

**PERCEPTION AND EXPERIENCE OF CHILDREN IN
CONFLICT WITH THE LAW: IN THE CASE OF ADDIS
ABABA REMAND HOME**

BY

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Certificate of Originality

This is to certify that Jenberu Haile student of SMW from Indra Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi, was working under my supervision and guidance for his project work for the course MSWP-001.this project work entitled Perception and Experience of Children who Become in Conflict with the Law which he has submitted is his genuine and original work

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ABSTRACT

This study finds out the factors that contribute to the participant children's recidivism or repeatedly becoming in conflict with the law and their experience and perception towards the children correction center. The participants were ten children (aged 10 to 16) who were in the Addis Ababa Remand Home more than once and three staff members were involved as key informants. The study showed that the factors that lead children to be in conflict with the law are complicatedly interrelated and interwoven and no single factor was found responsible to put them in this situation; but the sum of various factors, predominantly being family factors, and followed by peer influence, substance abuse, street life, school factors, community and neighborhood characteristics, and institutional factors were revealed. The participant children's experiences and perceptions towards their being in conflict with the law repetitively were also explored. It was also found out that after they were released the children have different experiences during their first incarceration, in their subsequent incarcerations and their future challenge for change. Their perceptions to their being in conflict with the law repeatedly were also multifarious in nature. They perceive themselves as sinner, cursed, rejected, unwanted, cannot do better in life in the future, and other negative perception, which could also hinder them from being rehabilitated in the future. The study revealed various implications of social work, policymaking, and research by understanding the major factors for recidivism and the ways to minimize the problem with the collaboration of the Remand Home and other responsible bodies.

Key words: recidivism, children in conflict with the law, remand home

CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND

One of the most devastatingly challenging issues that people of the world is facing these days is crime. It is affecting the life of any people irrespective of their age, race and socioeconomic status, though there are a lot of evidences that depict that crime is fueled and aggravated by social and economic problems like unemployment, poverty, family breakdown and other problems (Barnes, n.d.). When criminal activities escalate, the total harmful effect they bring about to the society also rises. Children involvement in crime is also the most challenging problem across the nations of the world. Children in conflict with the law are children or adolescents apprehended by authorities and accused or suspected of committing illegal acts, which are listed in the legal codes of countries or states (Keith, 2002). Criminal behavior that is taken as in conflict with the law in the youth community is usually considered as a criminal act if it would have been committed by adults too. Children can be in conflict with the law for the first time or may become repeatedly in conflict with the law (recidivism) (ACPF, 2007). Recidivism is usually used to refer to re-offending after release from a correctional centre; in other words, a relapse or return to criminal activity by children who have been in conflict with the law before (Mbuba & Grenier, 2008).

As to the definition given in the Riyadh Guidelines, a juvenile (child) is any person under the age of 18 (the Riyadh Guideline, 1990). Besides, Article 1 of the Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC), which Ethiopia has ratified, and enacted as a law of the Land through proclamation No. 10/1992, defines the 'child' as "every human being below the age of 18 years" (CRC, 1992). Article 198 of the Ethiopian civil code defines the child as a "minor" who is a person of either sex who has not attained the full age of 18 years (civil code of Ethiopia, 1960).

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The penal code of Ethiopia on the other hands classified children under 18 years of age into three categories: infants, young persons, and offenders over 15 years of age. Infants refer to children less than 9 years who are not responsible for their actions, while young persons are those aged 9 to 15, who are to certain extent accountable to their actions but not to that of adults. This group shall not be kept in custody with adult offenders and measures would be taken only if the young person who is in conflict with the law was convicted. In the penal code of Ethiopia (1957) child offenders who are over 15 and under 18 years are tried under the ordinary provisions of the penal code like adult criminals with the exception of not facing capital punishment and having the right to be in a separate correctional home.

Based on (UNICEF, 2005), the age of criminal responsibility which begins from the age nine years in Ethiopia is among the lowest age in the world. A recent legislative reform has indicated a trend towards rising the age of criminal capacity in Africa. For example in Ghana the minimum age of criminal capacity is fourteen years old, whereas in Uganda the minimum age of criminal capacity was seven years. However, in the 1996, Uganda children's statute raised the minimum age to be twelve years old, (Beukman, 2005). In spite of the fact that the various international minimum legal standards, which Ethiopia is a signatory; the minimum age of criminal responsibility stated in 1957 penal code has been maintained in the criminal code of 2005. International minimum legal standards are those standards that are set by international organizations or states on how to handle specific cases, and no one can go below the minimum standards but it is possible to entertain the case in a better way than the minimum standards.

Before Italian occupation the problem of children becoming on conflict with the law was not recognized in Ethiopia. It was because of this occupation that many children lost their parents because of the war and became without protection and parental guidance. As a result,

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children sometimes started to involve in small offences like shoplifting in market places, buses and so forth (Andargachew, 2004). It was in response to these emerging problems that the Addis Ababa Boys' training and Remand Home for detention and Education of the Juvenile was established in 1943 (UNCEF, 2005).

According to [Andargachew, 2004], the major offences committed by children can be classified as economic crimes like burglary, theft, robbery and attempt of robbery, breach of trust and crime against the state and municipal regulation and violent crimes like international homicide and assault and battery as well as sexual offence. The Addis Ababa Bureau of Social and Labor Affairs reported in 2002 that children in conflict with the law in Addis Ababa are increasing at a rate of more than 5% per year (Azeb, 2004). In addition to the above report, data compiled in 2003 by Addis Ababa Police Commission and Forum for street children Ethiopia (FSCE) show that there were a total of 13,588 offences from the year 1998/99 to 2000/01 committed by child offenders. Among the offences 85.5% of the children were from age 15 to 18, where as 13.8% were committed by children of age 9-14. Those below 9 years old committed 0.5% of the total offence during the three years. However, data regarding age are not reliable because of the absence of compulsory vital registration system. Most of the children who are in conflict with the law were male (98.8%) (Azeb, 2004). According to (Andargachew, 2004), the proportion of children in conflict with the law aged 9 to 18 to the total adult criminals in the years 1992/93 was 17.3 percent of the crime reported to the police.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As children indulge in crime can be the basis for adult's crime, a considerable amount of emphasis must be given to the problem (Beukman, 2005). The recidivism of children who become in conflict with the law presents even a more disturbing problem, considering the consensus in general literature that adult's criminals start their criminal tendencies in their adolescent years, suggesting that to deal with adult criminality; we must begin by working on children in conflict with the law (Mbuba, 2004).

The problem of children who become in conflict the law is one of the biggest challenges that exist in the juvenile justice system of Ethiopia also. A considerable number of children are incarcerated in the Remand Home for a repeated number of times. According to the survey conducted for the purpose of institutional capacity need assessment of the Addis Ababa Remand Home (Azeb 2004), among the number of arrests at the time of the survey, 68.2% were arrested by the police only once, 15.5% arrested twice, 3.6% arrested three times and the rest 7.2 % were not arrested by police (Azeb,2004).

Scholars in different disciplines have examined risk factors of children who become in conflict with the law for decades. The major risk factors that lead children to be in conflict with the law and lead them to recidivism are attributed to some of these areas: individual characteristics, offense history, and, academic failure or disengagement, peer relation, substance abuse, psychological factors, community or neighborhood characteristics, and parenting patterns and family circumstances like family breakdown or broken homes which refer to family structure that has been disturbed by separation, divorce or death of parent (Mbuba,2004; Beukman,2005). Loose family control and supervision, poor disciplinary measure, lack of parental love and

rejection have also been found by different researchers to be the causes of children's repeatedly involvement in criminal activity (Stoddard, 2201; Mbuba, 2004; Keith, 2002).

A considerable amount of literature has also linked peer influence to patterned delinquent behavior, with peer pressure being a central explanation of not only first involvement in delinquency, but also the repetitive pattern that typifies recidivism (Mbuba&Grenier, 2008). In addition Medias like television and movies have been mentioned as factors leading to delinquency by promoting justice through the physical elimination of enemies. Many researchers have concluded that young people who watch violence tend to behave more aggressively or violently, particularly when provoked (World Youth Report, 2003).

Since there are particular risk factors that lead a child to engage in criminal activity, there are also recognized protective factors by researchers that can encourage pro-social behaviors. These factors are divided into external influences and internal influence that are related to preventing and reducing children from being in conflict with the law. The internal influence include achievement motivation, school engagement, integrity and honesty, responsibility, resistance skills which a youth can use to resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations, peaceful conflict resolution skill, self-esteem, positive view of personal future and interpersonal competence are some of them. Some of external influence includes high levels of love and support within the family, positive family communication, caring neighborhood, caring school climate which provides a caring, safe, encouraging environment, adult role models who have positive and responsible behavior, and positive influence (Stoddard, 2001).

Other researches on recidivism were conducted on the difference between institutionalized and community based treatment on reducing recidivism (Sari, Rollin, Stephens

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&Wolfson, 1996). These researches revealed that there is no difference between recidivism in the type of treatments. According to Sarri et al, the only difference discovered was that the community-based programs were more cost effective than the institutionalized one. However, although the practice on Ethiopia is not extensive, the reality shows that the program of community-based treatment has a significant role in reducing re-offences, since the program addresses the major factors of the problem that the children are facing (Save the Children Sweden, 2005). Moreover, the program prevents the criminalized child from getting criminal records and being labeled as criminal as some researchers agree on how labeling can predispose juveniles to the possibility of repeated offences.

The researches concerning recidivism-children who repeatedly become in conflict with the law in developed countries are done in their own economic, social, culture and other contexts. As I have attempted to review studies concerning children in conflict with the law and recidivism in Ethiopia, which were accessible and available, done by different stakeholders who are working on children in conflict with the law; namely, those done by different stakeholders who are working on Street Children Ethiopia (FSCE) and government organizations like Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA). Most of the above documents were concerned with the general situation of children who become in conflict with the law. Accordingly, the current research focuses on finding out the factors that contribute to juvenile's recidivism through their experience and perception.

SIGNIFICANCE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study is important in that understanding about juvenile repeated involvement in crimes has various implications for the future youth-development programs in particular and for the well being of the society in general. Moreover, because very few studies have been done in Ethiopia with regard to children who become in conflict with the law repeatedly and in particular very little are mentioned about recidivism, this study will contribute on the existing fund of knowledge in Ethiopia concerning children in conflict with the law and recidivism.

Besides, understanding the factors that contribute to children involvement in crime and recidivism is important for the development of effective policy responses to the problem. Particularly, understanding why children relapse to criminal activities after being released from Remand Home is crucial to design the appropriate treatment and preventive approaches. This study is not only useful to policy makers, but also to practitioners like therapists, caseworkers, and also program managers.

Therefore, the main objective of this research is to explore the associated factors that contribute for children's recidivism from the point of view of their experience and perception. This was done by critically analyzing some cases of children who repeatedly become in conflict with the law and are in Addis Ababa Remand Home.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research will attempt to respond to the following three research questions.

1. Why do children become repeatedly in conflict with the law after they are released from the Remand Home?
2. How do children in conflict with the law repeatedly perceive themselves as recidivist?
3. What are the experiences of the children recidivism in time of their incarceration; after they get released/ from remand home/

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

The main theories available in the literature that explain why children become in conflict with the law are biological theory; sociological theories of crime like strain theory, labeling theory and social control theory; and psychological theories of social learning. The detailed discussion of these theories is given below.

Biological theory: Biological theory refers to the effect of hereditary (inherited physical) traits on human behavior. They present strongly deterministic explanations of criminality, and hold that some people are “naturally born criminals” with physical qualities that govern their deviant tendencies (Martin, 2005). In other words individuals who commit crimes had inherited certain biological and genetic factors (Asher, 2006). Therefore, this theory revolves around the idea that individuals are predisposed to commit crime. Therefore, according to this theory, individuals have no control over their behavior since it is influenced by physiological factors within their body. In my opinion however, since the idea of people’s predispositions to crime refutes the possibility that people can change, it is impossible to accept that this theory can solely explain the reason for children’s being in conflict with the law because it is too narrow and too derogatory, and denies the fact that behaviors are influenced by so many other factors within and around the person.

Labeling theory: Labeling theory or the integrationist approach is the sociological theory of crime. The theory focuses on how certain behaviors come to be labeled as deviant in the first place and how such designations influence future behavior (Pontell, 1999). The concept

of integrationist refers to the idea that criminal behavior involves more than one persons' act rather than the interaction between the labeled child and other conventional people who are the labelers (Thio, 2011). The theory asserts that "identifying or isolating deviant person as criminal could lead the labeled person to be what he is labeled as. Labeling a child as delinquent [criminal] will influence the child to consider himself as delinquent and affiliate with other children who had the same label" (Gullotta, Adams & Montemayor, 1998, P.28). So, according to this theory, there are basically two criminal acts, one is the first act that the child considered blameless but what conventional people consider as criminal behavior and the second is the final behavior or criminal act that comes after the child is labeled as criminal and which is defined as criminal act by both child and the society around her/him (Thio, 2001). However, labeling may sometimes not lead to persistent conflict with the law if one considers the possibility in which a person continues to be in conflict with the law even when he/she moved to a place where no one knows them enough to label them as criminals. So, one can say that labeling theory cannot logically deal with hidden deviance or delinquency because labeling theory assumes that unless a child is labeled as criminal (delinquent) or deviant she/he won't be in conflict with the law (Thio, 2001). Besides, labeling theory was criticized of not being able to answer the question of what causes children's being in conflict with the law. But, labeling theorists discard the critique by saying that the theory is not meant to explain what causes primary involvement in crime act at the first place, but how labeling causes secondary and recurrent conflicts with the law (Thio, 2001).

Strain theory: Strain theory is one of sociological theories, that assumes strain or frustration is the cause for children being in conflict with the law (Ngai & Cheung, 2005). According to this theory, strain occurs when there is a great disparity between what the person

wants and what he/she has attained because few legitimate means were available. This theory explains youths turn to crime as the only available means to achieve their goal when other legal options are missed (Gullotta, Adams & Mentemayor, 1998). There is an extent that the individual values and expects success through a legal means but when he/she experiences otherwise, he or she will feel frustrated and will strive to reduce the frustration through criminal behavior. Strain theory assumes that lower-class people are more likely to engage in deviant activities since background factors like economic problem, unemployment, social disability, and isolation are considered as a source of strain and because society fails to help them to fulfill their aspiration (Thio, 2001). Since not all members of society have an equal access to resource for achieving society's recognized goals, it can result in increasing strain on those less empowered members (Martin, 2005).

From my point of view, however, even though the task of failing to have legitimate means to achieve goals has significant contributions to children's involvement in criminal activities, this theory does not explain why those individuals who have the legal means to attain their aspirations become involved in crime. Therefore, strain theory cannot sufficiently spell the reason for children's being in conflict with the law since it gives too much emphasis on poorer classes and is unable to explain why the rich individuals still involve in criminal act. However, the theory is not without strength. As (Thio 2001) clearly stated "the premise appears valid as long as it is not used to make the unwarranted generalization that the lower classes are more pressured toward deviation in general than the upper classes" (p.23). So, anybody, weather she/he is in the lower, middle, or higher class, tends to involve in criminal act if they experience gap between aspiration and opportunity (Thio, 2001).

Social control theory: The other theory is social control theory, which presumes “people are naturally inclined to commit deviant act and will do so unless they are properly controlled” (Thio, 2001, p.27). According to social control theory individuals are prevented from engaging in criminal activities by the social bonds they are in. These bonds are external controls like family, school, and church as well as other conventional institutions and internal controls in the form of faithfulness to conventional beliefs and values (Ngai& Cheung, 2005). When these bonds or controls are not strong, the individual is free to engage in crime (Agrew, 1985). According to the theory, there are basically four social bonds that prevent the person from becoming in conflict with the law. The first is attachment, which refers to the love and respect that the individual holds towards important persons in his/her life such as parents, teachers, and peers. If an individual with high affection and respect to his parents or teachers are less probable to turn out to be in conflict with the law because they do not want to disappoint those people they love and respect (Agrew, 1985). The second social bond that stops a person from being involving in anti social activities according to the theory is commitment, which refers to “the individual’s actual or anticipated investment in conventional activities such as getting an education, building up a business, or acquiring a reputation virtue” (Agrew,1985,p.47). Therefore, the theory assumes that individual who invests much in such activities is less likely to engage in criminal behavior than those who doesn’t invest. The third social bond that the social control theory believes in controlling children from involving in criminal act refers to the amount of time spent in conventional activities. Therefore, individual who spends a lot of time in such activities has less time for involvement in antisocial behaviors. The final social bond is belief, which refers to “the individual’s commitment to the central value system of the society” (Agrew, 1985, p.47). Individuals who believe they should abide by the rules of society are less likely to engage in

criminal behavior. According to this theory, therefore, children can become in conflict with the law if they fail to be bound by the externalized and internalized controllers discussed above.

The theory, however, had been criticized of not treating cases where social bonds become weak because of the deviant behavior and because they assume that the motivation towards deviance is relatively constant across individuals (Thio, 2001). In addition, I personally believe that there are cases where these controlling mechanisms are not balanced with other influencing factors around the individual like poverty, failure in education or the availability of legitimate means. And sometimes over-control by the family and society itself might lead the person to be in conflict with the law like parents having authoritarian type and parenting style, who are highly demanding and directive and focuses on controlling the child and influencing them to comply with rules without questioning the rules, at the same time, they are unresponsive to the needs of the child (Darling & Steinberg, 1993).

Social learning theory: Psychological theories consider criminal behavior as deviant behavior that can be explained psychologically (Hoge&Andrews, 1996). One of the psychological theories of crime is social learning theory. This theory was first developed by Edwin Sutherland in 1939) who believed that “deviant behavior is learned through one’s interaction with others” (Thio, 2001, p.24). The theory argues that becoming a criminal is an art to be learned and the most prominent sources of such learning are peers, followed by media influence. According to this theory, learning criminal behavior involves not only the art or techniques of committing crime but also motives, drives, rationalization and attitudes that are favorable to commit crime (Ngai&Cheung, 2005). Therefore, social learning theory focuses on the youth acquiring the art of crime from peers. However, this theory gives too much emphasis on peer pressure in that it does not specify the fact that children are less likely to be influenced

by this pressure if they have favorable family attachments. Since criminal behaviors are generated, nurtured, and maintained within social relationships (Eddy & Gribskov, 1998), social settings like home, school, and neighborhood also play a great role in either leading to or preventing children from being in conflict with the law.

Strain, social control, and social learning theory explain children's involvement in crime in terms of the individual's social relationship (Agnew, 1992). However, their difference lies on their focus of relationship. Strain theory explicitly focuses on negative relationships with others who prevent the individual from achieving her/his goals. Therefore, strain theorists assume that this negative relationship will create negative emotions on the individual such as anger, and this negative emotion may lead the individual to use illegitimate and deviant means to achieve the needed goal (Agnew, 1992). On the other hand, social control theory focuses on the absence of relationship with the conventional others and institutions such as family, school, church and so on. Hence, children become in conflict with the law when the relationship is absent or weak (Ngai & Cheung, 2005). Social learning theory conversely focuses on positive relationships with deviant others such as peers who have antisocial behavior will lead to acquiring antisocial behavior (Agnew, 1992).

As we can understand from the forgoing discussions, though there are different theoretical explanations, a single, adequate explanation for children's involvement in crime repeatedly has not been available. Therefore, it will not be feasible to use only one or two theories to explain the reasons for children becoming in conflict with the law. Especially when we see children in Ethiopia, where there are so many factors like poverty, family breakdown, failure in school, peer pressure, lack of parental love and attention, unemployment, streetism, and

drug addiction and so on; it will be very difficult to explain the reasons behind children's involvement in illegal acts in a single theoretical explanation.

Therefore, for the purpose of this research an eclectically integrated theory of strain theory, social control theory, labeling and social learning theory will be employed, with the exception of biological theory. The eclectically integrated theory is practical because the factors that emanate from the different theories are not mutually exclusive, but complementary. They are complementary in that these theories address different factors, which lead children to be in conflict with the law (Ngai & Cheung, 2005). Merely one theory cannot give sufficient explanation on how an individual becomes involved in crime act. For example, a person may indulge himself/herself in criminal activity because of economic problem or not having legitimate means to get what she/he wants and if one argues that social control theory is the only and adequate explanation for children becoming in conflict with the law, the economic factors and the absence of legitimate means of achieving aspiration cannot be explained by this theory. It is on account of this kind of fact that we are inclined to better explain the factor by using strain theory than social control theory.

TREATMENT APPROACHES TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM

The complex and multi-causal nature of the problem of children become in conflict with the law gives rise to several alternative treatment approaches used to address the problem. These treatments include individual based treatment, group treatment, family, and multi-systemic therapy. Each of these treatment focuses on a particular factor except the multi-systemic therapy.

Individual treatment approaches: Individual treatments are more expensive because a considerable number of counselors are needed, and the quality and quantity of treatment may

be compromised by budget limitations (Andargachew, 2004). There are different types of individual treatment such as psychotherapy, behavioral modification, reality therapy, and cognitive and behavioral skill training.

Psychotherapy needs extensive analysis of the individual's childhood experience. This is to help individual to make positive adjustment by altering negative behavioral pattern learned in childhood (Siegel & Welsh, 2005). By understanding how her/his childhood experiences influence her/his behavior from the analysis, the therapist will help the person in adjusting her/his behavior with the societal expectation (Andargachew, 2004). Behavioral modification is another individual based treatment. This treatment is based on the theory that "all behavior is learned and current behavior can be shaped through rewards and punishment" (Siegel & Welsh, 2005, p.357). Therefore, the treatments are designed to reward acceptable behavior and reduce reward for unacceptable behavior (Andargachew, 2004). Behavior modification treatment is found to be more effective in institutional setting than in community based treatment setting, since the counselors can manipulate or control the reward and the punishment that are to be received by the children (Seigle & Welsh, 2005).

Reality therapy, which is another individual based treatment, gives emphasis to current rather than past behavior (Seigel & Welsh, 2005). In other words, it is concerned on changing future behavior by ignoring the past behavior. The purpose of this therapy is to make individuals to be more responsible for their behavior (Andargachew, 2004). The other individual based treatment for children in conflict with the law is cognitive and behavior skill training. This treatment is usually for violent children who are assumed to "lack cognitive and intrapersonal skill for managing challenges in family, peer, and school situation" (Gullotta, Adams & Montemayor, 1998, p.160). The treatment focuses on skill building, social skill training, anger

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management or aggression replacement therapy, and problem solving skills (Gullotta, Adams & Montemayor, 1998).

Group treatment approaches: These are more economical than individual treatment approaches, because one therapist can counsel more than one individual at a time (Andargachew, 2004). Group treatment also has other advantages such as the value of group support, individuals gaining hope from knowing that other group members have survived similar experience, and the effectiveness of groups in solving problems (Seigle & Welsh, 2005). There are different types of group treatment and the most common are guided group interaction (GGI) and group psychotherapy.

Guided group interaction is a common group treatment method in children's Remand Home. GGI is based on the theory that, "through group interaction a delinquent [children in conflict with the law] can acknowledge and solve personal problems" (Siegel & Welsh, 2005, p.358). GGI provides daily group discussions aimed at confronting negative behavior and reinforcing positive behavior (Gullotta, Adams & Montemayor, 1998). The discussion will have a group leader whose role is facilitating the interaction among the group members and enable them to form group culture (Andargachew, 2004).

Group psychotherapy is another group treatment. It examines the personality of an individual and tries to structure it. In-group psychotherapy, strong relationships in the group are used to facilitate the expression of feelings, solve problems, and teach members of the group empathy (Andargachew, 2004).

Family therapy: This approach to treatment assumes that treatment of antisocial behavior should be family based (Gullotta, Adams & Montemayor, 1998). Family therapy

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attempts to change aspects of family relations that can be risk factors for the involvement of the child in antisocial behavior. From different types of family therapy, the most widely used and which is regarded, as the most effective treatment for children who become in conflict with the law is functional family therapy. It integrates treatment strategies from system theory and behavioral therapy (Gullotta, Adams &Montemayor, 1998).

Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST): MST is based on combined theoretical foundations of socio-economical and family systems theories (Gullotta, Adams, Montemayor, 1998). The treatment model emphasizes on the recognized risk factors, which are associated with children's involvement in crime act, and it is directed towards solving multiple problems across the different contexts that the child is embedded (Curtis, Ronan &Borduin, 2004). Therefore, it targets the individual, family, peer, school, and community factors, which are identified as contributing to and maintaining the antisocial behavior. In MST, interventions are personalized to the specific needs of the child, the family, and surrounding systems and are highly flexible (Gullotta, Adams &Montemayor, 1998). This treatment approach is considered to be very affective because it directly addresses interpersonal, familial, and extra familial factors to children's becoming in conflict with the law. As Gullotta, Adams &Montemayor (1998) clearly stated it "approaches that takes a social- ecological perspective and focuses on multiple systems and techniques to address behavior, cognition, and attitude may be more effective in eliciting significant change that will last" (p.208). That means MST is very effective in reducing children recidivism.

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO REPEATED CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

Factors that contribute to the recidivism of children in conflict with the law vary from researches to researches and there is no single factor that was identified to explain the problem. The most frequently identified factors that predict children to be in conflict with the law repeatedly included: duration of stay in the correctional system, drug use, family factors, and peer influence (Mahlet, 2010).

Family factors-The influence of the family in reducing or encouraging recidivism comes from the notion of social control, where it is believed that parental influence is capable of lessening the probability of children from becoming in conflict with the law at the first place and from repeatedly involvement in illegal acts (Warr, 1993 as cited in Mbuba, 2004), since family is the primary and longest influence on child's development. Thus if children are less controlled and supervised by their family even after their incarceration, their chance of being in conflict with the law is high. Moreover, families play an important role in buffering risk factors and supporting children to get through challenges they face after release from incarceration. There is strong evidence to suggest that family functioning has a significant role on the children's becoming in conflict again. If children do not find this kind of support from family, the chance for their being recidivist increases (Silpephat, 2007).

Peer influence- Some researchers agree and link peer influence to patterned conflict with the law of children (Mbuba, 2004; Silpephat, 2007), in other words, peers are not the only reasons for the first conflict but also the repetitive pattern that characterizes recidivism. The influence that stems from peers will be powerful on the child's behavior if she/he does not have good paternal control, supervision, and attachment (Gullotta, Adams & Montemayor, 1998).

School Factor - School is another chapter of life that a child undergoes and that can have a great degree of influence on the child's behavior. School associated factors that are having impact on a child's being repetitively in conflict with the law are poor motivation to school or low attachment to school, low academic performance, truancy, poor antisocial behavior controlling system in the school (Silpephat, 2007; Le, Monfared & Stockdale, 2005). Silpephat (2007) put this proposition as "A child who has problems in school may be predisposed to early onset delinquency and persistence in offending throughout life" (p.55)

Drug Abuse -A linkage between drug use and involvement in crime act has been established (Siegel & Welsh 2005; Silpephat, 2007; Mbuba, 2004) and this association takes many forms including committing crime by being under the influence of drug or committing crime for the sake of getting money to pay for their habit (Siegel & Welsh 2005). In other words, drug users are more willing to take risks or drug use may indirectly contribute for their involvement in crime since drug users need money for buying drugs for their habit/addiction. Thus, different researchers concluded that whether directly or indirectly, drug use by children contributes for their being repeatedly in conflict with the law (Silpephat, 2007; Mbuba, 2004).

Length of Stay - In various researches, length of stay in rehabilitation centre as a factor leading to recidivism is a debatable issue. Theories in support of this argue that longer sentences (incarceration) reduce the risk of recidivism by causing an emotional response, such as fear, anxiety, or guilt, which forces the individual to avoid future punishments, and thus discourages them from involving in illegal acts (Song & Leib, 1993). On other hand, theories that support shorter sentences argue that the negative effect of incarceration during imprisonment is that the inmates learn the norms of the antisocial subculture from other prisoners. Hence, the longer offenders stay in prison, the higher their degree of acquiring new criminal behavior, as a result

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their likelihood of getting involved in illegal activities after release will be high (Song & Leib, 1993).

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS DESIGN

“The purpose of social research can be to explore new things, describe a social phenomenon, or explain why something occurs” [Krueger and Neuman (2006, p.21)]. This study has explored the factors that contribute for children’s being in conflict with the law in a repeated manner. To do this, exploring the factors that contributed for their being in conflict with the law for the first time was important. The research also explores the perceptions and experiences they had about their being in conflict with the law repeatedly.

A qualitative research design was employed to carry out the study. Qualitative research was appropriate for this study because assessment of the factors that contribute to children’s repetitive conflict with the law needs understanding of the perceptions and viewpoints of the respondents in a natural context (Yin, 2003). Qualitative research also provides a comprehensive or holistic understanding of the social setting in which research is conducted and helps to understand social problems by focusing on few people affected by a problem (Royse, 1999). Similarly, this study is conducted to understand a social problem, that is, children’s conflict with the law in repeated manner. Using qualitative research can help to explore the factors from the children’s themselves who have passed through such situation and were affected by the problem. Their personal perception about their experience cannot be understood other than in qualitative research methods. Hence, qualitative method is believed to be the most appropriate approach to collect the data in this particular study.

Case studies are more preferable when ‘why’ question is being posed [Yin, 2003]. Case study is appropriate, for this study is to explore why children become repeatedly in conflict with the law. Case studies help to understand complex social phenomenon and allow the

researcher to retain holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life. The data are usually detailed, varied, and extensive. In this study a single case was employed to answer the research question. The single case in this sense is the Addis Ababa Remand Home where children in conflict with the law are incarcerated. Single case study was preferred in this study since it is the only institution in the country where this kind of service is rendered.

Study Site

This study was conducted in the Addis Ababa Remand Home. The institution was chosen for the study because it is the only rehabilitation centre for children who become in conflict with law in the country and there was no other alternative site to conduct the study for the same reason.

Study Participants

The number of children in the Remand Home varies according to the amount of entry and exit. Participants to the current study were selected from those children who were in the institution more than once. Therefore, the units of analysis for this study were individual children who have been in the institution twice or more. In this study, 10 children of such type participated. In addition to this three key informant interviews with staff members were also conducted. These were two caregivers and one counselor.

Criteria of Selection

As stated in Krueger&Neuman, 2006, p. 209, in qualitative study, cases are selected based on their relevance to the topic rather than their representativeness which determines the

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way in which the people to be studied are selected. Individual participants were chosen based on the following criteria:

They were in the centre more than once

They were from different family structure such as from double parents, single parents, full orphan, those living in the street, and those who live with guardians

The participants were from both genders

Different places of origin like from rural area and from urban

Key informants were selected because they had better experience of working with the children in the center and witnessed the issue

Techniques to Select Participants

Purposive (judgmental) sampling technique was used to select the participants. Purposive sampling, which is one of the methods in non-probability sampling, allowed the researcher to identify particular kind of participants for in-depth investigation (Krueger&Neuman, 2006). In this research, cases were chosen carefully and purposively to demonstrate the issue of recidivism in different contexts. Purposive sampling technique is also suitable to select respondents who were able to analyze their own situation thoroughly and who were more articulate and expressive.

DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

The chief means of data gathering in this study was in-depth interview and key informant interviews. Since the purpose of this study is to learn why recidivism occurs in children who were in conflict with the law based on the experiences and views points of those who recidivate, in-depth interviews were found helpful to obtain information about the experiences and perspectives of the respondents towards the issue. Thus interview offers an insight into respondents' memories and explanations of why things have come to be what they are. It has also helped to motivate respondents to give more accurate and complete information and provided a valuable means to understand the perception of participants (Monette, Sullivan, &Dejorg, 1998).

Among the different types of interview structures, open- ended interview questions were used in this study (see Appendix A). Open- ended interviews are the best way to gain an understanding of respondents' perception and help to obtain an in- depth description of the respondents world (Tutty, Rothery&Grinnell, 1996). Pilot test of the interview guide was conducted with one child who was in a similar setting to the study participants. The major objective of the pilot test was to verify that the interview guide supplied the type of data needed for the study from the respondents (Royse, 1999). In pilot testing the guiding questions have also been helpful to make the necessary adjustments to terminologies, words, concepts, and ideas that fit the purpose of the study. Given that the purpose of the study is to explore the factors contributing to children's recidivism, it was found important to interview key informants like experts or those who witness the issue in the institution (Tutty, Rothery&Grinnell, 1996). The interviews were in the form of discussion with the purpose of learning about their views on the issue of children's recidivism and understanding their perceptions and experiences (Kikwawila

study group, 1994). Moreover, interviewing both the principal respondents (the children) and the key informants has helped to crosscheck for inconsistency and has added to the data trustworthiness and credibility to the data (Royse, 1999).

PROCEDURES OF DATA COLLECTION

The first step that the researcher underwent in the data collection period was to identify the children who were in the center more than once with the help of the counselors who have their records. The next step was contacting each identified child in person and asking them if they are willing to participate in the study. After the researcher makes sure that the children are willing to participate in the study, contacting the children's parents was the next step so that they will sign the consent form (Appendix B), because the children to be interviewed are less than the age of 18. For those children who are from the streets, the institution itself signed the consent. Then the interviews were conducted in an unoccupied office that was found in the centre. After finishing each in-depth interview, the researcher arranged a short counseling session so that the child would not be left with a disturbed emotion. After the researcher was done with the interview with the participants children, the next step was to interview the three key informants after they signed the consent form to participate in the study.

During the in-depth interviews, tape recording was used to capture the actual words and essence of all the interviews and all the participants were willing to be tape-recorded. Tape recording was helpful to focus on the eye contact and body language of the interviewees rather than writing notes to get all the details (Tutty, Rothery & Grinnell, 1996). In addition notes were also taken especially non-verbal expressions. Secondary source such as books, journals, policy records, and reports from the institution were also used to substantiate the information.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the research process, a significant amount of emphasis was given to the ethical considerations regarding research. Since the research involved children from nine to 15 years, there were many ethical issues to be considered carefully. In doing so, the researcher tried to ensure the rights, privacy, and welfare of the persons who participated in the study by making them aware of the research objectives as well as by providing them with an informed consent form (See Appendix B) to be signed to elicit their willingness to involve in the research. Since the research is on children aged between 9 and 15, the parents or legal guardians were responsible for signing informed consent on behalf of the children. Moreover, the children, who were the participants of the study, signed assent forms, which showed their willingness to participate in the interview (See Appendix C).

Methods of data analysis

Qualitative data analysis is seeking to make sense out of the raw data collected from the interviews. In this research, the first step of the analysis was transcribing the interview recorded in time of the data collection. Secondly, the interviews were translated into English for the analysis. In the process of transcription the researcher tried to make sure that the nonverbal expressions like sighs, long silence, laughter, crying, and other important emotional remarks were properly transcribed by using field notes taken while the interview was conducted as a reference (Pandgett, 2008). After transcription, the next process was categorizing the data by using coding. Coding involved labeling or tagging data with labels (Morse & Richards, 2002). From the different types of coding, topic coding was used in this research. Topic coding involves “creating a category and recognizing one from earlier, reflecting on where it belongs among your

growing ideas, and reflecting on the data you are referring to and on how they fit with the other data coded there” (Morse & Richards, 2002, p.117).

Since the research is exploratory in its nature using case study design, and it looked for the factors contributing to recidivism of children in conflict with the law, analytical technique called analytic comparison was found to be suitable in this study (Krueger&Neuman, 2006). Comparative analysis refers to systematic search for similarities and differences across cases. That means as coding proceeds, the researcher will develop irregularities or differences across or patterns as well as look for negative instances and irregularities or differences across cases (Padgett, 2008). Hence, the responses of the participants of the study were discussed under each theme by looking for similarities and differences across the participant’s response and by also referring to the differences and similarities in other studies and theories that are reviewed in the literature part of this study.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As a novice researcher, I have come across many challenges. The most challenging one was the one I encountered during the data collection period. As the study participants were children, a lot of time was needed to establish rapport with them. I designed a two-month lesson plan to teach them English through various activities such as teaching English through music, games, listening, etc. Then I won the consent of the director and the respective grades teachers for the same. In addition, it was through these classroom interactions that I tried to have established the rapport. Even after establishing rapport, they were not willing to provide some information that could have made the study result even better. Another challenge was the fact

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that the study involved discussing private issues which was illegal in nature caused some children to shun away from the frank responses that some questions demanded.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

SOCIO- DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES

Ten children who are repeatedly in conflict with the law and are in the Addis Ababa Remand Home were the participants of this research. In addition to the target children, three staff members were also interviewed. All the children had been in the center twice except two of them who were in the centre for the third time. All the children are from 11-16 years old and their educational level is from 1st -8th grade. There were four female and six male respondents. Most of the respondents are Orthodox Christian in their religious background and three of them are Muslims. Among the ten participants, six of them were born in Addis Ababa and the four of them are from regions. From those who came from regions three of them are from *Gurage* region. In addition, the fourth one is from *Welayta*. When we see their family structure and their place of residence before they entered in the centre, seven of them have double parents, however only two of them were living with their parents.

When we see the structures of their family, one of them are double orphan and used to live with her grandmother; another girl was living with her aunt because her mother died and her father is absent (his whereabouts was not known), and the other one has single parent, he was living with his mother because of divorce and he doesn't know his father much. Six of the participants were living in the streets of Addis Ababa and one of them was sometimes on-the street and on other times off- the street. The other five children were permanently living off- the -street. The offence type that the children committed are more of property offences like, stealing, pick pocketing, and robbery but only one of the respondents committed battering in her second

incarceration. The summary of the participant children profiles are found in table 1. (See Appendix D)

Among the key informants, one was a counselor and two were female and male caregivers. The counselor is also the program coordinator of the institution. He has ten years work experience in different organizations. He worked in the centre for five years. His responsibility in the centre is to coordinate every activity in the in the institution. In addition to his coordination duty, he provides counseling for the children because of the inadequacy of the number of counselors in the centre. His educational level is first degree in management and he is also a social work student in one of the private colleges in distance mode. The second key informant was from the women caregivers. She has 34 years work experience with children in different government institutions in this centre she worked for 9 years. Her education level a grade 12 complete. The third key informant is a caregiver in the boys ward. He worked in the centre for 4 years. He didn't have direct social service experience with children since he was a police officer.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS FOR CHILDREN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

Family Factor participants of this study were in one way or other suffered from different family problems. Some of the problems are related to economic condition of the family, family breakdown or disruptions like parental death or divorce, poor parental control and harsh disciplinary measures, lack of parental love and neglect, and even abuses and labor exploitation in the family. As one of the key informants summarized it after pointing out the immensity of the factors related with the children's involvement in illegal acts, he put as the leading factors to be

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family factors such as family low economy, low supervision, family breakdown and disruptions, and having stepparents that lead children to become in conflict with the law.

The different family problems are leading and forcing most of the respondents to run away from their home and end up on the street. When the children start to live on the street, life becomes hard to them. As the result they start to steal and engage in other forms of offences. Next I will present the major findings of the study that lead children to enter into conflict with the law which latter may become the reason for repetitive conflict with the law. Without understanding the factors for the first involvement, it will not easy to identify the factors that lead children to be in conflict with the law for the second or third time.

Poverty is deemed to be the main social problem that leads children to be in conflict with the law. Most children who participated in this study are from families with low economic status. From ten of the participant children, only one comes from middle class family. The rest nine children come from low-income families. Those who came from rural area, their parents are engaged in small farm holdings, and selling vegetables and rearing sheep and goats, presumably having very low income. Those who are from Addis Ababa, their parents are engaged in low income generating activities like weaving as one of the participants reported, another participant reported that since both of her parents were died, her grandmother supported her with the meager income she had from renting of rooms. Her grandmother had also engages in small trade such as prepare and sale of foodstuff like *shiro*, *berbere* and some sugarcane. Still another participant used to live his mother who is divorced. His mother gets income by selling *khat*.

Family breakdown is another factor, which contributes for the children being in conflict with the law. Family breakdown may be resulted due to the death of one or both parents, divorce,

separation, parental conflict and related problems from participants, some of them experienced parental death either one or both parents. Case 10 lost both parents by death in her early childhood; case 7 is the other participant who lost her mother by death. Her father was imprisoned and later disappeared and nobody knows the whereabouts of him. In her own words she stated “my father imprisoned, then my mother died, and after her death he was released and I saw him at once but he was gone ... gone... gone and I never saw him again.” Case 3’s parents were divorced when he was 4 years old, and his mother got married to another person but divorced again. Both of case 4’s parents have chronic health problem. His mother has eye problem, she has a half vision, and because of that she has series headache and cannot do household tasks properly. His father is having severe kidney problem so he cannot work in the farm. As case 4 told his story, he also lost his elder sister who was responsibilities for every household task. After her death he became burdened with multiple responsibilities. Case 2’s father was usually absent from the house of the nature of his job. The absence of his father, as case 2 expressed, created some gap in family management that resulted with poor communication among members and poor supervision.

Harsh and inconsistence disciplining is usually mentioned as the leading factor by the participant that make children to be in conflict with the law. Seven of the study participants have the history of physical punishment. From those who faced physical punishment, case 8, case 1, and case3 had suffered excessive kind of punishments. Case 8 is a 14 years old girl now. Her parents tried to discipline her first by giving her some advice and warning, which was followed by brutal punishment. She remembers the process and explains, “They first tried to give me advice so that I might not do again something which is not allowed. I remember they usually gave me three chances. But if I keep doing that the same mistake again, one of my parents tied

my legs and hands with a rope, then beat me.” She remembered one of the worst occasions when her father beat her. She explained:

His punishment might discipline me. However, the problem is he hit me on sensitive area of my body. One time he injured me very badly. He beat me by tying both of my legs and hands twisting them to my back. He beat me with a big stick closing the door of our house. He hit me on my head with the stick and it started bleeding....He did this assuming I will be disciplined next time....Ah! It was a terrible situation.

From Case 8’s experience, it is possible to see the instance of physical abuse by parents by the name of disciplining. Case 3 is another child who experienced repeated physical punishment and denial of basic rights by his mother such as lack of access for food. He said, ‘My whole body was fill of scars, besides, I used to have a bad headache, because of repeated beatings...I would never say anything about it to my mother...I was obedient for her’. The effect of physical punishment on Case 3 did not result in only scars and headache, but also in developing aggressive behavior towards other children in the village and in the school. His anger towards his mother was revealed in his relation with other children. ‘Because I don’t have any tolerance when the kids make me angry, I used to beat them up, they bled or swollen in most of the cases. The outcome was, parents of those children whom I beat came to our house and made complaints about my behavior ...’ He described his mother’s character by saying ‘ I know I was too submissive to my mother but I was very aggressive outside home. My mother was inconsistent in her decision. When she saw someone beating me, she would tell me to beat them back, and when a complaint came from the parents of other children, she would punish me.’

Case 1 had a bad experience of painful physical punishment done to him by his father. The harsh physical punishment became the reason for his runaway from *Wolayita*, where his parents were living. He reported the incidences that forced him to be deserted from his parents as follows:

My father tied me up with chain and fixed me with wooden pillar of the house for a month, and I had to admit my mistakes and not to do it again... When he found me doing that again, he started using some dry grass... tying me with chain and I understood he planned to put me in the fire..., suddenly, I put the fire out, and then I escaped from there... he tried to kill me ... one day he threw a spear on me and I escaped. He beat me a lot ..., one day I decided to leave the house for good although I loved my mother.

The experience of case 1 is a good example where physical punishment cannot make a child to adjust the behavior according to the needs of parents. The punishment may rather aggravate the misbehavior to a worst level. In his own words, case 1 explains:

A person cannot be changed by being beaten, he should be advised... I could have been changed if they had advised me, but they were beating me instead. Therefore, when they beat me I started to misbehave more and more... but if they advised me I might not be like...that is why I left the town... that's all.

Lack of parental love and purposeful rejection are the other family practices that are mentioned as principal factor to put children in difficult situation. From the study participants, case 3 experienced and felt the hatred and rejection that his mother had on him during his childhood. His mother expelled him from the house and started living on the street since he was 8 years old. As the result he does not get the love and affection from his father since his mother and father are divorced in his early age and his father didn't look for him anymore. When he remembered the situations how his mother treated him until he was expelled, he was struggling to control his tears from falling. He makes a strong statement of dissatisfaction on the actions of his parents by saying "the main reason for me being on the street is because I didn't get love and affection both from my father and mother." There was a long silence after he spoke this. His lack of love from his parents, especially from his mother made him to be aggressive towards other children in the village. He used to beat and wound some of them and the parents of victim children usually came and complained to his mother, then his mother took her brutal disciplinary measures, which finally became the reason for him being expelled from the house. Case 3

explains, “Because my mother didn’t love me, I started to fight with kids in the village... when they touched me, I wouldn’t tolerate them. If they did something on me I would fight with them. The kid I kicked may bleed or get wounded.” Case 7 also faced a rejection by her father. Her father was released from prison by the time her mother died. However, he was not willing to take care of her. Therefore, he left her with her grandmother and disappeared.

Parental supervision and control is another family factor. The parents and guardians of participants 5 didn’t supervise and control their children’s day-to-day activities. This is especially evidenced among those children who are originally from Addis Ababa. When we say parental supervision and control it is to indicate that parental knowledge about their children’s friends, their attendance to school, and their whereabouts. The parents of case 2, case 8, case 9, case 10, and case 7 did not control their attendance to the school and didn’t also have the knowledge about what kind of friends their children have. Case 2 for instance was usually absent from school and instead he used to go to his friends who live around *GojamBerenda* and stayed there during the day with his friends and came back home acting as if he spent the day in school. He used to do that until he left his family for good and joined his friends who were running away from home. The nature of his father’s work also made the control to be loose since his father would not be able to stay at home for longer times. The communication with his father was by telephone; on the other hand, the control from his mother was weak.

Case7, who was living with her grandmother and aunt was not properly supervised and controlled. This is because, her grandmother had the fear that she will feel mother’s death if she tries to put some pressure on the child, so, her grandmother did not want to say anything even when she did something wrong and the same is true to her aunt. The grandmamma had poor follow up and supervision to her educational performance. She reported that she was truant in the

school, did not do her assignments and she fought with other students. One day one of the teachers asked her to bring her parent, so that they will discuss why she was absence from school repeatedly. However, she was afraid to ask her grandmother to go to school and instead she runaway to the street. She stated the reason why she took this measure saying, “they thought that I was decent and they would not imagine that I’ll do such things in the school. Thinking this, I was afraid to tell them that I am told to bring my parents.”

Case 8, case 9, and 10 were friends in the school as well as in the village and they were in the center for the second time as co-offenders during the time of interview. All of them experienced very loose control by their parents. Their parents didn’t make any effort to make sure their children are attending classes on regular basis or not. For case 8 and case 9, their sisters and brothers were more worried than their parents. Case 8 became the reason for conflicts that arose between her mother and sisters as her sisters wanted the mother to put more pressure on case 8.

Child labor exploitation and workload in the house is identified as contributing factor for children to become in conflict with the law. Especially, for the children who came from countryside, work burden in the household and in the farmlands are reported to be the main factors for children to run away from their home. One of the study participants, who is from Addis Ababa, also reported that he experienced work burden when he was his mother’s home. Among those participants who reported that they came from rural areas, case 4 and case 5 experienced a lot of exploitations by their parents. Case 4 who is 15 years old is from *Wereabe* and he came to Addis Ababa two years ago. Both of his parents have chronic health problem, which was difficult for them to do the household chores and the farm duties. He also lost his order sister by death. She was very much responsible in most of the household tasks. As the

result of his parents' sickness and death of his sister, case 4 was responsible for both the household task and the farm work. The day- to-day workload was unbearable to him. He explained that his parents understood that he is more burdened with the work beyond his age but there was no any solution. At the end, he decided to run away and his destination was to come to Addis Ababa. When he decided to run away, his health condition was deteriorated due to restless workload. He explained:

After my sister's death, my dad also started to become weak and weak everyday ... then the farm work and the household tasks load rested on me. I started to feel weary about everything... I also became anemic and I started to get collapsed in the middle of doing something, I didn't tell anyone about my sickness. Then I did something for a lady in our village and she gave me 35 birr, then I informed my friends that I am going to Addis Ababa... and I came.

Case 5 was also the other participant who experienced labor exploitation. He was living with his grandmother since his childhood. Since she was living alone he was given to his grandmother. He was expected to assist his grandmother as she was old. He therefore used to work on his grandmother's farmland since she doesn't have anyone to rely on, except him. His grandmother was not willing to let him spend the money he got from the production on what he wanted. He was the one who supported himself as well as his grandmother.

Case 3, who is from Addis Ababa, was victim of workload in the house. He didn't have time to study because his mother engaged him in household tasks. He used to do house chores such as bringing water from *bono*, washing dishes, cleaning the house. He was also expected to run wherever his mother ordered him to fetch something. Taking care of his younger brother was another responsibility for case 3. After finishing his work, he asked his mother for permission to play with friends but she would never let him. This might have affected his socialization with other children.

Rural to urban migration is identified as one of the influencing factors children to become in conflict with the law, since migration puts children in difficult circumstances in which they become exposed for any kind of criminal activity. Some of the pushing factors that are identified by the participants who are originally from rural areas for their being migrated are attraction to city life, work burden, and parental physical abuse. The reason for Case 6 for his migration is his curiosity to see the life in Addis Ababa. He stated “when people talk about Addis Ababa, it was like they were talking about America. When they exaggerated it so much, I thought it is nice place, and then I wanted to prove whether Addis Ababa is like as they explained it or not”. Case 4 on the other hand left his chronically sick parents since he couldn’t bear the workload anymore. Case 5 was also the other person who left his place of origin because he was getting tired of the workload in his grandmother’s house and he had conflict with his grandmother over money use. Case 1, who suffered a lot of brutal and repetitive physical abuse by his father, left his place of origin to escape the danger or death after he succeeded to run away from where his father tied him to suffocate with smoke.

The other factor identified from the participants for their being in conflict with the law was street life. From the participants of this study, six of them were living in the street and the contributing factors for their being in the street vary from participants to participants. Those who are from rural area, after they came to Addis Ababa because of different pushing factors, since they don’t have anyone to support them in Addis Ababa they ended up on the street. From those participants who were born in Addis Ababa, parental rejection and weak parental control and guidance are found to be causes for the children’s being in the street. Case three whose is 13 years old, was living in the street before he was incarcerated in the centre. He said that his mother sent him out from home when he was 8 years old. Besides, he didn’t know where his

father lives or any other person who will be willing to support him. He first tried to work for different shops around stadium area as garbage collector. The money he earned out of this activity was not enough to support him. When he got hungry, he started to steal from people's pocket.

Case 7 on the other hand went to the street because she was attracted to the life as she had one time experience. The reason for her first time experience was related to her being afraid of telling her grandmother and her aunt that her teacher asked her to bring her parent for discussion related to her wrongdoing in school. She was brought back home after two months of street life with the effort made by her grandmother and aunt to find her. Since, she enjoyed the life in the street with her new friends, she ran away for the second time. She got sick when she was living on the street which became the reason to come back home. However, as soon as she got better, she ran away to the street again. She kept going to the street and comeback home repeatedly until she was incarcerated for the second time. Her grandmother and aunt were very welcoming and also caring whenever she came back home. When she came back home, she never stayed more than a week since she got bored with family life. When she had an intension to run away to the street, she would plan to do something wrong at home. In addition, when someone asked her why she did that, she would automatically run away.

Parental substance use and being alcoholic are other factors that lead children to be in conflict with the law. From the 10 participants of the study Case 8, Case 3 and Case 4's parents use one or two type of substances. Case 3's mother has *khat* addiction and she also uses *shisha*. Case 4's father chews. Case 8's father is alcoholic as well a smoker and when he came home drunk he was abusive and have had bad temper. She described the situation as follows:

When he becomes drunk, he insults my sisters and my brothers and also my mother. He even tells my mother to get out of the house, he always does that, Eh... in that time she will just leave the house, and then she will come back after he falls asleep. Then they will be mediated by elderly people or neighbors then they start to live together again.

Peer Influence

Apart from family factors, peer members have many contributions in shaping the behavior of a child. For all the participants, the effect of peer influence is evidenced as the other major contributor for the children's being in conflict with the law. It is identified from the participants' point of view that time of meeting with friends has an effect on the children's involvement in crime acts. For example those children who were in the street met their friends in their desperate and critical times of their life. Case 4 met his friends after he stopped working in the shoe repairer shop. At the time he didn't have any work and started to live in the street. At that point of time he met his friends who lived in the street. He said that his friends were so nice to him they offered him every things he wanted. He explained in his own words as follows:

After I quitted working in the shoe repairer shop, I met my friends in the play station house where I used to go every day. They were working at *shinkurtberenda* [onion market]. I was feeling very hopeless at that time, I didn't have anything to eat, I didn't also know how to work in the market area... but my friends used to give me money; when they saw my unkempt hair, they gave me money to get my hair cut.

Case 3, who is from Addis Ababa, said that after his mother expelled him from home, he went to street around stadium. He first used to sleep and spend the day alone. Then he met his friends in his bad moment and they were compassionate towards him. He explained the support he got from friend on the street as follows:

It was at night. I was looking for leftover food at the nearby hotels, but I was not able to find anything. I got hungry and I was sitting in one corner of a building very

frustrated. Then, some guys who also lived in the street came to me and took me to their place. Then they bought me dinner, and they allowed me to sleep near their territory that night after. These guys were thieves from whom I learnt the rope from them.

Case7's friends can be classified into school friends and street friends. She met with her street friends when she was wandering around *GojamBerenda* after runaway from her home. The friend she met was very generous and caring for her. Her friend promised her that she could stay with her that night in the room she rented with 6 birr and to work together to get money for food, cigarette, and *chat*. They get the money by begging and stealing.

All of the study participants committed their first offence because of the encouragement and pressure they got from friends. Case 5, for instance, was pressurized by his friends to carry people's good and disappear in market places. He explained that stealing is mandatory if one becomes member of the gang group. In describing how theft is done because of pressure, he said, "When I told to my friends that I didn't want to steal, they knocked on my head and beat me with a stick... they also intimidated me by pointing a knife on my face and said to me 'who do you think you are? Be a man!'... Fearing their possible attack I joined their business and started stealing." He further explained how they showed him the tricks the tactics that he would use for stealing.

Case 2, who is from Addis Ababa, was motivated and encouraged by his friends to leave his family, and he started to live with them around *GojamBerenda*. His friends promised him that they would teach him the skill of *belbela*, which means breaking into people's house (burglary). They managed to influence him by telling him flattery things like "it is better for you to be with us, we will enjoy and relax every day, and we have our own money and other precious things." Case 4 also learned *belbela* from his friends. His friends taught him what kind of time, conditions or situations are suitable or conducive for *belbela*. They told him that rainy nights are

good for burglary. They also trained him how to flee and hide from policemen. They also encouraged him by telling him words like 'don't be afraid of anything' and so on.

Case 8, Case 9, and Case 10 are three friends in the village and at school as well as in the centre, who are incarcerated twice together because they are co-offenders. To influence and motivate Case 10 to participate with them in stealing, her friends were saying to her that she could help her poor grandmother and she could also buy anything she wanted." They even used to share what they stole until she became fully capable of participating in the stealing activities. Then she started to steal with them. Case 9 started to steal because her classmate who brought money from their home and bought candies and other things made her very jealous. Therefore, she started to steal from her sister's shop. Then she met with a new friend in the village. She was one who taught her pick pocketing. Then she met with Case10, Case 8 and another girl who was not in the centre during the interview. She started to work with them in market areas of *Shiro meda*; in a place where religious festivals are going on; and in other crowded areas. Her chances of meeting friends who had the motive of stealing enhanced her ability to become thief. Case 8 also learned a more organized stealing strategy from her friends.

Case 7's friends also contributed a lot in her twisted behavior. Her school friends were influencing her to truancy, to smoke cigarette, and have affected her school participation and she even reached to the point of scoring incomplete grades in most of the subjects. After she ran away from her family, she met other street friends who latter trained her how to steal in market places, to beg in the streets, and to use different drugs other than smoking cigarette. She took street life as a fun and she used to enjoy it so much. She was daring to do anything her friends asked her to do, and they would appreciate her fearlessness. The appreciation and

encouragement she got from her friends was fueling her for further commitment of offences. The reason for her being submissive to her friend's ideal was associated to avoid rejection by friends.

For some the participants, the age of friends has an effect on their involvement in criminal activities. Among the participants, Case 2, Case 3, Case 4, and Case 5 had friends who are older than they are. Case 2's friends, for example, called him "*felaw!*" which means 'the kid' since there is a significant age difference between him and his friends. Two of the key informants also asserted that one of the factors contributing to the children's being in conflict with the law is attachment with friends who are bigyounger than theirs. They also stated that there are adults criminal who recruit children for the purpose of crime so that they will fulfill their selfish wishes and they will pay them minimum payment for their "job."

Friends were the reasons for others not only to get participated in delinquent acts but also to start different substance abuses. From the participants of this study, Case 7, Case 1, Case 3, and Case 2 abuse different substances like cigarette, *khat*, taking illicit drugs like *ganja* (*hashish*) and inhaling wood fixer glue what they call it '*MastishMetoz*'. Case 1 started to smoke cigarette when he was in *Shashemene*. His friends persuaded him to smoke the cigarette then he started to take and became addicted. After he came to Addis Ababa, he also started chewing *khat* in addition to smoking cigarette. His cigarette intake increased very much from time to time. Case 2 also started smoking and chewing *khat* with his friends. Case 3 also started smoking for the first time with the invitation he got from friends. He also learned chewing *khat*, taking *ganja* and inhaling glue (*MastishMetoz*) from his friends. Case 7's school friends as well as her street friends are responsible for her being drug addict. She would abuse different substances, like *ganja*, *mastish*, smoking cigarette; chewing *khat*, and she would also take alcohol occasionally with her friends.

School Factors

School is another factor that plays a major role in behavioral development of a child. Low school motivation and weak academic performance as well as the school environment are identified to be factors that have some contributions for children to enter into conflict with the law in this study.

Case 7 was 7th grade in the time of her incarceration. When she was asked about her attitude about school, her response was “I used to like...” she puts the practice of substance abuse and experience of living on the street as reasons for her dislike of school. Her school performance was very low and even she was incomplete for almost all subjects marked below 50%.

Case 9 has a negative attitude towards schooling and she had very low school performance. Her reason for disliking school was related to her association with friends and the school environment. She has friends who are truant and if they are not in the class all she thinks is about them, where they could be in that moment and the like. On such occasions, she left school at break time and joined her friends.

Case 10 who was in grade 6th has reported negative attitude towards school. For her getting money to spend for her own interest was the reason for low school performance and low motivation. All she thought about in class was how to get money; when to meet friends; and do some stealing rather than listening to what the teachers taught.

Case 1, who was in grade one when he left *Welayitahas* negative attitude towards school. When his father sent him to school, he put his exercise books in the school and ran out

from there and went for stealing. He had also low school performance and he believed that he could not understand what the teachers had taught in class. He even once got a sponsorship in Addis Ababa to keep him in a boarding formal education, but after he stayed there for a week, he got bored and left the school.

Case 6 was in grade 1 when he was in *Welkite* and he, as Case 7, used to like school. He stated “I used to like school when I was with my parents, but after I came to Addis Ababa, I hated it... after I started street life, and I lost the interest for learning.” For Case 2, “school is ... Eh ... I don’t know, I am not comfortable with it”. He was usually absent from school and if he went to school he would leave any time when he felt bored. After he met his friends and started to live with them, he quitted schooling at all.

On the other hand, the rest of four participants have positive attitude towards school but with low performance. Case 8, who was 7th grade before she was in the centre, had positive attitude towards school but her problem was she had low school performance. “I like school even though I am not clever, but if I got someone to help me on it, I would be happy; I started to love school since I was in a priest school.” Case 3 was in grade 4th when he was living with his mother. He is positive about school but had low performance. He said that his low performance in school is because of his engagements in household tasks. Therefore, he didn’t have much time to study and perform well. Case 4 was in grade three when he was with his parents in *Werabe*. He has good attitude for school and was a good student with higher rank. However, he failed when he got to 3rd grade because of the work burden he had in the house due to his parent’s health situation. Case 5 also has highly positive attitude towards school. He was in grade five when he was in *Welele*. Even after coming to Addis Ababa, he started learning in the evening problem.

School environment is another factor mentioned by the participants that contributed for their being apprehensive to schooling. School related factors could include the control system and the disciplinary measures that exist in schools. For Case 9, one of the reasons her hating school is the disciplinary measures that were taken by teachers while she was in school. She explained:

The teachers were so cruel. If you don't answer when they ask questions in class, they will beat you.... I used to wear many clothes when I went to school ... my dad saw me one day while I was wearing and asked me why I was wearing one clothes upon another despite the hot weather. I said I am cold. He said, 'take it off!' However, after he went out, I put them on again. I did that to reduce the pain of the teachers' beating.

Inadequate rules against antisocial behaviors and truancy in the school can also be noted from the participants as factors that led the children to hate school, dropout and commit some criminal activities that put them to be in conflict with the law.

Neighborhood and Community Factors

Most of the respondents live in places, which are usually identified as crime zones. Case 10, Case 8, and Case 9, who are co-offenders, live around *shiromeda*, which is a crowded market place. Three of them used to steal mobile phones and money from marketers around the market areas. Case 2's parents live around *Tor Hailoch*, but after his run away from home, he joined his friends who were living around *GojamBerenda*. Case 7 also lived around *GojamBerenda* after her run away from home and started to live with her street friends. Case 1, who is a runaway from his family in *Welayta*, was living in *GojamBerenda* as well, where a dozens of criminals live. He said "the place by itself is a crime station, everybody steals... there are many thieves who pick pockets there. When we saw them stealing, we also steal with them... that is it". The others live also at *Merkato*, *ShinkurtBerenda*, *stadium area*, and *Sebateгна*. We

can see from the participants report that neighborhood characteristics have determinant impact on the children's involvement in criminal activities. One of the key informant affirmed that, neighborhood characteristics has impact on the child's being in conflict with the law since she/he will take people as a role model who are living around her/him that are involved in crime.

The other community factor is participation in religious activities. Participation in religious activities has some controlling effect in people's behavior. Participation in religious activities has some controlling effect in people's behavior. Case 9 thinks that she doesn't deserve to go to church. She has the assumption that "a person who goes to church is not a thief like me. I always think that God is watching us when we steal things, what will God say to us? So, I decided not to go to church anymore." Case 7 used to go to church as a pretext to go out from home and meet her friends; she said that she never went to church on purpose. Case 5, Case 6, Case 4 used to go to Mosque, pray the timely prayer and so on. However, after they came to Addis Ababa and started to live in the street and they quitted doing that. Case 4 said for instance:

When I was in *Werabe*, I used to go to the mosque in the morning; pray timely prayer and read Quran till 8 o'clock, and then I would go to school. However, after I came here, I didn't have anything other than watching movies in the cinema the whole day and then at nights, I would do '*belbela*' with my friends.

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING FOR REPEATED CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

The factors that contributed for first time conflict with the law are the bases for the repetitive conflicts with the law. As one of the key informants stated, the reasons that led the children to be in conflict with the law at the first time continue its influence all through their life.

Therefore, when I present the factors that make children to be in conflict with the law repeatedly, the first instances that put them in incarceration are also been taken into consideration.

Family Factors

As it is identified in the previous section, family factors are the major important factors that contributed on the children's first time in conflict with the law. All participants experienced family disorganizations and breakdown. These factors also led children to be a situation conducive for being in conflict with the law repetitively.

Case 2, who was a runaway from his parents, his family didn't know about his first incarceration since he was not at home at that time. After his first release, he stayed with his friends for a few days and he decided to go back home after two years of runaway. They were welcoming when he went back home and gave him three choices, either to learn vocational or formal education or to be employed in a garage. However, his choice was neither of the three, because he hates to work as well as attends his education. What he needed was to have his own business. In the middle of this, his friends called him and asked him to work (*belbela*) with them. Then he decided to work *belbela* rather than engaged in business. He explained how he left home and joined his friends to work *belbela* as follows:

I told my mother where I was going, I also told her when I should come back home. I lied to her that I was going in a distant place to do business with one of his elder former school friends. In addition, she agreed, but she said to me 'ok Babi what is it that we couldn't provide you if you wanted the same business being with us? If you think the business is lucrative, I will borrow some money from my *Ikub* and let you do the business here' she tried to give me different choices to convince me to stay at home; but I went to my friends ignoring all of her options.

His father's absence in the house was the main reason that led him to join the *belbelagroup*. He imagined about what differences could have there been in his decision to join

the *belbel* group if his father had been at home at the time. He said, “I don’t know, I respected him so much... not because he beats me, you know he is a father, it would not have been easy to join the group.” His mother used to hide many personal secrets for Case 2 from his father, and he knew that when he joined the *belbel* group his mother would not tell the same to his father. That was why he paid no attention to what his mother said to him. We can see that how the presence and absence of father figures in the family matter in Case 2’s life and might be the reason for his being repeatedly in conflict with the law since his father was usually at fieldwork. The control made by Case 2’s father was very loose particularly after his first time incarceration. Lose control from parents is evidenced in that of Case 8, Case 9 and Case 10 cases. Case 9’s family was welcoming and both of her parents were advising her not to do the mistakes she did before again. However, the control was loose, even after her first release they didn’t supervise and control her. Even when she became friend with the girl who was incarcerated with her as co-offender, the family didn’t do anything. Case 8’s family was also welcoming when she is released from the centre. However, because of the labeling neighbors and community members towards the family, she reported that they felt angry about her. She stated what her siblings said to her “it is because of what you did that we are humiliated in front of all these people, this kind of thing is not known in our family. By doing such things you disgraced us, and they will say other such things to me.” Members of the family blamed her for the bad perception and name that they gained in the neighborhood. Moreover, the controlling strategies after her release did not change. As the result, she continued her friendship with previous friends who are thieves and stated doing their previous anti-social and anti-legal activities. They usually went to the market place as they did before to steal. This was also the same with Case 10, who was living with her

grandmother. The story of the participant depicts that lack of proper help from parents and other family members may put children in persistent conflict with the law.

On the other hand, one of the key informants indicated some factors other than what are mentioned by the children participants. He asserted that there are families that want their children to involve in crime and bring them some money to support them. Since the children are supposed to bring money because their parents expect the same from them, they will become repeatedly in conflict with the law.

Street Life

Six of the participants are children who used to live on street before their incarcerations. The reasons for their being in the street are mostly related with family problem. Among the participants who were in the street life, Case1, Case 4, Case 5, and Case 6 came from rural areas. Case 7 and Case 3 are from Addis Ababa. Case 1 thinks that the main factor for his being in conflict with the law and for his third time incarceration is his coming to Addis Ababa, which was the result of punishment made by his father; and his being in the street made things worse. In order to survive, stealing is inevitable. He adds that “the city benefits only those who are educated and for those who have money. Me... where can I find money? When I don’t have something to eat, I don’t have choice other than stealing. So, in order not to steal... and to refrain from all wrong doings, I have to go back to my home.” Case 4 who is from *Werabe* also thinks that what led him to become in conflict with the law repeatedly was basically related to the work burden imposed by his family. The immediate factor for him to engage in criminal activities was his being in the street. “It is the family problem that made me have that work load, and after I came here, it was my being in the street that made me to be involved in such actions.” Case 6

explained how street life led him to be repeatedly in conflict with the law as this: “When we lived in the streets, and had nothing to eat, we couldn’t stop doing that thing [stealing], and we didn’t have another option. If you are living in the street, and if you don’t have anything ... you have one option ... stealing.”

Case 3 is 13 years old, he is from Addis Ababa. He started to live on the street because his mother expelled him from home when he was 8 years old. After he had been discharged from the centre, he needed to go back to his home but when he remembered the incidents that forced him to leave home; he refrained from going back home lest the same thing would happen to him, and so his stay in the street was unavoidable. In his own words Case 3 says:

I even wanted to go to my mother when I got released from here, but I started to think otherwise. She sent me out meanly. When I think about that I feel bitter I don’t need to think that... [Frown] when I think about all the things how she rejected me, I get upset.... [Long sigh] Then, six month after release, I came back to the centre.

We can understand from the respondents’ view how the street life leads them to be repeatedly become in conflict with the law; since nothing is changed to make them do the necessary adjustment in life. Lack of welcoming parents was also an issue here, lest their parents be welcoming, they will go back to their street life, which in turn might led them to be repeatedly in conflict with the law.

Peer Influence

All of the respondents rejoined their previous friends who at the first time led them to be in conflict with the law. Case 9, Case 8, and Case 10 were in the centre together on their first incarceration, and after they were discharged they continued their friendship. For Case 8,

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rejoining her previous friends was the main reason for her second incarceration. She explains how rejoining her friends contributed for her second time incarceration:

After we were released from the first incarceration we used to meet on Saturdays day Sundays and we all used to go to *Shiro meda*, as I told you it is Case 9 who usually picks things from people's pocket. If she got whatever amount of money or mobile, she would pass it for one of us, then we all shared that money and bought things to eat.

Case 9 also joined her previous friends and started to steal with them after release.

She has also explained the incidence after first release that put her again in incarceration:

After we were released, I was not involving with any stealing. I was focusing on my learning. Then I had heard that they were still stealing, and then I asked them about it. They said they were not doing that, they told me that they were selling sugarcane. However, after sometimes they started to do it again. Then I also started to work with them, to steal with them. Then we were caught and brought here again.

Case 7, who is a run away from her home, would live in a street. She was also incarcerated with her friends who were co-offenders. She and her friends were released together and went back to the street they left. In her own words:

I was released from the centre with my friends. We were wearing snicker shoes that were given to us from the centre. After we were released from here, we went to *Teklehaimanot* directly and sold the shoes. Then we went to pizza and chilled out there, we chewed *khat*, smoked cigarette and enjoyed ourselves.

She went to the same environment that she was before, where she didn't get the chance to get support for behavioral change.

Case 2 was a victim of peer influence both during his first and second time becoming in conflict with the law. After his release he went back to his previous friends who were living around *GojamBerenda* and who became the reason for his runaway from his parent's house. He states:

Children in conflict with the law

My friend used to visit me when I was in the centre in my first incarceration. They were even present in my court appearance, and when the court ruled that I am free to go, they were happy. They waited for me till I went back to the centre to handover my things. Then I went with them. They bought me lunch, and we drank together, we also chew *khat* and smoked cigarettes. Then they rented a room for me and let me rest there. They didn't force me to work with them for about three days. Then I started to steal with them again.

After a few days stay with his friends, case 2 decided to go back home [his parents' home] after two years of being in the street. Then he went back home and his parents were welcoming to him. When he went back home, he gave his home phone number to his friends. As the result of this, he stated what happened as follow:

My friends called me when I was thinking about having my own business- to learn or work in somebody's garage. Being in this kind of dilemma, they told me that they got a job (burglary) which was worth of 10,000 birr, and asked me if I could join them. They told me there is money and gold in the place where they planned to rob, and told me everything is ready. Then I said '*style*' to them.

Case 2 blames his friends to be the causes of his first as well as his second time becoming in conflict with the law. He explains, 'it was my friends who put me in both of these situations'.

Case 1, who is from *Welayta*, also blames his friends for his repetitive incarceration. He explained how close he was with his friends saying, "I go where they go. When they steal, I also steal. I live like this. Here I am in this place for third time. I have decided not to do such things again."

Substance Use

Among the ten participants, four of them are addicted to different substances. Case 7, who is 15-year-old girl, has different substance use like *Ganja*, *khat*, cigarette, and *Mastish*

(glue). Sometimes she drinks alcohol with her friends. Case 7 thinks that using drug by itself doesn't lead to crime. She argues:

I don't think taking these substances lead to crime... I mean the reason why we take and get high with hashish... you know to get rid off our painful inner feelings, you will simply laugh and you will make others to laugh, that is it. Does it lead to crime...? Oh! ... I don't think so, I don't believe in that. I have experienced it myself... when we *chewkhatin*-group we all do it for enjoyment. We only talk about our life history, nothing else.

However, for the question of what they will do if they don't have the money to buy ganja (hashish) or the other substances, she simply replied in a matter of fact gesture, "that is obvious, we will steal or beg."

For Case 2, his addiction has a contribution to his further involvement in illegal acts. For the question how his addiction can lead him to repetitive crime, he replied, "you know if you have addictions, you need money for that, I mean for your addictions... it is obvious you will need money for that. Even when I think about going back to school what comes into my mind is what am I going to do with my addictions? So I feel anxious." We can see that addiction result in the need of money, which in turn leads to stealing, and how addiction also affects motivation to attend class.

Case 1 believes that if he doesn't stop the addiction, he will not stop stealing. He even smokes in the centre hiding from the caregivers. He will get the cigarette when the institution itself allows him to go out for break since he is one of the children who are considered to be "*tamagn*" which means who are trusted. However, this gave him the opportunity to get cigarette. When he reported the reduction in the amount of daily intakes he described that "I have managed to quit *khat* but smoking I couldn't. I used to smoke a packet of cigarette per day. What

I can do is just to reduce the amount little by little every day. If decided to smoke, I would take only 2-3 next time. Like this I will try. Otherwise... ”

Community and Neighborhood Factors

The participants after they are discharged from the centre, they all will go back to the place they used to live before incarceration. Those who come from the street will go back to the street and who are from their family will also go back home and neighborhood they used to live. Case 8, case 9, and 10 who are from *shiro meda* went back to their home and neighborhood after they were released. Bur reintegration with the community was very difficult for all of them even though they stayed only for 18 days in the centre. This is mostly because of the labeling, the rejection, and detestation that the people showed to them in the neighborhood they live when they go back. Case 9, who is 11 years old now, expresses her experience she encountered as,”

I don't have a good name even in the whole neighborhood. Everybody knows about me... if it was possible, I wanted to leave that area... in the name of God... they are not good people. If it was possible to move from that place...” she added what the people say to her, “they will call me *leba... leba* (thief... thief). I heard them saying to each other ‘she is released from jail.’” She also said, when they call me thief, I will say to myself, wait... I will snatch from you too. I will steal your things.” The above description of neighbors’ perception about children who are in conflict with the law indicates that neighborhood members are hostile to them and as the result the children started to be unfriendly towards the neighbors. This also might lead children to develop anti- social behaviors since the people around them are not caring for them, and help them to change positively.

Case 10, who is 13 years old, also faced many labeling and rejections from the neighborhood when she went back from the centre. Because of that she developed negative feelings about the whole neighborhood. It was not only her who suffers from the labeling and gossips from the people in the neighborhood, but also her grandmother. She said “everybody in the neighborhood heard that I have been arrested. When they called me *leba ... leba*, (thief... thief) I started to alienate myself from the neighborhood... for that, I spend the day till 3:30 pm

in the afternoon at school... it makes me too disappointed. "She added" I regret and feel ashamed. I also feel like not living in that neighborhood anymore. However, after a while I started to get used to it and started to say to them 'did you see me stealing?' Then they almost stopped saying that." Case 10 also encountered the same kind of hostile environment, which was not favorable to her to be rehabilitated. The grandmother was also suffering from the gossips in different community gatherings like *Iddirs*. Her grandmother blames the child for the same.

Case 8 who is a 14 years old girl got different type of treatments from the neighborhood. Some were positive towards her and some are negative and affected her emotion so much. What makes her offended and upset was that the people's reaction was bad not only to her but also defamed the family too. She explains, "Why I feel bad is when I understand that it is me who is the reason for the dishonor of my family in the face of the whole neighborhood. They feel insulted because of me. Our neighbors said 'how did she become a disgrace to the family, a family which was respected in the whole neighborhood?' because of this they hated me." She also added about how she felt when they said such things to her. "*I hear them saying 'this is the girl who stole mobile with those kids over there'. At that time I feel mortified so much.*" For case 8 the neighborhood environment was not a conducive place to rehabilitate not only because she was hated by the members of that community but also by her family.

When case 2 was released and went back home, his family, as well as the people in the neighborhood didn't know his first time incarceration. The neighbors did not even know he ran away from home for two years. His mother and the rest of family members told everybody that he went to his aunt out of Addis Ababa, fearing the labeling and gossips that would follow if people knew the reason. Therefore, for case 2 this was not a problem. Generally, the fear that Case 2 has in mind during the interview seems what could happen if the people around his

family's house heard about him, they may label the child as deviant. Fearing this, his parents keep lying about the whereabouts of their child. We can see from this how labeling is stressful for the children as well as the family since parents are also the ones to be blamed for the behavior of their child.

School Factors

Most of the respondents didn't go back to school after their first release. Those who rejoined school were only Case 8, Case 9, and Case 10 who were at school before their incarceration. However, the others didn't go to school because most of them were not at school when they were incarcerated, except Case 5 who was attending school in the evening. Among those who went back to school, Case 9 was the only child who faced problems at school. For everyone knew her incarceration, she suffered the same labeling and rejection from the students and teachers as the one she suffered from the neighborhoods. She expressed her school experience as follows:

When I went to school, everybody said, 'this girl is a thief..., this girl is a thief' then I started to hate going to school. However, my father warned me not to quit class, and if I do that it will be the end of our relationship with him. In addition, I promised him that I would not quit. In addition, I started learning giving a deaf ear to whatever they said.

She said the following about the mistrust she had in the class. "Without any reason they would kick me and pick up a fight with me and also if somebody said s/he lost something they shouted at me ... '*leba....leba*' [thief... thief....] and beat me... all of them ... then I would report it to our teacher but the teacher also beat me." She also added how the teacher treated her at school: "The teachers used to beat me without reasons assuming that what the other students said about me was true. If somebody in the class lost something, they would report it to the

teacher as if I stole that thing. Then ... [long sigh]". All these things that she encountered in the school made her to hate school more than she ever hated it before. In any way, school was supposed to be a place for change not for aggravating behavioral problem.

On the other hand, Case 8 and Case 10 didn't face these kinds of problems since the students didn't know anything about their incarceration. Case 8's teachers also didn't know anything. However, Case 10's Home Room teacher knew about it but he kept it confidential and was very supportive to her and helped her lot even in her education.

Institutional Factors

The institutional factors that are identified in this study are mostly related to the length of stay of the children in their first incarceration; the treatment they got; the relationship they had with the counselors, care givers and staff; the disciplinary measures in the institute; the relationship with the other children in the centre including the experience they share and the drug use in the centre; and other related issues: these issues either contribute to or prohibit children's from their being repeatedly in conflict with the law.

Children, in most cases, stay for a short time in the centre during their first incarceration. The shortest was eight days and the longest was four months. For example, Case 4 stayed for only eight days, Case 7 fifteen days, Case 9, Case 8, and Case 10 stayed one month, Case 2 and Case 6 stayed two months, and finally Case 1 stayed four months. Participants reported that their short stay encouraged them to continue offending. The reason for their short stay as reported by the participants was based on the court's decision. The court usually passes a short period of sentence for one-time offences for children. However, Case 1, for instance, stayed relatively longer than the other respondents and said:

I never knew that there is a prison like this before, I steal, and if they catch me they just beat me and let me go. However, when I was caught by a police and brought here, I was confused. Then they sent me free in a short time, I started to think then that ‘what is this? Is it easy like this?’ Then I was caught again and brought back here.

Case9, who stayed for eighteen days with her friends, also said:

We were caught stealing mobile phone. We stole mobiles in the church, but we were not caught right away, but when we stole another mobile they knew that it was us that were stealing before. Then when handed to the police, they brought us here. Then they took us to the court and the court released us in a short time because it was our first time. We thought that it is easy like this to get released. And we are here again.

It is not only the length of their stay that mattered but also the treatment they got in their stay that did not effect change in their behavior. When participants children were asked about the treatment they got in their first stay as the centre that could change their behavior, they reported that there was no appropriate service for the same. Case 7 said about the treatment she got with regard to change her behavior: ‘... they didn’t work on changing my behavior, it was only one day that I came to the office [counselor’s office], and in fact I didn’t stay there for long.’ She reported that she did not get any counseling service in her first incarceration in the Remand Home. Case 9 shares this view and says “we just stayed here for a few days and left. We ate, drank, and slept. Nothing more.... [Laugh]”

When they are asked what kind of counseling they received even if it was little, it was noted that there was not a proper counseling as such. Case 4 stayed for eight days in his first incarceration, he said that he got a counseling once and the counseling was more of promises that are not fulfilled. He said:

I heard that there is counseling. Two days after my incarceration, somebody came and asked me where I came from and I told him so. Then he promised me they would buy me shoe shiners equipment [*listro*] when I finished my term of imprisonment. From that day on I didn’t get any counseling. When I was released, I asked them to give me the material the guy promised, but they told me he was not here.

He also added, “They also promised us to send us to our place, to our family. I have a friend called Z, they also promised him that they would send him to his place, because he was younger than I, but they did not. We went out from the centre and that was it.”

Case 3 who stayed for four months said that the counseling he got was something like a suggestion. The counselor told him that it is better for him to go back to his mother. Without putting a reunification program in place, this will remain to be a false suggestion. Telling him what is better is not a proper counseling. Case 6 who stayed for two months also said that the behavioral change treatment he got was from the formal education and the handcraft training like making carpet (*sigaja*). He said it was helpful especially the handcraft class. Case 1, who stayed for four months, said the following about the counseling:

It was as expected; they ask you what you want to do in the future, then we tell them. But they don't seem to understand our problems. There are so many children who came from the street. They need a lot of counseling. But they don't get any counseling, they just directly enter to the centre, meet with the other children there, they start sharing many things, then they leave the centre with better skill of stealing and doing other illegal things....then they will come back with another offence.

We can see that how the unavailability of proper treatment of the children can make the institution to be a centre for breeding trained and more skilled children in committing crime. So, after they go out from the centre, they will come back with other offence.

Case 8 who stayed for eighteen days said about the counseling services she got to be more of intimidation. In her own words, “If you do this again you are going to be sent to *Kaliti*...the guy used to work in the office...” Case 2 was not interested in the counseling services: he thinks that the counseling is not effective in bringing about behavioral change.

Three of the respondents also said that they don't have a good relationship with the counselors and the caregivers; and they also said that they are experiencing inappropriate

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disciplinary measures and verbal abuse. Case1 said, ‘there are some counselors and caregivers who insult them. He is especially not in good relationship with one of the counselors who insult him repeatedly with degrading words. Case2 has good relationship with most of the caregivers and other staff, but he said that there are some caregivers who insult him by saying “*leba*” (thief). Case 9 had been beaten by one of the counselors because of complaints from other children.

Disciplinary measures in the center were also the other factors mentioned by the respondents that affect their relations with the counselors and the caregivers. When they were asked about the disciplinary measures that are taken on them in the center, heavy physical exercise and sometimes beating as disciplinary measures in the center were reported. Case 1 who is in the centre for the third time and stayed from four to five months said that:

I am not in a good relation with one caregiver. When he beats you, he never knows which parts of the body he should beat you. He is always in bad temper. He has a green thick electric wire, and he beats us with it. He once kicked one child and cut off his ear. One day he heard shouting in the room and he opened the door and entered the room. There was one child standing in front of him, he hit the child on this head with the padlock on his hand, and the child bled so much. He almost crushed his head. His punishment is so wild... even we complained to the office about him but nothing happened. He said that nobody will take any measure on him, and he keeps beating us. He is making everybody not to be rehabilitated. This thing should not happen... we don't complain anymore, no difference.

Since he exercised the same treatment from his father before he escaped from him, he was very disappointed with the caregiver's treatment; he also kept saying: I am tired of being beaten: It seems that he is traumatic with beating from his father and when he witnessed such kind of treatments in the rehabilitation center his chance of being rehabilitated decreased.

The other institutional factor that may lead children to have awful experience in the center that made the place not favorable for positive change is their relationship with the other

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children who entered prior to them. Five of the respondents said that they didn't have good relation with the children in the center in their first incarceration. Of those who had bad relation with the children, four of them suffered a physical abuse by the inmates. Case 4, who stayed only for eight days in his first incarceration, was beaten by another child with a wood timber by locking him in the toilet. He was wounded in different part of his body, especially on his head. They also stole his soap that was given by the center and his clothes too. Case 2, Case 5 and Case 3 were also beaten in their first entrance to the center by the children. Case 9 has also bad relationship with the other children in the centre. She explained:

The kids were not good. If they hate you once, they will not leave you alone, they blame you for every wrong thing and try their best to create conflict between you and the caregivers, and then they will laugh at you when you are punished. They will provoke me to fight with them and they will make me punished.

Concerning experience sharing in the center among inmate children, Case 2 thinks, as there are children who come to be rehabilitated, there are also children who learn to be the worst offenders because they learn from each other's experience." They talk about things like their past life, what they were doing. And the other child who is listening to their conversation will be motivated to do what the other did." Case 4 also said that the children in the center talk about their experience like "one may say, I came here because of using illicit drug, when I go out I will do *Dukita*(type of theft)... everybody is interested in participating in this kind of discussion."

As to substance, Case 4 said the following:

Some of them use ganja and cigarette being hidden from caregivers and the other responsible people. There are children whom they call '*tamagn*' and who are trusted even to go outside the center's compound for different purposes. They bring cigarettes and other substances from outside.

Case 1 who is one of the *tamagn* 'the trusted' said that he still smokes while he is in the centre though the amount is little.

Institutional Services and Programs

Addis Ababa Remand Home is now under the Addis Ababa Women and Children Affairs Bureau. The objective of the institution is to rehabilitate children who come into the center by the order of the court. In this section of the study, I will present findings in consonance with the capability of the Centre in meeting its objective of rehabilitating the children so that they will not be in conflict with the law again.

According to the coordinator of the centre, the institution runs four basic program components. These are the formal education, the vocational training, the counseling service, and the entertainment program. Besides these basic program components, the centre provides different services like health treatment, food and shelter, library, taking the children to courts, and parental visit twice a week and other day to day services. The counseling services that exist in the centre are both group counseling and individual counseling as the coordinator reported it. There is an elementary school, which offers formal education. The vocational trainings include woodwork, metalwork, carpet making (*sigaja*), and embroidery. The entertainment programs are usually held on holydays.

When I look at the staff composition of the centre, the plan shows there is a need to have 64 staffs of different qualifications and capacities. However, currently, there are 49 staff members working in the centre that means there are 15 vacant positions that need to be filled. Of the existing staff members, only 5 of them have first degree one in management, two in sociology, and two in psychology. Four of them are working as counselors in the centre and have

limited experience in the field. There are also 5 staff members who are diploma graduates, the remaining staff members are 10+2 complete and below. The existing staff members whose day-to-day activities are directly related with children do not have adequate trainings, which can help them to work with children who passed through challenging life circumstances.

Challenges of the centre to rehabilitate the children are multifaceted and interrelated. According to one of the staff key informants who is the program coordinator of the centre, the centre is full of challenges. According to the view of the coordinator 5% can be accounted for their success and the remaining 95% for their failure.

As one of the informants who is working as a caregiver in the centre stated that the buildings of the centre are very conducive to escape. The number of rooms was mentioned by the informants as a challenge to rehabilitate children. There are only three rooms, the two are for the boys and one is for the girls. This is a challenge because the children who come at one time could be from 80-150 children, so, it is difficult for the institution to divide them in their offence type, number of times incarcerated age group as well as those who are convicted and those who are in court proceeding. Because of this, the children are learning different techniques and skills of stealing and other forms of offense from their mates in the centre. The coordinator said:

They are locked in the same room, whether s/he is 10 or 17. So, what do you expect? They will share each other's different skills. If one knows only how to steal a mobile from pocket, he will learn here how to rob a house... then they will be released from the centre learning more skills. Not to make this thing happen, they have to be placed in different rooms according to their offence type to reduce the influence. But to do this we don't have the capacity.

The very one service that is available in the institution is counseling. According to one of the key informants who is the coordinator of the institution, there are two kind of counseling that are given to the children, group and individual counseling. He said that to give

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these services in proper manner the resources that are available restrict us. There are only four counselors. This mean if there are, for example, 90 children on average in the institution at a time, the ratio of the counselors to the children will be 1:18. Besides the counselors who are working in the centre currently are with minimal experience and their fields of study are not directly related to counseling, like sociology and management, so the counseling service is not effective. Only the two counselors are fresh graduates from psychology department and have less experience. The most surprising thing is that this service was not being given for the last seven years in the centre. Counseling services were restarted in 2009 again. The interest of children to get counseling services is not encouraging, as the coordinator explained. The centre also lacks special service for those children who are addicted to different substances. The coordinator of the centre said:

This is also related to the capacity and resource of the centre. We know that children with addictions need special treatment but we don't have professional for the same. We will just tell them not to smoke again.... What we can do is forbidding them not to smoke or take any drug... these make the children to try to escape from here or show aggressive behavior because they are denied. If they stay in the centre for longer period, they will probably forget it.

One of the key informants who participated in the study was a caregiver for girls. She mentioned how she tries to help girls with addiction. "There are girls with heavy addictions; they sit the whole day and feeling bored. I help these children to engage in different activities such as washing their clothes, their body and make their hair. Their engagements in these kinds of activities help them to forget their addiction at list on temporary basis." The problem of lack of adequate counseling services is more serious for children who are repetitively becoming in conflict with the law. These children need carefully planned services since they need more treatment than those who become offenders for the first time.

The major problem of the institution is budget constraints. This paucity of budget aggravates the level of other challenges that exist in the centre. Because of this, for example, the vocational training machines and the building of the workshop are not repaired and not functioning well. The food that the children eat, according to one of the key informant, is always the same and with low nutritional quality. As the result, there is complaint about the quality of the food by children and is making them hate the environment. This might make the children not to be rehabilitated since things are not favorable to them.

The institution also lacks the basic program component that is reintegration and reunification program because of different reasons including, manpower, budget, vehicles, and other logistics. The program coordinator of the centre summarized the capacity gap as follows:

We don't have the resources for the same. We know that some of the children want to go back to their place of origin. Of course, there are some attempts made by the social unit of the court on this (reintegration), but this centre is supposed to render the service... and we have the information that the service was available before some years, there was even follow ups after the children are released. But now, we don't have the resource needed for that. We have one car. There are many activities such as taking children to court... to hospital... for office duties... and so on. Where can this single vehicle go? So, the existing resource doesn't allow and motivate us for extra work. The counselors who are working in the centre are not enough in terms of number to go out from here and help the children to reintegrate with their parents and families. Since there are a lot of works to be covered by the small number of workers, there is no adequate time as well as the capacity to perform these external activities.

He also added how this negatively affects the children who become in conflict with the law repeatedly:

As I explained earlier, there are a lot of problems in the institution. After one child is given the necessary services that are available in the centre, then the question of child's destination after release from the centre comes by. In the majority of the cases, they go either to the street or to their disrupted family. There is no any follow-up made after children leave the centre. These challenge children to commit repetitive crimes despite they get detained in the centre more than once. What we are doing here as the Amharic saying is (*tatbochika*). After we cleanse up the dirt from them we put them back

to that dirt again, then they come back with another dirt. For example those children who come from the street, whether they are rehabilitated or not they go back to the street...

EXPERIENCE AND PERCEPTION OF CHILDREN

Children face challenges in the institution, after their release and in their repetitive incarcerations. Children have also perceived future challenge hinder them from being changed positively. The challenges that some of the children face in their first stay is mostly related to the physical abuses that are inflicted by their own peer- inmates. The most common challenge that participants face after they are released from the centre is financial constraint for their survival. Case 2, Case 3, Case 4 and Case 6 mentioned shortage of money as the main challenge they face upon their release.

Participants, especially those who went back to their home after their release, were challenged by the perception that the community had towards them. Case 8, Case 9 and Case 10 were challenged with the labeling and the rejection they encountered from the people in the neighborhood. Other three participants mentioned the possible rejection by their parents as the main challenge to go back home after their first release.

The challenges perceived by the participants as their threat to future positive behavioral changes include peer influence, substance use, low school performance, labeling in the society and school, and lack of welcoming parents. For Case 5, Case 8, and Case 10 their friends are the threat for future changes. Case 8 said "If my friends don't want me to change, if they keep asking me to go where ever they go, if they ask me over and over to do what we used to do, my mind may start to incline to them. Then they can lead me to the worst things." Case 10 also said that it is only her friends whom she worries about that can be the source of her future challenge to change. Among the respondents who use different substances, Case 1, Case 2, and

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Case 7 mentioned their addiction as a future threat to change so that they can their formal education as other children do. Case 7 who has a number of addictions said “when I think about why I am not going to school, my addiction will come to my mind, what I am going to do with my addiction? Then I fall in a dilemma.”

Case 1 also has a fear that his addiction will affect his future life. “Since I smoke, I feel that I may not understand what I learn at school. Even if I managed to go back to my parents in *Welayta*, they would not accept me as such; we will not have good relation because of my addiction.” We can see from the two participants that addiction might affect the children’s future change in every aspect of their life including their education and their chance to live with their parents. For Case 9, the future challenge to change is her low school performance and fear of going back to the same school environment that labeled her as a thief. She said: “My problem is, I am not good at school, and I don’t understand what they teach us.” She also added that the threat she has in the school environment “I was thinking like... ‘Am I going to go back to the same school that will call me a thief?’ So, I just want to change school and learn where nobody knows about my deeds. And I will meet with new decent friend who can help me understand what we learn.... This is what I am thinking.” From Case 9’s story we can learn how labeling can affect children’s future change for better. Others like Case 6 and Case 3 mentioned as a future challenge to be lack of welcoming parents. They want to go back to their home but they have a fear that their parents will not be willing to have room for them.

Based on the different challenges the children faced in their life and in their incarceration, they perceived their life and their being in conflict with the law the first time as follow. Case 2 has no good perception about his own life. He expresses how his relation with other children put him to be in a bad feeling. “I was shocked... I was terrified, like, when the

children beat me, you know, I feel bad. I was shocked... I felt like I was in hell.” Others promised to themselves that they will not do anything wrong again lest they come back to the centre. Some of them perceived themselves as a sinner and cursed. Case 9, Case 10, Case 8 and Case 1 are in this category.

The participants’ perception in time of their first release also varies. Eight of them were thinking that they are changed and think that they will never involve in such activities. Two of the participants on the other hand were thinking about how they will carry on their deeds but with safe way, that is in a way that they will not be caught again. Among the respondents, Case 2 and Case 1 perceived themselves that they are not changed a bit at the time release. Case 1 was not thinking anything in his first release but in the second release he stated to think of changing his strategies so that he will not be caught again. The same was true to Case 2. He explains:

When I was released from my incarceration, I learnt from my mistake. I was thinking that I would not be caught again. What I mean is, I took a lesson from the mistake that put me in jail. I also regret because I didn’t save money to pay for bail; the court asked me 900 birr bail and I was not able to pay. What was in my mind when I was released was what kind of things I should do that enable me to save money so that I can pay for bail in case I am caught while I am engaged in the same activities.

The remaining eight respondents, except Case 10, were thinking that they were changed at the time of their release. Case 10 thinks that she will be changed in the future, not now. The perception of participants as to why they were respectively in conflict with the law differs. Case 1, who is his third time in the centre, perceives his being repetitively in conflict with the law as a result of his being cursed. He also thinks that this is something he cannot do anything about. He further tries to express his perception saying:

I was looking after the cattle and some old person was sitting and eating bread. I was very little at that time; I took the bread from his hand and ran. Then he cursed me. Eh... when he cursed me I felt pain in my chest that was swelling every day. I was going to die; I got better by drinking milk daily. There was another person who could reverse

the curse. But he asked a lot of money which my father could not afford and then we left it. From that day on ward I started stealing from my father and [A long brooding silence]

He deeply believes that his current life becomes as such because of this curse and he also believes that this cannot be changed. This kind of perception might have contribution for his not being positively changed in his two incarcerations. Case 9 who was in the centre for 18 days in her first incarceration perceives that her second incarceration is because of her hand's habit. "I am praying that God should amputate my hands and remove the idea of stealing from my mind, and help me only to focus on my education." Her parents also perceive that her problem is related to her hands. She said, "My mother took me to the church and got my hands baptized so that I will stop stealing." But I start stealing again with my friends." She might have developed this perception from her other's action. Her father was also advising her upon her first release that the thing she did is a sin and so she should repent. '

Case 8 perceives that her being in the centre is advantageous for her parents. "Of course I felt shocked when I was brought here. But when they gave us clothes, shoes and other things, I thought that the burden of my family was reduced." She also has the perception that stealing has addiction, "It will become habit. Like... you will have money and when you have it you will buy anything you want and you will buy ear jewelries and so on. But when you want to buy these things having no money ... you know... you feel very bad." Case 10 felt regretted for everything she did, and she was also afraid of the caregivers' perception when they saw her for the second time. Case 5's perception was "I felt ashamed and I decided not to go back to my friends because they will make me do it again. I will go to different place ... far away... I will go to Nazareth, then I work in small shop there... that is what I am thinking." Case 6 was thinking in his re-incarceration about the length of his stay, he worries how he will finish the two years in

the centre. He also blames himself for everything that happened in his life including his being repetitively in conflict with the law. Case 1 also felt when he was incarcerated for the third time that it is waste of time to continue like this. Some of the respondents also think that they cannot achieve anything. Case 2 said “I think that I cannot do anything to make my life better. I hate to work and I also hate going to school. I am not interested in these things. I am sure that if I start school again, I will drop it sometimes... only if God gives me my own business, things could be good.” This kind of perception to himself, not able to work and not able to learn because he hates both things, would probably have contribution for his being repetitively in conflict with the law because he hates the legitimate means (school or employment), but what he is looking for is for shortcuts so that he will have his own business. It is against the assumption of strain theory, which explains children’s being in conflict with the law is the result of not having legitimate means like school or employment that children commit crime (Gullotta, Admas&Montemayor, 1998). Therefore peer influence is more reflected on his case, which is explained by social learning theory.

Case 3’s perception towards himself is that he is considering himself as a person who is rejected and not important since his mother did that to him. When he thinks about the future, he feels hopeless. And when he thinks about his former friends, he feels so jealous. He voices this as:

I feel very sad. I always think what my life will be in the future, what kind of life I will have. Am I going to grow up in the street and live in the street? I will never go back to my mother, not by any reason ... my friends whom I was learning together are now in 9th grade. When I think about them, I regret very much. When I feel so, I will tell myself none of it was my fault. I should have regretted if I had left the house with my own will. So where could I dwell so that I will pursue my learning? That is the question. So, I don’t have to regret.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

The major findings of this study are discussed in this chapter on the basis of different theories and literatures reviewed for the same. The major findings are classified into three major parts, the first part deals with the children's first conflict with the law; the second part discusses the contributing factors to their becoming in conflict with the law in a repeated manner or factors for recidivism; the final part deals with the experience and perception of children on their being in conflict with the law repeatedly. Discussing the first factors for their being in conflict with the law is important because they lay the foundation for the recidivism of children.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS FOR CHILDREN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

Previous researchers who conducted different studies on the subject agree that factors such as family, peer, neighborhood, and drug abuse are the major factors that contribute for children to be in conflict with the law (Stoddard, 2001; Mbuba, 2004; Keith, 2002). These factors are also reflected in the current study.

Family Factors

In this study different family factors were identified including family poverty, family breakdown or disruption, poor parental control, harsh disciplinary measures, labor abuse, and lack of parental love and neglect. These are the most commonly reported factors. These factors are so interwoven and interrelated that one person might suffer from more than one family factor. The economic condition of a family might be taken as a main factor. Besides this, a child may also suffer from poor disciplinary measures, lack of parental love and affection.

Low socioeconomic condition is mentioned in many researches to have contribution on children to be in conflict with the law (Gullotta, Adams & Montemayor, 1998). Poverty is the driving force that involves people in different illegal activities in order to survive. As strain theory clearly stated, children who are from low economic status are more prone to get involved in crime since they do not have legitimate means to attain their needs (Thio, 2001).

Family breakdown is one of the elements that can be noted from these research findings as one of the contributing factors for children to become in conflict with the law. Parental death, imprisonment, and divorce were among the family disruptions that were mentioned by the study participants. These factors might have contributions to children's involvement in illegal activities because the control and the supervision they get from guardians are limited or will not be as equal as that of the parent's supervision. Parental death is also noted to be one of the factors for low economic condition of children since parents who generate income have passed away. This, in turn, will lead them to be vulnerable to get involved in different illegal activities to support themselves.

Children who have parent but who are not properly controlled and supervised are also prone to get involved in crime activities. Social control theorists state that individuals are prevented from engaging in criminal activities by the social bonds they are in; and one of the bonds is family, which serves as external control (Ngai & Cheung, 2005). If a family fails to control and supervise a child, the child may end up in involving illegal activities.

But control does not mean corporal/physical punishment, which makes a child get frustrated and run away from home to escape the harsh situation; or makes the child to develop aggressive behavior. Poor disciplinary measure as one of the family factors that leads children to

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be in conflict with the law was confirmed in many researches (Stoddard, 2001; Mbuba, 2004; Keith, 2002). After running away, children will end up on the streets, the result of which may be either to get involved in begging or stealing or doing both.

Labor abuse or workload in the family is also another factor identified as one of the factors, which contribute for the child's involvement in illegal acts. The workload that a child has at home is noted to affect the child's health condition, socialization, and educational achievements. This may lead the child to start street life. Due to lack of other options to survive, the child may enter into criminal activities.

Peer Influence

Peer influence is another major factor that leads children to be in conflict with the law. The participants reported that they started to involve in illegal acts such as stealing by the pressures from their friends. The pressure includes convincing them as if stealing is a rational act to those who lack support from parents. Friends also convince new comers to the street that through stealing it is possible to support oneself. The participants also reported that their friends are the ones who have showed them how to steal, how to pickpocket or break into people's house, the suitable time and place for the crime act and so on. According to social learning theory, learning criminal behavior involves not only the art or techniques of committing crime but also motives, drives, rationalization and attitudes that are favorable to commit crime (Ngai & Cheung, 2005).

The time and place of interaction with friends matter for children's involvement in crime and anti-social acts. Participants of the current study have reported that they meet their friends in desperate times such as when they do not get a job, starve or look for food in the street

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and run away from home and wander around. They also reported how their friends showed them generosity in that critical time in life. Time of meeting might matter because during these times their friends are filling the gaps created by their parents or guardians. Getting a person who takes care of them was important thing for the children, so their involvement with the friends may not have a limit.

Participants' friends being older than participants themselves were also noted as important to develop new behavior. The age difference might indicate that these friends have better experience and skill in committing crime. So the influence that can be created by such friends seems to be high. However, it does not mean that peers who are in the same age category do not influence each other's behavior, but the influence might not be as those who have friends older than their age. But what makes them similar in that all of them believe that their friends have influence on their involvement in criminal activities.

It was also reported in this study that friends' influence is not limited to children's involvement in criminal activities but also extended to the use of different substances like *Khat*, Cigarette, marijuana (ganja), and inhalants (*mastish*). When they join friends who use substances, they are invited to take some substances, which may lead them to addiction. As Gullotta, Adams & Montemayor (1998) affirmed it; peer substance use is one of the predictors of substance use among adolescents.

School Factors

School is another part of child's life that plays a major role in behavioral development of a child (Silphiphat, 2007). In this study low school motivation and academic performance as well as the school environment were identified to be factors that have some

contributions for children's being in conflict with the law. Findings of the current study coincides with the findings mentioned by Mbuba (2004), Keith (2002) and Silphiphat (2007) which confirm that low school motivation and performance can lead a child to be in conflict with the law. But there were participants who had good attitude toward their schooling but had low performance. The reason identified as a factor for having low school performance for those who have positive attitude to school was workload in their home. This finding was supported by another study conducted in Addis Ababa among working children who were found to be low academic performer (Alegnta, 2007)

Truancy was another issue noted in the study that might considerably contribute for the children's becoming in conflict with the law. After escaping from school, children meet their friends who have influence on their behavior and may involve in illegal activities such as stealing and substance use. Garry (1996, p.1) found out that truancy is "a stepping stone" to children's involvement in criminal activity. According to social control theory, individuals are prevented from involving in criminal activities by the social bonds they are in (Ngai& Cheung, 2005). However, participants of the current study did not have strong connection with their schools, which may help as a strong bonding center to prevent criminal activities.

Community and Neighborhood Factors

As it was reported by the participants, most of them resided in crowded parts of Addis Ababa city such as the market places, bus stations and others. It seems that there are some areas in the city that are very conducive for children to be involved in criminal activities. This is also supported by Gullotta, Adams &Montemayor (1998) who stated that with specific urban areas, there is a different rate of involvement of children in illegal acts.

Informal sanctions by the community were also found to be one of the factors in children's becoming in conflict with the law. Participants were not as such available to be sanctioned by informal community sanctions like religion and religious activities. Informal sanctions have some controlling effect in people's behavior (Nagi& Cheung, 2005). Participants of this study also reported that they have low interest to participate in religious activities. They reported that they used to participate but after starting street life, they stopped. Hence the possibility of informal sanctions to discourage children from involving in conflict with the law has been low for children especially for those who were on the streets, since they were no longer available as permanent residents of their former residential area, where there are such community sanctions.

FACTORS AFFECTING CHILDREN'S BECOMING REPEATEDLY IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

Family Factors

Family factors that are mentioned as reasons for the first involvement in crime also serve as the base for further involvement of children in illegal activities. Participants reported that after release from their first incarceration, participants who were with their family prior to their detention went back to their previous family and those who were on the streets went back to the street life. That means there is high probability that children who go back to the street as well as to their family may encounter the same problem that previously influenced their criminal activities. For those who went back home, the same lose control and supervision by the parents may continue. The loose parental control and supervision was the reason for their first being in conflict with the law and it also continued to be the reason for second, third, and more.

Street Life

Basically what leads children to street life is related to their family factors. Once children are forced to live in the streets, it becomes a contributing factor for their involvement in illegal activities in a repetitive manner. The participant children mentioned that lack of money and skill to be the main reason for their involvement in crime when they live on street. This finding is in consonance with strain theory that states that when there is no legitimate means like skill and education to earn income to fulfill their needs, children will divert to illegitimate means to acquire the basic necessities for their life (Gullotta, Adams & Montemayor, 1998). Having no money, education, and skill make life on the streets difficult and excruciating. So children will involve in crime even though they know their act is punishable and even after they pass through confinement. This is because it is a matter of survival for them.

Peer Influence

All participant children of this study rejoined their previous friends who in the first place led them to be in conflict with the law. A large body of research has persistently linked peer influence to patterned delinquent behavior (Mbuba & Grenier, 2008). For those participants who were from the streets, their going back to previous friends is a predestined fact since they do not have another option. So the influence from their previous friends with whom they have rejoined would continue.

Substance Abuse

As it is reported by the participants who use different substances, their substance use contributed a lot in their being in conflict with the law for repetitive times. Need for money to buy the drug is one reason mentioned for involvement in crime than being under the influence of

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substances and committing crime. Siegel & Welsh (2005, p.247) also stated that “drug users may also commit crimes to pay for their habits.”

Community and Neighborhood actors

One of the factors identified in the children’s becoming repetitively in conflict with the law is related to the problem of reintegration with the community after being released from the Remand Home. Participants who returned home mostly mentioned the labeling, the detestation, and rejection they faced after incarceration and how hostile that situation was for them to reintegrate and live a positive life in the community. People were pointing their fingers and called them “*leba! Leba!*” (Thief! Thief!). This finding is consistent with the assumption of labeling theory. The theory asserts that labeling causes secondary and recurrent involvement in criminal acts (Thio, 2001). Labeling children as ‘*leba*’ (thief), or being considered as a disgrace to the family by the community members, did not give the participant children the chance to rehabilitate. This shows how caring and positive attitude from community members is very important for children rehabilitation after their passing through incarceration.

School Factors

Low academic performance, weak bonds to school, low school motivation, truancy, and poor disciplinary measures in school are the most frequently mentioned school related factors both for first time and repetitive conflicts with the law (Keith, 2002; Silphiphat, 2007). In the current study participants have reported that they have low performance, low motivation, high truancy, and improper disciplinary measures as factors leading them to be in conflict with the law in repetitive manner.

Institutional Factors

The institutional factors that participant children reported as reasons for their second and third incarceration were mostly related with their length of stay during their first incarceration; the type of treatment they got; the relationship they had with the counselors, care givers and staff; the disciplinary measures of the institute; and the relationship with the other children incarcerated in the center including experience sharing and drug use within the center.

Even though the issue of the length of stay in the remand home as a factor for recidivism is datable (Lin & Lieb, 1993), what the participants in this study have reported is that shorter stay encouraged their further involvements in criminal behavior. One of them states that “if it is so easy, I will not be afraid to make another theft or pick pocketing.” However what matters from my point of view is not the length of stay but the type of treatment service that they get in the centre that helps them to change to the better.

As to the counseling, the participants said they could not be considered as counseling as such since it was full of wishes, suggestions, intimidation, and unfulfilled promises. Moreover, there is no special attention for street children to address their pressing needs. Lack of proper treatments like counseling and other services were evidenced from the participant’s report that it might contribute to their recurrent conflict with the law. Besides, participants reported that they do not have a good relationship with the counselors and caregivers because some of the counselors and caregivers insult them and beat them. Since the participant children suffered a lot from physical abuse already inflicted by their parents and guardians, when they face problems in the rehabilitation centre similar to that of the problems they encountered in the dysfunctional family setting, their chance of being rehabilitated seems to be endangered. The

practices observed in the rehabilitation centre are against United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (“The Beijing Rules”) that Ethiopia has ratified which forbids corporal punishment (The Beijing Rule, 1985). As a result of such maltreatment, children may develop unfriendly behavior towards the counselors. This in turn may put children to develop negative perception on the counseling services rendered in the center. They will develop resentment towards the counselors, as the result of which they may not accept anything that is given to them in terms of advice or counseling.

Unpleasant environment and interaction exist among children during their stay in the Remand Home. This was manifested in various ways. The participants reported that they have learnt different skills of committing crimes from their own peers. As some literatures documented, the negative impact of incarceration is that during imprisonment, inmates learn the norms of the antisocial subculture from other mates in the center (Lin & Lieb, 1993).

EXPERIENCE AND PERCEPTION OF CHILDREN

This section discusses the perception and views of children about their being in conflict with the law more than once. As the findings indicate, children faced challenges in the institution, after their release and in their repetitive incarcerations. Children have also anticipated that future challenges may hinder them from being changed positively.

The Challenges

In their first incarceration, participants reported that they encountered physical abuse from their fellow mates who were incarcerated earlier. After release, children have money constraints to support themselves, especially those who are from the streets. They have also experienced labeling when they go back to their home and community they live in. the stigma

they encountered because of their being in conflict with the law has a significant impact on their perception towards themselves and their subsequent involvement in illegal acts which is also confirmed by the theory of labeling (Thio, 2001).

Participants also reported that their perceived future challenges have an impact on their positive changes. Such challenges include peer influence, substance use, low school performance, labeling in the community and at school, and absence of welcoming parents. The future challenges that are perceived by the participants are the challenges that they faced before and are the factors that led them to be in conflict with the law during their previous incarceration and their current incarceration. These perceived challenges to change may also lead them to further involvement in criminal activities if they do not get appropriate treatment at this point.

Perception about Their Repetitive Conflict with the Law

The perception about their being repetitively in conflict with the law also varies from one participant to another. One of them perceived his being in conflict with the law as to be the result of his being cursed by an old man and also thought that he cannot do anything about his situation. Others perceived themselves as sinners as they were called so by their parents. These perceptions are more related to the thinking that existed in the middle age Europe, where misbehavior was assumed to be the result of witchcraft, possession by the devil, or a similar contract with the evil-spiritual world, which at this time do not have much acceptance (Blake & Holland, 1971). So, since the family perceives the problem to be spiritual, the problem to be spiritual, the solution they were seeking was spiritual instead of controlling and supervising their children in an objective manner.

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One participant perceives her being incarcerated repetitively as an advantage to her family since they will not buy her shoes and clothes if she is in the centre. This shows the financial problems of her family. She also thinks that stealing is an addiction or a habit that is very hard to quit. This kind of perception probably influenced her to maintain her stealing behavior as part of her life.

Generally, participants reported that their perception towards their life is negative which includes that they are unable to be changed positively, for they are being rejected and considered as unimportant; and are feeling hopeless. These kinds of negative perceptions may affect recidivism of the participants in the future.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study explored different factors that led children to be in conflict with the law for their first as well as repeated incarcerations. It also tried to examine the intuitional capacity of the Addis Ababa Remand Home in rehabilitating children not to involve in crime over and over again. It also explored the different perceptions that children have towards themselves.

Children's involvement in criminal activities in cyclical manner may imply that children may continue engaging in crime even when they grow into adulthood. This would be an undesirable both for individual her/himself as well for the community at large. Hence great deal of emphasis should be given to the issue of children's being in conflict with the law repeatedly,

Participants encountered not only one problem that led them to their present life, but also consecutive and subsequent factors that led them to be in conflict with the law. In other words, it is not a single factor that leads children to be repeatedly in conflict with the law but a sum of different factors. For example, a child who is not supervised and controlled by his parents will have a chance to meet with friends who influence her/him in a negative way. In another scenario, a child who suffers from harsh disciplinary measures may run away to escape the harsh environment and go to the streets which then leads her/him to be in a difficult situation to survive. This in turn leads the child to involve in crime acts in order to get something for survival.

As the current study documents, (1) family factor such as low socioeconomic status, family breakdown including parental death and divorce, harsh punishment, loose supervision and control; (2) peer influence such as initiation and pressurization; friends' age difference or similarity and the time a friendship is established may affect the behavior of the child. Other

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factors that lead children to be in conflict with the law as this study reported include (3) school factors such as low motivation and performance as well as school environment and low control mechanism on truancy; (4) community and neighborhood factors such as their way of life near to market places and crowded areas are parts of the major and the most important challenges that lead children to be in conflict with the law. It was also found that these factors serve as bases for children's further involvement in criminal activities. In addition to these, substance abuse, street life, and intuitional disorganization are identified as contributing factors for children's being in conflict with the law. The unavailability of proper counseling and other treatments such as substance treatment, reintegration and reunification programs, and poor disciplinary measures in the Remand Home make the institution ineffective in rehabilitating the children.

The major perceptions of participants' about their own repetitive conflict with the law include being cursed, sinner, and addicted to stealing and false advantage to the family. From my point of view, these kinds of perceptions may hinder them from being rehabilitated and lead a positive and fruitful life. Hence, they will enter into a repetitive circle of crime as a result of which they may continue indulging in crime even in their adulthood.

Social Work Implications

The contexts of social work practices are often believed to be complex, demanding, and always challenging. The phenomena of children's being in conflict with the law are one of these complexes, demanding and challenging situations that social workers in Ethiopia should deal with. As it is shown in this study, children are a product of their social and physical environments including their family, neighborhood, friends, and school. This calls for interventions, which will address the different factors that the child is affected by. As it is

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known, “social workers, regardless of setting or function, tend to view the person-and-situation (PAS), person-in environment (PIE), or person-issue-situation as the basic unit of attention”, since the focus of the social work profession is not only on the individual client, they involve other people or other social systems in the helping process (Cournoyer, 2005, p.1). The involvement of family, friends, school, and neighborhood in the rehabilitation of the child might help her/him not to be repeatedly in conflict with the law.

The institution also lacks the due attention of different government as well as nongovernmental organizations including religious organizations. Since one of the social work skills is providing inter-organizational liaison services, social workers participation in this institution is very fundamental. As the children may need different treatments and service that the intuition is not providing, these services could be found in other places, so the social worker might refer such cases to the appropriate place. Besides, the children have needs for psychosocial support during their stay in as well as after release from the Remand Home. Social workers are also important in this centre to work with families. Children may not have good relationship with their parents (conflict with parents): thus social workers can help them to resolve their conflicts in a peaceful manner so that the child will get the appropriate support from his family.

Policy Implications

- Since poverty is found to be a major reason for the children’s involvement in different illegal activities, policies concerning improving family economic conditions should be developed.
- Legal frameworks that prohibit children’s maltreatment including abuse should be implemented throughout the country so that the children will not be forced to

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leave their family because of such maltreatment and be vulnerable to risky situations that lead to involvement in different criminal activities.

- Policies that focus on truancy and dropouts control and guidelines for appropriate disciplinary measures in schools should be also devised and implemented.

- Since absence of shelter and other forms of disenfranchisement intensify the risk of young people offending and re-offending, the government should have a policy on giving shelter for these children as well as working on reintegrating children with families including extended families so that their well-being cannot be threatened and they will not be involved in crime activities.

- The government should give due attention to Remand Home by hiring qualified personnel like social workers, counselors, special need professionals as well as lawyer; and allocating appropriate budget for the different costs is also important.

- The government should coordinate different service providers like mental health hospitals, vocational training institutions, as well as formal educational intuitions so that he children's needs are met in holistic manner. Medical and psychological assistance in particular are extremely important for incarcerated young person with problems of substance us.

- The government should encourage the participation of NGOs, religious organizations, and private sectors to work with the Remand Home so that he children are rehabilitated and reintegrated into the community as well as with their family. The government can encourage voluntary organizations that provide services for young

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people by giving them support like formulating favorable legislations for the participation of such organizations.

- Government should give attention concerning comprehensive policies and strategies for the prevention of alcohol, drug, and other substance abuse by children so that the children will not enter into the circle of criminal behavior.

Implications for Research

The issues of children who are in conflict with the law in Ethiopian lack rigorous and systematic study. The current study can serve as a take-off point to conduct further studies in order to understand the complex contributing factors that lead children to get into conflict with the law.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Guiding Questions

(Participant Children)

- Tell me about your family: your family structure such as, are you living with both parents or single parent, with step parent or foster parents or living in an institution; what do your parents do for living, the relation you have with your parents and siblings how do your parents discipline you and your siblings.

- If you are living in an institution, tell me the relationship you have with the caregivers and how they discipline you.

- Tell me about your school performance, your relation with teachers and students.

- Can you tell me about your friends in the school, neighborhood, and even in the remand home and your relationship with them? What do you like to do with our friends?

- Can you tell me how many times you are detained in this Centre, when was the first time you entered in this center, the reason why you were here and the experience you have in your stay? Tell me how you were feeling about your detention.

- Tell me about your relation with the other children who are in the centre and the people working in the centre during your first detention

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- Can you tell me what kind of treatments you have received from the centre?
- Tell me what happened after you are released from the centre, how you felt about your release, your family's response to your release, and how they treated you after that.
- Can you tell me your experience of going back to the school after being in the centre for some time? What was your classmates and teachers response towards your coming back?
- Tell me the challenges that you encountered after your first release.
- Tell me about your relationship with your friends after your release. Did you continue your friendship with your previous friends after your release?
- Can you tell me about your second entrance to the center? What was the reason for the second detention, and how do you feel about it?
- Tell me the difference in your feeling and experience between your first detention and the second or the third detention.
- Can you tell me what your opinion is about the future? What do you want to be in the future and do you think you can achieve it? What do you think will be hindrance for your accomplishment? So, how would you respond to it?
- Tell me about yourself: your name where you are from, your age, educational level, and your hobby, what you do for living and other things about yourself.

(For Counselor)

- Tell me about yourself, your educational background, your work experience in the centre, your position in the centre
- Tell me the positive working experience in the centre
- Tell me the challenges you have working as a counselor in this centre
- What are the major offences that are committed by the children?
- What do you think are the main factors that lead children to become in conflict with the law for the first time and for repeated times?
- Tell me about the different program components and services that are available for the purpose of rehabilitating the children.
- Tell me about its effectiveness to bring permanent change in the children.
- Do you have special treatment or give special attention for those repeated offenders?
- Tell me the challenges that the institute has in working towards the rehabilitation of the children.
- The children who come here are from different background, committing different offences, with different addiction and some other problems. So, they may need different treatment services. How much do you think this centre provides these treatments and services for the various needs of the children?

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- What kind of things do you work with the parents/guardian of the children?

(For Caregivers)

- Tell me about yourself, your work experience in this institution, your education, trainings you have taken, and so on.
- Tell me the main responsibilities you have as a caregiver
- Tell me the positive experience that you have working in the center
- Tell me the challenges you have working with the children
- What do you think are the most common factors that lead these kids to criminality/to be in conflict with the law for the first time as well as the subsequent in conflicts?
- How do you handle different discipline problems in the centre? Not only have you abutted he others also. And what kind of disciplinary measures are taken in the centre?
- Tell me about the positive changes that you see when the children leave the place
- Do you think the kids leave the place rehabilitated?
- What do you feel when you see kids coming back here re-offending again?

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- Tell me about the programs and services that are available for the purpose of rehabilitating the children.

- Do you think the services in the institution are effective to bring change in the lives of the children?

- What do you think should be done by parents, government, and this institution to prevent the problem as well as to rehabilitate the children?

Appendix D: Participants' Profile

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Names of participants	Sex	Age	Religious Background	Educational Level	Status of Care Giver	Place of Origin	No. of Times in Prison	Type of Offences
Case 1	M	14	Orthodox	1 st grade	Double parent	Wolayita	3	Robbery on all
Case 2	M	15+	Orthodox	7 th grade	Double parent	Addis Ababa	2	Robbery [<i>Belbela</i>]
Case 3	M	13	Orthodox	4 th grade	Single parent because of divorce	Addis Ababa	2	Pick pocketing, snatch
Case 4	M	15	Muslim	3 rd grade	Double parent with health problem	Werabe [Gurage region]	2	Robbery [<i>Belbela</i>]
Case 5	M	15	Muslim	5 th grade	Guardian, grandmother	Welele [Gurage region]	3	Theft
Case 6	M	13	Muslim	1 st grade	Double parent	Wolkite [Gurage region]	2	Robbery [<i>Belbela</i>]
Case 7	F	15	Orthodox	7 th grade	Mother died and father is absent	Addis Ababa	2	Theft and battering
Case 8	F	14	Orthodox	7 th grade	Double parent	Addis Ababa	2	Pick pocketing
Case 9	F	11	Orthodox	3 rd grade	Double parent	Addis Ababa	2	Pick pocketing
Case 10	F	13	Orthodox	6 th grade	Double orphan, lives with her grandmother	Addis Ababa	2	Pick pocketing

Appendix D: Participants' Profile

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis entitled Perception and Experience of Children who Repeatedly Become in Conflict with the Law submitted by me for the partial fulfillment of the MSW to Indira Gandhi Open University [IGNOU] New Delhi is my original work which has never been presented earlier, either to IGNOU or to or any other university or university college; and that all resources and materials used herein have been acknowledged.

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Counselor at Study Centre**

Enrolment No: 109100777

Date of Submission: _____

Name of the Study Centre: St Mary University College

Name of the Guide: Ato Desalegn Nagari (PhD Candidate)

Title of the Project: **Perception and Experience of Children in Conflict**

with the Law: In the Case of Addis Ababa Remand Home

Signature of the Guide:-----

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Enrolment No: **109100777**

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Indira Gandhi National Open University

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INTRODUCTION

This study will explore the factors that contribute to the participant children's recidivism or repeated conflict with the law and their experience and perception towards their being repeatedly in conflict with the law. The participant children's experiences and perceptions towards their being in conflict with the law in repetitive manner will also be explored. This study is important in that it will reveal various implications of social work, policy making and research by understanding the major factors for recidivism and the ways to minimize the problem with the collaboration of the concerned bodies.

Background

Crime is considered as one of the most devastating offences that are rife all over the world. It can penetrate any life-style irrespective of age, race, or socioeconomic status. It is also evidenced that crime is fueled and aggravated by social and economic problems like unemployment, poverty, family breakdown and other problems (Barnes, n.d.). As criminal activities increase, the total harm to society also rises. Children involvement in crime is also the most challenging problem across the nations. Children in conflict with the law are children or adolescents apprehended by authorities and accused or suspected of committing illegal acts which are listed in the legal codes of countries or states (Keith, 2002). Criminal behavior that is taken to be in conflict with the law in the youth community is usually considered as a criminal act if it would have been committed by adults also. Children can become in conflict with the law for the first time or may become recurrently in conflict with the law (recidivism) (ACPF, 2007). Recidivism is widely used to refer to re-offending after release from a correctional facility, in other words, a relapse or return to criminal activity by children who were in conflict with the law before (Mbuba and Grenier, 2008).

According to the definitions of the Riyadh Guidelines, a juvenile (child) is any person under the age of 18 (the Riyadh Guideline, 1990). Besides, article 1 of the convention on the right of the child (CRC), which Ethiopia has ratified, and enacted as a law of the land through proclamation No. 10/1992, defines the 'child' as every human being below the age of 18 years [CRC, 1992]. Article 198 of the Ethiopia Civil code defines the child as a minor who is a person of either sex who has not attained the full age of 18 years (civil code of Ethiopia, 1960). The penal code of Ethiopia in the other hand classifies children under 18 years of age into these categories: infants, young persons and offenders over 15 years of age. Infants refer to children aged less than 9 years who are not responsible for their deeds, while young person are those aged 9 to 15, who are to some extent responsible for their deeds, but not like adults. This group shall not be kept in custody with adult offenders and measures would be taken only if the young person who is in conflict with the law is convicted. In the penal code of Ethiopia (1957) child offenders who are over 15 and under 18 years are tried under the ordinary provisions of the penal code like adult criminals with the exception of not facing capital punishment and having the right to be in a separate prison.

According to (UNICEF, 2005), the age of criminal responsibility which starts from the age nine years in Ethiopia is among the lowest age in the world. In Africa a recent legislative reform has indicated a trend towards rising the age of criminal capacity. For instance, in Uganda the minimum age of criminal capacity was seven years. But in the 1996, Uganda children's status raised the minimum age to be 12 years old, whereas in Ghana the minimum age is 14 years old (Beukman, 2005). Despite the different international minimum legal standards are standards, which Ethiopia is a signatory, the minimum age of criminal responsibility stated in 1957 penal code has been maintained in the criminal code of 2005. International minimum legal standards that are set by international organizations or by states on how to handle specific cases, and no

one can go below the minimum standard but it is possible to entertain the case in a better way than the minimum standard that means no maximum limit.

The problem of children becoming in conflict with the law was not recognized in Ethiopia before Italian occupation. As a result of the Italian occupation, many children lost their parents because of war and became in small offences like shoplifting in market places, buses and so forth (Andargachew, 2004). In response to the emerging problems, the Addis Ababa boys training and remand home for detention and education of Juvenile offender was established in 1943 (UNICEF, 2005).

The major offences committed by children can be classified as economic crimes like robbery and attempt of robbery, burglary, theft, breach of trust and crime against the state and municipal regulation like black market, and violent crimes like international homicide and assault and battery as well as sexual offences (Andargachew, 2004). The Addis Ababa Bureau of Social and Labor Affairs reported in 2002 that children in conflict with the law in Addis Ababa are increasing at a rate of more than 5% per year (Azeb, 2004). In addition to the above report, data compiled in 2003 by Addis Ababa police commission and forum for street children Ethiopia (FSCE) shows that there were a total of 13,588 offences from the year 1998/99 to 2000/01 committed by child offenders. Among these offences 85.5% of the children were from age 15 to 18, whereas 13.8% were committed by children of age 9-14. Those below 9 years old committed 0.5% of the total offence during the three years. However, data regarding age is not reliable due to the absence of compulsory vital registration system. Most of the children in conflict with the law were male (98.8%) (Azeb, 2004). The proportion of children in conflict with the law aged 9 to 18 to the total adult criminals in the year 1992/93 was 17.3% of the crime reported to the police (Andargachew, 2004).

Statement of the problem

Since children involvement in crime lays the foundation for adult crime, a considerable emphasis must be given to the problem (Beukman, 2005). The recidivism of children in conflict with the law presents even a more disturbing problem, considering the consensus in general literature that adult criminals begin their criminal tendencies in their adolescent years, suggesting that to deal with adult criminality; we must begin by working on children in conflict with the law (Mbuba, 2004).

The problem of recidivism on top of the problem of children in conflict with the law is one of the biggest challenges that exist in the juvenile system of Ethiopia also. A considerable number of children are incarcerated in the remand home for a repeated number of times. According to the survey conducted for the purpose of institutional capacity need assessment of the Addis Ababa Remand Home (Azeb, 2004), among the number of arrests at the time of the survey, 08.2% were arrested by the police only once, 15.5% arrested twice, 3.6% arrested three times and the rest 7.3% were not arrested by police (Azebe, 2004).

Scholars in various disciplines have examined risk factors of children to be in conflict with the law for decades. The major risk factors that lead children to be in conflict with the law and lead them to recidivism are concerned with some of the following areas: individual characteristics, offense history, academic failure or disengagement, peer relations, substance abuse, psychological factors, community or neighborhood characteristics, parenting patterns, and family circumstances like family breakdown or broken homes which refers to family structure that has been disrupted by separation, divorce or death of parents (Mbuba, 2004; Beukman, 2005). Loose family control and supervision, poor disciplinary measures, lack of parental love and rejection have also been found by different researchers to be the cause of children's involvement in

criminal activity in repeated manner (Stoddard, 2001, Mbuba, 2004; Keith, 2002).

A great deal of literature has also linked peer influence to patterned delinquent behavior, with peer pressure being a central explanation of not only the first involvement in delinquency, but also the repetitive pattern that typifies recidivism (Mbuba and Grenier, 2008). In addition, Media like television and movie have been mentioned as factors leading to delinquency by promoting justice through physical elimination of enemies. Many researchers have concluded that young people who watch violence tend to behave more aggressively or violently, particularly when provoked (World Youth Report, 2003).

As there are particular risk factors that lead a child to engage in criminal activity, there are also recognized protective factors by researchers that can encourage pro-social behaviors. These factors are divided into external influences and internal influences that are related to preventing and reducing children from being in conflict with the law. The external influences include high levels of love and support within the family, positive family communication, caring neighborhood, caring school climate which provides a caring, safe, encouraging environment, adult role models who have positive and responsible behavior, and positive peer influence are some of them. The internal influences include achievement motivation, school engagement, integrity and honesty, responsibility, resistance skills which a youth can use to resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations, peaceful conflict resolution skills, self-esteem, positive view of personal future and interpersonal competence are some of them (Stoddard, 2001).

Other researches concerning recidivism were conducted on the difference between institutionalized and community based treatment on reducing recidivism (Sari, Rollim, Stephens and Wolfson, 1996).

These researches revealed that there is no difference between recidivism in the two types of treatments. According to Sarri et al, the only difference discovered was that the community based programs was more cost effective than the institutionalized one. Nevertheless, although the practice in Ethiopia is not extensive, the reality shows that the program of community based treatment has a significant role in reducing re-offending, since the program addresses the major factors of the problem that the children are facing (Save the Children Sweden, 2005). Moreover, the program prevents the criminalized child from getting criminal records and being labeled as criminal as some researchers agree on how labeling can predispose juveniles to the possibility of repeated offending.

The researches concerning children in conflict with the law repeatedly (recidivism) in developed countries are done in their own social, cultural, economic and other contexts. As I have tried to review studies concerning children in conflict with the law and recidivism in Ethiopia, which were accessible and available, done by different stakeholders who are working on children in conflict with the law, namely African Child Policy Forum (ACPF), Forum for Street Children Ethiopia (FSCE) and government organizations like Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MOLSA), in addition to some studies done by scholars, nothing particular was researched on the factors leading children to be in conflict with the law and recidivism. Most of the above documents are focused on the general situation of children in conflict with the law. Accordingly, the current research focuses on exploring the factors to juvenile's recidivism through their experience and perception.

Significance and objective of the study

This study is important in that understanding juvenile crimes involvement in repeated manner have some implications for future youth development programs as well as for the well being of the society at large. Besides, since very few studies have been done in Ethiopia concerning children in conflict with the

law and in particular very little are mentioned about recidivism, this study will contribute on the existing knowledge in Ethiopia regarding children in conflict with the law and recidivism.

Moreover, understanding the factors associated with children involvement in crime and recidivism is crucial for the development of effective policy responses to the problem. Especially, understanding why children recidivate after released from remand home is important to design the appropriate treatment and prevention approaches. This study is not only useful to policy makers, but also to practitioners like therapists, caseworkers, and also program manager.

Therefore, the main objective of this research is to explore the factors that contribute for children's recidivism from the experience and perceptions of the children themselves. This will be done by critically analyzing some cases of children who repeatedly become in conflict with the law and are in Addis Ababa Remand Home.

Research questions

The research will attempt to respond to the following three research questions.

1. Why do children become repeatedly in conflict with the law after they are released from the remand home?
2. How do children in conflict with the law repeatedly perceive themselves as recidivists?
3. What are the experiences and challenges of the children recidivists in time of their incarceration after they get released from remand home?

Research methods

According to Krueger and Neuman (2006, P.12),” the purpose of social research can be to explore things, describe a social phenomenon, or explain why something occurs”. This study will explore the factors that contribute for

children's repeated conflict with the law. The research will also explore the perception and experience they have about their being in conflict with the law repeatedly.

A qualitative research design will be employed to carry out the study. Qualitative research will be appropriate for this study because assessing the factors contributing to children's repetitive conflict with the law needs understanding of the perceptions and view points of the respondents in a natural context (Yin, 2003). Qualitative research also provides a comprehensive or holistic understanding of the social setting in which research is conducted and helps to understand social problems by focusing on few people affected by a problem (Royse, 1999). Similarly, this study will be conducted to understand a social problem, that is, children's conflict with the law in repeated manner. Using qualitative research can help to explore the factors from the children's themselves who have passed through such situation and were affected by the problem. Their personal perception about their experience cannot be understood other than in qualitative research method. Therefore, qualitative method is found to be the most appropriate approach to collect the data in this particular study.

As Yin (2003) clearly stated, case studies are more preferable when 'why' question is being posed. Since this study is to explore why children become repeatedly in conflict with the law, case study is appropriate, case studies help to understand complex social phenomenon and allow the researcher to retain holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life. The data are usually detailed, varied and extensive. In this study, a single case study will be employed to answer the research questions. The single case in this sense is the Addis Ababa Remand Home where children in conflict with the law are incarcerated. Single case study is preferred in this study since it is the only institution in the country where this kind of service is given.

Study Site

The study will be conducted in the Addis Ababa Remand Home. The institution is chosen for the study because it is the only rehabilitation institution for children in conflict with the law in the entire country and there is no other alternative site to conduct the study.

Study participants

The Remand Home accommodates 80 to 150 juveniles at a time. The number of children in the institution fluctuates depending on the amount of entry and exit, participants to the current study will be selected from those children who have been in the institution more than once. Therefore, the units of analysis for this study are individual children who have been in the institution twice or more. In this study, selected children of this type will participate. In addition, three key informant interviews with staff members will also be conducted.

Criteria of selection

“In qualitative study, cases are selected based on their relevance to the topic rather than their representativeness which determines the way in which the people to be studied are selected” (Kreuger and Neuman, 2006, P.209). Individual participants will be chosen based on the following criteria.

1. They should be in the center more than once.
2. They should be from different family structure such as from double parents, single parents, full orphan, those living in the street and those who live with guardians.
3. The participants should be from both genders.
4. Different places of origin like from rural and urban.

5. Key informants will be selected because they have better experience of working with the children in the center.

Techniques to select participants

Purposive (judgmental) sampling technique will be employed to choose the participants. Purposive sampling, which is one of the methods in non-probability sampling, allows the researcher to identify particular kind of participants for in-depth investigation (kreuger and Neuman, 2006). In this research, cases will be selected carefully and purposively to demonstrate the issue of recidivism in different contexts. Purposive sampling technique is also suitable to select respondents who are able to analyze their own situation thoroughly and who are more articulate and expressive.

Data collection techniques

In this study the principal means of data gathering will be in-depth interview and key informant interviews. Since the purpose of this study is to learn why recidivism occurs in children who were in conflict with the law based on the experiences and viewpoints of those who recidivate, in – depth interviews are found to be helpful to obtain detailed information about the experiences and perspectives of the respondents towards the issue. Thus, interview will offer an insight into respondents. Memories and explanations of and why things have come to be what they are. It will also help to motivate respondents to give more accurate and complete information and provide a valuable means to understand the perception of participants (Monettee, Sullivan, and Dejorg, 1998).

In this study, from different types of interview structures, open ended interviews questions will be used. Open ended interviews are the best way to gain an understanding of respondents' perception and help to obtain an in-depth description of the respondent's world (Tutty, Rothery and Grinnell, 1996). Pilot test of the interview guide will be conducted with one child who is

in a similar setting to the study participants. The major objective of the pilot is to verify that the interview guide supplies the type of data needed for the study from the respondents (Royse, 1999). Pilot testing will be helpful to make the necessary adjustments to terminologies, words, concepts and ideas that fit the purpose of the study.

Given that the purpose of the study is to explore the factors contributing to children's recidivism, it is found important to interview key informants like experts or those who witness the issue in the institution (Tutty, Rothery and Grinnel, 1996). The interviews will be in the form of discussion with the purpose of learning about their views on the issue of children's recidivism and understanding their perceptions and experiences (kikwawila study Group, 1994). Moreover, interviewing both the principal respondents (the children) and the key informants will help to cross check for inconsistency and will add to the data trust worthiness and credibility to the data (Royse, 1999).

Procedures of data collection

The first step that the researcher will pass through in the data collection period will be to identify the children who are in the center more than once with the help of the counselors who have their records. The next step will be contacting in person each identified child and asking them if they are willing to participate in the study. After the researcher makes sure that the children are willing to participate in the study, contacting the children's parents will be the next step so that they will sign the consent form, since the children to be interviewed are less than the age of 18. For those children who are from the streets, the institution itself will sign the consent. Then the interview will be conducted in an unoccupied office that may be found in the centre. After finishing each in-depth interview, the researcher will arrange a short counseling session so that the child will not be left with disturbed emotions. After the researcher will be done with the interviews with the participant

children, the next step will be to interview the three key informants after they assign the consent form to participate in the study.

During the in-depth interviews, tape recording will be employed to capture the actual words and essences of all the interviews and all the participants consent for the same will be sought for. Tape recording is helpful to focus on the eye contact and body languages of the interviewees rather than writing notes to get all the details (Tutty, Rothery and Grinnell, 1996). In addition, notes will also be taken especially on the non-verbal expression. Secondary sources such as books, journals, policy records and reports from the institution will also be used to substantiate the information.

Ethical considerations

Throughout the research process, a great emphasis will be given to the ethical considerations regarding research. Since the research will involve children from 9 to 15 years, there will be a lot of ethical considerations to think carefully. In doing so, the researcher will try to ensure the rights, privacy and welfare of the persons who will participate in the study by making them aware about the research objectives as well as by providing them with an informed consent form to be signed that participants will be willing to involve in the research. Since the research is on children aged between 9 and 15, the parents or legal guardians will be responsible for signing the informed consent on behalf of the children. Moreover, the children, who will be the participants of the study, sign assent forms, which show their willingness to their participation in the interviews.

Data analysis

Qualitative data is seeking to make sense out of the raw data gathered from the interviews. The initial step in analysis in this research will be transcribing the interview recorded in time of the data collection. Then, the interviews will be translated into English for the analysis. In the process of transcription, the

researcher will try to make sure that the non verbal expressions like sighs, long silence, laughter, crying and other important emotional remarks will be properly transcribed by using field notes taken while the interviews is being conducted as a reference (Padgett, 2008). After transcription, the next process will be to categorize the data by using coding. Coding involved labeling or tagging data with labels (Morse and Richards, 2002). From the different types of coding, topic coding will be used in research. Topic coding involves “Creating a category and recognizing one from earlier, reflecting on where it belongs among the growing ideas, and reflecting on the data you are referring to and on how they fit with the other data coded there” (Morse and Richards, 2002, p.117).

Since the research is exploratory in its nature using case study design, and it will look for the factors contributing to recidivism of children in conflict with the law, analytical technique called analytic comparison is found to be suitable in this study (kreuger and Neuman, 2006). Comparative analysis refers to systematic research for similarities and difference across cases. That means, as coding proceeds, the researcher will develop regularities or patterns as well as look for negative instances and irregularities or differences across cases (Padgett, 2008). Hence, the responses of the participants of the study will be discussed under each theme by looking for similarities and differences across the participants’ response and by also looking for differences and similarities in other studies and theories that will be reviewed in the literature part of this study.

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Physical action plan

No	List of Activities	Time										
		May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	0c	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	
1	Preliminary assessment of the study area											
2	Proposal preparation											
3	Proposal defense											
4	Literature review											
5	Questioner development											
6	Pre test and questionnaire adjustments											
7	Training data collectors											
8	Data collection											
9	Data cleaning											
10	Data coding, entry & organizing											
11	Data analysis											
12	Interpretation & draft thesis writing											
13	Draft thesis submission											
14	Full write up											
15	Defense											
16	Comment incorporation & final submission											

Budget break down

1. Household data collection related expense

No	Group	Daily allowance	No of people	Duration(days)	Total(ETB)
1	Investigator	150	1	30	4,500
2	Supervisor	130	1	15	1,950
3	Data collectors	100	3	15	4,500
4	Interpreter	100	1	20	2,000
5	Driver	100	1	20	2,000
Sub total					14,900

2. data collectors' training related expense

1 training auditorium

600 ay x 2 days----- 1,200

2 training material ----- 200

Sub total -----1,400

3. Data handling expense

1. Layout preparation ----- 500

2. Data clerk

7 birr/ questioner x 13 questioner----- 91

Sub total -----591

4. Stationary and other related expenses

1. Duplicating paper

80/ packet x 4 packet----- 320

2. Photo copy and printing ----- 2,000

3. Binding ----- 500

4. Communication (tele, internet) -----1,000

5. Transportation (within Addis Ababa) ----- 1,000

6. Contingency ----- 3,000

Sub total ----- 7,820

Grand total ----- 24,671