Young People Transition Process from Family-Oriented Care to Adulthood: Unveiling the Nexus of Reality in Life Course Approach

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Abstract

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Key words: Young people, transition process, family-oriented care, life-course approach, culture

The aim of this qualitative study was to unveil the reality in the transition process of youth from family- oriented care to adulthood using life course approach. The comparative study was carried out in the SOS children villages in both Lagos, Nigeria, and Bicesse, Portugal, where data for the study were gathered through audio-recorded and phone calls interviews. Organisational documents and data collected were analysed using content analysis to identify the emerging themes, similarities and differences in the nexus of transition process from care to adulthood. Three dimensions emerged from the 12 participants' answers to the interview questions, these include the past life in shaping transition, the present life in shaping the future, and the projected pathways of future based on the possibility of the past life and the present life. Two types of childhood typologies were identified. The study findings have implication for family-oriented care organisations. The need for international collaboration for national exchange of research, and networking among family-oriented care organisations will go a long way to improve the transition process of youth towards holistic development and an international successful outcome. Furthermore, this can impact state policies and global policy development towards the globalisation of transition from care to adulthood.

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Dedication

I am forever indebted to my Lord for the privilege of being part of the first cohort of the MFamily programme and for the fulfilment of His Word to me. This was a divine interruption in my pilgrimage on earth. To all the children and youth in alternative care, I believe and trust God for better days ahead of you through this international study.

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Thanks to all my blood fathers, mothers, sisters and brothers in Christ. I can boldly say the Lord is my helper for He has never left me lonely for once and has always given me fathers and mothers (disciplers) to watch over me in my different trajectories in life. I have also enjoyed the fellowship of the brethren both home and abroad throughout my stay in Europe. The pages will be filled if I were to mention your names. Only eternity can bless all of you for your silent labour on my life. I did appreciate you all from Peace house Nigeria, Pilgrim house Nigeria, Revival Labour in United Kingdom and Faith Baptist Church Norway.

1. Introduction

It is assumed that all children are to be nurtured in a familial environment, and their right to a family life is non-negotiable. In fact, the International Convention on the Rights of the Child is widely acknowledged – promoting the familial environment as the best interest of the child until 18 years of age. Yet, this document does not guarantee equal and safe places for children to develop and prepare for their individual social trajectories as adults. There is no society, either in the global south or the global north, where every family can provide the stability necessary for their children's holistic well-being. Children are not exempt from the influence of societal parameters, which predisposes them to risk either directly or indirectly. However, the extent to which children are affected differ by country and gender. The directly affected children are regarded as vulnerable. Their vulnerability is a result of life situations that lead to their families' becoming incapable of taking responsibility for them.

1.1 Background of the problem

The different meanings of childhood and youth are associated with the different socio-cultural perspectives and life conditions in each country (Young et-al, 2011; Wyn, 2015). This may account for the continuous change in the transition from childhood to adulthood which has become more extended and varied across all level of institutions either with family of origin, foster care or other related forms of care (Höjer & Sjöblom, 2014).

Nonetheless, national and cultural context plays a crucial role. Portugal, a western and developed country included in global north, has an effective child protection system. This involves collaboration of social security, pertinent entities and the major institutions responsible for protecting, and supporting children exposed to violence and/or risks including the Committee of Protection of Children and Young Children (CPCJ), a non- judiciary body together with a private NGO called Child Care Institute (IAC). A recent report highlighted a 25% reduction in cases of child victimisation, violent abuse and vulnerability between 1999 and 2009 via the implementation of national and local policies, specific legal and communal measures and programmes put in place to protect children (Amaro, 2008). But this significant reduction is not synonymous with the total extinction of vulnerability in its various kinds that directly affect children.

A very different situation exists in Nigeria, where 85 million children live and account for 51% of the country's population. The massive number of children exposed to violence or at risk cannot be estimated; official statistics cite 17 million orphans and vulnerable children. This implies the ineffectiveness of child welfare systems at the national and local level and, at the same time, the role of informal networks in supporting vulnerable children. To some extent, child protection systems function through international organisations such as UNICEF, PEPFRA, UNFPA, USAID and other NGOs. Yet, their coverage in meeting the needs of vulnerable children is limited. The early help for vulnerable children that is available is able to minimise the period of adverse experiences, leading to improved outcomes (Munro, 2008).

In the best interest of these children in both Portugal and Nigeria, some of them are raised in a representation of a familial setting: the family-oriented care of SOS Children's Villages through formal process of CPCJ or by government intervention. Some of the children in SOS Children Villages are admitted into care shortly after birth, whereas other came in as toddlers or school–age children. The impact of this may affect parent-child relationship as much as any other factor.

However, moving from one stage or social trajectory involves a process. According to the concept of transition in life course approach, the youth for this study have experienced traumatic changes beginning in early childhood. Five principles of life course approach were delved into in order to unveil the transition process of youth into adulthood. Relating to this work, transition can therefore be described as the effect of passive processes leading to active process at any developmental milestones. Thus, each individual social and developmental trajectory can take on a passive or active process. Passive process is defined as the life young people in care have been exposed to before admission into care, either the developmental process common to all human beings or the specific circumstances leading to their vulnerability. Active process is what is obvious to the human eye – the present life of youth. The passive process may find expression through the active process, as well as the future. Thus, the reality of the past and present are objectives, and fundamentals more or less in preparing the youth for the future - subjective expectations yet unrealised. The past is considered passive because it cannot be undone, yet it is foundational in contributing to the holistic development and outcomes of children.

Attempt to explain this transition process of youth from care in this study takes into consideration three dimensions – the past, the present and the future as related to five of the

principles of the life course approach. The past life related to the geographical and historical events can help unveil the impact of societal parameters on childhood. However, the present addresses the timing of lives, and the different social trajectories children take on, and the future is shaped by decisions of the past and present.

1.2   Statement of problem

Many children have been exposed to and experience adverse situations due to lack of parental capability, societal parameters beyond their control. For instance, children displaced by armed conflicts in Nigeria and its surroundings are prone to vulnerability due to inaccessibility to education, nutrition, health care and other social services. It is estimated that 800,000 children have been relocated to refugee camps or internally displaced due to the insurgence (UNICEF, 2015). However, little is known about children in care in Africa due to lack of available research related to children in care, and what happens to them once they leave care.

Even in the global north children in care experience poor outcomes in relation to education, health and well-being. Care leavers struggle as they attempt to make up for the previous lack of education and practical skills, coupled with their need for continuing education, housing, employment and money. Despite the availability of working child protection systems and social security, these young people often lack crucial life skills (Munro and Stein, 2008; SOS Children's Villages International, 2012). The situation is far worse for children in Africa who experience additional difficulties and challenges during their childhood and youth due to absolute, and relative poverty and weak, if any, child protection systems (Bailey, Lorheke, French, 2011). With a high rate of discrimination, and anxiety among institutional care leavers, many of these children seems to have no direction in life, or understanding of what the future holds for them. This can impede their holistic development, influencing the social timing at which that take on different trajectories, and their transition process can be delayed in comparison to other children who are not raised outside of their biological homes (Elder, 1998; Munro and Stein, 2008). This could pose a threat, creating fear of what the future holds to these children. But how children are prepared for the societal challenge can help to overcome barriers.

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1.3   Relevance of the study

Children have the right to holistic development in their contextualised settings. The majority of available research on care leavers' transition has centred on the preparation and support for leaving care in developed countries with little or no study in the African context. Therefore, there is urgency in bridging the huge gap between global south and global north as well as in increasing cognisance of the life course of the individual children and youth in care and after care. This study offers insight into the social context of care leaving internationally and understanding of the target group in order to channel appropriate resources to meet their holistic development towards adulthood.   In addition, describing the lives of vulnerable children in care can provide a basis for international collaboration.

Engaging developing countries of the global south, Nigeria specifically, in the globalised systemic perspective of care leaving strategies in developed countries can strengthen the social ecology of support, fully utilising the little information available on care leaving (Pinkerton, 2011). This will further impact social policies in the different countries and SOS organisations in order to help upcoming generations.

1.4   Research question

The central research question for this study was 'what are the lived experiences of the past, and present in cultural practices, social relationships with both family of origin and foster family, and opportunities and disadvantages to nexus of transition to adulthood?' In order to address this question, three sub-questions were further developed. In view of research question and research problem, the study seeks to ask the following sub-questions;

I.   What is the past experience of foster youth?

II.   What is the description of foster youth's present life?

III.   What are the future pathways or expectations and/or future plans for foster youth based on I and II?

1.5   Objectives

The broad objective of this cross-national study is to unveil the processes of entering and leaving care and compare and contrast how young people's lived experiences of the past

impact their present, how they describe their present and how past and present prepare them for the reality of adulthood.

1.5.1 Specific objectives

I.   To unveil the past experience of youth in transition stage

II.   To explore the present life of youth present life

III. To describe the projected future pathways of youth

1.6 Research focus

The study is a comparative case study of children in Nigeria and Portugal who have been placed in family-oriented care through SOS Children Villages. SOS Children's Villages is an international organisation with about 134 affiliates in different countries, preparing vulnerable children for the reality of the future in three phases – childhood, adolescence and young adulthood. The study uses biographical interviews to explore the nexus of the passive and active lives of youth raised outside their own families but in family-oriented care in different national and cultural contexts. These biographical stories through comparative content analysis reveal the passive processes that have helped the young people or marred them in the present, and at the same time their perceptions and possibilities for their future.

2. Theoretical contextualization & framework

This study begins with an in-depth review of literature related to the lived experiences of childhood and its associated problems, and measures taken to improve childhood for children in and out of their biological families. This broader approach is needed because the stories of youth in transition cannot be understood outside the context of their childhood experiences.

2.1   The concept of childhood and its dynamics

The notion of childhood is a historical, psychological and social construct (Aries, 1962; Alanen, 1988; Allan and Allison, 2003; Qvortrup, Cosaro & Honig, 2009) which all children experience in varying degrees. Moreover, the diverse and contradictory analytical conceptual frameworks of childhood and children by media, scholars, policy-makers and civil society creates a wide range of terminology, definitions, problems and practices, making it difficult to understand and explain the concept of childhood (Wyn, 2015; Diptee, 2014; Boakye-Boaten, 2010; James & Prout, 2003). Childhood was – and in its modern versions is – the ever-constituted result of decisions and actions of particular historical social actors, in their economical, political and cultural struggles that potentially concern the whole spectrum of their interests (Alanen, 1988:64).

2.1.1 Childhood as a historical concept

The understanding of the history of childhood unravels the experiences of children in different ages before the new paradigm of childhood. However, the concept of childhood in the Middle Ages through nineteen centuries were more of a political concern entangled with everyday struggle, where children remained insignificant as a social class, lacking any visibility except for vulnerable children with physical disabilities or young criminals (Alanen, 1988; Qvortrup, Cosaro & Honig, 2009). Hennock's (1978) review of Lloyd de Mause's (eds.) book on the history of childhood describes that history as full of nightmares, which we are just waking up to realise. Aries (1962) describes childhood as inconspicuous during the Middle Ages; however, some of the literature of the time paid special attention to children's minority status, rights and fragility and called for the protection of children (Kroll, 1977). In general, though, the present life of children as children was neglected while commentators

focused on expectations and the goal of becoming an adult (Allanen, 1988; Prout & James, 2003; Qvortrup, Cosaro & Honig, 2009). According to Alanen (1988), children's maturation was the responsibility of the family, reflected in the triangular representation of childhood, family and socialisation. Childhood was more or less confined to children's socialisation, and the role of the state was inconsequential. This means that the uniqueness of childhood was dependent on the uniqueness of parent-child relationships and interactions (Alanen, 2009; Kroll, 2006). Silverstein and Bengston (1997) identified five typologies of parent-child relationship as the tight-knit, sociable, intimate-but-distant, obligatory, detached relationships.

However, the position and roles children took in such interactions with parents and others was defined by cultural norms (Ulvik, 2014). In a nutshell, childhood was inconspicuous in history.

2.1.2 Childhood as a social construction

The current paradigm and concern for the view of childhood emerged in the late nineteenth century with different ideologies (Prout & James, 2003; Qvortrup, Cosaro and Honig, 2009). From a psychological perspective childhood is a distinctive phase of life with age-bounded developmental tasks and characterised by irrationality and incompetency. According to Prout and James (2003), the social aspect of childhood emerges in attitudes, values and beliefs of a particular society. However, the recognition of children as a foundational institution, part of social change and participant of social movement is still overlooked (Prout and James, 2003; Lee, 2005; Qvortrup, 2009; Nolas, 2015).

Wyn (2015) finds the dualism of orthodox sociological and psychological views of childhood and youth to be unhelpful. However, Qvortrup, (2009) argues that there is no contradiction between the two; rather the two parallel each other in understanding childhood. He describes childhood on horizontal and vertical dimensions.

The horizontal dimension is a fixed period or the permanent period of the generational unit - childhood, adulthood and old age. On the other hand, the vertical dimension - the development of childhood − has generated different notions of childhood, influenced by both socio-cultural context and societal parameters (historical, geographical, social, political, religion, culture, technological and economic), which both produce and influence the permanency of social constructions such as gender group and social class (Wyn, 2015; Bell,

2012; Qvortrup, 2009; Cahill, 2015). These broad structural determinants encompass the global realities, as well as national and local conditions (UNICEF, 2012). All of these have contributed to the diversified experiences of childhood around the world today.

2.1.3 Impact of societal parameters on childhood

Scholars in developed countries argue that the demographic and cultural shift to families' diversity and individualism does not undermine the traditional family models in their countries (Silva and Smart, 1999; Morgan, 1999; Guerreiro, Torres, & Lobo, 2009).

However, in Portugal, the evidence from 792 essays of Portuguese youngsters shows that the traditional family model has reached its end with emerging fatherhood models (Guerreiro, Caetano, & Rodrigue, 2008). The implication of this is that few children live in emotionally stable homes, with the majority living in unstable homes that can subject children to poverty, neglect, maltreatment and sexual abuse, among other ills. In addition, Hernandez's (1995) historical analysis of American families found that the percentage of farm families has eroded in contemporary society, from a majority of 71% of children in the 1870s who lived with farm families and less than five percent of children without parents. The transition from rural life to life in cities and suburbs has resulted in smaller family size and changing family compositions, non-farm work, increased educational attainments, mother's employment, and children in child care.

However, in Africa, demographic shifts have had a positive effect on childhood, the principal one being the reduced fertility rate. Haub and Kaneda (2014) estimate a drop to 2.5 from 4.7 children per woman as the total fertility rate in the world as of 2013. This has had the advantage of improving the economy and reducing poverty (Population Reference Bureau, 2014). On the other hand, it seems to have impacted the traditional family model. Ebigbo, (2003) reported the eroding of cultural and family values in Nigeria. However, the effects have been less significant because life in Africa generally cannot be lived outside group settings. This alludes to Healy's (2007), characteristics of communal society.

Furthermore, the demographic shift is apparent in migration. The significance of migration as a result of globalisation is a major factor in developed countries, resulting in differential work opportunities and living conditions of populations (Lyons, 2006). For instance, it is a known phenomenon that the children of undocumented parents (hiding families) in Sweden are isolated, emotionally traumatised and drop out due to fear of being

arrested by the police. In addition, migration due to war and conflicts has redefined childhood for many ethnic minority children. Many are unaccompanied asylum seekers in both developed and developing countries. UNHRC (2009), reported about 7 million children displaced by war. Carling, Menjivar, and Schmaltzbauer (2012), studied the experiences of transnational parents and suggested that their children can be traumatised, especially when separation becomes permanent and expectations are unrealised. This is another side of neglect - transnational neglect, as children become uncared for and easily fall victim to teenage pregnancy, school failure and involvement in antisocial activities. For instance, Akesson, (2009) found that Cape Verdean parents with new families in Portugal reduced their attention to and care of their children in Cape Verde in favour of the children and/or family abroad and meeting the challenges of surviving abroad.

Furthermore, globalisation has increased the ethnic diversity of many countries. No country can canvass against ethnic diversities, especially in a country like Portugal where Roma families and immigrants have diversified their single ethnicity (Crawfurd, 1881; Lyons, 2006; UNHRC, 2009). Related to ethnicity are culture and religion.

On a global level, research has shown that economic shifts have resulted in the commercialisation of children. Hernandez (1995) refers to economic expansion as the cause of the reduction in parental care and increase in demand for non-parental care among American families. This has led to the differences in educational needs of children depending on economic resources, ethnic and racial background and family living arrangement. The economic shift has further exacerbated economic insecurity, reducing marital quality and increasing the risk of divorce. In Africa, rapid urbanisation, and the modern forms of communication and entertainments have invaded the traditional culture, resulting in various forms of children's commercialisation – increased demand for cheap labour, changed child rearing practices and the exposure of children early on to social and political hazards (Boakye-Boaten, 2010). Andre & Hilger, (2015) found that child labour exposed children in Africa to multiple forms of domination, both within their local and global context, framing children by seniority and social group. The implication of this is that subordinating children can predispose them to different forms of abuse. This will be explored further.

Recent statistics have shown that a high percentage of children around the world are dislodged from their homes with many of them living on the streets (UNICEF, 2014).

2.2   The recognition of the Rights of the Child

The reviewed issues of children around the globe indicates the global challenge despite the widely ratified rights of children. Fleer, Hedegard, and Tudge (2009) assert that global politics keep shaping global childhood. The pedigree of the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is the 1959 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child. The UNCRC has been ratified in 193 countries, including Nigeria and Portugal. The protection movement initially responded to the vulnerability and incompetency of children, but that view has evolved into the one of the UNCRC of autonomous and competent children capable of constructing their own lives (Prout and James, 2003; Reynaert, Bouverne-de-Bie, & Vandevelde, 2009).

2.2.1 The Charter of the Rights of the Child

This legal convention focuses on children and their holistic well-being. It contains the preamble, three parts that sectionalise the 54 articles and the optional protocols. It is legally binding to each nation that has signed the convention. The missing accountability mechanism was resolved with the recently added third optional protocol (Diptee, 2014). The charter covers human rights in its full spectrum – political, social, economic and cultural rights. The key focus areas of the UNCRC are summarised under four general principles including Articles 2, 3, 6 and 12. Article 2 forbids discrimination against any child regardless of ethnicity, religion, disabilities, race, political views, social status and other related factors; Article 3 stresses a commitment to the best interest of the child; Article 6 focuses of the rights of children to survival and development; and in Article 12 children have the right to actively participate, express their opinions and receive respect for their views. Responsibility for translating and implementing these principles rests with government bodies and national legislation. The National Plan of Action is a means of incorporating children's rights into social policy. In recapitulating, the well-being of children is embedded in the four overlapping P's of the UNCRC - provision, protection, participation and promotion, the last of which was recently added (Alderson, 2008).

2.2.2 The implication of the UNCRC

The UNCRC affirms the family as the pertinent stakeholder and first agent of socialisation of children. It addresses the holistic development - cognitive, physical, emotional and social development of children, with much responsibility on stakeholders. Bradshaw, Hoelscher and Richardson (2007) refer to the four principles as the conceptualisation and understanding of child's well-being. Children as rights holders have less input into implementation but they maintain the right to demand that society give voice to them and allow their active participations in all facet of social institutions including education, politics and economic institutions. The rights of the child imply that children are human beings and not becoming human beings (Alanen, 1988; Qvortrup, 2009).

As the principal international advocate of children's rights, the UNCRC emphasises the social construction of these rights (Reynaert, Bouverne-de-Bie, & Vandevelde, 2009). It is not meant to supersede, but rather work within the culture of any society towards the development of childhood (Healy, 2007). It has to take cognisance of the conditional and aspirational rights (Alderson, 2008) in relation to the local values and traditions of each country, and the cultural implication of the shared responsibility between the parent and the state (Lundy, 2010). The embedded principles imply that rights are universal for any child – God-given, indivisible and inalienable. It contrasts with the view of children as a source of wealth creation and trickle-down effect (Hernandez, 1995; Walakira et-al, 2014).

2.2.3 Tensions of the UNCRC

Researchers have stressed the tensions implied in obligations, necessities and responsibilities of pertinent stakeholders in the 193 states such as parents, institutions and civil society, among others. The markers of tensions seem to centre on the relationships between the overlapping four P's of the UNCRC and each country's societal parameters.

Johansson (2013) observes that the UNCRC privileges the western culture of individualism, at the expense of children with an ethnic minority background in out-of-home care in both Britain and Scandinavian countries. This implies that the applicability of the convention to specific children of non-western backgrounds and countries where communality is valued may the problematic (Healy, 2007). For instance, in North America, children's rights are treated as a private matter, which allows parents to set standards rather than local authorities (Diptee, 2014). This is also the situation in Africa, where the

government has no input on how a child should be raised; it is the responsibility of the family and extended families. However, the powerful influence of culture on members of a particular society cannot be easily unlearned to incorporate universal convention (Inglehart, 1990). Healy (2007) highlights the need for negotiation on a middle range of the universalist-relativist continuum in order to enforce and implement the charter.

Reynaert, Bouverne-de-Bie, and Vandevelde's (2009) review of 369 articles within 18 years of the adoption of the UNCRC stresses that the convention has centred on autonomy and participation, dichotomisation between parents' rights and children's rights, and the technical issues related to the implementation of the charter. For instance, Percy-Smith, and Thomas (2010) focus on participation and protection rights as emerging themes. Their study implies that the centrality of the child has not been established due to differing foci in each continent. It is established that the variability in the implementation and utilisation of the rights further summarise the document as a working document either in aspirational rights or conditional rights. This could be the reason why Penelope (2012) argued for the establishment of a hierarchy of rights based on the heterogeneous conditions of children globally. Though she did not explicitly mention the situation of African children, her work is relevant in the context of the situations in developing and developed countries. While developed countries have progressed, more or less, to the protection and participation rights, it can be argued that the majority of developing and low-income countries are still struggling to achieve survival and provisional rights for their children. Thus, de-contextualization of rights fails to acknowledge the context of societal parameters that determine the living conditions of children (Reynaert, Bouverne-de-Bie, & Vandevelde, 2009).

2.3 Social protection policies for children in developed and developing countries

Social protection policies - an essential element of realizing children's rights and ensuring their well-being – have the potential of mitigating the problems of health, education, housing, poverty and deprivation, which predispose children to vulnerability and prevent them from realising their full potential (ILO, 2014; Bradshaw, 2015). To meet the worldwide challenges confronting children and families, the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children was created. It addressed the gaps that have prevented the effective implementation of the UNCRC for millions of children worldwide who lack parental care or are at risk of losing it.

The guidelines are based on the principle of necessity - supporting children within the family of origin and only removing children from the family as a last resort (United Nations, 2009). In 2005, The United Nations adopted the guidelines on justice in matters involving child victims and witnesses of crime. Two categories of children benefit from the guidelines, children harmed by crime and children who have seen others harmed. UNICEF and UNODC created child-friendly version of the guidelines in 2005 so children could become informed and advocate for themselves.

However, the rhetorical nature of children's rights is more evident at the state and local level where children's lives are often removed from policies at the national level. In fact, there is huge gap in the implementation of domestic policies, domestic laws and budgets to actualise and directly impact children's lives (Reynaert, Bouverne-de-Bie, and Vandevelde, 2009; ACPF, 2013; Diptee, 2014). In the World Social Protection Report, the ILO (2014) emphasised that, despite their expansion, existing social protection policies do not sufficiently address the income security needs of children and families, not only in low- and middle-income countries with large child populations but in developed countries as well (ILO, 2014: 22). In fact, according to the report, some countries with adequate social protection policies have curtailed policies, in large part because of the 2008 economic crisis (Eurostat, 2014). However, the devastating effects of this on developing and low-income countries cannot be overemphasised.

Significant achievements in Africa have been recorded. National laws and policies are in place to protect children from violence and maltreatment in ten out of 52 African countries, and they have allocated adequate budgets for sectors targeting children while ensuring that those allocations are translated into better outcomes (ACPF, 2103). However, it is acknowledged that the policies and programs for family and parenting support remain under-researched (Daly, et-al, 2015).

In Nigeria, the Child Right Acts was adopted in 2003. Despite, the societal parameters that predispose children to harm and risks as mentioned above, only three have received partial attention by being identified as child protection vulnerabilities linked to social protection services (Jones, et-al, 2012). These are child trafficking – addressed in the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration Act in 2003, which works in partnership with UN agencies – child labour and domestic violence. Even after the implementation of the laws and initiatives, the situation for children has worsened in many of Nigeria's 36 states (Alemika, 2005). Other policies to ensure the well-being of

children include the 1982 national education policy, a system of 6-3-3-4; updated penal codes; and child health policies to address infant and maternal mortality. Recently, a draft national policy on child labour eradication was adopted (FRN, 2013).

In Portugal, national and local policies on child protection include policies to prevent and combat violence, with the involvement of various Government sectors, the Office of the Ombudsman and NGOs.

Targeted policies for children can be influenced by ideals of social investment, state involvement and/or individualization, which depend on the type of welfare regime (Gilbert et-al, 2011). The welfare state is specific only to developed countries, classified as liberal, democratic, corporatist Mediterranean and antipodes regime. Each welfare state determines whether policies should be targeted in meeting children's needs (Arts and Gellisen, 2002; Esping- Anderson, 2007). However, establishing justice across and within political institutions, as well as between citizens, is the basis for fair welfare policies. Specific examples include primary education, family supports, unemployment compensation, housing subsidies, childcare, health care and cash benefits. The cash benefits include child and family benefits, the minimum wage and nutritional subsidies (ILO, 2014).

Many countries have special laws pertaining to children in alternative care. These include the Children Leaving Act 2000 of England (Wade, 2011) and Title IV-E of the Social Security Act in the United States, which extends care to vulnerable children in care institutions (Courtney, Lee, & Perez, 2011).

These measures emphasise objective well-being is more than subjective well-being. Bradshaw (2015) explores the subjective well-being of children, which cannot be measured by social policy, but can indirectly be address through other policies, such as social security cash grants that address children's need for money. Bradshaw describes the matrix of subjective well-being as learning, self, environment, leisure, relationships and money. Although less attention has been paid to the subjective domains of child well-being in global policies, they are closely tied to objective domains of well-being.

2.4 Problems faced by children in developed and developing countries

The world continues to fail children despite the convenient benchmark of the UNCRC which is not yet a reality globally (Munro, 2008; Kaufman and Rizzin, 2009; Lundy, 2010; Gilbert, et-al, 2011). Diptee (2014) and Qvortrup (2006) stress the universal impracticality of ensuring the non-negotiable entitled rights of children, including education, health care and protection from all forms of violence. The problems faced by children is evident in the stigmatising terms used to identify them due to unresolved social problems in many societies. These include neglected, abandoned, street children, disabled children and young offenders, among others. Societies have failed to recognise the subjective well-being of children.

Analysing the common problems of children based on Bradshaw, et-al, (2007) the following eight categories of child well-being cast light on children's situations around the globe: the material situation, education, children's relationships, health, subjective well-being, civic participation, housing and risk and safety.

Material situation describes the economic conditions of children with focus on family income, child poverty, deprivation and workless families (Bradshaw, et-al, 2007). Child poverty impedes the actualisation of the rights of children towards holistic development as stated in the UNCRC (de Milliano, and Plavgo, 2014). Children in some of the rapidly developing countries are victims of the double burden of poverty and malnutrition, coupled with the spread of non-communicable diseases, (Bell, Donken &Marmot, 2013). This does not exclude developed countries. Bell, Donken &Marmot, (2013) allude to regions within countries where the majority of the populace experiences poverty, with groups who suffer greatly from discrimination and exclusion (Bell, Donken &Marmot, 2013). De Milliano, and Plavgo (2014) analysed multidimensional child poverty and deprivation in 30 sub-Sahara African countries representing 78% of the region's population. They found that 67% (240 million) of the 368 million children suffered from two to five characteristics of deprivation crucial to their survival and development. In Wales and England, socially and economically disadvantaged children are referred to as children in need or children in trouble due to deprivation, and many of them act out by engaging in criminal acts. This situation has made many of the children even more vulnerable as they are caught up in the criminal justice system and strict "no excuses" policies (Goldson, 1999). According to Eurostat (2014), an estimate of 27% and 28% of children in EU-27 and Portugal respectively are at risk of

poverty and social exclusion. Hungary, Romania and Malta have the highest percent. Only 10.6% suffer more severe material deprivation in Portugal (ibid.).

Furthermore, the commercialisation concept may be well understood under this category. The annotated bibliography of Auf der Mauer et-al (2003) revealed that globally, children continue to engage in labour especially in agriculture. Although Newman, (2004) and Diptee, (2014) challenge the dichotomy between western and non-western cultures, western cultures believe that children need to be cared for and nurtured without any expectation for gain. However, western children in the eighteenth century were the source of economic power to their parents until the passage of child labour laws and compulsory school attendance, which reduce the role of children as source of wealth creation (Lee, 2005; Hernandez, 1995). Yet child labour is not totally eradicated. The ILO convention of 1973, number 138, addressed the minimum age of employment, and the convention of 1999, provision number 182, was the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Across the globe, children are still engaged in economic activities, some of them hazardous, for profit or non-profit. It is reported that 264 million children worldwide are in different forms of employment of which 168 million (11%) are engaged in labour, and 85 million engaged in hazardous work detrimental to their well-being (ILO, 2013; ILO, 2013). The difficulty of identifying some of these children and estimating the hazards they encounter is due to the children's dispersal in rural society, inaccessibility of the location and the invisible nature of their work (ILO, 2014). Those hazardous jobs include agriculture, domestic service, mining and scavenging, manufacturing and construction, and other industries and services (Vikram, 2001; Guillermo, 2002; Auf der Mauer et-al, 2003; Ennew, 2003; Goulart & Bedi, 2007; Idris, 2013; ILO, 2012; ILO, 2014).

Vikram, P. (2001) reported the servitude of children under 14 in agricultural pest control in Egypt, despite a minimum age of employment of 15 years in neighbouring Israel and Palestine. In Sub-Sahara Africa, there is high incidence of child labour estimated at 21%, one out of five children, compared to Asia and Pacific countries with 9% (ILO, 2013; Human Watch, 2012). Human Rights Watch (2015) reported the high rate of Palestinian children who have dropped out of school to work in Israeli settlements and the hazardous conditions due to pesticides, dangerous equipment and extreme heat. The 38 children interviewed, 33 of whom did not finish school, worked low-wage jobs in farm settlements in the Jordan Valley due to desperate economic conditions faced by their families. A 2010 World Bank estimate of

children between 7 to 14 years in employment showed 21.2% in Nigeria and 3.6% in Portugal. Even though it seems insignificant, child labour exists in Portugal.

According to ILO (2014), Sub-Saharan Africa's child labour rate has decreased significantly, between 2002 and 2012 from 40% to 21%. In Nigeria, 15 million children under the age of 14 were working to support their families in 2006 (UNICEF, 2006). Five years later, an estimated 47% of children between 5 and 14 years were engaged in labour (NBS, 2011). The servitude of children denies them their rights, and at times the economic reasons for engaging in forced work are unclear. For instance, some children living with affluent relatives work as house maids. The employment of children as house maids from within some states, especially from Seme, close to Benin, and the importation of children from Niger is not uncommon in Nigeria. Some of these children attend school in the morning but engage in labour in the evening. Exploitative child labour exists in both the formal and informal sectors where children work as hairdressers, beggars' assistants, hawkers and as factory and agricultural workers under conditions characterized by long hours, hazardous environment and meagre remuneration (Wilson-Oyelaran, 1989). Nigerian children's poverty predisposes them to sexual exploitation, trafficking, accidents and violence, among other problems (Jones, et-al, 2012).

Related to housing, Chzhen, et-al (2014) uses the EU-MODA approach to reveal pre-school children's housing deprivation in descending order, from 86% in Romania to 33% in the United Kingdom and 15% in Finland. The problems are even more severe in Nigeria, where civil conflict has made many children homeless. According to a UNICEF Child Alert (2015), 800,000 children were displaced from their homes by the Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad group, also known as Boko Haram, in the northeast of Nigeria. Boko Haram's principal campaign is against western education, but its effects have extended to every aspect of children's lives in the region.

The health challenge in Africa is still on the increase. ACFP (2013) reported that African children still die from malaria and diarrhoea, with malnutrition contributing to 53% of all deaths in children under five in Africa. About 13% of females experienced genital mutilation between 2002 and 2012 (Statistics UNICEF, 2013). UNICEF (2015) reported that, children displaced by armed conflict in Northern Nigeria and living in the border regions – Lake Chad, Cameroon and Niger – are at risk of disease due to contaminated water and limited access to health facilities, as many health workers have fled. For instance, in 2014, the insurgency prevented about 1 million children from receiving polio vaccine, and 2 million

out of the 5 million children in northeast Nigeria were malnourished. Of them, 18% were above the emergency threshold of malnutrition. Cholera remains another threat, with 37,000 cases and 760 deaths (UNICEF, 2015). ACPF (2013) estimated that only 30 million of Nigeria's 100 million children have access to education, clean water, shelter and health care. Participation of children cannot still be guaranteed when their voice is still missing in Africa. While an acceptable level of participation has been achieved to an extent in Europe (Sinclair, 1998: Healy, 1998; Young, et-al 2014), barriers of language and communication skills remain, and only by conveying the real meaning of children's experiences can we ensure their perspectives in full participation (Skivenes & Strandbu, 2006; Ulvik, 2014).

According to Bradshaw, et-al (2007), the domains of education include educational attainment, participation in childcare and post-compulsory education and employment outcomes. However, global access to education is still influenced by gender, class and location (Cahill, 2015).

The gap between male and female literacy rates in Africa appears to be widening, with a high rate of incompletion despite the implementation of basic school rights (The World Bank, 2010; ACPF, 2013). In rural areas, young people have less access to education, the quality of education is poorer and adult illiteracy is higher (The World Bank, 2010). In fact, it is estimated that about 32 million children in Sub-Saharan Africa were not attending primary school in 2013, compared to 170,000 children in the Eurozone (The World Bank, 2015).

In Nigeria, only few children attend pre-primary school, with a gross enrolment ratio (GER) of 14% for both males and females (Statistic UNICEF, 2013). Data of The World Bank (2010) reveal that approximately 8 million primary school age children were not enrolled in school. A significant reduction is noted in the primary school net enrolment ratio (NER) from 81% in 1999 to 62% in 2013 (Statistics UNICEEF, 2013; The World Bank, 2015). However, with the available children who have access to primary school, their participation reveals that, there is difference between the administrative data estimated at 79%, and the survey data estimated at 96% with regard to the retention rate to the last primary grade between 2008 and 2012 (Statistic UNICEF, 2013).

The only available data for secondary school participation is the net attendance ratio estimated at 54% for both males and females (Statistic UNICEF, 2013). The explanation for this discrepancy at both pre-primary through secondary may be due to privatisation of education from both pre-primary through post-primary education, due in large part to the

poor quality of government educational systems. However, only few families can afford the cost of such education from pre-primary to post-primary. As labour statistics show, access to education is not a requirement for immediate employment. Statistic of UNICEF (2013) reveals that the literacy rate is higher for males (75%), than for females (58%). Regarding location, NPC and ICF Macro (2009) estimated that in the rural areas of Nigeria, 48% of females had no education compared to 28% of males between the ages of 6 and 9 years. According to NBS (2011), 34% of children from the poorest households, as against 94% of children from the richest household, were in primary school. UNESCO (2014) estimated that 10 million children in Nigeria are not attending school. In six geo-political zones in Nigeria the northerners are less educated than the southerners. Inequality in education still exists across locations, age, gender and social class.

In Portugal, the GER of relevant age group was estimated at 86% in pre-primary, showing a 3% between 20010 and 2013 while in Nigeria, the only available data as at 2013 reveal 13% (Data The World Bank, 2014).

Turning now to Portugal specifically, the GER for relevant age group was estimated at 106 in primary, 113 in secondary, and 69 in tertiary. It is reported that between 2010 and 2013, about 19,000 children were not attending school (Data The World Bank, 2013; The World Bank, 2015). However between 1999 and 2013, there has been a slight increase of 2% in net enrolment of primary school children from 97% to 99% (Data The World Bank, 2013). Perista and Silva (2011) estimate the school drop-out rate at 14%. The mean age of leaving school or other training equivalent to schooling is 19 years for both male and female, and students often continue or return, depending on their financial power or their place in the labour market (Statistics Portugal, 2009).

As in the rest of Africa, poverty is a major barrier to schooling in Nigeria. For instance, female children in the northern part of Nigeria are generally less educated due to preference for male child. The situation of girls clamours for attention, as they lack shelter and education. Discrimination against children in education exists around the world, based on class, culture and national origin among the Roma (gypsies) and ethnic minority and undocumented families across Europe and United States, Palestinian Arab children in Israel and the low caste children in Asia (Human Rights Watch, 2001; Furlong and Cartmel, 2007).

The category of risk and safety captures the conditions and behaviours that place children at risk (Bradshaw, et-al, 2007). The level of vulnerability of children and the causes vary across countries. However, the three broad domains of risks factors common to children

and youth include the individual children, family and society (Ungar, 2007; Ungar, 2008). Children and youth in Western Australia are faced with myriads of social ills including poverty, domestic violence, drug abuse, teenage pregnancy and poor school attendance (Young, et-al, 2014). In Portugal, the Comissão Nacional de Protecção das Crianças e Jovens em Risco (CNPCJR, 2007) reported that many children are exposed to emotional abuse and physical abuse – 3526 and 2471 cases, respectively in that year – with 56 cases reported of sexual abuse. According to Perista and Silva (2011), the main situations reported to social security requiring intervention include negligence (36%), exposure to deviant models of behaviour, school-drop out, physical abuse, crime, abandonment and sexual abuse. Cardoso et-al (2013) studied children's relationships and bullying. Costa & Pereira (2010) found that both successful and failing students are victims of bullying in Portugal.

Unexpected natural disasters and surrounding traumas can predispose children to risk. Exenberger, and Juen (2014) studied children raised in care, and children living with their families, after experiencing tsunamis in India. The long-term effect of trauma due to tsunami had a devastating effect on the domains of economic, cognitive, psychological and cultural behaviour. Children took to flight at the sight of any event or scene associated with the disaster. Before intervention took place, the events associated with the Tsunamis remained a haunting shadow for both categories of children.

ACPF (2013) emphasises that crises in African countries are often characterised by rampant child death, extreme forms of violence with impunity for the perpetrators and limited access to essential services. Children in Africa experience multiple forms of abuse and neglect, vagrancy, kidnapping, sexual abuse, hawking, abandonment, destitution and exploitation (Ebigbo, 2003; Pereda et-al, 2009). In Nigeria, about 17 million children are orphans and vulnerable children, out of which about 9 million and 2 million are orphans based on prevalence globally, and HIV/AIDS respectively (Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development – FMWA&SD, 2008; UNICEF 2008; Federal Ministry of Health, 2008 in Country Brief Nigeria, 2009). Furthermore, education in Nigeria, is now a source of risk for children, especially girls, where attendance in school could expose them to threats and violence. In 2014, 276 girls were abducted by Boko Haram in a secondary school in the northern part of Nigeria. Despite international pressure, these children have yet to be found. The implication of this is that education for girls remains even more of a challenge, though the threat extends to all children. UNICEF (2015) describes the Boko Haram insurgency as an attack on education and a violation against children that has predisposed

them to diseases, emotional distress, termination of educational pursuits and malnutrition. Other major reasons for an increasing number of orphans and vulnerable children include accidents, deaths at childbirth, HIV/AIDS and military conflicts (World Bank, 2002).

Adeboye and Ariyo (2011) study the perception of mothers' anger on 159 secondary school teenagers' psychosocial development. The implication of this is that teenager's experience of physical abuse, emotional abuse and/or verbal abuse can lead to poor self-worth and dependency on others. Children are unsafe when they cannot express themselves, and this may affect their psychosocial behaviour in the long run.

Eni-Olorunda, and Adeboye (2014) found the major cause for the exclusion of children with intellectual disability by regular teachers in Nigeria to be overpopulation of children in the regular classroom, making inclusion difficult. This means that some children are at risk of being victimised by and unsafe when with teachers who lack the special skills to teach the children. Jones, et-al (2012) allude to the fact that in Nigeria, the economic and social factors that predispose children to vulnerability can be summarised as the key drivers of child-related risks and vulnerabilities. These include poverty and economic vulnerability, a major cause of urbanisation and migration, harmful traditional practices based on cultural values such as female genital mutilation, early marriage, domestic violence and family fragmentation, gender discrimination, health shocks and chronic illnesses, environmental degradation, conflict and violence, social exclusion and discrimination, family bereavement and other discrimination against children (Alemika et-al, 2005; Jones, et-al, 2012). For instance, 19% and 39% children are married out by ages 15 and 18 respectively (Statistics UNICEF, 2013). From the above explanations, it is evident that children in Nigeria experience difficulty and are faced with many challenges during childhood, beyond what a child can bear.

In Uganda, street children are vulnerable to violence in varying degree based on sex, orphanhood, early marriage and being infected with HIV or any other diseases (Child, et-al, 2014; Walakira et-al, 2014). Ennew (2003) compared the situation of street children in Latin America and Africa Walakira et-al, stressed gender and age as risk factors for children's vulnerability, where boys are more often physically abused and girls more often sexually and emotionally abused. In addition, there is increase in the use of children as soldiers in Uganda, Rwanda, Congo, Burma, Afghanistan, Sudan and Central African Republic (Human Rights Watch, 2002; Child Soldiers International, 2015). Child Soldiers International (2015) reported the illegal recruitment of poor and uneducated boys by Myanmar army in Burma.

Recruiting children as soldiers exposes them to assaults, victimisation in defence of their country and denial of the joy of childhood. Ngunshi (2011) discusses the harmful practices of breast ironing against children in the 200 ethnic groups in Cameroon. The problems associated with breast ironing include eradication of one or two of the breast and the possibility of breast cancer is very high.

Dahlburg and Dzhindzhikhashvili (2015) reported the study of Horgan on the recruitment of children in their early and late years of youth as fighters for the Islamic state from the perspective of conflict struggle. Going to war at such a youthful stage may not only pose physical threats but also encourages risky and unsafe behaviour when the youth are in search of identity, exploration and gratification of their impulses.

2.4.1 Available social protection services to address prevalent common problems among children

The demands for paradigm shifts to reach the grassroots level with strict time limits and goals is no longer effective. Rather, each society seeks to take a gradual, stepwise approach to fulfilling children's needs (Reynaert, Bouverne-de-Bie, and Vandevelde, 2009). For instance, the use of community development approach Young, et-al, 2014). Services are rendered to children at the international level according to the UNCRC by international organisations such as International Social Service (ISS), which advocates and campaigns for the rights of children and caters to children with social problems across borders due to international migration or displacement. The SOS Children's Villages provides enabling environments for at-risk children through provision of care, education, and health in about 134 countries (SOS Children's Villages International, ISS, 2009).

The services of welfare states are generally available for children and youth in the global north. Gilbert, et-al. (2004) classified the services as family service oriented or child protection systems. Each country renders service based on their welfare state policies and institutions. In the neoliberal approach of the United States and Australia relatively little is spent on family policy. These two have the lowest percentage of expenditure –0.6% of GDP. Childcare services are selective because the market is strengthened to promote efficient allocation of resources for the maximum benefits referred to as maximum wealth creation. Children of all ages are commodified, with the lowest degree of defamiliarization. On the other hand, 14% of the world's countries offer universal childcare characterized by higher

degrees of decommodification and defamiliarization, emphasizing a strong government role that deters stigmatising those who use social services (Esping-Anderson, 2009; Gilbert et-al, 2011; ILO, 2014). Non-contributory means-tested, contributory employment related schemes and non-contributory employment related schemes accounted for 18%, 18% and 9% respectively (ILO, 2014).

Efforts to meet the needs of these children and prevent the possible negative impact of intervention have led to innovations in child welfare services, including family group conferencing, looking after children, kinship adoption, foster care systems and other care systems of care based on culture in a bid to share their responsiveness to children's needs (Ungar, 2007). The facilities and spending of each country on social policy, and other welfare needs of children such as education and health care, among others, differs. This is contingent not on GDP per capita but upon the strength of the welfare state, and political commitments to putting children as priorities of policy agendas and budgets (ACPF, 2013; Klocke, Clair & Bradshaw, 2014). For instance, Rwanda and Lesotho were ranked among the 10 child-friendliest in African countries despite their relatively low GDP (e.g. ACPF, 2013). However, African governments are still not investing adequately in children. The latest ILO World social protection report (ILO, 2014), advocates for 75 countries to offer child and family cash benefits, with 108 countries having already achieved this.

On the European continent, concern for children raised out of their biological home has attracted the attention of the Council of Europe. Their response to the UNCRC and the UN Guidelines for Children in Alternative Care is evident through the framework of guides, booklets and documents concerning children and young people in care – Discover your rights, Quality4Children Standard for Out-of Home Child Care, Securing Children's rights: A guide for professional care workers (Council of Europe, 2006; 2009; 2013). The recommendations include attention to children's rights, social services friendly to children and families and concern for the rights of children living in residential institutions (Council of Europe, 2005; 2011). Child-friendly social services are addressed in three levels - the general services to meet physiological needs and other preventive and supportive programmes, the specialised socialised services to provide intervention for immediate emergency needs of children exposed to harm, violence or abuse and lastly, intensive social services available for children in need of alternative care. However, in Portugal, these services are rendered respectively and in collaboration with the pertinent entities, CPCJ and courts.

The practicality of the response of the Council of Europe was strategized by collaborating with the widely acknowledged SOS Children Villages International in the production of a captivating booklet with attractive pictures, stories and informative text for children and young people in alternative care to know and learn more about their rights. Their goal is to advocate and promote the rights of children and youth in care system, while mutually building and maximizing the capacities of care professionals, and to inform the development of policy and services.

The collaboration of the three international care organisations in Europe including SOS Children's Villages International, IFCO (International Foster Care Organisation) and FICE (Féderation Internationale des Communautés Educatives) towards improving the holistic developments of the children, and the young people raised outside their biological families, resulted in the development of 18 standards to guarantee their quality of lives called Quality4Children (Q4C) standards. Children in care go through three processes – decision-making and admission, care-taking and leaving-care. This implies a cumulative and practical response to meet the needs of children in need of intensive social services as recommended by the Council of Europe. Intensive social services are solely available for children whose need for alternate care becomes urgent and/or indispensable (Council of Europe, 2011). These processes are embedded in 18 standards of Q4C.

The first four standards address the decision-making and admission process. They give support to the family of children in need of care, encourage children's participation and include their parents in the professional decision-making process. The care-taking process is embedded in standards 5 to 13 of the Q4C. This involves preparation and implementation of the child, group of siblings or youth's transition into care by developing an individual plan for each child. This individual care plan serves as a guide to meet the holistic needs of children while placed in t appropriate care. Standard 10 specifically expects that a mutual relationship and understanding exists between the qualified caregivers, and children in either emergency, temporary institutions, foster homes or residential institutions (Quality4Childen, 2007) which is expected to be close or similar to the original social settings of the children with the goal of preparing the children for independent living. However, while in care, it is expected that the child or youth maintain close contact with the family of origin. Lastly, the leaving-care process is embedded in standards 15 to 18 of the Q4C. The focus here is to give necessary support to, and carry children along through, their participation in the well-conducted preparation process. All these processes represent a collaborative effort of the

parents or guardians, the child or youth, the child protection services, the care organisation and the caregivers towards a smooth period in, during and after care.

In the global south the available protection services are provided by NGOs and international organisations. For instance in Nigeria, UNICEF, USAID, UNFPA, NGOs (SOS Children's Villages International affiliations) provide services to children. The highest of the service available to orphans and vulnerable children in descending order is provided by 77% NGOs including faith based organisations, 9% contribution each from governmental and community based organisations, and 1% each from umbrella, private not-for-profit organisations and others (Country Brief Nigeria, 2009).

2.4.1.1   Child protection systems in Portugal

History reveals that child protection existed since the establishment of Misericórdias - institutions that took care of poor and homeless children in 1498 by Queen Leonor (Amaro, 2008). According to this sociologist, the first law on child protection was approved in 1911, and by 1925 the nation had judicial institutions for youths at risk, complementing the 1911 law by Decree 10767. A 1944 law changed the name to Minor's Courts. Portugal has four tiers of government – the national, districts (18), the municipalities (300) and the parishes (about 4000).

Services put in place in order to protect children against violence have a legal and institutional basis at the international and national levels. About 18 international instruments had been signed and ratified. According to Amaro (2008), some of the international instruments are the European Convention on the Adoption of Children ratified by presidential decree no 7/90, The Hague Convention on the Competent Authorities and Applicable Law in Minors' Affairs Protection, approved for ratification by Decree-Law no. 48494, of 22 July 1968, the European Convention on the Legal Status of Children Born Out of Wedlock, ratified on 7 May 1982, the Convention on Contact Concerning Children, signed on 15 May 2003, Convention on Cyber-crime, signed on 23 January 2001, European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, ratified on 29 March 1990, Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse signed on 25 October 2007, Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, Signed on 16 May 2005 and The Hague Convention on Child Protection and Cooperation on International Adoption, of 29 may 1993, signed by Portugal on 26 August 1999, among others.

The national instruments include the Penal Code revised in 2007, which included the prohibition of corporal punishment to punish child perpetrators, and the Protection of Children and Young People in Danger no. 147/99. This law brought about the creation of the CPCJ, under the provisions of Law No 147/97 in 2001. It is a non-judiciary official body that has the sole responsibility of promoting child welfare, protecting children and addressing factors that may endanger the holistic development of children and youth. The law brought about two other significant dimensions – change in the role of the MP as the statutory body responsible for the legal rights and interests of children and youths at risk and the monitoring of the activities of CPCJ; and the implementation of the new protection model that involves community participation and collaboration with the state. The existing 300 CPCJs work at the level of municipality together with social security, education, health, labour and NGOs related to childhood and youth. However, the law added additional three years to the universal age of childhood, defining a child or youth as any person under 21 years of age. In order to function effectively, the CPCJs serve as intermediary, directly relating with the MP, courts and CNCPJR at the state and national level, and with entities in the fields of childhood and youth, social security, police, and public and private organizations.

The intervention model is represented as a pyramid with three levels of intervention. However, before intervention take place, members of the society have the power to report any situations that could predispose harm or impede the holistic development of children and youth to the entities, police, CPCJ or court. The bottom part of the pyramid represents the entities and institutions involve in promoting and protecting the rights of children and youth. They implement protective measures effective in the natural living conditions including support among parents, support from another family, trust for a suitable person or support for independent living. These measures address the physiological needs of children, youth and their families. For instance, the Child Care Institute (hereafter: IAC) is a private NGO that provides support and defends the right of children through the running of a telephone hotline called child S.O.S and the organisation of activities in the area of health care.

If intervention is needed, the police and judicial authorities then communicate the situation of to CPCJ. At the middle of the pyramid is the CPCJ, which takes up cases beyond the entities ability. At the top of the pyramid is the court. The CPCJ communicates to the prosecutor the child's need to be removed. The court comes into play when the CPCJ fails to obtain parental or custodian consent for the child's removal. However, the CPCJ and court decides the measures of placement, which can either be to place the child in foster care or in

an institution. In an institutional settings, temporary shelter is available for children but is stay is bound by maximum of six months duration based on the provisional application (Perista and Silva, 2011). After six months, the case of the child and family is re-examined. If the child or youth cannot return to a safe place with parents or guardians, he or she is provided with future placement such as adoption or a permanent placement by the court, since the CPCJ may lack the means to provide such appropriate protective measures. In fact in such situations of dire need, the court has to decide to trust the selected foster carer or the institution, with the goal of future adoption. However, the CPCJ, and the court are responsible for the implementation of the protective measures.

The 10 principles guiding intervention, which each level has to apply in descending order, are to ensure the child or youth's best interest and privacy, early intervention, minimum intervention, proportionality and timeliness, parental responsibility, family prevalence, obligation of information to the child, youth and parent figure, mandatory hearing and participation of the child, youth and parent figure, and subsidiarity. Subsidiarity means that the intervention proceeds in succession from the entities to the CPCJ and finally to the courts' involvement; a child's case may not get to CPCJ or court, for instance, if it can be handled at the community level. This reduces the probability of involving the court and the main reason for its position at the top of the pyramid.

Other programmes in place for children are the Initiative for Childhood and Adolescence (INIA), which is a global programme that targets the rights of the child in collaboration with organisations and ministries involved in the field of childhood and youth; health programmes; a hotline run by the Office of Ombudsman; safe school programmes and other specific measures to support families and children (Amaro, 2008).

2.4.1.2 Child protection systems in Nigeria

Historically, social welfare in Nigeria evolved from missionary period through the colonial period, until the present era of government and philanthropist (Irele 2011). However, the period of the British colonial master in 1943 was said to be exploitative through the passage of Children and Young People's Act (CYPA, and not until the post-colonial period were social services directed to aid the people of the country (Representing Children Worldwide (RCW), 2005; Jones, et-al, 2012). CYPA relates to primarily to juvenile justice administration, which is run by oppressive penal codes.

Recently, the age of youth is between 18 and 35 years (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2009). Thus, children are below 18 years. In response to the policies made at the national level to ensure the rights of the child, measures were put in place in three areas – child trafficking, child labour and child domestic violence. However, enforcement of the appropriate measures, the awareness of non-functional measures and prosecution of perpetrators are major challenges with policies on trafficking, domestic violence and corporal punishment (Alemika, et-al, 2005; Jones et-al, 2012). The implication is that there is no legal foundation for evolving robust policies and programmes in relations to the rights of children in a large number of states. The report on the country's situation alludes to the fact that despite the visibility of the situation – the exposure of children to lives on the streets, victims of armed conflicts and insurgencies, lack of parental support and physiological need – the provisions of the CRA are not taken seriously by the authorised law enforcement agencies, let alone enforced. There is also a dearth of information on the states that have adopted the child rights acts (Alemika, et-al, 2005). The authors allude to the fact that the enforcement of child protection legislation can operate in an effective way, especially when the situation is very critical and devastating for children. For instance, in 2003 UNICEF collaborated with the police, immigration and NGOs to rescue and repatriate about 300 children from quarries in Ogun state back to their home country, Benin (UNICEF, 2006).

Nigeria has three tiers of governments – Federal Government (hereafter: FG), States Government (36) including the Federal Capital territory, and Local Government Areas (LGA, 774) levels. However, each tier is responsible for the protection of children in different measures.

At the Federal level, the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs (FMW) is responsible for the coordination of services to ensure the implementation of the Child Rights Acts adopted into law in 2003. The child department of FMWASD has three units, and the name of each depicts their functions - survival and social services, participation and protection, and the orphans and vulnerable children. They are responsible for ensuring the implementation of the rights of the child, through advocacy, sensitisation programmes, monitoring and evaluation. The national department for children also engages in intermittent research and international reporting of policy developments and the National Plan of Action. Its responsibility cuts across pertinent Ministries – Justice, Health and Education at both Federal and State levels – civil society and NGOs.

Jones, et-al. (2012) argue the linkages between child protection and social protection services regarding three key child protection deficits: child trafficking, harmful forms of child labour and child domestic abuse. It is acknowledged that there is still a huge gap between the national policy and social assistance for vulnerable children (Jones, 2011). The areas of child protection vulnerabilities of priority given attention are child trafficking, child abuse and child labour (Jones, et-al, 2012). However key drivers of protection for child-related risks are majorly economically and politically influenced.

The state level differs from the Federal level structure. The child welfare department is embedded in the social welfare department. Possible reasons for this could be the diverse ethnicity, religion and financial resources. Marsden and Guyer-Miller (2011) found great inconsistency in terms of capacity and functions at the Federal and state levels in social welfare workforce structures as well as across states and across local government areas. For instance, while it is the role of the LGAs to provide primary school education, post-secondary education and health can either be provided by the State or the Federal Government or both (Kanu and Umoh (2013).

Along with relative and absolute poverty in the country, the social welfare system is weak, if it functions at all. This may be due to the collectivistic nature of the society where extended families are responsible for the care of the child, and abnormal situations are accepted as normal – for instance, children hawking in the streets. There is no relationship between social security such as police, and children. Social work is focused more on orphans and vulnerable children as well as juvenile offenders. In Nigeria, policy frameworks have often neglected children's vulnerability to violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect (Jones, 2011).

The social protection strategies and policy frameworks have to a great extent neglected the social sources of risk in the context of high rates of poverty and vulnerability (Jones et-al, 2012). In fact, some communities and rural areas are at the receiving end due to lack of resources and ineffectiveness of social welfare offices (OVC, 2007; OVC, 2008). Given the significant limitations of governmental responses to child protection vulnerabilities, NGO and international agency efforts are important to consider as they engage in public programmes and campaigns to enlighten the public (Jones et-al, 2012). It is acknowledged that OVC care, support and protection services are not well integrated with planning processes at national, sub-national and community levels.

According to reports from the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Constitutional Rights Project (CRP), Penal Reform International (PRI) and UNICEF (2002), Nigeria's juvenile justice administration is still influenced by the penal system of the British – Nigeria's former colonial master. This makes the juvenile justice system weak and gives little preference to children. Two categories of children in contact with juvenile justice are those in need of protection and institutional care because they are offenders, vagrant or uncontrollable by parents, and those children who are faced with poverty, double or single orphans, mentally ill, lacking education, in poor physical health, abused or neglected (NHRC, CRP, PRI, and UNICEF, 2002; Bella, Atilola and Omigbodun, 2010). However, at the State level, most residential correctional youth institutions serve as punitive labour camps where children become hardened when they come out (NHRC, CRP, PRI, and UNICEF, 2002). The harsh rehabilitation system and lack of social welfare makes children more vulnerable, rather than reformed and rehabilitated (UNICEF, 2007). UNICEF (2011) describes the child justice administration as fraught and dysfunctional, with such a plethora of distortions that it is counter-productive and operates in conflict with the protection rights of children. Regardless of how and why they entered the system, children and youth are treated as criminals rather than as young people in need of assistance and rehabilitation.

2.4.2 Informal social capital in Nigeria and Portugal

In Nigeria, the major source of social capital is the family, with much less coming from non-governmental organizations. Nigeria is a collectivistic society, where negligence and other forms of abuse are seen as normal, or at least not the concern of outsiders, and kinship groups are responsible for resolving situations in the family. For instance, it is seen as shameful to report parents even when children are at risk. This has weakened the social protection systems that do exist. Government welfare services are more involved in advocacy and sensitization programmes and in the care of juvenile offenders in the juvenile home. Nigeria was identified as one of the 41 countries that have no legal programme anchored in legislation for children; rather, it offers general programme (ILO, 2014). The most prominent social assistance in Nigeria for children is basic school education, with low quality. The majority of children at the grassroots level have no access to sufficient education. A 2009 survey on child health indicators in the rural part of Nigeria, found grievances against the government due to lack of drinking water, health services and schools. ILO (2014:44),

reported that Africa, Asia and the Pacific offer non-contributory programmes that are not yet well enough developed to cover substantial numbers of children and families, as many of these programmes remains at a "pilot" stage with limited geographical coverage.

In Portugal, Aboim, Vasconcelos, and Wall (2013) assert the importance of welfare provisions as opposed to informal relationships, arguing that the latter may encourage social inequalities as those who need the support most may get less and it does not compensate for social differentiation. Barwin –Legros, (2002) argue that formal support cannot replace intergenerational family relationship. They encourage closer ties that are able to compensate for crises and budget deficits in welfare states and in situations of increased life expectancies (Bawin-Legros, 2002). However, regarding the dropout rate of school children between the ages of 11 and 14, the subsidiarity principle is often not fully respected (Perista and Silva, 2011).

2.5   Foster care in its unequal modalities

The family remains the first agent of socialisation for children before other institutions come into play. This is alluded to Munro's (2008) thought that, the best place to nurture a child is the family environment. However, some children are raised outside the domain of parental care. United Nations Children's Funds (UNICEF, 2011) describes all children who are not being cared for by at least one parent or legal guardian as candidates for alternative care. Gilbert, et-al (2011) describes the care available for such children as either family-oriented service, child protection oriented systems or the proposed child focus service that seeks the best interest of the child. These are services available to vulnerable children in developed countries based on their welfare programs. In developing countries, the majority of vulnerable children are helped by NGOs, since not all countries can afford the cost of foster care. This is specifically stated based on the competency of the country or agency in the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (General Assembly of the United Nations, 2009). Munro, et-al's (2011) exploration of the UNCRC state party reports, guidelines and concluding observations of 15 countries reveal limited attention to promoting the needs of children in alternative care.

Alternative care is a contextualised concept that differs from one country to the other, though acknowledged in Article 20 of the UNCRC – that alternative care is responsible for providing care for children deprived of family settings. The alternative care can be formal or

informal. The formal care includes residential care – group care or orphanages – and family-based care – foster families, kinship care, or professional non-foster families (Courtney, et-al, 2011; Zeira, & Benbenishty, 2011; Stein, & Verweijen-Slamnescu, 2012). The children in these categories are described as looked after children, children in need or children in out-of-home placement, depending on the country. The family-oriented care includes the SOS Children's Village; however, kinship care is more common in the Mediterranean where it is often the largest percentage of care. For instance, in Spain kinship care is estimated at 86%, which is more common than other foster care (Del Valle, 2011).

Researchers have found that the experiences of children while in placement differs and may generate different outcomes. The level of support differs for each individual. While survival and provision of basic material needs is still a challenge for some children in care in Africa, formal support is readily available in varying measures for children in care in developed countries (Bailey et-al, 2011; Stein, & Verweijen-Slamnescu, 2012; Hoger and Sjöblom, 2014). The distribution of resources to children in care is unequal. Wade, (2011) and Courtney, Lee, and Perez, (2011) found that younger children are being attended to adequately with regards to their needs and assessment, while those above 16 and 17 years of age in England and United States are inadequately provided for.

Foster care has been shown to give support to children more than residential care or other care settings (Courtney et-al, (2011). Stein, and Verweijen-Slamnescu (2012) found that young people in family-oriented care tend to be more privileged and informed at the point of departure than their counterparts in residential care. Young people still in foster care also are more likely to have access to formal support.

Luster et-al, (2010) found that personal agency, contextual supports and impact of past traumatic experiences were major determinants for successful living in foster care. For instance, some children with multiple placements, coupled with past experience of previous alternative care, experienced cumulative negative effects, and behavioural problems, which may have reduced the support received (Dumaret, 1988; Höjer and Sjblom, 2010; Courtney, et-al, 2011; SOS Children's Villages International, 2010). Wade (2011), found that unaccompanied asylum seekers in England were better-off in terms of utilising educational and personal opportunities than citizens in care.

2.6   Foster youth transition to adulthood

The four typologies of youth transitions was invented by Brannen, Nilsen and Smithson (2002). These typologies reveal the silent discourse on social structure and the effect of gender, social class, ethnicity and context on youth trajectories (Edwards & Willers, 2010). Nevertheless, globally, there is a dearth of available research and international collaboration on transitioning and transition experiences of young people in foster care into adulthood (Stein & Munro, 2008; Courtney, et-al, 2011; Bailey, Loehrke, & French, 2011; Stein, & Verweijen-Slamnescu, 2012; Höjer & Sjolom, 2014; Stein, 2014; Singer & Berzin, 2015). Berzin, Singer and Hokanson (2014), define transition, also called emancipation, or aging-out as marked by a complete end to a child's time in care, and the end in receipt of service. Berzin, et-al. (2014) found that youth in care exhibited Arnett's five distinct characteristics of emerging adulthood – feeling in-between adolescence and adulthood, instability, identity exploration, self-focus and optimism. Stein (2008) argued that there is similarity among care leavers and children of working class, black and ethnic minority backgrounds. Berzin, et-al. (2014) allude to the common characteristics of this group that makes them vulnerable. However, Standing (2011; 2013) describes the majority of youth to be among the emerging endangered class called precariat. According to him, youth in this category, even those with education, are frustrated due to lack economic security. They are insecure people living bits and pieces-lives, and are unable to access societal rights despite insecure job. This also describes the foster youth, whose precarious early adulthood of financial dependence creates a mentality of just getting by (Brannen et-al, 2002; Edwards & Willers, 2010). In Europe and Central Asia, characteristics of care leavers in various alternative care is that of dependence on benefits, employment in low-skilled jobs and a low standard of living (Lerch and Stein, 2010; Stein and Verweijen-Slamnescu, 2011). Ludy-Dobson (1996) found in the United States a similarity between youth in foster care and the general populations in terms of educational outcomes. However, other researchers have found the overall experiences of youth who have aged out of care to be more challenging in outcomes, and of great concern simply as a result of their accelerated path into adulthood (Berzin, et-al, 2014; Singer and Berzin, 2015; Bailey, et-al, 2011).

2.6.1 Life course approach (LAC), strength perspectives and cumulative advantages and disadvantages (CAD)

Research unveiling the nexus of previous life experiences and transition to adulthood from a life course perspective is scarce. The markers of adulthood for youth can no longer be the determined by the normative pattern of the traditional transitional structure. However, while some life course theorists still believe this is the trajectory, a majority of life course theorists, and social scientists believe it is dependent on socio-cultural, individualistic and experiential indicators (Shanahan, 2000; Brannen, et-al, 2002; Arnett, 2004; Courtney,2011; Luster, et-al, 2010; Nielsen, et-al, 2012; Höjer and Sjöblom, 2014; Singer and Berzin, 2015). All these indicators allude to Elder's (1998) life course principles. In general, the individual, system and contextual factors all contribute to the extent that an individual youth's needs are met. Meeting those needs has the effect of boosting success, especially for those who consistently assert their rights and request what they need (Courtney, et-al, 2011).

The life course approach reveals the nexus between the past, present and possible future pathways of youth transitions from care to adulthood. The life course approach is an emerging paradigm that can unveil the impact of structural parameters on the social trajectory of youth. Elder (1994:3) describes it as a multilevel phenomenon, ranging from structured pathways through social institutions and organisations to the social trajectories of individuals and their developmental pathways. However, for this study, five principles of life course approach will be delved into with its indicators. These are socio-historical and geographical locations of youth, the timing of lives, linked lives, human agency – individual indicator that focuses on personal relationships, and past shaping the future pathways.

2.6.1.1 Socio-cultural and experiential indicators - socio-historical and geographical locations of youth

Elder (1998), emphasises the impact of ever-changing societal parameters on a life span, which gives it behavioural continuity and change. To better understand an individual youth's life, the year and location of birth is indispensable due to the ever-changing society in which each youth is born. However, individual youths take on different trajectories – or sequences of events – in life. With the event history, one can identify the significant experiences of youth born in Nigeria and Portugal. The event history is described here to mean the causes for placing children in foster care – poor family background, orphaning, war, conflicts,

violence, neglect, abuse, dependency and parental alcoholism among others were the principal causes for children to be placed in out of home care (Dumaret, 1988; Courtney et-al, 2011; & Wade, 2011). These causes have generated different outcomes for children (Santee, 2013).

The ordering and spacing of events for youth in care is different from the traditional transitional structure, which starts with leaving the family for either education or marriage (Jonathan, 2007). Rather, it is transition first into care for safety and protection, with children arriving there at different times and locations before they can proceed to other events that can make their life meaningful. The experiential indicator comes into play, describing the role of foster care in preparing youth for adulthood (Singer and Berzin, 2015). This implies that the traditional life course structures of individualisation of life course are not universal, because youth in care are not in care by choice rather by life chance. This implies that children in care are not there by choice, but due to unbearable or risky family circumstances beyond their control. According to Coleman (1988) foster care is a source of social capital existing in relationships. It is part of the social structure established in order to facilitate children's protection against actions by the family of origin that have placed the child at risk, and further provide what these children lack. In fact, according to Singer and Berzin (2015), the foster care experience is regarded as the turning point, but not without its attendant cumulative advantages and disadvantages (CAD).

According to Singer and Berzin (2015), the cumulative disadvantages occur when there are negative events and influences, while the cumulative advantages are associated with positive outcome for youth. Various studies have directly or indirectly use CAD to examine the heterogeneity of youth in foster care, their preparation and support and the effect of early transition to early or emerging adulthood. Related to the positive outcome of cumulative advantage is the strength- based perspective. Saleeby (2006) describes this perspective as capable of restoring some balance in understanding the conditions of youth, through the recognition of and focus on the strengths, capacities and less focus on problems of children in care. He further describe the elements of this perspective to include ability to make decisions, possibilities and expectations, resilience.

To focus on strength means to look out for the traits of resilience in and around the children. Rutter defines resilience as the good outcomes despite experiences that presents the major risks (Rutter, 2000). This implies that regardless of the tendencies of the experience of children and youth in care to place them at a disadvantaged position, there is a level of

resilience in each of them. However, this may be conspicuous or inconspicuous at the present. Thus, the reality of the future among youths cannot be outside their strengths and capacities.

Research has shown that aging out of care not only predisposes young people to difficulty and challenges but they also enter adulthood too early to achieve stability, due to bureaucratic and institutional factors of age limits. As a result, many have poor outcomes in different domains of well-being (Osgood, Foster and Courtney, 2010; Courtney et-al, 2011; Bailey, et-al, 2011; Höjer & Sjöblom, 2011; Jones, 2014). Researchers have identified the features of good preparation in leaving care as building networks of social support, stable supportive placements, effective planning, mental alertness, acquisition of life and practical skills and educational qualification and pursuits. Wade (2011) argues that the commencement of preparation and planning on admission of children into care cannot be overemphasised; however, children's immediate needs and their age on admission may make this unrealistic. Children admitted close to legislated age of leaving care may not have adequate time for preparation. Nevertheless, the body of literature has found conspicuous similarities and differences in the transitioning process in terms of age, sex, citizenship, type of care facilities, whether they are still in care or out of care and the categories of children themselves (Stein, 2008).

Stein, and Verweijen-Slamnescu (2012) examine the realities and disturbing deficiencies of independent living of 338 youth still in care and care leavers across four European countries – Albania, Czech Republic, Finland and Poland using peer interview methods. The results revealed concerns about the age of leaving care and defects in certain skills, especially cooking and communication skills. Aside from this, majority were fully prepared for integration. For instance, in Poland, about 30% and 26% had attained the secondary and university level respectively, and 30% had received vocational training. It was reported that only 27% did not receive educational or vocational training. However, only 35% were fully employed. The finding is similar to Dumaret, Coppel-Barsh and Couraud's (1997) study on 56 care leavers. Their study revealed that 56% were fully integrated into the society, and 12% were not integrated due to unresolved childhood traumas, while the rest were partially integrated. Bailey, Loehrke & French, (2011) assessed the strengths of, needs of and risks faced by 37 orphans in Ethiopia who were still in care and the care leavers. The results of their study revealed that orphans between ages of 15 and 18 were forced out of care and left to fend for themselves. The youth still in care reported fears of leaving, societal

pressures to engage in anti-social activities, unfulfilled promises by family members, dropping out of school and begging on the street. The challenges faced by care leavers reveal the realities of life for vulnerable children in Africa who are severely deprived of material needs and basic rights such as food, clothing and education. Many resort to begging on the street. Overall, the needs and potential risks of youth both in care and out of care outweigh their strengths. Their engagement in vocational training – crafts, home making, embroidery, hair dressing, cooking and washing clothes – is inadequate for survival in contemporary society. Poverty is a significant factor in forcing care leavers into early adulthood, despite the fact that they may still be in high school. These care leavers lack informal support, and God remains their only source of survival in life pursuits.

This picture is broadly consistent with that which emerged from a study on the experiences of 65 youth who had left care after 39 months in Sweden. Though, the number of young people in that study was smaller, Höjer &Sjöblom (2014) found that formal support was no longer accessible and reconnection with birth families was impossible. The implication of this is that young people can lose trust in the government, especially when foster care is supposed to be temporary care that should ultimately reunite care leavers with their birth families. In this study, the factors that impacted well-being such as housing, education, employment, financial help and emotional supports were only partially fulfilled or lacking entirely.

A study by Courtney et-al (2011) on receipt of care among 732 children in different care settings for a period of six years in the United States found that extending the age for leaving care does not increase the independent living services offered to young people. Rather, those services are decreased. In other words, the longer young people stay in care, the greater the reduction in independent living services (ILS) offered to them once they leave. For instance, those at the verge of leaving at 21 years had access to fewer than 6 ILS out of 46 ILS. This suggest the inadequate care given to younger people in transition. The experiences of youth reveal that those in group care are more likely to find employment than those in foster or independent care.

Culture remains a challenge for youth in care and in the transition stage. Ibrahim and Howe (2011) revealed that the experiences of care leavers making the transition from residential care to adulthood in Jordan was highly influenced by a patriarchal and collectivist culture. The 42 care leavers noted the negative impact of a patriarchal, family based culture,

which proved devastating for them when they tried to integrate into the society without such family supports.

In addition, migrants' children, unaccompanied asylum seekers and black African children have been described as needing more attention while in care and when leaving care (Coutrney et-al, 2011; Wade, 2011). This corroborates the reports of social workers about the readiness for adult life of 1256 adolescents in care, predominantly Ethiopian Israelis in youth villages in Israel (Zeira & Benbenshty, 2011). Johansson (2013) also mention the existence of racial and ethnic discrimination against children in out of home care. A study by Courtney, et-al (2011) of children in foster care in the United States found racial and gender differences, as females are likely to receive more services than males, and white children more than blacks or Asians. Wade's (2011) review of foster care in the United Kingdom reveals the inequality regarding sex and colour of children, and as the children age, the less the attention paid to their needs and support.

Concern about the legislated age of leaving care and risks of discontinuance in education, employment support and planning for independent life is consistent with the findings of other recent studies. The reality that leaving care is associated with difficulties and concurrent societal pressures has been emphasised in the literature (Bailey, Loehrke, & French, 2011; Courtney et-al, 2011; YIPPEE, 2011; Hoger & Sjöblom, 2014). Stein and Munro's (2008) description of the outcome characteristics of care leavers depict educational problems, health challenges and decline in the assistance received from formal support networks. This is because the facility of foster care, as social capital in providing support in all domains of well-being, diminishes or abruptly stops when youth are either aging-out or aged-out of care, and informal support is less effective.

The fair progress achieved across the levels of participation when children are involved in decision-making regarding their care has not being extended to children leaving care who are denied full participation in planning their care or in decisions affecting them (Sinclair, 1998) . The transitional phase from care to adulthood so far depicts young care leavers as a vulnerable group because the aftermath of leaving care seems to do more harm than good. In the end, they are incapable of facing the reality of adulthood and the challenges of independent living. This means that the importance of education is not at the heart of carers. The global shift towards a learning society demands the need for continuous skill development and credentials acquisition (Furlong and Cartmel, 2007). It is evident that young people leaving care are not moving along this learning trend in the society, which requires

more educational than vocational training. As a result, care leavers face significant disadvantages in the labour market.

2.6.1.2 Individual indicator – youth timing of lives of youth, linked lives, and human agency

The individual indicators of adulthood depend not merely on self-evaluations of maturity and independence (Arnett, 2004) but more importantly on social timing. According to Elder (1994:4), social timing refers to the incidence, duration and the sequence of roles, and to relevant expectations and beliefs based on age, which can determine the quality of fit between social trajectories. Individual youth in care can be said to have undergone de-standardisation of life course. This is because their sequence of biographical events took a different trajectory pattern from the normative route. This in turn may impact their social timing, which may be late or early, taking a short or extended linear pattern, depending on the opportunities, and constraints of social parameters as well as the well-being of youth in care. According to psychologists, developmental milestones are age bound. However, psychologists often fail to acknowledge the social trajectories of individuals.

Closer to trajectory is transition, which is a way to describe the life of an individual with a focus on different phases. According to Elder (1998), life transitions are part of a social trajectory, which can lead to life pathways based on timing of lives, defined as the developmental impact of a succession of life transitions or events, contingent on when they occur in a person's life (p.3). The youth life course phase is the link between the two other phases – childhood and adulthood. At a certain age, it is expected that youth in care have to make transitions, regardless of whether they are capable or not (Bailey, et.al, 2011). The majority do not choose whether or not to stay. Extending the duration of care is done for legislated reasons, some of which could be stigmatising – physical or mental health challenges, treatment for drug addiction or slow learners who are still enrolled in school (Höjer Sjöblöm, 2010; Courtney, et-al, 2011).

Human agency states that individuals construct their own life course through choices and actions they take within the opportunities and constraints of history and social circumstances (Elder, 1998). However, for youth in care, formal opportunities or supports end after care ends. Individuals' survival in the broader society depends on the choices they made while in care. In fact, while some youth in care seriously explore the opportunities of education and establish strong social networks, others shy away (Luster, et-al, 2010; and Courtney, et-al, 2011). Those youth who shy away are the ones most likely not to become

integrated properly into the society. Lastly, youth are able have relationships through linked lives principle. This can be connected to strength perspective. This implies that through relationships established, the resources available and located within children's environments can be harnessed to build a better life.

2.7   SOS Children's Villages

Founded by Hermann Gmeiner, a child welfare worker, SOS Children's Villages is an international organisation responsible for the nurturing vulnerable children in family settings. Based in Austria since 1949, it is a non-denominational non-profit organisation rather than a NGO. Using a family/model approach, it seeks to nurture vulnerable children until they are mature enough and capable of independent life in the society. SOS Children's Villages is a child-focused organisation that provides direct services in the areas of care, education and health for children at risk of losing parental care, or who have lost parental care (). However, the distinction between SOS Children's Villages care and other adoptive or traditional foster care is that it offers permanent family life for children, raising the same or different siblings in the same house with a single mother (Dumaret, 1988). However, Dumaret noted that children or different groups of siblings are raised in large family settings by a single mother who may be illiterate, divorced or widowed. Recently, Norway initiated the SOS couples system of care.

SOS Children's Villages is the largest global child care organisation, established in 134 countries and territories working in accordance with the UNCRC Article 21 and 18 on the need to provide children with family settings in an alternative care. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child affirms the family as a natural environment for the growth and well-being of children in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding (SOS children Villages, 2012).

Children and families are reached through effective programmes in various centres. These include but are not limited to SOS care programmes, families and youth programmes, family strengthening programmes, SOS education and social centres, kindergartens, Hermann Gmeiner schools, vocational training centres, social centres, SOS medical centres and SOS emergency relief programmes.

In all, 2317 programmes were conducted worldwide in 2013. For instance, in the continents of Europe and Africa, the youth programmes served 11,400 and 24,000

respectively out of 82,100 young people around the world (SOS Children's Villages International, 2013). In addition, 1,400 and 71,300 children attended the kindergartens and Hermann Gmeiner schools in Europe and Africa respectively (ibid). Furthermore, 3,700 and 6,300 benefitted from vocation training in Europe and Africa respectively. Lastly, the social centres reached 92,800 and 23,500 children and adults with 73 and 26 programmes run in Europe and Africa respectively. SOS Children's Villages have no tertiary schools at the moment, yet information regarding graduate youth would have enriched the report inasmuch as there is available information on the primary and secondary schools.

Nevertheless, the number of children, youth and adults reached through SOS alternative care is a pointer to the specificity of needs of children in the two continents. This implies that lack of access to formal education in Africa is the major social problem that debars children from schooling. The lack of formal support in terms of survival, provision of basic material needs and development is still a major concern in addressing the well-being of children (ACPF, 2013, Cahill, 2015). In Europe, the bulk of social problems related to the well-being of children are social and health problem, risky behaviour and successful transition to employment and adulthood (Cahill, 2015). This means that if child poverty can be addressed in Africa, then social problems can be minimized. The report also highlight the specific situations of each country.

3. Research Objectives and Methodological Procedures

Here in chapter 3 is the detailed description of the procedures for data collection, and analyses of the SOS children's life course transition from care to adulthood. It takes into account the rights of the children in the two countries, and how the system is implemented for the protection of children. After the literature review, the research looks into the context of country, the specific national protection system as it relates to the SOS Children's Village in each country, and how these institutions raise children and prepare them to become autonomous citizens. According to Hollins (2002), methodology identifies the reality or distortions in actors' awareness which can lead to causal explanations. The purpose of this study is to explore the lived experiences of youth as a transition process from care to adulthood in order to unveil the nexus between the present and the past, and the reality of the future. Furthermore, it discusses the analytical model of the lived experiences of youth in transition stage and its dimensions using data analysis.

3.1 Analytical design

This research design will provide insight into the transition process of youth in a life course approach. The principles of life course approach will be used to unveil and conceptualise the transition process of youth in three dimensions - the past, the present, and the projected future. The design will take into account the available child protection system and child welfare system in both Portugal and Nigeria respectively. The use of the available documented laws, policies and guidelines of the national affiliates of SOS Children's Villages in both Nigeria and Portugal, their history, and how they have been working will be explored. However, document and content analysis will be the principal means for examining the situations in both countries. After biographical interviews with participants, content analysis will be used to analyse and compare their life course experiences and trajectories related to the three dimensions.

3.1.2 Analytical dimensions

According to Bryman (2012), theory is the background and basis for the research to be conducted. Thus, the significance of the life course approach (LCA) cannot be overemphasised in this study. Three theories are integrated into the life course approach. These include the Maslow hierarchy of needs, the strength perspectives and the cumulative advantage/disadvantage (CAD) theory. Elder (1994) refers to LCA is an emerging paradigm. It has existed for more than five decades. However, the CAD theory emanates from the life course approach, expounding on the significance of timing of major life events (Singer and Berzin, 2015). According to Elder, ´´Issues of timing, linked lives (…) are key mechanisms by which environmental change and pathways influence the course, and the substance of human lives`` (Elder 1994: p.3). These theories are substantive and have both influenced and guided the collection and analysis of data. However, one major weakness of LCA to this study is the fact that the cultural practices of lived experiences of youth may not be well addressed. However, the family practices approach of Morgan (2011) will be adapted to delve into the cultural practices of participants.

Figure 3.1   Research analytical model
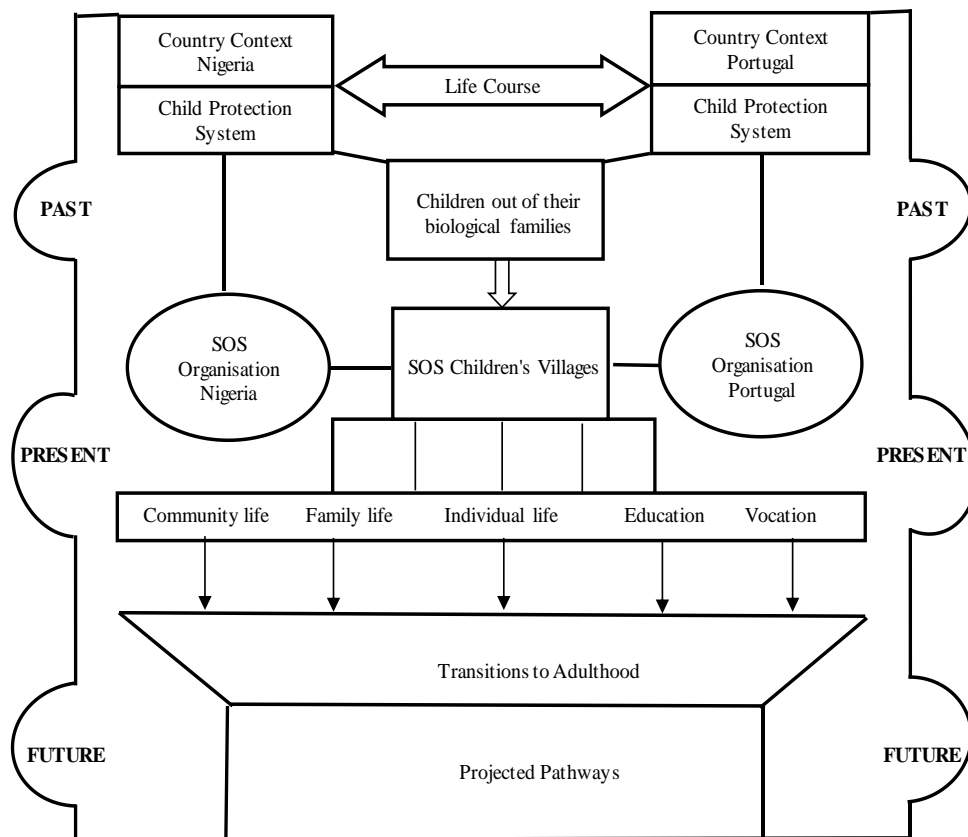
3.1.2.1 The past

In the life course approach, the past dimension is foundational and crucial to better understand the life of a youth. According to Elder (1994: 3), "Historical effects on the life course take a form of a cohort effect in which social change differentiates the life patterns of successive cohorts." The principle of socio-historical events and geographical location in the life course approach will grant insight into the interplay of children's lives and their historical time. Therefore, the point of departure for the analytical model is the country contexts (Nilsen, et-al, 2012). This implies that the period in which children were born, their cultural context and social institutions such as school, child protection systems, migration systems and religion, among others, are relevant to understanding their past lives which might have influenced childhood. Elder (1998) emphasises the impact of ever-changing societal parameters on individuals' life span. The impacts of these societal parameters embedded into

social institutions were described in the previous chapters; specifically, the past may have denied some children the right to be nurtured in biological familial settings, although it is their rights. Related to culture, Portugal is an individualistic society, ruled by principles of social and cultural freedom, whereas Nigeria is collectivistic society ruled by cultural norms and a patriarchal ideology that binds members to a hierarchical structure and a communal lifestyle.

The Maslow hierarchy of needs is applicable to a life course approach related to the past dimension. It simply means that children who were not provided their basic needs for development or did not have the opportunity to be raised in their biological family may find it difficult to move to the next level or may become emotionally or psychologically insecure. To better understand the lived experiences of youth, it is essential to reflect on their past childhood experiences. In the case of this study, the participants' past childhood experiences encompasses their life before their admission to SOS Children's Villages. That transition may have begun quite early in life. It is important to stress that the three dimensions – past, present and future – are interconnected, and one cannot stand on its own. Thus, to unveil the transition process of youth, the three dimensions has to be put into perspective.

3.1.2.2 The present

The present dimension is defined as the period each youth spends in the SOS Children's Villages, from childhood until their integration into society at a certain age in both Nigeria and Portugal. After children move out of their biological settings for different reasons, they are admitted into the SOS Children's Villages either as infants, toddlers or school-age children. The process of admission can be by legal procedures or government intervention through the available child protection systems in the two countries of study. According to Elder, (1994 and 1998), this movement is referred to as "transition." "Transitions are always embedded in trajectories that give them distinctive form and meaning" (Elder 1994: 3).

In Portugal, children can be admitted either for a short- or long-term stay depending on the court's decision and the ability of parents to take up their parental responsibilities once again. Generally, the time spent in this care system coincides with key moments in the social timing of children's lives – a principle in life course approach as mentioned in the last chapter. Social timing refers to "the incidence, duration, and sequence of roles, and to relevant expectations and beliefs based on age" (Elder 1994: 4). Social timing for each child

differs according to the child's age and his or her readiness to take on cultural roles and other social trajectories. For instance going to school and having a family can be mandatory or by choice in the two countries, and the cultural context of each country may influence children's perception of which trajectory to take on. For instance, the wedding in Nigeria is a communal event to which every young person aspires to celebrate. On the other hand, the diverse forms of families, such as cohabitation without marriage, may be a choice for young people in Portugal.

In the present dimension, children are able to interact with different people; this interaction creates linked lives. Linked lives has cumulative advantage for children because no one can survive outside social relationships. Like children living with biological families, children in care have relations with whom they can interact. Children have direct contact with SOS mothers, biological siblings or siblings gotten while living in care with their SOS family (mothers and siblings), SOS staff, peers in schools, friends, teachers and others within their sphere of contacts. This may represent social capital as these relationships give support to children in one way or the other; "social capital inheres in the structure of relations between actors and among actors" (Coleman, 1988: p.5). In addition to relationships, key aspects to be considered in the present dimension are the details of day-to-day life, activities that engage the young people, available opportunities, failures and achievements. According to Saleeby (2006), the environment of children and youth can be a source of strength, as it is loaded with protective and generative factors of social capital linked to durable networks to achieve individual or communal goals. Furthermore, the strength perspective through social interactions and different programmes and when integrated during children's time in care can prepare children for the future. All of these aspects combine to prepare children in care for the future.

3.1.2.3 The future

The future dimension stresses the projected pathways of youth. After a certain age, youth are re-integrated back into the society from which they came. This implies that each youth should have expectations for life after care. Their perspectives on, and understanding of the future, can illuminate the aftermath of the past, and present transitions and trajectories. The CAD theory can be used to unveil the cumulative advantages and disadvantages (CAD) of living in care, and may provide answers to the principle of the past (and present) in shaping the future

in the life course approach. This will be possible through the expounding of timing of lives of youth through the four typology of youth transitions – long period of youth, young adults, early adulthood, and short youth, as mentioned in the last chapter. The principle of timing of lives is significant to the future pathways because it "…states that: the developmental impact of a succession of life transitions or events is contingent on when they occur in a person's life" (Elder, 1998: 3). This will answer whether each youth can make the transition early or late into adulthood. Furthermore, these projected pathways may include, but are not limited to, desires for career paths in education and/or vocation, work and family life.

3.2   Research method and design

The approach to the conduct of this research was a comparative qualitative research strategy. This qualitative research strategy helps youth in care in the two countries to be heard via interviews and the opportunity to tell the stories of their lives. Giving voice to the youth themselves has historical and cultural significance, and can advance theory as well (Ragin and Amoroso, 2011).

Qualitative research is an inductive approach that reveals the relationship between theory and research established through an individual's social reality, interpreting his or her social worlds in words (Bryman, 2012). The in-depth contextual understanding of the views of participants are among the characteristics of the qualitative approach. This study allows each participant to tell his or her life story, and the result will provide insight to the transition process and unveil the gap encountered when a young person leaves family-oriented care. Knowing what happens at the beginning and the end of foster care will help to meet the developmental needs of youth in care in their different countries, aiding their transition from care to adulthood. The cross-national comparative case study design has the advantage of addressing aspects taken for granted when using a single country as the context of study (Nilsen, et-al, 2012). A case study is the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case (Bryman, 2012). The comparative case study provides the research with a background to investigate and collect data for analysis and synthesis of the similarities, differences and patterns across two or more cases that share a common focus or goal (Bryman, 2012; Goodrick, 2014). Comparative research aims to identify the similarities and differences in two or more nations or context (Hantrais, 1995; Brannen and Nilsen, 2012). The foster youth are the case studied in the context of the same organisation but in two different countries. The outcome of the research, though, can produce a context-dependent knowledge able to be

generalised for a much larger population of youth in foster care (Flyrbjerg, 2006; Bryman, 2012).

3.3 Population

As a phenomenological study, this study involves identifying and locating participants from the population of who have experienced or are experiencing the living and/or leaving of care (Rudestam & Newton, 2007). The youth for this study were identified out of the populations of SOS Children's Villages, SOS mothers and service providers in both the global south (Nigeria) and global north (Portugal). The population for the study are children from the multicultural backgrounds in the family-oriented care. However, the selected target group who participated in the study was foster youth who are in transition into adulthood and those youth who have left care.

3.3.1 Sampling frame

The research used purposive sampling in selecting participants – as the experiential experts on transition process, who closely match the criteria of the study (Rudestam & Newton, 2007). These were nine foster youth in the transition process of leaving care and three care leavers, with six females and six males. In Nigeria, three out of the ten youth in the stage of leaving care participated in the interview. Three care leavers were also interviewed, which made six participants for this research. In Portugal, six youth in the transition process participated in the study, four from Bicesse, and two from Guarda SOS Children Villages. The twelve participants were between 19 and 30 years of age.

3.4 Research location

The research was conducted in the national affiliations of the SOS Children Villages International, the SOS Children Villages Isolo – Lagos, Nigeria, and SOS Children Villages (Aldeaias) Bicesse, Portugal. The preliminary visit in 2013 to the SOS organisation in Portugal inspired this study and identified its location. This field visit provided more information about the organisation alongside the interview with two contact persons with the documentary evidence. In general, in order to access the youth, the gatekeepers had to be

reached first (Bryman, 2012). These were the directors staffing the villages in both countries. Gaining approval from the directors was necessary, as this prompted access to the selected youth who participated in the study.

3.5   Data collection

Data were collected through biographical interviews, and phone conversations. The use of biographical interviews provides understanding of the uniqueness of each of the participants (Brannen and Nilsen, 2012). The data collection process included a pre-meeting with the gatekeepers in both Lagos, Nigeria and Portugal. In Nigeria, submissions of the research proposal, interview guide, informed consent letter and a one-on-one meeting with the village directors and the national project coordinator granted permission for the study. In Portugal the initial field visit, a one-on-one meeting with the village director and the head of pedagogical unit and submissions of the research proposal and interview guide granted permission for the study.

Subsequently, two contact persons assisted in getting the six participants who were dispersed around the youth facilities in Lagos state, Nigeria. In Portugal, two contact persons assisted in mobilising the six participants both within and outside the village, since the house for girls was located in the village and the house for boys was located in the city of Lisbon. In both countries, biographical interviews with each of the individuals interviewed were scheduled at the convenience of the participants.

The significance of the biographical interview in the life course approach is that it allows the researcher to collect and analyze the intensive account of a whole life or portion of a life in an in-depth, unstructured way (Miller, 2003). Bryman (2012) describes this as life history interview – an unstructured interview providing entire biography of each of the participants. Through the biographical interview, each of the participants talked about specific events and trajectories of their life – a story of themselves – for an average of 50 minutes. The biographical interview started with an open question, then the unstructured interview using the interview guide (Brannen & Nilsen, 2012). However, due to distance, a follow-up phone interviews was also conducted after the one-on-one interview to gather missing data or clarify information with participants in both countries. The interview was conducted in both English and Portuguese languages. Afterward, the recorded data was transcribed for easy analysis.

3.6 Instrumentation

Instruments for data collection were documents on the organisation, scientific literatures, policies, laws, audio-recorder, translators, biographical interview and a one-on-one phone interview. Furthermore, the researcher used an interview guide to aid the biographical unstructured interview. The interview guide contained a list of issues to be covered using an informal way of questioning (Bryamn, 2012). There were three headings – past, present and future with 24 open-ended questions focusing on general issues, and three sub-questions. The three sub-questions provided support and facilitated the general question in being able to delve into specific details. The research used the questions as tools to draw out the participants to reflect on their past and present experiences, and implications on their lives and future pathways (Rudestam and Newton, 2007). With the research instruments, the research was able to probe into the knowledge, perception and opinions about the experiences of participants (Adeboye and Ariyo, 2012). Through the interview guide, participants were able to describe their past and present experiences regarding social trajectories. They expressed how they felt about being taken away from their biological families and their experiences after that. They talked about how their lives have changed since leaving their biological families. Further questions probed the youth's expectations for the future as they were able to dig deeper into perceived pathways in terms of accommodation, career and family life.

The research questions and interview guide were translated into Portuguese. The researcher recorded the interview using a high-quality audio recording device.

3.7 Validity and reliability

Validity is the integrity of the conclusions generated from research (Bryman, 2012). The internal validity adds credibility to the study (Rudestam & Newton, 2007). Credibility of a qualitative research depends on the ability and effort of the researcher (Golafshani, 2003). However, the method design and procedures of carefully constructed interview questions can help ensure the validity of data collected (Santee, 2013). The two categories of the research questions – general question and sub-sections – explored the life story of participants, and clarification of the audio recording with the participants through phone conversation addressed the validity of the study.

Reliability measures the accuracy of the data processed (Santee, 2013). The reliability of the study is the consistency of the coding of the raw data so that another person can understand the themes and arrive at similar conclusions (Rudestam and Moroso, 2007). To ensure reliability, the researcher clearly organised questions and use the right sample – foster youth – in order to represent other foster children in family oriented-care.

3.8 Data analysis

The technique used to analyse the result is comparative content analysis. Comparative content analysis reveals characteristics of general differences, general similarities and the peculiarities of each context of the study. According to Bryman (2012) and Philips (2014), content analysis allows both the summarizing the specific characteristics of the message and the drawing of conclusions objectively and systematically, based on the circumstances of origin alongside effects and connections. Content analysis allows for a systematic and quantitative interpretation of the content of text data through a classification process of coding and identifying themes and patterns. Categories generated can either represent explicit or inferred communication.

However, the three approaches of content analysis identified as conventional, directed, and summative are used to interpret text data from a predominantly naturalistic paradigm (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). All the three approaches were applicable in the study, as they are combined for in-depth analytical work. Each of the approaches involve different stages. However, this study only selected the stage that fits appropriately into the study since the analysis involves the three approaches.

After transcribing, the conventional approach requires the analyst to get immersed into each interview transcripts by reading through the texts in order to highlight the key concepts corresponding to the initial coding scheme, some of which emerge as the derived codes. A code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data (Saldana, 2008 p.3). It is suggested that coding is the most central and distinctive stage of doing content analysis (Bryman, 2012).

The derived codes from the induction of the raw data are then sorted into categories based on the link to the differences, similarities and peculiarities of context of study. While some codes were combined, others were split into sub-categories. Depending on the subcategories, they can be grouped into new categories (Saldana, 2008; Bryman, 2012).

Directed content analysis remains indispensable for this study since the study used the life course approach as the main theoretical framework. The goal of directed content analysis is to validate or extend a conceptual framework or category (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). This approach supports existing theory and can extend it. The strategy is to use the identified dimensions of the life course approach, coupled with the existing research findings, both of which serve as a guide in deriving initial codes using predetermined codes. Directed content analysis helps focus the research question and sub-questions. It reveals the relationships between codes.

Summative content analysis explores the latent part of the analyses, the process of interpretation (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). It is used to describe the underlying meaning of words or content that cannot be coded in both conventional and directed approaches (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). Thus, the peculiarities of each context can be interpreted using summative content analysis.

The stepwise action for the analyses is described below.

1. Developing the coding frame – past, present and future
2. Transcribing the audio-recorded and phone interviews
3. Reading and/or highlighting interview scripts thoroughly for generating codes
4. Establishing relationships between codes
5. Labelling codes for categories (subcategories) and emerging themes
6. Exploration of the latent part of the analyses
7. Interpretation of the results

3.9 Ethical considerations

In the course of carrying out the research – which requires gaining entrance into SOS Children's Villages, accessing the participants and the analysis of the data gathered – some ethical issues were addressed. According to Homan (1992), ethics and ethical codes represent the effort of the social work profession to illuminate the distinct mission of the profession and to establish norms of behaviour for its realization. These include access into the organisation and ethical scrutiny, confidentiality, informed consent and invasion of privacy.

3.9.1 Access into organisation and ethical scrutiny

Studying and interviewing the private life of children in their care community without previously informing the organisation would be unethical. The researcher underestimated the time required to gain access into the organisations both in Nigeria, and Portugal as well as clearances to conduct the interviews with the youth. However, this was managed by informing the authority through email contact which failed to work out, and after which it was required to go in person in order to submit a supervisor's introductory letter, a personal introductory letter, the proposal, research questions, the interview guide and an informed consent form for scrutiny in Nigeria. The purpose of the meetings with the three of the staff members in Nigeria was to explain verbally the aim of the research, provide clarification and address doubts, in order to gain access to the organisation without any restraints. In Portugal, the prior field visit to the organisation in 2013 made entrance and access easier, although a meeting was scheduled to explain the aim of the research, to work out the modalities of accessing the youth, and to clarify any doubts. After these issues were resolved in the two countries, the research began with the interviews, though not without further arrangements via phone in the two countries.

3.9.2 Informed consent

The participants in Nigeria were given informed consent forms in order to obtain their consent before proceeding to the interview stage. The informed consent form (Appendix) presented the participants with information about the study and purpose of the research, their right as participants and how the data collected through interview would be kept confidential. Through written forms and verbal explanations, the researcher informed the participants of the details of the research to build trust and rapport and ensure confidentiality. Written and verbal informed consent was obtained from participants. Verbal consent in Portugal was dependent on the presence of staff during most of the interviews. This was the dilemma, as one staff member and several youth were needed to translate.

3.9.3 Invasion of privacy and confidentiality

Invasion of privacy is linked to informed consent (Bryman, 2012). The interview guide helped to create a boundary and focus on the area of study. Participants were assured of

pseudonyms in interview transcripts and beyond so as to ensure that their identity remained confidential. The researcher kept the recorded data in a secure location, and personal details such as the interviewee's name was not recorded. After the end of the study, the recordings, hard copies, and computer data were destroyed.

The next chapter, Chapter 4, presents the results and discussion. The chapter includes the analysis of the interview data using content analysis, the presentation of the findings and a detailed discussion and explanation of the findings.

3.10 Delimitations and limitations

Delimitation allows a restriction on the research design (Rudestam & Newton, 2007). The research was deliberately restricted to include the population of SOS children who are already youth, and are about to be and/or are already integrated into the society. This is due to the importance and sensitivity of youth, not only as a stage of transition into adulthood in the life course approach, but also as a significant phase related to independence and preparation for adulthood. However, three of the participants who had aged out of care less than two months earlier at the time of the interview were included in order to view their perception of the reality of life in society outside of the care system. The staff and participants were used as translators in Portugal. This was done to understand the participants who could not express themselves in English. Staff and participants were available to help, and it was felt that using translators from the target population rather than an outsider made it easier to work with the group, giving the researcher more time to digest the responses and ask questions for further clarification in case the response was not well understood

The limitations experienced included time constraints, which limited the study to focus only on youth in SOS organisation both in Lagos, Nigeria and Bicesse, Portugal as a representative of other SOS children in Africa (global south) and Europe (global north). Language differences limited one-on-one biographical interviews with the participants in Portugal. Informed consent was not applicable in many cases, as one staff member and one participant served as translators. This could have created bias or incomplete information for the study.

The research experienced difficulty in accessing the choice of youth for the interviews. The participants were purposively selected, and made accessible by the contact persons in the organisations. However, the sampled youth who were selected by the contact

persons may have been among the more successful youth in the transition process or care leavers, ones with whom the contact persons might have established more cordial relationships (Höjer and Sjöblom, 2014). The implication of this to the study is that the sample may be biased and not be a true representative of the character of the population. Also, successful negotiations with gatekeepers in each country slowed the process of data collection. For instance, the leaving of an important gatekeeper in Portugal required the establishment of a new relationship and the renegotiation of the terms of the research. In Nigeria, documents submitted to the organisation went missing and had to be re-submitted, which slowed down access to the participants. This confirms Bryman's (2012) point that some disruptions to research are unpredictable.

In addition, the study was limited to interview. However, observation into the past life of youth through the daily life of present children in the SOS Children's Villages could have unveiled the cultural practices in the village as a reflection of the historical principle in the life course approach. Language barriers also posed a great problem for the interview, and could have contributed to the loss of important information and misinterpretation of the information gathered. The time was very relatively short for interview and transcription, and this prevent participants from accessing the analysed data for accuracy of the findings with the participants. With the phone conversations, participants were able to build trustworthiness of the study by clarifying doubts and clarification in Nigeria.

4. Empirical Analysis

This chapter presents the findings and the results of the empirical study of the research. It further discusses and interprets the results with the dimensions, categories, and sub-categories that emerged through the prior scientific research and the theories, as well as concepts deduced from the study. This chapter is divided into three main section(s) and sub-chapters relating to the central research and sub-research questions.

The purpose of this research was to unveil the nexus in the transition process of youth through a life course approach. As mentioned earlier, the central research question was - what are the lived experiences of the past, and present in cultural practices, social relationships with both family of origin and foster family, and opportunities and disadvantages to nexus of transition to adulthood?

In view of the research question and research problem, the study seeks to ask the following sub-questions:

  I.   What is the past experience of foster youth?
  II. What is the description of foster youth's present life?
  III. What are the future pathways or expectations and/or future plans for foster youth based on I and II?

4.1 The SOS Children's Villages in Nigeria and Portugal

As mentioned earlier in previous chapters, the study was carried out in the national affiliated SOS Children's Villages International in both Portugal and Nigeria. This serves to represent the African, and the European contexts. Table 4.1 shows the status of each of the organisations as at 2014. The data was gathered through available documents, visits to Aldeias, and phone calls to Nigeria after sending questions via e-mails. However, common in each context is that, the children are raised in a familial environment by a mother figure who nurtures them up until they are old enough to start their own independent life while in care until they have developed important skills for transition to adulthood. This is against the UNCRC age for the termination of childhood which is 18. Thus, cultural context and achievement may be determining factors for children to re-integrate. In order to give children

their own freedom of youth and experience autonomy, children live in three or two phases while being raised under the umbrella of SOS Children's Villages.

Table 4.1 The admission process and running of the villages

Items	Portugal	Nigeria
Number of SOS Children's Villages	3	5
Major partners		18
Programmes	Family strengthening programmes.	Kindergarten, primary school, vocational training centres, family strengthening programmes.
Number of SOS children in the village	122 (Bicesse, 65)	65
The process of admission into care	Email or request either directly from social security or CPCJ, analyses of the situation by the director and technical, team, and receive support from pedadogical unit for further actions.	Investigation and exploration of child's situation and family by social worker and relevant government agencies, village committee decisions, and health status of child checked.
Age of children on admission to care	Maximum age for single child is 12 Group of siblings – can be older than 12	0-7 (exceptions)
SOS families/ number of children	7/7	10/12
Children who left care in 2014	14	10 youth
Children who arrived in care in 2014	17	None
Average age of children spend in care	6	23
Autonomy home or youth facility II	2 in Bicesse, 1 in Guarda	7 dispersed across Lagos
Country and ethnic background of children	Angola, Portugal, Cape Verde	Nigeria

4.1.1 SOS Children's Villages in Nigeria

The first SOS Children's Village was established in 1973, located in Lagos, the business state and the former capital of Nigeria. Presently, there are 3 more villages established in 1993, 2004, and 2010. The 4 villages in Nigeria, with 2 in the south west, and 2 in the north central collaborate, and receive major support from both national and international organisations contributing to meet the needs of abandoned and orphaned children. Each of the villages has about 10 - 12 family houses to accommodate children and medical facilities. Two youth hostels are located outside of the village, and two youth counsellors oversee and guide these youth. These hostels are majorly for children who are in secondary school. After secondary

school, certain age or while in the process of gaining admission into the University, teenagers are moved into the available 6 youth facilities dispersed across Lagos. This transition prepares each youth for independently living before the final integration into the society. Furthermore, the progress achieved in Nigeria is evident with the running of pre- primary, and primary schools providing children with both educational and vocational skills. 5 out of the 36 states benefit from the family strengthening programme. This gives support through vocational training, medical care and feeding to children and families in need.

The admission into care involves the social worker in the village, and relevant government agencies. The police are the starting point when a child is found. However, the juvenile court can as well make referral. Then, the children are admitted based on the decisions of the village committee after investigating and the exploration of the child and his or her family background. After which, the health status of the child is checked so as to ensure proper care. Recent development this year is the fact that partnership now exists with the Lagos state government through the department of social development under the Ministry of youth and sport. This recent development will enforce governmental responsibility and their role in giving the final approval for the admission of any child into care. However, the eligibility for admission into care is solely for children between 0 and 7 years. As at 2014, 10 youth were integrated into the society and no child was admitted into care.

4.1.2 Portugal SOS Children's Villages

In Portugal, there are 3 SOS Children's Villages called Aldeais SOS. The first Aldeia SOS is located in Bicesse, the second in north of Portugal- Gulpilhares and the last in Guarda. The study was carried out in the first SOS children village located in Bicesse, established in 1967. The SOS organisation is majorly supported by both international and local organisations. Child protection is a societal thing in Portugal, and children's well-being is important. From table 4.1, the number of children in care in the three villages was estimated to be 122, out of which 65 children are in Bicesse. However, while some children spend more time in care, the same time, others spend less time in care. For instance, from the table, the number of children who left care in 2014 was 14. While 17 were admitted again that same year. This implies that children can stay for a short period or a longer period, depending on court's decision and parental ability to take up responsibility. This is also an indication that, children are becoming more victims of abuse on a daily basis. This corroborates Amaro's (2008) estimate of the

number of cases reported, though it revealed a decrease in the low education attainment level due to poverty, among other things. From the findings, the issue of child protection is being influenced by the external bodies or outsiders, these are individuals who fail to investigate the situation the child is exposed to or that has predisposed such child to become object of social discussions. On the other hand, the collaboration of the three villages in Portugal makes it easy for children to move from one village to another as the need arise. For instance, in this study, 2 of 6 participants from Portugal were from the Guarda village. They had access to the youth home in order to continue their life of autonomy outside of their own primary village where they grew up. This is as a result of the need to take on the trajectory of job and education for two of the participants.

The running of the villages in Portugal is influenced by the state welfare department's approval, CPCJ and the decisions of Judge of Children's court. In the three villages and youth facility, 120 children who lack parental care are nurtured in a loving family and community atmosphere. Children with the same biological origin are raised together by the same SOS mother. SOS mothers before being employed are observed and undergo training. The village has 7 families at the moment. The organisation organogram has the head as the director, 2 pedagogies, 4 social educators, and 2 social workers, working to support the mother regarding education and sport activities of children. The organisation has 2 buses and 3 cars which the mothers have access to in order to take care of children.

The ethnic diversity of children makes it unique when compared to the village Lagos. Children are admitted at average age of 5 years. These children admitted are solely based on court's decisions in order to protect them from peril. Every child has a life project which is followed duly but subject to alteration. There are two houses for youth - the pre-autonomy and the autonomy house, this is synonymous to the youth facility 1 and the youth facility 2 in Nigeria respectively.

4.2 Social characterisation of the participants in Nigeria and Portugal

As earlier mentioned in chapter 3, the participants for this study are young people, three of which are care leavers and with nine still in care the time of study. The tables 4.2 a and 4.2 b present the social characteristics of the participant, with respect to their gender, chronological age, the age at which they were admitted to care, age when moving into youth or autonomy

house, educational level, occupational status, marital status, parental status, residence present condition, and nationalities. Table 4.2a shows the social characteristic of participants from Nigeria while table 4.2b shows the social characteristic of participants in Portugal. In general, the age range of participants was 19 (in Portugal) to 30 (in Nigeria). It is quite revealing that majority of the participants were admitted into care at a very tender age, as infants (< 1 year in Nigeria) and school-age (> 6 and 8 years in Portugal). However, the 6 females and the 6 males who participated in the interview are from 4 different countries (Cape Verde, Portugal, Nigeria and Angola, which is a representation of 2 continents – Africa and Europe in the study. This may be the potential reasons for the difference in chronological age of children in care, the age of admission into care, coupled with the organisational structure of the age that children can be admitted into care as shown in table 4.1. In addition, as mentioned in the literature review, the official age of youth in Portugal and Nigeria is 21 and until 35 years respectively (Amaro, 2008; Policy Federal Government of Nigeria, 2009). Therefore, the participants for the study are youth by age in their country context.

The tables 4.2 a, and 4.2b further show that while in care, participants make transitions into independent living at different stages. However, it is important to note that Nigeria participants went through two transitions – youth hostel and youth facility II at an average age of 18 and 21 respectively. On the other hand, Portuguese participants while in care made transition only into the autonomy house which is similar to youth facility II in Nigeria at an average of age 18. This means that the age at which youth in Nigeria made their first transition was the age at which youth in Portugal moved into the autonomy house. Thus, there is a skip in one of the phase in Portugal. This could impact their final integration and denial of some important skills that could have been gained in preparation for the autonomy phase.

The tables show that majority of participants have attained high and low educational levels. The first degree holders in Nigeria are 5 and secondary school holders in Portugal are 2. This implication of this is that educational attainment is not about being a developed or developing country. It may apparently be attributable to the determination of the youth, the age of the youth and / or the expensive education or lack of scholarship in Portugal on the other hand. Related to age, time may be a determining factor in the educational attainment of participants in Portugal although, they are already at a final stage of leaving care, yet only two are already in the University while the rest are in secondary school and professional school which is equivalent of secondary school. This is the case of Andreia – 19 years and

Abilio - 22 years. However, the occupational status of Nigerian youth from the table 4.2 a shows that majority of the graduated youth are unemployed. This may be justified by the level of unemployment in Nigeria estimated at 23% (NBS). It is worth noting that majority of the participants as revealed in the tables 4.2 a, and 4.2 b, have no clue who is one of and/ or both their parents are. This is especially the situation with the participants in Nigeria, who can be regarded as double orphans, while in Portugal single orphans. However, the definition of orphan here may not necessarily be by death, but in all the cases, youths were deprived of parents who could take care of them. Interesting in this may seems to be an outlier, but it is worth nothing due to the specificity of the concept to social work - the parental status of one of the participants' shows that his grandfather was also his biological father. This concept is referred to as incest. However, majority of participants have more than one sibling in care. This was noted in the table 4.1 as the organisational setting of the village in Portugal permits group of siblings to live together. Also in table 4.2.a, three of the participants had been resettled while others are still living in the youth facility II. In Portugal, five of the participants live in the autonomy house, except for Andreia living in the University residence.

Table 4.2a The social characterisation of Nigerian foster children

Social characterization	Nigeria					
Gender	Female			Male		
Pseudo-names	Sola	Bolu	Joko	Mayowa	Gbenga	Dele
Age	25	29	30	28	26	27
Age at admission	Months plus	A week old	A day old	A day old	12	1 year
Age when moving into youth hostel	17	21	18	16 or 17	18	18
Youth facility II / Autonomy house	21	24	24	20	20	21
Educational level	Secondary cchool in view	First degree	First degree	First degree	First degree	First degree
Occupation	Cosmetologist	Unemployed	Unemployed	Unemployed	Civil servant	Unemployed
Marital status	Single and in a relationship	Single with child	Single and in a relationship	Single	Single	Single
Parental status	No contact	No contact	No contact	No contact	Separated	Unknown
Resident present condition	Resettled last month	Youth facility II	Resettled 2013	Resettled December	Youth facility II	Youth facility II
Nationalities	Nigeria	Nigeria	Nigeria	Nigeria	Nigeria	Nigeria

Table 4.2b The social characterisation of Portuguese foster children

Social characterization	Portugal					
Gender	Female			Male		
Pseudo-names	Micaela	Cristina	Andreia	Andres	Abilio	Carlos
Age	19	19	19	20	22	19
Age at admission	Temporary institution 2-4, SOS by 6	3 years	6	8	4	6
Youth facility II / Autonomy house	18	17 years and 10 months	19	19	18	18
Educational level	Business school in view	High school in view	1st Level in University	Secondary school	3rd year in University	Secondary school
Occupation	Business school student	High school student	University student	Cook	University student	Barman
Marital status	Single	Single	Single with boyfriend	Single	Single in a relationship	Single
Parental status	Knows mother but not father	Deceased father, mental ill mother	Don't know father but knows mother	Maternal grandfather is the father and knows mother	Deceased father and knows mother	Deceased father and knows mother
Number of biological siblings	2	7	2	3	6	2
Number of biological siblings together in care	None	2	2	2	1	2
Resident present condition	Autonomy house	Autonomy house	University residence and Autonomy house	Autonomy house but without personal allowance	Autonomy house	Autonomy house
Nationalities	Cape Verde	Angola	Portuguese	Portuguese	Portuguese	Portuguese

4.3   Transitions from family-oriented care to adult life

The transition of youth from a life course perspective seems to be around three dimensions - the past life, present life, projected future life. The sampled youth as mentioned in Chapter 3 are foster youths, 3 of whom had left care and 9 who are still in care both in Nigeria and Portugal. The three dimensions based on life course approach, generated both categories, and subcategories. The interpretation is into several subchapters based on the three dimensions and sub-categories. However, the last two steps of action taken in analysing data alluded to in chapter 3 was to search for the latent part of the data analysed alongside the interpretation of data in the tables presented below through textual description.

The tables are organised according to each sub-category for easy flow and interpretations.

4.3.1 Dimension 1: The past of Nigerian and Portuguese children in foster care

The past emerged as the basis for understanding the life story of the youth. It helps to unveil the past lived experiences of youth and provide information related to sub-research question I. Tables 4.3.1a and 4.3.1b present an overview of the past of Nigerian foster youth and the past of Portuguese foster youth respectively. From table 4.3.1a, and 4.3.1b, three categories emerged from the dimension. The categories include biological family affiliation, cultural practices and causes of separation. Data from these two tables can be compared to show the difference in the highlighted categories. In general, tables 4.3.1a and 4.3.1b revealed that five of the 12 participants reported they had no affiliation with the family of origin and siblings, five of the participants also reported affiliation with single and/ or both parents and two of the participants do not know their father. However, it is interesting to know that there exist social capital among the relatives of the participants during the time past in both countries. For example two of the participants in Portugal (Andreia and Andre respectively) and one participant in Nigeria (Gbenga) respectively reported that:

´´I don't remember ever being with my mum, my father (grandfather) took care of me ....my grandfather is old….´´ (Portuguese interviewee).

´´My mother have a lot of husbands and always have sons with different fathers, my grandmother took care of me´´ (Portuguese interviewee).

´´She eventually took me to my paternal home, where I wasn't really accepted and she left……..He had rejected me before he left the country, and a cousin that has acted like a father…. I lost my own family, not to death but to the unfair world…….´´ (Nigerian interviewee).

A common view about the three cases reported is the fact that extended families serve as social capital and support for many of the children in time past. The grandfather, grandmother and cousin were source of social capital through their availability to meet the needs of the children when parents were pre-occupied with other things. However, this corroborates the findings of Aboim, Vasconcelos, and Wall (2013) of the existing long trend of family network and informal supports in Portuguese families and that the older generation are able to

give more support to younger generation than they can receive in return. The implication of this is the availability of these relations was able to bridge the missing gap of biological parents.

However, the issue related to Andre is very specific and not common to all the other participants in general. The data in table 4.3.1b can be compared with data in 4.2b, and 4.3.2b (ii). He reported that: ´˝I discovered my grandfather was my father, this made me visit psychologist….´´. Interestingly, this may seem to be an outlier, but it is worth noting due to its peculiarity and the implication on the child. This participant never got to know, after he was admitted into care, yet this affected the educational pursuits of the child. Thus, unresolved past occurrences or mistakes of parent(s) may directly or indirectly impact a child. The aftermath of such occurrences may be devastating and have negative influence on the child and in the long run affect parent-child relationship. Incest was worth noting, although it is passive. Yet, it can be a major source of mental health problem for any child. However, the degree at which each child is disturbed differs. Andres, reported having mental problem when he got to know about his real father, and the fact that his academics pursuit were affected in the long run.

In addition, the specificity of each context is an eye opener to the situation of participants in time past. For instance, data from table 4.2a can be compared with data from table 4.3.1a related to Nigerian context, which shows that majority of the participants (5 of the 6 participants) were brought into care system at a very tender age. This may explain the possible reason these children do not have any affiliation with their biological family. However, there was a sense of affiliation with siblings among majority of participants (4 out 6 participants) in Portugal.

The cultural practices are the second category identified under the past. The cultural practices unveil the daily living of the participants. The cultural practices can be defined as the daily activities of participants as embedded in three categories of daily life, family life, and village or societal life. However, in all the cases, little can be said or recollected by the participants. This may be explained by the fact participants might have outgrown the experience and activities that characterised their past due to the present living or they decide to let go of the impact of their cultural practices in its entirety. A good example found out from this study is that one quarter of the participants lived on the streets as they go about begging for food. This was the experience of Gbenga in Nigeria and Abilio in Portugal respectively:

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´´I walked in myself into the organisation, I was found on the street´´.

´´I came in here my father died and my mum has 7 children, brothers and we lived on the street and we had to go to people to say: 'Hey! Give something here, give me something there'. So when you make a child and the child don't have food, and they don't have health and they have to live on the streets, why do you make 7? ´´

On the other hand, these findings may help us to understand the lives children were exposed to in time past and the physiological state of the children. This finding supports Maslow hierarchy of needs alluding to the fact that children cannot be safe, seek security, or seek psychological needs when their physiological needs - food, water, sleep, is unmet. This shows that the rights of these children as explained in chapter two were denied in the past. Thus, it may have been difficult for the participants to survive or ever thought of moving to the next level of security and safety.

In contrast, half of the 6 participants reported to have attended school in time past in Portugal. Although, one of them was already in care institution as at then, while five participants had no clue to the situation of their lives in the past because they were very young during this period. Thus, cultural practices are a dimension not applicable to most of the participants in Nigeria context. However, in general the cultural practices revealed life lived on the streets and schooling in the two countries.

The third category is the causes of parental separation. This was reported as abandonment by half of the 12 participants, lack of parental or custodian care conditions or capacities (5 participants) sickness of mother figure by one (1), and others include parental sickness and neglect in the two countries. However parental abandonment was reported by all participants in Nigeria. The basis for abandonment in Nigeria is not known, although, one of the participants reported that she was probably abandoned in the hospital because mother could not pay the hospital bills.

Dumaret (1988) in her studies of the children admitted early into care in SOS children village, showed that the majority of children became motherless and fatherless because of the illness of mother and suicide committed by father. This differs from the findings presented majorly because economic constraints seem to be the major reason for abandoning and withdrawal of children from parents by social security. This result is consistent with the findings. Sola said, ´´she left me maybe because she couldn't pay the hospital bills, and she gave birth to me as a premature baby, may be the money was too much´´.

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The exception to this is the case of Cristina whose mother was sick and father could not take care of her and the rest of her 6 siblings. Relating to life course approach, the past life of participants in their different locations and worlds before their admission into care shows that they have been abandoned by families of origin.

The findings presented here in relation to the principle of socio-historical events and geographical location in life course approach suggest that the period in which participants were born is characterised by poverty and geographical location is not a major factor to be considered for the participant. It can therefore be assumed that the societal parameter of economics (characterised by struggle) as a historical social actor has influenced the past life of the participant negatively, encouraging family disintegration. This alludes to the impact of this on the family in the long run suggests a separation in parent-child relationship, due to the pathetic and unenjoyable childhood of children in their different worlds.

Table 4.3.1a The past of Nigerian foster children

Dimension	Category	Nigeria					
		Female			Male		
		Sola	Bolu	Joko	Mayowa	Gbenga	Dele
Past	Biological family affiliation	No contact	No contact	No contact	No contact	Raised by single mother, unwilling father, cousin acted like a father	No contact
	Causes of parental separation	Abandoned in the hospital to	Abandoned	Abandoned	Abandoned	Abandoned at 10 years	Abandoned
	Cultural practices (daily routine)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Lives on the street	N/A

Table 4.3.1 b The past of Portuguese foster children

Dimension	Category	Portugal					
		Female			**Male**		
		Micaela	Cristina	Andreia	Andres	Abilio	Carlos
Past	Biological family affiliation	Unknown father, known mother, connected to 2 siblings	willing mother, willing father	Unknown father, raised by maternal grandfather. no close attachment with mother, connected to 2 siblings	Known father and mother, connected to siblings of different fathers	Deceased father, 6 connected to siblings	Father and mother living together with 2 siblings
	Causes of parental separation	Mother lacks conditions for parental responsibility	Father unable to take care of the 3 children due to mother´s sickness	Grandfather was old with no living conditions for the 3 grandchildren, mother has 3 kids by 19 years	Intervention by social service due to economic reasons (mother has no conditions)	Deceased father no home, and lack of food and good health, referral	Father say no condition, no home social security intervenes, for intervention
	Cultural practices (daily routine)	Cared for by carers and attended school in the temporary institution. Lack of condition to be cared for by mother. Weekend visit by mother	Normal as a child	Grandfather takes her to school, picking her up later in evening	Going to school	Mother and children lives on the streets, begging for food	The family sleep on the streets,

The first dimension has been able to show the lived experiences of foster children before their admission into care. However, it is important to further probe into the present so as to gain a glimpse of the experiences of the children while in care. This will lead to the second dimension.

4.3.2 Dimension 2: The present of Nigerian and Portuguese foster children

As explained earlier, the central question further delves into the present dimension through the sub-question II.

What is the description of the participants' present life?

The present dimension is indispensable in life course approach to better understand the trajectories surrounding this transition, the timing of lives, linked lives of foster children. To better understand the lived lives of participants during the present dimension, the care phases are explored. The participants were prepared for the reality of the future in three phases –

childhood, teenage and the youth. Participants were nurtured in at least three phases in Nigeria - childhood, teenage and youth while in Portugal two phases – childhood and youth. The childhood phase is the most extensive phase for children where many are being raised right at a tender age regardless of the country. However, each phase is unique on its own for each child based on the principles of timing of lives, human agency and the individual trajectories. Each phase is meant to prepare each of the participants for their developmental needs, equipping them with skills, and allow them take on different social trajectories in order to face the reality of their future. Moreover, the need for more independence is addressed as the child grows, which the third phase addresses. The teenage phase – pre-autonomy stage is negotiable in the context of Portugal where children can stay with their SOS mothers until they are 18 years and move directly into autonomy house.

The first phase provides children with a family life right from childhood to school age and beyond. During childhood, children live in a big community fenced round, with many siblings and a single mother who raised them up, until they are between 16 and 18 years. In this setting, children are able to interact with other siblings and families in the village community. However, the mother is solely responsible for the nurturing of these children during the childhood phase, the youth counsellor during teenage years, ensuring they take on pertinent social trajectory early in life such as education or take on a vocation. Children enjoy the community life, daily life and individual life in their own world. However, children in the community are raised in individualistic settings while in care but in a different cultural orientation based on the two countries under focus. Thus, in Nigeria children are raised as individualistic but in a collectivistic society, while in Portugal, children are raised as individualistic in an individualistic society. Furthermore, in order to prepare youth for the reality of life outside the village, both groups of youth had different experience with teenage and youth period based on the present dimension.

4.3.2.1 Childhood within the SOS Children's Villages

There is need to allude to tables 4.2a and 4.2b. These tables point to the age at which children were admitted into care. From the two countries, majority of the participants were admitted early in life into care as infants and school age children in Nigeria and Portugal respectively. Although, an exception to this is Gbenga as seen in table 4.2a, who was admitted during his

school age in Nigeria while Cristina and Abilio were admitted during toddlerhood in Portugal.

However, the contrasting age of admission into care, it is worth noting that the children made a cogent transition very early in life. The previous studies has reported that early transition of youth in care into adulthood has negative outcomes (Stein and Munro 2008; Bailey, Loehrke, & French, 2011; Courtney et-al, 2011; YIPPEE, 2011; Hoger & Sjoblom, 2014). In contrast, early transition of children into alternative care system may have a positive lasting effect on their holistic development if properly harnessed by both the child and care givers.

Turning now to the empirical findings, the present of the Nigerian and Portuguese foster children is characterised by the 4 categories and 13 subcategories. Further probing and the need for a clarity of the present, four sub-chapters has been arrived at – the present childhood cultural practices of Nigerian and Portuguese foster children, the present childhood social relations of Nigerian and Portuguese foster children, and the present childhood opportunities and disadvantages in the village among Nigerian and Portuguese foster children.

4.3.2.1.1   Childhood cultural practices within the SOS Children's Villages

As explained earlier, the cultural practices related to this study are the daily activities of participants embedded in three categories of daily life, community life, and village or societal life. The cultural practices are significant to life course approach especially with participants being raised in the context of family-oriented care. Thus, their life story cannot be understood outside their detailed cultural practices. Tables 4.3.2a (i) shows the cultural practices of foster children in Nigeria. Table 4.3.2b (i) shows the cultural practices of the participant in Portugal. The overall activity reported by all the participants was daily attending school in the two countries of study. The majority of the participants reported their daily lives to be of good memories, majorly of playing and eating. However, regarding country context, there is a difference. In Portugal, a participant reported sneaking out for parties during weekend nights and also smoking as part of her daily activity (Micaela) whereas another participant reported playing football as part of his daily activity (Abilio). On the other hand in Nigeria, the common view reported by half of the participants include going for vacation.

The next category is the participants' family life and the domestic skills they acquired as a child. The tables 4.3.2b (i) and 4.3.2a (i) majority of the participants reported their engagement in domestic chores and going to church during childhood. In addition, one quarter of the participants out of the 12 participants took care of their siblings - 3 in Nigeria and 1 in Portugal. However, in Portugal, all the participants reported cleaning as the major activity they do daily in the family, and only half of the 6 participants reported attending church with their mothers. Other activity reported in Portugal was studying. On the other hand in Nigeria, the activities participants engage in differ with respect to sex. All the 3 females' participants reported cooking as their daily activity using a shared roaster while only one male participant mentioned cooking as part of the family skills. Other activity and skills Nigerian participants reported include having family prayer time, punctuality in family activity and cleaning.

It is interesting to see that participants from the two countries reported church as part of weekly practices. This suggests that the mothers were able to inculcate the values in these children the need to believe in God, which cannot be overemphasised. However, some of the interviewees never mentioned anything related to the skills and/ or activity they engage in. For example, Mayowa reported that he lacks family skills. Likewise, Gbenga said he cannot cook, besides the fact that some activity and skills were overlooked by majority of the participants and not mentioned. Another possible explanation for this may be due to the collectivistic culture of the Nigerian society. In the traditional settings, it is a known phenomenon that the culture gives respect to the male figure and exempt male child from domestic chores.

The issue of being physically abused, experience of corporal punishment and deprivation reported by Mayowa was not prominent to the rest of the participants in Nigeria. However, it cannot be overlooked. He said:

´´I was trained by three mothers. The first one was the one that took care of me, so was very (...) and she was a mother. But the other one that came, she was a military woman, so you know as a military woman, she just came and brought in the military thing and as a kid, if I don't do anything right, she will beat and brutalize you. At a time, she didn't spend two years and she was sacked, until the recent one came, and properly, may be because I had an attachment with the first mother, I think it affected me. The last one ….hmm was not a military person, she was just a mother, from my view I felt she just came for a job. She is not interested She just get the job done and get paid. I

was with her. I think I wasn't the only one I lived with her about 6 – 8 years……she said I was stubborn and I was doing it ignorantly. . At a very tender age, she said I was stubborn???? I don't know why I will just want to hurt you intentionally. But like I said earlier there are things I just do and if she (…) oh God (…) If you do anything wrong, she comes and……like at times she comes at night and caught with anointing oil like witch, and say, you are like this, you are like that, she will come in the midnight that somebody is pressing her and she will come to the room and beat us up (the boys in the house, we the stubborn ones) and beat us and at times she locks us out; like we don't go out of the compound and we play within, she just lock us out, and with our friends outside., so we have to play, gist with them. She will lock us out, like she won't give you food. My friends accommodated me, at times, I sleep in the hall, I sleep in the hut and at a time, I got used to it. You can't, you won't even go home. Even when you go home, she won't give you food. Like if my friends are around, at times, I scavenge food around the office, the house…. I was between primary 4 to 6´´.

The story above illustrates bad memories of childhood of constantly been beaten and deprived of food and emotional well-being. The implication of this is that there is possibility of being early helped, but yet the situation may be tantamount to not being helped especially when children engage become frustrated in care.

Bolu in Nigeria commented this way when asked about domestic life:

"We eat the same food but the thing is when we were growing up, some mother if they don't like you they won't really care about you, which was not mine experience, I have sisters and brothers that mother don't care about. Most of the time they believe since I didn't take care of you as a child, they act as if the child has a parent so they won't really take care of you´´.

Her comment could explain the possibility of why Mayowa and his other brothers were being maltreated. However, the basis for this cannot be proved, so it cannot be substantiated in this study.

The last category is the community life. In tables 4.3.2a (i) and 4.3.2b (i), three of the participants reported that folks play and sports are the common community activities practiced in the two countries of study. However, in table 4.3.2b (i) all the Nigerian participants reported folks play, vocational training, development skills, farming, and going for summer camps characterised their community life in general. In contrast, one of the participant's (Gbenga) described the community life as restricted life. However, with the

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participant in Portugal as shown in table 4.3.2b (i), the general characteristics include freedom of activities such as swimming, sports, doing things in common. One of the participants described it as brotherhood community (Andreia). The comment below gives an illustration of community life in Nigeria and Portugal respectively;

Gbenga said: "it is a regular life. There are level of restrictions, we see ourselves as cousins and that is the ideology of the essence of the whole community". Andreia said: "The village life is different - we grow with a lot of children; we are not friends, we are brothers, we share a lot of things in common and it is a very strong spirit in there. We have a lot of activities when growing, I did a lot of things, climbing the walls, childhood was more or less fun, after my 6 years my life change."

The similarity here is the togetherness and the sharing in the two countries. However, the difference between the two participants case is a pointer to their perception about the cultural practices in general. This reports may be explained by the fact that the daily life of children in Nigeria is restricted only to the community while in Portugal there is freedom in the choice of activities. Another possible explanation could be that geographical location and the financial capacity influence the activities participants can engage in. Therefore, there is need for caution in the interpretation of this disparity in this finding. However, the advantage with male participant in Nigeria is that they are more able to engage in Agriculture - which is one of the major sources of livelihood in Nigeria, by taking care of the poultry farm, and through this they can get more gifts while the female engage in wetting of flowers. The reinforcement suggests a real balance to dersire to do more. It can be suggested that Portuguese participants can also be engaged in more creative activity that is typical of Portugal.

In summary, from the tables 4.3.2a (i) and 4.3.2b (i), majority of the participants did not mention the activities they engage in, in detail and was overlooked in the two countries of study. For example, Dele said, daily life for him was a normal childhood of play and work. However, only Joko was able to give a detailed picture of her daily life activities:

´´we live the way a normal child lives, wake early like 5am, pray with the family, do your house chores and prepare school and come back home, wash your cloth, eat your lunch, around 4-6 you play in the village, and by 6pm you come back to the house and by 7 pm you eat then watch till 9 pm and sleep and go back to bed´´

What individuals do are everyday practices, which stress on regularities and because of its routine pattern, there may be tendency of taking it for granted and may not necessarily

improve skill (Morgan, 1999; 2011). This implies that cultural practices participants engaged in may be the result of the influence of culture in each country - the individualistic society in Portugal and collectivistic society in Nigeria. It is important to note that there is an indication that domestic skills is lacking among Portuguese participants whose chore is only to clean. These findings suggest the need for domestic skills training in both male participants in Nigeria and Portugal participants. This corroborates the findings of Stein and Verweijen-Slamnescu (2012) on the lack of life skills among many of their participants.

Table 4.3.2a (i) Cultural practices of Nigerian foster children

Dimensions	Category	Subcategory	Nigeria					
			Female			Male		
			Sola	Bolu	Joko	Mayowa	Gbenga	Dele
Present - childhood	Cultural practices (daily routines)	Daily life	School, attend lessons in school, bead making on weekends, vacation with sponsor's	Girls only school, visit sponsor, vacation, eat, play, dinner,	Wake up by 5am, pray, chores, school, return home, wash cloth, and eat lunch, 2 hrs. Play in the community, return home, dinner, watch TV, sleep	Not exposed to normal life, lack of identity until JSS2, play, eat, take company with friends, painful memories, punished for rights physical abuse, physiological deprivation, insecurity unfed, flee from home, suicidal attempt	School, social life and summer holidays so	Normal childhood - play and work
		Family/ Domestic life	Roaster for cooking, beaten by siblings or reported for failure to do chores, cook, care of younger siblings, mother wash cloth at times	Church, Sunday special meal,	Biological family representation - family prayer, unity, mop floor, cooking as hobby	Unapproachable mothers, home during festive seasons, Nothing of family skills care of siblings,	Go to church, sharing spirit, time conscious for Family activities- eating, cannot cook, allowance, and gifts for taking care of farm	Cooking, care of younger ones
		Community Life	Traditional play, vocational training and sports	Cutting and dressing flowers, general cleaning on the farm, c	Shy, always indoor, introvert, don't play	Skills development, play with friends	Restricted life, summer camp, other siblings are cousins. Social participation,	General cleaning, poultry farming
		School and / or vocational experience	Poor school performance, extra coaching, vocational training for 2years.6months	Close to few friends, fast education	Slow in primary education	Better opportunities than children outside	Backlogged in primary education, excellent performance after primary school, motivational teachers, extra coaching	Normal primary school, challenging, interesting and exciting secondary outside the village, farming, forced to learn a vocation

Table 4.3.2 b (i) The present childhood cultural practices of Portuguese foster Children

Dimensions	Category	Subcategory	Nigeria					
			Female			Male		
			Micaela	Cristina	Andreia	Andres	Abilio	Carlos
Present - childhood	Cultural practices (daily routines)	Daily life	School, sneak out for night parties, smoke, visit mother	School preparation by mother, lay bed, eat	School, eat	School	School, football,	Happy time, bring past again, school
		Family/ Domestic life	Clean	Clean, church	Clean, church	Clean, church, study	Clean	Clean
		Community Life	Greetings and no interest for activities	Good	Brotherhood community, climbing walls, fun	Sports, swimming	Interact, play, do things in common, assist mother in taking care of siblings	Sports, freedom of choice in activities
		School and / or vocational experience	Poor school, performance, professional school	Good and poor academic performance, playful, sleeps during long teaching, wake up for life	Excellent performance in school	Poor school performance, professional school	Success attributed to mother, military school, excellent performance, scholarship in SS	Poor, low moments, very difficult, work after secondary school

Attending school was the major activity reported by all the participants. The majority of the participants reported poor school performance during primary and secondary school education. Four of the 12 participants reported good performance in education. However, two of the 6 Nigerian participants reported being supported by teachers. However, two of the participants in Portugal reported that mothers were really supportive during their educational pursuit in Portugal. This implies that mothers and teachers were source of support and social capital for the children. Abilio said, ´´ School, well I finished, but my mother helped me. When I was 12 years I told my mother I want to go military school and it is really expensive, and because I am one of the best students in my school, I could go there and I have a scholarship in secondary and it's my mum who made that stuff to be possible, she stay there and say study, study, that's why! Gbenga said: ´´Primary 5 wasn't that easy, but eventually in primary 6, I found so many motivational teachers who took personal interest in me in the SOS. The SOS provides a role for you where to learn, no matter how old you are and they try to work on your short coming, academic short comings, your problems, and your difficulties´´.

Regarding vocational experience, 2 of the 6 participants reported vocational training as a practice. However, one of the 2 reported to have been forced to learn the vocation. This implies that there is need for children to participate in decisions. This was mentioned in the literature review that it is their right to be consulted in decisions affecting them.

Children have different experiences when in care. Some are interesting, others are uninteresting. However, majority of the experience of children seems to be shaped by relationship with mothers. Thus, the next category – social relations will buttress more on the linked lives of participants.

4.3.2.1.2 *Childhood social relations within the SOS Children's Villages*

It is very significant to know that human being exists in relations (Coleman, 1988). The relationship participants sustain is important in life course approach. This social relations category will unveil the linked lives of the participants through the available social networks. However, from the tables 4.3.2a (ii) and table 4.3.2b (ii) presented below, three subcategories emerged including existing relationship that existed with biological families, SOS family and outsiders. Table 4.3.2a (ii) shows the relationship Nigerian participants were able to sustain during childhood in care while Table 4.3.2b (ii) shows the relationship Nigerian participants sustained during childhood. In general, half of the participants (50%) had relationship with either mothers and/ siblings of the parents. Participants' fathers seem to be insignificant in this study because all the participants who knew their fathers never had the opportunity to relate with them. This was the case of Gbenga, Cristina, Andre and Carlos.

It is impossible for five of the Nigerian participants to sustain any relationship with the biological family, since they do not have clue to their source. The exception to this was Gbenga, who knew both parents but was unable to identify with them. The reason for this is unknown.

On the other hand, the relationship existing between the participants in Portugal who could have access to them was not a close one. In fact, two of the participants – 2 males deliberately detached from the parents and kept a close distance. The possible reasons were identified in the cases presented below.

Carlos said: I have contact with 2 of my 3 sisters, I don't want to speak with her (mother). The first time my mother and father came to see me then they were not coming anymore. I don't want to see them I don't feel emotional connection´´. Abilio said: ´´I don't

speak with her, I don't want to speak with her because I think when we make a mistake, and all the people can make mistakes but if we make one mistake, and then we go there and make second time and over and over again, it is like you are stupid without intelligence ´´.

The cases show that children are grudged and annoyed with their mothers. Thus, it can be assumed that when there are unresolved issues such as trust, the attitude they put up can be a reflection of what is going on within them towards the mistrusted person.

However, female participants relate with their mothers. After all, they only know their mother. The relationship is not cordial and intimate. However, only one of the participants knew her father among the females and has an intimate relationship with all her immediate family members.

Cristina said:

´´My case is different from other children in SOS before my father died he put me and my brother and sister in the SOS. My sister left at 21 years. She just finished school and now she work in cosmetics and massage. I have one brother living in London. But another brother I have so much contact. I don't see my brother for 9 years….. (Sad) I don't know. Since the first day I came here I talk with my family I never stopped talking with them´´.

Her case shows that she had a close relationship with all her family members. It is interesting to know that despite the distance from family members, the gap was bridged through social network and phone. Another important finding was that different relationships exist between parent and mothers and between siblings. A majority reported having a good relationship with siblings; others were selective in their relationship with siblings. The following relationship had been identified – close, and detached among participants in the two countries of study.

Turning now to the relationship with SOS family, all the participants reported having good relationship with one or more mothers in both country of study. Only two of the participants reported a very close relationship with mothers (Joko and Dele) while in Portugal, 5 participants had intimate relationship with mothers. However, children were majorly affected by the need for a change of mother. The need for second mother seems to be based on valid reasons known to participants (retirement, health challenge, death, inability to cope with the system and children among others) due to the close relationship that existed among many of them with these mothers. This led to an end in their relationship to an extent with the first mother as care responsibility ends. With regards to relationship with subsequent

mothers for half of the participants (Sola, Bolu, Mayowa) in Nigeria, the link and attachment was lacking. However, only Andre´s experience seems to be different with subsequent mothers, this is because he was able to develop attachment and connection with his last mother. For instance, Bolu in Nigeria reported her second mother had preference for some siblings while Andrea who had up to five mothers to care for him during childhood refer to the first 4 mothers as not mothers and the last one as real mothers. Andrea said: ´´The first one gave up on the job because the SOS mother have her own sons, the second gave up because I was troublesome, the third had problem with the director, the fourth mother had mental health problem and she retired. The last mother is my mother. The other four mothers are not my mother, because they can't make connection with me´´.

Another participant to recollect is Mayowa as reported above. His experience with the two subsequent mothers never yielded any positive connection throughout his stay with them. However, it is very interesting to know that the more mothers each participants had the more, the distance in relationship with such mothers and the more the cumulative disadvantage on their behaviour, and social network. These findings may help us to understand Micaela's case who had been with previous care giver in the temporary institutions before her admission into care. This finding is similar to previous studies. Multiple care placements can trigger cumulative behavioural problems in children (Dumaret, 1988; Höjer, 2008; Höjer and Sjöblom, 2011; Courtney, et-al, 2011; SOS Children's Villages International, 2010). On the other hand, the behaviour of mothers have effects on the psychosocial behaviour of children (Adeboye and Ariyo, 2012). Related to siblings, all the Portuguese participants related with one and/or more of biological siblings. However, it can ascertain that different relationships exist among participants with SOS mothers – sociable, intimate, close, distance and detached relationship. This alludes to the Silverstein and Bengston (1997), characteristics of parent-child relationships mentioned in the literature review chapter.

In the final part of this category, the relationship participants maintained with outsiders is explored. All the participants in Nigeria had few friends in school if any during primary school. The possible reason deduced for this was the fact that they all had their primary education in the school within the village. Thus, participants were limited only to school friends they have access to interact with. By contrast, Portuguese participants had their schools outside of the village and, however, their perception about the outsiders suggest the same relationship except for Micaela, who says she only interact with her SOS siblings but have friends outside.

Abilio, when asked about relationship with peers, he said:

´´When I start to study, I remember that its really different because some of us (brothers) go together but when I see other children we look different, because we have different education, different life, but we are all the same we have our stuffs we play the same way, we don't think the same way that is why I think we are different´´.

The findings on social relationships differ with the groups or links children had. Regarding relationship with biological families, it is evident that transition to care affected parent-child relationship. This implies that stability in parent-child relationship cannot be guaranteed once children or group of siblings are admitted into care. This seems to be similar to the previous findings of Silverstein and Bengston (1997) on the different typologies of parent-child relationship as mentioned in chapter three. Many of the children who initially had contact with the biological family had become detached due to intervention of social security. This may impact their social relationship of children with other linked networks. The possible legal action taken against some parents may be to protect children from harm. However, there is no evidence for this. But it can be suggested that there is a need to balance the linked networks of children.

Table 4.3.2a (ii) Social relations Nigerian foster children

Dimensions	Category	Subcategory	Nigeria					
			Female			Male		
			Sola	Bolu	Joko	Mayowa	Gbenga	Dele
Present - childhood	Social relations	Relationship with biological family	No contact	No contact	No contact	No contact	Not rosy, positive and negatives, ups and down, lost contact with mum at age 12, wasn't accepted by father.	No contact
		Relationship with SOS mother and siblings	1st-connection, 2nd -no connection	1st-attached, 2nd- no attachment, secretive, sibling preference	Quiet, close	1st-attached, 2nd-corporal punishment forceful and job relationship, 3rd-keep to self, emotional problems, not family in real sense, administrative relationship	Not rosy, wasn't too good and wasn't too bad	1st late, 2nd- very close and cordial
		Relationship with outsiders	Sisters and	Close to few friends, inferiority complex, cut off from despiser	Sisters and few friends	Open if received with open arms, disposition about life - everyone is my brother because I don't know who is who interact and love equally	Childhood friends and other friends	Few friends, good relationship

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Table 4.3.2 b (ii) Social relations of Portuguese foster Children

Dimensions	Category	Subcategory	Nigeria					
			Female			**Male**		
			Micaela	Cristina	Andreia	Andres	Abilio	Carlos
Present - childhood	Social relations	Relationship with biological family	Not very good, not closeness to siblings	Always in touch with all family members since admission, unhappy - loss of contact with brother	Mother comes visiting, no connection	Mother relocated, 4 husbands, 4 children, close to grandmother	Detached from mother, only make, don't want connection, social network relationship with siblings	Grudged with mother for being abandoned, no emotional connection, connected to sibling
		Relationship with SOS mother and siblings	Good, interact with siblings	Love big mum, motivator, advice a lot among 8 siblings - keep company, cooperation, likeness, good interaction, close to biological siblings	Helpful, nice and good mum, good siblings relationship	1st- gave up on job, 2nd- complaint, 3rd- left job, 4th was sick and retired, (1-4, no connection) 5th- real mother. Siblings are brothers	My mother, supportive and problem solver, decision-maker, small productive network, siblings are supportive brothers	Good experience with SOS family
		Relationship with outsiders	Few friends in school,	Happy friends and willing to help	Proud and good siblings	Just friends	Play together but no similarity , difference in thinking	Friends at school

The present-childhood experience of participants revealed that different categories of childhood exists – early-happy childhood, early-frustrating childhood and early-moderate childhood.

4.3.2.1.3   Childhood opportunities and disadvantages within the SOS Children's Villages

The participants for this study had opportunities which were advantageous when under the care of their SOS mothers when living in the village. At the same time they had disadvantages of the village. The table 4.3.2a (iii) shows the accessibility to opportunities and disadvantages attached to living in the village when compared to other children outside for children in Nigeria. Table 4.3.2b (iii) accessibility to opportunities and disadvantages attached to living in the village when compared to other children outside for children in Portugal. These subcategories of opportunities and disadvantages as reported by the

participants will unveil the cumulative advantages and disadvantages of participants as presented in the presented in the table 4.3.2a (iii) and table 4.3.2b (iii).

The opportunities accessible to participants in both countries of study include material provisions, networks and education. However in Portugal, participants mentioned having a mother figure, emotional attachment, organisational support and network, education and opportunity to be a better person as opportunities some children outside do not have. On the other hand, the Nigerian participants mentioned material provisions, social networking with celebrities, protection from societal happenings, choice of school, medical care, private education - were rare privileges they enjoyed which other children never had. These responses of participants with regards to opportunity suggest that they never lacked the basic needs of life although all the opportunities were not mentioned in details. However, from these two contexts, it can be assumed that many of the children spoke from both their personal history and the situation of their country at the present. For instance, this corroborates the idea of Penelope (2012) that the rights of children are hierarchal in country context. The developed countries have progressed, more or less, to the protection and participation rights; it can be argued that the majority of developing and low-income countries are still struggling to achieve survival and provisional rights for their children. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that the presence of a mother should generate emotional attachment.

Table 4.3.2 a (iii) Opportunities and disadvantages of Nigerian foster Children

Dimensions	Category	Subcategory	Nigeria					
			Female			**Male**		
			Sola	Bolu	Joko	Mayowa	Gbenga	Dele
Present - childhood	Childhood opportunities	Childhood economics compared to other children	Schooling, material provisions, social networking	Good education medical attention, optional career choice	Education	Education	Private school from primary through university levels, over all well-being care, outsiders want the opportunity	Basic provisions, protection from the societal happenings, options to select SS of choice
		Advantages of village life	Save cost	material provisions,	No lack, normal childhood - had everything, cared for	Learn vocational skills	Eventually had a family that cares after losing family to the world,	Poultry, forced to learn a vocation
	Childhood disadvantages	Worst experience compared to children outside	None	Student mocks when background is known, downcast, dejected	None	None	Disdained by some childhood and school friends	Non
		Disadvantages of village life	None	Restricted to visit friends	None	Restricted to the village, group outing	None	Restricted to brothers and sisters in village, no childhood friends

Table 4.3.2 b (iii) Opportunities and disadvantages of Portuguese foster Children

Dimensions	Category	Subcategory	Nigeria					
			Female			Male		
			Micaela	Cristina	Andreia	Andres	Abilio	Carlos
Present - childhood	Childhood opportunities	Childhood economics compared to other children	Become another person if living with mother in social neighbourhood	Having a mother figure, not alone	Organisational preparation and opportunity to University level	Study, organisational networking, support	School,	Study, emotional stability
		Economics of village life	Education, availability of everything	Study, no worries for material provisions	Organisational preparation and opportunity to University level	Education-open way to the future	Togetherness, sports	Education, emotional stability
	Childhood disadvantages	Worst experience compared to children outside	None	None	None	None	None	Separated from parents,
		Disadvantages of village life	None	You can't go anywhere you want	No full family	None	Missing father figure, stressed mother	No father figure

In line with the advantages of living in the village, common to the participants is the fact that living in the village ensured emotional stability and material provisions were of surety in both countries of study. However, Nigerian participants alluded to the fact that it was advantageous to have learnt vocational skills (Mayowa), no lack of care (Joko), guaranteed material provisions, having a family that cares again (Gbenga), engaging in poultry farming (Dele), and that living in the village saves cost (Sola). Similarly in Portugal, participants highlighted the fact that availability of everything, togetherness, emotional stability (Carlos) and supportive organisation and organisational networking as advantages of living in the village. Little is reported about having any worst experience, except for Carlos who reported his worst experience to be the time he was separated from his parents (this could have contributed to the unresolved issues of grudge). It is assumed that the village director is the father figure. However, half of the participant still see the need for father figure, and the fact that they missed not having a father in their family. Although, the lamentation of these children could bulge on the fact that they are too many to access him as individuals (this

could explain why Abilio reported in subsequent table that he saw it as an advantage to have direct contact with the father figure. On the contrary, for Cristina, the disadvantage perceived is similar to many of the participants as restriction of where to visit. In Nigeria, the worst experience was the stigmatisation from friends Bolu and Gbenga, and Dele reported he was forced to learn vocation. Half of the participants reported restrictions as the disadvantage of living in the village. This may have implication with social development of children. The cases reported below exemplify this findings.

Mayowa said: ´´Like at my tender age we do learn the skills in the compound, and after we go outside after a while we do go out to nearby close where we learn the skills. I was confine to the village and only pack us in the bus when we need to go out together as a group´´. Bolu said: ´´we don't go out, you can go out to visit your friends or you have to take permission and the house mother tell the village director. For instance, besides the fact that children attend school outside of the village, they are as well free to choose freedom of activities in the village. However, participants had to go for swimming outside the village´´.

Together, these findings provide more insight to the right child in its holistic perspective. All these responses are a pointer to the fact that both the objective and subjective well-being of children were moderately ensured while with their SOS mothers which other children outside may not have the opportunity of accessing. Thus, with the majority of the children, they were able to grow holistically as related to their cognitive, physical, emotional, and social development. This finding grant understanding to the four principles of the rights of the child has it is been ensured while in care. This corroborates Bradshaw, et-al (2007) idea of the four principles as the conceptualisation and understanding of child's well-being and their findings on the eight clusters of well-being as referred in chapter two. It also suggest that when the physiological needs and safety of a child is ensured according to Maslow hierarchy of needs, it may have contributed to taking on the next trajectory or move to the next phase of their life, such as education and been more determined to achieve their goals. However, it can be suggested from the disadvantages that many children want and long for a real family setting peradventure they cannot be with their biological parents in Portugal and in Nigeria - they don't want to be confined only to the walls of the village.

4.3.2.2 Youth phase within the SOS Children's Villages

Based on the just concluded discussion on the present- childhood dimension, it is evident that youth experienced another phase while in care after childhood phase. This is in two phases in

Nigeria (teenage and youth phases) and in Portugal, a single phase (youth phases). This implies that Nigerian participants had three transitions and Portuguese participants had two transitions while in care system.

4.3.2.2.1   *Youth transition*

The tables 4.2a and 4.2b as earlier explained show the age at which each participant had the subsequent transition after the childhood phase. This youth phase will not be detailed enough since it is more or less the continuation of life in care even if in a different setting, and the youth as well confirms during the data collection. However, it is important to elaborate more on this present-youth dimension because it is the timing when participants are meant to take on different social trajectories. It is important to note that the achievements of youth in autonomy differ within and between the two countries. In addition, the age of youth in the autonomy differ between the two countries.

Living in the autonomy house implies that youth are capable of making decisions in the choices they are presented and construct meaningful life for their path into future. Elder refers to this as the principle of human agency. Elder (1998:4) states that 'individuals construct their own life through the choices and actions they take within the opportunities and constraints. These choices are within the available opportunities and advantages and the provisions the organisations provide for the youth and the trajectory path they took on such as education.

Table 4.3.2a (1) Transition perception of Nigerian foster youth

Dimension	Category	Subcategory	Female			Male		
			Sola	Bolu	Joko	Mayowa	Gbenga	Dele
Present – Youth	Transition	Factors facilitating transition	Age don't count, achievement	Maturity	Age	Age	Age, rarely progress	Age
		Description and movement	Lazy part felt bad initially, not rosy, nice decision for independence	Difficult, observe others and do	YF1 youth counsellor watches over you, YF2- fend for yourself, mother figure is missing	anticipating comforting, restful	Cross-road, decisive, diminished privileges, adapt	Decisive, responsible for whole well-being

Table 4.3.2b (1) Transition perception of the Portuguese foster youth

Dimension	Category	Subcategory	Female			Male		
			Micaela	Cristina	Andreia	Andres	Abilio	Carlos
Present - Youth	Transition perception	Factors facilitating transition	Age	Maturity	Maturity	Work	Age	Age
		Description and movement	More responsibilities	Maturity, good	Maturity	Independence	Send progress report	Age

4.3.2.2.2 *Youth cultural practices within the youth care systems*

The practices the participants engaged in during childhood further led to the present phase called the youth phase. Youth in both countries now have the freedom to live the life they want. However, for many of them it is a challenging phase which they have to keep up with.

Table 4.3.2a (2) Cultural practices of Nigerian foster youth

Dimension	Category	Subcategory	Female			Male		
			Sola	Bolu	Joko	Mayowa	Gbenga	Dele
Present - and Youth	Cultural practices (daily routines)	Daily life	Vocational training, work, active in church group, table tennis	In school almost, busy with baby	Freedom after integration, always indoor, difficult, tactic		Regular life, play football	Director of your life, more interesting, keep up to goals, challenging
		Family/ Domestic life	Lazy, learn with time		Cooking, upbringing is a lfestyle, wake up late		Manage and cook yourself	Cook for yourself, take care of yourself
		Society or Community Life	Visit friends	Visit village but no longer permitted	Learning the way of life in society , marriage			Closer to the society, more friends than siblings
		School or vocational outcome	Resettled to be established, open shop	Graduate and professional course	Resettled after university education, seeking job	Graduate, volunteer, and to open art shop	Graduate and working	Graduate and acquiring poultry farming skills

Table 4.3.2b (2) Cultural practices of Portuguese foster youth

Dimension	Category	Subcategory	Female			Male		
			Micaela	Cristina	Andreia	Andres	Abilio	Carlos
Present - Youth	Cultural practices (daily routines)	Daily life	School, smoke, drink,	Prepare for school, medicals, self-independence,	Cook, laundry, rush out to school, come back late	Got 2 jobs, return home following day, tiring	Work, boring and difficult, plan life,	Got 2 jobs, sleep
		Family / Domestic life	More responsibilities, nobody to push you around	Cook, clean, school, part time work	Call mother to cook food	Lack patience to clean,	Cook, balance work and family life, eat together with siblings,	Clean on rest days,
		Society or Community Life	No interaction	Talk with children, unfamiliar with new children,	Hang out with friends and people of Aldeias	Always at work	Hang out with friends,	Busy at work
		School or vocational outcome	11th grade on professional business school	13th grade in secondary school, positive energy for school	1st year in university	Professional cook and working	On internship and final year in University, engage in exam malpractice	Secondary school cert. Holder and barman

4.3.2.2.3   *Youth social relations within the youth care systems*

The only thing that changed here is the fact that many participants had the opportunity to relate more in the society. Many of the participants were able to establish more linked lives as shown in tables 4.3.2a (3) and 4.3.2b (3). In fact, for the participants who experienced lack of care with SOS mothers, relationship became obligatory or final detachment. This was the case of Bolu and Mayowa. On the other hand, Gbenga was able to establish contact with the mother again while Dele plans to search for his family in the nearest future. This suggests the longing of the participants for a linked network with the families of origin. In contrast, Sola is not willing to link up with her family of origin. When she was asked about her present relationship with her family of origin, she said: ´´I don't want to even know anything about them, I am okay with the way I am because if I were to be there I don't think all this I would have known or achieve this´´.

In Portugal, Cristina reported visiting her family members every holiday in order to assist her mother and biological siblings. On the other hand, Abilio, a university student reported that he does not go looking for his (mother). Thus, reconnection to parents seems to be yet impossible during youth stage.

He said:

´´My biological mother try to talk but I don't want to talk. I don't. She is not my mother, she only make me. When I have my problems to go to make my decision to think well, it is the woman who lives here that is my mother. That is my mother because she stays all the time I need her, the other one is just a woman who make me, if I see here on the streets, hi, hi, I say its ok. But I don't want to talk with her more than this. In my life I just have a group of people who think it's better for me this group keep small because its people who think is good for me the others…go, I think it's more easy to live that way My sister live here with me, the others I don't know. She go out village 5 years ago, she is leaving with the boyfriend and working. Two of my elder brothers stay, one in the jail the other one is going to jail, because they shoot people that kind of stuff the others. I guess they stay with my mother, I talk with them on Facebook, but just a small talk´´.

The case of Abilio points out his definition of a mother as someone who is able to give birth to a child and raise the child. In, majority of the male participants seems to relate with biological families when compared to the female participants.

Table 4.3.2a (3) Social relations of Nigerian foster youth

Dimension	Category	Subcategory	Female			Male		
Present - Youth	Social relations	Relationship with biological family	Not interested in knowing them	None	None	None	Re-connected to mother only	Make a search using available document
		Relationship with SOS mothers and siblings	Established contact with mothers and children, phone conversation with siblings	Unplanned visit, affected relationship due to pregnancy, no intimate relationship with the family and community	Regular visit to mothers, in contact with siblings	No basis for relationship or visit	60% close, busy with work, close to siblings	Intimate relationship, visit once a week
		Relationship with outsider		More friends outside	Peers want the same opportunity	Close relationship with friends	Close to friends outside	Keep few friends

Table 4.3.2 b (3) Social relations of Portuguese foster youth

Dimension	Category	Subcategory	Female			Male		
			Micaela	Cristina	Andreia	Andres	Abilio	Carlos
Present - Youth	Social relations	Relationship with biological family	Call once a while and talk with one of siblings	Stable mother but relapse, assist family during vacation	Don´t go searching for her, no strong ties	Not aware of relocation	Detached from mother	Zero, engrossed with work
		Relationship with SOS mothers and siblings	Good relationship but not happy with habits of smoking, drinking and partying	Stay on back, advice, source of help, succour when down casted	Visit once a month from school, hang out with friends and people of Aldeias	Real mother	Supportive, perfect, make right decision with her when in problem	Speaks with her regularly
		Relationship with outsider	Hangout with few friends	Happy friends, gist, hang out	Fit into a group in school, located old friends in new location	Wonderful	Play together but no similarity , difference in thinking	Friends at school and work

4.3.2.2.4   Youth opportunities and disadvantages within youth care systems

The table 4.3.2a (4) shows the available opportunities and disadvantages for Nigerian participants including increase in allowance, freedom to live with people, skills development while in table 4.3.2a (4), Portuguese participants reported bills paid off, freedom to go anywhere without restrictions, and the independence of living alone as advantages of living in the autonomy house. The opportunities reported by participants reveal their strengths especially in the area of independence living

In general, placing children in boarding house in Nigeria would have exposed them to the rudiments of the larger societal culture. However, in Portugal the children are directly connected to the society when growing up basically due to the fact there school is located outside of the village. This suggest that exposure to cultural context has impacts on the children. Disadvantages seem to be present in both context. In Nigeria, it is important to note that of lack of employment put youth in Nigeria at a disadvantaged position. This, couple with the impact of the past related to their upbringing in familial settings may make youth have delayed family life through their financial incapability for marriage. However, many

participants in Portugal lack domestic skills to take care of themselves. This may be reason why they missed the mother figure who can cook for them besides the emotional attachment. Children are directly or indirectly influenced both by the organisational institutions and the culture. Youth reported the disadvantages of the need to keep telling their true life story to friends, and having worst experience with other teenagers outside. This can contribute to cumulative disadvantage to linked lives outside of the village. All the disadvantages reported by youth have the tendencies to become cumulative and impacting the adulthood negatively.

Table 4.3.2a (4) Opportunities and disadvantages of the Nigerian foster youth

Dimension	Category	Subcategory	Female			Male		
			Sola	Bolu	Joko	Mayowa	Gbenga	Dele
Present - Youth	Teenage/ youth opportunities in the society or community	Best opportunities compared to children outside	Talent discovery competition	Increase in allowance, support for child	YF1 - good life, supportive youth counsellor, YF2 - 70% opportunity	Prepared with skills and qualifications, got business equipment	Education	Freedom, live with people
		Advantages of living in community or society	Freedom to visit friends	Manage resources, supportive youth counsellor, access to cheap food	Supportive youth counsellor, manage finance	Relate with many friends, self-independent	Independence	Financial support, cook together
	Teenage/ youth disadvantages in the society or community	Worst experience in relation with other teenagers or youth	None	Tell story, separation from friends	Variety of options between good and bad	Lacks care after resettlement, needs connection to get job	None	None
		Disadvantages of living in the community or society	Fined for coming late	Reduced daily meal	Missing mother care, lonely life after resettlement	Deserted and forgotten after resettlement	Decrease in allowance	No privacy

Table 4.3.2 b (4) Opportunities and disadvantages of Portuguese foster youth

Dimension	Category	Subcategory	Female			Male		
			Micaela	Cristina	Andreia	Andres	Abilio	Carlos
Youth	Teenage/ youth opportunities in the society or community	Best opportunities compared to children outside	Self-independent	Accountable to no one, work, act alone	Education	Less expensive, freedom to do what you want	Direct relationship with director, access to volunteer teachers	Monthly allowance
		Advantages of living in community or society	Freedom, decisive	Freedom to go anywhere, do it yourself	Independent	House bills paid off	Well-prepared for independent living	Bills paid off
	Teenage/ youth disadvantages in the society or community	Worst experience in relation with other teenagers or youth	None	None	None	None	None	None
		Disadvantages of living in the community or society	Responsibilities - medical, eat, insufficient finance to survive	No mother to cook, pay for net	Learning practical's and facing reality	No mother to wake up	None	Difficult to have savings

4.3.3 The projected future pathways of Nigerian and Portuguese foster youth

The table 4.3.3a and table 4.3.3b below presents the future pathways participants expect to pursue or likely arrived at in few years. This is also an indication of individual experiential reality. Majority of the participants exhibited elements of the strengths perspectives – decisive, expectations, resilience, and possibilities among others towards a better future as mentioned in chapter two and three. The principle of human agency in life course approach relates to the fact that opportunities and constraints are determined by the choices an individual make (Elder, 1998). This implies that the utilisation of the opportunities available to individual participants while in care will go a long way to map their trajectories.

It is interesting to know that all the participants were able to utilise the opportunities in different ways. This ranges from their career path to family life. These pathways seem to be traceable to both the past and the present dimension with respect to career path. The majority of the participants have acquired one or two skills that could keep them going and make their transitions to independent living successful in terms of career. However, the

resettlement grants may not be sufficient for the youth in Nigeria despite the acquired vocational skills or business plan on their minds.

In the two countries of study, the participants had one and/ or more low-level and high level academic qualifications. Among the six participants in Nigeria, only one had a low-level education (Sola) while half of the participants in Portugal are majorly low skilled, and may have to take up job early. It may be expected that in entering the labour market, the high-level qualified participants will take up a lucrative job while the low level-qualified participants take up other jobs less lucrative. For this present study this is not the case. This is because the two country's contexts differ with job. A country like Nigeria has 23% unemployment rate while Portugal has 13%. Thus, in this study, it is possible for the less qualified participants in Portugal to get work or a job than the highly qualified participant graduates in Nigeria. In fact, Sola reported that she is well established in her cosmetology while Joko is still at home searching for job after their resettlement. This poses a barrier to high-level education for majority of the participants who may not be able to practice in their respective disciplines.

The two countries of study reveal that majority of the participants had a clear understanding of what they want to become, but unemployment is a challenge to participants in Nigeria. However, some (Mayowa and Dele) were able to utilise the vocational and farming skills imparted to them during their childhood. This shows the strength in the youth in their being able to utilise the resources in providing themselves with self-employment. It also indicate the cumulative advantage of exposing children to vocational and training skills during childhood in care. It is interesting to know that two of the six participants are taking up their childhood training as their career path.

For instance in Nigeria, Dele who has chosen farming as his career path can be traceable to the exposure he received while he was living in the village as a child (table 4.3.2a (i)). Similarly, tracing back the life course of Mayowa, his experience as a child in artistic training can be connected to his interest in being established in graphics profession alongside his charity work. The timing of the life course of the youth in Nigeria seems to be prolonged and there is possibility of prolonged transitions among Nigerian youths. The age factor, the education years, and the employment status mean that for many of them, they may be delayed to take up other trajectories. On the other hand in Portugal, the possibility of early adulthood can be identified among the participants. However, their decision for marriage is still a plan majority are still considering.

The other significant pathway is related to family life. There is little evidence to the present dimension influencing the future family life for many of the participants in Portugal. Thus, it is possible that their indecision about getting married (Micaela and Andres) and assertiveness of Carlos of not wanting to get married may be the aftermath of the past life. In Nigeria, the childhood experience of Mayowa is perhaps the reason why he is still considering marriage as an option. This implies that youth suffer from unresolved issues of abandonment. It is interesting to know that many of the participants do not want past occurrence for their children in the future. Abilio said, ´´I want to be a role model to my children´´, while Andreia said: I want to give my children all the opportunity I had and much more to my children´´.

Almost all the participants' can see the possibilities and reality of their expectations for the future in the area of family and children. This is reinforced through their hopes about the future. Cristina said, my experience has made me become resilient, and I will fight for the best. Abilio said, my childhood experience has made me become strong and see life in different way. This implies that despite their past, they have become empowered through the available opportunities to face the reality of adulthood.

Table 4.3.3a   The projected future pathways of Nigerian foster youth

Dimension	Category	Subcategory	Female			Male		
			Sola	Bolu	Joko	Mayowa	Gbenga	Dele
Future - Projected Pathways	Career		Cosmetologist	Aviation industry, Banker	Business, optional white collar job	Charity, Art work	Humanitarian	Farmer
	Plan	1 year plan	Open hair salon, professional training	Professional course in Aviation	Marriage in view	Graphics	Business	Establish farm
		5 years plan	Marriage, owned beauty spark	Marriage, Master programme	2 kids	Graphics	Business, family	Poultry business, politics
		10 years plan	Cosmetologist into countries and schools	Travelling agency	Marriage and work	Good job, masters, PhD	Big business, bigger family	Established business
		Parenting / family life prospect	Marry	Financial independence in marriage	Marry	Not interested in what people are not enjoying	Gain financial strength, buy land, better job, then marry, in marriage	No plans yet, not a priority
		Prospective number of children	3	3 or 4	4	2	3	2
		Desires for children	Good life, responsible, good home	Good education, responsible, teach daughter sex education, feed well	Best mum, best education, cleanest life	Good life, education, feed well,	Education, love, protection	Comfortable life, good education, provision availability
		Undesired for children	Waywardness	Secretive	Cheating, past reoccurrence	Past reoccurence	Deprived good life, single parenting, silly mistakes	None

Table 4.3.3b The projected future pathways of Portuguese foster youth

Dimension	Category	Subcategory	Female			Male		
			Micaela	Cristina	Andreia	Andres	Abilio	Carlos
	Career		Model	Actress	Multimedia (radio)	Chef	Mechanical Engineer	Hotelier
Future - Projected Pathways	Plan	1 year plan	Model	Finish secondary education	Studying	Cook	Job	Process admission into University
		5 years plan	Model, job	Work in theatre	Finish first degree education, work	Promotion in cook		University - restaurant related
		10 years plan	Model, marriage probability	University, work in theatre	Globetrotter, multimedia employee, professional stability, start to have a family	Chef	Marry, start personal business	Have a kid
		Parenting / family life prospect	Not certain about marrying	Marry, big celebration	Not in thought, but will get married	No plans, live for a day, not certain of marriage	Marry	Don't want to marry
		Prospective number of children	Don't know	10	2	None	2 or 3	1
		Desires for children	Don't know	Health, money, luck, best, freedom, clubbing, resilient	Explore all opportunity in education, happy and strong family, grow well	None	Food, learn, role model, never give up	Health, happy childhood, financial and emotional stability
		Undesired of children	Don't know	Drugs	Past occurrence, single parenting	None	Past reoccurrence,	Unhappiness, unlike *benfica*

4.3.4 Reality of adulthood after leaving care

Three of the participants in Nigeria were integrated into the society at different periods. There is no detailed information about the care leavers. Yet, the available information suggest both possibilities and problems. For instance, two out of the three care leavers are graduates still seeking employment or hoping that their business plan will yield a positive response. The table 4.3.4 shows the reality of the future for the care leavers.

Sola said: ´´I am not really prepared because there are some things I need I still need to fix up I want to really go deep into this cosmetology, I need more preparation in my training, just the makeup aspect. So I will start the training. I am finding fulfilment because that is what I

want to do and that is where I want to make my money from, but thus, is what I have been doing when I was young, make hair….I learnt how to make hair when I was in the village´´

Table 4.3.4 Reality of adulthood after leaving care

Dimension	Category	Sola	Joko	Mayowa
Care leavers Perception	Established but not fully prepared	Established and acquisition of more skills related to	Unprepared for resettlement	Unprepared for resettlement
	Career path	Cosmetologist	Journalist	Artist
	Accomodation	Rented apartment	Rented apartment not a good accommodation	Living with someone
	Career status	Cosmetologist	Unemployed	Unemployed
	Hopes	IS to make name for yourself and make impact in youth life and the whole world	My hope is built on nothing else than Jesus. I hope on God, amn will My future is bright fail you	I want to be part of the change
	Fears	Paying good with evil	No fear	None

However, the lack of proper care leaving process may require a need for the definition for leaving care in Nigeria. Leaving care need to be tantamount to a prepared, organised, and established life if foster youth will be free from turbulence of adulthood. Although, SOS children's villages look into the future and may not or want to shy away from the past because it is passive, the life project can give another perspective about life with their life project.

Mayowa said:

''At a time eh., children in the village have better opportunities, at a stage in time, but when it comes to the…when they are resettled it's always kind of hectic because like ….at a time, just you are on your own, like you are nobody's business, you are just on the street when you are resettled. It's better at youth facility two. But when you are re settled, you are on your own. No one cares if you have a job, and it's like everyone is like….I need to help my younger brother, I need to do this I need to do that, my uncle is....is a niece of mine…. And you don't have any Uncle anywhere and if don't have any good friend around to help or assist you, you will just be there and gallivanting the street. I don't have a job yet''

He further said, when asked about his plans in 10 years: I want to get a good job and get done with everything pertaining to education, plan to do my Master's, PhD My business, going into graphics and making it big.

Joko said: ''I don't get allowance now after I finished my service year in 2013, they do help in getting job, they should still help me, and they should pay for the house. The past was the beginning of my life, now I'm in the present and I'm looking forward to the future. Yeah, I love the present!''

Despite the complaints in lack of accommodation, financial support and employmet common to two of the participants as identified by Leirch and Stein (2010) in Asia and Europe among care leavers, it is quite revealing that participants had elements of strengths in them. Elderly siblings were source of social capital for all the participants'. Mayowa lives with one his SOS sisters. In fact, with the experience of Mayowa while in care, it would have been assumed that he will not be resilient, yet out of all the participants, he is the only one seeing the possibility of pursuing his education to the highest level – Ph.D. Joko and Sola have close relationship with their siblings. Thus, while care givers may be absent from children and youth due to an abrupt or prepared end of care supports, siblings can be a source of strength, support, survival and livelihood for each other.

Moreover, SOS children's villages seems to agree with strength perspective in a way by not looking into the past life of the children, rather into the future, the possibilities around these car leavers can be explored. For instance, all the participants reported having written a project plan and business plan, in order to be towards their full integration. This suggest that youth have been able to explore their resources in making decisions. They are able to define and channel the opportunities, set directions and ability to mobilise strengths. Their ability to participate in decisions affecting them is worthwhile which can give them a sense of responsibility and empowerment to make crucial decisions for their lives.

4.5 Global challenges faced by Nigerian and Portuguese youths

The problems faced by youth in general are an indication that both global south and global north are faced with challenges in providing a turbulent- free childhood for all children. The table below shows the challenges of youths as mentioned by the participants including

unemployment, lack of shelter, suicide attempt. However, in Nigeria, problems faced by youth include stigmatisation, lack of opportunity for vocational skills, lack of care, and lack of parental guidance. In Portugal, drug, suicidal attempt, mental problems, exclusion, among others were reported as the challenges peculiar to youth in the context of Portugal. This finding may help to better understand that tackling social problems among children and youth is both global and context specific. These findings are very significant in unfolding the realistic rights of the child according to the four overlapping P's of the UNCRC in the two countries as a representation of global south and global north.

Table 4.3.5 Global challenges of youth

Dimension	Category	Nigeria	Portugal
Intervention	Problem faced by children	Unemployment, lack of education, lack of vocational skills, lack of shelter, lack of love, war, discrimination, suicidal attempt, lack of parental guidance on media watch	Drugs, lack of life, abandonment, lack of support, lack of shelter, difficult life, disappointment from parent, mental problems, lack of trust, exclusion, peer influence, unemployment
	World intervention	Peace and harmony, provide home, embrace children, so seclusion,	Reunite family, provide shelter for family, support and create more institutions, create more SOS Children Villages, provide father figure,
	State Intervention	Suffering alleviation, subsidized and quality education, give children voice, support in donation, create more institutions	Support institutions to admit more kids, test mothers mental fitness to have and raise children,

4.6   The past, the present and the future: a synthesis

The process of transition from care to adulthood through a life course approach has unveiled the life of youth in three dimensions – the past, the present and the future. The transitions of youth while in care occurred in three phases – childhood, teenage and youth with childhood as the most extensive phase for all the youth.

Poverty was the major reason for which children were separated from their parents. Dissolving of the past from memory was evident among interviewees, yet, the supressed issues are still fresh. The impact of this on the family in the long run suggests a separation in parent-child relationship, due to the pathetic and unenjoyable childhood of children in their different worlds in the past.

In the past, seven of the interviewees had no clue of one and or both parents and five of the interviewees were from single parenting home. During this period, relatives were source of social capital, bridging the missing links between children and parents for Andres, Andreias

and Gbenga. However, economic constraints had more impact on childhood than the cultural context in which children lived.

The past dimension reveals two perspectives of childhood – turbulent and helpless childhood. Thus, the typology of childhood before care of children in adverse life situation includes:

Turbulent childhood - these are children who are affected by societal parameters of ecological systems of global, country, society or family incapability and find it difficult to develop holistically – their rights as children to holistic development is denied. Half of the interviewees - Gbenga, Abilio, Carlos, Andreia, Andres, and Micaela experienced unrest and insecure childhood before their admission into care as they lack physiological needs, and protection. They can be between pre-school age and school age. These children are active when going through this turbulent experience. Even some of them may seek out alternatives in overcoming the situations they are exposed to by begging on the streets (Abilio, and Carlos). Characteristics of such children is that they may know or have access to one or both of their parents yet, life for them is unenjoyable and full of pathetic experiences they may not want to remember such as living on the streets (Gbenga, Abilio and Carlos) or being taken care of by extended families (Andreia and Andrea).

Helpless childhood – these children become vulnerable due to both economic constraints and parent(s) deliberate act of cast away due to parents incapability to take up care responsibilities. These children are passive and are helpless because they tend to be too young – less than one year old. Such children are abandoned by parent (s) and can be found as helpless being on the streets, hospitals. For these participants, it cannot be concluded that they are orphans who have lost both parents because there is no evidence as to whether one or both of their parents are dead. Rather, they are deprived of parents who could bear and nurture them. This is a good representation of five of the cases of Nigerian participants – Sola, Bolu, Joko, Mayowa and Dele.

Comparing the past and present dimensions, it can be seen that the present seems to be interesting for many of the interviewees in the timing of their lives to take on different social trajectories, and the linked networks established. SOS children's villages' affiliations in Portugal and Nigeria have been able to produce different kinds of experience for children and this has resulted in different childhood for the children. However, these findings will probably be more examined, but there are some immediately dependable conclusions of childhood typology in social work with families and children in care. Different relationship

seems to exist between mother and children within and across the countries of study. This has led to the typology of childhood related to social work and children in care:

Early-happy childhood - these are children who received early help by making cogent transition into care from families of origin or relations while depending on care givers for better lives and outcomes. Majority of the interviewees received early help by 6 years in both countries. Close to this typology include Andreia, Abilio, Cristina, Carlos and Gbenga. They seem to be holistically balanced (Abilio, Andreia, and Gbenga). They remove barriers or block any link that can hinder their happiness such as detachment from untrusted family members or friends. They were active actors during past experiences. Thus, they had turbulent childhood. Although, it is possible they have delay in trusting people due to their experience of turbulent childhood, but once they are comfortable and are emotionally attached with care givers, they are able to trust the few people they are consciously and unconsciously surrounded with. They are able to plan and work towards achieving their goals. This implies that the future for these children is early and not prolonged (Gbenga, Abilio and Andreia) as they are able to obtain high-level of academic qualifications between 21 and 22 years and securing work and getting married and having their family of procreation is non-negotiable.

Abilio said, ´´ there is need to pass test to make sure mums are mentally fit or good to make children and to raise children. I have to learn to love my mother here. If it was my own mother that made and raised me, I don't have to learn how to love, we were born and love mum naturally. When I came here I have my problems it took me time to trust. Right now I don't trust anyone, even with my mum, imagine when I came here the first day, it's really difficult because I guess my experience make me not to trust any more´´.

Early-moderated childhood – these children like any other children in care received early help through early transition into care systems. Their past background tends to be helpless childhood. They are able to sustain the few links they have and are very committed to care givers and siblings. However, they feel comfortable with whatever they have and do not seek friendship outside. In fact, initially they may not want to know anything about their family of origin because of the lasting impression they had while in care. So, they can easily feel disappointed when they are neglected or abandoned to survive alone. Later on, there is every possibility that these children may go in search of their family of origin or biological relatives when the people they once relied upon are no longer supportive. The future for these

children can be prolonged or early, depending on the career pathway and country context. Sola, Joko and Dele are very close to this type of childhood in this study.

Joko said: My peers want to be like me because of the opportunities I have and everything. I don't really keep friends, the way I grow up, It's telling on me. …I'm timid and shy. I am in touch with my sisters also. (…). I would prefer to stay with my SS mum. I am not lonely. I just want that motherly thing. There are sometimes when you feel you need someone to talk to or someone be there for you to stand for. So when your mother is not there and someone else' mother is there (…) the mother thing is not there anymore; now you'll have to manage your money, nobody to tell you. (…). It is tough, it is not easy, being alone spending yourself facing life without nobody being there to take care of you. It tough

Early-frustrated childhood – these children received early help by making cogent transition into care from families of origin or relations while depending on care givers for better lives and outcomes. But, they are denied a happy childhood while in care. They experience harassment from care givers (Andres and Mayowa). They may have more than two care givers while in care. These children cannot grow holistically since their rights as children are denied. They may be physically maltreated and denied food for physical growth. They are not emotionally attached to care givers because they lack affection. Such children in this group in time past could have had either a turbulent or helpless childhood. In order to suppress their feeling of resentment, they may engage more in vocational work or other activity that keeps them going and being on their own. In fact, such children may be opportune to attend the University but they may prefer taking up vocation as career (Mayowa – artist).

Andres said,

> ´´I have a lot of mothers, I have 5 mothers. The first one gave up on the job because the SOS mother have her own sons, the second gave up on me because I was troublesome, the third had problem with the director of SOS, the fourth mother had mental health problem and she retired. The last mother is my mother, the other four mothers are not my mother because they can't make connection with me´´.

Another interviewee in Nigeria reported that: ´ (…) and I have been asking questions about this and I cannot even ask my mothers, I dare not approach them because they were not approachable. I never approached the mothers for once, if I want to know anything about myself (…) ´´.

The children are in search of identity, yearn for a sense of belonging, because they feel unloved and unaccepted for who they are within their sphere of contacts. They may fail to see the possibility of marriage or having a family of procreation in the future, become more resentful to others, and may not have many friends.

Early–restrained childhood - these are children who received early help by making cogent transition into care from families of origin or relations while depending on care givers for better lives and outcomes. At times, they could have experienced placement in different settings or have more than one care giver with either helpless or turbulent childhood background. These children tend to keep to themselves while in care because they feel they are not emotionally attached. Their experience of parental preference for a child may lead to mistrust for developing close relationships due to their disappointments in those they trust. Thus, they deliberately detach from their care givers and others within their close contacts and have more links in the society than in the care systems. They are more comfortable to trust outsiders than insiders who can betray them. Bolu alluded to the fact that: ´´I have more networking outside. I don't talk to my mothers, I have been like that. But I can talk outside if I see that they can advise me. I am not attached to my mothers, most of us. They tell your secrets when you even tell them not to, they only smile at you but at the back it's another thing.....95%. It depends on the mother, we have 10 houses I think you can confide in two out of the 10. For me there is no motherly care ´´.

This alludes to Erickson (1959) first stage of psychosocial development that trust may be difficult to be established if care givers or dependants fail to meet up to the expectations of children. Foster children's expectation is trust in mothers or care givers in meeting their physical, emotional, among others so that they can have hope to trust others, otherwise social relationships may be established on mistrust. Their feeling of lack of sense of belonging while in care could result in being easily been influenced by peers outside as they engage early in social vices of drugs, drinking, and smoking. They disobey the societal law. For instance, Micaela said: ´´ I started smoking at 15 years because I just wanted to start smoke. I told my mother initially that I don't smoke, later on I told her I smoke. My friends smoke but I don't later on I start ...it's not my friend, it is me´´.

Children close to this type (Bolu and Micaela in this study) can engage in social vices, have children outside of marriage and make necessary plans such as gaining financial strengths as a female before considering marriage or family life (if any) so that they could be free to do and have whatever they want.

The cases reported above show that there is need for a better strategy on how care givers relate with children and handle sensitive matters related to each child. Of course it is acknowledged that while in care mothers cannot bear the burden of raising 7 to 10 children alone because many are form different origins, life exposures. For example the case of a foster child whose mental problem began while in care (Andres). Thus, there is need for mothers or care givers to do things with caution, if children will develop holistically. Abilio commented about the disadvantage of living in the village, ´´this is a perfect way, it's not perfect but close to it, the father is important but not the most important, the important is love, care, the military approach, all the children here have different mental problems, she has to use military education to train us, imagine 10 children with mental problems´´.

Another key findings related to the present dimension is the impact of culture on family and domestic skills development. The culture in the countries of study reveal that participants male may lack the skills for necessary family life during childhood and the participants in Portugal may be delayed or prolonged in developing family and domestic skills. For instance, as Andreia was calling the mother to teach her food. This goes beyond theoretical for her when the reality of life dawned on her.

Andreia said:

"(…) because it's complicated and there are changes. My body does not have the skills to live in the autonomy. Other activities to be involved in she makes activities paying electricity, we play the activities and one time she gave us the map of our city and taught how to pay bills. We had to learn how to do things, it should be difficult but more or less, I was ready to do, we are never ready, the reality is different, and that's not the same with practical. Keeping my room clean: it is difficult doing that now, I make my bed. I have to cook to myself, I have to take care of my cloth, and the experience is good. Its gives, makes me realise I am growing up and learning the things growing up. I make my bed every day because I am going out rushing arrive at home in the night. I call her (SOS mother) almost every day, like saying how to do this fish, then she said again ..., I forgot and you have to teach me again because I don't remember anymore I am learning a lot´´.

In the final dimension, there seems to be consistency with the way children are being raised in SOS Children's Villages, only with little variation due to cultural context. However, the reality of the future seems to differ.

The findings revealed the third typology of taken for granted future or early risers and precariate or late risers.

Taken for granted or early risers - these are young people who may attain early adulthood because they got into labour market early. However, another characteristics of this group is the fact that they may fail to be competent adults due to the taken for granted approach on short term basis in some areas of their life trajectory such as education continuity. It is not uncommon for youth to discontinue education once they start earning salary with low academic qualification and thus, take for granted other crucial trajectory in pursuits of financial sufficiency. The cumulative disadvantage of early transition into adulthood is that uncertainties is inevitable. This could make the future uncertain because of lack of preparation with crucial life skills including domestic skills, educational skills, family life among others. Close to this group is Carlos and Andres.

Carlos reported that:

> "I want to be an hotelier, I have a wish to make a lot of money. I want to work in restaurants in a big company with many hotels. I want to go graduate in University, planning with the SOS village, I want to study things about restaurants. Marriage is another thing for me it is not significant, marriage is not the real thing, (…).

Andres reported that:

"No plans, I live for a day. I don't plan. I don't know whether I want to marry. Chef - preparation towards this is to working with life"

The precariates or late risers is characterised by young people who have attained higher academic qualifications but still lack employment to sustain themselves. Care leavers in developing country depict a true picture of life after care as lonely, helpless, and destitute.

For instance Joko commented that she was deserted immediately after the end of her first degree. Although, the present status shows that the future seems to be uncertain, and the possibility of finding precariat is high as mentioned in the literature, among the Nigerian participants as they fit into the description of the emerging dangerous class who have high-level of academic qualifications (Bolu, Joko, Mayowa and Dele). This could make them become insecure if after integration there is no hope of surviving in the society due to lack of unemployment in the country. However, their hope of survival is beyond employment if the financial strength is gained. This will help them venture into self- employment through the vocational skills acquired during their childhood while in care.

Joko and Mayowa, who had been re-integrated into the society in the year 2013 and 2014 respectively.

Joko said:

> ˝After resettlement, it's tough, it's not easy, being alone, fending for yourself facing life without nobody being there to take care of you. It's tough. I am the one paying for my rent. Before there was no lack of shelter, no lack of love, no lack of finance. Then no, but now I can say yes. They work with age in SOS and they believe you have to be resettled after a certain age, we are not the same hand, fingers are not equal, if someone finished at the age of 20 and another finished at the age of 25, she should not be resettled, they should do it in the way they (...). I was informed (about resettlement) but the way I was informed I didn't like it. Like one month, the situation then made me feel somehow. I just finished my university and a week after my last exam and I received a call that I will be resettled. How do you start, thinking and calculating how you will live, there was nothing to rely on. While I was resettled, there was no money, my business plan or resettlement plan. After the good life it ended in a mess.˝

Mayowa said:

> ˝To be candid with you (…) they were not too clear about what …like the support they are giving me. Was it for my resettlement plan, was it to go and start a business, was it for me to go and collect an accommodation? Ok. The money they gave me compare to the business plan I wrote, it cannot build the business. The business is related to printing and graphics, because I'm a graphic artist but it cannot do it. So I'm still trying to like just merge. Like see how to manage the resources effectively. Ok, the art aspect. I don't know how to be prepared in the real sense in education terms, because I have the necessary skills but monetary terms is not (…) I lack care, even those who are married are no even enjoying their marriage so why should I go into what I will not enjoy. The money cannot start a business˝

The lamentation of the care leavers is an indication that they lacked support after leaving care including financial, housing, emotional, and employment supports. The implication of this is that while education trajectory is certain for many Nigerian participants, employment trajectory remains uncertain especially among the care leavers in the context of Nigeria. These results support recent research on the experience of care leavers from family- oriented

care on the lack of formal support after leaving care (Stein & Verweijen-Slamnescu, 2012; Höjer & Sjöblom, 2014). An implication of this finding is the possibility that uncertainty in securing employment has uncertainty for family life for the males' participants who wants to have a family of procreation.

In addition, the experiences of the past, lack of domestic skills and multiple caregivers (Micaela, Andres and Mayowa) seem to have impacted the certainty of a family life and parenting. For instance, Carlos said he wants just a child but do not want a marriage or family, while Andres who discovered his grandfather was his father, is yet to see the possibility of marriage evolving.

However, it is interesting to note that regardless of the past experience and family background of participants, many of them had become resilient to face the challenges of future.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

The purpose of this study was to unveil young people transition process from care to adulthood in a life course approach. This chapter includes the conclusion and recommendations based on the data analysis and the reviewed literature.

The research design of this dissertation has been based on the literature review on the concept of childhood, on children's rights, issues affecting children and the respective protection policies in developed and developing countries, with particular focus on the child protection systems in Nigeria and Portugal, specifically the foster care systems and the action of SOS Villages in these two countries. It also focused on the life course approach, the strength perspective and cumulative advantages and disadvantages theories, with which it sought to analyze the collected empirical information.

This study set out to unveil the nexus in the transition process of young people in the family-oriented care in a life course approach exploring five principles of life course approach - socio-historical and geographical location, timing of lives, linked lives, human agency and the past shaping the future. The life course of young people in care is influenced by societal parameters of historical, economic, culture, religion, social factors. In addition, the similarity between the two countries is the fact that they are raised in an individualistic environment before being integrated into the society.

With interviews conducted in Nigeria and Portugal, we proceeded to a comparative analysis of the situation of children in foster care and their transitions to adulthood and autonomy.

The analysis carried out, anchored in the life course perspective has focused on the past, present and planned the future of these young people. About pre-foster care childhood and during foster care period two typologies were elaborated to address the diversity of these SOS Village young people. The first, including "turbulent childhood" and "helpless childhood" types. The second, with four types: "early-happy childhood", "early-moderated childhood", "early- frustrated childhood" and "early- restrained childhood". Planned futures

also differ and vary between "uncertainties" that seem to be associated with some lack of preparation to assume the process of autonomy, and other "taken for granted" futures especially the short-term ones that involve the continuation of studies or the start up or consolidation of a job career, or entering a conjugal project. To deserve attention is the fact that uncertainties seem to be more associated with those who are younger and/or have not advanced in schooling.

Regarding SOS children villages, the mothers system of raising children seems to be imparted by their cultural contexts. This affect the social links of children within and outside their immediate environments. Thus, the holistic development according to the rights of the child cannot be ascertained in relation to alternative care services in the two countries of study. In Nigeria context, emphasis seems to be placed more on high- level of educational achievements (cognitive development) at the expense of the psychosocial developments while in Portugal, emphasis is more on psychosocial development than high-level of educational achievements.

The result of this study indicate that young people in care enjoy the full support of the organisations, and this has raised important question of how youth could be helped in maintaining the full and /or partial support after leaving care, tantamount to the kind of support they received while in care. The study has been able to confirm previous findings and contribute additional knowledge that suggests the need for international collaboration in research towards understanding the global situation of children in care. However, this seems to be the first study to explore the transition process of children in Africa and Europe and also using a life course approach to unveil the lives of the young people in order to grasp the projected future. Although this study only interviewed a small participants in the two countries, the findings has been able to compare the situations of children within a limited period. However, it was not possible to observe the children. Thus, aside the paucity of participants' in each country, observation and time limit were major weaknesses for this comparative study. For instance, it would have been interesting to understand the daily lives of the present children in care and the youth in their various settings.

Recommendations

On what concerns the possible recommendations, the findings of this study have a number of important implications for future practice. Thus, several recommendations are suggested at different levels, either at academic, at governmental or at family-oriented care, in order to

achieve the holistic development of children from care to adulthood from findings and literature reviewed.

The academic;

It will be interesting for further research to examine more closely;

1. The link between the past life and the present life, due to unresolved issues especially with regards to the family relationship in order to attain a holistic well-being for children.
2. The role of caregivers is very significant for children in the care system. Thus, assessment of the impact of cultural conflict on mother- child relationship can be explored.
3. Exploration of the subjective and objective well-being of children in alternative care.

The government;

1. In the two countries, greater efforts are needed to ensure family reunification. This is because the lack of support after leaving care may be catered for by family members or relatives.
2. Unless the Federal Nigerian government enforce an effective child protection system in Nigeria which target different groups of children according to their needs and vulnerability, holistic development of all children may not be attainable in this context. However, this can be possible through the effective collaboration of the Child Department of the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, the state government Child Departments, NGOs, and other international parastatals.
3. There is the need for leaving care policy development in Nigeria. In promoting individual integration into the society, there is the need to give more support to the individual care leavers in Nigeria. This can be better achieve through research and the active implementations of recommendations obtained from such research related to children in orphanage homes and other care institutions.
4. Funding of higher education through scholarship provision for youth in care.

The family-oriented care or foster care;

1. There is need the organisations to collaborate with Universities and/or institutions with focus on childhood and youth for research so as to get the better understanding of the situation of children intermittently and further improve service delivery in their contexts.

2. However, there is the need to balance individual integration and early family reintegration in the two countries of study before young people leave care.

3. There is need to seek to balance the conflicts in the culture of rearing children if holistic well-being will be attained in the future of prospective care leavers.

4. A follow-up of life project plan is indispensable as soon as children are able to write and understand.

5. There is the need to reduce the number of children nurture by mothers, especially in Nigeria.

6. In Nigeria, the need to utilise the informal network and informal support will be very effective in the meantime. So that the end to support after leaving care may be catered for by family members or relatives while leaving care policy development is under consideration. This may not necessarily be in monetary terms.

The social worker;
1. There is need to recognise children's individual needs and focusing less on problems rather on their strengths and capacities.

2. The use of strength perspectives through meaningful dialogue in discovering children's strengths and the resources available in their environments − most importantly, the siblings in the two country contexts.

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Appendix 1: Interview guide

Social characteristics- Age, Sex, Age at admission, age at entering the autonomy/youth house, qualification.

Past

What is the past experience of youths in relation to biological family, SOS mothers, siblings, school, village community life, relations with peers, daily life?

What are the best opportunities or worst experience of youth when compared with other young people of their town, not in SOS Children's Villages?

What are the advantages of staying in SOS Children's Villages?

What are the disadvantages of staying in SOS Children's Villages?

What are the family practices and skills you have been exposed to – family or domestic skills, skills/ life skills/?

Present

What facilitated young people's independence into the youth house?

What is the present experience of youths in relation to biological family, SOS mothers, siblings, school, village community life, domestic life, relations with peers, daily life?

What are the best opportunities or worst experience you have when compared with other young people of their town, not in SOS.

What are the advantages of staying in autonomy or partial resettlement (youth facility 2) home?

What are the disadvantages of staying in autonomy or partial resettlement (youth facility 2) home?

What are the family practices and skills you have been exposed to – practical or domestic skills, or life skills/ ?

When are you leaving and when did you know this?

Are you living in the village or outside?

Do you understand why you are in the autonomy or youth facility 2 home?

Future

What kind of job will you want to do?

 What are your plans for the next 5 and 10 years?

What are the preparation, opportunities and support in place regarding job, parenting and life after now?

What is your plan for family life: marry or remain single, intending number of children you may want to have, what will you want and not want for their children?

What can the country and world do for children outside their biological families?

What are the worst problems faced by youths?

What are your fears for the future?

What are your hopes for the future?

Appendix 2: Interview guide in Portuguese language

Guião de entrevista

Social characteristics- Age, Sex, Age at admission, age at entering the autonomy/youth house, qualification.

Caracterização social – Idade, Sexo, Idade de admissão nas Aldeias SOS, Idade de início da fase de autonomia/entrada no apartamento de autonomização

Past / Passado

What is the past experience of youths in relation to biological family, SOS mothers, siblings, school, village community life, relations with peers, daily life?

Qual é a sua experiência relativamente à família de origem

E o que pode dizer da fase da sua vida com as Mães SOS? Quantas teve? Durante quanto tempo?

Fale-me um pouco dos seus irmãos (biológicos e da Aldeia SOS).

Com quantos viveu? De que idades? Davam-se bem?

Eram os seus principais amigos ou tinha outros amigos?

A sua relação comos seus amigos, como a caracteriza? Tinham brigas? Eram unidos? Tinha amigos que eram especiais, mais chegados?

E quem são os seus amigos presentemente?

Como era a sua vida no dia a dia na Aldeia SOS? E na sua casa, com a sua Mãe SOS?

What are the best opportunities or worst experience of youth when compared with other young people of their town, not in SOS children's village
Quais as melhores oportunidades que uma criança tem numa Aldeia SOS por comparação com outra criança nas mesmas circunstâncias mas que não viva na Aldeia

E as piores experiências?

What are the advantages of staying in SOS children's village
Que vantagens existem para as crianças que vivem na Aldeia SOS?

What are the disadvantages of staying in SOS children's village

E as desvantagens?

What are the family practices and skills you have been exposed to – practical or domestic skills, skills/ life skills/ ?

O que é que aprendeu na Aldeia, ou com a sua Mãe SOS quanto ao governo da casa e às tarefas domésticas? E quanto a outras competências úteis para o seu dia a dia? Quanto a gerir dinheiro? Saber fazer compras? Dê exemplos

Present

What facilitated young people's independence into the youth house?

O que é que facilita a independencia dos jovens não apartamento de autonomia

What is the present experience of youths in relation to biological family, SOS mothers, siblings, school, village community life, domestic life, relations with peers, daily life?

Qual a sua experiência actual:

- quanto à relação com a sua família biológica,

- com as mães SOS,

- com irmãos

- com a escola

- com a vida em comunidade na aldeia

- com a vida doméstica

- com os amigos / irmãos SOS?

What are the best opportunities or worst experience you have when compared with other young people of their town, not in SOS.

Qual foi a melhor oportunidade que teve na sua vida por comparação com as de crianças portuguesas nas suas circunstâncias que não vivam na Aldeia SOS?

What are the advantages of staying in autonomy or partial resettlement (youth facility 2) home?
Quais as vantagens de estar a viver num apartamento de autonomia?

What are the disadvantages of staying in autonomy or partial resettlement (youth facility 2) home?

E as desvantagens?

What are the family practices and skills you have been exposed to – practical or domestic skills, skills/ life skills/ ?
A que hábitos e práticas sobre a vida em família tem estado exposto

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When are you leaving and when did you know this?
Sabe quando irá sair? Há quanto tempo tomou conhecimento dessa data?

In what ways are you involved and participating in leaving care?

De que modo está envolvido e a participar no processo de saída?

Are you living in the village or outside?

Onde está a residir presentemente? Aqui perto? Em que concelho?

Do you understand why you are in the autonomy or youth facility 2 home?
Compreende qual o motive por que está num apartamento de autonomia?

Future

What kind of job will you want to do?

Que tipo de profissão quer seguir?

 What are your plans for the next 5 and 10 years

Quais os seus planos para daqui a 5 anos?

E para daqui a 10 anos?

What are the preparation, opportunities and support in place regarding job, parenting and life after now?

Quais são os preparativos, oportunidades, apoio no local, quanto a emprego, parentalidade e a vida em geral, de agora em diante?

What is your plan for family life: marry or remain single, intending number of children you may want to have, what will you want and not want for their children?
Quais os seus planos a nível familiar? Tenciona casar ou ficar solteiro? Quer ter filhos? Porquê? Se sim, quantos?
O que quer para os seus filhos? E o que é que não quer?

What can the country and world do for children outside their biological families?
O que deverias o país e o mundo fazer para o bem-estar das crianças que não têm condições para viverem com as suas famílias biológicas

What are the worst problems faced by youths?

Quais os piores problemas vividos pelos jovens

E o que é que de bom as crianças experienciam?

Appendix 3: Informed consent

The following is a presentation of how we will use the data collected in the interview.

The research project is a part of our education in the International Master's program in Social Work at the University of Lisbon, Portugal. In order to insure that our project meets the ethical requirements for good research we promise to adhere to the following principles:

Interviewees in the project will be given information about the purpose of the project.

Interviewees have the right to decide whether he or she will participate in the project, even after the interview has been concluded.

The collected data will be handled confidentially and will be kept in such a way that no unauthorized person can view or access it.

The interview will be recorded as this makes it easier for us to document what is said during the interview and also helps us in the continuing work with the project. In our analyze some data may be changed so that no interviewee will be recognized. After finishing the project the data will be destroyed. The data we collect will only be used in this project.

You have the right to decline answering any questions, or terminate the interview without giving an explanation.

You are welcome to contact us or our supervisor in case you have any questions (e-mail addresses below).

Student name & e-mail   Supervisor name & e-mail

Interviewee