EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL GUIDELINES IN THE HANDLING OF STREET CHILDREN

BY

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ABSTRACT

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL GUIDELINES IN THE HANDLING OF STREET CHILDREN

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The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions street **children have about the most important referents in their life worlds and to propose guidelines to their helpers on the most appropriate intervention. The street children's perceptions of their families, schools, society, peers and themselves were examined through a literature study on the phenomenon of street children and their intervention and, an empirical study consisting of a questionnaire survey and case studies. It was found that the street children generally perceived themselves and these referents negatively, which can be related to experiences of severe physical, emotional and social deprivation. These perceptions influence their involvement with all referents in their lives negatively, as their main tendencies in response to problematic situations are flight, avoidance and withdrawal. Guidelines given to their schools, social-and care-workers, and educational psychologists focused on inter-and intra-personal areas of development**

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KEYWORDS:

Educational Psychology street children perceptions referents life-world involvement **development family school society self-concept self actualization guidelines intervention**

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EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL GUIDELINES TO THE HANDLING OF STREET CHILDREN

CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to provide a broad background to and contextualize the purpose of this study, the major issues relevant to the phenomenon of street children will briefly be over-viewed. As point of departure, different conceptualizations of childhood and the resultant varied views on aspects of streetism, such as child-labour, homelessness and adaptive engagement to street life will indicate the complexity of the issue. An analysis of different perspectives on how to define street children, is closely related to the previous issue, and will result in an Educational Psychological definition of street children. This definition will provide a specific focus for the study, wherein the physical, moral, social and educational-psychological development of street children will briefly be over-viewed. This will be followed by a review of related literature, the delimitation of this study, the problem statement and hypotheses, a clarification of terms and finally an overview of the rest of this study.

1.1.1 DIFFERENT CONCEPTS OF CHILDHOOD

Childhood takes on diverse faces across the world. There are many perspectives of what an 'ideal' or 'normal' childhood should constitute and also how variant forms of childhood should be approached. The phenomenon of street children as a variant form of childhood occurs in various degrees and forms and also because of diverse reasons across the globe. The view of what childhood constitutes, influences how the phenomenon of street children is perceived by that society and ultimately the form intervention of that phenomenon will take. A society's view of childhood is evident in its perception of the role of the child in the family and society. The milestones that should be reached in childhood, as well as its time-span are also socio-culturally determined.

Perceptions on childhood have not only changed historically, but also differ currently on a global scale, depending on factors such as belief systems and customs based on culture and socio-economic development. During the Middle Ages, the idea of working children was neither rare nor strange, indeed, it was imperative to the family's livelihood and children were regarded as little adults. Economic progress made after the Industrial Revolution changed the lives of middle and upper class children in Western Societies (Black, 1993:13). The idea of working children seemed contradictory to the prevailing notions of children being dependent upon adults for nurturance, protection and guidance which would enable them to grow into healthy well-developed adults. This view of childhood was further entrenched in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when Psychology as a science flourished and started influencing people's worldviews. Psychologists such as Piaget challenged the pre-existing notions that children were in their thinking needs and abilities indistinct from adults. Western society began to view children as unique with differential physical mental and emotional needs according to their specific developmental phases. *"Happy care-free childhood is the story as far as childhood in industrialized countries and richer families are concerned."* (Ennew, 1994:10)

A standard for a quality childhood characterized by maximal guidance, support and nurturance by adults seems to have become a measure of normality. It is only in countries and among societies where it is economically viable through, that this standard is upheld and practically implemented in the form of institutional structures and legislation protecting the rights of the child. Although the occurrence of street children is a global phenomenon, it is perceived differently and acted upon differently in various countries.

In many poor societies, child-labour is still the norm and are many children forced on to a life on the street through abandonment or unbearable circumstances at home. Such circumstances are often related to poverty and social and family upheaval, instability and progressive disintegration (Black, 1993:10). Working children is not a problem per se. In many societies children have to work and it is not problematic to that society, it is

considered as a norm, as part of their customs and as a means of contributing to the livelihood of the family. In that respect it is actually a way of keeping families together so that it does not automatically lead to or are related to streetism. Independence at an early age could likewise also not be considered as a primary problem. In many traditional African societies boys are considered as mature at puberty (Dawes & Donald, 1994:12). Different societies thus have different hallmarks for a desired childhood, which impact on their perceptions of street children.

Although some aspects of childhood development seem to be cultural and society specific, some universal parameters do exist. Certain physical, social and emotional conditions are more beyordelik conducive to the healthy development of children despite disparate views on the essential nature of childhood (Dawes and Donald, 1994:23).It is crucial to a holistic understanding of the issue of street children that the universal and the specific socio-cultural factors should be viewed in interaction. The goal of this study is to examine the perceptions street children hold about important referents in their life-world. The context of this study is both mainstream South African society and its influences and demands, and also the street child's own cultural concept- and belief-system.

The next section will examine how the concept 'street child' is defined by firstly viewing the general development of definitions and the ramifications associated with it. An educational-psychological definition will secondly be constructed which will provide a focus for this chapter.

1.1.2 WHO IS THE STREET CHILD - TOWARDS A DEFINITION

Street children are by no means a homogeneous group, but relevant to any attempt at defining them are four key factors - the concept of childhood, working children, the child's relationship with his family, and the concept of street. The first two issues were already discussed in the previous section. The interrelationships between these factors vary in different parts of the world, and the impact of social, political, economic

and cultural factors upon them also differs globally. Defining street children is thus not an unproblematic issue and the different definitions that have involved, is an indication of how perceptions about this issue had developed from one-dimensional definitions to broader more inclusive ideas emphasizing the complexity of the phenomenon.

1.1.2.1 STREET CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

The first modern definition of street children was derived from the relationship children had (or did not have] with their families. (Ennew, 1994:15)

> *Street children are those for whom the streets (in the widest sense of the word) more than family has become the real home in which there is no real protection supervision of direction from responsible adults.*

The above definition is criticized on various grounds. Firstly is family and home relatedness not a strongly distinctive feature in a definition of street children. It is true that many children have left home completely, but most children still retain links with their families in varying degrees. Some stay home but 'work' on the streets, others return home after seasonal work or at weekends. Some may even live with their families on the streets (Ennew, 1994:18). Secondly, it ignores the self-reliance and independence of these children as working children in cultures where child-rearing practices allow adult status and roles much earlier. A later attempt at defining street children was made by UNICEF who distinguished between children' on' and 'of' the streets. (Ennew, 1994:15)

> *Children 'on the streets are those working on the streets but still retaining strong links with their families, often returning home at night. Children of the streets, refer to children who have relinquished all bonds with family or home of origin and who have made the streets their home.*

Many children do not fall exclusively into either category making the above definition not entirely unproblematic.

1.1.2.2. THE CONCEPT OF STREET

The popular image of street children is that of children living and working on city streets, because of their visibility there. This view obscures many other forms of street-like existence. The same hazardous conditions also prevail for other children less visible. Children working in factories, in rural areas and children working in people's homes, fall into this category. A group of children often neglected and who suffer unnoticed are girls, working in their own or other people's homes and who often work as prostitutes. The concept of 'street' could thus be much wider than the actual city streets, complicating the definition of street children even further.

It became clear that an all-inclusive definition of street children based on only one dimension of their existence would be near impossible, and that a more holistic approach was necessary.

1.1.2.3 A HIERARCHY OF STREET USE AND APPROPRIATE RESPONSES

The functionality of a definition of street children fell into dispute. Some proponents doubting the usefulness of a definition, maintained that it *"artificially mark(s) a group for special attention in a way that is unnecessary and misleading"* (Williams, 1993:831). They also claim that the conditions of street children vary so vastly that it is difficult to draw boundaries, making intervention difficult and often misdirected. Such vague definitions also lie the ground for misconceptions about the actual nature and extend of the problem leading to emotive responses that could prove more damaging to the plight of these children than no intervention at all.

There are though, compelling reasons for some form of definitions. Attention is focused upon the existence of the problem firstly, and responses is there-by motivated -

"*unclassified could mean unrecognized.*" (Williams, 1993:833) By providing a definition, focus is also placed upon the seriousness of the problem. It became clear that a definition should not be avoided, but that it should be functional and specific.

From the idea that one-dimensional definitions could prove to be too limiting and rigid, the concept of a continuum of street existence evolved. The regional director of UNICEF has grouped street youth into three broad categories: children at high risk, children in the street and children of the street. These distinctions are based on children's exposure to and involvement in street life. (Pinilla, 1986 in Lusk, 1989: 59)

Williams (1993: 834) indicated the development of definitions in figure 1.1. He proposed a solution between the two conflicting stances on definitions by also building on the continuum approach and suggests a hierarchy of street use and appropriate responses. This hierarchy ranges from minimal street use to total dependency, and corresponding methods of intervention are proposed for each level. As indicated in figure 1, street existence could be beneficial and living on the streets, could have a positive outcome and be associated with individual growth. Children's work often helps a family stay together, or sometimes pressures at home could necessitate a child leaving home for a period of time. "*Street existence may be potentially hazardous but recognizing the benefits for large numbers of children is a vital part of planning on overall intervention strategy*". (Williams,1993:832)

Determinants of intervention	----------Beneficial street use ----------Assumed Adulthood ----------School exclusion ----------Degenerative estrangement
The Welfare/education response	WELFARE School-based Support through family Open-door services Outreach health-care & social support Custodial care Supervised accommodation "Rescue" STATE EDUCATION Night schools Homework support Part-time schooling Supplementary educ Skill training Preventative educ. 'Corrective' education Sympathy with street children <Legal rights education> Educational outreach (street educators) EDUCATION
Responses aim to change children's:	----------awareness---------- ----------capabilities---------- ----------condition----------

Figure 1.1 Appropriate responses and aims derived from the hierarchy of street use (Derived from Fig 2 Williams 1993:834)

Street life also bestows on children an adult status because of their behaviour and the roles they play. "Assumed adulthood" is the second level of street existence and it is often a balancing factor in communities where about 50% of the population is under the age of seventeen.

The following level proposed by Williams (1993:836), is school exclusion. "Push" factors such as repeated failures and factors directly related to the dynamics of school life may drive children from school. Children may also leave school because of " pull" factors such as the relationship between poverty and a lucrative market for child labour.

The final level is that of degenerative estrangement "*it depicts a largely irreversible array of catch 22's which regressively alienates individuals and groups from family support and socialization networks and eventually from themselves*". (Williams, 1993:839)

A situational diagnosis is thus crucial to an understanding of working children's problems and is necessary because social policies and programmes established on erroneous assumptions often tend to become part of the problem rather than the solution. (Myers, 1991:5)

Providing a workable definition for street children thus seems to be necessary. According to Richter (1989,05:7) "*the term 'street children' is valuable in at least one respect, because children who 'hang out' on the street share certain problems arising directly from the street environment*". Such a definition is only effective though, when it succeeds in highlighting and not obscuring the true nature and scope of the problem as it present itself in a specific area.

So what is a street child? A minor who finds himself on the street, (in the widest sense of the word) and who has extensive, very little or no contact with his family and home. He may live on the street seasonally, parts of the day or permanently, and he usually

earns a living on the street. This definition may apply to all or some street children all of some of the time, but the specific needs and circumstances of children should be taken into account, and may not necessarily be generalized.

1.1.3 AN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL DEFINITION OF STREET CHIDLREN

From the general definition of street children it will now be attempted to redefine this phenomenon from an Educational Psychological perspective which will serve as the focus of this study. Educational Psychology pertains the theory and practice concerned with the identification of obstacles (internal and environmental) that could hinder a child in developing into a mature self sufficient adult, and thus actualize all his potential. (Jacobs and Vrey, 1982:10) This field also concerns the provision of guidance and support in this regard within an Educational and Psychological perspective. The following definition highlights the key issues surrounding this perspective to street children.

> Street children are children still in developmental need of adult supervision, care, guidance and support to facilitate their development into self-actualized adults. Due to a particular relationship between structural, family, society and individual personality factors these children have relinquished relationships with care-giving referents such as parents, guardians, teachers and care-workers, as well as institutions providing educational and psychological guidance and support. Street children live on their own or with peers under circumstances putting at risk their psychological, physical, social, moral and educational development, and their eventual self-actualization.

From this definition certain aspects of the street child's life that seem to put at risk his development seem pertinent and need to be emphasized.

- The street child does not develop a relationship with any mature adult, that could provide in his physical emotional, moral and educational needs, and provides him with guidance and support.

- He does not relate positively to the socializing structures from which he is supposed to learn the norms and values of his society and does not understand and subscribe to that value system and...
- Develops an alternate value system and acts accordingly causing constant conflict with mainstream society.
- The street child does not develop insight into his own abilities and never learns to set realistic goals accordingly.
- The street child's ability to communicate with other people in open and honest ways is underdeveloped and clouded by fear, hostility, distrust and manipulation.
- The street child is at risk of developmental hazards associated with street-life, such as physical and neurological damages related to the effects of under- and malnutrition, exposure to harsh climatic conditions, unattended illnesses, glue-sniffing, harassment by public and peers and prostitution.
- Their failure in maintaining positive relationships with important referents in their lives is reflected in their negative self-concepts.
- The self-actualization of the street child is at risk because of his life-style and distorted perceptions of other referents and themselves.

These aspects will be elaborated upon further in the discussion of the developmental effects of street life upon the perceptions they develop about their life-world

1.1.4 THE DEVELOPMENTAL EFFECTS OF STREET LIFE UPON THE STREET CHILD

One of the main areas in the domain of Educational Psychology is a focus on the child in his development to adulthood. An important focus would thus be on all aspects impacting on this development especially those that may impede upon the child achieving all his potential to an optimal led. Street children are as such a group of children vulnerable to an array of risk factors having an influence on their physical, psychological, moral and educational development, simply because they are children,

not matured yet and en route to being adults. It is therefore imperative for the Educational Psychologist to consider these effects.

1.1.4.1 PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Life on the streets is tough and dangerous. The health and physical safety of street children are often endangered, by lack of a safe place to sleep, facing all kinds of weather conditions, under- and malnutrition, and lack of medical services when they are ill or injured. The are also exposed to substance abuse such as glue-sniffing having a debilitating effect on their health and neurological development. Their health is further compromised by the risk of HIV and STD infections because of their involvement in prostitution. (Richter & Swart-Kruger, 1995:31)

1.1.4. 2 MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Although street children do not start out as having deviant moral codes, hardship on the streets, co-option into crime syndicates, as well as drug-abuse lure them into criminal activities, that become progressively more entrenched the longer they are on the streets. The street-laws are difficult to avoid if you want to survive and an alternative value-system eventually develops, based mostly upon survival. (Richter, 1988:13)

1.1.4. 3 SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The street child's lifestyle and alternative value-system is directly at odds with mainstream society, expecting children to be obedient to adults, at school, clean and happy. Mutual hostility, distrust and fear usually characterize their relationships with social role-players. Because street children are not involved with the major socializing structures (family, school, and church) in society, they never learn the rules to appropriate social interaction as prescribed by their society. They do not actively

oppose these rules, but drift along side it. Their social development and social relationships is also close related to survival, and although they are adept at playing different roles within social interaction, it is seldom based on honesty and openness. Apart from their peers, with whom they generally built supportive relationships, they mistrust people although they are keen manipulators." *Children on the streets have a 'front stage', 'back stage' personality. They present themselves the way they want you to see them.*" (Rheikat in Black, 1993:21)

1.1.4.4 EDUCATIONAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

Apart from the physical dangers associated with street life, the psychological and social alienation they experience drifting on the fringes of mainstream society, severely influences the relationships they have with the main referents in their lives. The important relationships in the life of the street child will be described in the context of the importance of relationships in the development of a healthy self-concept of all children.

The word 'child' denotes a particular position within a family or society. It implies a certain relationship between the child and important others in this world. In this relationship the child is usually dependent on the adults in his world for guidance, protection and nurturance. This relationship is a double-ended one, with the child on one end, and other people, ideas and institutions on the other. Each of these relationships could be experienced either positively or negatively, which in turn influences the meaning the child attributes to it and his involvement in it. These factors influence each other interactively and affects the nature and quality of the relationships the child will have with others in his life-world, and eventually his experience and evaluation of himself in these relationships. It is through these relationships that a child thus develops knowledge and forms an opinion of himself and his self-worth.

If a child receives positive feedback from important others, he learns to value and accept himself, and work actively to word achieving realistic life-goals. The importance of positive relationships in the establishment of positive self-perceptions could hardly be over emphasized.

Street children bring with them remnants of all kinds of broken relationships to the streets, profoundly influencing the relationships they will have in their street-life. The feelings of mistrust, fear, hostility and alienation, are the products of the worst society could offer in terms of love, respect, knowledge and care - the basic tenets of a loving, nurturing relationship.

Street children usually come from broken homes, and unstabling circumstances, characterized by extreme poverty, physical and substance abuse, single parenthood. In their family relationships they have often experienced abandonment and rejection, or instability and insecurity because their families could not provide for their needs adequately.

On the streets they experience confused feelings and are torn by longing to go home, but wanting to remain free from the unsettling circumstances. Their relationship with school and education is equally problematic. They often experience school as punitive and restrictive and their experience of success in that environment is particularly low because of repeated failure.

The picture reflected back to street children by almost all the role-players in their lives is that of shameful failure, lack of personal worth and unacceptability. The effects there-of on their self-perceptions are shattering, they see themselves as other people do. The experiences of themselves in most of these relationships are negative and their involvement in it becomes progressively more negative. The street child therefore, would be unable to develop positive and realistic self-perceptions and set realistic goals that would lead to ultimate self-fulfillment.

1.1.5 CONCLUSION

In this introductory section to the orientation to this study, the street child phenomenon was discussed in terms of childhood development. Different perspectives on childhood were highlighted to show that the view of childhood profoundly influences the view that would be taken on street children, and how this phenomenon could be defined. In order to provide a specific contextual focus to the study, and Educational-Psychological definition was derived from different definitions to this phenomenon, The implications of viewing street children from such a definition was emphasized by a brief discussion on the developmental impact of street-life upon street children.

In the next section the literature related to the phenomenon of street children will be reviewed to gain a global understanding of the most important issues surrounding it.

1.2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

1.2.1 INTRODUCTION

It was only after in 1979 - The International Year of the Child that global concern about the plight of the street child was raised (Tacon, 1991). Subsequent research focused mostly on the street child phenomenon as it manifested in Latin American countries. An increasing number of studies is also done in African as well as Asian countries such as India, although research done on street children in Asia is relatively scarce, relative to the vastness of the sub continent and the amount of people living there. In European and North American research the phenomenon of street children manifests in the form of runaways and children of homeless families.

In South Africa, research on street children is also flourishing although this concern is a relative recent one, and the studies done provide a mere background for more specific

research - "*provide no more than a starting point for further research of which much is still needed*": (Donald & Swart-Kruger, 1994)

There are a few themes appearing very prominently in literature. The first of these are the etiological factors giving rise to this problem. (Donald & Swart-Kruger,1994; Baizerman, 1988; Le Roux, 1992; Dlamini, 1991; Cockburn, 1991; Connolly, 1990; and Blanc, 1994), A second theme is the consequences of street life to street children. These include risk factors associated with street-life, and street children's adaptation to street life (Tannhauser, 1992; Jansen, Richter, Griesel & Joubert, 1990; Richter, 1989; and Richter & Swart, 1995). Another important theme relates to the programmes established to address the needs of these children. (Goode, 1987; Levenstein; 1994; Williams, 1993; Myers, 1991; and Seelig & Tesfaya, 1994)

1.2.2 ETIOLOGICAL FACTORS

Schurink's (1994) distinction between three broad groups of etiological factors (macro, meso and micro) underlying the emergence of street children seems functional in underlining the different contexts from which the etiology could be viewed. These factors cannot be viewed in isolation though and must be seen as contributing the existence of this phenomenon interactively.

1.2.2.1 MACRO FACTORS

Macro factors refer to large-scale structural factors relating to the etiology of street children. Agnelli (1986) discussed the emergence of street children as a result of social changes associated with industrialization and urbanization. This view is expanded on by Bourdillon (1994) who placed causal factors in the context of the loss of stability in the social order, and economic welfare that occurred with urbanization and the subsequent disintegration of the extended family system in Africa. In South African studies, these factors are also noted, but in the specific context of political

economic and demographic practices associated with apartheid, such as forced removals and the migrant labour system. (Donald & Swart-Kruger, 1994; Baizerman, 1988; Le Roux, 1992 and Dlamini, 1991).

Economic factors are strongly cited as underlying causes of streetism in Latin America. This relates closely to the view that poverty is basic to the emergence of street children discussed under the meso factors.

1.2.2.2 MESO FACTORS

Meso factors refer to specific community and family factors relating to the street child phenomenon and has been subject to various studies (Cockburn, 1991; Connolly, 1990; Blanc, 1994; and Mc Carthy & Hagan, 1992).

1.2.2.3 MICRO FACTORS

The child himself, his personality traits, tendencies and typical coping strategies from micro level factors contributing to the street child phenomenon. Very little has been researched about this aspect of etiology specifically, Schärf, Powel and Thomas (in Burman & Reynolds, 1986), compared the street child to the street-gang and mentions some typical behaviour and coping strategies that sheds light upon this particular outcome of structural factors that produces poverty. Another important study in this regard was done by Richter (1989a) - a psychological study on streetchildren focusing on cognitive development, school-readiness, problem-solving skills, neuro-psychological screening and sense of self and others.

1.2.2.4 CONCLUSION

Most of the research on the etiology of street children focuses on contextual issues related to this phenomenon. Such factors are usually not only present in the lives of

those children whose home are the streets, but also in the lives of millions of other children who do not land up there. The plight of many children living under the plight of poverty is thus highlighted not showing the distinguishing features of the street child's life. The large-scale issues and intermediate factors are focused on but the picture of how this child's psychological make-up relates to his becoming a street child is not adequately dealt with in literature yet. For a more complete understanding of the etiology of street children an analysis of how macro, meso and micro factors interact is crucial.

1.2.3 LIFE ON THE STREETS

1.2.3.1 STREET CHILDREN'S ADAPTATION TO STREET LIFE

In Aptekar's (1994) study, he found that the families of street children in Colombia had a strong influence on their adjustment. Peer support was also found to be influential in the introduction of street children to street-life and their adoption of street values (Schurink, 1993), and on their orderly development (Aptekar, 1989). Schärf, Powell and Thomas (1986) found that the peer group supplanted the family with the strollers in Cape Town. On the other hand, Donald and Swart (1994) concluded that the peer group did not complete replace the family as support system and peer relationships were fleeting and often based on survival rather than loyalty.

Street children showed resourcefulness, adaptability and coping skills in finding ways to survive on the streets (Donald & Swart-Kruger, 1994; Schurink, 1993; Schärf, Powell and Thomas, 1986).

Swart (1987) found in her study of the characteristics of street children in Hillbrow concerning their moral development that these children did not have deviant moral views from mainstream society. Their adaptation to street-life necessitated them to engage in activities viewed by them selves as morally deviant though.

1.2.3.2 RISK FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH STREET LIFE

Most risk factors associated with street life centres around delinquent behaviour and the use of intoxicating solvents, as well as the dangers associated with prostitution and unhealthy living conditions.

Drug abuse in particular is a cause of concern in literature in Brazil (Tannhauser, 1992; Bucher, Coste & Oliveira 1991; and Carlini, Beatriz & Carlini, 1981) and can be associated with other illicit activities. It is also a health concern as found by Jansen, Griesel, Richter and Joubert (1990) who studied social psychological and neuropsychological factors associated with glue-sniffing.

Richter (1989) did a comprehensive psychological study of street children in Johannesburg regarding their physical growth, cognitive development, school-readiness, problem-solving skills and neuro-psychological screening, psychopathology and sense of self and others.

The effects of factors such as overcrowding, poor diet and a lack of clean water, urban children were studied by Westhoff, Coulter, Mc Dermot and Holcomb (1994).

The threat of HIV/AIDS to the health of street children is also becoming an increasingly imminent risk factor considering their life style. Richter and Swart (1995) in their research of the attitude towards and knowledge of AIDS among the streetchildren in Johannesburg found that they possessed good superficial knowledge, which was though, obscured by moral imputations.

1.2.4 INTERVENTION WITH STREET CHILDREN

Programmes in response to the street child phenomenon are varied. Such programmes differ not only on the basis of community perceptions of the problem, but

also in terms of availability of resources and the objectives set for intervention. Lusk (1989) discussed the developmental categories of children in Latin American streets and established that the programmes for children on the streets are based on four approaches- correctional, rehabilitative, outreach and preventative perspectives. These approaches are the subject to numerous analyses. (Rizzini & Lusk, 1995; Goode, 1987; & Levenstein, 1994)

The view that programmes should be based on a situational analysis, considering macro, meso and micro factors, and that an integrated approached should be used is espoused by many researchers. (Williams, 1993; Myers, 1991; Mwaza, Mufune & Osei Hweidl 1994; Seelig & Tesfaya, 1994 and Salvador, Alves, Bens & Nudelman 1994).

Williams (1993) proposed a hierarchy of street use and appropriate responses to the needs of street children, corresponding to their level of street involvement. In an analysis of several programmes for street children in Khartoum, The Philippines and India, Myers (1991) concludes that a situational analysis is crucial to a correct understanding of the interventative steps that would be effective to street and working children.

Mwanza, Mufune and Osei Hweidl (1994) conducted a field study on the problems youth experience in three African countries and established that any programme aimed at alleviating the plight of children at risk, should be based on a careful examination of their actual needs.

In another African study, Seelig and Tesfaye (1994) presented an overview of the child welfare groups in Ethiopia and established that the most rapidly increasing problem is that of street children. Amongst the programmes described is a family reunification programme and residential centres for street children.

Salvador, Alves, Bens & Nudelman (1993) described the development of an integrated programme for at risk individuals such as street children based on intervention at family level. A survey on street children in three urban centres in Namibia was coordinated and conducted by the ministry of Local Government and Housing of the Republic of Namibia (Tacon, 1991).

As far as South African research is concerned, the most comprehensive study is an HSRC investigation edited by Schurink (1993). Amongst other issues an overview of selected programmes for street children in South Africa and abroad is given. The goals, structure, activities and staffing of these projects, are examined, as well as its special features, and problems experienced. Cockburn (1988) compared the effectiveness of formal versus non-formal education for the street children in South Africa and proposes the "Learn to Live" non-formal education programme.

In his notes for designing a programme for street children, Baizerman (1998) proposed a five level programme based on the basic needs of the children, basic services for them, services to prepare children for life after the street, inter-organizational flow between organizations involved with street children, and finally preventative action.

These aspects are also emphasized by Mc Curtain (1988) in his paper on the development objectives and problems associated with the "Street Wise" educational project.

One of the most prominent programmes in South Africa is the "Street Wise" programme consisting of five facets: street outreach, shelter, assessment, educational programme and graduate programme. (Le Roux, 1992).

The final report of UNESCO's workshop for street children in Eastern and Southern Africa (1994) also provides insight into educational programmes proposed for street children.

1.2.5 OTHER ISSUES

Some of the issues appearing less prominently in literature, centres around, firstly, the definition of a street child, and secondly, the human rights of a street child.

Cosgrove (1990) presented a system of definition of street children that can be applied cross culturally based on accepted norms and family involvement, which can also be used for effective outreach programmes.

A group of reports on children's rights following the passage of the United Nations convention of the Rights of the Child in 1989 was summarized by John (1994) and he found that the injustices toward children continued world-wide.

In his examination of the situation of Brazilian street children, Drexel (1994) placed the large numbers of street children in the context of their lack of human rights.

1.2.6 CONCLUSION

Most of the above studies indicate that large-scale factors such as political and economic policy interact with specific group and cultural factors to determine a particular life situation for children, especially in Third World countries. Their life situation is characterized by poverty, over crowding violence and a de-emphasis of the importance of education.

Street life presents a particular challenge to children and in order to survive, it seems as if they develop into a distinct breed of children. It is difficult to respond to the needs of these children as their make-up and needs are so complex. Programmes established in response to their needs vary from institutionalization to street shelters, and seem to consist of varied elements such as rehabilitation, education, outreach, preparation for adult life, life skills training, re-unification with family etcetera. Not all

programmes are equally successful but those who do succeed, seems to be those who emphasize the real needs of these children, and not those imposed upon them.

1.3 DELIMITATION OF STUDY

Research into the street child phenomenon has to a large extend, focused on etiological factors, especially macro- and meso-level factors. The etiology and description of the street child phenomenon have thus been placed in the context of large-scale structural economic and political policies, and social and demographic changes related to factors such as family upheaval, violence, single parenthood and poverty-related conditions. Studies on the intervention of street children have also followed paths related to the above-mentioned factors. Very few studies have emphasized the specific child in the process of becoming a street child, the perception such a child has about his life-world, and how these perceptions relate to his essential nature and eventual actualization of his potential.

In South Africa, the above mentioned large-scale influences and conditions exist for most black children. These conditions do not inevitably produce street children. If it was true, most black children would be roaming city streets. Baizerman (1988:13) touches on the essence of this issue when he asks why there are such a small number of street children relative to the actual number of Black children. He speculates that other children could be in the same desperate situation in other parts of the child care system and enquires to the specific routes that children who land up on the streets take.

In examining the dynamics involved in the pathways leading to the streets different fields of study would ask different questions about the phenomenon of street children. Even within a broader Educational and -Psychological perspective, an array of ways of looking at this phenomenon is possible. Within these fields, several issues are worthy of consideration. The question of the relevance of the education system in meeting the

needs of street children is currently a much-debated issue. The cognitive structure and approach of the street child, and how the street child differs from the other Black children living in the townships as far learning styles and approaches are concerned, are also important research topics. In South Africa, especially in this transition period, multicultural issues such as the implications of being a black boy in a western mainstream society and the influence of cultural differences in perceptions on child-rearing education and intervention could also be important issues. Broader issues centre on child-care systems, legislation and policy-making in meeting the needs of children.

Considering all these issues as broader background and contextual to this study seems important if the guidelines written at the end should be relevant to the South African street child, and some will be touched on in the course of the analysis of the phenomenon of the street child. In this study though, the focus will shift from contextual issues to the street child as the centre of his life-world. The Educational Psychologist is particularly interested in the child's development into self-actualized adulthood and in examining the internal and external obstacles that may delay or hinder in such self-actualization. A particular area that may cause such obstacles to develop is the relationships a child develop with important others in his life and an important aspect of such relationships are the perceptions held by a child about the referents he enters into a relationship with.

An understanding of these perceptions held by the street child is thus viewed as crucial in providing guidelines to his helpers (social-and-care-workers; educationists, and educational psychologists) about interventative approaches that would support him in achieving self-actualization. The street child presents a particular paradox to these helpers, as it is difficult for them to understand how to approach him. He as simultaneously a child exposed to severe developmental risk factors, but also experienced beyond expectations for his age and his tendency toward flight when

exposed to difficult circumstances, complicates understanding him and how to handle him even further.

The specific focus of this study then is an examination of the perceptions held by street children about important referents in their life-world, in order to establish the nature of the meanings they attribute to it and eventually assess the impact it has on their self-actualization.

1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

On the basis of the street child's perception of important referents in his life-world, what guidelines could the Educational Psychologist give to institutions and persons acting as helpers to the street child?

1.5 HYPOTHESES

a) Street children have negative perceptions about their families, peers, society and the schools they attended.
b) Street children have negative self-perceptions.

1.6 PURPOSE AND AIMS OF STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine the street child's perceptions about important referents in his life-world in order to give guidelines to persons and institutions acting as their helpers. The researcher wants to reach this goal by:

a) Doing a literature study on the phenomenon of street children.
b) Doing an empirical study on a sample group of street children through a questionnaire survey and ideographic case studies
c) Writing guidelines for the effective intervention of street children.

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

STREET CHILDREN

Street children are children still in developmental need of a nurturing relationship with adult persons, who can give them guidance, support and nurturing, who have relinquished such relationships and are living with other such children or on their own under conditions putting at risk their psychological, physical, moral and educational development.

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

Educational Psychology pertains the theory and practice of identification and remediation of learning, emotional and behaviour disturbances that impedes with the optimal development of children in an educational-psychological sphere.

HANDLING

Handling in this study refers to intervention, thus intentional engagement with street children in a promotive, preventative and therapeutic way in order to manage this problem.

ATTRIBUTION OF MEANING

Attribution of meaning refers to the cognitive process by which a child continually learns about, understands and orients himself within his world. Because of its connotative, emotive dimension as well as normative component, it is always idiosyncratic and it also makes communications possible.

PERCEPTION

Perception refers to the subjective sensory process through which a person attributes meaning to objective stimuli within himself and his environment. New meanings are attributed based on prior knowledge and experience giving perception both connotative as well as denotative dimensions.

The process of conducting empirical study will be described in chapter five. This description will include an overview of the execution of the study as well as an analysis and interpretation of the results of the study.

In chapter six, the conclusions made in the literature and empirical study about the street child's relationship with his important referents will be used as bases to write guidelines to his helpers.

In the last chapter final comments and conclusions on the study be made, as well as recommendations for further studies.

CHAPTER 2: AN ANALYSIS OF THE PHENOMENON OF STREET CHILDREN

Burning Cigarette

This little black boy
Is drawn like a cigarette from its box
Lit
He looks at his smoke hopes
That twirl, spiral, curl
To nothing
He grows like cigarette ashes
As docile, as harmless
Is smothered

Mongane Wally Serote

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this analysis, is to derive from literature what the essential nature of the street child is in order to understand him from an Educational Psychological perspective and ultimately propose guidelines for his intervention.

In seeking these essentials, the street child will firstly be compared and contrasted to other related alternative conditions of childhood. The South African street child will be compared to the street-gang, the North American runaway and the Latin American street child, by describing their origins, means of existence and coping strategies. It will be attempted to arrive at an understanding of this child functioning under adverse circumstances.

The heart of this analysis is in the last section where the street child's relationships with important referents will be examined. Although the focus of this discussion is the perceptions the street child has about important referents, it will be viewed in the context of the dynamics involved in the development of relationships. Perceptions do not develop as objective constructs, but are embedded in relationships and are essential components there-of. The development of relationships with family, peers, school, society and values objects and ideas will thus be viewed, by examining how the streetchild experiences, perceives and is involved with these referents. The ultimate objective is to understand how he sees and understands his life-world.

2.2 OTHER RELATED ALTERNATIVE CONDITIONS OF CHILDHOOD

Leaving their homes at a youthful age and making the streets their home is a decision taken by many children all over the world. The circumstances they live in may differ vastly though, making survival more or less difficult. The South African street child's circumstances will thus be compared with his counterpart in North America - the runaway- firstly and then to the Latin American streetchild. Closer to home a

phenomenon closely related to the street child - the street-gang - occurring currently very conspicuously in the Cape flats will also be drawn under the spotlight for comparison.

2.2.1 SOUTH AFRICAN STREET CHILDREN COMPARED TO NORTH AMERICAN RUNAWAYS

The phenomenon of children living and working on the streets is not confined to only one part of the world. In industrialized countries, these children are usually known as runaways whereas the term "street children" is reserved for children in countries in the developing world. Richter's (1989b) comparison of North American runaways to South African street children has revealed that the main difference between these two groups lies in their respective society's attitudes towards childhood and the resources available to uphold these attitudes practically. In industrialized countries, the existence of legal and support structures and "historically determined social attitudes" (Richter, 1989b: 33) counteract the growth in numbers of children living and working on the street. Having to work and aid to their families' income is common to children living in many third world countries. These children are more independent than runaways and also start living on the streets at a younger age and tend to stay on the streets for longer periods. Runaways are usually older than sixteen, and ninety-five percent of them are home within six months. Runaways are usually attracted to the streets through a sense of adventure, independence and excitement associated with a life without adult supervision. Life circumstances for street children are usually bleak, and they are forced to a life on the streets.

Common about these two groups is that they "begin their experience of living or working on the streets with some sense of personal failure, misfortune, injustice or embitterment". (Richter, 1989b: 6). The life circumstances of both groups leave them in despair, and although it may differ, both groups come from the lowest stratums in their respective societies. They have the perception that they are unwanted at home or that their families are better off without them. Their school lives were typically

characterized by repeated failures or being at odds with the educational establishment. Often these children are secondary runaways from welfare institutions and other institutional care, settings. Once on the street these children share the same experiences and are exposed to the same dangers presented by street life.

2.2.2 A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE SOUTH AFRICAN AND LATIN AMERICAN STREET CHILD

In his comparison of South African and Latin American street children, Le Roux (1992) found the following similarities: "poverty, unequal distribution of wealth, social upheaval through rural poverty and urbanization, population distribution - nearly half under the age of eighteen years and violence against street children perpetuated by right-wing groups." (1992:70)

The differences in the manifestation of this phenomenon in these two countries could be ascribed to specific political, economic, demographic, geographical and cultural features.

In Brazil, an open Mediterranean society, the occurrences of street people is common, South Africa on the other hand, is a private Calvinistic society where street people is a rare occurrence. Brazilian people also tend to be up until late at night, making it less dangerous for children to be on the street at night. In South Africa, the streets could be very dangerous for children after dark. In South Africa slum areas are distant from the city centres, making it difficult for children to return home at night. In Brazil, these areas are close to city centres, and most children, return home at night. Most South African street children are black, making them conspicuous by colour, whereas in Brazil they are less conspicuous and the public is also more tolerant of these children. Brazilian children find it easier to survive in their mild climate and the plentiful fruit and nuts. In South Africa, during the winters especially, the harsh climate and scarcity of food makes survival very difficult for street children.

Laws in Brazil prevent arrests for vagrancy whereas street children in South Africa are often arrested for being on the street. Church programmes and private sector enterprises are obligatory by law in Brazil. In South Africa only voluntary and church programmes exist. There is also a much stronger emphasis on voluntary programmes in Brazil where the constitutional rights of children are also upheld to a larger extend.

2.2.3 STREET CHILDREN AS COMPARED TO STREET GANGS

In their investigation of the strollers on the Cape flats, Schärf, Powell and Thomas (in Burman & Reynolds) found that there "*is very little overlap between street children and gangs*" (1986:265). Although both groups originated from structurally disadvantaged circumstances, their responses to their conditions differed vastly. These differences are especially evident in their activities, socialization and moral codes. Strollers tend to be very individualistic creatures who do not usually retain links with their families. Gang members on the other hand are still very much part of the family system they operate from. The 'strollers' tendency towards individualism is also clearly indicated in the dynamics of the social groups they form. Contrary to gangs where the survival of the group is totally dependent on a rigid system of group loyalty, street children hang out in loose groups of two, three or five for a short period. Although each group has idiosyncratic ways of sharing/pooling food, money and other resources, their main tendency is to keep to themselves.

Street children also do not seek any power or benefits common to society as gangs do, but make efforts to steer far from it. Gang-members, as opposed to street children who appear timid, are intent on appearing macho, and tend to act aggressively and confrontationally. Street children tend to avoid conflict at all cost. "*All these differences highlight very particular methods of coping with conflict and authority.*" (Schärf et al, 1986:267)

2.2.4 CONCLUSION

The comparison between the South African street child and other related conditions of childhood alludes to some common personality tendencies of South African street children. The composite picture of the street child is that of a child with a strong tendency to escape from adverse conditions. He also seems to be a non-conformist, who does not oppose societal rules and expectations but rather drifts away from it. The street child also seems to be a loner drawing only on his peer-group for support and survival. He has a strong need for independence and has a low tolerance for restrictive circumstances. This child avoids conflict rather than seeking it. The street child seems to respond to the challenges posed by his life through escapist strategies. His strong needs for freedom and independence may be rooted in a deep-seated fear that he cannot rely upon anyone but himself and thus a deep sense of insecurity and alienation.

2.3 THE STREET CHILD'S RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER IMPORTANT REFERENTS IN HIS LIFE WORLD

At the interface of what the street child presents and what the world expects and demands, relationships develop which are fraught with mutual discontent. The message this child receives about himself, is ultimately that of inadequacy, rejection and personal failure. The effects these relationships have on the street child's perceptions examined and drawn together to indicate how they influence his potential for self-actualization.

2.3.1 THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERCEPTION

Perception is one of the key determining factors in the development of a relationship and also influences the nature and quality there-of. It is therefor necessary to understand the dynamics involved in the process of perception and the impact it has on how a person relates to himself and others in his world.

In their attempt to arrive at an Educational-Psychological conceptualization of perception, Du Toit and Jacobs (1989) drew upon several definitions and ultimately described it in terms of the subjective process of attributing meaning to objective phenomena.

Perception is thus described as a cognitive process by which objective internal or external stimuli that comes under an individual's attention are processed and interpreted subjectively, so that meanings are attributed to such stimuli. This process implies a conscious engagement and involvement with an issue, person or object perceived. The perceiver is thus not a passive recipient of stimuli but is actively involved and consciously directed at the stimuli speaking to his senses, thus implying a reflexive relationship between the perceiver and the perceived. Perception is also described as a set of organizing categories in terms of which new experiences may be sorted, given identity, and more elaborated connotative meaning. The implication is thus that the perceiver needs prior knowledge or experience of the phenomenon perceived and that this prior knowledge and experience may influence the processing and interpretation of new information or experience. Distorted ideas or perceptions can thus also lead to the distortion of new perceptions in order to establish their fit in the present cognitive structure, thus also distorting the meaning the perceived relationship has for the perceiver. An important element of perception is the emotions associated with experiences, which will colour the perception of the particular experience. A negative experience with a certain referent in a child's life-world could thus influence his perception about that referent negatively, and even unrealistically distort his future perceptions about it. Such negative perceptions could also have an impact with a child's engagement with that referent, and his willingness to become involved or lead to negative involvement, and thus negatively perceived relationships.

There seem to be a reflexive relationship between the experiential (emotional component), the perceptual (cognitive component) and the action (conative component) of a relationship. These factors need thus to be viewed in an interrelated way, and will

discussed as such in the context of the relationships the street children have with the most important referents in their life-world. Ultimately will be examined what their perceptions are, and how these perceptions influence their self-actualization.

2.3.2 THE STREET CHILD'S RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS FAMILY

The street child's perception of his family will be discussed by firstly examining the role of the family in the development of all children. The black family will then be focused on, by showing that because of its changed nature, it is becoming less able to cater to the needs of their children, as most street children originates from black families. The street child's present perception of his family will then be examined to show how these perceptions about their families impacted upon their self-perception.

2.3.2.1 FAMILY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PERSONAL IDENTITY

Each child is born within a family and although the "*family has undergone various structural and functional changes ... it ... is still regarded ... as the institution in which the basic moral and social being of the individual personality is formed*" (Smit & Mapatane in Schurink, 1993:62). The family is the place where the child is taught not only social functions and roles, but also the moral codes and norms of his society. It is also the sphere where the child primarily develops a sense of himself, his abilities, preferences, attitudes and values - thus an identity.

The concept of 'identity' is described by Raath and Jacobs (1990:8) as the meaning a person connotes to himself as a human being and the process of forming an identity, as one in which the child becomes more involved with his environment, experiences different situations in his own specific way, forms relationships with important people in his life, and attributes meaning to these relationships.

The family is the first group to which a child belongs, with whom he interacts, by whom he is evaluated and also is of the most important referents with which he forms a relationship. From the safety of his family the child gains confidence to explore his life-world. The feedback the child receives about himself, his abilities and value as a person, is of crucial importance to his own evaluation of himself and his self worth.

The importance of a supportive and nurturant home-environment to the development of a child's self esteem could hardly be overemphasized. Such an environment is often absent in the homes street children originate from. Most street children are black, and the black family has during the past century changed from a strongly traditional patriarchal extended family system to often uprooted, disorganized single parent, female-headed households, These families are often not able to provide in the physical, emotional and educational needs of their children.

2.3.2.2 THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE BLACK FAMILY IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa is a country of vast cultural diversity and class differences impacting strongly on family life. Most street children are black and very poor. (Richter, 1988:10) In order to understand the circumstances of the black family today, it is necessary to examine the changes it has undergone during the past century due to specific socio-political and economic reasons.

The black family had traditionally been strongly patriarchal and hierarchical maintained strong links with the extended family, which helped to strengthen the moral and social control and discipline. (Smit & Mapatane in Shurink, 1993:65) It was found that the extended family had the following advantages for its members: security and a feeling of obligation toward each other, psychological and material support, it made leadership possible and promoted the welfare of dependent family members and so ensured the existence of the extended family. (Smit & Mapatone in Shurink, 1993:65)

In Africa as a whole rapid urbanization and industrialization led to the collapse of the extended family system. (Dlamini, 1991: 27). In South Africa, this was further entrenched by legislation such as the Group Areas Act, leading to measures such as forced removals and the migrant labour system. (Swart-Kruger & Donald , 1994:110) Some of the results of these measures were female headed households (due to the absence of fathers), wide spread illegitimacy, and children brought up by relatives or stepparents (Swart-Kruger & Donald, 1994:110). It also led to a diffuse moral and value system and children left without material, emotional and social support and stability previously provided by the extended family. Children were also deprived of a sense of identity and clear role-indicators which they could use as they ventured into the social world.

2.3.2.3 THE STREET CHILD'S FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES

It is very difficult for the family of a South African street child to play a meaningful socializing and nurturing role in his life or have a positive influence on the development of his perceptions. The following factors seem to be characteristic of the families of street children: poverty, unemployment, nuclear family upheaval in the form of death desertion, remarriage, and alcohol abuse among parents, single parenthood economical problems, high density housing, social isolation and excessive discipline. (Smit & Mapatane in Schurink, 1993:85; Richter, 1988a: 13).

Schärf, et al (in Burman, 1986:265) in their study of the strollers of Cape Town considered such factors not only as mere "*pathologies or inadequacies*", but saw it as important to acknowledge the role that ideology and history have played. They view, in example, the occurrence of high density housing as directly resulting from the state's low cost housing policies, and alcoholism on the Cape Flats as interwoven with the "tot" system. The street child's detrimental family circumstances cannot be viewed in isolation from broader social and ideological issues.

2.3.2.4 THE STREET CHILD'S PRESENT RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS FAMILY

For street children, leaving home resembles a process of drifting away from home into street life. It was found by Schärf et al (in Burman, 1986:270), when their family circumstances became too much for strollers to bear, and no other support systems were available for these children, there was simply no where else to turn, but the streets.

The relationship between street children and their families seems to be quite complex and ambiguous. Most street children are not actual orphans or homeless. The inability of their parents or caretakers to answer to their physical emotional and social needs, though, render them functionally homeless (Le Roux, 1992:71).

Despite the general negative relationship that existed prior to their leaving home, street children mostly still would like to return home, provided that the situation improves (Le Roux, 1992:71). Some street children actually still maintain a relationship with their families and send some of their entire earnings home (Le Roux, 1992:71; Donald & Swart-Kruger, 1995:171). It was found though, that children who relinquished all links with their families were emotionally less disturbed than those who had contact with their families. (Donald & Swart Kruger, 1994:171)

Street children often fantasized about and idealized family life to compensate for their physically and emotionally starved lives. (Richter, 1989a: 1). Schärf, et al (1986:281) also found that the strollers in their study had an idealized vision of what their future family life would be like which coincided strongly with the working class conventions *"...all strollers... intended to raise families in the conventional manner and hoped to occupy homes. All twenty-eight were adamant that their children should not become strollers".*

2.3.2.5 CONCLUSION

The street child seems to originate from a dysfunctional home, characterized by poverty, instability, harsh and inconsistent disciplinary practices and an inability to nurture its children. The family of the street child also seems to be without community, family and social support structures that could sustain it during times of upheaval. Parenting skills seem to be lacking and the changing roles within the family system to single-parent, female-headed households contributed to the erosion of family stability and cohesiveness.

The street child himself is depicted as a child with low tolerance for the rules and restrictions associated with family life, and opts out of it by living on the streets. The option seems to be at once a flight away from distressful circumstances, as well as a choice towards independence, and reflects the dual nature of the street child personality. He seems too timid to confront and handle the stressful circumstances at home, and is yet courageous enough to survive on his own. The choice of living on the streets is also strongly indicative of the direction of his involvement, a striving toward self-fulfillment outside the conventions of family life. The street child with his mostly negative experiences of family life has idealized notions about it. Never the less, he never learns the socialization skills appropriate to fulfilling these conventional notions. He also seems to experience conflicting, ambiguous feelings about family life, by idealizing it on the one hand, and is thus drawn towards it, but on the other not being able to obtain such a life, and drifting further away from it.

Reintegrating the child with his family would call for co-operation between various sectors, to reinvent the family as an environment. The family itself would thus need to be re-integrated into social and community structures in order to draw support from it. Such support would not only need to address parenting skills and providing parental guidance in child-rearing, but also structural and material support that would require focused cooperation between government structures, non-governmental organizations,

community based organizations, business and employers of parents. As far as intra family relations are concerned should be remembered that the street child had lived as a functional adult, and power relations between parents and children will need to be negotiated. Even if the street child is not integrated with his family, he will need therapy to come to terms with the relationship he had with his family of origin.

The next section will look at the street child's perception of school - the second most important referent in the life of a child.

2.3.3 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STREET CHILD AND SCHOOL

The school is probably the second most important referent after the family in the life of the child and an area where the basis of many other social relationships are formed.

In this discussion the importance of street children's perceptions of school will be analyzed firstly. The street children's experience of school will then be described highlighting important factors contributing to the negative relationship between the street child and school. Finally will be looked at the implications of the street child's lack of schooling on his perceptions of himself and his self-actualization.

2.3.3.1. THE IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF THE CHILD

The importance of the school on as major influence on the perceptions of the street child could hardly be overemphasized. The child's sphere of development is extended from family to school and the school becomes the second most important influence on his perceptions and experience of himself, his own worth and his place in the world. Children are expected to adapt to the demands of the school, and when they are not able to achieve this, they become sure that the school is an anxiety provoking place and a definite threat to their identities. (Raath & Jacobs, 1990:61) Morse (1964) and Carmary (1978) in Raath and Jacobs (1990:61) found respectively that the school

played an important role in the development of negative self-perceptions in the child. *"Whatever else we have done, we have communicated a sense of personal failure to many of our pupils"*. (Morse et al, 1964:198 in Raath & Jacobs. 1990)

The child is largely dependent upon the teacher as educator, and the attitude of the teacher is an important determinant of success experienced by learners. Pallardy, Patterson and Maer (in Raath & Jacobs, 1990:62) found in their respective studies that the attitude of the teacher not only influenced the child's academic achievement but also the perceptions they had of themselves.

The perceptions a child has about himself and his abilities are important indicators of success at all levels at school. The child, who perceives himself negatively, is unsure of himself and fears failure. These negative self-perceptions leads to the development of a vicious cycle, wherein through his negative self-talk, he convinces himself into actual failure, which again convinces him, that he is unable to achieve success. There seems to be a reflexive relationship between his perceptions, experiences and actions.

School in general, seems to be negative experience for children who fail to adapt to its demands and instead of being a source of support for some children it could be a frightening place from which they would rather flee.

An examination of the measure of dissonance between what the schools demands and the street child's ability to comply with them, and the outcome there of, will show that the street child's chances of school success is very slim from the outset.

2.3.3.2 STREET CHILDREN AND SCHOOL

It seems that when children abandon their homes to live on the street abandonment of school is a natural route to take. *"By running away from both home and school, strollers have abandoned the conventional sources of emotional and economic security.*

They have also escaped from the customary sources of guidance and moral inculcation." (Schärf, et al, 1986:264)

The relationship between street children and school seems to be negative all over the world. The following quotes from Williams (1993:337) shows the demands set by school and that by his mere existence the street child is found inadequate by school systems.

> *They didn't fit into the school system and the school system didn't fit into their lives ... they had enough to bear without the daily humiliations, and they disliked being told they were dirty and the sons of prostitutes...*(Dallape in Cor House,1983: 64 in Williams,1993: 337)

> *Formal schools need clean uniforms punctuality doing of homework. If there has been a fight in the house at night of no food cooked, the child will come to school late so he is punished a few times of this and he opts out... No place at home results in no homework done, or books are dirty, both results in punishment.*
> (Society for Educational Exploration, Bangalore)

> *...a set pattern of study parrot wise. Streetchildren are clever. They don't fit into normal schools because they can't wait - or they have been used to working and earning money. They believe in the three "f's" food, freedom and films. None of our school systems fit these kids.*
> (Fonseca, Snehasadan Bombay)

Schärf, et al, (1986:282) also found that most children in their Cape Town study, had difficulties at school. They found school punitive and restrictive, and most had failed at least one year - some had failed as much as four times. They also found that school, was one of the subjects these children were most reluctant to discuss.

Certain factors intrinsic to street children, but also endemic to their circumstances seem to interact with school factors resulting in their alienation and exclusion from school. Some of these factors need to be viewed closer.

a) INABILITY TO ADAPT TO THE ETHOS OF THE SCHOOL

"*In many developing countries ... schools seem to belong to a different world, remote from the every day existence for those at street level for whom they may constitute yet another possibility of failure*" (Agnelli, 1986:86). School often do not reflect or, have any bearing to the real lives of children. Both the content of education as well as the form it takes, are often based on Eurocentric values, completely alien to the child. Street children often reported that they did not understand school and that school did not understand them. The rules set by school and the demands it made in terms of neatness and punctuality were often impossible for them to meet, increasing their feelings of alienation. (Williams, 1993:337)

b) LACK OF A STABLE HOME ENVIRONMENT

Many of the problems children experience at school start at home. According to Smit and Mapatane (in Shurink, 1993:85) the families of street children are often characterized by unstabling circumstances such as alcohol abuse, single parenthood, unemployment, severe punishment of these children, and the lack of a role model with whom they could identify meaningfully. The above factors could inadvertently interfere with the child's successful adaptation to school, meeting the demands of the school, and leave them feeling alienated.

c) POVERTY

Poverty is probably the most important determining factor influencing the relationship between street children and education. Most black children in South Africa live under

poverty-stricken circumstances. Structurally this means that an overcrowded, noisy environment creates the least conducive environment for school success. This also has implications for their physical growth and development. Richter & Griesel (in Dawes & Dawson, 1994) found that most black children including street children suffer from growth stunt due to malnutrition in their early years. *One of the effects associated with stuntedness is that such children "tend to perform less well on a variety of psychological and scholastic indicators."* (Richter & Griesel, in Dawes & Donald 1994:71) Other factors associated with poverty such as dysfunctional non-stimulating caretaking practices, compounds the physical deprivation effects, putting poor children at greater risk. (Richter & Griesel, 1994:72) At a more basic level, poverty influences the ability of families, to pay school funds, uniforms and generally participate in school activities again causing children to leave school.

d) STREET CHILDREN AS WORKING CHILDREN

Among poorer societies, children are often expected to contribute to the income of their families from a very young age. They do not have time to attend school and education is often de-emphasized by their communities. The idea of schooling is of little reference in the rural areas where children's labour is needed as early as possible to make an essential contribution to the income of poor households. Richter (1989a: 2) describes children's labour as part of the socialization process in agricultural societies where children are also inducted to adult roles. The phenomenon of street children in developing countries is a distorted extension of the phenomenon of agricultural working children. The influence of urbanization and industrialization upon this phenomenon though, is the breakdown of family life under socio-economic pressures, leaving children neglected or abandoned. (Richter, 1989a: 2)

e) UNDERPROVISION OF BLACK EDUCATION

Under the Apartheid regime the most pervasive characteristic of South African Education was the marked unequal provision based on colour lines causing huge

disparities in the nature and quality of education amongst the different education departments. "*Another way of highlighting the financial inequality is that there are more than five times as many black pupils as white, but the budget for whites is nearly twice for blacks*" (Hartshorne, in Millar, Rayham & Schaffer 1991: 44). Inequality has impacted on schools severely - quality education was simply impossible under conditions of overcrowded classrooms, with very little facilities, and resources, overburdened under qualified and demotivated teachers, and curriculums that were alien to both teachers and learners. "*The effects of such gross and sustained under-resourcing of African education have been both cumulative and acute*" (Dawes & Donald, 1994:3) High failure rates are not uncommon in black schools, especially in the foundation phase, associated with a large proportion of school drop-outs. Some of these children inadvertently land on the streets.

Inequality also exists especially as regards to learners with special educational needs (LSEN). The approach towards LSEN in South Africa was that special educational needs had been described in terms of categories of disability. This had discriminatory effects in especially two respects. Firstly, little culture-free measurement instruments exists with which needs could be adequately detected, and secondly it disregards structural issues which could lead to learning disabilities and difficulties such as poverty. (Dawes & Donald, 1994:21)

f) VIOLENCE AND THE ANTI-SCHOOL CULTURE

Turmoil in Departments of Education and Training and Education and Culture schools during the 1970's and 1980's, associated with the liberation struggle led to a loss of schooling for many children, as well as an entrenchment of an anti-school culture. (Shurink et al, 1993) Many children reported being coerced by older children and feared attending school. Some also drifted out of school over a period of time as conditions rapidly worsened at schools. (Williams, 1993:837)

2.3.3.3 THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE STREET CHILDS RELATIONSHIP WITH SCHOOL AND EDUCATION

The street child's exclusion from school has left him not only functionally illiterate but also negatively biased against further integration into the formal education system. (Donald & Swart-Kruger: 1994:172) He is doomed to a future on the unskilled labour market, or being co-opted into crime syndicates, unless alternative ways of educating him is found. Alternative education would entail a holistic approach towards his particular emotional and educational needs.

These children present a particular challenge as learners. Firstly, although they have opted out of schools, street children still aspire to skilled careers promogated as important by mainstream society. "*One noticeable contradiction of the future coincide with conventional working class expectations*" (Schärf, Powell & Thomas, 1986:281). All the children in their study had as their goal aspirations requiring much higher education as had attained by them. This shows on unrealistic attitude as often espoused by children with low self-esteem wherein they aspire to conform to working class expectations although they had no means of realizing these aspirations. (Mc Curtain, 1988). Secondly, although these children are lacking formal education, they have considerable survival skills on the streets. These street smarts include numerical analytical and problem solving skills far more practically than they could have learned at school. (Donald & Swart Kruger, 1994:171) They have dormant and developing abilities, which could be utilized as a basis to develop an educational programme. "*To survive in the streets, requires exceptional fortitude, a creative mind and an astute knowledge of human nature.*" (Donald & Swart-Kruger 1994:171)

Specialized education in the past was also geared at a small select population of learners, usually those with specific mental and physical disabilities. These learners were then taken out of mainstream and taught under special conditions. These services were also delivered on the basis of race and colour. "*Limited educational support services ... were disproportionately distributed across the different education*

departments. The more privileged sectors of society (especially whites) received the best services, while the most disadvantaged sectors (Africans and those living in rural areas) had little or no access to any support". (Du Toit in Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booysen, 1996:12)

When viewing the Gauteng Department of Education description of a learner with special educational needs:

"*Learners with Special Educational Needs LSEN includes children with visual hearing mental physical emotional and behavioral impairments, the gifted, children who are poor, children who came from different cultural backgrounds, children who were politically disadvantaged and children who speak a different language than that of the school*". (GDE Inclusion Policy Document ,1996)

It is clear that the street child in his pre-street life was indeed such a learner who was undetected and received no support and simply disappeared. He is again a learner with special educational needs and in The South Africa the School Act and the constitution and he has the right to receive education suitable to his learning style, environment etc.

2.3.3.4 CONCLUSION

Black schools in South Africa, had been a veritable battleground for the past few decades. As primary arenas of political struggle, they had been characterized by violence and upheaval. Teachers were frustrated and demotivated at conditions of overcrowded classrooms and under provisioning, and learners suffered under-stimulation and repeated failure, especially during the foundation phase. Under such circumstances of turmoil, schools have been unable to adequately fulfill its role as support structures to many learners. Children, who ended up on the street, perceived school a restrictive and punitive environment, irrelevant to their lives and not fulfilling

their needs. Street children on the other hand seem to be focused on immediate gratification of their needs and have short-term goals. School and education offer long-term benefits, and do not take into account their physical needs of hunger, safety and shelter. The school environment also set demands for neatness, punctuality and compliance to rules. Street children seem to be non-conformist by nature and drift out of school when social and academic demands become too high. Because of their experience of academic failure and inability to comply to the demands of the school, they experience school in totality very negatively and are very negatively oriented to formal schooling. Street children though, aspire to the rewards of formal education, a good job and social standing although they are inadequately prepared for this on the streets.

The impact of the relationship the street child has with school on his self-perception and possible self-actualization is devastating. Street children, although negatively biased against any form of formal education, are acutely aware of their low level of educational achievement, and their experience of school leaves them with low self-esteem and feelings of low self worth. They experience themselves as drop-outs, not only in a school context, but also in society, as school is esteemed very highly in society.

The implication of the negative relationship between the street child and school is that it is very difficult to reintegrate this child into mainstream schools. The conditions that caused them to drop out - the nature of schools and their backgrounds have not changed. Their own tendencies toward independence individualism, non-conformist and escapism have been entrenched in the streets. It seems as if street children would benefit from an alternative education programme that takes in to account the following:

1) Providing vocational skills.
2) Providing life skills (including health and sexuality issues).
3) It must be flexible allowing children to combine a school and work programme.

4) It must be less formalized considering the maturity level of streetchildren, and the skills they have learned on the street .
5) Providing social interaction skills, and for personal and moral growth.
6) It must include psychotherapy and counseling for those who need it.
7) It must be relevant and related to the child's everyday existence.

On a preventative level should schools be targeted to be transformed into child-friendly, supportive and nurturant environments. Apart from structural changes necessary and smaller teacher: learner ratios, should teachers be empowered to cater to the needs of learners. A basic awareness of cues and indicators of problems, as well as skills to assess and provide basic intervention should also be acquired by educators. An acceptance of learners despite differences in backgrounds, learning styles and a sensitivity to such differences should undergird the mission statements of schools, and be practiced in the form of inclusive teaching practices.

In the following section, the focus will be upon the relationship between the street child and society, looking at the factors influencing this relationship, and how the street child relates with different social role-players in his life.

2.3.4 THE STREET CHILD'S RELATIONSHIP WITH SOCIETY

If the measure of progress in any society is to be found in its ability to take care of its young, the existence of street children could be viewed as a social indictment to most countries. This perhaps, is the reason for the negative response these children elicit from the public globally. Internationally, the measure of tolerance toward them is evident from the terminology used to describe them: *"Salignizzo (spinning top) in Peru; Saligomon (nasty kid) in Rwanda; moutiques (mosquitoes) in Cameroon, and Twilight children in Johannesburg". (Agnelli, 1986:331)* The above descriptions have a definite negative connotation, and although these children are viewed more positively in some

countries than others, the relationship between the street child and society seems to be generally characterized by hostility and distrust.

The relationship between street children and society is influenced by a multifold of factors. In South Africa, the major factors include street children and the popular view of childhood, socio-political influences on the attitudes toward street children, and also the 'anti social' behavior of street children eliciting negative public response. The above influences are interactive and influence the street-child's relationship with the major social role-players in his life, his peer-group, authority figures such as the police, and the general public he regards as his clientele.

2.3.4.1 FACTORS INFLUENCING THE STREET CHILDS RELATIONSHIP WITH SOCIETY

a) STREET CHILDREN AND THE POPULAR VIEW OF CHILDHOOD

The popular view of childhood originates from a primarily white western mainstream orientation, - "... *international legislation and agencies tend to work with a global model based on middle-class children, who do go to school play live in increasingly private families and do not do adult tasks*". (Ennew, 1994:11) Such views undermine the independence and agency of these children in communities where they are often left unsupervised, and children are routinely expected to contribute to the income of their families. (Hansson, 1991: 6; Ennew, 1994:12; & Forest, Tyler, Echeverry, Tyler & Zea, 1986). Street children, through their self-reliance challenge the popular view of childhood and elicit feelings of uneasiness in adult-centred societies. Such uneasiness are enacted upon by blaming street children for their circumstances and reacting punitively wanting them locked up, others react emotionally by wanting to protect these children and treat them like other 'normal' children. Street children though, do not conform to the popular view of childhood, they are children yet *"they have seen so*

much" (Williams, 1993:835)) and there does not seem to be a 'neat', simple answer to a condition of childhood, that has sprung from the inadequacies of society itself.

b) SOCIO-POLITICAL INFLUENCES TO THE ATTITUDE TOWARD STREET CHILDREN

In South Africa, racial segregation was enforced by measures such as the Group Areas Act, the migrant labour system, pass laws and forced removals (Donald & Swart-Kruger, 1994:110) which served to keep black people excluded from participation in mainstream white society. Apart from serving as labourers, Blacks were not intended to be conspicuous in urban areas, settle or have families there. Interaction between the different racial groups was minimal and only in the context of a master-servant relationship. The presence of Black children running rampart and unsupervised in urban areas, was not regarded very sympathetically by the apartheid regime. This attitude is evident from the harsh measures taken by sectors from society such as the police and social services in dealing with this problem. (Schurink, 1994:19) The absence of any legislation directly addressing the needs and rights of this child during this period, as well as the non-existence of any facilities for such children is also indicative of the general socio-political attitudes toward the street child. (Schurink, 1994:19

c) ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR EXHIBITED BY STREET CHILDREN ELICITING NEGATIVE PUBLIC RESPONSE

The presence of street children and their particular lifestyle and means of survival, present a very real problem to city dwellers. To the public "their attempts to make a living (are) regarded at best as an unpleasant nuisance, and at worst as a frightening menace." (Mc Gregor-Stuart in Schurink 1994:19)

Street children are sometimes engaged in illegal activities ranging from petty crimes such as begging, pick-pocketing to more serious offenses, such as glue sniffing, theft, assault and involvement in criminal syndicates. (Mc Gregor-Stuart in Schurink,

1994:19; Swart, 1988:11) Their lifestyle including littering, urinating and defecating in public places and their behavior when intoxicated is frowned upon generally. The conditions under which these activities occur, could be interpreted in from various perspectives, but from the point of view of the public street children present a decline in the quality of city life in general, and their presence are felt negatively in a very real way. Richter (1989:58) though, found that although the children do engage in criminal activity, delinquency as a motivational and behavioral syndrome is not characteristic of more than a small group of street children.

2.3.4.2 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STREET CHILDREN AND OTHER SOCIAL ROLE-PLAYERS

a) PEERS

The relationship between street children and their peer group is a very crucial one, and a strong determinant of their successful adaptation to street-life. A child is often introduced to street-life by a friend and drifts into it by being exposed to it by friends. (Schurink, 1993:179) Aware of their vulnerability alone on the streets they depend on the peer group for support and companionship. "*Their rejected families are supplanted by an extra-ordinarily supportive companionship*". (Donald & Swart-Kruger, !994: 275). Newcomers are initiated into street survival and have to prove themselves, and especially younger street children, suffer under abuse and intimidation of older more experienced, and streetwise peers. (Schurink et al, 1993:188). Activities shared include finding a place to sleep, procuring money, recreation, and also support during illness. (Schurink et al, 1993:185; Schärf et al, 1986). They form groups of three to five children, and rival other groups for sleeping areas and work territory. (Schurink, 1993:188) These groups however, do not fulfill all the needs for nurturance and support, and are not conflict free.

Street children tend to be individualistic though, and the composition of street groups and friendships is consistently reported as fluid, erratic and subjected to the pragmatic demands of individual survival. (Donald & Swart-Kruger, 1994: 171; Schurink, 1993:186).

b) THE POLICE

The relationship between street children and the police, by nature of the social role of the police and the activities and lifestyle of children tends to be negative. This is also partially due to the harsh and coercive measures taken by the police in their dealings with street children (Mc Gregor-Stuart in Schurink, 1994:19). Schurink (1993:191) found that although many street children in their study experiences the police negatively, some felt that the actions of the police were sometimes justified as some of them did commit crimes, and other experienced them positively as being helpful.

2.3.4.3. CONCLUSION

Society is a large system of interaction between different people playing different roles according to sometimes clearly defined but mostly unspoken rules. People not complying with these expectations and demands of their roles are dealt with in a variety of ways e.g. ostracized alienated or persecuted. Street children often suffer such treatment, because they are in many ways a contradiction to all the expectations set for childhood in a western society. Unsupervised, undisciplined, not exposed to any of the traditional socializing forces, they represent an image of a broken childhood. Where innocence characteristic of childhood are expected, are found in street children a calculated manipulation in social interaction.

The mutually distrustful and hostile relationship between street children and society springs from an incompatibility between what society demands and what the child represents. It is in social relationships that street children experience the harshest

forms of rejection, because of their appearance, life-style and means of survival. Their involvement with other social role players is scanty and fleeting, and the only people they form positive relationships with are their friends, although this is also at the price of group loyalty.

The social self of the street child is characterized by ambivalence - he feels effective because he manages to make a living through an alternative life style, but at the same time feels detestable because he is aware of his social unacceptability and rejection. On the streets he learns very little skills that could prepare him for effective participation and self-actualization within mainstream society. He lives outside the realm of social conventions, leading to the development of a distorted social consciousness.

Because the street child will have to live within society, his integration into mainstream society is crucial. A reorientation of the social role-players involved with the street child, is required. A concurrent change in the meaning the street child attributes to social interaction and thus his involvement there-in is equally important to improve the street child's experience of himself in the social sphere.

Intervention should thus focus upon social awareness of the street child and dissemination of accurate information about the nature and origin of the street child phenomenon. Such awareness and understanding on a community level seems especially important, as to the family of the street child social support is crucial. Networking between all the social role-players would ensure a focused approach to effective intervention. A re-orientation of especially those role-players directly involved with the street child such as the police and social workers cannot be over stressed. The agency of the street child, his independence and resilience should also not be ignored, and he should be regarded as an active participant in his own intervention process.

The street child needs to adopt a particular street-culture to ensure his successful adaptation and integration to street-life. In the next section will this street-culture be discussed in the context of his relationship with values, objects and ideas.

2.3.5. THE STREET CHILD'S RELATIONSHIP WITH VALUES, OBJECTS AND IDEAS

2.3.5.1. INTRODUCTION

The nature of the street child's relationship with values, objects and ideas needs to be contextualized to his present needs and form of existence. This child presents an alternative lifestyle, and it is often questioned to which degree his sense of morality and value system is contingent to a certain subculture rather than mainstream society.

One of the most prominent features of this relationship is the strong importance street children ascribes to a sense of freedom, and the implications this holds for concordant values, norms and ideas needs to be examined carefully. Being streetwise also implies adhering to a particular code of conduct prescribing a sense of morality the child is inducted to in the beginning of his street-life. These ideas and rules that he needs to adapt to needs also to be viewed. The street child's notion of family life, occupations and other ideas, valued by mainstream society will also be discussed briefly.

2.3.5.2. THE STREET CHILD'S PARTICULAR AFFINITY TO FREEDOM

Street children do not view their option to live on the street as a particularly negative route to potential self-destruction. They see it as a choice to freedom, some space, and opportunity they have created for themselves. "*On the whole the children regarded themselves as survivors (and not as drop-outs) who were able to fend for themselves, despite the fact that they "ran away" were "thrown away" or "pushed out*" (Schurink, 1993:22)

The choice toward a street existence could be perceived as a choice in reaction to the control and punitive measures experienced by many street children at the hands of adults in their pre-street lives. (Schärf et al, 1986:272) This sense of freedom is a pervasive trend of their lifestyle and encompasses all aspects there-of. *"The newly found freedom expresses itself as freedom from institutions, freedom of movement, freedom to choose activities and daily rhythms and even freedom from commitments"* (Schärf et al, 1986:272)

This freedom allows them, but also demands from them a keen sense of ingenuity and opportunism. It not only allows them to move swiftly and at their whim, but this freedom extends to activities such as lying, stealing, and other activities, not necessarily approved by mainstream society, when the situation and their survival requires it. (Schärf et al, 1986:272). Engagement in these activities leads to adopting a street-culture, which prescribes the norms, values and develops from the particular survival. Closely related to this high regard for freedom is their tendency to escape from difficult situations by fleeing from it rather than facing it (Le Roux 1992: 71) firstly and secondly their tendency toward individualism. (Schärf et al, 1986:275) This is also concordant with reports by Richter (1988:9) that these children on the locus of control measure showed a strong notion towards autonomy and self directed choice. The consequence of this trend toward freedom could be summarized as dualistic in nature. Firstly, a sense of independence and self-reliance is developed. But secondly are street children as children vulnerable to a variety of physical and developmental dangers.

2.3.5.3 BECOMING STREET WISE

It has been noted elsewhere that becoming a street child is a process rather than an instantaneous decision and that there are various stages of involvement with street activities (Williams, 1993:833; Schärf et al, 1986:272; Schurink et al, 1993:181). *"All the children...went through a process before they came to think of themselves as street children and thus required a "street child" identity* (Schurink et al, 1993:203)

One of the determinants of the child's successful adaptation to street-life is the extend to which he is able to adhere to and internalize the unspoken rules and customs of the street. "*The newcomer had to earn the respect of the group and be accepted as a professional member capable of understanding their language. Sharing their norms and values and doing one job assigned to them well.*" (Schurink et al, 1993:181)
The street child's adaptation includes the development of loyalty to the group with whom he finds himself, but also to the larger population of street children in the area. This loyalty is proven through shared activities in procuring money and food, common sleeping places, recreational activities, caring for each other when sick or in need and never revealing each other to authorities. (Schärf et al, 1986; Schurink et al 1993) These groupings are loose formations though and not really long lasting and despite the fact that they do support the family in some regards the underlying philosophy still seems to be the law of the jungle. "*Generally however there was a feeling of every body for himself.*" (Schurink, et al 1993:181) This again alludes to the street child's strong tendency to individualism.

2.3.5.4. STREET CHILDREN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH MAINSTREAM NORMS AND VALUES

Despite their alternative lifestyle and their rejection of conventional socialization process, street children have extremely ambivalent "*perceptions and constructions of family life, their roles and obligations and relationship within the family*". (Richter, 1989c:11) She also found that these children did not only have idealized conventional notions of family life. (Schärf et al: 1986; Swart 1988a), but that they also have a deep longing toward understanding family relationships and roles. Schärf et al, (1986) found that these children did not only have conventional ideas about family life but also about their future occupations and roles they had to play in society. Concerning their own behavior that could be considered deviant measured by standard social norms, such as illegal activities, it was found that these children were acutely aware of it.

2.3.5.5 CONCLUSION

The street child may enter the streets with values closely concordant to mainstream society, but his adaptation to street-life and survival demands an adoption of a street-culture. The values important on the streets are closely related to survival and a sense of freedom. Although conventional norms and values are not necessarily opposed, they are subjected to the survival principle. The street child is thus aware of the mainstream values and ideas and often feels guilty because he cannot adhere to it when it contradicts his main motives in life. He is thus torn between what society demands and what he needs to do to ensure his physical survival. The longer the street child stays on the street, the deeper the street-genie becomes entrenched in him and will dictate the relationship he will have with values, objects and ideas.

Living on the fringes of society, street children cannot legitimately partake in social conventions and activities and become progressively more isolated. Street children have a harsh life which makes their particular relationships with values, objects and ideas both legitimate and essential to their existence, to an extend. Intervention would thus not or negate these values, but work with it, and through them to encourage realistic perceptions and positive experiences that would in the long term impact upon their values and ideas.

2.3.6. THE STREET CHILD'S PHYSICAL SELF

In the next section the last important to referent the street child relates with - his body - will be discussed, looking at aspects that influence his physical self both positively and negatively.

2.3.6.1 INTRODUCTION

All humans enter the world as physical beings and their awareness and experiences are also initially on a physical level. People's bodies allow them to communicate,

create and be functional. According to Maslow (1970:25) physical needs are the basis on which all other needs will develop.

A child's body image is developed primarily through two processes - his experience of his body and his evaluation there-of. As a growing developing person a child experiences his body as a means of gaining increasing control of his world. His feeling of being effective develops with increased mastery of his physical skills.

For continued growth and development a child's body needs sustenance and protection from the environment and could become a limitation if these are not automatically met. Through sheer physical discomfort a child could thus experience his body negatively.

The body as a means of interacting with the world is also how he presents himself to the world. The feedback he receives from the world regarding his physical worth, also impacts on his experience of his body and his evaluation there-of.

Certain social norms regulate human behavior especially as regards to what is considered acceptable appearance and activities. Specific social taboos exist around certain bodily functions and expressions. The body, although the source of potential pleasure, could also cause feelings of shame and anguish if a child's appearance effectively etc. does not measure up to social standards.

2.3.6.2 THE STREET CHILD'S EXPERIENCE OF HIS BODY

Three factors impact heavily on the street child's experience of his body. Street children have to survive under extremely harsh physical conditions and the first factor would be the physical deprivation they endure. The have escapist tendencies by nature, and use glue-sniffing as a way coping which also impacts on their body image. Their relationship with their bodies is also influenced by the act of prostitution many of them engage in.

a) PHYSICAL DEPRIVATION

The greatest risk the street child is exposed to is that of physical harm and developmental discords and lags he could suffer due to his deprived physical conditions. Malnutrition, lack of shelter and protective clothing, and exposure to all kinds of harsh weather conditions, cause physical survival to be on the top of their list of priorities. They do not look nice, or smell nice and are acutely aware of it. They look different from other people and other children increasing their sense of alienation from the social world. His experiences are that of severe deprivation and rejection from other people because of his dirty and haggard physical conditions.

b) PROSTITUTION

Prostitution presents one of the most lucrative ways of procuring an income on the streets. It seems to have a two-fold effect on the self-image of street children. On the one hand, they are aware of the social prejudice against prostitution, and are reluctant to discuss it. On the other hand it presents the only situation in which they are physically attractive to adults and feel effective (Schärf et al, 1986) seem be to part of the general self-perception of street children, ' *a sense of the self as effectual, but contemptible, instrumental, but bad*' (Richter, 1989a:8)

c) GLUESNIFFING

Most street children admit to glue-sniffing as a means of escaping both their physical hardships such as hunger and cold, and also emotional problems such as fear and loneliness (Hattingh, 1994). The consequences of this practice are detrimental, both on the long and short term. These children often fall or have other accidents when under the influence of glue. They sometimes concur head-injuries as a result of this. Their prolonged stay on the streets also has deliberating effects on their cognitive functioning, which could be associated with glue-sniffing. Street children agree to the

detrimental effect of glue-sniffing, but maintain that it is an important means of survival. (Hattingh, 1994)

2.3.7. THE STREET CHILD'S RELATIONSHIP WITH HIMSELF - HIS SELF-CONCEPT

2.3.7.1 INTRODUCTION

The self-concept as prime motivator of human behaviour will be discussed briefly, and then related to facets of the street child's perceptions of his life-world in order to show how these facets interrelate and compound to the perceptions that have ambivalent meaning to the street child as well as others in his life-world.

2.3.7.2 WHAT IS THE 'SELF-CONCEPT'

Rogers (1965:136) provides an explicit definition for the self-concept:
"The self-concept or selfstructure may be thought of as an organized configuration of perceptions of the self which are admissible the awareness. It is composed of elements such as the perceptions of one's characteristics and abilities, the precepts and concepts of the self in relation to others and to the environment, the value qualities which are perceived as associated with experiences and objects; the goals and ideals which are perceived as having positive or negative valence.

The above description depicts the self-concept as an organized configuration consisting of elements or facets of which a person could be aware. It could also be evaluated and compared to those of others. It could also be experienced as negative or positive dependent on the emotional value attached to it, and could in turn strongly influence his future involvement with it. Compounded negative experiences, could influence the perception of that aspect of the self, to the extend that realistic interpretation is very difficult, and it holds negative valence.

According to Vrey (in Jacobs & Vrey, 1982:21) self-concept develops because of a certain attitude towards the self. The integration of and relationships between these components determine the valence of the attitude toward the self. The self could be perceived in certain categories, which also include extensions of the self around which identities are built as the facets of the self develop. As these aspects are continuously evaluated, this is a normative process, and the self-concept could thus also be seen as the evaluated self. A child forms these identities, and thus a self-concept through attribution of meaning (the cognitive aspect), involvement (conative aspect) and experience (affective aspect) (Jacobs & Vrey, 1982:18).

The self-concept is dynamic and moves between positive and negative poles, due to different associated experiences that a person has and his interpretation there-of. Such an experience could also be interpreted realistically or unrealistically. A realistic interpretation leads to insight into that aspect of self, and ultimately acceptance irrespective of whether this aspect is evaluated positively or negatively. An unrealistic interpretation in turn could lead to a diffused sense of self due to a lack of insight and acceptance indicative of poor contact with reality. The meaning a person attributes to an experience is strongly related to feelings he associates with it.

2.3.7.2 THE STREET CHILD'S SELF-PERCEPTION

When all the facets of the street child's perceptions are drawn together, a particular pattern of contradictions characterizing his psychological make-up emerges. These contradictions emanates from his break-away from the customary social institutions and yet a simultaneous deep need and longing for positive involvement there-in. It could be concluded that as a physical, emotional, social and developmental being and as a child, the street child has certain needs, which are not met in either the pre-street existence or on the streets. His life-style on the streets demands of him to shed

aspects of his childhood in a way that profoundly influences his general engagement with life.

The street child suffers severe deprivation on a physical, emotional and social level . In none of these relationships, he is provided with unconditional acceptance, love, support and respect. In all these relationships he has experienced rejection and has learned that he is a failure, unworthy of any form of positive regard. These aspects are integrated to his self-perceptions, and attribute to his general escapist nature and low self-esteem.

The other aspect closely related to this deprivation, is the diffused perception he develops, and the nature of the contact he makes with reality. Central to his self-perception seems to be an ambivalent sense of self, as effective but detestable. This could derive from being attracted to what society provides in terms of physical survival, but also repelled by it, because of what he needs to do to attain it. It also relates to his conventional mainstream value system in conflict with the activities he engages in and attitudes and values he ultimately has to adopt for survival. This diffuse sense of self is also the consequence of his experience of rejection of his total self by the lifestyle he does not view as escapist, but as the only possible means of survival. This dualistic perception of self also could influence his contact with reality especially as far as his future orientation is concerned. He aspires to a lifestyle and career his present life is not preparing him for.

2.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter set out as its main objective to come to a clear understanding of the phenomenon of street children. More specifically the focus have been on the area of the relationships of the street child and the impact these relationships have on his perceptions, and the ability of the street child to actualize all his potential. In order to understand the distinctiveness of street children, they were compared and contrasted

to other children living in equally adverse circumstances, like the North American runaway, the South African street-gang and the Latin American street children.

The relationships street children are involved in were chosen as perspective through which the analysis of the phenomenon of street children was perceived, because in all human dimensions (physical, psycho-spiritual and social) the relationships people are involved in have essential impact upon their experience and perception of self.

Throughout this chapter one of the major challenges was to achieve a balance in considering the environmental impact (including structural political, socio-economic and demographic factors) as opposed to specific personality tendencies idiosyncratic to all street children, and arrive at a point of convergence between these two sets of influences. It was concluded that a directly causal relationship between the circumstances of street children and the outcome of the relationships they developed with important referents in their lives could be detected. A specific grouping of South African children - black and poor - are more at risk of becoming street children. This specific grouping live under poverty related circumstances where structural economic social and demographic factors interact leading to disintegrated cultural norms and values, poor schooling, insufficient child-rearing practices. Children are left with very little physical, social and emotional support. Circumstantial and environmental factors are thus predisposing factors, causing some but not all poor black children to land up on the streets. Another important factor comes into play with these predisposing factors - the specific approaches and tendencies these children have toward life problem-solving, conflict- management and interacting with other people, ideas and institutions. It would be a gross oversimplification and generalization to type-cast street children into a specific personality type. Street children though, do show some common tendencies including a striving toward freedom and individualism, low trust in other people, escapism, and low self-esteem. These tendencies could be integrated into a pattern that plays an important role in the street child's perception and experience of himself and others and his involvement with them. Previous experience

have taught him to trust and rely on nobody but himself, and not to become involved with anybody because involvement leads to both responsibility to the other, as well as vulnerability to face rejection, abandonment or betrayal. This chapter was concluded by viewing the self-concept and the influence of all the major referents in his life upon his perceptions which is summarized in tables 2.1 -2.5.

TABLE 2.1 THE STREET CHILD'S FAMILY SELF

ATTRIBUTE OF MEANING (COGNITIVE)	INVOLVEMENT (CONATIVE)	EXPERIENCE (AFFECTIVE)	IMPACT ON SELFACTUALIZATION
Sees himself as a burden upon the families limited re-sources. Thinks family will be better of without him. Thinks that parents do not care about him. Sees his family as violent, non-supportive and restrictive. Would like to return home if circumstances change (some) Do not think that family can fulfill his physical/emotional needs.	Leaves family partially/ permanently, has little/ some/no contact with family	Feels rejected by family, uncared for, unloved. Experiences family as restrictive and harsh in discipline. Has a longing for stable family life.	Lack of positive parental role model or care giver, do not have an identification figure, does not experience a stable family life as basis for his own venturing into the world.

TABLE 2.2 THE STREET CHILD'S SELF IN RELATION TO SCHOOL

ATTRIBUTION OF MEANING (COGNITIVE)	INVOLVEMENT (CONATIVE)	EXPERIENCE (AFFECTIVE)	IMPACT ON SELFACTUALIZATION
He is not successful at academic work - is a failure. School demands things he does not have. School is boring and irrelevant Teachers are punitive and restrictive School is a waste of time that could be better used in procuring an income. Teachers do not like him or care about his well-being They want/need education that is relevant to their needs, and would make an immediate difference in their lives.	Drops out of school Does not want to get involved with activities that seem academic. Does not want to be involved in projects and programmes that bear the same ethos as school. Potential to succeed at attaining academic skills erodes on streets due to gluesniffing, headinjuries etc.	Feels like a failure Feels stupid Feels rejected and unwanted. Has unrealistic aspiration that does not coincide with attained academic level. Although he rejects school he still aspires to its outcomes. He has pride in the street smarts developed.	They are negatively biased against any form of formal education. They are aware of their low level of educational achievement and their experience with school leaves them feelings of low esteem and worth. They feel like dropouts - not only of school, but society as school is esteemed very high in society. They are realistic about school not providing them with skills that will make an immediate difference in their lives.

TABLE 2.3 THE STREET CHILD'S SOCIAL SELF

ATTRIBUTION OF MEANING (COGNITIVE)	INVOLVEMENT (CONATIVE)	EXPERIENCE (AFFECTIVE)	IMPACT ON SELFACTUALIZATION
People reject him because of his appearance, lifestyle and means of survival. Peers ate supportive but demand loyalty and submission to group. Police and Care workers are restrictive punitive and hostile sometimes, at other times friendly and helpful.	People are generally engaged with as possible 'clients" - no real, honest involvement. Share activities, provide support and comfort. No lasting and stable relationships though.	Feels rejected, Mistrusted, and mistrust people. Feels unworthy, lonely alienated desolated. Enjoyment, Comfort and support. Fear Fear, distrust, alienation, hostility.	Takes on adult roles and responsibilities very early. Ambivalent sense of self: effective but detestable. Individual survival takes precedence over group. Group is utilized for survival only. No realistic social consciousness develops. Focused on immediate short-term needs. Little social skills accepted by mainstream society are learned. Ultimately negative social self concept.

TABLE 2.4 THE STREET CHILD'S PHYSICAL SELF

ATTRUBUTION OF MEANING (COGNITIVE)	INVOLVEMENT(CONATIVE)	EXPERIENCE(AFFECTIVE)	IMPACT ON SELF ACTUALIZATION
All their activities have physical survival as its main goal. Think of themselves as cold, dirty and hungry	They do things such as begging, petty crimes and serious crime for physical survival. They sleep on the streets, waterpipes, etc. sometimes do not wash. Uses glue to forget their physical hardships and emotional desolation. Engage in prostitution to make money.	Experiences themselves as different from other people and feel isolated, alien and looked down upon. They find it difficult to maintain personal pride. Feels guilty, but that they need the highs to comfort them. Dualistic feeling - they feel guilty and dirty, but it is the only instance when adults want their bodies.	Their bodies and what they do with it is no source of pride to street children. it is a potential source of conflict and low self esteem.

TABLE 2.5 THE STREET CHILD'S SELF IN RELATION TO OBJECTS IDEAS AND VALUES

ATTRIBUTION OF MEANING (COGNITIVE)	INVOLVEMENT (CONATIVE)	EXPERIENCE (AFFECTIVE)	IMPACT ON SELFACTUALIZATION
• Streetlife is a choice of freedom. • Perception of self as survivors and not drop outs. • To be accepted on the streets you have to be streetwise. • They have conventional ideas about careers and family life. • They have conventional ideals about morality but these are overshadowed by survival needs. • Individualistic: survival of the fittest.	Behavior often does not coincide with expressed values. Involved with object ideas and people with survival as prime motivator. They value freedom and their entire behavior is an expression of this.	Contradictions between their beliefs and their actions create guilt feelings. Experience the world as negatively oriented to their value system. Experience conflict between social norms and their own.	Street children live on the fringes of society, being aware of mainstream values, and unable to adhere to it; cannot legitimately take part in social conventions and activities, and are isolated.

The main characterizing feature of the street child's relationship with all the referents in his world is mutual rejection. As aspects of the self, these relationships hold mostly negative valence, and his primary approach in handling this is through escapism and unrealistic perceptions. Upon first glance, the chances for street children to achieve self-actualization seem very slim. They simply seem to have all the odds against them.

They have very little material and emotional support structures and are deprived in a very basic way of any relationship that will allow them to experience themselves realistically and positively. Street children seem to be alienated from the world and since the feedback they receive about themselves is so extremely negative, they view themselves also negatively.

The other side of this picture though reveals a child, forced to leave childhood behind, who struggles against all odds to survive in a hostile world. He does not stay in his destructive conditions, but moves out and learns coping skills, resilience and adaptive mechanisms.

The analysis of the street child phenomenon elicits contemplation of complex issues around the nature of childhood, developmental consequences of deprivation, and the influences of socio-cultural and structural factors. Some questions concerning the distinguishing features of the street child phenomenon in South Africa still remain.

The first question relates to exactly how poverty and socio-cultural and structural conditions associated with being black relates to streetism. In other words, what about the street child's relationship with the referents in his life-world caused him to flee to the streets as opposed to others who stayed in equally impoverished conditions to childhood.

The second question is related to the first, and centres around in how far do street children experience their street life as a better or worse option than the life they had left

on the farm or in the township. This question does not intend to undermine the severity of the street child phenomenon as a problem, but focuses on the street child problem as manifestation of wider social issues. It is also linked to the cultural diversity and its influence on views of what childhood constitutes.

With these questions in mind, the ultimate conclusion that can be made though is that street life as it presents it self in South Africa is not the optimal conditions for development into self-actualized adults.

In the following chapter the intervention with street children will be discussed by examining different conceptual frameworks guiding the different models of intervention, how these models are practiced and the problems involved with each model, and finally the role the Educational Psychologist would play in the intervention of street children intervention.

CHAPTER 3: INTERVENTION WITH STREET CHILDREN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter 2 the phenomenon of street children was analyzed with special emphasis on the street child's relationships with important referents in their life-world, and how these relationships ultimately impact upon his self-concept. The focus of this analysis was thus "*the complex interaction of contextual interindividual and intra individual factors shaping the child's personal and scholastic experience and no doubt his life path*" (Dawes & Donald, 1994:4). It was concluded that his life path indeed seems bleak. The street child's self-actualization is obstacled by not only environmental deprivation and inter-individual factors, but also his own approach towards life.

As an attempt to address the problems posed by the obstacles preventing him from actualizing all his potential this chapter will focus upon the intervention of street children. The issue of intervention though is also not without particular ramifications. The first factor that needs to be analyzed as an area of contention is the conceptual frameworks guiding the form and direction intervention will take. The implementation of these conceptual frameworks as different models of intervention will also be discussed with special reference to its development in Latin American countries. This chapter will be concluded with an overview of the South African scenario concerning the intervention of street children, and finally some ideals on the role of the Educational Psychologist in the intervention of street children will be forwarded.

3.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS GUIDING THE RESEARCH AND INTERVENTION OF STREET CHILDREN

The phenomenon of street children could be approached from a number of perspectives influencing in a very basic and profound way the direction followed and discourse used in research, as well as the particular interventative strategies

employed. Two of these opposing approaches - positivism an constructivism - as discussed by Dawes and Donald (1994: chapter 1) will be focused on briefly, viewing mainly the different perspectives proponents of this stances have taken on childhood development and the implication it has on intervention. Summarizing the contributions these approaches has made to the study and intervention of street children will conclude this discussion.

3.2.1 POSITIVISM

Research in childhood developmental psychology have traditionally been firmly rooted in a positivist perspective which implies viewing the constructs of child and environment as two distinct phenomena, to be studied as two separate entities. For the study of street children such a vantagepoint has certain direct implications. It relates to conceptions of the particular needs of these children, what is presumed to be good and bad for them, and what their optimal development would constitute. Most research in this regard was done in industrialized western countries, which also laid the basis for norms set, and interventions made. When such observations and findings are regarded as universally applicable to all children, the influence of particular structural and socio-cultural factors are ignored or negated. By viewing the child and society as two distinct phenomena the influence the child exerts in the shaping of his own life-path, and reflexively upon society, is also not credited.

In a multi-cultural society such as South Africa, in the midst of social, political and economic change, and cultural cross-fertilization, it is especially difficult to be certain which cultural and social phenomena such as street children.

An example of the influence of a positive stance upon could be seen in Hattingh's (1994) summary of her study of the experiential world of street children.

"Street children grow up with the minimum in educational and vocational skills and are therefor a burden on the country's economy. He doesn't have the educational and developmental opportunities that children who grow up in families and societies (have)... from an educational-psychological point of view, this is abnormal. It is therefore a challenge for the educational psychologist, to try and avoid or resolve the negative effects of this child's living environment"

This statement reflects a narrow approach to this issue. Constructs such as 'normality', 'family', 'society' are treated as if it denoted universal concepts, and are not embedded in its specific socio-cultural contexts. The complexity of cultural, political and structural factors on development of black children in South Africa is not acknowledged. When looking at the conditions of adversity street children find themselves in, possibly only negative effects could be found. Viewing it from the complete context most black children find themselves in, leaving home, could be viewed as actually opting for a better life. By viewing the street child's adaptation to his environment as abnormal, the agency this child has shown is ignored, and his way of dealing with the world is discarded as inappropriate. Interventative responses will necessarily include making the street child fit into a particular framework of what a 'normal' family, society and childhood would constitute

The constructivist and relativist approach are as critiques to positivism, The main thrust of their criticism is lodged against the decontextualization of the person in research, and the postulation of ideology and theory as fact.

3.2.2 CONSTRUCTIVISM

The premise of the constructivist approach is that society and person cannot be divided and that all research and intervention based thereupon is embedded in a socio-cultural

context. *"The key ideas here is that knowledge, including psychological theory is a cultural artifact and historical product.... constructivism therefore holds that what is most important about human action is meaning and how it is communicated, that the assignment of meaning is mediated and constructed socially.."* (Dawes & Donald, 1994:19), For research and intervention with street children the implications are that some of the major considerations should be the meaning the street child assigns to himself and his life, where this meaning is derived from, and his particular response to life according to this meaning. The child as developing person in interaction with his environment would then be context wherein research and intervention should be approached from. Both these perspectives have particular contributions to make to the study and intervention of street children. From the positivist perspective it can be assumed that there are certain biological growth and maturation processes that happens to an extend independently from the environment the child lives in and could thus be considered to be universal. Focusing on the street child, as a distinct phenomenon is also both useful and necessary as it highlights particular issues surrounding this subgroup, of children found in many diverse societies. Constructivism on the other hand highlights the contextual embeddedness of all social constructs. This stance - complementarism is embraced by Dawes and Dawson (1994:23):

> *"While we do not accept the notion of the universal normative child we do assert that there is considerable evidence from a number of societies, which has been able which has been able to identify a range of life circumstances that influence developmental processes in particular ways and that pose risks to development, Children's life circumstances can restrict the optimal development of their adaptive powers and hence their ability to engage actively in the world, By the same token, it is clear that children who are given opportunities to extend their powers are able to apprehend a wider range of physical, cognitive and social challenges than would otherwise be the case... The notion of adaptive power, therefore, is as much an assertion of the active, agentic child as a force in its own development, as it is an assertion of the*

social forces that interact with, and thus shape and are shaped by, that very capacity for adaptation" (Dawes & Donald, 1994:23)

3.3. MODELS THE INTERVENTION OF STREET CHILDREN ARE BASED ON

3.3.1 INTRODUCTION

Historically, different role-players and stakeholders involved themselves with the street child phenomenon, also, for very different reasons, either voluntarily or, on a mandatory basis. The background of these agents is an important determinant of their goals, and also their assumptions about the phenomenon, and, the nature, scale and outcome of the action they would take. Strategies used in intervention followed a developmental path from narrow correctional approach followed by law-enforcement officials, to preventative approaches adopted, as more constituents from broader stakeholder positions became involved. The largest proportion of street children live in the Latin American countries, particularly Brazil and Columbia. These countries, as such, have the longest history in dealing with this phenomenon, and examples will be drawn extensively from their experience.

There are basically four approaches in dealing with street children - correctional, rehabilitative, outreach and preventive. Each of these approaches have different assumptions about the etiology of the problem, how it should be defined and what the most important preventative strategies should be...." *the way in which a social problem is defined will be a major factor in determining the policies and programmes which are designed to address the problem*" (Lusk, 1989:56). None of these models are entirely unproblematic as far as their outcomes and success rates are concerned, and there are particular ramifications around each strategy used. The underlying differences are summarized in Table3.1distinguishing between their main features.

TABLE 3.1 APPROACHES TO THE INTERVENTION OF STREET CHILDREN

CORRECTIONAL	REHABILITATIVE	OUTREACH	PREVENTATIVE
• children are delinquent • etiology related to children's attractions to freedom and rebellion against family and social conventions and rules • personal pathology • streets needs to be cleaned from children • dealing with street children is the domain of the police and social welfare • goals-keeping children off the street • intervention directed only at street	• children are the products of poverty abusive parenting-thrown or pushed from their homes • personal pathology and skills deficiency • street are potentially hazardous for children • social welfare as well as NGO's and churches are involved in rehabilitating children • goals -rehabilitating children to become productive and well- adapted adults	• children are products of an oppressive and unjust society • social pathology - children should not adjust an unjust society • lay workers acting as street educators are involved in teaching children in a liberating environment • goals-concientization of children to find solution to their problems -basic life skills, business skills literacy and numeracy • intervention directed	• the origin of the problem lies within longer forces interaction of macro meso and macro factors • large scale structural forces leads to urbanization poverty and breakdown of family's cohesiveness • involvement of all role players and stakeholders government structures, communities, families children themselves, NGO's CBO's • providing support and education to keep families together • multi-level intervention strategies advocacy, legislation and policy changes, education social upliftment and

children • children are forcefully and coercively institutionalized	• intervention directed at street children • children are voluntarily institutionalized and involved programmes aimed at their rehabilitation	at street children • institutionalized, but are empowered with skills to be self-reliant and develop on the street	empowerment • children are not institutionalized, but it is attempted to keep family and social structures intact to be able to provide for children

3.3.2 CORRECTIONAL APPROACH

The correctional approach is by far the oldest and can be associated with the underlying assumption that street children are delinquent and are on the streets because they are lured by hedonistic attractions of unlimited freedom. They are also seen as rebelling against the restrictive conventions of social and family life and responsibilities. The most appropriate response to the phenomenon of street children according to the correctional approach is institutionalization where deviant forms of behaviour could be corrected, and street children could be placed under adult supervision. (Tyler, Holliday, Tyler, Echevery & Zea, 1987:1)

Dealing with street children as such has been the domain of the police and social welfare. Children were coerced into institutions under prison-like circumstances such as places of safety, orphanages and sometimes-even prisons. They were picked up from the streets for vagrancy, various other petty crimes and even serious criminal offenses. The ultimate goal was to keep the streets clean, rather than catering to the needs of the children. Interventative strategies were characterized by punitive and restrictive measures taken against the children. (Goode, 1987:2)

The correctional approach seems to derive from a positivist perspective focusing on the symptoms of problems rather than its origins. By decontextualizing the streetchild phenomenon, problems could be viewed as existing within the child, without considering the impact of the environment that he is finding himself in.

The correctional approach became increasingly unpopular as the church (especially the Roman Catholic Church in Latin American countries) and NGO's became more involved and started defining the problem differently. It was realized that these children were less delinquent, but more the victims of poverty and of her social and family problems. (Levenstein, 1994:44; Lusk 1989:67)

3.3.3 THE REHABILITATIVE MODEL

The realization that street children are the products of circumstances such as poverty and abusive parenting, and that they are 'pushed', 'thrown' or 'pulled' out from their homes, and originate from a variant set of circumstances is the premise for this stance. The other underlying assumptions are that street-life is potentially hazardous for children and that they need to lead sheltered and protected lives. Children should thus be rescued from the streets and placed in environments that are safe and where they can develop, learn skills and become productive and well-adapted adults. The model also rests on the stances of personal pathology firstly - that the problem resides with the child and that they should change, and secondly skills-deficiency, which street children, because of their lifestyle, lack appropriate social and vocational skills. "*These programs aim to rehabilitate children to society, using providing residential treatment, drug detoxification program, literacy courses and the teaching of skills to prepare the adolescent for the world of work*" (Levenstein, 1994:46)

The most influential rehabilitative program was implemented in Bogota, Columbia under the auspices of Padre Javier de Nicolo. The Bosconia-Florida program is build on the principles of "*voluntary participation and commitment, reinforced by the use of rituals and ceremony, and the emphasis on developing self-government. The goal of the program is to create a community environment in which the child can prepare to move into larger society as an independent adult with marketable work skills and a feeling of self-esteem*". (Goode, 1987:2) This is a five step programme where to children are firstly attracted by involvement in the 'patio', where they have food, a shower, and participate in games and other activities. They are prepared for the next step - entering Liberia where children stay in a dormitory in order to learn to take care of themselves and live in a community and show commitment to behaviour change. When such changes are achieved, children may enter Bosconia, which is more like an institution. The emphasis at Bosconia, an educational setting, is upon learning vocational skills as well as leadership development. The final step is Florida, a village community run by

street children. It is built on principles of participation and responsibility and the educational programme emphasizes agricultural and industrial skills and artistry. This entire five-step program is entered upon on a voluntary basis and children are free to leave at any stage. Contact with family, although not prohibited, is not encouraged. This program tries to create a sense of community that should replace the family. (Goode, 1987:3)

There are several criticisms that can be lodged against rehabilitation programmes especially the institutionalized types. Some critiques feel that it perpetuates the street culture, and provides a communication network between children with various ties and connections and enables children to keep up with the latest criminal trends and plots. It is also criticized for being more concerned with cleanliness and discipline than with the children's needs for love and affection. The structure of the program also allows hardened streetwise children to mix with new-corners and because of its nature, no stable relations are developed, and stable relations with adult role-models is also not possible because of high staff turn-over rates (Goode, 1987;5)

Ennew's (1994:89) criticism is that institutionalization as such is not cost-effective as it reaches only a small minority of street children. Such programmes do not provide a range of experiences and relationships that children need to develop into self-actualized adults. The range of vocational skills is also limited so that not all children's potential are developed. These programmes ignore children's actual coping skills and infantelize them. They separate the child from community and stigmatize them as different, and seek for the child's problems within the child and not in the wider economical social and structural setting.

3.3.4 OUTREACH PROGRAMMES

Outreach programmes, as its title aptly states, focus on reaching out to street children where they live and work. Such programmes refrain from taking children from their

environments, but street workers enter these environments, and provide services on the streets. (Lusk, 1987: 74). The advantage of this approach is that services are more accessible to street children and that they can make use of it on a voluntary basis.

Educationist Paulo Freire advocated a revolutionary outreach model. The basis of his philosophy is the empowerment of street children. "*Children, in addition to being taught basic hygiene, business skills and literacy are encouraged to resist injustice and degradation and form themselves into pastoral study groups.*" (Lusk, 1987: 72). Children are encouraged to find solutions to their problems and not conform to an unjust society. The outreach model is thus taking a much broader perspective than the models previously discussed. The socio-political factors influencing the street child phenomenon is considered and children are regarded as active agents, able to be involved in changing their society and their lives.

The main criticism against this approach is that it sounds good in ideological terms, but the pragmatic needs of children are often not taken in consideration. As the other two approaches discussed, outreach programmes also only zooms in on a segment of the total phenomenon, and focuses on counteracting an existing problem, but not on preventing it altogether.

3.3.5 THE PREVENTATIVE MODEL

The preventative approach tends to move away from focusing on the symptoms rather than the causes of the street child problem, and considers the larger social economical and structural factors these problems can be contextualized in. It also developed as an alternative approach to the rehabilitative model that may have rendered interventative services to a small number of children, but have not been able to stem the tide of ever increasing numbers of children to the streets. It has as such been unable to reach most children, and addressed the problem as if it originated on the streets. The

underlying assumption of this model is that the street child phenomenon could be linked to a large set of interacting social forces. (Lusk, 1987:73) A holistic approach acknowledging the complex dynamics between the child his family and society is adopted in addressing the street child problem. The preventative approach thus uses a multi-focal approach. Poverty and its associating factors such family disintegration, lack of social support, unemployment, poor parenting skills, lack of recreation etc. are recognized as contributory factors to streetism. The family and community are targeted as areas of intervention, with the goals of keeping families integrated and providing social support to poor families and communities. *"Prevention means different things to different programs...(it)... is a code word for community based services in which there is substantial local participation. Such programs attempt to treat the community and family with special concern for economic capacity to shape up the family and prevent run-aways and abandonment."* (Goode, 1987:7)

These are broad-based, long-range programmes. Attempts are made to prevent families from disintegrating through improving parenting skills, but also helping parents and children to obtain marketable skills to find employment on the informal labor-market. Community services include health and educational literacy services, pre- and after school care and recreational facilities. Preventative programmes seem like the most appropriate way to go in finding ultimate solutions to the street child phenomenon.

Goode (1987:7) though, cited some problems sometimes encountered with community based programs. Some programmes, firstly, do not consider that any developmental programme will be very difficult or near impossible to implement without a sound economic base. It is also very difficult to measure the success rate of such programmes. Another source of limitation lies with community resistance if proper consultation has not occurred or goals are not clear and negotiated. Co-ordination of many helping programmes is also necessary to prevent duplication of services and to allocate funds - UNICEF is undertaking this in Latin American countries. Many successful programs also depend on the initiative and energy of a particular

charismatic leadership figure without whom it would crumble. Programmes of such a large scale would also necessitate the involvement of all stakeholders from the government to the very grass-roots level.

3.3.6 CONCLUSION

Although each of the four models used in the intervention of street children has a contribution to make to the ultimate solution of this problem, it is done from such a singular perspective that the ultimate outcome is fragmented and less effective than a more holistic approach would be.

The correctional view focuses only on the criminal dysfunctional side of street children disregarding the social dynamics involved in maintaining this phenomenon. The rehabilitative approach takes a more positive stance and recognizes the pragmatic needs of children but in attempts to help these children to adapt they become infantelized. The potential of street children to be self-reliant and contribute to their own well being is recognized by out-reach approaches, but their view of approaching the problem where it is existing does not help in preventing it. The preventative approach takes a broad stance in its interventative strategies, targeting the origin of the street child problem, -disintegrating family and social structures.

Each of the above-mentioned approaches is appropriate to a group of streetchildren at a specific stage of their street existence but not necessarily to all street children, all the time. It seems thus, that there is a lesser need for one approach unilaterally used with all children defined as street children and that the need is more toward a holistic perspective wherein all these perspectives could be effective. (Williams, 1993:831) proposal of intervention being directed at groups of children in different stages of their street existence seems relevant here. (See Table 1.1). Street children though do not only differ in terms of their street involvement, it is a blanket term for different categories of children in terms of where they live (urban-rural distinction and the

economic sector they are involved in. (Ennew 1994:15) The needs of children working as cheap labour in a factory or rural environment are different from young girls working as servants in people's homes or as prostitutes in brothels, or from the young beggar, thief or shoe-shiner in city streets. In designing an interventative programme for street children a carefully planned situation analysis viewing children's immediate pragmatic needs, but also developmental needs as well as preventative strategies is imperative. Collaboration between all the stakeholders involved from government to grassroots level reflected in national legislation and policies.

3.4 POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES RESPONDING TO THE STREET CHILD PHENOMENON IN SOUTH AFRICA

South African responses to the street child phenomenon should be viewed against the broad structural and social dynamics which impact upon both the origin of the problem as well as the nature and scope there-of - "*it is a social institution, resulting from social causes: some complex interaction between the policy, about race ethnicity, work, housing, health services and the like.*" (Baizerman, 1988: 14). Basic to the origin of streetism is one of the most pervasive characteristics of South African society - inequality. It is in the provision of social educational and psychological services to children that inequality is especially evident, becoming both a cause and consequence of streetism. "*Despite the fact that black children outnumber(ed) whites by 5:1 in South Africa institutional care facilities ... (were) ... disproportionately provided at the ratio 9:20*" (Swart, 1988b:34). According to the statistics of children in need of care, and the fact that black children outnumber them by far and live in much worse adverse circumstances, the number of actual streetchildren is relatively low (Baizerman, 1988:13).

This inequality in service provision has also profoundly impacted on responses to the street child problem. No national policy regarding it existed until recently. National responses to it took the form of either ignoring the problem, or taking a correctional

route. The latter option included 'cleaning up' the streets by coercing these children into places of safety, children's homes or even prisons. These institutions are by far not enough to house all the children in need of care. Street children on the other hand, also do not respond well to coerced institutionalization and invariably run away, back to the streets.

The change to a more child-centered approach came only in the last decade as a result of greater public awareness, research and political changes. (Tiba, in Schurink, 1993:243) A more rehabilitative approach is followed, advocated especially by NGO's. Not all programmes are equally successful though and many well intentioned were doomed from the outset because of inherent problems in approaches followed and goals set. *"(T)he failure of many programmes for street children is the tendency to rescue children from streetlife without providing realistic alternatives for them"* (Swart, 1990b:37). According to Cockburn (1994) a major pitfall of rehabilitative and resocialization programmes is that it uses a Western concept of childhood, and infantilises children who have been independent for a long time and cannot accept being treated as children.

Recent approaches to the street child phenomenon show two definite trends, that is voluntary entry and participation programmes, and programmes aimed at prevention and family reunification. (Swart, 1990a:37) The most successful programmes though derive from co-operative efforts between the government and NGO's. Mutual commitment between the children and their caretakers is also an important determinant of success. (Swart, 1990
a:38)

Tiba (in Schurink , 1993:243) discussed the ideal macro and micro programmes suited to the South African situation. Micro programmes are those aiming at diagnosing and treating street children on an individual basis. Such are contact and outreach programmes where a street-worker goes out to places where street children usually

are, to make contact with them in order to draw them into some kind of programme. Children also need an immediate care programme that will provide food and shelter, medical, recreational, and counseling facilities. Intake and assessment programmes focuses on establishing a profile of the children's health status, present functioning and background in order to make an accurate assessment of their needs.

Macro programmes, on the other hand, focuses on large-scale issues such as community awareness, prevention, legislation and policy. (Tiba, in Schurink, 1994:244) Preventative programmes are very important macro programmes, but have not yet been successfully implemented on a local level, because of the complex interaction between government, community, family and individual factors. The first step to be taken to is launch community awareness and participation campaigns, to involve all community role-players. The most influential factor though, is national legislation and policy regarding street children.

3.5 THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST REGARDING THE INTERVENTION OF STREET CHILDREN

3.5.1 INTRODUCTION

Changes in the general trends in social and behavioural science research as well as social and educational service delivery have influenced the role of the educational psychologist in the intervention large-scale social issues such as street children. Traditional approaches to childhood development have also impacted on how educational psychologists viewed the etiology and nature of problems associated with streetism, and their role in its intervention. A position of focusing on personal pathology and individual adaptation has moved to a broader perspective of working not only with the child, but the whole system the problem could be contextualized in.

3.5.2 THE DOMAIN OF THE EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST

Optimal development for each child as he grows into adulthood means actualizing all his potential. Children are dependent upon care taking adults (parents and teachers) for guidance, support and education in their development into self actualized adults. In the context of their relationships with important others. They develop perceptions of themselves that are important determinants of their eventual self-actualization. Sometimes though, children encounter obstacles in their development. The role of the educational psychologist is seen as supporting the child in overcoming these obstacles by examining and providing corrective therapy within the educational psychological structure.

The essences of this structure are:

a) The child as a person - The I, self, identity and self-concept.
b) The activities necessary for attribution of meaning, involvement, experience and self-actualization
c) The educational psychological conditions
d) Development of relationships and the educational climate.
(Jacobs & Vrey, 1982:11)

This context provides the educational psychologist with an overview of the child's total life-world and his future possibilities. He is also positioned to examine the fit between the child and his world and the areas that need change in order to maximize the child's self-actualizing potential. This would thus refer to the child's relationship with all the important referents in his life-world. The child is viewed as central to his problem (Jacobs & Vrey, 1982:2). In order to gain a proper perspective of the problem, wider issues the problem is imbedded in need also to be scrutinized. It is thus incumbent on the Educational Psychologist not only to examine micro and meso-scale factors but also to look at large scale influences upon these relationships. It is important to view

how the child's personal pathologies shape his life, but also the influence his environment has upon him. More so, it is important that such a view results in related practice, moving the educational psychologist from the sphere of not only individual assessment and therapy, but to involvement in counteracting the effects of streetism and prevention there-of.

The educational psychologist would then be involved with the street child problem as a total phenomenon, on different levels and using various approaches. On the micro level would issues relating to personal pathology such as counseling/therapy of the streetchild be relevant. Meso-level involvement would include family guidance, teacher empowerment, community awareness and education. On the macro scale the educational psychologist could be involved with research, and activities promoting legislation and policy development relevant to the street child problem.

3.5.3 MICRO-LEVEL ACTIVITIES

a) Counseling/Therapy

Richter (1989:57) found that street children typically suffer from anxiety, low self-esteem, depression, withdrawal and repression. Individual and group therapy is thus an important aspect of the educational psychologist's involvement with the street-child in an attempt to aid to his optimal development.

b) Assessment and guidance

Assessment of the street child's psychological and educational functioning is a necessary prerequisite to plan educational and other intervention programmes. Street children also need guidance in making important vocational choices and concerning life-skills in general.

3.5.4 MESO-LEVEL ACTIVITIES

a) Family guidance and therapy

Since problems surrounding the family's resources in providing for the welfare of the streetchild, it is also a primary site that could be targeted for preventative and rehabilitative work. Prevention from the side of the educational psychologist would include empowering families with skills to deal with everyday and specific problems they could encounter that would lead to its disintegration and neglect and abandonment of children. Rehabilitation would refer to support given when street children are re-united with their families.

c) Educator empowerment

The school is the other important avenue to direct preventative and supportive action to. Educators could be empowered by firstly being aware of educational factors contributing to the street child problem, and secondly how adapt their teaching strategies, attitudes and classroom management, to provide support to all children.

c) Community awareness

Information regarding the plight of street children, the outcome of streetism and the role the community could play in providing support to at-risk children, and re-unification of families should be made available to all families. Advocacy for communities accepting responsibility for all children including street children should be made. Educational Psychologists could collaborate with all other service providers in forming a support network for at-risk children, as well as streetchildren and their families.

3.5.5 MACRO LEVEL ACTIVITIES

a) Research

Research on the developmental risks associated with being a black child in South Africa is relatively scarce. There is a need specifically to examine how different

aspects of deprivation and streetism relate Baizerman (1988:13) views it as important to find out what specifically the pathways to the streets are if any attempt at prevention is to be made. It is also necessary to examine what the long-term effects of streetism upon the self-actualization of youngsters upon adulthood are.

On another level, research aiming at developing relevant tools to assess the cognitive and general psychological functioning is of dire need in order to accurately assess the effects of street life, and to address the specific educational and psychological needs of street children.

b) Legislation and policy development

The most important determining factor is the success of any programme implemented to address the streetchild problem is the national policy regarding it. The educational psychologist's involvement here could be to advocate development of child-care and educational legislation and policies that would ensure the optimal development of all children, especially those at deprivational risk and with special needs.

3.6 CONCLUSION

The effectiveness of interventative measures taken concerning the street child problem relates very strongly to the measure of correlation between the type of response taken and the assessment of the street child and his situation. Intervention could take the form of correctional, rehabilitative, outreach of preventative approaches. Of these, outreach and preventative approaches seem to be most popular presently. The total situational diagnosis will determine which approach would be most popular though. The Educational Psychologist finds himself in the unique position of having insight to the relationships the child have with all the referents in his life-world, and from this perspective could act on different levels, in a promotive, preventative and a therapeutic way.

The next chapter will focus on the design of the empirical study. Two methods are used in the empirical study -the questionnaire survey and the case study method. The rationale for using these methods, the material, used sampling strategies, procedures used as well as ways of analyzing and interpreting data will be overviewed.

CHAPTER 4: THE DESIGN OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The analysis of the phenomenon of street children, and the interventative strategies used to manage this problem have provided the background wherein the most important issues surrounding street children could be contextualized. The theoretical framework was found from primarily three areas in Educational Psychology:

- Literature on the definition, etiology and manifestation of the phenomenon of street children focusing especially on their relationships with family, society, school, morality, values and their physical selves.
- Literature on the interventative strategies used in managing this problem.
- Childhood educational and psychological development.
- The Relations Therapy approach.

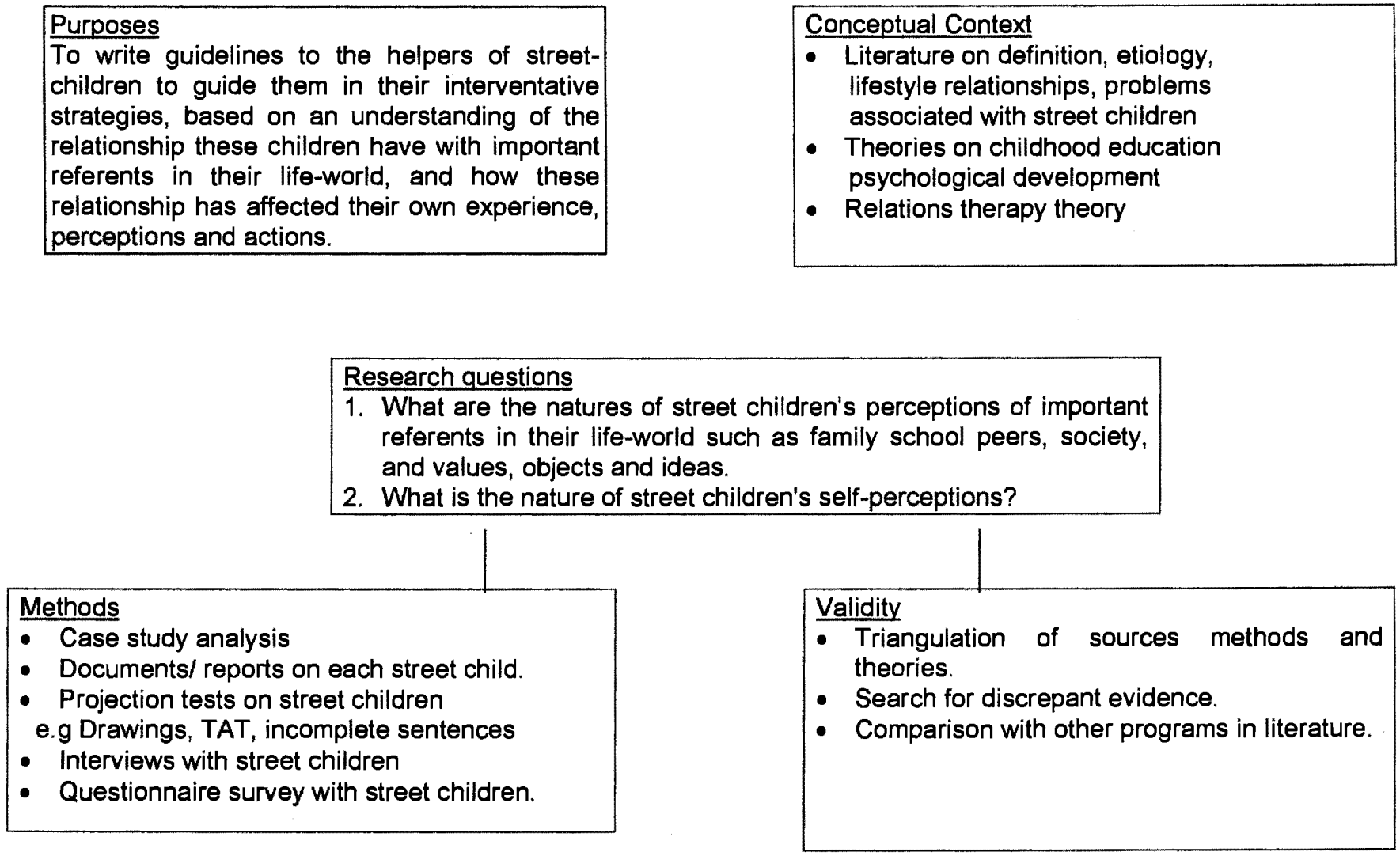
From this broad perspective a more specific unit of analysis could be focused on in the empirical study figure 4.1 indicates the relationship between different aspects of the study.

In this chapter an outline of the empirical design will be given. The methods used including sampling strategies, assessment material, analysis and interpretation as well as the procedures used will be discussed.

FIGURE 4.1 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF THE STUDY

Adapted from

(Maxwell, 1996:62)



4.2 METHOD

In this empirical study, two methods - the survey questionnaire and the case study method will be used to approach the research question. These two methods are used to provide the researcher with complementary data, the questionnaire yielding, less specific and more broad-based information that will serve as a basis for the more specific data that could be obtained from the case study analysis with a smaller number of participants. The rationale for using these two methods, the participants involved, material used, settings and procedures will now be described.

4.2.1 QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

4.2.1.1 RATIONALE FOR USING THE QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

The questionnaire survey is a useful investigative tool to gain information from a large number of participants that will provide a general overview of the phenomenon studied. In this case, it serves as a preliminary study to the case studies that will be done subsequently. The questionnaire survey is thus as complementary to the case study yielding less specific information, but over a broader range that will also allow for comparisons between different sub groupings and thus facilitate interpretations about broad trends of the phenomena studied.

4.2.1.2 THE STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire (appendix 1) consist of two sections - a brief section on biographical information of the respondents and then 50 statements reflecting their perception and experience of and involvement with the most important referents in their lives. The biographical data includes a number, the place where the questionnaire was completed, the respondents' age and the time spent on the streets and finally his/her current place of residence. The second part of the questionnaire was developed from the summary of street children's relationships as depicted in figures 2.1 - 2.5. The

assumptions made from the literature and study about the street children's perceptions about the most important referents in their life-world had been translated into fifty statements. The responses on each statement (yes, sometimes or no) express the degree to which they agree with the statement made.

Both negative and positive statements are made in an attempt to balance a possible bias to responding mostly negatively or positively. This questionnaire is presented in Afrikaans and English, as most street children understand it.

4.2.1.3 THE PURPOSE OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

The purpose of the questionnaire survey is two-fold. Firstly, it is used to establish in how far the assumptions made in the literature study, conforms to how streetchildren really perceives experiences and are involved with important referents in their life-world. Secondly, will it serves to confirm information obtained in the case studies and will as preliminary research to the case study guide in selecting candidates for and provide a more focused approached to the case studies. Children will be interviewed from cross sections of all these communities.

4.2.1.4 THE PROCEDURE IN CONDUCTING THE QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

The questionnaire will be presented in a structured interview format, as most street children are illiterate or semi-literate. Where these children are part of organizations or reside in shelters or homes these organizations will be contacted to request permission to do this questionnaire survey. Children on the streets or in squatter camps will be contacted through a social worker with whom these children are already acquainted and it will be established which time in their daily routine are most suitable for conducting this research.

On the questionnaire the street children had to indicate the degree to which the statement made was applicable to them. Each statement reflected the child's

perception of that specific referent. From the questionnaires it would be possible to tabulate their general orientation to each referent (negative, positive or neutral). From this data general comparisons could also be made between street children currently in shelters, those on the streets and those in squatter camps, and also between boys and girls and finally between different age groups, to detect how these different environments impact on how children perceive, feel and act upon their worlds. Ultimately it is hoped to compose a picture of street children's general approach to life, and to establish how they perceive themselves and the world they live in.

4.2.1.5 THE PARTICIPANTS

The participants in this study are street children and former street children from a wide a range of living situations. They will thus include children currently living on the streets in Hillbrow, Randfontein, and Carletonville; street children living shelters and children living on their own in squatter camps in Randfontein. Approximately 100 children will be interviewed.

4.2.2 THE CASE STUDY INQUIRY

The method most suited to the research question is the case study inquiry. Yin (1994:13) states the following characteristics of the case study that deems it the most appropriate under certain circumstances:

A CASE STUDY

- *Investigates contemporary phenomenon within its real life context especially when*
- *the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly evident...(and)*
- *copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points and as a result*
- *relies upon multiple sources of evidence with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion and as another result*

- *benefits from the prior development of theoretical proposition to guide data collection and analysis.*

Other methods that could be used in qualitative social and behavioural inquiry include experiments, surveys, histories and the analysis of archival information (Yin 1994; Maxwell 1996). Yin (1994) mentions three conditions under which the case study is preferable above the rest. Firstly when either an explanatory or exploratory research question is asked, secondly when no control is required over behavioural events, and finally when there is a focus on contemporary events. In this study the research question seeks to explore the relationship between street children and the most important referents in their life-world in order to understanding give guidelines on their intervention.

Street children is a contemporary phenomenon within a real life context, and there is no clear distinction between the phenomenon and its context, as they are mutually interactive. This study also relies upon multiple sources of evidence (literature, reports, projection tests and interviews) and is an explanatory as well as an exploratory study.

4.2.2.1 UNIT OF ANALYSIS

A multiple case design will be used with five cases of street children in different settings being researched (on the streets, and squatter camps,). Two settings will support triangulation of results and would allow for comparison of different outcomes of child-care. This sampling method is most appropriate because of the small sample and because the purpose of the study is to expand existing theory about the population rather than generalization to the population as such, and finally, as it allows for comparisons of individuals and settings.

4.2.2.2 SETTING

The choice of settings is important, as it is crucial that the children should be relaxed and comfortable in an environment that would enable them to disclose. For the

children currently on the street and residing at the squatter camps the researchers office was the best option as it is in an educational, child-friendly environment.

4.2.2.3 SELECTION OF STREET CHILDREN

A selection of street children will be made on the basis of their age, language and number of years on the streets. Qualitative interpretations will be made about individual differences that will influence the outcome of the study. Preference will be given to children who have been living on the streets until recently - a time frame of six months, and children who speak Afrikaans or English fluently.

4.2.2.4 MATERIAL AND PROCEDURE USED IN CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

Data for the case study analysis will be drawn from four sources:

a) Case histories as could be found in files, reports etc. from case-workers and institutions.

b) Projection tests applied on the street children.

c) Interviews with street children.

d) All records kept by social workers or other helpers will be analyzed to obtain a complete picture of the children's background and functioning, and this will be integrated with other information.

4.2.2.4 b) Projection tests

I) Rationale for use of projection tests

An effective case study relies upon the holistic picture formed from the convergence of information from various data points, (Yin 1994). The case in this study is the street child and the information sought should complete the picture of his relationships with important referents in his life-world, in order to understand his thinking, feelings, and actions. This implies, entering the street child's internal frame of reference and

understand the world he has created from his own experiences, attribution of meaning, and involvement. The child as central figure in all his relationships, gives the internal frame of reference a unique and personal dimension, deeming it necessary for the Investigator to view the world as he does. (Du Toit & Jacobs, 1989:34)

Projection can be described, as the process through which objective stimuli are perceived and interpreted according to personal interests, needs, fears and expectations. "It should be possible to study man's motives, emotions, values, attitudes and needs, by somehow getting them to project these internal states onto external objects. (Kerlinger, 1986:471) This is the premise behind the use of projection tests which include association-, construction-, completion-, choice/ordering- and expression techniques. (Kerlinger, 1986:470) The use or these tests seems appropriate in helping to complete the picture of the street child's experiential world. It is suited, as it does not require the acquisition of prior knowledge or skills on the part of the testee. This is important, since street children have limited literacy skills. The use of projection tests relies upon qualitative, relatively subjective interpretation of data, in the context of prior knowledge obtained about the phenomena. As in the case of most qualitative research, information or knowledge is viewed as context bound, acknowledging and interpreting the contextual influences, which would have been controlled in quantitative research.

Kerlinger (1986:476) is extremely cautious of the use of projection tests in research, claiming that it is better suited to therapy, and poses a threat to the canons of science-, validity, reliability and objectivity. His criticism centres around two issues - the difficulty to assign numerals to objects and events according to rules, thus norm referencing and the relative lack of objectivity and dependence on inference in projection tests.

The concepts of validity, reliability and objectivity are dealt with differently in qualitative as opposed to quantitative study. With a qualitative study, the approach is often heuristic, systemic and holistic, and the investigator often becomes part of the research. In quantitative studies validity threats are dealt with by prior controls,

whereas..." *the main emphasis of a qualitative proposal ought to be how you will rule out particular plausible alternatives to your interpretation and explanations."* (Maxwell, 1996: 89). This can only be done afterwards. Validity should be sought in three areas: description, interpretation and theory. (Maxwell, 1996).

ii) Drawings

Drawings will be used as expressive projection tests to gain insight into the major themes that are important in the children's lives, how they feel and think about it and what their typical modes of responses are. According to Van Niekerk (1986) expression also display the persons directness to his world, his attitude, and symbolically discloses which can often not be verbalized.

"*Drawing tests are simple to administer, non threatening, and it can be used where other techniques are limited by factors such as language barrier, cultural deprivation and inability to communicate*". (Burns and Kaufman, 1970:13)

Draw a person

The drawing of a person compels a child to incorporate his own feelings as human being and thus his own situatedness. (Van Niekerk, 1986). The child is presented a pencil and rubber and instructed to draw any person. This person should be complete and it may be any person. The child is also instructed to do his best and that he may use a rubber if necessary. The child should then be instructed to draw a person of the opposite sex. This should occur in an atmosphere of total acceptance and should be posed as an invitation rather than an instruction. The time the child uses for each drawing should be noted. After the child is completed, the drawings are discussed with him/her. The following questions will be asked:

1) What is the name of this person?
2) How old is he?
3) Tell me about him
4) What are his greatest fears in life?

5) What would be wished could happen with him most?

(This interview will be audio-taped.)

Kinetic Family Drawing

The rationale behind the Kinetic Family Drawing is that children are active and often express themselves through action (Burns, 1972). It also gives insight into the relational dynamics within the family and typical themes within family life. The child is instructed to draw a picture of his family where everyone is doing something. The same procedures for the DAP is also used here.

iii) The Incomplete Sentence Test

The Incomplete Sentence Test will be used as a completion projection technique. With this test, the child has to complete a part of a sentence thus on incomplete stimulus with any response he chooses. (Kerlinger, 1986). When completing these sentences the child projects a part of his world, and how he is related to important people and things there in can be explored. (Van Niekerk, 1986: 273). This test will be adapted from the Rotter (1951) test and translated into the street children's first language. Responses will be taken orally and noted down verbatim by the researcher, and translated to English where necessary.

iv) Interviews with street children

The interviews will be done according to themes that appear important in the projection tests. Each interview will thus differ in the specific content, but will centre on the relationship the street children have with people in their lives.

4.3 PROCEDURAL ARRANGEMENTS

4.3.1 CONTACT WITH INSTITUTIONS

The institutions/shelters will be contacted telephonically to inquire about procedures to be followed to obtain permission from the relevant authorities to conduct the study.

Such application letters will subsequently be sent. Children on the streets and those living in shelters will be contacted through social workers they are already aquatinted with.

4.3.2 RESEARCHERS

The researcher and two assistants will conduct the research. The assistants are suitably qualified in the psychological field and working in the educational sphere and will be trained regarding the purpose of the research and the procedures to be followed. The two researchers are well conversant in all the South African indigenous languages and would be well suited for assisting in presenting assessment material and interpreting data where necessary.

4.3.3 ESTABLISHING A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PARTICIPANTS.

The participants will be visited informally by the researchers twice within one month period to establish rapport.

4.4 INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The results of the projection tests will be interpreted qualitatively, especially since there are no norms for all South-African culture groups. The underlying basis for interpretation would be important themes, conflicts and patterns emerging from these tests, especially concerning important referents that figures as important, the nature of these relationships and which mode is primarily used in the approach to these relationships.

4.5 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

4.5.1 INTRODUCTION

The quality of a case study research design can be measured by assessing it according to the criteria of reliability construct-, internal- and external validity. (Yin,

1994:32). The challenges in this study to meet these criteria, and the attempts made in this regard will be discussed.

4.5.2 RELIABILITY

Reliability refers to "*the extend to which a test of procedure produces similar results under constant conditions*" (French, 1993:10). If the same case study is thus repeated, the results should be the same. This criterion is approached by making the steps as operational as possible and through clear documentation of research procedures. Thorough training of research assistance to the goals and procedures is a further attempt to assure reliability of results.

4.5.3 VALIDITY

Validity refers to "*the correctness of a description, conclusion and explanation of interpretation...*" *(Maxwell, 1996: 87)*. Validity is thus the strategies used to rule out threats that description conclusions explanations of interpretations made are incorrect, or can be ascribed to some other extraneous variable, and refers to the extend that an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure.

4.5.3.1 CONSTRUCT VALIDITY

"Construct validity refers to the extend to which a test is measuring the underlying theoretical constructs," (French, 1993:16) The research instrument and methods should thus be suitable for studying the phenomenon under question. Multiple sources of evidence such as the literature study, interviews and projection tests serves to strengthen construct validity.

4.5.3.2 INTERNAL VALIDITY

Internal validity refers to the extend to which can really be determined that a causal relationship between two variables are existing. It concerns thus mainly explanatory

studies, where some kind of relationship is explained. In this study, the relationship between the street child's most important relationships and his self-concept is studied, as a secondary emphasis after these relationships are explored. The inter*nal validity checks would thus be related to the inferences drawn from these interactive variables, again it is relied upon convergence of evidence from multiple sources.

4.5.3.3 EXTERNAL VALIDITY

External validity refers to the generalizability of the results of research. With case-study research the goal is less to generalize the results to a population, but rather to expand the body of theory about the phenomenon. Because of the small sample and because to a large extend the influence of extraneous variables on the results cannot be controlled, the results cannot be generalized to the wider population of street children. Inferences made based on the findings though, could be used to expand theory about this phenomenon.

4.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter served as planning for the empirical study. The research design was described, explaining the rationale for the two methods used, (the questionnaire survey and the case study inquiry), material, procedures and analysis and interpretation of data obtained.

The following chapter will focus on the execution of the empirical study, and the findings from the study.

CHAPTER 5: THE DESCRIPTION ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will have as its objective two main focuses. The first part will be a description of the execution of the study including the successes and pitfalls encountered as well as the qualitative experience in conducting it. The second focus of this chapter will be on the results of the empirical study, which will thus be analyzed and interpreted and assessed against the problem-statement and hypotheses posed in Chapter 1.

5.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

5.2.1 THE QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

The questionnaire survey was done with 110 children in various settings. Of this group 66 children are actually still living on the streets. The 'streets' in this sense implies children living on the streets of Hillbrow, Randfontein, and children in a squatter camp near a rubbish dump in Randfontein. The rest of the group (44) are presently residing at various shelters. They are children who entered the shelters
quite recently within a six-month period. These shelters include Paradise, All star shelter, Abe Bailey shelter and Universal church in Johannesburg.

5.2.1.1 CONTACT WITH THE CHILDREN

The children were usually contacted through social or care workers they were already acquainted with. After the initial introductory meeting which occurred at the shelters the children were staying, or on the streets they were working, further appointments were made as to where and when the questionnaire would be completed. The second and later meetings usually occurred at the shelters, or the out reach shelters where the

children usually met the child care workers. Some children were also approached individually on the streets at the squatter camps they were staying, and others were seen at New Nation School.

5.2.1.2 CONDUCTING THE QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

More than one appointment often had to be scheduled with a particular group, as some members were unable to keep the initial appointment. It was accepted that completing the questionnaire had to be done around the children schedules that were often changed as opportunities to obtain food, money or entertainment occurred. When children were contacted on the streets, the environment that always seemed to be in flux, proved to be problematic in keeping the children's attention focused on the survey.

Completing the questionnaire was quite an arduous task. The children had to be explained the process very clearly with practice examples done firstly. Each statement was read out and the children had to cross out their preferred choice. The questionnaires were completed in English and Afrikaans with a translation in Setswana for occasions when a translation had been necessary. Some children had distinct problems in keeping up with the group, and keeping their place on the questionnaire which necessitated using masks that only left open the statement under question. What became equally clear was that most of the children involved with the questionnaire survey had a very short attention span, drifted of easily and became tired of such focused activity quite quickly. It was also quickly learned by the researcher that it was more effective doing the questionnaire individually or with less than five children at a time, as it was necessary to watch them closely to assure that they were keeping up. It was also necessary to have a break of five minutes after the first twenty-five statements, and to explain the procedure again after each five statements - especially with the first twenty-five statements.

5.2.1.3 PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED

There were a few issues concerning the research the researcher was not prepared for. The first of these was that conducting the research was more time-consuming than expected, as street children are a lot less like the children the researcher had been acquainted with. Street children are not accustomed to structured conditions and thinking in a structured way, and though very simple, the questionnaire is quite structured and it was difficult for them to adapt to it. These children's attention is easily disturbed and they tend to succumb easily to outbursts of anger, excitement or joy that had to be contained before the business of research could be attended to. They also show emotional lability and needed lots of reassurance before and during the questionnaire survey. Some statements seemed to evoke quite an emotional response and some children seemed to need more expression about it than simply crossing out an option. Their affectedness was shown by discussing some of their responses with the researcher and by sometimes forgetting to cross-out options, but responded by scratching it out severely. It is suspected that the street children had seldom (if ever) been faced with questions about their self-perceptions and these statements although simply stated, seemed to be the most difficult to approach and respond to. It also seems then that the area of the self-perceptions is perhaps an area of inner conflict for these children.

The researcher's inability to understand a Black African language was more of an impediment than was expected, and the research assistants were relied upon extensively to make instructions clear to the children. Some of the qualitative aspects of the study were also lost to the researcher as it was difficult to understand exactly what the sources of confusion about the questionnaire, and extraneous influences that caused disruption had been about.

Some of the problems experienced are directly related to the questionnaire and the way statements had been set. Particular problems had especially been experienced with negative statements that could also be related to the dialect used by most Black

children when speaking English. They would answer negatively to a negative statement in order to reinforce it, and thus actually imply a positive answer. These statements and the implication of the option chosen had to be explained carefully to avoid such confusion.

5.2.1.4 QUALITATIVE EXPERIENCE

The most noticeable experience of working with street children is firstly their general co-operative nature, and their eagerness to please and show affection as soon as they trust you. They seem generally starved for positive regard and warm easily to it. The second obvious qualitative aspect is their general seemingly spontaneous reaction to influences from their environment.

5.2.2 THE CASE STUDIES

5.2.21 THE CHOICE OF CHILDREN

Five case studies had been done with children who were still on the streets or have been on the streets until quite recently. The children had been part of the group with whom the questionnaire study had been done and had been chosen because of three reasons - their street experience, their age and their fluency in communicating in Afrikaans or English. It was preferred that children used in case studies should have been on the streets for at least six months, in order for them to have gained enough street-experience to identify with that existence and thus be essentially a street child. The children chosen were also younger than eighteen because the study is to a large extend about the vulnerability and developmental risk associated with street-existence. The last criteria is fairly obvious - to allow the researcher to communicate with the children in an effective way that would not impede with study it was necessary that they would be able to speak English or Afrikaans fluently.

5.2.2..2 INITIAL CONTACT WITH THE CHILDREN

The street children who participated in the case study analysis were seen at the researcher's office as a group initially before individual case studies were done. The purpose of these group sessions was to familiarize the children with the researcher and the setting. It was also done as preparation for the more structured individual sessions. The activities during these sessions had been quite informal and unstructured to encourage children to relax and start self-exposure and self-exploration in a comfortable but progressively more structured situation. The children were occupied with drawing, painting, making collages and building puzzles. These activities were done around themes in the lives of these children and their experiential world. Initially they were reserved and during debriefing sessions gave mostly socially acceptable responses. As they relaxed, they opened up more but it was still difficult to talk to each other about how they experienced things. On the whole these group sessions served its primary purpose and more insight was gained about their world by the researcher. The children also seemed to have enjoyed it greatly and looked forward to the next session.

5.2.2.3 INDIVIDUAL CASE STUDIES

The children were then interviewed individually with the help of projection tests. Not all children were interviewed for the same length of time or in equal amounts of sessions. Projection tests were also brought in when it purposeful so that all the tests were not necessarily done with all the children. The interviews were audio-taped, and transcribed and analyzed later. Each interview was developed from the previous one, and had the purpose of validating information and confirming inferences previously made in order to build a complete picture about the children's functioning and characteristics.

There were little problems experienced with the individual case studies. The general problem again as with the questionnaire survey, was related to the children's short attention span and their lessened ability to keep their attention focused to a specific activity for very long. This was evident especially when the TAT was done, so that it was not possible to do all ten chosen TAT cards during one session. The children also displayed low levels of task orientation, and 'work' sessions had to be alternated with pleasurable activities such as playing or eating. Each work session started with a ritual of eating first.

Although street children are essentially loners, they work, play and move about in groups. It was as such necessary to explain to other members of the group why a specific child had been elected to participate in the study, and other group-members often tagged along and had to be occupied otherwise while their friends were interviewed. Sometimes these children seemed relieved to be busied otherwise than their everyday routine and even mockingly referred to it as school 'siyafunda'. When they became tired, such sessions and even interviews were abruptly ended and nothing could move them toward further cooperation. These children were generally experienced as being very co-operative, friendly and obedient, without any traces of aggressive or anti-social behaviour.

5.2.3 CONCLUSION

The empirical study was concluded without any serious problems. Important qualitative insights about the essential nature of the street children, their means of existence and relationships had been gained, which will also be included with the interpretation of the data obtained. The results of this study will be analyzed and interpreted in the following section and it will be attempted to come to an understanding of the perceptions street children have about important referents in their lives, which the guidelines written to their helpers could be based on.

5.3 .ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

5.3.1 INTRODUCTION

The first section of the empirical study is a questionnaire survey examining the street child's perception of all the referents in their life-world. The street children involved with the study had to respond ***'yes', 'sometimes'*** or ***'no'*** to fifty statements about how they perceived these referents which included their families, peers, school, society, their physical selves, their values, objects and ideas and themselves. The data obtained was analyzed by firstly interpreting the biographical data and how it relates to the study. The statements in the questionnaire were analyzed then, by firstly indicating the percentages of choices for each statement and then interpreting general as well as salient features of the whole questionnaire. The next step in this analysis was to cluster the statements according to the different referent it is addressing in order to interpret the street child's relationship with each respective referent. The above information obtained will be used to make inferences about the street child's general functioning, perceptions about his life-world, and possibility for self-actualization.

The second part of the study involved five case studies done with street children. The children had been assessed through projection tests and interviews to determine their essential nature as street children, and how their relationships with important referents in their lives influenced their self-perceptions and self-actualization. A report was written on each child indicating the results and interpretation of projection tests and interviews. A summative analysis of these five reports indicating general and as well as salient features trends and traits was compiled, highlighting the perceptions these children had about important referents in their life world, and a comparison was made with the findings of the questionnaire survey and the literature study.

5.3.2 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

5.3.2.1 ANALYSIS OF BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

The biographical information was analyzed by looking mainly at the variables of age, time spent on the streets and educational attainment (school grades passed) and the inter relationships between these three variables. Distinctions were made between the data from children seen at shelters and those seen on the streets as well as the total scores for both groups. The following biographical data will be discussed: gender, age, time spent on the street and school grades passed, with reference to the accompanying figures.

i) GENDER (FIGURE 5.1)

The sample consisted of eight girls and 102 boys, of which 6 girls were from the shelter and 2 from the street group. The low number of girls can be attributed firstly to the fact that most of the shelters visited catered exclusively for boys, and secondly because the existence of street girls are typically obscured by their activities often differing from boys, keeping them less visible.

ii) AGE (FIGURE 5.2)

Most of the children in the sample fell in the age groups 13-14, and 15-16, accounting for about half of children in the group. Only about 11% were younger than the above group. The same pattern also occurred with the children interviewed on the streets. The graph for the shelter children differed somewhat with a peak at the 17-18 group, but with also large numbers on the 13-16 age group. Before the age of twelve children are usually considered too young to be able to fend for themselves in streets. This explains the low number of very young children, although some of them are present on the streets. An important implication is also that 60% of this sample is below the age of sixteen, thus all children of compulsory school attendance age, and children from whom

full-time employment is still illegal. When viewing these children's low level of educational attainment compared to their age (Table 5.5) the picture is one that warrants concern for future careers and employment.

iii) EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT. (SCHOOL GRADES PASSED - FIGURE 5.3)

A large percentage (71%) of the total group has not passed grade 7 and thus only has primary school education. This picture is even more disconcerting when considering that the highest peak is in the grade 3-4 group and almost fifty percent of the children are within the first two groups, grades 0-4 thus barely literate. According to figure 45% of the children are at least three years older than their expected age for that grade complicating their integration into mainstream education even further.

TABLE 5.1

GENDER DISTRIBUTION

	Girls %	Boys %
	80 70 60 50 40 30 20 10	10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
Shelters	11,36%	88,6%
Streets	10,6%	89,39%
Total	10,9%	89%

Fig 5.2 Distribution of Age of a Sample Group of 110 Street Children

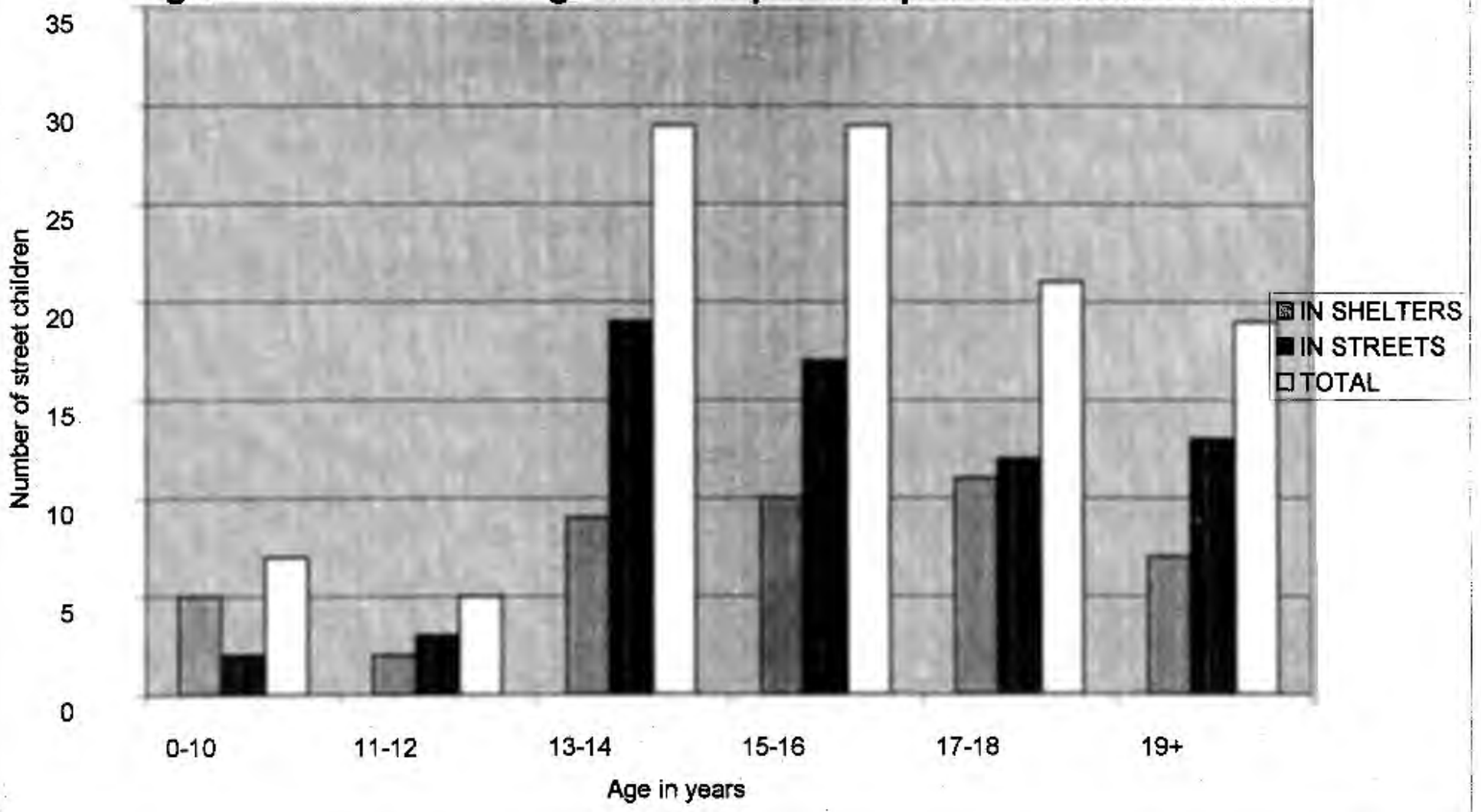


FIGURE 5.3 DISTRIBUTION OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN A SAMPLE GROUP OF 110 STREET CHILDREN

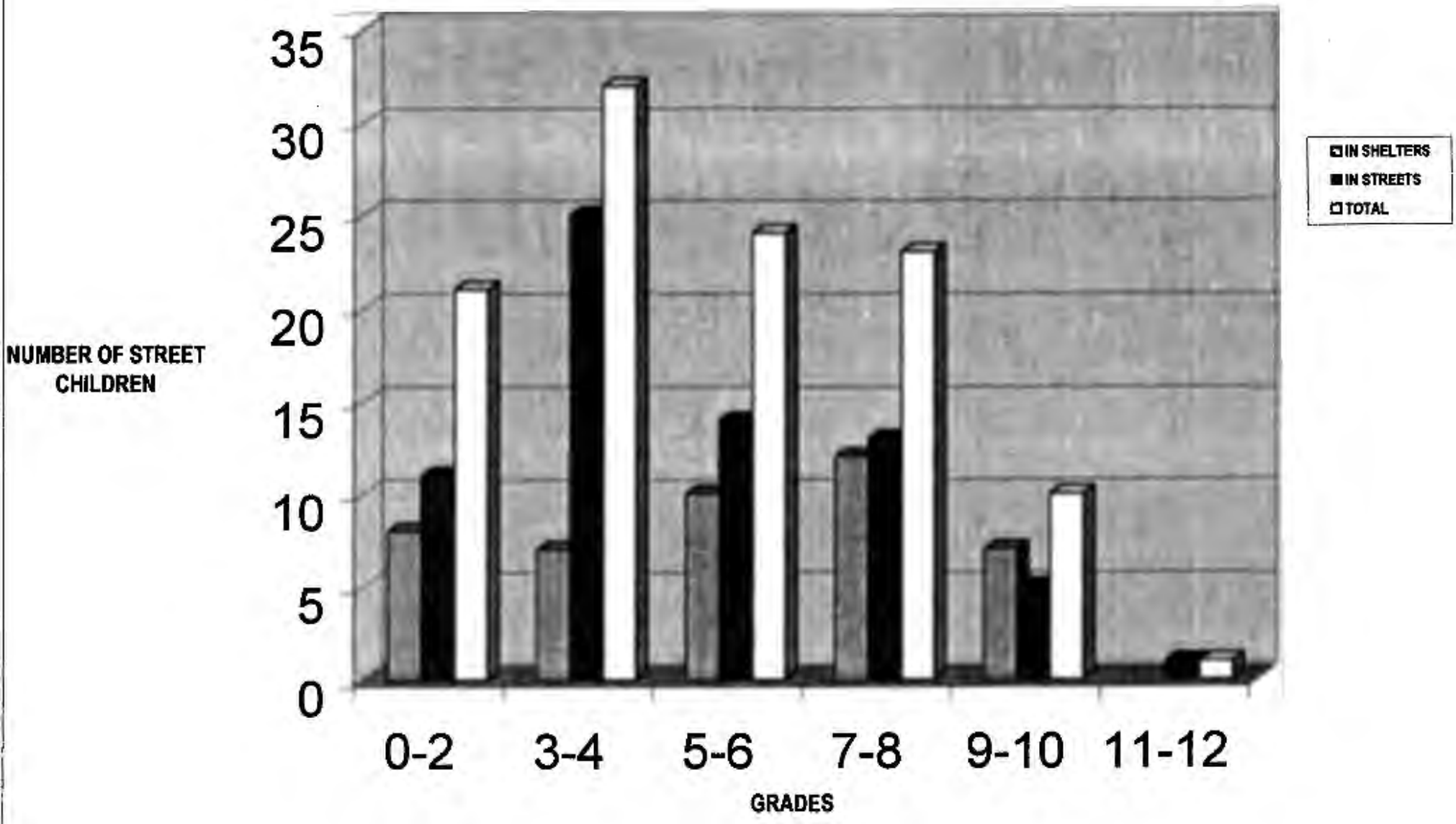


FIGURE 5.4 DISTRIBUTION OF TIME SPEND ON THE STREET IN A SAMPLE OF 110 STREET CHILDREN

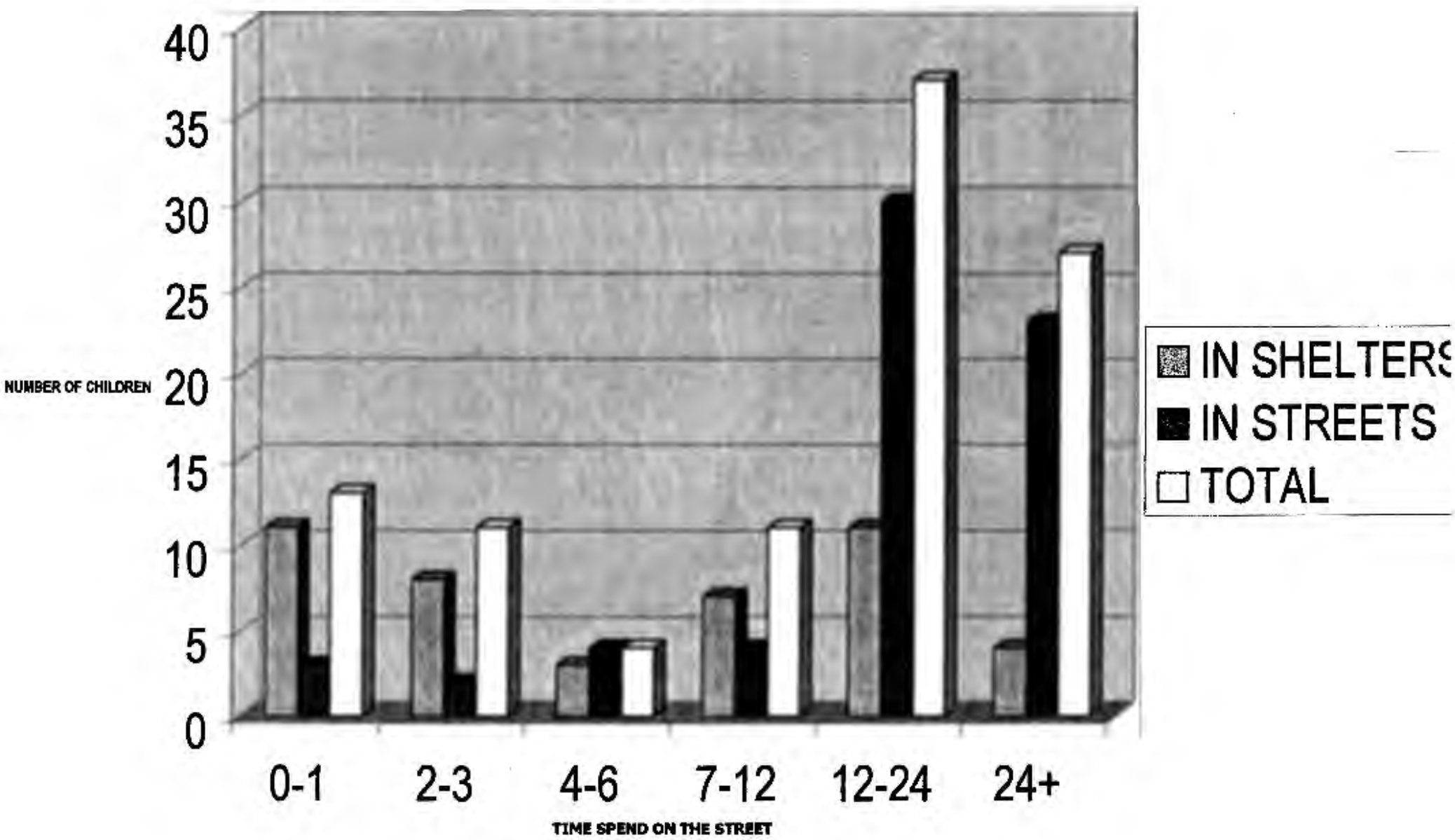


FIGURE 5.5 a-c

DATA MATRIXES DEPICTING GRADES AND AGES OF 110 STREET CHILDREN

a) Children in shelters

	0-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10	11-12	TOTAL
0-10	3	2					5
11-12	1	1					2
13-14	2	2	5				9
15-16	2	1	3	2	2		10
17-18		1	2	7	1		11
19+				3	4		7
TOTAL	8	7	10	12	7	0	44

b) Children on the streets

	0-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10	11-12	TOTAL
0-10	1	1					2
11-12	1	2					3
13-14	6	9	4				19
15-16	2	4	4	6	1		17
17-18	1	5	2	4			12
19+		4	4	1	3	1	13
TOTAL	11	25	14	11	4	1	66

c) Total number of children

	0-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10	11-12	TOTAL
0-10	4	3					7
11-12	2	3					5
13-14	8	11	9				28
15-16	6	5	7	8	3		27
17-18	1	6	4	11	1		23
19+		4	4	4	7	1	20
TOTAL	21	32	24	23	11	1	110

FIGURE 5.6 a-c

DATA MATRIX DEPICTING TIME SPENT ON THE STREETS AND AGE OF A SAMPLE OF 110 STREET CHILDREN.

a) Shelter Children

	0-1	2-3	4-5	7-12	13-24	25+	TOTAL
0-10	4	1					5
11-12		1			1		2
13-14	1	3		3	2		9
15-16	1		2	3	3	1	10
17-18	4	2		1	4		11
19+	1	1			1	4	7
TOTAL	11	8		7	11	5	44

b) Children still on the streets

	0-1	2-3	4-5	7-12	13-24	25 +	TOTAL
0-10					2		2
11-12		1			2		3
13-14		1		2	11	5	19
15-16	2		1	2	6	6	17
17-18	1	1	1		4	15	12
19+	1				5	7	13
TOTAL	4	3	2	4	30	23	66

c) Total number of children

	0-1	2-3	4-5	7-12	13-24	25 +	TOTAL
0-10	4	1			2		7
11-12		2			3		5
13-14	1	4		5	13	5	28
15-16	3		3	5	9	7	28
17-18	5	3	1	1	8	5	22
19+	2	1			6	11	20
TOTAL	15	11	4	11	41	28	110

TABLE 5.7 COMPOSITE DEPICTION INDICATING RESPONSES OF QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

		YES						SOMETIMES						NO					
		SHELTER		STREET		TOTAL		SHELTER		STREET		TOTAL		SHELTER		STREET		TOTAL	
			%		%		%		%		%		%		%		%		%
1	I wish I were someone else	23	52.27	20	30.30	43	39.09	8	18.08	25	37.88	33	30	13	29.55	21	31.82	34	30.91
2	I do not want to be told how to live my life	19	43.18	20	30.30	29	26.36	10	22.73	26	39.39	36	32.37	15	34.09	20	30.30	35	31.82
3	My friends care about me	25	56.82	21	31.82	46	41.82	10	22.73	32	48.48	42	38.18	9	20.45	13	19.70	22	20
4	People think I am clever	15	34.09	11	16.67	26	23.64	17	38.61	35	53.03	52	47.27	12	27.27	20	30.30	32	29.09
5	School is boring	6	13.64	8	12.12	14	12.73	8	18.18	26	39.39	34	30.91	30	68.18	32	48.48	62	56.36
6	My parents drink and fight too much	23	52.27	22	33.33	45	40.91	10	22.73	23	34.85	33	30	11	25	21	31.82	32	29.09
7	Streetchildren are lonely	22	50	21	31.82	43	39.09	11	25	31	46.97	42	38.18	11	25	14	21.21	25	22.73
8	Good things do not happen to me	14	31.82	18	27.27	32	29.09	20	45.45	41	62.12	61	55.45	10	22.73	7	10.61	17	15.45
9	Most people can do things better than me	17	38.64	20	30.30	37	33.64	14	31.82	37	56.06	51	46.36	13	29.55	9	13.64	22	20
10	I enjoy things my friends and I do together	29	65.91	18	27.27	47	42.73	12	27.27	40	60.61	52	47.27	3	6.82	8	12.12	10	10
11	You cannot trust anyone	25	56.82	16	24.24	41	73.27	10	22.73	32	48.48	42	38.18	9	20.45	18	27.27	27	24.55
12	Teachers think I am stupid	12	27.27	19	28.79	31	28.18	6	13.64	30	45.45	36	32.73	26	59.09	17	25.76	43	39.09
13	My family really wants me home	23	52.27	28	42.40	51	46.36	7	15.91	26	39.39	33	30	14	31.82	12	18.18	26	26.36
14	I will be a successful person one-day	36	81.82	31	46.97	67	60.91	4	9.09	29	43.94	69	62.73	4	9	6	9.09	10	9.09
15	I lie and steal to get what I want	15	34.09	16	24.24	31	28.18	12	27.27	30	45.45	42	38.18	17	38.64	20	30.30	37	33.64
16	I work very hard at being clean and healthy	36	81.82	28	42.42	64	58.18	4	9.09	28	42.42	32	29.09	4	9	10	15.15	14	12.73
17	My friends helped/caused me to leave home	12	27.27	19	28.79	31	28.10	6	13.64	24	36.36	30	27.27	26	59	23	34.85	49	44.55
18	People do not want me to be around them	13	29.55	19	28.79	32	29.09	16	36.36	30	45.45	36	32.73	15	34.09	17	38.64	32	29.09
19	I would like to go home	25	56.82	33	50	58	52.73	10	22.73	29	43.94	39	35.45	9	20.45	4	6.06	13	11.82
20	I am a good person	29	65.91	34	51.25	63	57.27	15	34.09	27	40.91	42	38.18	0	0	5	7.58	5	4.55
21	It is difficult to find food and a place to sleep	19	43.18	27	40.91	46	41.82	7	15.91	23	34.85	30	27.27	18	40.91	8	12.12	26	23.64
22	I worry about what I am going to be in future	33	75	35	53.03	68	64.82	8	18.18	29	43.94	37	33.6	3	6.82	2	3.03	5	4.55
23	I am not like other children	16	36.36	24	36.36	40	36.36	10	22.73	30	45.45	40	36.36	18	40.91	12	18.18	30	27.27
24	My family is too poor to take care of me	30	68.18	26	39.39	56	50.91	9	20.45	35	53.03	44	40	5	11.36	5	7.58	10	9.09
25	I am happy with my life as it is now	24	54.55	25	37.88	49	44.55	6	13.64	25	37.88	31	21.18	14	31.80	16	24.24	30	27.27
26	I feel guilty about things I do	23	52.27	27	40.91	60	49.09	13	29.55	26	39.39	39	28.18	8	18.18	13	19.70	21	19.09
27	There are many things I can do well	28	68.63	22	33.33	50	45.45	8	18.18	33	50	41	37.27	8	18.18	11	16.67	19	17.27
28	There are days when I am cold and hungry	10	22.73	14	21.21	24	21.82	19	43.18	33	50	52	42.27	15	34.09	9	13.64	24	21.82
29	I feel that I do not belong anywhere	12	27.27	13	19.70	25	22.73	13	29.55	38	57.58	51	46.46	19	43.18	15	22.73	34	30.91
30	Teachers were kind and helpful to me	31	70.45	29	43.94	60	45.55	9	20.45	30	45.45	39	28.18	4	9.09	7	10.61	11	10
31	It is better on the streets than at home	8	18.18	15	22.73	23	20.91	7	15.91	25	37.88	32	29.09	29	65.91	26	39.39	55	50
32	I have many plans for my future	35	79.55	30	45.45	65	59.09	4	9.09	29	43.94	33	30	5	11.36	7	10.61	12	10.91
33	I would do anything to be free and do as I like	30	68.18	29	43.94	59	53.64	6	13.64	31	46.97	37	33.64	8	18.18	6	9	14	12.73
34	I sniff glue	6	13.64	15	22.73	21	19.09	5	11.36	21	31.82	26	23.64	33	75	30	45.45	33	30
35	My friends force me to do things I do not want to do	19	43.18	17	25.73	36	32.73	6	13.64	32	48.48	38	34.55	19	43.18	17	25.76	36	32.73
36	Adults listen to children and care about them	24	54.55	18	27.27	42	38.18	13	29.55	45	68.18	48	43.64	7	15.91	3	4.55	10	9.09
37	I hate schoolwork	5	11.36	10	15.15	15	13.64	10	22.73	30	45.45	40	36.36	29	65.91	36	54.55	65	59.09
38	It is better to be on your own and look after yourself	13	29.55	23	34.85	36	32.73	12	27.27	35	53.03	47	42.73	19	43.18	8	12.12	27	24.55
39	I am the cause of all the problems at home	9	20.45	16	24.24	25	22.73	12	27.27	28	42.42	40	36.36	23	52.27	22	33.33	45	40.91

40	The police are kind toward street children	13	29.55	14	21.21	27	24.55	12	27.27	38	57.58	50	45.45	19	45.18	14	21.21	33	30
41	I do not like the way I look	19	43.18	22	33.33	31	28.18	8	18.18	29	43.94	37	33.64	17	38.68	15	22.73	32	29.09
42	You have to fight for yourself in life	32	72.73	32	48.48	64	58.18	2	4.55	21	31.82	23	20.91	10	22.73	13	19.70	13	11.82

		YES						SOMETIMES						NO					
		SHELTER		STREET		TOTAL		SHELTER		STREET		TOTAL		SHELTER		STREET		TOTAL	
			%		%		%		%		%		%		%		%		%
43	When life becomes difficult I will rather leave	16	36.36	14	21.21	30	27.27	6	13.64	30	45.45	36	32.73	22	50	22	33.33	44	40
44	Tomorrow will look after itself	20	45.45	28	42.42	48	43.64	5	11.36	27	40.91	32	29.09	13	29.55	11	16.67	24	30.91
45	I do not want adults to give me any rules	10	22.73	27	40.91	37	33.64	10	22.73	26	39.39	36	32.73	24	54.5	13	19.70	47	42.73
46	You need to go to school to have a good future	41	97.18	42	63.64	83	75.45	1	2.27	19	28.79	20	18.18	2	4.55	5	7.50	7	6.36
47	Social workers are good for streetchildren	35	79.55	38	57.58	37	65.36	5	11.36	24	36.36	29	26.36	4	9	4	6.06	8	7.27
48	I dream about having my own home and a good job	39	88.64	35	53.03	74	67.27	3	6.82	27	40.91	30	27.27	2	4.55	4	6.06	6	5.45
49	Living on the streets is dangerous for children	40	90.91	37	56.06	77	70	2	4.55	25	36.88	27	24.55	2	4.55	4	6.06	6	5.45
50	Nobody cares about me	7	15.91	20	30.30	27	24.55	12	27.27	39	59.09	51	46.36	25	56.82	7	10.61	32	29.09

iv) TIME SPENT ON THE STREET (FIGURE 5.4)

The most salient feature about figure 6.4 is the difference in percentages of time spent on the street between the shelter and the street group. According to fig 6.4, 63% of the shelter children have spent less than a year on the street compared to the street-group whom 80% have reported to have spent longer than a year with a peak (45.45%) who have spent more than 24 months on the streets. The graph depicting the time spent on the streets for the total sample closely resembles the graph of the street group. One of the hypotheses that could be made to account for the differences in the graphs of the street and shelter groups is that children who eventually land up in shelters are more prone to respond to intervention. Conversely could also be hypothesized that the longer children stay on the street the lower their prognosis are for eventual reintegration into a sheltered existence, stressing the importance of early intervention, and also alternative forms of intervention for children with a longer street career.

5.3.2.2 ANALYSIS OF STATEMENTS IN QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

i) INTERPRETATION OF TABLE 5.7

Table 5.7 is a composite depiction of the street children's responses to the statements posed in the questionnaire. The responses 'YES', 'SOMETIMES' and 'NO'are indicated in the three main columns. Each of these large columns are subdivided into three smaller columns distinguishing between responses made by children at shelters, those on the streets and the total for both groups. The total number of children having given a particular response is indicated firstly, followed in the next column by the percentage which that total constitutes. For the first statement ***I wish I were someone else*** 23 of the 44 shelter children (52.27%), 20 of the 66 children still on the streets (30.30%) and 43 of the total of 110 children (39.09%) responded **YES**. In the same way could the SOMETIMES and NO columns also be interpreted.

ii) GENERAL IMPRESSIONS AND TRENDS IN RESPONSES

The responses to the statements by all the children are summarized on table 5.7. This table also includes a distinction between children interviewed on the streets and those in shelters for comparison. The first distinctive feature of this table is the large percentage of 'sometimes' scores by the street-group. These middle scores tend to obscure interpretations about this group's genuine opinions or feelings about certain referents. This trend could also be a reflection of ambivalent feelings about the referents referred to in these statements, or indicative of a tendency of this group to avoid conflict or anxiety provoking situations. The statements, on which clearer expressions were made, were those concerning, self-directedness, future orientation and school, which are perhaps an indication of issues very important to them.

There were no other significant discrepancies between the scores of the street and shelter group, their responses show on inclination to the same general direction, although much stronger responses were made by the shelter group. Significant differences in scores will be discussed, when the streetchild's relationship with each referent is analyzed. The street child's relationship with his family will be discussed firstly by commenting on his responses to statements.

ii) THE STREET CHILD'S PERCEPTION OF HIS FAMILY

		YES			SOMETIMES			NO		
FAMILY		Shelters	Streets	Total	Shelters	Streets	Total	Shelters	Streets	Total
6.	My parents drink and fight too much	52.27	33.33	140.91	22.73	34.85	30	25	31.82	29.09
13	My family really wants me home	52.27	42.40	46.36	15.91	39.39	30	31.82	18.18	26.36
19	I would like to go home	56.82	50	52.73	22.73	43.94	35.45	20.45	6.06	11.82
24	My family is too poor to take care of me	68.18	39.39	50.91	20.45	53.03	40	11.36	7.58	9.09
31	It is better on the streets than at home	18.18	22.73	20.91	15.91	37.88	29.09	65.91	39.39	50
39	I am the cause of all the problems at home	20.45	24.24	22.73	27.27	42.42	36.36	52.27	33.33	40.91

The above statements examine some of the aspects pertaining to the streetchildren's perception with their families. It especially addresses the etiology underlying streetism, and the streetchild's experience of his situatedness within the family. The experiences streetchildren bring from their home circumstances seem to be generally negative. A large percentage responded that incidences of alcoholism and violence occur sometimes. Despite these circumstances most of these children seem to experience a deep longing to go home and feel that they are wanted at home. The reality seems to be though, that the poverty-related circumstances that drove them to the streets initially are still existing - most of these children believe that their families cannot afford to take care of them. It also seems that street children do not view the streets as a better environment to live. They seem torn between a longing to be with their families while simultaneously being repelled by the unsettling conditions at home

v) *THE STREET CHILD'S PERCEPTION OF SCHOOL*

		YES			SOMETIMES			NO		
SCHOOL		Shelters	Streets	Total	Shelters	Streets	Total	Shelters	Streets	Total
5	School is boring	13.64	12.12	12.73	18.18	39.39	30.91	68.18	48.48	56.36
12	Teachers think I am stupid	27.27	28.79	28.18	13.64	45.45	32.73	59.09	25.76	39.09
30	Teachers were kind and helpful towards me	70.45	43.94	54.55	20.45	45.45	28.18	9.09	10.61	10
37	I hate schoolwork	11.36	15.15	13.64	22.73	45.45	36.36	65.91	54.55	59.09
46	You need school to have a good future	93.18	63.64	75.45	2.27	28.79	18.18	4.55	7.50	6.36

The street child's perception of school-content, teachers and the role of school in their existence are looked at with the above statements. Although the children as a total group had a much more positive attitude toward school than had been expected, there is still a marked tendency by children from the shelters to embrace positive statements more strongly than the street group. This tendency could possibly be attributed to the fact that as a prerequisite to staying in the shelter children had to attend school, whereas the street group had mostly drifted out of school. Shelter conditions are also more conductive to school attendance creating better opportunities for children to experience success at school. The children also did not seem to have any problems with the school-content or the idea of attending school. They experience alienation from their peers, and seem to find peer-relationships less fulfilling than the shelter group.

v) THE STREET CHILD'S PERCEPTION OF SOCIETY

		YES			SOMETIMES			NO		
SOCIETY		Shelters	Streets	Total	Shelters	Streets	Total	Shelters	Streets	Total
4	People think I am clever	34.09	16.67	23.64	38.61	53.03	47.27	27.27	30.30	29.09
18	People do not want me to be around them	29.55	28.74	29.09	36.36	45.45	32.73	34.09	28.64	29.09
36	Adults listen to children and care about them	54.55	27.27	38.18	29.55	68.18	43.64	15.81	4.55	9.09
40	The police are kind toward streetchildren	29.55	21.21	24.55	27.27	57.58	45.45	43.18	21.21	30.
45	I do not want adults to give me any rules	22.73	40.91	33.64	22.73	39.39	32.73	54.5	19.70	42.73
46	Social workers are good for streetchildren	79.55	57.58	65.36	11.36	36.36	26.36	9	6.06	7.27

The above statements seek to examine the street child's perceptions and feelings about how people in society especially the major social role-players view him and how he relates to them.

The children who are in shelters seem to have more positive relationship with society and its major role-players than children who are still on the streets. They also experience authority figures less negatively and seemed to experience a greater sense that they are being valued and cared for than children from the street group. The sheltergroup though, indicated stronger feelings of resentment against the police, and both groups showed an embracement of social workers as specific social role-players.

vi) THE STREET CHILD'S PERCEPTIONS OF HIS PHYSICAL SELF

		YES			SOMETIMES			NO		
PHYSICAL SELF		Shelters	Streets	Total	Shelters	Streets	Total	Shelters	Streets	Total
16	I work very hard at being clean and healthy	81.82	42.42	51.18	9.09	42.42	29.09	9	15.15	12.73
21	It is difficult to find food and a place to sleep	43.18	40.91	41.82	15.91	34.85	27.27	42.91	12.12	23.64
26	I feel guilty about things I do	52.27	40.91	49.06	29.55	39.39	28.18	18.18	19.70	19.09
34	I sniff glue	13.64	22.73	19.03	11.36	31.82	28.64	75	45.45	30.00
28	There are days when I am cold and hungry	22.73	21.21	21.82	43.18	50	42.27	34.09	33.68	21.82
41	I do not like the way I look	43.18	33.33	28.18	18.18	43.94	33.64	38.64	22.73	29.09
49	Living on the streets is dangerous for children	90.91	56.06	70	4.55	37.77	24.55	4.55	6.06	5.45

The street child's relationship with his body as potential source of discomfort could be associated with deprivation and means of interacting with the world was the focus of the above statements. It was concluded that street children do find life on the streets physically demanding. They experienced physical danger, destitution and hunger. Many children expressed feelings of guilt associated with things they do and a large percentage were not sure that they always liked their appearance. This is indicative of negatively oriented physical self-perceptions associated with physical hardships. More than half of the group also responded that they sometimes smoke glue, further complicating their health and entrenching negative self-concept.

vii) THE STREET CHILD'S PERCEPTION OF VALUES, OBJECTS AND IDEAS

		YES			SOMETIMES			NO		
VALUES, OBJECTS AND IDEAS		Shelters	Streets	Total	Shelters	Streets	Total	Shelters	Streets	Total
2	I do not want to be told how to live my live	43.18	30.30	26.36	22.73	39.39	32.73	34.09	30.30	31.82
11	You cannot trust anyone	56.82	24.24	37.27	22.73	48.48	38.18	22.45	27.27	24.55
15	I lie and steal to get what I want	34.09	24.24	28.18	27.27	45.45	38.18	38.64	30.30	33.64
22	I worry about what I am going to be in future	75.	53.03	61.82	18.18	43.93	33.63	6.82	3.03	4.55
32	I have many plans for my future	79.55	45.45	59.09	9.09	43.94	30	11.63	10.61	10.91
33	I would do anything to be free and do as I like	68.18	43.94	53.64	13.64	46.97	33.64	18.18	9	12.73
38	It is better to be on your own and look after yourself	39.55	34.85	32.3	27.27	53.03	42.73	43.18	12.12	24.55
42	You have to fight for yourself in life	72.73	48.48	58.18	4.55	31.91	22.91	22.73	9.7	11.82
43	When things become difficult I will rather leave	36.36	21.21	27.27	13.64	45.45	32.73	50	33.33	40
44	Tomorrow will look after itself	45.45	42.42	43.64	11.36	40.91	29.09	29.55	16.67	30.91
48	I dream about having my own home and a good job	88.64	53.03	67.67	6.82	40.91	27.27	4.55	6.06	5.45

The above statements examined the street child's perception of values, objects and ideas especially as regards to his perceptions and feelings about personal freedom, self-reliance, and future aspirations.

The street child seems to have a strong concern with future oriented ideas indicating a strong aspiration to achieving success in areas - conventionally viewed as important by mainstream society. Again shelter children seemed to have stronger beliefs in their

future success, which could perhaps be related to their more sheltered existence which makes their aspirations more attainable.

A second important feature of their relationship with values, objects and ideas seems to be a strong sense of independence, self-reliance and an emphasis on self-directed behaviour especially amongst the street group.

viii) THE STREET CHILD'S PERCEPTION OF HIMSELF

		YES			SOMETIMES			NO		
SELFCONCEPT		Shelters	Streets	Total	Shelters	Streets	Total	Shelters	Streets	Total
1	I wish I were someone else	52.27	30.30	39.09	18.18	37.88	30	29.55	31.82	30.91
7	Streetchildren are lonely	50	31.82	39.09	25	46.97	38.18	25	21.21	22.73
8	Good things do not happen to me	31.82	27.27	29.09	45.45	62.12	55.45	22.73	10.73	15.45
9	Most people can do things better than me	38.68	30.30	33.64	31.82	56.06	46.36	29.55	13.64	20
20	I am a good person	65.91	51.52	57.27	34.09	40.91	38.18	0	7.58	4.55
25	I am happy with my life as it is now	54.55	37.88	44.55	13.64	37.88	21.18	31.82	24.24	27.27
27	There are many things I can do well	68.63	33.33	45.45	18.18	50	37.27	18.18	16.67	17.27
29	I feel that I do not belong anywhere	27.27	19.70	22.73	29.55	57.08	46.36	43.18	22.23	30.9
14	I will be a successful person one day	81.82	46.97	60.91	9.09	43.94	62.73	9.09	9.09	9.09
50	Nobody cares about me	15.91	30.30	24.55	27.27	59.09	46.36	56.82	10.61	29.09

The above statements focus upon certain aspects of self-perceptions found prominent in literature and salient features there of will be discussed. The responses on the questionnaire reflect that street children have a dual sense of self. They seem to believe in their own abilities and success in future prospects on the one hand, but on the other quite a large percentage indicated that they wished to be some-one else - are thus not satisfied with themselves. Quite a large percentage also indicated that they feel lonely.

Although the same general trends existed for statements about self-efficacy and future success, the shelter group showed much higher levels of self-confidence and general satisfaction with their lives, than the street group.

5.3.2.3 CONCLUSION

The street child's perception of important referents in his life-world had been examined with the survey questionnaire to come to an understanding of his psychological functioning and form a composite picture of his self-perception. As part of this analysis, former street children now in shelters were compared with children on the streets and the most prominent common as well as salient distinctive features will be discussed.

Certain Features were found to be common in both groups and are summarized in figure 5.8. Both groups originate from dysfunctional unstable families characterized by poverty, alcohol abuse and violence. Their relationships with their families seem to be extremely complex and repelled by their families simultaneously. School seems to be an important issue to street children as it is viewed as vehicle toward future success, making their non-attendance also a source of concern. This is especially true since they seem to be very concerned with future success. There are indications of discrepancies between these aspirations and what could be attained by them considering their present circumstances and their low level of education

Street children also seem to experience street-life as physically demanding and though which could lead to negative physical experiences and resultant negative physical self-perceptions.

Some differences between the responses of street and shelter children were also observed (figure 5.9). The first of these differences relates to their general approach in responding to the questionnaire survey. Children from the shelter group opted for extreme responses as opposed to the street group who chose middle ground answers. This trend could be associated with higher levels of commitment on the part of shelter children to answer the questionnaire firstly, and secondly perhaps a greater sense of security coupled with better self insight and a stronger sense of self allowing them to open and expose their feelings and opinions easily. The obscure responses of the

street group could possibly be related to less commitment, a general insecurity and perhaps a less clear sense of self.

Shelter children in general seem to have higher levels of self-esteem, better relationships with all major referents in their lives and an associated belief that they are valued and cared for. Shelter children also seem to have a greater sense that they will achieve future success and are more confident of their own abilities. The shelter children in this study have spent much less time on the street than those still on the streets. An inference that could be made relating to this difference is that prolonged stay on the street has a negative influence on the quality of the relationships street children have with important referents in their world, and ultimately themselves.

The composite picture of the perceptions of the street child based on the findings of the questionnaire survey, is ultimately that of a very insecure child, alienated from and distrustful of most people. They seem to be drifters with a sense that they want to achieve a better future, but have very little means of achieving it.

TABLE 5.8 COMMON TRENDS OBSERVED IN THE EXAMINATION OF THE STREET CHILD'SRELATIONSHIP WITH IMPORTANT REFERENTS IN HIS LIFEWORLD

- Originate from unstable homes characterized by poverty, alcohol abuse and family violence.
- Experience conflict in their relationship with families. Attracted and repelled simultaneously.
- Embrace school as mechanism for attainment of future success.
- Experience life on the street as physically hard - may develop negative body-image as a consequence there-of.
- Strong concern for future oriented aspirations.
- Strong sense of independence, self-reliance and emphasis on self directed behaviour.

TABLE 5.9 DIFFERENCES IN THE RESPONSES OF FORMER STREET CHILDREN IN SHELTERS AND STREET CHILDREN STILL ON THE STREETS

SHELTER GROUP	STREET GROUP
more extreme responses indicating commitment and feeling safe enough to show how they feel	more inclined to opt for middle road responses indicating less commitment, more insecurity in testing situations
stronger sense of self and insight into themselves.	may not be sure of how they really feel
Perceptions of all referents more positive	seem to experience more conflict with and a sense of alienation in relationships with all referents
have a greater sense of being valued and cared for in social situations	are not sure of own self-worth and value by social role-players
greater sense that they will achieve future success, and of own abilities	not so sure of future success and their own abilities to attain it

5.3.1 THE CASE STUDIES

5.3.3.1 INTRODUCTION

Each case will be presented by providing a brief report on identifying particulars, family background, scholastic information and reasons for leaving home and school. The assessments and interventions done will be indicated in a column for each case indicating the media used, prominent themes, analysis and interpretation findings, hypotheses and recommendations. The information regarding all five cases will then be summarized and compared to the conclusions made in the survey questionnaire.

CASE STUDY 1

1) IDENTIFYING PARTICULARS

Name	JM
Present address	Staying with friends in streets of Randgate
Age	15 years , 11 months
Time residing at present address	4 years, 2 months

2) FAMILY BACKGROUND

Marital status of parents	Married
Occupation of parents	father - farm worker mother - domestic servant
Age of parents	father (44) mother (45)
Address of parents	Botha small-holdings Randfontein
Number of children in family	4 children (including client)
Position among siblings	sister (26) married, sister 19 (grade 9) brother 18 (grade 8), client 16 (youngest)

3) SCHOOL INFORMATION

Last school attended	Malerato Primary School Mohlakeng
Previous schools attended	None
Highest grade passed	Grade 4
No times failed (grades)	Grade 1 (1)

4) REASONS GIVEN FOR LEAVING HOME:

The client reported firstly that his parents abuse alcohol, and become aggressive toward each other when drunk, and force him to stay from school, do housework etc. He also cited a lack of friends at the small holdings where his parents live and work as a secondary reason.

5) REASONS GIVEN FOR LEAVING SCHOOL

His parents found it increasingly difficult to send him to school, due to lack of funds (for taxi-fare). He has to travel to school by foot from their small holdings to the nearest township school. Now that he is staying on the streets the situation is even worse due to a lack of school essentials. He refuses to stay with his married sister (like his elder brother and sister) because they refuse to give him lunch-money and he has to do house-work after school.

5) PRESENT RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS FAMILY

The client reports that he still sees his parents quite often (at least once a week). He usually takes them things they need such as sugar, tea or cigarettes. He misses them very much but 'cannot' stay with them because of the above mentioned reasons. He rarely visits his sister and brothers in the township, because they do not like him, ignore him, never talk to him or give him anything. He seemed very resentful towards them

.SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT/INTERVENTION DONE WITH CASE 1

MEDIA USED	PROMINENT THEMES	ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	FINDINGS	HYPOTHESES	RECOMMENDATIONS/ GUIDELINES
INITIAL INTERVIEW	Present situatedness Means/mode of existence Family background	Appears withdrawn and strained Gives socially acceptable responses	Not comfortable in one to one situation	Seems to experience conflict concerning his present situation.	* Explore sources of conflict in his life - establish in which area it lies, and how his own approaches and tendencies are related to it
DRAW A PERSON	Embeddedness in the security of a family home and material possessions	Feelings of insecurity, inadequacy, rejection Depression, tends toward withdrawal Dissatisfaction with present educational situatedness Dependency	Dissatisfied with present situation Perceive himself as inadequate to change it, feels powerless and frustrated about it Do not want to explore possibilities of change	There seems to be conflict in family situation C. seems to have a rigid approach to problem-solving	Explore family situation that seems to be the source of frustration and conflict Explore C.'s approach to problemsolving: obstacles in environment, obstacles in self
KINETIC FAMILY DRAWING	Refuses to do KFD Alcohol and violence among parents Unprotective, unnurturant parents Conflict with siblings Alienation towards friends	Ambivalent feelings towards family Wants life he suspects other children has Does not want to consider other options Anger towards parents and siblings Enjoy company of friends but do not respect their lack of ambition	idealizes family life of his parents' employers who has a son his age Loves parents but does not respect them Frustrated because of seeming hopeless future	Negative perceptions of family has developed leading to negative self-perceptions	Further exploration of family situation and problem solving approach.
THREE WISHES	Father, mother and children living together in beautiful home Car Shop	Need for family and longing for security associated with conventional family life Symbolizes mobility, economic and social progress, means to escape present situation Symbolizes need for material things	Has idealistic perceptions of family life Wants to escape his own life	Comparisons of his life to the 'ideal' leads to unrealistically negative family perceptions. Does not accept his family and ultimately himself.	Explore both negative and positive aspects of his life. Help him to see himself as an individual person apart from his family in realistic terms.
TAT	Inability to cope with demands of school as well as frustrating situations Disorganized - Family life associated with alcohol abuse and violence, inability of parents to fulfill parental roles of nurturer, protector and provider, leading to loss of childhood	Feelings of insecurity and incapability to handle stressful situations Tends to withdraw and become depressed when faced with problematic situations Masked aggression and ambivalent feelings towards parents Sadness is an undertone through-out interview	Fear of facing challenges is incapacitating him Perceives his situation as hopeless, feels depressed and over- burdened Do not want to embrace any problem solving strategies Still needs adult supervision and care but is distrustful	Has a tendency to avoid, escape from problematic situations, because he does not know any problem solving skills, and feels inadequate and frustrated.	Explore feelings toward parents and work through aggression Focus on own abilities and strengths and upon goals and how it could be achieved Look at own responses t life and how empowering/ dis-empowering it could be Do general life-skills training.

CASE STUDY 2

1) IDENTIFYING PARTICULARS

Name	Lorraine
Age	16 years, 4 months
Gender	Female
Current place of residence	Squatter camp near rubbish dump Randfontein
Previous place of residence	Squatter camp in Swaniville with mother, stepfather and brother

2) FAMILY BACKGROUND

Marital status of parents	Divorced, mother living with stepfather
Address of parents	Mother - Swaniville Biological father - Brits
Number of children in family	9
Position among siblings	Sixth (5 elder sisters in Brits - 1 younger brother and sister with mother in Swaniville

3) SCHOOL INFORMATION

Last school attended	Swaniville Primary
Highest grade passed	Grade 4
No times failed (grades)	2 (Gr1 & Gr3)

4) REASONS GIVEN FOR LEAVING HOME:
Mother is not able to provide for family. Mother and stepfather abuse alcohol, become violent when under the influence. Do not like stepfather. Own father abandoned her at birth. Disclaims his own fatherhood.

5) REASONS GIVEN FOR LEAVING SCHOOL:
Has to work to provide for family, cannot afford school fee and uniform any longer.

6) TIME SPENT ON THE STREETS:
1 year 8 months

7) MEANS OF EXISTENCE:
Picking up articles from rubbish dump and selling it.

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT/INTERVENTION DONE WITH CASE 2

MEDIA USED	PROMINENT THEMES	ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	FINDINGS	HYPOTHESES	RECOMMENDATIONS/ GUIDELINES
DRAW A PERSON	Security of family, home and possessions. Having the possibility of progressing socially and economically	• Experiencing a futile striving to achieve success. • Confusion with sexual identity, ambivalent about gender role • Negative body image • Lack of self confidence in social situations, experience conflict with contact with outside world • Feels trapped in situation unable to escape it • Aggression, sadness and rejection experienced • Dissatisfaction with present situation - longs for the past	• Has ambivalent perceptions about gender role identity- has to give up childhood as well as aspects of girlhood in order to survive • Perceptions of social recognition and to be accepted. • Perceives herself as alienated and rejected by society	• Despite low self-esteem, positive belief that she could achieve success in better situation • Realistic perception of her present situation and willing to explore alternatives to change it • Hard working energetic and resilient	• Explore her gender role confusion and emotional as well as physical impact of living almost as a boy. • Provide Life Skills such as sexuality education, assertiveness training
THREE WISHES	Car, house, and to be a policeman - also related to security and acceptability related to a conventional life.	• Longs for security and acceptability associated with conventional life-style • High aspirations for achieving future success	• Perceives herself as alienated and rejected by society reacts to it through aggressive (not always physical) acting out		• Help her to understand and accept her own frustrations and ways to channel it productively.
TAT	• Dislike of school conflict with mother • Violence in community spilling over in family • Obedience to authority • Futility of existence • Acceptance of alternative value system based on physical survival after moral dilemma • Violence accepted as part of life • Mother-daughter relationship described as nurturant • Acceptance of gender role	• Confusion about what should be regarded as priority response to life's demands "education us survival" • Alienation from family and society • Reacts to frustration by aggression • Experience of life as • inescapability difficult - feels trapped	• Conflict about what she perceives to be right and the morality and values held by her environment relating to aggression, criminality, lifestyle • Anger about roles bestowed upon her through rejection by her father, and incompetence of her mother • Negative self- perceptions relating to her appearance and lifestyle.	• She has problems accepting an alternate value system, although violence and criminality is an integral part of her life-style • Still wants to be obedient to her mother, although she finds it difficult to have respect for her - creating conflict • Caring and nurturing mother role towards her own brother and other destitute children shows positive prognosis	• Helping her to distinguish between her environment and its value system and her own, and help her to develop her own. • Explore the relationship with her mother, and help her to separate emotionally from her mother • Focus upon the positive aspects of her personality and help her in developing these aspects • Provide lifeskills

CASE STUDY 3

1) IDENTIFYING PARTICULARS

Name	Amos
Age	10 years 5 months
Gender	Male
Current place of residence	Streets of Randfontein
Previous place of residence	Small holdings near Randfontein where his parents are employed

2) FAMILY BACKGROUND

Marital status of parents	Married
Occupation of parents	Mother: domestic servant Father: mechanic (cars)
Number of children in family	2 brothers / 2 sisters (older)
Position among siblings	youngest

3) SCHOOL INFORMATION

Last school attended	Tswelelo Primary School Mohlakeng
Highest grade passed	Gri
No times failed (grades)	Gri (1)

4) REASONS GIVEN FOR LEAVING HOME AND SCHOOL:
No specific reason given. He had been 'hanging out' with the streetboys after school, and also on days he could not go to school when his mother did not have money for taxi fare. He liked it and sometimes slept over and gradually drifted from home to the streets over a period of time, and afterwards quit school completely.

5) MEANS OF EXISTENCE:
Goes home occasionally for food and clothes, 'parking' cars, begging, washing cars.

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT/INTERVENTION DONE WITH CASE 3

MEDIA USED	PROMINENT THEMES	ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	FINDINGS	HYPOTHESES	RECOMMENDATIONS/GUIDELINES
DRAW A PERSON	• A boy wanting to do well at school because it would make his parents happy • Satisfaction derived from being with his friends • Boys doing adventurous things together • Feels insecure not listened to at home	• Futile striving to achieve • Infantile egocentric emotionally • Need for love and protection • Over compensation for physical weakness • Insecurity • Negative body image	• Very immature approach to problems experienced • Short term goals based on gratification of immediate needs	• His difficulties in getting to school regularly is related to feeling isolated there because he's losing so much time, but also to his own focus on gratification of short term immediate need	• Explore difficulties experienced in his relationship with family members • Guide him to an understanding of his own motives in not attending school and the conflicts he's experiencing there
KFD	• Interaction in family based on instructions and routine activities • Family not involved in common activities each goes his own way • Children fulfilling their obligation towards parents at the expense of their own enjoyment	• Do not experience meaningful communication between family members • Inconsistent disciplining and loose set of rules • No sense of adventure and joy experienced at home	• Feels emotionally isolated in a family where everyone is much older than he is • Perceive his friends as providing him with companionship adventure and experiences acceptance with friends • Feels guilty for not living out internalized family values	• The streets and his friends a providing, a temporary compensation for problems at home but is leaving him feeling guilty	• Continue exploring his relationship with family and school and allienatries for choosing to opt out • Explore his problem solving strategies and help him to set long term goals • Parental guidance
THREE WISHES	• Success at school • Physical possessions relating to fun with friends • Acceptance of self by others "being liked"	• Feels guilty about not being at school • Enjoyment of peer relationships • Need for social acceptance	• Feels isolated at school and finds it difficult to cope, escapes this by being on the streets		
TAT	• Conflict between meeting the demands of life and experiencing adventure with his friends • Strong emphasis upon preparing for and attending school • Rejection of routine associated with conventional family and school life • Guilt feelings related to own aspirations as well as family expectations • Unexpressed anger towards father figure	• Wants to go to school because it is the socially-acceptable thing to do, but do not derive any personal satisfaction from it, or has any identification with its long term goals and benefits.	•		

CASE STUDY 4

1) IDENTIFYING PARTICULARS

Name	André
Age	14 years 4 months
Current place of residence	Squatter camp near rubbish dump Randfontein
Previous Place of residence	Toekomsrus Randfontein with parents
Gender	Male

2) FAMILY BACKGROUND

Marital status of parents	Married
Occupation of parents	Father - does odd jobs Mother - domestic servant
Position among siblings	Middle

3) SCHOOL INFORMATION

Last school attended	Hartzstraat Primary School Toekomsrus
Highest grade passed	Grade 6

4) REASONS GIVEN FOR LEAVING HOME:
People in his township accused him of stealing their dogs, they did not like him and were cruel towards him.

5) REASONS GIVEN FOR LEAVING SCHOOL:
Teachers at school did not like him and disciplined him harshly and unfairly.

6) MEANS OF EXISTENCE:
Picks up and sells articles at rubbish dump, pools income with friends at rubbish dump.

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT/INTERVENTION DONE WITH CASE 4

MEDIA USED	PROMINENT THEMES	ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	FINDINGS	HYPOTHESES	RECOMMENDATIONS/ GUIDELINES
DRAW A PERSON	• Persecution by people in community • Persecution and harsh treatment by teachers • Perfect family situation, loving caring nurturant parents	• Dissatisfaction with current situation • Rigidity tension and basic insecurity • Restlessness, physical mobility, ready for exploration • Bad judgment, problems in thinking • Dependency, anxiety and insecurity • Feelings of guilt about aggression • Feelings of weakness • Negative body image	• Weak inner controls • Rigidity and limited range of responses to problems • Negative perceptions of his body. • Do not accept own responsibility - blaming others for own conditions • Perceives himself as persecuted by other people.	• Severely distorted perceptions of most referents • Uses aggressive defense mechanisms to protect himself • Uses escapist tendencies such as distortion when the reality of his environment and his own limitations becomes too overwhelming	• Explore his anger at most referents and himself. • Start the process of awaring him of reality and create a safe place to accept himself • Start doing life skills training
THREE WISHES	• Happiness at home • Education • Neat physical appearance	• Experiences a longing for stable conditions at home to be integrated in home and community, including school community • Need for social acceptance	• Perception of himself as alienated from home and community and school - feels rejected and unwanted • Ambivalent perceptions toward present life style - feels accepted on rubbish dump but also alienated from mainstream community	• Experiences a sense of safety at his present environment that is in conflict with his desire to be socially acceptable	• Continue exploring his exploration of his anger and help him see his own role in relational problems he encounters
KINETIC FAMILY DRAWINGS	• Alcoholism and violence in family • Series of unrelated activities related different family members • Incoherence and confusion in stories	• Disconnected family members - no communication • No rules, discipline no feelings of security • Diffused roles - especially among parents and children • Aggression and anger toward parents and authority figures - subconscious	• Narcissistic thinking • Tends to confabulate stories. • Experience insecurity due to unstructured family life. • Persecution mania	• Disorganization in family has left him confused and insecure, not trusting anyone, alienated as a family and as a person, feeling persecuted	• Help him understand the roles played by different family members and how he feels about it • Guide him into seeing himself as an individual, though part of his family, able to make pro-active choices
TAT	• Financial progress • Obedience to adults • Violence and crime in community permeating family life and personal existence • Death • Responsibility children have to care for parents	• Striving towards adult hood in order to be able to meet the demands of life • Moral conflicts - morality based on conventional mainstream society ideas • Aggression directed at self reversal of family roles	• Pre-occupation with death and violence, related to multiple experience of violence leading to feelings of hopelessness, loss of control over his own destiny	• Not sure of own perspective and value system - and thus not sure how to process violence have on overwhelming effect on his sense of security. Feelings of persecution excarcerbated by real physical threats	• Explore his experiences of violence and help him to process it. • Help him to establish his own value system • Focus upon his strenghts and abilities

INCOMPLETE SENTENCES	• Ideal family life • Rejection by school and society	• Longing for stable secure home environment • Aggression towards teachers and authority • Needs to feel valued at school and society • Alienation from school an society	• Ambivalent feelings simultaneously attracted and repelled to school and society • Deep-seated need for social acceptance	• Need to understand why he needs social acceptance	• Continue process of aligning him to reality and exploration and acceptance of own strengths and limitations

CASE STUDY 5

1) IDENTIFYING PARTICULARS

Name	Moses
Age	13 years 3 months
Place of residence	Streets of Randgate Randfontein with his friends
Previous place of residence	With his mother and brothers at his mother's employers home in Randgate
Gender	Male

2) FAMILY BACKGROUND

Mother	died last year (was a domestic servant)
Father	Left family when Moses was five - has not seen him since.
Siblings	Eldest of three children - 2 younger brothers (12) and (8)
Closest relative	Grandmother with whom siblings stay at her rooms at her employers residence

3) SCHOOL INFORMATION

Passed grade 6	Rapportryer Primary School Gr 3-4
Previous schools attended	Wheatlands Primary School Gr 1-2
No times failed (grades)	None

4) REASONS GIVEN FOR LEAVING HOME:

No specific reason - Gradually drifted from his grandmother's home to streets over period of one year after his mother died and he left school.

5) REASONS GIVEN FOR LEAVING SCHOOL:

After his mothers death his grandmother could not afford to keep himself and brothers at an Afrikaans Model C school.

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT/INTERVENTION DONE WITH CASE 5

MEDIA USED	PROMINENT THEMES	ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	FINDINGS	HYPOTHESES	RECOMMENDATIONS/ GUIDELINES
DAP	• Activities and life-style associated with white family life. • Role of parents as protectors and providers emphasized • Role of children carefree without any responsibilities	• Strong intellectual aspirations • Dependence • Dissatisfaction with present situation • Aspirations lived out on fantasy level • Longer for earlier age	• Identifies strongly with white children as his norm • Rejection and existence and escape from own identity • Still strongly dependent on authority figures for guidance and support	• Had difficulty in establishing his own identity as a black boy in a predominantly white school and environment. • Negative self concept • Unrealistic perceptions about own achievement - wants the unattainable does not see the attainable	• Explore his identity diffusion and focus upon his own uniqueness and family traditions values, etc.
THREE WISHES	• Related to mobility and movement	• Wants to escape present situation • High energy level • Strong aspirations to achieve success	• Wants to achieve success, very motivated but perceives himself and his abilities to succeed very negatively.	• Needs direction and needs to learn to focus upon goal-directed behaviour and to accept his limitations	• Focus upon his goals, distinguish the attainable from the unattainable • Explore his own motivation in achieving his set goals
TAT	• Compliance and obedience to authority • All family efforts ultimately ending in disaster • Despite all efforts not able to meet academic demands • rejection by father figure • guilt towards mother not living up to her ideals • Alcoholism and violence in family	• Feels that family has disintegrated after mother's death • Feels disappointed that he cannot live up to his mothers ideal now that she's gone of the family structure as well as his own life	• Have been disappointed, having had to leave school - quite a traumatic experience • Perceived his mother's death as the cause of the collapse of the structured nature of his life.	• Has not dealt with the grief associated with his mother's death yet • Perceived leaving home as the only way out of overwhelming circumstances.	• Explore the experience of his mothers death and its resultant effects on his life and his goals. Help him come to terms with the emotional trauma
KINETIC FAMILY DRAWING	• Sadness at loss of mother and missing their life when she was still alive • Anger at father for abandoning them • Shame at loss of schooling • Feels rejected by society because of his appearance	• He had the experience of a secure and stable family life and progress in school which provided him with self-esteem, partially lost again after his mother's death	• He has drive and ambition and wants to achieve but is confused about the route to take in order to realize it	• He has been out of school and in an instructured environment for more than a year and will need to become focused and goal-orientated	• Focus upon his goals and help him work on a plan to achieve it. • Continued support in dealing with his mother's death
INCOMPLETE SENTENCES TEST	• The importance of school in his life • Omitted sentences about his father, and family	• Still has unresolved feelings about his fathers abandonment • Longs for the stability and routine associated with school	• Perceives his father's abandonment of the family as personal rejection	• Feels angry at his father , but perceives these feelings as wrong and denies it	• Explore his feelings about his father • Continued focus on goal-oriented behaviour and his strengths.

TABLE 5.10 a-e SUMMARY OF STREETCHILDREN IN CASE STUDIES' PERCEPTIONS OF IMPORTANT REFERENTS IN THEIR LIFE-WORLD

a) FAMILY

- They view their families as incapable of providing them with physical and emotional guidance security, nurturance and protection.
- They see their families as unacceptable to the rest of society due to general disorganization and occurrence of alcohol abuse and family violence.
- At least three of them have experienced abandonment by their fathers and perceive themselves as unworthy of fatherly love and care and a resentment of their fathers.
- General perceptions of their parents as inadequate, not trustworthy and not to be relied upon seem to prevail.
- They perceive themselves as inextricably bound to their family and their family's failures.
- These children tend to have rigidly over idealized ideas about the existence of 'perfect families' from which they perceive themselves as excluded. They tend to resent their own families for not living up to these ideals.
- Despite of their negative perceptions of their families, they seem to have a great sense of responsibility toward them, and their well being.
- They seem to feel inadequate impact positively upon the family situation

b) SCHOOL

- These children view school as a critical means of attaining future success and present social status.
- They see themselves as social outcasts because they are not attending school.
- They perceive themselves as incapable of meeting the academic demands of the school.
- They do not seem to have any expectations of the school as an institution or teachers to provide them with any support and expect to be excluded. They do not view school as a supportive environment.

- An unrealistic reverence and respect for school is held without any realistic perceptions of the activities necessary for school success.
- They do not see any relation between their approach to problem solving (avoidance) and their progressive non-attendance of school and their eventual dropout.
- Although they perceive themselves as wanting to return to school, they find it difficult to reconcile their present life-style with the routine and rules associated with school.
- Despite their reverence for school, they perceive it as conflicting with their need to earn a living.

C) SOCIETY

- They view themselves as not part of mainstream society and feels alienated from it.
- They perceive society as rejecting them because of their appearance and life-style.
- These children seem to want social and acceptance, but do not see themselves as worthy there-of and act accordingly in socially unacceptable ways.
- A perception of being free from restrictions and authority figures as important seem to prevail among these children.
- Perceives his life-world as a violent environment from which he needs to protect himself - does this by avoidance of close interpersonal contact, and conflict situations.

d) VALUES, OBJECTS AND IDEAS

- They seem to ascribe to a very conventional value system, measuring things according to simple right/wrong terms, leading to extreme guilt feelings when they perceive themselves as contravening it.
- They seem to experience ambivalence in their value system, ascribing to mainstream values, but enacting values common to a street culture.
- They perceive personal freedom as extremely important and use this principle to escape and avoid responsibility and restrictions, and also as a means of personal control over their lives amidst extremely unstable and unpredictable conditions.

e) PEERS

- Perceive friends as sources of support but also partners in crime leading to guilt feelings about common activities.
- Perceive themselves as less fortunate than other children their age.
- Seems to experience a sense of adventure with being on their own with their peers.

5.3.1.2 CONCLUSION OF CASE STUDIES

The findings of the case studies are summarized in Table 5.10 indicating the street children's perception of the most important referents in their lives. These findings correspond with the conclusions made in the questionnaire survey summarized in tables 5.8 and 5.9. It also concords with conclusions made in the literature study (table 2.2.). The street child's problems regarding the perceptions he holds seem to be related to the structural conditions associated with poverty, and the inter- and intra-individual factors associated with it. The above factors are in a complex dynamic relation with each other with poverty as an important underlying condition, affecting all the perceptions children have about others and themselves. The street child's family background though, can be isolated as the most important inter-individual factor influencing all the relationships he has in his life.

i) THE STREET CHILD'S PERCEPTION OF HIS FAMILY

The street child's family seems to be a very complex structure. Underlying the seeming chaotic and dysfunctional environment the family produces is firstly the common occurrence of alcohol abuse and family violence, and secondly the child's perception of his family as totally isolated from, and rejected by the rest of society. The family of the street child seems to be on a constant brink of total collapse. In the absence of meaningful communication, clear role distinctions between parents and children, clear rules and guidelines and an inconsistent of discipline, children are left with a sense of insecurity that seems to pervade their total perception of the world and are depicted in every aspect of their engagement in it. Their perceptions of their life-world are distorted

by experiences of severe deprivation and their response system to it is extremely limited and rigid. They thus develop limiting expectations about their own abilities and possibilities to exert control over their lives. It seems that in the often-total dyscontrol experienced in the family, the only control they perceive themselves, as having is to refuse to be part of it. Negating the family as an institution and with it all other social institutions they cannot be part of in a way perceived by them as meaningful, is a form of control over their lives. The insecurity this child experiences seems to contribute to the seeming paradoxes in his psychological functioning, and him being so stubborn and tough on the one hand, and yet so vulnerable on the other, that intervention becomes a process of picking a path between two extremes. These polarities are depicted in table 5.11.

TABLE 5.11 Paradoxes in the psychological functioning of the street child

Emotional immaturity:- ego-centrisism, a limited repertoire of strategies to problem solving	Life experience far beyond his age
Need for social approval and acceptance	Perceives themselves as being free from social rules and restrictions.
Need for love and dependence	Perceives independence and self-sufficiency as important.
Ascribes to mainstream conventional ideas and values	Practices a life based on the values of the street-culture and ideas
Perception of obedience to adults as very important	Constantly flees from restrictions placed by authority
Perception of school as means of attaining approval and social progress	Avoiding school because of its rules and conventions

These paradoxes are not only problematic to the helpers of street children, but are also an enormous source of conflict for the streetchildren themselves. In the process of developing their own perceptions about the world they are constantly haunted by conflicting messages about the roles they are supposed to play, the values attitudes and norms they are supposed to have, and what the guiding principles underlying their paradigm of the world and themselves should be. In short they develop perceptions fraught with insecurity because in virtually none of the most important relationship in

their lives to they experience security in the form of consistent physical and emotional support nurturance and protection.

They develop escapist defense mechanisms to protect themselves against the reality of their situations. Their tendency to avoid problematic situations by turning away from it and reflecting the aggression and anger experienced by themselves turned inwards that becomes so entrenched that it eventually becomes part of their total approach to handling all situations. Even when other solutions to their problems seem evident, they tend not to explore it, for fear of failure but also because they have limited problem-solving skills concerning some areas in life and a limited range of responses to problem-situations. Extended stay on the streets entrenches their perceptions that their situation is hopeless and that they are inadequate to change, or control it and they feel trapped in these conditions. The greatest source of their conflict lies in the fact that despite the negative self-perceptions they have developed, they still aspire to the acceptance and status associated with a conventional mainstream social life-style. An important consequence of this conflict is an undefined sense of guild related to their life-style and activities that most street children seem to experience.

In the next section the two hypotheses stated for this study will be discussed and examined in how far they have been proven, which will be followed by concluding remarks on this chapter.

5.5 ASSESSMENT OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY AGAINST THE HYPOTHESES FOR THE STUDY

HYPOTHESIS A

STREET CHILDREN HAVE NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THEIR FAMILIES, THE SCHOOLS THEY ATTENDED, THEIR PEERS AND SOCIETY

From Table 5.10 could be concluded that street children indeed have negative perceptions about the major referent in their lives. The nature of these perceptions

may be primarily negative such as the perceptions they have about their families, or a secondary consequence of other factors. The perceptions street children may have had about school and society may have been positive at the onset, but may have become increasingly negative due to negative experiences, related to family circumstances. Their perceptions of their friends are less negative but are not experienced as totally positive. These friends do not seem to replace the family as source of nurturance completely and their peer relationships are not totally characterized by trust. When comparing themselves with other children not in their situation, they perceive themselves as neglected and inadequate though.

HYPOTHESIS B

STREET CHILDREN HAVE NEGATIVE SELF-PERCEPTIONS

The street child's self-perceptions are derived from the feedback he receives from other important referents in their life-world. The image mirrored back to them in these relationships is one of a child that fails to comply with the norms and standards set for adequacy and acceptability. These reflections in the form of the negative experiences associated with severe deprivation and rejection have negative effects upon their self-perceptions. They perceive their choice to live outside of the family structure, school and on the fringes of society as their only possibly response to unbearable family circumstances, and the only means of asserting themselves and exerting control over their circumstances. In this respect they perceive themselves as assertive and self-directed. The consequences of this choice though, do not improve their self-perceptions and leaves them alienated from a society they want to engage with positively, but are excluded from, because their ways of involvement with mainstream society are found reproachable.

5.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the empirical study, consisting of a questionnaire survey and case studies, was described, and the results there-of had been analyze and interpreted.

In the first section, the execution and progress of the study was evaluated and the success and pitfalls described. Aspects that posed particular challenges had been related to the street children in the study's short attention span, and the unstructured nature of their life-style and thinking. On the other hand, it was also found that they were very co-operative and eager to please. Other problems were related to the way some questions were structured, but on the whole the empirical study served its intended purposes.

The second part of this chapter was devoted to two sections, the questionnaire survey and the case studies. The results of the questionnaire survey was processed by calculating the percentages of responses to each statement, and then analyzing and interpreting general trends. Statements relating to particular referents were then clustered and interpretations made about the streetchild's perception on it. The results of the case studies was presented in a tabular form indicating the media used prominent themes in interviews, the analysis and interpretation of data obtained, findings, hypotheses and recommendations and guidelines for further intervention.

The findings of the empirical study concorded very strongly with the conclusions made in the literature study. It was found that because of the street children's experiences of severe deprivation and rejection and their unstabling family circumstances their perceptions of the most important referents in their life-world is distorted causing particular approaches to life and managing problems. They seem to have a limited repertoire of responses to problem situations and handle problems through distortion of reality and avoidance. They tend to see the world as an unsafe place and the people in it not be trusted to the extend that they avoid risking experiencing success. Street children also seem to experience feelings of insecurity about their own abilities and have negative self-perceptions.

CHAPTER 6: GUIDELINES IN THE INTERVENTION OF STREET CHILDREN

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The intervention of street children is held at interest and seen as the responsibility of a number of individuals, institutions and organizations. This study though directs itself at the caretakers and helpers of street children and their families directly involved with their social psychological and educational well-being. The guidelines that will be presented to these helpers in this chapter is done from an Educational-Psychological perspective based specifically on the perceptions street children have about important referents in their life-world. The helpers considered of interest here are the school and education departments, social and care workers and Educational Psychologists.

Macro and meso approaches to intervention are used as backdrop and contextual features, but the focus of these guidelines are the inter- and intra- individual micro factors being at issue. General guidelines applicable to any programme of intervention will be presented firstly followed by more specific guidelines to the stakeholders mentioned above.

6.2 GENERAL GUIDELINES IN THE INTERVENTION OF STREET CHILDREN

6.2.1 INTRODUCTION

There are certain aspects about the general nature of street children and the phenomenon they present, that should be considered by all programmes aiming at the successful intervention of street children. Some of these aspects are related to the paradox presented by the street child also depicted in their perceptions of their life-world and themselves helpers are often faced with. Should they treat this child as a self-directed adult or a vulnerable child?

6.2.2 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STREET-CULTURE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

Street children learn very quickly that in order for them to survive on the streets, they have to adopt and enact the values associated with the street culture. These values are often based on survival and a certain amount of consumerism, also having an influence on their self-perceptions, and the perceptions of the public as possible clients. A successful programme would consider these influences and incorporate them than ignore or denigrate them and use them as strengths, rather than obstacles. (Schurink, 1994:41)

6.2.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF FREEDOM

As means of exerting control over their own lives, street children value their own freedom to move around at will, not be restricted, and make decisions for themselves as extremely important. Any programme established should thus be flexible, nor coercive and based upon voluntary participation.

6.2.4 CONSIDER THE CHILD'S OWN INITIATIVE AND PARTICIPATION

The considerable street-smarts children have learned on the streets, and their resilient nature should be used as strengths in any programme. They should be involved in the process of developing services for them, and their experiences and skills recognized and utilized in such a programme.

6.2.5 FOCUS ON THE CHILD'S REINTEGRATION WITH COMMUNITIES AND BROADER SOCIETY

Street children perceive themselves as extremely alienated from, and rejected by society and a major focus of intervention should be to integrate them with their respective communities and broader society. Since the rejection they perceive is often real, programmes should not only have as its goals, the adaptation of the child into

society but should also view community and social awareness of and involvement in alleviating the plight of street children.

6.2.6 RESOCIALIZATION RATHER THAN ADAPTATION

Since street children have already become functional adults, and perceive themselves as such, intervention should not be aimed at infantelizing them by wanting to give them back a 'lost childhood' but have its goal to resocialise them. Integration into society should thus not be directed at giving them back innocence, but should accept their experiences (Cockburn in Schurink, 1994:16).

6.2.7 DIVERSIFICATION OF INTERVENTION FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF CHILDREN AND CHILDREN AT DIFFERENT STAGES OF THEIR STREET-CAREERS

The same goals for intervention may not be appropriate for all children depending upon their specific personality features, background and street-involvement, also impacting on the way they perceive the world. (Blanc 1994:87; Williams, 1993.) Intervention should thus be based on a situational analysis.

6.2.8 THE IMPORTANCE OF AN INCOME

Most street children are engaged in an income generating activity because they value their independence and also because they have to support themselves and their families. This need should be taken into account when developing programmes for street children, so that work is integrated in their daily routine in order to make them feel self-sufficient and also increase their skills.

6.3 SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS

6.3.1 INTRODUCTION

The school is the second most important socializing agent in the life of a child. When the family fails to fulfill its role in providing adequate guidance and support to the child in its venture to reach self-actualized adulthood, it is often called upon the school to partially fulfill this role. The school is also the place where problems could identified and addressed at an early stage and could be instrumental in canvassing support for the often socially isolated family of the street child or children at risk of landing on the streets. The school thus needs to be structured and organized in order to give children adequate support to prevent them from dropping out of school prematurely and also reintegrate drop-outs back into school. It is also incumbent on not only individual schools, but also education departments, to review their goals in education in terms of its relevance to the needs of all children.

6.3.2 TEACHERS AS ROLE-MODELS

Street children often have very negative perceptions of their parent influencing their perception of all authority figures. It is therefore imperative that teachers should act as positive role-models to these children, providing them with consistency, stability, guidance and support, and enacting the kinds of roles they want children to adopt.

6.3.3 DEVELOPMENT OF A SCHOOL SUPPORT SYSTEM

The school should have a support system making provision for support of children on a very broad basis from academic remediation, to food and uniform for the poor. Street children perceive themselves as incapable of adapting to the social demands of the school and the school should be flexible in its policies to accommodate them. This school support system should enable the school to:

- Keep consistent records of all children's family backgrounds, behaviour, changes in their circumstances in order to detect problems as they occur. An important problem often overlooked in many of the schools street children emanate from is prolonged and intermitted absenteeism often leading to eventual dropout.
- Be abreast of the resources available to the school, children and their families in the form of community support, government-based organizations and non-governmental organizations, and the school should engage in networking with such organization.
- Make special arrangements for children from minority groups and at-risk families, such children who live in informal settlements and farming communities, and children whose language and culture differs from most of the learners in the school.
- Be sensitive to the diverse needs of children, and recognize the indicators of at-risk learners.
- Have an effective follow-up system to ensure that all problems experiences are attended to optimally.
- Have a pro-active developmental approach to problems experienced by learners.

6.3.4 TAKE STEPS IN OPENING THE CURRICULUM TO ALL LEARNERS

Street children also perceive themselves as unable to meeting the academic demands of school and the school should make concerted efforts at providing to the diverse needs of learners concerning their learning styles and differences in abilities. Street children also have negative self-perceptions and need to experience success in some areas at school in order to change their negative self-talk into a more positive tone. Learning programmes should thus be geared ensuring that all children experience success by focusing on their abilities and not just at their disabilities. Street children pose special problems as learners: they have low concentration spans, tend to withdraw in demanding situations, and sometimes suffer brain damage or other neurological dysfunction. They should receive special attention, and be engaged in activities relative to their scope of interest and abilities.

6.3.5 ENGAGE PARENTS IN THE SCHOOL LIVES OF THEIR CHILDREN

Street children perceive their families as rejected and alienated from society and all its institutions including the school. Parents of street children are also often not aware of the demands school place upon children. Parents should thus be co-opted as co-responsible for their children's school success and involved in all decisions made about them.

6.3.6 INCLUDE LIFESKILLS TRAINING AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE CURRICULUM

Many of the problems street children have concerning their perceptions of other referents in their life-world and their role in it, can be related to their limited problem solving skills. The strained relationships they have experienced with in their families have left them with little effective communication and conflict management skills, as well as no adequate information to base important decisions and life choices on. Schools should thus include in their curriculum a focus upon life skills fused in all learning areas. An important aspect of such a programme should also be sexuality and gender role issues including HIV/AIDS and STD education.

6.3.7 A STRONGER FOCUS ON ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

When children have been out of school for a considerable length of time, and are older than the average children in their grades, reintegration in to formal mainstream schools may be very difficult. Street children though esteem school and the career options and social status it provides very highly, but their reintegration may be further complicated by their functional adulthood, the importance they ascribed to freedom and independence and their dislike of routine and authority figures. It is therefore very important that Education Departments should make provision for street children to be reintegrated through alternative education programmes, to give children greater flexibility in accessing education such as night schools, or non-formal education

programmes. Cockburn (1988:9) cited several advantages of non-formal education that makes it more appropriate for street children as opposed to formal schooling:

- It is developed to occur in shorter recurrent cycles relating to immediate learning needs, is part-time and flexible enough to meet the varying needs of participants.
- Non-formal education is environment based, learner centred, emphasizing learning rather than teaching, and uses community facilities and resources to keep it economical.
- Non formal education is self-governing, characterized by "autonomy at local and local levels with an emphasis on local, self help and innovation" (Cockburn 1988:9)
  Non formal education also focuses upon vocational training as important means complementing the skills already possessed by them. (Unesco, 1995:130)

6.3.8 DEVELOPING AN ETHOS OF INCLUSION, ACCEPTANCE AND RESPECT FOR HUMAN DIGNITY AT ALL SCHOOLS

Schools should strive to become child-friendly environments where all children feel welcome, respected and enabled to contribute to their own development and the development of their schools and communities. An aspiration towards practicing ubuntu should be encouraged, through specific activities across the curriculum to aware children of the needs of all their fellow learners and examples of how to respond specifically to the needs of street children to be included should receive special attention and effort.

6.4 SOCIAL WORKERS AND CHILD CARE-WORKERS

6.4.1 INTRODUCTION

Often the people most frequently involved with street children and their families are social workers and child-care workers involved with different community or child care organizations. They may be involved in community or casework or could be resident or employed at institutions such as schools, children's homes, shelters or drop-in shelters.

They work on various levels such as community development, family intervention and individual intervention with children, and may be engaged with the street child problem preventatively and rehabilitatively.. Many of the general guidelines given also include guidelines to be used by them.

6.4.2 .INTERVENTION WITH THE FAMILIES OF STREET CHILDREN

The intervention with the families of street children is often a crucial factor in the child's successful reintegration with their families and society. Street children view their families in extremely negative terms and although they long to be with them, they often do not want to return to the same conditions. Social workers thus have an important role to play in restructuring family circumstances, and can help families retain they roles in supporting the child.

- PROVIDING SUPPORT TO THE FAMILY DURING TIMES OF CRISIS

The street child's perceptions of his family as socially isolate without any support is often founded on reality. Crisis such as the death of a family member, or loss of employment may hit hard upon already strained family relations, dis-enabling the family even further in taking care of the children. Social workers thus need to ensure that the families have adequate support during such times and community involvement in such efforts by involving churches, municipalities and other community based organizations in such endeavors, to also reintegrate the family into its community.

- PARENTAL TRAINING PROGRAMMES

Street children perceive their parents as unable to provide guidance, nurturance and protection to them. A key role social workers thus have is to empower their parents with skills, knowledge and attitudes to be more capable parents. This would include basic information about children's developmental stages and needs at each stage, communication skills and guidance on the different roles children and parents play

within a family. These skills are necessary with a view of the child's reintegration in the family and preparation for the child's return as the child had been a functional adult, and new relational patterns will have to be established. Even when a child do not return home because it is either impossible or not advisable the families of street children is so important to them, that it is crucial that discordant relationships are restored and family intervention thus still occurs. (Tiba, in Schurink, 1993:289)

6.4.3 INSTITUTIONALIZED CARE

The general guidelines also pertain to institutionalized care setting such as children's homes and shelters. A strong focus should be upon allocating personal responsibility to children and including them in decision making. Additionally should be attempted to give children a sense of stability, but also a sense of personal ownership and identification with their new homes, its rules and regulations, vision and mission and value system. Institutions should also not foster dependence among street children, but utilize their coping skills and experience to help them become more independent. (Ennew, 1994:88) Institutionalized care should also as far as possible not exclude the communities children come from, but be part of such communities and involve them as not to increase these children's perception of their social alienation.

6.4.4 NON INSTITUTIONALIZED CARE

Non institutionalized care are settings such as drop-in centres and street environments where street-workers and educators are offering support and education to children. The general guidelines are also pertaining here.

- The services should be situated where the children are, and responsive to their immediate needs, including food, shelter, and health care.
- These services should have developmental components addressing children's needs for education and recreation.

- Children should be provided with counseling and peer counseling especially as regards to drug-abuse could prove to be effective. (UNESCO, 1995:132)
- The experiential world of children should be the vantagepoint of intervention especially in the initial stages, and care should be taken that programmes do not reflect a moral or socio-cultural approach that would further alienate children.
- The goals, expectations and methods of intervention should be explained to the children from the onset and their inputs about this should be asked, as they will not voice dissent if they do not find the programme relevant, they will simply disappear.

6.5 THE EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST

6.5.1 INTRODUCTION

The role of the Educational Psychologist is to identify and address the barriers children could have in their developmental path toward self-actualized adulthood within an Educational and Psychological framework. The Educational Psychologist would then work with the individual child or a group setting and assess, doing therapy, remediation or counseling, and would also work in the same way in relation to the family of the street child. The Educational Psychologist also acts as a consultant to the school and teachers giving them guidelines in the most appropriate way to include and support street children as children with barriers to learning.

6.5.2 INDIVIDUAL / GROUP INTERVENTION

Intervention with an individual street child or group of street children would entail firstly an assessment of their emotional, behavioural and cognitive functioning in order to find his strengths and weakness, and also to establish his relational patterns, how he thinks, feels and acts toward the most important referents in his life-world. The Educational Psychologist would then move between the child and his life-world and work towards changing negative unrealistic perceptions into more positive and

realistically orientated self-talk. As far as the street child is concerned the Educational Psychologist would:

- Explore the street child's perceptions of his family with him and help him to come to realistic terms with it.
- Help the street child come to a realistic understanding of himself and his abilities.
- Explore with the street child conflicting aspects about his needs, traits and tendencies.
- Explore with him his typical coping mechanism, problem-solving methods, and the effects these have upon his choices, relationships, and when necessary consider alternatives for these and work through the effects of these alternatives.
- Assist the child in setting appropriate goals and making appropriate informed choices according to his needs, interests, abilities and circumstances about important issues in his life.
- Provide emotional support and guidance toward experiencing success.
- Street children have low attention spans and drift off or run away when under pressure, any counseling situation should thus be relatively informal with short periods of concentrated activity, with intermittent period of relaxation in between.
- As street children are quite weary of all people and their intention it is necessary to prepare them for such intervention slowly by winning over their trust, by genuine interest in them and their activities and honesty about your own motives.

6.5.3 FAMILY THERAPY

The Educational Psychologist would not work with the child in isolation but would also focus upon problems within the family relations. He would be viewing the communication patterns, role distinctions and relations and other dynamics with in the family structure. In a family therapeutic situation the Educational Psychologist, could make the family aware of the problematic aspects of their relationships and more then toward changing these dynamics. The Educational Psychologist would also give guidance to the parents of street children about how to handle them effectively.

6.5.4 ACTING AS CONSULTANT TO EDUCATIONAL AND CHILDCARE SETTINGS

The Educational Psychologist will work in consultation with schools, health practitioners, social and careworkers, parents and communities and assist them with guidelines in their intervention with streetchildren based on the findings of his assessments. As regards to the street child's reintegration into school, the Educational Psychologist will also assist with the preparatory work involved, as street children may experience emotional, behaviour and learning problems, and have negative perceptions about their own ability to adapt to school. Such preparation may include:

- Determining the child's interest and potential and start working from an informal less structured manner and environment to a more structured situation.
- Doing remediation based on the child's cognitive abilities, his basic reading, writing, perceptual and concentration skills.
- Doing emotional preparation for school, goal setting etc.

The Educational Psychologist will also be responsible for preparing the school and teacher to assist and welcome the child back into the school. An academic learning program individual to the child's learning needs and abilities could be developed to help the teacher and programmes could also be done to prepare fellow learners for accepting and supporting the street child.

6.6 CONCLUSION

Although these guidelines are focusing mostly upon intra and inter personal intervention strategies, it cannot be over emphasized that they can only work within a framework of larger structural and policy changes affecting the plight of all poor children but especially street children. Another crucial factor in effective intervention is the co-ordination and integration of all services and interventative work with streetchildren calling for considerable networking between all stake-holders and role-players. A focus upon preventative strategies occurring concurrently with rehabilitative

and outreach approaches will call for services for both at risk children and those in the different stages of street involvement. A global and holistic approach considering the origins as well as the incidence of the problem is thus called for.

CHAPTER 7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

And what you thought you came for
is only a shell, a husk of meaning
from which the purpose breaks only
when it is fulfilled. Of at all.

T.S ELIOT

CHAPTER 7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The last chapter has as its purpose to draw to a conclusion this study. An overview of each of the preceding chapters will be given discussing its goals, methods and conclusions. The limitations and contributions of the study will then be examined followed by its contributions and a discussion of directions future research on this topic could take.

7.2 OVERVIEW OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS

7.2.1 CHAPTER 1 - ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

Chapter one served as background and provided a contextual rationale for the study. As introduction, the phenomenon of street children was defined by analyzing the development of different definition and ultimately defining it from an educational psychological perspective. The developmental risk factors associated with street life were discussed as rationale for the importance of this study. An overview of the literature related to the phenomenon of street children was conducted and it was concluded that a strong focus on macro and meso issues related to street children existed, but a lesser amount of attention could be found on the inter- and intra-personal factors. In the delimitation of the study it was confined to an educational-psychological examination of the perceptions street children have about themselves and important others in their life-world. In the statement of the problem it was asked what guidelines could be given to helpers of streetchildren on the basis of their perceptions about their families, schools, society and peers. The helpers in this case were the schoolteachers and education departments, social and care-workers as well as educational psychologists. It was hypothesized that street children had negative perceptions about these referents as well as themselves. The purpose of this study was achieved by doing a literature study on the phenomenon of street children and current trends in their

intervention. (Chapters 2 and 3 respectively) and also an empirical study consisting of a questionnaire survey and case studies.

7.2.2 CHAPTER 2 - ANALYSIS OF THE PHENOMENON OF STREET CHILDREN

The purpose of this chapter was to do a literature study on the phenomenon of street children in order to investigate their perceptions about important referents in their life-word. It was done firstly by comparing and contrasting the street child with other conditions of childhood associated with deprivation and adversity. Secondly, the street child's perceptions were examined in the context of his relationships with his family, society, school, body and values, objects and ideas. It was found that the street child suffered extreme deprivation and that these experiences caused a distortion of their perceptions of their life-world and themselves and a particular engagement with others and problematic situation characterized by flight and avoidance. The distinguishing characteristics of street children seem to lie in their dualistic nature - they simultaneously have the developmental vulnerability of children growing up in hazardous circumstances, and life experience, acuity and resilience of adults.

A summary of the street child's relationships with important referents is given in tables 2.1 - 2.5 highlighting the most important aspects of their attribution of meaning experience of and involvement with these referents.

7.2.3 CHAPTER 3 - THE INTERVENTION OF STREET CHILDREN

In chapter three the existing models governing the intervention of street children were examined with the purpose of establishing what the philosophical premises, goals, application and outcomes of each model was. It was found that primarily four fundamentally different models were used - correctional, rehabilitative, preventative and outreach. It was concluded that effective intervention calls for the integration of all four or any combination of models based on a situational analysis and a diversification of interventative strategies and approach to provide in the needs of al street children.

Table 3.1 provides a summary of the main differences between the models described above. This chapter served as background for chapter 5 wherein interventative guidelines were given.

7.2.4 CHAPTER 4 - THE DESIGN OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

Chapter four concerned the design of the empirical study consisting of a questionnaire survey and ideographic case studies. The rationale for using these methods are described in this chapter, including the sampling strategies, procedures used, assessment material and ways of analysis and interpretation. The relationship between different aspects of the study is depicted graphically in Figure 4.1

7.2.5 CHAPTER 5 - DESCRIPTION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

In this chapter the empirical study was described and the results analyzed and interpreted. Qualitatively the process of conducting the research proceeded without many problems.

The questionnaire survey was done with 110 street children, 44 of who were in shelters and 66 still on the streets. A comparison of these two groups (see fig.5.9) revealed that children in shelters had less negative perceptions about other referents and themselves possibly associated with their improved conditions. The perceptions of both groups indicated high aspirations, but a lack of insight in finding means to achieve it.

Five children were involved in the ideographic case studies. The results of their projection tests and interviews were summarized on in tabular form. The conclusions concorded with those derived from the literature study as well as the questionnaire survey. The poverty related unstable family circumstances were found to be underlying to the street child's deep sense of insecurity that influenced all his perceptions and his

entire engagement with his referents in a very profound way. The street children's perception of the most important referents in their life world are summarized in fig 5.10

7.2.6 CHAPTER 6 - GUIDELINES TO THE INTERVENTION OF STREET CHILDREN

Based on the findings of the previous chapter, chapter six was concerned with proposing guidelines to the helpers of street children. General guidelines important to all interventative programmes included, recognizing the importance of the street culture, the child's own initiative and participation in interventative programmes, a focus on the child and his families reintegration with community and society, a focus on resocialization rather than adaptation and meeting the diverse needs of children. More specific guidelines were then proposed to the schools and education departments, social- and care-workers and Educational Psychologists, relating to their professional functions but focusing on empowerment of street children and their families to enable them to develop in a pro-active way.

7.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Most of the limitations of the study concerns the empirical study which had as its main purpose to ad to the existing theory about the phenomenon of street children, and not necessarily to yield information that could be applicable to all children. A large sample group was used though, and therefore the information yielded could be of value in developing intervention programmes for street children in general.

The questionnaire survey was done within a certain geographical area - Randfontein, Hillbrow, Carletonville and Kemptonpark and was done with only black children. The areas selected though, differed in the possible impact on children's experience of street life, thus including different contexts of street existence. The sample was also not randomly selected and the questionnaire was done with all children available at that point. Although these were intentional limitations it does compromize the extend to which the results could be generalized to all street children. The same limitations exist

as regards to the case studies where the five children are all from the same geographical area and situational and environmental influences may be specific to them.

Although the questionnaire survey was an appropriate method of obtaining general information from a large number of respondents, the questionnaire was perhaps too structured for this population and more qualitative information may have been gained with more open-ended questions. The streets as setting where the questionnaire survey was conducted mostly also proved to be an influential factor extraneous to the study interfering with the children's already limited attention span. Given the circumstances, the overall response was very good and served as an outlet for the children who participated in the study.

The greatest limitation concerning the case studies was the lack of standardized psychometric tests for black children especially street children. Qualitative interpretations were made, which were verified with each other and also within the interviews. The researchers inability to speak or understand a Black African language was also a limitation as it interfered with communication, although a translator was used with the questionnaire survey and the children involved with the case studies was also selected on the basis of their proficiency in English or Afrikaans.

As far as the results of the study is concerned the street children's tendency to choose middle ground "sometimes" answers in response to statements rather than an explicit "yes' or "no" made the interpretation very difficult. This tendency though, was also interpreted as qualitatively significant and the inferences were made that they were reluctant to commit themselves or had limited self-knowledge.

7.4 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THIS STUDY

- The study contributed to the existing body of theory about the phenomenon of street children by focusing closely on intra- and inter-personal factors relating to the phenomenon.

- In chapter one this phenomenon was redefined in Educational Psychological terms and the risks associated with streetlife and the needs of streetchildren stated from such an approach.
- From the literature study in chapter two a summary of the street child's attribution of meaning experience of and involvement in the most important referents in their life-world which was an important basis upon which the statements in the questionnaire survey in the empirical study was developed.
- From chapter 3, a comparison of the four models used in the intervention of street children revealed their differences in assumptions about the etiology and nature of the problem and approaches in its intervention which provided a background to the guidelines given to the helpers of street children in chapter six.
- A questionnaire that can be used to investigate the perceptions street children have about the most important referent in the life world was developed in this study.
- A questionnaire survey was done with a large number of street children and the implications of using this method and this specific group was highlighted.
- A comparison between former street children now in shelters and street children still on the streets, revealed the influences a sheltered existence have on the perceptions of street children.
- The empirical study served as confirmation to the findings of the literature study and was used as basis where-upon the guidelines to the helpers had been developed.

7.5 FUTURE DIRECTIONS ON THE RESEARCH OF THE STREET CHILD PHENOMENON

The first area of research that seems important would be related to the etiology of the phenomenon. A casual observation made during interviews with street children and their helpers was that they tend to originate from rural and semi-rural communities, and informal settlements mostly, rather that townships. The above-mentioned areas are home to the poorest of the poor, the most dislocated, under-resourced and isolated people in South Africa. Their family lives are thus likely to suffer multiple stress factors associated with their circumstances. Research on what the nature of these stressors is

and their specific influence on family life, and practices in child rearing and caretaking could thus be important. Questions could also be asked about whether a causal relationship between growing up in a rural environment or informal settlement and streetism actually exists, and particularly about the perception, identity development and self-concepts of children growing up there.

Closely related to the above issues could be multi-cultural questions such as the identity development of a black boy growing up in a predominately white mainstream environment. This could be cone especially as regards to the children of domestic servants in white homes with their children living with them. Another issue in this regard that demands research would be cross-cultural community perspectives on the street child phenomenon and community and cultural group influences on the etiology of the phenomenon as well as community intervention and maintenance programmes .

An issue that also seems quite prevalent but also under researched is that of single parenthood and matriarchal families and the influence it has upon the development of identity, perceptions and the self-concept of the black boy. This is especially important in its influences on family relations and patterns, especially as regards to a society that was previously very patriarchal.

An important facet of future studies would also be a stronger focus on prevention and intervention. The development of a life skills programme for all at-risk children preventatively, and also for street children seems like a priority. Such a programme could also be coupled with one for their parents. A family therapy focused intervention programme for the families of street children would also constitute very important action research.

Assessment material developed for black children and more especially streetchildren is an important need in their intervention. Different shelters and homes for street children also seem to have different goals, approaches and outcomes. An important question surrounding this issue could be relationship between the perceptions and expectations

of the helpers and the outcome of their intervention. The strategies and programmes that also seemed most successful under different circumstances also deserve closer attention.

7.6 CONCLUSION

It is important that this research should occur within the South African context to develop a relevant body of knowledge about the South African street child. Street children also have the right to a dignified existence, a meaningful future and actualizing all their potential. It is therefore, the duty of adults and institutions ensure that they grow up in conditions that would optimally ensure their healthy development. There will always be street children, but the ultimate objective should be to take preventative action against the conditions that drive children to the streets, and to start intervention with those all ready there as soon as possible.

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