Increase of children delinquency in the major cities of Tanzania vis-a-vis protection of their rights.

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Received: 28 June, 2023, Manuscript No. AAJCP-23-105028; Editor assigned: 30 June, 2023, Pre QC No. AAJCP-23-105028(PQ); Reviewed: 4 July, 2023, QC No. AAJCP-23-105028; Revised: 21 July, 2023, Manuscript No. AAJCP-23-105028(R); Published: 31 July, 2021, DOI:10.35841/0971-9032.27.07.1933-1939.

Abstract

There is currently observed increase of illegal conducts committed by children in major cities. Tanzania such as Arusha, Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, Mbeya, Dodoma, Morogoro etc. These clucks are reported to involve harm and serious injuries to the victims who some them as sucred permanent disabilities. This Article argues that this increase denotes failure of the common to ake proper care and raise children in good and acceptable manner. Children realized only proper care in their childhood, but also extra care at their adolescence stage. This are also and moral derogations have now shown great negative impacts.

It is time to find alternative ways to deal with the so called 'Tatu Mzuka' and 'Pa wa Road' who are in most cases adolescent children, than locking them up in apprehended and juvenile fisons where their rights under municipal, regional and international laws are highly fringed. These places in most cases do not prepare these adolescents for their positive return to the sorty but rather distorts their psychology and moral wellbeing. Before raising cries on infringer to of add rights in apprehended, there is a need to treat them morally, psychologically and the sorty but to them before finding themselves in conflict with the law.

This abstract examines the alarming increase in children singularly within major cities of Tanzania, exploring the relationship between this trend and the release of their rights. Drawing on psychological and behavioral perspectives, the rudy of the sint of the potential factors contributing to the rise in delinquency, such as socio-economic parities, family dysfunction, and limited access to quality education and healthcare.

Keywords: Child, Protection, Rights, Delinguency, Legal officer, Custody.

Accepted on 13th July, 2023

Introduction

Western civilizations have ha great in ts to most of African cultural values. Most of pe in A. an countries have abandoned their culture in favo n odernity. This modern deti. kind of life has left mor lity nt, and modern children are raised in manne nich they are dependent to their parents, an en. Is are lacking to most people eneur. ration. This is why when parents dies or in the nt ge ost of youths resort to illegal becomes of finding alternative ways to accommodate ors ins then for lies and mselves. In Tanzania, following economic hard has, some eenagers in major cities has formed illegal groups to robe from people, while calling themselves Panya oad, Tatu Mzuka etc.

They use force and weapons in robbery, which has been reported to cause deaths to citizens and some, are seriously injured, even causing permanent disabilities. In the last quarter of 2022 to the first quarter of 2023, there have been reported several incidences of the alleged groups of teenagers robbing, injuring and killing citizens, using traditional weapons such as

Swords, axes, bunts and other sharp instruments in major cities more especially in Arusha and Dar es Salaam. The legal units have done their jobs in apprehending the suspects and their alleged sponsors pending legal actions in respective courts (For minors, they are taken to juvenile courts and adults are taken to ordinary criminal courts for trial). In legal protection, there are many outcries of violation of rights of detainees especially children.

Rights of detained minors are enshrined in the CRC, ICCPR, and ACRWC, Beijing rules and the LCA as well as the LC juvenile court procedure rules. The convention on the rights of the child, adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by general assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989 and entry into force 2 September 1990, in accordance with article 49; the international convention on civil and political rights, united nations general assembly resolution 2200A (XXI), 16 December 1966, in force 23 March 1976; The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Child (ACRWC) adopted by the Organization of African Unity (OAU, now AU) in July 1990; and the law of the child act of 2009 (Cap. 13 R.E 2019) as well as law of the child (juvenile court procedure)

rules G.N No. 182 of 2016, respectively. These rights are in most cases infringed and many scholars have addressed that challenge.

Literature Review

This article in particular considers the reasons for the rapid increase of children delinquency in the major cities, and ways to address this challenge alternative to detaining these teenagers in apprehended and prisons where their rights are in most cases infringed and abused, as well as measures to be taken to help youths to avoid illegal behaviors.

Legal framework on the protection of the rights of delinquent children

From 1990's there have been noticed developments in national and sectoral policies aiming at promoting child rights and welfare (Tanzania child rights forum (2013) Tanzania child rights status report). In so doing, various international instruments have received comity by Tanzania through ratification. The major being the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its two protocols which Tanzania ratified on July 10, 1991. This convention and other international instruments have been a guide to Tanzania towards enacting its municipal laws.

Legal instruments

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) This convention (the convention on the rights of the pened for a preamble and 54 articles was adopted and signature, ratification and accession by Genera ssembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989 and September 1990, in accordance with artice 49 he general ngl s o he child. international instrument catering for Almost every important right entitle to a c is stipulated therein and it allows them have participation in matters affecting their welfare. provid rotection against ben state to ensure children discrimination and calls upon are protected in every even

child rights are comprehensively Under this entid compiled in sp fic ma and including all categories of n traditional perspective, politically and civil recogni overs economic, cultural and social rights. A A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment gh inter for the award of the degree of Master of equirent SLLM) A constitutional and administrative law of Mzumbe university, 2016 at page 27)[2]. A child under the convention is defined to mean a person aged below 18 years unless otherwise under municipal law majority is provided to be achieved earlier. Hence the convention recognizes the national laws which provides for acquisition of majority age below 18 years.

Specifically on the rights of the detained child under apprehend, the convention prohibits subjection of a child into inhuman or any treatment degrading or punishment. When a child is detained and placed behind the bars, the convention requires the municipal laws on protection of child rights and juvenile justice be adhered to and such other measures be tak first before resorting to detention. Detaining a child under convention is required to be last resort, and the same should be of shorter period as much as practicable. The convertor interalia requires treatment of a child detained be in human and protection and respect to dignity inherent to a child be thered. The child detained has to be separated from adult unless the surrounding circumstances are to the effect that t is the best interest of the child be combined to addits or adult s the child's relative. A detained child und the c on is entitled to access to legal services for exle an advocate, and the matter be decided by an appudicial body which is importial an indep riate d competent ent [3].

International Covenant on Civ nd Political Rights (ICCPR): Internat on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) is in place to promote a protect civil and political rights as deriving from inherent dignity of the human person. The covenant prohibits of torture, inhuman and degrading treatments and ranishments thereof, to all persons including in legal protection. In relation to detained children under Article 10(2) (b) requires juveniles cove from adults and their matter be determined be separal acable. This covenant reiterates the provisions and they are to the same effect as the provisions of the C

he African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Child (RWC): Specific regional treaty in respect of the rights of the child is only found in African Continent. The charter was adopted by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in July 1990. The charter was mainly for providing in specific terms comprehensively mechanisms for protecting and promoting rights of children and their welfare at the African continent.

Just as in the CRC, the charter defines a child to mean a person under the age of 18 years. Unlike the CRC, the ACRWC does not give a room for recognition of majority age below the age of 18 years. On the protection of the child against torture and abuse, it prohibits all forms of torture, inhuman and degrading treatments to the child in respect of the child's physical or mental condition. The charter calls for the state parties to establish special monitoring units for provision of necessary support to the child as well as persons taking care of the child. These units nevertheless are required under the charter to prevent abuse of child rights through identifying, making reports on referral investigation about treatment of children and following up all instances of alleged abuse of child rights.

In relation to juvenile justice and children detained in legal protection, children in conflict with penal law should be specially treated in such a manner which conforms with the sense of dignity of the respective child, and his/her human rights should be respected. The charter further requires detained juveniles be separated from adults. Also other rights of a child accused of breaching penal law are provided such as right to presumption of innocence, right to prompt information on the charges against him in understandable language to the child, right to legal representation and assistance and right to

have the matter decided speedily by an impartial and independent judicial body. Furthermore, the trial against the child is under the charter required to be held in camera.

Institutional framework

Committee on the Rights of Child (CRC): Special mechanisms in monitoring human rights by the United Nations works under bounds of treaty bodies which are established in instruments core to human rights. In traditional perspective treaty bodies are for experts which works independently, and these experts are selected and elected inter alia from among the nationals of the states which are party to the human rights treat respectively. In protecting children, the committee is in operation in mechanisms which monitors reporting by states making inquiries and procedures for communication.

An African committee of experts on the rights and welfare of the child: This body comprises 11 moral standing members who are impartial, competent and integrated in child welfare and rights matters. The committee is mandated to call for state parties through the general secretary submit reports explaining measures undertaken in making sure that the provisions of the charter are in effect. These reports are required to be submitted in every three years by state parties. The charter empowers the committee to receive such communications from per groups and nongovernmental organizations on any allegation in respect of the rights and welfare of the child being The charter also empowers the committee to inqu investigate violation of the rights of children and preparations as to the report in that respect, an proceed recommend on the best practices. All these can b one by the committee under its own motion.

Domestic protection of rights of dir june children the law of the child act

In 2009 this act was enacted to he child's rights protected specifically. It is the law tech was a cifically enacted for protection of the child, to refer and consolidate laws relating to children, stipulate ight of a cond, protect and maintain the welfare of a child with a view to giving effect to international and regional amention are rights of a child.

Consider on or the hild under the act means a person below the age of the vears. Let Act under section 13 prohibits a child iron being the seted to torture or inhuman treatment which degrades his dentity. Hence even if a child is in conflict with the law and he is detained in legal protection, treatment of such a child must be in conformity with the law.

In relation to children in conflict with the law, the act enshrines comprehensive provisions to that effect. Section 101 requires an apprehended minor be released on bail if he cannot be arraigned in court immediately or does not fall within specified exceptions under paragraph (a, b, and c) of the same section. Section 102 expressly requires separation of detained child from associating with adults on the exception if the adult is the child's relative. This provision conforms to the requirement of several international instruments discussed in this chapter

which requires the same. Having the law providing for something is one thing and its implementation is another thing. Various studies shows that most of station house does not separate cells for children, then how this provision will be complied with if there are no infrastructures for the same?

The law further establishes juvenile court to deal wit juvenile matters under section 97. Section 98(3) requires juvenile matters be heard in a different place than the order ary place where cases are heard. This is for privacy of child and the law in effect to have matters of children and in the law in e

Law of the child (juvenile court predated) rules

These are the rules to estable, a to form practice and procedures for the juvenile ours. The mainland Tanzania and to assure the procedure of the child under the law of the child act are protected. The rules under rule 23 provides for conditions under which a child may be arrested. Sub rule (3) of the same rule requires for immediate notification to parents or guardian of the child as early as practicable after apprehension of the child. The 28 is to the same effect on issues on bail as observe under the laws in this chapter. In the same manner, rule 29(1), the requires that remanding a child be a decision of ast court, and the same be of shorter period as practicable. This is the center of the child.

nterestingly, rule 29(9) requires that where a child is remanded to custody, he shall be held separately from adults, and receive care, protection and all necessary individual social, educational, vocational, psychological, medical and physical assistance that he may require in view of his age, gender, disability, health status and personal circumstances. All these are in place to have the best interest of the child saved and to conform to the leading international instruments on protection of the rights and welfare of the child. The main issue remains in implementation of the same. Also infrastructures to allow these provisions to be effected are lacking and this raises the question of observance of these requirements while the child is under apprehended.

Domestic institutions social welfare

This is an institution responsible for social issues related to families and care of children and gender issues. Under the law of the child, social welfare officers are persons serving the government with legal obligations to ensure wellbeing of children and their rights are protected. These officers are duty bound to take steps to protect children from harm in all environments. This means they are charged with duty to protect even detained children under legal protection to ensure that the environment they are living in is fit for their welfare and conforms to their needs according to their conditions and age. This is why the LCA imposes an obligation to social welfare officers when necessary determine a suitable place where the child will be safe. But the authorities have been using discretional powers conferred to them by the law to disallow release of the child on bail if the same will obstruct justice or investigation. This causes children to keep on

suffering in legal protection and most of them get out of the premises psychologically, mentally and physically affected.

Legal officers

Among the duties imposed upon the officer is to conduct investigation on the committed offences and suspected allegations of commission or intention to commit offences, and proceed to arrest and apprehend the suspects. The legal officer are also duty bound to perform the same duties in respect of child rights abusers. The law also empowers them to charge persons alleged of child abuse issues ad proceed to make application for summons and search warrants from a magistrate and proceed to prosecute child abuse perpetrators.

Despite of all these duties towards protection of child rights, legal officers are the most complained persons for abuse of child rights while in apprehended. They often torture them for confession and mix them with adults. This is what brought the question of assessing implementation of the law relating to protection of the rights and welfare of the child while in legal protection.

Courts of law

In child related issues, court means juvenile court, primary, district, resident and high court. Unlike other two main organs of the state, courts are vested with absolute powers jurisdiction to deal with matters related to adjudication and dispensation of justice. The most relevant court under this study is the designated juvenile court. This is the outmost part with jurisdiction with juvenile matters. Section 4(2) of LCA requires that in determining children matters, as best interest of the child be the foremost consideration. Hence in determining even bail issues, the court should direct for is in the best interest and welfare of the milk this is also reiterated under rule 29(1) (a and b) of the residual court.

Courts are empowered to give order upon ap tion by the social welfare officer for removal of child in any place or nd wel environment where the righ of the child is in court may order release of a danger. Through these powers, detained child on bail great hat the custody has no separate facility for det purent of children. Also the same may be done when the observation of children is being tortured or his served. rights a not nese powers have been rarely observea the courts and in most cases for ectal needs. This also calls in question the children wi er caveness o ourts in protecting the rights and welfare us children de aned under legal protection.

The most violated rights of delinquent children the right to be separated from adults

This right is reiterated in almost all legal instruments analyzed above. But its adherence has proved problematic. But frankly, this right cannot be achieved if our officer's facilities are short of special cells for detention of children. When children are mixed with adults they engage into dangerous conversation with adults, and they sometimes live in fear hence affecting

their psychology. The study conducted by commission for human rights and good Governance in Tanzania, shows that in some station house juvenile were either detained in same cell with adults or were detained in offices or corridors. Other station house boys were kept in women cells rather than mixing them with men.

This shows that some of important rights denied to hiven such as the right to be separated from adults, are not denied deliberately, but lack of infrastructures and facility to have these laws complied with are lacking. Hence legal officers consider it fit to use other means necessary windirectly comply with these law.

It is true that the situation of jux ssess their specific needs, status and icomm n prei isites as per their respective ages, identity, sex and of fence and mental and physical wellbeing and which guan their security from harmful impacts a why international, regional and domestic instruments require delinquent children being distinctly treated. Authoraties must regard the personality and needs of a child. Their treat, at should focus on rehabilitating bem to become good persons. All these will be them and ass attained if here environments to have this facts attained. Lack of al factories affect children and mostly they suffer morel and shological effects when especially they are with adults in apprehended. ocia.

Reset to be treated with humanity and protection of

above analysis of the legal framework observed that among of the most emphasized rights is the right to be treated with humanity and protection of dignity. There is currently observed a trend where delinquent children especially who are found in gang robberies (Panya Roads, Tatu Mzuka etc) being subjected to torture in the course of apprehending them or after being arraigned in station house. During interrogations, torture is mostly common to force them to confess or mention their sponsors and whereabouts of their fellows and alleged proceeds of crime.

Despite of the fact that there are many serious effects caused to victims by these delinquents, it should not be forgotten that children does not breach the law deliberately, but restrictions in opportunities in respect of their development forces them to do so. And these opportunities become even tighter when they are held under illegal justice system. Children are among vulnerable groups who are to be prevented from possible risks including those which may face them while in legal protection. The CRC requires detention of a child be a matter of last resort, and the same should be of shorter period as much as practicable. This was not stated by an accident, the law recognizes vulnerability of children. Everyone hates these illegal behaviors committed by these delinquents, but the society should priory consider that children are always victims of abuse and neglect. Some of parents raise them negligently and parenting is poor. This is sometimes caused by economic hardships which cause children to engage in illegal behavior [4].

Before harming them with stones and other instruments when they apprehend them robbing, the society in general have to recognize the fact that having many children delinquents is not a success, but rather it is a proof of failure by the society to create favourable and preventive environment for better rising of children. Hence holding them under detention is just a matter of excluding them from the general public rather than rehabilitating them to become good persons. This is because the environment they are kept while in legal protection exposes them in more risks than helping them to change.

During their apprehension by legal officers, there is witnessed excessive use of force and even when they were arraigned in legal protection they were still tortured to provide information on whereabouts of the alleged stolen properties and their fellow culprits (Various media reported tortures to these children where some of them were seriously injured and some acquired permanent disabilities. This is because they were treated not as suspects but as criminals. This is a clear contravention of the right to presumption of innocence). This Article calls upon authorities to consider dignity of these children even though they engage in illegal acts.

Are these deficits denoting institutional failure?

The law of the child act empowers social welfare to ensure rights of children are protected. Social welfare officers are persons serving the government with legal obligations to ensure wellbeing of children and their rights are protected. These officers are duty bound to take steps to protect children from harm in all environments. This means they are charged with duty to protect even detained children under legal protection to ensure that the environment they are living intis fit for their welfare and conforms to their needs according their conditions and age. This is why the LCA in uses an obligation to social welfare officers when necessary december a suitable place where the child will be safe [5].

It is revealed that authorities have been us discretional powers conferred to them by the law to child on bail on the ground that the sime y bstruct justice suffering in the premises was also or investigation. This causes childen legal protection and most of them get psychologically, mental and ically affected. It was also noticed that, visitations social social force officers and human rights officers in legal precion is ery rare and even when they visit, their observed on . commendations are mostly not taken into a out by the officers of station house. in post cases visitation days are often Followi fact to super of station house, hence the situation inicat com tend to differ and children on that day some plausible places where it will be deemed as re shi tected. neir right.

In reneral, therence to the laws providing for the rights of children while in custody has not reached satisfaction. There are still some challenges, but it seems that some are unavoidable due to lack of necessary facilities such as special detention cells for children. It is now the right time for human rights institution and activists to stand strong to convince the government to create suitable environment for protection of these rights. The commission for human rights and good governance in Tanzania plays a vital role in making follow ups and publishing various reports which reveal mistreatments facing children in police custodies, but this role is yet not effectively played because they have mandate to sue whenever they realize violation of human rights, but this is rarely done. They have powers also to submit to the government propers as explaining the problems and how the identified challeng may be tackled, but this is also rarely done [6].

It is true that, we may not speak of effective implementation of the laws protecting rights of children under legal prection, while there are no facilities to ensure children are separately kept so that they may enjoy privileges given to hem by the law. If it is special treatment, how can happen while children are kept in similar lock u vith . How can of children while institutions responsible ensure special there are no facilities to separate ep u that they can v can we blame legal be specially treated wille in ere? place where their mental, officer's for placing children physical and psychological health alth danger while there are helter and health services for no funds for children detained in custodies. This study notes that there is something to be dear with before lamenting legal officer's for some violations of child rights. Some lamentations may really go direct to them, mings like inhuman and degrading torture, but not issues caused by lack of treatments facil

have their rights protected. The majority of the community then help hear about torture subjected to these teenagers they hear about torture subjected to these teenagers they then help hear about torture subjected to these teenagers they hear about torture subjected to these teenagers they then help hear about torture subjected to these teenagers they demands the popular saying statement by former Prime Minister of Tanzania, Hon. Mizengo Peter Pinda who said 'Na Wapigwe tu'. This proves immaturity in protection of child rights. This also denotes that respective authorities have a lot to do in spreading awareness about protection of child rights in all environments. The Social Welfare and other NGOs' should awake the society to place in the forefront best interest of the child, while recognizing that they are the tomorrow's generation [7].

Alternatives for curbing the increase of children delinquency

Most of the reported scenes were for robbery. Most of the interrogated delinquents mention economic hardships as the major cause. As the community, before we throw stones to them, it is worth creating opportunities for them so that they can earn living. Entrepreneurial skills should be imparted to them so that they can be self-dependent. There is needed more of psychological and spiritual treatments than beating them around the streets. These acts distort their psychology and they are mentally affected. Most of them are not positively rehabilitated, but they become morally affected. There is a need to have these adolescents helped before they conflict the laws and find themselves in legal actions which are inevitable. Institutions dealing with human rights and social welfare should ensure that conditions of children meets the required

standards and the acts of abandoning them are effectively dealt with [8].

This Article calls upon charitable organizations to consider the fate of the meandering street children. They need help before they organize themselves to form Panya Road or Tatu Mzuka Groups. The Government should also keep on strengthening strict legal actions for parents abandoning their children and those leaving them without proper care. Having collective efforts as society will easily curb these situations than leaving everything to law enforcers to work on where lamentations are often on protection of the rights [9].

Recommendations

First: There must be constructed special facilities for detention of children. This will help in conforming to domestic and international laws which requires inter alia children to be detained separately from adults. Section 102 of the Law of the Child Act requires juveniles to be distinctly held from adults while behind police bars. Also the CRC under article 37(c) requires the same that child detained has to be separated from adults unless the surrounding circumstances are to the effect that it is to the best interest of the child be combined to adults or the adult is the child's relative. Also Article 17(2)(b) of the ACRWC imposes the same requirement charter further requires detained juveniles be separated from adults. In these facilities is where children will be specially treated and their rights can easily be observed while in this special Children will be comfortable and the environment will no affect their mental, physical and psychological health.

Second: Responsible institution for protections of ch and human rights in general must wake up and special programs in legal protection to ensure c ild rights a not violated. These are duties imposed to the by the law which must diligently exercise by them ocial welfare officers are required by the CA ake steps to vilont ent protect children from harm in all his means they are charged with duty to project even ained children under legal protection to ensure the environment they are forms to their needs living in is fit for their are and nd age This is why the LCA according to their condition welfare officers when imposes an obligation necessary determine stable place where the child will be safe. Wh duty kercised, the condemned deficits may derease.

Third: The content of the property of the prop

main purpose of ensuring that the society is free of juvenile delinquency.

Conclusion

By analyzing the interplay between psychological factors and the broader social context, this research highlights the urgent of strengthening child protection mechanisms of hitigate delinquency rates. The findings underscore the cert for comprehensive interventions that prioritize the hold to well-being of Tanzanian children, ensuring their rights and fostering positive developmental outcomes.

Whether they are illegal or whatever, b children remains essential and compu The arrent trend ₩ties in general of children delinquency is alarming and the need to wake up to have in place colle e errorts to help these delinquents, and other cildren ey will not become that illegal in future. Leaving everythe to law enforcing bodies will not effective oblem, for the environment in legal protection a es not poor y rehabilitate them. Before they are engulfed by legal teeth, background measures should be placed from family level to national lever to ensure a generation of peaceful cople is created. Children must be taught of p tism and obedience of the law from childhood part of their culture in future. This article at, acrease of children delinquency is failure of so tha conclude Lety, and curbing this increase is the duty of the vhole

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