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Research Methodology: Knowledge Gained through Direct Experience

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Introduction

The subtitle of this chapter reads 'Knowledge Gained through Direct Experience'. This is because the chapter was motivated by my participation in the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) College of Mentors Institute that was convened at Kenyatta University in Nairobi, Kenya between April 10 and 20, 2017. Knowledge gained through direct experience, we are informed, is the first credible source of information that a person comes to know. The modes of gaining this type of knowledge range from relatively passive observations to active manipulations of abstract variables in completely controlled environments.

During the Institute, I acquired new knowledge on inductive and deductive approaches to research, emic and etic research approaches, qualitative and quantitative content analysis, and a cocktail of sampling strategies. I also gained infinite knowledge on qualitative and quantitative data analytical techniques using a variety of computer software such as MATLAB, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), NVivo, and Atlas.ti. In addition, I learnt many other qualitative and quantitative research methods that are quite vital for my research journey. These include hermeneutic, pluridisciplinary, ubuntugogy, ethnographic, consciencist, and phenomenological research methods, among many others.

In any systematic study, research methods are an indispensable part. They determine the success of the study, its credibility, and trustworthiness (for qualitative studies), validity and reliability (for quantitative studies). In this chapter, I use the knowledge gained from the abovementioned institute to present a combination of distinct and systematic, yet complementary, qualitative research methods that were used to investigate the social protection for Children Living on the Streets (henceforth, CLS) in Uganda and the application of the human rights-based approach (henceforth, HRBA). Social protection refers to cash and in-kind support, including basic and social services that are of a public, private and informal nature to mitigate poverty, inequality, vulnerability and risks associated (ILO & UNDP 2011), while the Human Rights Based Approach is a conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards (United Nations-Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 2006). Researchers worldwide use qualitative methods to capture and describe the depth, richness, and complexity of research (Ariño et al. 2016). I therefore employed qualitative research methods, with an inductive research approach, applying both emic and epic data collection and analytical approaches for this study. The qualitative research methods included content analysis (both conventional and summative), as well as in-depth interviews. The respondents were selected using purposive sampling methods: namely, critical case, maximum variation/heterogeneous, criterion and snowball sampling.

It is uniquely evident that a triangulation of conventional and summative content analytical approaches is good for social protection studies. A blend of inductive, descriptive and exploratory approaches to content analysis presented me with an opportunity to succinctly explore and describe the key thematic areas under social protection studies. Correspondingly, in-depth interviews were utilized to complement content analysis in order to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings. In this chapter, I conceptualize the methods that were used which entailed *what*, *why* and *how* I used the methods. The research was prompted by the recurring challenges encountered in undertaking qualitative studies on CLS, specifically on how to obtain samples. Thus, the adoption of qualitative approaches was a daunting task that required triangulation to enhance the trustworthiness and credibility of the research findings. The chapter further demonstrates that a solid qualitative study on CLS cannot be conducted without an appropriate conceptualization of the phenomenon under investigation and the research methods to be used.

Key Terms

There are many terms that can be used in a case study research design, depending on whether the researcher is employing quantitative, qualitative, or a mixture of both approaches. In this study, I mainly use a qualitative approach. The terms described in Table 12.1 are the major ones employed in this chapter.

Table 12.1: Key Terms

Term	Description
Case Study	The collection and presentation of detailed information about a particular participant or small group, frequently including data derived from the subjects themselves (USC 2017).
Qualitative Research	This is a study that primarily describes a situation, phenomenon, problem or event, where data is non-numerical (Ranjit 2011; USC 2017).
Exploratory Research	This is when a study is undertaken with the objective either to explore an area where little is known or to investigate the possibilities of undertaking a particular research study (Ranjit 2011).
Descriptive Research	An attempt to systematically describe a situation, problem, phenomenon, service or programme (Ranjit 2011). The researcher provides a description of their observations, findings and results of data analyses (USC 2017).
Inductive	A form of reasoning in which a generalized conclusion is formulated from particular instances (USC 2017).
Interpretivism	The theoretical paradigm where research seeks knowledge through the interpretation of human action, by examining how people make meanings of them (Oxford University 2009).
Constructivism	The idea that reality is socially constructed. It is the view that reality cannot be understood outside of the way humans interact and the idea that knowledge is constructed, not discovered (USC 2017).
Phenomenology	This is the study of how people experience the world, (Oxford University, 2009).
Emic Approach	This is where the research participants' words and perspectives are the starting point, and it is an insider, or bottom-up, approach (Olive 2014).

Etic Approach	This is where, theories, concepts, and ideas are studied; it is an outsider, or top-down, approach (Olive 2014).
Bias	This is a loss of balance and accuracy in the use of research methods. It is also a deliberate attempt to either conceal or highlight something (Ranjit 2011).
Saturation	A situation in which data analysis begins to reveal repetition and redundancy and when new data tend to confirm existing findings rather than expand upon them (USC 2017).

Source: Self-generated by the Author using the sources cited in the Table

Research Design

According to Greener (2008), a research design is a grand plan of approach to a research topic. It is also a plan, structure and strategy of investigation so conceived as to obtain answers to research questions or problems (Kerlinger 1986, cited in Ranjit 2011). The plan is the complete scheme or programme of the research. It includes an outline of what the investigator did from writing the research questions, hypotheses and the operational implications to the final analysis of data (Kerlinger 1986 cited in Ranjit 2011). According to Yin (1984), three conditions determine the type of research design: (1) the type of research question, (2) the degree of possible investigator control, and (3) the degree of focus on contemporary events desired.

Given the preceding conditions, I used a case study research design with both exploratory and descriptive attributes. Despite the widespread use of case study methods throughout the social sciences, no consensus has emerged for a single definition (Ragin & Becker 1992; Gerring 2007 cited in Baxter & Jack 2008). According to Bormley (1990), a case study is 'a systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims at describing and explaining the phenomenon of interest'. Yin defines it as 'an empirical inquiry which: investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context: when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and where multiple sources of evidence are used' (Yin 1984 in Schel 1992. 1). According to Yin (1994), a case study as an interpretive and inductive form of research, explores the details and meanings of experiences and do not usually attempt to test a priori hypotheses; instead, the researcher identifies important patterns and themes in the data.

In a case study, the unit of analysis can vary from an individual person, group, location, organization/company and event (Bormley 1990), and many others. A unit of analysis is an object, event, individual, group, organisation, or society. It is

the 'who' or 'what' the researcher wants to explore, describe, explain or understand (Oxford University 2009). Therefore, I was aware of the many types of case studies like: multisite, intrinsic, collective, and illustrative; however, for this study, I used single case design with exploratory and descriptive attributes as elucidated in the following sub-section.

Single Case Study Research Design

A single case study design can be divided into two types: (1) *idiographic* and (2) *nomothetic* (Levy 2008; Willis 2014). The two concepts were used in Kantian Philosophy to describe two different approaches to knowledge. The word 'idiographic' originates from the Greek word *idios* meaning *own* or *private*. An ideographic approach offers a full description of a given case. Idiographic case studies describe, explain, interpret, and/or understand a single case as an end rather than a vehicle for developing broader theoretical generalizations (Levy 2008). In contrast, the word 'nomothetic' originates from a Greek word *nomos* meaning *law*. A nomothetic approach aims at studying and establishing laws or generalizations, mainly to obtain objective knowledge through scientific methods (Levy 2008). Therefore, in any research, a nomothetic approach offers a generalized and indiscriminate understanding of a given case. In this study, the idiographic case study design employed was mainly descriptive in nature. The idiographic case was used to describe the (a) mechanisms and processes for social protection of children living on the streets in Kampala, Uganda; (b) context of implementing social protection for children living on the streets; and (c) strengths and weaknesses of the human rights-based approach to social protection for children living on the streets in the Ugandan context.

The nomothetic case design was mostly used to test the hypothetical propositions of the study. These propositions are (a) the socio-economic, political, and institutional contexts in Uganda cannot facilitate social protection for children living on the streets; and (b) in the Ugandan context, the human rights-based approach cannot be applied to social protection for children living on the streets. The single case study design was for the following reasons:

a. to cover contextual conditions for social protection of CLS, because they could be easily captured under a case study;

b. the boundaries between the phenomenon of social protection and context under investigation were not clear;

c. both idiographic and nomothetic single case studies were advantageous, notably the empirically–rich, context–specific, holistic accounts that they

offered, their contribution to theory building-the human rights-based approach, and to a lesser extent, theory-testing too (May 2011); therefore a single case design is ideal for applying a theory and building a theory; while describing single case designs, Yin (2009) assigned them roles in applying, testing, or building of theory, as well as in the study of unique cases;

d. in this study, a single case design was used because it blended well with an inductive research approach; given that this study had inductive attribute; According to Bennett and Elman (2010), the use of inductive process tracing in a single case study has the advantage of generating new hypotheses, either particular to that individual case or potentially generalisable to a broader population; single case analysis can therefore be valuable for the testing of theoretical propositions, provided that predictions are relatively precise (Levy 2008);

e. a single case study was used because it offered a methodological rigor (Bennett and Checkel 2012); I used this design due to its procedural objectivity and consistency in order to develop a context and process for social protection of CLS in Uganda; hence, 'a single case study design is a more free–form approach advantageous in delving into the subtleties and particularities of individual cases' (Lyotards 1994);

f. in this single case study, there was process tracing; this helped in addressing the complexity of path-dependent explanations and critical junctures in the study (Bennett and Elman 2006b); also, a signal advantage of the single case study existed at a more practical rather than theoretical level; according to Eckstein (1975), a single case design is economical in all aspects: money, manpower, time and effort; and

g. it also entailed descriptive accounts; yet, the design could also be used in an intellectually rigorous manner to achieve experimental isolation of one or more selected social factors within a real-life context (Yin 1994).

h. It was against such a milieu that I used a single-case design to gain an in-depth understanding of contextual influences on the interpretations of institutions (governmental and non-governmental organizations) and examining the implementation of social protection, as well as application of the HRBA to the social protection for CLS. Particular interest was centered on international and national contexts and the public institutions. Therefore, a qualitative single case study research design was used. The understanding of issues relating to the human rights-based approach to social protection for CLS was largely qualitative. The analysis from the literature review and the

responses from the respondents on the subject were qualitative, descriptive and exploratory statements.

i. Nonetheless, I was also aware that the use of a single case study research design in this study had a number of limitations. Some of these are as follows:

j. Like any other research design, a single case study is not without limitations. The design has been subject to many criticisms, the most common of which concerns the interrelated issues of methodological rigor, researcher subjectivity, and external validity (Willis 2014). Maoz (2002: 172) argues that 'the use of the case study absolves the author from any kind of methodological considerations. Case studies have become in many cases a synonym for freeform research where anything goes'. The absence of systematic procedures for case study research is something that Yin (2009) sees as traditionally the greatest concern due to a relative absence of methodological guidelines. However, this criticism appears rather unfair. Many contemporary case study practitioners have increasingly sought to clarify and develop their methodological techniques and epistemological grounding (Bennett and Elman 2010). In this study, the research systematically explained all the data collection methods and research approaches. This action therefore negated such a criticism.

k. In addition, incorporating construct validity, the reliability and replicability of various forms of single case study analysis is challenged. This is usually tied to a broader critique of qualitative research methods, as a whole (Willis 2014). Nonetheless, I utilized a triangulation of both content analysis and interviews to enhance reliability and replicability of the findings of the study. Triangulation is a multi-method or pluralistic approach, using different methods in order to focus on the research topic from different viewpoints and to produce a multi-faceted set of data (USC 2017).

l. External validity or generalizability is also a critical challenge of the single case study. For example, it is hard for one case to reliably offer something beyond the particular. Generalizability is the extent to which research findings and conclusions conducted on a specific study to groups or situations can be applied to the population at large (Oxford University 2009). King et al. (1994) wrote: 'in all social science research and all prediction, it is important that we be as explicit as possible about the degree of uncertainty that accompanies our prediction'. In a single case study, the criticism is 'mitigated by the fact that its capability to do so is never claimed by its exponents; in fact, it is often explicitly repudiated' (in Eckstein 1975: 212). In this regard,

in this particular study, I found that the criticism of generalisability is of little relevance when the intention was that of particularisation.

m. According to Willis (2014), single case studies are clearly less appropriate for statistical generalization, but arguably retain significant utility for analytical generalization. Indeed, in this study, I employed qualitative approaches to enhance the analytical generalization. Additionally, Seawright and Gerring (2008) argue that the generalisability of case studies can be increased by a careful and systematic selection of cases. Alternatively, *appropriately used*, atypical or extreme cases often reveal more information (Bennett and Elman 2006a). However, in this study, I carefully and purposively selected the cases to elicit relevant and reliable data.

n. According to May (2011), many research methods and approaches possess clear limitations. Indeed, any research method involves necessary tradeoffs. However, this can potentially be offset by situating them within a broader, pluralistic mixed-method research strategy, which I did during this study. May (2011) adds that whether or not single case studies are used in any fashion, they clearly have a great deal to offer.

Single Case Design versus a Phenomenological Design

Many qualitative studies use similar research designs, data gathering and analytical techniques. Their discrepancy is mainly premised on the intention of a researcher. For example, given that this study was on CLS, one could argue that I ought to have used a *Phenomenological Research Design*: i.e. the study of the lived experiences of participants who have gone through a traumatic experience like CLS. However, the main goal of this study was to examine existing mechanisms for social protection of CLS in Uganda and the strengths as well as weaknesses of applying the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) to social protection for these children in the current context. Therefore, although a phenomenological design is good for a study on CLS, it was not ideal for this particular study. Participants are individuals whose physiological and/or behavioral characteristics and responses are the object of study in a research project (USC 2017).

Descriptive and Exploratory Attributes in the Case Study

I employed a mixture of descriptive and exploratory attributes within the single case study design as described in the following subsections.

Descriptive Attribute

A descriptive approach was used to define the characteristics of the population or phenomenon that was studied. A *descriptive study* systematically illustrates a situation, problem, phenomenon, service or programme, or provides information about, say, the living conditions of a community, or describes attitudes towards an issue (Ranjit 2011). In this context, the study described the nature of social protection services provided to children on the streets of Kampala and analyzed the application of the human rights-based approach to the delivery of these social protection services.

A descriptive case study is different from other types of case studies in the sense that it is a qualitative methodology that uses the illustrative approach to demonstrate facts, focusing on a single or specific nature of a phenomenon. According to Tobin (2012), a descriptive case study is focused and detailed on propositions, questions about a phenomenon that is carefully scrutinized, and articulated at the outset. According to Jack (2008), a descriptive case study methodology is a means to providing tools for researchers to study complex phenomena within their contexts. The main goal of a descriptive case study is to assess a sample in detail and in depth, based on an articulation, informed by a descriptive theory. Descriptive studies reveal patterns and connections in the data in relation to theoretical constructs in order to advance theory development. Some researchers refer to descriptive case studies as intensive or focused case studies. These are semantically helpful terms for directing a researcher's desired level of intellectual penetration of a phenomenon (Jack 2008). The descriptive theory must respect the depth and scope of the case under study, which is conveyed through robust propositions. If a descriptive theory cannot be developed easily before a case study, then a researcher may want to consider whether the case is more of an exploratory case study or not.

Exploratory Attribute

Exploratory research is conducted for a problem that has not been studied more clearly before. It establishes priorities, develops operational definitions, and improves the final research design. Exploratory research is when a study is undertaken with the objective either of exploring an area where little is known or investigating the possibilities of undertaking a particular research study (Ranjit 2011). An exploratory case study is a qualitative design conducted about a research problem when there are few or no earlier studies to refer to, with the intention of identifying key issues and variables (Omero and Mselle 2017).

The focus is on gaining insights and familiarity for later investigation, which may be undertaken when problems are in a preliminary stage of investigation. In this study, in tandem with Mansur's (2015) view, the exploratory research involved a broad range of literature search and conducting interviews to learn more about the context and process of social protection for CLS in Uganda, and the application of the human rights-based approach. The exploration of a new phenomenon in this way helps a researcher to better understand a phenomenon (Mansur 2015).

Research Approach

This study used a qualitative, inductive research approach, which is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. In qualitative research, a researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting (Creswell 1998). In inductive studies, researchers begin with specific observations that are used to produce generalized theories through which conclusions are drawn from the research. The inductive approach was mainly used for the current study because it takes into account the context where research effort is active, while it is also the most appropriate for small samples that produce qualitative data (Denzin & Lincoln 2005). Samples imply the population researched in a particular study (USC 2017). According to Thomas (2003), the primary purpose of the inductive approach is to allow research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant, or significant themes inherent in raw data. However, the main weakness of the inductive approach is the production of generalized theories and conclusions based only on a small number of observations, thereby impacting the trustworthiness of research results (Thomas 2003).

Implicit in the inductive approach was an *unstructured approach* that was also employed. In the unstructured approach, everything that formed the research process – objectives, design, sample, and the questions that the researcher asked respondents – was not predetermined. The unstructured approach was mainly used because it allowed flexibility in all aspects (design, objectives, questions, etc.) of the research process (Ranjit 2011). The unstructured approach was predominantly used to explore its *nature*: in other words, variation/diversity per se in a phenomenon, issue, problem or attitude towards an issue (Ranjit 2011). According to Ranjit (2011), before undertaking a structured inquiry, an unstructured analysis must be undertaken to ascertain the diversity of the phenomenon. Later, another study

can be conducted to provide quantified information through a structured inquiry. Therefore, both structured and unstructured approaches have their place, and they are accorded equal weight (Ranjit 2011). Largely, this was why this particular study was conducted using an inductive, unstructured approach.

Etic and Emic Approaches

In addition to the inductive and unstructured approaches, I also generated and used both etic and emic data. Emic and etic are two divergent approaches to conducting research on human beings. In the emic approach, the research participants' words and perspectives are the starting point, and it is an insider, or bottom-up, approach. In the etic method, theories, concepts and ideas are studied. It is an outsider, or top-down, approach. Emic is culture-specific and etic is universal.

The terms 'emic' and 'etic' were first coined by the linguistics theoretician Kenneth Pike in 1954. Pike derived the term 'etic' from the suffix of the word *phonetic* which pertains to the study of sounds in isolation that are universally and specifically used in human language: i.e. the function of sounds within a language regardless of their meanings. Similarly, 'emic' stems from the word *phonemic* which is primarily concerned with the acoustics, external properties, and meanings of words (Helfrich 1999; Yin, 2010 and Olive 2014). Applied to this study is Pike's (1967:37) in Olive (2014: 13), 'the etic viewpoint studies behavior or a phenomenon from the outside of a particular system, while the 'emic viewpoint studies behavior or phenomenon from inside the system'. The application of these divergent perspectives has grown and spans numerous fields of study and genres of qualitative research. Headland (1990: 21) argues that 'emic and etic approaches diffused into other branches of science during the 1970s and at the same time became common words in the English language'. As the use of emic and etic became more prevalent, so did the confusion regarding their definitions and how their distinctions were applied. Headland observed that 'authors equate emic and etic with verbal versus nonverbal, or as subjective knowledge versus scientific knowledge, or as good versus bad, or as ideal behavior versus actual behavior, or as description versus theory, or as private versus public, or as ethnographic ... versus ethnological ...' (Headland 1990: 21). Due to the confusion surrounding these terms, I provide brief explanations of how the 'emic' and 'etic' perspectives are frequently defined and how the two approaches were utilized in this study in the following subsections.

The Emic View

Emic, which is the insider view, is focused on culturally-bound data and looks at how people within one culture (in this context, CLS) think, perceive, and understand their world. This approach allows for a description of social protection that was meaningful to the children within their 'culture' and/or condition (Margret 2013). In the social protection research that I conducted, the emic perspective typically represented the interna l – view–context of CLS (Merriam 2009). An emic perspective captures the participants' indigenous and homogeneous meanings of real-world events (Yin 2010) and looks at things through the eyes of members of CLS (Willis 2007). There is a supposition that the emic perspective is more relevant: i.e. it is impossible to truly comprehend and appreciate the nuances of a particular group's culture. An outsider's (etic) perspective can never fully capture what it really means to be a part of a particular culture (Olive 2014).

From the emic perspective, respondents, specifically the CLS, were asked about the kind of social protection services that they received from the state and other actors like the NGOs. One respondent stated that *while on the streets, we don't receive any social protection services, not even any other single service (emphasis added). If one is lucky to be taken off the streets by some organizations that is when such a person is provided with; education, accommodation, clothing and food and other services. The only 'protection' we get from government institutions like Kampala Capital City Authority is harassment to leave the street without alternative support,"* (CLS14, 2017).

The Etic View

Contrary to the emic view, the etic view is based on observations and interpretation made by the researcher. This is where we arrive at the insider and outsider distinction. Lett (1990), defines etic constructs as accounts, descriptions, and analyses expressed in terms of the conceptual schemes and categories regarded as meaningful and appropriate by the community of scientific observers. In reality, emic versus etic is not a dichotomy: i.e. not mutually exclusive (Margret 2013). The etic perspective encompasses an external view on the context of social protection for CLS. I also took an etic approach to this study because it enabled comparisons to be made across multiple cultures and populations that differed contextually (Morris et al. 1999; Olive 2014).

From the etic perspective, the findings of the study suggest that existing social protection mechanisms for CLS in Uganda were *preventive* in nature, as they

sought to avert multiple forms of deprivation. However, these social protection mechanisms fell short of international human rights values and standards: i.e. the human rights-based approach.

Emic-Etic Tensions

Like in many other studies, the emic-etic tensions had to be explained. In qualitative research, there are a number of methodologies which significantly favor the emic over the etic approach and vice versa. Regardless of the methodology being employed, many social researchers subscribe to this view (Olive 2014). According to Olive, given the inescapable subjectivity that every researcher brings to a study through his or her past experiences, ideas and perspectives, a solely emic perspective is impossible to achieve. Subjectivity is a way of thinking that is 'conditioned' by one's educational background, discipline, philosophy, experience and skills. It is the quality of being based on or influenced by personal feelings, tastes, or opinions (Ranjit 2011). Conversely, if a researcher takes a purely etic perspective or approach to a study, he or she risks the possibility of overlooking the hidden nuances, meanings, and concepts within a given culture that can only be collected through interviews and observations (Olive 2014).

Vidich and Lyman (2000) explain that the tensions are prevalent due to questions such as 'By which values are observations to be guided?' and 'How is it possible to understand the other when the other's values are not one's own?' Yin (2010, in Olive 2014) argues that differences between emic and etic perspectives are always present due to a researcher's own value system which ultimately guides the design, execution, and reporting of results in a study. Personal characteristics such as age, gender, sexual orientation, race, and ethnicity can play a significant role in the divergence between emic and etic views on the same subject, even in cases where a real-world event is being described. I was therefore mindful of Rosa's (2012) views to the effect that inductive research requires a careful use of both etic and emic approaches. Rosa adds that within the field of qualitative research, it has become a custom to invoke and use the emic–etic approaches to conduct research (Rosa 2012). From this perspective, the use of emic and etic approaches facilitated the translation of social protection systems extracted from the reality of CLS and key informants. Emic knowledge was essential to the intuitive and empathic understanding of the practices developed by the CLS and key informants, while etic knowledge was essential for comparing these practices (Rosa 2012). Ensuring equilibrium between emic and etic views remained critical to guarantee the most accurate depiction of research participants during this study. This enhanced a

balanced, objective, credible and trustworthy synthesis, as well as the triangulation of data and reporting.

The Theoretical Framework for the Human Rights-Based Approach

A *theory* is a generalized logical statement that shows the relationship between two or more hypotheses (Bangura 2017). On the other hand, the University of Southern California Libraries System in Bangura 2017) defines and characterizes a theoretical framework as follows:

> a structure that can hold or support a theory of a study. The theoretical framework introduces and describes the theory that explains why the research problem under study exists. A theoretical framework consists of concepts and, together with their definitions and reference to relevant scholarly literature, existing theory that is used for a particular study. The theoretical framework must demonstrate an understanding of theories and concepts that are relevant to the topic of your research…and that relate to the broader areas of knowledge being considered… The selection of a theory should depend on its appropriateness, ease of application, and explanatory power.

In this study, I used a human rights-based approach (HRBA) as a theoretical framework. The HRBA has been defined differently by many scholars and organizations. According to the United Nations' Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN-OHCHR), a human rights-based approach is a conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights (UN-OHCHR 2006).

The HRBA seeks to analyse the inequalities that lie at the heart of development problems and redress discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress (UN-OHCHR 2006). Under the HRBA, all the international and national plans, policies and processes of development are anchored in a system of rights and corresponding obligations established by international law. This aims at promoting the sustainability of development work, empowering people themselves, especially the most marginalized, to participate in policy formulation and hold accountable those who have a duty to act (UN-OHCHR 2006). The choice of HRBA for this study was based on the following factors:

a. The HRBA principles emphasize that social protection for CLS should be guided by identification of the poor, national and international human rights frameworks, equality and non-discrimination, participation, monitoring and accountability, and international assistance and cooperation.

b. The HRBA emphasizes enhancing the capacity of rights holders (demand for social protection) and duty bearers (supply of social protection) for children living on the streets.

c. According to the HRBA, social protection plans, policies and processes for CLS in Uganda should be anchored in a system of rights and corresponding obligations established by international law. This was yet to be realized in Uganda. Social protection is being implemented as a need and a matter of charity rather than a human right.

Area of Study: Kampala

The study was conducted in Kampala city, specifically in the Central Division. The choice of Kampala was based on three factors: (1) It is the capital city of Uganda, a home to many CLS compared to other urban areas in Uganda; (2) It is also home to many organizations, both national and international, coupled with local NGOs that are mandated to implement social protection for CLS; and (3) a study on CLS in Kampala presented a representative and credible position on the topic indeed. The Central Division was chosen for several reasons. First, the Central Division has a Central Business District (CBD), which is regarded the 'heart' of Kampala with many business and socio-economic opportunities that attract many children to the street compared to other divisions. These children are attracted by opportunities like picking scrap metals, casual working, like winnowing maize and millet, and begging opportunities among many. Secondly, the Central Division also hosts many government and international and local organizations compared to other divisions.

Sample Size

Samples for qualitative studies are generally much smaller than those used in quantitative studies. According to Mason (2010), a number of issues can affect sample size in qualitative research. However, the guiding principle should be the concept of saturation. Ritchie et al. (2003) argue that this is because of diminishing returns due to saturation in a qualitative sample. As the study progresses, more data do not necessarily lead to new information. Frequencies are rarely important in qualitative research, as one occurrence of the data is potentially as useful as many in understanding the process behind a topic. This is because qualitative research is concerned with meaning and not making generalised hypotheses (Crouch and McKenzie 2006). Glaser and Strauss (1967 cited in Mason 2010) argue that qualitative studies should generally follow the principle of saturation.

They also maintain that within any research area, different participants can have diverse opinions. Qualitative samples therefore must be large enough to ensure that most or all the perceptions that might be important are uncovered; but at the same time, if the sample is too large, data become repetitive and, eventually, superfluous. Ritchie et al. (2003) suggest the following seven factors that can influence qualitative sample sizes: (1) heterogeneity of the population, (2) number of selection criteria, (3) extent to which 'nesting' of criteria is needed; (4) groups of special interest that require intensive study, (5) multiple samples within one study, (6) types of data collection methods used, and (7) the budget and resources available. Morse (2000) adds that the scope of the study, the nature of the topic, the quality of the data, and the study design also contribute to the determination of a sample size. Lee et al. (2002) also suggest that studies that use more than one method require fewer participants as do studies that use multiple (very in-depth) interviews with the same participant (e.g., longitudinal or panel studies).

Mason (2010) uses a sample of 560 PhD students' projects using qualitative approaches and qualitative interviews as the method of data collection was taken from *theses.com* and the contents were analyzed for their sample sizes. The results revealed a pre-meditated approach to sample size that was not wholly congruent with the principles of qualitative research (Mason 2010). Mason found that the standard mean of the sample size was the use of 31 respondents. Other researchers have suggested guidelines for determining qualitative sample sizes. According to Ritchie et al. (2003), qualitative samples frequently 'lie under 50'. Charmaz (2006) proposes that 25 respondents are adequate for small projects, while Green and Thorogood (2009) postulate that the experience in most qualitative researches is that in interview studies little, that is, 'new' comes out of transcripts after you have interviewed 20 or so people. Although these scholars do not provide a statistical formula and a logical conclusion of how they arrived at their proposed sample sizes, it appears that their respective proposals have been ratified internationally by many researchers. I used a total of 33 respondents. I was equally aware of the view by Leech (2005) that it is a mistake to presume that all qualitative research must inevitably use small samples, which ignores a growing body of studies that utilize text-mining and/or data-mining. Lokesh and Parul (2013: 36), defined text mining as 'the non-trivial extraction of hidden, previously unknown, and potentially useful information from – large amount of – textual data, or the process of analyzing text to extract information that is useful for a specific purpose.' Oxford University (2009), defined data mining as the process of analyzing data from different perspectives and summarizing it into useful information, often to discover patterns and/or systematic relationships among variables. According to Navathe et

al. (2000) in Lokesh and Parul (2013), text mining is similar to data mining, except that data mining tools are designed to handle structured data from databases, but text mining can also work with unstructured or semi-structured data sets such as emails, text documents etc. As a result, text mining is a far better solution.

Sampling Frame

Salant and Dillman (1994) define a sample as a set of respondents selected from a larger population for a survey. Even if qualitatively-oriented studies often work with small samples with single case studies, researchers must describe and provide justifications for the sample size and sampling strategy (Mayring 2014). Therefore, the determination of a sample size is a common task for many researchers. Inappropriate, inadequate, or excessive sample sizes influence the quality, accuracy, credibility, and trustworthiness of research (Bartlett et al. 2001). According to Maleske (1995), samples must be representative enough so that they allow a researcher to make inferences or generalisations from the sample statistics to the population under study. Peil (1995) argues that the choice of varied respondent categories presents an opportunity to have a number that is representative with different features and views and selected from different information backgrounds to provide credible, reliable, valid and theoretically-meaningful information.

Studies on homelessness generally face a problem of failure to obtain representative samples (Robertson 1992; Susser, Conover and Struening 1989; Tessler and Dennis 1989). A representative sample is a sample that includes cases or individuals from all subgroups of the targeted population (Oxford University 2009). Many of these studies on homelessness have not documented their sampling methods at all, while other studies have generally focused on single localities, often sampling from only one or two sites in a particular city. Although convenient for a researcher, sampling entirely from one source may miss a sizeable segment of a homeless population (Toro 1999). In this study, the sampling framework was systematically geared toward covering social protection institutions and CLS. Considering the preceding views, I used various non–random sampling techniques, also known as purposive sampling techniques, to cover both social protection institutions and CLS. These techniques are discussed in the subsections that follow.

Critical Case Sampling

This is a type of sampling in which only one case was chosen for study. I expected that studying this one case would reveal insights that could be applied to similar cases. The critical case in this study was selected because it demonstrated success

in implementing social protection for children living on the streets. This sampling method was good for selecting respondents from the Ministry of Gender Labor and Social Development (MoGLSD), which, at the time of my study, was believed to have good social protection programmes for CLS.

Deviant Case Sampling

According to Patton (2001), extreme or deviant case sampling looks at highly unusual manifestations of the phenomenon of interest, such as outstanding success and notable failures, top of the class/dropouts, exotic events, crises. This strategy tries to select particular cases that would glean the most information, given the research question. This sampling method was used to study organizations (the outliers) that were believed to deviate from the standards of social protection for CLS and the application of the human rights-based approach. This was used to get information from organizations like Save Street Children Uganda (SASCU) and Children at Risk Network that were believed to have minimal social protection programmes and integration of the human rights-based approach in their programmes, which were identified and studied through a combination of snowball, criterion and maximum variation sampling methods.

Criterion Sampling

This can be defined as a sampling method that is used to select individuals with certain important characteristics. McMillan (2016) states that in criterion sampling, the researcher selects participants on the basis of identified characteristics or traits that will provide needed information. For this study, the main characteristics of respondents were gender and disability. The criterion sampling method was used to determine girls and children with disabilities living on the streets. The selection of girls and children with disabilities was significant in eliciting and integrating the gender and disability issues in the study. This was also significant in analyzing the double jeopardy that these children experience to justify the advocacy of affirmative action for them.

Maximum Variation/Heterogeneous

This was where the respondents were selected to provide a diverse range of cases relevant to a particular phenomenon of social protection for CLS. The purpose of using this sampling design was to provide as much insight as possible into the nature of social protection, the context and process of social protection for CLS. The respondents selected and maximized variation in terms of age was 10–17 years

for CLS. I also paid particular attention to ensure a maximum gender variation for all respondents. This was purposely done to collect and analyze gender sensitive data in order to enhance gender mainstreaming at all levels of the study. In any case, out of the 33 respondents, 15 were males and 18 were males. I did not intend to collect equal numbers of male and female respondents, or even more female respondents, since the study was not purely a gender study.

Snowball Sampling

Katz (2006), defined snow ball sampling as a non-probability method for developing a research sample where existing study subjects recruit future subjects from among their acquaintances. This sampling method was used to get information on CLS. It was used because I selected one child to lead to the next respondent, since they are homeless, and it was hard to locate them. It was easy to reach these children using this sampling method, since their locations were less known.

Data Collection Methods

The research methods that I employed in my study fall under the extensive category of qualitative research. In this study, qualitative methods posed several merits that include (a) the ability to undertake a basic conceptualization of social protection and the application of the HRBA and (b) the capacity to delve into the contexts and processes for application of the HRBA to social protection for CLS that could largely be conducted through an inductive qualitative study.

It was through qualitative research methods that I got a clear construct of the social protection mechanisms for CLS. I was also able to loosen the connection between the concepts and practices of both social protection and the employment of the human rights-based approach.

Primary Data Collection

For this study, primary data were collected and analyzed to compliment secondary data as well as bridge the pertinent gaps identified in secondary data. Primary data were collected through in-depth interviews. Also used were existing international human rights law instruments as well as national laws and policies as primary data.

Content Analysis

There is no single definition of content analysis. Thus, a number of definitions of content analysis have been advanced. Kerlinger (1986) and USC (2017) define

content analysis as a method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective and quantitative manner for measuring variables. It is a family of procedures for the systematic, replicable analysis of text (Rose et al. 2015); any technique adopted to make inferences through systematically and objectively identifying specified characteristics of messages (Holsti 1968). It is a research methodology that utilizes a set of procedures to make valid inferences from a text (Weber 1985). I use Hsieh and Shannon's (2005) definition of qualitative content analysis. For them, it is a process designed to condense raw data into categories or themes based on valid inference and interpretation.

This process uses inductive reasoning by which themes and categories emerge from the data through a researcher's careful examination and constant comparison of categories. Content analysis requires a systematic coding and categorising of texts to determine the trends and patterns of words through establishing their frequency, relationships, and structures found in communication discourses (Grbich 2006; Pope et al. 2006). Every analysis requires a context in which the available texts are examined (Krippendorff 2004).

There are two approaches to content analysis: (1) inductive and (2) deductive. Inductive analysis is used when there are no previous studies dealing with a phenomenon; thus, coded categories are derived directly from the text (Hseih and Shannon 2005; Vaismoradi et al. 2013). Deductive analysis aims at testing a previous theory in a different situation or to compare categories at different periods (Hseih and Shannon 2005). This study used an inductive approach to content analysis, given the lack of adequate theorization on the topic under investigation in the Ugandan context. Content analysis, like other research methods, conforms to three basic principles of scientific method: (1) *objectivity*, meaning that the analysis is pursued on the basis of explicit rules, which enable different researchers to obtain the same results from the same documents or messages; (2) *systematicity*, referring to the inclusion or exclusion of content and is done according to some consistently applied rules whereby the possibility of including only materials which support a researcher's ideas is eliminated; and (3) *generalizability*, implying that the determination of whether results obtained by the researcher can be applied to similar situations.

Content analysis can be carried out both quantitatively and qualitatively (Rose et al. 2015). The technique provides a structured way of analysing data that are typically open-ended and unstructured. Two important aims of such analysis strategies are (1) *description* – the focus is on describing features of the message content (Rose et al. 2015); and (2) prediction – the main aim is to predict the outcome or effect of the messages being analysed (Neuendorf 2002).

In this study, I systematically analyzed the written content. This included books, journal articles, international treaties and declarations, national policies and laws for social protection, and programme documents from both government and NGOs. Some of the documents reviewed included The National Development Plan II, Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development Strategic Investment Plan, Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development Annual Reports, Uganda National Social Protection Policy, Expanding Social Protection Programme reports, UNICEF Uganda Country Reports, NGO Reports, etc. Regarding the laws and policies, The Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Bill of Rights, the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, and the National Social Protection Policy 2015, and many others were reviewed. I utilized a triangulation of conventional and summative content analysis techniques, in addition to the inductive content analysis approach (Vaismoradi et al. 2013). I further employed descriptive and explorative views to content analysis (Mayring 2014). A blend of these approaches presented an opportunity for me to succinctly explore and describe the key thematic areas that emerged from the study's findings (refer to the section on Data Analysis section for these themes).

Understanding Qualitative In-depth Interviews

Kvale (1996: 174) defines an interview as 'a conversation, whose purpose is to gather descriptions of the (life-world) of the interviewee' with respect to interpretation of the meanings of the 'described phenomena'. Similarly, Schostak (2006: 54), states that an interview is an extendable conversation between partners that aims at having an 'in-depth information extraction about a certain topic or subject; and through which a phenomenon could be interpreted in terms of the meanings interviewees bring to it'. For Dörnyei (2007) in Alshenqeeti (2014: 40), an interview is 'a natural and socially acceptable' way of collecting data as it can be used in various situations covering a variety of topics. Researchers like Bell (1987), Kvale (1996), and Berg (2007) recommend that interviewing should be adopted as a method for research, as it facilitates obtaining 'direct' explanations for human actions through comprehensive speech interactions.

For this study, qualitative unstructured interviews were used. Gubrium and Holstein (2002) point out that unlike a structured interview, an unstructured interview is open and has greater flexibility and freedom to both the interviewer and interviewee. The interviewer is more 'keen to follow up interesting developments and to let the interviewee elaborate on various issues' (Dörnyei 2007: 136). Interviewing is 'a valuable method for exploring the construction and negotiation of meanings in a natural setting' (Cohen et al. 2007: 29)

An in-depth interview can be defined as a discovery-oriented or open-ended research method which is mainly employed in order to obtain detailed information about any topic from participants (Sravani 2017). This helps in delineating in-depth views of respondents' experiences, feelings, and perspectives on a topic under investigation (Sravani 2017). In-depth interviews were generally preferred because of their strength in accessing in-depth information (Marshall and Rossman 1995). Henn et al. (2006) provided qualitative in-depth data by allowing interviewees to talk about the subject in terms of their own frames of reference (Henn et al. 2006). The un-structured in-depth interviews, on the other hand, are a more flexible as 'they allow in-depth information to be achieved, providing the opportunity to the interviewer to probe and expand the interviewee's responses' (Rubin and Rubin 2005, cited in Alshenqeeti 2014: 40).

For the current study, a total of 33 in-depth interviews were conducted. One-on-one, in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 CLS who were deemed to have privy or extensive knowledge of the issues on social protection, based on their age, exposure to urban life, as well as livelihood shocks. As noted earlier, these were children between the ages of 10 and 17 years. Also 15 of the in-depth interview respondents were key informants. A key informant is someone who can offer specific, specialized knowledge on a particular issue that the researcher wishes to understand better (Center for Substance Abuse Prevention 2004).

During the field work, a voice recorder was used in some in-depth interviews with the permission of the respondents. Subsequently, transcription was done. In cases where the voice recorder was not used during the in-depth, because it was deemed inappropriate for the setting or it was rejected by the participants, a note book and a pen were used to write field notes (as suggested by Matt 2013). Field notes presented an advantage in that I could easily refer to them during data coding and analysis. Coding is a way of indexing or categorizing the text in order to establish a framework of thematic ideas about it (Gibbs 2007).

Data Analysis

At the end of each fieldwork day, interview-guide questions were checked and reviewed to identify any inconsistencies and anomalies; and if detected, appropriate corrections were made to ensure consistency and completeness. All data from the interviews were transcribed and summarized to enable easy identification of the key emerging issues and to allow the display of qualitative coding aimed at manual and computerized analysis. A content–driven and thematic approach was used in the analysis of the qualitative data.

Like any other qualitative research, coding was central in this study. I took time to read through the responses from the interviews and content analysis notes. Prior to this coding, the transcription of the interviews had been done. During the reading of interviews and content analysis notes, I identified words and phrases that were prominent to develop open codes. More on these codes follows.

*Open Codes***:** this is where I read through the data several times and developed tentative labels for large amounts of data that summarized the key emerging issues. I ensured that the existing theories do not bias my judgment in this categorization. The establishment of these codes was based on the meanings that emerged from the data. Participants' words were recorded to establish properties of each code.

At this level, I looked for concepts and categories in the data that formed the basic units in the data analysis. Khandkar (2017) states that open codes can be divided into line-by-line and word-by-word coding. However, I utilized line-by-line coding because of its flexibility and ability to manage large quantities of data. For example, the codes in Table 12.2 emerged from the question: What are the existing mechanisms for social protection of CLS?

Table 12.2: An Excerpt of Open Codes

Open Code	Properties	Specimens of Participants' Responses
Enabling access to Education	Enrolment in primary school. Enrolment in secondary school. Providing scholastic materials. Paying school fees. Monitoring access and retention in primary schools.	Enrolment of children. Scholastic materials. School fees. Retention of children. Monitoring access.
Providing Food and Nutrition	The supply and availability of food in a quantity and quality sufficient for the needs of children. Access to good diet nutrition. Adequate dietary in-take, Providing nutrition knowledge.	Availability of food Access to food. Good diet. Providing knowledge.

Source: Self-generated by the Author

The open codes in Table 12.2 were later amalgamated into larger codes called Axial Codes, also known as Category Codes. More on these codes follows.

Axial codes: These were constructed by identifying relationships among the open codes. It was easier to appreciate the emerging themes from the data at this stage. During axial coding, I used concepts and categories while re-reading the text to (a) confirm that the concepts and categories accurately represented interview responses and (b) explore how the concepts and categories were related. The axial codes were then merged to a small group of major codes to form themes. The themes produced Selective Codes, also known as Thematic Codes, discussed in the following paragraph.

Selective Codes: The selective codes helped to define the core variables that included all the themes in the data. I read all the transcripts again and selectively coded all of the data that related to the core variables. This procedure is explained in Table 12.3.

Table 12.3: Excerpt of an Amalgamation of Open, Axial, and Selective Codes

Open Codes	Axial Codes	Selective Code
Facilitating access to education: Enrolment in primary school; Enrolment in secondary school; Providing scholastic materials; Paying school fees; Monitoring access and retention in both primary and secondary school.	Enabling environment for access to education as a support service for CLS.	The preventive and in-kind social protection mechanisms to basically avert deprivation.
Providing food and nutrition: The supply and availability of food in a quantity and quality sufficient to satisfy the needs of children; Accessibility of such food; Access to good dietary nutrition; Adequate in take; Providing nutrition knowledge.	Access to quality food and nutrition for CLS.	

Source: Self-generated by the Author

Therefore, central to the data analysis were a family of codes that were generated in a hierarchical order but related to the context and process of social protection for CLS. Several sub-themes emerged from the broad themes of the study. Some

of the key broad themes included (a) the instruments for social protection of CLS; (b) the process of social protection for CLS; and (c) the context of implementing social protection for CLS

Thereafter, the primary qualitative data codes were integrated with the secondary data codes to make qualitative inferences. Where necessary and applicable, relevant computer software such as Microsoft Office and Atlas-ti were used during data analysis. Microsoft Office was only used during typesetting and transcription of raw data. The transcribed and typeset data were exported to Atlas-ti software for analysis. The data analysis was both descriptive and exploratory, as earlier indicated, defined and justified in discussion of the research design. Throughout the data analysis stage, emphasis was mainly premised on credibility and trustworthiness of the data and research findings. Trustworthiness was unearthed through a triangulation of qualitative research methods, conducting quality checks, and comparing various data sources.

Data Quality Control

For purposes of data quality control, interview guides were subjected to expert review, and a discussion for modification was conducted. This was done to ensure the clarity, accuracy, correctness, and relevance of the data collected. These issues are discussed under the five rubrics discussed in the subsections that follow.

Objectivity in Qualitative Research

Mayring (2014) defines objectivity as total independence of the research results from the researcher. An objective researcher is assumed to be free of individual views, biases and prejudices during the research process (USC 2017). Objectivity is held to be difficult to achieve within qualitative approaches. The objectivity conflict between quantitative and qualitative research is not new. For example, in 1959, Snow diagnosed two cultures in his research, working with different methods: a postmodern constructivist and a realistic position (Snow 1959). In the 1990s, after the postmodern constructivism (the Sokal hoax') the situation worsened leading to a science war (Ross 1996; Bucchi 2004). In one corner stands a rigid positivistic conceptualization of research with a quantitative methodology, and on the other stands an open, explorative, descriptive, interpretive conception using qualitative methods (Mayring 2014).

In agreement with Kanakulya (2015), I was aware of the usual doubts raised by those in favor of quantitative methodology that hold that qualitative methods may have a problem with objectivity. They usually consider qualitative research as

'unscientific, or only exploratory, or entirely personal and full of biases' (Denzin and Lincoln 1994 cited in Kanakulya 2015: 56). The label 'unscientific' is commonly given to qualitative research to imply that such methodology is not 'objective'; but as Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison (1992 cited in Kanakulya 2015: 56) comprehensively discuss, 'objectivity' is a discourse wherein epistemic power is negotiated for the sake of advantage in epistemic-economics and academic politics. In most cases, what is considered 'scientific' is automatically presumed to be 'objective'.

Nonetheless, it has been noted that 'objectivity' itself emerged out of a discourse; thus, as Daston and Galison observe, 'philosophers of science routinely use *objectivity* as a pan-historical honorific, awarding it to this or that discipline… but paying little attention to when objectivity itself developed, or to what served as its source' (Daston and Galison 1992: 84). Therefore, since both qualitative and quantitative approaches have their strengths and weaknesses, and advantages and disadvantages, 'neither one is markedly superior to the other in all respects' (Ackroyd and Hughes 1992: 30 in Ranjit 2011: 33). The measurement and analysis of the variables about which information is obtained in a study are dependent upon the purpose of the study (Akroyd and Hughes 1992).

Credibility and Trustworthiness

Validity, reliability, and objectivity are criteria used to evaluate the quality of research in the conventional positivist research paradigm. As an interpretive method, a qualitative study differs from the positivist tradition in its fundamental assumptions, research purposes, and inference processes, thereby making the conventional criteria unsuitable for judging its research results (Bradley 1993). Recognizing this gap, Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed four criteria for evaluating interpretive research work: (1) credibility, (2) transferability, (3) dependability, and (4) conformability.

Credibility and Transferability

Credibility is a researcher's ability to demonstrate that the object of a study is accurately identified and described based on the way in which the study was conducted (USC 2017). *Credibility* also refers to the adequate representation of the constructions of the social world under study (Bradley 1993). Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend a set of activities that would help improve the credibility of research results: (a) prolonged engagement in the field, (b) persistent observation, (c) triangulation, (d) negative case analysis, (e) checking interpretations against raw data, (f) peer debriefing; and (g) members checking.

To enhance the credibility of the results for this study, I designed data collection strategies that were able to solicit adequate representations, designed transparent processes for coding, and drawing conclusions from the raw data. Peer scrutiny of the research tools as well as supervision and guidance by my academic supervisors and doctoral committee also enhanced the credibility of the research findings. I further recognized the strengths and limitations of the selected research methods, design, and approach used in the study. I further justified the appropriateness of the research methods and research design. Therefore, an in-depth methodological description of the study's approaches was conducted to enhance and allow the integrity of research results.

Transferability refers to the extent to which a researcher's working hypothesis can be applied to other contexts. It was not my task to provide an index of transferability but, rather, I provided data sets and explanations that were rich enough to enable other researchers to make judgments about the findings of the study and their applicability to different settings or contexts (as suggested by Hsieh and Shannon 2005). This was done through providing the content analysis data sources as well as coded data to enhance the transferability of my research findings.

Dependability and Confirmability

Dependability refers to 'the coherence of the internal processes and the way the researcher accounts for changing conditions in the phenomenon' (Bradley 1993). Dependability is being able to account for changes in the design of the study and the changing conditions surrounding what was studied (USC 2017). I paid adequate attention to the internal processes of primary data collection and content analysis. I also employed 'overlapping methods' and 'overarching' in-depth methodological approaches to render the study's results dependable. Dependability was enhanced by ensuring the consistency of the study's processes, from conception, data collection, analysis, and report writing to dissemination of research findings (Hsieh and Shannon 2005).

Confirmability: refers to 'the extent to which the characteristics of the data, as posited by the researcher, can be confirmed by others who read or review the research results' (Bradley 1993). The major technique for establishing confirmability is through audits of the research processes and findings (Hsieh and Shannon 2005). Confirmability was mainly enhanced using content analysis because the data sets from content analysis could be easily presented and confirmed by other researchers. I further adopted a triangulation of methods to reduce the effect of investigator bias.

I argue that credibility and trustworthiness are usually less of a problem within qualitative approaches. This is because qualitative studies seek to be subject-centered, close to everyday life (naturalistic perspective), especially when the research process remains theory driven (Mayring 2014). I was also aware that subjectivity can threaten the trustworthiness of the research results (Jae-Eun 2016). Although some scholars argue that qualitative researchers should embrace subjectivity, in this study, I tried to minimize subjectivity by (a) removing and minimizing subjective errors in the research tools; (b) during data analysis and report writing, I also minimized the use of subjective statements; (c) deducing researcher's bias at the different stages of the research process; and (d) using positionality in the research process. I interacted well with respondents during the in-depth interviews. Positionality also helped me to minimize the bias during content analysis. The term positionality both describes an individual's world view and the position they have chosen to adopt in relation to a specific research task (Foote and Bartell 2011; Savin, and Major 2013). Positionality "...reflects the position that the researcher has chosen to adopt within a given research study" (Savin and Major 2013: 71). The individual's world view or 'where the researcher is coming from concerns ontological assumptions (the nature of social reality), epistemological assumptions (the nature of knowledge) and assumptions about human nature and agency (Sikes 2004).

The preceding aspects not only enhanced the integrity of the data but also the research process and the analysis, as well as the interpretation of the data (Mosseleson 2010). I was aware that ensuring *refutability* and/or *falsifiability* (i.e. the belief that for any hypothesis to have credence, it must be inherently disprovable before it can become accepted as a scientific hypothesis or theory) of information can be important in generating theories that are testable and realistic, thereby minimizing subjectivity. Nonetheless, I did not select this approach to minimizing subjectivity. This was because falsifiability is very strict in its definitions and does not take into account that many studies are observational and descriptive. In any case, this particular study had descriptive and explorative attributes.

Research Constraints

The cosmopolitan nature of urban areas made it complicated to locate the respondents, mainly CLS. This problem was largely solved by using snowball sampling and making use of research gates in communities to locate these children. I anticipated the non-availability of some respondents, mainly the key informants – respondents who can offer specific, specialized knowledge on

the study (Education Development Center 2004) – because of their busy work schedules, and CLS, due to their 'nomadic' lifestyle and the nature of activities that they undertake during the day. This was partly true with some respondents during the fieldwork. Nonetheless, this was solved by making prior appointments with the carefully selected key informants. I further selected respondents (CLS) in a systematic manner that ensured that they were reached.

There were also language barriers with some children who could not speak Luganda, the dominant local spoken language in Kampala. To solve this constraint, I used research assistants that spoke other local languages fluently.

Some respondents asked for some logistics and/or incentives before accepting to be interviewed due to their vulnerability. This was solved by informing them of the ethical values of the study in order to make them informed as well as highlighting how the logistics could compromise the findings and responses they would give. Nonetheless, I provided some simple refreshments to children who participated in the study given their vulnerability. The logistics were limited to the required exigencies not to undermine or in any way influence the findings of the study.

Community apathy was also another major constraint to the study. Many organizations and individuals have conducted research on vulnerable children, including CLS. Inadvertently, these children have become objects of study. They continue to ponder that such research findings should have delivered lasting solutions to their problems, albeit such is yet to happen. I overcame this problem by visibly substantiating the impetus of the study – academic purposes only and possible unforeseen interventions that could be undertaken based the results from this study.

Ethical Considerations of the Study

The research complied with the ethical requirements as outlined in the Makerere University's Directorate of Research and Graduate Training Guidelines for Research Proposals, Research Reports, Thesis and Dissertations, September (2013). The Study was also guided by the National Guidelines for Research involving Humans as Research Participants (July 2014) by the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST). The research proposal was approved by Gulu University's Research Ethics Committee (REC). The key ethical aspects and considerations during this study were the following:

    a. The researcher recognized that some participants, specifically CLS, were vulnerable and ensured that the study was conducted with full respect

for the autonomy and dignity of these children. Power differentials that existed between community members and researchers were purposefully mitigated during the research planning and data collection stages. These were mitigated by explaining the purpose of the study to the community members, especially community leaders like the Chairperson Local Council.

b. Privacy and confidentiality were ensured. I made sure that the right to privacy for all respondents was respected and protected. This included ensuring anonymity and confidentiality in record-keeping and report-writing. Whatever the respondents said in the interview sessions remained anonymous. Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity were upheld. Confidentiality is a research condition in which no one except the researcher(s) knows the identities of the participants in a study (USC 2017). On the other hand, anonymity is a research condition in which no one, including the researcher, knows the identities of research participants (ibid).

c. As argued by Cliggett (2012), qualitative researchers must control the access to information and systemic anonymization of information. This was done for this study.

d. Informed consent and assent: obtaining informed consent and assent from the participants was central to the research. This gestured respect for the research participants' dignity, their capability to express their views, and their right to have them heard in matters that affect them – that is to say, the quest for social protection. Consent and assent were asked for and given voluntarily and, where necessary, was renegotiated so that the respondents, particularly children, were free to withdraw at any stage of the research/ interview process.

e. Harm: the study tried to minimize harm to all respondents, especially CLS. I modified all the questions to ensure that they did not cause any emotional harm to the respondents. On the other hand, I ably justified the benefits of participating in this study to the respondents like creating knowledge on social protection mechanisms to directly influence academia and policy in a long-run. I also ensured the safety and protection of participants. This meant ensuring that the environment for respondents was physically and emotionally safe for the researcher and respondents.

Overall, the study was guided by the principles of; *autonomy*, *beneficence*, *non-maleficence*, and *justice.* These principles underpinned the need for all research participants to be respected, protected, properly acknowledged, and adequately compensated.

Cracked/Fractured Lines of Consent for Children

Most researchers and human rights scholars argue and assume that all research with children under the age of 18 years requires formal consent from the parents and or guardians and assent from the children. In this case, a child's assent is obtained after parental/guardian's consent. Nonetheless, a child's assent or dissent takes precedence over the parent's or guardian's consent (UNCST 2014). However, for this study, I argue that in the context of CLS, this argument is not clear-cut. This is because CLS are in most cases 'independent children'. They are independent in a sense that they autonomously make decisions and execute them without permission from their parents/guardians. I also argue that this consent must be limited to the required exigencies. If parents of such children live in an urban area, and can be reached, it is imperative to seek formal consent. If the reverse is true, then a researcher ought to engage children as an 'independent child'. In any case, the 1986 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) provides for the best interest of the child as the key principle in the promotion and protection of children's rights. This further answers the following questions: Is a child aged 17 years and eleven months necessarily less mature and able to consent for him/herself than a person aged 18 years and one day? Is it always ethical to let parents or guardians have the final say about participation in research if their son or daughter wants to take part?

Implicit in this argument is that even when parents/guardians are available, the best interest of the child should help inform the need for formal consent by parents and assent by the children. Therefore, although it is a formal requirement, sometimes, parental or guardian consent may not be required for some children above ten years and under age 18 years to take part in a study; especially, when the research is not risky. Nonetheless, assent must be sought from these children themselves, which I proficiently did. Therefore, children can be competent in assessing and acting in their interests for inclusive development, although sometimes with parental and or guardian assistance.

Environmental Considerations

I recognized the interrelatedness of environment and human rights. During this study, I paid attention to environmental issues that may exacerbate vulnerability among children in street situations. During the study, I also minimized actions that could potentially cause environmental degradation, such as printing many copies for sharing with the academic supervisors, mentor, and editors. I shared soft copies instead of printed ones.

Gender Consideration

I further recognized the contribution of gender to the vulnerability of CLS. Therefore, gender must be a critical component of any research on social protection. Consequently, gender aspects were integral to this study. During the research, gender mainstreaming was done and, where applicable, affirmative action-related recommendations were made.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented the qualitative methodological aspects of a study on social protection for CLS, focusing on the application of the human rights-based approach. I have discussed the merits and demerits of the single case study design, content analysis, and interviews – i.e. the qualitative methods that were used in this study – in order to minimize research bias. In terms of novelty, in this chapter, I introduced the concept of 'independent children' as a part of research ethics of conducting studies on children.

I further showed how triangulation of both qualitative content analysis (conventional and summative) and qualitative interviews were very rich research methods to assess the context and processes of social protection for CLS. Consequently, I strongly recommended the use of these methods to researchers that were considering conducting similar studies. However, for any researcher to use these methods and approaches, the research approach, design, objectives and questions should be put into consideration and should essentially resonate with such a methodology. It also must be noted that the research methods and approaches used for this chapter were founded on personal research experience and were context specific. The research methods and approaches vary. It is imperative that in the use of this work researchers exercise their own judgments regarding the suitability of the research approach.

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