

The Street Child's Process to Leave the Streets of Lima, Peru

- A study that illuminates the street child, as an actor in interaction with its environmental systems, in its process to leave the street

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VT-11



“Children situated in the street...I don't work with children from the street, I work with children from their homes, but now is the situation that they are in the street”

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Abstract

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This study is based on a field study conducted in Lima, Peru. The field study was financed by the MFS (Minor field study) scholarship of SIDA. My intention was to illuminate the street child's process, as an actor in interaction with its surrounding environmental systems, to leave the streets of Lima, Peru. The questions that were related to this aim were how structural aspects, such as changes in residential patterns and housing policies could influence this process, how did the activities, roles and relations that the child took part in influence this process and how could the process be seen from a perspective of gender and age. The investigation was made with a qualitative method based on semi-structured interviews with social workers and former street children. It also included participant observations made at an organization that was doing outreach work with street children and also offered shelters. Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory and resilience were used as a theoretical framework to analyze the collected material. The conclusions that were reached were that the child's process in leaving the street might be influenced by structural aspects, such as residential patterns and housing policies. The process away from the street might, however, not only be the process away from the physical street but also the process away from a social space or culture. Seeing the process of leaving the street through a gender perspective illuminated that a girl could face difficulty to leave the street due to the challenge of leaving sexual exploitation and prostitution, and what comes with this situation. Results also illustrated that vulnerability in leaving the street might increase with age. The study further concluded that the social worker had an important role in the child's process away from the street; this was based, however, on the key factor that the child was feeling confidence for the social worker. The child might, in its ecological crossing from the street to an organization, be challenged when trying to adapt to the new environment. It was illustrated that motivation to leave the street was based on different experiences but also the child's own choice to leave the street could create motivation itself. Another important part in leaving the street could be the influences of peers.

Keywords: Ecological system theory, street children, resilience, process, development, gender, age, motivation, ecological crossing

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Foreword

Now my journey is finished. It was a journey that took me to the other side of the world and also gave me a lot of nice and interesting experiences along the way writing this paper. I want to thank the organizations in Lima, Peru that were so welcoming and made my field study so pleasant. A big thank you also goes to the street children and former street children that I was in contact with. Thank you for sharing your experiences with me, because of you this study was made possible. I also want to say thank you to the family I stayed with in Lima and for all the support that you gave me. Additionally, thanks to my interpreter in Lima, my supervisor and last but not least, to my family, friends and other persons in my near surrounding that have given me support during this period.

- Nina Bengtsson, August 2011

1. Introduction

1.2 Introduction of the problem

Today there is an estimated 40 million street children living in Latin America (UNICEF, 2011); a suggested 8,000-12,000 of children are in Peru (Green, 1998). A Foreign Office report from Peru (2007) says that around 1,000 children live on the streets of Lima. Green (1998) argues that street children can be seen as a symptom of a wider social crisis in Latin America; a crisis that could be explained by such factors as poverty and social exclusion.

UNICEF distinguishes two different groups of street children: children *on* the street who “only” work there and return to their families during the night, and children *of* the street who live on the street fulltime and sleep there. Sometimes the difference between being a child *of* and *on* the street is not that clear. For example, a child who is *of* the street can live on the street for long periods and after a while return to his/her family for some nights or a longer period (Green, 1998). In this essay, the children *of* the street are going to be my primary focus.

The way to understand street children as a phenomenon and cause of its genesis has changed over time. Before the 1980’s research mainly focused on individual factors. It was seen as a lifestyle chosen by the child, because, for example, the child didn’t want to obey rules or was looking for independence. The phenomenon was also seen through an approach of individual pathology. Meanwhile today, the phenomenon is understood through a more holistic approach, partly as a result of the “discovery” of child abuse. The movement of children to the street is increasingly seen as “running away” from the family due to such conditions as sexual and physical abuse, neglect or general family dysfunction (Karabanow, 2003). But according to Dybicz (2005, p. 766-767): “these children do not want to be seen as victims, but rather want their strength and resiliency recognized”. Panter-Brick (2002) maintains that presenting children as helpless victims doesn’t acknowledge how the street children take incredible initiatives and their resourcefulness when coping with hard circumstances (Panter-Brick, 2002).

Conticini & Hulme (2006) suggest that for the children, the street may be a place of freedom and security that they may seek after experiences of violence at home. Actions that happen within the group on the street can contribute to a sense of shared identity and unity (Davies,

2008). Having once lived on the street it could, according to Martinez (2010), be hard for the children to stay at Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) or other shelters that provides them with support. This could depend on the personal and relational needs of the child. The child evaluates and measures the new environment by these dimension, such as a need for adaption, being helped and supported to achieve personal goals and also having connections to significant others.

Davies (2008) suggests that we have to gain a deeper understanding for the street children's "child cultures" before we can create methods to tackle and overcome them. We have to understand how and why these cultures are built and also how the street children act. It is also of importance to be aware of the interaction and interplay between the social worker and the client (Svensson, Johnsson & Laanemets, 2008). Street children actively interact with their environment and experience their situation, which means that you have to understand this phenomenon in a more contextual meaning. How they perceive their environment could, for example, influence their decision to stay in a shelter, or leave it and go back to the street (Martinez, 2010). According to the "Convention of the rights of children" children have rights and are "agents of change in their own life". A child's eventual choice to live on the street though often brings up questions relating to their development and social maturity (Panter-Brick, 2002).

To understand the actions of the street children, research suggests that you have to look at the context in which they are acting. Lamberte points out that there is a need to look at the context of the social structure rather than in only behavioral terms (Martinez, 2010). Looking into different cultural contexts could explain, for example, differences in career outcomes for a street child living in Brazil or in Nepal (Panter-Brick, 2002). Differences in how to make a living and use the public space could also be affected by gender and age (Evans, 2006). To rescue the children from the street by placing them into their families and schools, instead of listening to their voices, has not produced lasting solutions. Therefore interventions have started to change by focusing on the child's participation, where they work *with* the children (Panter-Brick). Being able to match the children in the process away from the street and to get an understanding of what the street could mean to the children is, as explained above, of importance. This introduction is therefore followed by this aim and these questions:

1.2 Aim

The aim of this study is to illuminate a street child's process, as an actor in interaction with its surrounding environmental systems, to leave the streets of Lima, Peru

1.3 Research questions

- How can structural aspects, such as changes in residential patterns and housing policies, influence the street child's process to leave the street?
- How is it possible to see the child's process to leave the street from a perspective of gender and age, and how can the social worker relate to this?
- How do the activities, relations and roles that the child takes part in influence the child's possibility to leave the street, and how can the social worker relate to this?

1.4 Disposition of the essay

The disposition of this essay is divided into introduction – with aim and questions of the problem, background, earlier research, theory, method, analysis and discussion. The introduction introduces the problem by pointing out differences in how to perceive street children as a phenomenon, which today is more perceived in a contextual manner, and which kind of factors that may be influencing the child in its process off the street. In the background section I'll present an introduction of Peru and Lima and after that present some earlier research about my subject in order to highlight what has been previously said regarding this research area and also point out the relevance for the essay's aim and research questions. In my theory section I will introduce resilience and Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory which will be an important tool in my analysis of this essay.

1.5 Limitations

In this essay the child's process away from the street is in focus. The material from the social workers is related to this process and will show what influence they, or other factors that they mention, could have in the child's process away from the street. The social worker is therefore a part of the environmental systems that were expressed in the aim.

As described above this essay attempts to illuminate a street child's process away from the street in Lima, Peru. This means that the topic is going to handle empirical material which is created in this context. In my essay, however, I have brought up research from other countries than Peru since street children are a global phenomenon (Panter-Brick, 2002). It's also important to mention that the collected material can't represent all other street children,

former street children or social workers working with street children because of the small number of respondents represented in my study and also because of differences in context.

I have chosen to focus on the process between the street and mainly the organization, but also the family or other groups of people of importance in leaving the street. By that not said I didn't get a lot of material from the home environment, before the child's movement to the street. I will discuss some of that in the analysis because it's an aspect that affect the child but I will more present these kind of information in the background and earlier research section.

1.6 Concepts and definitions

Process - The term *process* in this essay will focus on how *the development over time* appears for the child in leaving the street, which will be analyzed from Bronfenbrenner's theoretical framework which also takes the contextual situation into consideration. The process will illuminate what makes the child spend more time in one environment than in another. I will focus on the possibilities for the actual movement away from the street, which might be factors of support but also factors that makes it more difficult.

The process away from the street could be expressed in different ways, for example as written in the introduction it could also have a "rescuing" approach which could mean that workers collect the children from their situation in the streets. My aim is, however, to look at the process when the child voluntary decides that he/she wants to leave the street and how this process could look like.

Street Children – As mentioned in the "introduction of the problem" UNICEF divides street children into street children "of" or "on" the street. But doing this kind of definitions is not so easy. Panter-Brick(2002) declares that the street children themselves resist those definitions explained above. The author explains that a classification is necessary but could be problematic because it's possible to create a homogeneity which doesn't match how many children relate to their own experience. She argues that many children sleep both at home and on the streets but also spend time in for example shelters (Panter-Brick, 2002). So although my focus will be on the children in the group defined "of the street" it's of importance to have these circumstances in mind according to my investigated material but also to the literature I have used. Below in "selection" I will also define street children by age, the meaning is that I have also focused on individuals above 18 years old.

When I will talk about street children living in the shelters I will see them as former street children, even though the process to actually leave the street could be a longer process.

Social worker – The social worker in my study is not necessary a person with a degree in social work. Rather the definition of social worker in my study is based on that the person practically and formally actually works with the street children and what they do is practicing social work. My target group is the professionals that work with street children today, wherefore one of my interviewed I had with a former street educator will not be included.

2. Background

Below I will present research and facts on the politics, economy and social circumstances in Peru. I will also illuminate the social situation, the street children's situation and organizational solutions in the context of Lima.

2.1 Peru – politics, economy and social circumstances

Peru became independent from Spanish rule in 1824 and has been a democracy since 1980. Today Peru has a high-income gap among its population. Even though 49% of the inhabitants live in poverty (which is \$1.25 per day), the country has a high BNP. The cost of living has become more expensive because of low salaries and unemployment. Poverty is higher in the countryside, but it's also high in urban areas (Lundström, 2001). Children who grow up in Peru are considered to live in the most critical conditions in Latin America due to poverty. This leads to consequences such as lack of access to health care, poor school attendance and high mortality rates. In the second half of the twentieth century migration from the rural areas to the cities increased as a consequence of political violence. This resulted in a growing informal sector, increased poverty and street migration (Strehl, 2010).

2.2 Lima

Today there are about 8 500 000 people living in Lima (Landguiden, 2011). The enormously fast growing urbanization of Lima has led to many people migrating to the outskirts of Lima where they have built squatter settlements which have grown into residential communities. Today 40 000 children and adolescents live in extreme poverty and almost 60 000 works. Many of the working children come from shattered families (Strehl, 2010).

2.2.1 Street children's situation in Lima

There are around 700 children that live in the streets of Lima (Strehl, 2010). A research based on a survey found more boys than girls on the street and more than half of the children were between 14-17 years old. The girls were, however, the majority in the youngest group (Strehl, 2010). Street children, both boys and girls, are vulnerable to different kinds of sexual exploitation and abuse. Although girls spend a lot of time in the street, many of them sleep in hostels with family members or with adult “friends” who let the girls stay there in exchange for prostitution work or sex. Such sexual activity at a young age, and often unprotected, put them at high risk for such diseases as HIV/AIDS and STDs and also unwanted pregnancies. It is common to exchange sexual relationships for protection, care and products (Strehl, 2010).

The street children work with selling and also services, such as shoe shining or washing cars. Other economic activities are, for example, singing and playing music on the street or in the busses, doing street acrobats, begging, stealing and prostitution. The majority of the street children earn between 11 and 25 soles per day (3-6 Euros). The boys mostly spent their money on basic needs while the girls mostly give the money to parents or caretakers (Strehl, 2010).

Street children in Lima have a high drug consumption, mostly *terokal* (shoe-glue) and alcohol. Because of the lack of safety the children are more vulnerable to pressure from street gangs, adult junkies, police and other street children (Strehl, 2010). The street children in Lima often suffer from health problems due to a lack of personal hygiene, skin infections, tuberculosis and malnutrition. Many street children have an educational level below the level which is adequate for their age (Ensing & Strehl, 2010).

2.2.2 Organizational solutions in Lima

The work with street children is mainly done by NGO's. For example they provide street children with outreach programs with street educators, provide basic needs, permanent shelters, day shelters, night shelters, reintegration programs, health care and family counseling. Day shelters can offer the children washing facilities, a warm meal and also sometimes counseling and activities. The permanent shelters, where it's possible for the child to live, have a semi-open door policy which means that the child enters voluntarily. This policy, however, varies a bit among the different shelters; in some of them the door is “open” and the child can come and go as they want, and in others the door is locked and the child is not able to leave without managements' permission. There are also shelters with a closed door

policy. The purpose of the shelters is to provide basic needs and an opportunity to leave the street life by offering education, job training and healthy norms and values (Strehl, 2010).

3. Earlier research

There is a lot of research about street children. Because the phenomenon is more prevalent in the developing countries, such as Latin America and Africa, I have found most research from these continents. The research comes from such disciplines as social work, sociology, psychology and also medicine, which indicates that the phenomenon is tried to be understood from different perspectives. Below I will present existing research about how research has managed to understand street children as a phenomenon, children's needs and priorities on the street and possibilities and challenges in the process away from the street.

3.1 The understanding of street children as a phenomenon

As explained in the introduction, today the phenomenon of street children is more understood in a holistic approach. For example, poverty plays a major role in the existence of street children (Martinez, 2010). Karabanow (2003) argues that the children are more often "running *away*" from something than they are running *towards* something (Karabanow, 2003). Green (1998) explains that according to the children's own stories, there are cases of orphans and abandoned children but mainly it's a conscious choice influenced by push and pull factors (Green, 1998). Though this movement to the street is usually something that happens gradually (Martinez, 2010).

3.2 Children's needs and priorities on the street

There are different ways to see the needs of the street children. According to Maslow (Schimmel, 2006) in order for a person to actualize his or her full potential, the person has to fulfill four basic needs: physiological, safety, love and esteem. An individual always prioritize to fulfill the basic needs first, primarily the needs of physiological and safety are tried to be accomplished. Though for a street child these physiological needs are often not met. Maslow argues that if the physiological need is not fulfilled, the other needs, such as love and esteem, may be nonexistent (Schimmel, 2006).

One way to know the children's needs is to listen to them (Karabanow, 2003). A research by Nalkur (2009) showed that one of the most important actions for the street children was to receive good advice from adults. Nalkur's (2009) argues that this finding confirmed Schimmel's (2008) argument that supportive adult relationships should be considered as a

basic need for street children, together with shelter, food and clothing. Nalkur's research looked into how children's priorities could change according to their contextualized situation. The research showed that former street children and school children had more equal priorities than the street children. Nalkur suggested further research in contextualizing street life to see how it is possible to meet the street children's priorities related to this.

3.3 The Process away from the street – challenges and possibilities

3.3.1 Understanding street life – different perspectives

Schimmel (2006) argues that it becomes very difficult for a child that has been socialized into street life, to liberate him/herself from this space. The experience of extreme freedom, having developed friendships and social networks on the street and using drugs and glue makes it really hard for the child to leave the street (Schimmel, 2006). Panter-Brick (2002), on the other hand, based her article on criticism of the category "street child" and research that tries to identify characteristics of a street lifestyle. The researcher stated that the categorization of street children in a group at "at risk" should not have more focus than the children's resiliency and the life career in a long-term perspective (Panter-Brick, 2002). Malindi & Theron (2010) maintain that rather than stereotyping street youth, or judging them, it is necessary for the practitioners and the theorists to recognize and preserve the resiliency of the street children. Their study was based on finding hidden resilience in street youth to discover resources from which the children demonstrated great strength. They found out that the resiliency could be connected to personal resources, to their peer group and religion (Malindi & Theron, 2010). Panter-Brick (2002, p. 163) argues that: "resilience is a reflection of an individual's agency". According to research of Malindi & Theron (2010) agency was a personal resource that attributed resilience for street children, meaning when the children were challenged with difficult situations they took action to deal with this.

3.3.2 Supportive and non-supportive environments in the process away from the street

Martinez (2010) conducted research based on interviews with former street children in Manila, Philippines. In her study she came up with within what particular context a child chooses or doesn't choose the life inside a shelter. A supportive environment was based on an affective atmosphere - where the child felt that the environment supported its decision and that the child was given some time for adjustment. Factors that affected this were the provision of basic needs (food, hygiene, shelter/rest, education), that the need for emotional nurturance was met, outside support existed (parents and peers), that it was one's very own

personal choice to leave the streets and that the child felt that she/he perceived personal development. A non-supportive environment in the shelter was based on perceptions of it being an unfriendly environment and incapable of answering the child's needs. Some factors which contributed to a shelter's characterization as non-supportive were peer influence (directly or indirectly), difficulty detaching themselves from the street lifestyle, boredom, relationship with center's staff (short of affective elements) and experiences of conflict in the center (Martinez, 2010). Panter-Brick (2002) further suggested that by analyzing street children's careers, which is influenced by such factors as ethnicity, gender and age, it could give more knowledge of the child's vulnerability in a greater context.

3.3.3 Organizational solutions

Practices that have had the best results are the ones with residential/rehabilitative care. This kind of care has, however, been discovered to have serious limitations. For example they have had low success to reintegrate the children into the community. It has also been shown that the environment in these residential/rehabilitative care centers could possibly be worse than on the street (Dybicz, 2005). Research showed that successful programs must be voluntary. Other factors which could give a good result are community development, motivated interaction and invited participation (Dybicz, 2005). Street educators are individuals that make some of the most successful outreach today among street children (Schimmel, 2006). The street educators are directly involved with the street children, both where they live and work, and by that they are able to understand the children's needs. This could be in the street, in a shelter or in the family. The street educator may provide a link between the child and the society (UNODC, 2011).

4. Theory

My aim is to illuminate the street child's process away from the street in a contextual manner, with the social worker as an intervener. In order to do so, I will use the model of Urie Bronfenbrenner, the American psychologist in development. With this model I will be able to analyze the phenomenon from different kinds of environmental aspects such as the meaning of social relations and structural influence. The model is a useful tool because it treats the child as an actor. A dimension not included in Bronfenbrenner's theory is resilience. I will integrate this term as a tool to illuminate the capacity of the child, which is a recommended combination of Engler (2007).

4.1 Ecological system theory

Bronfenbrenner created an ecological model which takes a child's different surrounding environments into consideration when assessing the child's development (Andersson, 2002). Bronfenbrenner stipulates that the process of a child's development is affected by social relationships which appear within and between the systems, and also the child's relations within a bigger social context (Klefbeck & Ogden, 1995). He criticizes individual development psychology which assesses development by looking at the individual child, without taking the surrounding environment into proper consideration. Bronfenbrenner maintains that child development is also created through the interplay between the child and its environment (Andersson, 2002). The phenomenological conception that the environment is influenced by its structure comes from Kurt Lewin, who uses the terms "life space" or "psychological fields". Lewin states that in order to understand behavior and development, it is of importance to understand an environment as the way it is perceived by the human beings interacting with it (Andersson, 1986). Bronfenbrenner's research is mainly focused on children, but since development is a process continuously occurring throughout life, the theory is applicable during the whole life course (Andersson, 2002). The model takes biological, social and psychological aspects into consideration (Broberg, 2007). Bronfenbrenner argues that development can be seen as a lasting change in how the person perceives and tackles its environment. Bronfenbrenner believes that it is possible to see development if the behavior is changeable over time and also if this development can also be seen in the other systems the child is a part of (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

The model of Bronfenbrenner is based on four systems: the *micro-system*, *meso-system*, *exo-system* and the *macro-system*. These four systems are not hierarchically ranked over each other; instead they should be seen as being surrounded by each other, like a Russian marionette (Andersson, 2002). In the model the child is placed in the middle and is directly surrounded by its microsystems (settings) (Andersson, 2002) which are the systems that the child has direct contact with. The major unit in the system is the individual, who is seen as an actor (Klefbeck & Ogden, 1995). The child can be a part of different microsystems, but the first of them is mainly the family. As time goes by the child also can be part of other microsystems such as daycare, school and friend groups. The microsystems are socially and physically demarcated from each other (Klefbeck & Ogden, 1995). The most important elements in the microsystems are what kind of *roles*, *activities and social relations* the microenvironments offers, as this affects the potential for development of the child in the

system (Andersson, 1986). A dyad is a relationship between two people in a microsystem which composes the smallest unit in a microsystem. When two people participate in common activities they will probably develop positive and lasting feelings for each other which makes the dyad become a primary dyad (Andersson, 1986). The relations between the micro systems are called *meso-system*. This could be the relation between the home, school and friends. The size of the meso-system can vary depending of the social competence of the child and contact surface. It's of importance that the number and quality of the contacts in the meso-system are sufficient in order to have proper child development (Klefbeck & Ogden, 1995). Microsystems that are well-interacted in a meso-system may offer better possibilities of development than one micro-system could offer. A united meso-system of high-quality can contribute to possibilities of good development, but at the same time a meso-system of low quality can become a risk for the child. When the child moves from one micro-system to another, it is called *ecological crossings* (transition) (Klefbeck & Ogden, 1995). The *exo-system* is comprised of environmental structures that the child is not directly in contact with, but still affects the child's development through interactions or influence from others. Conditions in this system can affect the framing and content of the activities, roles and relations. This can include, for example, local politics, the resources in the local society or the parents' working place (Andersson, 2002). The *macro-system* frames and provides the conditions that the other systems in the model are in (Andersson, 1986). The macro-system includes conditions in the society, norms and values on a national level (Andersson, 2002). It also considers different cultural aspects and ideologies, for example how the CRC is considered in the country (Klefbeck & Ogden).

4.1.1 Roles, Activities and Social relations

The actor is described through its role, through the tasks it is responsible for, and what kind of function the role has in relation to the other actors involved in the system. The roles in the different micro systems can be different for the child and change according to time and place. The child can also have different roles at the same time, such as both a student and a sister (Klefbeck & Ogden, 2003). Bronfenbrenner argues that molar activity is a more long lasting activity which may influence the individual's development. When I will talk about activities in this essay, I will talk about molar activities. Bronfenbrenner defines activity as: "an ongoing behavior possessing a momentum of its own and perceived as having meaning or intent by the participants in the setting" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 45). Further, a social

relation is a relation that exists whenever a person in a setting pays attention to, or participates in another person's activity (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

4.1.2. Ecological crossing - transition

In an ecological crossing the child is not certain if she/he is going to be accepted or if they are going to competently handle the demands in the new context. In this moment the child is vulnerable. For example this kind of movement can happen when a person starts to study. This movement is affected by which emotions encapsulate the move, who is involved and how it happens. It can facilitate, if for example, a parent follows the child to school and also if the expectations at the child from the parent or the school are similar (Klefbeck & Ogden, 1995, p. 57).

4.2 Resilience

When a person is able to adapt positively, even though the individual is facing hard situations such as violence and poverty, that person has a capacity for resilience (Goldstein & Brooks, 2006). Resilience does not only come from the individual himself, but also from the surrounding environment. The term resilience is therefore based on the interplay between a person and the different situations which determine the outcome for the person (Borge, 2005).

5. Method

Below I will present the process of my field study, choice of methods with its demerits and limitations, selection, transcribing and coding and finally ethical considerations

5.1 Field study – preparation and process

My essay is based on an eight-week field study I conducted in Lima, Peru. When I was applying for this field study my aim was to investigate the process between the *family* and the *street*. But a couple of weeks before leaving for Peru my focus changed to the process between the *street* and the *organization*. I found out before that I was going to be able to carry out participant observations at one of the organizations. I was further informed that I could take part in their outreach work with the street educators. This made me think that investigating this process was a good alternative, from a methodological aspect as well. In total I visited four organizations in Lima and its surroundings; in one of them I conducted my observations.

When I came to Peru I was very open to all the impressions and possibilities that could provide me an understanding of the context of the street children in Lima. After two weeks of observations I was able to better focus my investigation. I formulated my study's aim, questions of the problem and interview forms, but my theoretical framework was not decided, although I had some ideas in mind. May (2010) explains that letting the research derive theory is called induction, which is a way to achieve "grounded theory". During my first weeks I used this way to work in order to gain a more relevant focus to my study according to the context.

My first thought was to make my investigation from a professional perspective. After a while I was able to make some interviews with former street children, which thereby focused my research on both the workers' and former street children's perspective. This new focus led to changes again in my aim and questions of the problem to fit my material, both of which are now settled. According to Aspens (2007) it is normal during a process of research that changes in theory, research question and field are made.

5.2 Choice of method

I have chosen a qualitative method for my investigation. Qualitative research can be seen as a method to understand rather than explain a phenomenon (Meuwisse et al. 2008). Conducting quantitative research, by for example doing an inquiry, was not in the same way going to give me the possibility to ask follow-up questions. Aspens (2007) states that a qualitative researcher is trying to understand what people do, why and how they do it, which requires interaction with the field in different kind of ways. I have used semi-structured interviews and also participant observations. By combining interviews and participant observations it is possible for the researcher to ask relevant questions in the interviews, but it also makes it easier to construe the answers in the interviews (Aspens (2007). To combine methods is called method triangulation (Fangen, 2005).

5.2.1 Interviews

With semi-structured interviews it is possible to get a deeper understanding for the subject by having a dialogue with the interviewee. The interviewer can focus on some specific themes while also leaving space for the professional in the answers. Structured interviews, a method not that flexible, are dependent on the interviewer and the interviewee sharing the same culture to get a good outcome. In an unstructured interview there is great flexibility, but at the same time, the interviewer has to have a goal (May, 2001). According to the above guidelines,

I wanted to be able to ask more questions but at the same time have structure, and because of factors such as different languages, semi structured interviews was a good method in my study.

5.2.2 Participant observations

During my field study I also conducted participant observations at one of the organizations. I was always open about my role and either I, or the worker/street educator, introduced me to the street children or the former street children. I did observations in the street, in different areas, and also in shelters. The function of the observations was to gain an understanding of the phenomenon. The observations also helped me construct my interviews and conversations with the children and professionals. Fangen (2005) explains that as an observer it is possible to use informal conversations.

5.2.3 Demerits and limitations with the methods

The interviews, except from two, were recorded. For me it was of great help to be able to listen to them many times afterwards because the interviews were made in Spanish, which is not my mother-tongue and therefore had been a challenge for me. Three of my interviews I did on my own, one of them without a recorder, where I wrote down the answers instead. During the rest of my interviews I had an interpreter, half-Swedish half-Peruvian, who has been of much help. The function of having an interpreter was to explain things when I lost the thread of the subject, or did not understand exactly what was being said. She helped me formulate questions that I wasn't exactly sure how to formulate, she also helped me my last week in Lima with transcribing material. For one of my interviews I had another interpreter in English-Spanish. Using an interpreter is something that may have affected the reliability of my material because an interpreter is not able to reproduce the exact content from the responses of the interviewee, both what they said and how they said it. The time of the interviews varied between 1 to 3 hours; they averaged around 1.5 hours. This length was affected by language differences and also by using an interpreter. Some of the interviews were also more or less life stories, which was very interesting and honoring for me to hear, but because of that it was natural that the interviews took a longer time.

Having interviews in another language and in another culture can also be a challenge. For example, sometimes when the interviewee was very excited about what he/she was talking about I didn't want to interrupt the person, and also I didn't want to interrupt something that could lead to something very interesting for my investigation. According to knowledge in the

context of culture, Aspers(2007) says that limited knowledge could affect the validity, but at the same time it could also help to limit the research.

While transcribing my material I realized that I, or the interpreter, sometimes asked closed questions, which for example, was related to when a question had been asked many times without being understood in the right way. One good opportunity and possibility with being on the field is that it is possible to make follow up questions. Some of the respondents were followed up afterwards by e-mail.

The interviews took place at the offices of organizations except for two that took place at a restaurant and one at the shelter; the restaurant was a bit noisy which made hearing a bit difficult. Aspers (2007) states that unbalanced power between the interviewee and the interviewer may affect the material. While collecting material it was important for me to be flexible about the location and how to make the interview, in order to make the person feel comfortable in this situation.

In my interviews with the professionals I had to be flexible with the questions and my interview schedule. Some of them didn't work on the street and one of them had a time limit. My interview schedule with the former street children also changed during my stay (see attachment 4 and 5). Some questions were added or changed, which was something that was a part of my research process. These factors explained above, might however have affected the comparability in my material

May (2001) stipulates that by doing participant observations it is possible to gain a better understanding of the persons and their actions that are studied, and also protects against projecting one's own image on the phenomenon. May (2001) says that factors such as being aware of the time, the place, the language and the social circumstances could contribute to a high validity. Doing a field study made me aware of these things but at the same time the language could have affected the validity. That's why my observations, except from the informal conversations, were mainly observing the environment and interactions, and not necessarily detailed conversations. Things that have been unclear were not added to my study. During my field study I also brought a book for writing, like a diary, where I wrote down conversations or thoughts.

5.4 Selection

For my investigation I carried out interviews with six professionals working with street children (see attachment 3). I also interviewed three former street children. Two of them were working as street educators; wherefore these interviews were divided in two perspectives. A street educator is a person that works directly with the children in the street but also at the shelter. A social worker may also work in the street but from my experience during my field study they were mainly working in the shelters. In my study two of the former street children were street educators but it's of importance to note that to work as a street educator it's not necessary to have this background; other persons could also work as this. I also had conversations with professionals, children and adolescents in the street and in the shelters. By having interviews with former street children I was able to look into their process away from the street. According to Bryman (2011) it is recommended to make a goal-oriented selection which is relevant for the questions of the problems.

As explained above I mainly had contact with one organization, but the manager also gave me recommendations of other organizations on the field, some of which I had read about before I left. According to May (2001) this is called the snowball-method. This means that the researcher tries to get more contacts/interviewees by the informants he/she is interviewing. A risk with the snowball-method is that you get informants within the same network which could limit the understanding of the question. I was, however, interested in investigating organizations working on a voluntary basis, and because they all had that principle, I made contact with them.

5.4.1 Street Children – definition of the target group

The organization in which I made my observations worked not only with children under 18 years of age, but also above that age, in their outreach work and in the shelters. Therefore they are also included in my target group. Wiencke (2008) also included 20-year olds in his research when he used the term "street children", as they lived in very similar conditions to the younger ones. When the individual is living in the street I will introduce them by age and if they have left the street I will name them as "former street children" even though they might be above 18 years old.

5.5 Transcribing and coding

Transcribing the material was a long process due to language barriers and the amount of interviews. When a difficulty in language was met I marked that part. The last week in Lima I

sat down with my interpreter and went through those interviews that were most difficult and those parts that I thought were of interest for me. Still there were parts which were unclear; therefore they were not included in my study. Sometimes the interviewed person talked for a long time and the interpreter made a short version of what the person said. When I transcribed the interview I tried to listen to see if both versions matched and also to give the interpreter's version more detail. Sitting down with the interpreter, and also sometimes talking about the interviews, probably helped me to avoid misunderstandings. Having done the interviews with the interpreter, in another language, having translated them afterwards partly into Swedish and also into English and writing this essay, may have affected the validity and reliability of my material. Sometimes the digressions were big and sentences incomplete wherefore not everything always were transcribed. According to Fangen (2005) this kind of approach is a common way when the digressions and incomplete sentences could instead be a distraction.

After transcribing all my interviews, I printed them and marked them in categories which were then grouped and divided into themes. During my coding I used colour pencils for practical help. The ideas behind the themes were mainly from my questions of the problem but also from theoretical considerations. In the process the themes changed or were added to each other. According to Aspers(2007), it is normal in the process of research, that the themes or research questions are changed. After I divided them into themes I copied them and put them into a new document so it would be easier to read and analyze.

When I use quotes in my essay they will be slightly edited for the sake of readability.

5.6 Ethical considerations

My first aim was to have interviews with the professionals. According to Forskningsetiska principer (2002), it is important to be aware that a child is not able, at least not the same as an adult, to assimilate given information, such as the meaning of the study. I have conducted interviews with former street children above 18 years of age. The children I spoke to in the street during my observations were mainly above 18. Because they were informed about who I was, they were able to decide whether they wanted to participate or not in the study. I always tried to be relaxed and laid-back in my manner with the children, especially at one of the shelters where younger children lived. I informed the professionals about the aim with the observation before my field study started (see attachment 1)

Before my interviews I gave information about what the research was about and about their conditions, written or verbal (see attachment 2). They were informed that they could interrupt their cooperation at any time. I made sure to get consent from the participants before an interview was done. The participants were informed that the material collected within the interviews was going to be confidential, which meant that it would be a secret as to what was said. The data that was collected would only be used within the purpose for this research. I have also maintained anonymity between the organizations.

When I travelled to the different places during my field study, one person in the family I lived with went with me for guidance. He was also informed that all the material that he saw and heard was confidential. Also my interpreters were informed about this written or verbal (see attachment 6).

6. Analysis

This analysis is based on nine interviews that I have done with six professionals and three former street children, two of them working as street educators. I have also used my conversations with former street children, street children and professionals that I had during my observations. All the respondents will be replaced with letters, P= Professionals and FSC=former street child.

P1: Social worker that has worked with street children for 23 years, P2: Primary teacher that has worked with street children for 20 years, P3: Family therapist that has worked with street children for one year and in other programs for children during 13 years, P4: Social worker that has worked with street children 12-13 years, P5: Primary teacher that has worked with street children for 24 years and P6: A social worker that has worked 3 years with street children and 12 years with vulnerable children.

FSC 1 is 18 years old and she lived at an organization for 12 years old, she left the street when she was 5 years old. FSC 2 is 26 years old and left the street when she was around 22 years old. FSC 3 is 24 years old and left the street when he was around 14 years old.

The analysis will be structured in the following manner. I will first illuminate how residential patterns and housing policies influence the street child in its process away from the street. I will then present how gender and age can affect the process from the street and how the social worker can relate to this. Finally I will present how the roles, activities and relations the child

takes part in can affect the child's process away from the street and how the social worker relate to this.

6. 1 How can structural aspects, such as changes in residential patterns and housing policies, influence the street child's process to leave the street?

6. 1.1 Children living on the street of Lima, where did they go?

Early in my field study in Lima I found that the living situation of the street children had changed. While before many lived more openly on the street, it is now less, according to some of the social workers (P1, P2, P6). Some professionals working in organizations which had street educators, told me that today many of the street children in Lima don't physically live on the streets. Today many of them instead live in small rooms built up in houses (*casonas*). There was also a difference in the answers from the social workers as to whether street children as a phenomenon had increased or diminished, one of them (P6) said she thought it was more but because they are living in these room you can't see them as much. Another social worker argued:

P1: "They camouflaged themselves. Now they are not living anymore on the streets..there are very few that live in the street as the kids that you know in --- They are the remaining ones ."

Before, the children were living in the squares of the city center in Lima. One former street child argues:

FSC3: "I was 7-8 years old and I was living at the square – in the center of Lima. When I came there in 1995, the square..was the land of nobody."

When I asked some of the social workers why the phenomenon had changed, it was explained in a local political perspective (P2, P1) but also because of repression from the authorities (P6, P1). This might be illuminated through the model of Bronfenbrenner and how the exo-system influences the child's life. Bronfenbrenner (1979) argues that actions that happen in the exo-system affect, or get affected by, what happens in the micro system.

During my observations and dialogues I realized that this change of living in the street wasn't happening in all parts of the city. There were children still living in the streets, but in certain areas of the city or in communities (*conos*) around the city. When I asked one of the street educators (P2), she told me that an explanation as to why one of these places was not affected was because these politics, introduced above, had not in the same way reached this part of the population. P2 also said that the population in the street is subjected to the conditions of their surroundings which mean that when these politics are felt by these groups still living on the

street, they will be obligated to find another place to live. In this way P2 meant that the street children could be seen as a mobile population.

In order to show that the exosystem makes a contextual influence on the child's development, it is necessary to show a chain of events involving at least two steps. Firstly you have to be able to relate the external conditions to processes that happen in the micro system of the individual. These processes in the micro system thereafter have to be related to the changes in the development of the individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). To get an understanding for development it is important, according to Bronfenbrenner, not only to observe an actual situation but also to see the changes in the systems. When a system is altered, for example when the scenery is changed, it is possible to see the interplay in a new way (Lagerberg & Sundelin, 2000). When the authorities didn't permit the children to sleep in parks or squares anymore, the children, according to P2, naturally began to look for another place to stay. This need was seen by people living nearby:

P1: "There are people who have been from the street or that have seen that it could be a business. They have inhabited abandoned houses and put up rooms of boxes."

This physical change in living location also has produced changes in the lives of the children. One effect of this change of setting that some of the workers described, was the high cost the street children had to pay for their living. For one child it could cost around 10-14 soles per night, a very high cost for a street child in Lima. According to P2 and P6 the people that rent out these rooms can exploit the vulnerable position of the children and take out a high cost for these rooms which one social worker (P6) described as unlivable. Some of the respondents argued that the children could divide one of these small rooms between 5-6 persons. One social worker explained the change this way:

P2: "The street also has changed; the danger in this time now is different from before. We can see that the human rights for the children are not respected. But for example today we don't see them sleeping in the street. Today they are staying in rooms that are dirty.. and in these rooms it's permitted to take drugs, take alcohol---In these rooms there is no control; they can get raped, get TBC and also live there with their babies"

The cost the children have to pay just covers the room, in addition, according to P2, they have to pay for their food, clothes, drugs and alcohol. All of which are part of their expenses.

Local politics is a factor that indirectly affects the development conditions of the child (Andersson, 2002). Even though it's a factor which is played outside the child's direct setting, this kind of factor affects the design and the concrete content of the activities, roles and the

relations. It can also affect the discretion of the child (Andersson, 1986). According to P1 and P2, this change may obligate the street child to partake in activities, such as work or to rob, that will allow them to pay for their needs. P2 explains it this way:

P2: “This forces the children to increase their criminal activities and in some cases to be skilled in their robberies. It can also give longer punishment in prison for the elder ones and the placements for the children. Some of them have chosen to sell drugs, sexual exploitation and stealing”.

As these examples above show, local politics is a factor that may affect the development conditions of the child.

6.1.2 What does it mean to leave the street?

An interesting aspect that was raised during the interviews was that it might not be enough to provide the children with a place to live in order for them to not be a street child. When I asked some of the social workers if street children still are “street children” even though they are living in rooms, two of them had these answers:

P6: “A room like this is not enough to say that they are not street children. They don’t have the necessary conditions to make development in their lives according to the human rights; they don’t have to possibility to have a life with dignity.”

P2: “I think so, because their lifestyle continues the same: they rob to eat and dress, they don’t have any bond to their family, they take drugs etc.”

For these social workers the role as a street child therefore didn’t change with this transformation. In Wiencke’s (2008) article he refers to “street” as all public and social spaces which are either accessible or are made accessible to the street children. He argues that street children live in their own small social life world or social space. Wiencke argues that the children create this space but also that the structure of the space plays a significant role in shaping the children (Wiencke, 2008). When some of the social workers and the former street children talked about the street, they didn’t talk about the street only as a physical space but also as a matter of culture or social space. FSC2 said:

FSC2: “The street hasn’t capsized me as it has done with some other people. The street makes some people bad; I’m a good person. I have studied, I can write, I can work and I’m a good mother”

The process away from the street then may not only be the process away from the physical street but also away from the social space or culture. A difference in living situation, or not living on the street anymore, therefore might not be enough to solve the problem. The street might also be a culture that follows longer than the accommodation.

6.2 How is it possible to see the child's process to leave the street from a perspective of gender and age, and how can the social worker relate to this?

6.2.1 The process of leaving the street: a gender perspective

Bronfenbrenner argues that the interaction between the child and its surrounding is affected by such factors as gender, age and social class. In a revision of his theory he explains that gender is not a power of explanation in and of itself, instead it's of importance to combine these factors with different lifestyles, resources, expectations and value systems. It's of importance to define factors that are supportive and also unsupportive, in relation to for example, gender being able to explain the development of the individual (Andersson, 2002).

My empirical material shows that gender differences play a role in leaving the street:

P4: "The most difficult thing of all is to get off a girl from situations of sexual exploitation."

P2, P4 and P6 talked about the difficulties of getting a girl off the street. They said that today many of the girls on the street are victims of sexual exploitation and prostitution, which makes it more difficult in their process away from the street. One reason why it is difficult for the girl to leave prostitution is because that is how they are able to make more money (FSC2, former street child/shelter, P6) With the money they are able to afford to buy some of their needs such as clothes and makeup. Others interviewed also explained that the girls' income doesn't always only provide for her. One former street child in a shelter explained what she did with her money:

"The money that I earn goes to me, the group but also to the ones who protect the accommodation and sell drugs".

Two of the former street children (FSC2, FSC3) told that there had been a change in the couple's patterns compared with how it was when they lived on the street:

FSC2: "Today the guy in the couple sends the female to prostitute herself...Today the small girls prostitute themselves; before it was not like that. Before a girl didn't prostitute herself. At least it was a choice; today the guys force the girls to prostitute themselves."

They talked about how before when they lived on the street the girl economically was supported by the boyfriend that robbed for her. But today the male or a female with a masculine role (*machona*) sends the girlfriend to prostitute herself, according to FSC2 and P2. According to Dybicz (2005), a good intervention approach has to be related to gender. Girls often represent an invisible group on the street and it is not always obvious why if it's, for

example, for prostitution or because they are working in other homes (Dybicz, 2005). P5 said that it was important to offer an alternative income for the girls to get money. FSC2 explained that the girl usually chooses training in works that can provide them money, for example seamstress. She argued that this might help them in their process to leave the street but this income could also provide for their children.

6.2.2 Consequences of Social exclusion - a matter of age

Street children is a group which is socially excluded in their situation; they are short of access to birth certificates, registration documents, stability of residence, good education and health care (Panter-Brick, 2002). According to Karabanow (2003) it can be difficult for the street children to re-enter mainstream culture because of the difficulties of being socially excluded and having feelings of stigmatization and marginalization. Pierson (2009) believes that Bronfenbrenner's model is a useful way to show how social exclusion occurs by looking at the interconnections in the model. He argues that it is of importance that social workers are aware how the environment and its social context can affect the individual, which is best perceived by the individual. He also expresses the importance of social support for individual development (Pierson, 2009).

During my field work I saw that the vulnerability of the individuals living in the streets is also affected by age. Most of the organizations in Lima are working with children below 18. But what happens when a child turns 18? In a paper by Low (2009) he brings up the recommendation for further research on the question of the older survivors. He meant that it's possible to debate that this group is even more neglected than the children below 18 and that they still are facing the same challenges such as social exclusion and limited education (Low, 2009). When I talked to a female adult, 27 years old, in the street, she said:

“Most of all I would like to have a real job, but it's hard. I'm afraid that they will look down on me...it's hard to search for a job when you have scars on your face and unclean clothes...I would like to go to university but because I don't have any money I can't; there are so little resources for that.”

When I asked the organizations until when a street child is considered a street “child”, two of them (P1, P4) said up until 18 years of age, P2 mentioned 17 years old and P4 said up until 14-15 years old. Two of them talked about that despite this definition, they worked with the population over 18 years old on the street, but in a different way. For example they tried to help them to look for work. (P4) explained the situation like this:

P4: “Well, it’s a problem. We are also working with them because they don’t have anything organized in their lives. For example in xxx exist elders, there they are kids from 18, 22, 23 -- - Unfortunately it’s hard for them to step into the world of work and continue employment. Because of that, we are always working with them but we are the only institution in Peru that can help them to get documents, identity card and help them to look for alternatives in work”.

As introduced in earlier research Nalkur (2009) showed that one of the most important actions for the street children was to receive good advice from adults. Klefbeck & Ogden (2003) brings up that a micro systems that are well interacted may offer better possibilities of development than one micro-system could offer itself (Klefbeck & Ogden, 2003). If those relations end, age might then be seen as a factor that may make the process away from the street more challenging by increasing age.

6.3 How do the activities, relations and roles that the child takes part in influence the child’s possibility to leave the street, and how can the social worker relate to this?

6.3.1 The street child as a survivor

A main task for the child living on the street is that he or she has to find a way to survive. Categorizing the child as a “survivor” was a main role that the social workers gave the child. Low (2009) argues that to each other, the street children are survivors. He argues that the street children do not only live, work or beg on the street; they *survive* on the street. As I mentioned in the theory section the actors at the different levels have different roles. They are described through their roles and by the tasks that they are responsible for, and also through the functions they have in consideration to the other actors on the same level (Klefbeck & Ogden, 2003). The children use the street as a way to survive but also as a place to live. The children get involved in activities to be able to provide for themselves (Ajiboye & Oladiti, 2008).

Surviving through work

Julien (2008) explains that on the street the children have to feed, clothe and seek shelter without any guidance of adults. Therefore they also have to behave like adults because they are totally responsible for their lives. The reasoning of Julien supports what some of the social workers had to say about the street children. P2 said:

P2: “The child wants to work. Because a child that lives on the street needs to survive. And to survive the child needs money to be able to buy food, clothes or whatever the child needs. When they are on the street they don’t see the importance of studying.”

According to Andersson (1986) an activity is having a purpose. In the street the children have to work to survive. Being able to have money is though (according to FSC3 and a former street child/shelter) a reason why it could be difficult for a child to stay away from the street.

To live day-by-day

A central aspect of human development according to Bronfenbrenner, is what the individual perceives, wishes, teaches or thinks about. He argues that this changes as a function of different environments that the individual is interacting with (Andersson, 1986). To be a survivor also means, according to some of the respondents, to live day-by-day. P2 talked about it like this:

P2: “It’s hard for the children to think further than day-by-day. For them it is more about: ‘where should I sleep tonight? Where should I eat today?’ Then it’s not possible to make future plans. It is something that is possible to focus on when living in a house within an organization. If you are going to work, study”

FSC1 lived with her family in the street and she says:

FSC1: “My family only thought about the present, not anything else. We didn’t think about the future.. We thought about how to get food, how to survive and how to pass the night.”

A research made of Nalkur (2009) showed that when comparing the prioritizes between street children, former street children and school children the street children’s’ prioritizes were about getting good advices from adults, having time to do activities they enjoyed and having a dependable place to sleep while the other the groups prioritized the school, examination and good health. This showed that children’s’ prioritizes were depended on which conditions they were living under and that their prioritizes once moving from the street may change. With this result the researcher argued that by providing the street child with supportive adult relationships and a dependable place to sleep, through rehabilitative care, the street child could also put greater value in, for example, education (Nalkur, 2009). That being said it might show that children could prioritize different things according to their context. Therefore it might also be of importance for the social worker to be aware of these contextual influences.

Surviving through resilience

To be able to survive in the street you have to get money which can be made through a variety of ways. One social worker (P1) explains two ways to get money:

P1: In this situation we have the music which is the positive way to survive, or we have the robbery which is the negative way to survive. So for the best the child discovers that it is possible to make money with the music.

During my observations we visited a group of children that were making a living playing music “en los combis”, which means the minibuses; they supply most of the local traffic in Lima. We were sitting down under a bridge, eating muffins and drinking coke that one of the street educators had bought together with some of the boys. They had great talent for the instruments they were playing. When I asked one of the boys how he learned to play, he said that he learned from the other boys in the group. They explained to me how they worked together and organized their day. Davies (2008) believes that the street children have built up satisfying lifestyles wherefrom it is important to create interventions instead of just erase them. Activities and qualities acquired through work, sharing, games and so on, may supply the children with helpful skills (Davies, 2008). P2 explains:

P2: “But the children have also learned some qualities in the street. They have got social skills to express themselves, to communicate and they have humor. They have a capacity of resilience as no one else to get out from very complicated and difficult situations. Despite difficult situations they raise themselves again and continue forward. Through surviving day by day they have learned to be able to overcome this by, for example, to joke or laugh about what has happened. This means something positive for the children, being able to work with them.”

Cheng & Lam (2010) state that when helping a child to leave the street and to integrate them into society, it is of importance to take the positive effects, such as freedom and happiness, that the street has had on the children into account, and see what kind of role they had in the kid’s choice to stay on the street.

6.3.2 Immune to authorities – a challenge for the social workers

As mentioned in the theory part the microenvironments could offer different potential for development of the child in the system (Andersson, 1986). In the environments the child makes its experiences and creates its reality (Klefbeck & Ogden, 1995). During my field study the social workers and former street children explained that some experiences the street children have had with authorities, workers and other adults could affect their interaction with the workers. All of the former street children expressed that they had had bad experiences with social workers. FSC2 and FSC3 expressed that they distanced themselves from the workers, partly because they thought the workers were only there for the money. FSC2 said:

FSC2: “I knew that they were working with children on the street but I never got close. I always kept myself away from the organizations..The others told me that they were only there

for the money... The children were tired of all the organizations saying: 'I'm coming that day' and the children were waiting but no one came."

P2 and P4 also expressed that the children also had bad experiences in other relations, such as in school, with the police, other institutions and also the family.

P2: "The picture they have got from adults, the ones that they have known, is negative. The authority at home and the respect the adults have won has been with beats.. So it's no authority, no respect. What they have is fear"

When talking with the street children about their experiences, a common characteristic according to Karabanow (2003), is the emotional and psychological effect of the traumatic experience the child has suffered. Abuse, violence, abandonment and rejection lead to emotional scars which affect the child in its emotional, educational and social development. Some of the interviews, both with workers and former street children (now street educators), talked about how the children in the beginning might tell the wrong things to the workers before they had the confidence of the worker. According to FSC2, the children might do this because of the hard circumstances they are under but also to protect themselves. P2 also explained that the children's experience and the lack of confidence in adults might cause the street children to test the street educators. The child might be very hard and treat the street educator bad just to see how far the street educator can go or have patience, and to see if the street educator is really interested in the child or just there to fulfill his/her task.

Confidence – the only key for the social worker

The first thing being able to work with the street child is to create confidence, P2 said:

P2: "The first thing you have to do is to win their trust. The treatment has to be very horizontal. Not like a person who comes and thinks that she/he knows everything and tells the child: 'what you are doing, you are doing wrong and I'm going to tell you what is good.' It is more like talking to a friend."

When I asked the former street children what had been important for them in building their confidence in the workers, two of them talked (FSC2, FSC1) about the importance that the worker told the truth, being direct (FSC1) and stuck to what she/he said. FSC2 said:

FSC: "Yes, I trusted her because every Friday she came and we knew that she was going to come...She was more direct and the things she promised she also kept."

All of them said it was important for them that the workers spent time with them, which was not only related to spending time with them in the streets. FSC3 said:

FSC3: “She was good; if we were in jail she always came and visited us. She always had a word of hope--She was the only person who was able to be with us 24 hours. She could sleep under the bridge with the children...it came from her heart.”

Related to this empirical material the relationship between the street child and the social worker might have more potential to influence the child’s process in leaving the street when it has become a primary dyad, as mentioned in the theory section.

6.3.3 Motivation – essential for the child in its process to get off the street

Bronfenbrenner maintains that development is the process through which the individual obtains a more increased, differentiated and valid image about the ecological environment and becomes motivated and able to get involved in activities which explore, maintain or change the qualities of the environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). He does not focus on the traditional psychological processes of motivation, perception and thinking. Rather he focuses on its content-what the child perceive, wishes, fears, thinks about etc. (Andersson, 1986). During my field study I understood that motivation is an important part in the process away from the street. In the book *Working with Involuntary Clients: a guide to practice* (2006), Trotter brings up the importance of motivation as a factor in an individual’s change. He says that a common phrase from workers is that “you can’t change someone who doesn’t want to change”. In my interviews five professionals(P2, P3, P6, P5, P1) and two former street children(FSC1, FSC3) talked about how it’s of importance that the child chooses for him/herself whether to leave the street. This choice seemed to be something that could motivate the child:

P5: “From the start it has been important that it has been a decision from the child. Because I think that it’s the only way the child can overcome his/her problems.”

P6: “We want the child to make this decision, because this will help guarantee its permanence in this step.”

The meaning of the term motivation is, however, complex. There are different levels in the stages of change. For example the motivation to change could be affected by, and have a more positive outcome, if the individual points out that the worker believes that she or he can change (Trotter, 2006). Two of the former street children who were interviewed and one in an informal conversation expressed the need for hope from the professionals; two of them gave this expression:

FSC1: “She trusted in us and had the confidence to bring us here and now she also has the confidence in us to finish school and become professionals”

Former street child/shelter: “You often hear words like “piraña”(piranha) on the street. Even though you get this opportunity, you don’t think that it’s possible for you to change; you need someone who gives love and hope”.

Bender et al. (2007) refers in their article to Selekman who maintains that choice is necessary to motivate change. Youth who believe that they can take full control of their future will continue to overcome tasks in life and become more committed to making positive life changes (Bender et al. 2007). Street children who have entered the rehabilitative care voluntarily might have unidentified resiliency factors which facilitate them to leave the street lastingly (Nalkur, 2009). Bronfenbrenner’s definition of development doesn’t only mean that entry into a setting is an indication that development has occurred. An individual can’t maintain a role, engage in activities or maintain interpersonal relations in a setting if the person is not motivated (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

In the interviews with the former street children there were different factors that motivated them to leave the street. FSC2 explains that when she discovered that she was 2-months pregnant she stopped taking drugs but had to take medication during her pregnancy due to an illness she had. The baby was born healthy and FSC2 says: “*in that moment I decided to not go back to the street*”. In the book *Examining Lives in Context* the authors complement the development of ecological theory by suggesting that turning points in a person’s life also could change its development (Andersson, 2002).

In the interview with FSC3, he said that he had a close friend that died which affected him a lot. After spending time in jail at a minor age he expresses that he didn’t want to return to the street. He further explains:

FSC3: “I felt really bad and I was afraid to rob, for the first time... I didn’t want to return.. so after I left the jail I went to the house of xxx...and a friend started to talk about God. I wasn’t interested but he insisted that I come with him to the church, and there I had a meeting with God...God gave me an invitation and I accepted it. From that day I started to change”

Research by (Malindi & Theron, 2010) suggested that a street child’s religion could be a personal resource for resilience. Religion might provide them strength and also help guide them in their lives and influence their decisions to, for example, go to shelters.

FSC1 explains that she ended up living at the organization because one of her sister lived there:

FSC1: “My sister got to know xx and she went to live there...After that, my sister went to talk to my mother in the street about how I shouldn’t be living there anymore. She asked xx if I

could come and live with them and xx said yes. So I went there, together with three other of my sisters”.

In the case of FSC1, her sister represented an important relation between the two settings, the meso system. This might have revealed the transition for FSC1.

6.3.4 The transition between the street and the organization

According to Bronfenbrenner social support is an important part in the transferring process between micro-systems. This move can be a challenge for the child because he/she doesn't know if he/she is going to be able to handle the new demands in the new setting, which would mean a new role. In the transferring it's essential how it happens, what kind of feelings are involved, and with whom (Klefbeck & Ogden, 2003). The organizations with street educators, or those who have worked as street educators, talked about the importance of being with the child throughout the whole process, from the street and also to continue to support the child at an organization, in the family or in another settlement other than the street. P2 says:

P2: “When she comes to the house, it's not like she suddenly transforms into another girl; behaviors from the street have to be changed little by little... When the street educator leaves a girl in the house the work in the street continues. The street educator has to come and visit the child in the house so she doesn't feel that she just got left behind.”

Bronfenbrenner warns that the child could be temporally marginalized or vulnerable coming to a new environment (Klefbeck & Ogden, 2003). Four of the professionals explained that when the children come to the organization they can be very vulnerable. The vulnerability the workers talked about was often connected with the children's self-esteem and happenings in the school or connections within the family. One of the former street children said:

FSC2: “When I came from the street my self-esteem was low, I didn't want to study. I was unsure on myself...it was really hard.”

The social workers explained that the street children could be very sensitive to other people's opinions. For example P2 said:

P2: “There is a girl now in the house that doesn't want to go to school because the teacher was told that she was living in this house. It's important to read those signals so that the child won't return to the street.”

The meso-system can offer more possibilities for the development of the child than each microsystem itself. The contact between the microsystems is called meso-system contacts and their quantities and qualities are important; they can create opportunities or risks in the

development (Klefbeck & Ogden, 2003). Three of the professionals talked about that they also worked with the families of the children. P6 says:

P6: “Many times the families don’t know how to take care of their children, or they don’t have the time...The organization is supporting the parents so they know more how to be able to take care of their children”

Adapt to the new environment

The transition for the child could be easier if the norms in the two microsystems in the transition are common (Klefbeck & Ogden, 2003). When the child comes to the organization or the family, all those interviewed talked about how the child has to adapt him- or herself. In my interviews the term adapt was many times related to the risk of going back to the street.

P3 argues:

P3: “The children that are new in the house will go back to the street in a few days. And again you have to work with them in the street...and it’s like that until they engage the rhythm of the house.”

One street child expressed what had been of importance in the decision to continue to stay at the organization:

FSC2: “They had a lot of patience. That was easily why we continued to stay in the house, especially the first couple of days...we were like a family. This made you want to stay with joy, to participate in the tasks, in the programs.”

There are difficulties in adapting as the new norms and rules in the house may be a challenge for children as they differ greatly from the norms in the street. Related to this some professionals and also a former street child (FSC2), talked about how it could be easier for a child who hasn’t spent too much time in the street to leave the streets.

Some of the professionals also talked about the rules and norms as a factor that could help the children, and as a factor that the children perceived to be helped from. One of the former street children (FSC2), now a street educator, confirms this.

FSC2: “When they don’t take drugs anymore, and go back to the organization, they long for the structure, their new friends”

When talking about adaption the interviews also related this to a life without drugs. Two of the former street children and all the professionals said that one of the main reasons why the children go back to the street is because of drugs and addiction to this.

The social workers, representing different organizations, had different ways to deal with these factors of adaptation that could affect the child in its process and decision to return to the street. The difference was that two of the organizations had a range of certain time when the child was not able to leave the house; the child could leave if he/she wanted, but not come and go as he/she wanted. This was intended as a period when the child could adapt to new rules, norms and a life without drugs. Another organization worked with open doors which meant that the child could come and go as they wanted. FSC2 expressed: “You have to study to see if the child needs closed or open doors...some children are violent, take drugs, steal and don’t want to work...they will end up in jail so therefore I tell them: ‘now it’s time for you to decide, either you will end up in jail or you will go to a closed place’..”. P5 expressed that this could be a complicated question:

P5: “I have seen children that have been in the street 6-7 years taking drugs, and when he comes here he conquers his problems. And sometimes there are children that only have had 3 months in the street and have started to take drugs, but can’t conquer this problem here...it depends on each child individually.”

6.3.5 How peers and the social worker can influence the child in the shelter

Peer influence

Peers may have as much importance in a child’s development as the relation between the child and the mother (Broberg, Almqvist & Tjus, 2007). Malindi & Theron (2010) found out in their study that the peer group could provide a source of resiliency for the street child. The study showed that the peer group may have a function to shape more acceptable behaviors, but also the peers could rely on each other and provide a sense of family and support for each other (Malindi & Theron, 2010). The professionals and some of the former street children talked about the importance of peers in the street child’s process away from the street, P6 says:

P5: “There is an influence because they are of the same age; it’s a child of the same age who has the same experience. The kids say: ‘you are silly if you want to leave, here you are well’. Here you have the possibility to study; you have the possibility of a different life”

Bronfenbrenner believes that a balanced system includes common communication in the different systems. This could be a factor that makes the child adapt, learn and develop (Klefbeck & Ogden, 2003). All the professionals were talking about the function of the peers. Two of the interviews said that they worked with peer influence as a strategy, for example, when a child is thinking about leaving. Sometimes the function of peers as support also came indirectly.

FSC1: “After a while I realized that as they were supporting me when I came, I now also had to do the same for this new person coming to the house”

Almost all of the professionals described that they wanted the children to feel that they were like in a family. And also some of the former street children described the peer group and the workers as a family. One former street child in a shelter expressed in a conversation that they felt a difference in feelings for each other now compared to while they were living on the street:

“When we were staying in the street we didn’t trust each other, but now when we are here we do because all of us want to change”.

Some of the professionals and FSC2 talked about how the group could act more like a support if the group was stable, which often was related to the fact that the children often had another focus in their lives.

At the same time the peers could be a support, they might also be a risk for the child in its process. Martinez’s (2010) study showed that peer influence could be a strong element, both directly and indirectly, that could bring the child back to the street. P3 argues:

P3: “A new child can sometimes move the whole group...because they are children that come from the street and they bring memories that make the others to remember their life in the street.. the new child could say to the other ‘Let’s go to the street! Let’s go and get money, so we can buy things!’..”

Some of the workers also said that sometimes children who come to the house just talk about the street which brings up memories to the children in the house. For example a child could remember a friend or a girlfriend on the street and might want to go back.

The influence from the social worker

The workers talked about that the children needed a lot of attention and also love. The lack of attention could instead be a risk for the child, P1 says:

P1: “When the child feels love the child stays..but the child is very jealous. So for example if I bring a new child and I don’t give the other child the same amount of attention he will say ‘I’m going to leave!’..they need one thousand percent attention. “

Bronfenbrenner meant that it’s of importance for the child’s development that the system is in balance. By taking charge of the needs and interests that the child has, the system could be in balance. But when it doesn’t do that it might instead be a system in risk. Martinez (2010) discovered that the main factor in a supportive environment for the former street children in

the house, was an affective atmosphere. FSC expressed what she felt was of importance for her at the shelter:

FSC1: "I had education, I was free, but most of all they gave me a lot of love."

7. Discussion and Conclusions

The aim of this essay was to investigate the process of the street child, as an actor in interaction with its surrounding environmental systems, to get off the streets of Lima. As introduced in the introduction, research of street children as a phenomenon today is seen from a more contextual approach. The perspective of ascribing the child more agency and to see the resourcefulness of the street child as he/she copes with hard circumstances, has also been given more focus. Although treating the child as an actor in some situations is limited; it depends on differences in organizational solutions, for example how to handle drug addiction. Using the model of Bronfenbrenner as a tool has given this essay, and my material, the possibility to understand the child's development over time in a contextual approach, relating to the process off the street. Using resilience as a complement to Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory, allowed this essay also to focus on the capacities of the children in this process. These capacities are important to identify because they have great importance in how the street child deals with their situation on the street, and also once they get off the street.

The essay illuminated that structural aspects such as housing policies and residential patterns might affect the process off the street; in this case it might have given the child less discretion in their obligation to earn money to pay for a place to live. Having a place to live was, however, not enough to not call the child a street "child." The process off the street seemed also to include the process away from a social space and/or culture. The process away from the street was also seen from a gender perspective. The collected material illuminated that girls are often vulnerable to sexual exploitation and prostitution; a role that may be influenced by the girl's partner or family. This in turn makes it possible for the girls to make more money. Their process away from the street, and not having this money anymore, can be a challenge for the girl. Therefore it is important to present options for the girls, not only for their immediate well-being but also for their long-term career perspective. From a perspective of age the essay illuminated that increased age could mean a challenge when considering the process away from the street. The person will still be under circumstances of social exclusion and the need for guidance might not end by turning 18.

The essay illuminated that the social worker's role is an important part in the process, but that this relationship also can create barriers. For example it was described that some children protected themselves against social workers because they had previous bad experiences. The way to approach the child is therefore of great importance for whether the child should feel confident about the social worker. This trust is however necessary in order for the social worker to be able to influence the child in its process away from the street. Because the study focused on a voluntary process away from the street, the study also illustrated that motivation is important for the child to make a decision to change and leave the street. This decision in itself may also be a motivation for further change. Ecological crossings might be a challenge for the street child as he/she has to adapt to a new environment. At this stage it is important that the social worker spends time with the child in this process and provides social support. It was also found that peer influences on the organization, directly or indirectly, may be a supporting factor, but it could also be a detrimental factor in the child's process away from the street. The essay illuminated that the children's process away from the street was of different characteristics which might show that a contextual approach in the process off the street is of importance. Through this research I have realized that it is of great importance to have street educators working with the street children; it's important in order to gain a greater understanding of the children's social world and also their needs. I believe that further research that contextualizes the children's lives on the street might be a good start to meet the children where they are. It's of importance to listen to the children, to hear what has been of importance in their process away from their street. Another thing which is of relevance is the perspective of age. How is it possible to include "children" when they are over 18, and maybe even more important: by whom?

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9. Attachments

9.1 Attachment 1 – Information letter / Observation

School of Social Work
University of Lund
My data: Nina Bengtsson
E-mail: xxx
Telephone: xxx

Supervisor: Kristina Göransson
E-mail: xxx

Hello!

My name is Nina Bengtsson and I'm studying social work at the University of Lund in Sweden. Right now I'm writing my essay in social work here in Lima, Peru. This was made possible through a Minor Field Study – scholarship I received through my university from SIDA.

My essay aims to illuminate street children from the perspective of the professional. It is my interest to see how you, as professionals, look at street children as a social phenomenon, including for example the strategies and solutions which are currently used for the children with whom you are working with. My hope is that this essay will contribute knowledge to this area of investigation and show what could be of significance for the children on the street.

To understand this I would like to participate in the work that you are doing and make observations. My wish is to be able to follow the social workers in their daily work and therefore also have the possibility to ask informal questions about the work with the children.

The collected material in my participation and observation will be treated with great respect; it will only be used for the objective of my essay. Those of you that are participating will

remain totally anonymous in the essay, and neither you nor your organization/the work place will be mentioned. Participation is voluntary, which means that you can cancel your participation in the project at any time throughout the process. If there is collected material that you don't consider adequate or that you simply don't want to go into the essay, tell me and I will not use it. Those of you that do decide to participate will receive the essay afterwards. It will be written in English, but I will make a small résumé in Spanish if you would like.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me by e-mail or by telephone. Best

Regards / Nina Bengtsson

9.2 Attachment 2 – Information letter interview / Professionals

School of Social Work
University of Lund, Sweden
My dates: Nina Bengtsson
E-mail: xxx
Telephone: xxx

Supervisor: Kristina Göransson
E-mail: xxx

Hello!

My name is Nina Bengtsson and I'm studying social work at Lund University in Lund, Sweden. Right now I'm writing my essay in Social Work here in Lima, Peru. It was made possible through a Minor Field Study – scholarship I received through my university from SIDA.

My essay will illuminate street children from a perspective of the professional. It is of personal interest to see how professionals look at street children as a social phenomenon, including for example the strategies and solutions which are currently being implemented for the children with whom you are working with. My hope is that through this essay I might contribute to knowledge in this area of investigation and show what could be of significance for the children on the street.

To be able to perform this study, I intend to conduct interviews with you as professionals who work with street children or have experience with this. The interviews will take about 60 minutes and I will be accompanied by an interpreter. Together we will find a time that is suiting. I'm flexible on the basis of what suits you! My wish is to record the interview with a recorder in order to be able to listen to it afterwards and to give justice to the material which will be presented during the interview. My Spanish is not perfect; therefore having a recorder

would facilitate me greatly. The material will be guarded in a safe place and the material will be eliminated from the recorder once the essay has been completed.

The collected material from the interview will be treated with much respect; it will only be used for the purpose of my essay. You will be anonymous in the essay and neither you nor your organization/the place that you work, will be mentioned. Your participation is voluntary, which means that you can at any moment cancel your participation in the project. Those that participate will receive a copy of the essay afterwards. It will be written in English but I will make a small resume in Spanish if you would like. *If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me through e-mail or telephone. Best regards / Nina Bengtsson*

9.3 Attachment 3 – Interview questions to the professionals

The work situation

1. What is your profession? Age?
2. How long have you been working here?
3. How long have you been working with street children in general?
4. How do you connect with the street children in your work? Do they come to the organization or do you do outreach work?

The child in its original context

5. In your opinion, why do the children end up in the streets of Lima and its surroundings?
6. What is your experience about the process when a child ends up on the street? How does the child connect to other children on the street? What do you think this might mean for the children?

What is your opinion on how this step might affect the child? What are the consequences for them? How does this affect your work?

The child in the street context

7. What are the characteristics of the children that you meet in your work? Do they constantly live on the street? Do they live at the organization? In a family? Are you working with the parents of the children? In what ways?

8. How do you work with the children living on the streets? Are there any special methods/theories? Do you have special work strategies? How do you get in contact with them? Is there something special you have to think about the first time you meet the street children?
9. How would you describe your role for the street children? Why?
10. What are the needs of the street children that you meet on the street? What are they looking for? How do you relate to those needs? How do you support the street children?
11. How do you relate to the children's desires? If the child doesn't seek another situation than the one he or she is currently in, how do you relate to this? What are your motives?

Does the age affect the child and their desires according to your work? For example, if the child is six years old and chooses to live on the street, how do you interpret this? Why?

How do you look at age, as it relates to children on the street? When the child turns eighteen, how does this affect your work with them? Does it change? Why? Are they called street children even after they have turned eighteen? If not, what do you call them?

How do you view the street children's children? How do you work with them? How are you working with the families on the street?

Do you work differently with boys and girls? How? Why?

12. How do you feel that the child's self-perception/self-esteem is affected when the child ends up on the street? Why? How do you think that the group could affect the child? Negatively? Positively?

The child in the street and its eventual transition

13. What is it that makes the child start to think about moving away from the street? Is it something that the child starts to think about themselves? How do you think that your role can influence this process?

14. Do you try to prepare the child before moving from the street? How? Why?

The social workers and the NGO

15. What do you believe are the wishes of the children who come to the NGO? What are their needs? How do you try to fulfill them?

16. What is important to think about in the beginning when the child first comes to the organization to live there and why? Is there any kind of experience that the child passes?

17. What do you want to achieve in the work that you are doing with the children in their process to leave the streets? What kind of work strategies are you using? Why?

18. What's your role? From your experience, what can your role mean to the child? How do you participate in the child's development? How do you make the child to participate in its own development?

19. What is it that makes the child return to the street? What are the potential difficulties that may arise for the child to stay at an organization? What does the child look for? How do you look on this? What can you do to make the child stay?

How do you feel about the child's will and its importance in this situation? What can affect the child's will? How do you look at if the child chooses something that might be damaging for the child? What bearing does the child's will have in your continuing to do work with the child?

What factors affect the child's will to stay at the organization? What factors affect the child's will to return to the street?

How could the child's self-esteem be affected when he/she leaves the street? How could the child's self-esteem be affected being at the organization?

20. How is your work affected by the Convention on the Rights of the Children? For example, what kind of meaning does Article 3—“The child's best should always come first”—have in your work?

21. What solutions do you see for the child? What is your experience that the children consider themselves to be helped off?

22. How is possible to work with prevention with the street children?

23. Is it that there will come a time when the child not in the same way is able to return to the street? How will you notice that?

Other

24. Is there anything else you would like to add before we finish the interview?

9.4 Attachment 4 - Interview questions to the former street children/street educators

In general

25. What is your profession? Age?

26. For long have you been working here?

27. How long you been working with street children in general?

28. How do you connect with the street children in your work? Do they come to the organization or do you do outreach work?

On the street

29. How come you lived on the street?

30. For how long did you live there? Where did you live?

31. How did you start to know the group? What did the group mean to you? What was good? What was bad?

32. How could a day for you look like on the street?

33. Did you get in contact with other organizations? How? What was good/bad with the organizations? Why? (How come you didn't stay at the organization?)

34. How did you feel when you lived on the street? Did you want something else or were you satisfied with your situation?

35. What kind of factors made you want to stay? What kind of factors made you want to leave from there?

Between the street and the organization

36. How come you left the street? What happened?
37. Was it someone that helped you to get off the street? How? How did you get to know them? What was good/bad with them? How did you meet? What did you usually talk about?
38. How long did it take before you could decide to move from the street? What was it that determined this decision? In which kind of way could the workers help you at this point?
39. What did the people you used to live with on the street say? Did they support you?
40. Did the workers say anything about the organization? How did they describe it? In what ways did they affect you in your choice to move?
41. What were your expectations when you moved from the street? What you're your dreams?

At the organization

42. How did it feel to leave the street?
43. What factors made you want to stay? What factors made that you want to leave?
44. Did you feel that you wanted to go back to the street? Why or why not? Was there some point when it felt better?
45. Have the workers been able to be a source of support for you? How? Have the other children been able to be a source of support for you? How?
46. How did it feel when a new person came to the organization?

The work today

The Organization

1. How do you believe you can use you experiences in your work today?
2. How do you work with the street children?
3. What needs do the children that you meet have? What do the children seek? How do you try to fulfill these needs?
4. How is your role against the children? Why?
5. How do you relate yourself to the child's will? If they don't look for something else than the situation they are in, how do you relate to this? What's your motive?

Does the child's age or will matter to you? For example, if the child is six years and chooses to live in the streets, how do you view this? Why?

An eventual transition

6. Is it something special you have to think about to prepare the child before moving to an organization?

At the organization

7. What needs do the children have coming to live at the organization?
8. What is it that makes the child return to the street? How come there could be difficulties for the child to stay at an organization? What is it that the child seeks once they are in an organization? How do you look at this? What can you do for the child to stay at the organization?

How do you look at the child's will and its importance in this situation? What can affect the will? How do you look at if the child chooses something that might be damaging for the child? What bearing does the child's will have in your continuing to do work with the child?

What factors affect the child's will to stay at the organization? What factors affect the child's will to return to the street?

How could the child's self-esteem be affected when he/she leaves the street? How could the child's self-esteem be affected by being at the organization?

9.5 Attachment 5 - Interview questions former street child/at the shelter

1. What is your age?
2. For how long have you lived here?
3. How come you lived on the street? For how long?
4. How did you get to know the group in the street? How was the group for you?
5. How did you get to know this organization? Have you been to other organizations before? (Did you return to the street? Why?)

6. When did you start to get to know x (social worker)? How was your relationship? How was x able to support you? For example?
7. How were they able to support you when you wanted to live in the organization?
8. What did the group in the street say when you left? Did they support you? Did they want you to stay?
9. Why did you want to live here and not on the street? Was it something special that happened?
10. Did they affect you in your decision? How?
11. How did you feel when you left the street? Was it something special that was difficult for you? Good for you? How have they been able to support you while you have been living here?
12. How is your relationship with the workers? Could you say something that is good and has been of importance to you?
13. Who is the most important person in your life? Who do you go to when you have problems?
14. Have you wanted to return to the street? Why? For example?
15. How do you feel when a new child comes here to live?
16. What did you want when you came here?

9.6 Attachment 6 – Information letter to the interpreter

School of Social Work / Student
University of Lund

Nina Bengtsson
E-mail: xxx
Telephone: xxx

Information letter to the Interpreter for the interviews

Hello !

My name is Nina Bengtsson and I'm studying social work at Lund University in Lund, Sweden. Right now I'm writing my essay in Social Work here in Lima, Peru. This was made possible through a Minor Field Study – scholarship I received through my university from SIDA.

My essay will illuminate street children from a professional perspective. It is of interest for me to see how they look at the street children as a social phenomenon, including for example their strategies and solutions which are currently being implemented on the children. To be able to perform my study, I will conduct interviews with the professionals. The interviews will take around 60 minutes.

The task of translating will serve as an immediate support in my interviews. The materials collected during the interviews are confidential because the respondents have been promised anonymity in this essay.

I'm looking forward to working together. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me through e-mail or by telephone. Best regards / Nina Bengtsson