



Unsettled youth: Examining the life experiences of resettled youth raised under institutional care in Uganda

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Disclaimer:

This document represents part of the author's study programme while at the Institute of Social Studies. The views stated therein are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Institute.

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List of Acronyms

ADA	Australian Development Agency.
HGIC	Herman Gmeiner International College
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
MTN	Mobile Telecom Network
UHMG	Uganda Health Marketing Group
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
YMCA	The Young Men's Christian Association

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DEDICATION

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ABSTRACT

This study is purposely looking at issues institutionalization and experiences of resettled youth resulting from the social and economic challenges that affects them in independent living, tackling how they are negotiating and overcoming them.

Basing on the fact that there is a high mushrooming rate of care institutions in Uganda, the reproduction of misery life among youth resettled from care institutions has become inevitable. This study also shows how effects of institutionalization begins affecting children while still on care and later magnifies when they exit and live on their own, limiting the existing social capital which they give a justification for admitting children in these institutions.

The study also nuances the term used by the care institution, '*resettled*' therefore arguing from the findings that the youth were unsettled due to the lacking of social support networks, which came out as the main challenge for the youths in independent living. Since this challenge and others were rooted into their being institutionalized, the study therefore suggests de institutionalizing and embrace alternative care so that that the cycle of these challenges can be broken.

RELEVANCE TO DEVELOPMENT STUDIES.

Many scholars have conducted studies along the lines of these care institutions but concentrated on children and very little has been on youths that exited. There this study comes to fill that gap and contribute knowledge into this field. The fact remains that there is a strong connection between care institutions and the creation of orphan industry for many reasons to institutionalize children.

To remove children from communities due to broken and damaged social protection systems may be a valid reason but it remains that they send them back to the communities in a much worse situation than they found them. Therefore arguing against the notion of institutionalization in the interest of alternative care in Ugandan context, is advantageous to give these young people spaces to be in position to experience normal lives like their counterparts.

To embrace the alternative care framework gives care institutions space to spend less since alternative care has been proved cheaper, putting the right people like grandparents to take up the role care giving who have been proved to be very resourceful in this role by scholars in this field. Therefore massive campaigns should be undertaken to have most of the children deinstitutionalized to break the cycle of these social and economic challenges re occurring when they start to venture into independent living.

KEYWORDS

Care Institutions, resettled youth, Institutionalizing, Alternative care, care givers

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Chapter one: Introduction and contextual background

This study gives details the life experiences of youths who have exited care in Uganda and the challenges they face. These care institutions make use of the term resettling of these young people in their policies but in reality, they are putting back the youth in the community to live a more vulnerable life than they did before admitting them for care. This is because the youth had to start afresh, establishing new roots for social capital and the rest that would enable them survive in life.

From this study, *I argue that many of these youths are unsettled due to a number of factors that are linked to the time they were still in care and the life they live after they have exited.* With no well-established social capital, the youth I interviewed were full of frustration that left them with a feeling that they had been exploited. This resulted in not wanting to be identified and affiliated with these homes. The policies guiding the resettlement process were not well followed and implemented, the end result was that the financial assistance to resettle them well always came too late and found them heavily indebted. A good number of these youth live in a misery in the communities where they resettled, particularly in the suburbs of Kampala.

From the above concerns, many alternative care advocates in Uganda have of recent, campaigned for the change in the approach in which care institutions operate. They critique the notion of institutionalization of these children through the Alternative Care Framework. Arguing that institutional care is expensive and operates in a way that directly affects the relationship between the children on care and the people in the surrounding outside communities. The impacts of institutionalization on children included stunted growth, lower levels of IQ and brain activity, social behavioral abnormalities and among others (Grietens et al, 2014:176; Csaky,2009:6), this initiative by the Ugandan government and civil society partnership has encouraged some of the care institutions to gradually embrace Community based care models of operation.

Many children have been admitted into these homes on the premise that they are orphans. However, it should be noted that from studies carried out on care in Uganda, it has been

discovered that most of these children admitted were not total orphans (Subbarao and Coury 2004:33; Every Child, 2011).

As youth come to point of exit, they are required to make use of both the experiences learnt and obtained when they still under care for example managing house chores, learning to take care of their young siblings and those that they are to encounter in their daily lives like making use of their life skills after they have been resettled in the community.

Education and life skills are the only important things emphasized as they tend to come to the point of their exit, other skills like financial management, how to live with people especially when renting and the imperative aspect of culture are often forgotten (Frimpong, 2012:349).

The skills to manage domestic chores as part of the independent living preparation are imparted by the mothers. This took place at the time when they were experiencing their childhood as stated by the youth I interviewed. When they approached their teenage stage they were transferred to youth homes and the responsibility for their wellbeing was entrusted to the youth leaders who were also part of the administration social work team. Secondary boarding schools especially from senior one up to senior six, vocational institutes and universities are also play a part in preparing the youths as claimed by (Frimpong, 2012:347). This is because they avail spaces where youths can freely interact with other young people of their age.

The decisions on who was to be resettled and when were relative on a number of factors. The age and the level of education attainment were so much emphasized in accordance to the care resettlement policies but other factors like discipline conduct also influenced one's time to be exited especially when the behavior was seen to be consistently contrary to what the home expected (Pryce et al , 2015:2).

Care institutions provide the necessary assistance to exit the ageing youths and resettle them out into the community. Upon resettlement, institutional support is ended so that the youth can be able to live on their own but this is where things begin going wrong for the majority. Today a few of these resettled youth have some safety nets where they can tap some assistance from relatives, this may not be the case for the majority who completely have no connection for any family assistance, these type of resettled youth are affected the most (Child Welfare Information Gateway 2013).

Irrespective of the final institutional support in terms of financial packages provided for these youths to be resettled in the community, many of them are still unsettled and faces a number of social challenges like unemployment, being homeless, emotional hardships, physical abuse and others are on high risks of incarceration (Child Trends Data bank 2014 and SOS Children`s villages, 2010)

(Dunn et al, 2003:9) connects the above hardships to the life these youth live while they were still in care. Many of them were raised under subjection of doing daily routines and procedures, served the needs of the home and lived lives of conformity. This means that they only get time to live a free life without supervision when they exit and may find it hard to reach that level of self-discovery to fully take control of their lives. A chance to exercise their agency and to shape their own structures and ongoing processes is indirectly limited at this stage of childhood (Morrow 2008).

In addition to the above, (Abebe, 2009) points out that youths raised under such care models are found having less socialization with others in public. This affects their ability to establish good social networks which are very important for moral support therefore, many of them are not able to cope with life outside the institution.

It is to this point that (Ansell 2005:59) confirms that due to the that poverty is a factor that contributed to the state of unsettledness before their being institutionalized, it is very possible that even after they have been settled, they may transfer the same condition to their children.

Therefore the objective of this research is therefore to examine the life experiences resettled raised under institutional care in Uganda, in order to find out why these youth were living unsettled lives yet they were referred to be resettled by their care institutions. These experiences are derived from the social and economic challenges that the youth were facing while in independent living in the communities where they were resettled. The study also aims to discuss to detail how the youths were negotiating and the mechanisms they devised to overcome these social and economic challenges in chapter three and four of this study.

Situating institutional care in Uganda

The situation of institutional care in Uganda has been an issue of attention in ensuring the provision of a safe environment for raising needy children. Campaigns to encourage such institutions to move towards the de-institutionalization of their children has been rooted in the challenges these children face as adults in the communities. Like other youth raised under residential care in different parts of the world, they face hardships like lacking strong social capital networks, lacking money to meet their daily needs for survival, facing incarceration and experience early pregnancies (Reilly, 2003). These shocks affect their lives due to the fact that they are exit care unprepared for the life outside the institution.

In Uganda today, over 57,000 children are living in care institutions (Child Fund International 2014). An estimate of 3000 children of the above total live in SOS Children`s Villages Uganda and Watoto care Ministries (SOS Uganda, n.d) and (Watoto Child care Ministries 2015). Children are often unnecessarily institutionalized due to vulnerabilities created by HIV-AIDs, poverty and destitution.

The mushrooming rate of these care institutions has also caught the attention of the Ugandan government. There is over 800-900 known care homes that are currently operating in the country, over 100-221 care homes are unconfirmed, operating in hidden in boarding schools and were awaiting investigations by the Ugandan authorities (Riley, 2012; Subbarao and Coury, 2004; Wilson 2013).

Having so many of these unregistered care institutions in the country hidden behind the face of conducting humanitarian activities has a connotation driven by selfish and personal economic interests as cited by (Wolde, 1998) in (Suski, 2009:209). Institutional care in Uganda has lost meaning since children are easily made orphans through paper work and admitted into these care homes. This whole process has been affecting and damaging the structures in the community that are meant to take responsibilities for the wellbeing of their children. Care institutions being the channels through which support is remitted to reach children in the suburbs and remote areas of the country, many Ugandan parents have often rendered their children into these institutions as orphans aiming to gain access to the good quality education and a good life much as many of them have poor facilities that are not fit for the children to say due to poor management and excessive embezzlement of care funds (Cheney, 2010:9).

This has forced the Uganda government through the Ministry of Labour, Gender and Social development to track some of these unregistered care institutions, arrest their owners and close them down. (Riley, 2012) adds that in the campaigns to track these care institutions, many were operating in school infrastructures, with no proper records of children and that they had got cases of child abuse for example some care givers often defiled children.

Although the operations of unregistered care institutions were being looked into, registered care institutions like SOS Children`s Villages and Watoto Care ministries continued their daily operations having opened up for the monitoring and evaluations by the authorities.

SOS Children`s Villages Uganda and Watoto Care Ministries are the two (2) main care institutions that operate on a family- based care model in the country. Both were established in 1991 in areas that were badly torn by the 1985 bush war and had high death tolls due to HIV-AIDs that left many orphaned. SOS Uganda and Watoto have established children`s homes to care for orphans and vulnerable children in Kakiri, Entebbe, Fortportal, Gulu; Bira, Suubi and Labore. These were chosen purposively for the study because they admitted in large numbers of children, raised under a unit of family by a mother, aged out through youth homes are resettled back to the community as mature adults when institutional support is completely cut off.

Much as these two care institutions look similar in operation, the differences lie in the modes of how money is raised, sponsoring and the settlement packages given to their youth. For example Watoto Child Care Ministries uses children to raise money through singing in their church choirs and at times, these children often fly abroad to sing and raise money which in turn is spent on their welfare, whereas with SOS Uganda, children are raised and their welfare is catered for without letting them engage in any form activity that is aimed to raise money for their school fees, clothing and many others.

Both are currently gradually shifting to the community based care approach although there are some nuances regarding the implementation. For example SOS Children`s Villages Uganda launched its Community based Care through the Family Strengthening program in partnership with other local and International development agencies like United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Australian Development Agency (ADA), Mildmay Uganda and the Uganda Youth Marketing Group (UHMG). They are taking specific households

in the communities and they provide care and other required assistances in education. The problem is that this is still creating classes of inequalities in the community since the children and the households are seen as privileged since they access medication, quality education in boarding schools and institutes that others in the community cannot afford and many others. Therefore the implementation has remained a big challenge.

SOS Children`s Villages Uganda allows individual child sponsoring where every child is matched with individual foreign sponsors, whereas Watoto believes in collective sponsoring and pooling of all gift packages. The financial resettlement packages given to their youths as they exit care differs, SOS Uganda, released these funds in instalments, the mothers of these youths participate in the process and the amount of these funds remitted differs basing on how much their sponsors sent and was saved for them. On the other side, Watoto Childcare ministries did not engage foster mothers of these youths in the arrangements of issuing the settlement packages to them and the these packages are of the same amount of money which is One (1) million Uganda shillings for every child raised through its system.

Contextualizing social and economic challenges in Uganda

The social and economic challenges affecting youths in Uganda are deeply rooted both into the structure of the care institutions. They are normally socially excluded in all dimensions of life. With poor academic qualifications, lack of technical skills and with no access to social networking groups, these resettled youths like other youths raised in normal families in the community also find it hard to access employment opportunities (Stein, 2006:423)

Facing hardship in accessing employment opportunities, these youths have no sources of income with which to pay for the basic needs of life. Due to the high costs of living in country, they are usually expensive for them to afford and therefore ending up in conditions of destitution.

In trying to overcome the above, many of the youths have resorted to borrowing money from friends and close family relatives to meet their daily needs. With no reliable sources of income to pay back, defaulting in payment is inevitable thereby ending up charged and imprisoned (Kelleher et al 2000).

Such is how the social and economic challenge has affected the lives of resettled youths live with in accordance in the Ugandan context. It is mainly described by hardships, having to experience life outside care the hard way with no or limited assistance, prone to make many mistakes which are usually expensive to correct and some are lived with for the rest of their entire lives.

Research Objectives and guiding questions

The general objective of this research paper is to understand the life experiences of resettled youths who are raised under care homes in Uganda. This is for purposes of understanding how institutionalization impacts the lives of these young people in the Ugandan context. Having noted in the introduction how these youths spend their childhood in these institutions under subjective procedures and following routines as expected by the management, also serving to meet the requirements of the home and conformity, they are most likely to find it hard to live by themselves in the new life outside and this guided me to come up with the following questions for the study;

How have resettled youths experienced institutional care and how are they responding to the resettled experiences?

- i. How are resettled youths affected by the social and economic challenges in the community?
- ii. How are resettled youths negotiating the social and economic challenges in the resettlement experience?
- iii. How are resettled youth devising coping mechanisms to overcome the social and economic challenges in their lives?

The data yielded from these questions will be analyzed by the use of secondary data in the remaining chapters to answer the above research questions and generate meaningful and convincing evidence about the situation of these resettled youths.

Definition of key terms

Institutional care

Also commonly known as residential care by other scholars, (Calheiros et al, 2015:159) defines this type of care as one that is applied by the child-care protection system as a response aiming to reach out to children and youth in risky conditions, wellbeing and development.

Resettle youths

A resettled youth in this context is one that has gone off institutional support and received his/her settlement package for independent living (SOS Children`s Villages Uganda, 2012).

Relevancy and justification

Care institutions in Uganda every year exit large numbers of youth are resettled back to the community to start living on their own. The figures of youths leaving care are not known due to the limited studies in this area. The study brings to the reader`s knowledge how institutionalization and its policies in Uganda has negatively impacted the lives of the youth in their independent living. They live a misery life, heavily indebted, lacked knowledge and skills of financial management and living with people.

The study also is expected to contribute to the literature on how Ugandan institutionalized resettled youth relate with the outside structures of the communities and the cope up mechanisms that have been devised to live with these challenges in the process surviving.

Whereas there are policies from care homes that clearly stipulates how these youths are to be resettled in the community, little or nothing is at times followed to ensure a proper transition. Many of them move into the world and experience the challenges head on without the preparation in terms of financial management skills, encouragement of not despising work and how to make use of the existing social capital around them (Frimpong, 2012). The study therefore highlights that these policies are always followed, evidence has it in the study that many youth did not receive proper preparation for independent living and exited care without their transitional resettlement packages. Being contrary to what resettlement policies stated, these youths also found it hard to access these transitional packages since the whole process was bureaucratic and unchecked for a long time for changes.

The study also lays out the revelations how these young people are used while still in care to support the operations of these care institutions. This falls into the some of the fundraising venue through which these youth felt exploited and were rendered of no use after they exited care.

Chapter Two: Framing the research

Study Procedure

The approach for this study was based on a qualitative method using focus group discussions, interviews, auto ethnography and the reviewing of literature sources. The data for this research was collected from the suburbs of Rubaga, Makindye and Kawempe. As access to the youth was proving hard, I went to Care administrations of Kakiri and Biira to seek permission from SOS Children`s Village and Watoto respectively. These were the administration centers where some of these frequently visited to see the progress of their financial resettling funds requisitions. This was my entry point since the administrators had some of the contacts of the youths.

After securing permission from the care administration, I was connected to meet Peter and Laura who chaired the youth associations for each care institution. This was because they knew the locations and contacts of other youths. I was able to get introduced to other resettled youths for the focus group discussions and later followed with the interviews.

I used a participatory approach to allow youths to have their own voice on the daily experiences they faced. This was done through the auto ethnographic exercise where I provided note books and requested them to note down every challenge they faced, the ways through which they were able and those they were not able to overcome throughout the day. This enabled me to uncover the true experiences, with firsthand information and was able to get authentic knowledge on realities of their daily social and economic challenges.

Therefore qualitative methodology was chosen purposively for this study since it enabled the respondents to express themselves freely on what was going on in their lives and also gave the researcher a chance to actively participate in data analysis using thematic exploration in chapters there, four and five of this study (O'Leary, 2014:120).

Methods of data collection

The data for this study was collected by using of focus group discussions, in depth interviews and auto ethnography as discussed below;

Sampling

In this research, I used snowball sampling method in choosing the youths for the focus group discussions. From focus group discussions, purposive sampling was also used to select the youths for both interviews and the auto ethnography activity. Therefore the researcher used this method because it involves the building of research sample through referrals and it is usually better for populations that cannot be easily identified (O'Leary, 2014:190).

Focus Group Discussions.

These were conducted to get a general view of life experiences together with the socio and economic challenges they faced. This method was purposefully employed in collecting data because it availed an environment where participants of the same similar experiences freely discussed and shared their opinions on matters under the study (Rietbergen and Narayan-Parker 1998).

Interviews.

In this method, participants were identified from the focused group discussions. The researcher conducted four (4) interviews for each group of youths from care institutions. Each care institution had two youths (both male and female representatives) interviewed with a guidance of an interview guide, the interviews were conducted to get more information which the researcher was not able to capture from the focus group discussions and also wanted to get first hand in depth narratives (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2010:280).

Each interview lasted between 40-60 minutes together with those that followed after the auto ethnographic exercise. They were semi structured in nature for purposes of also capture the unexpected responses that emerges during the interviewing period (O'Leary, 2014:218).

Auto ethnography

I used this method for purposes of including some of the youths who were not active during the focus group discussions. Since some of the youths were not feeling free to express themselves in

the group discussions, a few were requested to participate in this activity and this was very important in accessing and uncovering true meaning. I was able to conduct some short interviews to enable these participants to explain in detail on some of the issues they noted in these books (Short et al 2013:7).

Data analysis

The process of analyzing the qualitative collected data of this study was carried out using thematic analysis concepts and taking into consideration the evolving relationships between them. The purpose for using this method of analysis was that it enabled me to identify and recognize patterns in findings (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This helped me to move the data from disorganized piles, arranged it into simpler categories and enabled me to simultaneously engage with the existing literature thereby giving greater depth of understanding of the data collected (O'Leary, 2014). I made use of the recorded data from the focus group discussions, the reports from the interviews and the notes from the auto ethnographic exercise to extract findings that related to the respective themes of this study. The first theme of this study was ecological framework and social capital. The data here was related to the social and economic challenges that were the resettled youths were experiencing, focusing on lacking social support networks as the main challenge.

Agency and life skills were in the second theme. This theme consisted how the youths were negotiating the social and economic challenges discussed in theme one above and the establishment of associations which were affiliated to their care institutions was the main idea.

The third theme that was introduced was resilience. The three themes under the analysis section had their primary data captured from the recordings and notes taken during the focus group discussions, the reports from the interviews and the notes written down by the youths in the auto ethnographic exercise.

Subjectivity and Positionality

I was raised under the same care institution system and currently still works with one of the care homes under study. I was raised with some of the resettled youths who participated in the study though by luck and the grace of God, I was able to attain a level of self-discovery at an early stage.

It is this same luck that I was put into good institutions in the country and was able to penetrate and widen his social support networks for opportunities, a chance which many of his colleagues missed while still under care. Given the opportunity to come back and work for the home as soon as I finished with my university studies, I continued to interact with youths who were about to be resettled and those who had been resettled a while back.

I remember there are times when some of the resettled youths came to the administration block wanting some assistance and to their dismay, they were not able to get what they had wanted that day and went back to Kampala very disappointed and in pain. This was because some of their transport was not re-reimbursed and that they waited for a long period of time for their concerns to be looked into. Personally, I could not imagine how hurting this was on their side.

There are moments when I was out for office field work, making home visits to families supported by SOS Uganda Family Strengthening Program in partnership with AVSI-(SCORE), a program funded under USAID and my boss saw me on phone on different occasions which at times made him angry. I was responding to calls of some youths who had no money and they had nothing to eat throughout the day. I was not in position to finish my field work tasks because I would walk and search for any Mobile money agent had to help them by sending the money onto their accounts. This reminded me how vulnerable most of us were and with this study, I wanted to learn and gain more knowledge of what these youths were doing to break the chains of financial dependency.

The way I position myself in this study remains important that I have tried to reflect on the assumptions and biases on the issues am conducting research on. The assumptions I had while in office that these youths were not trying enough to work and be better were gradually. This is when I realized through the interaction with the youths that it was the system that raise that had made a connection to the situations they were going through.

While interacting with the youths, I was aware of the perceptions of the resettled towards me. This from the start began to affect my study since many of them were stressing on that I should help them check on the progress of their resettlement packages from the care administrations. I communicated clearly that I was coming to conduct the study not as any of the care official but as an academia which saved me from making promises. However those who had received their

resettlement packages were reluctant in responding on the issues of this study, most especially those old male youths that were of a much big age difference from mine.

But upon knowing that I was a student from an international institution, they were able to open up since they also wanted to tap into the academic opportunities like scholarship information and the rest so, in that way the power relations among them and me were resolved and we worked smoothly throughout the data collection process.

Therefore when I was collecting the data and listening to the responses, I began to develop empathy and deeply re-think about these concerns that while working on the analysis, I was able to critique the same system that raised me and learn the aspects that I had not thought of in this study.

The Problems encountered

During the focus group discussions, disagreements broke out on some issues regarding access employment opportunities. Those who had sources of income were blaming those without of being lazy and despising work which sparked a big argument and made those without jobs emotional. Those who had sources of income stated that the care institution had connected to DHL (one of the reputable courier service companies in Uganda). They went on to argue that those who persevered to go up to the ends of the training program were retained. I intervened and requested everyone in the discussion to try and be objective in their statements rather than being subjective which made others uncomfortable and almost ended within the first 20 minutes when it kicked off.

Another challenge met during the interviewing sessions was the interruptions of incoming calls to one the male respondent. It so happened that he was responding to a young lady who was asking for child support assistance and he kept on claiming that there was no way he was to send the money for a child who was not his. It happened to be a hot argument and it covered nearly 15 minutes of the interview time but I kindly requested him to put his phone into silence so that we finish up. There are times when he went off track because of the pressure the lady had put on him therefore I tried so much to bring him back onto therefore it was necessary for me to bring him back on track, engage him openly in exploring his experiences in the session was a success (Magnusson and Marecek 2015: 69)

For those that participated in the auto ethnography activity, it nearly became hard for me to engage with them more on whatever they had written about their daily experiences. This was because three (3) of them worked throughout the week and were returning to their homes very late. Whenever I called them, they kept on procrastinating until I made appointments with all of them at different days, to meet each of them immediately after leaving their work places. I made arrangements in places of convenience in Kampala, facilitated both refreshments and their transport and it was from this that I managed to go through with them whatever they had noted as their daily experiences.

Chapter Three: Ecological framework and social capital

Introduction.

In trying to understand the experiences caused by the social and economic challenges, the ecological framework and the concept of social capital will be used as a base to engage with the exiting literature for this study. These will be linked to the lives they lived while in care and how they were affecting them when they exited care. The main argument discussed in this chapter on social experiences is lack of social support networks, from which other sub-arguments of restrictiveness, perceptions, unemployment, emotional breakdown, the implicit care policies, exploitation and blocked assistance from care mothers are explained.

From the data collected on economic experiences, late issuing of resettlement packages was the dominant argument, single motherhood and the lack of financial management skills as discussed later at the end of this chapter.

The ecological framework

The ecological theory has been defined as

“The scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodation between an active, growing human beings and the changing properties of the immediate setting in which the developing person live, as the process is affected by relations between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which settings are embedded” (Bronfenbrenner, 2009:21).

I will use this framework to argue that resettled youth, care institutions, the communities for resettlement and other institutions all exist in the same environment and continuously influence each other.

I will discuss these social experiences in relation to the ecological environment that Bronfenbrenner (2009:22) puts forward to show the relationship of these youths with the structures surrounding them, exploring the aspects of forming their identities with the assistance of non-kinship networks that are normally influenced by inter connecting factors like membership in extended family ties, the neighborhood and community, society norms and values

and the schools they went to as claimed by Reynolds (2013:7). This all happens as these youths transit from the micro level where they experience their childhood with supervision from care providers throughout until the level of independent living in the macro system where they are fully responsible for their wellbeing.

The levels as of the ecological framework as used in this study context begin with the youth at the center. Re-tracking their experiences they went through while in care at the meso level within the care institution, then throughout until into independent living at the macro level where they begin interacting with other settings of the community like culture and norms at the macro level.

Social capital

Pierre Bourdieu in (Lesser, 2000: 45) understands the concept of social capital as the available collection of prospective resources an individual makes that are connected to having a strong networks from institutionalized interactions based on mutual acquaintances or those that that may one from recognition.

Social capital is also defined by (Lin, 2001) as cited by (Jordan, 2008: 74) as those resources that are embedded in social networks that resettled youths can access and later use for their wellbeing in the communities.

Social capital has been widely used in so many academic disciplines but little has been in relation to children and youth studies (Badu-Nyarko and Manful, 2014:85). As contextualized for this study, social capital assist me to look at the way resettled youths got access to resources for their personal wellbeing by the use of existing connections. Beginning from the available caregivers in these care institutions, extended family relatives and other members in the outside communities where they reside.

Such existing connections between the youth and their care givers while still care had elements of reciprocity and cooperation. In this case, the way these young people conducted themselves before their caregivers determined how much that caregiver would go an extra mile to help in whatever situation as cited by (Coleman, 1998) in cited (Barn, 2010:836).

The same elements were also required in the relations when they exited care to give them a smooth interaction with the people in the communities where they had been resettled.

However, despite of the usefulness of this concept, very little studies have been to explore the youth`s social capital and improving their wellbeing (Coleman, 1995) as cited by (Badu-Nyarko and Manful, 2014:85). The ecological framework and social capital are discussed in relation to the findings of the study as follows;

The social challenges

Poor socializing skills with others in the community.

From the focus group discussions, the youths agreed that while still on care, they were having problems with socializing with other members in the community. Having been surrounded by the same people at the meso level (the foster mothers, youth leaders and other social workers in the care administration), it can be argued that while in care, they were restricted from spending most of the time with their counterparts and elders of the outside community. They spend most of their time inside the institutions that had well-built perimeter fences and always saw the same faces of caregivers.

The resettled youth referred to this kind of living as *caged lifestyle* in the group discussions. They explained that going out into the community always necessitated acquiring approval from the mothers and the care social workers and this limited their access and contact with people in the outside community in which they were to be resettled back (Walton and Elliott, 2014:237). This gave less time to these youths to socialize and get used to the people in the community and the impact of this was in the hardships when it came to integrating with the people in the community at the macro level when they exited care (Pryce et al, 2015:4).

These people from which the youth were restricted from are the ones the youth needed most when it came to issues of connections for employment opportunities after institutional care. Therefore I argue that it was hard for them to initiate negotiations for any kind of assistance from the people who never knew them. Most of them were beginning from scratch in building these relations and contacts.

Community perceptions towards the youths

The restrictions also affected and influenced the perceptions of the community towards the youths as clearly elaborated through the interviews. As a result of being raised from comfortable spaces with abundances, the community at Macro level, automatically classified into a class of a

well off status in the community (Brim, 1975:518). So upon exit, such social stratification often blocked the youths from access assistance from people whose perception has already been made that youths raised from care institutions are better off than other youths from the community.

“There are moments when I went to my friends to get some financial assistance and it turned out that they declined to help me. Later I heard rumors that they had refused to help because am one of the children that are affiliated to an International care institution with a lot of money. The same applied to members of my extended family, they see me in a more privileged position which am not” (Jovia 26, Female resettled youth from Watoto Child care Ministries)

These perceptions held by those living in the outside communities were not only blocking them getting access to financial assistance but also in terms of connections for employment opportunities. This was more worse to those youths who had no extend family ties in the community compared to those who had some from they would negotiate their way out.

The same community perceptions also took a direction that labelled the resettled youth as *abavubuka abononefu*, literally translated as spoilt youths. This was because the youths were not aware of some of the important cultural practices and norms having been raised by mothers from different cultural background while in care. Whenever they made mistakes or behaved in a way that is contrary to the expectation of the communities, they never received correction but were often shouted at especially if they had identified themselves as orphans raised from care institutions (Ibrahim and Howe, 2001:2471).

Therefore such labelling demoralized the resettled youths to freely live their lives without being judged and tarnishing their identities even if they are not solemnly responsible for the wrong doings in the communities.

Unemployment

Connected to the employment opportunities, a large pattern of these youths through the response in the group discussions agreed that unemployment was one the social challenges. Having gone through a routine system of education, full of theories and possibly leads to university to make them job seekers, the youths questioned the inabilities of their care institutions to connect them

to the corporate companies like commercial banks with whom official business were conducted. (Jackson and Cameron 2014:151) argues that too often are resettled youths encouraged by their care givers and professionals to become self-supported early enough and at times joining vocational trainings to get hands on experience become a prime issue to have a breakthrough in accessing employment.

The reality was that while still on care, those that performed poorly in their primary and secondary studies were always taken to vocational institutions. A decision taken without the voices and the consent of the children since joining vocational training was seen as failure in terms of academics. With the available contacts and connections, they were not linked to those companies, yet this was the easiest according to the youths to easily penetrate and link up into these networks than being on their own without any point of reference.

To further concretize on the unemployment issue, the youths cited tendencies of some care administrators blocking opportunities. Much as Reed in Partnership (2011) report urges for institutions to set bases where their youths can access employment opportunities, some care administrators were doing the opposite. A good pattern in response of youths in this study agreed that there were at times vacancies of Youth leaders which they thought they were in good position to take up. This was because they knew the needs and understood the concerns of their fellow sibling better and they were posing an employment threat. These were a few ways in which care institutions would tap into their resources and save costs of training new recruits from outside who had to begin from scratch to know the working context of these institutions.

The issue of unemployment greatly became a hot topic that was discussed beyond having access to well-connected friends and family members to lead them to probable employers as (Pryce et al, 2015:5) stated. Although the connections were missing, the youths in particular the female had tried their initiative but were demoralized by the men who tried to offer them *carpet interviews* (literally meaning sleeping with men in executive office to access jobs) as explained during the focus group discussions. The female resettled youth stressed that they would not go in for such risks because they knew the effects that came with it.

However, there has been some few exceptions where the resettled youths have been availed with opportunities and they blow them up. The example given here was the partnership with DHL (a

popular international courier company) also operating in Uganda was availed to these resettled youths and only a small fraction benefited from it, basing on reasons that the description of the training was not fitting what they trained in academically and other reasons. To a larger extend, this is seen as an exception case, the truth remained concrete that care institutions at all levels ecological systems of youth development, were not making use of the available social capital within their control to help out their youths. These were used to for the benefit of the care staff in shifting from one company to another causing a lot of employee turnover rates in these institutions conclusively.

Emotional breakdown

The study also revealed from the group discussions that institutional care support systems were contributing to the emotional breakdown of these youths. Linked to the high employee turnover rates in the care institutions, the policies available are implicitly failing to recognize the effects that break down the emotions of these youths at all levels from the meso to the macro. (Potter and Brittain ,2009: 177; Stein, 2005) talks of these ongoing changes in care institutions that are influenced in terms of new polices, agendas and even the structure of the organization that are having great impact of the child welfare staff.

Such changes have continued to influence the decisions of care givers in these institutions to move on, retire and at some instances fired from work. In this process, youths were getting affected in a way that there are some care givers and administrators that had served for a long period of time and had a big positive impact in on childhood, among these were foster mothers, care directors who had connected with the youth emotionally, won their love and trust from childhood times. When such people left, the youth stated that they felt these special people had gone with all the love they will never be able to access again.

“The year 1998 changed everything in my life when a memo came to our house communicating the resignation of Tata Fredrick Kasumba. Many of us entered his regime of office, he loved us all and paid great attention to the needs of the children. We lived on to see other people come and go but none indeed fitted his replacement. Later on, he passed on and we got more heart broken. God bless that old man, indeed Taata is

irreplaceable' (John 30, Male resettled youth from SOS Children`s Villages)

Today more youths are getting affected in similar ways, they get closely attached emotionally to specific care givers in the institution and after a small time of service, these care givers find better opportunities elsewhere and move on. As care givers come and go, (Ansell 2005:220) conclusively argued that such inadequacies of paying less attention to emotional needs of children made these institutions gradually lose support in many parts of the world in recent years. This indirectly affects the youths since it becomes hard for them to get used to the person taking over office and the duties of the one leaving. This was connected to their childhood since people came, served and went away, the youths had less people to confide in and depend on for emotional support even after they exited care.

Discrimination

Linked to the implicit care policies that affected these youths, the focus group discussions brought out an issue of how the policies by one of the care institutions to made them follow a certain religion that was not theirs. A female resettled youth who preferred to remain anonymous from Watoto Child care Minisries, stated that she was finding a number of challenges ranging from discrimination among her own family relatives in the community. She went ahead to state that she was admitted to the care institution from a family that had a Muslim background but due to the policy of One-size-fits all in many child centered practices in this care institution at the meso level as (Haskins et al, 2007) argues, she was forced into Pentecostal affiliation like other children while still on care. She gradually began to forget how to recite the Muslim prayers like others and could not fully manage the months of fasting. When she exited, she re-united with her Muslim family since she could not afford renting but she noticed that she was looked at in peculiar way, not citing the Muslim prayers like others and the worst came when the holly months of fasting came by. She was often seen eating while others in the house had fasted, something that made the whole family unhappy however much she tried to explain about the conversion to Christianity, they were continuing to discriminate and calling her a *mukafiri* (literally known as an infidel) at home which was latently breaking her emotionally.

Blocked assistance from care mothers

Lastly on the social challenges, the interviews revealed to the researcher that these youths were not feeling free to pay visits to their affiliated homes even when they were almost becoming homeless. Kigozi, a 27 year old resettled youth from Watoto Child care Ministries painfully explained that it had been made hard for them to go back to care institutions even for a simple visit and access their foster mothers, since foster mothers are at the meso level where youths first got attached to while still on care. The National Advisory service (2009) ranked the fear of being homeless among the top ten problems that youths were worried of. This was why most of them opted to go back and seek assistance from their foster mothers when they noticed that they were almost coming to this point.

He further explained that after his foster had given some money and some food stuff to depend on. To his surprise, the administrators blocked him on his way out and the askaris were ordered to check him thoroughly and later confiscated some of the food. Care administrators also had tendencies of only welcoming and give attention to the minority of the youths who were successful. It is this treatment that contributes to the latent emotional abuse that young people raised from care institutions go through as Mendes and Moslehuddin (2006) argued.

The economic challenges

Late issuing of resettlement packages

From the economic perspective, the challenge that came out the most from the pattern of the responses was the late issuing of financial resettlement packages by the care institutions. This was completely different from what the youth care policies of these institutions stated in writing that the youths exited care together with these packages to enable them settle with ease and meet the basic needs. These packages were very important since they mitigate the probabilities of these young to fall into debts (The UK Department of Education, 2013).

For the fact that these youths were resettled without these packages, it were their foster mothers that took up the initiative to provide them with the little amount of money they depended on though this was always short lived. A good number of them affirmed that they found it hard to meet the basic needs of life like food, and shelter when they entered into independent living

(Reilly 2003). At this point, life became hard and began falling into debts to access money to buy something to eat and pay their rent so that they can survive at the macro level where the survival for the fittest was the order of the day.

Much worse, they always incurred big costs travelling back to their care institutions to attend the bureaucratic meetings where their business proposals were requested for, processing of the requisitions for their resettlement were discussed, and they angrily remarked that that the meetings often yielded no practical results yet their transport expenses were not always reimbursed. A majority of them gave up making these travels to stop incurring expenses and preferred to wait until they were called to pick the packages if at all they were ready.

Resulting from above, through the focus discussion groups, a number of female youths confessed that with no resettlement packages forced them to resort to cohabiting. Chase et al (2006:39) and Mendes and Moslehuddin (2006) states that such circumstances bring about early parenthood and early pregnancies since at macro level, social capital is scarce and these young ladies only looked unto their boyfriends as capable individuals to provide and meet the needs of the young ladies.

But at times, relationships did not work out and the ladies were left with the babies by the men and young men. This explained the pattern of single motherhood to which lost of them agreed to. Child abandonment cases were also highlighted upon in the discussions. This was the case because the young men were not economically stable to meet the rising needs of the newly born babies and their mothers therefore disappeared, abandoning their responsibilities of fatherhood and worse off, were the cases where these ladies were left in rented houses with rent fees not yet cleared. From an auto ethnographic exercise, one of the young ladies stated that she sold off some of her belongings to raise the rent money, a process that was reproducing the cycle of poverty and pushing these young ladies into vulnerable and more desperate positions in the communities where they lived.

Financial exploitation and commodification.

In addition to the above, from the auto ethnographic exercise, the study revealed a finding that some of the youths felt financially exploited. This latent exploitation was in form of fundraising activities through which the care institutions raised money as the Ugandan alternative care report by (Rilley, 2012) emphasizes. The youth strongly argued that on the meso level, activities like the singing activities were emphasized where they made a lot of travelling on trips from which the care institution fundraised money and sponsorship schemes for their wellbeing. They stated that they felt they had been used as means to and since they had to display their innocent looking faces to attract attention of the donors during these choir sessions. The concern raised here is that when they exited care, they felt as if they had been used and dumped since the care institution did not show any concerns of how they were fairing in the community.

They added on to say that they attracted attention while they were in care and when they exited, they made no meaning of value. The strong attention in also meant strong social protection from them at the meso level but gradually reduced when they became youths Myers and Bourdillon (2012). It was also noted that on these trips, they were heavily restricted on making contact with any of the people who attended these shows from where they performed for which it reduced chances for them to make friends at the international level who would be of use in the future.

After exiting care, the youth wondered whether the attention was given to them for the fact that they were young, sang to attract sympathy and then that they had grown and exited, they felt thrown out and the money they waited for took so long to be processed with the bureaucratic systems which did not exist when they sang for that money. Therefore this impacted some of the programs and activities like re-unions, meetings to engage them into some holiday programs where the care administrators might need their participation to help out which they stated to have boycotted since they felt to have been commodified in this whole process of fundraising for funds.

Lack of financial management skills

The lack of financial management skills was another economic challenge that the resettled youth faced. Through individual interviews, it was discovered that they mismanaged their resettlement packages and spent it on things that never of important matter to better their lives. (Frimpong

2012: 349) argues that such skills were to be imparted to the youths while they were still on care as part of the preparation process especially through their foster mothers and by the youth leaders. This was because it was the time when youths spent more time with those care givers and another in secondary and vocational institutions for education.

It should be noted that career guidance and the imparting of such skills was often received little or no attention by the care givers (Wade and Dixon, 2006:206). The impact of this finally caught up with the resettled youths as they failed to know the priorities to spend on, when to spend. To further drive this point home, from a one on interview, one of the youth agreed.

“I spent all of my resettlement package lavishly on irrelevant activities like outings and electronic gadgets like new smart phones” (Kenneth 29, male resettled youth from Watoto care Ministries.)

This is key to understand that a good number of youths did not use the money to better their lives, and create sources of income from which they can derive a livelihood. From the fact that they had debts to settle financially although there are a few exceptions of those that were able to establish some scale business but the trends of dependency on their foster mothers and extended family relatives were still continuing.

In conclusion, the findings in this chapter have revealed that challenges resettled youth were faced in their independent living were engineered by the ways through which they were brought up in their affiliated child care institutions. It is important to also note that it was from their childhood lives while in care that these challenges gradually began making latent impact and the damage was revealed upon exiting care into independent living. Therefore, chapter four of this study discusses the different means through which the resettled youth were negating these social and economic challenges.

Chapter four: Agency and Life skills.

Introduction

In this chapter, the discussion of the findings is based on the responses the youths gave on what they were doing to solve some of the social and economic challenges they faced as they lived on their own in the communities where they resettled. The researcher used the concept of agency and life skills to analyze the findings in relation to the perspective other researchers and scholars had concerning the study. The dominant argument in this chapter is the establishment of youth associations affiliated to their care institutions through which they were able to extend assistance to each other, taking on the small odd jobs, considered volunteering as a way to penetrate employment market, setting up small-scale entrepreneurial businesses and writing dissertations and academic papers for university students.

Agency

In the context of youth studies, (Wyn and White, 1998:35) understood agency in the sense of strengthening the available choices and options the resettled youth have, enabling them to make use of what they have to solve these some of these social and economic challenges.

(Ansell 2005:222) also views agency as the way these youth are able to engage dynamically with their surrounding environments, be in position to make choices, define roles, manage crises based on their own understanding of the changing world around them.

This study is going to make use of this concept by relating on the resettled youth were able to negotiate the social and economic challenges using the available choices regardless of the big limiting factor of the structure in this case –the society. Although there is a limited scholarly coverage for this context, the findings will be discussed in relation to what other authors argued.

Life skills

Life skills as a concept has been defined by (Holt, et al 2008:282) as those skills the resettled youths needed in order to deal with everyday challenges and demands of everyday life. Some of these life skills were imparted into the lives of these youth while still in care by their foster mothers and others mainly learnt from vocational institutes. Life skills learnt from care institutions are mainly those with domestic home keeping like cooking, washing, caring for their siblings among others.

The life skills obtained from vocation institutions included sewing, plumbing, welding and many others. It was clear from the study that such skills were only obtained to those youths that undertook vocational studies while still in care therefore it limits those that went through the normal education system that was full of theories.

Therefore the findings for the negotiating of the social and economic challenges are discussed through the analytical lens of agency and life skills is as follows;

Establishment of youth unions affiliated to their care institutions

In the context of this study, the researcher recognized that a large pattern of youths agreed through focus discussion groups that they had established youth unions. The youths stated that they were strengthening their own unions affiliated to the care institutions. The establishment was mainly spear headed by those youths who were resettled when the resettlement program was first introduced by these care institutions. Through these, emotional, peer and financial support were extended, shared and availed to every member (Kufeldt and McKenzie 2003:269). During times of re-unions meetings with care administrators, their voices were unanimously heard in negotiating for their resettlement packages and also to check on its requisition progress. The union leaders here, were very instrumental in trying to smoothen the already spoilt relations between the care institutions and the resettled youths for example during the time when the study was conducted, a union group from Watoto childcare Ministry was preparing to meet the country care director which the administration had worked hard to block. Therefore, it is argued that the

collective efforts were making a meaningful representation that using individuals to speak which would be interpreted as striving to achieve selfish interests during such negotiations.

Take on the available odd jobs

The youths also were also using these associations to encourage others not to despise work, distribute information regarding the available odd jobs, to enable those without jobs to access them and earn a livelihood. Most of these were in the informal sector and since they required semi-skilled labor, a good number of the unemployed resettled youths felt conformable to take them on. The youth through the discussion stated that there some incidences where a few of them despised these jobs and lived on handouts from friends.

Such jobs included ferrying food, loading and offloading goods from trucks, driving business trucks, sewing on a retail scale among others. The youths were happy that they were in position to earn some little money every day than spending a lot of time in Kampala, in search for full time white collar jobs that would suit their academic qualifications (Mawuko-Yevugah and Ugor, 2015:85). It should also be appreciated that these jobs occupied their time especially for those who were always in conflict with the law. Rather than having idled minds to attract them to into crimes of stealing people's handy items on streets of Kampala, they chose to be occupied with work and avoided being rounded up police officials who always purposely charged them of idling in efforts of extorting money from them. Therefore, by working, the youths developed a moral responsibilities to provide for themselves and other needy extended families members in need with the small amount of money they earned (Such andWalker 2005,) as cited in (Smith, 2009:253).

A few of those who had enrolled for technical vocational training were doing well. They were always occupied, working on construction sites engaging into plumbing, roofing and electrical wiring and they profited from their skills since a lot of construction was going on around Kampala and the surrounding suburbs. Therefore it was still these associations the information regarding the demand for their skills was obtained.

In connection to the above, the information from these associations regarding employment opportunities was very useful but also had an indirect effect of deskilling them (Katz, 2004). A

few of them had paved their way into accessing some greener pastures into odd job opportunities of the United Arab Emirates, many were considering to take on such opportunities and others had begun working on the bureaucratic paperwork. (Malit Jr and Oliver, 2013:15) argued that youths that were taking on these opportunities experienced massive deskilling since they were accepting any work outside what they trained in and qualified for.

Deskilling was inevitable in this case since high skilled job opportunities were given to those expatriates from developed countries. Much as the youths had qualifications, they were undermined which was putting them under a big disadvantage, coupled with the discriminatory laws and the non-recognition of foreign credentials, they had no choice but to accept the odd jobs like security guards and housekeeping among others as further elaborated by (Malit Jr and Oliver, 2015). The fact that a good number of the jobs were passive and automated, working for a good number of years was gradually eroding their skills and when their contracts ended, they could not translate that experience to fit their trained qualifications back in Uganda.

For the fact that they were some youth who were always in conflict with the law, it was these care associations that solicited money and contributed it towards bailing out their fellow brothers as captured from the interviews. These cases included theft, defaulting debts from their friends and at times, minor cases of idling on streets of Kampala were charged and used as means of money extortion by Ugandan Police officers around the capital suburbs. The youths under their affiliated associations negotiated and paid for the release of their fellow youths. A good pattern in response from the focus group discussion stated that those commonly involved, are the ones that did not have extended family relatives hence prison was not a place for them to stay as (Fitzpatrick, 2014) argued. It was therefore that reason why they did all to help their troubled fellows, while always devising means to have occupied and busy as a mechanism of keeping them out of crime.

Volunteering in companies and Non-government organizations.

Volunteering in different companies and Non-government organizations was also devised strategy to locate better employment opportunities as noted from the auto ethnographic exercise. This was yielding two big advantages for these resettled youths. They were accessing larger social networking groups with people`s contacts and also acquiring hands on experiences.

Mostly in this were youths that were newly resettled and had graduated from different universities. (Newman and Blackburn, 2002) argued that it was through these corporate companies and Non-government organizations that they engaged in different activities in different departments and acquired new skills that were enabling them to achieve a level of self-efficacy with all the duties and responsibilities they were entrusted with.

The choice to volunteer according to (Halba, 2014:127) was helping to position and pave a way in improving the social cohesion for the youths while they engaged and interacted with people at work. Among those that were volunteering was Leonard, a 29 years old male resettled youth from SOS Children's Villages Uganda and a UHMG (Uganda Health Marketing Group) volunteer concretized that he was flexible and worked in any department that his supervisor placed him depending on the need, was always prepared to go to field commonly in parts of Northern Uganda. He continued to state that he gained a lot from this opportunity, ranging from improving his marketing skills, made a lot of friends from other partnering NGOs and collected useful contacts. This helped him to get used to all his colleagues and was able to blend in and felt comfortable and was hoping hope to be retained.

Connected to volunteering, these youths also stated that through participating in sporting activities, they were making use of their talents for example in soccer where many of them were doing referee work and for the ladies, they participated in drama acting and singing voluntarily especially during the MTN Uganda promotions and rallies from where they at times earned a little money that helped them survive.

Establishing small scale entrepreneurial businesses.

The creativity to come up with joint small scale businesses was another way the youths were coping with these social and economic challenges. It is here that a large pattern of them agreed through interviews that they were pooling resources from their settlement packages to start up small scale business ventures. Such ventures included retail confectionary shops, food kiosks and air time retail dealership. These small scale ventures were enabling some of them to break the barriers of unemployment and the stress of having to go through social networks from which

their fellow youths were striving to make use of to enable them know some people in different offices in order to be connected for employment (Reed in Partnership Limited 2011).

In connection with small scale businesses, there are instances where youths were availed with additional funds through corporate companies to make use of their skills and knowledge to make income generating projects. Among these was the “Go Teach” project through the partnership of DHL and SOS Children`s Villages Uganda where over 30 youths were provided with 250,000 Uganda Shillings each to start any business of their own (SOS Children`s Villages Uganda, 2015). The youths first underwent rigorous training through which they were advised on how they were to use these funds. To make the project competitive, a prize of One million Uganda Shillings was to be awarded to the youth that came out with an outstanding entrepreneurship project. The youths through the focus group discussions agreed that such projects boosted their thinking capabilities.

The innovativeness of these resettled youths was observed when a female youth won the final prize after setting up a project of mushroom growing project. With such initiatives, it saves these youths the burden of having to know and make efforts to please someone for an opportunity, they in other words become bosses of their own and be in position to get daily earnings to better their lives.

However, (Pantea et al, 2014:38) brings in an argument which ideally argues that the entrepreneurial ventures have always had an element of individualism which does not fit well with the principles such as equality for opportunity, social justice, cooperation among others that lays the foundation unto which work among youth is based. Through an auto ethnographic exercise, Richard, a 27 year old resettled youth from SOS Uganda concretely explained further that he faced managerial challenges in the kiosk canteen he had set with his close fellow youth Peter after they pooled resources through joint contributions from their resettlement packages. The two youths had good cooking skills and set their kiosk canteen near Mengo town to tap into the fast food demands by students of Ndejje University. Richard stated that he had trusted Peter with financial management and he concentrated to catering and deliveries so that their business would attract students for the good food and hospitality.

Richard gradually started noticing that his fellow business associate's attitudes were changing, the business began registering a lot of financial shortages which Peter would not clearly explain. Later, through his fellow resettled youths, Richard received notifications that his colleague was telling them that the business was entirely belonging to Peter and he practically started disrespecting him in front of their daily customers.

What finally worsened the situation was that Richard discovered that Peter had gone ahead to use their business as his project in the DHL "go teach competition" without his consent. The business was finally dissolved since Richard would not keep up with his colleague's behavior and that their relation had worsened and they had then fallen into the trap of fighting financial greediness as (Smyth 1999) emphasized in (Pantea et al, 2014:38).

Therefore, joint business ventures were looked at as a failed issue and a big pattern in response during the focus group discussion. They instead preferred to run individual entrepreneurial businesses for which they felt comfortable and be fully responsible for their losses and profits.

Assisting university students with their academic assignments.

Lastly, in continuing to earn a living from their knowledge and skills, the study found out through auto ethnographic exercise and interviews that the unemployed graduates were earning a simple living through writing dissertations and other academic papers for university students. The students assisted were mostly from Makerere University which was strategically located in Uganda's capital thereby being accessible by all the surrounding suburbs. They stated that they earned over four hundred thousand Uganda shillings (400,000 Shs) from this informal employment activity. (Ahaibwe and Mbowa, 2014) argue that such informal activities of employment were accounted for the high percentages for the youths employed in the country. When these youths were asked how they located these University students, a good pattern responded that it was through their friends who worked in secretarial and photocopying bureaus within the University and in places like bars mostly situated in Wandegeya where these students normally went to have fun.

The youths further explained that a good number of these students were from wealthy families who spent and allocated most of their time in leisure activities than to their studies. This was a blessing in disguise for them to earn something since the students never minded but wanted to be assisted.

In conclusion, in trying to solve the challenges resettled youth were facing, the initiatives devised had an aspect of instilling a spirit of togetherness in whatever they did. This was the first source of help within themselves before any of them looked out unto anyone in the public for assistance. Since they knew each other so well and shared the same background, they knew the context of each other's problems but to a point a good number of them wished they had been raised from the community, they would have been in better position to handle the challenges like their fellow youth raised in normal families in the community. Therefore, there are some challenges that were not that easily to be negotiated about but required endurance to overcome them and let life move on. They have been discussed in chapter of this study guided by the concept of resilience.

Chapter five: Resilience of resettled youth

Introduction

In this chapter, the findings of how resettled youth were able to overcome, cope up and finally recover shocks caused by the social and economic challenges discussed in the previous chapters. The responses on resilience following the order of support beyond unions, relying on personal pride and use of hope as analyzed in support of other existing literature.

The concept of resilience has been one that is increasingly being used in the studies regarding young people. For the context of this study, the concept of resilience has been defined by (Rutter, 1999) as cited in (Stein, 2005:1) as the quality that enables resettled youths in finding satisfaction in their lives irrespective of the disadvantaged backgrounds through which they were raised, the problems they may have passed through and the pressure they are experiencing outside care.

(Newman and Blackburn, 2002) also defined resilience as that universal capacity that allowed young people, the community or a group to be in position to prevent, minimize and overcome the detrimental outcomes of adversities.

From the shocks resulting from the social and economic challenges these resettled youths, the ability to cope up developed over time (Stein, 2005:36). The more time the youths lived with some of the challenges, the more they got used to them. This is because some challenges could not be solved by negotiating around them. It was worth to state that in recovering from the shocks caused by the social and economic challenges, existing factors like culture, the close relationships with people from the community and members from extended families supported the construction of resilience in these youths (Chaskin, 2008) as cited in (Stein, 2005).

Therefore the ways through which the youths overcame the shocks caused by the challenges discussed in chapter three of this study were as follows;

Support beyond unions

It was found out through the group discussions that a good number of youths had an outside relative or any person to whom they got attached to for support. Most of these were friends they had gone to school with and had developed a strong bondage. The youths were often taken in by the families of their friends having explained the condition they were going through after leaving care. Prior to the decision of being taken in, their friends always negotiated and convinced the parents about such a need for which they considered these resettled youths as their brothers and sisters. These families provided safety nets to settle, stabilize and continue with life with a sense of developed emotional maturity (Stein, 2005:9).

The youths explained that the families of these friends especially those that they studied with in secondary school and at university provided shelter, food, medication and emotional support. They however in return opened up to also take part and helped out in the family businesses rather to always be at the receiving end. For this example, Slyvia, a 24 years old female youth from SOS Uganda narrated in the interview that having been brought back from the HGIC Ghana program due to mentally challenged conditions. She was resettled from care while still on the psychiatric medication, and had used some of resettlement package to pay for unfinished her hair dressing course at YMCA institution in Kampala. During the interviewing time for this study, Slyvia was living with a friend with whom she was studying with YMCA and was expecting a baby.

She stated that her relationship with the boyfriend was at the verge of ending, with so much stress on her, Slyvia had made up her mind to relinquish her unborn baby for adoption. This is because the father to be was not being supportive at all and had denied responsibility for the pregnancy. She often lacked the money for antenatal checkups and depended on the mother to her course mate. The mother happened to be a dentist who played a big role in reminding her that there is hope for a good life beyond her current situation and also establishing positivity aspects in her of identity, always counselled her to work on her emotionally broken feelings and high temper. (Newman and Blackburn, 2002) argues therefore that contributions from such people play a vital in enabling young people a lot in dealing and overcoming the above adversities and was enabling these youths to regain control of their lives.

She added that with the emotional assistance provided from the family, she was able to pay less attention to the boyfriend who was stressing her, changed her mind from handing over her unborn baby for adoption and started to think for the future wellbeing her position as a mother. Therefore these people also formed a base of support beyond which the care unions would offer especially for those youths who had no extended family members in the community, provided with the a sense of belonging upon they the youths used as a base to continue in life for youth like Slyvia irrespective of the daily challenges in their lives.

Proudly handled the challenges by themselves.

On the other hand, other resettled youth through the auto ethnographic exercise were handling their life concerns privately and never wanted anyone's involvement in establishing bases for which they would cope and over these challenges. They relied on this pride as their source of resilience, a state (Samuels and Pryce, 2008:1205) referred to as '*Survivor pride and disavowal of independence*'. The youths desisted themselves from asking for assistance from anyone since they knew with prior thought that none of those people close to them would step in to help. They silently lived with these challenges, moved on with their life since it was not the first time to encounter with them. Based on the premise that some of these challenges were at time re-occurring, and that if at one time an extended family member or any friend offered help, it would be unrealistic for one to go back to the same person, therefore they lived on with them with a mind that with time, they would be solved by time. Another reason given for such decision was that, there had been many cases where their fellow youths and people in the community made their problems a public talk. Therefore it is through this pride that (Stein, 2012:167) helps the youth to acquire the self-knowledge that puts them in control to enable them carry on and lift themselves up from the shocks for which later becomes their identity.

However, to argue that these youths were entirely managing on their own is to miss a point judged by reality. There are times when they would admit to have gone for some little push up economically especially when the situation worsened to the level of being thrown out houses for failure to pay rent and settling of their debts. (Stein, 2012) went ahead to argue that there was a degree of agency for that fact they would turn to friends and extended family relatives for

financial assistances and that acting to be tough would cause damage on these already established networks for social capital and relations.

Hope as a driving force to move on.

Hope was another mechanism through which the resettled youth exhibited their resilience. This was connected to how they continued to volunteer and take part in apprenticeship programs regardless of the underpaid condition or at time no pay at all. From the auto ethnographic exercise data, a good pattern was recognized to have commented about having hope of being retained for employment in the Non-government organizations and companies they were volunteering. Through this, many risked a lot and absorbed a lot of pressure resulting from exploitation while at work. Since the benefits of volunteering at work in this context were not driven by remunerative gains as argued by (The UK Department of Education, 2013:8). Through this hope the youth developed a sense of purpose, progress achievement through skills and experiences that they would make use of once retained or make use of elsewhere. Therefore enduring to work and be occupied was better than being idle on Kampala's streets where the Ugandan Police would later incarcerate them and extort financial gains which they never had at hand.

At times the hope to continue brought some additional financial gains. A few of those that were volunteering stated that they were financially benefit from these positions, especially when they set out for field work in rural areas commonly in Northern Uganda, their bosses would remit out money meant for field facilitation which they used on other personal needs. Hence there were examples of those that were retained especially the youth now currently working DHL, they stated that they had endured the conditions were they spent days working with no transport and lunch allowances that were availed but in the end, they got the jobs which also inspired others to be patient and cling on hope.

In conclusion, in coping up with the social and economic challenges, it can be argues that the largest source and foundation onto which the resettled youth built their resilience was from community supporting members and the care unions. From the study it is seen that coping up by individuals was something very hard however sensitive the challenges were in one's life and it is

from this point that concluding reflections and recommendations on the entire research will be discussed in chapter six of the study.

Chapter six: Concluding reflections and recommendations.

From this study, based from the findings and responses from the resettled youth, there is a clear connection that the root cause of the unsettled life is linked to institutionalization. These social and economic challenges made them unsettled and their coping up was indeed very difficult compared to their counterparts raised in normal families. The policies and arrangements that care institutions used in raising these youths were seen to be very limiting which affected them right from their childhood and followed them into times of independent living. Therefore the central argument posed by the study is that since most responses of the resettled youths in this study are linked to their affiliated care institutions, its remains evident that the issue of raising children through these institution has for long been problematic and becoming unpopular as argued by (Grietens et al, 2014).

The study also recognizes the hurtful feelings of these resettled youths. They felt commodified and financially exploited since their childhood in the process of fundraising for the care institution. The youth recognized themselves as participants in these fundraising schemes but were forgotten when it came to smoothly sending them into the communities, since they had to struggle and kneel for the same funds they taken part in raising. It is clear that these are some of the factors that worsen the relations between the resettled youths and the care institutions, since some of the youths did not want to be recognized as affiliates to these care institutions anymore.

Based on the findings, the study provides the following recommendations that would hopefully better the life experiences to solve the social and economic challenges for these resettled youths;

This study suggests the need for care institutions to de-institutionalize and gradually embrace the alternative care framework to be in position to provide well for the children. Based on the fact that institutionalization had numerous effects on resettled youths and it remained hard for them to cope up with the challenging situations as their counter parts raise in normal families in the community. This comes as not a statement to demerit the work done but to make changes that are to improve the lives of young people easier after they exit care. Alternative care framework advocates in Uganda like Mark Riley, through the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social development has continued to challenge the whole notion of institutionalization of children since

most of them found pride to have been operating in this charity business and resettling youths for over a number of years hence doing the same mistakes therefore reproducing these social and economic challenges in their youths (Riley, 2012).

The study acknowledges that these care institutions are making commitment towards embracing community based care as their mode of operation. Most preferably SOS Children`s Villages through their Family Strengthening Programs which are trying to move towards the right directions, the suggestion is that they concretely fulfill this commitment as started by the old leaders of President Kutin. The future of this success remains into the hands of the new leadership to take on the responsibility for the complete change.

Preparations for independent living should be given a high priority by these care institutions. The youths should receive this preparations before they are exited. This takes form through teaching and training of life skills such as financial management, accommodation and cultural norms and practices which are very essential in their lives as they live on their own in the communities they are resettled. The above skills would also assist these youths to be in position to manage their financial settlement packages even without supervision by their mothers and administrators therefore equipping them with a sense of maturity for financial independence.

Care administrations are also urged to identify early enough those youths to be resettled and initiate the processing of their settlement packages early on time to enable a smooth transition into the community. This would give ample time to the youths to plan what they would want to do with the money without pressure and avoid the expenses in future like borrowing money for transport from friends and many others which would leave them indebted hence very hard to clear as they strive to push for the requisitions of these settling funds.

Volunteering programs should also be encouraged among the youths while still in institutions of learning. This would provide an environment for them to acquire hands on experience and also be in position to penetrate the real social support networks for employment connections and also collect work related contacts early enough thereby enhancing their skills of competence.

The administrations should also allow these youths to interact with the members of the outside community as early while still on care. This would open the minds of some youths especially the girls so that people do not capitalize and exploit on their innocence therefore equipping them

with the ability to make informed judgements in any tight situations they may find themselves into while they live on their own.

Therefore, having seen the experiences of resettled youth that result from institutionalization in this study, it remains prime for me argue that community- based support is the best way to deal with issue of young people in orphan situation. This is because people like grandparents in the communities have been rendered very important in raising orphan children rather than institutionalizing (Briefing, 2004). This is to break the cycle of having these challenges re-occur and empower these young people to be in position to handle the social and economic challenges like normal youths raised from families,

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Appendices

Appendix A

Interview/FDG Guide

Resettled youths-Kampala

Name.....Age.....Male Date.....

1. Do you consider yourselves settled?
2. How did you feel when you began living by yourself without institutional support?
3. Did you receive any support from your care institution to resettle you well?
4. What social challenges are you experiencing today?
5. What are the economic challenges you face today?
6. What are the economic challenges you face today?
7. How does your care experiences imparting your independent living today?
8. How have you been negotiating the social these challenges?
9. How have you been negotiating the economic challenges?
10. How have you been coping up with the social challenges?
11. How have you been coping up with the economic challenges?

Appendix B

Auto ethnography guiding procedures

Name..... Age, Affiliated care institution.....

1. Take note of both social and economic challenges you faced every day.
2. How did you negotiate the solutions to those challenges above?
3. To some of those challenges you could not solve, how did u cope up with them?

Thank You