# Chapter 2

# REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Street Children in the Developing World : A Review of Their Condition**

For the last decade, many psychologists have been studying children, and viewed them as both needy and bold. They have also seen them in streets that have increasingly become both theatre and war zone. Observing the children and how people have reacted to them not only has forced them to think about growing up without the security of parental love but has made them contemplate the potential rewards of like without parental restraint. Their ambivalent thoughts and feelings are to some extent similar to the way the children are treated by the public. Some people see the children as being worthy of the valor given to heroic survivors, while others afford them the pity due the neglected and abused. Sadly, the most common public response is scorn and hostility. Although one can imagine why they are scorned - their being dirty, uncontrolled by authority, and involved in mischief are enough to explain this. It is difficult to understand the degree of violence they receive.

It is not just in Latin America where the children are violated. In fact, in many places in the world, street children have been assassinated for no more than petty crimes and haughty behavior (Henriquez, cited in Boydon, 1991; Herman, 1991). They have also been abused in other ways. Under the rubric of a government sponsored program called "Operation Beggar," street children in Bombay were taken from the streets and sent into what amounted to indebted servitude. Street children in Khartoum, Sudan, who were on the streets to escape ethnic violence were rounded up by the government and sold to farmers (Boydon, 1991).

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There is no clear definition of street children. For example, it cannot be assumed that all children on the streets are homeless. The great majority-well over three-quarters and as many as 90% of the children on the streets in various developing countries-work on the streets but live at home and are working to earn money for their families (Ennew, 1986; Myers, 1989). Estimates of Colombian street children have ranged from 130,000 (UNICEF, 1985) to 25,000 (Goode, 1987). The difference reflects the change that came about by excluding working children.

For many years, UNICEF said there were 40-50 million street children in Latin America (Ortiz & Poetner, 1992; Tacon, 1982). These numbers would mean that more than 45% of all Latin America's children are street children (Ennew, 1968). One estimate of the street children in Brazil reached 30 million (Sanders, 1987). This meant that more than half of all Brazilian children were street children (House, 1989). These figures fail to take into account the difference between working children living at home and street children who work in the streets but do not live with adults.

Lusk (1992) developed four categories of children found in the street. Each group has its own psychological characteristics. First, there are poor working children returning to their families at night. They are likely to attend school and not be delinquent. Second, there are independent street workers. Their family ties are begining to break down, their school attendance is decreasing, and their delinquency is increasing. Third, there are children of street families who live and work with their families in the street. Their conditions are related to poverty. In India, they are referred to as pavement dwellers (Patel, 1983), whereas in the United States they are the children of homeless families. Finally, there are the children who have broken off contact with their families. They are residing in the streets full time and are the "real" street children. Lusk (1992) considered

this group to be about 15% of his sample of children in the streets of Rio de Janeiro. Patel (1990), in her study of street children in Bombay, had a similar categorization of children in the streets.

Cosgrove (1990) has used two dimensions to define street children: the degree of family involvement and the amount of deviant behavior. According to Cosgrove, a street child is "any individual under the age of majority whose behavior is predominatly at variance with community norms, and whose primary support for his/her development needs is not a family or family substitute" (p.192). Cosgrove's definition assumes a great deal of cultural consistency, but deviance and "family substitutes" are greatly embedded in cultural particulars. For example, how do we handle the fact that in many cases the life of street children is healthier-both physically and emotionally-than is the child's life at home? Which life is deviant ?

The United Nations has its own definition of street children: "any girl or boy.... for whom the street in the widest sense of the word (including unoccupied dwellings, wasteland, etc.) has become his or her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised, or directed by responsible adults" (International Catholic Children's Bureau, 1985, p.58).

Some definitions of street children divide the children on the streets into stages of street life  Aptekar (1988b) and Visano (1990) defined the process of moving from home to the streets in stages beginning with a slow but progressive amount of time away from home until there is a full matriculation to street life and culture.

Other writers have added to the definition by describing different types of experiences of the children, such as the quality of their play and work and their relations with peers,

adults, and authority figures (Dorfman, 1984; Lusk, 1989; Shifter, 1985).

There are two additional facts that warrant attention in defining street children. One is the range of their ages and the second is their gender, which is overwhelmingly male in the developing world and equally split between male and female in the developed world.

Children rarely begin street life before they are 5 years of age (Gutierrez, 1970). When their body image changes to that of an adult, they are forced into criminal behavior or into the same kinds of work that other poor adults do to survive. The reason for this is that the small children are looked on as being cute and receive alms because of it, but when they get big enough to be perceived as adults they are considered dangerous and so getting money from the public is more difficult.

There are cultural differences to this phenomenon. Visano (1990) noted that age was a liability among the 50 street children she studied in Toronto. The young had restricted employment prospects. Also, because they were under the compulsory schooled attendance age, they were committing a legal offense. Because the children were in the developed world, the law was enforced.

The fact that the great majority of the children are male is often hidden when the children are referred to as street children and not street boys. The predominance of boys (83% in a study in Juarez, Mexico; Lusk, Peralta, & Vest, 1989) is particularly striking because in many cultures girls are more likely to be abandoned and abused than are boys (Korbin, 1981). The most common claim for finding fewer girls in the streets has been that they are taken off the streets to become prostitutes (Agnelli, 1986; Nixon, 1991, Tacon, 1981a; UNICEF, 1986).

But the numbers do not bear this out. Using UNICEF's estimates of 40 million street children in Latin America (Tacon, 1981a), one would assume-if there were no gender differences-that half would be female. If half of those became prostitutes, there would be 10 million prostitutes in Latin America-a figure that is much too high.

A more plausible reason for the gender difference is that because girls are needed in the household, they never get to the streets. Many street children come from female-headed homes in which boys are socialized into leaving home much earlier than western middle-class sensibilities deem appropriate and in which girls are encouraged to stay home far longer than is typical in the developed world (Aptekar, 1989c).

Another factor-one less considered and more subtle-is the dynamics that go on between stepfathers and male stepchildren. This is a common situation and might account for boys-but not their sisters going to the streets (Aptekar, 1988b; Felsman, 1979). It might also explain why half of the street children in the developed world are female (Brennan, Huizinga, & Elliott, 1978). The reason may be that prostitution is less an option, but the situation could also be the result of the patrifocal family structure. The dynamics of the patrifocal family structure might be more conducive to daughters leaving home, whereas the dynamics of the matrifocal family structures of East African and Latin American countries and of the poor in North America might be more conducive to boys leaving home. There is plenty of room for more study.

At this point, it can be said that street children are of both genders although they are far more likely to be male in the developing world. Street children are more than 5 years of age but are not old enough to be perceived as adults. They work in urban streets without adult supervision. They live without their parents although they keep some contact with them. And they are not the children of the working poor.

**Methodical Problems :**

Getting accurate information from the children is quite difficult. They have developed an extraordinary capacity to tell stories. Lying about their ages, family background, the reasons for being on the streets, and their current circumstances in included in their well-rehearsed scripts (Felsman, 1989; Leite & Esteves, 1991). Presenting information about themselves is part of their survival skills which, like those of other nomadic entertainers, rests on their ability to manipulate their audiences (Aptekar, 1990a).

One boy told Aptekar (1989), that he was in the state reformatory because his father beat him, and later the same day he told a female investigator he was there because he had been abandoned and had no other place to go. Felsman (1989) reported observing three siblings playing together happily. When they eyed a passerby who was a potential patron, they dropped their smiles and held out their hands claiming they were starving and abandoned. In fact, their mother was around the corner selling fruit.

There are other reasons why the children manipulate information. Manipulating information has a psychological function that allows the children to get back at a society that devalues them. Falsified information also serves to keep society at bay about the details of their lives. In many cases, the children purposely create a secret code or a private language (adopting a special argot may be related to the degree of hostility toward street children) with the purpose of hiding the truth (Lemay, 1975; Ricuarte, 1972, 1977).

Accepting what the children say as fact is suspect. Yet the most common form of gathering empirical data about street children has been to administer questionnaires through intermediaries and then accept the answers as if they were factual.

Beltran (1969), a Colombian researcher, remarked how easy it was for researchers

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to succumb to the quickly written and readily acceptable prose that describes unfortunate children in melodramatic terms. Unfortunately, this leads to stating all the children's problems while understating , or ignoring entirely, their ability to cope and their resilience (Felsman, 1985, 1989)  One study in Brazil showed that the child workers had far more pessimistic and less accurate appraisals of the children than the children had of themselves (Oliveria, Baizerman, & Pellet, 1992).

It is also possible to obtain biased information in the other direction by ignoring the children's misery and delinquency and by presenting  them with small problems, as if they were modern-day Huck Finns. Thus they have been characterized as "acknowledging no authority and owing no allegiance to anybody or anything, with grimy fist raised against a society whenever it tries to coerce him; his sturdy independence, love of freedom and absolute self-reliance, together with his rude sense of justice enable him to govern his little community" (Riis, 1957, p. 148).

These two potential biases-becoming the savior of the pitiful or gaining power through the vicarious pleasure associated with turning the victim into a hero-are made more difficult by the public and by the international organizations that serve the children.  The public wants to hear about the children's miseries, their adventures, and the ways in which they outwit adult authorities.  Reporters eager to sell copy follow the public's lead.  Thus the press is more likely to publish feature articles than to publish news stories, and it is more likely to illustrate worse-case scenarios than to show typical situations.

The international organizations seeking attention from funding agencies use their publications to make their case for financial allocations. They, too, rely on showing the youngest, the most drug dependent, and the most violent.  Even though these groups are motivated by high ideals and perform excellent services, they can contribute to the

existing biases against the children (Felsman, 1989; Tyler, Holliday, Tyler, Echeverry, & Zea, 1987).

In addition to the problems associated with the children's distortion of information and the fact that there is distortion about them, there are methodological problems related to the cross-cultural nature of the work (Segall, 1983; Triandis & Berry, 1980). The use of standardized tests is difficult. It is rare for street children to have birth certificates. Even a child's parents may not know the child's date of birth. In Brazil alone, there are 12 million children without birth certificates (Lusk, 1992). Given the possibility of malnutrition (at least half the children in Lima, for example, suffer from malnutrition; Creed, 1985) and thus delayed physical growth it is difficult to know whether a child's stated age of 7 on one occasion is more accurate than his alleged age of 12 in another (Aptekar, 1988b). Because standardized tests are based on age, not knowing the children's ages is very problematic.

Even with these problems, there still is some value in using tests at least for group comparisons (Holtzman, 1980). In the Colombian study, Aptekar used the Bender-Gestalt, the Human Figure Drawing, and the Kohs Block designs. These were shown to have relatively good cross-cultural reliability and validity for the variables (intelligence, emotional well-being, and neurological dysfunction) that were being studied (Anastasi, 1988). They also were chosen because they helped to deal with some other problems in that the tests were of some interest to the children and fairly easy to administer. They did not rely on reading; only 40% of the sample could read. They measured intelligence in a way that was somewhat separate from the degree of schooling the children had attained; most of these children had not attended school. (In the developing world, 20 million of the 100 million primary school-age children do not attend school, and an additional 30 million

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drop out by the fourth grade (UNICEF, 1990).

Supporting test data with ethnographic information is imperative but, unfortunately, it also presents problems. One problem is getting a fair sample of the data. Data should be collected during all times of night and day. For example, in Rio de Janeiro during the day, the vast majority of children on the streets are boys who work by shinning shoes, washing cars, vending on a small scale, and so on. At night, the percentage of girls and numbers of older children increases considerably (Lusk, 1992). The children found at night have different family situations, and the two groups of children function differently.

There are also sampling problems with reference to where the data are collected. It is best to collect data in more than one place. Some ethnographic information comes from observations taken only when the children are incarcerated. Aptekar found that incarcerated children, particularly those who have just arrived, are much more likely to talk about their pasts and their families. As time goes on, their stories change in the direction of helping them get out (Aptekar, 1988b). Other studies have taken data only from reception centers, which are places that serves children meals but do not offer sleeping facilities. Many children are in reception centers, which have the value of seeing behavior that is close to what is found in the streets. But the children who come there are not representative of all street children. All state-run programs (reception centers, places of incarceration, orphanages) must be sampled in combination with programs run by non-governmental organizations (churches, civic groups) because they serve children of different circumstances and abilities.

Collecting ethnographic data on the streets is less rewarding than one might assume. Although it may appear that the children are free to talk and spend time with the researcher, the fact is they are busy working-and for them, working means survival. It is difficult to

get their sustained attention unless the researcher pays them (Dallape, 1987). Employees have a way of passing pleasing information onto their bosses.

Collecting ethnographic data directly from the children on the streets is difficult without the help of a local informant, and this has its own problems. The relationship of the informant with the children, and the attitudes of the informant toward street children, must be taken into account.

When foreigners conduct ethnographic observations, they bring cultural biases that determine the interpretations of what they observe. Many times these biases lie beneath the surface and are not understood by the researcher. Because of this, and because the children bring out strong emotional and judgmental feelings, it is helpful for the writer conducting qualitative cross-cultural research with street children to offer the reader some self-disclosure that orients the reader to the writer's feelings and what has been done to reduce the bias such feelings may produce (Aptekar, 1992b). Secondary sources such as newspaper and magazine articles, government reports, status about children, and records kept by institutions are helpful. For example, Aptekar (1992) was able to get assurance about the accuracy of ages of certain children from state institutions. Secondary sources also provide information on how the public views the children, and this is important in understanding why the public reacts so violently towards them (Aptekar, 1990b).

These are the major methodological problems associated with the study of street children. The more the children are studied in their natural habitat, the more difficult it is to have the type of control that empirical research implies. By combining several methods (psychological tests and other sources of psychological assessment such as mental status interviews and open-ended questionnaires; ethnographic observation in different

situations, at different times, and by more than one person; and the use of secondary sources), it is possible to generate empirical information about the children with reasonable assurance.

Because of all the difficulties associated with studying street children, it is helpful to give the reader a heuristic analysis of the data. Such analysis gives logical arguments about how the data were collected and what was done to overcome methodological problems (Kvale, 1986). This is commonly missing in studies of street children.

**Cross cultural comparisons:**

What accounts for the phenomenon of street children in a particular culture is difficult to ascertain. In some countries of Latin America-most prominently Colombia, Brazil, and Mexico-street children have been around for more than a generation. But Brazil, which actually has the highest number of street children in Latin America, is bordered by Uruguay, Paraguay, Argentina, and Bolivia, each of which has relatively few street children.

Kenya, in which some children on the streets are said to have been born from parents who themselves were street children (Clark, 1982), is bordered by Ethiopia, in which almost all of the working children on the streets return to their families at night (Lalor, Taylor, Veale, Ali Hussein, & Bushra, 1992). Both Kenya and Ethiopia have a mixture of Christian and Muslim populations, and both have been equally undemocratic. Kenya is wealthier than Ethiopia yet has more street children. Both countries border the Sudan, also a country of Muslim, Christian, and animist faiths that did not have street children until the recent ethnic violence in the southern part of the country (Veale, 1992; Veale & Taylor, 1991).

A common denominator that might explain the cultural conditions for street children

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is a nondictatorial capitalistic country in the developing world that has significant urban centers. This could explain the high incidence of street children in Mexico, Colombia, and Brazil, and it would help explain why there is a low incidence in Chile, Paraguay, Cuba and Tanzania.

This hypothesis does not explain why Argentina and Uruguay have so few street children. Perhaps these countries have more of a European heritage than they do an indigenous or African culture. This would explain why Colombia, Mexico and Brazil, which are influenced strongly by their African and indigenous cultures, have many street children. Yet the idea that some cultural groups are over or underrepresented in the population of street children is also difficult to accept. Cuba, for example, has few street children but a strong African culture. Bolivia has a strong indigenous culture and few street children.

Within one country, Ecuador, the numbers of street children vary by region. In Guayaquil, which has a large African influence, there are many street children; in Quito, which is largely influenced by indigenous culture, there are few street children. It might be that street children are a modern phenomenon, that is, they are not found in places with strong indigenous cultures. Thus Connolly (1990), in a comparative study of street children in Bogota and Guatemala City, found it very difficult to locate street children in Guatemala City, which has a far higher influence of indigenous culture than has Bogota, which has many street children. This would help to explain the situation in Bolivia but not in Peru, which has many street children.

The idea that there might be a link between a relatively recent, violent, anti-colonial national movement and the onset of street children is worth examining. Veale (1992), in a comparative study of street children in mid-19th-century Ireland and the current

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Sudanese street children, wrote that civil unrest was the reason for the origins of street children in both countries. Civil unrest dating from the Mau Mau struggle for independence has been connected to the origins of Kenyan street children (Nowrojee, 1990). There are also many street children in South Africa, where their high numbers have been related to the country's violent political problems (Swart, 1988). In all of Latin America, Colombia has had one of the most violent popular uprisings. Indeed, its current violence has been connected to the period of la violencia and to the high incidence of street children (Aptekar, 1989a).

Some societies, such as Tanzania, have not had strong civil violence and have few street children. But the situation is more complex. Ethiopia has had a long history of civil war, and the violence has not produced many street children. Argentina and Chile had relatively less adverse anti-colonial wars but had recent violent politics. Yet they have fewer street children than do Brazil or Mexico, neither of which has had recent political violence (excluding the very recent violence in Mexico). The situation in many countries of Central America, where there has been considerable civil violence, has not produced many street children.

A worldwide study of street children, perhaps conducted by using the Human Relations Area Files (a collection of indexed ethnographic data on more than 350 societies), would be helpful to learn more about why certain cultures have an over or underrepresented amount of street children.

Tracing cultural differences is also possible in East Africa, where different tribes of widely divergent cultural traditions live so closely together. A study of the tribal origins of street children might provide a good deal of information about which type of family structure is conducive to producing or not producing street children.

Whatever the cultural factors that account for street children, one is am continually asked to compare street children in the developing world with those in the developed world. As bad as the situation is perceived by the American public, for example, there simply is no place in the United States where there are large numbers of children living without adults and working in full public view. What the United States and the developed world have is a large delinquent and violent population, most commonly found in the poor urban slums. Street children are less delinquent or, as Aptekar (1989) has described elsewhere, they are more like thieves than thugs. For all practical purposes, there are no guns in the slums of Latin American or East African cities, a situation that is considerably different from that in the United States. There are other differences as well, one of which is that there are far more females among street children in the developed world than there are in the developing world. Also, many homeless children in the developed world are from middle-class families, unlike the case in the developing world. In addition, North American runaway children are more likely to be on the streets because of family discord than because of poverty. Nearly 80% of American runaways have been physically or sexually abused (Reppond, 1983). Only 20% of the Latin American street children are on the streets because of physical or sexual abuse (Lusk, 1989).

**Origins : Poverty, Family Abuse, Modernization**

UNICEF (1990) estimated that, in 1980, there were 369 million poor children under age 15 in the cities of the developing world. The great majority of them were not street children. Why is it that certain children leave their homes while their siblings, who are as poor and presumably as abused or neglected, stay at home ?

Several hypotheses have been advanced to explain the origins of street children. One relates to urban poverty, a second relates to aberrant families (e.g. abandonment,

abuse, or neglect), and a third is associated with modernization.

In any attempt to ascertain why certain children become street children, such factors as the psychological status of the child and the child's family, the perception of life on the streets, and the degree to which a street children culture exists must be considered. Lucchinni (1993) has developed a promising schema along these lines. Visano (1990) is doing similar work with North American runaways.

Wherever the inquiry might lead, it is important not to assume that leaving home is a mistake (Aptekar, 1989d; Felsman, 1984; Tyler, Tyler, Echeverry & Zea, 1991). Children find that their "living conditions on the street are often better than those at home" (Connolly, 1990,p. 146). Many street children have better physical and mental health than do their siblings and peers who stay behind (Aptekar, 1988c, 1989e; Pardo & Vergara, 1964). One thousand street children in Tegulcigalpa, Honduras, were compared to an equal number of poor working children in the same city. The authors found that "second and third-degree malnutrition has so far been found only among the market children [working children living with their parents]; no such cases have yet been seen among the children of the street" (Wright, Kaminsky & Wittig, 1993, p. 282)

The process of becoming a street child has been well documented. Almost all street children begin their life on the streets by a gradual and predictable process. They leave home in a measured manner, at first staying away for a night or two and then gradually spending more time away from home (Aptekar, 1988b; Connolly, 1990; Felsman, 1981; Visano, 1990). As time goes on, the amount of time they spend with other children increases, yet they rarely break family ties. Studies in Colombia (Aptekar, 1988d, 1993b; de Pineda, de Munoz, de Pineda, Echeverry & Arias, 1978; Felsman, 1981), Costa Rica (Valverde & Lusk, 1989), Mexico (Lusk et al., 1989), and Brazil (Judge, 1987; Sanders,

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1987) have shown that 90% or more of street children maintain contact with their families.

The number of children arriving in the streets because they have been abandoned by their families is far less than is commonly assumed. In Felsman's (1989) sample of 300 Colombian street children, less than 3% were abandoned. Boydon (1986) found that, of the 200,000 children on Lima's streets, only 6,000 (or 3%) had been abandoned. Tacon (1982), speaking of all Latin American street children, estimated that less than 10% were abandoned by their families. An informative narrative account of how one unmarried mother takes care of her children and avoids abandoning them can be found in the autobiography of Maria de Jesus (1962).

Many authors believe that most children in the developing world are in the streets because of poverty, Lusk, who has studied street children in Juarez and Rio de Janeiro as well as in the countries of Colombia, Peru, and Dominican Republic, refuted the abusive or neglectful family theory by showing that in "interviews with hundreds of street children in Latin America over the past five years, one theme has been repeated countless times: they are on the streets to work and earn money because there is not enough at home" (1992, p.296).

Rosa, de Souza, and Ebrahim (1992) obtained physical and mental health data and tested 80 Brazilian street children from 9 to 18 years of age. They found that 82% of the children left home for economic reasons. Once on the streets, the children contributed half or more of what they earned to their families-hardly a sign of family discord.

In a study of 55 Nigerian street children under age 15 who were begging for a living, Ojanuga (1990) found that the children were on the streets because their families were poor and needed the money they earned. Indeed, 80% of children still lived with

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their families and many of the children begged with them.

However, not all studies support the poverty hypothesis. After interviewing , 1,000 children on the streets in Mumbai, Patel (1990) claimed the major reason for street children was not poverty but family violence. Another Indian study, this one of child porters (children under age 14 working and living without family support), showed that although poverty was a significant aspect of the children being on the streets, family discord was the major problem (Subrahmanyam & Sondhi, 1990).

Often studies cite more than one reason for the origins of street children. For example, the same study of Brazilian street children that found economic reasons to be the major reason for children being on the streets also noted that it was twice as common to have fathers absent from the homes of street children as it was to have fathers absent from those of the control group of poor working children (Rosa, de Sousa, & Ebrahim, 1992). Other studies have emphasised the deleterious effects of stepfathers who abuse their stepchildren (Holinsteiner & Tacon, 1983; Tacon, 1981a, 1981b). De Pineda et al. (1978), after conducting a UNICEF-sponsored demographic study of street children in Colombia, estimated that slightly more than a third (36%) of the children left home because of poverty, 27% because of family breakdown and another 20% because of physical abuse or neglect.

It is certainly reasonable to assume that there are many possible variations. Some children might respond to one problem while others respond to another. Further study is needed. It may turn out that street children and working children have different pre-existing psychological make-ups, including such relatively non-enviornmental factors as temperament (Felsman, 1989). There are also cultural differences. Poverty in the developing world might well be a necessary condition and family discord a secondary

phenomenon, but in the developed world the two factors might be reversed (Aptekar, 1993a).

The modernization hypothesis, which contains some elements of both the poverty and the family abuse hypothesis, holds that children no longer grow up in extended families with strong community support. The modern poor urban families are composed of single female parents living in isolation from community. In the case of most East African societies, modernization resulted in reducing the legitimacy of polygyny. Men now have extramarital affairs. In a polygynous society, men were expected to take care of all their children-not just the children of a current wife or of the first wife. If the man was not able to do so, the man's extended family fostered his children and took care of his wives. In the modern system, women having an "affair" have no legal rights and get little help from extended families. Kilbride and Kilbride (1990) directly related these changes to child abuse, which they claimed did not exist before modernization occurred. The demise of the extended family and the increase in extramarital affairs have also been implicated in the origins of street children in Latin America (Connolly, 1990).

Some writers have claimed that the rural-to-urban migration, which is another aspect of modernisation, is sufficient to explain the origins of street children (de Galan, 1981; Munoz & Pachon, 1980; Wright et al., 1993). There is, however, evidence that street children are not the children of recent migrants (Rosa et al., 1992; Tellez, 1976; Villota, 1979).

One factor that is missing from most studies is the role of culture in explaining the origins of street children. Certain cultures make it quite easy for children to become street children; others make it impossible. One study that did look at cultural factors was conducted in South Africa, where it was not poverty, family violence, or modernization

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that explained the origins of street children; it was the political culture of apartheid (Hickson & Gaydon, 1989).

One approach to sort out what the origins of street children might be is to follow the children's socialization based on the theory of social interactionism described by Lemert (1972). In this theory, socialization is understood in terms of career-a concept that includes the growth of identity based on a series of experiences of self and other (Goffman, 1961). The social interactionist perspective was used by Visano (1990) to chart the movement from home to street among a group of 27 boys and 23 girls ranging in age from 12 to 16 in Toronto. These children entered the street as a result of being pushed out of their homes because of family problems as well as being pulled toward the streets to find refuge from their problems. To these children, the streets were a solution-a possibility of experiencing freedom and stimulation.

It is often asked what becomes of these children and one can offer only an educated guess because of the lack of follow-up data on the same subjects over time. There is a clear need for longitudinal data. The social interactionist approach would also yield valuable information about what becomes of street children as they get older.

The Visano (1990) study noted that disengaging from street life, like beginning street life, was not an abrupt procedure but a slow process of estrangement brought about by the inability to live well on the streets, a feeling of meaninglessness, and a sense of not resolving the psychological issue that led to beginning street life in the first place. As time wore on, the children in his study began to reinitiate friendships with non-street children and slowly and inevitably moved back into the social milieu from which they came.

**The Family Structure and Other Factors Relevant For Street Children :**

Aptekar described the Latin American family that produces street children as being composed of three generations of women often living together in the same house. The mother has a series of men who live with her temporarily. A recent discussion of African American women dependent on welfare illustrates a comparable situation among some poor African American families (Sheehan, 1993). The Caribbean family is also described similarly (Mintz, 1984). A few studies offer some confirming demographic information. For example, only 7% of the street children in a Jamaican study had two-parent families (Brown, 1987), and 85% of the "parking boys" of Nairobi were brought up by a single parent in a female-headed family (Wainaina, 1981).

The variability in traditional family structure in East Africa, and the degree to which the traditions have survived modernizing pressures, supplies an opportunity to understand the relationship between family structure and the origins of street children.

In Nairobi, for example, the great majority of street children are Kikuyu (Wainaina, 1981). This might be because the Kikuyus are the most numerous tribe or because they live in and around Nairobi. It has also been hypothesized that during independence the Kikuyu family was changed more than were the families of other tribes. This is because many Kikuyu men were incarcerated as a result of fighting against colonialism (Edgerton, 1989). Women were forced to take on the roles formerly associated with husbands and fathers, causing family traditions to change rapidly (Macgoye, 1987). Kikuyu street children could be compared to street children from other tribes that have different family experiences.

In some tribes in East Africa, property-including children-is inherited by the man

and his family (Erny, 1981). In other East African societies, inheritance is through the mother and her family. Thus the degree to which women with children are able to accumulate money varies (Hakansson, 1988, in press). If women can be financially independent, they have less need to stay married and once they are divorced they are better able to care for their children. Indeed, the divorce rate is considerably higher in societies where women can secure financial independence than it is in societies where they cannot (Kayongo-Male & Oyango, 1991). Today, among the Busoba of eastern Uganda near the Kenyan border, where women are in control of property, almost 45% of marriages end in divorce (Heald, 1989).

It is reasonable to assume that women who live in societies that do not grant them access to property outside of marriage are less likely to separate from unhappy marriages. These dynamics have been associated with child abuse. So if child abuse is a major cause of children going to the streets, this would be reflected in comparing groups in which women have different degrees of financial independence.

What is becoming increasingly apparent (but not written about in relation to street children) is the rise of a postmodern urban family, that is, a family in which there are children from different men and in which the mothers of these children do not have relationships with each other. In these families, a husband and wife have children, the husband and wife divorce, the man marries another woman with children from another marriage and the wife of the first marriage marries a man with children from another marriage. The children belong to three families: the family of their biological origin, their mother's remarried family, and their father's remarried family. The extended family is no longer kin, or members of the same clan, nor are they even connected by the same community.

Sibling rivalry in the postmodern urban family is very complex. It is based on the sense of not belonging to "family". It is common in these families and probably accounts for children leaving home.

Many studies have been done in the early sixties and seventies, on socio-economic strata by Bossio and Pringle(1958), Gaur (1967), Symond and Langmeier (1972). Karon (1973) and Pandey etc ,(1980) which revealed that deprivation effects the growth and personality of a child.

Khan (1980) in a survey found that the main reasons for the employment of children, as stated by children themselves, were (1) to help the poverty stricken parents, (2) to avoid schooling of which they were scared, (3) to earn money, and (4) not wanting to idle time at home.

Another study by Kapoor(1980) claims that work develops a sense of responsibility in the children making them sober, considerate and well behaved.

Gangrade (1981) observed that lack of schools or the reluctance of parents to send their children to school is the other important reason of child labour. Uneducated children are an assest, where as the desire to educate them becomes a double liability.

Roger and Standing ( 1981) concluded that the greater degree of drudgery of the work, the lesser the children are able to acquire knowledge and skill through their work. They also feel that the child's participation in labour force activities tends to reduce the potential for educational development of a child

An analysis of census data done by Srekantan et. al., (1981), (on child labour in the rural and urban areas of India ) showed the strong association of illiteracy with child work participation and indicates the competing demands made on the children's time

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The author suggests broader long term measures ( like productive employment generation and improvement in female education to reduce the work participation of children ) rather than resorting to specific direct measures designed to reduce child labour.

In a study done by Cole (1982) on changing Indian family, he said that the unfortunate part is that the adolescents have no real choice. They choose only the jobs available there and hence, have very little chance of entering his most preferred occupation. So consequently he compromises between aspiration and reality, and settles for one of his less preferred job.

In a study by Kanbargi and Kulkarni (1985), it was observed that the age and gender constrain the quantum and nature of the gainful and domestic activities of children. While boys aged 5-6 years, on an average work, for about 2 hours a day, by 12-14 years they work for 5 hours a day. Boys put in more time tending livestock and working on the family farm. Girls work in activities very different from boys, such as in food preparation and domestic chores.

In a study by Uma Upadhya (1985), to relate the deprivation and self -concept and findings were similar, that higher the deprivation lower the self -concept.

A study conducted by Philip (1989) on street children, revealed that large number of street children belonged to the weaker section of the society. They are exposed to gang culture, which influence their personality and habits. Their emotional bonds are strong with peers but weaker with their family.

Nagia (1987) proposed that apart from poverty, the low education and occupational status of the parents, and inadequacy of the legislative system and its insufficient enforcement are the other reasons for the persistence of child labour. The study suggests

that most of the juvenile were males, who had the freedom to enter into any activity, where as the girls had to restrict themselves to certain selected occupations which were less strenuous and could ensure better security.

Dutta (1990) in his study discussed the plight of unwanted, abused, handicapped and poverty stricken children of India. She described the importance of a happy childhood and the psychological consequences of stimulus deprivation for infants.

A paper by Indra Hirway(1991) on " Child labour in the developing economic today" gave a broad estimate of child labour in the world. The root causes of the emergence of the problem are extreme poverty and unemployment, lack of proper educational facilities for children . The prevalence of the child labour is a cause as well as the result of poverty and unemployment. Hirway suggested that instead of postponing the complete ban on child labour on the ground that "the time is not yet ripe." Short term goals should be formulated for this purpose.

Demographic as well as socio-economic study of the characteristic of the families of child labour by Srinivasan (1991) examined the nature and extent of exploitation of child labour. The study revealed that about 55 % of the sample children belonged to scheduled caste / tribe , and more than 30 % of the workers are migrant workers. About 25 % of the children attend school while the rest are illiterates or dropouts. The average monthly earning of these children was around Rs .152 per month. When compared with non-working children, the child consumed low calories, calcium and protein.

According to Behari (1991), one of the main reason of the prevalence of child labour in the developing countries is poverty of the people and the phenomenon of over population. With the increasing population and rising inflation in our country, it has become

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difficult, where even combined labour of parents cannot ensure two ends meet. And so, the children have to lend a helping hand. The result is that there is sharp rise in number of children working in factories.

Series of studies were conducted by National Labour Institute of India in joint collaboration with UNICEF on child labourers, working in different hazardous industries of the country. The studies were conducted by Bura (1992 ) in Moradabad ; Bura(1992) in Khurja, U.P.; Sekar (1993) in Sivakasi; Nangia (1993) in Jammu & Kashmir; and Bura (1995) in Jaipur. The result showed that children who are exposed to adult life at an early ages have many problems These children work for long hours even during the night with the least protection from polluted environment at the place of work and under constant mental and physical strain, the children growth become stunted. These ill-priviledged children are robbed of their rights to recreation, leisure and other pleasures of childhood.

The results of the research conducted by Shoibh and Krishan (1995), revealed that the low income group children have been found to choose vocations loosely, in a very focused way. Which shows the awareness of social states in the Indian culture and is reflected in the parental as well adolescent choice.

According to Srivastava (1995), there are children who live on and off the street. These children have no home or family and they earn their living working on the street. The problems of street child are a global one, more in the cities of developing countries. She suggested that welfare programs and services are not the responsibility exclusively of a particular department or agency.

In a study done by Shah (1996) of schedule tribe child labourers of Udaipur district revealed that poverty, illiteracy and economic deprivation are the root cause of child

labourers in schedule tribes community. They are very poor and, hence, have to join the work force at an early age.

Gairola (1996), viewed that there is an increasing trend in children opting or being forced into employment to augment their familiar income. It glosses over the fact that child labour stunts their growth and development forcing them to inter into the market of unskilled labourers, compel them to work on low wages all their lives. Approximately 2 million children are working in hazardous industries despite the clear prohibition of such employment in both constitution and child labour act.

Bonamigo (1996) investigated relationship between work and identity construction of street workers boys. The findings showed that work is seen in a contradictory way, being at the same time something that generates satisfaction and endurance. The work and the worker are valuable because they move away from marginality and idleness. The children's work occur mainly to satisfy economic needs and it is determined by the opportunities on the street.

The child labourers were more secure than the normal children as found by Chauhan and Sharma (1998a).

A study on child labourers conducted by Chauhan and Sharma (1998b) found that they were significantly higher in the tendency of juvenile delinquency than the normal children.

A study done by Chauhan and Sharma (1998c) on child labourers indicated that child labourers had higher degree of emotional maturity compared to the normal children. The basic reason was the status of the child labourers as a responsible earning member of the family.

In a study of child labourers, a project in Andra Pradesh by Sarumathy (1999), found that a majority of the families of the child labourers have not adopted small family norms.

Child labour is accepted as a social evil in society. The social-economic problem play a crucial role to speed up child labour problems. The children of lower -economic strata of society becomes victim of these problems. These children work beyond their capacity in adverse environmental conditions effecting physical, mental, and moral growth of a child (Sikligar,1999).

**Studies related to frustration and aggression :**

In many cultures, aggression is a strongly disapproved form of behaviour. So, person who is exposed to frustration are urged to demonstrate restrain.

A study by Frieze (1978) and Senedjani (1989) found that the Indian males were more dominant and more aggressive in their behaviour as compared to their female counter part.

According to Berkowitz (1989) frustration often produces depression or resignation rather than aggression against others. So frustration is only one of the many factors that elicit aggression ( Berkowitz, 1989a ).

Berkowitz (1990b) also postulated that most psychologists believed that aggression, like many other forms of motivation, is elicited by a wide range of external events and stimuli.

According to Spencer ( 1990), in Sri Lanka, quiet self control is highly valued. As a result, people generally, refrain from aggression in response to provocation that would

evoke strong retaliation from people in other cultures. So, seems to be the case in India.

According to Botha and Mels (1990), studying aggressive reaction patterns found that aggressiveness is a persistent trait that may be influenced by situational variable but reveals substantiate consistency over time among adolescence.

Evidence indicates that watching televised violence increases violent play and, even, actual violence ( Bandura ,1973 ; Liebert et. al., 1983; Thomos and Drabman ,1975). The issues of Televised violence is understandably one of the major concern (Wood, Wong and Chachere, 1991).

Growing evidence indicates that biological or genetic factors do play a role in occurrence of violent crime (Gladue , 1991).

Pushplata , Bujtaba , and Joshi ;(1991), conducted a study of reaction to frustration among children and adolescents. Frustration leads to aggressive actions in the process of obstacle removed (Dollard et. al.,1939). According to Rosenzweig (1978), aggression is not always the same as hostility or distructiveness, it implies assertiveness as well. It may be inferred that Indian children and adolescents predominantly react to ego defensive and external blaming manner in a frustrating situation. Assuming responsibility and assessing the seriousness of obstacle are two least adopted reactions. Lower SES children have less at stake and hence lesser need for being ego defensive. When threatened by frustrating situation everything is at stake for children of lower class who have no choice but to face the situation and search for a solution.

In a comparative study between boys and girls done by Aijaz and Kureshi (1991), revealed that boys have needs like nurturance, aggression and are stronger, where as hetrosexuality and abasement are strong among girls. In other words, boys are more

appreciative, affectionate, considerate, helping, magnanimous, fraternal and trusting. They engage themselves in activities which are aimed at insulting, attacking or hurting others and become more arrogant, rude, autocratic, cruel, quarrelsome, hostile, uncompromising and are keen to win. Girls were found to be less confident, seek stability, they are more adventurous, affectionate, warm and social. They feel inferior, resort to self criticism, blame themselves for their social inadequacy and importance, hence, have feelings of remorse and guilt, are anxiety ridden, cowardly, gloomy, socially retiring, timid and inhibited in their general behaviour.

Research was conducted by Bhogle (1991) on child rearing practices and development of behaviour, namely, aggression and dependency in girls. The result revealed that the girls were noted to be dependent while the boys were aggressive and independent.

Nisbelt (1993), suggests that such socially learned attitudes are the basis of the differences in rates of violence among different ethnic groups in U.S. A.

According to Baron and Richardson (1994a), aggression often stems from other than frustration. Direct provocation from others, exposure to others behaving in an aggressive manner, the presence of weapons or other stimuli are associated with aggression.

In another study by Staub (1996a), he suggested that it is not surprising that violence is more common among people who live in poverty as they are chronically frustrated in their attempts to meet the most basic needs.

Carol, David, and Rebecca (1999), studied the relationship between boys's social acceptance and aggression ; mother's role -child interaction and boys' belief about peers.

The age group of the study was seven to nine years old boys. The results showed that boys' negative behaviour with mothers was associated with their having more negative belief about familiar and unfamiliar peer and with their being more aggressive and well-liked. Belief about familiar peer predicted change in boys' social acceptance, where as negative belief about unfamiliar peer predicted changes in aggression. In addition, boys' belief about peer changed in response to their social experience.

**Studies related to adjustment :**

Symond (1947), Kiran and Singh (1982), conceptualised that family is one of the basic social institution. It plays a private role in shaping the personality structure of an individual. The loving and accepting parents provide healthy medium for the child to grow his energy into proper channel and exercise his potential to the maximum so that the child becomes a productive member of society in which he is to live. Parental acceptance play a major role in determining the attitude and behaviour of the child and accepting child is generally well socialized co-operative, friendly, loyal, emotionally stable and careful.

Vnita Kaul (1980) and Kalia (1985), found that disadvantaged children were significantly more co-operative than those of the high socio-economic status groups.

According to Singh (1993), emotional maturity is the process in which an individual endures to maintain the psychic strength and emotional health.

Khokhar and Thakur (1993), found that children brought up through loving and permissive parenting develop better feeling of acceptance than the children brought under hostile and restrictive parenting. They acquire a rejecting attitude towards self and others.

According to a study conducted on the home environment of children, Chaudhary

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and Kaur (1993), the result revealed that the child home environment has a positive impact on their moral values. The home environment comprises of situations like parent child relationships, parental -socio-economic status, and intra-family relations etc.

In a comparitive study of boys and girls, the results revealed that the boys had more adjustment problems than girls (Tarzanio et. al., 1993) .

According to Staub (1996b ) , the problem begins with young adolescents who later join the gangs. When parents use harsh punishment to discipline their children, they are modeling aggression for the child to imitate. In addition, the child is likely to react to pain of harsh punishment with even more aggressive misbehaviour.

Kurman and Eshel (1998), conducted a study on self-enhancement , generality level of self-evaluation and emotional adjustment. The result showed that self-concept has an hierarchical structure in which self-evaluation becomes more positive as they become more general. Self-enhancement is positively associated with emotional adjustment.

A cross cultural comparitive research on social and emotional adjustment of children and adolescent was done by Schneider (1998). The result revealed that beliefs about the child and adolescents adjustment are intricately linked to cultural values regarding the place of the individual in society. Socialization practices and coping differed in the economic structure of a society and value systems.

Dalal, Kapur and Rao (1991) did a research on pattern of adjustment among boys and girls. The results indicated that boys perceived themselves as having more problems in their schools and with peers and girls face problems in the area of home, school, teachers and general adjustment.

**Studies related to self-concept :**

A comparative study by Wylie (1974), between high self-esteem and low-esteem persons indicated that persons with high self-esteem are less susceptible to influence as compared to those with low self-esteem.

Another study revealed that person high in self-esteem are generally happier, healthier, and more successful at any task than person lower in self-esteem They also have more consistent and well developed self-concept.

Children's dependence on the family tend to place them at a risk on economic hardship. Deno and Williams (1983) replicated these findings by employing more explicit measures and found that individual achievement for children played more significant role in self-esteem than such ascribed factors as social class.

Researches by Hamen and Zupan (1984), Zupan, Hammen and Jaemcke (1987), illustrated how children's self-schemas can influence the way they relate to the world around them. Children whose self-esteem is high are apparently more attuned to information that conforms, and may even perpetuate, their negative views of themselves.

Researches by Harter (1986), and Kihlstrom and Lantor (1984) revealed that individual differences in self-concept of older children and adults.

Studies done by Elkind (1980) and Hart (1988), showed that the adolescent period become so much better at taking the perspective of others that they develop a preoccupation with how other people regard their appearance, behaviour, and so forth.

According to Straumann and Heggin (1988), persons who are high in self-esteem tend to report fewer negative emotions and less depression than persons who are low in

self-esteem.

In a study conducted by Harter (1988), the result showed that children under 8 years of age do not have a well-developed sense of overall self-worth.

According to Kihlstrom et. al., (1988) self-concept has been described as one's own personality. Hence it must contain information relevant for the understanding of one's disposition (i.e., personality traits).

Many psychologists (Longer, Longer Elder, Lorenz, Simon and Whitbeck 1991; Kessler, Turner and House 1988 ), did studies on economic stress and their results revealed that economic stress also affects family functioning independently of social class. Unemployment, income and adverse income changes have been linked consistently to emotional distress.

In a recent review, Mc Loyd (1989) reported that fathers who had experienced job loss were more irritable, aribitrary and punitive and less nurturant in their interaction with their children. The extent to which economic stress increases irritability and decreases warmth, and supportiveness in parents to their off spring will be a greater significance for children's self evaluation than the children's own understanding of the economic status of the family.

In a research done by Hoffman (1984, 1989), it was observed that millions of children, especially those living in poverty, grow up in families where the mother is the only parent. Clearly, this social context would appear to put children at risk for problems in development and adjustment.

Similar study by Brown and McGill (1989), postulated that persons high in self-esteem are better able to handle stress, and they experience few negative health effects

when exposed to it.

In a research done by Brown and Smart (1989), it was found that people who have less clear-cut self-concepts are more vulnerable to the harmful effects of stress.

Harter (1988 , 1990 a ), found that older children's feeling of self-esteem are based on both how they perceive others and evaluate them and how they evaluate themselves.

Ethologists Denlon (1987) ; Scroufe(1990) ; Pipp(1991) ; Lewis(1987 b;) Sander (1975), have suggested that responsive care giving and secure attachment relationship may facilitate aspects of the child's self -development.

More recently, Wiltfang and Scarbecz (1990), have argued that "non-traditional measures of social class," such as family's being on welfare, father's unemployment, and neighbourhood unemployment negatively affect the self-esteem of children. Significantly these measures are also indicators of family economic hardship, blurring the distinction between social-class and economic stress.

Persons low and high in self-esteem also differ with respect to the clarity of their own self-concept On the basis of this assumption, a study was conducted by Campbell (1990), and the finding suggests that persons low in self-concepts are less clear or under-developed than those of persons high in self-esteem.

Ruble et. al., (1990), suggested that self-evaluation, like self-knowledge, develops a child grow, and is influenced by both cognitive and socialization variable.

Researches conducted by Harter (1990a); Nottleman (1987); and Wigfield et. al., (1991), the result indicated that the transition period from childhood to adolescence (at times) poses problems. Many investigators have found that at about age 11 or 12 years,

self-esteem scores dip , only to increase again during the high-school years.

According to a study conducted by Strauman (1992), psychological problems can arise from two difficulties either with the self or with the ideal self. Excessive discrepancies between the self and the ideal self can be uncomfortable.

Baumeister, Heatherton, and Tice ( 1993), showed that high self-esteem is not always beneficial. However, under conditions of ego threat, persons who are high in self-esteem may experience larger decrements in performance than those who are low in self-esteem.

In a study by Scott and O'Hara ( 1993) it was found that students who saw themselves as different from the way that they would like to be seen were more likely to experience sadness in their lives.

According to Baron and Bryan (1994a), an inaccurate self-concept can also cause problem. If our "selves" is not reasonably congruent (similar to the way we actually act, think, and feel ) then we will develop an obscured view of ourselves.

In another study on self-esteem by Baron and Byrne (1994b), the persons having a high self-esteem are more effective in social situations —that is, they make more favourable impression on others.

Mzobanzi (1996), examined the relationships between dimensions of family and school environment and various other aspects of self-concept. Results indicated that perceived parental behaviour were associated with relation to family, school, physical appearance, emotional stability, relation with peers, healthy global self-concept.

Maykel Vekuyten (1998), did a study to find a relationship between perceived discrimination and self -esteem. The results showed group discrimination had a negative

impact on self-esteem, which in turn was related to personal self-esteem. Perceived personal discrimination had a negative effect in personal self-esteem as well as an indirect negative effect stemming from reduced sense of control.

**How the children function on the streets:**

Given the children's living conditions, it was surprising to find the majority of children had adequate mental health. About a third did quite well, another third did poorly, and the remaining children moved between doing well to faring poorly depending on circumstances such as which children they were with, their success at securing benefactors, and the demands made on them by authorities and the public (Aptekar, 1988b, 1989c).

From ethnographic data Aptekar (1993), has for Kenya, it appears that the level of many street children's functioning is adequate and that many of them do better than their equally poor counterparts who stay at home. Similar estimates of the children's mental health were found in a study of 100 street children in South Africa (Richter, 1989, 1991). After interviewing 78 street children in Khartoum, Veale (1992) reported that she "found in their accounts of their lives no evidence of strangeness or deviance" (p.119).

Many authors have pointed out that street children are resilient (Aptekar, 1988b, 1989c; Felsman, 1989; Hickson & Gaydon, 1989; Lusk, 1992; Swart, 1990; Tyler et. al , 1987; Tyler, Tyler, Tommasello & Zhang, 1992). Oliveria, Baizerman and Pellet (1992) measured the mental health of 71 Brazilian street children ranging in age from 8 to 18 They pointed out several resilient characteristics of the children including a high degree of intelligence, a concern for each other, lack of drug abuse and good self-esteem. The authors believed that the prevailing stereotypes of the child that they are delinquent and

drug abusing-has more to do with blaming the victim than it does with describing the child accurately.

Tyler et. al., (1991) and Tyler et. al., (1987) collected data of street children in Bogota. They used a structured 2-hour inter and their own psychosocial competence scale, which assessed their self-esteem, trust and active planfulness. They found that the child showed a high degree of autonomy, actively defining their living their own terms. The children were highly creative and immense in a network of caring and supportive friendships.

Most of the claims of high number of drug-dependents street children do not come from empirical research. One exception that comes from Granados (1976), who administered a questionnaire on Colombian street children and found that more than 9 out 10 used inhalants. However, as Aptekar pointed out, the use of questionnaire data is highly suspect-particularly if the researcher does not know the children It may be that many children use drugs socially but that few of them are drug dependent. This is the problem what Tyler et. al., (1991) found. Half of their sample of Colombian street children were drug users, but only some of these were dependent.

A study of Brazilian street children commented on the absence of drug abuse (Oliveria et. al., 1992). In fact , these authors noted that "it was interesting to learn that the youths were much more concerned about its (drugs') abuse than were service providers (p 170). About a quarter of the street children in Johannesburg, which is far too many but no more than the proportion of poor children in the control group, were chronic glue sniffers (Jansen, Richter & Griesel, 1992). In Randall's (1988) study of London's street children, less than 5% needed care for alchohol or drug abuse.

Also not clear is the degree to which the children's mental health is affected by their use of drugs. Although it is widely assumed that the use of inhalants causes inevitable cognitive deterioration, one recent empirical study of 44 South African street children, half of whom used inhalants, concluded that "the findings lend support for the view that the effects of volatile substance abuse on cognitive and personality functioning cannot be clearly demonstrated" (Jansen et. al , 1992, p 29). Among the measures the children were given the Halstead-Reitan, the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, and the Raven's Colored Matrices.

Misperception also exists concerning the degree to which the children are violent. Some violence between the street children is to be expected. There are many street children, and they live in situations that produce violence and in countries that have a history of violence. Indeed, there is documentation that the larger boys take advantage of the younger ones in India (Subrahmanyam & Sondhi, 1990), in South Africa (Hickson & Gaydon, 1989), and in Latin America (Munoz & Pachon, 1980; Munoz & Palacios, 1980; Tellez, 1976).

On the other hand, Scharf, Powell and Thomas (1986), who studied street children in Johannesburg, found that only 7% of the children were affiliated with gangs. Richter (1989) found few incidents of delinquency among a sample of 100 South African street children. Aptekar (1988), found that because the younger children had better economic prospects than did the older children, the younger ones were able to avoid being prey to the violence of older children.

However violent the children are to each other, it is clear that they fear the violent reactions of the public. Virtually every study of street children in various Latin American countries report that the children's greatest fear is not of going hungry or of missing the

security of their family, it is of police brutality (de Pineda et. al., 1978; Fall, 1986; Felsman, 1981; Lusk, 1989; Pereira, 1985). The same findings come from other parts of the world. A study of 1,000 street children in Mumbai revealed that the children's worst fears were of being accosted by the police (Patel, 1990). Similar results come from South Africa (Randall, 1988; Richter, 1989; Swart, 1988).

The children have reason to fear hostility. Between 1987 and 1990 alone, there were 1,397 violent deaths of Brazilian street children (Swart, 1990). In fact, the total number of street children killed in Brazil has, according to one estimate, superseded the casualties in the civil war in Lebanon (Leite & Esteves, 1991). Even more shocking is that there is evidence of collusion of state authorities (AIDSWATCH, 1989b; Emert, 1989; Filgueiras, 1992; Jeffrey, 1993). Similar violence has been found in Colombia (AIDSWATCH, 1989a), Guatemala (Amnesty International, 1990), and South Africa (Swart, 1988), where government collusion has also been documented (McLaghlan, 1986).

Why such violence?. One approach to ascertaining why there is so much violence toward street children is to look at the societies that have street children but have not reacted with such hostility toward them. There appears to be less violence toward street children in East Africa, although some certainly exists (Lalor et. al , 1992). In Ethiopia, children feel the current regime has treated them with kindness (Lalor et. al., 1992). The same authors noted that children reported that Sudanese police have actually gone out of their way to be helpful to them. This situation does not exist in Latin America.

The different levels of violence toward street children across cultures might have to do with the fact that, in Latin America, the elite are European but the origin of the majority of citizens is indigenous or African, as can be seen in their darker skin colour. In East Africa, the racial elite are more integrated into society and members of each tribe are

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represented in all social classes

Another possible reason for the different levels of hostility toward street children in East Africa and Latin America might pertain to family structure. The elite and the masses in Latin America raise their children in different ways. In the elite Latin American homes, fathers are present and powerful. Boys learn to respect the father's authority. By contrast, among the poor in Latin America, it is common to have women at the center of families and boys are raised not so much to respect authority as to gain an early independence from home. It is possible that the pejorative attitude toward the street children in Latin America comes from the perception that street children are not beholden to adult authority Thus street boys inadvertently press the issue of adult authority at a time when traditional authority is in jeopardy (Aptekar, 1989d, 1990a, 1992a).

The difference between family structures do not correspond to social class in East Africa as they do in Latin America. In East Africa, family structure and child rearing are not correlated with social class or political power. There are many types of families and many ways to raise children. Further study is needed to explore this possibility.

**Conclusion :**

Street children are really street boys. They come from families headed by women who teach them to be independent at an early age. They are allowed to be on the streets only in the poor urban areas of capitalistic and non-dictatorial countries in the developing world. It is in these places that they learn to find a niche in the economy of the poor and that they participate as citizens by earning a living, being family members and making judgements about what is right and wrong in their world and in the nation that controls-often with great hostility-what they can and cannot do. Should they make the mistake of

challenging the roles assigned to children or of challenging the decorum of public places, they are likely to become victims of physical violence.

It is difficult to get an accurate appraisal of street children from sources that have a stake in describing the children in a certain way. The press, as well as the international and national organizations that exist to provide for the children, exaggerates their numbers and the degree of their emotional problems and delinquency. Misrepresentation from Church or civic groups that work with the children can come from overidentifying with the children's apparent sense of freedom or from seeing the children as symbolic threats to legitimate authority. This is not to say that these groups do not provide excellent help for the children; they do, but they often fail to explain the street children phenomenon accurately. This is particularly important because it may turn out that the children's biggest problem might not be poverty or family abuse but the public's attitude toward them-an attitude that is based on misrepresentations and fueled by the children's own provocative behaviour. The result, far too often, is violence.

The dramatic theater the children perform, from swallowing burning gasoline flames to performing acrobatics at red lights in the middle of central thoroughfares, is designed to attract attention. When customers must give money to enter or exit a shop that is "guarded" by street children, or when drivers must donate to have their parked cars "cared for," or when passengers of public transportation must pay the children for a "helping hand" to get off a bus or reach a curb from a taxi, the public's anger is aroused. These and other "services" the children perform not only raise the discomfort of the public but give the public a reason to pressure the police who are responsible for maintaining public tranquility.

The unfortunate interplay between the confusion of who the children are and the

hostility they receive and provoke is one good place on which to focus future research. Because the level of hostility varies among cultures, cross-cultural comparisons could help explain and possibly reduce the degree of violence the children face.

Another valuable area in which cross-cultural research can help is in building a model that would predict which circumstances in a given culture (type of family, degree of poverty, psychological style of children and the like) would explain the origins of street children. It is hoped that this line of work would produce answers to the questions of why only certain poor or abused children become street children.

The changes in traditional families and the degree to which postmodern urban families create street children can also be studied by using cross-cultural examples. The results should indicate more specific ways in the family structure related to the origins of street children.

Finally, street children need to be studied in relation to child refuges who more frequently are being found on the streets of large urban centers in the developing world In spite of severe problems, many street children have survived and even flourished. They may have a good deal to teach us about psychological resilience.