

I declare that the dissertation for the degree of Master of Social Work at the University of the North-West hereby submitted, has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university, that it is my own work in design and execution and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE PHENOMENON OF STREET CHILDREN IN
THE NORTH WEST AREA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MOLOPO, ODI
AND KUDUMANE REGIONS

BY



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ABSTRACT

This study is about street children. It focuses on the three regions of the previous Bophuthatswana area viz. Molopo, Odi and Kudumane. Using literature on the topic, previous research on this topic, and in-depth interviews, the study seeks to investigate the nature and extent of the problem, causation and effects of child street peddling and possible measures to prevent the problem of street children.

Through a critical assessment of factors causing the problem and the effects this problem is having on the children as well as the community, the study shows the increasing need for professional and communicative approaches in finding solutions to the street children problem.

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CHAPTER 1

1. PROBLEM AREA

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of street children¹ is a social problem experienced by many countries. The area previously known as Bophuthatswana presently is no exception in this regard². The street children are friends to none and consequently they regard everyone as a total stranger, thus causing them to live in distrust and fear towards those they do meet. Their desire is to survive until they are old enough to find their own social and economic levels in the society. Each country has its own focal points of development, which attract street children to seek some means of survival.

The focus of this particular study is on the three regions of the Bophuthatswana area namely, Odi, Molopo and Kudumane. These regions were chosen from the twelve regions comprising the Bophuthatswana area because of the reported high rate of street children as noted in the 1988 Annual Report of the Department of Health and Social Services.

1 The phenomenon of street children and street child problem will be used interchangeably throughout the study.

2 As this study was undertaken when Bophuthatswana was still an independent country, the text will throughout refer to Bophuthatswana.

These regions have their own focal points for development which are the industries and business areas which obviously attract street children. Social workers and the general community are inundated with the problems and the probable increase of street children. It is therefore vital that acceptable solutions are found to these problems.

1.2

GENERAL ORIENTATION

It is generally accepted that street children experience problems which affect them physically, emotionally as well as socially. This, amongst others, is evident from their general appearance. They are withdrawn, depressed, underclothed, dirty, underfed and sad. They also seem to have a nobody-cares attitude towards the world.

These children are mostly found around business areas asking for money or devising some means of obtaining such money. They tell incredible fantasy stories to enhance their begging. This behaviour becomes a habit because parents apparently are doing very little or are not in a position to stop such behaviour. The parents even sometimes, according to social workers reports, encourage this type of behaviour especially when the child is regarded as the family's bread-winner.

Although this study focuses on three regions only, it should be realized that other regions of the country which are not under study, are also to a lesser or greater extent fraught with a similar problem.

Street children are mostly found around shopping complexes and taxi ranks pushing trolleys, washing cars and helping taxi drivers collecting money from passengers. As a social worker and being faced with this problem, the researcher wishes to investigate thoroughly this problem in an effort to arrive at practical recommendations and possible measures to prevent or otherwise alleviate the situation.

1.3

RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEM

In Bophuthatswana as a whole but especially the study areas, one meets street children of varying ages daily. Some children have parents or guardians, others do not know their parents. Some children do not have anywhere to go and hence, the street is their home. Some children have homes but they take to the streets and dumping places for various reasons. Some do go to school whereas others are not interested or do not have the opportunity of attending school.

Mmabatho, in the Molopo region, like Johannesburg having "street wise" an educational programme for street children, has Mmabana Cultural Centre which caters for an educational programme of formal schooling to a small number of street children.

Unfortunately the bulk of street children are not catered for and are therefore in need of care.

Research into this problem will help the authorities to understand better the factors which lead to children being on the streets. It will also help identify the need and problematic areas which may have effects on the physical, emotional and social development of these children.

Furthermore, this research is necessary for possible relevant conclusions leading to appropriate facilities or programmes being provided to meet the needs of these children and their families.

Lastly, the authorities of the North West Region could refer to such studies for the implementation of RDP in respect of the welfare of the street children and their families.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study is to collect and process data about the street children in Molopo, Odi and Kudumane. The following objectives will be pursued:

1.4.1 The extent of the problem of street children

According to the general observation and information from the Department of Health and Social Services, this problem is of general interest since problems created by the street children apparently affect the entire community's social functioning. Generally, the children's behaviour is unacceptable by the society at large: for example glue sniffing, stealing and also the fact that they are not attending school and are generally accepted as being children in need of care (Child Care Act, 1983).

1.4.2 The nature and causation of street peddling by children

The researcher attempted to identify some characteristics of this problem by reviewing literature on research already carried out. Different probable causes such as divorce, poverty, unemployment, etcetera, were fully investigated.

1.4.3 Identifying possible measures to prevent the problem of street children

From the literature reviewed on research already carried out on the phenomenon of street children, possible measures to combat and prevent this problem in the Bophuthatswana area were selected. These will help to improve the quality of life of these children thereby facilitating their return to a "normal life".

1.5 METHODOLOGY

Methodology encompasses techniques such as research design, methods for collecting data and sampling which a researcher uses to manipulate data to the acquired knowledge.

1.5.1 Research Design

According to Reid and Smith (1981:64) a research design is the overall plan or strategy by which questions are answered. Schuerman (1983:21) defines design as the plan for specifying what information (data) is needed, from whom and when it is to be gathered.

The research design which was used in this study is Exploratory - Descriptive design, which according to Barbbie (1986:91) is an attempt to develop an initial, rough understanding of some

phenomenon and the precise measurement and reporting of the characteristics of some population or phenomenon under study.

This design was chosen because the phenomenon of street children has not, according to the knowledge of the researcher, been properly explored in Bophuthatswana. Therefore firstly, the researcher attempted to familiarise herself with the phenomenon and secondly she attempted to observe and describe the characteristics of the street children as objectively as possible. These will be clearly shown in the chapter on data presentation and analysis.

NWU
LIBRARY

1.5.2 Methods of data collection

The following methods of data collection were used:-

1.5.2.1 Literature studies

Literature of previous studies on the problem of street children was reviewed in order to get information on the extent and nature of the problem, causes and effects, and possible measures to prevent and combat the problem of street children.

1.5.2.2 Structured Questionnaires

(a) Interview Schedule

The researcher assisted by Honours students of the University of Bophuthatswana personally interviewed the respondents in the three different regions to collect data. The children were interviewed on the streets, shopping complexes, taxi ranks and homes.

(b) Mailed questionnaires

Structured questionnaires were mailed to the social workers in the study area, through the Department of Health and Social Services to complete in order to get their views on the problem of street children. As experienced workers and being in contact with the children, their input is important and could prove to be invaluable.

1.5.3 Sampling

The researcher used a non-probability sample namely accidental and snowball sampling to gather the necessary information.

Grinnell (1981:86) defines accidental sampling as taking the first available appropriate sampling unit and gathering data from the known persons. The available street children found at the shopping complexes and taxi ranks were included in the sample.

Furthermore Grinnell (1981:88) defines snowball sampling as requesting the information from the available sample as to other appropriate persons. The available street children referred the interviewer to the other street children.

The population group included black children, both boys and girls aged between six and eighteen years, who were loitering in the streets at shopping complexes and taxi ranks. Most of the street children were boys (91%) as compared to girls (9%). The sample consisted of 90 street children.

1.6 LIMITATION

The only limitation seemed to be that the children were somehow suspicious of the researcher and as such the information obtained from them might not have been the full truth.

1.7 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

1.7.1 A Child

According to the children's Act No. 33 of 1960 as cited in Bosman (1982:313) a child is generally someone who is under the age of eighteen years, and stands in particular relationship to his parents.

The word child according to Mekgwe stands for the following:-

C	=	Care
H	=	Home
I	=	Intimacy
L	=	Love
D	=	Discipline (Mekgwe, 1991:6)

In other words the child is a person who needs care, shelter or home, love and discipline from his or her parents in order to develop and mature normally.

1.7.2 SOCIALIZATION

Penroid (1983:638) defines socialization as "the process by which individuals learn what their community considers socially important and acceptable behaviour".

Elkin and Handel (1984:33) define socialization as the process by which children learn the ways of a given society or social group so that they can function in it.

Children are mainly socialized within the family by their parents. Parents are normally seen as raw models for their children. They have to try and make sure that their children do not adopt any form of deviant behaviour. This is not always the case because some

children do end up as street children despite their parents' efforts to keep them away from the streets.

1.7.3 CONFORMITY

The concept of conformity is normally used to indicate that people comply with the values, rules and general customs of society. Despite the aforementioned, street children, as part of a sub-culture, normally have to conform to peer groups. This conformity is to support the group's own norms and values.

Bronson (1974:247) maintains that when one joins a group, he will have to incorporate the behavioral patterns, lifestyles, ambitions, aspirations and language of that group, even if the behaviour of the group is deviant.

1.7.4 STREET CHILDREN

According to Swart (1987:3) a street child is "any girl or boy who has not reached adulthood, for whom the street has become his or her habitual place or source of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised or directed by responsible adults".

Balanon (1989:159) defines street children as those who live or spend a significant amount of time on the streets of urban areas to

fend for themselves, and their families. He further categorizes them into the following groups:

- (a) Children with continuous family contacts, they work in the streets; but most of them go to school and they go home to their families at the end of the day.

- (b) Children with occasional family contact; they work in the streets, but do not attend school and seldom go home to their families.

- (c) Children without family contacts; they consider the streets their home, and they seek shelter, food and a sense of belonging among peers on the streets.

Street children could be clearly understood by making a distinction between the children of the street and children on the street. Emery (1986:9) in her distinction said that children of the street are those who are homeless, who live on the street, whereas children on the street refer to those who go into urban areas in order to earn or beg for money and who then return home. The latter will be the description of street children in this study. Such children may be neglected, abandoned, have run away from destitute or brutal homes

or may be without visible means of support. They may also be habitual truants.

1.7.5 BOPHUTHATSWANA REGIONS (See Annexure A)

The Bophuthatswana area is a semi-urban territory which opted for independence from the Government of South Africa in 1977. It comprises of twelve regions and the capital city Mmabatho is situated in Molopo region. The Department of Health and Social Services in Bophuthatswana area has identified three regions viz. Molopo, Odi and Kudumane as having the most serious problem of street children as compared to other regions within the area.

In order to prevent unreliable and invalid findings, only three regions have been singled out of the twelve regions upon which the research is based. Therefore, the three regions mentioned earlier on will then represent street children in Bophuthatswana area.

1.8 DIVISION OF THE REPORT

Chapter 1 has dealt with the problem area: general orientation, Significance of the problem, Objectives, Methodology, Limitations and definition of concepts.

Chapter 2 of this report will consist of the review of literature by other researchers on the nature, extent and causes of the street

children phenomenon and of the researcher's own view regarding this literature.

Chapter 3 will contain the effects of the phenomenon and measures to combat and prevent the street children problem.

Chapter 4 will contain the presentation analysis and interpretation of the empirical results from both street children and social workers from different regions of Bophuthatswana.

The final chapter will include the main findings, recommendations and conclusions i.e. a summary of major research findings and interpretation of actual results, suggestions for the application of the findings, possible future awareness concerning the study.

Finally bibliography and annexures.

CHAPTER 2

2. NATURE, EXTENT AND CAUSES OF THE STREET CHILDREN PHENOMENON

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The problem of street children is increasing world wide and the Bophuthatswana area is no exception. It manifests itself as a situation of non-conformity within the existing cultural and social norms and values of society. Unfortunately this is not always the case as children are sometimes forced to the streets by factors beyond their control. Most of these factors such as poverty, unemployment, child abuse, etcetera, are common to most countries. There may, however, be unique differences in the specific situations of the children.

Non-conformity of street children is a result of the inability of children to develop the social bonds of involvement, commitment, attachment and beliefs that bind society together. For the child to develop such bonds, it is necessary for him to be adequately socialized within the family. The family is the institution that provides for the child's self-actualization and normal upbringing.

When the child grows older, he will look for a pillar to lean on while looking for some means of self-sufficiency. If there is no secure loving environment and support from parents and other significant family members, the child will not be able to find meaning and direction in his own life. He may deviate from society's values and norms and possibly engage in socially unacceptable behaviour. He may accomplish this by joining his peers on the streets because there he will find empathy and acceptance.

For the purpose of this study it is necessary to make a distinction between children on the street and children of the street. In this regard, Emery, (1986:9) in her distinction, mentioned that children of the street are, on the one hand, those who are homeless and who live on the streets. These children have little or no contact with their families. Children on the street, on the other hand, are those who go into urban areas in order to earn or beg for money and afterwards return home at the later hours of the night. These children usually contribute towards the financial support of their families.

Wherever street children are found, they either go home at later hours or sleep on the streets wherever they can find a place to spend the night.

Schurink (1993:10) maintains that these children's lives are shadowed by factors such as (illiteracy) little or no schooling, sexual exploitation, delinquency, neglect, poverty, poor socialization and begging. Street children should not be considered as separate from other children in need of care but the uniqueness of their problems should be recognized.

Henceforth the literature on street children is reviewed in order to familiarize the researcher with the problem area at hand, as well as to validate any findings made in this regard.

Since the availability of research is limited on what actually brings about the street children phenomenon, the researcher will look at the nature and extent of the street children problem, the causation and effects of this phenomenon as well as an evaluation of the measures that can possibly be implemented to combat or prevent this problem. All these should be considered in addition to the children's own perceptions of their: present existence; fantasies about their own future; and ultimate wellbeing.

2.2

NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE STREET CHILDREN PROBLEM

A great number of neglected children all over the world are forced to turn to the streets in an effort to solve problems arising from the social structures of which they are a part. In this section the

researcher will outline the personal characteristics and background features of street children.

2.2.1 NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

People are concerned about the thought of children forced to take up adult responsibilities by working on the streets or living off the proceeds of street life. Yet the phenomenon of child-men and child-women who have to earn their own living is not new.

According to Schurink (1993:11) in medieval times, there was little difference between being a child and being an adult. Children were vital to the economy of both family and society. Peasant families could not have survived without their children's labour. The children were to start work at the earliest possible age and were destined for a life of hard work and suffering. The employers favoured child labour because low wages were paid in exchange for tedious and tiring work done under poor working conditions. As the children mainly emerged from the lower socio-economic scale, they were forced to work in order to augment the family income.

Today the street children are moving around business centres - shopping complexes, taxi ranks in rags or underclothed, dirty, underfed and sad, asking for money in order to buy food. According

to Baizerman (1990:4) street children constitute an aesthetic phenomenon, one resulting from their presence and visibility in a community. They are part of the street culture of petty crimes, drug selling and prostitution which constitute part of the criminal subculture of the street. They are part of the job market as unskilled, energetic, available low cost and short term employees.

Street children are beset with complex problems and pressures ranging from poverty, to a lack of access to education and employment, to difficulties arising from the changing family and community structures and the break down of traditional family and community support. The majority of families of these unfortunate children belong to the disadvantaged sector.



Balanon (1989:159-160) maintains that many children in big cities today find themselves on the streets and perform odd jobs to earn a living for themselves and their families. They are surrounded by malnutrition, undernourishment, hunger, unsanitary and unhealthy living conditions, and susceptibility to physical abuse, gambling and prostitution. They are deprived of parental support, discipline and guidance.

Street children in Hillbrow are reported by Swart (1988:6) as being filthy, neglected, begging at shop entrances, peering through restaurant windows at diners, lying comatose on pavements and in shop doorways and snatching leftovers or even whole hamburgers from plates of pavement cafes.

In a special report from Santiago, Sapa reported that street children in Latin America are impoverished, abandoned, and they roam the streets and alleyways. They are surviving by prostitution in Brazil, street crime in Colombia and brutalized by war in central America.

In certain parts of the world, street children are the products of civil war and unrest.

The age range of street children is between six and eighteen years. Schurink (1993:19) asserts that the majority of street children are boys. Girls comprise about 10% of the street child population. Those girls who choose street life end up becoming prostitutes fairly easily. Different researchers cited in Gibeys (1990:12) confirm the statement that street children are mostly males. Gibeys noted that 81,1% were males and 18,9% females.

The same tendency is also applicable to South Africa. In this regard Swart noted that in Johannesburg the street population was predominantly male and black. Scharf et al noted that 10% of street

children in Cape Town were female and the rest male.

Most of the street children seem to be in need of food, clothing, shelter and basic services such as medical care and literacy. Ultimately these children are resentful and suspicious of those who try to help them which makes rehabilitative efforts so much more difficult.

2.2.2 EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

The assumption can be made that the number of street children have been underestimated by most of the previous research findings, for instance; Swart (1987:6) reported that an anonymous government official had estimated the number of street children to be 5 000 country wide.

However even though people should not underestimate the extent of the problem, they should try their level best to avoid sensational overestimates. It is therefore very tempting to speculate that there could be thousands of street children, and in fact this may be the tip of the iceberg.

What is implied by such statements may be useful for alerting the government and the public to the urgency of the situation or for reassuring ourselves as social welfare service workers that we are working on major and significant social problems.

According to Richter (1988:22) street children in South Africa including coloured and black, urban and rural, boys and girls have been estimated to be 6364 and tabulated as follows:-

DISTRIBUTED BY AREA IN RSA

Western Cape	-	813
Northern Cape	-	222
Eastern Cape	-	528
Natal	-	367
Orange Free State	-	640
Transvaal	-	1 827

PREVIOUSLY INDEPENDENT COUNTRIES

Bophuthatswana	-	559
Ciskei	-	303
Transkei	-	977
Venda	-	128
Total	=	6 364

In contrast to the above figures for South Africa, more than twenty million street children are said to be roaming the streets of Latin American cities. Seven million street children are still teeming through Rio de Janeiro, Sau Paulo and other Brazilian cities.

It is extremely difficult to conduct a head count of street children at any given place and time. Schurink (1993:28) maintains that recent global estimates put the number of children on the street at 100 million and those of the street at 50 million.

The number of street children in developing countries is consistently rising and the street children phenomenon is currently becoming more prominent especially in the developing countries.

2.3

CAUSES OF THE STREET CHILDREN PHENOMENON

Several home background factors have emerged as salient causes in the number of studies on street children by researchers such as Zelizer, Swart and Richter. These factors will be discussed in order to determine their relative contribution to the reasons why children tend to frequent the streets. Contrary to the general concept that street children are only naughty children, rejecting parental authority and taking to the streets, previous studies indicate that pathological family factors are mostly responsible for this phenomenon.

Swart (1988:33) asserted that childhood security in the traditional sense of being contained within a family system is being shaken everywhere by divorce, desertion, marital dispute, child abuse, all of

which are increasing inexorably and may contribute to the street children problem.

Various situations and circumstances deprive a child of the safe atmosphere that ought to prevail in his parental home. These unbearable situations can be classified into three levels, namely: macrolevel (community context), mesolevel (family context) and microlevel (the individual himself).

Schurink (1993:108) outlined the unbearable situations under the three levels as follows:-

- (a) The macrolevel factors include urbanization; forced resettlement; overcrowding; violence and few or no job opportunities.
- (b) Mesolevel factors include parents moving to the cities without adequate planning for the provision of sustenance and care for their children; single parent families; disintegration of marriage and family life; physical and psychological maltreatment of children by their parents; and lack of parental control and supervision.
- (c) Microlevel factors include: feelings of inferiority because parents cannot afford school fees; need for personal attention

which is impossible in a large family; poor school performance; love of adventure; peer group pressure; etcetera.

Several of these contributing factors will be examined as possible causes for the phenomenon of street children.

2.3.1 MACROLEVEL FACTORS

2.3.1.1 POVERTY

Most of the street children come from the lower end of the socio-economic scale which implies that they come from families that are poverty stricken. Since these children are without visible means of support, they may move to the cities or shopping complexes to earn money as a means of survival.

According to Ammerman, et al (1991:145) poverty exerts a stressful impact on families and parental functioning. As such parents are unable to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter for their children. They will thus try other means to supplement the family income, such as having their children beg in the streets.

This has been supported by Sanders (1987:7) that in a valiant and admirable struggle to improve their situation, the poor turn to various alternatives, one of which is to have their children work or beg to supplement the family income.

When these children are unsuccessful as beggars, they resort to foraging in dustbins for food. They may also end up involved in petty theft, especially of food. For example, one child who, because of lack of food, was caught stealing from one of the shops in town and handed over to the social workers (see Annexure B).

The foraging in dustbins is evidently clear in Molopo [Mafikeng area] at the dumping site. The children here wait for lorries to come their way so that they can dig up their lunch and supper from the dirty unhealthy rubbish heaps.

2.3.1.2 INDUSTRIALIZATION AND URBANIZATION

Since the beginning of industries and urbanization, some members of the family were forced to leave their homes in search of employment in urban areas. The task often fell on the head of the family. Once he gets a job, he may forget to provide for the family financially and therefore poverty sets in. As a result of the mother's additional responsibilities which possibly also include accepting work away from home, she may also not be in a position to see to the proper upbringing of the children. The children may ultimately become neglected and possibly start roaming the streets in search for some means of survival and attention.

Swart (1988:33) concurs with the above statement when she mentions that the phenomenon of street children world wide is today generally linked with rapid industrialization and urbanization with the concomitant breakdown of care and control of children.

Furthermore migration is coupled with communication breakdown and disintegration of the family because of lack of family ties. This is not the only reason for the breakdown of family life, as other factors such as unemployment, difficulties to adapt to the changed circumstances, etcetera, may also contribute to disintegration possibly in combination with one another or as a precipitating factor leading to the neglect of children.



2.3.1.3 UNEMPLOYMENT

It is generally known that without being employed, life is difficult. People need to work in order to survive. Zelizer (1985:41) found in his study on the Brazilian street children that the children were on the street as a result of poverty, unemployment and marginalization, which affect their families. No matter how attached and integrally involved the child is with his or her family, if the family is impoverished, the child may, out of necessity, explore the environments to seek other means of survival. In order to do this, the child may choose to move out to the streets.

Since unemployment is generally associated with the problem of malnutrition, the children will resort to peddling for some money to buy food for survival.

Sethole (1991:9) in his unpublished dissertation on the problem of street children stated that unemployment resulting from illiteracy may influence parents to resort to alcohol and drugs. Thus the resultant poverty may influence the children to go out to central business areas to look for food in order to survive.

2.3.1.4 AIDS

At an international conference held in Zambia in 1991, a Zambian Health Authority mentioned that approximately 1:4 people in that country are HIV positive. As a result of the increasing AIDS phenomenon and the resultant deaths of both parents, many children are compelled to go to the streets for their own survival (Strydom, 1991).

2.3.2 MESOLEVEL FACTORS

2.3.2.1 FAMILY DISORGANIZATION

The family is a social unit whereby if one part of the unit becomes affected, then the whole unit will be affected as well. When a family is disorganized, it means that it does not function according to the

approved ethical patterns of the society. When there is lack of communication between family members, there is the possibility that the emotional and physical needs of the children may be neglected by both parents.

A child has no control over the actual structure of the family unit instead he often becomes a victim of his family's disorganized structure or dynamics. In disorganized families where there is a lack of parental discipline, the child's socialization process is often disrupted by this unfavourable home environment.

Shoemaker (1984:7) came to the conclusion that broken homes are often described as a cause of delinquency because broken homes and delinquency are correlated with one another (that is delinquents often come from broken homes). In such families the child may adopt unsociable behaviour such as: disrespect for the elderly, the usage of violent language and disrespect for private property.

Sometimes a family can be subjected to stress and when in this state, it does not care what happens to the children. During difficult times like starvation and severe food shortage, families may neglect their children in their despair.

Furthermore, constant fighting within the family will lead to minimal emotional support, love and care. As a result the children will be induced to view their home as non-conducive hence they leave to seek love and attention elsewhere.

The consequence of constant family discord, as viewed by Cronje et al (1987:93), negates proper parental guidance and the children are often gripped by a sense of uncertainty. The incessant quarrels also take up so much of the parents' energy, time and attention that they cannot devote enough positive attention to their children's development.

When the children leave their homes, they will search for people who will empathise with them and for situations where they will be able to reformulate their human dignity. In this regard, they frequently find empathy and acceptance among their peers on the streets.

2.3.2.2 FAMILY VIOLENCE

Disorganization within the family may result in violence. When quarrels degenerate into assault and fighting in which the children become involved, Cronje et al (1987:94) maintain that this can cause lack of self confidence and feelings of inferiority, resentment and

bitterness in the children leading, at times, to a rebellion not only against the parents but society as a whole.

Child maltreatment may occur in families where there is ongoing marital violence. In this regard Faller (1981:40) added that children may be caught in parental and family conflicts and become the focus of the anger and aggression. When there is a marital dispute, often the child becomes enmeshed in this conflict and traditional generational boundaries are blurred. Thus the antagonism between the spouses is displaced onto the child as forms of abuse and neglect.

Parents may become emotionally unavailable to their children as a result of their pre-occupation with battering. They may rely on their children for guidance, support and affection. They may also have difficulty disciplining their children and may alternately ignore and severely punish their children for misbehaviour. Severe punishment has a degrading effect on the child and he could even decide to run away from home.

The increasing tension between husband and wife, parents and children sometimes finds expression in quarrelling and even assault and maltreatment of mother and children by, for instance, the

drunken father. Not only do the parents set their children a bad and corrupting example in this way, but the children also want to leave the family circle to avoid involvement in the quarrels and fights. Ultimately they will go to the streets where they will live peacefully with their peers.

2.3.2.3 CHILD ABUSE

When the child is abused in the family, he or she will experience emotional traumas and becomes isolated and alienated from the rest of the family. Not only physical abuse, such as beating and burning, can drive the child from home, but also abuse in the form of continual betrayal of a child's trust, emotional apathy towards him and neglect of his physical, emotional and mental needs.

According to Cronje et al (1987:102) the child, even the infant though not experiencing the necessary mother love, his personality development suffers and even at an early stage, he may possibly show signs of emotional disturbances which may lead to adjustment problems.

Fredericksen and Mulligan (1972:18) put it as follows: "The child who is rejected by one or both parents may develop anxieties and inferiorities that make it difficult for him to enter into easy social relationships". This implies that if the child who is emotionally

neglected does not experience love and support in his family, he will often turn away from his home to outside groups where his needs may possibly be met.

Neglected children exhibit physical and developmental retardation as well as cognitive impairment, especially in the area of speech and language. They also experience impairment in their ability to form meaningful social relationships. The mother who consciously and unconsciously rejects her child, does him or her irreparable harm.

Ammerman et al (1991:141) further stated that children are not only abused physically, but can also be abused sexually. Sexually abused children may present amongst others scholastic problems, running away from home as well as experience emotional disturbances. They may also have hostile and aggressive behaviour or antisocial behaviour leading to delinquency.

Added to this, Harrison (1992:7) is of the opinion that children can be forced to run away from their homes when they report cases of sexual abuse to other people whom they trust and are not listened to. An example is of a child 13 year old child who sought help from a female social worker for being sexually abused by his foster mother, and was not believed. He therefore ran away from his foster family

and started to frequent the streets. Children who are abused and those who are abandoned by their parents, prefer to stay away from their homes and may even be afraid to go back.

2.3.2.4 LACK OF PARENTAL CONTROL

Lack of parental control has also emerged as a precipitating factor causing children to become street children. Fredericksen and Mulligan (1972:243) asserted that parents fail in home discipline not because of design or malignancy, but because of neglect, indifference, ignorance and unwillingness to accept their social responsibility towards their children.

In our society of constant change, many parents, especially those from the rural areas, are unable to discipline their children who have become delinquents or who have taken to the streets as a way of living.

In conclusion, Tappan (1949:31) maintained that parents who are either too careless or too busy with their own pleasures to give sufficient time, companionship and interest to their children, may increase the rate of delinquency.

2.3.2.5 DIVORCE OR SEPARATION OF PARENTS

This factor, in a great number of cases, has a detrimental effect on the health and wellbeing of the children involved. Lieberman (1979:45) asserts that when one parent leaves the family, the children will be deprived of that significant person and will start worrying about deprivation. He further mentions that divorce may shake the children's childhood security of being contained within the family unit. Children from broken marriages may become dropouts from school due to lack of funds. Dropping out from school may leave children idle and with no or little future aspirations which again can lead to the phenomenon of street children.

Following family breakdown, harsh neglectful treatment of children may result in families; especially step-parents who may cause the children to experience emotional trauma, leaving them isolated and alienated from the rest of the family. These children may even choose to flee from home and choose amongst others, to roam the streets begging, scavenging food outlets or even prostitution in order to survive.

Naturally children need love, proper care, social approval and guidance by significant others. Should these be inadequate, then the

children may turn to the streets where they will get the support of the group in their struggle for self-actualization.

2.3.2.6 SINGLE PARENTHOOD

As a contributing factor to the street children phenomenon, single parenthood proved to have an influence on the upbringing of the children. For example if death struck the breadwinner, or the breadwinner deserts the family, financial income disappears especially if the mother is not working. Some of these children may be forced to go out to the streets to supplement the family income, since the children are viewed as more successful at begging, petty earning or eliciting money from adults.

This phenomenon has been noticed by Madge (1983:136) as resulting from the dramatic rise of births out of wedlock, where there is no proper parental care of the child.

Single parents have been over represented among the abusive and neglectful parents and it would appear that they experience more difficulty in child rearing.

Faller (1981:41) also emphasised that a single parent is unable to manage the responsibilities of two parents as a result some of the

responsibilities go unmet. The strain of trying to perform two roles may also lead to abuse and neglect.

The insufficient care of children may also be aggravated by the fact that young teenage mothers have been described as being distractible, having infantile behavioral problems, acting out difficulties, poor reading ability and low IQ (Madge 1983:120).

Furthermore, because of inadequate protection and emotional instability, children may leave their homes to seek security and acceptance elsewhere.

2.3.3 MICRO LEVEL FACTORS

2.3.3.1 LARGE FAMILIES

One of the major contributing factors leading to the street child phenomenon is large families which are brought about by high birth rate noticeable in the poorer society. The effects of any parental shortcomings, incompetence or neglect are likely to be exacerbated if families have more children than they can cope with properly.

In this regard, West (1982:35) maintains that under working class conditions parents with too many children often suffer financial hardships. Furthermore limited spending power forces parents to live in neighbourhoods where delinquency is rife. They are also unable

to supply their children with aids such as toys, room space, leisure pursuits, reading material and school clothes for their schooling and socialization.

Overburdened parents have limited opportunity to monitor their children's activities or to exercise consistent control to prevent misconduct. Lack of individual attention from parents promotes reliance on peer groups who may exert pressure towards delinquency. Sometimes the older children in a large family may be left to manage the younger ones who may not take their supervision and control seriously as compared to parents.

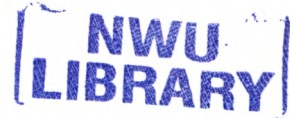
This may lead to conflict between the siblings resulting in uncalled aggression. The children who cannot bear the situation at home, may be driven into joining their peers in the streets.

2.3.3.2 PEER GROUP INFLUENCE

The peer group does not designate a single group in which a child participates but rather all those groups made up of older/senior children. Any particular child is likely to belong to more than one peer group although there may be overlapping membership.

Elkin, cited in Anderson, (1994:9) outlined the distinctive characteristics of the peer group as a socializing agency as follows:-

- it is made up of members who have about the same age, status and roughly the same position in relation to adult authority;
- the peer group is based on the group's concerns, whereas adult authority issues instructions which the child must learn in order to function in adult society. In contrast, the peer group has no such responsibility;
- thus any long run socializing implications are largely unintentional. Children participating in peer groups do not do so with the aim of preparing themselves for adult society through the peer group experiences.



Children may be influenced by others on the streets even though their parents are taking care of them. In this regard, West (1982:125) argues that lack of parental attachment and school failure will decrease commitment to educational and occupational aspirations, while increasing the likelihood of association with delinquent peers and the acquisition of such delinquent values.

The child's decision to leave home is usually the culmination of a series of events leading to his disengagement from the family. The period of anxiety and uncertainty leaves an emotional vacuum most

easily filled by his peer group or friends and he turns to them for the necessary support. Such children usually deviate totally from societal norms, values, traditions and belief systems.

They also lack social and emotional stability and confidence in themselves, hence turning to peers for support.

This tendency is supported by Swart (1988:36) namely that street children tend to live in groups for companionship and safety. Children who choose to remain on the streets will adopt the lifestyle of the group.

It can be concluded that the influence of the peer group on the lifestyle of the individual is therefore greatly caused by or strengthened by group cohesion and the expression of the culture (sub-culture) and values of the group.

2.3.3.3 EDUCATION

According to Madge (1983:3) low family income is associated with an increased risk of underachievement of children at school. Added to this, children from low income families may not be able to attend school at all due to lack of school funding. Most of the street children are from the lower economic scale families where parents are unable to send them to school due to lack of funds.

When a street child is sent to school at a later stage, he would find it difficult to adjust because of the learning disabilities he has acquired during his or her childhood stage. Their learning disabilities will cause them to produce poor academic results thus leading to dissatisfaction in attending school. On the other hand, children without learning disabilities and who have means of attending school, may ridicule this child. As a result, the child may resort to truancy and at the end dropping out of school.

In this regard Shoemaker (1984:29) adds that the poor grade and negative attitudes in turn result in the child's association with others who are also failures in schooling and involve themselves in school truancy, additional school related problems and delinquency.

Some children may even be forced to leave school in the middle of the year because of financial constraints. This is supported by Schurink (1993:110) that non-compulsory education creates basic problems. Moreover, African children may only enter school in January after the year in which they have turned seven. Many are therefore almost eight when they start formal education. The parents often experience financial problems and the children have to leave

school because they cannot afford books and school uniforms. A year later, circumstances may have improved and then the child, who has grown older, has to return to the same standard which may cause a total maladaptation.

The early schooling experience of children who end up on the streets, has frequently been such that they fear a return to an educational situation, where they will be ridiculed or punished for being older than their classmates and yet not knowledgeable in their subjects. It may also discourage a child returning to his community of origin even if other circumstances are favourable because it carries the stigma of a school failure.

Lack of schooling and dissatisfaction with poor family life play prominent roles in encouraging children to resort to street life more easily.

2.3.4 PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

As children are highly vulnerable, they may be emotionally affected by the negative treatment received from their parents or family members, such as betrayal, mistrust and emotional apathy towards them. They are often used as tools or scapegoats to reduce the

frustrations of their parents. When the child can no longer take all the harsh treatment, he may try to find an alternative solution for love and support elsewhere.

In this regard Haskel and Yablousky (1978:445) maintain that from Erikson's developmental theory in the stage of trust versus mistrust, trust develops in the first year of life and is built upon rewarding experiences and satisfaction of basic needs in the family.

The child is dependent on the mother for the gratification of his needs. According to Erikson's theory, it is in this stage where it is determined whether the child will develop trust or mistrust of the world around him.

They further state that the sense of trust in others, in himself and in the world, may be the most important element in a healthy personality that is not being delinquency prone. The possibility of mistrust is also emphasised by Salkind (1985:112) who states that: "Lack of support, inconsistent interactions with others and deprivation of basic needs lead to a sense of mistrust that threatens later developmental progress". Effectively this statement implies that when the needs of children are not met or satisfied, they will not trust the people around them especially their family members. They

may thus go to the streets to find people whom they can trust and these people may be their peers.

As stated earlier, a great number of street children are adolescents. This period generates ambiguities in self-perception and self-definition. According to Simons and Rosenberg (1973:564) in the study of adolescents, puberty does not in itself disturb the self image, but heightens vulnerability to environmental circumstances which threaten the individual's self concept. The adolescence stage is a developmental phase of increased susceptibility to acquire self identities which could effectively exclude adolescents from meaningful participation in mainstream society. If this developmental stage is restricted for whatever reason, it may lead to deviances such as the street child phenomenon.

2.3.5 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Although there are causative factors from the practical point of view, attention was given to the possible theoretical perspectives which might also explain the phenomenon of street children.

2.3.5.1 PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY - ERIKSON'S DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES

Trust is seen as the basis of all security. The home environment plays an important role in equipping the child with interpersonal skills during this period of development. The development of the child proceeds in stages and only the first three are relevant to the present study on street children.

(a) TRUST VERSUS MISTRUST

Erikson (1963) as cited by Mako (1993:35) maintained that the earliest basic trust is established during the oral - sensory stage and is demonstrated by the infant's capacity to sleep peacefully, to take nourishment comfortably and to excrete effortlessly. The repeated interactions between the mother and the infant such as touching, feeding, holding, naming and recognizing are highly personal and yet culturally ritualized behavioral patterns or actions. On the one hand recognition of the infant by the mother affirms and certifies the infant and its mutuality with the mother.

Lack of recognition on the other hand, can cause estrangement in the infant's personality; a sense of separation and abandonment. The child may carry these feelings with him throughout the other stages of development. If the child has

developed mistrust in his parents or other family members, he will seek empathy in his peers when he is of age. This, he might accomplish by going to the streets.

b) AUTONOMY VERSUS SHAME AND DOUBT

During the second stage of life (the anal-muscular stage) the child learns what is expected of him, what his obligations and privileges are along with what limitations are placed upon him. Hall and Lindzey (1978) as cited by Mako (1993:36) state that the child's striving for new and more actively-oriented experiences places a dual demand upon it, a demand for self control, and a demand for the acceptance of control from others in the environment.



Since the virtue of "will" emerges during this second stage of life, one wonders if street children have such a virtue, given the fact that they live in depressive conditions. The child learns from himself and from others what is expected from him and what is expectable. The will of the child is eventually responsible for his gradual acceptance of lawfulness and necessity. But this is not the case with street children. They are on the streets because amongst others, they refuse to accept discipline from authoritative figures.

(c) INITIATIVE VERSUS GUILT

The third psychosocial stage of life is that of initiative, and age of expanding mastery and responsibility. Erikson states that initiative combined with autonomy will give the child a quality of pursuing, planning and the determination of achieving tasks and goals. He also warned against the danger of feeling of guilt that may haunt the child for an overzealous contemplation of goals, including genital fantasies and the use of aggressive, manipulative means to achieve these goals as may be the case with street children.

The child's major activity at this stage is playing. He plays, explores and experiments with toys for a certain purpose. The child also assumes roles of parents and other adults in a make believe world. If the child is not exposed to all this, his development may be affected.

Street children, like all other children, have undergone the stages of development. One might say that for these children to be like this, something has gone wrong, they have experienced some mishaps of some kind or other throughout their developmental stages. In this regard, it is important not to forget that the first stages of development of a child are

very critical in his life. As such parents need to be sure or should make sure that their children go through all the stages of development, without experiencing any difficulties that may force them to opt for street life or any other form of deviant behaviour.

2.3.5.2 SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

According to Anderson (1994:12-13) this theory maintains that the problem of street children can occur when a child is a member of a sub-culture whose values conflict with those of mainstream society. According to this theory, this phenomenon may be part of a social learning process by which children become deviant through conformity to a set of standards rejected by the larger society, for instance gambling and not attending school. This problem may also be a form of social acquisition through imitation or modelling of other's behaviour especially the deviant behaviour of peers.

Whatever the causative factors, it is clear that the problem of street children is dependent on the value orientation of children and the degree of social control exerted by the parents.

Furthermore, it is clear that the increasing number of street children have an immense influence on the general lifestyle of a community.

The phenomenon of street children is a multifaceted problem which is increasing rapidly the world over. The children are the most easily targeted group and as such they should be saved and protected from the wrath of this phenomenon before they are all destroyed.

CHAPTER 3

EFFECTS OF THE PHENOMENON AND MEASURES TO PREVENT OR COMBAT THE STREET CHILDREN PROBLEM

3.1 EFFECTS OF THE STREET CHILDREN PROBLEM

The street child phenomenon has an effect on both the children and the community. The effect can be either advantageous or disadvantageous.

3.1.1 EFFECTS ON THE CHILDREN

3.1.1.1 ADVANTAGEOUS EFFECTS

Many of the street children prefer street life to an unhappy home. Schurink (1993:116) outlined the advantages as follows:-

The street child group provides empathy and security for the child; on the street the child is safe from maltreatment by his parents; street life brings escape from home circumstances that are unbearable for the child; on the street the child is not subjected to discipline; the child learns to think creatively and device plans in order to survive; street life fulfils the child's need for adventure.

3.1.1.2 DISADVANTAGEOUS EFFECTS

Street life poses various problems for street children. Children may be affected emotionally, physically and cognitively.

(a) EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS

These problems include, amongst others, fear that nobody will ever love them; continuous search for people who would empathize with them; fear of being alone; anxiety; and distrust of other children.

The children are defensive and withdrawn about many aspects of their past and present lives, which evoke painful emotions. This is true because "emotionally starved and brutalized children express their rage and despair as well as hope" (Lieberman, 1979:47).

Lieberman continues to say that even though such children may remember the abuse, tyranny and desertion in their childhood, they cannot remember the affect that accompanied these events.

Therefore these children may re-enact their experiences over with their own children. In this regard it was found that they will be unable to give what was lacking in their own lives: for instance if a child was deprived of love, and security during his childhood, he may be unable to give love and security to his own children.

(b) HEALTH PROBLEMS

Various health problems can be caused by exposure to cold weather, unhygienic conditions, malnutrition and contagious diseases resulting from street life. Examples of these problems are colds, hearing problems, food poisoning, cholera, sexually transmitted diseases, burns, skin problems, as well as health problems incurred from the use of abusive substances.

Schurink (1993:114) described the dangers related to the use of the abusive substances (especially glue sniffing) as follows:

physical signs that may occur are facial blemishes, spots and sores around the mouth and nose, cracked lips, tired look, enlarged pupils, sore eyes, sore throats, and rapid weight loss. Long term effects and damage to the central nervous system and the brain, the heart, the liver and the kidneys and the vital blood producing function of the bone marrow may also be damaged. Glue sniffing which is apparently generally practised by street children also has broader implications.

In this regard, Richter (1988:11), added that the street children showed cognitive and perceptual dysfunctions which resulted from the effects of glue sniffing, as well as injuries and accidents which are associated with glue intoxication. Some of these children end up dying or becoming disabled.

(c) EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS

Lack of schooling as well as the deterioration of skills already mastered in school represent a most important problem for the street children.

This is supported by Richter (1988:11) who argues that the study she did on street children showed that the longer the time children spent on the streets, the worse their prognosis for educational rehabilitation became. These children did not only lose the basic educational skills they might have picked up in a few years of schooling, but they acquired handicaps which may hamper further scholastic possibilities.

(d) EXPOSURE TO ANTISOCIAL AND EXPLOITATIVE PRACTICES

The children being on the streets may be involved in criminal acts or any acts which are socially unacceptable, hence convictions to society's moral folkways and standards.

Examples of crimes that the street children may be involved in are, amongst others, assault, rape, prostitution, theft, gambling, drunkenness, disturbance of peace, loitering, urinating in the streets, exposure to street fights and victimization. It has come to the notice of the social workers that they are even burned with cigarette butts or even drenched with cold water on winter nights in order to drive them away.

When society apprehend and treat children as criminals, it may place them on the path to actual criminality. The other effect is the daily experience of negative adult attitude to the street children's lifestyle and hostile, condemnatory responses that make it extremely difficult for these children to retain a healthy sense of self esteem.

It could be said that children roaming the streets may, in their own adult life, produce similar children. This may be true as it has already been mentioned that what children experience early in life, may have a bearing on their own lives later. Accordingly this may lead to a cyclical pattern which is difficult to break.

3.1.2 EFFECTS ON THE PUBLIC/COMMUNITY

This phenomenon has also an effect on the public especially with reference to health hazards and environmental conservation. Schurink (1993:117) outlined some of the effects on the community as follows: street children are guilty of littering, their sleeping abodes lure flies which might cause diseases, and the children sometimes commit arson and vandalism.

Referring to the children's reactions towards the public, Scharf et al (1986:273) maintain that the children are extremely manipulative of adults who are seen as the potential providers of money and other means of survival for them on the streets. They play on the people's guilt feelings, that they are responsible for these children being on the streets.



Street children's behaviour also affect the societal functioning in that the society does not approve of the antisocial acts committed by the street children. Street children in begging, play on the people's guilt feelings. They tell the people sad stories to persuade them to give them money. According to Swart (1988:12) the commonest feelings street children arouse in the public are pity, anger and frustration.

Members of the public believe that if they maltreat the children, they will feel that life on the street is made sufficiently harsh for them and as a result they will go home. These feelings of frustration and anger are frequently vented on the children.

From the literature review, it appears that the specific circumstances of the street children as well as their urge to survive, poses various

disadvantages for the society and themselves. This is a serious social problem.

As this phenomenon directly affects the community at large, service delivery by organizations as well as relevant legislation are important steps in dealing with the problem of street children.

3.2 MEASURES TO PREVENT OR COMBAT THE STREET CHILDREN PROBLEM

To combat the street children problem is not a short term task. This has been noted by the local social workers as well as overseas authorities as noted by Swart (1988:13). These workers noted that when the problem of street children is first addressed, public opinion demands impossible results that street children should reform in the shortest possible time. The time taken by each boy in each stage of the process of his recovery depends on his personal progress and not legal provisions. The time spent in each stage is progressively longer depending on the length of time the child has spent on the street and how old he is.

Street children have developed ways and means of caring for themselves and sometimes they even have to support their families. Therefore, they themselves, possibly as a result of their own acquired independence or ignorance and immaturity, are not asking or requesting for any form of external assistance. Whatever the circumstances may be, they are a unique category of children in need of care and should be dealt with accordingly.

3.2.1 LEGISLATION REGARDING STREET CHILDREN

Although there is currently no specific legislation regarding street children, the following Acts seem to be of particular relevance regarding both children on and of the street. Schurink (1993:37-51) outlined them as follows:-

3.2.1.1 CHILD CARE ACT OF 1983 (ACT NO 47 OF 1983)

The Act acknowledges the general principle that the family is the normal social and biological structure within which a child must grow and develop. The emphasis is placed on the care of the child by the parents and not the uncontrollable child. The Child Care Act makes provision for protection, care and treatment of children falling within its jurisdiction, as well as for services to their families.

This Act was amended by the Child Care Amendment Act of 1991 (Act No. 86 of 1991). It brought changes which are specifically applicable to street children such as:

"to provide that a child who has a parent or guardian who cannot be traced, may be brought before a children's court, which can hold an inquiry and make an order in respect of such a child;

to further regulate the designation of a children's home or school of industries as a result of an order of a children's court;

to provide for the observation, examination and treatment of children in places of safety;

to regulate the transfer of a child from an institution to the custody of his parents or guardian;

to abolish the requirement that race classification of a child and the person in whose custody the child is placed should be the same;

to make the offence relating to the ill-treatment of children applicable to all persons;
to further regulate financial support for the maintenance of pupils and certain children".

See Annexure C for detailed explanation of the above changes.

3.2.1.2 COMMON LAW (SECTION 38 OF THE CHILD CARE ACT 1983)

According to the South African common law, children under the age of seven years are deemed to be "doli incapax" meaning that they are incapable of committing a crime and are never regarded as responsible for committing criminal offences. When this child commits a criminal offence, it can be dealt with in a children's court. Children between the ages of seven and thirteen years are presumed to be "doli incapax" and can thus only be charged with a criminal offence if the prosecution can prove that the child was capable of distinguishing between right and wrong and was acting according to what he knew was wrong. A juvenile will be treated as an adult but the proceedings are held "in camera". Street children are children in need of care and will be treated like other children. In this regard the above statements will also apply to the street children as they are bound or sometimes even forced to indulge in criminal acts.

3.2.1.3 THE CORRECTIONAL AND SUPERVISION MATTERS AMENDMENT ACT (ACT NO 122 OF 1991)

The purpose of this act is to extend the mission of the Department of Correctional Services regarding treatment and rehabilitation of offenders by establishing correctional supervision as community based punishment being an alternative in lieu of prosecution or upon

passing of sentence. Seeing that most of the street children, especially juveniles, are put in prison for the criminal acts they have committed, they can be treated in terms of this act. In this regard the number of children in prisons will be reduced as their punishment will be treatment and rehabilitation within the community context.

3.2.1.4 THE BASIC CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT ACT OF 1983 (ACT NO 3 OF 1983)

This act prohibits an employer to employ a person under the age of fifteen years. Working children under the age of fifteen, whether employed in the formal or informal sector, are thus not protected by any legislation. The only protection the law offers them is the prohibition to work. Street children who do not have the option to stop working must maintain themselves in the face of illegality without enjoying the necessary legal protection to even defend their elementary rights as working children.

3.2.1.5 THE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF DRUG DEPENDENCY ACT, 1992 (ACT NO 20 OF 1992)

Act No 20 of 1992 is the amendment Act to the previous Abuse of Dependence - Producing Substances and Rehabilitation Act (Act No 41 of 1971) which made provision for the prohibition of the possession, use or sale of a wide range of substances like hallucinogens and stimulants which are deemed to bring about physical and psychological addiction. This Act also provided for persons under the age of 18 addicted to drugs to be voluntarily or involuntarily admitted to a rehabilitation centre. Street children who were addicted could also be treated in terms of this Act.

The amendment Act (The Prevention and Treatment of Drug Dependency Act) provides for the prevention of drug abuse and the treatment of patients. All references to discrimination or punishment measures have been removed and the emphasis is placed on a rational approach to the patient. Programmes can be established aimed at prevention of drug dependency, information to the community on the abuse of drugs; and the rendering of assistance to the families of persons detained in a treatment centre (Lotter 1993:15).

Street children who are found to be addicted to or abusing drugs, will not be punished by way of sentencing or prosecution, but will be admitted to rehabilitation centres for treatment.

In conclusion, although current South African legislation may prove to be insufficient to regulate the street child problem, it must be borne in mind that the use of legal instruments alone, will not be sufficient to fully address the problems of street children. (See Annexure D).

3.2.2 PROGRAMMES FOR STREET CHILDREN

A wide variety of programmes dealing with children in need of care have been developed world wide. These projects or programmes are mainly for the educational and social support of these children.

3.2.2.1 PROGRAMMES IN SOUTH AFRICA

In South Africa, the problem of street children has become an issue of public concern. There have been various individual and group initiatives in response to the street child phenomenon. The mission

of different organisations includes the return of the child to his or her home, job or life skills training and the reintegration of the child into the larger community.

Schurink (1993:213-226) outlines the programmes to help street children as follows:

(a) STREET WISE

The organization helps street children return to formal schooling, prepare (vocationally) those who are unable to return to formal schooling and provide basic child care in the form of shelter, food and clothing, and coordinates welfare, psychological, medical and legal services. Streetwise has established subprogrammes such as:

Street outreach: This subprogramme provides street children with clothes, blankets, food and medical attention, as well as protecting them from abuse.

Shelters: These shelters are open throughout the year and they create a substitute home environment for the children as well as offer informal guidance and development work.

(b) PLACES OF SAFETY

Places of safety cater for children in need of care in terms of the Child Care Act of 1983, and the Criminal Procedure Act of 1977. Treatment includes basic child care, social work and nursing services as well as formal education. Street children are detained at these places before being taken to industrial or reform schools, a children's home, placed in foster care, or returned to their homes. Social workers train street children

in social skills; attend to their adjustment to the place of safety; and link up with outside social workers in respect of pending court cases and progress reports. They also promote acceptance and adjustment on release.

(c) TWILIGHT

This organization provides for street children in Hillbrow (Johannesburg). The activities here include: outreach programmes; soup kitchen; remedial education; health services; social work services; spiritual inspiration; recreation; behaviour modification (tokens for acceptable behaviour); and vocational training.

(d) MOLO SONGOLOLO

This is a community project in Cape Town which aims to provide services that will enable street children to improve their quality of life and become productive citizens, mainly through a preventive approach. The children are exposed to services that would stimulate them to express their ideas and experiences, promote contact between the inmates, provide relevant and educational reading material dealing with community issues as well as community involvement.

When the children are charged with various petty crimes, legal assistance is sought in respect of these children. Their families are contacted and are encouraged to visit them in prison. There is also a soup kitchen to provide them with food.

3.2.2.2 PROGRAMMES FOR STREET CHILDREN IN OTHER COUNTRIES

Unlike South Africa where court initiatives in respect of street children became evident only in the eighties, programmes in some countries have been in existence as early as the sixties. Selected programmes in operation in Colombia, Sierra Leone and Brazil as outlined by Schurink (1993:226-236) will be discussed. Furthermore attention will be given to measures in Swaziland as well as other measures which can be borne in mind in dealing with street children.

(a) COLOMBIA : FORGING NEW MEN

The programme aims at attracting children away from the street. In order to attract and establish rapport with the street children they are offered breakfast in the morning; a good meal at midday; free medical attention; hot showers and organized games. The educators arrange meetings with these children every evening. These meetings give the educators an opportunity to probe into family situations and explore reunification.

(b) SIERRA LEONE : BOYS SOCIETY

The aim of this programme is the rehabilitation of rejected, under privileged, and delinquent street boys aged between eight and eighteen years. It provides behavioral guidance and promotes good health as well as social, educational, vocational and character development. An agricultural programme was added to provide further training in useful skills. This programme maintains a nursery with potted plants, christmas trees, seedlings (which are sold), a rice swamp and a vegetable garden.

NWU
LIBRARY

(c) BRAZIL : YOUNG WORKER'S CLUB AND THE MAN OF TOMORROW

These programmes aim at providing for youngsters while they pursue their normal activities such as shining shoes and guarding and washing cars. The objectives include the improvement of working conditions; development of the children's human potential; reunification with their families; mobilization of the children in respect of enrolment in school; and providing vocational training in different trades.

The programmes also encourage youngsters and their families to face up to the social issues affecting their daily lives and respond by doing something about it.

(d) SWAZILAND

According to Van Loggernberg (1989:11) street children in Swaziland are trained to care for farm animals which include chickens and pigs. They are also taught the basics of vegetable gardening and planting of crops on a small scale. The girls are taught knitting and sewing.

3.2 OTHER MEASURES

Cemane (1990:4-5) in his study of street children identified measures to combat the street children problem as follow:

SHELTERS

The communities may set up small shelters to attract street children who are in need of care to participate in meaningful social activities, and to acquire skills to carry out responsibilities successfully. In this regard, children may learn to develop bonds of commitment.

Education should be geared towards academic social, psychological progress and vocational skills.

FELLOWSHIP MODEL

Street children do not have support networks and they do not engage in activities that make them feel useful and competent in their community. As such, former street gang members are involved in activities like boy scouts and girl guides which may help street children to become actively involved in meaningful activities. The children are also given the opportunity to be part of a socially accepted environment in order to encounter situations which may change their present lifestyles. Facing a new environment will increase the children's sense of communality and attachment to others.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Group discussions may be held with street children by members of the community with expert knowledge or skills in group dynamics. The children should be encouraged and motivated to discuss problems that affect their lives directly and their most pressing needs and desires for the future. These sessions will provide a sense of constancy in the child's social environment. They should be given individual guidance with more emphasis on concrete problem solving. (See Annexure E for an example of group work with street children by John Lenong).

Other factors that may contribute to the prevention of the problem of street children are:-

the creation of employment opportunities for parents;

development of community facilities such as day care centres, to keep the children off the streets; compulsory and free education; and stabilization and strengthening of the family by means of parent guidance and environmental programmes.

According to Swart (1988:13), successful projects for street children are founded on respect for the child and faith in his potential to develop. They are given understanding, security and a healthy environment. By reconciling nature and nurture, the street children with the grimmest case histories can show an astonishing power of recuperation.

Furthermore Schurink (1993:241) maintains that an empathetic approach should be adopted since it enables one to have an uncompromising acceptance of the street child, which forms the basis of a trusting relationship and mutual understanding.

It should be clear from the preceding chapters that the street child phenomenon is multifaceted and necessitates the establishment and development of welfare programmes, appropriate policy and legislation.

Although some factors have been highlighted in this literature review as contributing to the street children phenomenon, there are those facts that leave the child with no alternative but to move to the street for peddling, such as poverty and unemployment of parents.

It will thus be wise enough for the literature to challenge the traditional welfare interventions and to promote legislations and services which will help children who are forced by circumstances to work on the streets. Since there is no positive and quick way to get rid of the children on the streets, the professionals and other people working with street children in their rehabilitation process, should integrate the various methods, techniques and strategies to ensure optimal psychosocial, cognitive and vocational development of these children.

3.2.4 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED OR APPLIED IN DEALING WITH STREET CHILDREN

The problem of street children is multifaceted and as such all possible avenues need to be examined. in dealing with this problem. In this regard the theoretical perspectives which can be applied when dealing with this phenomenon need also to be attended to.

3.2.4.1 BEHAVIOUR MODIFICATION

Behaviour modification is the "process of changing in practical situations, such as education or psychotherapy by appropriately changing the contingencies of reinforcement" (Hill 1977:275). The following strategies can be used:

(a) REINFORCEMENT OR INSTRUMENTAL LEARNING

The principle of instrumental learning of operational conditioning as developed by Skinner emphasizes the role of reinforcement on attitude, behavioral change and formation. When individuals receive social approval for their attitudes, these attitudes will be reinforced. Conversely if the attitudes

are not approved, they will not be reinforced. It should be noted that much depends on the source of the approach or disapproval (Bandura 1969:217-295).

In the case of a street child who plays truant and rebel against his parents, his undesirable behaviour is reinforced by peer group pressure or support from other street children which may carry more weight than his parents or community. In an effort to combat the problem, the community is also encouraged not to allow these children to push trolleys and wash cars for them. The main idea behind this approach is to try to discourage street children from peddling and begging on the streets but to rather encourage them to go back to school and lead an accepted lifestyle.

(b) MODELLING AND OBSERVATIONAL LEARNING

According to Bandura (1969:118-122) people often learn new attitudes and responses by serving and attempting to imitate the behaviour of role models.

At Mmabana Cultural Centre in Mmabatho, they offer services to street children which, amongst others, encourage them to go back to school. The social worker uses the former street children as role models to help the current street children to acquire new attitudes and change their behaviour.

As part of the programme, children are also engaged in different activities such as drama, gymnastics, and karate which may contribute to behavioral changes and acquisition of new skills which will be useful in the future. Thus, a double achievement.

3.2.4.2 CLASSICAL CONDITIONING THEORY

The basic principle of classical conditioning is that when a neutral stimulus is paired with a particular response, the neutral stimulus will elicit a similar response and this become a conditioned stimulus (Meyer et al 1989:185).

In the case of street children, stealing can be paired with detention of the child or withholding of the child's privileges such as money to buy whatever he or she wants or a visit to the zoo in order to discourage undesirable behaviour. Children who have been detained will most probably refrain from further criminal acts and may even deter others from being on the street and encourage them to go back to school.

3.2.4.3 CRISIS INTERVENTION

According to Zastrow (1985:466) crisis intervention postulates that current levels of functioning are disturbed when a person is in a crisis situation. The emotional disturbances that people in a crisis experience result from the stressful situation which they face, and the underlying emotional dispositions. Crisis places a person in an unfreezing position and he becomes emotionally charged. The person's lifestyle is highly vulnerable to change. In such a crisis, a person may either take the constructive or destructive direction.

This model can be used to help street children because they tend to move to the streets as a result of crisis in their families such as divorce, family disorganization, loss of employment by a breadwinner or death of one parent. By adopting this model, the people working

with street children will help them to solve the existing problems in a constructive way as these children will be vulnerable to change.

In conclusion, when dealing with a multifaceted problem like the street child phenomenon, all resources need to be explored, in order to finally reach the goal of removing the children from the streets.

The street child phenomenon has detrimental effects on both the children and society and as such it needs to be addressed or prevented as quickly as possible whilst still in its infancy phase. The longer the children stay on the streets, the more difficult and prolonged rehabilitation will be.

CHAPTER 4

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 EMPIRICAL FINDINGS FROM STREET CHILDREN RESPONSES (SEE ANNEXURE F - INTERVIEW SCHEDULE DIRECTED TO STREET CHILDREN)

The street children were interviewed in order to have their own views on what causes the street child phenomenon or why they are on the streets. In order to present an overall picture of the findings, data collected have been analyzed by way of univariate distributions. Although divided into three regions, only the total number of all three regions will be discussed and where applicable comparisons between the regions will be made.

4.1.1 SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

The main characteristics of the sample are set out in Table 1.

Table 1 Personal Particulars

Sex Distribution



	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Male	31	86.1	39	92.9	12	100	82	91.1
Female	5	13.9	3	7.1	-		8	8.9
Total	36	100.0	42	100.0	12	100	90	100.0

AGE GROUP (YEARS)

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
below 7	3	8.3	-		-		3	3.3
8 - 12	19	52.8	20	47.6	5	41.7	44	48.9
13 - 18	14	38.9	22	52.4	7	58.3	43	47.8
Total	36	100.0	42	100.0	12	100.0	90	100.0

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

Never attended school	16	44.4	9	21.4	2	16.7	27	30.0
Grades 1	5	13.9	11	26.2	3	25	19	21.1
Std 1 - Std 3	11	30.6	14	33.3	3	25	28	31.1
Std 4 - Std 6	4	11.1	7	16.7	4	33.3	15	16.7
Std 7 +	-		1	2.4	-		1	1.1
Total	36	100.0	42	100.0	12	100.0	90	100.0

The majority of street children are boys 91,1% as compared to girls 8,9%.

Different researchers such as the following concur with this finding:

Gebens (1990) 81,1% male; 18,9% female; Swart noted that in Johannesburg the street population was predominantly male and black;

Scharf noted that 10% of the street children in Cape Town were girls while 90% were boys.

In the Phillipines 85% of the street children were found to be boys.

Furthermore Schurink (1993:109) maintains that the vast majority of street children are boys and it is attributed to their physical power as well as their love of adventure, and also that girls are mainly protected by their parents and could be used to good effect at home.

The ages of the street children varied between eight and eighteen years. These children are mainly in their latent and adolescence stages (48,9% and 47,8% respectively) which as already indicated, are the stages crucial in proper development of the child. It is in these stages that the child tries to find meaning in life. The adolescent period is considered to generate ambiguities in self-perception and self-definition, which, together with other precipitating factors, may lead to some form of deviant behaviour such as the street child problem.

The latent stage, according to Simons and Rosenberg (1973:564), does not in itself disturb the self image but heightens vulnerability to environmental circumstances which threaten the self concept. Since the adolescence stage is a developmental phase in which the child may try to acquire self identity, this he may do by turning to his peers in the streets if there is no one at home to satisfy his needs. The other children (3,3%) may be those who have not reached the school going age or have reached it but the parents have no funds to send them to school. As a result, they go to the streets or shopping complexes probably influenced by peers to pass away time. Thereafter they may even become habitual street children.

Emanating from the table on educational level of street children, almost a third of the children (30,0%) have not attended school at all. This situation may be ascribed to a lack of finances or ignorance on the part of parents. In the event of lack of finances it is obvious that the children are on the street in order to secure food for themselves or to augment the family income.

Furthermore, the majority (52,2%) left school before completing Std 3. This may be due to truancy, school failure or also financial difficulties experienced by the family. The fact that 17,8% managed to reach middle school and then dropped out can be ascribed to various possible reasons such as financial constraints, frequent truancy and peer group pressure.

It is significant that the Molopo region's children are on the whole less educated than the Kudumane and Odi regions. This may, to some extent, be due to the detrimental effects of urbanization.

4.1.2 FAMILY PROFILE

The family profile of the street children is set out in Table 2. It includes the parent composition, parent employment and whether they are employed elsewhere, siblings, placing of the child and church denomination.

Table 2

PARENT COMPOSITION

Family Profile

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Father/mother	22	61,1	18	42,9	8	66,7	48	53,3
Father	-		-		1	8,3	1	1,1
Mother	9	25	9	21,4	2	16,7	20	22,2
Guardian/Father	1	2,8	-		-		1	1,1
Guardian/Mother	2	5,6	13	31	-		15	16,7
Guardian only	1	2,8	2	4,8	-		3	3,3
No response	1	2,8	-		1	8,3	2	2,2
Total	36	100,1	42	100,1	12	100,0	90	99,9

PARENT EMPLOYMENT

Mother/Father	6	16,7	9	21,4	5	41,7	20	22,2
Father	9	25	13	31	2	16,7	24	26,7
Unemployment	7	19,4	9	21,4	-		16	17,8
No response	7	19,4	7	16,7	2	16,7	16	17,8
Total	7	19,4	4	9,5	3	25	14	15,6
	36	99,9	42	100,0	12	100,1	90	100,1

EMPLOYED ELSEWHERE

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Father/Mother	-		5	11,9	1	8,3	6	6,7
Father	6	16,7	8	19	1	8,3	15	16,7
Mother	4	11,1	3	7,1	-		7	7,8
Unemployed	7	19,4	-		2	16,7	9	10
No response	7	19,4	-		3	25	10	11,1
at home	12	19,4	26	61,9	2	16,7	40	44,4
Employed but not mentioned where	-		-		3	25	3	3,3
Total	36	99,9	42	99,9	12	100,0	90	100,0

SIBLINGS

0	1	2,8	2	4,8	-	3	3,3	
1	5	13,9	8	19	5	41,7	18	20,0
2	4	11,1	17	40,5	2	16,7	23	25,6
3	3	8,3	3	7,1	2	16,7	8	8,9
4	8	22,2	7	16,7	-		15	16,7
5	3	8,3	4	9,5	1	8,3	8	8,9
6+	12	33,3	1	2,4	2	16,7	15	16,7
Total	36	99,9	42	100,0	12	100,1	90	100,1

PLACING OF STREET CHILD

Eldest	8	22,2	19	45,2	3	25	30	33,3
Middle	16	44,4	5	11,9	3	25	24	26,7
Youngest	7	19,4	7	16,7	3	25	17	18,9
Only	1	2,8	2	4,8	-		3	3,3
Uncertain	4	11,1	9	21,4	3	25	16	17,8
Total	36	99,9	42	100,0	12	100	90	100,0

CHURCH DENOMINATION

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
R.C.C.	1	2,8	12	28,6	1	8,3	14	15,6
Protestant	9	25	14	33,3	-		23	25,6
Z.C.C.	10	27,8	7	16,7	4	33,3	21	23,3
Other	12	33,3	9	21,4	3	25	24	26,7
No response	4	11,1	-		4	33,3	8	8,9
Total	36	100	42	100	12	99,9	90	100,1

The majority of children (53,3%) live with both father and mother, whereas 23,3% live with either father (1,1%) or mother (22,2%). Only 21,1% are not solely living with their biological parents only. In this regard, it needs to be mentioned that in 94,4% of the last mentioned cases a biological father or mother together with a step-parent is present in the respondents' home. According to this information, the parent composition per se' is obviously not a major cause for the children being on the streets.

In 66,7% of the cases both parents (22,2%) father (26,7%) or mother (17,8%) are in employment. Employment as such is not a clear indication of the financial standing of the family but is proof of some form of stability in the family. A possible reason for the respondents being on the streets may however be the fact that 17,8% of parents/guardians are unemployed and have no financial means to support the family.

Another possible contributing factor may be the large number (31,2%) of parents, father or mother, who are subjected to migratory labour conditions. Being absent from home for shorter or longer periods of time may interfere with the proper control of their children, as they themselves may not even be aware of their children's behaviour.

In summary, it would seem that the 17,8% unemployed together with the 31,2% migratory labourers making a total of 49,0% may have been amongst others, precipitating factors which to some extent, laid the foundation for the respondents concerned being on the streets.

A great number of respondents (42,3%) are attached to what is known as "large families" of four or more children. Controlling larger families, especially if this factor is combined with single parenting, limited monthly income, unemployment and migratory labour, may be physically impossible for the parents to handle. There is the possibility of some of the children becoming uncontrollable and therefore undomestic. Added to the last mentioned factors, a third of the children (33,3%) are the eldest child and therefore may be left with the responsibility of trying, by means of street peddling, to augment the family income.

Lastly, it would appear that the majority of respondents (64,5%) are from Christian homes. In this regard there is not a significant difference between the various denominations or any evidence that church denomination plays a role in the street child phenomenon.

4.1.3 REASONS FOR QUITTING SCHOOLING

Table 3 tabulates the reasons why street children originally quit schooling.

Table 3 : Reasons for quitting school

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
N.A	14	38,9	12	28,6	2	16,7	28	31,1
Lack of funds	16	44,4	20	47,6	3	25	39	43,3
Unhappy at school	-		-		2	16,7	2	2,2
Could not cope	1	2,8	-		2	16,7	3	3,3
Parent enforcement	3	8,3	-		1	8,3	4	4,4
* Other	2	5,6	7	16,7	2	16,7	11	12,2
No response	-		3	7,1	-		3	3,3
Total	36	100,0	42	100,0	12	100,1	90	99,8

* Truancy, late coming, pregnancy, moved to new place, influenced by friends.

Street children (43,3%) quit school mainly due to lack of funds. The present rate of unemployment is presumably high and parents cannot afford to pay for their children's school requirements.

Frequently parents work far away from their homes and in the process forget or ignore their responsibilities towards their children.

Almost a third of the street children are still attending school (31,1%). They go to the streets after school to earn some money, by for instance, pushing trolleys. In many cases this was done to help with the payment of their school requirement. Some of these children may go to the street through peer influence, even if their parents can afford to send them to school. The other reasons that influence the children to quit schooling were found to be, amongst others, truancy and pregnancy.

4.1.4 GOING BACK TO SCHOOL

Table 4 highlights the children's preferences of going back to school or not.

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Yes	13	59,1	12	40	9	90	34	54,8
No	6	27,3	1	3,3	-		7	11,3
Uncertain	2	9,1	5	16,7	1	10	8	12,9
No response	1	4,5	12	40	-		13	21,0
Total	22	100,0	30	100,0	10	100	62	100,0

From table 4, it is obvious that most of the street children would like to go back to school (54,8%). Since half of them (see table 17) have indicated that they are miserable on the streets, hence they want to be educated in order to upgrade their quality of life those who are not keen to go back to school (11,3%) may be because they are happy being on the streets as indicated in table 17 (12,2%).

The other reasons may be, amongst others, having to feel embarrassed to be in the same class with children younger than themselves and being afraid that teachers may ridicule them for their cognitive and perceptual dysfunctions.

In conclusion, it should be borne in mind that 31,1% of street children were attending school (according to table 3). The fact that 54,8% would like to return to school is an indication of the potential for a successful rehabilitation programme.

4.1.5 FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

This table tabulates the people whom street children have good relationships with.

Table 5 Family Relationships

	Father		Mother		Siblings		*Other	
Good	35	38,9	65	72,2	60	66,7	8	8,9
Fair	20	22,2	10	11,1	15	16,7	2	2,2
Poor	10	11,1	9	10	4	4,4	-	
No response	25	27,8	6	6,7	11	12,2	80	88,9
Total	90	100,0	90	100,0	90	100,0	90	100,0

* uncle, aunt, grandparents

Considering the above table, it would seem that most of the street children have a good relationship with their mothers (72,2%) as compared to fathers (38,9%). This finding coincides with the forthcoming data namely: most of the children indicated that if they experience any problems, they go to their mothers (48,9% table 6); almost a third (27,8%) are disciplined by their mothers as compared to their fathers (15,6% according to table 7); and since some of the fathers are also employed elsewhere (23,4%) they do not have continuous contact on a daily basis with their children as compared to mothers (table 2).

From the above information, one can say that the absence of the father figure at home has an effect on the child. The child needs constant contact with both parents and if one is absent all or most of the time, the child will be attached to the available parent, in this case the mother.

4.1.6 NEED OF PARENTAL HELP

The children need someone to help them when experiencing problems. Table 6 tabulates the street children's preference of the particular person(s) in times of difficulty.

Table 6 : The appropriate person to whom the children go for help when encountering problems

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Father	5	13,9	4	9,5	3	25	12	13,3
Mother	16	44,4	23	54,8	5	41,7	44	48,9
Sibling	4	11,1	-		2	16,7	6	6,7
Friend	-		-		-		-	
Family member	2	5,6	11	26,2	1	8,3	14	15,6
*Other	9	25	4	9,5	1	8,3	14	15,6
Total	36	100,0	42	100,0	12	100,0	90	100,1

* neighbour, grandparents, aunt, uncle

It is clear from Table 6 that most of the street children go to their mothers for help when having problems (48,9%). The finding may be obvious as it was indicated in table 5 that the majority of street children have good relationships with their mothers (72,2%) as compared to their fathers (38,9%).

Furthermore only 14,5% of mothers are employed elsewhere as compared to 23,4% fathers (table 2). This indicates that mothers are therefore at home most of the time as compared to fathers. As a result children go to their mothers for help. Children also would go to other family members mostly grandparents for help (31,2%).

4.1.7 DISCIPLINING OF CHILDREN

The children should be disciplined when they have done wrong or are deviating from socially acceptable behaviour. Table 7 indicates the people who discipline the children.

Table 7: Responsible person to discipline the children

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Father alone	8	22,2	5	11,9	1	8,3	14	15,6
Mother alone	7	19,4	14	33,3	4	33,3	25	27,8
Both parents	6	16,7	6	14,3	3	25	15	16,7
other siblings	6	16,7	2	4,8	1	8,3	9	10
*Other	9	25	14	33,3	3	25	26	28,9
No response	-	-	1	2,4	-	-	1	1,1
Total	36	100,0	42	100,0	12	99,9	90	100,1

* uncle, aunt, grandparents

Street children are mostly disciplined by their mothers (27,8%) as compared to their fathers (15,6%) as indicated in table 7. This may be because mothers are

most of time at home whereas some of the fathers are either absent or are employed elsewhere and therefore seldom at home.

Furthermore it has been indicated in table 5 that mothers have good relationships with their children (72,2%) as compared to the fathers (38,9%) and therefore one would expect greater acceptance of discipline from them.

Almost a third of street children (28,9%) are disciplined by other people such as grandparents, uncles and aunts because, apart from parents, these people are at home with the children and in collaboration with parents, they take care of the children. Fathers also help with the disciplining of the children, 16,7% (both parents).

Nevertheless the children are on the streets even if they are disciplined at home. This may be due to other factors such as peer group influence and refusing to accept discipline especially from mothers because fathers are seldom at home.

4.1.8 PUNISHMENT

Parents have to give their children direction in life and when necessary enforce authority. But it is however essential to apply a fair and consistent discipline or punishment. Excessive and inconsistent discipline may have a degrading effect on the child. The child will develop animosity towards the parents and could even decide to run away from home.



Table 8: Punishment given to the children

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Verbally	16	44,4	33	28,6	8	66,7	57	63,3
Whipping	15	41,7	6	14,3	4	33,3	25	27,8
withholding	1	2,8	1	2,4	-	-	2	2,2
rights	4	11,1	1	2,4	-	-	5	5,6
Other	-	-	1	2,4	-	-	1	1,1
No response	36	100,0	42	100,1	12	100,0	90	100,0
Total								

From the above table, it is clear that children are mostly punished verbally (63,3%). Verbal punishment is fair and consistent and it is mostly done by mothers because they are the ones who discipline their children and are normally less aggressive.

Punishment as such do not seem to be a contributing factor for the children becoming street children. Possibly, amongst the 27,8% who receive whipping, which in some cases may border on child abuse, may be a factor to consider. Unfortunately there is not sufficient evidence to support this allegation.

4.1.9 AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OCCUPANCY OF DWELLING

Table 9 indicates whether the children in this study come from overcrowded homes or not.

Table 9 Occupancy of dwelling

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
overcrowded	5	13,9	1	2,4	1	8,3	7	7,8
not overcrowded	25	69,4	33	28,6	8	66,7	66	73,3
uncertain	6	16,7	8	19,0	3	25	17	18,9
Total	36	100,0	42	100,0	12	100,0	90	100,0

Considering table 9, children do not go to the streets because of overcrowding. 73,3% of children indicated that their homes are not overcrowded.

4.1.10 SLEEPING ABODES OF CHILDREN

Everyone needs a place to lay his/her head at night. Table 10 tabulates the places where children sleep at night.

Table 10: Sleeping abodes of children

	No	%
Home	82	91,1
Doorways	1	1,1
Taxi ranks	3	3,3
Railway station	2	2,2
Dumping area	1	1,1
No response	1	1,1
Total	90	99,9

The family has a function of nurturant socialization towards their children. The basic moral and social being of the individual's personality is formed in the family. This is supported by Schurink (1993:62) in that the child learns that he is dependent on the cooperation of others for the satisfaction of his own needs and for the realization of his own goals. Even if a child could spend most of his time in the street, he may return home at some time or the other.

From table 10 it is clear that most of the children interviewed go home at night (91,1%).

The street child phenomenon in the Bophuthatswana area seems to be "children on the street". Only a small percentage (8,8%) apparently have no visible means of abode and are therefore "children of the street".

4.1.11 INTERVIEW PROCESS

The children were interviewed at different places where they spend most of their time peddling.

Table 11: The venue from which the child was interviewed

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
At home	-		8	19,0	-		8	8,9
Parking lot	5	13,9	7	16,7	3	25	15	16,7
Shopping centre	5	13,9	14	33,3	1	8,3	20	22,2
In the street	3	8,3	-		4	33,3	7	7,8
Taxi ranks	1	2,8	11	26,2	4	33,3	16	17,8
Dumping area	22	61,1	2	4,8	-		24	26,7
Total	36	100,0	42	100,0	12	99,9	90	100,1

Table 11 reflects the places where the children spend most of their time per day. Some of the places are: shopping centres (22,2%) where they push trolleys; taxi ranks (17,8%) where they help taxi drivers directing passengers to the taxis and collecting money from them; the parking lot (16,7%) where they direct the cars into the parking bays and sometimes also wash them; dumping area (26,7%) which is their resource for food. The places where they were interviewed are generally the places where they operate from. The great number at the dumping area confirm that food plays an important part in their lives.

4.1.12 CHILD'S PERCEPTION OF HIS REASON FOR BEING ON THE STREET

Each and every child has his/her own reasons for being on the street. Table 12 tabulates such reasons.

Table 12: Children's perceptions for being on the street

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Rejected by parents	1	2,8	-		1	8,3	2	2,2
Illtreatment by parents	1	2,8	-		-		1	1,1
Parents being irresponsible	8	22,2	8	19,0	4	33,3	20	22,2
Orphan	1	2,8	-		1	8,3	2	2,2
Group influence	11	30,6	15	35,7	-		26	28,9
Dropout at school	-		2	4,8	-		2	2,2
Attracted to city	-		2	4,8	-		2	2,2
Search for adventure	4	11,1	1	2,4	2	16,7	7	7,8
Compelled by poverty	9	25	4	9,5	2	16,7	15	16,7
Other	1	2,8	8	19,0	2	16,7	11	12,2
No response	-		2	4,8	-		2	2,2
Total	36	100,1	42	100,0	12	100,0	90	99,9

According to table 12 the following details seem to be of significance: almost a third of street children are on the street due to group influence (28,9%). This may be ascribed to having left their homes, due to neglect and/or emotional apathy by their parents, to join their peers in the streets who will empathise with them (Swart 1987:6).

The vulnerable child, lacking self-confidence and needing acceptance and appreciation, is almost bound to become a victim of group pressure (Cemane 1990:3).

Alternative reasons which the children themselves give for their being on the streets are, amongst others: irresponsibility of parents (22,2%) and poverty (16,7%). The fact that the children are on the street is enough proof of their parents' irresponsibility. On the other hand, their families, as a result of low incomes and unemployment, live in poverty and it is even possible that the children are on the streets with their full knowledge or consent. The children

themselves may not be properly fed at home and therefore seek other means, for example dumping grounds or mere begging to secure food for themselves or even to obtain money or food for their families.

On the positive side only a small percentage of children mentioned that they are rejected or ill-treated by their families. Apart from their behaviour, they are still accepted by their families. Proof of this is that the street children indicated that they have good relationships with their families as well as the fact that the majority of them (can) return home at night.

4.1.13 ENCOUNTER WITH THE POLICE

The probability of street children having an encounter with the police exists because of the deviant acts they might be involved in. Table 13 shows whether or not the children have had any encounter with the police.

Table 13: Problems experienced with the police

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Yes	6	16,7	9	21,4	1	8,3	16	17,8
No	30	83,3	32	76,2	11	91,7	73	81,1
uncertain	-		-		-		-	
No response	-		1	2,4	-		1	1,1
Total	36	100,0	42	100,0	12	100,0	90	100,0

From table 13 it is clear that only a few children, (17,8%) as a result of obvious misconduct, have been in contact with the police. This may be a positive factor as it would seem that, apart from being on the streets, the children apparently do not behave contrary to the law since (81,1%) have had no contact with the police.

There is however another side to this phenomenon namely that the authorities are aware of vast unemployment, poverty, the exclusion of some children from school

and therefore the reason for some children being on the street. To lawfully counteract this situation will be to no avail to the authorities or police as they have no acceptable solutions to the problem.

4.1.14 GANGING AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The totals in table 14 have changed because table 14 and 15 were grouped together in the questionnaire and the children were to indicate all the possibilities they were taking part in. Table 14 tabulates the deviant acts or abusive substances the children are involved or indulge in.

Table 14: Deviant act or abusive substances

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Ganging	-		-		4	40	4	16,7
Glue	1	10	-		-		1	4,2
Dagga	-		-		-		-	
alcohol	2	20	-		1	10	3	12,5
smoking	6	60	4	100	5	50	15	62,5
other	1	10	-		-		1	4,2
Total	10	100	4	100	10	100	24	100,1

According to table 14, the children possibly were not honest in their responses fearing actions against them. Glue usage, which is a universal problem with street children, apparently is not as yet a problem in the researched area (4,2%). Apart from possible dishonesty in this regard, the insignificant glue usage may be due to ignorance on the part of the street children.

The available substance is cigarettes and therefore the general usage thereof (62,5%). On the positive side is the fact that harder drugs are not abused.

Reasons for this may be:

- non-availability;
- too expensive for their meagre funds;
- ignorance;
- the majority live at home and as such fear reactions from parents or even possibly a measure of values are instilled in their home environment;
- fear of police intervention.

The reasonably high percentage of ganging (16,7%) is because these children are, to a great extent, dependent on one another. This also poses a problem as they are negatively influenced by one another. Peer pressure and adhering to group norms lead to or result in the type of sub-culture exercised by these children which may not always be sociably acceptable.

4.1.15 STREET TRADING

Different ways of street peddling by street children is tabulated in Table 15.

Table 15: Street trading

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Car washing	5	12,2	10	15,6	3	15,8	18	14,5
Pushing trolleys	3	7,3	29	45,3	2	10,5	34	27,4
Shoe polishing	-		-		-		-	
Selling	7	17,1	4	6,3	10	52,6	21	16,9
Begging	3	7,3	4	6,3	-		7	5,6
Gambling	22	53,7	16	25	3	15,8	41	33,1
Other	1	2,4	1	1,6	1	5,3	3	2,4
Total	41	100,0	64	100,1	19	100,0	124	99,9

The above table reflects the types of activities street children are engaged in. It is obvious that the street children will engage in one or more of these acts such as pushing trolleys (27,4%); selling (16,9%) and car washing (14,5%) in order to secure a means of income. The act in itself is mainly a front in order to beg.

Gambling practice (33,1%) is obvious as the children hope to multiply the little amount they themselves have secured. Whereas most of these activities, whether merely a front or not, are to secure money, the gambling act practised by young children can be viewed as deviant behaviour. Money accumulated may also be unnecessarily squandered.

4.1.16 SPENDING OF MONEY

Table 16 indicates the ways the children spend the money they have accumulated on the street.

Table 16: Ways of spending money

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Buy food	15	41,7	23	54,8	3	25	41	45,6
Take it home	11	30,6	8	19,0	5	41,7	24	26,7
Gamble	3	8,3	1	2,4	1	8,3	5	5,6
School fees/books	-		2	4,8	-		2	2,2
Buy clothes	1	2,8	3	7,1	3	25	7	7,8
Play video games	1	2,8	-		-		1	1,1
Earn no money	3	8,3	-		-		3	3,3
Other	2	5,6	-		-		2	2,2
No response	-		5	11,9	-		5	5,6
Total	36	100,1	42	100,0	12	100,0	90	100,1

Table 16 shows that most of the street children (45,6%) use the money they earn on the street to buy food since most of them are without visible means of survival. Others take the money home to supplement the family income (26,7%). Sanders (1987:7) said that in a valiant and admirable struggle to improve their situation,

the poor turn to various alternatives, one of which is to have their children work or beg to supplement the family income.

4.1.17 CONTENTMENT OF CHILD BEING ON THE STREET

Table 17 tabulates how the children feel when on the street.

Table 17: Contentment of a child being on the street

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Contented	4	11,1	7	16,7	-		11	12,2
Merely accepted their lifestyle	7	19,4	1	2,4	3	25	11	12,2
Miserable	19	52,8	18	42,9	8	66,7	45	50
Indifferent	1	2,8	3	7,1	1	8,3	5	5,6
Uncertain	5	13,9	6	14,3	-		11	12,2
No response	-		7	1,7	-		7	7,8
Total	36	100,0	42	100,1	12	100,0	90	100,0

Table 17 indicates that half of the street children are miserable being on the street (50%). This may be ascribed to the following: most of the children were forced out of school due to lack of funds (43,3% table 3) and as a result they were compelled to go to the streets to secure food for themselves or to augment the family income; according to table 12 some of the children have been influenced by peers (28,9%) while others were compelled as a result of poverty (16,7%) and the irresponsibility of their parents (22,2%).

Only a few children (12,2%) are contented with being on the street. This may probably be that they do not see any way out of the street, possibly because being on the street has become a habit or they see no future for themselves. They also have found support amongst their peers which may be lacking at home.

4.1.18 PEER GROUP

Table 18 indicates the importance of peer group to the child.

Table 18: Importance of peer group to the child

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Individualistic	4	11,1	11	26,2	5	41,7	20	22,2
Supportive	11	30,6	1	2,4	3	25	15	16,7
Do things together	15	41,7	15	35,7	1	8,3	31	34,4
Dependent on	2	5,6	1	2,4	-	-	3	3,3
group	4	11,1	2	4,8	3	25	9	10
Other	-	-	12	28,6	-	-	12	13,3
No response	36	100,1	42	100,1	12	100,0	90	99,9
Total								

Table 18 shows that more than a third of street children (34,4%) do things together because they are a cohesive group. They have to support the group's norms and values. The behavioral patterns, lifestyle and language have to be the same. On the one hand, street children's peer groups are unique in the sense that they live under the same circumstances and are supportive of each other. On the other hand, the street child phenomenon is a highly competitive behaviour pattern. The main purpose being to secure money or food for themselves. The group members can thus be a nuisance. They do however need the support from other children and of course in their "leisure time" they also play and do things together.

4.1.19 POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEM

The possible solutions to the problem of street children as viewed by the children themselves are tabulated in tables 19 and 20.

Table 19: Factors that may persuade the child to live a normal life

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Foster placement	2	5,6	-		-		2	2,2
Place with relations	5	13,9	-		2	16,7	7	7,8
Institutionalization	-		1	2,4	-		1	1,1
Improvement at home	13	36,1	13	31,0	6	50	32	35,6
Punitive measures	1	2,8	8	19,0	-		9	10
Not prepared to change	1	2,8	2	4,8	1	8,3	4	4,4
Uncertain	11	30,6	5	11,9	3	25	19	21,1
Go back to school	3	8,3	8	19,0	-		11	12,2
No response	-		5	11,9	-		5	5,6
Total	36	100,1	42	100,0	12	100,0	90	100,0

The respondents indicated that the only factor that will persuade them to live normal lives would be improvement at home (35,6% according to table 19). This preference mentioned by the children themselves is a positive one. It does prove their attachment to their families and homes. Very few of them are prepared to accept alternative placement arrangements (11,1%). Those who have indicated alternative arrangements may be those who are possibly not contented with their home circumstances. Being young children, they apparently have very little perception about what is really good for them, therefore the high percentage of uncertainty (21,1%). Fortunately only an insignificant number (4,4%) is contented with being on the street. The data collected in this regard proves two factors:

- firstly that the social work profession and authorities have failed to help these children to stay off the streets; and
- secondly that it is a strong point within the children themselves to prefer or even strive towards a more acceptable lifestyle.

Table 20: Attitude towards placement in an institution

	Molopo		Kudumane		Odi		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Yes	12	33,3	17	40,5	3	25	32	35,6
No	19	52,8	20	47,6	6	47,6	45	50
Uncertain	5	13,9	1	2,4	3	25	9	10
No response	-		4	9,5	-		4	4,4
Total	36	100,0	42	100,0	12	100	90	100,0

According to table 20, it is clear that a great number of children are not prepared to accept placement in an institution (50%). The reason for this is that most of them are still hoping for better home circumstances as this arrangement will help them to stay at home with their families and lead a more normal and stable life. The children will also opt to stay at home because of the good relationship they have with their parents and especially their mothers and siblings (72,2% mothers and 66,7% siblings according to table 5).

A third of the street children who indicated that they will accept placement in an institution or foster home see this as an acceptable alternative. They may be willing to go to school since by being educated they will live better lives. In an institution, education or schooling will be compulsory. They won't have to pay school fees or building funds. By being placed in an institution, they will be removed from the streets where a great number of them are apparently miserable (50% according to table 17).

4.1.20 RESEARCHER'S REMARKS

It is clear from the analysis that street children in the researched area are known as children on the street because at the end of the day, they return home. They are forced to be on the streets by factors such as poverty mainly due to unemployment of parents, peer group influence and irresponsibility of parents. These children are mainly in need of food hence their peddling in the streets.

The phenomenon of street children affects the children directly and as such, information should be obtained directly from them to ascertain what their needs are and what is best for them.

4.2 EMPIRICAL FINDINGS OF SOCIAL WORKERS WITH REGARDS TO STREET CHILDREN (See Annexure G for questionnaire)

No tables will be used to analyze the data on Social Workers' responses, instead figures (percentages) will be used. These will include responses of Social Workers from Odi, Kudumane, Molopo, Mankwe, Madikwe, Taung, Lehurutshe and Ditsobotla regions of the Bophuthatswana area.

The statistical presentation of this data will vary in the manner in which the percentages were calculated. In some cases three responses were requested and in others only two or one were requested in order of preference. As such the totals, depending on the number of answers requested, are given as 81, 54 and 27.

In totality only 27 respondents (Social Workers) returned their completed mailed questionnaires.

4.2.1 DESCRIPTION OF STREET CHILDREN

Most of the Social Workers (89%) described street children as being loiterers (53%), without visible means of support (18%). Their description of street children is more or less similar to those made by other researchers in this study.

4.2.2 GENERAL APPEARANCE OF STREET CHILDREN

71,6% of Social Workers support the statement that street children are dirty, underclothed and underfed in their responses namely being dirty (25,9%); underclothed (24,7%); and underfed (21,0%).

The remaining 28,4% of Social Workers described street children as being dull, withdrawn, depressed, reserved, outspoken, and sociable.

4.2.3 AREAS THE CHILDREN ORIGINALLY COME FROM

Researches in the literature review in this study revealed that street children mainly come from families within the lower socio-economic scale. 46,3% of social workers concurred with the above statement. The other children are from the high density areas, squatters settlements and migrators (40,8%).

The 13% of no response may probably be that the phenomenon of street children is not that rife or street children have not been identified yet.

4.2.4 THE MANNER IN WHICH THE CHILDREN MAINLY MAKE A LIVING

Street children make a living by pushing trolleys, guarding and washing cars, begging, selling (fruits, vegetables etc) and sometimes stealing. In this regard 88,9% of the social workers support the above statement.

The remaining 11,1% maintain that the street children make a living through vending and shoeshining.

4.2.5 PLACES WHERE CHILDREN SHELTER AT NIGHT

In this study it was found that street children, in the majority of cases, go home at night. Social Workers fully concurred with this finding.

4.2.6 SOCIAL PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH STREET CHILDREN

The problems such as glue sniffing, begging, truancy and theft have been highlighted by most Social Workers as being associated with the street children phenomenon (79,0%). Only two of the above stated problems, namely truancy and begging, were highlighted in this study. The reason for this may be that the

children have not told the whole truth about problems associated with this phenomenon.

4.2.7 CAUSES FOR CHILDREN BEING ON THE STREETS

Factors such as unemployment, poverty, lack of recreational facilities, inadequate parental supervision and peer group pressure are given by Social Workers as the main causes of this phenomenon (72,9%). The causes as mentioned above correspond with the findings of previous researchers.

The other factors that drive the children away from home are, amongst others, parental irresponsibility (25,9%); escape from cruelty, discipline or punishment (19,8%); school dropout (13,6%); and family disorganization (24,7%).

4.2.8 MEASURES SUGGESTED TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM OF STREET CHILDREN

The Social Workers suggested that the problem of street children can be addressed by means of the following measures: compulsory education (15,0%); improvement of parental skills (15,0%); community awareness (15,0%); community education (26,0%) and more job opportunities (15,0%).

CHAPTER 5

5. MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 MAIN FINDINGS

Following the collection and analysis of the empirical data as well as the literature reviewed on the problem of street children, the following main findings have emerged.

5.1.1 EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

The researched area has the problem of street children. Even though the study concentrated on only certain parts of the three regions and the number of the respondents being 90 in total, the other regions as indicated by the responses given by social workers are faced with a similar problem.

The problem of street children is world wide. Literature reviewed showed that recent global estimates put the number of children on the street at 100 million and those of the street at 50 million. This number is constantly rising, especially in developing countries.

5.1.2 NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

The street children in this study are known as children on the street. The reason for the connotation being "on" the street is because these street children go home in the evening after peddling in the streets during the day. They are mainly boys aged between eight and eighteen years. Other researchers such as Swart, Scharf and Schurink in their studies on street children also found the same ratio of approximately 1:10 girls to boys. Some of the children have not attended school at all whereas others left school during their primary school education. Abandoning their schooling is due mainly to

truancy, school failure and financial difficulties. These children frequent business areas such as taxi ranks and shopping complexes in an effort to generate money to either buy food for themselves or augment the family income.

The Social Workers reported that the street children mainly come from families falling within the lower socio-economic scale. They appear to be dirty, underfed and underclothed.

5.1.3 CAUSES OF THE STREET CHILDREN PROBLEM

The majority of children are on the streets because they are forced by social factors which they cannot or are unable to avoid or resist. The possible contributory factors to this problem can be viewed from a different context namely: societal context (macrolevel factors), family context (mesolevel factors) and the individual context (microlevel factors). Such factors are, amongst others poverty, unemployment of parents, irresponsibility of parents, and peer group pressure. In an effort to help their families, a number of children go to the streets for peddling.

5.1.4 EFFECTS OF THE PROBLEM

Street life can have either advantageous or disadvantageous effects on the children. It can be advantageous in the sense that children would prefer street life to an unhappy home. It brings an escape from home circumstances that are unbearable for the child.

On the disadvantageous side, street life poses emotional problems such as fear that nobody will ever love them; health problems (food

poisoning, malnutrition) and cognitive problems. The children mostly seem to be miserable on the street.

The community is also affected by this phenomenon. It affects the societal functioning in that the society does not approve of the antisocial acts committed by the street children.

5.1.5 MEASURES TO COMBAT THE PROBLEM

There is a potential for a successful rehabilitation programme because a great number of the street children would like to attend school in order to upgrade their lives. They indicated that the only factor that would persuade them to leave the streets, would be the improvement in their home conditions. This would only be possible if there are more job opportunities to beat the high rate of unemployment. The children want to strive towards a more accepted lifestyle. As such this proves the attachment they have to their families and homes.

5.1.6 VULNERABLE AREAS

According to the main findings, the following factors do not necessarily contribute to the phenomenon of street children. These are amongst others, parent composition (sometimes only one of the biological parents is present at home); family relationships and verbal punishment which is fair and consistent.

On the other hand, vulnerable factors such as unemployment, poverty, large families, migratory labour, parental irresponsibility, peer group pressure and school dropout proved to be contributing factors to the problem of street children.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the researcher's conviction that following the findings in this study, more effective and direct help for these children can be evolved by developing suitable and flexible programmes. She concurs with Tyler (1986) as cited in Mako (1993:59-63) on the triangle preventions perspective for ameliorating the problems of street children and improving their lives, that it has to be strongly considered.

5.2.1 PRIMARY PREVENTION

In terms of primary prevention, the stark poverty and social conditions which mark the lives of these children and their families require substantial social policy changes if their lives are to be significantly improved. Social changes of that magnitude require first of all, the establishing of a need for such a change by demonstrating the destructive impact of conditions such as those which characterize the lives of these children. It must be borne in mind that children under study here are children on the street. If nothing is done to remove them from the streets, they could end up being children of the street.



Improvements can also be facilitated by demonstrating in a more limited context the prosocial values of changes such as strengthening family units and providing resources and acceptable options for the children. Prosocial values can be brought to parents' awareness by calling on churches, schools and welfare agencies to hold parents' meetings in which they are educated about the importance of strong family units and the fact that children will model parents' prosocial

values if they (children) are exposed to them. In other words social action has to be taken into account involving parents too.

5.2.2 SECONDARY PREVENTION

At the secondary prevention level, instead of devaluing their capabilities, institutions and homes can build on the children's strengths and be responsive to their input and ideas when planning, implementing and evaluating programmes. Social services can recognize the coping capabilities of intact families and work to support and strengthen them so that their integrity can be maintained. In the absence of intact families, social service agencies can work to strengthen the relationships between street children and their primary caretakers even if these caretakers are the children's peers.

5.2.3 TERTIARY PREVENTION

Since the street child enters the system and develops sophistication and coping mechanisms against the harsh realities, it is essential that such strengths be recognized and accommodated. Programmes should be designed in the direction of self empowerment. Tyler (1986), as cited in Mako (1993:62), argues that the imposition of institutional values are counter-productive to the extent that they devalue children, leading the children to devalue themselves and making them more dependent on their peers.

Supportive programmes and foster care units for these children need to be developed at this level. The government should look into building such units and providing funds for the employees to take care of the children.

5.2.4 THE CONSIDERATION OF A FENCE AROUND THE DUMPING AREAS

The government should consider constructing a fence around the dumping areas so as to limit the accessibility of street children to them. Alternatively, a pit could be dug into which the rubbish can be buried or all the rubbish can be burnt.

5.3 CONCLUSION

The focus of this research was to investigate the phenomenon of street children - nature, extent, causes, effects and measures to combat the problem in the researched area. The findings in this research are that the researched area also experiences this problem of street children but the children are still children on the street.

The researcher contends that not only should the government play a part in providing remedies to the situation of street children, but that parents and social welfare agencies can play significant roles too. Street children too, with their resources and potential, can be utilized into helping.

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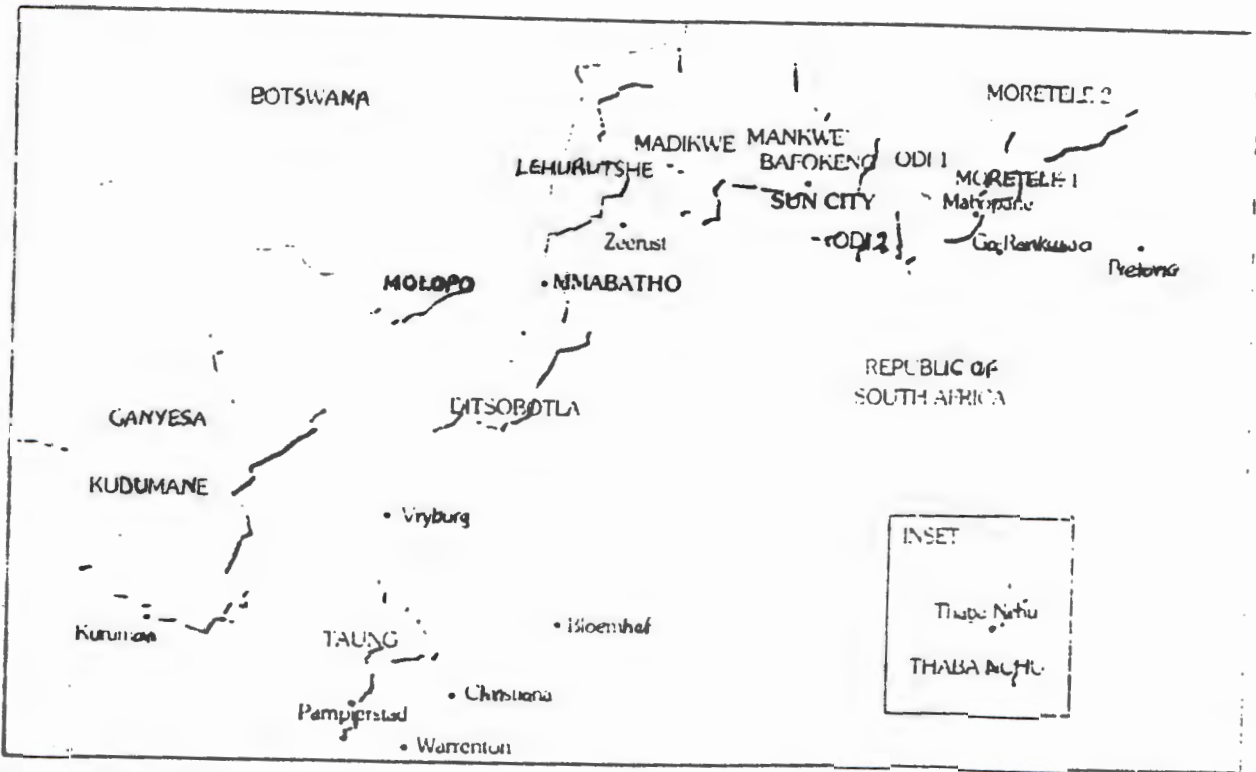
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ANNEXURE A



NEW - The Republic of Bophuthatswana, home of the southern Batswana, after colonialism, annexation and apartheid.

ANNEXURE B

CASE STUDY TO PROVE THE MULTIPLE CAUSATION OF THE STREET CHILDREN PHENOMENON

1. INTRODUCTION

This case study was undertaken with the view of showing that some children end up on the streets due to different factors such as lack of parental control, no means of survival (lack of food) and over delinquent behaviour. This child ended up on the street because of lack of food at home and he therefore had to secure money in the street to buy food.

2. IDENTIFYING PARTICULARS

NAME : Tebogo Andrew Tire

AGE : 25.01.1982

ADDRESS : Magojaneng Village - Kudumane

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION : Full Gospel Church

EDUCATIONAL STANDARD :

SEX : Male

SOURCES OF INFORMATION :

1. Sylvia Koloane
2. Aaron Swartland
3. Kudumane Social Worker
4. Mooifontein children's home
Social Worker



3. FAMILY COMPOSITION

NAME	AGE	RELATIONSHIP	OCCUPATION
1. Sophie Koloane	65 yrs	Grandmother	Pensioner
2. Aaron Swartland	39 yrs	Father	Unemployed
3. Hilda Tire	unknown	Mother	Deceased
4. Marie Oliphant	38 yrs	Aunt	Domestic worker
5. Kegoeng Modukanele	37 yrs	"	unemployed
6. Alfred Bosman	42 yrs	Uncle	"
7. Sylvia Koloane	36 yrs	Aunt	unemployed

8. Kegomoditswe Koloane	18 yrs	Cousin	"
9. Ohentse Koloane	20 yrs	"	"
10. Kehilwe Modukanele	14 yrs	"	non-scholar
11. Obusitse Koloane	12 yrs	"	"
12. Tebogo Tire	11 yrs	child in question	
13. Ororiseng Koloane	1 yr	Cousin	minor
14. Keaaleboga Koloane	1 yr	"	"

4. ECONOMIC CONDITION

The only family income is provided by the child's paternal grandmother with her bimonthly pension and aunt Marie's domestic work money. This money caters for the family's food, clothing and medical needs.

5. HOUSING

The family occupies a three roomed mud house divided into two bedrooms and sitting room. There is a sheltered place outside which is used for cooking. The house is fairly furnished.

6. PSYCHOPHYSICAL ASPECT

All the family members enjoy sound health both mentally and physically.

7. PRESENTED PROBLEM

7.1 Interview with Aaron Swartland and Sylvia Koloane by the Social Worker

Tebogo is the only child of Aaron Swartland and the late Hilda Tire who passed away in 1985, when the child was only three (3) years old. He was left in the custody of his father. His parents were not legally married. Sylvia Koloane, who is the child's father's sister, assisted in the upbringing of the child. They were all staying together. In 1987, when the child was only five years old, the father

took him along with him to seasonal reaping as he did not have any permanent job.

According to Sylvia, when her brother and the child returned from seasonal reaping after two years, the child was uncontrollable and refused to accept any form of discipline. He roamed the streets in town since he was not attending school.

In 1991 the child was brought to the attention of the Social Worker by the South African Police of Kuruman after being found loitering in town for days.

7.2 Interview with the child by the Social Worker

The child told the Social Worker during an interview that he was loitering around town to beg for money in order to buy food because at home there was no food. Also that he was made to do all the chores at home like fetching water, cleaning the house and running errands for everyone.

The worker investigated the child's allegations and the latter ones were unfounded. The of lack of food was possible because the family of 13 members depended on the pension money of the grandmother and aunt Marie's domestic work money. The child was also reported by the aunt to be uncontrollable.

7.3 Social Worker's intervention

A suitable home for the child was sought with one of the child's aunts who is married, and has a child the same age as Tebogo. The husband was employed. They have their own home in the same village. Tebogo would receive proper control and care in this home

environment. The social worker, during a follow up visit to the aunt's home where Tebogo was placed, discovered that Tebogo did not stay with them any longer and his whereabouts were unknown.

In 1992, the child was found again in Kuruman by the police and they took him to the social workers. According to the information obtained from the police by the social worker, he had been staying and working for a certain woman in town. He had been fired because he was becoming a nuisance. The social worker took him back to his aunt and he promised not to leave again. During the same year, complaints were received from businessmen in Kuruman by the social worker that the child was sleeping outside their shops at night and during the day he was stealing food from the shops. The child was also admitted to Tshwaragano Hospital for snake bites probably from his sleeping place in town.

While at the hospital, the social worker made an application for the child to be placed at a children's home. On the 25 January 1993 the child was brought to the children's court to be declared a child in need of care in terms of the Children's Act 33 of 1960. He was committed to Mooifontein Children's Home in Ditsobotla and admitted at Mooifontein Primary School with effect from the 7 April 1993 in Grade I.

7.4 Intervention by Social Worker at Mooifontein Children's Home

The child's behaviour is being modified through group discussions and behaviour modification programmes.

7.5 Reconstruction services by Social Workers at home

Reconstruction services are being rendered to the family by the social worker in an effort to improve home conditions. The unemployed family members are being encouraged to secure jobs for themselves. The family composition has, in the meantime, come down to seven members. The other members have left and have their own places and are reported to be working. Sylvia Koloane who is still with the family, has secured a job and is earning R300 per month. Obusitse Koloane is attending school.

7.6 Report by Social Worker at Mooifontein Children's Home

The researcher visited Tebogo at the children's home in June 1993. During the interview he told the researcher that he is happy because he is given care and food. The social worker told the researcher that Tebogo is adjusting well and with proper and regular guidance his behaviour will, hopefully, be modified.

7.7 Plan of Action

- (a) Social Workers should render after care services when the child is released from the home. They should ensure that the child continues with his schooling and does not take to the streets again.
- (b) The child may be put under foster care of one of the family members who can take care of him properly and a foster care grant should be applied for to cater for his school requirement and other needs.

8. CONCLUSION

Food is man's basic need. As such, children should not be made to go hungry because they might end up stealing which is an unacceptable social behaviour.

THE CHILD CARE ACT OF 1983 (ACT NO 74 OF 1983)

SECTION 1 : DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS USED IN THE ACT

■ **Definitions**

- "Child" means any person under the age of 18 years.
- "Authorized officer" in relation to any act, means any person authorized in writing by a commissioner of child welfare, social worker or policeman to perform the act.
- "District" means the area of jurisdiction of any magistrate's court.
- "Institution" means a reform school, school of industries or a children's home which is either established by the state or registered with the state.
- "Place of care" means any building or premises maintained or used, whether for profit or otherwise, for the reception, protection and temporary or partial care of more than six children apart from their parents, but does not include any boarding school, school hostel or any establishment which is maintained or used mainly for the tuition or training of children and which is controlled by or which has been registered or approved by the State, including a provincial administration.
- "Place of safety" means any place established under section 28 and includes any place suitable for the reception of a child, into which the owner, occupier or person in charge thereof is willing to receive a child.
- "Foster parent" means any person except a parent or guardian, in whose custody a child has been placed in terms of Chapter 3 or 6 of this Act, or section 290 of the Criminal Procedure Act, 1977 (Act No. 51 of 1977).
- "Commissioner of Child Welfare" or "commissioner" means a commissioner of child welfare mentioned in section 6 and includes an assistant commissioner of child welfare.

■ **Maintenance of certain children away from their parents**

Section 10 prohibits the receipt and maintenance of any illegitimate child under the age of seven years or any child for the purpose of adoption without the consent of the commissioner or having applied to adopt the child, with the exception of the managers

of a hospital, a maternity home, a place of safety² or a children's home. Such consent will be considered after submitting a written application in which an applicator's particulars, the reasons for keeping the child and the period as reflected in Regulation 8 are stipulated or after having applied for the child's adoption in terms of section 18.

■ **Conditions for determining whether a child needs protection**

In terms of section 14(4) the children's court will determine whether:

- (a) the child has no parent or guardian; or
- (aA) the child has a parent or guardian who cannot be traced; or
- (b) the child has a parent or a guardian or is in the custody of a person who is unable or unfit to have the custody of the child in that he:
 - (i) is mentally ill to such a degree that he is unable to provide for the physical, mental or social wellbeing of the child;
 - (ii) has assaulted or ill-treated the child or allowed him to be assaulted or ill-treated;
 - (iii) has caused or conducted the seduction, abduction or prostitution of the child or commissioned the child to conduct immoral acts;
 - (iv) displays habits and behaviours which may seriously injure the physical, mental or social wellbeing of the child;
 - (v) fails to maintain the child adequately;
 - (vi) maintains the child in contravention of Section 10 (as stated above);
 - (vii) neglects the child or allows him to be neglected;
 - (viii) cannot control the child properly so as to ensure proper behaviour such as regular school attendance;
 - (ix) has abandoned the child; or
 - (x) has no visible means of support.

Section 14(4)(aA) is particularly applicable to street children in that their parents can often not be traced when dealing with the children. Other relevant sections are section 14(4)(b)(ii), 14(4)(b)(iii), 14(4)(b)(v), 14(4)(b)(vii), 14(4)(b)(ix) and section 14(4)(b)(x) which refers to a child who "has no visible means of support".

■ **Removal of children to a place of safety pending children's court proceedings**

The Act makes provision for the removal of children and for them to be brought before a children's court. There are four ways in which children can be removed from their parental care for the opening of children's court proceedings, namely:

- Section 11(1) provides that any court, if it is in the interest of the safety and welfare of any child, may order that a child may be taken to a place of safety before brought before a children's court.
- Section 11(2) provides that if it appears to any commissioner of child welfare on sworn information on oath given by any person that there are reasonable grounds for believing that any child who is within the area of his jurisdiction has no parents or guardian or that it is in the best interest of the safety and welfare of any child who is within the area of his jurisdiction that he be taken to a place of safety, that the commissioner may issue a warrant authorizing any policeman or social worker

² "Place of safety" is not referring to a shelter

or any other person to search for the child and to take him to a place of safety, to be kept there until he can be brought before a children's court.

- In terms of Section 12(1) provision is made for the removal of a child from any place by a policeman, social worker or authorized officer to a place of safety without a warrant if that officer has reason to believe that the child is a child mentioned in Section 14(4) and that the delay in obtaining a warrant will be prejudicial to the safety and welfare of that child.

Any child removed to a place of safety by an order of court (Section 11(1)) or on sworn information (Section 11(2)) or pending inquiry (Section 12(1)) must be brought before the children's court of the district in which the child resides or happens to be by any policeman, social worker or authorized officer (Spiro, 1985:361).

■ Bringing children before the court

Children's courts have existed in South Africa since 1937. Contrary to what their names suggest, dealing with juvenile offenders is not within their jurisdiction (Spiro, 1985:357). Children's courts are inferior courts confined to the powers and jurisdiction of the Child Care Act of 1983. Children's court proceedings are conducted in private, meaning that no person shall be present unless his presence is necessary in connection with the proceedings of that court or unless he is the legal representative of any person whose presence is necessary or unless the commissioner presiding at the sitting has granted him permission to be present. A children's court shall sit in another room than the one in which any other court ordinarily sits, unless no such room is available and suitable (Spiro, 1985:358). The procedures for detention and bringing of children before the children's courts are clearly spelt out in Regulation 9.

In terms of section 13 a child is brought before the children's court to determine whether he/she has a parent or guardian, or has a parent or guardian who cannot be traced, or has a parent or guardian or is in the custody of a person unable or unfit to have the custody of that child. Section 13(1) states: "Any child referred to in Section 11(1) or (2) or 12(1) shall be brought before the children's court of the district in which the child resides or happens to be by any policeman, social worker or authorized officer." According to section 13(3) an inquiry may be referred to another children's court if the child brought before the children's court normally does not live in the district of the present children's court. A parent or guardian need not be present in court and often are not because of a lack of interest, practical problems such as transport and money and because they can not be traced. In this regard children from self-governing states who are arrested in the Republic of South Africa present specific problems because of the unavailability of social workers and the general lack of infrastructure in these independent states. The commissioner presiding over a children's court may according to section 14(2) at any time during the inquiry request any social worker to furnish a report on any matter affecting the child concerned or his parents or guardian or the person having the custody of that child.

In terms of Section 14(3) provision is made for the postponement or adjournment of the inquiry for periods not exceeding 14 days at a time, and for an order that in the interim the child remains in a place of safety or is kept in a place of safety for observation for the information of the court. The record of inquiries in terms of section 14 are stipulated in Regulation 10.

■ Powers of the children's court after inquiry

Section 15(1) stipulates the orders which can be issued by a children's court after holding an inquiry in terms of section 13. If the children's court is satisfied that the child concerned has no parent or guardian or has a parent or guardian who can not be traced, or has a parent or guardian or is in the custody of a person unable or unfit to have the custody of the child the children's court may:

- (a) "order that the child be returned to or remain in the custody of his parent or, if the parents live apart or are divorced, the parent designated by the court or of his guardian or of the person in whose custody he was immediately before the commencement of the proceedings, under the supervision of a social worker, on condition that the child or his parent or guardian or such person complies or the parents or the child comply with such of the prescribed requirements as the court may determine"; or
- (b) "order that the child be placed in the custody of a suitable foster parent designated by the court under the supervision of a social worker"; or
- (c) "order that the child be sent to a children's home designated by the Director-General"; or
- (d) "order the child be sent to a school of industries designated by the Director-General".

If any requirement mentioned in (a) is, in the opinion of the social worker concerned, not being complied with, the social worker may bring the child before the children's court of the district in which the child resides, whether or not it is the children's court which issued the order. The court shall hold an inquiry in terms of section 13(3), after which it may adjust that order or issue a new order under section 15(1).

In the case of orders (b), (c) and (d) the children's court may also order that the child be kept in a place of safety until such time as the court order can be executed. If the Director-General cannot designate a children's home or a school of industries he shall furnish the Minister with a report in connection with the child concerned without delay. The Minister may, after consideration of the Director-General's report either transfer the child to another institution in terms of section 34 or discharge the child from the institution in terms of section 37 as if the child has been admitted to a children's home or a school of industries. It is clear that the children's court has no authority to commit a child to a reform school, but a criminal court has such authority, and, under certain circumstances, also the Minister.³

■ Duration of court orders

Subject to the provisions of section 16 and section 34 any order made under section 15 lapses after two years, calculated from the day on which the order was issued or after such shorter period as a children's court may have determined. Thereafter the child should be returned to his parental care depending on the circumstances. Should the circumstances be uncondusive, the Minister will grant an extension of the court order for a further period not exceeding two years, provided that the order may not be extended to a date after which the child turns 18 (Section 16(2)) or, if the child was

³ It is important to note that a magistrate hearing a criminal matter has no jurisdiction to send a child to a children's home.

admitted to a school of industries, the year in which the pupil turns 21 (Section 16(3)). In this way the Act aims to provide a maximum chance for the success of reconstruction services to ensure the rehabilitation of the child and the family. Section 33 further defines the duration of a child's stay in foster care.

■ Places of safety, children's homes and places of care

Section 28 makes provision for the establishment of places of safety for the reception, custody, observation, examination and treatment of children under this Act and the detention of children awaiting trial or sentence for criminal offences. Such places may also be used for the reception, custody, observation, examination and treatment of children.

Section 29 makes provision for the establishment and maintenance of **government children's homes** and section 30 makes provision for **registration** of places of care and children's homes. The requirements for registration are spelt out in Regulation 30 and 31. The requirements include a constitution in the case of a children's home and a certificate issued by the local authority within whose area the institution is to be erected to the effect that the building satisfies certain structural and health requirements. Such places will be subjected to inspection by the officials of the Department as stipulated in section 31. Should the conditions be unsatisfactory, such registration will be cancelled. In the case of institutional care or places of care, legal status should be sought before these places could start operating. Legal status is attained through registration with the relevant department (according to race). The advantage of registering as a children's home or a place of care lies in the government subsidy available to such institutions. **No provision has yet been made for the registration of shelters.**

Maintenance of good order in children's homes and places of care is spelt out in Regulation 31 which stipulates the requirements with which children's homes shall comply. Regulation 32 stipulates the conditions under which good order and discipline in a children's home should be maintained. Behaviours regarded as undesirable in a children's home and how punishment should be meted out are also stipulated. With regard to corporal punishment, it should be inflicted selectively depending on the child's age, sex, physical and mental condition.

■ Absconding and unlawful removal of children

Section 38(1) makes provision for a policeman, social worker or authorized officer to apprehend, without warrant, and bring before a commissioner of child welfare in the district where apprehended as soon as possible "(a)ny pupil who has absconded from any institution or a child who has absconded from a place of safety or from the custody of any person in which he was placed under this Act or the Criminal Procedure Act of 1977 (Act No. 51 of 1977); or a pupil or child who has been granted leave of absence from any institution or place of safety or from any custody in which he was placed and who on the cancellation or expiration of his leave of absence fails to return to the institution, place of safety or custody from which he was granted leave of absence". Such an absconder can be kept in a place of safety until he can be brought before a commissioner.

Section 51 stipulates that any person who abducts or removes any child or pupil, or directly or indirectly counsels, induces or aids any child or pupil to abscond from any

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institution, place of safety or custody in which the child or pupil was lawfully placed, or knowingly harbours or conceals a child or pupil who has been so abducted or removed or has so absconded, or prevent him from returning to the institution, place of safety or custody from which he was abducted or removed or has absconded shall be guilty of an offence.

■ Employment of children

The Child Care Amendment Act of 1991 includes a new section 52A which states that: "Subject to the provisions of this Act or any other law no person may employ or provide work to any child under the age of 15 years". With special arrangements, children younger than 15 years can be allowed to work (section 52A(2)). Hypothetically, therefore, the legislation as it now stands could render child labour illegal while permitting certain categories of child work.⁴ Section 52A has important implications for street children especially with regard to protection against exploitation by employers. Because the majority of these children are employed in the informal sector where instruments for the monitoring of the nature and incidence of (child) labour (statistical information, labour inspection etc.) are sorely lacking legal sanctions against child labour will not be enough to protect children from being exploited. The need for effective machinery to ensure the implementation of the law should therefore receive urgent attention.

■ Medical treatment of children and pupils in institutions

Section 39 as amended reads:

- (4) Notwithstanding any rule of law to the contrary
- (a) Any person over the age of 18 years shall be competent to consent, without the assistance of his parent or guardian, to the performance of any operation upon himself; and
- (b) any person over the age of 14 years shall be competent to consent, without the assistance of his parent or guardian, to the performance of any medical treatment of himself or his child.

■ Determination of custody of children

The requirement that the race classification of a child and the person in whose custody the child is placed or transferred should be the same was abolished by section 13 of Act No. 86 of 1991. **The child's religious and cultural background should still be considered in determining his custody.**

The Act makes further provision for aspects such as transfers, leave of absence, removals, discharges and transfer of parental powers.

⁴ Students of the subject distinguish between "child work" and "child labour. Child work refers to work that improves the child's socialisation, maturation and skill development. Child labour is synonymous with child abuse and leads to the impairment of the child's physical, emotional educational and cultural development (Otis *et al.* 1992).

ANNEXURE D

CASE STUDY TO PROVE THAT LEGAL PRECAUTIONS ALONE ARE NOT SUFFICIENT TO COMBAT THE STREET CHILDREN PROBLEM

1. INTRODUCTION

This case study was undertaken in an effort to prove that the use of legal instruments alone in combating or helping street children are not sufficient. When the children are institutionalized and their conditions are not improved, when they return home, they will go back to the behaviour that made them to be institutionalized in the first place.

2. IDENTIFYING PARTICULARS

NAMES : Tebogo and Mosimaneotsile Phillies

AGES : 1973.10.12 - 1976.10.02

ADDRESS : 671 Mothibistadt

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION : Full Gospel Church

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS : Std II and Grade I

SEX : Males

SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

1. Annah Phillies
2. Mooifontein Children's Home Social Worker
3. Kudumane Social Worker

3. FAMILY COMPOSITION

NAME	AGE	RELATIONSHIP	OCCUPATION
Goitirwang Phillies	unknown	Grandmother	Deceased
Jan Phillies	unknown	Father	"
Annah Phillies	41 yrs	Mother	Unemployed
Tebogo Phillies	20 yrs	child-in-question	
Mosimaneotsile Phillies	17 yrs	child-in-question	
Mosimanegape Phillies	13 yrs	Brother	Scholar
Goitsewang Phillies	8 yrs	Sister	"

On the 17 July 1989 these children were declared children in need of care in terms of the Children's Act No. 33 of 1960 by the Children's Court. They were ordered to be committed to Mooifontein Children's Home in Ditsobotla. They were admitted at Mooifontein Primary School to continue with their schooling with effect from 17 July 1990. Tebogo was placed in Std III while Mosimaneotsile started Grade II.

7.1 Intervention by Social Worker at Mooifontein Children's Home

The Social Worker modified the children's behaviour through behaviour modification programmes and group discussions. Since the children had been out of school for a long time, learning was difficult for them. As a result they repeated the standards. The children made good contact with other children and with proper control and guidance, their behaviour improved. Unfortunately they made slow progress in their school work.

7.2 Reconstruction services by Social Worker at home

The Social Worker assisted the family with a Foster Care Grant. The money was put in the bank and monitored from time to time. This was done to ensure that the mother could not misuse it. The money was for the children's school requirement and other basic needs. The mother was also motivated to visit and write to the children in order to maintain contact with them. This was important to the children as they did not feel abandoned by their own mother. The Social Worker who handled the case was transferred in 1991 and she handed the case over to her co-workers.

7.3 Report from the Social Worker in Mothibistadt

The children were released in 1992 from the children's home. They were put back in school to continue with their schooling. They were doing Std IV and Std I respectively. Tebogo is reported to have quit school without his mother's consent. He went for seasonal reaping. This may probably be that he felt ridiculed being in the same standard with younger children than himself. Furthermore it shows that proper reconstruction services were not done before and during the time the children were released from the Home.

8. EVALUATION

This is a clear indication that the use of legal instruments alone is not enough to help the street children. Thus, declaring them children in need of care and committing them to institutions without proper reconstruction services at home will not solve the problem.

ANNEXURE E

AN EXAMPLE OF GROUP WORK (GROUP DISCUSSIONS) WITH STREET CHILDREN.

SECTION THREE

GROUP WORK : NAMES OF GROUP MEMBERS

- | | | | |
|----|------------------|---|--------|
| 1. | Webster Moloi | - | 14 yrs |
| 2. | Elias Dintoe | - | 13 yrs |
| 3. | Phineas Diholo | - | 14 yrs |
| 4. | Joseph Lesekele | - | 13 yrs |
| 5. | Thabo Boo | - | 17 yrs |
| 6. | Daniel Moeng | - | 15 yrs |
| 7. | Noxawe Moatlhodi | - | 11 yrs |
| 8. | Kuna Modise | - | 12 yrs |
| 9. | Nompi Lechalaba | - | 15 yrs |

1. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

NAME AND ADDRESS OF AGENCY: Provincial Administration of O.F.S.

District Representatives

P.O. Box 695

BLOEMFONTEIN

9300

Tel. (051) 324843

NAME OF STUDENT: JOHN LENONG - 91/07421

NAME OF SUPERVISOR : MISS E.N. NGEWU

NAME OF GROUP AND TYPE : REFETOGILE TREATMENT GROUP

DATE OF FIRST MEETING : 06 JUNE 1994

NUMBER OF SESSIONS HELD : SEVEN

2. PURPOSE OF THE GROUP

Since the group was of street children who were accommodated at Heidedal Youth Centre from the streets of Bloemfontein, the student found it important and necessary that he formulates a group with them in order to engage them in discussions where they could explore and ventilate their feelings of isolation, their needs, wishes and aspirations in a supportive environment of group work.

In this way their common concerns and problems would be tackled through mutual support as they possess similar characteristics. Since some of them were in the streets for a long time, the student thought that the preventive and rehabilitative services would motivate them to change and mature for the better.

3. THE RATIONALE FOR FORMING THE GROUP (Their needs, problems, goals)

Cockbum (1988:6) defines street children as "those who have abandoned or have been abandoned by their families, significant others and their immediate communities, and drifted into a nomadic street life". Swart (1986:3), on the other hand, defines street children as "any boys or girls who have not reached adulthood, for whom the street has become their habitual abode and/or source of livelihood and who are inadequately protected, supervised or directed by responsible adults".

They are conspicuous as beggars and workers in the streets. Most of them ended up on the streets because of poverty, desertion, overcrowding, unemployment or remarriage of their parents, school failure, alcohol abuse among parents, and a small percentage of them are orphans.

The street children at Heidedal Youth Centre are among the hundreds who roam the streets of South Africa daily. Reverend Mafungu, a pastor in charge saw a need to shelter some street children on temporary basis whilst their parents are still being traced. Some of them are from as far as Soweto and it is difficult to trace their parents. They usually come to the Centre, for food and a place to sleep, and they are not obliged to stay at the Centre.

Since the street children are subjected to harsh conditions in the streets, their needs include shelter from cold and rainy days, food, education and acceptance. Therefore the Centre, in its quest to meet their needs, is providing them with food and place to sleep, and is paying school fees for those children who agree to go back to school. The dignity and respect with which they are treated makes them to feel accepted as human beings, and this is good for their self-esteem (Cockbum, 1988).

Some of the problems experienced by these children are: failing health as a result of overindulgence in glue sniffing and being bullied by other groups or individuals in the streets. Some are even forced to engage in criminal activities against their wish. The student saw it fit to form a functional group with the children in order to motivate and instil the desire in them to strive towards improving their living conditions. Group work method was therefore found to be the best suited platform through which these children could be equipped with life skills.

4. PROGRAM USED TO MEET GROUP MEMBERS' NEEDS AND GOALS

Anstey (1983:109) refer to a programme as "those activities which are planned and carried out by the group members and the group worker to meet individual needs and goals". The activities used in the group were discussions, role plays and story telling.

5. GOALS OF THE GROUP

According to Heap (1979:16) a goal refers to "the aims and intentions that the worker has in relation to what the group members will gain from participating in the group". The students therefore had the following goals for the group:

- (a) To help group members develop self-confidence within themselves and deal with feelings of inferiority through role-plays.
- (b) To alleviate isolation as they will be part of a group of other children with similar problems and interests.
- (c) To engage the children in activities that will keep them away from the streets.
- (d) To motivate and encourage the children to attend school as all their school necessities are provided for by the Centre.

6. GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Corey and Corey (1987:119) refer to group development as the stages that the groups tend to go through, each characterized by certain feelings, specific behaviour, totality of interaction and changes that occur throughout the life of a group.

During the planning phase of group development, the student-worker took the following factors into consideration:

- i) TYPE OF GROUP - the group was planned to be a treatment one focusing on being educational and growth oriented. This type of group is characterised by open communication, members bonded by common concerns, problems and characteristics (Toseland and Rivas, 1984).
- ii) GROUP COMPOSITION AND SIZE - the group was composed of both males and females. It had nine members because Anstey (1983) maintains that a group functions efficiently when it is constituted by a manageable size of ± 10 members.
- iii) FREQUENCY AND DURATION OF SESSIONS - It was agreed that the group meets once a week for an hour session. The project was intended to run over seven sessions. These sessions were planned to be run at Heidedal Youth Centre where the children are sheltered.
- iv) Voluntary vs involuntary membership, and open vs closed group
Membership of the group was voluntary and the worker contacted the potential group members for recruitment, and it was explained to them what the group was all about. Those who consented to become group members did so out of their own free will. The worker decided to make the group an open one where new members would

be allowed to join notwithstanding group progression. The reason for this was that since these children are not obliged to stay for a long time at the Centre and that new ones come almost everyday, it would be important to allow them to have a share of what the group offered.

During the pre-group meetings the student-social worker explored members' expectations, clarified the goals and objectives of the group, dealt with misconceptions about the group and answered members' questions about the group (Corey and Corey, 1987).

The first session of the group was about orientation and contracting. According to Toseland and Rivas (1984) this stage is characterized by initial uncertainty, very low group consciousness, little interaction, disorientation and anxiety. As expected, when requested to introduce themselves to each other, none of the group members volunteered to speak first. As such the worker modelled by acting out what he would like them to do, Webster Moloji, who appeared to be brighter, followed. When they were introducing themselves, the student used the attending and observing skills to observe the verbal and the non-verbal, behaviour. The direction of interaction was basically from the members to the leader and the frequency of interaction was very low.

During the second session where the discussion was about handling group pressure with regard to alcohol and drug abuse, they were more active. This could be attributed to the fact that in contracting which was done at the first session it was agreed that every member should participate fully in the discussions and confidentiality was stressed. It was further agreed that members should be punctual for

the sessions. As a result, the distribution of interaction increased during the second session because every member tried to share his/her views with the group. Some members indicated that they started sniffing glue after being influenced by their colleagues. Others retorted that they never relented their position of being anti-drug abuse in order to be accepted in street clicks. The worker capitalized on this conflicting disclosures of members by using group influence to assist those who sniff glue to quit the habit. It was agreed that those who can successfully achieve that will be rewarded with sweets as reinforcers at the end of the sessions. The worker advised them to defeat the temptation by being honest with their feeling, firm and consistent in their stand point against peer group pressure on misconduct.

The third session of the group could be equated to the transitional stage of group development in that there was a struggle for control of members as competition, jealousies, rivalry, challenges to the group leader and jockeying for position surfaced. As a result, the worker had to use confrontation as a technique to attack the undesired behaviours of some group members. It was done in a caring way to curb the destructive effects of confrontation. Some members acted in such a way that they sought favouritism from the student, and these caused a competition and personal attacks. The toning down skill was used to reduce strong communication, shouting and angry facial expressions (Corey and Corey, 1987). During this session the discussion was about understanding the concept of crime and its legal implications. The student, through his expert knowledge, outlined the present legal system in South Africa with regard to criminality. This exercise was taken as a preventive and rehabilitative measure to those who envisaged and those who have

been involved in unlawful behaviour such as stealing. Most of the members were frightened to know the extent to which unlawful behaviour could make one face the wrath of the courts of law. The student could observe that information given sank into the minds of the members.

During the working stage of the group development, which tallied with sessions four to six, the discussions were on encouraging constructive use of leisure time, implications of teenage pregnancy and encouraging a positive outlook to life. According to Corey and Corey (1987) this stage is characterized by group cohesion, commitment to change, freedom to experiment, willingness to risk and trust among group members.

Group cohesion which refers to the emotional binding of members to their group was clearly observable during this stage. The student could observe a feeling of belonging and a willingness to work for and with the group. The climate which is the warmth in the group was high.



The student was completely removed from the central position and the group members took upon themselves the responsibility of guiding the group. Constructive inputs were made to the effect that the group members should take the first step of moving themselves out of the situation they found themselves in through being dedicated to education. They were alerted to the fact that the government, through its policy of free education, is encouraging learning, and that this opportunity should be used.

was very low at the first stage as expected but it increased tremendously after the student cleared misconceptions about the group which was held by the group members. They were also active in deliberations. This may be attributed to the fact that group members knew each other well because they stay together at the Centre.

(ii) Structural processes

This includes sub-group formation, status and role expectations of group members. Sub groups existed within the group but they were not harmful to the development of the group as a whole. They were rather positive in that when work was assigned it was distributed according to the sub groups so that it could be effectively carried out. Group members occupied the same status in the group and none was given preference over others. In this way a sense of belonging and acceptance was instilled (McKendrick, 1990).

(iii) Locomotive processes

This processes are contracting, goal formulation and democratic decision making (Heap, 1977). Verbal contract was upheld because the group was not strictly based on compulsory membership. Even though it was only verbal, members never withheld their participation and contribution during discussions. Punctuality and confidentiality were maintained. The goals of the group formed part of the contract.

Whenever decisions were to be made a principle of self-determination and democracy prevailed. Group members were afforded the opportunity to brainstorm around issues and at the end came up with an informed decision.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE DIRECTED TO STREET CHILDREN1. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION.

1.1 Sex :

M	F
---	---

1.2 Age of Child :

Less than 7 years

8 - 12 years

13 - 18 years

1.3 Last standard (school) attended:

Never attended school

Less than Std. I

Std. I to Std. 3

Std. 4 to Std. 6

Std. 7 +

1.4 Why did the Street child originally quit schooling:

N. A.

Lack of funds

Unhappy at school

Could not cope

Parents enforcement

Other -----

1.5 Would the child like to go back to school:

Yes

No

Uncertain

1.6 Family profile :

	Age	At home	Elsewhere	Employment	Sch.Std	Religion
Father						
Mother						
Guardian						
Street Child						
Brothers						
"						
"						
Sisters						
"						
"						
Others						

Mention total number of children

--

1.7 Last school attended or still being attended

.....

2. SOCIAL BACKGROUND

2.1 To whom do you go when you have a problem

Father

Mother

Sibling

Friend

Family member

Other

2.2 Family relationships:

	Good	Fair	Poor
Parents/Guardian			
Father/Street kid			
Mother/Street kid			
Siblings			
Other -----			

2.3 Who disciplines the children:

Father alone	
Mother alone	
Both parents	
Other Siblings	
Other -----	

2.4 How are the children normally punished:

Verbally	
Whipping	
Withholding rights	
Other -----	

2.5 How often does the child go home:

Daily	
Occasionally	
Weekly	
Never	

3. ACCOMMODATION

3.1 Occupation of Home (Sleeping arrangements)

	Available	No. of people
Lounge		
Dining room		
Kitchen		
Bedroom		
"		
"		
"		
Outside Bldg.		

3.2 If not at home, where does the street -

Child sleep:

Doorways

Taxi ranks

Drains

Derelict houses

Railway stations

At home

Other

4 CHILD'S HISTORY

4.1 Where was the child interviewed:

At home

Parking lot

Shopping centre

In the street

Taxi rank

Other.....

Group influence
Dropout at school
Attracted to city
Search for adventure
Compelled re poverty
Other -----

4.5 Is the child contented with being on the street :

Contented
Merely accepted their life style
Miserable
Indifferent
Uncertain

4.6 What does the peer group mean to the child in question:

Individualistic
Supportive
Do things together
Dependent on group
Other -----

4.7 How do you spend your money :

Buy food
Take it home .
Gamble
School fees/books
Buy clothes
Play video games
Earn no money
Other -----

5. POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

5.1 What will persuade the child to again live a normal life :

	P Q (Probing Question)
Foster placement	
Place with relations	
Institutionalisation	
Improvement at home	
Punitive measures	
Not prepared to change	
Uncertain	
Other	

Motivate your answer (PQ)

.....

.....

5.2 Will child accept placement in an institution or foster home

Yes	
No	
Uncertain	

Motivate whatever answer :

.....

.....

.....

6. General remarks by interviewer :

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

If possible, try to secure the home address of the street - child

REPUBLIC OF BOPHUTHATSWANA

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

QUESTIONNAIRES

ON

STREET CHILDREN

QUESTIONNAIRE NO

DATE COMPLETED

NAME OF SOCIAL WORK RESEARCHER

AREA

INTRODUCTION

Two types of questionnaires are hereto attached for your administering. One questionnaire deals with the nature and extent of this phenomenon.

The second questionnaire requires information dealing with children themselves. The aim is to help try and formulate policy on how to deal with the problem.

COMPLETING INSTRUCTIONS

= To be ticked with X

.....

= To be filled in full sentences

= To be filled in short sentences

THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM OF STREET CHILDREN IN BOPHUTHATSWANA

NATURE AND EXTENT:

1. How can you describe "Street Children" in your own words?

.....

2. What is the general appearance of these children (mention three characteristics).

<input type="checkbox"/>	Wellfed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Underfed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Clean	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dirty
<input type="checkbox"/>	Well Clothed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Under-clothed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bright	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dull
<input type="checkbox"/>	Happy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Depressed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Outspoken	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reserved
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sociable	<input type="checkbox"/>	Withdrawn

3. Estimate the present number of street children in your region that you are aware of.

AGE GROUP	WHITE	COLOURED	ASIAN	BLACK
Younger than 10 years				
10 years to 18 years				
TOTAL				

4. In which villages, townships, towns in your region does the phenomenon of street children occur?

.....
.....

5. In which of the above-mentioned villages, townships, towns is, the largest concentration of street children?

.....

6. Which areas do these children originally come from (mentioned the two main areas).

Lower income

High density areas e.g. flats

Squatter settlements

Migrators

Other (specify)
.....

SOCIAL CIRCUMSTANCES:

7. How do the children mainly make a living (mention two main areas).

Pushing trollies

Hair cutting

Selling fruit

Vending (e.g.newspaper selling)

Shoe shinning

- | | |
|--|---|
| | Car "Valet" services (e.g. car washing) |
| | Begging |
| | Stealing |
| | Other (specify) |

8. Estimate the percentage of these children that attended formal school?

--

9. Where do the children mainly shelter at night (mention two possibilities).

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| | Doorways |
| | Taxi ranks |
| | Old cars |
| | Drains |
| | Derelict houses |
| | Toilets |
| | Railway station |
| | Bus stops |
| | Other (specify) |
| | |

10. Describe a maximum of three social problems associated with these children. (mark your choices in order of priority viz.1,2 & 3).

<input type="checkbox"/>	Substance abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Glue
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Dagga
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Cigarette
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Alcohol
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Truancy		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Theft		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assaults		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ganging-give nature of the gan		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Begging		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify)		
<input type="checkbox"/>		

CAUSES OF STREET CHILDREN:

11. In your opinion, what are the three main causes of this phenomenon in your region (mark in order of importance viz 1,2 and 3).

<input type="checkbox"/>	Overcrowding	<input type="checkbox"/>	Force removals
<input type="checkbox"/>	Low wages	<input type="checkbox"/>	Negative home conditions
<input type="checkbox"/>	Inadequate housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lack of recreational facilities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Substance abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Indadequate parental supervision
<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor schooling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Peer group pressure
<input type="checkbox"/>	Unemployment		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Poverty		

12. What are the three main causes of the children's homelessness according to your opinion assessment (Rank your answer according to priority viz. 1,2 & 3).

	Rejection by caretakers	
	Orphaned	
	Parental irresponsibility	
	School dropout	
	Escape from	
	Attraction to the city	
	Search for Adventure	
	Family dis-organisation	

SUGGESTIONS:

13. The problem of street children - how can it be addressed?

14. In your opinion can the children be placed in:-

	Institutions	What type?
	With own parents
	Fo-ster placement	
	Other (specify)

15. Remarks (if any)

