# Street to Shelter Homes

# Street to Shelter Homes:

## *The Child Development Scenario in Bangladesh*

By

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Cambridge
Scholars
Publishing

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This book first published 2025

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

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ISBN: 978-1-0364-4394-8
ISBN (Ebook): 978-1-0364-4395-5

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Writing *Street to Shelter Homes: The Child Development Scenario in Bangladesh* has been a journey of both profound insight and personal growth, made possible through the support and contributions of many individuals and organizations. We bow down in humble reverence and express my sincere appreciation to the universe's guiding powers for giving us the fortitude and intelligence to the book.

First and foremost, we extend my deepest gratitude to the children who shared their stories and experiences with us. Their courage and resilience have been the heart of this book, and their voices have shaped every chapter. To the caregivers, shelter home staff, and social workers who provided invaluable perspectives and dedicated their lives to improving the lives of these children, your commitment and compassion have been truly inspiring.

We would also like to thank the researchers and colleagues who collaborated on this project. Their expertise and unwavering dedication were instrumental in ensuring the rigor and depth of our analysis. Special thanks to Mehedi Hasan Masud for providing the resources and support necessary for this study.

We are deeply grateful to Cambridge Scholar Publishing and the editorial team for their exceptional guidance and support throughout the publishing process. Your professionalism and attention to detail have been invaluable.

On a personal note, We wish to acknowledge the encouragement and patience of my family and friends. Your belief in this project and your unwavering support have been a constant source of strength.

Finally, we would like to express our thanks to all those who, in various capacities, contributed to this book but whose names may not be listed here. Your contributions, whether direct or indirect, have played a crucial role in bringing this work to fruition.

This book is a testament to the collective efforts of everyone involved, and we hope it serves as a meaningful contribution to the ongoing dialogue about child development and care in Bangladesh.

# PREFACE

In recent years, the plight of children transitioning from street life to shelter homes has become an increasingly pressing issue in Bangladesh. "Street to Shelter Homes: Child Development Scenario in Bangladesh" delves into the multifaceted experiences of these vulnerable children, offering a comprehensive exploration of their developmental journeys, challenges, and triumphs. This book emerges from a deep commitment to understanding and addressing the complexities faced by children who navigate the profound shift from street environments to institutional care.

The journey from the streets to a shelter home represents not just a physical relocation but a profound shift in a child's life, with significant implications for their development, well-being, and future prospects. Our aim with this book is to illuminate these experiences through rigorous research and empathetic analysis, shedding light on the diverse factors that influence their development and providing insights into how support systems can be enhanced.

In compiling this work, we have drawn on a range of perspectives, from the voices of the children themselves to the insights of caregivers, social workers, and policymakers. The demographic analysis presented herein serves as a cornerstone for understanding the varied backgrounds of these children, highlighting how different factors interplay to shape their developmental outcomes.

We hope this book serves as a valuable resource for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers dedicated to improving the lives of children in transition. By presenting a detailed examination of the street-to-shelter experience, we aim to foster a deeper understanding of the needs and potentials of these children, ultimately contributing to more effective and compassionate support systems.

Our heartfelt gratitude goes to all those who have contributed to this research, including the children and caregivers who shared their stories, and to the organizations and individuals committed to making a difference. It is our sincere hope that the insights offered in this book will inspire further dialogue, research, and action to ensure a brighter future for every child in transition.

# ABSTRACT

Children are the most valuable assets of any nation, embodying the future potential for societal growth and progress. However, in Bangladesh, a growing number of children are forced to live on the streets due to poverty, natural disasters, epidemics, and political instability. This harsh reality has sparked significant concern regarding children's rights on both national and global stages, with international forums and conferences addressing the urgent need to safeguard the well-being of vulnerable children. Street children, in particular, face immense challenges, including exploitation, abuse, and deprivation, which significantly hinder their physical, emotional, and intellectual development.

This book, *Street to Shelter Homes: The Child Development Scenario in Bangladesh*, offers an in-depth exploration of the lives of street children and their counterparts in shelter homes. By examining their living conditions, access to resources, and overall development, the book aims to shed light on the stark differences between these two groups. Utilizing a descriptive research design, data were collected from 100 children, with 50 selected from rehabilitation and shelter centers and the remaining 50 from street settings through simple random sampling. The comparative analysis focuses on key areas such as nutrition, education, emotional well-being, and skill development, revealing significant disparities in how each group experiences their formative years.

The findings of the study are striking: children living in shelters receive far more comprehensive support, including access to education, nutritional programs, and skill-based training, enabling them to develop into well-rounded, competitive individuals. In contrast, street children are often deprived of basic human needs such as proper nutrition, healthcare, and education, leaving them vulnerable to physical and emotional harm. This deprivation not only limits their potential but also impacts the broader socio-economic fabric of the nation.

By presenting a detailed account of these children's lives, the book highlights the urgent need for targeted policies and interventions. It calls for stronger governmental and non-governmental efforts to provide street children with access to shelter, education, healthcare, and protection,

ensuring that no child is left behind. Moreover, it advocates for reforms in child welfare policies, suggesting improvements in rehabilitation programs, and urging collaboration between policymakers, educators, and social workers to bridge the gap between street and sheltered children.

*Street to Shelter Homes* is a crucial contribution to the discourse on child development, offering valuable insights for academics, policymakers, social workers, and anyone invested in the well-being of marginalized children. The study not only emphasizes the immediate challenges faced by street children but also offers a roadmap for sustainable, long-term solutions aimed at securing a brighter future for every child in Bangladesh. Through its findings, this book inspires hope for a more inclusive society where every child has the opportunity to thrive, regardless of their circumstances.

**Keyword:** Street children, Sheltered children, Shelter Homes, Child Developme

# CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.0 Chapter Introduction

This chapter provides an in-depth exploration of the transition from street life to shelter homes, focusing on the developmental scenarios of children in Bangladesh. As urbanization and socio-economic challenges exacerbate the plight of street children, understanding their experiences and developmental trajectories becomes crucial. This chapter sets the stage for a comprehensive analysis by introducing the socio-economic context of Bangladesh, the nature of street life, and the role of shelter homes in addressing the needs of these vulnerable children. It outlines the objectives of the study, the research questions guiding the investigation, and the significance of examining the developmental outcomes associated with the transition from the streets to organized shelter environments. By framing the issue within both local and global perspectives, this chapter aims to provide a foundational understanding of the complexities involved in child development in this context, setting up the subsequent analysis of data and findings.

## 1.1 Background of the Study

'Street children' represent one of the most neglected and vulnerable segments of society. These children lack stable homes, adequate food, and proper clothing, leading lives marked by uncertainty and hardship (Hecht,1998). They inhabit the streets, which serve as both their habitual abode and source of subsistence (Murrieta,2010). A street child or adolescent is defined as a boy or girl who has not reached adulthood and has made the street his or her habitual abode and source of subsistence without sufficient oversight, care, or guidance from responsible adults (Lalor, 1999;Volpi, 2002; Woan & Auerswald 2013; Aptekar & Stoecklin, 2014). This minor group faces severe impacts due to poverty and inequality, often enduring exploitation, oppression, and various forms of hardship. The issue of street children is a global phenomenon, affecting both developed and developing countries ( Densley & Joss, 2000; Sorre & Oino, 2013). However,

the challenge is more pronounced in developing nations due to higher levels of poverty and inequality (Gordon et al.,2003; UNICEF, 2005). Street children are present in significant numbers worldwide, yet they are often underrepresented in national censuses. This underrepresentation stems from the transient nature of their living conditions and the variability in definitions of street children across different countries and cultures (Alam & Wajidi, 2014). In Bangladesh, it is nearly impossible to determine the exact number of street children due to the rapidly changing nature of their population (Conticini & Hulme, 2007).

As cited by Ferdous and Nila (2020), projections by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) indicated that the number of street children in Bangladesh stood at 1.5 million in 2015 and was expected to reach 1.56 million by 2024 (BIDS, 2015). However, these figures likely underestimate the actual number, as the population of street children continues to grow. These children lead extremely difficult lives, engaging in hazardous work to earn their living. The consequences of such work are detrimental, leading to severe physical and mental health issues that persist into adulthood. The government of Bangladesh has recognized the plight of street children and has implemented several commendable policies to improve their living conditions (Hai, 2014; Nawaz, 2011). These initiatives include public awareness campaigns conducted in collaboration with street children and the Street Child Activist Network (SCAN), training programs to educate street children about their rights and advocacy skills, and the publication and dissemination of assessments on laws, policies, and practices concerning street children's rights (Ackerman etal., 2005). These assessments come with proposed recommendations for further improvement of Government of Bangladesh.

In addition to government efforts, numerous non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have also taken steps to enhance the lives of street children (Islam, 2019). These organizations provide various forms of support, including shelter, education, healthcare, and vocational training. Despite these efforts, both governmental and non-governmental entities face significant challenges in implementing these policies effectively. Barriers include limited resources, logistical difficulties, and the need for greater coordination among different agencies and stakeholders (Reza & Bromfield, 2019; Reza, 2016).

This study seeks to provide a comprehensive comparison between children living on the streets and those residing in various shelter homes. By examining the differences in their living standards, the study aims to

highlight the critical role of rehabilitation in transforming street children into valuable human assets for the national economy. Additionally, the study explores how proper implementation of existing policies by both governmental and non-governmental agencies can significantly improve the overall living standards of street children. Therefore, addressing the issue of street children requires a multifaceted approach that involves effective policy implementation, increased resources, and collaboration among various stakeholders. By understanding the unique challenges faced by street children and the impact of rehabilitation efforts, this study contributes to the broader goal of ensuring that all children, regardless of their circumstances, have the opportunity to lead healthy, productive, and fulfilling lives.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Children living in impoverished, economically deprived environments, as well as those alternating between life on the street, institutions, and home with their relatives, require special assistance. These children face a myriad of challenges that impede their development and overall well-being (Pedro-Carroll, 2001). Due to the severe shortage of resources and essential needs, street children cannot grow in the right way, hindering their potential to develop into valuable human capital for the country (Hossain & Alam, 2016). Street children are subjected to harsh living conditions, including lack of access to nutritious food, clean water, healthcare, education, and safe shelter (Schimmel, 2006; Ghimire, 2014). These basic necessities are critical for the healthy development of any child. The absence of such essentials forces street children to engage in hazardous activities, such as begging, scavenging, and labor-intensive jobs, to survive. These activities not only pose significant risks to their health and safety but also deprive them of the opportunity to attend school and acquire an education, further perpetuating the cycle of poverty and marginalization. The impact of living on the streets extends beyond physical health; it profoundly affects the mental and emotional well-being of these children (Lugalla & Mbwambo, 1999; Aptekar & Stoecklin, 2014). Street children are often exposed to violence, abuse, and exploitation. The constant threat to their safety and security leads to chronic stress, anxiety, and trauma. These psychological challenges can have long-lasting effects, impairing their ability to form healthy relationships, trust others, and integrate into society (Miller et a., 2011). Moreover, the instability in the lives of street children disrupts their social and cognitive development. The lack of a stable home environment and the absence of nurturing adult supervision hinder the development of

essential life skills and social competencies (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998). Street children miss out on the experiences and guidance that are crucial for learning appropriate social behaviors and norms. This social isolation further alienates them from mainstream society, reducing their chances of future employment and economic stability (MacDonald, 1997).

In addition to personal hardships, street children pose a significant social and economic challenge for the country. They represent a substantial portion of the future workforce, and their current state of neglect and deprivation translates into a loss of potential human capital (Whitbeck, 2017; Boyden, 2015). Without proper intervention and support, these children are likely to remain trapped in the cycle of poverty, unable to contribute productively to the economy (Harper et al.,2003). This situation not only affects the children themselves but also hinders the country's overall development and progress. Despite various policies and initiatives by the government and non-governmental organizations aimed at improving the lives of street children, the implementation of these measures faces numerous obstacles (Kombarakaran, 2004; Dankwa, 2018). Limited resources, lack of coordination among agencies, and inadequate infrastructure are some of the challenges that impede effective intervention. Additionally, there is often a disconnect between policy formulation and ground-level realities, resulting in insufficient impact on the lives of street children (Wacquant, 2002; Cohen & Aviram, 2021). The necessity for targeted and effective interventions to address the needs of street children cannot be overstated. There is an urgent need for comprehensive programs that provide access to education, healthcare, and safe shelter, coupled with psychological support and vocational training. These interventions should be designed to not only meet the immediate needs of street children but also to empower them to break free from the cycle of poverty and become productive members of society (Kotler & Lee, 2009).

Furthermore, a collaborative approach involving various stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, community organizations, and the private sector, is essential to create a sustainable impact. Policies should be inclusive, focusing on the unique challenges faced by street children and ensuring that their voices are heard in the decision-making processes (de Benítez, 2011; Tisdall, 2017). Hence, addressing the plight of street children is not just a moral imperative but also a strategic necessity for national development. By investing in the well-being and development of street children, Bangladesh can harness their potential as valuable human capital, contributing to a more equitable and prosperous society.

## 1.3 Scope of the Study

This study is conducted on two distinct categories of children: those who live on the streets in various areas of Bangladesh and those who have received aid from rehabilitation centers. By examining these two groups, the study aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of the lives of street children and the impact of rehabilitation and policies implemented by different agencies on their development. The first group of children, those living on the streets, includes a diverse range of individuals from different regions and backgrounds. These children face numerous challenges, including lack of access to basic necessities such as food, shelter, education, and healthcare (UNICEF, 2005). The study seeks to document their daily struggles, survival strategies, and the various forms of exploitation and abuse they encounter. This exploration provides a detailed account of the harsh realities faced by street children and the factors that contribute to their marginalized status. The second group consists of children who have been placed in rehabilitation centers. These centers are intended to provide a safe and supportive environment for children, offering access to education, healthcare, nutrition, and psychological support. By focusing on this group, the study aims to assess the effectiveness of these rehabilitation programs in improving the lives of street children. It will examine how these children's physical, mental, and social well-being have evolved after receiving aid and support from rehabilitation centers.

Furthermore, the study analyzes the policies and initiatives implemented by various governmental and non-governmental agencies to address the issue of street children. It evaluates the extent to which these policies have been successful in providing relief and support to street children, identifying both the strengths and weaknesses of current approaches. This analysis offers valuable insights into the effectiveness of existing interventions and highlight areas that require further improvement and innovation. Therefore, this study seeks to provide a holistic view of the conditions faced by street children in Bangladesh and the transformative potential of rehabilitation efforts. It aims to contribute to the broader discourse on child rights and development, offering evidence-based recommendations for policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders involved in improving the lives of street children. By highlighting the critical importance of targeted interventions and supportive policies, this study aspires to advocate for more effective and sustainable solutions to uplift and empower street children in Bangladesh.

## 1.4 Significance of the Study

Children are the future adults who will shape the world for themselves and generations to come. Among the world's one billion children suffering from deprivation of basic needs, poverty, and physical and psychological illness, street children face untold hardships as they struggle to lead their lives (Bellamy, 2004; Gordon, et al., 2003). The growing number of street children is attributed to various causes, including a scarcity of economic opportunities, migration, abduction, fleeing from home, abuse, and involvement in crime, as well as civil unrest and war (de Benítez, 201; Masud, 2019). Poverty, loss or absence of social values, and domestic abuse whether physical or emotional are common catalysts pushing children onto the streets. When children have no other choice but to live on the streets, they become street children. These children, who lack adequate guidance on how to live a life free of violence, are in desperate need of education-based rehabilitation (Pare, 2004). The significance of this study lies in its comprehensive examination of the lives of street children and the impact of rehabilitation efforts on their development. By focusing on both children living on the streets and those in rehabilitation centers, the study provides a nuanced understanding of the challenges faced by street children and the potential benefits of targeted interventions.

The findings of this study hold immense value for several stakeholders:

1. **Researchers**: This study offers a rich data set and insights that can serve as a foundation for further research. It helps identify key areas that require more in-depth exploration and provides a benchmark for future studies on street children. Researchers can build on the findings to develop more targeted and effective intervention strategies.
2. **Street Children**: The direct beneficiaries of this study are the street children themselves. By highlighting their plight and the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs, the study advocates for increased support and resources for these children. It underscores the importance of providing street children with access to education, healthcare, and psychological support, thereby improving their quality of life and future prospects.
3. **Policymakers**: For policymakers, the study offers evidence-based insights into the factors influencing the development of street children. It evaluates the current policies and initiatives aimed at addressing the issue and identifies areas that require improvement. Policymakers can use the findings to formulate more effective

policies and programs that address the root causes of the problem and provide sustainable solutions.

4. **Government**: The study provides the government with a detailed analysis of the challenges faced by street children and the impact of existing interventions. This information is crucial for the allocation of resources and the design of programs that can effectively address the needs of street children. By understanding the gaps in current policies, the government can implement more comprehensive and coordinated efforts to improve the lives of these children.
5. **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)**: NGOs play a crucial role in supporting street children and advocating for their rights. The study's findings can help NGOs better understand the needs of street children and the effectiveness of different intervention strategies. This knowledge enables them to design more targeted and impactful programs and collaborate more effectively with other stakeholders.
6. **Community and Society**: Raising awareness about the plight of street children and the importance of rehabilitation is essential for fostering a more inclusive and compassionate society. The study's findings can be used to educate the public about the challenges faced by street children and the role that communities can play in supporting them. Increased public awareness can lead to greater community involvement and support for initiatives aimed at helping street children.

The significance of this study extends beyond academic research. It has practical implications for improving the lives of street children, informing policy and program development, and fostering a more inclusive and supportive society. By highlighting the critical need for effective interventions and support for street children, the study contributes to the broader goal of ensuring that all children have the opportunity to lead healthy, productive, and fulfilling lives. It creates a path for further research and action, ultimately aiming to transform street children into valuable human assets for the nation.

## 1.5 Rationale of the Study

The rationale for this study emerges from the critical need to address the complex and often harsh realities faced by street children in Bangladesh, juxtaposed with the potential benefits of transitioning to shelter homes. Street children in Bangladesh represent a highly vulnerable population, exposed to numerous risks including poverty, exploitation, and neglect

(Chowdhurt et al., 2017). These children often live in precarious conditions, lacking access to basic necessities such as food, education, and healthcare, which impedes their developmental opportunities and long-term well-being. The increasing visibility of street children in urban areas highlights the urgency of understanding their plight and identifying effective interventions to support their transition to safer, more structured environments (Nur, 2024; Sohel et al.,2024). Therefore, shelter homes are designed to provide a supportive alternative to street life, offering basic needs, education, and vocational training (Reza & Henly, 2018). However, there is a significant gap in understanding the effectiveness of these shelters in facilitating positive developmental outcomes for children. While shelter homes aim to provide a better quality of life and opportunities for growth, the transition from street life to a structured shelter environment is complex and multifaceted (Mokomane & Makoae, 2017). The effectiveness of these shelters can vary widely, influenced by factors such as the quality of the shelter's programs, the level of support provided, and the individual characteristics of the children (Surtees,2008). This study aims to fill the knowledge gap by examining the developmental scenarios of children who transition from street life to shelter homes in Bangladesh. It seeks to evaluate how these shelters impact various aspects of child development, including physical health, educational attainment, emotional well-being, and social integration. By doing so, the research provides valuable insights into the strengths and limitations of current shelter practices and highlight areas for improvement. Furthermore, the study is driven by the need to inform policy and practice. Understanding the outcomes associated with different types of shelter homes can guide policymakers, practitioners, and NGOs in developing more effective strategies and programs. It can also help in advocating for necessary resources and support to enhance the quality of care provided in shelters. In the broader context, this research contributes to the global discourse on child welfare and protection, offering evidence-based recommendations that can be applied to similar contexts in other countries facing comparable challenges.

## 1.6 Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to comprehensively examine and compare the development of street children with those who have received aid from rehabilitation centers. This study seeks to understand the multifaceted dimensions of their lives, encompassing physical, mental, educational, and economic aspects, and how these are influenced by their living conditions. Additionally, the study aims to provide actionable policy

recommendations to transform street children into valuable human resources for the nation. The specific objectives of the study are:

- To see how street children and sheltered street children differ in terms of development.
- To give policy recommendation to transform street children as human resources.

## 1.7 Research Questions

The objective of this study is to explore the differences in the lives and development of street children and those who have received aid from rehabilitation centers. To achieve this objective, the following research questions will be addressed:

1. To what extent do sheltered children get their basic needs fulfilled in comparison to street children?

This question aims to investigate the differences in access to basic necessities such as food, shelter, clothing, and healthcare between children living on the streets and those residing in rehabilitation centers. It seeks to understand how effective these shelters are in meeting the fundamental needs of children compared to their street counterparts.

2. To what extent do street children practice risky behavior compared to sheltered children?

This question explores the prevalence of risky behaviors, such as substance abuse, involvement in illegal activities, and unsafe practices, among street children compared to those in sheltered environments. The aim is to assess how the living conditions influence the propensity for engaging in such behaviors.

3. To what extent do street children experience harassment by their surroundings compared to sheltered children?

This question examines the frequency and severity of harassment, abuse, and exploitation faced by street children compared to those in rehabilitation centers. It aims to highlight the protective environment that shelters might provide against such negative experiences.

4. To what extent do sheltered children receive education compared to street children?

This question seeks to understand the educational opportunities available to sheltered children versus street children. It assesses access to formal education, quality of education received, and overall academic progress.

5. To what extent do sheltered children acquire skills in comparison to street children?

This question focuses on the acquisition of practical and vocational skills among sheltered children compared to street children. It evaluates the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs in equipping children with skills that are essential for their future employability and self-sufficiency.

6. To what extent do street children think about their overall development compared to sheltered children?

This question explores the self-perception and aspirations of street children regarding their personal development and future prospects compared to those in shelters. It aims to understand how their environment influences their outlook on growth and progress.

7. To what extent do street children develop economically?

This question examines the economic development of street children, including their income-generating activities, financial literacy, and overall economic stability. It aims to assess the impact of their living conditions on their economic prospects.

8. To what extent do sheltered children become potential stakeholders of our national economy?

This question investigates the potential of sheltered children to contribute to the national economy as future stakeholders. It assesses how rehabilitation and educational programs prepare them to become productive members of society and valuable human capital for the nation.

By addressing these research questions, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by street children and those in rehabilitation centers. It seeks to highlight the critical areas where intervention and support are needed to improve the lives of these children and maximize their potential as contributors to the national economy.

## 1.8 Organization of the Book

### Chapter One: Introduction

The first chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the study, starting with the background of the research. It discusses the global and local prevalence of street children, highlighting the socio-economic factors contributing to this issue. It elaborates on the importance of child development and the role of governmental and non-governmental organizations in addressing the needs of street children. The statement of the problem section clearly articulates the specific challenges that the study aims to address, such as the lack of access to basic needs, education, and safety for street children compared to those in rehabilitation centers. The objectives of the study are detailed, outlining goals such as comparing the development of street children with those in shelters, assessing the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs, and providing policy recommendations. The research questions section lists the guiding questions that explore various aspects of the lives of street children and those in rehabilitation centers, focusing on basic needs, risky behaviors, harassment, education, skill acquisition, self-perception, economic development, and potential contributions to the national economy. The significance of the study explains its importance for various stakeholders, including researchers, policymakers, government agencies, NGOs, and the public, highlighting how the findings can inform policy and practice. The scope of the study outlines the parameters, including the population studied, geographic areas covered, and aspects of child development considered. Finally, the limitations of the study acknowledge the constraints and challenges encountered during the research process, such as the reluctance of children to participate, lack of funding, time constraints, and ethical considerations.

### Chapter Two: Literature Review

The second chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the phenomenon of street children, including definitions, global prevalence, and specific challenges they face. It reviews existing literature to provide a theoretical foundation for the study, delving into various causes that lead children to the streets, such as poverty, family breakdown, abuse, and migration. The chapter examines the physical, psychological, and social impacts of street life on children and reviews existing rehabilitation and support programs, highlighting successful interventions and their outcomes. Comparative studies that analyze the differences between street children and those in rehabilitation centers are also reviewed, providing insights into how

different environments impact child development. The chapter concludes by identifying gaps in the existing literature, highlighting areas that have not been adequately addressed or require further research, setting the stage for the current study.

**Chapter Three: Methodology**

The third chapter describes the overall research design, including the approach and strategy used to conduct the study. It explains why a mixed-method approach was chosen and how it helps achieve the study's objectives. The population and sample section details the population studied and the sampling method used, explaining the criteria for selecting street children and those in rehabilitation centers, and how the sample size was determined. The data collection methods section outlines the methods used, such as surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions, providing details on the tools and instruments used and the process of data collection. The data analysis techniques section describes the qualitative and quantitative methods employed, including coding, thematic analysis, and statistical analysis. Ethical considerations are discussed, explaining how the rights and well-being of the participants were protected. The chapter concludes by acknowledging the methodological limitations, such as potential biases, data collection challenges, and limitations in the scope of the study, and discussing how these limitations were addressed or mitigated.

**Chapter Four: Analysis and Discussion**

The fourth chapter presents the findings of the study, starting with the demographic profile of the participants, including age, gender, and background. It provides a context for understanding the findings and analyzes the data on how well the basic needs of street children and sheltered children are met, comparing access to food, shelter, clothing, and healthcare between the two groups. The chapter examines the prevalence of risky behaviors and harassment among street children compared to those in shelters, discussing the factors contributing to these behaviors and the protective role of rehabilitation centers. It also analyzes the educational opportunities and skill acquisition among street children and sheltered children, comparing their access to education, quality of learning, and the types of skills they acquire. The self-perception and aspirations of street children and those in shelters are explored, discussing how their living conditions influence their outlook on life and future goals. The chapter examines the economic development of street children, including their income-generating activities and financial stability, comparing their

economic prospects with those of sheltered children. It discusses the potential of sheltered children to become valuable stakeholders in the national economy, evaluating how rehabilitation programs prepare them for productive roles in society. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the policy implications of the findings, providing insights into how existing policies can be improved and new policies formulated to better support street children.

**Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations**

The final chapter provides a summary of the key findings from the study, highlighting the major differences between street children and sheltered children in terms of their development and well-being. It presents the conclusions drawn from the study, discussing the implications of the findings for the broader context of child development and support for street children. The recommendations section provides actionable suggestions based on the study's findings, suggesting specific measures for policymakers, governmental agencies, NGOs, and other stakeholders to improve the lives of street children and support their development. The chapter also identifies areas for future research, suggesting topics and questions that need further exploration to build on the findings of the current study and address the identified gaps in the literature. It concludes with final thoughts on the importance of addressing the needs of street children and the role of society in supporting their development, emphasizing the collective responsibility to ensure that all children have the opportunity to lead healthy, productive, and fulfilling lives.

## 1.9 Chapter Conclusion

In conclusion, Chapter One has established a comprehensive foundation for understanding the transition of street children to shelter homes in Bangladesh. It has outlined the socio-economic challenges faced by street children and the potential benefits offered by shelter homes, highlighting the critical need for effective interventions to improve developmental outcomes. By setting forth the objectives and research questions, this chapter frames the scope of the study and emphasizes its significance in addressing a pressing social issue. The introduction of this chapter has underscored the complex interplay between street life and the structured environment of shelter homes, emphasizing the importance of examining this transition to gain valuable insights into its impact on children's development. The chapter has also articulated the rationale behind the study, detailing how it aims to fill existing knowledge gaps, inform policy and

practice, and contribute to the global discourse on child welfare. As the study progresses, subsequent chapters will build upon this foundation, delving into the methodologies employed, presenting the findings, and analyzing their implications. The insights gained from this research are expected to provide actionable recommendations for enhancing shelter practices, shaping policies, and ultimately improving the quality of life for street children in Bangladesh. By exploring the intricacies of this transition, the study seeks to contribute to meaningful change and support the development of effective strategies to address the needs of these vulnerable children.

# CHAPTER TWO

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.0 Chapter Introduction

This chapter delves into both the conceptual and empirical literature relevant to the study of street children. It begins with the presentation and discussion of the conceptual framework, providing a theoretical foundation for understanding the phenomena associated with street children. The conceptual framework sets the stage for a deeper exploration of the various factors influencing the lives of street children, including socio-economic conditions, family dynamics, and systemic issues. Following this, the chapter reviews empirical literature, examining previous studies conducted on street children. This review highlights key findings, methodologies, and gaps in the existing research, offering a comprehensive overview of what is currently known about street children and identifying areas where further investigation is needed. Through this examination, the chapter aims to contextualize the current study within the broader body of knowledge and underscore the importance of addressing the challenges faced by street children.

## 2.1 Children

All international human rights treaties encompass children, the Convention on the Rights of the Child is the only one that explicitly defines who qualifies as a child. According to Article 1, a child is identified as any human being under the age of 18 (de Detrick, 1999; Vučković-Šahović et al., 2012), unless a different age of majority is specified by domestic law (Lansdown et al., 2022). Children are universally recognized as individuals who have not yet reached adulthood, a definition formalized by the United Nations in their 1990 General Assembly (UN General Assembly, 1990). This definition was established to create a uniform understanding and to ensure that children across the globe are granted the same basic rights and protections regardless of their nationality, culture, or background. The adoption of this law marked a significant milestone in the global effort to protect and nurture children, ensuring that their unique needs are recognized

and met (Bellamy, 2001; UNICEF, 1992). The law encompasses a wide range of rights including the right to life, development, protection, and participation. It emphasizes that children are entitled to special care and assistance, that their best interests must be a primary consideration in all actions concerning them, and that they have the right to express their views freely in matters affecting them (Freeman, 2009; Hafen & Hafen, 1996; Freeman, 1997).

Bangladesh is among the countries that have formally acknowledged and adopted this international law. By ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Bangladesh committed itself to aligning its national policies and practices with the principles set forth in this law (Chaney, 2017). This commitment reflects Bangladesh's recognition of the importance of protecting the rights of children and ensuring their well-being. The country has made efforts to integrate these principles into its legal framework, social services, and educational systems to create an environment where children can grow and develop to their full potential. Despite these commitments, the implementation of these laws and protections remains a significant challenge. In Bangladesh, as in many other countries, socio-economic factors such as poverty, lack of education, and inadequate healthcare continue to affect children's lives profoundly (Shohel, 2012; Akhter et al., 2015). The recognition of the international definition of a child is a critical step, but translating this recognition into tangible benefits for all children requires ongoing effort, resources, and dedication from both the government and civil society. The international law set forth by the United Nations serves as a crucial reference point for advocates, policymakers, and organizations working to improve the lives of children (Van Bueren, 2021). It provides a clear framework for what is expected and required to ensure that children’s rights are protected and promoted. For countries like Bangladesh, it acts as a guiding document that shapes the development of child-centered policies and programs. The 1990 United Nations General Assembly's definition of children as individuals under the age of 18 has been a foundational step in the global movement to safeguard children’s rights. Bangladesh's adoption of this law signifies its commitment to these principles. However, the real challenge lies in the effective implementation and enforcement of these rights to ensure that every child in Bangladesh, and around the world, can enjoy a safe, healthy, and fulfilling childhood.