

Experience of the Sexually Abused Street Children. A Case of One of the Cities in Tanzania

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Abstract

This study is about the experiences of the sexually abused street children in one of the cities in Tanzania. The study makes use of the data from 34 respondents. A questionnaire, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were used to collect data. The findings show that the sexually abused street children have experienced all types of sexual encounters, with rape and sodomy being the common type of sexual abuse. The maximum number of times an individual child has been sexually abused is 9 times and a minimum is at least once, but many were sexually violated multiple times. Contracting infectious diseases and pains and swelling of the genital are the most prevalent effects. In terms of Perceptions on the sexually abused street children, while the social welfare officers and the nurses are neutral, the police are negative. While the services offered at the police gender desk are somehow satisfactory, the post violence services are not user-friendly, and the community virtually offers no support. When the sexually abused street children presented themselves where they were supposed to get some support, generally they did not receive any sort of help.

Keywords

Sexually Abused Street Children, Socio-Economic Support

1. Introduction

Street children are a global phenomenon that has caused numerous problems for millions of children worldwide (Quainoo, 2020; Salihu, 2019). As a result, street children are marginalized in society, live in deplorable conditions, are harassed, and are sexually abused (Dankyi & Huang, 2022; Hassen, 2019; Mekonen, Ad-

hena, Araya, & Hiwot, 2020; Msangi, 2017). More than one billion children are estimated to be growing up on city streets everywhere, and this number is liable to grow as urbanization and rising world population accelerates (Brown et al., 2019; Engemann et al., 2020; Gill, 2021). Street children can be found in public places such as gas stations, restaurants, banks, supermarkets, mosques, churches, and open areas (Glaeser & Henderson, 2017; Rodriguez et al., 2021; Sharma, 2020). As reported therein recent studies, tens of millions of street minors live in various parts of the world (Angaw, 2021; Ayaya et al., 2021; Dankwa, 2018; Quainoo, 2020). According to African statistics, there are three million street children in various countries (Alidost, Taghizadeh, Setayesh, Nazem, & Azizi, 2021). In both low- and middle-income countries, street children pose one of the most complex challenges (Alidost et al., 2021; Ellis et al., 2022). According to statistics, nearly 250,000 South African children live on the streets (Maepa, 2021). The number of street children in Accra, Ghana has increased from 35,000 to 90,000 in the last five years (Bawah, Abaka-Yawson, Seini, Yeboah, & Ngala, 2019). In 2007, there were between 250,000 and 300,000 children living on Kenyan streets (Mutua, 2017). Concerns have been raised that the increasing number of street children will become a public health issue (Alidost et al., 2021; Andrew, 2020; Cénat, Derivois, Hébert, Amédée, & Karray, 2018; Tsai & Wilson, 2020).

In general, family poverty or economic vulnerability is the root cause of street children. As a result, the children are forced to seek their earnings for daily bread and other necessities elsewhere, particularly on city streets. As a result, these street children are more likely than other members of society to be sexually abused. They are mostly poor children who contribute to the creation of a vulnerable social category on a daily basis (Abate et al., 2022; Adebayo & Olaogun, 2019; Joshi, 2021; Malindi & Molahlehi, 2020).

Despite global economic progress, street children, particularly sexually abused street children, are a serious and growing issue in the human community (Rizzini, Rizzini, Munhoz-Vargas, & Galeano, 2020; Zaman, 2019). This broad perception includes human productive accomplishments by minors, sometimes unpaid and illegal labor, and being employed in hazardous environments or in informal areas (Deb, Sunny, & Majumdar, 2020; Maya Jariego, 2021; Sovacool, 2021). Many children on the global streets struggle to survive, while others fight for the survival of their parents in ways that are neither harmful nor unfair. Three of the main factors that cause these minors to leave home or be sent to the streets in order to support their families are poor living conditions, poverty, and domestic violence (Amr et al., 2019; Lucchini & Stoecklin, 2020; Salihu, 2019). These street children have been pushed by their poverty to become partially self-sufficient, with some working and others begging to support themselves and their families (Fonseka & Malhotra, 2020; Holland, 2021; Jones, 2020).

2. Background

Several studies have documented the causes of street children's existence, in-

cluding the death of their parents or guardians, divorce, family member abuse, family poverty and other reasons (Kayombo, 2020; Mia & Islam, 2021; Sampson, 2017; Sharma, 2020; Sitompul et al., 2020; Turney & Wildeman, 2017). The most common reason for street children's involvement is poverty (39%), followed by family conflict (32%), abuse (26%), psychosocial health, and crime (Bah, 2018). Other common reasons reported in developing regions, aside from fleeing from home, include a desire to visit a city (10%), crime (10%), and psychological reasons (16%) (Ramírez, 2017).

Previous research indicates that street children are more likely to be sexually abused (Alidost et al., 2021; Ramaswamy & Seshadri, 2020; Wismayanti, O'Leary, Tilbury, & Tjoe, 2019). Due to the situational environment of various streets, it appears that street children use early sexual relationships and other abusive behaviors as a coping mechanism for their life (Ashraf, Ibrar, & Ullah, 2022; Dariotis & Chen, 2022; Kaiser & Sinanan, 2020). These street minors consequently know less about sexuality (when compared to children who live with their families), and they are more likely to engage in unprotected sex and other high risk sexual behaviors (Alidost et al., 2021; Kayombo, 2020; Landers, McGrath, Johnson, Armstrong, & Dollard, 2017; Wismayanti et al., 2019). Nearly 87% of street children who live with older boys on the streets are sexually abused, according to a report released by the Consortium of Street Children in 2014. Among them, 67% of the adults who live with them on the streets abuse them, and 30% are abused by strangers. The most frequent type of abuse that street minors encounter is rape (Amdeselassie et al., 2020; Bajari & Kuswarno, 2020; Fayaz, 2019; Salihi, 2019).

Furthermore, homosexuality and intergenerational sex are prevalent among street children (Alidost et al., 2021; Chikoko, Rugaranganda, Muzvidziwa, & Chimhowa-Chikoko, 2018; Chikoko, Rugaranganda, Muzvidziwa, & Chimhowa-Chikoko, 2019; Kayombo, 2020). As a result, infectious diseases (STIs and HIV) are prevalent among street children (Abate et al., 2022; Martin, 2018; Strashun et al., 2020). In terms of how they respond to the abuse, the majority of them reported that they did not take any action after being raped because they believe that reporting would have no effect on their experience with the situation (Kelly & Karsna, 2017). Sexual abuse against street children erodes the solid foundation required for children's health and productive lives (Barnett, van Dijk, Swaray, Amara, & Young, 2018; Hillis, Mercy, & Saul, 2017; Kayombo, 2020; Quainoo, 2020).

In Tanzania, 437,000 children are thought to be homeless. According to various authors, urban street children in Tanzania have amplified dramatically over the last decade (Bwambale, Bukuluki, Moyer, & Van den Borne, 2021; Fast & Moyer, 2018; Thompson, 2018). This problem is more severe in major cities such as Dar-es-Salaam, Dodoma, Mwanza, and Arusha (Ismail, 2020; Mataro, Myeya, & Kamangu, 2020; Ng'habi, 2019). The children are on the streets because they have been subjected to violence and abuse at home (Arnold, 2017;

Ashraf et al., 2022; Bajari & Kuswarno, 2020; Petrowski, Cappa, Pereira, Mason, & Daban, 2021). When they move to the street, however, they face similar or worse consequences because they are constantly harassed by police, sex tourists, and other people (Bakta, 2019; Christopher, 2020). Many street children continue to sexually abuse their weaker peers while also engaging in violence and exploitation of other street children or adults (Msechu, 2019).

Working on the streets for these vulnerable minors puts them at a higher risk of sexual abuse, among other things. They hitchhike for transportation and work in congested areas, on the street, in parks, and in front of bars. This vulnerable social group, who works on the streets, may occasionally find themselves in front of cars, asking to clean the windows or for coinage. As a result, they are frequently rejected (Kaiser & Sinanan, 2020; Mia & Islam, 2021; Ramaswamy & Seshadri, 2020).

Mistreatment of street children is a global felony that has a negative impact on the victim's physiological, psychological, and social health. Children who work on the streets incur abuse experience terror and rage (Kaiser & Sinanan, 2020; Tarish & Moussa, 2020). The victim protects themselves by employing a variety of methods. These include fighting back, receiving parental support, or responding with strategies similar to those used by their abusers. They occasionally use pointed or volatile armaments (Kaiser & Sinanan, 2020; Reza & Bromfield, 2019).

Although many studies have brought sexual violence to the public's attention in Tanzania, the majority of them have concentrated on adults, women, and university students rather than street children. It is challenging to get a complete picture of sexual violence against street children in Tanzania (Ezekiel et al., 2017; Kaiser & Sinanan, 2020; Kayombo, 2020; Mwashala, Grant, Saikia, & Chamberlain, 2021). The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, unequivocally states that children have a right to be protected from all forms of violence, is ineffectively implemented due to stakeholders' inability to make informed policy and programmatic decisions about street children regarding sexual violence (Bah, 2018). By confronting the children directly and providing information on sexual violence that street children experience, it is possible to close this data gap regarding sexual abuse of street children (Lees & Devries, 2018).

Furthermore, many studies in the literature have been conducted that reported on the reasons for street children finding themselves on the streets, struggling in a horrible situation, and how poverty role in children working on the streets and the numerous types of abuse that occur (Kaiser & Sinanan, 2020; Salihu, 2019). The effects of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse on minors working the streets have, however, not been the subject of many studies. Because of this, the aim of this study was to pinpoint the traits of minors who work on the streets as well as the dangers and repercussions of abuse. Additionally, this knowledge can aid in the creation of successful child-friendly prevention strategies and enhance the provision of services for Tanzanian street children who

have been sexually abused (Tanzania, 2017). When street children are subjected to any form of violence, it has long been a problem that rights and freedoms have not been adequately protected and promoted (Anangisyé & Xu, 2022; Cénat, Derivois, Hébert, Amédée, & Karray, 2018).

Exploring the various forms of these sexual abuses and providing various approaches to vulnerable children in order to help them survive is thus critically important in assisting to build a better and nonviolent community. All stakeholders responsible for health, such as nurses, can play a fundamental role in this concern by investigating the health care needs of these abused, abandoned, and helpless minors who live and work on the streets. Nurses, for example, are in an obvious position to raise awareness of the various types of sexual abuse and the costs associated with them. Similarly, this significant domain can provide assistance and solutions for dealing with these problems specific to this area. As a result, this research focuses on the types of sex, sexual violence experiences, the places where such violence occurs, the types of sexual abuses, the number of times the abuses occur, the effects of abuse, the perceptions of those responsible for caring for the sexually abused street children, satisfaction with services, and the treatment the sexually abused street children receive.

3. Literature Review

3.1. Theory and Context of Street Children

The theme problem is to consider street children's sexual violence experiences. At this point, the definition of the rappers is linked to the background of the research on the experiences of street children. As a result, the study provides the following definitions, which are important aspects of the study. As a result, street children, child help seekers, and sexual violence are all suspected. As a result, the research defines a child following (UN, UNICET, etc.) as an individual not less than the teen-ager rule, conventional is reached before (Hug et al., 2021; Judiasih, Rubiati, Yuanitasari, Salim, & Safira, 2020; Taha, Garemo, & Nanda, 2020). While the ILO's Child Employment Agreement and the UN Resolution on the Constitutional Law of the Teenager define them as adolescents under the age of 18, Similarly, in this study, a teenager is someone under the age of 18 and not older than that (Efevbera & Bhabha, 2020; Kosher & Ben-Arieh, 2020; Tobin, 2019). Furthermore, UNICEF defines street children as "any individual for whom the street develops habitual abode and source of revenue; and who is ineffectively sheltered, managed, or bound for by accountable elders" (Ibrahim, 2021; Kawala, Kirui, & Cumber, 2020). According to the United Nations Children's Education Fund, these three groups are primarily found in developing countries, with the first group consisting of minors working on the street and the second group living with relatives.

Furthermore, UNICEF has designated the previous group as street entrants. The following group of street children, on the other hand, is those who have insufficient or erratic income from their relatives. The latter group of street people

is those who have no family support (Amoah & Nyamekye, 2022; Ewunetie et al., 2022; Odoyo, Kavulya, & Muhingi, 2019). There are many young people who live on the streets; however, this study does not consider all street children; rather, it focuses on those teen-agers who are completely without family sustenance and spend their days on the street lacking any relatives organization. Given this, these children receive assistance from non family members by begging or working informally or without following rules. The study also defines a final key term, which is sexual abuse or violence. Raping, sexual coercion, unwanted sexual contact, sexual assault, and forced sexual penetration are all examples of the term. In this study, sexual violence is defined as any action that affects a prey's sexuality physically, emotionally, or mentally in relation to an unwanted sexual interaction between the wrongdoer and the victim of sexual violence (Ferragut, Rueda, Cerezo, & Ortiz-Tallo, 2022; Henry, Flynn, & Powell, 2020; Scoglio, Kraus, Saczynski, Jooma, & Molnar, 2021).

3.2. Pragmatic Literature Review

The pragmatic analysis crosses disparate pieces of the field with regard to cases, experiences, and tendencies of sexual abuse of street children. Nonetheless, the experimental writings appraisal established the foundation for selecting the procedure that was appropriate for data gathering for this research and, finally, the support of the field results.

3.3. Context of Street Children in Turkey (Europe)

Street children were one of the most significant challenges in most of Europe, for example, in Turkey, particularly in Istanbul. The growing number of street children has caused a variety of issues, particularly in major cities such as Ankara and Diyarbakir (Aytac, 2021; Bademci et al., 2020; Maksudyan, 2022). According to the Turkish Statistics Institute (TSI), 625,000 teenagers were in danger on Istanbul's streets. These people are subjected to sexual abuse, and 85% of them are subjected to all forms of sexual exploitation, with 70% of victims being older than 10 years old (Aytac, 2021; Bademci, 2020; Bazubagira & Umumara-rungu, 2020). Other journalists According to reports, 77% of Turkish street children come from broken families, 23% live with their parents, and domestic violence is common in their homes (Erol & Savaş, 2022; Gulesci, Meyersson, & Trommlerová, 2020; Shayani, Danitz, Low, Hamilton, & Iverson, 2022).

3.4. Condition of Street Children in Philippines (Asia) and Brazil (South America)

In the Philippines, there are roughly 1.5 million street children, with 70% of them being boys (Bermudez et al., 2021; Cabaguing, Caal, & Pedraza, 2021; Porio, Moselina, & Swift, 2020). Young people who are defenseless frequently experience physical and sexual violence from strangers as well as from other young people. In addition, South America is in a terrible situation, with the National

Department of Human Rights reporting that 23,927 children in Brazil are living on the streets (Gadd, 2021; Hartmann et al., 2021). Additionally, 23% of children living on the street are between the ages of 12 and 15, and 45% are between the ages of 12 and 15 (Markussen, Veierød, Ursin, & Andersen, 2016). Their street work, on the other hand, consists of car washing, garbage collection, and shoe shining, with 30% being beggars.

3.5. Street Children in Zambia and Tanzania (Sub-Saharan Africa)

Concerning the Zanzibar economic situation, approximately, 73% of Zambia's population lives in poverty (Ibtasam et al., 2019). Conversely, as the population grows, the number of street children may increase due to an increase in orphaned children, ill-treatment in their families, and economic problems. According to the research, 28% of Zambian street children spend their days and nights on the streets without the supervision of their families. Nonetheless, only 10% of street children under the age of ten live on the streets day and night, but no one under the age of ten reported being on the streets only at night (Capellà Mitermique & Gaunet, 2020; Hagwanama, 2020; Skilbeck, 2021). These minors do not value family regulation throughout their time on the streets because of the nature of street life. They only get a little help from strangers like bystanders, NGO supporters, churches, and others in the form of cash, clothing, food, and medicine. Furthermore, research shows that 63% of street minors are unable to seek assistance when they need it, whereas 54% found help from the police, despite the numerous risks of living on the streets (Aufseeser, 2020; Müller, 2019; Shadmi et al., 2020). However, 57% of street children reported facing sexual abuse on the street. Combats, sexual violence, and sexual aggravation are among the types of offenses faced by these helpless children, and older street children are more likely to report physical aggression (Kabwela, 2020; Morojele, Ramsoomar, Dumbili, & Kapiga, 2021).

Cities in Tanzania have recently undergone rapid physical and economic vicissitudes that have changed both the urban environments and the lives of millions of people who live there (Antonucci, Bial, Cox, Finkelstein, & Machado, 2019; Dev, Das, & Esther, 2020; Ismail, 2020). The impact of these changes is felt by nearly everyone in cities, particularly the urban poor. A number of social issues have emerged as a result of these changes, one of which is the rise in the number of remarkable unsupervised children living on streets. Large urban centers like Mwanza, Mbeya, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanga, and Arusha are particularly affected by this problem. One of the significant cities impacted by these changes is Dodoma. Minors living alone in city streets have increased in Dodoma, in contrast, as a result of the city's rapid population growth.

There doesn't seem to be a single factor that explains why there are so many street minors; rather, there are a number of interrelated factors. Street children are affected by a number of important factors, including domestic violence, family strife, guardian deaths, poverty, the desire for freedom, and urbanization.

These youngsters scavenge for food and cash on the streets to meet their basic needs. Nonetheless, these teenagers sleep on the street, at bus stops, on construction sites, at railway stations, and in front of stores (Ismail, 2020). Furthermore, as a result of the dangerous street environment, street children engage in extremely dangerous and violent behavior. However, one of the most frequently mentioned violent behaviors among street children is involuntary sex and sexual aggravation (Cooper, Munyerere, Yannick, & Omari, 2020; Lees, 2022). Even though these street minors have a variety of disrupted personalities, their situation makes it difficult for them to obtain any assistance following sexual abuse. Hopefully, the findings of this study will raise awareness among community members, allowing them to provide much-needed support to vulnerable minors who have been sexually abused.

4. Methods and Materials

4.1. Research Design and Approach

Because there are many cases of sexual abuse of street children, this study was conducted in one of Tanzania's cities. These minors appear to be begging and collecting trash. The cross-sectional research design is used. The study employs a qualitative and quantitative approach, and data were collected in Kiswahili before being translated into English, the country's second official language. In-depth interview guides and focus group discussion guides were utilised to gather qualitative data, while a questionnaire was utilised to gather quantitative data. Children who spent time on the streets without the supervision of their parents or guardians were among the study population. The sample size was 50, but only 34 were available for data collection. A sample size of 25 to 30 people, according to some social analysts, is sufficient for analysis (Bassatne et al., 2021; Morina, Kip, Hoppen, Priebe, & Meyer, 2021; Tol et al., 2020).

Despite the disappointment of having a besieged sample size of 50 street children, the available total (34) was appropriate. A sample size of 25 to 30 is sufficient for investigation, so 34 participants were chosen to increase the rationality of the verdicts. These are data that have been collected for the first time and thus appear to be unique in behavior. Previously, it was a type of data that had never happened before, and it was not previously issued (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Guest, Namey, & Chen, 2020; Moon et al., 2020). As a result, the research used the above-mentioned total of 34 respondents, which was deemed sufficient for cogency and relevant findings. Purposive sampling qualifies for qualitative information gathering from key informants. The investigation used an investigative strategy with a qualitative approach to gather, investigate, and present data. In-depth interviews, case studies, focus groups, and key informant interviews were utilised to collect qualitative data. Limited quantitative information was gathered by the limited number of closed-ended inquiries in the thorough interview guide that were aimed at street children who had been sexually abused in one of Tanzania's cities. The information was gathered in Kiswahili and then

translated into English, the country's second official language. The actual data collection was carried out using in-depth interview guides, focus group discussion and key informant interviewing guides.

4.2. Data Collection Methods

In-depth interviews with "50 street children" were conducted as part of the study. However, some children declined to take part in the study because it was sensitive; as a result, 34 minors were interviewed using a thorough interview guide using open-ended inquiries. Both the data and the result were tape recorded. Coding was used to remove people's selves. As a result, tormenting out the personal understandings of abuse, the problems faced by these victims who want support, and what they ruminate would be the most important approach out in supporting individuals in comparable environments.

4.3. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussion

Officers from the Social Welfare Office, the Regional Medical Office of Health, and one NGO who provide sustenance supports to these homeless vulnerable teenagers working on the streets participated in a total of three strategic informant interviews. The interviews with service beneficiaries intended to gather information, provide understanding of the environment of challenges, and provide support for resolutions and enhancements. Similarly, the informants of this research were chosen through purposive sampling. While data were gathered in Kiswahili, Tanzania's first national language, using the KII interview guide, which guided the data collection process. In contrast, three focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted, two of which included more than 25 community members (men and women distinctly). Participants in these discussions ranged from 7 to 12, and one had adolescents under 25 (both genders). The primary goal is to comprehend society's perceptions, attitudes, and understanding of street children and sexual abuse. This seized barriers to accessing assistance for street children.

4.4. Purposive Sampling Technique, Data Processing and Analysis

The purposive sampling method is frequently used in qualitative research to document and collect data in order to make the best possible use of scarce resources. It identifies and chooses people who have a particular level of expertise in or knowledge of a source of alarm. The purposive sampling method is frequently used in qualitative research to document and collect data in order to make the best possible use of scarce resources. It determines and selects individuals' entities (Hughes, 2020; Muyatwa, 2022; Ndungu, 2022). The study employed the purposive sampling technique, and the besieged inhabitants for the study were "minors who work on the street without any supervision from their relatives." Questioning, piloting interviews, detecting deprived of attainment involved, engaging oneself in a condition, doing tests, and deploying models are

some of the simple procedures used to collect primary data (Breeze, 2021; Ng, 2022; O'Rourke, Abdulghani, Yelland, Newton, & Shafiei, 2022).

Furthermore, the secondary data was not gathered by the researcher. Secondary data provide new material for investigating a topic of concern that is rooted in the past (Asante & Helbrecht, 2020; McMullan & Dann, 2020). They are, on the other hand, data that have previously occurred. Examples include books, newspapers, pamphlets, and other written works. Through literature reviews, which involved looking through files, records, newspapers, brochures, and other materials, secondary data for this study was gathered. As a result, the data bases in this investigation were primary and secondary, all of which were successfully used for the flawless fallouts. The qualitative data generated by the research investigated the research themes in depth. Furthermore, other emerging issues such as demonstration convoluted dense accounts were acknowledged, and where necessary, meticulous quotations were used to intensify the opinions of the opposing shadows of squealers and FGD contributors, and network tables were arranged around the issues.

5. Results and Discussion

This section describes the respondents and presents the baseline characteristics of the respondents included in this study. 28 (82%) of the 34 respondents were men, while 6 (18%) were women. This section demonstrates that the research is concerned with socioeconomic issues. Out of 34 respondents, 17 (50%) are between the ages of 8 and 13, and another 17 (50%) are between the ages of 14 and 18. These findings imply that respondents' ages matter simply because the study focused on children, which is why the age bracket was less than 18 years. In comparison to 11 respondents (32%) who did not attend school and a small percentage (1%), who had completed primary school, a significant portion of respondents (22%) had dropped out. These results imply that street children are not able to finish primary school due to sexual abuse. As a result, **Table 1** summarizes the respondents' socio-demographic details, including their gender, age, and educational attainment.

The street minors have experienced heterosexual, bisexual, homosexual, and group sex, which has been performed by them or by onlookers. 26 (76.5%) of the 34 street children who were sampled had experienced sexual assault. According to data, 65% of street children are sexually abused while sleeping, and a significant number are cheated (see details on **Table 2**). One of the street child testified:

"We are usually kidnapped for sex at night by security guards, watchmen of shops who are guarding various places in the city, and other adult people when we go to request for shelter to sleep".

Raping, sodomy, undressing, and beating are common forms of sexual abuse. The most prevalent type of sexual assault is rape (65%), followed by sodomy (24%). (See also **Table 3**). A girl of 13 years reported:

Table 1. Background characteristics of the children (N = 60).

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Sex		
Female	6	18%
Male	28	82%
Age of respondent		
8 - 13	17	50%
14 - 18	17	50%
Level of Education		
Not gone to school at all	11	32%
Drop out of Primary Education	22	65%
Primary education	1	3%
Total	34	100%

Table 2. Occurrence of abuse.

When violence occurred	Frequency	Percent
I was cheated by people	8	31%
Kidnapped at night when asleep	17	65%
I was coming from school	1	4%
Total	26	100.0

Table 3. Common sexual abuse.

Sexual abuse type	Frequency	Percent
Raping	24	64.9%
Sodomy	9	24.3%
Undressing us	2	5.4%
Beating us	2	5.4%
Total	37	100

“We come across different actions, sometimes we are raped, sometimes they enter us from the back, and sometimes they beat us up”.

The maximum number of times a child has been sexually abused is nine, and the minimum is once, but many children have been sexually violated multiple times. A 15 years old girl reported:

“I have been raped more than three times by different peoples, and yet I see it a normal thing”.

Although it is the duty of the government to shield all minors from harm like violence and beatings, street children are not adequately safeguarded (Mazikana, 2019). Furthermore, municipalities were given total control over child care as a result of government decentralization. They care about stopping child abuse and

safeguarding children from it. They are also in charge of helping abused children by treating them and offering them support. **Table 4** summarizes the effects experienced by sexually abused street children. The consequences are physical, reproductive, and psychosocial in nature.

According to data in **Table 4**, the most common effects are contracting infectious diseases and pains and swelling of the genital, as reported by 30% and 23% of respondents, respectively. Confusion (15%) and low self-esteem (11%) have also been shown to occur at a reasonable rate. The street minors who had been sexually abused were asked to rate how they thought police officers, medical professionals, and social welfare workers perceived them. **Table 5** provides a summary of the perceptions. Street children who experience sexual abuse face serious repercussions, such as an increased risk of HIV infection, unintended

Table 4. Effects experienced by sexually abused street children.

Negative effect	Frequency	Percent
Pregnancy	4	9
Pains and swelling of genitals	11	23
Infections of diseases	14	30
Death.	1	2
Confusion	7	15
Fear	3	6
Lack of self-esteem	5	10
To be stigmatized	1	2
Revenge from perpetrators	1	2
Total	47	100

Table 5. Perceptions about sexually abused street children.

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Police	Positive	5 19%
	Negative	12 46%
	Neutral	7 27%
Nurse	Positive	6 23%
	Negative	7 27%
	Neutral	11 42%
Social welfare officer	Positive	6 23.1
	Negative	3 11.5
	Neutral	15 57.7
Total	26	100.0

pregnancy, sexual assault (more common in young boys), and other STDs. Their mental health may also be affected by drugs and alcohol (Harris, Rice, Rhoades, Winetrobe, & Wenzel, 2017). Furthermore, these street children may face physical harassment from police, such as being beaten (Cénat et al., 2018). This type of police treatment is a violation of Tanzania's Child Act of 2009. Nonetheless, many street children who are victims of abuse, violence, and exploitation do not report their cases to the appropriate authorities (Ezekiel et al., 2017).

According to these results, 46% of police officers have a negative opinion of sexual abuse survivors, while 27% express no opinion. According to the survey, 23% of respondents said nurses and doctors treated sexual assault survivors favorably (treating them with the same respect as other children), 27% said negatively, and 42% were undecided. 58% of respondents had an unfavorable, 23% favorable, and 12% neutral opinion of social welfare officers. Service providers' perceptions of street minors are not satisfactory. Because police officers are biased against children who live on the streets, most minors claim they would avoid going near a police station out of concern that they might be arrested. The police are the most feared source of assistance among the three. Children view medical facilities as a trustworthy source of assistance because they think that not all nurses and physicians are bad. The social welfare system is largely unknown to numerous young people. The participants were questioned about their satisfaction with the caliber of the assistance they had reported receiving at the source of assistance. **Table 6** provides a summary of the findings.

Despite their fear of the police, sexually abused street children find the services provided by the police gender desk to be somewhat satisfactory (77%). 46% do not find post-violence services to be user-friendly, while 39% do. The community provides almost no socioeconomic support (81%). **Table 7** summarizes the findings on whether or not sexually abused street children received support when they presented themselves where they were supposed to get help.

Finally, the study provides a juncture for observing the life skills of these vulnerable children living in a problematic environment. According to the findings, the majority of street children are victims of sexual violence. The study discovered that street children are vulnerable to sexual abuse. According to the research, the perpetrators of this sexual violence are either other street children or adults. However, many members of this vulnerable group are defenseless against sexual assault brought on by a lack of secure housing as well as family protection.

Table 6. Table: Satisfaction with the services by sexually abused street children.

	The gender desk offers the help that satisfies the needs of sexually violated street children	The post violence services offered to children who encountered sexual violence are friendly	There is socio-economic support received from the members of the society
Yes	4 (15%)	4 (15%)	2 (8%)
No	2 (8%)	12 (46%)	21 (81%)
Somehow	20 (77%)	10 (39%)	3 (11%)

Table 7. Treatment at the source of support.

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Counseling	8	23%
They took me to hospital for treatment	8	23%
Good caring	4	11%
Did not help me at all	15	43%
Total	35	100%

According to the findings, the majority of respondents (43%) did not receive any assistance. Because of the public's concern about sexual abuse among street children, various initiatives have been launched to address the issue. With plans for evaluation and national scale-up, UNICEF has worked with the Tanzanian government, in particular, to develop and strengthen the country's child protection system (Ismail, 2020; Reuben, Mohamed, & Mutasa, 2021). These systems, however, are inaccessible and difficult to use for street children. No matter their age, gender, religion, or culture, all children in Tanzania have a right to protection from all types of abuse, violence, and exploitation (Kelly et al., 2022; Msangi, 2017; Sungwa, Jackson, & Kahembe, 2022). Even so, 3 out of every 10 girls and 1 out of every 7 boys are victims of violence on a daily basis. The lack of accountability on the part of community leaders, families, national agencies, and policies has prevented effective coordination of services for affected children in Tanzania, despite the fact that violence appears to be a serious issue there. Additionally, many incidents go unreported (Christopher, 2020; Reuben, Mohamed, & Mutasa, 2022).

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

According to the study's findings, the majority of respondents are male as opposed to female. The sexually abused street children have been subjected to a wide range of sexual encounters, with rape and sodomy being the most common. The maximum number of times a child has been sexually abused is nine, and the minimum is once, but many children have been sexually violated multiple times. The most common side effects are infectious diseases and genital pains and swelling. While social welfare officers and nurses have neutral attitudes toward sexually abused street children, the police have a negative attitude. While the services provided by the police gender desk are somewhat satisfactory, the post-violence services are not user-friendly, and the community provides little assistance. When sexually abused street children presented themselves where they were supposed to receive assistance, they were generally ignored. A significant public health concern with negative health and social repercussions is violence against street children. It imposes diverse sexual burdens on survivors as well as demographic, intergenerational, and other effects. Due to survivors' vulnerability to psychological harm, the spread of AIDS and HIV, as well as other illnesses, unintended pregnancies, sexual abuse has grave long-term effects. In

addition, it can raise the rates of maternal and infant mortality and sever families and communities.

Tanzania's policy considers anyone under the age of 18 to be a child. As a result, according to Tanzania Law of Child Act No 21 (2009), all children have rights that must be strengthened, protected, and maintained in accordance with international and regional conventions. Furthermore, the government should encourage more private sectors to open more centers to care for street children. Furthermore, the government should support existing centers, particularly financial center assistance. Unfortunately, there are few non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Tanzania's major cities, where there are many street children. The organization that works with and supports street children includes the Social Welfare Office, SAFINA, KISEDET, and others. These organizations should educate street children about sexual abuse and its consequences, as well as raise awareness about the minors' constitutional rights. In addition, organizations should collaborate with community members to uncover hidden issues. NGO's are responsible for ensuring that children's long-term and short-term concerns are effectively addressed, because children are constantly unable to express for themselves the horrifying phenomenon of child sexual violence.

Furthermore, the investigation suggests that community members should adopt a positive attitude toward street children rather than viewing them as vagrants. Furthermore, community members are advised to view street children as a vulnerable group in need of assistance rather than criminals. Furthermore, the investigation suggests that community members should adopt a more positive attitude toward street children and not treat them as vagabonds. Furthermore, community members are advised to view street children as a defenseless group in need of assistance rather than as criminals. Thus, accountability falls on the government and non-governmental organizations to care for these children; however, the entire community should assume and provide fundamental support. It suggests that community members change their pessimistic outlook and help these vulnerable groups.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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