



## **Push and Pull Factor for Rural Children Migration to Cities become as A Street Children's – A study of Assela Town**

Berhanu Hailemeskel, Library Team Leader, Arsi University.  
Dr. C. Senthilkumar, Assistant Professor, Dept of Sociology and Social Work,  
CSS&H, Arsi University.

### **ABSTRACT**

*This research intended to determine specifically the area of Push and Pull factors of migrant children; drivers and lived experiences of migrant children. The researcher used a phenomenological qualitative research strategy; the study target population consisted of street children's living on the street who do not go to their family/relatives regularly. Observation, Focus Group Discussion, interview, a case study approach were used to collect data. The collected data was analyzed thematically. The research findings reveal that many factors were generally, happened to be the drivers and lived experience of migrant children in Asella Town. These are poverty, beating at home, Parent separation, Parent divorce large family size, lack of awareness about Asella Town, and death of parents According to results obtained, even though, street children has different mechanisms to exist, they face challenges like shortage of food, abuse, shortage of cloth, in acceptability by the society and absence of meaningful work, and no home to live. Society seems to isolate street children and due to the stigma streets find it difficult to be integrated with the other members of the society. However, despite the many challenges faced, there are some street children who are economically help themselves and their families.*

## **Background of the Study:**

The concept of migrant children refers to all boys and girls below the age of 18 years, for whom the street in the widest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwellings and waste lands, more than their family, has become his or her habitual of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised, or by responsible adult/family (Kipyegon ,2015). Rural-urban migration of children is one of popular type of migrations in developing countries. Some of the findings show that migration of children is closely linked to the history of town development. Urbanization has largely taken place as a result of the “push” rural inhabitants to urban areas (ILO, 2013). In view of the high rates of urban population growth and the low level of urbanization, rural to urban migration appears to have been the major component of urban population growth in many developing countries. In low-income nations, rural–urban migration is seen as contributing to shortages in the provision of adequate housing, basic infrastructure and services; also to overcrowding and congestions/excessive traffic as well as increasing exposure to environmental hazards(Cecil ilia,2015.)

Migration of children from Rural to Urban in Ethiopia is not a new phenomenon. As in many African countries, the scale of the problem of migrant street children in Ethiopia has reached unprecedented levels (Girmachew, 2006). Forum on street children –Ethiopia (FSCE, 2003) conducted a study on the situation of street children in Ethiopia and found that the problem is growing in all towns, especially in Addis Ababa. Although the problem of street children is understood as an urban phenomenon, many of these children have rural origin. Chronic livelihood poverty in rural areas of the country which traditionally relied upon subsistence farming, in general, leads children to move to the city streets in search of better livelihood (Degefa, 2005). The researcher’s sample consists of street children who came from the rural villages, who in different ways earn income from the street, and who do not have relationship with their families frequently. Currently, even if organized data is not available, the number of street children in Asella Town administration is seams increasing time to time. These children push their life without adequate resources, and the majority of them are seen forced to work some sort of hard labor, their employment mainly takes place on the street.

## **Statement of the problem:**

Ethiopian is one of the highest poverty rates in the world with more than 38% of its population living below poverty line, Poverty is not only pervasive but also age and gender

---

biased. Street Children face complex and interwoven socio-economic problems and remain among the most vulnerable groups of the population. They usually do not have appropriate relationship with what we call institutions of childhood such as family, school, health, etc (World Bank,2018.)According to the draft national program of action programme action for children and women, it is estimated that there are about 100,000 street children in Ethiopia with number rising steadily and drastically over the year. Out of the 250,000 homeless children and 100000 street children in Ethiopia, only small proportions are receiving some kind of welfare and rehabilitation services (including vocational training, family support, and adaptation). These existing are only 6% of the total affected children. (UNSEF, 2008) estimated that the problem may be far more serious, with nearly 600,000 street children countrywide and over 100,000 in Addis a Ababa. Children migrant to urban street from rural areas for different reasons including preserving urban areas are good to change they are lives and families economic problems (Germachew,2006).

In this regard, much had not been done to study the drivers and lived experiences rural urban migrant street children in Asella Town. A limited study available indicates that this phenomenon is already a major social problem in Addis Ababa and in other major urban areas. A few have attempted to study these aspects of urban-ward migration such as (Girma 2006) in Addis Ababa, (Beranu, 2007 & Shimelis,2015) in Hawassa Some of these studies are from the point of view of street children and most of them are out dated.

### **Objectives of the Study:**

- To identify the driving (push and pull) factors of rural-urban migrant children in Asella town.
- To explore lived experience of street life in Asella Town.

### **Various categories of street children:**

(UNICEF, 2008). There are those who work on the streets as their only means of getting money, those who take refuge on the streets during the day but return to some form of family at night and those who permanently live on the street without a family network. All are at risk from abuse, exploitation and vigilante or police violence, but the most vulnerable are those who actually sleep and live on the streets, hiding under bridges, in gutters, in railway stations. While they may have small jobs such as shoe-shining or market-selling to pull through, many also end up dying on the pavement, victims of drugs, gang rivalry and disease. Without some form of basic education and economic training, the future is bleak for these street children and their life expectancy terrifyingly low (UN, 2017).

### **Lee's Theory of Migration Model:**

In 1966, Lee revised the basic push-pull concept. He developed a "general schema into which a variety of spatial movements can be placed. He also tried to figure out a number of conclusions with regard to the factors in the act of migration, the volume of migration, the development of streams and counter streams, and the characteristics of migrants. With regard to the factors in the act of migration he divided into "push" factors (factors associated with the area of origin), "pull" factors (factors associated with the area of destination), intervening obstacles and personal factors (Lee, 1966) Thus, a key prediction of the Lewis model was that rural-urban migration would primarily driven by the existence of surplus labour in rural areas along with the expanding opportunities of employment in urban areas (Dubey62, Jones and Sen, 2004).

### **The nature of Rural-Urban Migration in Ethiopia:**

As part of response to the famine, 1984-85 the Derg regime launched a massive national resettlement and villagization program intended to bring dispersed rural farmers from drought prone areas in the north into concentrated farming cooperatives, mostly in western Ethiopia estimated that the 1984-85 resettlement programs resulted in the movement of about 600,000 drought victims from northern and central Ethiopia (Kloos, 1990). During that time many children came to the countries Towns especially to Addis with their families and end up street children. Today, studies show that children exposed to street life for many reasons, some of the reasons are, economic problem, abuse in house, parent death or separate, Teenagers pressure, work load in the origin.

## **Methodology of the Research:**

This study was conducted in Asella Town Arsi Zone in the Oromia Regional state, Asella Town is a capital of Arsi Zone, Oromia regional state. It is located about 175 km south east of Addis Ababa which is the capital city of Ethiopia. This study was conducted in purposely selected kebeles of Asella Town. This kebeles were selected because they are affected by significance size of rural out migration to Asella Town. The research design for this paper is qualitative phenomenological approach. Qualitative approach provide an in-depth understanding of the ways the migrant children explaining the drivers of rural-urban migration how they interpreted and make sense of their own experiences before they come to and the current live they are living. A researcher choose to view phenomenology study as a methodology because this approach describes; the personal or community context in which participants live, the social cultural context of the study population, and broad political economic or historical context that shape a research. In order to triangulate as to how the information obtained from question guide FGD and interview, case study method is used.

The study targeted Asella Town, Asella Town is divided into eight administrative kebeles namely, Burkitu, Hanku, Buseta, Welkesa, Halila, Kombolcha, Arada and Chilalo. The 2007 national census reported a total population for Asella is 67,269, of whom 33,826 were men and 33,443 were women. The majority of the inhabitants said they practiced Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity, with 67.43% of the population reporting they observed this belief, while 22.65% of the population was Muslim, and 8.75% of the population were Protestant (CSA, 2007). The target population consisted of street children, governmental organizations involved in providing information about experience of street children in Asella Town. The researcher had administered data collection from about 34 respondents, out of which 1 male & 1 female for case study approach of the street children whose ages are 7-18 who work or live on the streets of the selected four areas. Purposive sampling technique employed to select the study kebeles and Purposely, four kebeles that were affected by significance size of rural out migration to Asella was selected. The researchers went to all the places in the kebeles where street children were found in high concentration and interviewed the children who happened to be working or who were around. Data analysis consists of examining, categorizing, and tabulation/arranging and recombining to get meaningful elements of words.

## **Data presentation, analysis and Discussion:**

On gender it was established that 50% were male and 50% were female. Gender balance were maintained.

### **Age**

The phenomenological study indicated that majority of respondents 34 (100%) failed under the age 11-17 Years. That means most street children are on the school age of grade 5-8 or primary.

### **Education level**

The researcher was interested in education level in which they quit from school and the relationship established between children street work and education. The demographic information shown that most of street children have a low level education (primary). That is 22(65%) primary (6-8), 10(29%) primary (1-5), (3%) Illiterate (unable to read and write). The other 1(3%) were grade 9-10 (secondary) and 1(3%) illiterate. This statistics indicates that street children in Asella Town do not get their fundamental right to education.

### **Religion**

The information obtained about the religion belief of the children allowed that 24 (70%) of them of are orthodox, 7(21%) muslim and 3(9%) protestant. The majority of the respondents (70%) is Christians (mainly orthodox).

### **Ethnicity**

The composition of ethnic group were: Amhara, Oromo, Welayita, Guraghe and Tigre. The the majority of respondents 15(44%) were Oromo followed by Amhara 14(41%), Welayita 3(9%), Guraghe 1(3%) and 1(3%) Tigre. From this we can conclude that the children of the street of Asella were from different ethnic groups.

Street Children of Asella Town originated from different diversified areas. As can be shown from table above majority of respondent 5 (15%) came from Tiyo Woredas followed by Kersa and shirka each woredas 4(11%). Assasa, Digelu/Tiyo and Welayita each 3(9%), as well as Adama 2(6%), Hetosa 3(9%) Bekoji 1(3%), Enkolo Wabe 2(6%), Guraghe, Shiree, Robe and Z/Dugda 1(3%) each wereda. We understand from table 2 the push and pull factors may be serious in Tiyo and Kersa woredas.

## **Case Studies:**

Paulose age 17 is from Welayita; He said, my father farms a small plot of land. He also cultivates other people's land as a share. My mother is a housewife. I have two brothers and two sisters I am the elder son. My brothers and sisters are living in welayita with my parents. I used to live with my family before two years. I was a grade six student. Problem we faced in the family forced me to quit school and search for work. My aim was to get some money, help my family, and to save money to continue my education.

In Asella, I used to Carry Luggage, and whatever I can carry. Soon after, I changed my work to lottery vending. Lottery vending is better than carrying luggage. Now I am living better than before. Daytime I work on street and night we 5 in number rented house for 400 birr. Each of us pay 80 birr monthly. However, if we fail to pay this money, we will return to our sleeping place to Street (berenda). In average I earning 50- 60 birr daily. I save at least 30 birr in average on daily basis. Sometimes I sent money for my family. From the above discussion we can draw a conclusion that migration has both beneficial and harmful implication.

### **Beating at Home-Violence**

Child beating (abuse) is when a parent or caregiver, whether through action or failing to act, causes injury, death, emotional harm or risk of serious harm to a child. There are many forms of abuse physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, or a combination of any or all of these. Abuse can also be neglect, which is when parents or guardians don't take care of the basic needs of the children who depend on them. Similarly, one of the respondents of this paper says the following.

Dagne, Age 14. Came from Kersa woreda ego Kebele(Arsi) He said, *I have two sisters and two brothers reason for my being on street life is that my father used to beat me repeatedly without any reason until I lose my consciousness. Sometimes I became feint (every night, two, three times daily). I work what he ordered me the whole day; whatever I work well didn't satisfy him. He never thanks me. He never send me to school for learning (I cannot read and write now) I always worry by not attending school. My age groups are in grade 8. He never buys cloth for me. My father is totally harsh person to me. This made run out of home. My brothers also faced the same problem and decided come and live with me on street. Now we live to gather. After I came Asella the first problems I faced was hunger, street children kicked me. They insulted me saying "Fara...fara...fara...It was also difficult for me to find*

*“sleeping place. Now I work everything (like washing car, carrying luggage, etc). I earn 20-30 birr daily.*

### **Death of One or both parents**

*Birke Age 15 place of origin welayita. She says, after my father and my mother died I used to live with my family. I have four brothers and two sisters. My father was chronic diabetic patient. The cause of his death is also diabetic. After the death of my father my mother became ill for a long period of time. Finally, she died because of her illness. After their death we hadn't food to be eaten, cloth and some other expenses. When things became dark, I decided to come Asella with my uncle daughter for searching work.*

*After I came Asella I started mobile card selling. Now I have passed two years on street life in selling mobile card .I work from 6 am up to 12:30 p.m, I pass night in a small house we rented for five on the boarder of kebele three. In early we rented very week house on the boarder of kebele three being in group (4/5). I earn 30-40 birr daily. During the day time I eat bread with tea and some other easy food. I visit my brothers and sisters on holidays once a year. Sometimes I use telephone and send money. The relation among us is very strong and we help each other for everything. Now I am living better than before .I have many customer who buy card from me. Thanks God!! I send money for my brothers.*

### **Education**

Less opportunities for children to go to school, develop livelihood skills, getting paid work ,family an able to cover school materials (exercise, book, pen ,cloth ) and feed lead them to street life.

*Mustefa Age 17 who came from Kersa woreda (Arsi) forwarded his idea as follows;-I came to learn here in Asella. I stayed more than two years on street life my parents are both alive. I came to Asella because we only have a very small land that cannot feed all of us all year and my parents do not have any other means of income. , even I couldn't buy stationery for my education. We cannot get more land. On our small land we only grow gerbu (barley) once in a year, and we cannot grow enough food to feed us all the year. When I reached about to stop school, I came Asella believing that my uncle supports me to learn. But he didn't allow me to continue regular class. He told me to continue my education in the extension program and work during day time. Then, even if I wanted to continue regular class, it was not possible for me to do so except attending extension program. Then, I chose to work Shoe shinning (listro). Now I, am*



*learning in grade 7 at Limat Behibret elementary school where the classroom set up is at Chilalo High school.*

### **Friend/Peer pressure**

Some children are more likely to be negatively influenced by peers – for example, children who have poor self-confidence of their own, who feel they have few friends, and who have special needs. These children might feel that the only way they'll be included and accepted in social groups is by taking on the behavior, attitudes and look of a group. Children who have strong self-esteem are better at resisting negative peer influence (Raising Children Network, 2015).

*Tejitu. age 17. Says, I came from Wello (Amhara Region) before one year with our neighbors daughter. She came to Asella 4-5 years ago. When she came to visit her parents she bought cloth for her mother, father, and sisters and brothers. She also bought netela and shash for many of her parents neighbors. During her stay within us, she advised me to be with her and my parents agreed. Then I came here with her, When we reach Asella she told me to involve in sex worker. But I refused. After some time, she left the area. I don't know where she went. At present I wash cloths for people, bake injera, and sell roasted potato.*

## **Lived Experience of Rural-Urban Migrant Children in Asella Town**

### **The influence of senior street Adults**

Street adult can identify who are newcomers and who are not. They identify newcomers by looking to different physical conditions. Some of identifications characters are clothing, speech, by looking at their face, by watching out their activity. After identifying the new comer, they call and invite the new comer food and drink. Then, they negotiate and ask the new street child to be with them. The final goal of treating the new comer is to make him/her service giver to them. After they became family, the new street child begins serving the adult street men.. Gradually, the new street child learns taking harmful substances.

**Observation:** *On Easter Holiday (30/07/2010 E.C) The researcher Came across the street adults and street children begging money from people walking on the street. The researcher watched out the activity carefully and asked what they were going to do with collected money. The street adult told him to return in the afternoon in order to see the afternoon Ceremony. The researcher returned back at 4:00 P.M. When the researcher reached he saw*

*a very hot ceremony surrounded by large amount of chat, Cigarette and tea pot. There were also many loaves of bread in front of the adult street to the right of street child. The street child was serving the adult street while he was chewing chat. It is easy to guess that the street child could learn to test harmful drugs from such activities.*

### **Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation:**

Some of the push factors are; economical problem, beating at home, peer pressure, Parental separation, large family size, parents died, and lack of awareness (having incorrect information) about the destination or Asella Town. Some of the pull factors include; Education, Teenagers pressure. Secondly, the finding shows living of the street of Asella town have both positive and negative result. Positive results are; access to daily laborer, access to daily meal, learning how to cope with problems. Negative result are; negative impact of senior street adults, addiction of drug substance, hunger, shortage of cloth, working long hours and problem of sleeping quarter. Lack of guidance and counseling is also considered as a big problem of street children in the origin and destination area.

The decision to leave is developed through time and assumes the characteristics of a process. Overall, it was the breakdown of trust within households that led them to move to the street. In this context, the departure from home is perceived by the children as a positive alternative to the acceptance of violence and abuse or excessive control at home. Poverty has forced many children from the poor area to migrate to the streets in search of food; most of these children are of school age going but are unable to attend school because of poverty.

Unless applying meaningful planned operation and addressing inclusive structure that make possible to mobilize every segment of the society, the problems of street children are beyond we think over it. .Through mobilizing the society at large, it is possible to tackle the problems of street children that are mentioned in finding of this study.

- Efforts should be made by government bodies, religious institutions, NGOs, Private sectors to reunite street children with their families.
- Strong efforts should be made to increase access to food, clothes, shelter, education and healthcare.
- Linking children of the street with families or creating family like groups to help meet the needs of children.

- Awareness raising campaigns by the media against various phenomena associated with the street such as begging, violence, sexual exploitation, child-labor exploitation, discrimination.

## References:

Abdelgalil S., Gurgel R. G., Theobald S., Cuevas L. E( 2004)Household and family characteristics of street children in Aracaju, Brazil. *Archives of Disease in Childhood*.(9):817–820.

Berhanu, M. (2007). Looking back at migration: Female labor migration to the Middle East: The case of the returnees in Ethiopia.

CSA,(2007).Population dynamics”, Addis Ababa Central Statistical Agency.

Daniel et al.(2009). ‘Noticing and helping the neglected child: summary of a systematic literature review’. *International Journal of Child and Family Welfare*, 12(4): 120.

Degefa A.(2005).Rural Livelihoods, Poverty, and Food Security in Ethiopia: A case Study at Erenssa and Garbi Communities in Oromiya Zone, Amhara National Regional State. DoctoralThesis. Norwegian University of Science and Technology. Faculty of Social

Dubey, A., R. Palmar Jones and K. Sen (2004), Surplus Labor, Social Structure and Rural to Urban Migration: Evidence from Indian Data: paper presented at the conference on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anversary of the Lawis Model, 6-7 july.

Ghuri, P. N. (2005). Research methods in business studies: A practical guide. Pearson Education. India

Girmachew Adugna: (2006) Livelihood and Survival Strategies among migrant children in Abbaba,Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) Trondheim, Norway

Kipyegon,Kirui et.al.(2015) Factors influencing rising number of street children in Urban Centers in Kenya:A survey of Eldort Municipality ,Kenya. *Journal of European open Urban Studies &Development journal* Vol.1 No.1, January,pp.1-14.

Kopoka, (2002) “The problem of street children in East Africa: An ignored tragedy” in Lugalla, J and Kibassa, C (eds) *Poverty AIDS and Street Children in East Africa*, The

Edwin Mellen Press. New YorkBrighton, United Kingdom.

Lee ES. 1966. A Theory of Mition. Demography 3:47-57 retrieved <file:///C:/Users/user>

Sentayehu B.(2014),The situation of children Who lost their parents: The Case Of Addis  
UNICEF (2005) The State of the World's Children 2006: Excluded and Invisible. New York:  
The United Nations Children's Fund.

UNICEF. (2008), Children and Armed Conflict in Sri Lanka conducted, UNICEF  
UN(2017).High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR),<http://data.unhcr.org./Syrian/refugees>  
regional.php.as of 1February

WorldBank (2018) Ethiopia povertyassessment retieved from [http://www.worldbank.org/en/t](http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poerty/publication/Ethiopia-poverty-assessment)  
[opic/po](http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poerty/publication/Ethiopia-poverty-assessment)erty/ publication/Ethiopia-poverty-assessment access on 24/02/2018.