Understanding the incidence of street children in Accra, Ghana through the public opinion, mass media, recognition and judgement perspectives in social work

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: Throughout the entire change process in social work practice, power plays a vital role. Social workers, organisations, governments, and service users exert some form of power in the process of addressing social problems and implementing interventions. The arguments in this article demonstrate how these various viewpoints affect the prevalence of children on the streets.

APPROACH: Drawing from existing literature and diverse theories, this article critically examines the power dynamics and perspectives that emerge within the design and implementation of interventions for street children in Accra, Ghana, using the lens of social work, mass media, and public opinion, as well as the recognition and judgment in social work perspectives. When the predominance of street children in Ghana is examined through the lens of public opinion and mass media in social work, it becomes clear how Ghana's status as a liberal state influences the public and the media's negative conceptions of street children. In addition, a critical analysis of the recognition and judgement theory in the Ghanaian context emphasises how street children's fundamental rights are violated, which results in low self-esteem and confidence.

CONCLUSIONS: By offering practical suggestions for social workers, the article's conclusion contributes to social work research and practice. Social workers, governments, and organisations may help street children by creating and putting into action rescue plans, raising awareness through advertisements and social media campaigns, and allocating enough human and financial resources.

Keywords: Social work; street children; Ghana; recognition and judgement; social work and mass media

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The concept of power is well inculcated in the field of social work practice. In the quest to improve the wellbeing and social functioning of individuals, groups and communities, some form of power is utilised by social workers, organisations, governments, and service users. Social workers, while designing and implementing interventions for service users, tap into various forms of power roles and relations to influence the change process (Sakamoto & Pitner, 2005). Governments and organisations also exert some form of influence on social workers and service users through comprehensive legislation, policy,

and procedural guidance (Bell & Hafford-Letchfield, 2015). On a more individual level, power translates as how a person can claim control of his or her life and uncover his or her own strengths after being in a state of helplessness (Tew, 2006).

In the field of social work, the concepts of *power over* and *power with* are two widely accepted forms of power that have been examined in a number of theories and practices (Avelino, 2021; Saar-Heiman, 2022). Power *over* is described as a hierarchical type of power in where one person has authority and control over others (Foucault, 1980). According to Foucault (1980), power is not something that is possessed by people or institutions but rather is a relational and pervasive component of social processes and relationships. He further argued that power is continuously being discussed and debated in social interactions and is distributed through a network of relationships. This viewpoint emphasises the need to understand the mechanisms of power in various contexts and the dynamics of power in social work.

On the other hand, power *with* represents a collaborative and empowering form of power where individuals work together to achieve common goals and empower one another (Laverack, 2019). According to the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), when working with service users, social workers are advised to employ power with as this method is more service-user-centred and empowering (IFSW, 2012). However, situations may arise where social workers have to use power *over* ethically to ensure the welfare and safety of service users (McLaren, 2007). For instance, in a situation where a child is being abused by his or her parents, social workers may have to use power *over* to rescue the child from the abusive parents, even if it goes against the wishes of the parents. In this case, the responsibility and ethical use of power by social workers is critical, as it encourages the mutual sharing of ideas, provides space for

critical reflection, and always prioritises the needs and best interests of the service user (Hair, 2014).

Drawing from the above, it is evident power plays a significant role throughout the entire change process in social work practice. This article examines how social workers can use various forms and sources of power in their practice, and how they can manage the tension between *power with* and *power over* approaches to serve the best interests of their service users (Tew, 2006). As a result, using the lens of *social work, mass media, and public opinion* theory and the *recognition and judgement in social work* theory, this article will critically examine the power dynamics and diverse actor perspectives that emerge within the design and implementation of interventions for street children in Accra, Ghana. The ideas in this article will show how these different perspectives influence the prevalence of children on the streets. Consequently, this article will conclude with practice recommendations for social workers.

Problem background

A street child is a boy or girl under the age of 18 who has made the street his or her habitual habitation and source of income, and who is not sufficiently safeguarded, supervised, or directed by responsible adults (Black, 1993). Street children are a diverse group of people that vary in age, gender, area of origin, and even reasons for leaving their homes (Amoah & Jorgensen, 2014). Street children have made the streets their home for diverse reasons such as urbanisation, poverty, violence at home, sexual abuse, neglect, and broken homes (Orme & Seipel, 2007). Children on the streets suffer numerous challenges due to a lack of basic essentials such as food, clothing, and shelter (de Brito, 2014).

Ghana is a West African country with a population of about 30.8 million people, with Accra, the capital, accounting for 17.7% of the country's overall population

(Ghana Statistical Service, 2021). The current prevalence of street children in Ghana is extremely disturbing (Oppong Asante, 2016) as the number of children seen begging, selling, sleeping, and loitering on the streets, around traffic lights and under bridges has spiraled over the years (Tettegah, 2012). It is estimated that about 61,492 children were growing up on the streets of Accra in 2011 (Department of Social Welfare et al., 2011). Out of this number, there were 66% migrant children and 18% urban dwellers among other, smaller groups. According to Amekuedi (2016), child protection experts estimate approximately 90,000 children on the streets of Accra as of 2014. These numbers of street children are not limited to Accra alone but all regional and district capitals in the country.

Problem statement

Street children in Accra, Ghana, are confronted with diverse challenges which have a negative impact on their welfare and wellbeing (de Brito, 2014). They are deprived of quality education, health care, and essential needs such as food, clothing, and shelter (Dankyi & Huang, 2022). Despite the significant efforts of governmental and non-governmental social service organisations, the prevalence of street children in Accra remains a serious concern (Oppong Asante, 2016). The main purpose of this article is to examine the influence of social work, mass media and public opinion theory and the recognition and judgement in social work theory, on the prevalence of street children in Accra. These theories are relevant for social work practice as they help in understanding how social workers interact with the mass media and public opinion, and how they recognise and judge the circumstances and needs of street children.

In this regard, the article seeks to answer this research question: "How does the Social Work, Mass Media and Public Opinion theory, and the Recognition and Judgement in Social Work theory influence the prevalence of street children in Accra,

Ghana?" Through an examination of these two theories and the experiences of street children in Accra, Ghana, this article seeks to shed light on the underlying factors that contribute to the problem of street children in Accra and inform the development of effective interventions to address the phenomenon.

The public's conceptions and perceptions of street children are shaped, in large part, by the welfare regime and the mass media (Larsen, 2008; Larsen & Dejgaard, 2013). Consequently, public opinion has either a positive or negative impact on how the public perceives street children. If street children are seen as irresponsible, delinquent, or criminal, they may face discrimination and stigma that hinder their chances of leaving the streets and improving their lives (Gayapersad et al., 2020). Conversely, if street children are seen as vulnerable with potential, they may receive support and resources that address their needs and protect their rights (Chingonikaya & Salehe, 2019). Public perceptions, therefore, have a significant impact on planned interventions for street children, and they often determine whether children stay on the streets or are leave the streets to achieve their full potential (Larsen & Dejgaard, 2013).

In addition to public perception, the prevalence of street children is also influenced by how they are treated by those who work directly with them (Ayenew et al., 2020). It is critical for social workers and other stakeholders to recognise the intrinsic value and dignity of street children and avoid all types of bias and judgment (Juul, 2009, 2013). This implies that, to get children off the streets, the concept of recognition and judgment is important because it influences whether children stay on the streets or leave the streets for a better life. The experiences and perspectives of street children should be acknowledged and considered when planning and implementing interventions (Whittaker & Taylor, 2018). If the dignity and rights of street children are recognised, they may develop a positive self-concept

and become empowered to leave the streets for a better life (Kam, 2021). On the contrary, if street children are judged as unworthy and treated with disrespect, they may internalize these views and lose self-esteem and motivation to change their situation (Joseph, 2020).

Relevance of discussion

According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, all children around the world have the right to survival and growth, to be free of all forms of discrimination, to be given priority in all choices that impact their lives, and to participate in decisions that affect them (Freeman, 2007). Children who live on the streets, however, do not have this opportunity because they must fend for themselves. Social work is a rights-based profession, and it thus remains imperative for social workers to ensure the welfare and wellbeing of street children (Androff, 2018). Understanding the aforementioned perspectives of social work, mass media, and public opinion as well as the recognition and judgement in social work can go a long way toward advancing the rights of these street children, as it will contribute to effective and efficient design and implementation of interventions for them.

Methodology

Review design

Using sections of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines and qualitative content analysis, this article systematically reviewed and synthesised literature on the prevalence of street children in Accra, Ghana (Page et al., 2021). It also reviewed the theories mentioned earlier to examine how they influenced the phenomenon of street children in Accra, Ghana. Furthermore, it applied qualitative content analysis to gain a deeper understanding and interpretation

of the selected literature for analysis and discussion. These methods ensured a thorough examination of the prevalence of street children in Accra, Ghana and informed the development of effective interventions to address the situation.

Information sources and search strategy

A systematic search strategy was used to locate relevant literature including books, academic journals, research theses, conference presentations, child protection laws, legal frameworks, and other readily available internet resources. Electronic databases, backward searching and forward searching were the three major channels used for the literature search (Xiao & Watson, 2019). The electronic databases used included the University of Lincoln Library, Google Scholar, Research Gate, Jstor, World Cat, Gender Watch, Research Rabbit, Elicit and Semantic Scholar. These multiple databases were used to ensure that the literature produced more accurate and thorough results, as no single database has the entire set of materials (Tawfik et al., 2019). A backward search was done by scanning through the list of references at the end of the selected publications to minimise the possibility of omitting potentially pertinent material. Consequently, a forward search was also done to discover any publications that had previously cited the reviewed articles.

Keywords and search terms including "Power Relations," "Social Work," "Street Children," "Street Children in Ghana," "Street Children in Accra," "Social Work, Mass Media, and Public Opinion theory," and "Recognition and Judgement in Social Work theory" were used in the search strategies to source the literature. The literature search did not limit the date of publication of the materials. This was because the materials were selected based on their relevance and significance to the current debate on the prevalence of street

children. An effort was made to incorporate as much modern literature as was practical to reflect the relevance and significance of addressing the problem of street children.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Screening the literature for inclusion and exclusion was based on the problem statement and research question (Xiao & Watson, 2019). This article aimed to understand the prevalence of street children in Ghana using the two mentioned theories. Therefore, only literature that related to street children and these two theories was included in the article. The relevance, authority, and currency of the literature were taken into consideration before being included in the article (Browning & Rigolon, 2019). The authority of the literature depended on whether it had undergone peer review, been professionally edited, and been published by a reputable source. The literature was relevant if it had enriched the existing body of knowledge about the prevalence of street children. The literature was further judged for currency based on how well it addressed recent debates about the prevalence of street children. Literature that was not in the English language were excluded. Furthermore, duplicate materials, inaccessible full texts, and publications with only abstracts were excluded from the article.
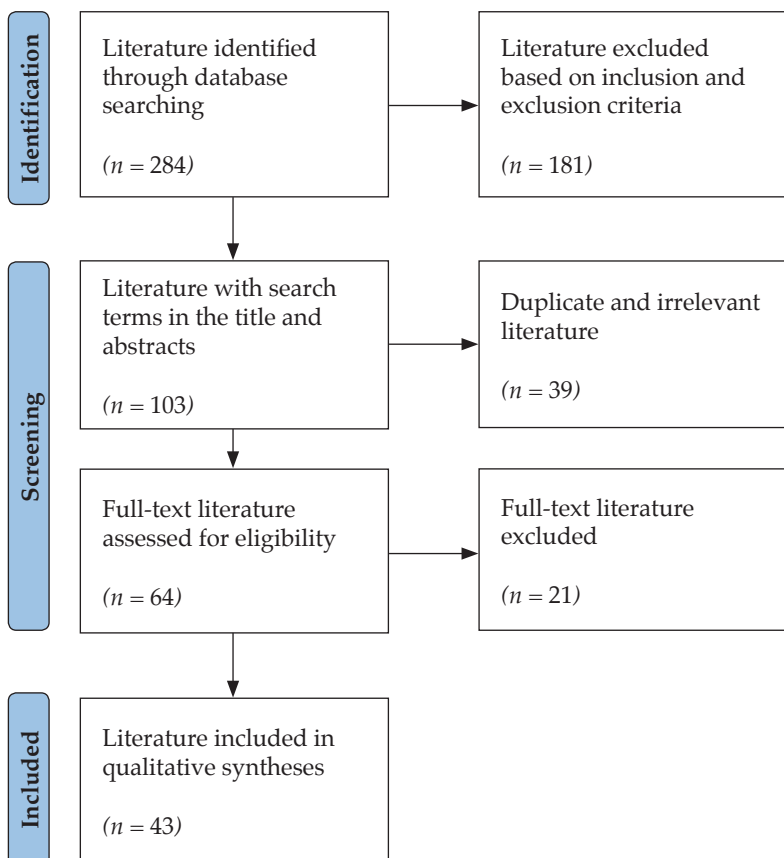
Method of data analysis

An in-depth reading of the selected literature was done to obtain all relevant information. Qualitative content analysis was then used to interpret the collected information (Merrian & Tisdell, 2016). This method was used to ensure that the collected information provided a deeper theoretical understanding of the phenomenon of street children. The existing literature was then summarised under the following themes: social work, mass media and public opinion; recognition and judgement in social work; and practical application of perspectives. Consequently, the information gathered throughout the summarising phase was then combined, linked, and paraphrased to make the literature condensed, clear and coherent for further critical analysis and discussion.

Figure 1: Literature Selection Flowchart

Identification	Literature identified through database searching (*n = 284*)	→	Literature excluded based on inclusion and exclusion criteria (*n = 181*)
Screening	Literature with search terms in the title and abstracts (*n = 103*)	→	Duplicate and irrelevant literature (*n = 39*)
Screening	Full-text literature assessed for eligibility (*n = 64*)	→	Full-text literature excluded (*n = 21*)
Included	Literature included in qualitative syntheses (*n = 43*)		

Social work, mass media and public opinion

This perspective places emphasis on a link between welfare regimes and how they tend to influence public attitudes and perceptions about the poor and unemployed (Larsen, 2008). Thus, the state establishes and selects the type of welfare regime which it adopts, and in doing so, it has control over citizens by influencing how they regard the poor and unemployed in society. This perspective examines three welfare regimes (social democratic, liberal, and conservative), as well as how they affect public support for welfare

policies for the poor and unemployed through time (Esping-Andersen, 1990). Consequently, social democratic welfare states have strong public support for the poor and unemployed whilst public support in liberal and conservative states on the other hand remains low and moderate respectively (Larsen, 2008). According to Larsen (2008), this can be attributed to the fact that the public in social democratic states are ethnically homogenous, and they tend to have a passion for equality whilst the public in liberal states are usually ethnically heterogenous and tend to have passion for freedom over equality. The public in conservative states on the other hand tend to be focused on delivering reciprocity and equal opportunities (Shorthouse & Kirkby, 2014).

Radio, newspapers, magazines, novels, video games, and online media such as blogs, podcasts, and video sharing are examples of mass media, which is a type of communication aimed at reaching a large audience (McFadden, 2010). The type of welfare regime under which the mass media operate has a tremendous impact on the content of the media which, in turn, affects the public perceptions of poverty and vulnerability (Larsen & Dejgaard, 2013). The economic freedom in liberal states (Larsen, 2008) breeds inequality, which exacerbates societal issues such as crime, teen pregnancy, and underclass culture (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010). This suggests that the economic freedom enjoyed in liberal states results in an unequal distribution of money and wealth, which causes poverty for some people and communities and can then lead to diverse social problems.

The media then reports on these social problems and portrays them as the result of individual weaknesses rather than structural inequalities. This creates a negative and stigmatising image of society that influences the public's attitudes and opinions. For example, a study by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2008) found that the media often depicted poverty as a personal choice or a consequence of bad behaviour, rather than a

complex and multifaceted issue that requires collective action. In contrast to liberal regimes, poverty and welfare beneficiaries in social democratic regimes are depicted positively by the media, resulting in a good public opinion of them (Larsen & Dejgaard, 2013). In social democratic regimes, the presence of equality reduces the occurrence and severity of social problems (Larsen, 2008). This provides the ideal setting for the media to convey good stereotypes of the poor and vulnerable (Larsen & Dejgaard, 2013).

The literature on *deservingness* also gives some insight for understanding the social work, mass media and public opinion perspective (Larsen, 2008). The fundamental goal of the deservingness criterion has been to determine whatever criteria the public use to determine whether a person or a group of persons deserve assistance (Baute et al., 2022). The criterion in this case hence affects mass media and public opinion about the poor and vulnerable. The deservingness criteria are based on five categories namely, control, need, identity, attitude, and reciprocity (Oorschot, 2000). The control criterion states that people with no power to change their situation of neediness have a higher degree of deservingness, but the needs criterion elaborates the greater the level of need, the higher the degree of deservingness (Larsen, 2008). Larsen (2008) further asserts that the identity criterion emphasises the importance of sharing a sense of belonging with the groups who will be supported. Hence the greater the sense of belonging to a group, the greater the sense of deservingness. The attitude criterion refers to how people react to support whilst the reciprocity criterion states the more people contribute to society, the greater their deservingness of receiving welfare benefits (Larsen, 2008).

Recognition and judgement in social work

The core ideology behind the recognition and judgement perspective in social work is about how service users should be treated

in order to improve their situation and how to minimise the hurdles that prevent them from seeking help (Juul, 2009). Juul (2009) explained this by presenting the social work norm of recognition as a counterpoint to institutional practices based on unfavorable judgement of service users. Judgment, in Juul's opinion, leads to disrespectful practice. This implies that it is imperative for social workers to create rapport and respect the inherent worth and dignity of service users without any form of bias or prejudice (Reamer, 2018). The recognition and judgement in social work perspective is modelled on Axel Honneth's theory of recognition (Honneth, 2018). According to Honneth (2018), mutual acknowledgement is necessary for human prosperity. As a result, recognition is a basic human desire as well as a prerequisite for successful identity formation. The three forms of recognition namely recognition of love, legal recognition and social appreciation must be satisfied if an individual is to have a positive connection with himself or herself (Honneth, 2018).

The *recognition of love* sphere involves intimate human relationships. This sphere places particular emphasis on the ability to form a favourable relationship with oneself based on the assurance of the continuance of affective bonds. In this case, if one's existence is acknowledged through love and affective ties, one can build his or her self-confidence which is crucial to a person's ability to act, communicate, and engage in public life (Juul, 2013). *Legal recognition*, the second type of recognition, is concerned with how one should be treated equally in the legal system. The emphasis is on universal and equal rights for all. Legal recognition used to be determined by social standing and privilege in old societies. Modernity and the advancement of universal rights, on the other hand, have separated legal recognition from social status and privilege (Juul, 2013). The third form of recognition known as *social appreciation* has to do with how individuals are recognised for the values and qualities they ascribe to themselves. Hence one's

principles and attributes are key factors to boosting and developing one's self esteem (Juul, 2013). These three types of recognition are consistent with three types of disrespect (*bodily violations*, *rights violations*, and *forms of life violations*), all of which undermine one's recognition. Such violations can cause a loss of self-confidence, self-respect, and self-esteem and ultimately lead to feelings of humiliation, outrage, and fury (Honneth, 2018).

It is vital to avoid all sorts of judgment to acknowledge individuals. Social workers, in their work with service users, should maintain objectivity. In social work, the recognition and judgment approach examines the concept of judgment from an institutional and societal standpoint. According to Juul (2009), institutional practices and ways of thinking have a significant impact on social workers' work with service users. As a result, institutions have some control over social workers—which has an impact on how they interact with service users in the process of planning and implementing interventions.

However, because social workers bring their own knowledge and expertise to the table when interacting with service users, institutions do not have complete authority over them. Social workers apply their knowledge when developing interventions for service users because of the theoretical and practical knowledge they acquire through education and training. Due to this, institutions are not solely responsible for the outcomes of interventions in social work; rather, the interaction between social workers' knowledge and abilities and those of the institutions is what ultimately determines how well interventions work for service users. Recognition in social work is based on a full mutual understanding that characterises social workers' relationships with service users, but this is frequently hampered by institutional judgment in the form of economic and political signals (which act as a regulative force) limiting

what social workers can think and do. As a result, the service users may be rendered invisible or stigmatised (Juul, 2009).

Practical application of perspectives

Reviewed literature showed that information on the phenomenon of street children in Ghana incorporating the two earlier mentioned theoretical perspectives was elusive. Research on the phenomenon of street children in Accra, Ghana, has predominantly focused on the plight of street children, their experiences on the street and the role governments can play to address the phenomenon (Awatey 2014; Oppong Asante, 2016; Quarshie, 2011). Using the relevant perspectives to try to understand the occurrence of street children is therefore important as it allows one to look at street children in Accra from different viewpoints.

The social work, mass media, and public opinion perspective will allow one to know how state systems influence public opinion and support for children living on the streets. It will also allow one to consider how these regimes form and shape information the mass media feeds to the public about street children (Jahan & Rahman, 2016). This theoretical perspective will further enable policy makers in state regimes to be more aware of the power they yield over the plight of street children, directly or indirectly. Policy advocates will also be informed on the course of action to take to help children off the streets. Furthermore, using the recognition and judgment in social work theory to examine the phenomenon of street children in Accra will enable social workers to have a distinct perspective on how state systems and theoretical knowledge affect how they recognize service users in diverse interactions. This perspective further allows social workers to remain vigilant and avoid all forms of judgment when working with service users (Houston, 2016).

The welfare regime in Ghana is a liberal one characterised by political equality based on

the right to vote and reasonably free and fair elections; civil liberties, freedoms, and human rights protected by a constitution that is upheld by all Ghanaians (Ayelazuno, 2015). Despite these freedoms and civil liberties in Ghana, the country's inequality has been rising, and poverty is still prominent in many areas (Cooke et al., 2016). In Ghana, approximately 3.57 million people lived in extreme poverty in 2021 (World Data Lab, 2021). The issue of poverty amongst other factors has contributed to the rising number of children living on the streets (Orme & Seipel, 2007). The social work, mass media and public opinion perspective where in liberal regimes the public opinion and support for the poor and vulnerable is low clearly depicts the situation of street children in Ghana. Ghana being a liberal state means the various arms of government exercise power over the populace as they influence their perceptions about children on the streets. The country prioritises freedom over equality, and this has grossly affected how street children are perceived by the public (Mensah, 2022). These street children are thus considered as social deviants who have nothing to offer society (Quashie, 2011).

Additionally, the mass media in Ghana contributes to these perceptions of the public about street children through the news presented via radio, television, and other online platforms. Most of the information given out by the media houses about street children usually revolves around lack of basic social services and amenities as well engagement in diverse social vices such as pickpocketing, stealing, prostitution, amongst others (De Moura, 2002). Although this may not have been the objective from the start, the media has inadvertently developed a bad stereotype about street children. Most media outlets set out to inform the public on the plight of Ghana's street children but, in the end, the material they provide casts street children in a negative light, establishing a stigma surrounding their existence and quest for survival on the streets.

The deservingness criteria linked with the social work, mass media, and public opinion perspective describes street children in Ghana and public opinion about them in five distinct ways: control; need; identity; attitude; and reciprocity (Larsen, 2008). In terms of control, the public sees street children as young people who are unable to regulate their neediness and hence demand assistance. Regarding need, the public perceives street children as having a higher level of need and, consequently, deservingness. In the case of identification, street children do not always feel like they belong because the public does not provide them with the acceptance, attention, and support they require. Their level of deservingness is relatively low in this case. The fourth criterion of deservingness places street children at the bottom of the deservingness scale because the population views them as less grateful. The public views street children as obstinate and resistant individuals who have nothing to offer society in return, resulting in a low level of deservingness in terms of reciprocity.

The perspective of social work, the media, and public opinion certainly impacts recognition and judgment in the field of social work. The welfare system, in combination with public opinion and perception, imposes institutional judgment on social workers. In the context of Ghana, social workers are influenced by the government systems in which they work, and this influences their encounters with street children (Juul, 2009). Governmental laws and actions regulate how social workers should design and implement interventions for street children. Various interventions have been developed to rescue children from Accra's streets and reunite them with their families or reintegrate them back into society (Amekuedi, 2016). However, these interventions have failed because, in most cases, institutional judgements have limited the reach of social workers.

Many times, street children in Ghana have been misidentified and treated with disdain (Nieminen, 2010). This has contributed to the children's continued presence on the streets, as they are constantly criticised and ostracised. Because of the stereotypes against these children, the majority of them lack self-confidence and self-esteem. They believe they are neglected and despised. Nonetheless, as human beings, they have rights that must be respected and recognised legally. The most important thing is to get the children off the streets and give them the opportunity to fulfill their full potential. Consequently, it is critical for social workers to acknowledge the value and dignity of street children by advancing their rights and refraining from passing judgment on them (Reamer, 2018). Social workers can do this by finding a balance between street children, governments, and policy makers through advocacy. This would go a long way towards ensuring that the children are finally taken off the streets and linked to various social protection programs.

Conclusion and recommendations

There has always been some form of tension in social work between the notion of professionalism and the use of authority and power, which is typical in many disciplines of practice (Campling & Smith, 2008). Social work, and social workers in particular, have always had to act as a bridge between professional authority in the shape of governments, welfare regimes and the service users who require empowerment. The perspectives of social work, mass media, and public opinion, as well as recognition and judgment in social work, give a framework for understanding various power dynamics and actor viewpoints. The application of these perspectives to the prevalence of street children in Ghana sets the tone for a better understanding of how welfare regimes impact the media, social workers, and the general public. Furthermore, these viewpoints make it easier to see the need for recognising the neediness of street children in their fight for survival without passing judgment.

The public's image of street children, as well as how they are handled by systems and social workers, determines whether they remain on the streets or leave the streets to seek a better life for themselves. States wield considerable power; thus, it is critical for government regimes to make it a priority to design policies that support interventions to rescue children off the streets to reduce the number of them living on the streets. These policies should also be closely monitored and assessed. Roles and responsibilities for leading departments to enable the policies' implementation should also be allocated and expressed explicitly (Amekuedi, 2016). The media must also make it a point to inform the public about the government's programmes aimed at reducing the number of children on the streets. The media can portray a favourable image of street children through commercials and social media campaigns. These campaigns might highlight how some street children have successfully transitioned from a life on the streets to a better life.

Adequate capital and human resources are required to rescue children from the streets. Funding is needed to provide basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter for street children (Cumber & Tsoka-Gwegweni, 2015). This implies that the provision of basic necessities is crucial for the survival of street children as it addresses their most pressing needs and lays the foundation for their rescue and future success. Additionally, social service organisations that work directly with street children require funds to provide services including technical, vocational and skills training for rescued street children (Dabir & Athale, 2011). Human resources required to help in addressing the problem of street children may include social workers, psychologists, and teachers. These professionals will be actively involved in reuniting street children with their families, reintegrating them back into society and linking them to other complementary services such as health insurance and school feeding schemes. It is therefore imperative for governments, in collaboration with

non-governmental organisations, to make sufficient finances and resources available for social workers and other professionals to empower these children and finally get them off the streets. Given the viewpoints presented here, it is important that future research explores the perspectives of street children on welfare systems, social workers, the media, and public opinion.

Note

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