোর মধ্যে ধরতে অনেক ক্ষেত্রেই বড়ো ভূমিকা রয়ে

যায় সংখ্যার। ঠিক যেমন এই রিপোর্ট।

বিশ্বজুড়ে যুদ্ধবিধ্বস্ত শিশুদের কোন বাস্তবতাকে তুলে ধরছে ইউনিসেফ-এর সাম্প্রতিক তথ্যপঞ্জি? তথ্য বলছে, সারা পৃথিবী জুড়ে এ পর্যন্ত ছিন্নমূল শিশুর সংখ্যা পাঁচ কোটির কাছাকাছি। এই গৃহহীন শিশুদের অধিকাংশই সরাসরি দাঙ্গা, হিংসা, গৃহযুদ্ধ ও প্রাকৃতিক বিপর্যয়ের শিকার। এর বাইরেও রয়েছে আরও প্রায় দু'কোটি শিশু, যারা স্রেফ একটু সুস্থ ভাবে বেঁচে থাকার জন্য ঘর ছাড়তে বাধ্য হয়েছে। এ-পর্যন্ত পড়েই ধাক্কা খেতে হয়। মনে না-পড়ে পারে না যে, ১৯৮৯-র রাষ্ট্রপুঞ্জের শিশু অধিকার সনদে খুব স্পষ্ট করে উল্লেখ করা হয়েছে যে, নিজের ঘরই শিশুদের সবচেয়ে বড়ো আশ্রয়, এবং তারা সবচেয়ে বেশি সুরক্ষিত কেবলমাত্র তাদের বাবা-মায়েদের কাছেই। অথচ, এখনও, তার পর প্রায় তিন দশক পেরোতে চলেও, সে অঙ্গীকার রক্ষার ধারেকাছেও যে পৌঁছনো হয়ে ওঠেনি, তার একেবারে টাটকা উদাহরণ তুরস্কের সাগরবেলায় শান্ত ঘুমিয়ে থাকা আয়লান কুর্দিরর দেখতে-না-পাওয়া মুখ।

সে ধাক্কা সামলে এগোতে গিয়ে তার পদক্ষেপে আরও অসংখ্য আয়লান কুর্দির সঙ্গে পরিচয়। পরিসংখ্যান বলছে, সারা বিশ্বে মোট যত মানুষকে যুদ্ধ, হিংসা ও সন্ত্রাসের কারণে উদ্বাস্তু হতে হয়েছে, তার অর্ধেকই শিশু। এবং যুদ্ধের কারণে নিজের মাটি থেকে উৎখাত হয়ে ভিনদেশে (অধিকাংশ ক্ষেত্রেই শরণার্থী-শিবিরে) আশ্রয় নিতে বাধ্য হওয়া মানুষদের মধ্যেও শিশুদের সংখ্যা উদ্বেগজনক হারে ক্রমবর্ধমান এবং একটা বড়ো অংশই (বিশ্বজুড়ে উদ্বাস্তু শিশুদের মোট সংখ্যার প্রায় ৪৫%) মধ্যপ্রাচ্য— সিরিয়া, ইরাক, লেবানন, প্যালেস্তাইন, ইয়েমেন, ইউক্রেন ও আফগানিস্তানের হিসেবদীর্ঘ এলাকায়। সংখ্যার হিসেবে, প্রায় দু'কোটি

চাষের জমি খেয়ে গিয়েছে নদীর নোনা জল, মাথা গোঁজার চালটুকু কেড়ে নিয়ে গিয়েছে মারণ-ঝড়— এহেন পরিস্থিতিতে অসংখ্য শিশু-কিশোরকে ছেড়ে আসতে হয়েছিল ভিটেমাটি, আচমকাই রাজ্যে নারী ও শিশুপাচারের ঘটনা বেড়ে গিয়েছিল বেশ কয়েক গুণ। কত? তার খোঁজ রাখার চেষ্টাও করিনি।

৮০ লক্ষ। এর মধ্যে এক কোটির কাছাকাছি শিশু ঘর হারিয়ে দিন কাটাচ্ছে নিজের দেশেই, আর বাকিরা ছড়িয়ে পড়েছে অন্যত্র। একেবারে সাম্প্রতিক তথ্য উদ্ধার করে ইউনিসেফ দেখিয়েছে, কেবল গত এক বছরেই এই লক্ষ পরিবার-হারানো শিশু আশ্রয় নিয়েছে ৭৮টি দেশে। এবং ২০১৫-র এই পরিসংখ্যান ২০১৪-র তুলনায় বেড়েছে তিন গুণ।

'আপরুটেড'-এর তথ্য অনুযায়ী, সাম্প্রতিক অতীতে এই বিপুল সংখ্যক শিশু-শরণার্থীদের অধিকাংশই আশ্রয় নিয়েছে মূলত সিরিয়া ও লেবাননে। লেবাননে এই মুহূর্তে মোট জনসংখ্যার এক-পঞ্চমাংশই যে শরণার্থী, সে তথ্য উল্লেখ করে রিপোর্টে দেখানো হয়েছে, কী ভাবে একটা গোটা দেশের অর্থনীতিই পালটে গিয়েছে উদ্বাস্তু-সমস্যার চাপে। সমস্যাটিকে যদি আমরা ব্রিটেন বা মার্কিন যুক্তরাষ্ট্রের মাটিতে আশ্রয়প্রার্থী উদ্বাস্তুদের সংখ্যা নিরিখে দেখতে চেষ্টা করি, তা হলে বিষয়টি হয়তো কিছুটা পরিষ্কার হবে। যেখানে এই মুহূর্তে প্রতি পাঁচজনের মধ্যে একজন উদ্বাস্তু, সেখানে ব্রিটেনে এই হার প্রতি ৫৩০ জনে একজন, আর মার্কিন যুক্তরাষ্ট্রে প্রতি ১,২০০ জনে একজন। অর্থাৎ, শরণার্থী-সমস্যার চাপ গরিব দেশগুলোর ওপর যতটা ব্যাপক ভাবে পড়েছে, তুলনায় উন্নত ব্রিটে্ন বা মার্কিন অর্থনীতির ওপর ততটা পড়েনি। ইউরোপিয়ান ইউনিয়ন-ভুক্ত দেশগুলির সম্পর্কেও একথা বিলক্ষণ খাটে। এবং সিরিয়া থেকে শরণার্থীদের আশ্রয় দেওয়ার বিষয়ে পূর্ব ইউরোপের অধিকাংশ দেশ এখনও যে ধরনের নিমরাজি মানসিকতা দেখিয়ে চলেছে, তা থেকে পরিষ্কার, বহিরাগত আন্তর্জাতিক শরণার্থীরা উদ্বাস্তু-শিবিরগুলিতে ঠিক কী ধরনের আতিথেয়তা পেতে পারে। শিশুদের ক্ষেত্রে বিষয়টা আরও জটিল, কেননা, যে কোনও প্রতিকূল পরিবেশে সবচেয়ে বেশি সমস্যায় পড়তে

হয় তাদেরই — একেবারে শৈশবাবস্থায় যে প্রাথমিক স্বাস্থ্য-চিকিৎসা পরিষেবা এবং শিক্ষার সুযোগ তাদের জন্য অত্যাবশ্যক, সেখানে মস্ত বড়ো ফাঁক রয়ে যায়।

ঠিক এই প্রসঙ্গটিতে এসে ঘরের দিকে চোখ ফেরানোও সমান প্রাসঙ্গিক বলে মনে হয়। এ-কথা ঠিক, সাম্প্রতিক অতীতে তেমন কোনও দীর্ঘমেয়াদি হিংসা বা গৃহযুদ্ধের মুখে পড়তে হয়নি আমাদের দেশকে। ফলে সিরিয়া বা লেবাননের শরণার্থী-শিবিরগুলিতে শৈশবের যে তুমুল অপচয়, তার তেমন প্রত্যক্ষ অভিজ্ঞতাও আমাদের হয়তো বা নেই। কিন্তু আমরা যদি মাথায় রাখি নেপালের সাম্প্রতিক ভূমিকম্পের কথা, বা কাশ্মীর-উত্তরাখণ্ডের প্রলয়ঙ্কর বন্যার প্রসঙ্গ, তা হলে হয়তো মনে পড়বে, কী ভাবে ভয়াবহ সেই সব প্রাকৃতিক দুর্যোগের দাম চোকাতে হয়েছে সেখানকার শিশুদের। ভূমিকম্পের ঠিক পরের কয়েক মাসে নেপাল থেকে যে শিশু-কিশোররা ভারতে চলে আসতে বাধ্য হয়েছিল স্রেফ দু'মুঠো খাবারের নিশ্চয়তার আশায়, তাদের নিয়ে কাজ করা বেশ কিছু স্বেচ্ছাসেবী সংগঠনের লোকজনেরা জানিয়েছেন, কী ভাবে বছর ১২-১৪-র কিশোরী মেয়েদের চাকরির লোভ দেখিয়ে পাচার করে দেওয়া হয়েছে উত্তরপ্রদেশে, হরিয়ানায়, গুজরাতে। দু'তিন দফা হাতবদলের পর অনেক ক্ষেত্রেই তাদের স্থায়ী ঠিকানা হয়েছে গুরগাঁও বা সুরাটের কোনও পতিতাপল্লিতে। আরও কয়েক বছর যদি পিছিয়ে যাই, নিশ্চয়ই মনে পড়বে ঠিক অনুরূপ ঘটনা ঘটেছিল আয়লা-পরবর্তী সময়ে, দুই ২৪ পরগনায়। চাষের জমি খেয়ে গিয়েছে নদীর নোনা জল, মাথা গোঁজার চালটুকু কেড়ে নিয়ে গিয়েছে মারণ-ঝড়— এহেন পরিস্থিতিতে অসংখ্য শিশু-কিশোরকে ছেড়ে আসতে হয়েছিল ভিটেমাটি, আচমকাই রাজ্যে নারী ও শিশুপাচারের ঘটনা বেড়ে গিয়েছিল বেশ কয়েক গুণ। কত? তার খোঁজ রাখার চেষ্টাও করিনি আমরা। গত কয়েক বছর ধরে খরাদগ্ধ বিদর্ভে যে বিপুল সংখ্যক কৃষক-মৃত্যুর ঘটনা ঘটেছে, সেখানকার শিশুদের ওপর তার কী প্রভাব পড়েছে, তা সহজেই অনুমেয়, যদিও আফশোস, সরকারের তরফে তার কোনও সুনির্দিষ্ট নথিভুক্তিকরণ ঘটেনি।

আমাদের সরকার, কেন্দ্রেই হোক অথবা রাজ্যে, শিশুদের নিয়ে অনেক ইতিবাচক প্রকল্প রচনা করেছেন। কিন্তু বিরুদ্ধ প্রাকৃতিক পরিবেশ ও দীর্ঘমেয়াদি হিংসার ঘটনা কী ভাবে বিভিন্ন স্তরে শিশুদের জীবনে প্রভাবিত করে, কী ভাবে তাদের সরিয়ে রাখে শিক্ষা-স্বাস্থ্য-সুরক্ষার নিরাপত্তাবলয় থেকে, তা নিয়ে সর্বসদীপ তথ্যভিত্তিক এখনও গড়ে তোলা সম্ভব হয়নি। পোশাকি ইংরেজিতে যাকে বলে 'ভালনারেবিলিটি ম্যাপিং'— প্রতিকূল পরিবেশে বেড়ে ওঠা শিশুদের জন্য তেমন কোনও সামাজিক সমীক্ষা বা গবেষণাও অন্তত সরকারি তরফে, হয়নি। বেশি কিছু নয়, গত মাওবাদী-অধ্যুষিত এলাকায়, বা কাশ্মীরের সীমান্তবর্তী গ্রামে, বা মণিপুরের মোরে-চান্দেল লাগোয়া মায়ানমার-সীমান্তে কেবলমাত্র সেনা-আধাসেনা মোতায়েন করতে গিয়ে কত বিদ্যালয় অধিগৃহীত হয়েছে, তার জেরে কত শিশুর রোজকার স্কুলে যাওয়া ডকে উঠেছে, তাতে তাদের জীবনে দীর্ঘমেয়াদি প্রভাব কী হয়েছে, সামান্য সেই সমীক্ষাটুকু হয়েছে কি? তা হলে কীসের ভরসায় দাবি করি, আমাদের সন্তানরা ভালো আছে?

অজিত নাইনান

APPENDIX- E

Contact Points in Kolkata City area

Sl. no	Contact point	Address	Geographical location
1.	Nimtala (LAMP)	56/1/1 Strand Bank Road	22 °35''36' 88° 21'' 07'
2.	Park Circus (LAMP)	5/1 Tiljala Road	22° 32''19' 88° 22'' 24'
3.	Desoprio park (CSP)	114 A Motilal Neheru road,	22° 31''0'8 88° 21'' 14'
4.	Chandni Chawk (CSP)	12/A Madan Street	22° 33'' 57' 88° 21'' 14'
5.	Rajabazar (READS)	2B/H/50 Gas Street	22° 34'' 35' 88° 22'' 28'
6.	Ultadanga (READS)	15A Adhar Ch Lane	22° 35'' 46' 88° 23'' 10'
7.	Surya Sen Street (BBWS)	66 Surya Sen Street	22 °34'' 25' 88° 26'' 54'
8.	Pottery Road (CHILDLINE)	37, pottery road	22° 33'' 16' 88° 22'' 45'
9.	Lalbazar street (BBWS)	345/1 Lalbazar Street	22° 34'' 16' 88° 21'' 19'
10.	Sealdah Station (CHILDLINE)	Near GRPF booth by Childline	22° 34'' 04' 88° 22'' 16'
11.	Bowbazar(LAMP)	6/1 Mathur babu lane	22° 33'' 23' 88° 23'' 30'
12.	Entally (CSP)	23 Sambhu Babu lane	22 ° 33'' 27' 88° 22'' 03'
13.	Picnik Garden (LAMP)	12/1 Raicharan Ghosh Lane	22 ° 31'' 48' 88° 22'' 54'
14.	Halgachia (CINI)	18/1 Chauil Patti Lane	22° 33'' 00' 88° 23'' 48'
15.	Baishali (CINI)	Atal Sur Road	22° 27'' 42' 88° 22'' 04'
16.	Motijhil (CINI)	R N Guha Road	22° 32'' 58' 88 °21'' 13'

Appendix- F

Spectroscopy Result of sample of Dendrite (a glue commonly used by street children)

ROYAL NEPAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
CENTRAL OFFICE

— RONAST

Date : - 10th Oct. 2002

NATURAL PRODUCTS RESEARCH LABORATORY
Sample Analysis Report

Sample: Dendrite
Received from: Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Center (CWIN)
Received date: 24 September 2002
Location: Rabibhawan, Katmandu
Lab code: NS 5903

S.N.	Parameters	Observed values	Standard values
	Physical:		
1.	State	Yellow glue	
2.	Odor	Characteristic smell	
	Spectroscopic:		
3.	IR spectra [v_{max}] (Solvent isolated from the sample)	3075, 3050, 3010, 2910, 2860, 2720, 2570, 1930, 1850, 1790, 1705, 1600, 1480, 1370, 1200, 1170, 1100, 1075, 1020, 890, 720, 690 cm^{-1}	3075, 3050, 3010, 2910, 2860, 2720, 2570, 1930, 1850, 1790, 1715, 1705, 1600, 1480, 1370, 1200, 1170, 1100, 1075, 1020, 890, 720, 690 cm^{-1}

Comments: IR spectrum of the solvent separated from Dendrite is found identical with the spectrum of the reference organic solvent toluene.

Kanti Shrestha
Asst. Scientific Officer

Note : - This result represent only tested sample.

Source: Rai et al(2002) Glue Sniffing Among Street Children in the Kathmandu Valley Page-61

Coding Statement:

1) **FAMILY STATUS:**

FAMILY SATTUS	CODE:
WITH FAMILY	2
WITHOUT FAMILY	1

2) **AGE GROUP OF STREET CHILDREN:**

	AGE GROUP	CODE:
	6-9	1
	9-12	2
	12-15	3
	15-18	4

3) **GENDER STATUS:**

	GENDER	CODE:
	MALE	1
	FEMALE	2

4) **LANGUAGE SPOKEN BY THE STREET CHILDREN:**

	LANGUAGE	CODE
	URDU	1
	BENGALI	2
	BIHARI	3
	HINDI	4
	NEPALI	5

5) RELIGION STRUCTURE:

	RELIGION	CODE
	HINDU	1
	MUSLIM	2
	OTHERS	3

6) WHY DID YOU LEAVE YOUR HOME:

CAUSES	CODE		
PARENT ATTITUDE	1		
POVERTY	2		
HOME VIOLENCE	3		
WANTED TO BE FREE	4		
FRIENDS FORCE	5		
WANTED TO MAKE MONEY	6		
ADDICTION	7		

7) PROBLEMS IN THE STREETS:

ABUSE BY POLICE	1	
ABUSE BY ELBERS	2	
SHELTER PROBLEMS	3	
PROBLEMS OF FOOD	4	
OTHERS	5	

8) HOW OFTEN DO YOU VISIT YOUR FAMILY:

VISITING AT HOME	CODE	
EVERY DAY	1	
2-4 TIMES IN A WEEK	2	
ONCE IN A WEEK	3	
ONCE IN A MONTH	4	
MORE THAN ONE MONTH	5	
DOES NOT GO TO HOME	6	
DON'T KNOW	7	

9)   WHAT IS YOUR PARENTAL STATUS:

PARENTAL STATUS	CODE	
BOTH ALIVE	1	
BOTH DIED	2	
FATHER DIED	3	
MOTHER DIED	4	
DON'T KNOW	5	

10)   READ OR WRITE:

	CODE	
YES	1	
NO	2	

10 A)   HAVE YOU ANY SCHOOL EDUCATION   YES—1   NO --- 2

11)   LEVEL OF EDUCATION:

LEVEL	CODE	
UPTO CLASS IV	1	
IV - VI	2	
VI- VIII	3	
NEVER GO TO SCHOOL	4	

12)   WHY DID YOU LEAVE SCHOOL:

CAUSES	CODE	
DON'T LIKE STUDYING	1	
HAD TO WORK	2	
ECONOMIC REASON	3	
DID NOT LIKE TEACHER	4	
FAMILY PROBLEM	5	
VIOLENCE BY TEACHER	6	
OTHERS	7	

13) DO YOU WANT TO RETURN TO SCHOOL:

WANT TO RETURN	CODE	
YES	1	
NO	2	
DON'T KNOW	3	

14) DO YOU KNOW ANY TECH WORK:

	CODE	
YES	1	
NO	2	

15) TYPE OF WORK:

TYPE OF WORK	CODE	
RAG PICKERS	1	
LOADING AND UNLOADIING	2	
SHOE POLISHING	3	
WORK AT VEG. MARKET	4	
BEGGERS	5	
OTHERS	6	

16) AVG. DAILY INCOME:

AVG. DAILY INCOME	CODE	
LESS THAN 50	1	
50---100	2	
100---150	3	
150---200	4	
ABOVE 200/-	5	

17) NUMBER OF MEALS   TAKING:

NO OF MEALS	CODE	
3	3	
2	2	
1	1	

18) SOURCES OF FOOD:

SOURCE OF FOOD	CODE	
BEGGGING	1	
BUY FROM NEARBY HOTELS	2	
NGO HOME	3	
RAILWAY PANTRY CAR	4	
OTHER	5	

19)   DO YOU SUUFERING FROM ILLNESS IN LAST SIX MONTHS

ILLNESS	CODE	
YES	1	
NO	2	
DON'T KNOW	3	

20) TREATMENT FOR ILLNESS:

TREATMENT	CODE	
GOVT. HOSPITAL	1	
PRIVATE DOCTOR	2	
SELF MEDICINE	3	
DISPENSARY	4	
NGO HOME	5	
OTHERS	6	

21) TAKING BATH:

YES	1	
NO	2	
DON'T KNOW	3	

22) BRUSHING TEETH REGULARLY

BRUSHING TEETH	CODE	
YES	1	
NO	2	
DON'T KNOW	3	

23) USAGE OF SLEEPER/ SHOES

USAGE OF SLEEPER/ SHOES	CODE	
YES	1	
NO	2	
DON'T KNOW	3	

24) CUTTING HAIR AND NAIL REGULARLY

CUTTING HAIR AND NAIL REGULARLY	CODE	
YES	1	
NO	2	
DON'T KNOW	3	

25) USE OF SUBSTANCE FIOR ADDICTION:

USE OF SUBSTANCE	CODE	
YES	1	
NO	2	
DON'T KNOW	3	

26) KNOW ABOUT GLUE SNIFFING

KNOW ABOUT GLUE SNIFFING	CODE	
YES	1	
NO	2	

27) DO YOU SNIFF GLUE:

DO YOU SNIFF GLUE	CODE	

YES	1	
NO	2	
DON'T KNOW	3	

28) WHEN DID YOU START USE OF GLUE:

STARTING OF GLUE SNIFFFING	CODE	
BEFORE SIX MONTHS	1	
BEFORE ONE YEARS	2	
DON'T KNOW	3	

29) WITH WHOM YOU STARTED SNIFFING:

WITH WHOM YOU STARTED SNIFFING	CODE	
FRIENDS	1	
ELDERS	2	
ALONE	3	
DON'T KNOW	4	

30) SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT GLUE SNIFFING

SOURCE OF KNOWLWDGE	CODE	
FROM FRIEND	1	
FROM ELDER	2	
FROM GROUP	3	
BY SEEING	4	
OTHERS	5	

31) TYPE OF GLUE

TYPE OF GLUE	CODE	
DENDRITE	1	
OTHERS	2	

32) FROM WHERE YOU GET THE GLUE

FROM WHERE YOU GET THE GLUE	CODE	

FROM MARKET	1	
FROM FRIENDS	2	
OTHERS	3	

33) FREQUENCY OF GLUE SNIFFING

FREQUENCY OF GLUE SNIFFING	CODE	
WHOLE DAY	1	
TWO TIMES DAILY	2	
THREE TIMES DAILY	3	
NOT SHEDULED	4	
DON'T KNOW	5	

34) WHY DO YOU USE GLUE

WHY DO YOU USE GLUE	CODE	
PLEASURE	1	
TO AVOIDE HUNGER	2	
FORGET EVERYTHING	3	
ADDICTED	4	
DON'T KNOW	5	

35) KNOW ABOUT THE EFFECT OF GLUE

EFFECT	CODE	
YES	1	
NO	2	
DON'T KNOW	3	
DON'T RESPOND	4	

36) DO YOU WANT TO GIVE UP THE ADDICTION

WANT TO GIVE UP	CODE	
YES	1	
NO	2	
DON'T KNOW	3	

Family Status	Gender				
	Age Group	Male	Percentage	Female	Percentage
Without Family	**6 - 9 Years**	16	6.11	4	1.53
	9 -12 Years	74	28.24	13	4.96
	12 - 15 Years	95	36.26	8	3.05
	15 - 18 Years	47	17.94	5	1.91
With Family	**6 - 9 Years**	28	11.11	3	1.19
	9 -12 Years	80	31.75	6	2.38
	12 - 15 Years	94	37.30	8	3.17
	15 - 18 Years	23	9.13	10	3.97
Total		457	88.91	57	11.09

APPENDIX-H

(Primary and Secondary Data Table)

APPENDIX- B

AB-1   (Primary and Secondary Data Table)

AB-2

Zones	Number of children in Open Shelter	Number of children in contact with NGO	Religious Composition (in %)	Locational Analysis
I	69	100	Hindu-81.89 Muslim-18.11	Kumartuli to Howrah Bridge along the river
II	63	157	Hindu-63.64 Muslim-36.36	College Square, College Street, Medical College area, Surya

				Sen Street and Bowbazar
III	59	100	Hindu-51.21 Muslim-48.79	Maniktala, Rajabazar, Sealdah and Narkeldanga
IV	62	130	Hindu- 59.37 Muslim-40.63	Tangra, Tiljala, Topsia and Park circus, Tangra, Tiljala, Topsia
V	49	60	Hindu-80.18 Muslim-19.82	Chitpur, Bagbazar, Sovabazar
VI	25	111	Hindu-59.63 Muslim-40.37	Ballygunge, Jadavpur, Dhakuria, Santoshpur and Kasba
VII	25	55	Hindu-56.25 Muslim-43.75	Taratala and Behala.

AB-3

Name of the Districts	Number of children
Kolkata	243
Medinipur	17
Maldah	9
24 Parganas (North)	179
24 Parganas (South)	233
Howrah	14
Bnakura	6
Murshidabad	3
Total Number of Children	704

AB-4

Name of The States	Number of Children
Bihar	278
Odisha	3
Uttar Pradesh	12

AB-5

Age Group of Street Children	Male	
6 to 9	273	108
9 to 12	243	82
12 to 15	143	74

15-18	86	23

AB-6

Migrated From	Male	Female
Bangladesh	11	0
Nepal	9	0
Bihar	14	4
Jharkhand	4	0
Uttar Pradesh	8	2
Maharastra	1	0

AB-7

Name of the Districts	Male	Female
Bankura		
Medinipur		
Cooch Bihar		
Darjeeling		
Utter Dinajpur		
Maldah		
Murshidabad		
Nadia		
Kolkata		
24 Parganas(North)		
24 Parganas(South)		

AB-8: Table of Daily Commuting Street Children at Sealdah station area

NAME OF THE PLACES	NUMBER OF CHILDREN
Shayam Nagar	2
Habra	2
Laxmikantapur	3
Madhyagram	3
Barabazar	3
Shyambazar	3
Sovabazar	3
collegestreet	4

Beliaghata Khal		4
Naihati		4
Canning		4
Dakshin Barasat		4
Baruipur		5
Mallick Bazar		5
Amharst street		5
Beliaghata Khal		5
Patipukur		6
Dhakuria		6
Entally		6
Titagarh		7
Kankinara		7
Dumdum		7
Nimtala		7
Sealdah		7
Sonarpur		8
Barasat		8
Park Circus		12
Rajabazar		16
Did Not Respond		16
Howrah		19
Tiljala		20
Narkeldanga Khal		48
Total Number of Children		**252**

Source: Primary Survey

AB-9: Reasons of Leaving Home or migration to street situation

			Reasons of Leaving Home or migration to street situation								Total
			Parent's Attitude	Poverty	Home Violence	Want to be Free	Friends' Force	Want to Make Money	Addiction	Did not respond	
Age Grou	6 Yrs	Count	04	09	05	01	01	00	00	00	20

315

ps	- 9 Yrs	% Value	19.6%	43.1%	25.5%	5.9%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	9 yrs	Count	08	49	21	04	00	02	02	01	87
	- 12 yrs	% Value	9.3%	58.1%	23.8%	4.7%	0.0%	1.6%	1.0%	0.8%	100.0%
	12 yrs	Count	18	50	23	04	02	06	00	01	103
	- 15 yrs	% Value	17.1%	48.2%	22.6%	3.5%	2.0%	5.5%	0.0%	1.0%	100.0%
	15yrs -	Count	11	29	09	01	00	00	00	02	52
	18 yrs	% Value	20.7%	56.1%	17.1%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0,0%	3.7%	100.0%
Total Number of Children		Count	41	137	58	10	03	08	02	04	262
		% Value	15.3%	52.4%	22.4%	3.8%	1.8%	2.8%	1.0%	1.6%	100.0%

AB-10: Use of Dendrite

Amount of Use	Number of respondents	Percentage
Never use	0	00.00%
Almost Never	0	00.00%
Occasionally / Sometimes	5	04.90%
Almost every time	84	82.35%
Frequently use	13	12.75%
Total	102	100.00%

AB-11: Problems Faced by Street Children in Sealdah area

Problem faced	Frequency	Percentage
Abuse by Police	**158**	**30.7**
Abuse by Elders'	**122**	**23.7**
Shelter Problems	**85**	**16.5**
Problemof Food	**85**	**16.5**
Others	**42**	**8.2**
Not Responded	**22**	**4.3**
Total	**514**	**100.0**

Source: Primary Survey

AB-12: Parental status of street children

			Parental Status					
			Both Alive	Both Died	Father Died	Mother Died	Dont Know	Total
Family Status	**Without Family**	Count	145	58	24	19	16	262
		Percentage value	32.1%	23.0%	9.2%	7.3%	2.3%	100.0%
	With Family	Count	175	38	12	17	10	252
		Percentage value	66.8%	14.5%	20.6%	15.5%	8.7%	100.0%
Total		Count	256	96	76	58	28	514
		Percentage value	49.8%	18.7%	14.8%	11.3%	5.4%	100.0%

AB-13: Family Status wise level of education

Family Status wise Level of Education							
			Level of Education				Total
			Up to Class 4	Class 4 to Class 6	Class 6 to Class 8	Never go to School	

Family Status	Without Family	Without Family	117	43	0	102	262
			44.70%	16.40%	0.00%		100.00%
	With Family	With Family	104	32	8	108	252
			44.40%	12.70%	3.20%		100.00%
Total		Count	229	75	8	202	514
		% within Family Status	44.60%	14.60%	1.60%		100.00%

Family Status wise use of Substances						
			Substance Usage			**Total**
			Yes	**No**	**Don't Know**	
Family Status	**Without Family**	Count	160	55	47	262
		Percentage value	63.5%	21.8%	14.7%	100.0%
	With Family	Count	113	112	27	252
		Percentage value	44.8%	44.4%	10.7%	100.0%
Total		Count	273	167	74	514
		Percentage value	54.2%	33.1%	12.7%	100.0%

AB-14: Type of Economic Activities

Type of Economic Activities	Children without family	With family
Rag Picker	96	113
Porter	43	19
Shoe Polisher	32	8
works at Vegetable market	21	33
Beggars	13	16
Other	11	8
Non workers	79	22
Total	262	252

AB-14: Family Status wise use of Substances

AB-15: Types of substances/Addictive materials

Types of substances	Male	Female
Glue or Adhesive	102	05
Tobacco (smoking)	21	0
Tobacco (chewing)	30	0
Guthka or Pan Mashala	29	0
Alcohol	11	0
Not responded/replied	63	05

AB-16 Age-Income relationship

AGE-INCOME RELATIONSHIP								
			Average Daily Income					Total
			Less than Rs. 50	Rs. 50 – Rs. 100	Rs. 100 – Rs. 150	Rs. 150 – Rs. 200	More than Rs. 200	
Age Profile of Street Children	6 Yrs - 9 Yrs	Percentage value	62.7%	17.6%	15.7%	3.9%	0.0%	100.0%
	9 yrs - 12 yrs	Percentage value	43.0%	36.6%	15.7%	4.7%	0.0%	100.0%
	12 yrs - 15 yrs	Percentage value	13.1%	45.2%	36.2%	5.0%	0.5%	100.0%
	15yrs - 18 yrs	Percentage value	6.1%	23.2%	24.4%	42.7%	3.7%	100.0%

SECONDARY DATA FROM DIFFERENT SOURCES

AB-17   MISSING CHILDREN (MALE) IN SEALDAH STATION:

Month	Year	Year	Year
	2013	2014	2015
Jan	17	19	15
Feb	23	23	22
Mar	21	24	20
Apr	18	14	11
May	16	19	29
Jun	22	22	26
Jul	24	23	37
Aug	18	19	21
Sep	21	22	19
Oct	27	24	22
Nov	20	18	18
Dec	18	15	15

Source: GRPF, Sealdah

AB-18:   MISSING CHILDREN (FEMALE) IN SEALDAH STATION:

Month	Year	Year	Year
	2013	2014	2015
Jan	6	3	2
Feb	4	4	5
Mar	4	4	4
Apr	3	2	4
May	3	5	4
Jun	5	6	4
Jul	6	4	8
Aug	3	2	4
Sep	4	4	2
Oct	6	5	2
Nov	3	3	2
Dec	3	4	3

Source: GRPF, Sealdah

AB-19:   Children data from childline

Years	Old children	Runaway children	New children	From west Bengal	From other states	From Other countries
2013-14	296	235	518	295	139	17
2014-15	353	288	516	303	138	11
2015-16	396	268	598	310	310	39

AB-20:   Restoration process data

Years	Total Children	Family	Institution	Shelter	Runaway
2013-14	522	348	55	99	20
2014-15	510	365	33	95	17
2015-16*	521	370	46	84	21

AB-21: Health Problems among the children

Health Related Problems	Number of children	Percentages
Cut Injury	75	10.76%
Cold and Cough/Respiratory problem	168	24.10%
Pain in differnt parts of body	82	11.76%
Fungal Infection	86	12.34%
Gastric problems	191	27.40%
Scaby	73	10.47%

other	22	3.16%
Total	697	100.00%

Source: Record book of CINI (Child in Need Institution) health care for Street Children (2014-2016)