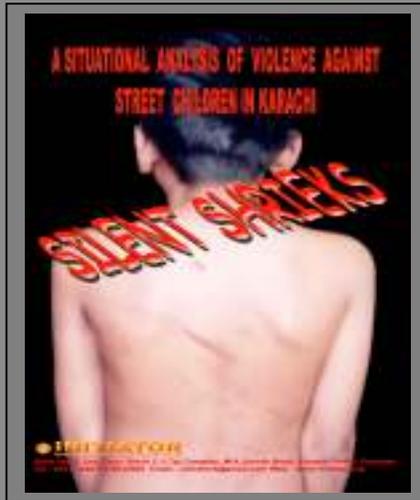


# **Silent Shrieks**

## **A Situational Analysis of Violence Against Street Children in Karachi**



*This publication is compiled and written by*

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*And*

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**"You have a right to live a safe life from the threat of war, abuse and exploitation. These rights are obvious. Yet we, the grown-ups have failed you deplorably in upholding many of them. [...] Let us not make children pay for our failures anymore."**

**- Kofi A. Annan, UN General Assembly Special Session on Children 2002**

It is easiest for us if we see them only as statistics, as number like 200 million street children worldwide or 30,000 in St. Petersburg or over 2,000 in St. Petersburg in jails. It is easiest to think of them as statistics but they are not statistics they are individuals from whom the precious time of childhood is being stolen. Rather than statistics they are people like Oleg. At 12 years old he fled to the streets because his alcoholic mother no longer wants to be troubled by taking care of him. One day after we gave him a coat to keep warm his mother showed up. She stole it so that it could be sold and the cash converted into drink.

- Rainbow of Hope Centre, St Petersburg, Russia

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During the research we met and talk to many sociologists, doctors and journalists in and outside Karachi. Furthermore, we have gone through hundreds of website to take information for the readers of this document. We tried our best to give them their due credit in reference section. However, if we missed the due recognition of any organization or individual; kindly accept our apology and do inform us so the mistake would be corrected in next addition.

This situational analysis is a part of Initiator Human Development Foundation's endeavor to make Pakistan a safe place for our future generation. Therefore, your support, feedback and suggestions are warmly welcomed to improve our work.

*Salman Mukhtar*  
*General Secretary*  
*Initiator Human Development Foundation*

## Introduction

Violence against children is certainly not a new phenomenon. Millions of children throughout the world, including Pakistan, are the victims of physical, sexual, emotional violence and discrimination.

However, the definition of “violence” to children varies from country to country and culture to culture. Different countries have differing levels of “legal” violence to children, characterizing such violence as forms of allowable punishment.

Negative impact of globalization, unplanned urbanization, increasing poverty, rural-urban migration and rising unemployment have devastating consequences for children. Under these adverse circumstances, poor families, especially in underdeveloped countries, abandon their children or they run away because of lack of parental care and concern.

Poverty, neglect and mistreatment are the major factors compelling them to leave their homes and seek shelter in big cities, making streets, market places, bus stops and railway stations as their new homes. To make a living, they take petty jobs, indulge in immoral activities and often take drugs. In the process, they come across criminals who lure them to a similar life of crime.

Children who leave, run away, or forced to take refuge in the streets are generally attracted to Karachi, the economic capital of the country. Therefore, street children are extremely visible in all 18 towns of the city. The exact numbers of street children in Karachi are unknown; a look of railway stations or bus stops strengthens the prevailing notion that the arrival of any train/bus from rural areas of the country increases the number of street children in Karachi.

The working conditions of these children can be described as dirty and dangerous. They do all sorts of manual work and do not find any profession that could ultimately lead them to skilled profession. Children on the streets suffer both physically and psychologically. Their exposure to unhealthy living and working conditions, vulnerability to physical and sexual abuse, drugs and indulgence in criminal activities are some of the physical threats.

Violence against street children in Karachi manifests itself in a number of forms. However, the exact scope of the problem is not known as it has been only in the last few years that the prevalence of deliberate physical and mental violence to street children by parents, peers, police and others has begun to be acknowledged however not documented.

The purpose of this situational analysis is to document the patterns and magnitude of violence against street children in Karachi and provide groundwork for further researches.

# Part I

## 1. Pakistan: Country Profile

Pakistan was founded in 1947 as a result of a movement in colonial India for a separate State for the country's minority Muslim population. The country was born amidst a mass exodus of ethnic cross-border migration of Hindus and Muslims. The accompanying violence claimed millions of lives.

Pakistan is situated in South Asia, with India on the East, China on the North, Iran and Afghanistan on the West and the Arabian Sea on the South. It has four provinces - Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and the North West Frontier Province, as well as the Federally Administered Tribal Areas.

### 1.1 Population

According to the World Fact Book and Government of Pakistan's Population Census Organization the Pakistan's population as of July 2006 was estimated to be 165,803,560. The birth rate was 32.11/1000 population while the death rate was 9.51/1000 population. The sex ratio at birth is 1.05 males: female, which rises to 1.06 under 15 years of age, returns to 1.05 between the ages of 15-64 and falls to 0.97 for the population that is over 65 years of age, making a total population sex ratio of 1.05.

### 1.2 Economy

The Pakistani economy has been through many phases due to changes in government which leads to changes in policy; there is thus no consistent government policy. The GDP 2006 (purchasing power parity) is \$427.3 billion, while GDP per capita stands at \$2,600. A mainly agrarian economy at its outset, a period of rapid industrialization occurred in the late 50's and 60's due to import licensing, subsidized capital and other government efforts to promote industry. This led to high growth rates, although the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few wealthy families continued.

However a tragic experiment with nationalization of large-scale industries, banks, financial institutions and agro-processing industries, and a socialist agenda considerably slowed the pace of growth in the subsequent years. The privatization of these industries in the 80's and 90's reversed the effects of these policies somewhat, but again bad governance and rampant corruption of elected government caused economic distraction. Pakistan's economy suffered for a number of reasons, but from 2000 to 2005 the economy has recovered as a result of changes in government, policies, foreign investment and the resumption of lending from the international financial institutions.

### 1.3 Health

The provision of health facilities in Pakistan is highly inadequate and remains one of the worst in the region. Almost 60% of all deaths and diseases in the

country are due to unhygienic conditions, under-nourishment and insufficient care for the afflicted. Infant mortality rates are high and inaccessibility to running water for hygiene purposes and potable water for drinking have made unsanitary conditions unavoidable in many parts of the country. Despite these conditions, only 1% of GDP is allocated towards the health sector. Neglect is especially evident in attitudes towards women and children; infant mortality rates and death during childbirth is high. Pakistan's dismal performance in social development is clearly evident by the fact that, according to the Human Development Report 2006 the country stands at 134 out of 177 countries.

#### 1.4 Education

The 2005 estimates for adult literacy were 44.0 percent and for young adults, up to 22 years of age, 57.8 percent (71.7 percent for males and 43.1 percent for females). The literacy rate has suffered from constant reinvention of the definition of literacy, with these figures indicating those who can read and write.

Ault Literacy Rate (1970 - 2005)								
Adult Literary %	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005
Male	32.0	36.2	40.4	44.6	49.3	53.5	57.4	58.2
Female	8.9	11.3	13.9	16.8	20.1	23.8	27.9	28.8
Total	20.9	24.2	27.8	31.3	35.4	39.3	43.2	44.0
Young Literary %	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005
Male	43.6	47.6	51.8	56.2	62.5	68.0	71.1	71.7
Female	14.3	18.1	21.5	25.1	30.6	36.5	41.9	43.1
Total	29.5	33.4	37.4	41.4	47.4	53.0	57.4	57.8

Source:<

<http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/countryprofile/pakistan.pdf>>

According to the Federal Research Division (2005) country's enrollment rate for those aged 5 to 24 is 36 percent (41.2 percent for males, 30.4 percent for females), and literacy and enrollment rates tend to be higher in urban areas. During the 1980s and most of the 1990s, public expenditures on education averaged 2.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), but have fallen to less than 2 percent of GDP since 1998. Of the fiscal year (FY) 2004 budget's current expenditures, US\$161.1 million—1.4 percent—was allocated to education, as was US\$201.6 million—1.7 percent—of the FY 2005 budget. Female enrolment at primary, middle and high level is low; additionally, a high drop-out rate among girls, especially in rural areas, is a major problem.

## 2. Karachi: City Profile

Karachi is the largest city in Pakistan and is the provincial capital of Sindh province. Located on the coast of the Arabian Sea, north-west of the Indus River Delta, the megacity is the largest city, original capital and cultural, economical, philanthropic, educational, and political hub, as well as the largest port of the country.

As Pakistan's economic capital, its leading economic sectors include finance, business services, transportation, media, television production, publishing, software production, medical research, education and tourism.

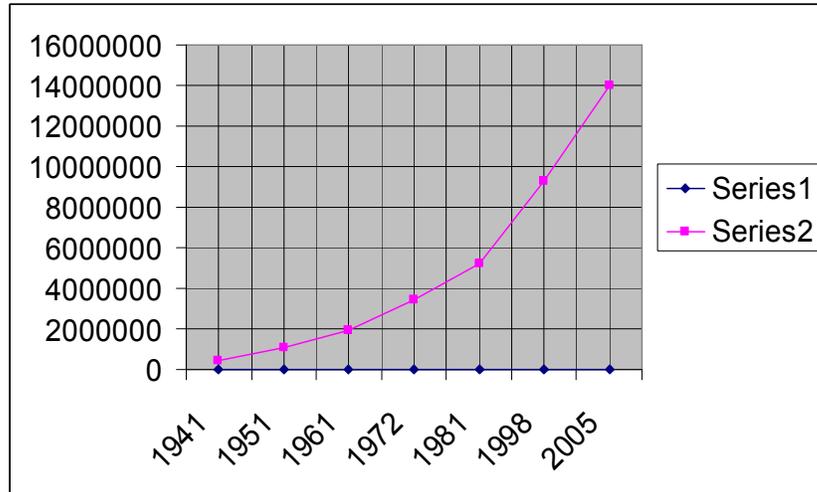
The metropolitan area along with its suburbs comprises the world's second most populated city, spread over 3,530 square kilometres. The city credits its growth to the mixed populations of economic and political migrants and refugees from different national, provincial, linguistic and religious origins who have largely come to settle here permanently. It is locally termed as the City of Lights for its liveliness and the City of The Quaid, for not only being both the birth and death place of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah the founder of Pakistan but also his home after 1947.<sup>1</sup>

Karachi is not just a city. It is unique city in many ways. To being with, it is a metropolis in the strict sense of the word. Like any other major metropolitan centre, Karachi is inhabited by a wide variety of communities belonging to different religious and linguistic groups drawn from different parts of Pakistan. In this way Karachi like other leading cities of the world has developed into a National Metropolis.

Population Growth in Karachi	
Year	Population Census
1941	435,887
1951	1,068,459
1961	1,912,598
1972	3,426,310
1981	5,208,132
1998	9,269,265

<sup>1</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karachi>

2005	14,000,000
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# Part II

### 3. Who is a Child?

The definition of a child varies in laws, traditions and customs across states and cultures with different standards or approaches in many countries of the region. The legal definition of "child" is interchangeable with minor and may vary by country, in keeping with cultural conceptions.

However, the Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) stated the following.

*For the purposes of the present Convention, a child means every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.*

In 2000, government of Pakistan promulgated the Juvenile Justice System Ordinance (JJSO), section 2 (b) of this land mark document also defines child as anyone under the age of 18.

#### 4. Who are Street Children?

There is no one definition of street children. Peoples and organizations hold different views of what exactly is a street child. The two central themes distinguish between the 'real' street children and children who are working on the street but return home at night.

**International/UN child rights organizations/groups categorized street children into three types.**

- A. Children in the streets
- B. Children of the streets
- C. Children on the streets

##### **A. Children in the streets**

These children consider the streets their home. Here they seek shelter, food and a sense of belonging among their peers. This group represents children who are detached from their families and are either living on the streets or in shelters. Some are orphans whose parents have been killed in war or have died from illnesses such as AIDS. In addition, their parents abandon other children because they are unable to care for them due to poverty, disease or personal problems. These children are not only victims of physical isolation but are also alone psychologically. In some cases, these children have no memory of what home life was like. Working with this group of children is the most difficult. Because they have been badly abused by adults they should have been able to trust, winning their confidence is very difficult.



##### **B. Children of the streets**

These children work on the street, do not go to school and seldom go home to their families. This group includes children from poverty-stricken families.

Some have come to the city from deprived rural areas; others are runaways. Many run away from home because of sexual or physical abuse, parental alcoholism and neglect or mistreatment by relatives. Home has become a place of fear and misery rather than security, love and encouragement. These children, if they are to survive, are faced with the need to find food and shelter daily. They also need to find a sense of belonging among their peers. Soon children come to enjoy their newly found independence, free of adult control. It is vital to get the children in this group off the street before they become addicted to street life.

### **C. Children on the street**

Most of these children work on the streets because their families need money to survive. Many of them go to school and return home to their families at the end of the day. Besides working, some children are on the streets to have fun, to pass time or to escape the overcrowded conditions in their homes. Also in this group are children from squatter families and the slums. These children have nothing to do in their homes so they frequently roam the streets, returning home only at night or at mealtime. This group of children, not yet deeply entrenched in street life, is more easily reached. They especially need to be targeted by prevention programs.

Several countries in the Asian region recognize the three categories, agreeing on a common denominator: the children, with or without family, are at high risk. Some countries' definition of street children reflects the priority they are willing or able to give to this group. According to Santaputrat, Wathanavongs, and Thaiarry (1990), street children in Thailand are those who have been abandoned and work and live on the streets: "have no permanent home, stray in public places, earn a living on the street, and tend to be victimized by criminals to commit crimes. These children do not include those who migrate with their family to work places."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m2248/is\\_n124\\_v31/ai\\_19226151/pg\\_2](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2248/is_n124_v31/ai_19226151/pg_2)

## 5. Some Scholarly Views

Street children; homeless youngsters who roam the streets by day and sleep in culverts, empty buildings and vacant lots at night (Drake, 1989).

Street children comprise a group of poorly socialized children, failing to develop commitments and attachments within society (Cemane, 1990).

In the widest sense a street child is one who has made the street his real home . . . those who have abandoned (or have been abandoned by) their families, schools and immediate communities before they are sixteen years of age and have drifted into a nomadic street life (Gebers, 1990).

A street child . . . is any girl or boy who has not reached adulthood for whom the street (in the widest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings, wasteland, etc.) has become her or his habitual abode and or source of livelihood and who is inadequately protected, supervised or directed by responsible adults (Swart, 1988).

The term "street child" refers more specifically to children of the streets. These children come from homes where there is violence, overcrowding, drug and alcohol abuse or from communities divided by political forces into war zones. Many have been abused and hope to find a better life in the city (Bernstein & Gray, 1991).

. . . throwaways and runaways, children whom families and communities have failed (Richter, 1988).

## 6. Their Magnitude

Street children, the offspring of today's complex urban realities worldwide, represent one of our global family's most serious, urgent and rapidly growing socioeducational challenges. No country and virtually no city can escape the presence of these street children. In the last decade this phenomenon has grown at an alarming rate.<sup>3</sup>

The United Nations estimates around 100-140 million street children worldwide. Out of these only 20 million children, live on the street round the clock without their families. In Asia 25 million, children and youth live on the street. Pakistan, which has an estimated population of 160 million, is no different from other South Asian countries as its urban settings portray the same bleak picture. The situation is worse in its biggest metropolis city like Karachi that is home to more than 20,000 street living children.



<sup>3</sup> [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m2248/is\\_n124\\_v31/ai\\_19226151](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2248/is_n124_v31/ai_19226151)

## 7. Why are they on the streets?

Street children are the casualties of economic growth, war, poverty, loss of traditional values, domestic violence, physical and mental abuse. Every street child has a reason for being on the streets. Street children go through the struggle of providing themselves with basic things such as food, shelter, health and clothing. Providing targeted interventions that meet the needs of street children requires an understanding of who they are, what they need, what they do and how they can be identified.<sup>4</sup> The origins of the street children phenomenon are varied, and the direct causes are many.

### 7.1 Unemployment and Poverty

Poverty is perceived often as a major reason for children coming onto the street. Poverty may in turn have been caused by many factors, such as natural disasters, lack of state support system and unemployment. This forces the families' to send children to work, in order to supplement family income. Families in urban locations may live in squatter camps, shanty towns, stay with friends or relatives, or "sleep rough," that is, the entire family may be homeless and live on the street. Children from such families may go to work locally on the street, with parents or separately, in various occupations.



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<sup>4</sup> A Profile of Street Children: Module 1. Geneva, Switzerland: World Health Organization. Mental Health Determinants and Populations: Department of Mental Health and Substance Dependence.

## **7.2 Domestic Violence and Abuse**

The reasons for children's self-migration, leaving home, or running away, often revolve around parents, family, or other members of the community. Domestic violence, physical abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation, all create conditions whereby children decide to leave home. Domestic violence is not limited to poor families; the children of better-off families also sometimes choose to escape and leave home.

## **7.3 Violence at Schools and Madarasas**

Violence at informal schools like madarasas, religious schools, and formal schools also force children to run away. Children can be subject to bullying or violence from Moulvi (religious teacher) teachers or other children. Children may face enormous school pressures, including both the quantity of schoolwork and anxieties about doing well.

In Pakistan, especially in rural areas of the country, poor families cannot afford the cost of education and their children are, thus, unable to attend school. In addition to being denied an education, this increases their vulnerability to be used as cheap labor, or to be sent away from the family to work.

## **7.4 Survival or Independence**

In many circumstances, children are adept at analyzing their situation and making decisions for their own benefit. These include daily decisions on coping or survival techniques, as well as general assessments of their own best interests to earn money, eat reasonably well, and do things children usually are not allowed to do at home. Children may be living in abusive or otherwise unsuitable residential homes/shelters but find some aspects beneficial and on that basis may choose not to move onto, or back to, the street. Some children prefer their independence, including the freedom to make their own decisions and have control over their lives.

## **7.5 Epidemics or Diseases**

Epidemics or Diseases sometime play a very crucial role in child's decision to come on the streets. In Africa and Asia HIV/AIDS and tuberculoses have left numerous children destitute, while families lost land and other possessions in medical care. Such children are left with no means of support and may not know how to, or completely lack the means to, migrate to urban centers.

## **7.6 Stigma and Discrimination**

Discrimination can also force children onto the streets. In many places, communities have shunned the children of parents who have been taken to prison. This stigmatization of parents causes problems for the children, particularly when the parents got died. Discrimination against girls and young women in all situations is an important factor in the lives of female street children.

### 7.7 Drugs

The increased availability of a variety of drugs, particularly amphetamine-type substances, is resulting in new categories of street children in parts of Asia. Drug use and dependence, and theft or other criminal activities to support such dependence, are causing some children from better-off families to be thrown out of home. Glue or solvent sniffing, which causes permanent brain damage, is also common in some countries. This is considered as a cheap and readily available means to escape personal problems or to diminish hunger. Drug use by parents is also a cause of children coming onto the street.<sup>5</sup>



<sup>5</sup> [http://www.cwin.org.np/press\\_room/factsheet/glue\\_sniffing.htm](http://www.cwin.org.np/press_room/factsheet/glue_sniffing.htm)

## 8. Street Children: an outcome of Urbanization

Many sociologists in Pakistan believed that for decades, the Pakistani State has approached the concept of development with a restricted perspective - the focus on urbanization, in locating industries in major towns and cities, an unequal distribution of resources with a marked rural-urban disparity, policies that stress big dams and reservation of forests for game sanctuaries, attitudes which encourage deforestation - all combine to systematically displace people to towns and cities. Urbanization and displacement also lead to a breakdown of the family structure, social tensions and upheavals driving children to urban streets.

Street children are a result of this very breakdown. They represent a critique of the way society is structured, challenging a development model that views some people as dispensable. Deciding early in life, to stand up against familial injustices - alcoholic parents, abuse, non-fulfillment of their needs, they move out of their homes into the alleys of most urban centers.



# **Part III**

## 9. What is Violence?

Violence refers to acts of aggression and abuse, which causes or intends to cause criminal injury to a person. Violence essentially falls into two forms, Random violence, which includes unpremeditated or small-scale violence, and coordinated violence, which includes actions carried out by sanctioned or unsanctioned violent groups as in war and terrorism.

“Violence or abuse is the deliberate use of humiliation / threat / coercion / force to enhance one’s personal status/power at some one else’s expense, and/or constrain the behaviour of others, and/or get ones’ needs and wants met at others cost”.

(Kelly, 1991, p.13)



## 10. Violence against Street Children

The global scandal of violence against children is a horror story too often untold. With malice and clear intent, violence is used against the members of society least able to protect themselves—children in schools, in orphanages, the street, refugee camps, war zones, detention, fields and factories. In investigating human rights abuses against children, Human Rights Watch has found a disturbing but persistent theme—in every region; children are subject to severe violence, most often perpetrated by the very individuals charged with their safety and well-being.

Children frequently experience violence at the hands of police and other law enforcement officials. Street children are more easy targets as they are poor, ignorant of their rights, and lack a support system. Police beat them in order to extort money, and street girls may be forced to provide sex to avoid arrest or to be released from police custody. Seen as vagrants or criminals, street children have been tortured, mutilated, and subjected to death threats and extrajudicial execution.

Police without sufficient cause, and then subject to brutal interrogations and torture often detain children in order to elicit confessions or information. Once placed in juvenile and criminal correctional institutions, children are frequently mistreated and abused, enduring severe corporal punishment, torture, forced labor, denial of food, isolation, restraints, sexual assaults, and harassment. In many instances, children are detained with adults, leaving them at increased risk of physical and sexual abuse.<sup>6</sup>



<sup>6</sup> <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2001/children/1.htm>

## 11. Different forms of Violence against Street Children

Violence by state officials, notably police, against children on the streets is perhaps the most obvious, and the most 'traditional' form of violence associated with street children. However, it is important from the beginning to make clear the links between wider social, economic and cultural factors and different forms of violence. The connection is obvious: street children invariably come from the poorest sectors of society, and it is this initial socio-economic disadvantage, and the resulting lack of protection, that renders them so vulnerable to violence. This is often compounded by racial discrimination because street children - for reasons linked yet again to poverty - are more likely to come from ethnic, racial and indigenous minorities. Violence against children on the streets must therefore be seen in its wider context as the visible end of a spectrum of structural violence against which these children struggle to survive on a daily basis.



### **11.1 Psychological Violence**

In addition to suffering extreme forms of physical violence, street children are also particularly vulnerable to psychological violence, which can play on and exacerbate existing insecurities and lack of self-esteem (based once again on their wider socio-economic and cultural circumstances). The overall stigmatisation of street children and the aforementioned dehumanization process form a continual backdrop of degradation of these children. For example, verbal abuse against street children (such as derogatory remarks made about a child's mother and family situation) are common, often carrying the implication that 'you are such a bad / worthless child that even your parents don't want you, you have no value...'. Furthermore, racial discrimination can also be a significant component of verbal abuse.<sup>7</sup>

### **11.2 Violence of social exclusion**

The public view of street children in Pakistani society is overwhelmingly negative. The people have often supported efforts to get these children off the street, even though they may result in police round ups, or even murder. There is an alarming tendency by some law enforcement personnel and civilians, business proprietors and their private security firms, to view street children as almost sub-human.

### **11.3 Domestic Violence**

Referring once again to the spectrum of violence and disadvantage that street children experience, let us step back shortly from the issue of violence against street children in the public arena, to examine violence in the private arena – a notoriously difficult area for human rights protection.

The psychological abuse suffered on the street, as mentioned above, is very often the continuation of abuse suffered at home, prior to migrating to the street. The vast majority of street-living children are victims of domestic violence, and/or sexual and psychological abuse to such an extent that life on the streets, with all the obvious dangers it entails, is still considered preferable.

Street children therefore have to be seen as double victims of violence: both before and after moving to street life. Violent socialisation patterns and poor communication skills experienced in the home, including gender socialisation (patterns of violence against women) can be absorbed by children and perpetuated after their migration to the streets. Furthermore, these cycles of

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<http://www.streetchildren.org.uk/reports/Street%20Children%20and%20Violence%20-%20briefing%20paper%202016.11.01.doc>

violence can also be exacerbated by the development of 'survival' violence on the streets as a form of self-defence and protection.<sup>8</sup>

Dr. Aila Tahir in her presentation stated that 56 per cent of all street kids were found to have run away from their home due to domestic violence, 22 per cent due to hostile behavior of their parents and 12 per cent due to parents' drug addiction. These children emerged at high risk of being inflicted with serious health conditions including HIV/AIDS, the researcher said while referring to their vulnerability and inability to resist overtures. She further, said that 63.4 percent of street children in Karachi were sexually abused and a large number of them were more exposed to critical diseases as HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B and C as well as other sexually transmitted infections.<sup>9</sup>

#### **11.4 Community Violence**

Violence against children in conflict with the law in communities has two aspects: "active" violence, as well as passive violence through the failure to protect children from violence. Criminalization and dehumanization of street children is a key factor contributing to violence. Violence against street children takes place by peers, police, private security guards and members of the community.

Children involved in organized armed violence (COAV) are part of a particularly severe form of violence in the community linked to the availability of drugs and the small arms trade. Children who are released back into the community after involvement with the criminal justice system are easy targets for the police. They are often scapegoat and stigmatized by the police, families and the broader community. Some indigenous/traditional justice systems and conflict resolution systems in the community may also include the use of physical punishment.<sup>10</sup>

#### **11.5 Police Violence**

Police subject street children, throughout the world, to physical abuse as the law-enforcing agency treats them as a blight to be eradicated-rather than as children to be nurtured and protected. Police frequently detain them arbitrarily simply because they are homeless, or criminally charged with vague offences such as loitering, vagrancy, or petty theft. They are tortured or beaten by police and often held for long periods in poor conditions.

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[http://www.violencestudy.org/IMG/doc/VACICL\\_Summary\\_Report\\_final.doc](http://www.violencestudy.org/IMG/doc/VACICL_Summary_Report_final.doc)

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.dawn.com/2006/03/23/local14.htm>

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.violencestudy.org/IMG/doc/VACICL\\_Summary\\_Report\\_final.doc](http://www.violencestudy.org/IMG/doc/VACICL_Summary_Report_final.doc)

Street children risk violence at the hands of the authorities much more frequently than other children. Children on the street are beaten, tortured, sexually assaulted, and sometimes killed. Several factors contribute to this phenomenon: police perceptions of street children as vagrants and criminals, widespread corruption and a culture of police violence, the inadequacy and non-implementation of legal safeguards, and the level of impunity that officials enjoy.

“The police treat us badly. They hit us. Not for any particular reason just because they feel like it. They have hit me much time. They hit with their rifles, or with sticks, on our backs and stomachs and sometimes they just punch us in the stomach with their hands. They also take our paint thinner and pour it over our heads. They have done that to me five times. It is awful, it hurts really badly, it gets in your eyes and burns; for half an hour you can’t see anything.”

**(Beto R., fifteen, Guatemala)**

Almost in all countries, police have harassed and beaten street children, chased them away from areas of safety and shelter, jabbed them with electric shock batons, smeared the glue that the children sniff on their faces and clothing, and sprayed them with gas. Police robbed street children of their money, and sought out girls on the street for sexual harassment.<sup>11</sup>

### **11.6 Violence in Institutions**

Violence against children during police interrogation includes threats, sexual harassment and violence, and physical violence up to and including torture. Causes of violence in interrogation: punitive (‘teaching a child a lesson’); forcing a child to confess; group dynamics (both police custody and detention facilities) where individuals may act differently in groups and be influenced by those who are more violent; anti-terrorism measures including the labelling of children as terrorists (Nepal, Philippines, Russia, US, etc). Many cases of violence in police custody are never identified, as the children do not pass further through the system and their cases are lost. Violence in institutions includes pre-trial and post-trial facilities, closed institutions and others. Violence also occurs in institutions for children below the age of criminal responsibility including in the care system where there may be even fewer monitoring mechanisms. The majority of children are in pre-trial detention; these facilities need particular attention in comparison with post-trial detention.

### **11.7 Street Children and Juvenile Justice**

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2001/children/5.htm>

Street children are particularly vulnerable to violence within juvenile justice systems (which we understand to include issues relating to the first contact between police and children on the street, as well as conditions and access to justice in detention). They are more likely to meet the juvenile justice system in the first place, and they are simultaneously less able to defend themselves against violations of their rights within that system. Grassroots development and human rights organisations have identified the situation of street children in detention and juvenile justice as necessitating immediate, sustained and coordinated action.



# **Part IV**

## 12. Aims and Objectives of the Research

### To explore and analyze the

- i. Causes and consequences of physical violence against street children.
- ii. Cause and consequences of sexual violence against street children.
- iii. Cause and consequences of emotional violence against street children.
- iv. How violence contributes in child's decision to leave the family and home.
- v. Actors perpetuate violence on street children.
- vi. Institutional injustice and violence against street children.
- vii. Relationship between social norms and perpetuated violence against street children.
- viii. Relationship between the size of family and violence against children.
- ix. Causes of drugs addiction among the children on street.

## 13. Methodology of the Research

### 13.1 Team formation and training

The lead researchers formed three teams of four-members each to collect data. The data collectors are either part-time volunteers of Initiator Foundation or students of Karachi University. These teams spent hours and hours to find respondents and persuade them to talk on the issue. Besides three teams for data collection, a separate team of two experts on data analysis were also formed.

Since, data collectors didn't work with the street children before; therefore, a series of in-house capacity building trainings were carried out to train the team members. The lead researcher had conducted four capacity building trainings at the office of Initiator Foundation. These trainings proved very fruitful and after trainings, all team members found an upward trend in their ability to interact with street children.

The safety of data collectors was also a cause of concern for the lead researchers and organization. During the training they were giving especial tips to avoid any untoward incident.

### 13.2 Sample size and techniques

A sample of 200 children was collected and the data collectors adopted "Purposive Sampling."<sup>12</sup> Since street children have the tendency to move swiftly therefore the said sampling techniques were used by the researchers.

### 13.3 Target group and places

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<sup>12</sup> In this sampling techniques the research purposively choose subject who in their opinion are thought to be relevant to the research topic. In this case, the judgement of the investigation is more important than obtaining a probability sample.

The target group decided upon during the designing of the research was male street children between the ages of five to eighteen in the following selected geographical locations of Karachi.

1. Tariq Road
2. Karachi Cant Railway Station
3. Clifton
4. Abdullah Shah Gazi Shrine
5. Guru Mandar
6. Jama Cloth Market
7. Empress Market Saddar
8. Regal Chowk Saddar
9. Burns Road
10. Passport Office Saddar
11. Hussainabad Food Street
12. Hasan Square
13. NIPA Chorangi
14. Sindhi Hotel
15. Tower
16. Jinnah Hospital

### **13.4 Instrument development**

A questionnaire was formulated in order to explore the following factors:

1. Personal profile of the child
2. Family profile of the child
3. Experience about violence
4. Patterns of violence
5. Physical violence
6. Sexual violence
7. Emotional violence
8. Violence at home
9. Violence at streets
10. Violence at workplace
11. Actors involved in violence
12. Peer's violence

The questions of the instrument were asked in an interview form and the researchers filled in the information on paper at the spot and later on designed Performa. In order to explore qualitative information the researchers compiled five case studies.

### **13.5 Database management**

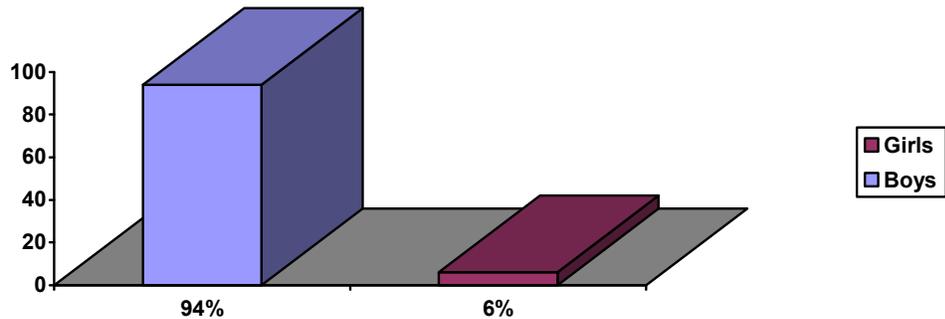
The data collectors dully filled the questionnaires and handed over to them to data analysis team. Before handing over the instrument the team members crossed check the forms to avoid any problem in coding.

All questionnaires were specified a code number, and the forms were edited by the data analysis team members. All the variables picked from the profiles were tabulated in the form of raw scores and later converted into the form of score tables, for analysis. The obtained data was analyzed with the help of software for the social sciences.

## 14. Results

Graph # 1

### GENDER

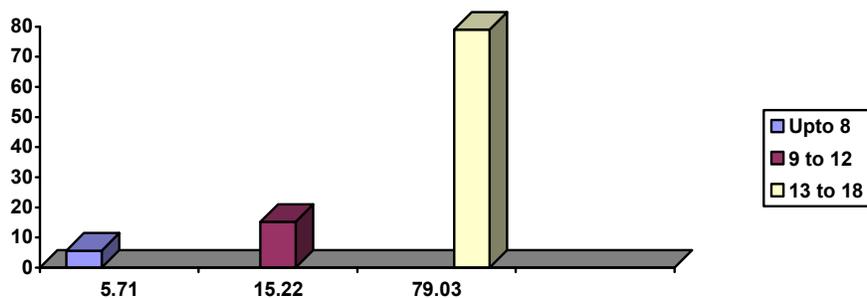


### EXPLANATION:

It is a fact that majority of street children are boys and the findings of the research strengthens the notion as **Graph # 1** shows that 94% of the respondents are boys while only 6% are girls. Street girls are more marginalized and vulnerable than the street boys.

Graph # 2

### AGE GROUP

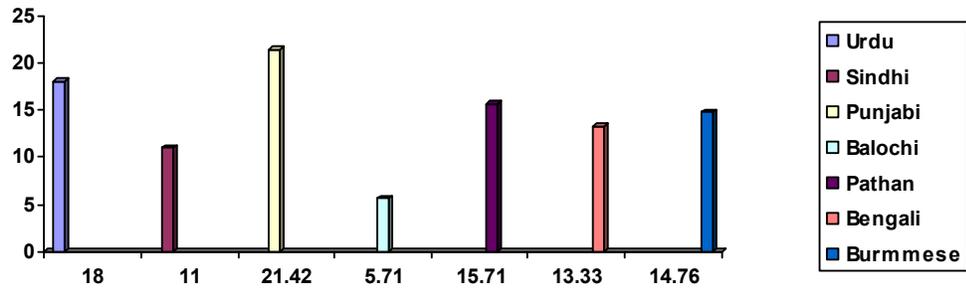


### EXPLANATION:

According to **Graph # 2** a large majority of children are in the age group of 13 to 18 years (79.03%) followed by those in the age group of 9 to 12 years (15.22%) and up to 8 years old (5.71%).

Graph # 3

ETHNIC GROUP

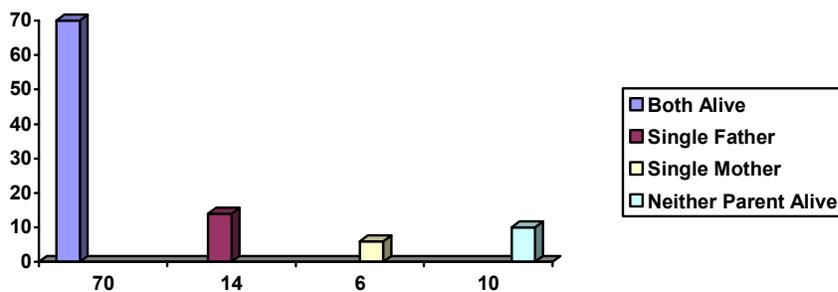


EXPLANATION:

Dysfunctional families, disputed families and disturbed families were the main cause to force children to leave homes, as cited by the respondents. Majority of children are Punjabi speaking which is 21.4% followed by Urdu 18%, while Burmese are 14.76 and Bengalese were 13.33%. (Ref. Graph # 3) These Burmese and Bengalese children are from the families of illegal migrants workers, mainly living in the slums of Karachi.

Graph # 4

FAMILY STATUS



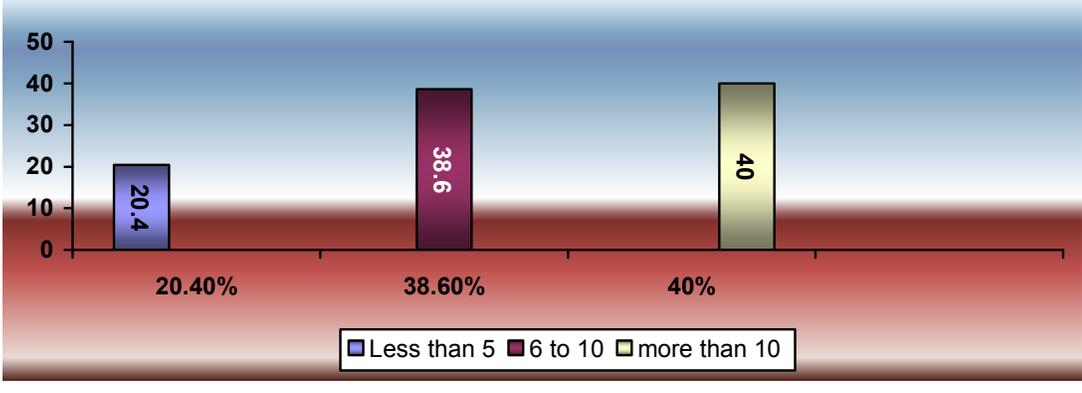
EXPLANATION:

The research indicates some surprising revelations and contradicts a prevailing myth that majority of street living children are either orphan

or part of a broken family structure. The research result showed that almost 70% children have both parents alive, while 14% have single father and 6% have single mother. Only 10% of the respondents informed that neither parent alive.

**Graph # 5**

**"FAMILY SIZE"**



**EXPLANATION:**

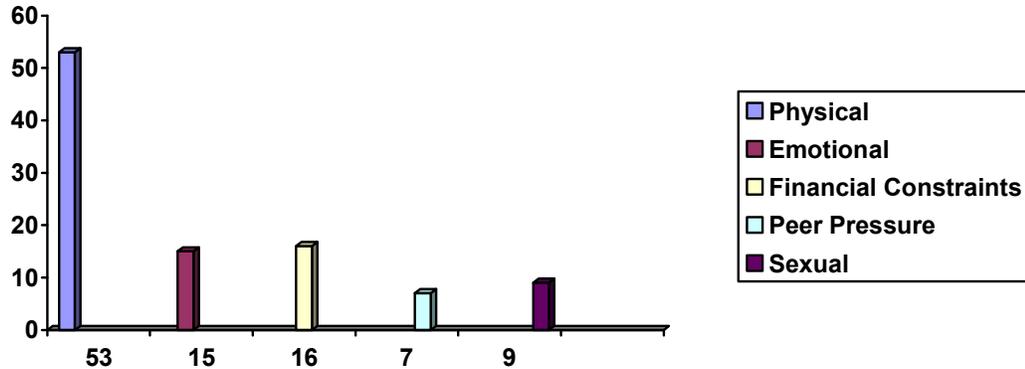
Data of household size can be used as a proxy for estimation of the degree of crowdedness, and economic status of the family of the respondents and has the great implication to health and poverty of the families of the street children.

The average number of street children per family is about six. This is higher than the national average for the size of a family. If on average of six or more of children in a family, than 78.60% of the respondents come from a large family.

The table shows that 5 to above frequency is high (78.60%) at a particular time of filling of questionnaire.

Graph # 6

Reasons of leaving home



EXPLANATION:

Physical violence 53% and emotional violence 15% is the most reported reason of leaving home by the street children. The respondents also termed socio-economic conditions at home as another reason to leaving home. Due to large family size and meager income, they are to beg and collect food from outside. Unavailability of basic necessities was the main cause to develop hatred against their parents, to fulfill their requirements or wishes they left their homes. Not only this they are sexually abused by their family members like uncles (Mamoo or Chacha) and due to fear they even can't complain to their parents and prefer to leave home. Another factor, which leads children to be on the streets, is the bad company of friends. Having no care and love at home, a child seeks love and attention within friends or strangers.

VIOLENCE AT HOME

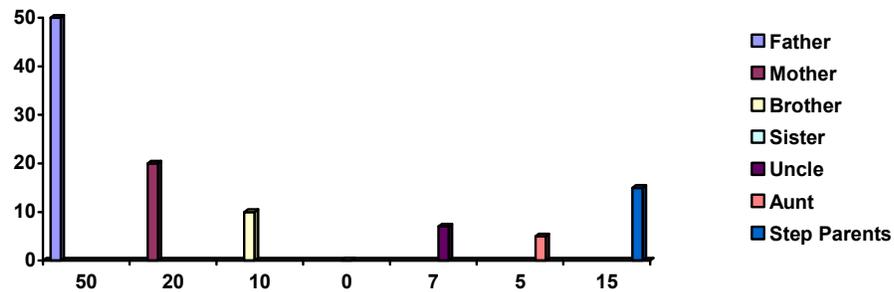
Graph # 7

Physical violence



Graph # 8

Perpetuator

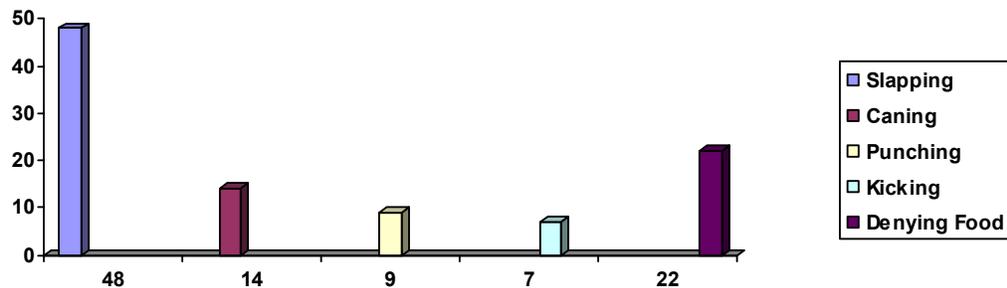


EXPLANATION:

Physical violence is common among the families of street children, as 88% of the respondent informed that they experienced violence at home. (Ref. Graph #7) In majority of cases father 50% perpetrates violence more as compare to other family members. 20% of street children divulged their mother as main perpetrator of violence, while 15% children held step parents responsible for committing violence. (Ref. Graph # 8)

Graph # 9

Types of Physical Violence



EXPLANATION:

While talking about the forms of physical violence majority of respondents 48% informed slapping as a common form however 22% termed denial of food as major form of physical violence. It is interesting to note that street children experienced various forms of violence like 14% canning, 9% punching and 7% kicking at their homes. (Ref. Graph # 9)

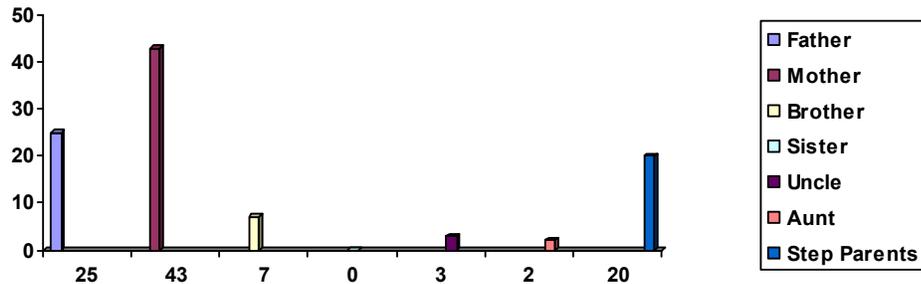
Graph # 10

Emotional violence



Graph # 11

Perpetuator

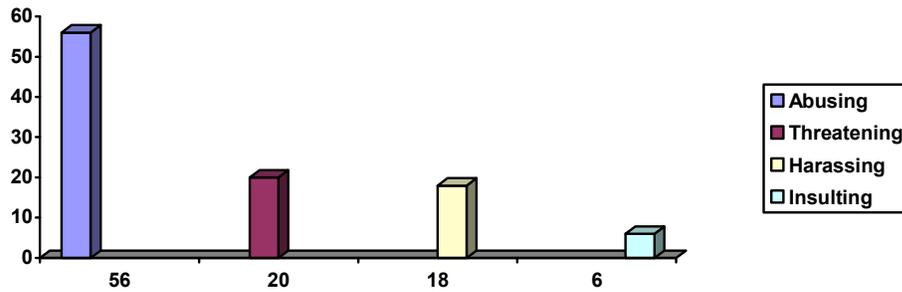


EXPLANATION:

Interestingly, besides physical violence majority of street children also complain the occurrence of mental violence. Among the respondents 86% informed frequent occurrence of mental violence at their homes. **(Ref. Graph # 10)** Contrary to the identified perpetrator of physical violence the emotional violence has been largely committed by mothers 43%. According to our target group 25% father, 20% step parents, 7% Brother, 3% Uncle and 2% Aunt are responsible for committing emotional violence. **(Ref. Graph # 11)**

Graph # 12

Type of emotional violence



EXPLANATION:

During the research, it was revealed that abusing and using dirty words with children is very common among the family of street living children. Around 56% children termed abusing as a frequent form of emotional violence. Additionally 20% threatening, 18% Harassing, 6% Insulting are the others form of emotional violence. (Ref. Graph # 12)

Graph # 13

Sexual Violence

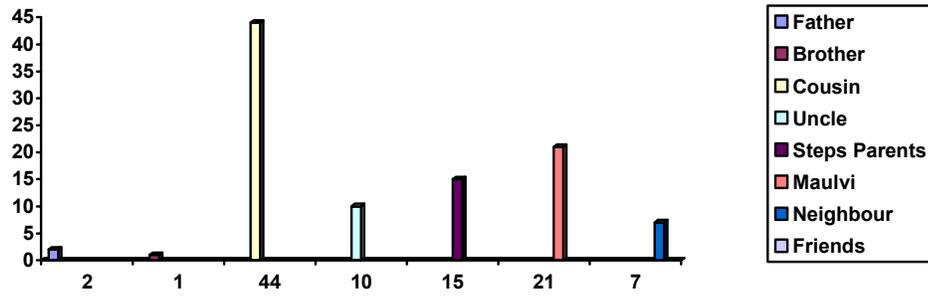


EXPLANATION:

Unlike physical and emotional violence, the occurrence of sexual violence is relatively low in the homes of street children. Only 23% children informed any type of sexual violence at their homes; however a vast majority of respondents 70% out rightly denied any form of sexual violence at their homes. (Ref. Graph # 13)

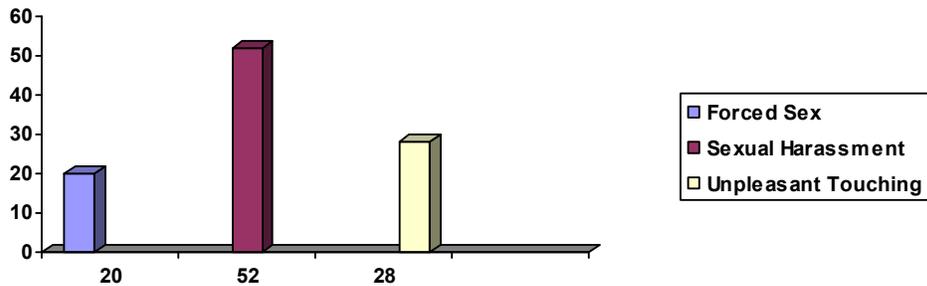
Graph # 14

Perpetuator



Graph # 15

Type of Sexual violence



**EXPLANATION:**

The social structure of Pakistani society makes its very difficult for the researchers to talk about sexual violence with respondents group, however since Initiator Human Development Foundation has been working with street children for a long time and have a good rapport with street children, the researchers managed to discuss this sensitive issue. While talking about the perpetrator of sexual violence a large percentage of street children 44% held cousins responsible for the offence followed by 15% Steps Parents, 10% 7% neighbour, 2% Brother, 1% Brother. This is a common belief that children are safe and secure in religious madarrash therefore parents prefer to send their children to these institutions as compare to formal schooling system. The respondents divulged a surprising indicator that they experienced sexual violence 21% from the Maulvis of Madarsah. While talking about types of sexual

violence the 52% respondents experienced sexual harassment followed by 28% unpleasant touching and 20% forced sex. (Ref. to Graph # 14 & 15)

## VIOLENCE AT STREET

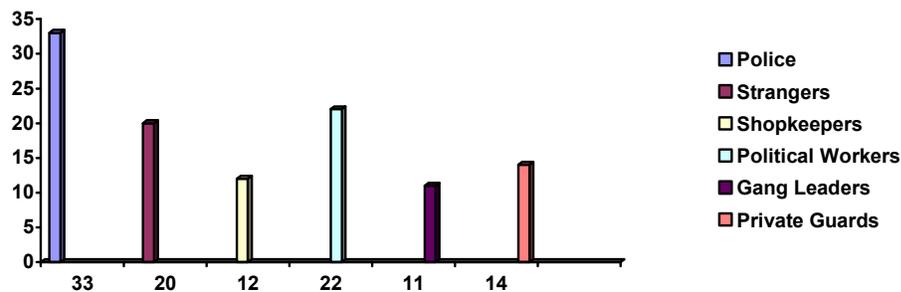
Graph # 16

### Physical violence



Graph # 17

### Perpetuator

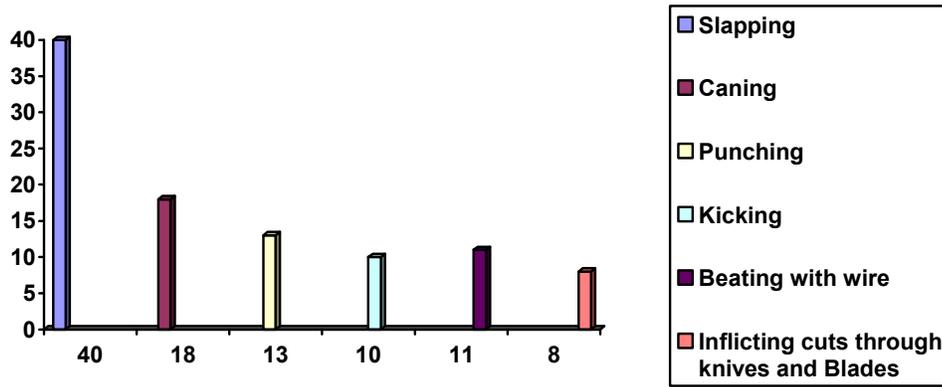


### EXPLANATION:

A 90% of the respondents informed the occurrence of violence at the streets, while 7% denied any sort of violence and 3% didn't have any idea about violence at the streets. While talking about the perpetrators of the violence 33% street children held policemen responsible for committing violence. (Ref. Graph # 16) It is surprising that a 22% of street children informed that political workers committed violence on them, while other 20% said strangers, 12% shopkeepers, 11% gang leaders and 14% private guards are the major categories of violence perpetrators. (Ref. Graph # 17)

Graph # 18

Type of Physical Violence



EXPLANATION:

The table (ref graph # 18) shows that slapping 40% is a major mode of violence against street children. While canning 18%, punching 13%, kicking 13% and beating with wires 11% are other modes of committing violence against street children. A small group of respondents 8% informed that they experienced cuts through knives and blades committed by policemen, shopkeepers and private security guards.

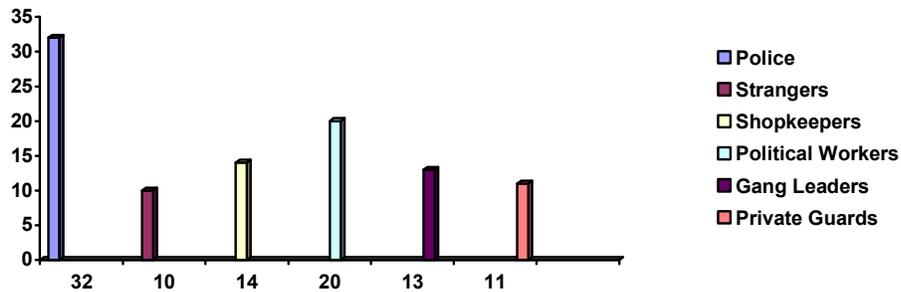
Graph # 19

Emotional violence



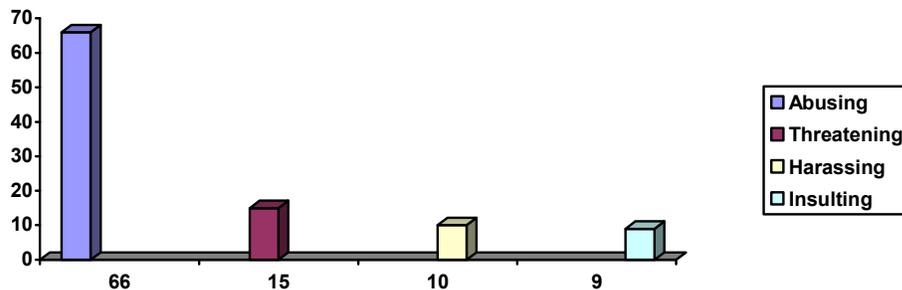
Graph # 20

Perpetuator



Graph # 21

Type of emotional violence



EXPLANATION:

Emotional violence is also rampant against street children in Karachi. A large number of respondents 86% informed that they faced emotional violence at any stage of their lives on the streets, while 9% denied any emotional violence and 5% didn't have idea about the violence. (Ref. Graph # 19) Again police is largely responsible 32% to committing emotional violence against the street children, 20% political workers, 14% shopkeepers, 13% gang leaders, 10% gang leaders and 11% private security guards are responsible committing emotional violence against the respondents. (Ref. Graph # 20) The Graph # 21 shows that abusing 66% as a major form of emotional violence, threatening 15%, harassing 10% and insulting 9% are the other forms of emotional violence against street children in Karachi.

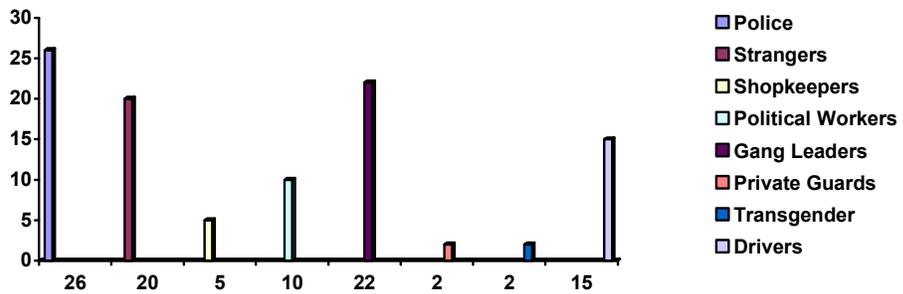
Graph # 22

Sexual Violence



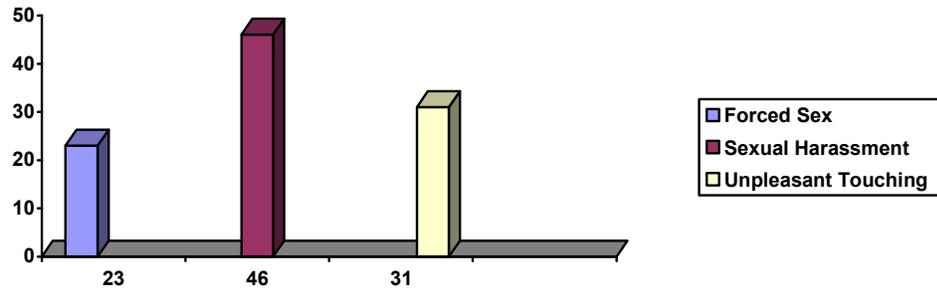
Graph # 23

Perpetuator



Graph # 24

Type of Sexual violence



**EXPLANATION:**

It is widely believed that sexual violence against street children is widespread and the research results show in table # that 88% children admitted that they experienced sexual violence, while 9% denied any sexual violence and 3% didn't have any idea about the occurrence of sexual violence while o the streets. (Ref. Graph # 22)

The research results show that police is again, according to the respondents, largely responsible for committing sexual violence against street children. A majority of street children 26% held police responsible fort committing. Other major actors responsible for sexual violence including strangers 20%, private guards 22%, drivers 15%, political workers 10%, shopkeepers 5% and transgender 2%. (Ref. Graph # 23)

The Graph # 24 shows that sexual harassment 46% is a major form of sexual violence followed by unpleasant touching 31% and forced sex 23% as major forms of violence against street children in Karachi.

**Graph # 25**

**Usage of drugs**

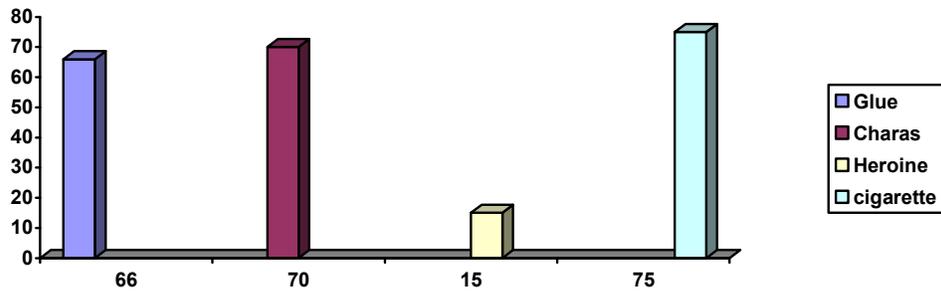


**EXPLANATION:**

The research further strengthens the common perception that majority of street children use drugs as 92% of street children admitted the use of various kinds of drugs however 8% denied any use of drugs at any stage of their lives.

**Graph # 26**

**Type of drugs/narcotics**



**EXPLANATION:**

While talking to street children the researchers came to know that street children uses various kinds of drugs regularly. As the table shows (Ref. to graph 26) 75% smokes cigarettes, 70% use Charas, 66% inhale glue and 15% uses heroine. In relation to reason for drug use, most of children used because of peer pressure, to socialize, for confidence, to relieve hunger pain, to cope, to sleep, to forget fear, anxiety and sadness, to aid in their dreaming, to remove the memories of their owns.

**Graph # 27**

**Violence after using drugs/narcotics**

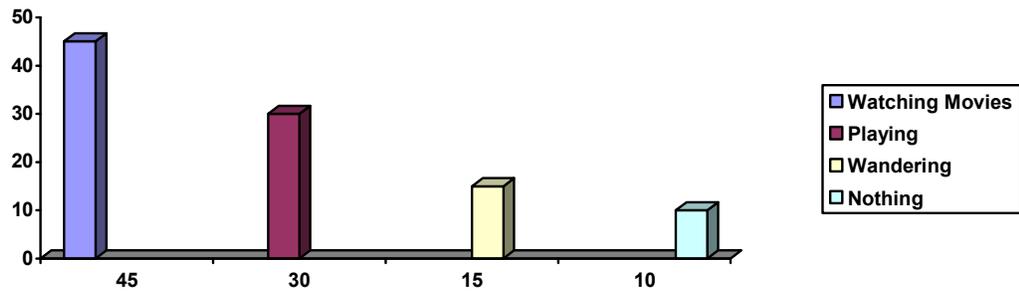


**EXPLANATION:**

After having drug the respondents group admitted their vulnerability towards physical and sexual violence. A majority of 66% nodded yes in relation to experiencing violence after using drugs.

**Graph # 28**

**Favourite recreation**

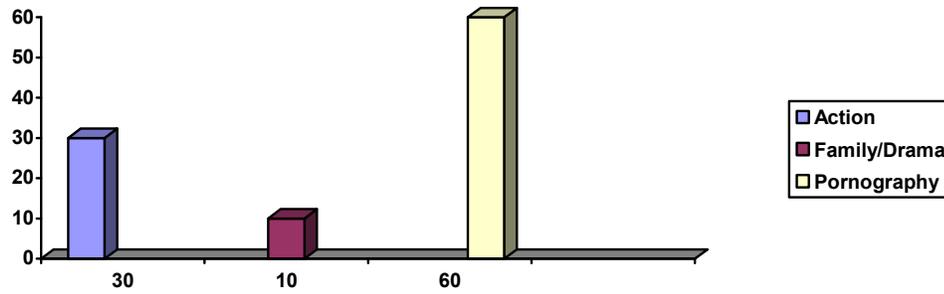


**EXPLANATION:**

While getting information about the recreation patterns of the target group, the majority of respondents 45% informed that they prefer to watch movies. 30% respondents plays 15% wander and 10% do nothing.

**Graph # 29**

**Types of movies**

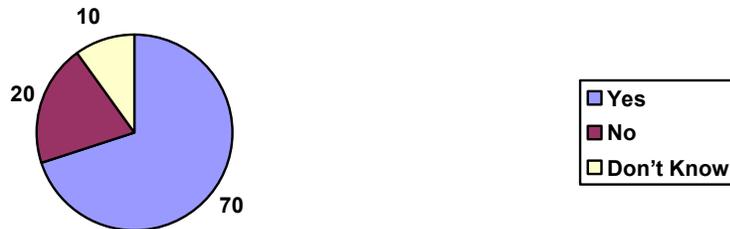


**EXPLANATION:**

Watching movies at mini-cinema houses or small hotels is their means of recreation in their leisure time. The respondents reported that they watch movies including pornographic too. They are very much inspired by actors and try to dress and act like them even adopt their names as their nicks. 60% respondents watch pornographic movies, 30% prefer action movies while 10% like family channels and dramas.

**Graph # 30**

**Violence after watching violent/action movies**



**Graph # 31**

**Sexual act/violence after watching pornographic movies**



**EXPLANATION:**

Graph # 30 shows that these children are very vulnerable after watching violent and pornographic movies. 70% of the respondents admitted the occurrence of violence after watching violent/action movies, while 20% denied that and 10% didn't have idea about that phenomenon.

Similarly 60% of the respondents admitted any sexual act or experienced sexual violence after watching pornographic movies, while 30% completely denied that and 10% informed that they don't have any idea about it. (Ref. Graph 31)

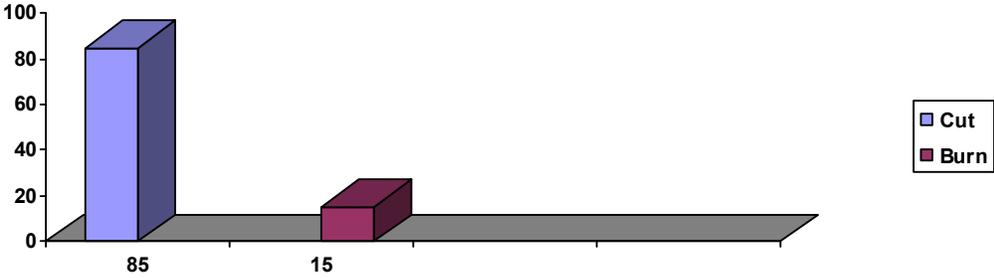
**Graph # 32**

**Self infliction in frustration/depression yourself**



**Graph # 33**

**Type of self-infliction**



**EXPLANATION:**

Depression is very common among street children and while talking about the high occurrence of physical, emotional and sexual violence the 66% of the respondents admitted that they self inflicted themselves, while 26% denied and 8% didn't give any response. Cuts 85% through blades and knives are major forms of self-inflection while burning 15% himself is another form of self-inflection among the street children.

## 15. Limitations of the Research

- Since the issue of violence against children has not been explored as yet it was difficult to find and gather a group of dedicated team members to collect data from street children.
- It was difficult for street children to give much time to the researchers
- The behavior of street children was some time very unpredictable
- During day time mostly children were busy in their work
- At night, the data collectors, especially girls, were concerned about their own safety
- It was noted that many street children were reluctant to talk about violence especially sexual abuse
- The research has been carried out without the support of any funding agency therefore the Initiator Foundation was not able to pay any stipend to their team members.

# Part V

### 16.1 Waseem (Age: 12)

"When I was little, she broke up with my father and disappeared. Before his death, my father left me at my aunt's house. From there my uncle took me to my grandmother. Soon after my grand mother started to treat me, as I was a slave soon after I went there. She would tell me to do something and I probably did not hear what she said because I do not think my hearing is too good. When I could not hear her, she would run outside, get a stick or a board, and beat me with it. I received many knots on my head and arms as well as my legs. My whole body still has many scars all over that hurt sometimes. She would hit me with her fist in the face and stomach also.

I used to sleep in front of the market. When I wake up, I go and try to find some water to wash my face, and then I go to the people on the street who sells second-hand clothes. There you can have cheap clothes and find something to wear and throw the dirty ones away. Then I return to the place where I slept and wait until the market is open so I can ask the customers to let me have a little change so I can buy something to eat. Sometimes they give to me and sometimes they do not. Other times I go to the people who sell cooked foods at the street kitchens and ask them to let me have something to eat. If they are in a good mood, they let you have something to eat. They often let you have the crust of the cooked food instead of giving you a normal plate of food. I make my money by wiping down cars or loading pick-up. They give you 20 rupees and sometimes up 35 rupees when you help them out. When the older people see the driver hand you something, they rush you and try to take away whatever he gave you. Sometimes they beat you up and take it from you. Sometimes, I have to go days without eating; something I cannot do anything about. I've been on the street for 3 years."

While sleeping on the sidewalk, lower legs were run over by a parking automobile. The driver did not assist him as he woke up screaming. He has no permanent damage from the injury and has healed well.

### **16.2 Nadeem (Age: 14)**

"My father died first and then my mother. After the death of my mother, there was no one left at home so I had to leave. I remember my father had a friend who had a farm house near our home. I went there and asked for the help. He said I could stay there if I worked. After about 2 months, I was doing all of the work. I started work before sunrise and continue till late night. I used to get food only once a day. He beat me like a dog almost all the time like when he said I was not doing something right or when he was in a bad mood. He would hit me with boards, pipes and other stuff. He would throw rocks at me to get my attention and hit me in the head a few times. 2 years ago I left him and came to the city for a better life, but I have been on the street ever since.

### **16.3 Abdul Manan (Age: 11)**

He lived happily with his family when his father was alive. His father was a retailer. He had four brothers and one sister. After his father death, the behaviour of his brothers and sister-in-law were very harsh, his sister in law gave him rigorous work, which was difficult for him to do and in return, the family members beat him. His two brothers lived at home and others two brothers are also on the street.

He left his home, his brother's attitude who used to beat him on petty issues. He is living on streets for about three years with a group of ten children. He not only takes opium but also heroin. He also sales heroine. They even have all this things in their pocket at the time of the interview. Some of his group fellows are in the police custody due to sale of drugs. Their income is quite good because of drugs business. He told that he used to sale heroin at Clifton but these days we sale at Sadder. He thought that he is not happy with his work but has no other choice.

He also told that he uses capsules (a sort of drug) when the drug was not available and this capsule is available at a Hakim's Shop in Sadder.

#### **16.4 Mohammad Ali Lahori (Age: 16)**

Mohammad Ali is the resident of Lahore. Three years back he had a quarrel with his neighbour and injured him with a knife. He got scared and left his home, since then these streets are his home and his friends are his family. He misses his family very much, sometimes feels very lonely, and in distress injures himself by making cuts on his arm. He earns his living by cleaning vehicle and shoe polishing. He earns 50 rupees daily.

He is a Samad Bond inhaler and is using this drug from the day he is on the streets. He had been a victim of sexual abuse on the next night on the street. He had no one to protest or complaint as the other children on the streets were also used to this kind of behaviour. Later he was abused occasionally and in return got enough money that could feed him. Slowly he was addicted to this habit and now he himself abuses the younger male members or any new child who join their group just for the sake of enjoyment. Muhammad Ali had no regrets for his behaviour as he thinks this is part of the life.

#### **16.5 Kashif alias Ramjanay (Age: 15)**

Kashif's family lives near water pump Block-16, Federal B Area. His father is an employee. His father's attitude with his mother was very harsh. His mother and siblings were frightened to this situation. One day his father had a fight with his mother, Kashif protested and tried to stop his father but his father kicked him out of home. He left the house and began to live on the street. It has been a year now. He misses his younger sister and mother and wants to meet them. He sleeps on the street at night with his 10 fellows who are from Karachi and Lahore. He went to the school only 3 to 4 days in his earlier age, then he scamper from his home and quit studies. He wants to have a respectable life and earn for his mother and sister; however, these days he earns his living by cleaning vehicles and is satisfied with his job. He is addicted to Samad Bond and smokes cigarette. He feels relaxed after using drug. He sometimes begs also. He told that he often visit his paternal and maternal relatives in the city. He spends his leisure time playing video game.

## 17. Recommendations

### 17.1 Policy

- Special emphasis is required on vulnerable groups of street living, working and those comes in conflict with the law. Urgently amend national legislation in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and other UN guidelines on juvenile justice.
- Government must ensure the protection of all children, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, disability and social, economic or any other status from discriminatory laws and practices.
- Raise the minimum age of criminal responsibility, currently 7 years, to an internationally acceptable level and make sure the protection of children as described in the Juvenile Justice System Ordinance 2000.

### 17.2 Police

- Children should be detained in separate facilities from adults at all stages of the judicial process.
- Juvenile Justice System Ordinance 2000 should be the part of police and prison official's training.

### 17.3 Visit of correctional facilities

- NGOs and child rights lawyers should form a 'child protection committee' and conduct visit to police stations and other correctional facilities for children.

### 17.4 Awareness on legal rights

- Potentially vulnerable children also need orientation on child rights and domestic legislation.
- NGOs should design campaigns to make street children aware about JJSO 2000.
- Institutional donors and NGOs should initiate projects on capacity building of police officials on child rights.

### **17.5 Awareness on the issue in source communities**

- Organizations working with street children need to organize awareness campaigns in order to educate source communities about street children.

### **17.6 Prevention**

- Orient political will and allocate resources to the structured development of child rights-based comprehensive prevention policies as outlined in UN Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency.

### **17.7 Participation**

- Make children's participation central to reform processes. Create spaces for children's voices to be heard at all levels.

### **17.8 Vocational training center**

- Karachi City Government should establish vocational training schools in with the collaboration of local NGOs.

### **17.9 Research**

- NGOs working in street children should initiate a national research to know the exact magnitude of street living children in the country.
- There is a need to conduct attitude surveys in slums and poor neighborhood about potential risk and street children.

### **17.10 Health**

- A child right to attain high standard of health facilities should be accepted and to facilitate street children GOs and NGOs should introduce mobile health care facilities.

### **17.11 Media**

- Media can also help creating awareness and overcome the problems faced in the rehabilitation and protection of street children.

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