

# The Free Basic Education Provision in Tanzanian Public Schools and the Existence of Street Children

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## Abstract

*The paper examines the influence of the free basic education provision on the street children existence using a concurrent triangulation research design. A purposive sampling and a convenience sampling techniques were employed to select a total of 200 respondents in Mwanza city. Data were collected through a likert-type questionnaire, interview and focus group discussions. Quantitative data from questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics while the qualitative data from interviews and FGDs were organized through thematic analysis. Findings indicated that, to a great extent the street children are ready to learn in schools. However, some indirect costs of schooling are still challenging. Based on this ground, findings reveal that to a very high extent the number of street children found to remain fairly constant despite of inception of the free basic education provision. Furthermore, the study found that the most appropriate possible remedy for the problem of street children is the establishment of well equipped boarding inclusive schools achieved by enforcing by-laws governing the enrollment of school age children. However, the findings reveal that there should be full government sponsorship covering direct and indirect costs for street children to afford schooling. The study has important implications for researchers, policy makers and, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. The paper recommends that there should be a prompt revisit of the Education and Training Policy of 2014 to involve street children in the provision of the free basic education.*

**Key words:** Free basic education, Street children, Street children existence, Tanzania

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## INTRODUCTION

Globally, developing education policies has been viewed as a crucial practice in developing countries. Developed national and international education policies and plans are launched to promote the growth of education sector and human capital. Tanzania since independence to present has made several efforts and commitments to develop national policies to extend the education opportunities for her people. Among the efforts is the education for all which has been developed basing on declarations of the World Conference on Education for All of 1990 held in Jomtien, Thailand. The conference pronounced all participating nations to achieve Universal Primary Education –UPE by 2000 (Haki Elimu, 2017). However, many countries including Tanzania have not been successful in achieving education for all. The poor attainment of UPE commenced a new direction based on the Millennium Development Goals that by 2015 all children in their nations should have the chance to enroll and complete primary education (UNESCO, 2009). Nevertheless, Tanzania is on move after endorsing the vision based on The Education Framework for Action by providing free primary and secondary education by 2030.

In Tanzanian context, the government started the implementation of the Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP) in 2002 aiming at improving access and quality of primary education in the country. This called on a free basic education being primary education where the fee payments in primary schools were abolished.

However, parents and or guardians were required by each school to meet some necessary contributions and costs including text books, uniforms and other school operational charges. The elimination of all primary school fees in January 2002 in Tanzania marked a tremendous increase in enrolment rates where girls and children from marginalized families had the access to primary education. For instance, the net enrolment rate in primary schools escalated from 59% in 2000 to 94% in 2011 (Haki Elimu, 2017).

Furthermore, the government started to implement the Education and Training Policy of 2014 by issuing circular number 5 in December, 2015 directing district education officers and heads of schools to ensure that education at lower secondary schools is free for all children. With this Circular, the government aims at achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 4 which requires the government to ensure that everyone completes free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education. In addition, the aim of providing a free basic education was to give opportunity to children from low income families to have access to education as well as lessening parent's burden of excessive fees and other contributions. In practice, this means that parents will no longer required to pay the 20,000 shillings fees that were charged to day school students and 70,000 shillings charged for students in boarding schools (URT, 2016). However, as per Education Circular No.3 of 2016, parents will still be required to make contribution for their children's education. For instance: purchasing uniforms for school and sports activities, text books, exercise books, pencils, mathematical set, pens and pay for the medical expenses of their children. These are termed as indirect costs for schooling (Evans, 2002).

The Education and Training Policy of 2014 inadequately suggests possible remedies for parents and guardians who due to extreme poverty fail to afford such indirect cost of schooling. Kopoka (2000) argues the same that street children in Africa are the victims of shortsighted policies, or lack of policies. In Malawi, Kadzamira and Pauline (2003) found that indirect costs of schooling continue to be prohibitive for some households. It seems that inability to afford such indirect costs of schooling cause a massive dropout and truancy of children from such households marked by extreme poverty. Such massive dropout from schools may at times accumulate more children on the streets commonly known as street children. The definition of street children adopted by this paper is that of children under the age of eighteen who spend most of their life on the streets (Lugalla, 1995).

Most of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) including Railway Children and several local partners in Mwanza carried out a survey in 2008, revealing that 392 children and young people were living full time on the streets (Railway Children Report, 2012). In the same vein, the same non-governmental organization conducted another survey in 2014 whereby 380 street children were living full time on the streets (Railway Children Report, 2014). In addition, the study found over a quarter of these street children had never attended school while 45% had dropped out. Furthermore, a study conducted by Olsson (2017) found that 44% of respondents put forth that poverty was the most common reason for children to leave from home to the streets.

Apart from extreme poverty as a cause of street children, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights conducted a global survey (OHCHR Report, 2012) which reveals other factors to include; family breakdown, armed conflict, natural and man-made disasters, famine, physical and sexual abuse, exploitation by adults, dislocation through migration, urbanization and overcrowding, disinheritance or being disowned, and HIV/AIDS status. All these factors render the accumulation of street children thereby making an independent 'community' that need special attention. The Education and Training Policy stated the free basic education to be accessible to all children in the country. However, this independent community comprising the street children seems too far to receive free basic education services as intended. This community of street children experience neither parental supervision nor readiness of parents and or guardians who can handle them to start schooling.

The provision of free basic education is expected to go hand in hand with increased enrolment rate of street children for them to access primary as well as lower secondary education. If that is the case, the decreased number of street children on streets of towns and cities needs to be observed. Contrasting findings regarding the status of street children have been revealed in literature. While some literature indicates the decreased number of street children in Mwanza by 40 per cent for the past three years owing to various joint initiatives by the government and private sectors (Kazoka, 2016), some other reports in the same region revealed the increased number of street children in recent years despite of various measures that have been taken to address the situation (Idai, 2016). Such contradiction calls for further research on the influence of free basic education provision on the existence of street children in Mwanza city.

Apart from the above debate, some more literature (Joseph, 2013; Lugalla & Mbwambo, 1999; HakiElimu, 2017; Hoogeveen & Rossi, 2013) have shown that the provision of free basic education have played a great role regarding the increased enrolment rate of school age children.

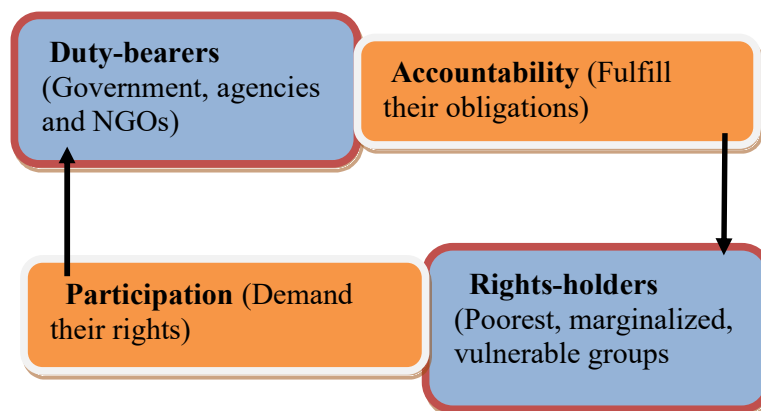
Despite of many researches on the effects of free basic education in Tanzania, the research gap as to how free basic education has influenced the existence of street children still exists. This information gap necessitates the need to examine the influence of the free basic education provision on the existence of street children. Specifically, this study intended to: assess the extent to which the street children are ready to access the free basic education, find out whether the provision of free basic education alters the number of street children in Mwanza city and, establish the possible remedies that provide lasting solution to the problem of street children.

### Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is grounded on Lugalla and Mbwapbo (1999) who assert that politicians, policy-makers and urban planners seem to be helpless in their efforts to either resolve the problem or to assist street children and have so far failed to prescribe plausible solutions which are realistic, down-to-earth and concrete. They add that the official government attitude towards street children has been very negative. In addition, Kopoka (2000) found that the community inadequately pressurizes the government to take necessary measures to find a lasting solution to the problem of street children. Thus, the findings from the current study unveil awareness of all education stakeholders including politicians, policy makers, urban planners, and the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology about the concern of the free basic education provision on the existence of street children. In addition, recommendations from this study put forth fundamental possible remedies that combat the problem of street children in the country. Furthermore, the findings from this study ignite other researchers in the world to carry out other studies on the same problem if deemed worthwhile.

### Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the human rights-based approach. A human rights-based approach is focused on thoughtful and systematic enhancement of human rights in all aspects of project and programme development and implementation (UNICEF, 2015). The core basis of this approach includes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and other international human rights mechanism. For instance, the UN hosted the World Conference on Human Rights commencing the Vienna Declaration in 1993. This declaration and the programme of action advocated human rights relating them to democracy, sustainability and development (Hamm as cited in Babaci-Wilhite, 2012). Significantly, in 1997, the UN Secretary General called for a mainstreaming of human rights into all UN works. As a result, various organizations and agencies came together in 2003 to develop the government responsibility in ensuring the rights-based approach (Babaci-Wilhite, 2012). The first objective of this approach is to empower people (rights-holders) to claim and exercise their rights whereas the second is to strengthen the capacity of the actors (duty-bearers) who have a particular obligation or responsibility to respect, protect and fulfill the rights of the poorest, weakest, most marginalized and vulnerable, and to comply with these obligations and duties (UNICEF, 2015). In this context, street children are potential rights holders in the human rights-based approach whereas governments are duty bearers accountable to meet their obligations. Thus the government is accountable through budget allocation, through building capacity to work on realizing specific rights, as well as through rule of law and juridical mechanisms.



**Figure 1:** Human rights based approach: Two fold objective (UNICEF, 2015)

The human rights based approach indicates that the government as a duty bearer is accountable ensuring that the poorest, marginalized and vulnerable groups are given their rights. For the purpose of this study, the street

children are the poorest, marginalized and vulnerable groups in the community. Therefore, street children deserve the right to acquire the currently provided free basic education of which the government has to ensure its accessibility to all school age children.

### **Global Prevalence and Statistics of Street Children**

The global status of street children varies across continents and countries. An estimated 10 million children in Africa live without families, unsupervised and mostly in towns as street children (Kopoka, 2000). According to the study conducted by Barri (2010), findings revealed that two (2) million children in the United States run away from their families each year. In some East African Countries, literatures have revealed an estimation of 250,000 street children particularly in Kenya (Joe, 2010). Tanzania is one of the East African countries which have experienced a tremendous increase in the number of street children either living alone or working on the streets of towns and cities (Carabain, 2008). Based on the survey of 95 districts, Saiboko (2012) found an estimation of 849,054 vulnerable children of which the street children only accounts for 33,952 in Tanzania. All of these street children gather in respective cities from every direction in the hope of escaping the misery and violence of rural areas (Railway Children Report, 2012)

### **The Growing Need for Combating the Problem of Street Children**

Nowadays, at least most of governments, communities and individuals have realized the huge problem of street children accumulating in every corner and along the roads in urban areas. However, most of individual's perceptions toward these street children have to date being negative. For instance, the street children are portrayed by the law and the general public as a group of vagrants, illegal vendors, orphans and hooligans or ruffians (Lugalla & Mbwambo, 1999). Due to such illusion, street children are improperly treated. For instance, police officers perceive the street children to be criminals thus tend to be punitive and anti-social when dealing with them on the streets (Lugalla, 1995). It is argued that street children are the victims of an uncaring community which is increasingly being characterized by extreme poverty or economic hardship, family breakdown, conflicts and violence. For instance, Evans (2002) found that mostly the street children are subjected to rejection and exploitation by the extended family after the death of their parent(s) in case of HIV/AIDS pandemic. This reason forces them into the street life in which are exposed to considerable risks of abuse, sexual violence and HIV within the street environment (Evans, 2002). In addition, Yangwe (2011) describes the Tanzania Legal and Human Rights Centre reports that in 2010 children remained victims of torture, rape, assaults, cruelty and killings putting Tanzanian children at a greater risks due to being unprotected. The violence against children is due to the reason that such unsupervised children work or live on the streets entailing unsafe environment (Pinheiro, 2006). While on streets, this community of street children faces a number of difficulties being characterized by starvation, malnutrition disorders, filthiness, nakedness and dangerous habitats. Preventing and eliminating violence against children are vital steps for improving children's lives and providing them with a safe and secured environment in which they are able to grow and thrive. That is, it is beyond doubt that special attention needs to be drawn regarding this community of street children in urban areas thereby ensuring total elimination of street children who work or live on the streets.

### **Empirical Literature Review**

Worldwide, there are a lot of empirical studies concerning the street children in terms of their causes, experiences, community perceptions and alike. However, a study conducted by UNICEF in 1999 indicates that there is a relatively small and mostly repetitive literature concerning the street children in Tanzania (UNICEF, 1999).

In London, the Consortium for Street Children Report (2001) revealed a very high street children's schooling readiness where most of street children quoted saying that any shelter is better than none, believing that forcing street children into government institutions rehabilitates them to leave the streets. However, some literatures in Indonesia revealed a very weak enrollment rates for school age street children due to financial and family problems (Jamihidin, Darnawati, Waode & Irawaty, 2018). The aforementioned study inadequately related enrollment rate versus free basic education provision rather financial and family problems. This necessitates the need for further research to capture an influence of the free basic education provision on enrollment rates of street children in schools.

Furthermore, an evaluative study conducted on education for street children in Egypt by evaluating the role of Hope Village Society in the provision of education to street children showed a fluctuation in children enrolment. However, it should be noted that the word "fluctuation of enrollment rate" does not capture the intensity of

existence of street children (Muhammad, 2009). The question whether the number of street children decreased or increased as a result of education provision remains in vein. Again, the enrollment in Muhammad's (2009) study seems too general to adequately inform whether such enrollment only captured the community of street children or went further including other school age children in the whole public. This grows a need for the study that is more specific, informing whether the number of street children has decreased or enrolled as a result of the free basic education provision.

To ensure the problem of street children is solved, UNICEF (2001) found that the Zimbabwe government enhances more traditional practices such that government officials round up the street children and confine them along with non-street abandoned children, delinquent, stray children and other children in need of care, in government residential facilities, training centres, child-care centres, probation and children's homes. Moreover, some related literatures (Negara, Setiadi & Wilodati, 2018) in Indonesia established character education to be among tools useful for changing immoral to more societal acceptable behaviors of street children. They added that character education is education that nurtures and promotes the ethical, intellectual, social and emotional development of individuals. However, the study inadequately informs where and when character education is delivered to street children. Also, the study does not encourage formal curriculum implementation of which has been the basis for getting employment rather character education which offers skills on core ethical values such as respect, justice, civic virtue and citizenship, and responsibility for self and others. Street children require revised curriculum that offers instructional and technical skills rather than character education only.

In the United States of America, Biggar (2001) conducted evaluative study on implementation of Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1987. The study findings revealed that the act upholds strong principles, albeit crucial flaws exist in the act itself and in the enforcement of the act that critically undermines its worth. However, the study was not informative on how poor implementation of education policies and acts denies rights to education for street children. This information gap calls for further research to reveal the way street children lack education as a result of poorly implemented education policies and education interventions.

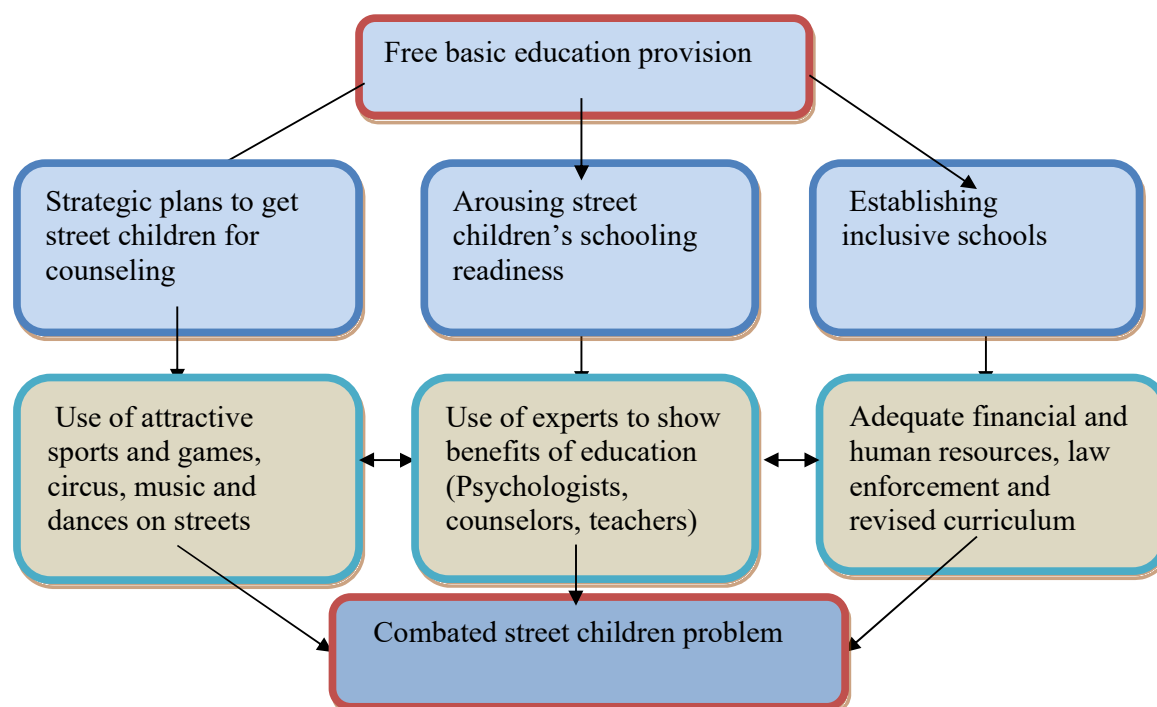
Some other studies (Joseph, 2013) in Tanzania were conducted to examine the effectiveness of intervention strategies in addressing the problem of street children in Dar es Salaam. The findings revealed that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) applied family reunification, rehabilitation centres, vocational training, advocacy and reintegration to address this social phenomenon. However, it was revealed that these intervention measures were inadequate and poorly implemented thus could not address the complex causes of street children. The aforementioned studies within the African context and globally again necessitates further studies to explore the extent to which the number of street children is altered as a result of free basic education provision, establish the street children's schooling readiness and, possible remedies that combat the problem of street children.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Combating the existing street children problem requires a well thoughtful strategic planned intervention. The free basic education provision aims at cutting across all school age children in the country. That is; it makes all children become pupils and students in schools thereby leaving the streets free from street children. The free basic education is in this case an independent variable while street children existence is the dependent variable. The existence of street children in urban areas depends on different strategies used when providing the free basic education. When providing the free basic education, there should be well planned strategies that cut across all children including the community of street children. For instance, to get the street children and disseminate information to them through counseling requires some strategies such as the use attractive sports and games, circus, music and moral dances. Collecting them at one point aims at disseminating information in order to arouse their study willingness or schooling readiness. The street children need to be informed the importance and or benefits of being educated starting from the individual, community and nation as a whole. Children schooling need to be governed by the law or by-laws. That is; every child who fails to attend at school is against the law or by-laws. Thus there should be law enforcement that forces street children to flee from the street to schools. This way, the enrollment rate of street children in schools is increased thus quitting the existence of street children. However, there should be well established inclusive schools that fit diverse needs of the street children as they come from different backgrounds. For instance, these inclusive schools should contain adequate financial and human resources, full equipped with indirect costs such as school uniforms, shoes, exercise books, pens, pencils, mathematical sets and the like. Street children are usually unsupervised and lack parental or guardian help to an extent that they cannot afford such indirect cost. To this group, the government needs to provide all kinds of support including direct costs (school fees) as well as indirect cost if really intends to provide the free basic education to the street children. Thus inclusive schools for street children require the government to provide full sponsorship. Human resources in these schools include among many; teachers, school psychologists, school



nurses, school guards, school cooks and the like. The conceptual framework guiding this study is indicated by figure 2.



**Figure 2:** *Conceptual Framework of Street Children Combating Model*  
Source: *Adapted and modified from Joseph (2013)*

## METHODOLOGY

### Approach, Design, Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

This study employed mixed methods approach and a concurrent triangulation design. Convenience sampling was used to select street children, while purposive sampling was used to select workers of NGOs as respondents. These NGOs workers were selected because they are in close proximity with street children. The study had a sample size of 200 respondents comprising 190 street children and 10 adults working in two NGOs (Railway Children and Caretakers of the Environment) all based in Mwanza city.

### Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected by questionnaire, interview and focus group discussions. Questionnaires were only administered to NGOs workers from the Railway Children and Caretakers of the Environment. The street children were subjected to structured focus group discussions (FGDs) plus interview sessions yielding in-depth information regarding the existence of street children especially after the launch of the free basic education provision in the region, street children schooling readiness, and possible remedies which would make street children flee from the streets. Therefore the instruments used in this study include questionnaires, interview guide and focus group discussion guide.

To ensure validity, consistency, simplicity and feasibility the interview guide and focus group discussion guide were back translated into Swahili (from English) and pre-tested with young people of similar characteristics (who had left their homes) but from another area.

The quantitative data from questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics (percentages and frequencies). While the qualitative data from interviews and FGDs were managed through thematic techniques.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Street Children's Schooling Readiness

The first specific objective was to assess the extent to which the street children are ready to access the free basic education. Qualitative data were gathered based on what street children say about their future. Also, quantitative data were collected by questionnaire, whereby a three-point Likert scale was used. An individual NGO worker was required to respond to a series of statements in the questionnaire by indicating whether he/she agrees (A), or

is neutral (N) or disagrees (D). NGOs workers were useful because they contact street children on regular basis. The results are displayed in Table 1.

**Table 1: The Street Children's Schooling Readiness (N= 10)**

Item	Level of Agreement		
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
The free basic education aims the enrollment of all school age children	10(100%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)
All school age children are enrolled in schools.	0(0.0%)	1(10.0%)	9(90.0%)
Street children cannot afford indirect costs of schooling.	9(90.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(10.0%)
Most of street children are ready to learn in schools.	9(90.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(10.0%)

Field data, 2019

Table 1 shows that majority (90%) of NGOs workers agreed that street children are ready to learn in schools. The study revealed that the free basic education provision aims at ensuring that all school age children are enrolled in schools (100%). However, not all school age children are enrolled in schools. The phenomenon of the free basic education provision is well known though its accessibility is still questionable to some of school age children. Both Sustainable Development Goal 4 and The Education Framework for Action put forth the necessity of all school age children to be enrolled in schools for them to acquire the basic education. Most of school age children including street children and those from the poorest households are roaming on the streets instead of being enrolled in schools. To the contrary, a survey conducted by Kattan (2006) found that the elimination of school fees in most countries resulted into a greater jump in gross primary enrollment rates significantly with girls and children from poorer families. Street children's schooling readiness is hindered by extreme poverty. That is, most of poor households and street children cannot afford indirect costs of schooling.

The findings from the focus group discussions (FGDs) indicate that most of street children were ready for schooling but unable to pay for uniforms and any other equipment to go along to school. For instance, one of street children was quoted *"We are street dwellers, we are the way you see us, and nothing we have left behind...it is difficult for us to attend schools though we admire that chance of schooling"*. The lack of fundamental support and belongings which could enable street children access basic education is evidenced by various reviewed literatures (Kadzamira & Pauline, 2003; Jamihidin, Darnawati, Waode & Irawaty, 2018). The failure of access to school is a fundamental cause of human trafficking (UNICEF, 2012) and therefore the street children are prone to unemployment in future cases.

In addition, readiness for schooling resulted from a belief that school environment is better than street life. For instance, during an interview session one of street children said that:

*"The street life is too difficult for me to earn a living. Sincerely, I'm ready to go to school if someone dares and becomes ready to pay for uniforms, pencils, pens, exercise books and other requirements"*. (Street child 75)

The kind of life experienced by street children forces them to stay full time on street though such environment undermines their bright future. The finding concurs with findings from the study conducted by the Consortium for Street Children (2001) that the street children were quoted saying that any shelter is better than none, believing that forcing street children into government institutions makes them to leave the streets. The desire for street children's schooling is prone to government support. However, Kopoka (2000) found that the government support for the street children's education has never attained. That is; most governments are influenced by the commonly held opinion that since street children will inevitably wind up as criminals, there is little use in spending public funds for their support (Kopoka, 2000). This view is similar to that of Lugalla (1995) who argues that street children are considered to be hooligans, vagabonds and people prone to committing crimes. Such government perception towards street children leaves street children without any access to the free basic education being provided in the country. Thus the street children's schooling readiness is limited by incapacitated fiscal and human resources from the government.

### Existence of Street Children

The second research objective was to examine the extent to which the provision of free basic education alters the number of street children in Mwanza city. Table 2 indicates that majority (100%) of NGOs workers negated the item "nowadays, none of the street children exists in the city as a result of the free basic education provision". This implies that apart from the provision of the free basic education, streets still experience the problem of school age street children buzzing. The same table indicates that majority (90%) of NGOs workers agreed that the number of street children has remained fairly constant since inception of the free basic education provision.

**Table 2:** *The status of Street Children Existence (N=10)*

Item	Level of Agreement		
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Nowadays, none of the street children exists in the city	10(100%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)
The number of street children has decreased due to free basic education	1(10.0%)	0(0.0%)	9(90.0%)
The number of street children has increased due to free basic education	2(20.0%)	0(0.0%)	8(80.0%)
The number of street children has remained fairly constant	9(90.0%)	1(10.0%)	0(0.0%)

Field data, 2019

The results revealed that the number of street children has neither decreased nor increased as a result of the free basic education provision. This implies that the street children's enrollment rate as a result of the free basic education provision is still very low or non-existent. The study finding concurs with Muhammad's (2009) study findings revealing that the enrollment rate of street children was fluctuating. For instance, the survey conducted by Railway Children in Mwanza city shows that a number of full-time street children found to fluctuate from 392 in 2008, 595 in 2012, 390 in 2013, and 380 in 2014 (Railway Children report, 2014). Thus the number of street children in Mwanza city remains fairly constant regardless the inception of the free basic education. A fairly constant number of street children on the streets entails that the implementation of the free basic education inadequately include the 'community' of street children. That is, the problem of street children has been much less eradicated though a number of education policies and interventions are in place (Joseph, 2013). In most cases, street children are found in groups of three to four. Figure 3 shows one of noted groups of street children on the streets.



**Figure 3:** Interview session with one of groups of street children

Furthermore, results from interview with street children revealed parental carelessness as one of reasons for their existence on the street regardless of the ongoing provision of free basic education. For instance, one of them had this utterance:

*"My father is accusing me every time I request him to buy for me school uniform plus other requirements prior to schooling. He usually gives a provoking sound by saying that you have no ability to study because you are not clever...this made me to rush into streets for earning".*  
(Street child 143)



It implies that most of street children still exist on the streets due to a number of factors including family violence, poverty (Railway Children Report, 2014) and parental carelessness accompanied by ignorance of individual parents. Thus the free basic education accessibility remains a challenge to street children as a result streets are not free from buzzing street children.

### Possible Remedies to Flee Streets from Street Children

The third research objective was to find out possible remedies that provide lasting solution to the problem of street children. Table 3 shows that all (100%) NGOs workers agreed that well equipped boarding and inclusive school is a possible remedy for the problem of street children.

**Table 3: The Possible Remedy for the Street Children Problem (N=10)**

Item	Level of Agreement		
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Strengthening poor households through financial supports	6(60.0%)	2(20.0%)	2(20.0%)
There should be by-law enforcement	8(80.0%)	2(20.0%)	0(0.0%)
Well equipped boarding inclusive schools	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	10(100.0%)

Field data, 2019

Building inclusive schools creates a conducive and convincing environment for the street children to leave the streets and become enrolled as normal students in schools. The finding is in line with UNODCCP (1999) findings which revealed that 12% of street children stated that providing them with a shelter or permanent residence in an institution could help them. Thoughtful inclusive policies and programmes are requisites for reaching excluded and marginalized groups and providing them with basic education. Therefore, there is a demand for establishment of inclusive schools in the country to accommodate the street children.

During the interview, one of the street children uttered that:

*"...how can I attend at the school on daily basis just from the streets? For me, I prefer boarding school to day school because on the street here the environment is not friendly for me to learn". (Street child 21)*

Establishment of inclusive schools could help the street children acquire quality instructional education rather than roaming about on the streets. This idea complies with Kopoka's (2000) study findings that to get rid of street children from the streets, there must be inclusive schools in which quality education and the vocational training is made accessible to the street children. Inclusive boarding schools eliminate chances of the street children to engage into the streets anymore. The literature indicates that young people who dropped out of school had nearly 8 times higher chances for ending up on the streets permanently than those who attended school daily (Henley, Mc Alpine, Mueller & Vetter, 2010). Thus inclusive boarding schools ensure 100% students' attendance due to the fact that they live in school campus. The problem of street children comes to an end after every street child has been taken into the school campus.

Well equipped inclusive schools favorable for street children need to be with full sponsorship covering direct costs and indirect costs to increase enrollment rate of street children. This implies that street children remain in school when are fully equipped with all necessary financial supports. The study finding complies with De Benitez (2007) in that the street children need to be helped and supported for them to learn in inclusive schools. Analysis of ideas resulted after the focus group discussion indicated that most of street children require help and support for them to stay in schools.

*The street life is not friendly at all. Adult persons have been responding to some of our needs by giving cash after begging them, shelter and money after washing or guarding their cars. However, such offerings can neither sustain our lives nor make us to benefit from education opportunities. What is necessary here is to request our government to support us with direct and indirect costs of schooling for us to acquire basic education and vocational training. This in turn will sustain our lives and integrate us back with our families after being educated.*  
(FGDs)

This implies that a new approach of the free basic education provision needs to be put in place for educating street children. The approach that covers both direct and indirect costs of schooling rather than the usual covered direct costs.

Table 3 shows that majority (60%) of NGOs workers agreed that another possible remedy to combat the problem of street children is the strengthening of poor households through financial supports, guidance and counseling to eliminate violence at homes. Strengthening poor families using financial support and, guidance and counseling services reduces the number of children detaching from their families to the streets. This finding complies with Kopoka's (2000) study findings that strengthening families needs to be prioritized for a sounding human

development. A study conducted by the United Nations Office of Drug Control and Crime Prevention (UNODCCP) revealed that 12% of street children pointed out that they prefer returning to their families as their first need (UNODCCP, 1999). Thus for street children return or attach to their families, there should be a thoughtful strategy for strengthening these families. In a strategy of strengthening families, it is obvious that even the poorest families can successfully manage to address the problem of street children when given relatively modest inputs of technical advice and finance (Kopoka, 2000). Also, the street children and their families have a variety of urgent needs requiring services such as fiscal support for guidance and counseling children as well as parent education and training programmes (Rafferty, 1998). Thus the provision of the free basic education needs to include components such as guidance and counseling as well as fiscal supports intending to strengthen families. This way children remain attached in their families thereby preventing dropout from schools. Nevertheless, Table 3 indicates that a good number (80%) of NGOs workers agreed that there should be a by-law that forces the school age street children to be enrolled in schools. In the same vein, the focus group discussion findings show that most of street children pointed out the need for certain force from the government for them to vacate the streets. For instance, one of street children narrated:

*...the government seems not ready to remove us from the streets. Nothing can fail when the government decides...as everybody remembers the way our government cleared the streets and main roads from petty traders commonly known in its Swahili acronym as “machinga”. Using similar techniques as well as planned by-laws...we can be forced to leave the streets for us to be enrolled in primary and secondary schools. (Street child 13)*

This implies that establishment of by-laws forcing street children to be enrolled in schools automatically reminds street children that are prohibited to remain on the streets. The study finding complies with UNICEF (2015) that the government is accountable for using rule of law plus juridical mechanisms when dealing with specific rights of marginalized and vulnerable groups including street children. However, the study findings by Lugalla and Mbwapo (1999) revealed very weak policies and non-existent by-laws concerning the problem of street children thus an essential cause of street children never treated to its fate. Therefore, Biggar (2001) cautioned that there should be strong principles though critical flaws in the act hinder proper implementation of the intervention. The complex cause of street children needs to be addressed by adequately implemented policies and by-laws that require every child to promptly vacate the streets and become enrolled in schools. This way, the problem of street children perishes as every child leaves the street and become enrolled in schools.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusion

Most of surveyed street children showed their great readiness to be enrolled in schools. However, the reported limiting factor(s) include financial problems signifying extreme poverty which makes street children unable to afford indirect costs of schooling. To this end, the enrollment rate for street children has for some years remained fairly constant despite of the inception of free basic education provision. That is; the free basic education provision involves most of school age children from households which afford indirect costs of schooling rather than street children who lack parental and or guardian supervision. To address the problem of street children, most of respondents pointed out that the government needs to establish by-laws as well as equipped inclusive schools. Lastly, the study found that together with full sponsorship covering direct and indirect costs of schooling, enforcement of by-laws regarding enrollment of school age children drives street children into inclusive schools where they are able to dwell and learn.

### Recommendations

The study recommends that further researches should be done in the same city and or other districts with the intent of making comparison of study findings. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology should revisit the Education and Training Policy of 2014 and pertaining circulars to come up with a thoughtful strategy on how the provision of the free basic education could involve the street children.

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