

**STREET CHILDREN AS A RESOURCE: A STUDY OF ENABLING
AND IMPEDING FACTORS IN SKILLS ACQUISITION AMONG
INSTITUTIONALISED STREET CHILDREN IN NAIROBI**

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ABSTRACT:

The study investigated skills among institutionalized street children of Kenya. The main objective was the repertoire of skills among the institutionalized street children. It focused on 3 institutions rescuing street children within Nairobi province. These were sampled and respective children randomly selected for interviews. Face to face interviews were conducted with key informants. The children's relationships and institutional environment were directly observed.

The study focussed on three main broad questions:

- 1.What is the nature and types of skills possessed by institutionalized street children.
- 2.What factors enable skill acquisition among the institutionalized street children
- 3.What factors impede skill acquisition among the institutionalized street children.

The study found that up to 85.0% of the institutionalized street children possess the following different kinds of skills; literacy skills, communication skills, social skills, organizational skills and work skills. Action skills were present among a small group of respondents, that is 14.4%. The study equally found the following factors to be responsible of influencing these skills; the motivation factor, institution infrastructure, the participation factor, shared information and the role function of the children.

In conclusion, the study recommended that institutionalized street children be involved more as participants and less as beneficiaries. This will as a result influence their acquisition of action skills, which they lack. Also that the resourcefulness of the institutionalized street children is more as a result of their informal education through experiences, interrelations and socialization. Therefore these children should be helped to attain their potential and not other

wise condemned as non-resourceful thereby overlooking the significance of informal education.

Areas of further research suggested included the role of informal education in the rehabilitation of street children and the contributions of institutionalized street children in capacity building.