



Living on the Margins of Life:

A Study about Street Children in Kathmandu, Nepal



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Dedicated

To

My Late Brother

Gyanu Pokharel

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ABSTRACT

This thesis entitled '**Living on the Margins of Life: A Study about Street Children in Kathmandu, Nepal**' is based on the idea that children rights, the most basic of human rights need to be discussed and promoted, since children are the future of the community, nation and the world. Indigenous peoples and their struggle for human rights is now a significant force, as the movement moves in a new era. In such a context, the main interest of this research work is the current situation of indigenous and minority children in capital city of Nepal. This work is mainly focused on the issue of street children in Kathmandu Nepal and the roles of different institutions to promote the issue of indigenous and minority children's rights in Nepal.

The study has been based on fieldwork conducted in Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal during June and July 2012. Interviews, document analysis and observations are used as research tools in this work. The study has based on the different sets of concepts like marginalization, internal migration, and cultural assimilation. Viewing street life as the margins of life this work explores different aspects of street life and different factors associated with this. The study has attempted to elaborate on the issue of street children as an issue related indigenous and minority communities in Nepal. Are the children from these communities more vulnerable? This is the focus of questions discussed in different section of the thesis.

The study therefore aims to map the current situation of indigenous and minority children's right in Nepal by discussing the roles of Non-governmental Organization and International Non-governmental Organizations and the government of Nepal to promote this issue.

LIST of ABBRIVATIONS

ACR:	Action for Child Right International
ADB:	Asian Development Bank
CCWB:	Central Child Welfare Board
CPCS:	Child Protection Centre and Services
CONCERN:	Concern for Children and Environment Nepal
CWCN:	Child WataBaran Centre Nepal
CWIN:	Child Workers in Nepal
CPN:	Communist Party of Nepal
CPN-UML:	Communist Party of Nepal- United Marxist Leninist
CWISH:	Children and Women in Social Service and Human Rights
ILO:	International Labor Organization
INSEC:	Informal Sector Service Centre
INGO:	International Non-governmental Organization
IREWOC:	International Research on Working Children
KTM:	Kathmandu
NAOSC:	National Alliance of the Organizations Working for Street Children
NEFIN:	National Federation of Indigenous Nationalities
NFDIN:	National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities
NGO:	Non-governmental Organization
NHRC:	National Human Rights Commission
OHCHR:	Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights
SAHARA:	Social Awareness and Helping Activities in Rural Areas

UN: United Nations

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

VOC: Voice of Children

WHO: World Health Organization

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Questions



As the picture reveals above, this is a normal life in the capital city of Kathmandu. A boy that looks younger than ten with physical disabilities is lying on a street. The boy is almost naked, without shoes and covered with dust. A white green *Tempo* is on the way waiting for its passenger and two men in a casual dress are walking on the street. It seems they are on the way without being affected by it. This is the central location of Kathmandu, just ten meters ahead across the road is the *Khula Manch*, where different political leaders deliver speeches. When I found such a situation, I immediately had questioned myself what parents can imagine a child sitting like this. Who is he, and what is his identity? What are the roles of public, NGOs and government? These questions led me to explore such situation through the project.

In the context of such a situation, this research focuses on the issue of street children in Kathmandu, especially of indigenous and other minority children. The project maps the current situation of street children in Kathmandu, and the role of different institutions that work to manage the street children of Kathmandu. It also tries to elaborate the role of

different institutions to promote the issue of indigenous and other minority children's rights providing a context and background to the significant number of indigenous and other minority street children in Kathmandu. To be more specific this study will:

1. Elaborate the situation of street children, and discuss the challenges associated with street life in Kathmandu.
2. Analyze the role of National Governmental Organizations, International Non-governmental Organizations, the government of Nepal and other stakeholders regarding street children and in promotion of indigenous and minorities' children rights issues in Nepal.

1.2 Introduction

After a long period of political instability and a decade of armed conflict (1996- 2006), Nepal has passed through a serious stage of human rights violation. Many groups of peoples and thousands of children were victimized throughout the conflict (the conflict between the Maoist and the government of Nepal). Though the armed conflict brought some significant change in Nepalese society, it has had seriously negative impact on thousands of peoples. Children were particularly affected. Of them many were injured and were killed during this conflict e.g. 33160 in 2005 based on INSEC (Lawati and Pahari 2010). "Many of the abducted were subsequently released but some were killed while others joined the movement voluntarily or under pressure" (Lawati and Pahari *ibid* P: 310).

In its yearly report, the National Human Right Commission of Nepal (The State of Children Rights in Nepal 2011) states that more than seven thousands children were kidnapped during the war and thousands of peoples were displaced from their home along with their children and they have still not been resettled in Nepal. Children displaced by war have been deprived of education and entered street life and many other child labor activities. Besides this, the rooted poverty and lack of educational awareness in Nepal has fostered the situations of child labor, child trafficking, and child marriage and has made many groups of peoples more vulnerable. Even today, different human rights organization and activists are reporting that the

human rights are still critical in Nepal¹, which also has been fostered by ongoing political instability.

Currently, the rights of indigenous peoples have been a part of a central discussion in national politics, among political parties and in the media. This has included for example Adibasi Janajati and other minorities and ethnic groups, Dalit² and Madhesi.³ How these different groups can be empowered and their linguistic, political cultural rights can be practiced are the agendas of discussion in Nepal. The discussion of empowering different groups of peoples has been connected with the restructuring of the country i.e. the structure of federalism. The debate on different types of federal structures and whether it should be based on geographical, ethnic, linguistic and economic resources are the different agendas of political parties as well as indigenous peoples of Nepal. The indigenous groups have raised the issue of ethnic federalism with the right to self-determination. Other parties like Nepali Congress, NCP-UML, NCP- Maoist have different opinions about it. Bhattachan (2008) regarding the attitude of three major political parties in Nepal states:

The Nepali Congress Party wishes for federalism without the right to self-determination and ethnic, linguistic and regional autonomy as demanded by the movements of indigenous peoples and Madhesi. The NCP-UML wishes for geographical divisions with some consideration of ethnic, linguistic and regional characteristics of various groups. Both opt for inclusive representation as a goal and aspire to practice reservation of seats or affirmative action for women, Dalit, Madhesi and indigenous peoples at all level. The NCP-Maoist wishes for autonomy on ethnic, linguistics and regional basis with full, centralized, control of their party over such autonomous states. (P: 20)

¹Human Right WATCH News dated 1st February 2013

<http://www.hrw.org/news/2013/02/01/nepal-year-backsliding-rights-commitments>

Human right watch in its world report 2013 has shown Nepal's human right situation still critical specially in women, disability, migrants, gender identity, statelessness and Tibetan refugees (P: 338-340). Which can be found

https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/wr2013_web.pdf

² Traditionally believed to be untouchable group having total population of 13.1% based on census 2001

³ Group of peoples living in Terai regions having different languages

Those who are against ethnic federalism argue that a country like Nepal having hundreds of ethnic communities requires geographical federalism to solve the conflict between different ethnic groups, and to equalize the economic resources of the country. This view of non-ethnic federal groups has been rejected by the indigenous groups stating only ethnic federalism can be a solution. For them, it would offer a fair chance for indigenous peoples in decision-making level, at a national level. There are differing opinions among different indigenous leaders of different political parties in Nepal about federal restructuring of the country and this complicates the discussion.

How to empower different groups of people in Nepal is complicated. The media and NGOs show clearly their dissatisfaction about government's indifference towards the issues of human right violations⁴ e.g. especially violation against women and children, and peoples of Dalit and minorities groups. They have been insisting that different parties and government should do more for the effective implementation of law and to make a necessary arrangement for the proper management of women and children's rights issues. The discussion is centered on urging all the political parties to implement their commitment on the issue of human rights⁵.

Among various issues affecting children, the issue of street children i.e. *khate* (see next paragraph), has been gaining a significant interest among different groups such as children rights organizations and especially in the mass media in Nepal⁶. As the issue has been raised by different NGOs and INGOs the discussion from the government is less focused on the issue of street children. In such a context, my thesis tries to find out the situation of street

⁴ Online ekantipur news dated: 9th of December 2010

<http://ekantipur.com/2010/12/09/capital/no-progress-in-human-rights-situation/326271.html>

⁵ Online ekantipur news dated: 9th of November 2009

<http://www.ekantipur.com/2009/11/09/national/nhrc-recommendations-ignored-by-government/302655.html>

⁶ Online ekantipur news dated: 8th of November 2012 and 20th of November 2011

<http://www.ekantipur.com/2012/11/08/national/street-kid-census-to-rehabilitate-them/362489.html>

<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2011/11/20/metro/police-bid-to-clear-street-children-from-major-tourist-hubs/228435.html>

children and activities carried out by different governmental as well as non-governmental organizations in Nepal.

The term '*Khate*' generally refers to the rag pickers or the collectors of different items that can be recycled. The meaning of the term to describe these rag pickers who are often children has been changing in recent years. Heidi Bjønnes Larsen (2003) in her master thesis quoting Onta Bhatta (1996) states *khate* was the term originated by street children themselves in a play performed in stage in 1992 and later on came to be a widely used term, which shaped the identity of street children. The term can frequently be heard in conversation with young people when they try to criticize their ways of living. For example, if a friend says to another '*kasto khatele jasto boleko*' the word-to-word translation is 'How *khate* like speaking' which means a way speaking like the *khate* meaning not polite or maybe rough. Thus, the term *khate* shows a negative public attitude towards street children and street children do not like to be addressed using the term *khate* (CPCS: 2012). Another term that is used is *Sadak Bal Balika* which is the word-to-word translation of the term street children where *Sadak* represents street and *Bal Balika* represents boys and girls simultaneously.

Unlike the term *khate*, the term 'Street Children' and its definition is a complex and a debatable issue among different scholars (See, Baker et al 1996, Lalor 1999, Brick 2004, Lyså 2009). Rather than having a standard and fixed definition, different organizations and scholars have defined street children differently. Even a scholar like Brick (2004) questions the significance of the term street children itself and prefers to use the term 'urban children at risk' in place of it. It also shows the definition of 'street' as problematic. However, in general, the term street children simply denotes the children living on the street which neither states the number of children nor the duration of time living in street nor the various social and or political reasons behind this.

UNICEF has classified these children into different categories; children at risk, children on the street and children of the street (Lalor 1999). The children at risk are possible street children in future. Like the uniformity of its definition the exact number of street children is also unknown but "despite disagreements concerning the number and definitions of street children, there is a consensus that large urban cities in 'Third World' countries are home to

most of the world's street children'' Lyså (2009, P: 15). Those who are on street are without any protection and supervision.

Different reasons are blamed for a child being on the street. Most of the agreed causes are: social structure including discrimination in terms of caste, economics etc., death of parents, separation of parents, poverty, natural disaster, family structure such as a step-mother and step father, political conflict, hope for getting job, dropped out of education, social negligence, migration etc. (Lalor 1999, W. James Jakob et.al 2004). The reason for a child in street may differ from place to place and in many contexts the reasons may overlap. The social security and established political system determines the number of the street children and their level of difficulty in street. The Asian Development bank in its report states ''In the varied and rapidly changing Asian context, the root causes range from the misery and social exclusion of extreme poverty to the consumer desire and substance abuse that cause relatively wealthy children to run away from home in newly industrializing country''(2003, P: 4).

The situation of the children who are on the street without love and support by their family or without having any caretakers is the most difficult situation. The street life can be regarded as being on the very margins of life Their situation can be argued as critical from psychological as well as the stages of social development perspectives i.e. they are not able to make decision on their own. Similarly, the psychological aspects of getting love, affection and counseling from a family unit is always lacking in the street. In this situation, the children on the street try to deal with the situation alone and try to create networks to fulfill their necessities. How do they form these social relations and what are the main difficulties that they have to confront while being in the street? These are the main issues that this thesis attempts to explore.

Though there has been a constant discussion in different fields, social workers, media, and different NGOs working for street children believe that the number of street children in Nepal has been growing. A joint report published by ACR International, CCWB Nepal and CPCS⁷ 2009 (A Study of Children's Home in Nepal) states that there are approximately 5000 street children in Nepal who are living and working on the street. The groups of children from

⁷ Child protection centre and services, a NGO established in 2002 working for the street children

various regions every year enter in to the street life in different cities in Nepal. Being the capital city, the number of street children in Kathmandu is higher than other parts of country and seems to be increasing along with the expansion of city.

1.3 Research Terminologies and Limitations of the Study

In this project, the terms ‘street children’ refers to the children without parental support living in different streets of Nepal in general and Kathmandu (the capital city of Nepal in particular) and ‘indigenous children’ refers to the children from the different indigenous nationalities as categorized by the government of Nepal. (See appendix: 1). ‘The minority children’ refers to the children from different minorities group like Madeshi, Muslim, and Dalit etc.

In this study, I focus on three different aspects: prevention aspects looking at the family and socio-economic background of street children, current state of street children including NGOs activities, and post-street aspects such as the process of rehabilitation and returning home. While going through the discussion during the fieldwork, I tried to get my informants’ opinion towards the general assumption that most of the street children in Kathmandu are from indigenous Dalit and other minorities groups. As far as I know, there has not been any official study of their (street children) background and number in terms of ethnicity and geographical location. The project tries to map the current activities and role of NGOs and INGOs for promoting the issue of indigenous and minorities children which indeed are helpful for indigenous societies and nations. The researcher is not in a position that there should be some special provision for indigenous street children and not for any other groups of children in the street. The children on the street no doubt deserve the special care and treatment regardless of their ethnic identity. However, finding different states of street children identities the most vulnerable and critical groups that could benefit most from different preventive measures. The project aims to reveal the current state of indigenous and other minority children rights in Nepal.

1.4 Literature Review

The focus of different international organizations and the research works on street children is fairly current, beginning in the 1980s. Most efforts have been done by Western academics and in Western areas, and less in Africa and Asia (Lalor 1999, Baker et.al. 1996). With the help of different studies carried out on street children, it can be argued that street children are a well-known topic in academic discussion not only in a certain part of the globe but all over the world. The studies and research from different governmental and nongovernmental organizations in different areas may have their own unique purpose that also depends on the interest of the research organization and individual.

There are various scholars in different part of the world talking about street children and their problems in street, the relationship between NGOs and children etc. Catherine Panter Brick (2004) has discussed critically the phenomena of street children, criticizing the use of the term street children and the focus of NGOs on it. Brick (ibid) doubts the intension of different organizations focusing on street children and views the term street children as created and focused on by different institutions without representing all children who have equally suffered social exclusion and poverty but not are in the street. He further states “there is more to the lives of children than could be revealed by *ad hoc* generalizations based on the criteria of physical location and social neglect.” (P: 84). In the Nepalese context, the situation of children in different rural areas exists even more critical and severe than has been discussed in urban setting. However, the situation of children in city areas also remains serious and critical due to the rapid growth of internal migration and hope for better opportunities. Thus, the focus of different institutions at current in the name of street children is helpful to minimize the problems associated with children from different rural areas and also from different urban areas.

Ida Marie Lyså (2009) in her Master thesis disagrees with Brick’s argument and states “I see the term street children as a wide term, illustrating rather than obscuring the heterogeneity of the children’s lives, since it includes all children who have a relationship to the street of a ‘stronger degree,’ either as a place of work and/or residence” (P: 17). Lyså (ibid) in her thesis has discussed the challenges associated with rehabilitation of street children based on her field experiences in CAINA (Centre for Integral Attention for Childhood and Adolescence), a

governmental run day center for street children in Buenos Aires. She thinks the contrast of perceiving childhood between children and peoples of different Agencies is one of the issues making such process very difficult. Even if a child wants to move out of street there are various external factors, which create difficulty for him or her. For example: the choices that he or she has and also the individual differences and their recognition by institutions who are working to support for the street children (Lyså 2009).

Kevin J. Lalor (1999) has conducted a comparative study of street children between Ethiopia and Latin America in different aspects of their life e.g. age, gender, reasons for being in the street, drug use in street, physical harass etc. Lalor finds that the majorities of the street children are aged 10-14 and the most of them are boys. He (ibid) states: “However, the true incidence of working girls may be hidden by the nature of their work, which tends to be less visible than the work of street boys” (P: 761). Lalor (ibid) has criticized the myth that children enjoy the street without adult interference by stating that street life is without any doubt miserable according to both his female and male informants (P: 768).

Rachel Baker with Catherine Panter-Brick and Alison Todd (1996) have discussed the methods used for studying street children and criticized the traditional methods like using surveys to study the street children in Nepal. Baker (ibid) has focused on the combination of various methods for the study. According to them such methods “give prominence to an emic perspective of children’s lives” (p: 172). The study has compared the different aspects of children e.g. health and life style of different groups: homeless street children, squatter children⁸, urban school children in Kathmandu and children of Salme village having normal economic life. The main methods used in the study are biological methods such as saliva collection, heart rate monitoring, along with the methods used in social research: interview, photo exercise, focus group discussion, structured observation etc. The finding of their study has shown that street children are comparatively healthier than the children of Squatter and the children of Salme village.

Heidi Bjønnes Larsen (2003) in her master thesis has studied street children of Kathmandu

⁸ children living with family on the bank of the Bishnumati river in ktm having low economic status and working as sweepers, jewelry makers etc., Based on Baker et.al.

focusing their relationship with street. How do they conduct their different daily activities or social practices and does this have some relation with the particular location of the city and time of the day. She found that street children conduct different social practices in different places based on their strategies of life such as maintaining “ontological security” and dealing with the daily difficulties. She has chosen the three different areas of Kathmandu: Idrachowk, Thamel and Anamnagar, for her study using interviews, mobility maps and workshops as her main methods for the study.

The various studies about children in the street have been done from different individuals and NGOs in Nepal. The focus of NGOs and other scholars are primarily on the issue of street children on the street, the problems of street life and the way they can be helped. Many scholars have not prioritized the ethnic marginalization and its impact on the significant number of street children. That shows in a way the main focus is on the treatment rather than the prevention. During my fieldwork in Kathmandu, I have tried to know from different NGOs and INGOs who are currently working on children’s rights issues whether they have any specific programs for indigenous and other minorities’ children’s rights issues. What are the reasons if they are not focusing on the issues of indigenous and others minorities’ children who because of various reasons are on the street? My study in this sense is unique that it tries to cover the issues of street children as well as indigenous and minority children’s rights on an institutional level such as the role of NGOs, INGO, government of Nepal etc.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Along with the situation of street children in Nepal, this research also shows indigenous and other minority children’s rights issues in a developing country like Nepal and the current activities of different institutions. Thus, this work will be useful for all those who are interested in the issue of children’s rights in general and street children’s rights and situations in particular. Since one of the special focuses of the project is on the indigenous children and their presence in street, it will be useful for the indigenous communities and organizations of Nepal to realize the importance and give some extra attention to their children and the issue of their rights. It will also be significant for the different NGOs and INGOs of Nepal to launch specific programs for the indigenous and other minorities’ children of Nepal and to raise the issue of indigenous children’s rights. Similarly, this will be equally significant for the

government of Nepal to launch necessary steps for the promotion of indigenous children's rights issue in Nepal and to address the issue of street children in Nepal. It will be useful to make a necessary management of national provision for the effective implementation of international provisions and conventions. Moreover, it will be a useful document to ensure these children have a brighter future.

1.6 An Outline of the Thesis

The thesis consists of six chapters. In the first chapter, research questions and a brief introduction and significance of the topic are provided. The first chapter also gives the brief review of previous studies about the street children and their focus carried out in Nepal and other parts of the world.

The second chapter is about the methodological reflections such as the reflections of the approaches, methods and techniques used for the study. To be specific, this includes methods used for the collection of data and the information of various sources for the data, the ethical reflection of the project and my role as a researcher in my home country. It has also discussed some approaches and concepts related to the study.

The third chapter is about the background information of the topic. In this session, I will discuss the reasons for focusing on indigenous and minority children for this study with an elaboration of legal background information. The issue of indigenous children's right and its importance for indigenous communities and culture are also discussed in the chapter. It also deals with the introduction of the study area.

Chapter four is about the situation of street children and the difficulties associated with their life. How their life has been affected by the attitude of the public and the main difficulties they have in the street are discussed throughout the chapter. It also deals with the description of their daily activities and different factors associated with the significant number of street children in Nepal.

Chapter five assesses whether the issue of street children in Nepal is an indigenous issue. It analyzes the role of government, NGOs and INGOs in promoting indigenous children's

rights, and for managing the issue of street children. It also deals with the relationship and shifting interest of different institutions.

The last chapter is a summary and conclusion of the project with several recommendations.

CHAPTER II: METHODOLOGICAL ELABORATION

Methodology is one of the significant parts of the project, without which the project remains incomplete. This chapter speaks about the methods and techniques that are used to produce data in the projects. The choice of method in a research project should reflect the research topic and the overall research strategy (Silverman 2005 P: 122).

2.1 Sources of Data

Under primary sources, I have used informants from the individual level and from the institutional level that are concerned about the issue of children or have responsibility of the children's right issue. At an individual level a former street child from an indigenous family background has been used as a source of information. At an institutional level, I have interviewed ten more informants represent from three different institutions: government, NGO and INGO.

Besides primary sources, different research publication including reports from NGOs working with street children in Kathmandu, Nepal (CPCS, CWIN, NAOSC), from the government of Nepal (Interim Constitution, National Census, Current State of Children 2011) and from international organizations (Convention on the Rights of the Children) are used as secondary sources of information. Different publications from the National Human Right Commissions related to children rights are also used as secondary sources of information. While using different sources of information, I realized the lack of sources, which are not particular to any institutional interest. For that, I have chosen different newspaper articles from various dates about street children.

2.2. Data Collection Tools

To obtain primary information different research tools were used. The choices of these particular tools are because of various reasons: e.g. the nature of the topic, limitation of time etc. Interview, observation, and document analysis are the tools used in the research.

2.2.1 Observation (Getting to the Field)

The first and most important thing in the beginning of fieldwork was to know about the study area and to know the current situation of street children in the street. Kathmandu, the capital city of the country is selected because it is familiar to me. I had spent four years there before working on my master degree. Even though I was familiar with the different areas of the districts, I was at first unable to distinguish the real street children (those are living in street without family contact) and other children those who are just spending their leisure time in the street. My purpose was to find children living in the street without parents. I conducted some observations during the night with the help of my friends, which helped me to distinguish street children from other people, but I realized the technique is not so useful with street children without proper study of the area and the street gangs.

The type of observation used in my research project was non-participant observation. Lynda (2006) defines non-participation observation as an observation where the researcher is not present on the scene but can observe the situation from an entirely different environment (P: 174). Non-participation observation is typically useful when a certain social situation does not allow for any participation (Spradley: 1980). Considering the ethical and social limitation this observation was chosen for the study, which was mainly used in order to know the general picture of the street children of that area. In fact it helped to find out the public attitude toward street children and their lifestyle in the street. If we compare my field visit with non-participatory observation we may find some similarities. For example as in non-participatory observation, none of the children were aware of my observation and activities towards them.

Since, I did not talk with any children or let them to know that I was there for research, it was comparatively easy for me to conduct this task. The observation was continued after interviews with different NGOs. Later stages of observations were easier than the former in terms of finding out the locations and street children. In this regard I was observing the general situation of street children, but it was different than any planned academic observation. The observation process was to gain insight into the situation of street children rather than a defined sets of objectives.

The ethical complexity associated with observation was the main problem in the field. The difficulty of maintaining a distance between a researcher and a common people was one of the serious challenges in the field. Using a camera to capture the activities of street children was also a very challenging issue. Because of the ethical limitation, I was just observing their situation but not conversing with them. Besides this, creating a demarcation between the beginning and end of observation process in a given time was another challenge for me as a researcher.

2.2.2 Interview

The first and most important research tool used in the research is the interview. Interviewing is a widely used tool in both qualitative and quantitative research. In contrast to quantitative study, interviews in qualitative study are conducted with a small number of informants with less formal patterns of questions that also provides opportunity to the respondents to go further on the specific issue (Silverman: 2005). The interview used in the research was with semi-structured questions with some open questions based on the response from the interviewee. “The semi structured life-world interview seeks to obtain descriptions of life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomenon, it will have a sequence of themes to be covered, as well as some suggested questions.” (Kvale 2008, P: 51).

Selection of informants is an important aspect of interviews in research. The choice of informants and their number should be based on the information required for the study or research questions. Based on the nature of topic and research questions different informants from different institutions are selected for the study. This included informants from NGOs, INGOs and the government of Nepal who has been involved in the past. The total numbers of informants selected from NGOs are five including the National Alliance of Organizations for street children⁹. Three interviews were from the governmental organizations: KTM metro municipality office¹⁰, Child Welfare Board¹¹ and National Human Rights Commission. Two

⁹ An umbrella organization having 12 different member organizations working for the issue of street children and children rights

¹⁰ Kathmandu metro municipality is the central administrative office of KTM District

¹¹ Child welfare board is a governmental organization working for the overall issues of children rights under ministry of women, children and social welfare Nepal.

informants were from INGOs: CPCS international and UNICEF Nepal. The last interview was carried out with a former street child who is currently working in a restaurant in Kathmandu district and was in the street before.

Eleven interviews were conducted for the study out of which five informants were contacted prior to the fieldwork. The remaining six informants were selected during fieldwork. The first interview was at the Kathmandu metro municipality office with an officer in the social welfare section of Municipality. The interview was about the role of the municipality and about the current and past activities carried out by the Municipality itself and in connections with other organizations. The interview lasted over 20 minutes, and I was not allowed to make a record of it. So, short notes during interview were taken which were expanded after the interview.

Another interview conducted in a governmental organization was in the Central Child-Welfare Board Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, Harihar Bhawan Kathmandu. This interview was the 7th interview of the fieldwork. The interview was conducted in a less formal setting and ended after collecting some useful written materials, which describe the policies and current activities carried out by government of Nepal. The last interview from governmental organizations was carried out in the central office of the National Human Rights Commissions with a human right training officer working on children section of Commission Harihar Bhawan Pulchok Nepal. The interview was focused more on the issue of missing children, child trafficking and children rights violations. The interview lasted over 15 minutes along with the collection of national reports of NHRC about state of children and women. The interview was number 9 in series.

These three different interviews conducted in governmental organizations were focused more on the policies and institutional voices rather than the individual experiences.

Interviews conducted in different NGOs were started from the Child Workers in Nepal¹². The interview conducted in CWIN was with the programme coordinator of CWIN Nepal. The interview was the second interview of the fieldwork. The informant had been contacted prior to the fieldwork. The informant at CWIN told that CWIN had started working with the issue of street children and conducted different activities in past in addition to currently working on different issues of children rights. As planned prior to fieldwork, the interview was more focused on the role of NGOs and about the history of street children. Besides this, the interview was also helpful to obtain information about different institutions that are currently working on the issue of street children. In this way, the selection of informants was also facilitated by the interview. During fieldwork I visited the CWIN library to obtain information about previous research carried out on street children.

After that, I visited CONCERN Nepal¹³, a member organization of NAOSC, and spoke with a founding member of NAOSC Nepal. The interview was helpful to obtain information about the activities of NAOSC and previous studies carried out by different scholars (some of them are mentioned in literature review) and other organizations. The interview was recorded was a total of 55 minutes. The informant stated the long experiences of working with street children and academic works related to street children provided significant information about the background of street children and relationship of different organizations regarding this matter.

Two other interviews, the 4th and 5th interview in the fieldwork, were conducted in the Child Protection Centre and Services Nepal¹⁴ Deilhi bazaar. The reason to chose CPCS was to know about the situation of street children and the activities of CPCS regarding prevention, support and rehabilitation of street children. Their experience in the field of street children and daily activities with street children help me to get insight into the detail of street life. The first interview in CPCS focused on the difficulties of street life and the experiences of children.

¹² based on its website: CWIN Nepal is a leading NGO established in 1987 dealing with child advocacy and many different issues of children rights and has been supporting in conducting different researches and study related to children by individuals and organization in Nepal, this can be found:

http://www.cwin.org.np/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=19&Itemid=39

¹³ Based on its official website Concern for Children and Environment Nepal is a NGO established in 1993 with a purpose of being an advocator for underprivileged children and their social and natural living environment in Nepal which can be found in link:

<http://concern.org.np/Contents/introduction.html>

¹⁴ Based on its official website Child Protection Centre and Services Nepal is a non-governmental organization established in 2002 focusing on the need of street children in street which can be found in:

<http://www.cpcs-int.org>

Another interview in CPCS focused the difficulties created by legal provisions, public and other factors to street children in Nepal. In my several visits in CPCS I found a variety of members involved in different activities with street children. Since I was not allowed to conduct any activities with children in their drop-in center, I had to rely on my informants to explain what I observed about street children.

The last interview from NGOs was carried out at office of National Alliance of Organizations for Street Children-Nepal (interview number 8), which was more about the statistics of street children and its member organizations. The informant has the official responsibility of NAOSC rather than being a board member of it. The informant told me about the NAOSC database and its process of collecting information regarding street children.

As stated above out of two interviews with INGOs, the first was in Purano Baneswhor Kathmandu (office of CPCS international Nepal). The interview was 6th in the series of interviews during fieldwork. The informant has a background as a social worker in CPCS international. The role of INGOs and challenges associated working with street children and the role and attitudes of public are discussed in the interview. The interview was around forty minutes. I took brief notes while talking to the informant.

The second interview on INGOs was at office of UNICEF Nepal (Pulchowk Kathmandu) and was the 10th (second to last) interview of the fieldwork. The informant had been contacted prior to the fieldwork via e-mail, which was helpful to establish rapport. The interview was about the role and current activities of UNICEF itself and its collaboration with other organizations regarding street children and children rights issue. The interview was recorded and lasted over 38 minutes.

The series of interviews ended after an interview with a former street child (anonymous), who was in streets of Kathmandu before and currently working in a restaurant in Kathmandu. The informant during several informal meetings agreed to discuss his past experiences of street life. According to him, he spent nearly 9 months in the streets of Kathmandu. The most challenging aspect of the interview was assuring him about the anonymity of information provided by him. I discussed street life with him and the reasons behind choosing street life.

As a former street child he also shared difficulties associated to integrating to society that I will include in the discussion portion of the thesis.

I also visited some indigenous organizations like the National Foundation for the Development of Indigenous Nationalities and collected some material about the different indigenous nationalities of Nepal and their linguistic and geographical distribution. Besides this several informal conversations about the topic were conducted with different persons in NGOs.

The interviews with different informants in different setting had their own unique circumstances. For example the challenges associated with the process of establishing a relationship with interviewees, where he/she can express his ideas frankly. The challenges in interview environment, the affects of other external factors and the challenges discussing past experiences made the interview process more difficult and complex. Viewing interviews as a complex phenomena in obtaining information Alvesson (2011) states some informants are actually capable of telling but unwilling to tell and some informants are willing to tell but not actually capable of telling (P: 30). The field experience of interviewing also contains similar problems. To be specific, the problem I faced was finding the information about street children rather than about different activities carried out by those NGOs. The reason behind this may be the willingness of NGOs to let other people know what they have been doing for street children and how rather than why and why not. The interests of the NGOs and their institutional limitations made it difficult to obtain information that was not possible to collect by the researcher in a street.

While choosing different informants, I have selected institutions with different interests and programs. For example among NGOs, some have current programs for street children and some of them had in past. I tried to find out the attitude of NGOS towards governmental organizations and vice versa, which help me to analyze the differences and draw a conclusion. To be more specific information gathered from various sources are discussed along with the use of various other methods e.g. documents analysis, observation and interview and even different interviews within the interview that is what Silverman (2005) calls “methodological triangulation”. Regarding methodological triangulation Silverman (ibid) states “by having a cumulative view of data drawn from different contexts, we may as in trigonometry, be able to

triangulate the ‘true’ state of affairs by examining where the different data intersect.” (P: 121).

Interviews recorded during fieldwork are translated into writing and the interview conducted in Nepali language is transcribed in to English language. The interview notes prepared during interviews were already expanded after each interviews in fieldwork. The expanded notes are arranged based on the institutions and their accuracy is evaluated using other sources collected during fieldwork and also other academic books. The informants while analyzing the interviews are introduced in terms of the number as stated below 1-11 of interviews in fieldwork. For example the interview number one is in KTM metro municipality and 11 is a former street child.

2.2.3 Documents Analysis

A document in general is an oral or written record of different activities carried out or conducted by an individual, group or organization for various purposes. Some of them are for the public and some to ‘publicize themselves, compete with other in the same market place or justify themselves to clients, shareholders, boards of governors or employees’ (Atkinson and Coffey 2004, P: 57). Document analysis is a method used by this study, where different documents related to street children and children’s right have been used and analyzed. The publications of NGOs, the government of Nepal and different international research are used as documents here. For example: “The State of Children of Nepal 2011” by CCWB, “The Street Children of Kathmandu” by CPCS, “The State of Children of Nepal” by NHRC, “Annual Status Report of Children-Women in Social Service and Human Rights” by CWISH Nepal are reports analyzed for this study.

Finding an appropriate document related to the project is one of the challenges for the study which was one of the problems of using document analysis as a method. The documents chosen for the study are not only the publication of institutions visited during fieldwork but also from the various organizations and individual. In many cases the texts were used as a replacement for an interview. I received some publications as the authentic information from an institution where I was not able to gain the personal experiences through interview. The

various publications from different children right organizations and the hidden interest and a voice behind their publications was a significant issue for my project.

2.3 Ethical Issues

My project was concerned with children, so it was ethically complex. The most ethically challenging aspect was obtaining real information about the street children from individuals who have experience of working with street children. I was not allowed to conduct any interviews with children in the street, which gave me extra pressure to gain the accurate information from my informants. The choice of non-participant observation as one of the research methods was also the reason of the ethical circumstances. The ethical difficulty while conducting non-participant observation in different streets of Kathmandu district was mainly on capturing the activities of children in Camera. Taking photographs of street children for my own research project was challenging.

Silverman (2005) also has discussed ethical issues as important factors to be considered. For that he suggests a researcher should be clear about his purpose and which group (individual) is more focused. Kent (1996) in Silverman (2005) has also provided a way to establish informed consent in different situation. As Kent has pointed out in the case of small children the consent should be obtained from their proxy but in case of my project, street children, I found this criterion was not applicable. In case of interviews with people from NGOs, INGO, and the government, I tried to develop a rapport at first between the interviewee and myself as a researcher clearly stating my research objectives and my educational identity.

In some cases, the NGO persons were not so open to share their experiences and in some cases peoples were found rather pessimistic about their own journey to rehabilitate street children out of street. During the fieldwork, I realized that the study about street children requires more time in order to build the confidence of informants in in organizations. With the help of organizations a researcher could then conduct interviews with street children and make group discussion or participant observation. These things of course require time, which is the limitation of the project.

2.4 Approaches and Concepts

A theory in a research project is the framework for the project on the basis of which we describe or explain our phenomena (Silverman 2005). Similarly “concepts are ideas deriving from models, which offer ways of looking at the world, which are essential in defining a research problem” (Silverman *ibid* P: 98). For this study different concepts are used as a guiding principles, which are described below.

2.4.1 Internal Migration

The term migration generally refers to the movement of a thing or person from one place to another either temporary or permanently. There may be several reasons for migration. “Many poor people migrate as a risk reduction or livelihood promotion strategy due to limited or inadequate opportunities at home... migrants typically become categorized with in a forced-volunteer spectrum...”(Wheeler & Feldman 2011, P: 6). This thesis will explore whether street children’s journey from a society to another (in street) is a strategy of risk reduction and livelihood promotion in a volunteer perspective or through forceful spectrum as argued by Wheeler and Feldman (*ibid*).

Migration is one of the challenging issues in Nepal. Nepal has been going through both internal and external (immigration) migration processes rapidly. An open boarder with India and the cultural similarity between each country has a significant impact on migration. The rapid change in migration can be seen after 1990 in Nepal, especially since the beginning of democracy. The trend of migration had increased by 63.4 percent during 1980 to 1990 out of which about 90 percent migrated to India (Nepal Population Report 2011). Internal migration from hill and mountain area to Terai area has been increasing dramatically for last four decades. ‘In 2001, the number of migrants within the country was 1,727, 350 which was 7.46 percent of the total population, which was an increase by 40.6 percent compared to 1991 census’ (Nepal Population Report 2011).

The increasing trend of internal migration in Nepal has directly affected indigenous ways of living and their kinship system. It also has been creating separation between the members of

their cultural network and creating forceful cultural assimilation. The internal migration and its impact on indigenous way of living and their children are essential issues to be discussed. How internal migration to the city area has been related to child labor, their sexual abuse, child trafficking and many other issues need to be discussed in detail. But, while relating the issue of internal migration in my own project, viewing children's journey from their home to street as a migration process, I am trying to find out the causes and consequences of the process to the life of street children.

2.4.2 Marginalization

Marginalization in general refers to the side of a thing that does not have any specific place or importance, which denotes the meaning of exclusion. People who are in a marginal position cannot affect the decision of any issue or event if the process is based on the majority vs. minority. Indigenous peoples are historically marginalized and dispossessed groups who are attempting to identify and disentangle the process of dispossession and domination (Kenric and Lewis 2004, P: 9). The indigenous activists, scholars and other social scientists agreed upon the fact that this is why indigenous people need more attention and should enjoy the right of their self-determination. The long colonized history and internal colonization in many contexts made many indigenous societies socially excluded and economically marginalized. In spite of having the huge source of traditional knowledge and linguistic landscape they are still not able to enjoy their cultural right and right to the self-determination. In such context, whether the street children represent the indigenous marginalization in street too is the issue, I will use as a basis for the study.

2.4.3 Cultural assimilation

Cultural assimilation is the widely used term in indigenous world. Indigenous groups in different parts of the world have gone through the process of forceful assimilation. Different attempts to apply European social policy on groups of indigenous peoples were unsuccessful which shows only indigenous communities have unique professionalism to train their children as they like (Armitage 1994). In such contexts, replacement of a child from a family and many children from a community affects the process of cultural continuity and transmission of cultural activities and knowledge. In this sense, the project is guided to elaborate the

impact of changing livelihood for a street child since from a society to street (another society) is a new journey for him/her.

If we focus on the colonial history over indigenous children and family in past, the colonizers in different indigenous communities e.g. in Aboriginal Australia, Native American and Maori New Zealand used forceful assimilation of indigenous children as their main weapon to destroy the indigenous culture. It was done intentionally to detach them from their culture and language, which was often violent, and in many cases through forceful schooling (See Armitage 1994, Sissons 2005, Renhold 1999,).

Different indigenous children at current are still 'dispossessed'¹⁵ from their community. Whether it should be viewed as a new form of colonization i.e. 'internal colonization'¹⁶ over indigenous communities or as a result of various local factors e.g. poverty, lack of education etc. Finding out the possible reasons behind the current situation of street children from indigenous and other minorities groups cannot be possible from a single perspectives rather it should be viewed from different layers e.g. socio-economic, pull and push factors at the local level and the problem of indigenous and minorities societies in broad aspects.

In this way the project is based on these different sets of concepts trying to find out the current problems and causing factors in the local context for street children. The project does not intended to find out the possible reason of internal migration, cultural assimilation and further marginalization of indigenous and minorities children, but rather tries to focus on the current situation through the eyes of different institutions involved with street children including the government of Nepal.

¹⁵ Sissons (2005) First peoples indigenous cultures and their future

¹⁶ James Tully (2000) The Struggles of Indigenous Peoples for and of Freedom

CHAPTER III: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 Introduction

Indigenous people and their struggle for rights have been discussed in many parts of the world. So, the introduction of indigenous peoples of Nepal comes through a framework of global discussion of indigenous peoples and their right since they have been struggling against similar types of problem and discrimination. Besides this, I also do a comparative overview to the Dalit people of Nepal who are believed to be untouchable groups based on the traditional classification. The main reason to introduce them is the socio-economic status of Dalit people in different part of the country is very critical in comparison to majority and indigenous peoples.

3.2 General Background

It is a well-established fact that indigenous peoples all over the world are still behind in terms of economic, social as well as political status in compared to the rest (non-indigenous and majority) (Anaya 2009). Along with the development in mass media and different international organizations, the situation has been changing for a long time and the Indigenous and minorities' rights discourse has been gaining a significant importance. Because of this indigenous people are now able to raise their voice and gain international audiences and win supporters to claim their rights for which they are struggling. At current, the indigenous peoples and their rights are the main discussion points in international community and legal system (Anaya *ibid*).

Though indigenous rights are the main discussion points and has received greater attention in international community, the situation of indigenous people in many part of the world is still very critical. This is even more critical in the case of developing countries. Scholars and ingenuous activists are pointing out that the situation of indigenous people in Africa and

many parts of Asia is still critical. Their linguistic and land rights have been threatened by different forms of internal colonialism and neo-colonialism (Rauna 2000 and Romine 2007).

Nepal is a sovereign landlocked country with linguistic, cultural, environmental and geographical diversity, having a population of 26,620,809 (Population Census Preliminary Report of 2011). Being a developing country, having political instability and low economic growth, the situation of indigenous people in Nepal is critical. Besides these, ten years of armed conflict has had a devastating effect on the lifestyle of different indigenous communities and their children. The continuous effort from indigenous peoples with the help of different national as well as international organizations at current has created a positive atmosphere in different corners of the country.

Based on the NFDIN (National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities), fifty-nine different indigenous nationalities have been identified from the government of Nepal. The identification is based on the characteristics of having a distinct language, culture, history (written or oral), traditional homeland and collective identity. The indigenous groups of Nepal live almost all over the country, but the number of inhabitants in hill and mountain areas is higher than (two third according to NEFIN) the city and Terai area. They are: Himalayan region (18), Hilly region (19), Terai region (11), and Inner Terai region (8). The indigenous population makes up 37.2 percent of the total population (NEFIN official web site) ¹⁷

3.3 Study Area: Kathmandu, the Capital City

Kathmandu is the capital city of Nepal, which not only has the highest density of population but also has the highest decadal population growth (60.9) in compared to the other cities of the country (Preliminary Census Report 2011, P: 17). Being a centralized country in the past, the entire administrative centers are in the capital city. Being a capital city and having different facilities like a good hospital, universities, job opportunity, international airport etc., the flow of people everyday in to Kathmandu is high. Besides these, the center for different

¹⁷ NEFIN: An leading organizations of Indigenous nationalities of Nepal (formed in 1991).

administrative task has also attracted people towards Kathmandu. Because of rapid urbanization and construction activities it has also been the most polluted city of the country.¹⁸ Kathmandu metro municipality consists of 35 wards with varied populations.



Source: http://myweb.unomaha.edu/~jchadwick/geog3000/maps_files/image018.gif.

As the map reveals, Kathmandu valley also covers some area of surrounding municipalities e.g. Lalitpur Bhaktapur, and Kirtipur municipalities. Kathmandu valley also consists of seven different areas that are listed as cultural heritages sites by UNESCO. They are: the Durbar Squares of Hanuman Dhoka (Kathmandu), Patan and Bhaktapur, the Buddhist stupas of Swayambhu and Baudhanath and the Hindu temples of Pashupati and Changu Narayan.¹⁹

¹⁸ Ekantipur news dated 6th September 2012

<http://www.ekantipur.com/2012/09/06/capital/kathmandu-the-masked-city/359841.html>

¹⁹ Different places of Kathmandu Listed in UNESCO's World Heritage

<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/121>

The study area for this project is not only limited to Kathmandu district, rather, it includes some areas of Lalitpur districts. Street children are found in almost every area of the valley but there are certain areas where they can be seen in a group and they spend their time more. The main areas of street children are: Thamel, Pasupati, Balaju, New Road, Putali Sadak, Darbar Marga, Koteshwor, Lagankhel.

3.4 Indigenous Children Rights

Indigenous peoples at current have been a great focus of various national and international organizations, NGOs and INGOs, United Nations and other associated organizations. From the very beginning of the indigenous right movement, the focus was on the colonial history and its devastating effects on indigenous people and then shifted to other human rights and property rights issues. Though, issues of indigenous children and their forceful assimilation in colonized countries (See Armitage 1994, Sissons 2005, Renhold 1999,) came in to a wider discussion, the issue of indigenous children as an independent issue has not been prioritized, as it should be. Regarding this the Editorial of Innocenti Digest 11 states:

“...indigenous children have not always received the distinct consideration they deserve. In some cases, their particular situation has been obscured by other issues of broader concern to indigenous peoples, including land rights and political representation. Such concerns are, of course, fundamental to indigenous communities, but it is nonetheless crucial that they are considered together with targeted action to safeguard the distinct identity of indigenous children and to promote the realization of their human rights.” (paragraph 1st)

The future of any community depends on the children of that community. How far the traditional norms and cultural practices are going to transmit and preserve depends on the process of transmission between generations in the community, and it requires the proper development of both. Realizing the importance of children’s rights, there have been lots of international organizations talking about the indigenous children’s rights. Among them the Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 is the first to deal with the rights of indigenous

children. The convention in its different articles has talked about children's rights in different aspects of their life and urge that the state shall manage all the internal mechanism appropriate for the protection of children's rights and shall not deny the children's rights based on their origin, religion and linguistic group. Similarly, ILO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO, OHCHR, World Bank etc. are playing significant roles for children's rights in general as well as indigenous children's rights. In case of Nepal along with these International Organizations National Governmental Organizations has shown their growing interest for children's rights. However, the city-centered organizations in many contexts are unable to cover the different rural areas of country, where many children are out of school or the education system.

3.5 Dalit and Other Minority Children

Viewing the controversial term *Dalit* Bhattachan (2008) states “Dalit peoples are those who belong to the Hindu castes and who have been placed at the bottom of the social hierarchy as Sudra and treated Untouchables by ‘upper castes’ ” (P:17). He further states there are some Dalit groups who are listed as dalit from dalit movement but later are claimed as *Newar* indigenous Nationality. The untouchability still exists in Nepalese rural societies in Madhes and also in hill areas. Dalit peoples are found all over the country e.g. i) Dalits in the hill areas, ii) Dalits in the Newari community; and iii) Dalits in the terai areas²⁰. The traditional hierarchy system also exists between Dalit and indigenous peoples of Nepal. It can be observed within a community and among different communities. Lawoti and Hangen (2013) view this as a result of assimilation and the imposition of Hill Hindu culture from the state.

UNICEF (2007) states Dalit are the poorest groups of Nepal in terms of poverty line and percapita assumption because of which they are behind in education and experience more child labor than other communities (P:4-5). Due to the poor socio-economic status of Dalit peoples many children from Dalit communities are out of the Nepalese education system. This is more critical in the case of girls than that of boys.²¹ It has also resulted in early

²⁰ Dalit in India and Nepal: policy option for improving social inclusion in education: UNICEF (2007) http://www.unicef.org/spanish/videoaudio/PDFs/Dalits_in_India_and_Nepal_Policy_Options_for_Improving_Social_Inclusion.pdf

²¹ Save the children resource centre on child protection and child right governance:

marriage in these communities and child labor to support their parents. Literacy rate of Terai Dalit is lower 21.1% than that of Hill Dalit 41.9%. (Bhattachan, Sunar & Bhattachan 2009, p: 30). Bhattachan et al. (2009) states the discrimination against Dalit children by school teachers and school management, the negligence of their historical and traditional identity in curriculum and teaching materials are the significant factors promoting high drop outs among Dalit children in Nepal. They further state the situation of Dalit women is more critical and have been experiencing different physical and emotional violence. The foreign labor migrant is second highest 39% in Hill Dalit with the highest being Muslims at 44%.²² Based on Bhattachan (2008) there are 15 different dalit castes out of which 5 are Hill Dalit and the rest are Madeshi Dalit. In contrast to this the National Dalit Commission has identified 22 Dalit castes including seventeen madeshi Dalit castes (Bhattachan 2008).

Besides Dalit other terms frequently used to denote minorities in Nepal are *Madeshi* and *muslim*. Madeshi is a term usually referring to the people living in the Terai regions with common languages and cultural practices with various communities across the border in Northern India Lawoti and Hangen (ibid). Because of the similarities in languages and in cultural practices, Madeshi peoples are ‘wrongly stereotyped as Indians by the Hill people’ (Bhattachan 2008, P:62). Because of the internal migration from hill to Terai region the population of Terai is also mixed and heterogeneous. Lawoti and Hangen (2013) about the movement of the Madeshi state “Madeshi have primarily formed a nationalist movement seeking autonomy to self-govern in Madesh/Terai, in addition to representation in state organs, access to material resources, and equal treatment as nepali citizens” (P:11).

Based on the Nepal Population Report 2011, the Muslim consists of the 4.2% of the total population in Nepal compared to 3.53% in 1991. Muslims are the minority group of Nepal in terms of their religious practices and affiliation (Lawoti and Hangen, ibid). Lawoti and Hangen (ibid) state three major groups of Muslims in Nepal: Kasmiri, Charaute and Terai. Adding one more group, Tibetan, on the classification Bhattachan (2008, P: 18) states the four different groups of Muslims in Nepal. “The Muslims seek equal recognition and treatment without restrictions, and proportionate representation in state organs” (Lawoti and Hangen 2013,P: 12).

<http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/content/country/nepal/childrens-situation>

²² Trafficking in person especially on women and children in Nepal, National report by NHRC 2009-2010

3.6 Legal Background Information and Current Challenges

Indigenous people, after a long history of struggle, have achieved significant support from the international community. Their rights and the role of the nation state have been clearly stated in different international documents and effective implementation of these rights have been forcefully promoted. For example The UN declaration on the right of indigenous people has been regarded as a vital achievement for the indigenous right discourse. To be more specific, Declaration 2007 art: 14.3 states: “States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.”

Beside this, the ILO convention 169, which has been ratified by Nepal, has also addressed many issues related to indigenous rights and against discrimination. Following the aspiration of international treaties, the different national legal documents have also assured the rights of the children. For example the interim constitution of Nepal 2063 (2007) has taken children rights as a fundamental right and has guaranteed that every children of the nation has the right to education, social security, nutrition and health; it has assured that every child has a right to their name and identity. More specifically, the constitution has spoken about street children stating that “street children at risk shall have the right to receive special privileges from the State to ensure their secure future” (Article: 22). However, different national and international organizations working for children’s rights have depicted improvement very pessimistically. The situation of child labor, child trafficking, children affected by HIV, child kidnapping, child sexual abuses are serious problems, which have been challenging the national and international legal provision.

The Child Welfare Board of Nepal states that based on district level statistics more than 21,000 children in Nepal are family-less²³. Similarly quoting the children searching center it further states during 2011-2012 (2068-2069 based on Nepali calendar) the number of reported missing children was 2431 out of which 1087 are still missing. In such context, the project is

²³ The state of children 2011

trying to figure out the conflict between the national legal provisions and real situation of children in street.

The acceptance, ratification and commitment of different international convention and treaties seem taken granted in Nepalese context. The reason behind this may be the perspective of the legally binding nature of these treaties. Indigenous achievements addresses by international organizations and international law have change the indigenous situation in international legal system significantly but the legal provisions still are state centered and the state sovereignty has continued to trump international law (Anaya 1996 & 2009). The formation of customary law, and its extension through different indigenous movement²⁴ need to be accepted by Nepal and the constant struggle from the side of indigenous peoples and scholars is essential for this.

Different human rights activists and civil societies have criticized the Government of Nepal in its indifferences of implementing national laws and regulation. The Government has used the transitional period of the country as the main defense of this criticism. The political deadlock and the demise of the constitutional assembly without a new constitution have made the situation more politically critical. Different political parties are trying to develop consensus for new constitutional assembly in 2013 to make a new constitution of Nepal.

²⁴ Anaya James S. (1996) Indigenous Peoples in International Law.

CHAPTER: IV STREET CHILDREN OF KATHMANDU

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will map the situation of street children in Kathmandu on the basis of field observations and interviews. First, I will try to provide detailed information of street children based on interviews and different studies conducted by NGOs, governmental organizations and different media. Then, I will discuss the situation in which street children have been adapting and socializing themselves. This chapter also deals with the attitude of the public towards street children in Kathmandu and the push and pull factors for a child to be in the street. This chapter also includes the push and pull factors associated for street life.

4.2 Facts about Street Children in Nepal

My first effort as guided by research questions in fieldwork was to gain more information about street children through different people and organizations who are involved with this issue. Accordingly research tools were intended to find out detailed information about their background as well as the current situation in the street. I found out different statistic of street children on the basis of different interviews, documents and publications about different aspects of street children e.g. age, gender, ethnic group and different geographical distribution, which would help me, analyze different factors which are responsible for children being in the street. I have tried to synthesize the information obtained from fieldwork here; on the basis of which indigenous and other minority children's rights and the role of NGOs and other organizations will be discussed in next chapter.

The history of street children in Nepal is short. The issue came to the forefront in discussion after the establishment of democracy. The issue of street children here seems to have a relationship with the trend of internal migration in Nepal. Since the magnitude of internal migration has picked up after the 1990s in Nepal. The trend of rural to urban migration is higher than 96% for the migrants from urban areas²⁵. Based on the NHRC poverty and lack of opportunities in rural areas are the key push factors for increasing migration in urban areas. It

²⁵ Trafficking in person especially on women and children in Nepal, National report by NHRC 2009-2010

further states that Kathmandu due to the incentives in the entertainment industry has fostered the low paid workers especially of women in Kathmandu. Most of the NGOs working for children's rights issues were also established after the establishment of democracy in Nepal. Only two NGOs i.e. Diyalo Pariwar and CWIN were established before the establishment of democracy based on the NAOSC Directory.

Based on interviews the issue of street children in non-governmental organization was first raised by CWIN in Nepal and later by many organizations. On a governmental level, the main effort was seen after ratification of the ILO convention 182 (the elimination of the worst forms of child labor). Along with the ratification Nepal listed rag picking (street children work) as the worst form of child labor and made a master plan in 2004 taking street children as one of the major part but it was not able to succeed after its mid-term review (IREWOC 2010). During this year, there have been several attempts from government and non-governmental institutions to address the situation of street children and their rehabilitation process, which will be discussed later in this project.

4.2.1 Number of Street Children

UNICEF has estimated that tens of millions of children live or work on the streets of the world's towns and cities and the number is rising with global population growth, migration and increasing urbanization²⁶. This statement does not indicate the exact number of street children in world. But it can be generalized that the issue of street children is not confined in a particular part of the globe, and the number of children in street has been growing.

One of the very important things to be noted regarding the number of street children is the definition of street children. Whether those children who are partly in the street for supporting their family and in contact and living with their family are to be counted or not. The definition by UNICEF, as stated above in Lalor as children on the street and children of the street, also creates problem on its definition. UNICEF in its study of street children in Zimbabwe states 'While the distinction between children "on the street" and "of the street" has been useful, some overlaps and grey areas still remain. Some children "of the street" may have been

²⁶ The state of the world's children 2012 Children in an urban world excluded
http://www.unicef.org/iran/SOWC_2012-Main_Report_EN_13Mar2012.pdf

abandoned and rejected by their families while others may have left their families due to prevailing circumstances'²⁷. So, the issue of definition is complex and debatable since some writers don't prefer to use the term street children saying that it shadows the issue of other children who have been equally suffered but not in the street (Brick 2004). But for the purpose of this study, street children are those who are out of their home and separated from parents using the street as their way of survival, or economic resource.

There are varied statistics regarding the number of street children in Kathmandu. It also differs from governmental record and among non-governmental institutions. Based on CWIN there were 1500 homeless street children in Kathmandu in 1995 (Baker *ibid*: 174). The number seems to have risen dramatically during this fifteen years if we follow the recent report from NGOs. For example there are approximately five thousand street children in Nepal and approximately 569 children home orphanages in Nepal where approximately 12,000 children are living²⁸. The National Human Right Commission in its yearly report 2011 quoting CWIN 2006 states “every year at least 500 children come to the street life in capital city” (P: 6).

While talking to the different NGOs in Kathmandu, I got the response that the issue of numbering is one of the challenging issues regarding street children. Because of the moving nature of street children, the process is very difficult. Each institution in Kathmandu has their own statistics about street children but they agree with the fact that a new systematic survey is essential to find out the exact number and origin of street children. A report by CPCS (2012) has stated that in Kathmandu alone, the number of children and youth aged between 6 and 18 living on the street without any family support amounts to between 338 and 619. It further estimates the number outside the capital city and other main cities of the country number between 350 and 540.

The number of street children in Nepal more specifically in Kathmandu in comparison to other South Asian countries and big cities seems small but it also depends on the definition of

²⁷ UNICEF: A study on street children in zimbabwe
http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/ZIM_01-805.pdf

²⁸ A study of children home in Nepal , a joint report produced by CPCS ans CCWB and ACR International)(2009: P: 9 & 82).

the street children. The number of street children in Bangladesh in 2005 was estimated at 679,728 out of them around two hundred fifty thousands i.e. 249,200 were in the capital city Dhaka²⁹. Similarly, Philips (1992) as cited in Verma states “there are an estimated eleven million street children in India, with their numbers ranging from fifty to one hundred thousand in the metropolitan cities (Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay, Madras) and fifteen to twenty-five thousand in smaller cities (Indore, Hyderabad, Kanpur, Pune)” (Verma 1999 P: 7). Verma (ibid) has argued to view street children in a broad perspective of working children.

National Alliance of Organizations for Street Children has made a significant attempt to find out the exact number of street children in Nepal, which is one of its program objectives. With the help of different member organizations, details of street children are recorded and are kept in a program, which also has described their geographical and ethnic origin. The main advantage of this program according to them is there is less chance of repeating the same person twice. If different organizations enter details about the same person again, the software refuses it. But, the issue of getting exact information from street children always remains questionable. So, if children only change their name when they are in contact with another institution while keeping other information the same, it is not counted again, improving the reliability of data an informant in NAOSC told me. The process of NAOSC was still not finalized during my fieldwork and I was unable to access the data during my field visits since the database was from the collectives’ efforts of its member organizations.

4.2.2 Age and Gender

Street children in Nepal are of different age groups. The age profile of street children appears to be a function of the nature of the demands of street life (Lalor ibid P: 762). The CPCS in its report in 2007 has stated the age groups of children between 8-18 are more in street in Kathmandu. In its survey of 430 street children only 1% were girls and 67% of them were age between 12 -16. In its recent 2012 report, a study of 320 street children, the average age of the children is 13.9 and the number of girls are 20 i.e. around 7% of the population. (CPCS 2012: P: 21). These two different reports show the increase in the number of girl street children in Kathmandu.

²⁹ Protection of Children Living on the Streets.docx | UNICEF Bangladesh
http://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/Protection_of_Children_Living_on_the_Streets.pdf

While conducting my field observation, I saw children who appear to be younger than 10. While visiting some NGOs, I saw the children of varied age but the people working with them viewed that the average age of children in the center is 12. The problem of finding information about age is similar since the children normally don't know their date of birth and even if they know they do not like to share with other persons.

The number of girls in the street is very low in comparison to the boys in Kathmandu. But, there are street girls in Nepal who have been evicted by child labor and sexual exploitation. Tuladhar (2009) quoting CWIN report 2006 states, among 5000 street children in Nepal around 5 per cent are girls, and they are most vulnerable to sexual exploitation, drug use and HIV³⁰. While discussing with the NGOs in Kathmandu about the less number of girls in street, I got varied answers.

The situation of girls is critical in many respects in Nepal. They are the victim of child trafficking, child marriage, child labor etc. Many girls are involved in domestic work in Kathmandu. They work in kitchen and care for small children in a family and receive small amount of money and sometime receive nothing. The most critical aspect of this is there are children below the age of fourteen who are also involved in domestic child labor in Kathmandu. This can be clearly observed in the CWISH report (2009) which states that there are 1,429 domestic workers younger than 18 out of a total population of 2324 domestic workers in Kathmandu (KTM). Out of them, 696 are below the age of 14 (which is an increasing trends based on its own study 2007) while the percent of girl child workers is 62% in comparison to that of boys 38 % (P: 3).

The most important aspect of study of CWISH³¹ is that it has mentioned the family background of domestic worker in Kathmandu. According to the same source 55.1% of

³⁰ Sumnima Tuladhar the Girl Child In Nepal
http://www.cwin.org.np/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=65%3Athe-girl-child-in-nepal&lang=en

³¹ CWISH: CWISH (Children – Women in Social Service and Human Rights) NGO established in 1993, advocates against worst form of child labor in domestic service in Nepal.
http://www.cwish.org.np/index.php?option=com_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=1

domestic workers in Kathmandu are from indigenous family background out of which 64.32% are below the age of 18. It further states that most of the workers are from the surrounding districts of Kathmandu. The study of CWISH shows the situation of children from indigenous background is very critical in Kathmandu. But, the report is silent about whether particular indigenous groups have more domestic child workers.

Another significant issue is the situation of women and child trafficking in Nepal, which can be one of the reasons for having fewer street girls than boys. Every year, many women and girls are trafficked to India and other countries to work in many fields. Quoting ILO-IPEC 2001, NHCR (2010) states approximately 12,000 girls under 18 are trafficked to India annually to work as commercial sexual workers. The report further states “Roughly 5,550 women and children were trafficked or attempts were made to traffick them in the fiscal year 2009-2010 and 2,917 applications were received for the missing women and children in Nepal” (NHRC 2010, P: 11). Many girls in rural areas are trafficked in India and many other countries from Nepal in the name of getting good job and money. This situation is also believed to be more critical in Dalit and some indigenous group believed to be more critical in Nepal.

4.2.3 Geographical and ethnic origin of street children

Street children in Kathmandu are from various regions of the country. They are from Hill, Terai as well as the Himalayan region. Based on CPCS and NAOSC some of the children are also from India and Bangladesh. The street children in Nepal are not only limited to Kathmandu rather they are all over the big cities of Nepal. Based on NAOSC the number of street children coming from the surrounding district of Kathmandu is high i.e. Nuwakot, Kavreplanchok, Dhading, Makwanpur, Sindhuplanchok etc. Similarly, the transportation between Kathmandu and other districts also determines the number of street children. Because of the moving nature of the children they change their places based on their needs and other available facility that also has been illustrated by Larsen (2003) in her master thesis. She states children change the different location based on their strategies.

Among various studies of street children, none of the studies I found during fieldwork are typically focused on the ethnic origin of street children. Many informants did not know the

number of indigenous and Dalit children but agreed that children from indigenous and minorities are a high percentage of children in the street. Talking about its ongoing projects the informant³² told me that NAOSC in its statistic regarding street children has tried to classify street children from different ethnic origins but this issue has not the special priority of the project. So, many indigenous groups are included in a single heading and some of the groups with a large number of street children has been stated separately like Gurung, Tamang³³, etc. During my interview with NGOS, the common answer about the most common ethnic origin of street children was Tamang which has been supported by a report of CPCS (2012) which referencing NAOSC states “the neighboring rural area of Kathmandu valley is the major place from which children flock to Kathmandu. The highest number of street children is from the ethnic Tamang community.” (P: 38).

4.3 Social Situation of Street Children

Children live in the street for various reasons and have to deal with many situations. The street life without any supervision of family is always difficult in comparison to family and support from family members. The situation and the level of difficulty also depends on the nature of the city i.e. the weather, the infrastructure, other development and the relationship with other peoples leaving in the same city. The street children have to do everything on their own to manage their daily activities. They need to make decisions in different situation on their own. So, during my fieldwork, I tried to get the information about the social situation of street children through the eyes of NGOs, who are working for street children.

4.3.1 Use of Data

How the street children view street life and what sorts of problems they have been facing was one of the key issues the project has tried to clarify. Considering ethical limitation i.e. unable to interview street children, I was using NGOs as the main source of information about the situation of street children. Here, the information obtained from informants is also explained together with the information obtained from different documents like: publications from

³² Interview Number 8

³³ an indigenous group of Nepal living kathmandu and surrounding district of kathmandu with a population of 5.64% out of total population base don census 2001

NGOs, government, and newspaper articles from different times etc. The information obtained from former street children also has been used as a source of information to illustrate the difficulties associated with street life.

4.3.2 Public Attitude towards Street Children

As discussed above in chapter one the use of the term *Khate* itself shows the impoliteness. As the term implies general public attitude towards street children in Kathmandu is not positive. Sometimes, people are asked for money by street children and also addressed by rough language because of which they do not want to be in touch with street children. Moreover, the use of smoke, hashish, alcohol, glue and drug by street children also creates negative impression among the public (CPCS: 2007). In some places, the children are accused of stealing different things which is also a factor affecting the relationship.

Being excluded by society, children also have own attitude towards public. “Why should we respect a society which rejects us? “The paradox is indeed terrible: society rejects street children because they are unsociable, and the children are unsociable because society rejects them” (CPCS: 2012, P: 28). Because of this conflicting relationship, the street children have their own society and norms, which they have developed, based on the relationship with public. The contrast between two different social structures creates problem for both but here we focus on street children’s problems in the street.

The large mass of people moving past them and society’s way of viewing them as drug user, thief etc. creates psychological impacts on the children’s mind. While an informant in an INGO³⁴ told me that some people have really negative attitude towards street children, they also do not appreciate the support of NGOs, INGOs to street children. He further states children who are new on the street feel more psychologically scared because of the public attitude. Based on the interviewee, it shows coping with all these pressures from society and dealing with different sorts of hazard like physical, sexual, etc. in early age of life makes a lasting emotional impact on a children’s life which will affect them their entire life.

³⁴ Interview number 6

4.3.3. Social Life of Street Children

Being in the street and part of a larger society, street children have to deal with different groups and establish relationships, which have both advantages and disadvantages for them. In many cases, their relationships cause them to be a victim of sexual, physical, psychological and emotional exploitation and different health hazards i.e. communicable diseases, accidents, child labor and other different sorts of exploitation. Some groups in the eyes of informants victimize the street children while other try to help and make their life easier. The long-term chain reaction based on the NGOs informants is as follows. The children starts pick pocketing and stealing in the beginning to survive with many of them begging, collecting bottles, working in tempo, microbus, and small restaurants for some hours etc. Later on they start doing hard and difficult activities for their survival that ultimately leads many of them to die in childhood. Along with the increase in the duration of street life, the children are more adapted and habituated with the street norms, which motivates them to stay on street and not return back to the home. One of my informants³⁵ told me that ‘many street children view street life better than their family life since they don’t have any facility and any freedom at home. Besides these, the street also supports them financially.’

An informant³⁶ who has been working as legal advisor in an NGO said many children talking to their law firm view police as their main enemy, which is the main area where street children require legal support. Sometimes, the gangs of street children fight each other, which can turn in to a very serious encounter, resulting in the death of children. Street children in street many ways feel insecure around the police and security guards. Stating some issues that he has dealt with, informants said that street children view police and local security guards³⁷ as their enemy in street. This view of my informant has also been stated in UNICEF (2006) as a worldwide phenomenon stating ‘‘Harassment, threats, insults, exploitation and physical and sexual abuse may be carried out directly by the police, or by other members of the public with either active or tacit encouragement of the police. The police may also be guilty of using their power to extort sexual favors, money or free child labor from street children’’³⁸. Sometimes,

³⁵ Interview Number 4

³⁶ Interview Number 5

³⁷ a person, who is for security purpose stand by the gate of a building or inside paid by the institution which had appointed him/ her.

³⁸ [http://www.unicef.org/tdad/PART202\(2\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/tdad/PART202(2).pdf)

the police and other security forces are used to shift children from one particular place to another i.e. especially more in the tourist areas.³⁹ While talking to UNICEF Nepal, the informant⁴⁰ told me that UNICEF is working with the police and justice system and trying to train them on child protection issues. Different trainings are targeted to the ways of managing interaction with the women and children who came to contact with justice system.

The children in the street make friendship with other children in the street. That's why they are usually in a group and create a group to feel protected being a member. The positive aspect of gang is the connection between street children, which helps them to share their feelings and feel supported by their friends in the street. There are different groups of street children in Kathmandu, but the number of children in each group is not so high based on informants in NGOs. Each group of street children has one leader. The leader in the group has the main role of decision-making, which other children in the group have to accept despite problems. One informant⁴¹ told me that 'while talking to us street children report that they are forced to have sex, and to give their money to the leader of their group'. The conflict between each groups also create difficulties for them. The new street children are also asked to perform different activities, as the senior desires. This problem is severe in case of street girls who have to face many problems because of street adults. They need to choose one street child as their partner, who gives a bit of a secure life, but after sometimes when she has finished earning money, the boy leaves her and she is forced to find another. An important cause of conflict between street children is girlfriends according to the informant. Further according to the informant⁴² these fights may cause a serious situation even a death of the street children.

Along with the leader of the group, street adults and foreigners trouble street children according to my informants. The street adults according to my informant⁴³ are those adults who were previously in the street and unable to complete the process of rehabilitation. But, the informant told me that the exact number is unknown. Street adults grab the money and

³⁹Ekantipur news dated 21st November 2011

<http://www.ekantipur.com/2011/11/21/development/police-bid-to-clear-street-children-from-major-tourist-hubs/344141.html>

⁴⁰ Interview Number 10

⁴¹ Interview Number 5

⁴² Interview Number 5

⁴³ Interview Number 3

also abuse them sexually. Informants in NGOs stated that though situation at current has been improved in many tourist spots, foreign predators victimize the street children and for doing that they have used money as the main source to motivate children. Police in the past had arrested some foreigner in charge of abusing street children in Kathmandu⁴⁴. An informant⁴⁵ stated that the children are more victimized by their own friends than other groups. This view of the informant is also verified by CPCS 2007 which referring to its joint report with VOC states that out of 150 street children 27 percent had been victim of anal penetration, 29 percent of them had been made to perform oral sex and 40 percent touching anal areas and masturbation and majority of them are abused by their friends and some of them by street adults and foreigners (P: 99).

while visiting Kathmandu, it is normal to see children with big plastic bags searching in a pile of garbage, or walking around the city looking for the plastic, paper and metals, which can be recycled. By collecting and selling them they get money from the junkyard owner. One of my informants⁴⁶ said the junkyard owners motivate street children in such a way that it is difficult to get children back to school or home. In many cases even after the initiation of NGOs a child starts school, they (junkyard owners) convince the child return to street by providing different facilities like giving food, showing movie etc. They do so because the role of street children is vital for their business. The informant here did not talk about the importance of money for the life of street children. The rag picking may here be the only better option for children to fulfill their needs.

The informant stated the serious aspects of rag picking where using the street children different groups plan robbery, pick pocketing etc. in Kathmandu. They use street children to collect different materials and sell them at a cheaper price. The group also has threatened different persons from NGOs in the past, which causing a big challenge to rehabilitating children and bringing them back to the process of education. The informant focuses on the role of police and or government as very indifferent in this issue. Below is a picture captured during fieldwork where a street child is rag picking on the street.

⁴⁴ Ekantipur news dated 1st February 2011

<http://www.ekantipur.com/2011/02/01/capital/british-paedophile-arrested/328980.html>

⁴⁵ Interview Number 4

⁴⁶ The informant is anonymized here



Different groups and members create trouble for the children. Moreover, they also have been abused by the street adult to commit different social crime like stealing, transmitting drugs from one place to another etc. Besides these, street children work in different places like as a khalasi⁴⁷ in bus and tempo, as a dishwasher in a small hotel and restaurant where they have to face different problems like beating, more physical work than their age, getting less money (salary) etc.

Once a child is in the street, it has a strong impact on his future life, as found through the interaction of a former street child and with the interviews of NGOs. Based on the informants to the NGOs some of the street children who were in the street are currently helping and supporting NGOs, but do not like to reveal their past life with other people in the group.

⁴⁷ A person who is assigned to help driver or owner in vechile by cleaning, moving, as a guard and also collecting money from the passenger etc.

During my interview, I found a similar situation of keeping identity secret from my informant. While talking to me my informant⁴⁸ told that only one of his friend knows about his previous life but not the rest of his co-workers. “They will call me Khate blame me if there is something wrong if they know about my street life that is why I do not want them to know about it”. While asking more about this he gave the example that this might compute up if some one loses something like money.

He elaborated it with a story and told that he had already quit a job before because of the attitude of his co-workers, who had known about his street life. It seems a fear is always there with him that he likes to hide. This clearly shows that children, even after returning back to their homes or with parents again are forced to choose street life. People’s attitudes towards street children and its deep impact on their lives need to be cured. He told that many times in the past he attempted to go back to street again. Now he does not want to go back again. He likes to earn money and wants to have his own restaurant, which helps him to earn money. While asking his wishes for continuing his education he told that he does not want to study again.

4.4 Street Life: Choice or Compulsion?

Why do children choose the street as their destination? The fieldwork interviews especially with NGOs were focused on this issue. Analyzing the national perspective Madhav Pradhan, president of CWIN Nepal in the CPCS report 2012 states:

“Lack of awareness among parents; family disintegrate on; domestic violence; poor economic conditions; lack of proper child-centered interventions in rural areas; a weak education system; insensitive traditions that discourage children; existing exploitative social relations; unsafe migration; growing attraction towards urban cities; and peer influence are main reasons for children to come to the streets for their survival.” (P: 35)

Pradhan here seems to have focused more on the issue of push factors rather than pull factors for children in street. The discussions with different informants were centered on two different aspects: the factors that force them to leave home (their family or relatives) i.e. push

⁴⁸ Interview Number 11

factors and the factors that attract children to come to street i.e. pull factors. These concepts of pull and push factors are widely discussed by different researchers in the discourse of street children. W. James Jakob et.al (2004) discussing about the street children of Uganda states two main factors associated to choose street life i.e. push and pull factors. According to them abandonment, child labor, armed conflicts, domestic violence, crime, neglect, loss of parents, lack of education and traditional social structures etc. are the push factors and urbanization, peer influence, hope for employment, and false information about city life etc. are pull factors. Wiehler (as cited in W. James Jakob et.al 2004) states, “ Charitable donations given by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and private individuals also act as an additional pull factor to entice children to come to and stay on the streets.” (P: 4). So, these factors are also described here in Nepalese context.

4.4.1 Push factors

In Nepalese context, even as adults many people live in a joint family with their parents. Some cultural and economic factors are associated with this. The general understanding of street children by a layman is that after losing parents children come to the street i.e. a single child without parents, but this is not always the proper image. Even if they have their parents they can choose street life. In its reports CPCS (2007, P: 34 and 2012, P: 48), around 60-62 percent children had reported having both parents at home and around 10-15 percent have no parents and the remaining have single parents. Similarly, the reports also have indicated that the children are more from poor economic backgrounds and most of their parents are laborers, farmers, drivers etc. Even though some children are also from sound economic family background the NGOs workers concluded that poor economic situation are present in more than 2/3rds of children in the street.

An informant⁴⁹ stating the reasons behind street life says that even if the children have both parents, both of them are busy at their work and don't have time to spend with their children. They don't have proper food, clothes, security and education because of the economic situation of the family. In some cases their stepfather and mother misbehave with the children. The conflict between father and mother, use of alcohol, parents forcing children to earn and or to support there work etc. forces children to leave there home. In such cases,

⁴⁹ Interview number 6

children decide on their own to leave the home hoping to live better lives on their own than they have at their home.

Informants discussing the reasons for this pointed out the role of educational institutions and the attitude of family members towards education in Nepal. The children are unable to continue their schooling because of the pressure from family and schoolteachers. The teacher in many rural areas is still a knowledge provider rather than facilitator, which affects the relationship between a student and teacher. The school management, parents' role, lack of counseling etc. can be other reasons. While discussing the reason for choosing street life, my informant⁵⁰ pointed out that he has both parents at home and was a student in a class of five in a government school. He told that the conflict between mother and father because of the drinking habit of his father was creating difficulties for him and his education. He told me that he used to go to his friend's house who only had his mother and stay there in the evening many times. He said both of them decided to leave village together. In this way, children after facing lots of difficulties at home see city life as their solution to earn and live better life.

4.4.2 Pull Factors

On the one hand there are lots of difficulties at their home and on the other hand children are mis-educated by media and their friends about lives in cities. Their imagination of a city life full of happiness, joy, more freedom etc. stimulates them to choose and keep the street life. An informant⁵¹ stating his long experience of working with street children said once a child is on the street, it is very difficult for him to go back. The developed relationship between public on one hand and more friends in street on the other pull them towards street. They have an established social structure in which they have been socialized.

One very significant thing pulling children to the street is the economic benefits for children. As discussed above the junkyard business owner provides money for the street children, which motivates them to stay on the street. My informant⁵² further said the economic benefits of work build a positive attitude for children and they communicate this idea to their fellow children making the issue more critical. Other informants in NGOs support the view of my

⁵⁰ Interview number 11

⁵¹ Interview number 3

⁵² Interview number anonymised

informant. They argued that many children visit their home village and motivate other children to come to the street and come together with them. The ease of transport to the big cities from the rural villages has facilitated them to come to the street. Many children according to the NGOs have returned back to the street even after the rehabilitation program. Once they are in the street it is very difficult for them to go back as the informant said repeatedly. It clearly shows there are many difficulties to rehabilitate children from the street life.

As Wiehler (2002) states in Jacob et.al whether the activities of NGOs and INGOs itself plays a crucial pulling factor in the case of street children is another issue that needs to be discussed in the Nepalese context. Different drop-in centers and facilities provided by different NGOs may also act as stimulating factors in the Nepalese context. None of the interviews conducted with NGOs view it as a pull factor for street children during my fieldwork. An informant⁵³ stated that some NGOs just advertise themselves as providing support to the children in street but their intention does not seem to be to rehabilitate them. The informant did not share any more information about the NGOs but it can be predicted that the role of some NGOs and their hidden interests are also the factors associated with the number of street children.

Another crucial thing that I found is the contrast between push and pull factors. Though different family-related factors cause children to choose street life, it also has been working as a pulling factor which I mainly found from my informant⁵⁴ who was in the street before. While talking to me my informant stated that he used to remember his home and regretted choosing street life in the beginning. When I tried to know more about his meaning of home he told me home is not only his home but his friends and his cattle as well. The situation in the street similarly works as a push factor based on the same informant. The problems of street adults, police and the public's view of children in the street were factors for him to leave the street. In this way the pull and push factors are on both side i.e. in the street as well as in the home.

⁵³ Interview number 1

⁵⁴ Interview number 11

CHAPTER V: THE ROLE OF NGOs, INGOs AND GOVERNMENT

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I tried to elaborate on the information obtained from different sources about ethnic and geographical background of street children that showed the issue of ethnic background of street children remains open and unknown due to the lack of proper study. In this chapter, I will relate this issue with indigenous people of Nepal. How the different people who are working on this issue view the ethnic background of street children and also the issue of indigenous and minority children's rights. Moreover, I will discuss the role of different institutions for promoting indigenous and other minority children's issues in Nepal. What sorts of focus children have been receiving from government as well as other non-governmental organizations will also be discussed here.

5.2. Street Children: an Issue Related to Indigenous and Minority Groups in Nepal

Based on the fieldwork, I came to know that street children do not share exact information in first or second attempts. They also change their place frequently and some of them do not know about their background as well. In such a context, finding ethnic background of street children is a very long-term process, which requires enough time and teamwork. This may be one of the reasons for a lack of sources related to the background of children. While introducing my research topic and relating it with indigenous and other minorities children with my informants I got varied responses. The unanimous answer from all the informants from NGOs was they do not have any study that can prove that the high numbers of street children are from indigenous background. In this section, I have analyzed the information obtained from informants relating to the issue of ethnic identity of street children.

One of my informants⁵⁵, immediately after introducing my research topic, told me that the large number of street children from indigenous background is not correct. He further said the

⁵⁵ Interview number 4

children are from mixed background i.e. both from indigenous and non-indigenous. Introducing himself as an indigenous person he asked me ‘how do you think the large number of children are from indigenous background?’ After stating my study program i.e. indigenous studies and research objectives and limitation of the project, he told that ‘if we take socio-economic causes as a factor for the large number of street children, there are more children from Dalit and indigenous group but ‘the poor economic family background is not only the reason that’s why’, he redefined his previous statement. He added he was opposing the speculation based on the general public attitude towards street children. My presence, from the point of view of my informant, was as a researcher from a non-indigenous group trained with Western thoughts and politics and viewing him or the entire indigenous communities as ‘the other’. This may have caused him to change his information (Sidsel 2001). The interview process in this sense enabled a change in the relationship between me and my informant from us versus them to a more reciprocal relationship as argued in Sidsel (ibid, P: 4).

In my next interview,⁵⁶ the informant’s indigenous background was more open. The experience of having done an interview could be working as an influencing factor here. Before starting the actual interview, we discussed different issues, which helped the informant share his opinion frankly. While talking about the family background of street children the informant agreed that the number of indigenous and minorities children including children from Dalit are higher than children of majority groups. He stated that because of their specified framework, they are not focusing on this issue of street children. He further stated that a large number of children from any community does not make any differences on their program since they have viewed all street children in the same way and have different programs based on their problems not on their ethnic origin. He further told me about the process of discovering their ethnic background and how it is not as easy as people think. Street children many times change their names and surname since they do not like to return from street life. The informant said that children very often change their surname like ‘*Sarki*’ to ‘*Karki*’. One of the reasons according to him is because of discrimination by others. As discussed above, the traditional system of untouchability among different castes, which still are practiced in rural areas and their impact on children can be a possible reason according to

⁵⁶ Interview number 5

him. The informant stated the need for a large-scale project in combination with NGOs, INGOs and government to make a fruitful study to find out the exact details of street children.

The third informant⁵⁷ of indigenous background told me that based on his experience the children from *Tamang* and *Dalit* communities are more often in the streets of Kathmandu. The informant states ‘though it is very essential for government as well as NGOs to make necessary changes on their prevention programs, the role of government on this issue is passive’. Why have NGOs not been focusing on it? He answered this issue a bit differently. He stated different limitations of NGOs, which will be discussed later (see: 5.4).

The next informant⁵⁸ shared his experiences of a family rehabilitation program told me that the children from sound economic backgrounds and who are well educated and from majority groups are also significant in the street. He stated ‘most children are from near Kathmandu and a large number of them are from *Terai*⁵⁹ region in street’. He also told that the children from India as well as Bangladesh are also there in the street of Kathmandu. In this way the informant focused on the presence of children from majority group and of sound economic status.

Based on these four different interviews, I came to the conclusion that, the issue of indigenous and minority children was new for the informant. Its may be that they do not like to cross beyond their institutional responsibility. Most of the informants in the beginning were indifferent about the ethnic background of street children. They viewed children on the street as equally suffering and victimized so they should be treated equally regardless of their ethnic origin. When I made my position clear stating that the ethnic background of street children is important to find out which ethnic groups are at the greatest risk, informants opened-up. I made it further clear stating its usefulness for different prevention programs, and then they shared their personal opinion as well as field experiences. Informants in the beginning were strong in that they have been supporting all the street children equally. During my visit and informal meeting in indigenous organization like NEFDIN, the issue of indigenous and minority children was new for them as well.

⁵⁷ Interview number 3

⁵⁸ Interview number 6

⁵⁹ Terai region is one out of three geographical regions of Nepal i.e. Mountain, Hill and Terai. Based on preliminary sensusreport 2011, It consists of 50.2% of total population of the countryt .

5.3 The Role of NGOs

The history of NGOs in Nepal is not long. The rapid growth of NGOs started immediately after the establishment of the multiparty democracy system in 1990. At that time the number of NGOs in the country was less than 400. At current there are 30,284 NGOs registered in the social welfare council during 2034 to 2067 Bikram Sambat ((i.e. 1977-2010) in Nepal. Out of them 951 NGOS registered as working for children in Nepal and the rest in nine different sectors⁶⁰. Among various organizations CWIN (Child Workers in Nepal) is the leading children's right organization currently involved in different issues of children's rights and advocacy e.g. child labor, street children, child marriage, bonded labour, trafficking of children, children in conflict with laws and commercial sexual of children.⁶¹ It has started a child helpline, which is free of cost with different facilities like medical, emergency, legal etc. An informant⁶² stating its program told me that CWIN has a significant role to play in putting the issue of street children on the national agenda.

Another NGO that is currently involved with the issue of street children is CPCS Nepal. During my visit, I saw many street children coming and going from its drop-in center Dilli bazar. An informant⁶³ spoke of CPCS activities and told me that it has both day and night drop-in centers where street children can come and go based on their needs. They also get food in the center. It has provided legal, medical and educational support to the street children. CPCS has run a child helpline and has 24-hour services for street children. Street children who take part in class are rewarded with rice, vegetables and soup. If they do not take part in classes they only get soup and rice. The children also get educational tokens based on their participation in class, which they can use to buy different things. Sath Sath, Voice of Children, SAHARA group, CWCN (Child WataBaran Centre Nepal), Child Welfare Scheme Nepal, Sathi and other NGOs working on the issue related to street children and/or with children in difficult situation.

⁶⁰Social Welfare Council was established after Social Welfare act 2049 for the management of NGOs in Nepal,

http://www.swc.org.np/sectorwisengo_list.php#nogo11

⁶¹ Structured decision -making manual CWIN Nepal

⁶² Interview number 2

⁶³ Interview number 4

Based on the informants from NGOs, I came to know that NGOs working for street children utilize two different approaches: street as a home and institutional basis, which has been working simultaneously. The current focus according to them is more on social integration so that it reduces the financial load to the government. However, there have been different programs focusing on awareness to prevent children from coming to the street. But, their focus seems more on the street and providing different supports as stated above. Informants while talking to me stated the lack of community support to NGOs. The effort of NGOs on its own is not possible to solve the issue, which requires support from government as well as other institutions such as the media, community, social workers etc. They told that they have to deal with children of different age, states of intelligence, family backgrounds etc. all of which are challenging issues. Besides this, the situation of family during reintegration time (change after a child left home) and the inaccuracy of information obtained from street children are challenging issues for NGOs.

One of the challenging issues I found through the informants in the NGOs is the follow-up process after the rehabilitation program. After completion of different stages like sheltering, short and long-term rehabilitation programs, a child gets back to his/her home. But, in many cases the child may need long-term rehabilitation because of not having their own parents and home. In such a situation, further institutions are needed to assure that their education will be guaranteed as one informant⁶⁴ noted. Even after the completion of different counseling programs, many children don't like to go back home even if they have parents at home. That is a very difficult aspect of the rehabilitation program. In such cases the chance of coming back to the street remains high. 'As early we try to rehabilitate a street children the possibility of coming back again to the street is lesser than we do the same thing later', one informant stated.

The lack of financial sources according to NGOs is the main reason for not having more programs on follow-up activities. Most of the institutions visited during fieldwork showed the difficulties of finance and the support from government as critical issues. They argued that despite having very limited resources they have been conducting different programs for street children, which has not been respected and supported by government. All the NGOs visited

⁶⁴ Interview number 5

agreed with the fact that the problem of street children will remain as it is until there is more focus on the prevention issues like empowering critical family members in terms of education, finance etc. However, most of their programs focused mainly on street children, providing the situation and support to street children.

5.4 Shifting Interests of NGOs

One of the key issues affecting the successful completion of different program launched from NGOs and INGOs was their shifting interests. One informant⁶⁵ talking about the limitations said that while working on a project basis NGOs have different limitations. The source of financial support comes from new issues, so they have to move on even if the former program still requires continuity. While speaking to the difficulties, informants said that even if there are very important issue needs to be prioritized, it depends on the various issues like funding. Garilao Earnesto D. (1987) regarding these states:

“Since most third world NGOs have limited Internal resources and operate from project to project, such outside funding gives them a certain degree of security to maintain and even expand. But security packaged as such also breeds dependency. Having fallen in to this trap it becomes difficult for NGOs not to tailor their program to the priorities of the resources agency rather than other way around. Hence the notion that NGOs are here today may be nowhere tomorrow” (P: 113).

As Earnesto has stated the main problems are based on dependency and lack of their own financial arrangement on different NGOs in Nepal. Another challenging issue is their project base work focusing on different issues rather than more on combined strategies. Because of this many programs conducted by NGOs may conflict with one another. Regarding this an informant⁶⁶ told me that NAOSC as an umbrella organization is trying to create one voice and unity regarding street children which helps to evaluate the progress of different institutions and transfer skills from one to another.

⁶⁵ Interview number 3

⁶⁶ Interview number 3

5.5 The Role of INGOs

Based on the Central Child Welfare Board Nepal, there are 130 different international non-governmental organizations working for children in Nepal⁶⁷. Among them, I visited two i.e. CPCS international and UNICEF Nepal. CPCS international is working on the issue of street children. They have different activities carried out through CPCS Nepal, which was already discussed above. The discussion in CPCS international was more on the challenges of institutions. The second INGO that I had visited was UNICEF Nepal. While talking to UNICEF, I found that UNICEF Nepal has been working on different issues of children i.e. child labor, child affected by arm conflict, child sexual exploitation etc. According to the informant⁶⁸ these problems of children are related in one or other ways. So, issue of street children cannot be apart. Stating current activities informant stated that ‘UNICEF currently working with the government of Nepal and trying to create a strong child protection system that can address different children related issues by helping and strengthening child protection centers.’

According to CCWB in 50 districts out of 75 the office of the mechanism of child protection system established and the remaining districts are in process. Based on the informant UNICEF Nepal is helping on the recruitment process of those remaining districts e.g. by providing training about child protection, case management etc. The informant in UNICEF told me that ‘next five-year UNICEF is planning to focus on early intervention program targeted for the children before they get into the serious situation.’ This program according to informant focuses those families who are in critical situation by different programs like parent education, counseling etc. economic support i.e. income generating training which focuses more on prevention issue.

Talking about the different individual activities carried out by NGOs informant in UNICEF told the lack of coordination among different institutions working on the same issue i.e. children's rights is one of the serious issues in Nepal. The project-based program may not be the permanent solution. So, a certain authority should coordinate it for the fruitful result. ‘The child protection state authority should coordinate these different actions.’ Informant further

⁶⁷ the state of children of nepal 2011

⁶⁸ Interview number 10

continued the main focus of UNICEF is to create such system, which control and monitor all the children's issues including the issue of street children in different level. Informant agreed on the fact that many of programs by UNICEF are targeting on indigenous groups since they are most marginalized but they do not have any specific program on indigenous issues. UNICEF is a member of interagency working group with CCWB and with major NGOs and INGOs e.g. save the children, world education, plan international, World vision etc. and has a joint work plan.

5.6 The Role of Government

The role of government is always very important for human rights as well as other fundamental human right issues. Government of any countries does this by forming different policies and creating different legal framework based on which different issues are conducted in the country. Nepal also has assured the children right in its interim constitution as fundamental right (see more on chapter 3). Besides these it has committed different regional and international conventions e.g. convention on the right of child and its two optional protocol⁶⁹, 1996 Stockholm declaration, 1995 Beijing declaration etc.

Central child welfare board under ministry of women children and social welfare is working specially on the issue of children in Nepal, which also has been working on its own and with different NGOs. CCWB in the past had tried to rehabilitate street children with the help of different NGOs and INGOs but it was not successful because of the lack of funding from government.⁷⁰ After two years it again has tried to make a detail census of street children and bring a special package of rehabilitation, which will also focus their age group. The first priority is to bring the children back to their families⁷¹. The board has also planned to distribute identity cards for the street children to maintain their identity.⁷²

⁶⁹ optional protocol to the convention on the rights of the child on the involvement of children in arm conflict ratified by nepal on 3jan.2007, & protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child proography on 20jan 2006

⁷⁰Ekantipur news dated 15th December 2010
<http://202.166.193.40/2010/12/15/capital/street-kids-rehab/326550.html>

⁷¹Ekantipur news dated 8th November 2012
<http://202.166.193.40/2012/11/08/editors-pick/street-kid-census-to-rehabilitate-them/362489.html>

⁷² Central child welfare board official wesite
<http://www.ccwb.gov.np/content.php?id=26>

Child welfare board has currently working on the development of national child protection policy. As discussed above it also has been planning to establish child protection system in every districts of the country, which has completed for fifty districts so far. The main NGO/INGOs that CCWB has been working with are UNICEF, Save the Children, International Nepal, Plan International Nepal, World Vision International Nepal, Teree Des Homes, World Education etc. (CCWB: 2012). The government of Nepal through the ministry of local development has been supporting two Dalit children of a family below the age of five by giving rupees 200 each. This program is not only for the children of Dalit but the children of all the family of Karnali zone. (CCWB: ibid).

Based on CCWB there are different programs launched targeting the children out of school by government. One example is providing scholarship to the Children from the Dalit community and more marginalized group of children. Similarly, to promote the mother tongue, education curriculum has been developed by the Centre and has prepared curriculum of twenty different languages. The establishment of child clubs in different districts of the country also has been going on. Since 2012 there are 13,291 different children clubs in 52 district of Nepal and they are mainly for creating awareness among people about different aspect of children's rights. Involvement of children in the child club from indigenous communities is higher than children from other communities according to CCWB: 2012. In this way, the government seems to have focused on minority communities of different geographical areas. The concept of indigenous children as an independent issue has not been focused. Central Child Welfare Board is also criticized by public and in news media for having donor driven agendas rather than its own⁷³. Since a lack of financial support from government increases the dependency on its donor agencies, and their influence on its programs cannot be denied.

To sum up the role of these three different sectors, it can be concluded that none of these three sectors focused on the issue of indigenous children as an independent issue. However different organizations have their own role to promote the rights of children and also to

⁷³Ekantipur news Kathmandu Post dated 17th December 2012
<http://www.ekantipur.com/the-kathmandu-post/2012/12/17/development/rehabilitating-street-children-is-our-priority/242985.html>

manage the situation of street children in Kathmandu. The role that different NGOs are playing to manage street children is very important and essential. In spite of having fewer financial support and resources, the initiation of NGOs to make an issue of street children as an independent national issue is admirable. However, their program should focus on significant results rather than only providing assistance to the street children. The efforts should be on the root causes that are causing the issue of homelessness. The current activities can minimize the hazards but not the number of street children.

The role of INGOs seems more of an issue of helping government on the issue of policy and strengthening government administrative organs to deal different children's rights, which is helpful in the long term. The role of the government for promoting children from different communities in the education system is appreciated but the focus on street children seems indifferent. The specific example of this is a lack of a proper census of the children who are living on the street. The fact that the Kathmandu metro municipality office, being the local administrative center, did not know the number of street children of the Kathmandu is disconcerting. The trend of accepting different treaties and forming policies but not implementing these in practice is a serious issue that the government needs to address in Nepal. Strengthening different administrative bodies as well as conducting different activities to minimize the current problem is the essential role the government has to play.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the discussion above, I have come to the conclusion that the situation of children's rights in Nepal is critical. There exist serious problems for street children that are not only confined to street. Other huge challenges for the country are issues such as the domestic child labor and child trafficking. Different efforts from the private sectors seem to have raised the issue and brought it into the discussion in mass media, but it still seems less effective to improve the situation. The lack of fruitful coordination between and among governmental and non-governmental organizations working for the rights of children also seems a significant factor need to be addressed in Nepal.

The fact that there are large numbers of street children from indigenous and other minorities like Dalit and from Madhesi have been agreed upon by different NGOs, and supported by different reports e.g. (CWISH 2009) showing large number of indigenous children in domestic child labor. In such a context, the issue of indigenous and other minority's children's rights issues should be taken as an independent issue and should have specific programs for targeting indigenous and minority communities. The empowerment of indigenous and Dalit families can be the appropriate solution for the prevention of large number of street children.

After visiting different organizations, I found the lack of coordination to be a serious issue among NGOs, INGOs and the government of Nepal. The role of NGOs in helping street children is praiseworthy, but it would be more fruitful if it were combined with preventions and awareness raising programs at different levels e.g. educational institutions, civil society and local government bodies such as village development community, municipality etc. The financial problem both in governmental institutions and NGOs is serious. The government as well as NGOs need to consider developing different ways to promote their own economic resources rather than only relying source on international donor agencies.

Additionally, the situation of street children has been made worse because of the negative public attitude. The way of viewing street children as criminals and uncivilized by the publics need to change. NGOs and INGOs currently working in Nepal need to address this. Different

programs like raising awareness among the public is essential. Exploitative child labor practices fostered by junkyard business owners, small hotels and restaurants for example and also in local transportation should be controlled. The fundamental right to have education and registration of birth should be guaranteed by the state.

To manage and sort out the difficulties and health hazards that face street children should be the first priority of government. Providing immediate basic services and providing special treatments that could be in different form like medical support, counseling and psychological assistance etc. based on their need is the current immediate issue. For the successful completion of any programs on street children an immediate census of street children should be conducted. This helps to know their background based on which different prevention programs can be launched targeting particular locations, ethnic communities and age group. So, one immediate suggestion based on my fieldwork would be a census. The census would record street children and the information obtained from this would assist NGOs and government too.

Another observation from fieldwork experience indicates that the role of police is vital for street children. The relation between police and street children should be changed so that the children can freely share their problems with police. Different educational programs targeting police and local security personnel are essential in Kathmandu. Similarly, the problem of street adult should be controlled. The violence against street children by street adults seems a serious issue, which requires a planned action from the government as well as civil society.

The role of school and education also remains vital for changing society. The role of school and the education system in Nepal can provide economic support through scholarships for the children who are from poor family background and have a high chance of dropping out due to financial problem. The high rate of dropouts in schools and low rate of enrollment from indigenous and Dalit children shows the need for a different education system in addition to the current teacher-centered and lecturer-oriented learning. Effective teacher trainings and the recruitment of teachers from those communities can be helpful in such cases. Besides these, conducting different information programs in local areas can help parents to understand children's rights and the responsibility of parents and even the state to the children.

Nothing can be as critical and serious as the issue of children. The more we wait to act the more we wait to transfer our culture and norms to the next generation. The children on the street are carrying the identity of current Nepalese society and if we let them go the Nepalese identity goes along with them. That is why; the most important and valuable aspects of life should be supported. This means that it cannot be accepted that children could live on the margins of society on the street.

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APPENDIX I: INDIGENOUS NATIONALITIES OF NEPAL

<p>Advanced Group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Newari 2. Thakali <p>Disadvantaged Group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tangbe 2. Teengaule Thakali 3. Baragaule Thakali 4. Marphali Thakali 5. Gurung 6. Magar 7. Rai 8. Limube 9. Sherpa 10. Yakkha 11. Chhantyal 12. Jirel 13. Byansi 14. Yolmo <p>Marginalized Group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sunuwar 2. Tharu 3. Tamang 4. Bhujel 5. Kumal 6. Rajbanshi 7. Gangaai 8. Dhimal 9. Bote 10. Darai 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Tajpuriya 12. Pahari 13. Topkegola 14. Dolpo 15. Mugal 16. Larke 17. Lopha 18. Dura 19. Walung <p>High Marginalized Group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Majhi 2. Siyar 3. Lhomi(Sinsaba) 4. Thundam 5. Dhanuk 6. CHepang 7. Santhal 8. Jhagad 9. Thami 10. Bote 11. Danuwar 12. Baramu <p>Endangered Group</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Kusunda 2. Bankariya 3. Raute 4. Surel 5. Hayu 6. Raji 7. Kisan 8. Lepcha 9. Meche 10. Kuswadiya
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Source: Official website of NEFIN : (Access Date: 2013-04-09)

<http://www.nefin.org.np/list/Categorization-of-Indigenous-People-based-on-development-15/95/6>

APPENDIX II: LIST OF INFORMANTS

Interview No.1	Kathmandu Metropolitan City Office
Interview No.2	Child Workers in Nepal
Interview No.3	CONCERN Nepal
Interview No.4	CPCS Nepal
Interview No.5	CPCS Nepal
Interview No.6	CPCS International
Interview No.7	Central Child Welfare Board Nepal
Interview No.8	National Human Right Commission Nepal
Interview No.9	NAOSC Nepal
Interview No.10	UNICEF Nepal
Interview No.11	A Former Street Child

APPENDIX III: SOME PICTURES FROM FIELDWORK



A street child collecting different materials for selling.



Street children sleeping in front of a shop



Street children in a group



Street children during evening



A Street Ragpicker on his way to ragpicking.

