

Anthropo-Social Analysis of the Therapeutic Rehabilitation of Street Children by BSU- Catholic Diocese of Byumba

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Abstract: This research was about the “*Anthropo-social analysis of the rehabilitation of street children by BSU-Catholic Diocese of Byumba*”. The case study is the Bureau Social Urbain (BSU) in the past 5 years, 2018-2023. The research was guided by the objective of analysing anthropologically and socially the approach used in rehabilitation of street children and the challenges faced by the street children when they returned back in society.

Concerning the methodologies, this study applied the descriptive design with the qualitative method and the historical method. The sample size was 65 respondents. Primary data were collected from the study area using the techniques of questionnaire, interview, and the observation, while the secondary data have been collected through the technique of documentation. The data have been treated through the statistical method and quantitative method while their interpretation has been done with analytical method.

The research revealed that the Catholic Diocese of Byumba, through its centre called BSU, in the rehabilitation of street children was addressing mental health issues (as shown by 23.1% of the respondents), developing social skills and support network (as shown by 13.2% of the respondents), and low self-esteem (as shown by 10.1% of the respondents), Health issues (as shown by 15.1% respondents).

After analysing, interpreting and discussing the results of our research we support that different stakeholders should invest in street children care with special attention because they are potential human capital for the social economic development.

Keywords: Anthropological, social, analysis, rehabilitation, street children, BSU

ACRONYMS: *BSU:* Bureau Social Urbain; *CBT:* Cognitive Behavioural Theory; *NURC:* National Unity and Reconciliation Commission; *PTSD:* Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder; *SDT:* Self-Determination Theory; *SLT:* Social Learning Theory; *UNICEF:* United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

1. INTRODUCTION

Many factors and causes are behind the problem of street children. Unlike the situation in other countries where a single cause such as extreme poverty, civil wars, or natural disasters might be the leading cause; the problem of street children in Rwanda is multi-dimensional where a combination of factors often leads to a single child ending up being on the street. (Richters, A., C. Dekker & W.F. Scholte, 2008: 217).

In Rwanda, street children are still found in the towns and cities around the country. In Byumba Sector, the Bureau Social de Byumba (BSU) started to provide the socio-therapeutic sessions to street children found in Byumba city. More than 150 street children were helped by BSU in past 5 years. Among them 107 were taught to read and write. At least 65 rehabilitated street children are in this city looking for livelihood.

Community based Sociotherapy was launched as a therapeutic system in 20th Century, and has very strong theoretical and historical relations with the discipline of Sociology.

The Community based Socioterapy appears to be appropriate response to the change of bad behaviours of street children in Byumba where from 1998BSU began to provide therapeutic rehabilitation to street children of Byumba.

Among many factors behind every street children case we can mainly mentionthe force of family conflicts and malfunction; and the resulting bad and unmoral behaviors adopted by these children constitute the major challenge of today. About 90% of street children in Rwanda live with their parents or have regular family ties as revealed in this study. These are working children who live with their families or have regular family ties. Poverty, unemployment of parents and several other factors bring them tothe streets of urbanized cities. UNICEF (2007:7) indicates that the remaining 10% children are either working or have few family ties. These are abandoned and neglected children who have no family ties and view the streets as their homes.

Research carried out on street children in Rwanda and Burundi by UNICEF in 2014 shows a multiplicity of behavioral problems: Occupational risk behavior included heavy manual labor, transportation and sale of illicit alcohol and narcotics, robbing/pick-pocketing, lack of hygiene, commercial sex work, and pimping. Recreational risk behavior included abuse of alcohol/narcotics, smoking, sexual promiscuity, and patronizing commercial sex workers, (UNICEF, 2014: 9).

The existence of street children is most often viewed as a significant problem, stripping youth of their humanity and burdening them with the everyday concern of survival. In 2015, Community based Socioterapy begins to follow and accompany the street children and its main work is to intervene in behavioural change, (Mageza E., 2015: iv).

Despite that community based socioterapy tried its best to help street children, these childrenstill face many challenges mainly related to their street living conditions such as the underlined lack of shelter, medical care; as well as the behavioural problems including fighting, thieving, alcohol abuse, etc. (Gicumbi District, February 2016:3). It is in this perspective that this research is focussing on analysing the therapeutic rehabilitation of BSU so that it could be radiated even in community based socio-therapy.As some street children were expressing remorse for their actions and expressed a desire to be reintegrated into society,BSU became a mitigation to the social rehabilitation.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This analytical research is about explanations of a phenomenon (Bhattacharjee 2012) of rehabilitation and social integration. This study explores the role of anthropo-social program in rehabilitation process throughout different psychosocial programs used in BSU. The study usesqualitative approach which is about exploration of behaviours or attitudes in order to make deepunderstanding on the causes of those behaviours and get information from population of the studyin a small number of respondents. (Dawson 2002 and Kothari 2004), Qualitative approachfocuses on explanations instead of numerical data.

This study helps to have deep understanding of the role of BSU in anthropo-social program of rehabilitating street children related to the promotion of mental health status andtreatment of cases with some mental distress; it helps to get information from population of thestudy who are chosen as sample to represent others.The target population is the study was 150 street children helped by the caritas of Byumba through its different services.

According to Kombo and Tramp (2006), sampling is about targeting a group of people believed to be reliable for the study, this group is considered as representative of population of the study in order to get and make analysis of data corrected as for all population. In this research, all the street children able to respond to the questionnaire were targeted. However, as most of them cannot be found, accessible population of 65 street children who are in Byumba city with small activities, responded to the questionnaire.

Therefore, the primary data were collected from 65 street children through the questionnaire distributed to them (Grinnell 1990, Busman 2004 and Mahto 2011) and from interview administrated to key informants: the director of caritas and 2 staff in charge of street children.

In this study, semi structured interview was used to other key informants having information about anthropo-social support of BSU and being able to relate it to rehabilitation of street children as their experiences in the area.

Direct observation was used to gather various information by using five sense organ (Chen, 1997). Observation, being a process by which a researcher analyses what is happening in some- real life situation and then classify and record pertinent happenings according to some planned to schemes, it has been a direct tool of data collection. In this study, we used behavioural observation which involves systematically observing and recording information of specific behaviour of street children displayed by individuals during the rehabilitation process such as engagement in therapy, social interactions, and adaptive skills. The documentation was used to assess different documents related to the topic and the data collected on the field.

The quantification in the collection and analysis of data entailed a deductive approach to the relationship between theory and primary data, in which the accent was placed on the testing of theories. Quantitative method was applied with quantities and relationship between attributes as states Kakooza (Kakooza, 1996).

The quantitative method was therefore applied to phenomena that were expressed in terms of quantity. The statistical technique was used to analyse primary data collected from the semi directive interviews by showing their frequencies, and percentages. Thus, the quantitative method helped in the analysis of anthropo-social rehabilitation of street children.

Corroborating with Churchill, qualitative method was used to uncover trends in thought and opinions, and dive deeper into the problem (Churchill, 1992). The qualitative method was based on the content analysis of data by showing the detailed non-numerical explanation. It was applicable to phenomena that were expressed in terms of quality. Therefore, the qualitative data were analysed through the analytical technique to analyse primary data collected from the interviews. Thus, the qualitative method helped in analysis of anthropo-social rehabilitation of street children.

3. FROM THE STREET TO ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITIES: ANTHROPO-SOCIAL ANALYSIS OF THERAPEUTIC REHABILITATION

3.1. Cognitive Behavioural Theory in Anthropological Rehabilitation

Developed by Aaron Beck and Albert Ellis in the 1960s, this theory posits that our thoughts, feelings, and behaviours are interconnected and that changing our thoughts can lead to changes in our feelings and behaviours. In the context of anthropological rehabilitation, this theory emphasizes the importance of identifying and changing negative thought patterns that may be hindering an individual's recovery. This therapeutic rehabilitation has been done through interactive counselling.

Cognitive behavioural theory (CBT) is a psychotherapeutic approach that emphasizes the role of thinking in shaping behaviour and emotions. It aims at helping individuals identify and modify negative thought patterns and beliefs that contribute to maladaptive behaviours and emotions. CBT has been widely used by the staff of BSU in rehabilitation to address a variety of issues, including chronic pain, traumatic brain injury, substance use disorders, crimes, vices and other malpractices. The Aaron Beck's cognitive behavioural theory was developed in 1960s from the idea that many people with mental problems have internal dialogues and tend to talk to themselves, which lead them to react accordingly, and cognitive behavioural theory try to develop alternative thinking to reduce psychological problems (McLeod 2019). The counselling delivered by the BSU staff were having the role of creating alternative thinking so that their clients strengthen the capacity to cope with everyday problems.

According to González-Prendes and Reckon (2012) cognitive behavioural theory is about considering individual's cognitions as has significant and primary role in the development and stability of emotional and behavioural response to a life situation. In the line of Foa & Riggs 1993 and Ranchman 1980, the staff of BSU declared how they focused on feelings, judgments related to a specific life of street children which determines the actions or behaviours to facilitate the process of adaptation in a given situation.

This theory was used to focus on street children instability which reflect on behaviours by using alternative thinking as a way to restore or maintain mental stability, that is, to facilitate them for self-confidence and determination to change mind set and gain skills to be used to survive by avoiding criminal behaviours. The result of this approach has been to see some street children joining the school or entrepreneurial activities. Cognitive behaviour theory normally helps to avoid trauma memory and come up with sustainability of emotions. (Foa & Jaycox 1999). Working on emotional, feeling of street children influenced slow by slow positively their behaviour and helped them react as a stable person, because cognitive aspect drives the thinking, reactions and behaviours.

This theory has been used through interactions between BSU's staff and street children because their previous life in street destabilized them and affected their feelings in one way or another, causing negative feelings or trauma with instability in their emotions which reflect the behaviours. In the line of Corcoran 2009, with the cognitive behavioural theory BSU's staff focused on educating on how to know and change negative thinking which are likely to destroy; offering skills training to enhance capability and helping to get some learning from experience they have and take appropriate decision in order to be ready to take action toward their problems and when it appears that lacks of knowledge or skills represent a barrier to more effective functioning. In the study, we discovered that BSU's staff focused on street children feelings, emotional which have disorders which reflect on behaviours, while their clients being under rehabilitation program to change them into good citizen. Cognitive aspect has close relation with behaviour and self-determination because the thinking determines or influences the behaviour, to be able to be rehabilitated; stability in mentality is needed to change bad thinking, get skills and analyse properly before taking decision.

3.2. Self-Determination Theory in Anthropological Rehabilitation

Is a psychological theory of human motivation and personality development that was developed by psychologists Edward Deci and Richard Ryan in the 1980s, SDT is based on the idea that people are motivated to pursue their goals and meet their needs, and that their behaviour is influenced by the degree to which they feel autonomous and competent in their actions.

In the context of rehabilitation, SDT was applied to help street children with disabilities or injuries to regain their autonomy and motivation to engage in activities that are meaningful to them. Street children were to be motivated and engaged in rehabilitation when they were feeling that their goals and preferences are respected and supported by healthcare professionals. SDT has been widely used in rehabilitation and has been proven to be effective in improving outcomes such as self-efficacy, autonomy and quality of life. Self-determination theory (SDT) is a motivational framework that emphasizes the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in promoting behaviour change and well-being. SDT has been used in rehabilitation to facilitate patient street children's engagement and motivation.

As SDT has had a significant impact on the field of psychology and has contributed to the understanding of human motivation and behaviour (Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. 2008), the emphasis on the importance of storytelling enhanced the understanding of street children background and experience. In the context of street children rehabilitation, narrative theory was used as a psycho-social approach to help those with disabilities or injuries reconstruct their life stories and develop a sense of meaning and purpose.

The use of narrative theory in rehabilitation has been developed over several decades, with early research in the 1990s, exploring the use of storytelling and narrative therapy in the rehabilitation of individuals with traumatic brain injuries. Since then, in BSU, narrative theory has been increasingly applied in a variety of rehabilitation contexts, including physical rehabilitation, mental health, and chronic illness management. One key aspect of narrative theory in rehabilitation is the concept of "narrative identity," which refers to the way individuals construct and express their sense of self through the stories they tell about their lives. By helping them to develop and shape their own narratives, BSU staff supported the process of identity reconstruction and promoted positive psychological outcomes. Narrative therapy, is a form of psychotherapy that focuses on the stories people tell about themselves and their lives. It seeks a form of anthropo-social therapy, helped in identifying and changing negative or limiting narratives, and creating more positive and empowering

ones. Narrative therapy has been used in rehabilitation to help in reframing their experiences and develop a more positive sense of identity.

Overall, the use of narrative theory in rehabilitation reflected a growing recognition of the importance of psychological and social factors in the recovery process, in rebuilding their lives (M.C. Adams, D. P. 1993) after the shock of the past and opened the doors to entrepreneurial activities.

3.3. Social Learning Theory in the Process of Therapeutic Rehabilitation

Social Learning Theory is a psychological theory that was introduced by Albert Bandura in 1977 as an extension of the earlier Social Cognitive Theory. It emphasizes the role of observation, imitation, and modelling in the acquisition and modification of behaviour. Bandura believed that behaviour is shaped not only by environmental factors but also by cognitive and personal factors. This theory suggests that people learn from observing others' behaviours, attitudes, and outcomes. In the context of rehabilitation, this theory has been important in BSU emphasizing the importance of positive role models and social support in helping street children to learn new skills and behaviours.

In this theory, the focus is on how individuals learn from one another through observing, imitating, and modelling, rather than through direct reinforcement. Social learning theory (SLT) posits that people learn new behaviours and attitudes by observing and imitating others, as well as by experiencing the consequences of their own actions. SLT has been applied in rehabilitation to promote positive behaviour change and increase social support. Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory is another approach that emphasizes the interaction between individuals and their environment. This theory suggests that an individual's development is shaped by the interaction between their biological makeup and their social and cultural environment. According to Erikson, people go through eight stages of psychosocial development, each of which involves a different conflict or challenge. The resolution of these conflicts determines the individual's overall psychological health and well-being.

When these two theories are applied in the context of rehabilitation, they offer insights into how individuals with disabilities can learn new behaviours and overcome challenges in their environment. Social Learning Theory suggests that individuals can learn new behaviours through observation and modelling, which means that they can observe and learn from the behaviours of others. This was done through the group counselling. In a rehabilitation setting, this means that street children learnt new skills and coping strategies by observing others who have successfully overcome similar challenges (Social Science & Medicine. 2000; 51(6):843-857). Erikson's psychosocial theory, on the other hand, emphasizes the importance of social support and interaction in the development of individuals. This means that in a rehabilitation setting, supportive and inclusive environment were created and this encouraged individuals to interact with others and to engage in activities that promote their overall well-being. Consequently, some have been engaged in small businesses others undertook the studies, and so on.

Unconsciously, Social Learning Theory and Erikson's psychosocial theory were combined by BSU staff as both theories offer complementary insights into how individuals with disabilities learnt new behaviours and overcome challenges in their environment. By emphasizing the role of observation, modelling, and social interaction, these theories provided a framework for designing effective rehabilitation programs that promote the overall well-being of individuals. (Bandura, A. 1977)

The combination of psychological and social factors influenced an individual's mental and emotional well-being. Through the psychosocial interventions various forms of therapy, counselling were involved to help individuals develop coping skills, improve their relationships with others, and manage stress and other emotional issues. Some educational programs that focus on social skills, stress management, and self-care improved the life of many street children and recovered quality of life overcoming mental health challenges, such as anxiety, depression, trauma, or addiction.

3.4. Impact of Psychosocial Approach in Therapeutic Rehabilitation of Street Children

The psychosocial approach is designed to address the complex emotional, social, and psychological needs of those who have been traumatized by their experiences in the past. In Rwanda, where a significant portion of the population has experienced trauma as a result of the 1994 genocide, the psychosocial approach has been particularly useful in addressing the unique challenges faced by many people.

The use of psychosocial approaches in the rehabilitation of street children, process of rehabilitation in BSU, is supported by a growing body of research. For example, a study by Mironko, Ntaganira, and Wagner (2018) found that the use of cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) in combination with group counselling sessions was effective in reducing symptoms of depression and anxiety among people. Similarly, a study by Mukashema et al. (2019) found that a community-based psychosocial support program was effective in improving the social reintegration.

According to the data collected from the interview given to the key informants, the BSU's rehabilitation program includes individual and group counselling sessions, as well as vocational training and other forms of support. The lives of some street children improved in terms of psychological well-being as well as their social and economic reintegration. An example of the effective use of psychosocial approaches in the rehabilitation is the work of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC). The NURC has been implementing a program of community-based trauma healing since 2004, and this includes psychosocial support. According to a case study published by the NURC (2015), the program has been effective in promoting the psychological well-being, as well as their social and economic reintegration. Community members are often involved in the delivery of psychosocial support programs, and are encouraged to support people who have the problems in their reintegration into society. This community-based approach has been effective in addressing the social and economic challenges as well as their psychological needs.

The study found that the involvement of community members in the rehabilitation process was essential for the success of psychosocial support programs. Specifically, the study found that community members played a key role in providing emotional and practical support as well as in promoting their social and economic reintegration. The psychosocial approach has been found to be effective in promoting the successful rehabilitation and reintegration to social and economic activities. The use of cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) in combination with group counselling sessions, as well as community-based psychosocial support programs, has been particularly effective. The involvement of community members in the rehabilitation process has also been found to be essential for the success of psychosocial support programs for street children. These findings have important implications for the development of effective rehabilitation programs for further studies.

4. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The findings are oriented to the main points of the study, the interpretation of findings used the narrative analysis and the hermeneutics about analysing data from documents.

4.1. Profile of Respondents

The study findings revealed that 79 % of the respondents were female; while 21% of the respondents were males. This indicates that the respondents had complementary perceptions about the evaluation psychosocial approach in therapeutic rehabilitation due to their gender distribution.

The age of respondents were considered to see if it should have any influence on mental status depending on the level of experiences on challenges faced in social life and how they can be managed, that make strong or not the street children of critical situation, which will enable the researcher to assess the relationship between the two.

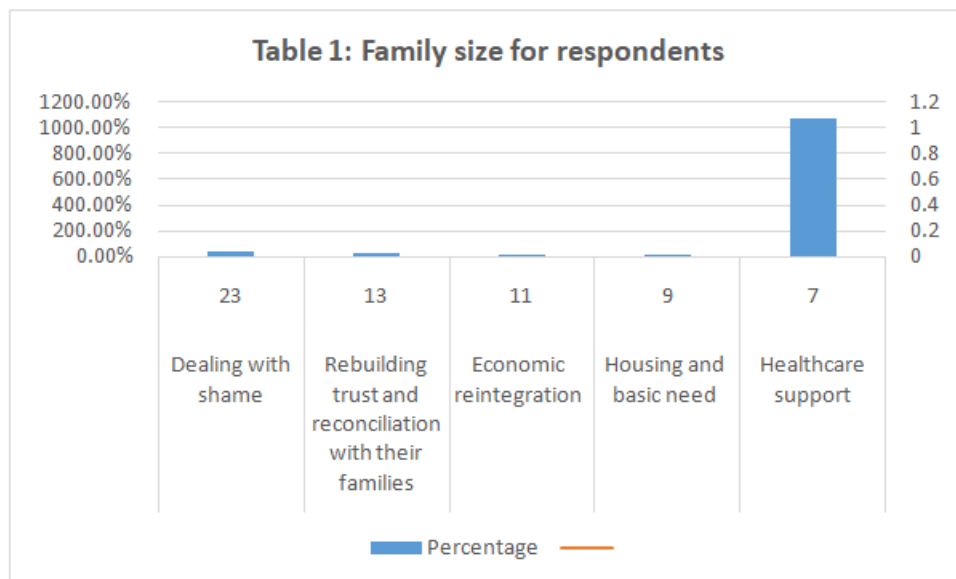
The study shows that, 29 respondents are between 10 and 15 years old representing 45% of respondents, 28 respondents are between 16 and 20 years old, representing 43%, 5 respondents are between 21 and 25 years old representing 8% and 3 respondents are between 26 and 30 years old representing 4%. The findings show that young people are more exposed to mental instability rather than old people because of life experiences playing a vital role in the management of stress, especially in critical situations.

The educational background is also considered as a factor which should have influence on the mental status of respondents as the level of education is likely to increase the level of self-management in critical situation.

The study shows that, 56 respondents have studied the primary school and represent 86.16% of the sample size, 7 respondents have lower secondary level of education with 10.77% of representation, 2 respondents have upper secondary school education with 3.07% of representation and all of these respondents are in small activities in Byumba city.

4.2. Family Size of Respondents

During the study, we considered family size as a factor which can influence the situation of the street children.

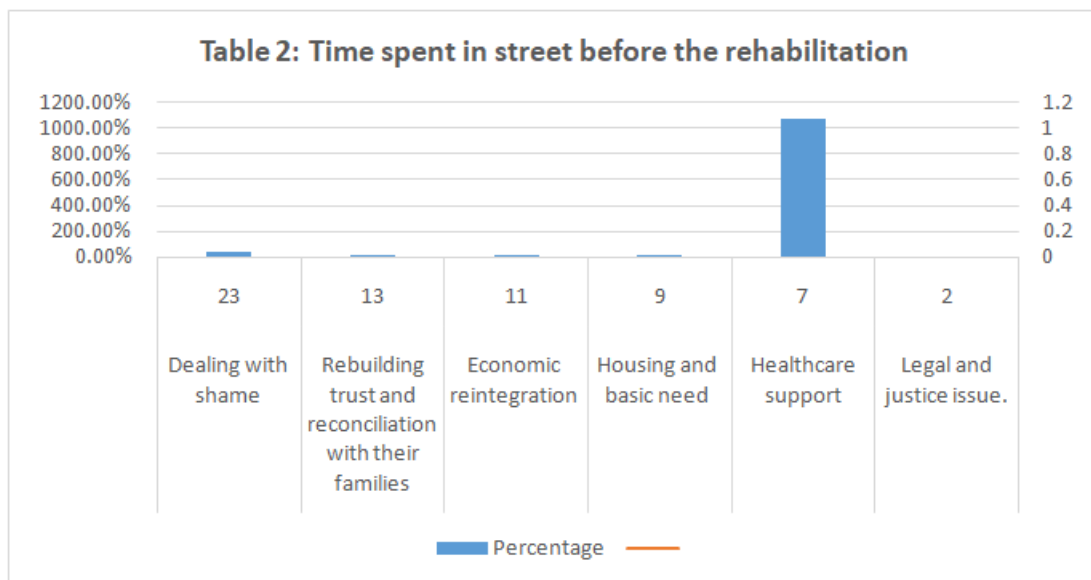


Source: Field research July 2023

The table 1 shows that, 41 families representing 63.08% have number of children between 1 and 3, followed by 16 families with from 4 to 7 children representing 24.62%, those who have above 7 children are 5 with 7.69% and those who don't have any children are 3 with 4.61%. The findings allow the researcher to conclude that families with small number of children are more exposed because they do not have enough experiences on social life on how to manage challenges faced in.

4.3. Time Spent in Street before the Rehabilitation

Depending on the time they lived in the streets, the respondents should have some feelings which can influence negatively their mental health.

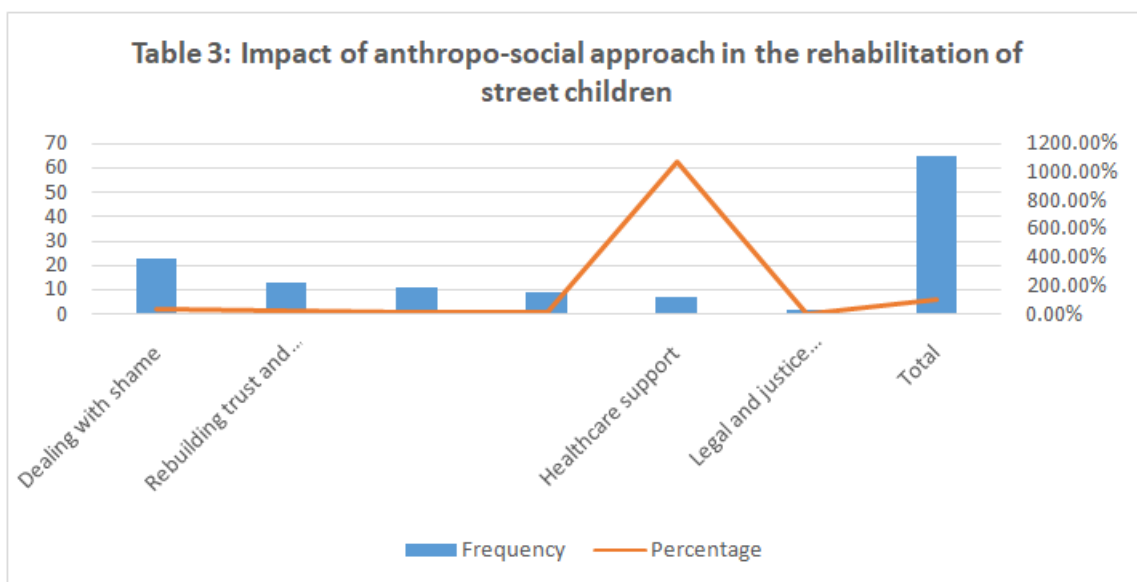


Source: Field research July 2023

The table 2 shows that 43 respondents have experience from 0 to 2years in the street and represent 66.16%, 14 respondents have between 3 and 5 years of experiences in street and represent 21.54%; 4 respondents have between 6 and 8 years of experiences in street with representation of 6.16 %, 1 respondent has between 8 and 10 years of experiences in street with representation of 1.53% and 3 respondents with experiences above 10 years in street and represent 4.61%.

4.4. Impact of Anthropo-Social Approach in the Therapeutic Rehabilitation of Street Children

During the research, the impact of anthropo-social approach in rehabilitation of street children is illustrated in the table below.

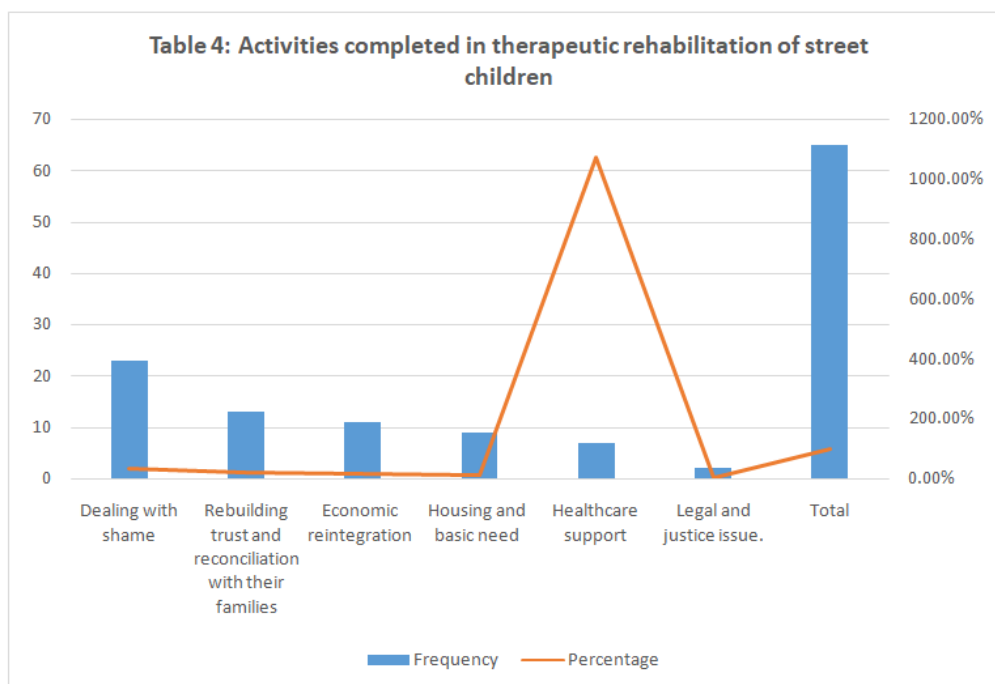


Source: Primary data, July 2023

The table above presents the impact of anthropo-social approach in the rehabilitation of street children, as identified by the respondents. The most common influencing factor reported was addressing mental health issue, with a frequency of 15 (23.1%). This was followed by developing social skills and support networks, which was reported by 9 respondents (13.2%). Other factors Low self –esteem (7 respondents, 10.1%), health issues (10 respondents, 15.1%), conflicts (18 respondents, 29.3%) and leading to feeling of shame (6 respondents, 9.2%).

4.5. Activities Completed in Therapeutic Rehabilitation of Street Children

During this research, the activities completed in therapeutic rehabilitation of street children are illustrated by the table below

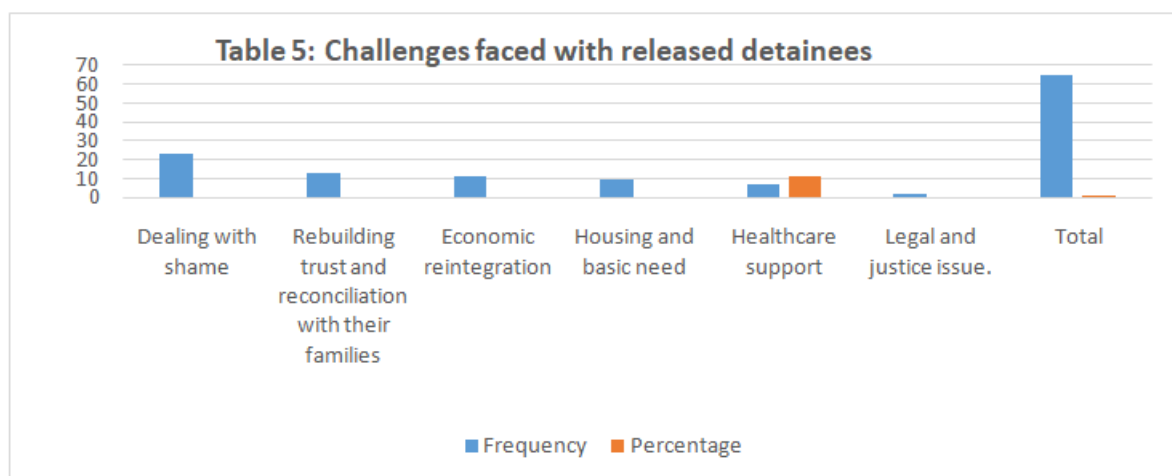


Source: Primary data, July 2023

The table above shows the activities completed in rehabilitation of street children. The most common indicator reported was individualized rehabilitation plan, with a frequency of 21 (32.1%). This was followed by comprehensive assessment (16 respondents, 24.3%), education and vocation training (11 respondents, 17.1%), counseling and mental health services (9 respondents, 14.3%), education to street children (6 respondents, 10.1%), and post-rehabilitation monitoring aftercare (2 respondents, 2.1%)

4.6. Challenges Faced by Street Children

During the research, we wanted to know the challenges street children faced. The results are presented in the table below.



Source: Primary data, July 2023

The table above presents the challenge faced with street children in BSU. The most common view expressed by the respondents was the dealing with shame, with a frequency of 23 (35.3%). This rebuilding trust and reconciliation with their families (13 respondents, 20%) economic reintegration (11

respondents, 16.9%), housing and basic need (9 respondents, 13.8%), healthcare support (7 respondents, 10.7), and legal and justice issue (2 respondents, 3.0%).

5. CONCLUSION

This study focused on anthropo-social analysis of the rehabilitation of street children by BSU-Catholic Diocese of Byumba. In BSU, through group therapy sessions, social support network, and skill-building programs, street children improved their interpersonal communication, conflict resolution, and empathy skills. By focusing on developing healthy relationships and establishing a support system, street children are better equipped to navigate social interactions, gain employment, and foster positive community connections.

After their rehabilitation, 35.3% of our respondents said that the shame remained with a small rate, 20% of respondents declared that rebuilding trust and reconciliation with their families remained a challenge, 16.9% of the respondents that economic reintegration has been faced even though it is on a small scale, 13.8% of the respondents are challenged by housing and basic needs but also on small scale. For some cases, BSU staff are still addressing mental health concerns such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) which are prevalent among rehabilitated street children. By providing individual therapy, mental health counselling, BSU builds positive self- image, leading to improve of mental health outcomes and over wellbeing.

To conclude, the anthropo-social study of the rehabilitation of street children shows promising results in reducing recidivism rates, enhancing social skills and relationship, and promoting psychological well-being among them. By addressing the complex interplay of psychological and social factors, BSU's approach plays a crucial role in facilitating successful rehabilitation and reintegration, ultimately contributing to safer communities and increase opportunities for families that have street children.

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