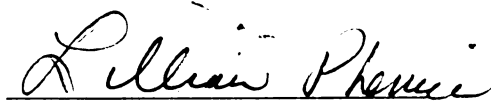




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ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING PROCESSES
OF PHILIPPINE STREET CHILDREN

By

Sue Liza Catalan Saguiguit

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
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ABSTRACT

ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING PROCESSES OF PHILIPPINE STREET CHILDREN

By

Sue Liza Catalan Saguiguit

In this study, a conceptual framework was suggested by which to view a specific representation of urban children, the "street children", a phenomenon besetting major urban areas in different parts of the world. This study was undertaken to describe the conditions and way of life of street children so they could be best understood by social workers, advocates, and program coordinators when planning, implementing, and evaluating programs and services. The study was done to provide directions for more in-depth follow up studies on street children, and contribute to the limited research literature on street children in Asia.

The study was undertaken to conceptualize an ecologically oriented framework by which to describe and explain activities and events that exemplify street children's relationship with their social and physical environments, in the context of their survival in the

streets. The participants for the research were 12 street children, ages 10 to 15 years old, from a major urban area in the Philippines.

Exploratory and descriptive in nature, this study used qualitative and ethnographic research methods such as informal interviews, participant observation, and environmental and behavioral mapping. Data were in the form of field notes from participant observations, informal interviews of street children, environmental and behavioral mapping observations, and illustrations from children's portfolios.

The findings of the study suggested the ecological levels by which to view the phenomenon of street children, from the country, community, and family level. The street children phenomenon was described as an interplay of factors concerning socioeconomic conditions of the country, accessibility and availability of community resources, situations in the family, and individual characteristics of street children. In the context of survival in the streets, the environmental learning of street children consisted of the processes of perceiving, interacting, experiencing, observing, and adapting. Findings from the study and experiences of the researcher were incorporated in schemes and strategies for developing programs, projects, and services for Philippine street children.

To my parents

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Philippines is one of the most urbanized countries in Southeast Asia. Urban growth in the Philippines is attributed to both natural population growth and rural to urban migration. In recent years, migrations from rural to urban areas have been intense. Thousands of families flock to the urban areas in search of better employment opportunities. However, life in the cities has been far from ideal.

Families find themselves facing several interrelated, chronic problems. Among these problems are lack of employment opportunities, high cost of living, inadequate housing and public utilities, poor environmental sanitation, and consequent health problems. With these conditions, members of migrant families including young children usually find themselves with responsibilities of securing additional income and finding ingenious ways of earning a living.

An observable phenomenon, which could be considered a consequence of this crisis, is the growing population of children living and working in the streets in urban areas

throughout the country. The number of street children seems to rise as poverty becomes widespread and the country becomes more and more urbanized. It has been a growing urban phenomenon which has alerted and garnered much attention both from the private and public sector, and governmental and nongovernmental agencies in the country.

The case of the National Capital Region, the official term designating the Metropolitan Manila area, exemplifies the pace at which urban population grows. Among the urban centers in the Philippines, population growth was observed to be fastest in Metropolitan Manila, consisting of four cities and thirteen municipalities. According to the National Census and Statistics (1990), Metropolitan Manila contains 33.1 % of the country's urban population. Urbanization in the Manila area has brought about problems such as: (a) increase in urban squatters, (b) slum dwelling, (c) prevalence of diseases due to inadequate housing facilities, (d) unemployment, and (e) increasing demand for resources and services.

Two adjoining regions to the National Capital Region, the Central Luzon region and the Southern Tagalog region have also displayed a high level of urbanization. Altogether, almost 57 % of the urban city dwellers in the country live in Metropolitan Manila, Central Luzon, and the Southern Tagalog Region (Ruland, 1992).

Attempts have been made to understand the situation of

street children throughout the major cities in the Philippines. A collaborative effort of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the National Council of Social Development (NCSD), and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) stressed the following emerging areas of concern: (a) the need for continuing and in-depth studies on street children, (b) the need to develop innovative and relevant program strategies which take into account the realities street children are confronted with, (c) the need to formulate policies and strategies which seek to transform structures that dehumanize the children and address the root causes of their problems, (d) the need to develop the capabilities of the children as critically aware, active participants in the change process rather than as passive subjects of research and recipients of service, and (e) the importance of generating more awareness regarding the overall problem of street children (Joint Project on Street Children, 1988). As a result of this collaboration, efforts have been targeted towards the provision of projects that could meet the specific needs of these children. Engaging in studies, and attempting to understand the specific subculture of Philippine street children have been deemed of paramount importance. Information gathered will be used to provide projects that congruently meet the needs of street children.

In this study, the cases of 12 street children from

Binan, Laguna in the Southern Tagalog Region are depicted to provide a phenomenological point of view of the conditions and situations faced by street children.

The main focus of this study deals with the environmental learning processes of Philippine street children. Environmental learning is conceptually considered as cultural forms and survival skills which may or may not be fundamental in the preparation for adulthood but supportive towards the development of alternative, ingenious means of learning in the street environment. Environmental learning processes are the experiences of street children in their urban environment, described in terms of their relationship with their social and physical environment. Environmental learning processes of these street children are composed of the perceptual and interactive processes describing their way of life in the street environment. The Philippine street children's learning process in their environment will be broadly and contextually addressed.

Statement of the Problem

The major goal of this study is to generate "grounded theory" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) to develop propositions that describe the conditions, situations, and events among Philippine street children. The study does not seek to provide solutions to the problems facing Philippine street

children. However, it will describe real microsituations (concrete rather than abstract) of street children in their survival in the streets. In the context of their survival in the streets, strategies and processes of learning concerning perception and interaction with their physical and social environment will be described. The study will provide incipient information relevant in future research studies and provide practical suggestions that can be incorporated in a framework to be used in programs and projects for Philippine street children.

Research Objectives

The study explores and describes the situation, conditions, and events of Philippine street children in their street environment. The specific objectives of the study are to (a) gain an in-depth understanding of the Philippine street children phenomenon, (b) describe and explain the environmental learning processes of Philippine street children, by considering their physical and social environmental conditions, (c) develop an incipient conceptual framework that depicts the situation, condition, and events of Philippine street children, (d) determine alternative schemes and strategies for programs, projects, and services for Philippine street children by including information on their subculture and specific learning needs.

Research Questions

The researcher's internship experience in the UNICEF-DSWD-NCSD Joint Project on Street Children in Manila, Philippines provided background and first-hand information. This experience led to the development of incipient ideas and general insights concerning the environmental learning processes of Philippine street children. These provided directions and initiatives in the conceptualization of research questions for this study. In order to accomplish the objectives of this study on street children, answers were sought for the following research questions:

1. Who are the street children?
 - a. What are their reasons for being on the streets?
 - b. What are their goals and aspirations?
2. What are the environmental learning strategies and processes of street children?
 - a. How do street children perceive their physical environment?
 - b. How do the street children perceive their social environment?
 - c. What are some of the street children's daily activities in the streets?
3. What suggestions could be utilized to develop a conceptual framework that could help in future research, planning, and implementation of programs on street children?

Significance of the Study

The study suggests a conceptual framework by which to view a specific representation of children in especially difficult circumstances (CEDC), the "street children". It is a phenomenon which has beset some major urban areas in different parts of the world. It is an endeavor that could benefit not only the street children in the Philippines but other developing and industrialized countries with similar situations. It is an effort to describe the conditions and way of life of indigent children so they could best be understood by social workers, advocates, and program coordinators. Knowing and understanding the street children's strategies of learning from their physical and social environment in the context of their way of life in the streets could be advantageous in planning, implementing, and evaluating programs and services. It could provide relevant information and provide direction for more in-depth follow-up studies on street children.

Conceptual Rationale

Human Ecological Perspective of the Study

According to the Human Ecological Theory of Bubolz and Sontag (1993), human beings or the Human Environed Unit, interact with three conceptually distinct environments: the

Natural Physical-Biological Environment, the Social-Cultural Environment, and the Human Built Environment.

In this study, the Philippine street children are the human envired unit. The street children are influenced by their social-cultural environment which involves relationships with the family, community, and society including peer group, social workers, and other people in the streets. The human built environment includes the characteristics of the street setting and the urban setting. The street children have their own unique environment which includes the general conditions in the street environment. The natural physical-biological environment of the street children refers to the geographical location, natural resources as well as climatic and seasonal elements in the street setting.

In such an ecological framework, the environmental learning processes and strategies of the street children are viewed as the interaction and perception of street children and their relationships with the social (social-cultural) and physical (natural physical-biological and human built) environmental conditions.

Bronfenbrenner (1989) discussed several research models with ecological perspectives that are useful in the study of human development in context. He referred to one of these research models as the "person-context" model. In the "person-context" model, the characteristics of both the

person and the environment are taken into account jointly in the study of development. The model identifies ecological niches which Bronfenbrenner describes as the regions in the environment that are especially favorable or unfavorable to the development of individuals with particular personal characteristics. In this particular study of street children, the characteristics of the children and their street environment are taken into account jointly in describing and exploring their environmental learning. Generally, environmental learning processes are viewed in the context of the children's way of life in the street environment.

Bronfenbrenner (1977) presented an ecological levels of analysis model that provides hierarchically nested arrangements of contexts each contained within the next. The model consists of four concentric circles signifying concentric layers, wherein each level of context is nested hierarchically within the next higher or more inclusive level. The inner most core is what Bronfenbrenner called the microsystem, the immediate spatio-temporal-social surroundings of the target phenomenon. The mesosystem consists of variables such as peer groups, schools, and community. The third layer is the exosystem. The exosystem involves variables that impinge on the setting, such as major institutions of society and mass media. The outermost layer is the macrosystem which consists of culture,

ideologies of culture and society, conditions involving the economic system, and political system. In this study, the phenomenon of street children is described and analyzed using the ecological levels of analysis model proposed by Bronfenbrenner.

Proposed Conceptual Framework of the Study

The street children phenomenon is viewed at the microlevel, mesolevel, and macrolevel, perspectives. At the microlevel, conditions and situations within the context of the family that are involved in the phenomenon are emphasized. Conditions in the community and the availability and accessibility of community resources in relation to the phenomenon are emphasized at the mesolevel. At the macrolevel, the relationship of socioeconomic societal, ideological, conditions of the country, and the street children phenomenon, are emphasized. In this study, the street children phenomenon is not viewed at the exolevel perspective.

An ecological perspective of the environmental learning processes and strategies of street children is proposed by the researcher for the study. Environmental Learning is derived from two major concepts: the **environment** and **learning**. For the purpose of the study, environment is viewed as consisting of both the physical and social

environments. The physical environment is represented by the venue or setting, its natural characteristics such as climatic and seasonal conditions and geographical location, and the social environment are represented by human factors and relationships in the setting. Learning is proposed in this study to involve perceptive and interactive processes as well as strategies used by the street children.

Definitions

The following concepts are defined conceptually and operationally:

1. Street Children refer to all the young girls and boys from ages 1-18 years old, who have adopted the street as their abode or source of livelihood, or both. Whether they maintain ties with their families or not, these children are inadequately protected, supervised, and directed by responsible adults (CHILDHOPE, 1989a).

Street children are found in public places such as parks, plazas, churches, markets, bus and railway stations. They also tend to frequent large commercial centers and entertainment centers, as well as tourist areas. The nature of their job requires them to spend most of their time in garbage dump sites or construction sites or simply pushing street carts. There are quite a number who sleep under bridges or in any available space in the city streets (Joint Project on Street Children, 1987).

In this particular study, the 12 street children were contacted in a temporary shelter for street children in Binan Laguna in the Philippines. Since the majority of the street children population in the area were street boys (Department of Social Welfare and Development, 1990), and street boys frequent the temporary shelter, the respondents of the study were 12 street boys. The street boys were in the age range of 10 to 15 years old. They were street boys who are most of the time in the streets of the town of Binan. They are usually seen in streets near the market place, near the cathedral, in the town municipal hall, or in the town plaza.

2. Environmental Learning is theoretically defined to include a child's increasing knowledge of geographical and spatial elements and also includes meanings and attitudes towards the environment. It is defined as the information and abilities children derive from encounters in a given environment.

Environmental learning processes of street children, in this study will be explored and described according to perceptual and interactive processes.

Perceptual processes refer to the intuitions and perspectives of children regarding their environment. Perceptual processes include beliefs and attitudes concerning their street environment. On the other hand, interactive processes and strategies are more on behavioral

activities, or what these children do and how they act in relation to their street environment.

Assumptions

1. The street children possess a subculture, their own way of life in the streets.

2. Although these children are inadequately protected, supervised, and directed by responsible adults, they have environmental learning strategies that enable them to sustain and maintain living in the streets.

3. Environmental learning processes of these street children are observable and describe their way of life in the street environment.

4. The learning process of these street children consist of perceptual and interactive subprocesses.

5. A case study approach emphasizes the uniqueness of survival strategies utilized by children in their environmental learning processes.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Many studies have stressed the rising existence of street children in major cities of the world (Agnelli, 1986; Connolly, 1990; Landers, 1988). The number of street children has been a controversial issue due to definitional inconsistencies. There has been no basis upon which an objective statistical calculation could be made. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) however, estimate homeless children throughout the world as over thirty million (Agnelli, 1986). Throughout the world, the situation of street children has been a critical social issue.

Street Children Phenomenon

In related literature, the causes of the phenomenon of street children are attributed to the conditions brought about by urban migration and conditions within the family of street children.

Conditions Attributed to Urban Migration

The causes of the phenomenon of street children are attributed to the situations brought about by rapid

urbanization and industrialization. In search of better employment opportunities, education, health care services, and hope, there has been a tremendous increase of rural to urban migration in major cities of the world (Agnelli, 1986).

Hollnsteiner and Tacon (1983) discuss the phenomenon of rural to urban migration in developing countries and its consequences for families and their children. Some rural children are left behind with their mothers while their fathers seek employment opportunities in the cities. In another scenario, both parents with their children move to the city. In both instances, during this transition period, the children of these families are said to suffer the most.

A consequence of urban migration is the likelihood of migrants to be underemployed if not unemployed, forcing millions of children into the work force and making them a pivotal part of their family's economic survival. With the abrupt change and impact of urban conditions on these families, some children attempt to escape from the harsh realities in their home. Some children become victims of the crisis of the family and are then deprived of opportunities for decent shelter, formal schooling, health services, and nutritional needs. These children usually stray away from home and find themselves living a different life in the streets.

Conditions in the Family

The phenomenon of street children is also attributed to changes, stress and strains due to problems in the family. Connolly (1990) in his study of street children in Colombia and Guatemala concluded that the phenomenon is a situational adaptation to a changing family structure in Latin American urban environments. In a study of 390 Canadian street children aged 13-19 years old, the majority of the children were found to come from families having aversive strain and absence of control (McCarthy & Hagan, 1992). These children were more likely to be victims of physical and sexual abuse and parental neglect.

Street Children Descriptions

Related studies classified street children according to: (a) frequency of contact with family, (b) purpose for being in the streets, and (c) age and dependency initiatives. Street children may either be the children of the streets, abandoned and without ties with their families, or children in the streets who live and work in the streets but still maintain family relations and have a home to go to. For those children working in the streets, what they earn serves to keep the family together and is often vital for its survival. For those children who left home and are without family ties, chaotic family situations which often involved abuse, alcoholism and alienation were implicated

(Miller, Miller, Hoffmann, & Duggan, 1980).

Children in the streets of Mexico were differentiated according to three distinct subgroups (Peralta, 1992): children of the street (COT), family street workers, (FSWs) and independent workers (IWs). Children of the streets were those who were detached from their families and vulnerable to exploitation. Family street workers were those who had their parents control their employment. Independent workers were those who were not relying on their family and had been earning a living on their own and for their own survival on the streets.

Colombian street children were found to be of two types as designated by age and dependency initiatives (Connolly, 1990). The first group were prepuberty street children known as gamines who grew up without fathers and became independent at an early age. Gamines were the ones who took advantage of the public as a means of survival. The other group of preadolescents called chupagruesos survived by seeking out and attaching themselves to more powerful children and adults.

Street Children's Coping and Survival in the Streets

Studies of the Colombian street children have indicated the importance of a social support system, a peer group, or an adult model in their process of coping and survival in

the streets.

In a study by Foley (1983), street children have admitted and considered themselves as being deprived of an adult model and have thought of their aggression and gang style as necessities in order to cope with street life, acquire immediate survival skills, and prepare for adulthood. Among Colombian street children, the peer group gallada replaces the family as the socializing unit in the streets (Connolly, 1990).

In the urban setup, the street often replaces the school and offers an entirely different experience for children (Landers, 1988). Aptekar (1989) attributed the Colombian street children's achievement of good test scores to their having strong peer support system and access to adult benefactors. Tyler, Holliday, Tyler, Echeverry, and Zea (1987) stated that the street children's intelligence could be attributed to their creativity and resourcefulness in surviving and entertaining themselves in the streets.

Programs for Street Children

Various types of programs have been provided for these street children in different parts of the world. When considering the effectivity and efficiency of such programs, evaluation studies have indicated the importance of considering the point of view of the children themselves and

their specific conditions. Related studies revealed factors to consider in planning and implementing programs for street children.

Considering the Perspective of Street Children

Tyler et al. (1987) have indicated that street children see themselves as more capable of defining their lives than any other adult, seeing themselves and their peers as the agents responsible for planning and implementing their future. In most cases, the conditions of these street children are not viewed from the perspective of the children themselves.

Focusing on the Abilities of Street Children

Foley (1983) maintained that to deal with street children, the positive aspects must be incorporated into a program, the focus of which should be on personality development. The program has to fit the child and not the child fit the program.

In Johannesburg, South Africa, effective programs for the "Twilight Children" were those that focused on nourishing the child's ability to trust, those that promoted self-concept, and those that encouraged success and helped the child to express anger, frustration, and accept feelings of rejection and pain (Hickson & Gaydon, 1989).

Preventing, Protecting and Rehabilitating of Street Children

In the Philippines, current efforts of the UNICEF-NCSD-DSWD Joint Project in helping street children are geared

towards the prevention, protection, and rehabilitation of these street children. They are classified as: (a) institutional or center based services for rehabilitation, (b) street based services for protection, and (c) community based services for prevention (Joint Project on Street Children, 1987). Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) developed and implemented programs and services, such as the outreach project for street children, the "street schools", and transitional homes for street children called "Lingap" for street children (Balanon, 1989). The outreach project supports an early detection and intervention approach to the problems concerning child abuse and exploitation. Social workers with the help of community leaders, law enforcement officials, and concerned citizens, locate vulnerable street children and their families and are provided with appropriate DSWD services or referrals to other agencies and organizations. The "street school" is designed for working children who maintain daily contact with their families. Specifically, the street school is (a) to keep the children from mendicancy and out of the hazards of the streets, (b) to help them develop social values, (c) to prepare them with curricular components of elementary school for integration into the formal educational setting at the appropriate grade level, and (d) to assist the child to engage in desirable livelihood, through provision of skills training. "Lingap", the transitional home for street

children, provides temporary shelter, care, protection, and immediate social services to street children. The transitional home provides assistance through counselling, and offers opportunities for vocational and trade skills training, which help these street children become economically self-sufficient and socially responsible while awaiting their return to their families.

In Latin America, effective programs that address the nature and significance of the problem of children in the streets were those based on correctional, rehabilitative, outreach, and preventive approaches (Lusk, 1989).

Most of the programs for street children in different parts of the world have focused on ways of preventing the phenomenon, ways of helping children in the streets to rehabilitate, and ways of protecting children who are mainstays in the streets.

Research Perspectives on Children in the Urban Environment

Ecologically oriented views in the studies of child behavior have always considered behavior in context. Bronfenbrenner (1989) suggests a model for research design, the Process-Person-Context model, which analyzes variation in human developmental processes and outcomes as a joint function of the characteristics of the environment and of the person.

Wohlwill and Heft (1987) view the differences between the types of human settlements, in terms of (a) levels of stimulation and the diversity of the stimuli, (b) the amount and frequency of social contact and interaction, (c) availability of behavior settings, or (d) opportunities for the development of specialized skills, and interests.

Wohlwill and Van Vliet (1984) examined the role of residential density in the development of the child in the urban environment. They stated that size and density of communities may not play a role in a child's experience. However, these variables are translated into major differences in opportunities such as participation in activities and development of skills.

Major studies in the area of children's experience in urban settings have emanated from the "Child in the City" project at the University of Toronto, as described by Michelson, Levine, and Spina (1979). Their work focused on the role of community services, services for parenting, housing policies, and the impact of the diversity of the urban area as they affect the processes of socialization and developmental transitions of the children.

A metropolitan area provides a different experience for the developing child than a rural area. Wohlwill and Heft (1987) mentioned two points of view applied in this area. First, is the consideration of the urban environment as a source of high levels of stimulation in the form of noise,

social contact, motion, visual diversity, and complexity. A second approach is that of behavioral ecology which considers the character of the place where the action is occurring.

The development of children can best be understood by viewing their behavior as the outcome of a continuous mutual accommodation throughout their life span, between themselves and their environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Environment is broadly referred to in this context to include both the physical as well as social environment. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the environment includes dimensions of culture, social structure, and specific interpersonal situations, as well as relevant aspects of the physical setting, with dimensions of time and space.

In the urban environment, the street children are exposed to an enriched social environment. A street child's social environment would involve the consideration of their social support system beyond their immediate family system. Bronfenbrenner (1979) in his ecological model for human development emphasized the children's social environment as encompassing family, school, and culture.

In this study, the children in the streets have experiences that reflect their relationship with their social and physical environment. Such experiences may lead to various forms of behavior and activities with causations which may be advantageous or disadvantageous toward their

development, but pivotal toward their survival in the streets.

Concept of Environmental Learning

Among children, learning is viewed as a function of their experience in a given environment. As such, there may be various types of learning as exemplified by one's reaction to events and relationships with their social and physical environment. Hebb (1949) placed primary importance on environmental stimulation as the role of the environment in the development of the individual. He regarded environmental stimulation as an input and the foundation for the development and maintenance of perceptual functioning as well as higher forms of behavior such as problem solving, adaptive, emotional, and motivational response.

A metropolitan area compared to a rural area could provide a very different experience for a developing child. Urban growth and industrialization have characteristics that are pivotal with regard to change, adaptation, organization, and transition among children. This could be exemplified in the situation of the street children (Hickson & Gaydon, 1989).

The concept of environmental learning is considered multidisciplinary, integrating the disciplines of psychology, education, geography, and environmental planning among others (Spencer, Blades, and Morsley, 1989). Most of

the literature on the concept of environmental learning has been concerned with the following processes: the process of uptake of new information, its storage and internal representation, the process of access to memory store, the systematic distortions that can occur in retrieval, and the process of use of such information in route planning and movement through space (Spencer & Bishop, 1989).

Blades (1989) referred to the concept of environmental learning in terms of how children learn about the environment from direct experience and from spatial representations. Blades explained that children experience the environment in two ways, either by directly experiencing the environment for themselves or indirectly through some form of written or oral information and that this experience can be accompanied by deliberate or passive learning. He emphasized that such type of learning can itself be either self-directed or mediated by an adult or other children.

Spencer and Bishop (1989) stressed that environmental learning could be taken to include not just a child's increasing knowledge of geographical and spatial elements but could also involve meanings and attitudes given towards the environment. It could be concerned with an individual's value system regarding the environment, where the environment is broadly conceptualized to include an individual's most immediate to most distant environment. There have been numerous creative works dealing with the

concept of environmental learning addressing current environmental issues and practical work with children. Axia (1989) addressed the pivotal role of environmental learning, in the curriculum program of the Italian primary school. Environmental learning was described as the children's awareness and direct experience within their environment. Katz (1986) studied the children in rural Sudan. Her focus was on agricultural economies, where environmental learning and the use of environmental knowledge are considered central practices of social reproduction. In such societies, children were viewed as learning about their agricultural environment largely through work and play in a variety of settings.

In this particular study on street children, environmental learning is viewed in the context of the street children's survival in the streets, where the environment, both physical and social, renders an essential role.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The study is exploratory and descriptive in nature. Exploratory research functions to satisfy curiosity, test feasibility, and develop procedures. Exploratory research is said to be most appropriate when very little is known about a phenomenon. Such study does not necessarily yield definitive answers to the problem but may eventually "shed light" on a phenomenon. The study does not seek to come up with solutions to the problems of street children, but focuses more on describing the situation and conditions of street children in general.

Most of us are unaware of what street children experience in the streets. This research also functions to help us to see more clearly the attributes of the street children phenomenon. To facilitate our understanding of the phenomenon, a factual and actual description of the conditions and situations of street children is of paramount importance.

This study attempts to generate "grounded theory" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), propositions that describe the

environmental learning processes of street children in the Philippines. This study is to explore directions for future research studies and to provide practical suggestions for programs and projects for street children.

Research Approach

An integration of two qualitative research traditions, phenomenological inquiry and ethnographic inquiry, formed the foundation for this research endeavor.

Phenomenological Inquiry

It is known that the emphasis of phenomenology is on the subjective aspects of people's behavior. Phenomenological inquiry attempts to describe and illustrate the meanings of human experience. Polkinghorne (1989) states that phenomenology is applied in research when the focus of research is on what the person experiences in a language as loyal to the lived experience as possible.

With regard to the orientation and role of phenomenologists, Taylor and Bogdan (1984) stress, "the phenomenologist views human behavior, what people say and do, as a product of how people define [or interpret] their world and the task of the phenomenologist and the qualitative methodologist is to capture this process of

interpretation." (p. 8-9)

Thus, the phenomenologists attempt to see things from other people's point of view. In phenomenology, reality is understood only in the form in which it is perceived. It is important to try to understand people's perceptions because their perceptions can and generally do influence their actions.

A related underlying concept is symbolic interactionism. Symbolic interactionism focuses on the meaning given to objects, people, situations, and activities. In this concept, meaning does not come from the things themselves but from the interpretation given to them by the person. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) explain, "objects, people, situations and events do not possess their own meaning rather, meaning is conferred on them." (p.33)

Ethnographic Inquiry

Ethnographic inquiry attempts to capture and understand specific life aspects of a particular group. The focus of the inquiry is on obtaining full and detailed descriptions from the participants of the study.

An underlying concern in qualitative research is on social organization. The focus of the research is tending towards how people perceive each other, arrange or organize their social relationships, and live together in communities and organized groups. Erickson (1986) stated that

qualitative researchers are concerned about the "social" aspect-- the relationships between people and how people and their actions together constitute environments for one another.

Another aspect that qualitative researchers are concerned about is culture. Culture is generally defined as learned and shared standards for perceiving, behaving, and acting. Spradley (1980) defines culture to include what people do and know and the things they make and use. Culture enables its members to behave in appropriate and acceptable ways in a given cultural setting. It is believed that neither an individual nor the culture can be understood in isolation. The culture influences the individual and the individual influences the culture.

Use of Qualitative Research Methodology

Doing qualitative research with children who spend much or most of their time on the streets is particularly appropriate given the following reasons and conditions:

1. There is no specific count of the total number of the Philippine street children in a given location at any point in time.
2. Street children are highly mobile.
3. There are numerous and various kinds of attractions in the street environment that affect street children that need to be taken into consideration.

4. There is strong possibility that street children will have difficulties answering forms or questionnaires that lead towards quantification.

5. Unstructured data gathering questions are less intrusive of street children's natural environment.

Under these conditions, the idea of using qualitative methodologies for the study was deemed preferable by the researcher. Thus, rather than dealing with inferential statistics, the study was based on cases and phenomenologies, and where appropriate descriptive analysis added to the body of findings. Qualitative data are based on themes or categories and evaluated subjectively. In qualitative research, there is more emphasis on description and discovery and less emphasis on hypothesis testing and verification. According to Polkinghorne (1991) qualitative methods are useful in the "generation of categories for understanding human phenomenon and the investigation of the interpretation and meaning that people give to events they experience." (p.112)

Literature on qualitative methodologies shares and agrees on the following fundamental assumptions regarding qualitative methodologies:

1. Qualitative methods seek to address and understand the phenomenon in their entirety in order to develop a complete understanding of a person or situation. This is contrary to the experimental paradigm which isolates and

measures narrowly defined variables and where understanding of the inquiry is dependent on prediction and control. Qualitative methods provide a holistic approach, stressing that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

2. Qualitative research is intended to understand phenomenon in their naturally occurring states. It ensures that context is taken into account. As compared to experimental research which uses controlled conditions and a limited set of variables, qualitative research is oriented towards discovery and exploratory in the natural environment.

3. Qualitative research advocates the consideration and stresses the importance of values, beliefs, meanings, and other subjective aspects of the lives of the participants, which are of paramount importance and of essence to the research inquiry.

4. Qualitative research begins with specific observations and moves toward the development of general patterns that emerge from the cases under study. It provides an inductive approach. However, it may also be considered a deductive approach if the observations are made to build a study based on an established theoretical framework.

5. Qualitative research enables the researcher to take into consideration the subjective nature of human behavior. It views knowledge as coming from both the inner as well as

outer perspective of human behavior. This is what is emphasized as learning how to take the role of the other in order to achieve understanding.

To be able to carry out the objectives of the study most effectively, to provide in-depth, holistic description of events, programs, procedures, in the context of their natural settings, qualitative research methodology was used.

Role of Researcher

While there may be a number of ways to conduct qualitative research, it calls for the researcher to become immersed in the lives of the persons being studied as fully and naturally as possible. It requires a long term involvement so that the researcher's presence becomes a natural condition. The researcher listens to what people say, observes what they do, asks questions when appropriate and participates in their activities whenever possible. The researcher analyzes related documents and studies about the phenomenon. In doing qualitative research, the researcher is the key research instrument, therefore the researcher's ability to develop trusting, informant relationships is necessary and directly related to the authenticity of the research (Spradley, 1979).

Qualitative methodology enabled the researcher to interact with the participants in a naturalistic manner, understanding the street children in the context of their

situation and from their own point of reference. The methodology allowed the researcher to be more spontaneous and flexible in exploring the phenomenon of street children in the context of its natural environment.

Research Strategies

The research strategies are described in three stages, the pre-data gathering stage, data gathering stage, data analysis stage.

Pre-Data Gathering Stage

From July until September of 1990, the researcher, as a student intern, had the opportunity to observe and be involved in a children's service program in the Philippines. The internship required the observation and involvement in a service program which was the Joint Project for Street Children, sponsored by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and the National Council of Social Development (NCSD).

Focusing on Area of Inquiry

The internship experience provided background information generally on children's services in the Philippines and specifically on urban poor children such as the street children in Manila, Philippines. Information on the organizational operations, orientations, and historical

information of the three agencies (UNICEF, DSWD, and NCSD) was gathered. The learning process of the researcher was enhanced with practical, day to day participation in on-going projects as well as interaction with the children themselves and with other social workers. The internship opportunity enabled the researcher to identify possible research directions based on the first hand information, observations, and insights experienced during the internship.

The researcher's interest and concern about street children is in line with UNICEF's "Rights of the Child" movement, which has been continuously enhancing concern, encouraging support, and advocacy for the improvement of the lives of the poorest, at-risk, children all over the world. The "Rights of the Child", a new international law recognizes the basic needs of every child as fundamental human rights. The Rights of the Child can be broadly categorized under three main headings (Castelle, 1990).

1. The Right to Survival through the provision of adequate food, shelter, potable water, and primary health care.

2. The Right to Protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation, including the right to special protection in times of war.

3. The Right to Develop in a safe environment through the provision of formal education, constructive play,

advanced health care, and the opportunity to participate in the social, economic, religious, and political life of a culture free from discrimination.

Data Gathering Stage

Mainstreaming on the topic of the street children phenomenon in the Philippines, the following data gathering strategies were done.

Soliciting Consent from Gatekeepers

The project coordinators for the Joint Project for Street Children were informed of the nature of the research study, the research objectives, and methodologies by the researcher before the beginning of the study. The Joint Project for Street Children, is a national program in the Philippines coordinated by United Nations Children's Fund, Department of Social Welfare and Development of the Philippines, and the National Council of Social Development. The researcher solicited the consent of major gatekeepers (national level) of the Joint Project for Street Children for the purpose of the study. Gatekeepers included the UNICEF, DSWD, and NCSD representatives in charge of the project, the national project director, and the director for Bureau of Child and Youth Welfare of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

The researcher made the necessary arrangements with the respective gatekeeper of the specific project for the study. The consent of the officer-in-charge of the project and the 12 participants for the study were solicited through University Committee on Research involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS) approved consent forms prepared by the researcher (see Appendix A). Verbal assent and permission from the participants who were unable to complete forms were also solicited.

Selection of Project Site

The researcher was provided a list of nongovernmental organization coordinated street children projects for the study. The researcher had the following considerations as the basis for choosing a project for the study: (a) geographical location and proximity to urban area, (b) characteristics of the city where it is located, (c) willingness/consent of the project coordinators, and (d) willingness of street children to participate in the study. The researcher chose a nongovernmental organization's (NGO) project for street children in the suburb of Metro Manila, in Binan Laguna. The project is called "Bahay ni Maria" (House of Mary), a drop-in center for street children organized and operated by an organization called "Samahan Anak ni Maria" (Organization of the Child of Mary).

A specific geographical area in the Philippines typical

of a growing urban area was one of the criteria for choosing the setting for the study. The setting of the study is in Binan, a suburb of Metro Manila, in the province of Laguna in the Southern Luzon region of the country.

In considering the street children phenomenon in context, a geographical and sociodemographical description of the setting of the study is provided.

The Philippine Islands. The Philippine archipelago lies in Southeast Asia. The Philippines has a total land area of almost 300,000 square kilometers. There are about 7100 islands in the Philippines. Eleven islands make up 94% of the Philippine landmass, which include the islands of Luzon and Mindanao. Luzon measures 105,000 square kilometers and Mindanao measures 95,000 square kilometers. Luzon and Mindanao, together with the cluster of Visayan islands, represent the three principal regions of the archipelago (see Appendix F).

The Philippines has a number of lakes or inland bodies of water fed by rivers and tributaries around which towns and communities abound. Such bodies of water are an important source of livelihood for farmers, fishermen, and traders who are known to transport their produce from town to town by boats. The Philippines has a tropical marine climate. The mean annual sea level temperature rarely falls below 27 degrees centigrade. The seasons are generally classified into three types: rainy season from June to

November, cool and dry season from December to February, and hot and dry season from March to May. The typhoon season in the Philippines, characterized by the onslaught of storms, is from July through October. Metropolitan Manila and its neighboring province of Laguna are periodically devastated. Annual rainfall measures as much as 5,000 millimeters in the mountainous east coast section of the country, but less than 1,000 millimeters in some of the sheltered valleys.

The Laguna Province. In the Southern Luzon region, one of the provinces adjoining the Metropolitan Manila area is the province of Laguna. Laguna is located in what is referred to as the Southern Tagalog region, where the principal dialect spoken is the "tagalog" dialect. Figure 1 shows the province of Laguna which is 30 kilometers south of Metropolitan Manila. It is bounded in the east by the Sierra Madre range, on the south by the province of Quezon, and in the west by the provinces of Batangas and Cavite.

Laguna's geographic area is 1,759.7 square kilometers or 175,973 hectares of land. The provincial terrain is mainly of narrow plains extending along the shores of the Laguna de Bay, the largest freshwater lake in the country. Laguna de Bay is the largest lake in the archipelago with an approximate area of 356 sq. statute miles or a spread of 90,000 hectares. The province of Laguna has evenly distributed rainfall throughout the year. Laguna is dry from November to April and wet the rest of the year.

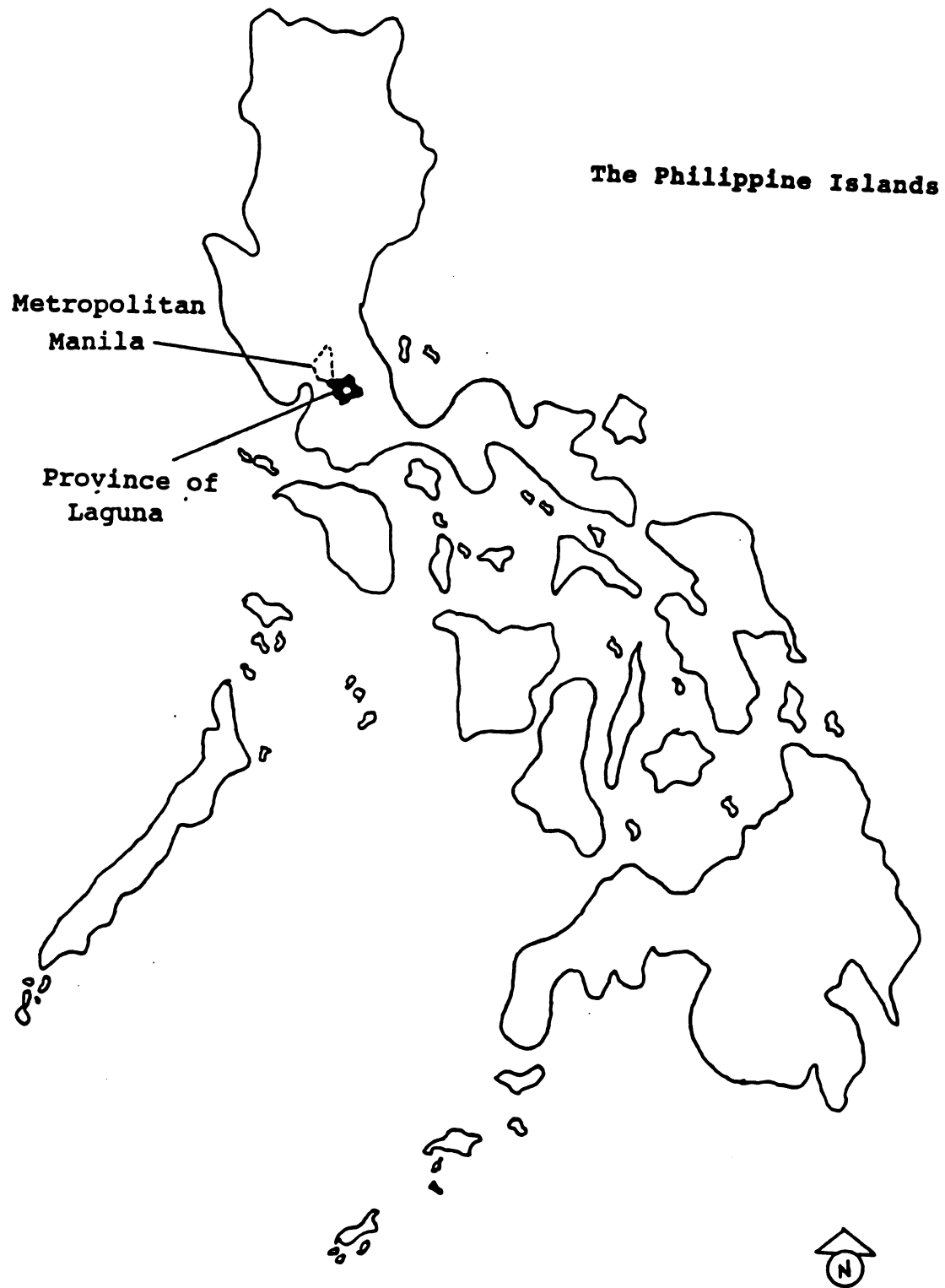


Figure 1. Province of Laguna and its proximity to Metropolitan Manila in the Philippines.

The Town of Binan. There are three legends that suggest the origin of the town's name. One legend suggests that the name Binan (pronounced as Binyan) originated from a tree called Banyan or Banian, which is scientifically referred to as Ficus benghalensis. However, some people believe that the town name came from the word "Banyan", which in Hindu language means merchants. Another legend suggests that it came from the tagalog term "Binyagan" which means to baptize or someone who has been baptized.

Binan is one of the 29 municipalities in the province of Laguna, as shown in Figure 2. Binan is bounded on the north by the town of San Pedro, on the south by the town of Sta. Rosa and on the west by the town of Carmona, Cavite. On the eastern and northern horizon lies the Laguna de Bay. Binan covers a total land area of 4350 hectares which represents 2.5 % of the entire Laguna area.

The municipality of Binan is about 40 kilometers south of Manila. Residential areas are increasing tremendously making Binan a housing area for people working and commuting to Metro Manila. Binan is classified as an industrial town, with establishments that include bus and car body manufacturers, cement pipe factories, footwear factories, and a fertilizer making company.

Binan, with a population density of 2481, is considered fourth in population density in the province of Laguna (Socioeconomic Profile of Laguna, 1987). Binan has an

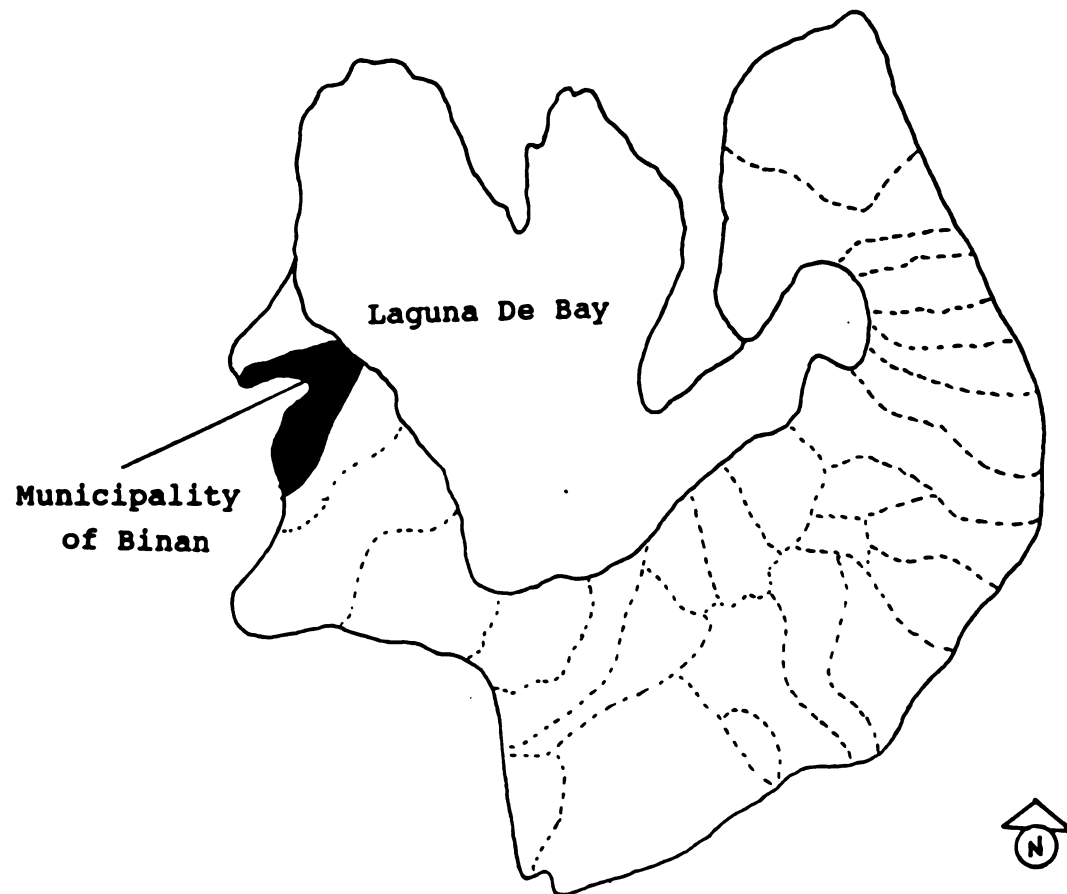


Figure 2. Binan as one of the twenty nine (29) municipalities in the province of Laguna.

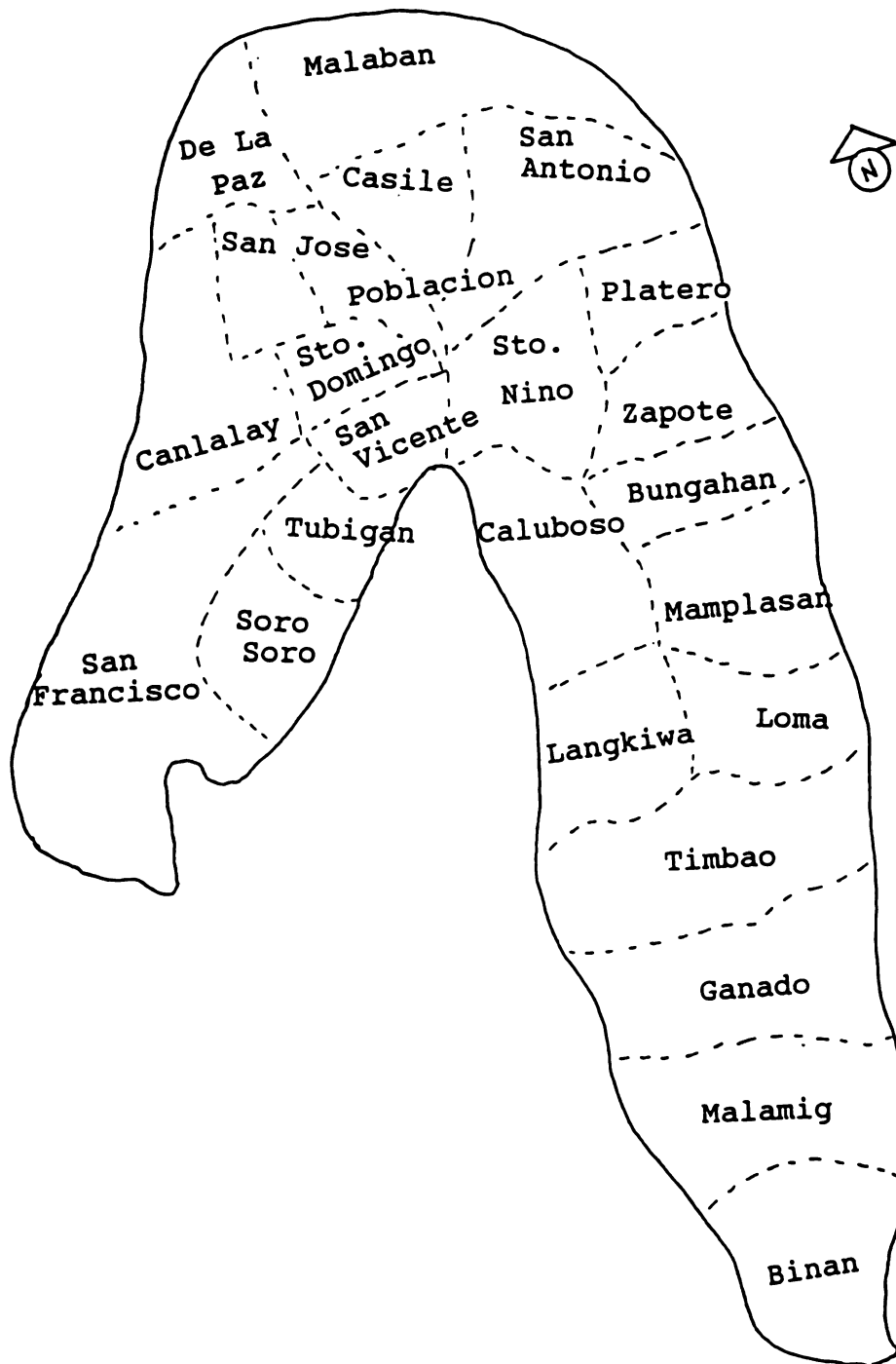


Figure 3. Barangays in the town of Binan.

annual growth rate of 4.56.

Temporary Shelter for Street Children. The 12 street children in this study were children who frequent a center called "Bahay ni Maria". The center is a temporary shelter for street children in Soro-Soro in Binan (see Figure 3). The main center provides a dining and kitchen area, a bathroom, a sleeping area, and a receiving room. An additional two floor structure serves as a workshop room and additional sleeping quarters for the street children.

Selection of Participants

With the consent of the organization coordinators for the temporary shelter for street children, 12 street children were chosen to participate in this study. The coordinators were the guardians of the children. Since there is no accurate and consistent available list of street children using the services of the center, nonprobability sampling was used. The 12 participants were from the group of street children participating in one selected project. Since all the children in this project and in the area were predominantly boys, all participants turned out to be males. The primary consideration in the selection of the 12 participants, was their voluntary participation or willingness to participate in the study. The street boys were asked to chose if they wished to participate at all, and informed of their option to refuse to participate in

certain procedures and to discontinue at any time during the study.

Establishing Rapport

The most important skills necessary for a researcher doing qualitative research include listening, observing, and forming empathic alliance with the participants. In establishing much needed rapport or forming "empathic alliance" with the participants, daily visits and conversations were vital especially at the preliminary procedure in the data gathering phase of the study. In such phenomenological inquiry, the researcher uses nonformal, unstructured interviews or extended conversations as source of information and data. In order to gain credibility and acquire the trust of the participants and to enable them to comfortably impart experiences and valuable information, the maintenance of rapport with the participants was fundamental throughout the research process.

Collection of Data

Data collection took place from March to July 1992 in the natural environment of the street children, which included the street environment (major streets in the area), the public domain (municipal building and market place area where they are found most of the time), and one of the

temporary shelter facilities for street children (Bahay ni Maria Center).

The exploratory and descriptive nature of the study, with the purpose of attempting to develop a general understanding of the phenomenon of street children and their environmental learning, was achieved through the use of the following five qualitative research strategies and ethnographic data collection techniques.

Participant observation. Participant Observation, as a strategy for data collection, was used for the following reasons: (a) it reduced the problem of reactivity among street children, that is their changing of behavior and being biased when the participants knew that they were being observed, (b) it helped in formulating questions, inquiries that would suit the native language and culture of the participants.

Participant observation of street children in the streets involved the observation of public behavior. Such street children projects are open to be viewed by the public, as part of their purpose of providing information with regard to the availability of such social services to those who are in need of such assistance and to enhance cooperation from the general public through voluntary services and donations. The researcher was able to seek permission to be involved in the project as a volunteer worker.

Environmental-Behavioral mapping. Mapping provided impressions and illustrative observation of how street children behave in a given environment. In Environmental-Behavior Observation, the following were considered as guide questions: WHO is doing WHAT with WHOM? In what RELATIONSHIP? In what CONTEXT and WHERE? (Zeisel, 1981, p.124). In Behavioral Mapping, observations of street children's behavior in a given setting (street setting or in one of the facilities used in the project) were in the form of field notes and annotated diagrams (see Appendix B). A diagram of the physical lay out of the setting was provided with consent by the coordinators and officials responsible for the temporary shelter facility. A diagram of the physical lay out of buildings in the town proper of Binan was developed by the researcher to determine specific areas frequently visited by the children. It was utilized to illustrate the behavior of street children, noting the moves of the street children with regard to the physical setting.

In Environmental Mapping, annotated diagrams of the street children's setting, with notations of physical traces were also utilized. From a trace, the researcher asked and found out "what caused it," "what the person who created the trace intended," and "what sequence of events led to the trace" through observation. Physical traces found were not in any way identified with specific participants or considered as consequences of individual behavior. The

researcher was not after inquiries that would identify "who did it" but more on causation information as "what has caused it."

Informal interviews. Informal Interviews were used with street children. This method enabled the researcher to establish much needed rapport with the street children and provided opportunities for the uncovering or discovery of topics which might have been overlooked. Prior to such informal interviews, rapport was established with the children. The researcher introduced herself as a student and a volunteer worker, joined the children in most of their play activities, and then gave a brief description of her study, prior to the interview. The participants' voluntary assent and willingness to participate were considered prior to the informal interview. The participants were notified of the option to discontinue their participation at any point during the session or the option of not answering any question if they do not wish to answer. Before the interview, the researcher informed the participants that their responses would not be dealt with individually but would be considered as information dealing with general processes and not specific individual behavior. The researcher prepared an interview schedule, an outline of possible guide questions to be used during the interview session (see Appendix C). Such questions were considered as open ended questions which made the interview as informal as

possible like an ordinary conversation, flexible and with no specific sequence in mind, could be rephrased, and modified as necessary.

Children's portfolio. The children's portfolio is a compilation of creative works, samples of the children's activities that provide important, relevant, and additional information about the children.

An ecomap was requested of street children to provide a visual overview of the complex ecological system of a street child. It provided the nature of connections and relationships between the street child and the immediate social environment. It emphasized the support system and modes of network of the street children. The children were asked to show in a diagram, using circles, the significant people in their life in the streets (see Appendix D).

A sociogram, as a supportive instrument to an ecomap, was used to assess and identify the social network dimensions of the street children. It was used to identify the people who provided means for relatedness, identification, and socialization. Individually, the children were asked by the researcher open ended questions regarding the people that they identified in their diagrams (see Appendix E).

It is believed that drawings and scribbles provide a panoramic view for exploring the inner world of children. Through this activity, the child was given the opportunity

to unwrap his experience, imagination, and fantasies. The children were asked to draw something about their life in the streets. Each child was provided with blank drawing paper and colored pencils for this activity. Upon completion, they are asked to describe their drawing to everyone in the temporary shelter.

Transcripts of a radio program created by street children themselves were used to provide additional information about the children. During the time that the researcher was collecting data for the study, there was a radio program where street children were encouraged to dramatize their own lives on radio. The radio program called "Batang Lansangan" (Street Child) was sponsored by CHILDHOPE, UNICEF, NCSD and carried out by the Salinsining Foundation, a nongovernmental organization engaged in social development work with children through the arts. The purpose of the radio program was to encourage children to express themselves in their own particular way for it is believed that the key to social development lies in the ability of each child to articulate personal feelings and ideas at an early age. The radio program was presented in a soap opera format using scripts derived from actual life experiences of street children. Transcripts of the radio program, generally depicting the lives of street children, were considered as supportive background information for the study. For example, in one of the programs, a street child

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shared his experience from the time when he left his home town, arrived in the city, and had memorable encounters with law enforcers in the streets.

Review of related studies. Conference materials, published articles, brochures, and survey reports provided by the institutions responsible for the Joint Project for street children were used as sources for additional information. Such information included description of the services rendered through the project and description of street children involved in the project, which were of relevance to the study.

Data Analysis Stage

In this study and in most qualitative research, the following characteristics of qualitative data analysis are noted:

1. Analysis of data was done simultaneously with data collecting.
2. In the analysis of qualitative data, the major tasks of conceptual development follow a repetitive, cyclical pattern (Spradley, 1979).
3. Most of the data gathered for the study were presented through field notes, transcripts, and annotated notes of diagrams or graphics.

Dealing with Confidentiality

In the narratives, field notes, and the transcripts of the interviews, the participants were identified by numbers 1 to 12, to ensure confidentiality. If the children referred to family members, friends, or significant others in their social network, these social beings were identified by their relationships and not by their names.

Interpretation of Data from Tagalog to English

Generally, interviews were made in the native language of the participants, in "tagalog". The researcher, coming from the same country and possessing the same native language, was able to translate most of the responses and the field notes to English. The researcher was extra careful in translating the field notes, making sure that the context of how it was said is translated and communicated accurately. In some instances, to reconfirm that it was accurately translated, the researcher asked colleagues from the same country to check if the translation accurately conveyed the same message.

Coding

Coding is the process of analyzing data in the tradition of qualitative research. Coding refers to the different operations by which data are broken down, conceptualized, and developed into theories. Coding is an

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analytical, systematic procedure in developing grounded theory with the following purposes:

1. Creating and building theory rather than testing it.
2. Providing a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived grounded theory.
3. Developing the sensitivity necessary to generate in-depth explanation.
4. Developing the integration that could closely approximate the reality it represents.
5. Exploring one's assumptions about a phenomenon and providing directions.

In the data analysis part of the study, the researcher started with open coding of the data. In this process, data were examined line by line. The major idea of each sentence or paragraph was noted. Data were taken apart according to idea, incident, or theme.

Categorizing. Quotations, sentences, paragraphs of the same idea or theme were grouped together. Data were closely examined and broken down into groups or categories. Each of these groups was given a label depending on the theme or main idea, thus developing categories.

Constant comparison method. Glaser and Strauss (1967), suggested a procedure by which to analyze and generate theory from empirical data, the "Constant Comparison Method." Using the "Constant Comparison Method," the researcher coded and analyzed the data to develop concepts

by continuously comparing the incidents found in the data. Each and every incident was compared with other incidents. Similarities and differences were taken into consideration.

The process was described by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in four stages: (a) comparing applicable incidents in each category, (b) integrating categories and properties, (c) defining and delimiting the theory and (d) writing theory.

Developing Grounded Theory

Category construction related to the development of "grounded theory." Deriving a theory from the data involved both the integration and the refinement of categories, properties, and propositions from the data. Related literature was also used as a source of data and was considered as another comparison group when refining categories. Continuous modifications were made for clarification, integration, and elaboration of concepts.

Inductive and deductive process. Though it may seem that the procedure of Glaser and Strauss is largely an inductive process, there were times during the study when tentative categories, properties, and propositions that emerged were tested against the data and thus, the process was also deductive in nature.

Patterns and trends. In this study, as in any qualitative research, results were based on the search for patterns or trends in the data of the study, as well as for

ideas that help explain the existence of these patterns. Such results provided the foundation and basis for a framework for understanding the environmental learning processes and strategies of street children.

Limitations of the Study

The following statements describe the limitations of the study.

1. The respondents for the study were all male street children. If the study could have included female street children, a substantial and insightful information different from that being described could be a possibility.

Having female respondents would have provided information that would serve as the basis for comparison between the conditions of street children considering gender differences.

2. Respondents were those who availed the assistance and services of the temporary shelter, "Bahay ni Maria". Limited resources and time constraints prohibited the researcher from studying and observing street children in other projects in Binan.

3. Observations were limited to daily activities of the street children in the temporary shelter and major streets near the marketplace in Binan.

4. The researcher was a volunteer worker who visited

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the temporary shelter, observed, and gathered data during her daily visits. Activities and events that happened when the researcher was not present could have provided equally useful information about the street children.

5. Street children in the study may have withheld pertinent information, about gang membership, gang activities, and other information that reflects a negative situation.

Reliability

Internal reliability, in the case of ethnographic studies, is referred to as the confirmability of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The natural subjectivity of the researcher and how it may form the study is a concern in internal reliability. The following procedures were done to help overcome this threat. A theoretical framework was utilized for the conceptualization of the study and the analysis of the findings of the study. With regard to translation of responses from Tagalog to English, rechecking by Filipino colleagues, whether the translations were appropriate and substantial, was done. When the researcher was gathering data, debriefing sessions or discussions about her observations were occasionally done with fellow volunteers and social workers assisting the street children in the temporary shelter, to guard against researcher's subjectivity.

External reliability or dependability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of a study, is concerned with the issue of whether another researcher would most likely come up with same findings, given the same or similar settings. In this study however, the following procedures were given due emphasis to enhance external reliability. The social situations, and the physical conditions, environmental contexts within which data were gathered, were described throughout the research study. The individual informants, every street child in the study, possess unique experiences, thus, specific and detailed descriptions of the children in the study were done.

Validity

The following are threats to the internal validity of this study. Internal validity, in the case of ethnographic studies, is referred to as the credibility of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In this study, observations may have affected the behavior of the street children. These effects were reduced by checking and confirming with other social workers and volunteers as to whether the observed behavior was typical of the street children and the extent to which the presence of the researcher may have had some effect. The researcher remained as unobtrusive as possible, staying in one corner of the room and out of the sight of the children. The researcher made it a point to vary the

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time and day of visit at the temporary shelter.

Coming from the same country and culture as the children in the study, the researcher most likely produced perceptions of what was observed and what occurred. This threat was minimally controlled by recording only what was happening and leaving out any interpretations in the behavioral and environmental mapping field notes. The researcher had a separate notebook for recording personal impressions and interpretations.

Another threat to internal validity concerns the selection of participants. For the study, children were contacted through a temporary shelter project for street children in Binan. There might have been differences in the behavior of children who were in the temporary shelter and the behavior of children who were not in the temporary shelter. This threat to internal validity was partially reduced by observing differences in the behavior of children in the streets and market place area in the town of Binan.

Another threat to internal validity concerns the making of spurious conclusions. In this study, a concern might be the number of the respondents for the study and the gender composition of the respondents for the study. This threat was reduced by the use of supportive sources of data, such as those from recent, related studies on street children in the Philippines. This study was exploratory in orientation, describing the phenomenon of street children and the

characteristics of street children in the Philippines. Moreover, the study was not conclusive of the causes of the phenomenon but explored and provided possible factors involved in the phenomenon.

With regard to the external validity of the study, or its transferability (Lincoln & Guba 1985), the nature of the study required a specific population in a specific setting. The study focused on street children in the context of their life in the streets. Although generalizability may be a concern, it does not pose limitations on the usefulness and significance of the study for the context it was done.

CHAPTER 4

DESCRIPTIVE EXPLORATION OF THE STREET CHILDREN PHENOMENON IN THE PHILIPPINES

In this chapter, the findings of the study will be described by addressing research question one: Who are the street children? The findings were open coded, categorized, and sorted. The situations and conditions which help describe the street children appeared repeatedly and will be described in this chapter. The purpose of the chapter is, first, to exemplify the situations and conditions that led to the phenomenon from the macrolevel, mesolevel, and microlevel perspective and, second, to describe the children of the streets through emerging characteristic factors. Descriptions include direct quotes that exemplify cases of street children. Tables are also included to show significant responses of the children.

Macrolevel: Philippine Socioeconomic Conditions

In the analysis of the phenomenon at the macrolevel, the situation of street children is viewed in relation to

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the general socioeconomic conditions of the country. situational studies, such as the Update on the Situation of Children and Women in the Philippines, (1990) confirmed earlier findings that the welfare of children and women is affected by the economic, social, and political conditions in the country. As the country began to recover from the economic and political crises from the period of the middle 80s, there was observable deterioration in the conditions of the children in the country.

The period from the middle 80s have witnessed a massive economic slowdown in the Philippines. In 1990, it was estimated that over 70 % or about 42 million of the 60 million population are living just below the poverty line. The problem of poverty could be deduced from the high rates of unemployment and underemployment. For the year 1990, the estimates for unemployment range from 10 % to 18 % and for underemployment from 30 to 40 % (Arroyo, 1990).

According to the Council for the Welfare of Children (1992), the poverty threshold was estimated at P3,377.00 pesos (approximately \$135 US dollars) per month in 1990. This is the minimum average monthly income which a family of six members, more than half of whom are children has to earn in order to be considered above the poverty threshold. In most cases, it will take two daily wage earners, both parents for a family to be above the poverty threshold. It is not uncommon to find mothers and young children working

in tertiary types of occupation to augment family income (Philippine Urban Situation Analysis, 1986). These problems have imposed severe sacrifice on most Filipino families, particularly on their children.

Income from wages and salaries has continuously decreased in purchasing power since 1960. It has been reported that the purchasing power of a skilled worker in 1990 is only half of what it used to be in 1960 (Arroyo, 1990). As a consequence, the majority of the people continue to live in poverty.

Such economic difficulties are acutely experienced by the poor families of the country. The majority of the families have adopted significant changes in their consumption patterns due to the increasing prices of basic commodities and their diminishing income. These adjustments have serious implications on family welfare and child survival and development in the country. During this critical period, the government is unable to provide adequate access to basic services due to decreased levels in government expenditures for social services.

Urban Migration

In search of the proverbial "greener pastures" people move to urban areas for employment and better income opportunities. Urban centers like Metro Manila and its neighboring towns provide attraction for rural people and

continue to be the preference of regional migrant settlers from the provinces. Such unprecedented population growth in Metro Manila and its neighboring towns was brought about by population in-migration and rapid urbanization. Metro Manila is considered the country's financial, political, educational, and cultural center.

Migrant families leave their rural homes for a variety of reasons. Some of the families' reasons for leaving their home towns as stated by children in this study include:

We (together with brothers and sisters) all wanted to move to the city. My father said he wanted to look for a better job. My mother said that it would be better for us to live in the city with my father. (Child 6)

My mother wanted to try life here. She wanted us to stay with her relatives who live in this place for a long time. She wanted to see what her relatives were describing in their letter. Now she is working with my aunt in a factory. (Child 5)

My father was a farmer. When he died, my mother wanted to go to the city to look for a job to earn a living. She came here first. My brother and I followed but we cannot find her. It was only recently that we found her. My brother and I have been roaming around in the streets because she does not mind us anymore. (Child 1)

My father told us that we might have a chance to go to school here. He said the government might have some sort of school for the poor. He said there are a lot of 'centers' we could go to for help in the city. In our town, there are not a lot of these centers. I wanted to ride the bus, the LRT (Light Rail Transit), and also go to the shopping center to watch television in the stores. (Child 2)

As stressed by the children, the major reasons of their families leaving their home town include the promise of economic opportunities and a better future in the cities.

Families move to the cities because of inadequate or deteriorating sources of livelihood in the rural areas. Another reason that has caused families to migrate is the availability of social services such as health care facilities and educational institutions in the city. Attractions of a faster paced modern life and technological conveniences in the city are other encouraging factors for rural migrants.

Urbanization

In the early 1960s, urban growth in the Philippines involved both natural population growth and rural to urban migration (Ruland, 1992). In recent years however, there has been a sharp upward trend in urbanization due to rural to urban migration. This trend in migration has been primarily attributed to conditions in the countryside. These factors include: (a) diminishing of arable land, (b) deterioration of security, and (c) the rapid spread of a communist led insurgency in the countryside (Ruland, 1992).

Almost 57 % of total Philippine city dwellers live in three regions, the National Capital Region (Metropolitan Manila area), Southern Tagalog Region, and Central Luzon Region (Ruland, 1992). Urbanization in these three regions have led to observed high rates of unemployment, accompanied by the upsurge of sprawling slum areas and squatter settlements.

In 1991, the country's Department of Trade and

Industry initiated a master plan study on a project called CALABARZON, a large scale, multisectoral project complex planned in a region contiguous to Metro Manila (Department of Trade and Industry CALABARZON Plan Study, 1991). It is part of the planning unit of Region IV. Included is the Southern Tagalog Region which occupies the southern central portion of the Luzon island, and where 37 % of the urban population of the country live. The project was originally conceived to encourage industrial/urban based economies in the region through high industrialization led primarily by foreign export processing type industries. The CALABARZON region comprises the five provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, and Quezon in the Southern Tagalog region.

The Southern Tagalog region is a driving force for further industrialization in the country together with Metro Manila and other areas in the National Industrial Core Region. The region has been considered as the receiving area of the "spill over" population from Metro Manila. As a result its population has been growing at rates higher than most other regions. CALABARZON's population grew 3.3 % in 1980 to 1990 as compared with 2.8 percent of Metro Manila during the same period (Department of Trade and Industry CALABARZON Plan Study, 1991). The CALABARZON provinces have provided alternative locations for industries.

The Southern Tagalog has transformed from a region of rustic small agricultural villages into an area of smoke

belching factory chimneys, congested traffic, and growing residential communities. The region has the most developed infrastructure outside the capital region. It has a relatively efficient road system and adequate power stations which supply the energy needs of the region.

The Southern Tagalog region accounts for 14 % (6.35 million) of the country's population (Department of Trade and Industry CALABARZON Plan Study, 1991). High migration rate from other areas including the National Capital Region has caused the region's high population growth rate.

The region has one of highest unemployment rates in the country, registering 7.7 % between 1985 and 1988, which is higher than the 7.1 % national average rate between 1980 and 1988 (Department of Trade and Industry CALABARZON Plan Study, 1991). Poverty has forced most of the people in the region to accept jobs which pay wages below the minimum standard.

Located in the Southern Tagalog Region, in the province of Laguna, is a town called Binan. Binan exemplifies the phenomenal urbanization in the Southern Tagalog region.

Under the CALABARZON project, Binan is being considered as a multifunctional urban center. Binan is considered as having the following functions: subregional business and service functions, commercial center functions, educational functions, housing or residential functions, and manufacturing and industrial functions.

Mesolevel: Community Profile of Binan

In an attempt to describe the street children phenomenon at the mesolevel, emphasis is given to the situation in Binan, the setting of the study. Binan will be described in terms of geographical location, socioeconomic conditions, and community resources.

Geographical Location

The municipality of Binan is about 40 kilometers south of the Metro Manila area. Binan is one of the 29 municipalities in the province of Laguna in the Southern Tagalog Region. Binan has a total land area of 4350 hectares, representing 2.5 % of the entire Laguna area.

Binan is comprised of 24 barangays. Barangays are small communities of at least 20 households. The barangays in Binan are Binan, Malamig, Bungahan, Calbuso, Canlalay, Casile, Ganado, Mamaplasan, San Francisco, Langkiwa, Malaban, Platero, Poblacion, Sto. Nino, San Jose, San Vicente, San Antonio, Sto. Domingo, Soro-Soro, Timbao, Tubigan, and Zapote (see Figure 3).

About 56.69 % of Binan's total area is regarded as suitable for urban use (Laguna Development Plan, 1990). Included as suitable for urban use is the central portion of Binan, which is the town proper itself. Binan is being developed into a residential area of people working in

Metropolitan Manila. Due to Binan's proximity to Metropolitan Manila, it has been developed to provide residential facilities for commuters and workers. Residential areas have been increasing tremendously as subdivisions, town house villages, condominiums abound in the town.

There are major industrial establishments in Binan that offer employment opportunities for migrant families. These industrial establishments include truck and jeepney body manufacturing plants, fertilizer factories, steel beam plants, cement pipe manufacturing plants, clothing factories, and shoe factories.

Socioeconomic Information

In 1987, Binan was ranked fourth in population density in the province of Laguna (Socioeconomic Profile of Laguna, 1987). In 1990, the total number of inhabitants in the town was 136,218 of which 68,543 were males and 67,675 were females and its population grows by 4.56 percent annually (Department of Social Welfare and Development, 1990). Increasing urbanization in Binan resulted in the proliferation of slum and squatter communities. In Binan, a suburb of Metropolitan Manila, the communities of the urban poor are characterized by dilapidated housing structures, congestion, and the absence of inadequate basic infrastructure or housing facilities. In spite of such

unfavorable conditions, these families continue to live in the slums for want of better options in the city. Many of them regard their life in Binan as an improvement over the kind of life they once had in the provinces.

Most of the street children are concentrated and found in four depressed areas in Binan. Depressed areas are priority areas that need immediate and adequate attention in terms of social services and assistance. Depressed areas are identified according to the following indices: (a) education, in terms of enrollment ratio of elementary, secondary schools, (b) health, in terms of population per bed and per health manpower, (c) social welfare, in terms of services rendered and available, (d) water supply, in terms of served population ratio of public water system, (e) electrification, in terms of electrification rate, (f) Transportation, in terms of road density per land area per 1,000 population, and (g) local government unit budget, in terms of municipality income.

In terms of social services and assistance, immediate and adequate attention are given to four depressed areas in Binan. Most of the street children come from the four depressed areas of De La Paz, Malabon, Ganado, and Mamplasan in Binan.

The children and youth population in the areas of De La Paz, Malabon, Ganado, and Mamplasan in Binan is shown on Table 1.

Table 1. Child and Youth Population Based on Four Depressed Barangays

Nv	Youth	Child
De La Paz	1,237	586
Malabon	1,647	786
Ganado	401	191
Mamplasan	999	615

Source: Department of Social Welfare and Development, Binan Laguna (May 1990)

Community Resources

Governmental agencies such as the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Health (DOH), Department of Education, Culture, and Sports (DECS) provide assistance to street children in Binan. The social workers of DSWD have assisted children through counselling, referrals, and the coordination of projects. Referrals include bringing children to health centers for medical treatment referring the children to respective governmental agencies and institutions such as shelters for abandoned, and displaced children. In some cases, social workers attempt to search for the parents of some of the neglected children in an effort to reunite them with their parents.

Binan has a few nongovernmental agencies catering to indigent families and children. Nongovernmental agencies in the area are mostly religious organizations such as "Samahan Anak ni Maria" (Organization of the child of Mary), Sisters of Our Lady of Fatima Learning Center, and civic groups such as the Rotary Club of Binan, Knights of Columbus, and

Knights of Rizal. Community people provide financial contributions for endeavors that aim to assist street children. Contributions are solicited from local community people in the form of used clothing, food, used reading materials, toys, and monetary contributions for the children.

The majority of the children are unaware of these organizations. The children in the study were not aware of any governmental agency that could assist them. The children found out about services and assistance provided by governmental agencies from social workers.

Seven of the children came to know of the temporary shelter "Bahay ni Maria" (House of Mary) through friends in the street. Two of these children mentioned an older peer group member who told them about the temporary shelter. The five other children stated that they joined their "barkada" (peer group) when going to the temporary shelter. One of the children stated that he was encouraged to join the group when he heard that there were free meals provided.

With regard to their awareness of nongovernmental organizations, most of the street children come to know of these organizations and the services and assistance they provided through friends and peer groups in the streets. Five of the children were referrals from social workers. The social worker informed these five children of the temporary shelter and its services.

Microlevel: Street Children and Their Families in Binan

In the microlevel, the phenomenon is viewed in the context of the situations and conditions within the family scenario and the common characteristics of the children. The situations and conditions within the family such as family background, family size, family composition, and family relationships will be described prior to describing the common characteristics of the children in the study.

The majority of the street children in Binan are children belonging to migrant families. For these children, migration to the city from the rural provinces means a variety of adjustments. Hollnsteiner and Tacon (1983) describe the scenarios exemplifying the types of adjustments that migrant children undergo as they face the consequences of urban migration. One of the scenarios describes the head of the family, usually the father, who decides to look for employment opportunities in the city and leaves the children behind in the province with their mother. When the father is able to find employment and is already settled, he sends for his family to join him in the city. However, there are also cases where the father may never come back for the family and consequently abandons them. There is a recent upsurge of an international migration stream. Skilled and semiskilled laborers leave for the Middle East, Europe, or neighboring Southeast Asian countries to find employment

opportunities. The father who is fortunate enough to work abroad is able to remit enough funds to improve the level of living of his family. The absence of the father can produce serious strains on the family. The mother takes over the responsibilities usually assigned to the father, especially in making decisions for the household. Similarly, the mother who spends more time fulfilling her husband's task, eventually has less time to be with her younger children. Children are often made responsible for household work to make up for the absence of their father and for the resulting labor deficit. When older siblings move to the city, younger children may be responsible for caring for their youngest sibling. Going to school may be the least of the children's priorities and thus there is a decline in the children's attendance and enrollment in schools.

More complications arise when a migrant father fails to send financial assistance to his family. The family's resources hardly meet the children's survival and developmental needs. With this persisting situation, the presence of more than one income earner in the family is imperative. It is thus common to find mothers as well as young children working in indigenous types of occupation to augment family income. These conditions predisposed the children to seek alternative modes of living outside their homes. Alternative modes of living include vending goods such as flower garlands and food products in the streets,

scavenging for food and recyclable materials, begging for money, hauling merchandise, and assisting in the market place.

A second major migration pattern includes the whole family, both parents moving with their children to the city. Parents usually establish enough kin or friendship linkages to solicit assistance and support as they begin to adjust to the city environment. They usually settle in and join other households in slum dwellings. Soon after, they start a series of moves from one residence to another.

A third category of migrant children are those born in the city to which their parents have migrated. As they grow up in the cities, they undergo similar experiences. Moving from one residence to another is most likely a consequence of searching for dwellings which are cheaper and a place near the parent's workplace. Convenience and accessibility are important considerations as transportation costs can be expensive. Also important is a preference of living with kin, near relatives, and in-laws. Family events that may trigger a family's moving from one place to another may be the remarriage or formation of new household units. Whatever the reasons for moving, migrant children face the difficulties of making new friends, adjusting to their parents' work or activity schedules, and usually the experiencing of small, crowded dwellings.

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Family Background

Most of the children come from families with parents who are nonskilled workers, doing manual work which requires no previous training. Based on a related study on urban poor in the Philippines (Callanta, 1988), a large portion of the urban poor population, consisted of nonskilled laborers engaged in such jobs as being haulers, janitors, and factory casuals. A small portion consisted of skilled workers such as drivers, plumbers, electricians, painters, or carpenters.

Most of the occupations that the parents of street children have are part-time employment or semi-contractual employment (see Table 2). These types of employment are temporary and are held only for a limited period of time.

Six of the parents of the children in this study were unemployed and were in the process of looking for jobs. One of the children stated that his father has been jobless for a long time. He stated that his father was still desperately seeking for a job. His father wanted any job where he could earn enough money for their family's daily food expenses.

Two of the children had a deceased parent. When asked about their deceased parent, both children remembered and described their deceased fathers as farmers. Their father earned a living by growing root crops, vegetables and fruit trees in their former hometown. One of the boys stated that their family's main source of income was from farming. He

remembered that his father was paid by their landlord every month.

Table 2. Occupation of Parents

Respondent	Occupation of Parents	
	Father	Mother
Child 1	Deceased	Waitress
Child 2	Construction Laborer	Laundry Woman
Child 3	Unemployed	Meat Vendor
Child 4	Part time Bus Driver	Housewife
Child 5	Deceased	Waitress
Child 6	Gardener	Shoe Factory Worker
Child 7	Jeepney Driver	Household Helper
Child 8	Construction Laborer	Housewife
Child 9	Unemployed	Laundry Woman
Child 10	Unemployed	Unemployed
Child 11	Unemployed	Market Vendor
Child 12	Unemployed	Market Vendor

Family Size

Most of the street children come from large families. Low income families tend to be large. In this particular

study, the average number of children in a family was five children. One respondent had as many as 11 children in his family. Two of the respondents, however, had only two children in their family.

Table 3. Number of Children in the Family

Respondent	Number of Children in the Family
Child 1	6
Child 2	7
Child 3	4
Child 4	7
Child 5	6
Child 6	11
Child 7	3
Child 8	5
Child 9	3
Child 10	10
Child 11	2
Child 12	2

In related studies, street children were described to belong to households with 6 to 11 members (Joint Project on

Street Children, 1988; Philippine Urban Situation Analysis, 1986).

Family Composition

Of the total number of street children in the study, 11 of them admitted living with their family before they left home. However at the time of this study, only five of them have both parents, brothers, and sisters living with them. The rest have either only a parent staying with them together with their brothers and sisters, or a parent and his/her common law spouse living with them. The majority of these street children come from households with separated parents. Eventually, their separated parents remarry or settle with common law spouses.

Ten of the street children considered either their father or mother as the head of the family. One of the children attributed the family leadership to his eldest brother, having been neglected by his mother for years. Another child considered his stepfather as the head of the family because he makes the decisions for his mother especially concerning the financial aspects since he is the breadwinner. The child describes that the stepfather imposes discipline in the house and is obeyed and feared by all of the siblings.

Family Relationships

The street children phenomenon could be rooted in the context of the family. Situations that may have contributed

to the phenomenon include the children's relationship with their parent(s), stepparent(s), siblings, and extended family.

Child's Relationship with Parent(s)

The children were asked to describe their relationship with their parent(s), the following positive feelings were expressed:

I love my mother so much. I just could not stand being hungry at home, that is why I left home. (Child 11)

I have respect for my parents, but I have to leave home to find some money to help buy food for them. (Child 6)

I want to help my mother earn money. She has been working so hard. (Child 12)

Three of the children have expressed their positive concern for their parents and expressed their desire to help their parents in securing additional income to buy basic needs such as food.

On the other hand, some of the following negative feelings were also expressed:

I would like to kill my father whenever he hits my mother. (Child 2)

I cannot stand my father's strong words, we are always arguing. (Child 4)

I don't like what my mother is doing. I hate her. She does not care about her children anymore. (Child 5)

From the direct quotes from three children, in some instances, relationships may be dependent on existing family

problems at home. Conflict between the children and their parents and, thus, discontent with the situation at home are common reasons why children leave home and stay on the streets.

Child's Relationship with Stepparent(s)

Of the 12 children in the study, two of the children had parents who were separated and living with common law spouses. Two of the children stated that their father died and their widowed mother remarried.

All of these four children described their stepparent as authoritarian, having strong influence in making decisions in the household and in imposing discipline. One of the children described his stepfather as someone to be feared and obeyed, for he makes major decisions for the family. One child admitted having difficulty in relating to his stepmother who takes charge of the family's finances at home.

Another concern among children regarding their stepfather or stepmother was how they could not avoid but compare their biological parents with their stepparents. The children usually tend to compare their stepparents with their real biological parents in terms of caring and attending to them and their home and in terms of providing financial support for the family.

Child's Relationship with Siblings

Generally, most of the children in the study felt closer to the eldest sibling in the family. In the absence of their parents in the household, the eldest child assumes the responsibility for caring for the younger siblings. In most cases, the children have admitted confiding to their eldest brother or sister in the family about their personal problems.

One of the children said he is eager to go home just to visit his brothers and sisters. Two of the children have been searching for their missing brothers and sisters. One of the children has been in the streets searching for his missing sisters, who he was informed, were given away by his stepfather to a rich family in the area.

Regarding the children's relationship with stepsiblings, one of the children described his stepbrothers and stepsisters as abusive and have not been treating him kindly. Another child who was adopted felt insecure when staying with the biological children of his adoptive parents.

Child's Relationship with Relatives and Extended Family

Most of the families in the Philippines have members of their extended family living with them. In most of the urban dwellings, relatives that are in the same household are usually uncles and aunts, grandmother or grandfather, or

cousins. In most cases the grandparents are requested to move to the city with the family to help with household work and to take care of the young children in the family, so that both parents can work. Grandparents were described by the children as usually overly protective. They regard their "lolo" or "lola" as disciplinarians who are given the authority by their parents to punish them if they disobeyed. The children were not able to describe their relationship with their uncle or aunt. One of the children stated that he could not describe his uncle or aunt because they are not always at home and are always working. Cousins were usually regarded as playmates who demand equal attention from their grandparents as the other siblings in the family. One of the children left home because he was afraid of what his cousin might have done if he found out that he broke his bicycle. Another important consideration with regards to family relations, is the frequency of contact of a street child with his family. It was observed and deduced from the findings that there are three typologies for classifying children in the streets with regard to their frequency of contact with their families back home. What they refer to as family in this context may mean a member of the family, such as a parent, a brother, or a sister.

Children who maintain regular contacts with their families. Children who maintain regular contacts with their families are usually those whose purpose is to earn a

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living, or work in the streets. They usually work in the streets to support themselves and their families. These children spend the day in the streets to work and regularly go home to their families to bring home additional monetary support for the family.

Children with irregular contacts with their families.

Children with irregular contacts with their families are those who may live and work on the streets. They occasionally come home to their family for special occasions and for short visits but not on a regular basis. They are the ones most likely to frequent drop-in centers or temporary shelters.

Children without families/abandoned children. Children on the streets may be those who are abandoned by their parents, or those who are orphaned and have nobody to care for them. They are seen roaming the streets searching for shelters while seeking ways of surviving. They are children most likely to end up in orphanages.

Descriptions Characteristic of Street Children

From the findings of the study, there were common descriptions that help characterize typical street children. The children in the study will be described according to the following emerging descriptive factors: (a) place of origin, (b) domain, (c) gender, (d) age, and (e) birth order.

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Place of Origin of Street Children

Prior to their stay in the streets of Binan, all of the children have been traveling from one place to another.

Five of the twelve children have been to three other regions prior to their stay in the town of Binan. Four of them had been to two towns before coming to the town of Binan. The rest of the children, have been moving from one "barangay" (small community) to another within the town of Binan.

These children come from different regions, provinces and neighboring towns. Four of these children came from the Visayas region before coming to the Southern Tagalog region where Binan is located. Three came from neighboring provinces of Cavite and Rizal, two of them came from a neighboring town of San Pedro, and three have been moving from one "barangay" (small community) to another in the town of Binan.

What could be deduced from tracing the movement of these children from one place to another is the mobility factor. Moving from one place to another, regardless of proximity or distance, emphasizes the mobile life of these children.

Domain of Street Children

In the urban setting, street children are commonly found in the following areas: (a) municipal building areas, (b) church areas, (c) market places, (d) restaurant areas,

(e) shopping center areas, (f) bus and jeepney station areas and (f) street alleys.

In the municipal buildings they usually use the wide hallways to hang around and find shelter for the evening to be used as a sleeping area. Most of the children try to sell their "sampaguita" Jasminum sambac flower garlands to employees in the building. They are also found outside the cathedral of the town where they are usually seen begging and asking for money from people who go to church.

In the market place, the children are usually seen carrying the baskets of old ladies where they earn gratuities. They also carry sacks of crops, merchandise for the market merchants, as "kargadors" (haulers). Market merchants employ them as vendors of vegetables, fish, and native delicacies. In the meat market, street children are helpers in slaughtering livestock to be sold in the market. The entrails of the livestock are what they get in return for helping.

In the restaurants, the children are seen begging customers for money and for food leftovers. They are also commonly found in small street alleys in the town, shopping centers, and bus and jeepney stations, vending sampaguita garlands or selling food products.

The respondents for the study were frequent occupants of the temporary shelter for street children "Bahay ni Maria" (House of Mary). However, prior to their frequent

visits and stay in "Bahay ni Maria" most of them have considered the market place, the plaza, the church, and the "Barangay Hall" (a multifunctional hall in the community) as their sleeping area. Usually during inclement weather, when they needed shelter to protect themselves from the harsh weather, the children look for public accessible centers in the town proper. During the dry season, as in summer, the children can be found sleeping on concrete benches in the park, on the sidewalks, street alleys, and in corridors of private and public buildings.

Gender of Street Children

In Binan Laguna, there were more street boys than street girls. According to the Department of Social Welfare and Development in Binan, approximately 90 % of the street children are males and around 10 % are females. Street girls are less visible on the streets. It was learned by social workers that girls who are found roaming around town do not usually stay long in the area. The girls are normally offered employment as domestic helpers in private homes. In some cases, investigations have uncovered information that street girls are prone to be kept in private quarters which are usually prostitution houses (CHILDSHOPE, 1989b). Street boys, on the other hand are apt to be involved in numerous indigenous ways of earning a living in the streets.

In a related study, data from the Situation of Street Children in Ten Cities (Joint Project on Street Children, 1988) indicate that among street children in the country, males outnumbered females. Of the 3,255 respondents they had for the study, 55 to 90 % were males.

Age of Street Children

For this particular study, as shown in Table 4, the responses of 12 street boys, age ranging from 10 to 15 were solicited. However, seven of the 12 respondents for the study were 13 years of age. Two of the children were older by two years, at 15 years of age. The youngest of the respondents for this study was 10 years old, followed by an 11 year old. This age range reflects the adolescent stage.

While there is no specific age that clearly marks the beginning of adolescence, some general norms have been established. It is distinguished by significant physical changes that culminate in sexual maturity. Adolescence, however, is more than a period of physical change; it is also an important time of social development. As they approach adolescence, most children make important social adjustments, usually involving parents and peers.

Data from a related study, The Situation of Street Children in Ten Cities (Joint Project on Street Children, 1988) wherein most of the respondents for the study ranged from 6 to 17 years, indicated that the 11 to 14 years old

age category were most numerous among street children. A related study, The Street Girls of Metropolitan Manila (CHILDHOPÉ, 1989b), described street children to belong mostly to the age category of 7 to 16 years old.

Birth Order

The majority of the children in the study described themselves in terms of their birth order, their role as the

Table 4. Age of Street Children

Respondent	Age
Child 1	13
Child 2	13
Child 3	13
Child 4	13
Child 5	15
Child 6	15
Child 7	13
Child 8	13
Child 9	13
Child 10	10
Child 11	12
Child 12	11

eldest, middle child, or the youngest child in the family and their reason for leaving home. As shown on Table 5, four of the 12 respondents were the eldest child in their respective families. Six of the 12 were middle children and there were only two who were the youngest member of their families.

Among the eldest children, the reason why they left home was to assume their responsibilities and obligation to help their parents to earn enough money to supplement their basic needs at home such as for food and clothing. These children were the ones who regarded themselves as additional breadwinners of the family. However, one respondent stated that his reason for leaving home was because, he was the eldest and he wanted to show his mother that he could take care of himself. Among eldest children, it was observed that their reason for being on the streets was to earn a living, a responsibility to help parents earn additional income for the family. Another emerging trend is the need to show independence.

For the middle children, reasons for leaving home included more opportunities for meeting friends in the street, enjoying the company of friends rather than family, and a means of escaping from the problems at home.

One of the respondents who happens to be the youngest in the family explained that his reason for leaving home was because his parents did not care about him anymore and he

felt unwanted and neglected at home. The other youngest child's reason for leaving home was to prove to his mother that he was old enough to fend for himself in the street.

In a study of street girls in Metropolitan Manila, the majority of the street children were generally found to be either the oldest, second oldest, or the youngest child in the family (CHILDHOPE, 1989b).

Table 5. Street Children's Birth Order in their Families

Respondent	No. of Children	Birth Order
Child 1	6	5th
Child 2	7	3rd
Child 3	4	3rd
Child 4	7	5th
Child 5	6	4th
Child 6	11	11th (last)
Child 7	3	1st
Child 8	5	2nd
Child 9	3	1st
Child 10	10	1st
Child 11	2	2nd (last)
Child 12	2	1st

In describing the phenomenon of the street children, a pivotal concern is determining the major reasons of the children for leaving home, their stated reasons for being on the streets and their stated goals and aspirations in relation to their being on the streets.

Primary Reasons of Children for Leaving Home

The 12 children in the study were asked about their primary reason for leaving home and being in the street. Common reasons involve abusive parent, death of a parent, remarriage of a parent, neglect, extreme poverty, abusive adoptive parents and siblings (see Table 6). The majority of the children stressed that due to extreme poverty, they opted to leave home and fend for themselves in order to survive.

Poverty. Poverty in the family is commonly described by the children in terms of absence or insufficient monetary funds to secure basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter for the family.

I came from a very poor family. We do not have enough money to support everyone in the family. That is why we, the children had to earn in the streets. I have been working in the town market, carrying baskets of vegetables and sacks of rice. (Child 6)

My brother and I had to leave home if we really wanted to live. We will starve to death if we stayed at home. First, nobody is working and we don't have money even to buy food for our next meal. (Child 1)

My brothers and sisters were getting sick already. They have nothing to eat at home. I did not want to

get sick. Also, it is too crowded in our place. It is not our own place but the place of a relative because we cannot afford to rent our own place. (Child 9)

Most of the children admitted that their reason for leaving home was due to the inability of their parents to provide for their basic needs.

Table 6. Street Children's Primary Reasons for Leaving Home

Respondent	Reason for Leaving Home
Child 1	Death of Father; Mother Remarried; Neglected by Mother
Child 2	Drunkard Father; Abusive Father
Child 3	Thought of being an Adopted Child; Treatment of Adoptive family
Child 4	Abusive Father
Child 5	Death of Father; Neglected by Mother
Child 6	Extreme Poverty
Child 7	Abusive Stepfather; Searching for Lost Sisters; Extreme Poverty
Child 8	Drunkard Father; Extreme Poverty
Child 9	Separation of Parents; Abandoned
Child 10	Disabled and Abandoned
Child 11	Extreme Poverty; Abusive Father
Child 12	Extreme Poverty; Abusive Stepsiblings

Family Problems. Some of the children signified their desire to escape from problems at home, stressing their frustrations and difficulties in getting along with family members.

My life is a turmoil. Our family members have been separated from each other since my father died. Since my father did not leave us anything, we had to leave home and earn at an early age. My mother is difficult to find. I don't know where she is working. Except for my younger brother, I don't know where my other brothers and sisters are. I don't even know if they are still alive. (Child 5)

There are rumors in our neighborhood, that I was actually adopted, that is why I don't look like my brothers and sisters. Now I am beginning to feel that I was really adopted, because they have been treating me differently. (Child 3)

I don't think I want to go back home, it is a turmoil, my mother and stepfather are always fighting, almost trying to kill each other because of money. My stepfather doesn't earn enough money to give to my mother to buy our food because he is always drinking. (Child 11)

Family Events. The usual events that bring about conditions of change among families of street children are the death of a parent, separation of parents, and the remarriage of a parent.

My mother remarried when my father died. She left everyone of us, her children in her first marriage. (Child 7)

I have a new step father and I don't like him. I don't think he likes me too. My step father brought his other children from his first marriage into our home and I don't like them. (Child 12)

When my parents separated, I went with my father. My father is now living with another woman and I really hate her. I left home and I am looking for my mother. (Child 7)

Abusive Parents. Some of the children stressed leaving home as a consequence of their desire to avoid maltreatment by an abusive parent(s). Maltreatment involves rough or brutal physical treatment, as well as the use of abusive or insulting language of parents to these children.

My father is terrible, especially when he hits my mother. When I see him hurting my mother, I wanted to get back at him, to get a knife and stab him. My father is a drunkard. One time he was so drunk and he went after me and hit me with a 2 inch thick piece of wood on my ankle. I thought I would be lame and would not be able to walk again, because it was really very painful. That is why I don't want to go home, I don't want to get hurt and I do not want my mother to get hurt. My father's problem is his drinking. (Child 2)

I left home because I am afraid of my father. I broke the bike of my cousin and now I am afraid that my father will hit me again because of what I did. (Child 4)

I would not like to be tied up and hit by my drunkard father again. I don't know what goes into his mind but whenever he is drunk, he wants to tie me up and hit me with his rubber whip. (Child 8)

My mother hates me because I answer back to my stepfather. She hits me so hard that sometimes I get unconscious. This is an experience that I will never forget and would not like it to happen again. That is why I left home. (Child 12)

Reasons Stated by Children For Being on the Streets

When asked why they were on the streets, the major reasons common in the responses of all 12 children in the study were oriented towards: seeking employment, avoiding the family problems at home, seeking adventure in the streets, or surviving on their own.

To seek employment. Some of the children were on the streets to seek employment. They expressed their desire to look for ways of earning a living in the streets, one of which is to seek employment. These children are creative in seeking opportunities for employment. Their tasks include employment as "kargador" (haulers) of merchandise in the market, vendors, street sweepers, shoe shine boys, "sampaguita" (Jasminum sambac) flower garland makers. These are some of the opportunities that are compensated by employers.

To escape from problems at home. Some of the children in the study have expressed their desire to avoid the problems at home. Thus, spending more time in the streets was considered a way of avoiding involvement, escaping from the pending problems at home.

To seek adventure. Some of the children wanted to enjoy the adventures the street environment offered. Adventures include being with peers, membership in organizations, such as gangs and fraternities. Adventures among street children involve activities in the streets shared by organization and gang members, which include glue sniffing and taking drugs.

To survive on their own. Some of the children have expressed their desire to show independence from their parents and siblings. Their reason for being on the street was to prove to their family that they could live on their own. Living on their own entails being able to earn money,

feeding oneself, and finding a place to stay, without asking the help of their family.

Goals and Aspirations

The children were asked about their goals and aspirations in life. In this study, a street child's goal is described as a specific want that he has been striving to attain. On the other hand, aspirations were defined as the street child's desires or ambitions for advancement.

As stressed by the children in this particular study, their goals pertain to various facets:

1. Earning a living for himself

Earning a living for the family

2. Survival in terms of finances

(subsistence-livelihood)

Survival in terms of food (sustenance-food)

3. Solutions to immediate problems at home

Solutions to personal problems

In Table 7, the common wishes stressed by the street children are shown. The children have defined their aspirations in terms of their desire for advancement in: (a) attaining a profession, (b) attaining education, (c) gaining independence, and (d) achieving "fame and fortune."

The respondents were asked about "changes that they wanted" in their lives, things they wanted to change if granted the opportunity. Most of the responses referred to "changes" as possible solutions to overcome their problems at home as well as advancement in their aspirations.

Table 7. Wishes of Street Children

Respondent	Wishes
Child 1	To be able to study To earn enough to buy basic necessities
Child 2	To stop father from hurting mother To make father stop drinking
Child 3	To stop neighbors from talking about him To be an engineer To be able to sell goods like mother
Child 4	To be an entertainer To earn from being an entertainer To be famous
Child 5	To be able to help the family financially To be a soldier someday
Child 6	To be able to eat three times a day
Child 7	To survive without help from family
Child 8	To earn enough money for the family
Child 9	To earn money for things I wanted to buy
Child 10	To earn money for food
Child 11	To be rich someday
Child 12	To be a courageous soldier

Common responses include the desire to start or continue schooling. Among street children, education remains to be an ambition and thus, the desire to be able to read and write among the children was common. Three of the children stated:

"I want to finish schooling." (Child 6)

"I want to study." (Child 11)

"I would like to be able to read and write." (Child 1)

On the other hand, the children wanted change in their situation at home, specifically pertaining to problems of the family or in the home front. Four of the children mentioned,

"I hope my mother will not marry again." (Child 1)

"I don't want to go back home again." (Child 2)

"I hope our neighbor will stop talking about me
being adopted." (Child 3)

"I hope father will stop gambling." (Child 12)

The desire to be employed in order to earn enough money is another common response when asked about things they wished would change in their situation. One of the children mentioned, "I want a job so that I could earn money." (Child 5).

From the findings of this study, there seems to be an observed congruency in the reasons given by the children for being on the streets, their goals and aspirations in life, and what they wanted to achieve or desired to attain.

This chapter also included a discussion of the situation and conditions that exist in the physical and social environment of street children, from the macrolevel, mesolevel, and the microlevel perspective. These are pivotal concerns in understanding the street children phenomenon. What emerged from this analysis was the commonalities found in the individual characteristics of street children.

CHAPTER 5

ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING PROCESSES AND STRATEGIES OF STREET CHILDREN

The purpose of this chapter is to present a description of the environmental learning processes and strategies used by the street children based on the findings of the study. The main concept of environmental learning was initially assumed to consist of subprocesses of perceiving and interacting. However, additional subprocesses were identified from the findings of the study. In this chapter, the strategies under each subprocess are identified and discussed.

There are various ways that Philippine street children learn from their street environment. The children were asked about "what" they learned in the streets. This was done to determine the context of learning for these children (see Table 8).

The responses depicted three main aspects of being a street child: (a) about street life, (b) surviving in the streets, and (c) coping with street life. The children described their experiences in the street environment which cannot be attained in the school environment. They

described how they survived in the streets, narrating experiences referring to their ways of earning a living or securing income for daily subsistence in the streets.

Table 8. What Children Learned in the Streets

Learned About	Responses	Number of responses
About Street Life	"About 'real life'"	2
	"Things not learned in school"	1
Surviving in the Streets	"Earning a living"	2
	"Making both ends meet"	1
Coping with Street Life	"How to sniff glue"	2
	"How to hide from police"	1
	"How to sell and handle money"	1
	"How to steal"	1
	"How to deal with different people"	1

Most of the children narrated their activities in the streets. These activities included glue sniffing, vending, handling money, stealing, avoiding law enforcers, and dealing with various people in the streets. These activities are strategies that help them conform to street

life.

Deduced from the children's responses are the aspects of surviving that children thought they had learned in the streets such as subsisting financially, dealing with social networks, and living in the streets.

The street children's responses helped identify the complex and significant social networks in which the street children in the study are engaged in. Their responses identified the people involved in their learning process (see Table 9).

In lieu of family members, learning among these street children involved mostly gang peers and playmates. The child who stated learning from a neighbor clarified his statement by describing this neighbor as an adult friend from the same town of origin who was responsible for bringing him to Binan. One significant characteristic of their peers, that the children emphasized, was that they had looked up to someone older than them. Younger street children tend to follow and regard older street children. Older street children have an influence over younger street children because of their age and experiences with street life. Age and experience are identified as influential factors that children consider when referring and learning from others.

Table 9. How Street Children Learned in the Streets

Context	Responses	Number of responses
From Whom?	Learned From Playmates	4
	Older Gang Peers	4
	Television Personalities	2
	Neighbor	1
	Oneself	1
	Radio Personalities	1

The children mentioned learning from television and radio personalities. They learn from the people that they have seen on television and have heard on the radio.

I wish I could watch the show called Aguila, it is a nice show, lots of action, gun shooting but has a story. That is, it has a story about life in the streets. I learn what to do if it happens to me. We watch TV in the appliance store in the marketplace. It is where we get to know about actors and actresses, people I want to be when I grow up and become richer. We can not watch movies, we watch television in the appliance store. (Child 5)

I love to listen to the radio. When I am in the market, and waiting for customers, I make it a point to stay in a store with the radio on, especially in stores of old ladies who listen to the drama station in the afternoon. I don't know why I like it, maybe I like the part when the radio host, who is famous, give advice at the end of the program. I learn from her advice. Also, the words of the theme song of the program. (Child 3)

The children saw such personalities as role models.

They would want to be like these television and radio

personalities or want to follow their footsteps. One child stressed that he gains ideas from television actors on "what to do" or actions to pursue if the same situation would befall him.

Bandura (1969) uses the term "modeling" to mean that the child adds to his own actions by seeing or hearing someone else perform the behavior rather than by overtly carrying out the behavior himself.

A meaningful response from one of the children indicated "experience" as pivotal in his learning. The child included one's self and one's experience as a source of learning. Learning from experience indicated learning from one's doing in the past, an event that has happened in the past and is applicable either at present or in the future.

In this part of the chapter, patterns of behavior common among street children and their major activities in the streets will be described. Aside from earning a living and playing, the children were involved in gangs and glue sniffing activities in the streets. Street children were observed to use aliases as well as possess common codes and terms when referring to events and people in the street environment. Among the street children in Binan, the values they maintained at home as well as in the streets were fundamental manifestations of their cultural orientation. One of these values connotes showing respect for elders.

The participation of these street children in a nongovernmental organization project will also be discussed.

Major Activities of Street Children

Environmental learning processes and strategies used by the street children will be described and discussed through these major activities in the streets.

Street Gang Membership

All of the 12 street children in the study belong to a gang or what the children referred to as a "frat", a shorter term for fraternity. Five of the 12 children belong to the AKHRO fraternity, four of the children belong to the Five Balls group, and five were "Samahan ng Rugby Boys" (Organization of Rugby Boys) or SRB group. Rugby refers to an all purpose glue that street children used for their glue sniffing activities. Street groups had names which denoted the children's activities and their gang turfs or "hang outs". When describing their "frats", the children stated,

Our frat is for us, helping one another for our needs, means of earning a living. We are like brothers. Especially when we need protection. There are members of our frat who are older than me, married with kids, and there are some who are younger than me. (Child 8)

We call it a frat, because its like an organization with its members helping each other. It's like having somebody on your side. There are several frats, there is AKHRO, Octopus, or Tau Gamma. Most of us are members of AKHRO, but the others do not participate a lot because they move to other places. Frats have specific places where they hang around. There was one child who was killed because he belonged to one of the

frats. I know him he was only 14 years old when he got killed. No one claimed his body afterwards. I'm afraid of joining such groups, but I think it is the 'pakikisama' (comradery) and how you relate to others that matter." (Child 6)

Street Gang membership as described by the children and observed by the researcher had the following definitions:

1. Having Identifiable Marks. The children had tatoos symbolizing their membership in a gang. Four of the children had the Five Balls symbol for a tatoo, signifying membership in the organization.

2. Displaying Gang Symbols, Slogans on Personal Items. Written on the shirts, short pants, wrist bands of three children were the gang name AKHRO and the batch year that they belong to. Gang graffiti with the same "AKHRO" were also exposed on the walls of commercial establishments in public places and the walls of the center where the boys were contacted in this study.

3. Claiming a Turf. The children stated the importance of having a meeting place for their group. They have a designated territory where they hang around as a group. They called the place their territory, a venue solely and exclusively for meeting group members. Most of the children described their specific alleys in the market place as their turf.

The street environment is perceived as a territory for the gang. Having a turf is synonymous to having a place of their own. A territory is a designated place which no one

other than group members have the right to occupy. An intrusion of the territory meant a possible gang fight or gang conflict.

The emerging environmental learning strategy of street children involves group membership. The street gang "frat" mentioned by the children had the functions of companionship, leisure activities, and syndicate tasks. A paramount concern among street children was to be able to belong to a group. Joining a group insures the young street child support and protection from his fellow group members. This is a common practice. To be involved in a group or to belong to a group is very important to the street children in the study.

Aside from belonging to gangs and "frats," children in the study used aliases and possessed secret codes when communicating with other street children.

Use of Aliases

An analysis of the use and purpose of an alias name among street children helps decode the complexities of their street life. It provides a description and explanation of an environmental learning strategy among street children that reflects their perception of themselves and their social environment.

Street children were observed to use aliases, which are names that usually revealed their perception of themselves.

They identified themselves to different people using various names. Eight of the 12 children in the study had confided to the researcher of having at least three different aliases, aside from their real name. According to these children, they have three different aliases used for three different groups, one for gangs and fraternities, one for police officers and social workers, and one for close friends or peers. Two of the children have been using two aliases, one of which they are known for among police officers and another alias that is used for close friends and peers. Two of the children had been using more than three aliases, which they use when introducing and identifying themselves to different gangs and fraternities that they join.

Aliases are acceptable to street children because more often than not they have chosen them. In most cases, the children deliberately change their name when introducing themselves to new acquaintances or when moving to another place. Subconsciously a street child groups the people into categories and then chooses a specific alias applicable to these people. The child tries to conceptualize the role he wishes to portray if he considers himself a part of this group. Often times, street children choose aliases which promulgate the valued norms of their social milieu. In a street child's world, the use of aliases can serve to create or maintain social groupings. Using aliases can define and

strengthen boundaries of the group. It can maintain resentment towards outcasts.

In addition to delineating individuals or groups and promulgating prevalent norms, an alias is used sometimes to mask one's identity from outsiders. It serves as a mechanism by which a child can hide his true identity from those who have power over him such as the police officers, social workers, or fellow gang members.

On the other hand, the use of aliases bridges the social gap which may exist between strangers or those who may belong to different social groups. A specific alias chosen by the street child himself may enhance familiarity and bridge closer relationships among peer group members or his pseudo extended family in the streets. The use of an alias is an expression of a street child's personality or attitude towards his existence in the streets and the events in the streets.

An alias is a self-chosen name, a self-assumed title giving direction to the child's belief and response to the social environment. A street child could have as many aliases as he would like to have, but since he must assume one at a time, the child would perhaps choose one which represents his attitude for the moment. A street child may decide to change his alias when assuming a new status in a group or acquiring newer experiences.

In using "aliases", the children undergo the following

strategies: (a) categorizing people in groupings, (b) modifying identity accordingly, (c) promoting group norms, (d) enhancing familiarity, and (e) bridging of social gaps.

The emerging environmental learning process in this activity of using "aliases" entails: (a) perceiving oneself in relation to different groups, (b) perceiving oneself in relation to the group norms, (c) perceiving the street as a venue for socialization between group members, (d) promulgating prevalent group norms and acting accordingly.

Use of Secret Codes and Terms

The children in the study used secret codes when communicating with other street children. Street children who belong to gangs often have secret codes to signify their belonging to such secret societies. The need to belong is extremely strong to these street children. To be able to have that sense of belonging, there must be shared activities, conceptions, orientations which are fostered by a common language that designates and delineates the group from others. In the case of the street children, they have developed their own secret codes to strengthen companionship among group members and to provide group seclusion.

The children have specific codes when referring to their illegal activities like taking drugs and stealing. They have terms that refer to law enforcers such as the Police. They have a code for stopping a specific activity

especially when their plan has been revealed or when preempting a plan. Thus, it was common to hear the children using such terms as "maong", "labong", "namimitak", "dilihensiya", "tike", and "bugsoy". The children possessed a common language and shared meaning of terms pertaining to common street activities. They created group boundaries by identifying those "who are in" (those who understand the meaning), and "who are out" (those who do not understand the meaning). This is manifested through the use of secret codes.

For the street children the use of secret codes is an identification of oneself as being part of a group. The group, in this context, is not necessarily limited to a gang or a "frat", but the community of street children in the area.

The process of coping, surviving, and learning from their environment in the streets entails: (a) perceiving oneself as a member of a group as opposed to nonmembers, (b) perceiving oneself as belonging to a group, (c) promoting group isolation, and (d) promoting group solidarity.

The use of aliases and use of secret codes are boundary maintenance strategies among street children. Such practices can be taken as the symbolic equivalent of territoriality. These street children lay claim of a specific domain, an effort of isolating themselves from others. They take control of specific group territory.

Glue Sniffing

Rampant among the street children in the Philippines is the practice of inhaling poisonous fumes from products used in domestic as well as commercial activities. Most of these children in the streets resort to sniffing gasoline or kerosene in addition to glue. A common practice involves the deliberate inhalation of the fumes of glue "rugby" (a brand name of a glue) for the immediate purpose of gaining a feeling of pleasure similar to the early stages of intoxication of alcohol. Two of the children in the study have admitted sniffing "rugby", to take away hunger pains.

The volatile substance/solvent in glue is Toluene, an aromatic hydrocarbon which is chemically related to Benzene and which is also found in plastic cement, paints, paint lacquers and thinners (Callen, 1984). Toluene, may be the most widely abused inhalants either by itself or as an ingredient in other abused substances, such as glues, solvents and paint sprays (Callen, 1984). Toluene (methylbenzene) is a colorless liquid used extensively as a solvent.

The appeal of such substances among street children could also be attributed to reasons that entail easy availability and low cost. Inhalant drug abuse was described to involve voluntary, intentional inhalation of gases or vapors in order to achieve a modified state of consciousness. The usual intention is to be in a state of

euphoria or as street children would say, "high". Being "high" involves being light-headed, a feeling they describe as seemingly "floating" in the air. With such feeling of dissociation from one's real world, it provides a temporary escape from problems, stress, and other concerns of everyday living. The practice is an effort to escape from reality to a chemically induced fantasy world. Other than the children's own assent of experiencing the incident, glue sniffing among street children could be ascertained through the following observable indicators:

1. Environmental Signs. Glue stains on clothing is an insinuation. Glue stains could be seen on the child's shirt. Another indicator is the presence of empty containers, bottles, or plastic bags with hardened glue.

2. Physical Appearance. Observable characteristics of these street children who are engaged in glue sniffing, involve the enlargement of pupils and the presence of red spots and marks around mouth and nose.

3. Behavioral Characteristics. Glue sniffers in general are observed to possess a dreamy, drowsy look. They tend to have poor concentration and may be irritable and listless. They tend to lose appetite. They tend to show similar actions as that of drunken behavior.

4. Process of Glue Sniffing. This drug activity is known as "sniffing", the inhaling of volatile hydrocarbons in certain glues. In order to produce a high state of

intoxication, the user puts a portion of the glue in a plastic container or paper bag and inhales the fumes. Another method is putting a portion of the glue in the chest part of the child's shirt or any piece of cloth wherein the child can easily pull it up right in front of his nose. It may also be direct inhalation from the container. About half an hour after inhalation, intoxication occurs as that of alcohol intoxication occurs. This is followed by characteristic symptoms of double vision, drowsiness, and sometimes hallucinations (Cohen, 1977). Street children pursued glue sniffing in various areas even in public places.

According to Cohen (1977), the reasons for using volatile substances for abuse include: (a) Rapid onset of effect. They are easily and rapidly absorbed across the alveolar membrane and distributed throughout the body. They traverse the blood-brain barrier easily and because of their lipophilic nature tend to accumulate in brain tissue. (b) Quality and Pattern of Effect. Most users report that they have decreased inhibitions and feeling of a "floaty euphoria". (c) Low Cost. Many of the solvent users are from low income families, as the case of the street children. The solvents are usually in the form of domestic products which are inexpensive. (d) Easy Availability. Many of the volatile substances are available in homes, in most households. These are materials that are available in

supermarkets, hardware stores, and drug stores.

(e) Convenient Packaging. Many of these substances are sold in small containers that can be hidden with ease.

(f) Legality. In contrast to alcohol and the controlled substances, purchase and the possession of these substances is not illegal in most jurisdictions.

Children in general, both preadolescents and adolescents are considered as an important population on studies related to drug abuse, because of its relation to brain development (Elliot, 1989). It is during this stage that the higher level cognitive attributes of planning, evaluation, flexibility, internalized behavioral control, higher level of abstracting skills, and ethical awareness are developing (Golden, 1985). Use of drugs at this point could interfere with the development of one or more of the above mentioned attributes and may have bearing on later personality functions.

Janzen, Richter, Griesel, and Joubert (1990) evaluated by means of neuropsychological and neurological procedures 22 black South African street boys who had histories of prolonged glue sniffing. The neuropsychological examination showed that the boys had visual-spatial difficulties, visual scanning problems, language deficiencies, motor incoordination, memory deficits, and attention and concentration problems. The neurological examination showed that two boys had cerebellar signs. The study indicates

what may be physiological implications or effects that "glue sniffing" can cause on street children.

Glue sniffing and drug activities of similar nature are viewed as expressions of psychological needs that should be investigated by concerned parents, educators, and social workers who are aware of the problem of these children. The emerging strategy for learning demonstrated by the children in their glue sniffing activity includes: (a) alienating oneself from problems and stress, which in this case of "glue sniffing" is through temporary intoxication, and which is achieved through another strategy which concerns, (b) adhering to what other boys are doing, not only in such conditions, but also in other activities that promote and declare the norms of the street children in the group.

Considering the children's rationale for their "glue sniffing" activity as an effort to escape or alienate oneself from the problems in the home front, a street child is made to perceive himself in relation to his family or other significant individuals involved in his problems at home and to find ways of eluding these problems. A street child then engages in ways that other street children have diverted to when preoccupied with such problems. The emerging environmental learning process involves a street child's perception of self in relation to other street boys or his peer group. In relating to other street boys, there is that desire to "fit in" and to show that he belongs to

the group by following and imitating them in their activities. Perceiving the streets as a venue by which to find ways to escape and find freedom from stress and problems at home was emphasized by the children who were engaged in this activity as a strategy for adapting to the street environment.

Playing in the Streets

Street children exhibit characteristics of resourcefulness and creativity in their play in the streets. Their play revealed a wide range of activities involving creativity, imagination, fantasy, and risks. Street children were engaged in play activities that included games, sports, and the creation of improvised play materials. Accessibility and availability of public parks, centers, and parking lots, provide street children a venue for most of their play activities.

The games that street children played usually involved groupings. Each child belonged to a team and team work was involved. Such games frequently took place in parking lots, and nonbusy streets. No significant equipment was needed for their hiding, chasing, guessing, and singing games.

These children have many opportunities to play out of doors especially during the summer. The street children were especially fond of playing basketball in improvised courts on street corners. Trees in the public parks offered

wonderful opportunities for exploration and bird shooting. With their sling shots, made of branches from a tree and a piece of rubber band, children shoot at birds from atop trees. Oftentimes, they compete with each other in climbing a tree, the winner being the one who can reach the top fastest or one who can reach the highest height. A tree is sometimes a "look out" for gang members to watch for those who may invade their designated territory.

When the weather is extremely warm, children spend their afternoon swimming in the nearby river. A game that they usually play in the river involves searching for coins and other objects thrown in the river by other children. Jumping from the bridge or from a boulder at the edge of the river, they learn how to swim and stay underwater in search of the coins. The team which gets the most number of coins is proclaimed winners of the game. Such rivers serve as places to bathe and do laundry as well. In such cases, play activities are combined with domestic tasks.

During the typhoon season, children spend some time frolicking and wading in the flooded streets brought about by torrential rain and clogged sewers. At times, they are hired by homeowners to unclog the drainage and manholes leading to sewers by collecting the street wastes and garbage that clog the drainage. Thus, some of their play activities are combined with other money earning tasks.

The street children in this study possessed almost no

purchased toys. Toys were made by the children themselves. Children resourcefully made use of indigenous materials and exercised creativity and ingenuity when making their toys. For example, the children improvised and created their own scooter using discarded materials such as planks of wood, used car wheel bearings, and used nails and wire. Out of the junk yard, they salvage wheels as hoops for rolling or for constructing toy wagons or carts.

They used whatever was at hand as props for playing. Once they were approached by a street worker with a camera, they eagerly borrowed it, took turns holding it, and became "reporters" and "directors", comparing themselves to what they have seen on television shows. It exemplifies how these children pretend creatively and imitate what they see on television.

With the urban streets as their domain, some of their play activities are often dangerous and risky. Some of the children are fond of jumping on rear bumpers of cars, tricycles, and jeepneys for rides or as a contest among themselves. One who gets a free ride to the town market without being caught by the police or reprimanded by the driver often wins a bet among peers. Such skills serve as vital means of securing a free ride around the town as well as showing his peers his skills and abilities which in turn enhances his status among the group. It also illustrates the connection of play and survival under very dangerous,

and risky situations.

The street children experience and are exposed to a variety of risks and stress in finding for themselves and in an effort to survive in the streets. Given these environmental conditions, the street children have developed creative and ingenious as well as imaginative fantasies through play. These play materials are created out of necessity and want. They have learned to employ their ingenuity and creative skills as an adaptive strategy to enjoy playing and living on the streets.

The emerging strategies for learning that street children employ during play involve: (a) improvisation, pertaining to ingenious use of indigenous materials for play materials, (b) imitation of people, events from television or radio programs, and (d) integration of play with earning and domestic tasks.

The emerging environmental learning process in this activity involved the perception of oneself in comparison to other children who are more privileged with purchased play materials. Creativity through improvisation of play materials is greatly encouraged among these children. Through their playing of games in the street, they engage in activities that foster team effort and competitive play. The street environment is viewed by the children as accessible and available public space for their play activities.

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Earning a Living in the Streets

In their desire to contribute to their own family's economy, children of urban poor families in the Philippines are made to work in the streets at an early age. Parental expectations in such homes extend far beyond the standard chores of providing a "helping hand to mother", but include child labor and financial support. Although parents are responsible for their children's food, clothing, shelter, and for providing social and moral support, they are not financially capable to allocate a large portion of their family's resources for meeting these needs. Such childhood role expectations still hold true today in the Philippine countryside and are maintained in the cities, where most of these families migrate.

A family who migrates to the city has a domestic economy similar to those families back in the countryside. In a typical rural home, the daily activities of family members concern the whole well being of the household. Such contributions are not referred to as economically significant nor referred technically as "work", however, they are engaged in daily tasks (e.g. fetching water, taking care of brothers and sisters, cooking meals) which in actuality help support the family. In the city, such expectations are also necessary and maintained. However, meeting the basic needs such as food, water, and shelter involve costly financial expenditure. To be able to meet

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the basic needs of the family in the city, the children are expected to help in earning a living. Many of these children generally belong to large, low income families, wherein parents are unemployed or irregularly employed and children are made to contribute to household earnings.

Street children are involved in various and numerous ways of earning a living. It is estimated that there are over 100,000 of these children in the Philippines, and that they constitute about three per cent of the child and youth population of major urban centers (Rialp, 1993, p.3).

Most of the children in the study earn their living as assistants in the marketplace. They are "kargadors" (haulers) who carried baskets and other market merchandise. Some are vendors of vegetables and fruits. Most of them sell "sampaguita", Jasminum sambac, flower garlands. In the temporary shelter, they are engaged in raising chicken and fish to sell to neighbors.

Earning a living in the streets also included stealing, begging, and scavenging among street children. Two of the children in the study confided to the researcher that they have been involved in stealing ventures. One of the two children was formerly involved in a gang which stole car accessories. The child was in charge of opening car doors, a task for someone with small hands and arms that could fit in semiopened car windows to be able to reach the car locks. The other child confided to the researcher of his "pick

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pocketing" activities such as stealing purses and bags from people in the market place.

Children begging for money was also a common sight near the church and municipal hall in the town proper. Street children stand near the entrance of the church begging for money from people who visit the church. Food scavenging was common for street children who frequent commercial food establishments in the town proper. One of the children told the researcher his experience,

We needed to wait for left-overs, scrap food in the restaurant. (Left-overs in the restaurant that would otherwise be thrown or given out as scrap food fed to pigs). In Mc Donalds or Shakeys, we are not allowed to roam around we are reprimanded by the police. We are told not to come back again because they will punish us. They tell us that we might get sick and that they would not want to be responsible. (Child 2)

Scavenging for materials that could be sold to junk yard owners was also a common way of earning a living among children in the streets. They frequent garbage dumps for scrap materials such as pieces of metal, plastic, bottles, cans, that are easily sold to junk yard owners.

Due to dire economic need, these children engage in money earning activities at an early age. In an effort to survive in the streets and to help their family in their financial crisis, the children learn to explore ways of earning a living at an early age. Such initiatives foster learning strategies that help these children to fend for themselves.

A street child who attempts to earn a living in the streets to help his family perceives himself as being responsible and obligated to his family. He perceives himself as a member of a financially distressed family. On the other hand, if he earns a living for himself, he perceives himself as someone in dire need who needs to survive and fend for himself in the streets. He engages himself in exchanging his services for monetary resources. The street environment in this context is viewed as a venue for opportunities for earning a living.

Filipino Family Value Orientation

The street children in the study consistently called the social workers "ate" (sister) or "kuya" (brother). It was also common to hear them refer to the elderly social workers as "nanay" (mother) or "tatay" (father). In the temporary shelter as well as in the streets, the children used kinship terminologies to connote existing closeness or to promote such closeness.

Philippine kinship groups consist of consanguineal, affinal, and ritual kinsmen (Mendez, Jocano, Rolda & Matela, 1984). The position or status of every member may be discerned through kinship terminologies (see Figure 4). Such kinship terms suggest not only status but also the corresponding roles and norms governing interaction among kinsmen. Kinship terminologies, both referential and

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vocative, connote duties, obligations, privileges, and behavior patterns expected of kinsmen.

An individual refers to his parent as "magulang" and addresses his father as "tatay" and his mother as "nanay." Parents are expected to support their children, to feed, clothe, and provide shelter for them. Both parents are expected to discipline their children and give them moral and spiritual guidance.

The referential term for sibling is "kapatid". The vocative term for the oldest brother is "kuya" and for the oldest sister "ate". For subsequent older sisters, the term of address is "ate" followed by the first name or nickname. For subsequent older brothers, the term of address is "kuya" followed by the first name or nickname.

Older siblings are responsible for and have authority over younger siblings. They are their siblings' sitters and may impose discipline on them, and punish them if necessary. It is the duty of the older siblings to protect the younger ones and to help their parents support them and educate them if possible. This is especially true in the event of the parents' death, when the oldest child takes over all parental responsibilities. Younger siblings, on the other hand, are expected to obey and respect their older siblings and never to answer or fight back when reprimanded. Even if siblings have grown up, authority continues to be exercised by the older siblings, and due respect is extended to them

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Kinship terminologies are not entirely limited to kin. These are also used with nonkinsmen to connote respect and closeness. Neighbors and friends may use the terms liberally, depending on their own perception of the closeness of their relationships. Thus, a close friend may call his friend's siblings or call older friends "ate" or "kuya". These terms not only connote existing closeness but may be used to promote such closeness. One of the children asked permission to call the researcher "ate", and explained to the researcher that he would like to treat her as an older sister from whom he could seek advice regarding his problems. In the temporary shelter "Bahay ni Maria" center, the children used kinship terminologies. They have used such kinship terminologies to foster a quasi-family atmosphere in the center. One of the children stated his definition of a family to include the staff of "Bahay ni Maria" center, "This is our family.. all the children and the staff members here in the center" (Child 6).

An important Filipino value associated with the use of kinship terminologies is the show of respect for elders. A child does not traditionally address adults by their first names only. He prefixes the respectful titles "mang" (for males) and "aling" (for females) to the first names of men and women. He uses "ate" or "kuya" when referring to his older siblings and cousins.

The street children in the study referred to people using the above mentioned prefixes to show their respect for elders in the marketplace, projecting a respectful image of themselves to these people.

The use of certain words or forms indicates varying degrees of respect or familiarity. Unlike the English language, Tagalog has variations of the second-person singular pronoun to indicate respect. "Kayo" and "sila", are respectful ways of addressing older persons.

Other than kinship terminologies, the Tagalog respect term "po" or "ho" is also used to foster respect for elders. An example is when answering "Oo" (yes), a child is taught to answer "Opo." These are the equivalent of saying sir or madam. Two of the children in the study reminded another child about this value.

Remember your sister is older than you, where is your sign of respect? Remember to say 'po.' In our house, my father is always cursing us with bad words but he never forgets to use 'po' when it comes to my grandmother. That is one thing I can't forget about my father. (Child 2)

Once in a while we respect our elders, let us remember that some people are older than us. (Child 3)

In the Philippines, it is also a common sight in rural households for adults to encourage children to make "mano", a gesture of homage wherein a child is to kiss the hands of his parents and elder kin when arriving home. This respect is extended to other members of the community who may not

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In the Philippines, it is also a common sight in rural households for adults to encourage children to make "mano", a gesture of homage wherein a child is to kiss the hands of his parents and elder kin when arriving home. This respect is extended to other members of the community who may not

necessarily be relatives or kin. Such gestures if performed by the growing child, show that he has internalized the value of respect. While the children were in the center, they were taught to practice such gestures as the "mano" especially to elderly visitors. Respect for elders is a highly valued relation between adults and young people in the Philippines.

What has been described are some of the values transmitted to the Filipino child during the early process of socialization. Such values refer to standards that people use to view actions and ideas whether they are desirable or undesirable, right or wrong, appropriate or inappropriate, or guides to human behavior. Transmitting these values begins early in life in the Philippine culture. In the absence of their parents in the streets, the children in the streets promulgate these values in an effort to preserve family values, as well as promote their own sense of family orientation in the streets.

In the case of the street children in this study who were contacted through the center, religiosity among the boys was also observed. Schedules and daily activities in the center reflected religious events. Use of decals such as a scapular and rosary were common among the street children in the center. One of the children showed his rosary and referred to it as his own lucky charm for protection.

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In demonstrating significant Filipino values, a street child perceives self with regard to his family's cultural value orientation. A child also perceives self in relation to a support family founded in the streets. A street child exhibits ways of initiating closeness and familiarity with others in his search for or creating a family in the streets.

Participation in Programs

The children in the study were participants in a program for street children sponsored by a non-governmental organization, the "Samahan ng Anak ni Maria" (Organization of the child of Mary) which provided a temporary shelter "Bahay ni Maria" (House of Mary) for abandoned, neglected street children in Binan, Laguna.

The project is a response to the concern for children who stray away from home, take sanctuary in the streets, and are not properly guided and sheltered. To keep children ages 7 to 15 from acquiring negative habits which may eventually turn them into juvenile delinquents, the organization provides a temporary shelter (referred to as the "center" by the children) for the rehabilitation of the group of street children found in the market area of Binan. The children are provided with basic necessities such as food, clothing, and a decent place to dwell, through its program. The children learn skills in starting livelihood

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projects, such as growing "sampaguita" (Jasminum sambac) and making flower garlands, growing vegetables, and raising poultry. The proceeds from these income generating projects are used for the continuous operation and management of the program. The projects also provide income to the children who participated in the activities.

Children are provided assistance through referrals to other social welfare agencies or private and public medical institutions. When the children are sick, they are either brought to private clinics or to government coordinated health centers in the area. The children are made aware of available social service programs sponsored by the government's Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Health, and the Department of Education. Knowing that assistance is available and knowing where to go and whom to approach help children feel more privileged.

The staff and social workers in the "center" supervised the activities of the children. The activities of the children in the center, other than participating in income generating and livelihood projects include attending informal reading and writing lessons, and attending informal sessions of social workers on the topic of health and sanitation, good grooming practices, and religious values.

While providing assistance and doing activities together, interaction between the staff members, social workers, and the street children are fostered.

Table 2

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Table 10. Environmental Learning Strategies

Major Activities and Environmental Learning Strategies

Street Gang Membership

- Identifying oneself as a member of a group.
- Receiving support and protection from a group.
- Acquiring strategies for survival through group.

Using "Aliases"

- Categorizing people in groupings.
- Fitting one's identity according to group norms.
- Promoting group norms.
- Enhancing familiarity, bridging social gaps.

Use of Secret Codes and Terms

- Possessing common language.
- Sharing meaning and understanding of terms pertaining to common activities.
- Creating group boundaries, "who is in", "who is out"
- Identifying oneself as part of a group.
- Adhering to governing system of a group.

Glue Sniffing

- Adhering to what other boys are doing, "peer modeling."
- Alienating oneself from problems and stress through intoxication.

Playing in the Streets

- Ingenious use of indigenous materials for play materials.
- Improvisation of play materials.
- Imitation of people and events from television and radio.
- Integration of play with work and domestic tasks.

Working in the Streets

- Engaging in money earning activities at an early age.
- Exploring ways of earning a living.
- Expanding social networks.

Filipino Family Value Orientation

- Demonstrating Filipino kinship values and terminologies.
- Demonstrating respect for all elders.
- Treating street friends as family.
- Demonstrating respect for the older street gang members as older siblings.
- Caring for younger street gang members as younger siblings.

Participating in Sponsored Programs for Street Children

- Availing of services and resources provided by organizations.
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In this study, the concept of environmental learning, was initially assumed to consist of the subprocesses of perceiving and interacting (see Figure 5).

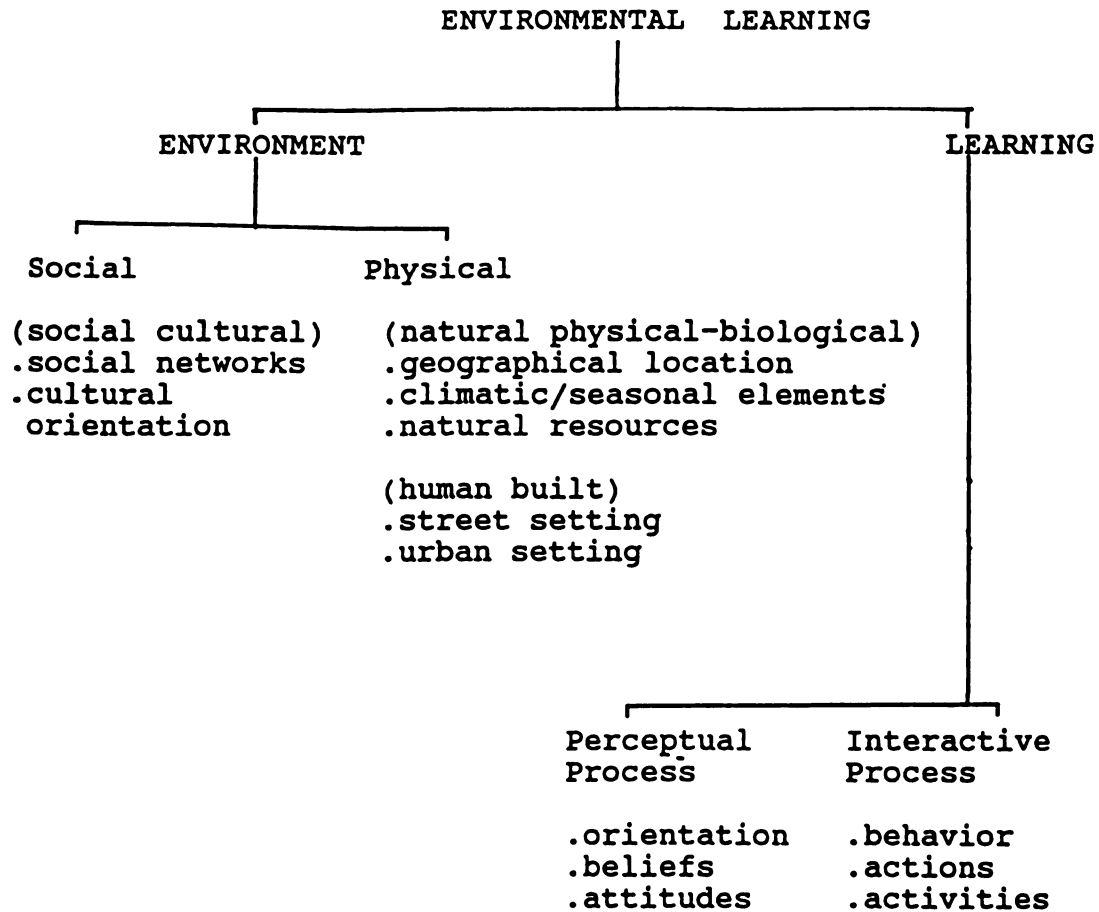


Figure 5. Environmental learning conceptual framework.

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Mentioned below are some of the street children's emerging perceptions and interactions with their environment that provided avenues for learning in the context of their survival in the streets. In analyzing the findings of the study, however, three other subprocesses emerged: the adapting, experiencing, and observing processes.

Perceiving the Social Environment

The street children's responses indicate the significance of their social environment in their learning of adaptive strategies necessary in the streets. The children attribute much of their learning to neighbors, playmates, older kids, and radio and television personalities. The children stated that they learned by "following" what these important people were doing. Implied in the children's responses are the strong influences these people have on street children.

Street children, in the absence of parents and siblings, seek adult role models in their immediate social environment. In the same context, Bandura (1986) believes that children primarily learn through imitation of models in their social environment.

The children mentioned having learned from people that they have seen on television programs and those that they have listened to on radio programs. The children have thought of them as people that they would like to be, or

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wanted to follow. Television personalities, for example, were seen as "idols" and radio personalities, as knowledgeable counselors for solving personal problems. Older peers were viewed as experienced and competent leaders, or models, in terms of coping with the harsh realities in the streets. Playmates were influential in areas concerning verbal expressions, use of secret codes and street terms, enhancing prohibited activities in the streets such as glue sniffing and stealing, influencing their manner and mode of dressing such as in the use of ornaments, and influencing their views on cultural values.

The description of several of the street activities suggest another important component of their social environment which is the gang or the "frat" that most of the children belong to. Perceiving oneself as a member of a gang or belonging to a group was common among the street children. It was implied that belonging to a group was a necessity in order to cope and survive in the streets. To belong to a group meant finding support and protection in the streets. Looking for a group to belong to meant looking for a support system in their process of coping and surviving in the streets.

Another important implication of the manifested Yearning of street children to belong to a group was the Promulgating or promoting of group norms. There was a need for them to "fit in". Children tended to test their

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developing identities. The concept of a group refers to a circle of acquaintances who know one another and who serve as a source of reference or comparison for one another.

Street children in this study were in the adolescent stage. At this stage, adolescents are described as generally striving for adult status and a sense of identity in a complex world such as the urban environment. Adolescents are confused about their role in society. The immediate social environment provides avenues towards the fulfillment of their role in society. Adolescents are inclined to partake in groups. Conformity to others, a sense of sameness is sought after by these adolescents. The responses of the street children add to the evidence of adolescent role confusion.

Perceiving of the Street Environment

The street environment defined by the children as their territory, is a venue for socialization, for adventure, for freedom from stress, for opportunities of earning a living, for meeting acquaintances in the absence of a family support system, and as available and accessible public space for play activities.

Interacting with the Social Environment

Most of the interactions of the street children involving their social environment involved group dynamics.

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Street children join "gangs" and "frats" in search of support and protection. Membership functions involve promulgating group norms and acting accordingly to these norms. Group solidarity is promoted.

As a function of searching for one's identity, a street child compares himself to other children. A common outcome is adhering to what most of the other street children are preoccupied with, one of which often entails following prohibited activities such as glue sniffing. In an effort to compromise with what limited financial and material resources one has in comparison to other children, street children improvise play materials. Play activities may serve as means by which these children compare themselves with others. In some cases, play is when children imitate others. They learn from interaction with each other, especially during play activities that involve team work. Seven of the children stated learning "by playing". They were always involved in games and sports that had team groupings. Each child belonged to a team, was part of a team effort, and had his part in the team's winning or losing the game. The feeling of being a part of a team was deemed important by the children. One child stressed that having a "kakampe" (having someone on his side) was important to him. He said that he wanted to play and belong to a group and win the game over another group.

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wherein one's effort is counted and considered a very important component of the group's achievement. In competitive play activities, a child is made to exert much needed effort in order to succeed. It helps provide the drive needed to encourage street children to work harder, succeed, and excel.

Such interactions are descriptions of the common activities of children in the streets viewed in the context of learning in the streets.

Physical Environment Related Interactions

Changes in the activities of the children in the streets are influenced by weather conditions and seasonal changes. Weather conditions are considered a limitation for street children's play activities. They define the types of play activities that are employed by the children and dictate whether the play activity should be an indoor or outdoor activity.

There are also changes in their ways of earning a living due to seasonal changes. In the Philippines, the dry season or the wet season, has a bearing on the possibilities of earning a living among street children. In the dry summer season, there are more possible ways of earning a living, especially vending food products to tourists or vacationers in the area. With the location of Binan being near Laguna de Bay, and close to the hot spring resort towns

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of Calamba and Los Banos, vacationers who frequent the area are viewed as customers in the eyes of entrepreneur street children. Street children devise ways of earning a living and taking advantage of the influx of vacationers in the town.

Another concern from the human built environment, which does not inhibit or constrain street children in their street activities, is the threat of environmental pollution. Air pollutants in the streets where these street children could be found, include carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, oxides of nitrogen, suspended particulates, and total organic gases (Philippine Almanac, 1990).

The Environmental Management Bureau (1990) stated the following information about the pollutants and their physiological effects on individuals. Carbon monoxide is formed from incomplete burning of carbon containing fuels such as gasoline, fuel oil, and other petroleum products. Carbon monoxide concentration of 50 parts per million (ppm) of air can cause dizziness, nausea, and can aggravate chronic heart disorders, and cause heart attacks. Sulfur dioxide is derived from burning fuel containing sulfur. Exposure to sulfur dioxide can increase the potency of cancer causing air pollutants. Oxides of nitrogen are formed from the intense heat and pressure of combustion processes. Most are emitted as nitric oxide, which converts rapidly in the atmosphere to highly toxic nitrogen dioxide

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which restricts breathing and affects the respiratory system. Suspended particulates are solid wastes from incompletely burned materials, dusts and wastes from industrial and agricultural operations. They may be carriers of toxic materials such as arsenic, cadmium, and lead. Total organic gases are emitted during the combustion processes, such as in the operation of automobile engines and industrial boilers. Air pollution is an environmental risk about which street children are not aware and concerned.

Street children were fond of bathing in rivers which may likely be polluted. Rivers are most likely to be polluted because of careless practices of people spilling motor fuel and dumping garbage into rivers, lakes, or streams. Other water pollutants include dyes, detergents, and other harmful chemicals from manufacturing establishments and factories in the area. The drinking water sources of street children are exposed and susceptible to microorganisms or chemicals that can cause diseases such as diarrhea, dysentery, cholera, and gastroenteritis.

What has been described in this particular chapter are the major activities of the street children as observed by the researcher. The researcher describes how these activities exemplify some of the perception and interaction of the street children with their social and physical environment (as shown in Tables 11, 12, 13, and 14).

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Table 11. Social Environment Related Perceptions

Activities/Practices	Perceptions of Street Children of themselves in relation to their Social Environment
Street Gang Membership	As a member of a group. As belonging to a group.
Using Aliases	As belonging to a group, and conforming to group norms.
Using Secret Codes	As belonging to a group, and conforming to group norms.
Glue Sniffing	As belonging to a group, differentiating oneself from other nonmembers.
Playing in the Streets	As a member of a group, doing what others do when faced with problems and undergoing stressful situations.
Earning a Living in the Streets	In relation to other children in the street environment who serve as playmates.
	As someone with a responsibility to help support his family financially.
Filipino Family Value Orientation	As someone who needs to survive in the streets.
Participating in Programs	In relation to street friends in the absence of, lack of, a family support mechanism.
	In relation to social workers who provide assistance to them.

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Table 12. Physical Environment Related Perceptions

Activities/Practices	Perceptions of Street Environment
Street Gang Membership	Street as a territory.
Using Aliases	Street as a venue for meeting group members.
Using Secret Codes and Terms	Street as a venue for meeting with peers who use the same secret codes and terms.
Glue Sniffing	Street as a venue for adventure and freedom from stress and family problems.
Playing in the Streets	Street as accessible and available public space for play activities.
Earning a Living in the Streets	Street as a venue where one can work and earn money.
Filipino Family Value Orientation	Street as a venue for meeting acquaintances and companions in the absence of their family.
Participating in Programs	Street as a venue for meeting social workers who can help them.

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Table 13. Social Environment Related Interactions

Activities/Practices	Interactions
Street Gang Membership	Joining a group. Seeking support from fellow group members.
Using Aliases	Promoting prevalent group norms and acting accordingly.
Using Secret Codes and Terms	Promoting group isolation. Promoting group solidarity.
Glue Sniffing	Adhering to what other boys are doing when alienating oneself from problems and stress.
Playing in the Streets	Engaging in play activities which involve team work and competition.
Earning a Living in the Streets	Providing services, doing tasks for others, in order to earn money.
Filipino Family Value Orientation	Initiating closeness and familiarity with others. Seeking companionship offered by street friends in the absence of family in the streets.
Participating in Programs	Cooperating with social workers when availing of services and resources in programs.

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Table 14. Physical Environment Related Interactions

Activities/Practices	Interactions
Playing in the Streets	Changes in play activities as influenced by weather conditions and seasonal changes. Health conditions of street children associated with air and water pollution in the streets. Exposure to street hazards (vehicular accidents).
Earning a Living in the Streets	Changes in ways of earning a living based on seasonal changes. Health conditions of street children associated with air pollution in the streets. Exposure to street hazards (vehicular accidents).

The researcher developed insights regarding the use of the term "interaction". Interactions denote actions that happen among, between, or involving street children and their environment. The term is appropriately used in denoting interaction with the social environment, where interaction is two way and involves both the street children and others belonging to the social-cultural environment. However, in denoting the changes in the activities of the children due to conditions in the natural-physical

environment (i.e. climate, weather, and seasonal changes), the use of "reaction" seems more appropriate. Changes in the street children's activities are done as a response to an environmental stimulus or influence. Such response of the street children to the physical environment paves the way to another subprocess that emerged from the findings. The response is a way of adapting to the environment. Moreover, some of the environmental learning strategies identified in this study among street children emerge as adaptation strategies that these children employ to survive in the streets. The environmental learning of street children should include the subprocess of adaptation.

Adapting as an Environmental Learning Subprocess

Adaptation is a process that explains the responses of children in an effort to survive in the streets. Adaptation stresses the fact that children have their specific methods of responding to a different way of life in the streets. Earning a living at an early age fosters independence and sense of responsibility among street children. A street child attempts to fend for himself at an early age, thus proving his capabilities to be able to live and survive in the streets alone in the absence of his family. A sense of responsibility is developed early among street children who have to leave their homes and seek ways of earning a living to contribute to the financial resources of the family.

In the absence of a street child's family in the streets, he develops a support system through interaction with peers, and close acquaintances in the streets. This is enhanced through kinship terminologies and encouraged through demonstration of significant cultural values which promote closeness, familiarity, and a sense of "family". Not having a home, and in the absence of their family, street children respond by devising ways to maintain a defined "fit" between their needs and what their given urban environment could provide towards the achievement of these needs.

Due to their desire to have the same amenities as their more privileged counterparts, street children are made to show their ingenuity and resourcefulness in producing their own toys and play things. The children were observed to make their own toys out of indigenous or scrap materials found in the streets. Adaptation is, therefore, a process that describes the ability of a child to conform with its changing social environment and its distinct street environment.

Observing as an Environmental Learning Subprocess

Another emerging subprocess that may be included in the environmental learning process in the context of the survival of street children, is the process of observation. When asked how they thought they learned in the streets, the

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children's responses included "by following others".

Children acquired behaviors by observing the experiences of others.

Learning by observing is concerned with behaviors which are acquired without any direct reinforcement to the learner. Instead, a child observes the behavioral experiences and their consequences, from another person who could be termed as the model. Observational processes encourage children to imitate others, as in the process of social modeling. Learning "by following others", a common response of the children is an aspect of imitation. It means learning something new by watching someone else, without participating actively.

Bandura (1986) states that people who are seen to be powerful, competent at some task, considered attractive and nice to these children, and give praise, are the ones who are typically imitated by children. On the other hand, children who lack self-esteem, are overdependent, or incompetent, are most likely to imitate more than those rated as self-assured or self-confident.

Two of the children have stated that they have observed their friends as being influenced by others, observing and following what others are doing in their peer group.

He keeps on following, always doing what others are doing imitating others. (Child 13 on Child 10)

They are all following what the others are doing.
(Child 12 about other kids)

One of the children provided a rationale for following older peers, stating that he wanted to attempt and try what others are doing to find out his own capabilities. The statement suggests that the child wanted to prove to himself that he could do what others were doing in the streets in spite of being younger. Younger children, due to their inexperience are, therefore, more likely to imitate others who are seen as more powerful and competent.

You are so young like the rest that you like to follow others. (Child 3 to Child 12)

Why is it bad to try what others are doing to find out if you can do it too ? (Child 12)

Bandura (1977) points out a number of reasons for the major importance of observational learning, the effects of which are the same as those of behavior-contingent learning: (a) the acquisition of new patterns of behavior, (b) the strengthening or weakening of previously learned inhibitions and (c) the facilitation of previously learned responses.

Through play, the children's tendency to imagine and imitate is greatly encouraged. The children in this study enjoyed making believe and pretending to be someone else by copying what they observed others were doing on television shows. Playing in this case is role playing, reproducing or mirroring events in exactly the same way they have observed it to have occurred.

Membership in groups provides many opportunities for observing and learning from social models. Street children

who contribute to the cohesiveness of a group by conforming to the observed norms of the majority will be rewarded with group acceptance. On the other hand, those who do not conform could be excluded from the group. One of these norms may be to behave illegally such as stealing and glue-sniffing.

Experiencing as an Environmental Learning Subprocess

Another emerging subprocess involves the pivotal role of experience among street children. Experiencing is learning from one's doing in the past or an event that happened in the past and is applicable either at present or in the future. These experiences are useful information for whenever such circumstances would arise again.

Experience "By Doing It"

Learning "by doing it" was a learning strategy that street children identified. This strategy suggests the underlying initiative of these children to prove independently their ability to survive in the streets like the others in their peer group.

A street child realized what he did wrong in the past and has learned never to do it again. Through time, for example, a child realized what he did wrong and the consequence of his mistake not only to himself, but also his family. He has learned never to do it again. As this child stated, "I learned from what had happened to us, our family"

(Child 1). Also important is the inclusion of time in such experience, stressing what change may occur over time and what they have learned from the change.

Another incident which made these children learn from their own experiences is when caught and punished by law enforcers for something done illegally, such as stealing. They learned that such negative behavior would entail punishment from law enforcers. Knowing the circumstances of such behavior, children are discouraged from doing such behavior again.

Experience "By Assisting Others"

Learning "by assisting others" was stressed by two of the children in the study. Both children helped and assisted their mother in selling food products in the market. One of the children regarded providing assistance to his mother by selling vegetables in the market place as a learning experience. This child stated that he learned to count when he was assisting his mother when they were selling string beans in the market. The other child learned how to count money and compute the exact change while assisting his mother in selling meat products. In these activities, the children learned through practical involvement in a task with another person. The children were subordinates in a task and someone was there to help them out and "figure out" their mistakes.

The following are examples that help describe the

procedures utilized when coding and analyzing the findings of the study. It also attempts to describe how the findings were found to indicate and imply the processes of adapting, observing, and experiencing as environmental learning processes of street children.

Example 1. Adapting as an Environmental Learning Process

Findings:

Earning a living at an early age.

Initiating relations in the absence of family support mechanism.

Ingenious use of indigenous materials in producing play materials due to insufficient financial resources to avail/purchase toys.

Changing their ways/types of earning a living in the streets according to seasonal conditions.

Changing the types of play activities they engage in according to weather conditions.

Analysis:

Street children conform to the following situations:

- (a) independence, sense of responsibility at an early age
- (b) absence of a family support mechanism
- (c) insufficient financial resources

Street children make changes in their activities according to the following conditions:

- (a) changes in weather
- (b) changes in season

Indications:

Conforming to a different way of life in the streets.
Changing of activities according to changes in environmental conditions.

Process: ADAPTING

Example 2. Observing as an Environmental Learning Process

Findings:

Learning by "watching" what others are doing.
Learning by "imitating" what they see on television.
Learning by "following" what they see others are doing.

Analysis:

Children learn by taking notice of others.
Children learn by considering the behavior of others
that they see.

Indications:

Taking notice of others.
Considering behavior that they see.

Process: OBSERVING

Example 3. Experiencing as Environmental Learning Process

Findings:

Responses of children included,
learning by "doing it"
learning by "assisting"
learning "from what has happened to me in the
past"
learning "from my own experience"

Analysis:

Children learn through personal involvement in a task.
Children learn through personal participation in doing
a task with someone.
Children learn from personal encounters in the past.

Indications:

Personal involvement
Personal participation
Personal encounter

Process: EXPERIENCING

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The study, therefore, suggests three other environmental learning subprocesses that have emerged from the findings of the study. Aside from perceiving and interacting, there are the adapting, observing, and experiencing subprocesses.

Emerging Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework depicting the phenomenon of street children was developed from the findings of the study. The framework suggest that the phenomenon is ecological and could be viewed at the macrolevel, mesolevel, and microlevel. Factors depicting the socioeconomic conditions of the country, such as unemployment, rural to urban migration, and urbanization were involved in the street children phenomenon. Availability of basic needs such as food, water, shelter, inadequate basic infrastructure or housing facilities, accessibility to social services, governmental and nongovernmental agencies are factors in the community that were involved in the street children phenomenon. In the family, situations concerning family relationships, events, socioeconomic background, size, and composition were factors involved in the street children phenomenon. These factors together with factors referring to the individual characteristics of the children, fostered the phenomenon. This framework is shown on Figure 6.

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A conceptual framework for the environmental learning processes of street children was developed for the study. Activities in the streets which included gang membership, glue sniffing, playing in the streets, working in the streets, and participating in sponsored programs, as well as patterns of behavior such as use of aliases, use of secret codes, and demonstrating Filipino kinship values and terminologies, consisted of learning strategies that children initiated in order to cope with life in the streets. These strategies formed the environmental learning processes that street children employ in the streets. Environmental learning processes were found to include, other than perceiving and interacting, processes such as adapting, observing, and experiencing. This framework is shown in Figure 7.

The children in their effort to survive in the streets, relate to their social and physical environment through environmental learning processes. In relating to their physical and social environment, individual characteristics of street children may be considered as intervening factors involved in environmental learning processes.

Within the context of the children's survival in the streets, the environmental learning processes of street children based on the findings of the study is illustrated and shown in Figure 8.

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Microlevel
Situations in
the Family

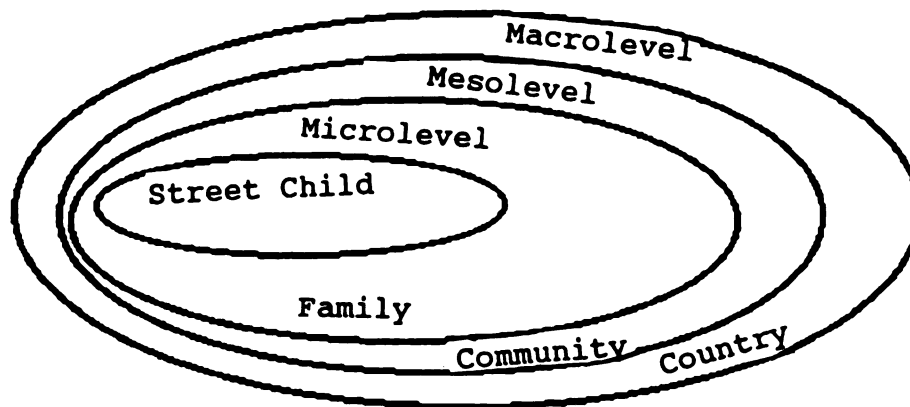


Figure 6. Ecological levels of the street children phenomenon. (Based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological levels of analysis model)

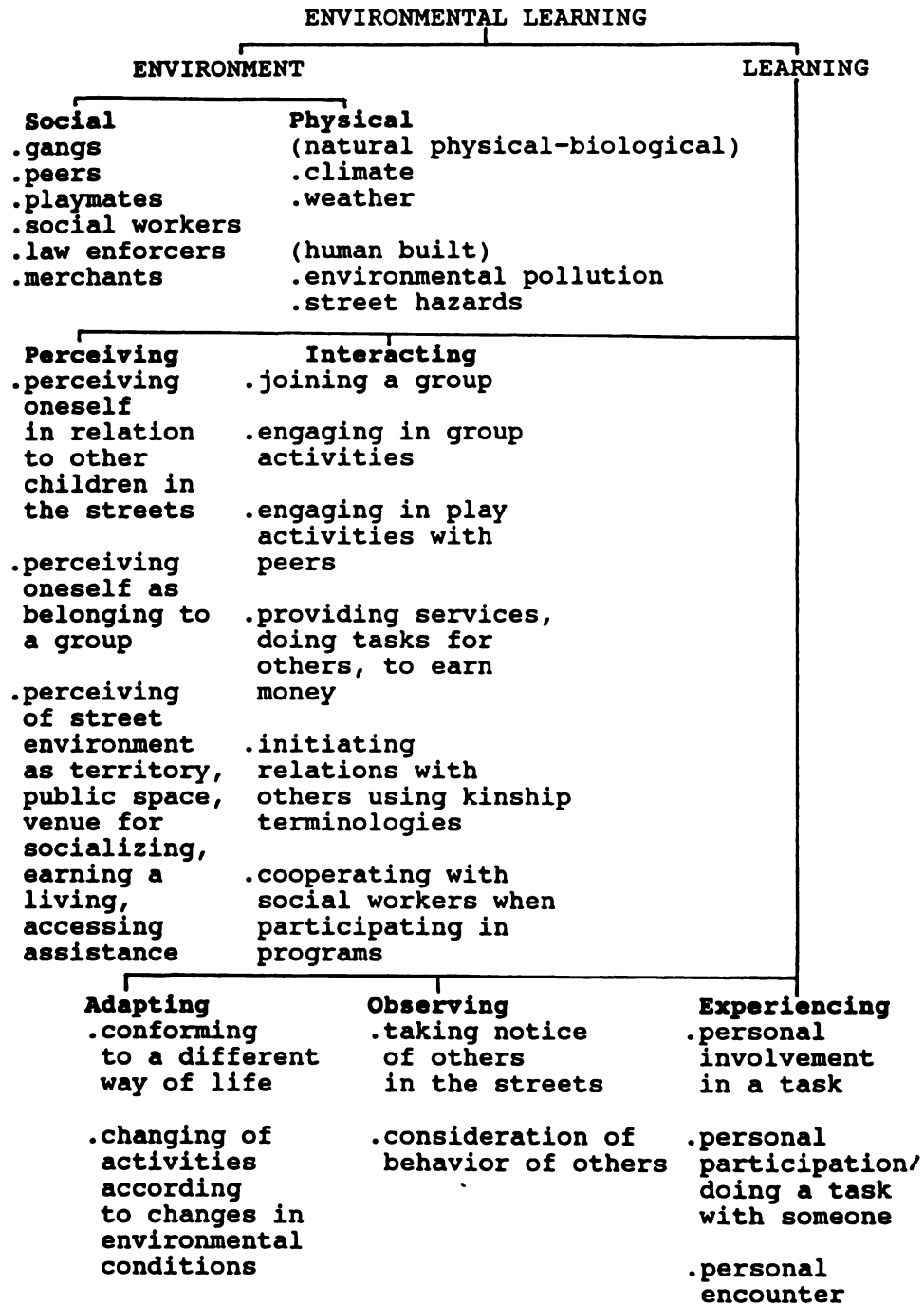


Figure 7. Environmental learning processes of street children.

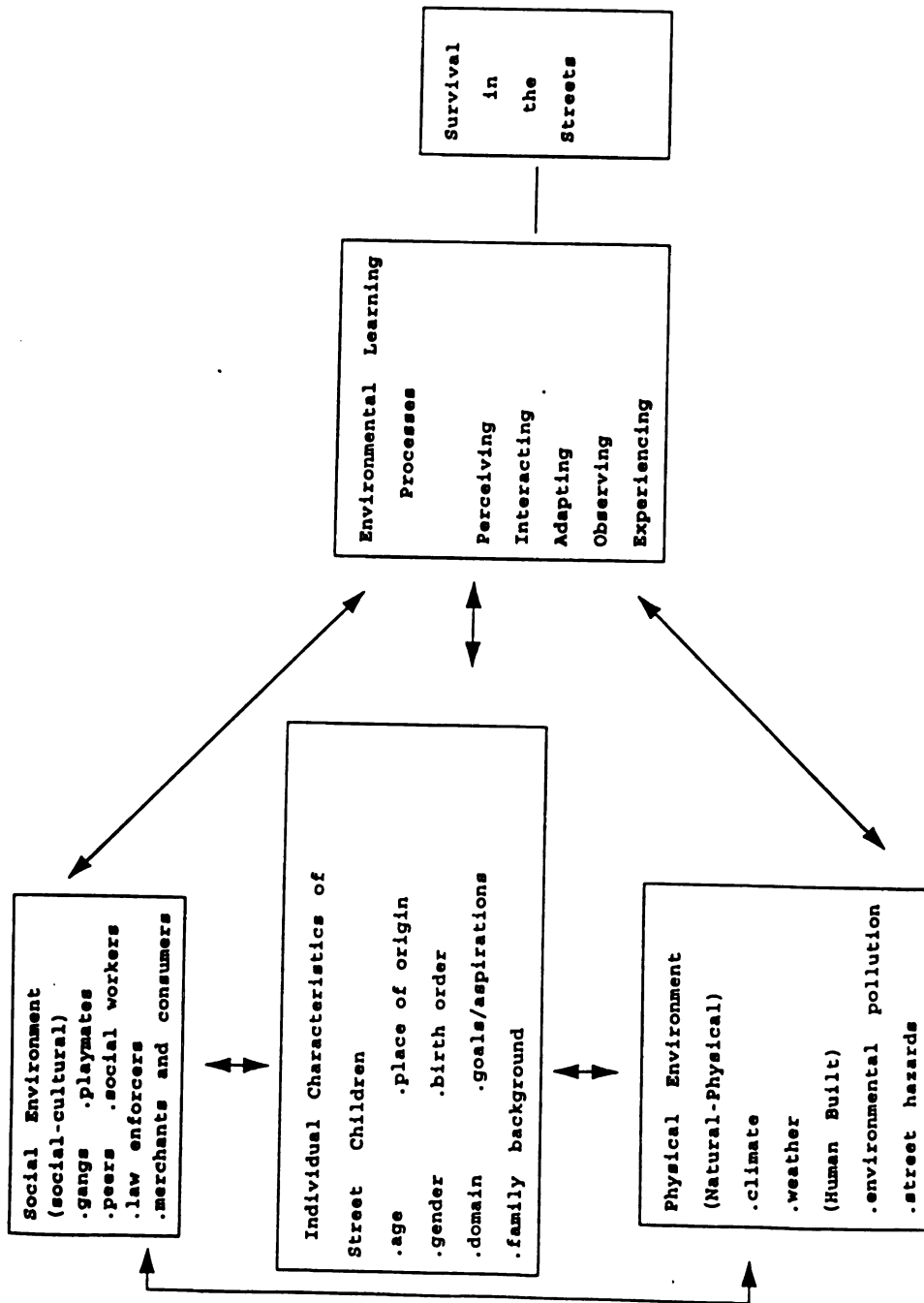


Figure 8. Environmental learning processes of street children in the context of their survival in the streets.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING FRAMEWORK, RESEARCH, AND PRACTICE

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the situations, conditions, and events of street children in their environment. The objectives of the study were to gain an in-depth understanding of the street children phenomenon and to describe and explain the environmental learning processes of street children considering their physical and social environmental conditions. In this chapter, a summary of the research and the emerging conceptual framework of the street children phenomenon and their environmental learning processes will be provided. Moreover, the implications of the study to the environmental learning processes framework, to research and practice will be discussed.

Summary of Research

The street children phenomenon was described as the interplay of ecological factors and the individual characteristics of the children. Ecological factors included conditions in the physical and social environment

of the children, at the country, community, and family level. The socioeconomic conditions of the country, and the urban migration or the influx of families seeking better opportunities in the cities were found to encourage the phenomenon. At the community level, the availability and accessibility of social services through governmental and nongovernmental agencies were found to create a context that contributes to the phenomenon. At the family level, situations and conditions within the family such as family background, size, composition, and relationships, are factors that were found to promote the phenomenon. The characteristics of street children in terms of place of origin, domain, gender, age, birth order, and purpose for being on the streets, are factors that were found to nurture the phenomenon.

The definitional context of learning for the street children was geared towards their survival in the streets. Although the environment was generally referred to as either social or physical environment throughout the study, physical environment represented the natural physical-biological and human built environment, and social environment represented the social-cultural environment. The social-cultural environment of the street children refers to their social networks in the streets consisting of fellow gang members, peers, playmates, social workers, and law enforcers. Also included in the social-cultural

environment of street children are their value orientations, such as demonstrating respect for elders and using kinship terminologies, that help to describe how these children relate to others.

The natural physical-biological environment consists of elements of the natural environment, such as the geographical location of the town, climatic and weather conditions, seasonal changes, which influence the activities of the street children. The streets and the urban settlement where street children live are considered their human-built environment. The street children's human-built environment also includes environmental risks and hazards, such as air and water pollution, vehicular or traffic hazards, that the children are exposed to in the streets.

As described in the activities and responses of the children, the environmental learning of street children consists of the processes of perceiving, interacting, adapting, experiencing, and observing. In an effort to survive in their street environment, the children perceive their social networks as a support and protective system in the absence of their family. Interaction with their social environment consisting of playmates, peers, and social workers fostered a sense of belonging. Children learn by adapting to the changes in their physical and social environment. Observing their immediate social environment, and eventually, doing and experiencing for themselves what

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they have observed were essential learning strategies.

Implications for the Environmental Learning Processes of Street Children Framework

Environmental learning was theoretically defined to involve a child's increasing knowledge of geographical and spatial elements and to include meanings and attitudes towards the environment. The concept was defined to involve the information and abilities children derive from experience in a given environment.

Environmental learning was derived from two major concepts: environment and learning. In this study, the environment was viewed as consisting of the physical and social environments. The physical environment represented both the physical and biological components of the street setting as they exist unaltered in nature, and the human built components which are alterations and transformations in the street setting made by humans. The social environment represented human factors, people found in the street setting, as well as culture related events and patterns of behavior. Initially, learning was proposed to involve perceiving and interacting processes. Environmental learning described the processes of learning as how these children interacted with their social and physical environments as well as how they thought of their social and physical environments. The description and exploration of

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the phenomenon and the characteristics of the street children promoted a different context of environmental learning. Environmental learning emerged as the survival strategies of street children. Although the researcher initially proposed that environmental learning of street children involved only the processes of perceiving and interacting, three other environmental learning processes emerged from the findings: the processes of adapting, observing, and experiencing.

This study clarified and provided the following dimensions of the concept of environmental learning: (a) contextual in orientation, (b) versatility in definition, (c) not exclusive to geographical and structural environment, but (d) inclusive of social and cultural meanings and interactions with the environment. Thus, the applicability of the concept may be broad and varied.

Implications for Research

The study was exploratory and descriptive in nature. The purpose of this exploratory research was to satisfy curiosity about the phenomenon, test feasibility of a framework, and to develop procedures for future application and for studies on the topic of street children. Such exploratory study attempts to enhance awareness of the street children phenomenon, since not much is known and not much emphasis is given on the phenomenon. The study does

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not yield definitive answers but attempts to shed light on the phenomenon and provide directions for future studies.

Another function of this research, being descriptive in nature, was to help us to more clearly see the attributes of the phenomenon. To accurately describe the phenomenon was to facilitate our understanding of the what the phenomenon was about.

The study identified three ecological levels of the street children phenomenon, at the country or national level, at the community level, and at the family level. It described the phenomenon in the context of ecological levels from the street child's immediate environment to the broader context of societal environment. It developed a broader and encompassing perspective of the environment, considering a holistic overview of the phenomenon. Findings of the study confirmed the various facets of the phenomenon which should not be overlooked but given due emphasis. Worthwhile studies in the future could be studies that would further explore the phenomenon by specific levels, focusing and delving more about the phenomenon in every ecological level.

There is a need for more intensive studies that would delve more on the directions provided by the findings of this study. Future studies could involve the following research questions:

1. How do the street children's perception of their family, community, and country, influence their being

on the streets?

2. How do the social environment of street children provide a support and protective system in the absence of the street children's family?

3. How do street children adapt to changing environmental contexts?

The findings of the study helped generate the following general propositions for future studies. Every proposition has the potential to be transformed into a hypothesis by employing empirical indicators.

1. The number of children working and earning a living in the streets is associated with the unemployment rate, and poverty threshold rate of the country.

2. The number of children in the streets is associated with the number of families who migrate to the cities for employment opportunities.

3. The number of children provided with assistance by social service agencies is associated with the number of governmental and nongovernmental agencies existing in their community.

4. The street children's being on the streets is associated with family background, family size, family composition, and family relationships.

5. The street children's being on the street is associated with the gender, age, birth order, place of origin, and domain of the children.

6. The street children's being on the street is associated with their goals and aspirations.

7. The street children's being on the street is associated with their perception of older peers.

8. The street children's being on the street is associated with their perception of themselves as gang members.

9. The street children's being on the street is associated with the cultural value orientations of the children.

10. The street children's being on the street is associated with their perception of themselves in relation to their responsibility to their family.

11. The street children's being on the street is associated with their perception of the street as a territory, as a venue for socialization, adventure, and freedom.

12. The street children's being on the street is associated with their perception of independence and survival in the streets.

Research questions and propositions generated from the findings of the study could be used for future quantitative and qualitative research endeavors.

The findings of this study indicated the involvement of sociocultural factors in the phenomenon and the environmental learning of street children. Future studies

could be cross-cultural studies of the street children phenomenon in different areas of the world, comparing the phenomenon in the context of different cultures. Comparing and contrasting the findings in different cultural contexts would help develop a more applicable and appropriate conceptual framework of the phenomenon that researchers in various countries could apply and utilize in their studies and practice.

What has been done in this study was to view the street children and the phenomenon at one point in time. Longitudinal design studies could be done that would study the same children over an extended period of time, such as a follow up study of the children every year. It would help record changes, progress, and development of these children through time.

Implications for Practice

Significant descriptions identified in this study, such as the observed characteristics of the street children determined the possible approach that could be utilized when working with street children. Based on the experience of the researcher, the following descriptions and characteristics of street children should be taken into consideration when doing research or working with street children:

- 1. Street children have mobile lives and are found in various places.** When working with street children, one

should try to be a part of the street children's milieu by:

(a) going to where the children hang around and making oneself visible and a familiar sight to the children, (b) wearing simple clothing so that the children will identify with him/her more easily, (c) playing with the children or participating in their group activities when asked to join.

2. Street children do not trust strangers easily. When working with street children, introduce oneself and make them aware of one's purpose for being with them. Introduce oneself to gatekeepers, authorities in the community, the guardians or social workers who are responsible for the children in an institution, and make them aware of one's purpose for being with the children.

3. Street children have their own language consisting of secret codes. Street children often belong to gangs or "frats" and peer groups. When working with street children, one should try to know their language, secret codes for the places, events, and people in the streets.

4. Street children have different names or "aliases". When working with street children, one should try to know the names of the children, including their "aliases", it helps get to know them faster and better.

5. Street children have a great need for concern and attention. When working with street children, one should try to listen intensively to what the children are saying: it tells valuable information about their problems and

needs. One should respond to their inquiries, answer their questions, but try to encourage them to use their ideas and generate their own solutions to their problems.

6. Street children have individual needs and problems.

When working with street children, one should ask open-ended questions when the child can provide more specific information about his situation. Try to make the children listen to one another. Children often come up with simple and practical ideas when interacting with each other that provide solutions about their own problems.

When working with street children, social workers or researchers should keep a record of one's experience with the children as often as possible. It is important to take note of what the children say, for it may help when emphasizing or explaining ideas later on.

Mentioned above were some suggestions of the researcher when working with street children based on her experience and considering some of the observed characteristics of street children described in the findings of the study.

The identified environmental learning processes of street children in this study should help determine the nature of the intervention to be introduced and implemented for street children. The perceiving, interacting, adapting, observing, and experiencing activities and strategies of the street children could be the basis or emphasis of programs to foster learning among street children.

Programs and interventions for street children should take into consideration the ecological levels of the phenomenon. When planning and implementing interventions for street children, the following procedures may be helpful. A macroenvironment situational analysis of the social, political, economic, and cultural aspects of the country where the intervention will be implemented should be undertaken. At the community level, a mesoenvironment situational analysis describing availability of community resources (human, material, financial, social services, governmental and nongovernmental agencies), and the demographical characteristics of the community, should be undertaken. At the family level, a microenvironmental situational analysis on economic conditions of the families of the street children, conditions in terms of family structure, relationships, and events related to the phenomenon, should be undertaken. This initiative would provide significant background information in planning an intervention.

A profile study of the street children in a community, depicting the characteristics of these street children in terms of age range, gender, place of origin, domain, birth order, purpose for being in the street, and gang membership, should be undertaken. Such valuable information could determine the type of intervention to be implemented.

Conclusion

This study attempted to explore and describe the situation, conditions, and events of street children in an effort to provide pertinent information that could be incorporated in programs, and interventions that should congruently meet the needs of these street children. From the information gathered through the study, a conceptual framework was developed that views the phenomenon of the street children through the context of ecological levels. The phenomenon is described as an interplay of conditions in the macrosystem or the national or country level, the mesosystem or the community level, and the microsystem or the family level and conditions associated with the characteristics of the children. It is, therefore, imperative to recognize the phenomenon at a broader scenario, beyond characteristical and familial level but encompassing community and national contextual levels.

The emerging environmental learning processes of street children, perceiving, interacting, adapting, observing, and experiencing, describe the survival strategies of these street children. In this study, the survival strategies of street children were viewed in an ecological perspective. The major concern for this study was to relate the occurring interaction between street children and their environment,

and their survival in the streets. Emphasis was given on the contextual components of the street and urban environment and the strategies and processes employed by street children in an effort to survive in such an environment.

Although the majority of the street children in this study belonged to the age range referring to the adolescent stage, and findings relate to and reflect some socialization strategies of adolescents described in most human development theories, generalizations describing street children as adolescents were not given emphasis in this study. The focus of the study was on the subculture of street children, described as young people who end up on the streets for a wide variety of reasons and who experience street life in a multitude of different ways.

The study uncovered the different learning processes street children employed in an effort to survive in the streets. Knowing these processes would help determine programs and interventions for street children that would congruently meet their needs, comply with their various interests, and take into consideration their constraints and limitations.

EPILOGUE

What has been described in this study is a compendium of the street children's way of life and experiences in the streets. This research initiative commenced when the researcher, as part of her internship in the UNICEF-DSWD-NCSD Joint Project for street children from July to September 1990, had the opportunity to observe and participate in some of the ongoing projects for street children in the Philippines. The researcher developed networks with people involved in street children projects. She was introduced to numerous street children project coordinators and implementors. She became aware of various governmental and nongovernmental projects for street children in the country. She had the opportunity to interact with street children and was initiated into the daily lives on the streets of these children.

On July 16, 1990 when the researcher was fulfilling her internship work in the Philippines, a natural disaster occurred when an earthquake shook the Northern Luzon area and the Metropolitan Manila area and its suburbs. The earthquake brought to immediate attention issues of life and death, of suffering and misery, but only momentarily

diverted the attention from the political and socioeconomic conditions in the country. The earthquake in fact came at a time of continuing political instability, economic stagnation, and galloping inflation in the country. The presence of street children were even more obtrusive in the streets than usual. Street children together with earthquake survivors availed of relief goods, foodstuff, and medication and sought refuge in makeshift shelters. The sight had fostered insights for the researcher regarding the survival of these people. Earthquake survivors were victims of a natural disaster, street children on the other hand, aside from being victims of a natural disaster, were also victims of societal circumstances.

The internship experience enriched her knowledge and cultivated awareness of a social problem, the phenomenon of street children. It became apparent that this unique lifestyle of the street children was worthy of documentation and study. The experience was most informative and had led the researcher to conceptualize a research topic. The researcher's observations revealed information that yielded a fascinating picture of children's relationship with the environment. Of paramount interest to the researcher was the street children's survival in the streets. Specifically, given the conditions, situations in the streets, a query would be how these street children relate to their environment in an effort to survive. Environmental

learning surfaced as an appropriate concept to depict the children's acquiring of information and skills through their relating to their physical and social environment to survive.

From March to July 1992 the researcher went back to the Philippines to collect additional information or data pertinent for the conceptualized topic on the environmental learning processes of street children. Political conditions in the country, however, produced a different scenario for the data gathering of the study. It was the time prior to the 1992 election period and the country's focus was more on campaigns and deliberate debate on who would be most appropriate for the pivotal positions in the government. The economic condition of the country was highlighted, the increasing unemployment rate was overemphasized. Rural to urban migration of the people and the plight of these people who seek better opportunities for employment in the cities were discussed. Presidential candidates had taken the socioeconomic conditions of the country as paramount in their agenda. Each candidate proposed the improvement of social services for the purpose of alleviating the conditions of the urban poor.

Prior to the data gathering process, the gatekeepers were notified of the purpose and methodologies of the study by the researcher. However, it was extremely challenging to seek permission for the undertaking of the study during the

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campaign period. The gatekeepers, usually government officials and employees, were preoccupied with election preparations. However, soon after contact with the gatekeepers, the researcher was granted permission for the study. The researcher was made to choose a specific area in the suburbs of Metropolitan Manila and was given a list of existing street children projects in the area. The area chosen was Binan Laguna, a suburb south of Metropolitan Manila, a seemingly booming industrial town. A project catering to street children through a temporary shelter, founded by a religious organization called "Samahang Anak ni Maria" (Organization of the Child of Mary) was chosen for the purpose of the study. Since the project was frequently visited by the street children and which gathered and kept the children in a specific location, it was chosen as the most suitable project for the study.

The participants of the study were all street boys, ages 10 to 15. In reality, street children are observed to be predominantly boys. Moreover, street boys who find ingenious ways of earning a living in the streets, spend more time in the streets than street girls. Street girls are more inclined to engage in household tasks. In some cases, street girls with dire need to earn money, get involved in prostitution at an early age. Under such circumstances, street girls are less visible in the streets than street boys.

The researcher visited the temporary shelter daily and at different times of the day for unobtrusive observations. The researcher thought of the possibility of staying temporarily at the center with the street boys for the duration of the data gathering process, to gather more observations and valuable information. The coordinators were unsupportive of the idea and wanted no responsibility over the health, safety, and welfare of the researcher. Instead the researcher was granted the permission to visit as often as she wishes, whenever she desires, and for as long as she wanted to, but was not given permission to stay overnight at the center.

Working with street children, as a volunteer social worker, challenged the researcher to find ways of blending in with the children. Beyond establishing rapport, aspects of physical presentation were important. Wearing comfortable working clothes portrayed an image that enhanced the children to accommodate the researcher more. Staying and being in public places where most of the children were usually found, was another important factor that brought the children closer to the researcher. Being a common sight to the children and being a part of their domain, made the researcher seem to be more accepted by the children.

The time allotted for data gathering, March until July 1992 was rather brief. Although the study was exploratory in nature and generally descriptive of the situation of

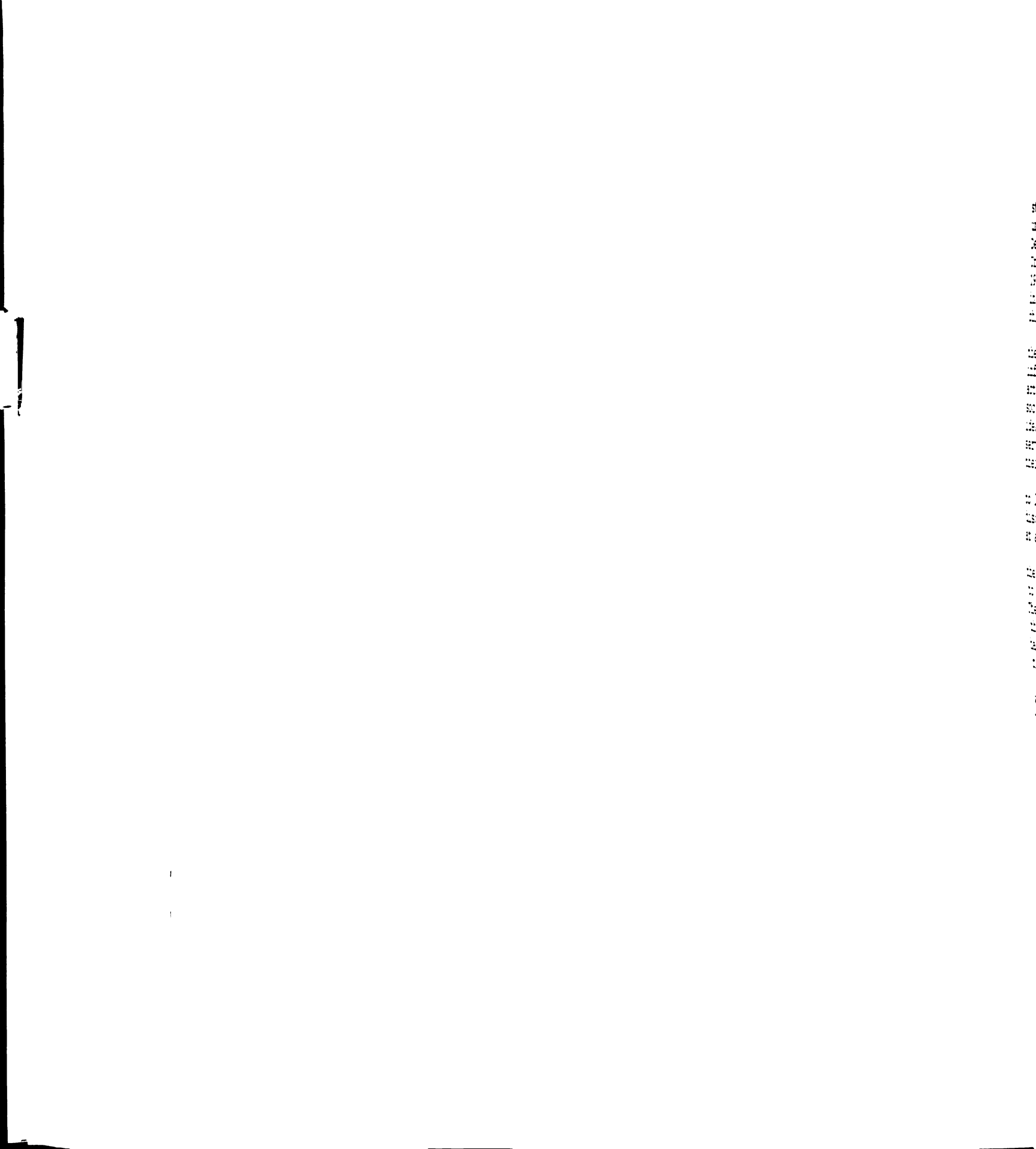
street children, more time was needed for more in-depth study. However, in spite of the short period of time allotted for data gathering, the researcher was able to gather insightful, invaluable, qualitative information for the study. The children's generous sharing and lively personal warmth throughout the data gathering process were inspirational to the researcher. Each child had his own story to tell. Every single case was considered important. What the children said was quoted and had to be individually cited. Quotations from the children were treated as extremely important information that help depict the subculture of street children.

During the analysis process, the open coding, deducing, and inducing of concepts from qualitative data was interminable. Confining the research findings and focusing on the topic of environmental learning was challenging for the researcher.

The researcher's primary intention was to provide a description of the situation of these street children as they exist in the real world, in a detailed and descriptive manner as possible, in order to enhance awareness and encourage advocacy and concern for these street children. The researcher hopes that this prefatory study on the phenomenon of street children will help initiate future studies with the same rationale.

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APPENDICES



APPENDIX A

Consent Form for Project Coordinators

I, as one of the coordinators of the Joint Project for street children, a collaborative effort of UNICEF-NCSD-DSWD, understand that Sue Saguiguit, a graduate student from the Department of Family and Child Ecology, Michigan State University, will be visiting our projects, from March 15, 1992 until June 30, 1992 for the purpose of seeking information about the environmental learning of street children.

I understand that the participants in the study will be the street children in our project who will be observed and informally interviewed regarding their participation in the activities of the project and their perception about their social and physical environment, that could help generate ideas for alternative schemes for projects, programs and services which consider the situation of street children and their specific learning needs.

I understand that as guardian, I am under NO obligation to let the children participate in the study. I am free to discontinue the participation of the children in the study at any time.

I understand that the participants will be chosen on the basis of their VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION and willingness to participate, or their assent to participate in the study. The children will be under no obligation to participate. If the street child participates in the study, he/she would have the option to discontinue his/her participation at any time.

I understand that all information that I provide, as well as the information that the children will share will be treated CONFIDENTIALLY and that my name or the names of the children will not appear on any written record or report.

I understand that I can approach, the researcher Sue Saguiguit if there are questions and concerns at any time during the study.

Signature of the researcher _____
Signature of Coordinator _____
Date _____

Consent Form for the Participants

(This is the English translation of the consent form developed according to the condition and characteristics of the street children to participate in the study. If the street child cannot read, the information below will be read and conveyed verbally to the street child, by the researcher. The street children have the option of checking the box below to signify their assent to participate or to verbally convey their assent to the researcher.)

I know that Sue Saguiguit is a student and wants to study about my situation in the streets and how I learn in the streets.

I know that I do not need to participate in the study if I do not want to, or if I participate, I can stop at any time.

I know that all the things about myself that I have shared with Sue, will not be shared to others and my name will not be written and will not appear in any form or report.

If I want to ask any question, I know that I can approach Sue at any time.

—



I feel like this.
YES, I want to participate.

—



I feel like this.
NO, I do not want to participate.

Date _____

APPENDIX B

Environmental Mapping Data Gathering Instrument

Date:

Time:

Place:

DIAGRAM/ PHYSICAL TRACES	:	NOTATIONS
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Date:
Page:

Doc:
Page 1

Behavioral Mapping Data Gathering Instrument

Date:
Time:
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APPENDIX C

Guide Questions For Informal Interview (For: Street Children)

The researcher would try to be as flexible as possible, and would consider the consent, availability, convenience of the child to participate in the informal interview. The interview will be done in Tagalog (Philippine language) for cultural relevance and to assure understanding by the children. The following are English translations of the guide questions. The questions may be reworded or the sequencing and style may be altered or changed accordingly.

The first step, prior to every informal interview session, is for the researcher to introduce herself by stating her name, her place/province of origin, introduce herself as a student studying about children. Second, the child will be informed of the researcher's purpose for visiting, which will be stated as,

"I am here to visit and see how you all are doing here in the center. I am here to observe, know more about you and to try to find out possible ways concerned citizens like me could help you more."

Prior to the informal interview the researcher will solicit the consent of the child to be interviewed. The child would be informed of his/her option to decline to be interviewed at any time, to stop the interview at his/her convenience or to refuse to answer specific questions at any point during the informal interview.

Guide Questions:

How old are you?

Do you have brothers and sisters?

Where are your parents?

Are you really from this place, were you born here? How long have you been living in this area?

Where do usually spend your time, when you are not in the center?

Are you there very early in the morning till afternoon? till night?

Do you still go home?

What do you do there in the streets?

What do you and your friends enjoy doing in the streets?

Aside from being with your friends, what do you enjoy doing most of the time?

Do you like to go to school? What do you think will you learn in school?

Now that you're not in formal school, what are the things that you learn in the streets?

Where did you learn how to do these things?

When the weather is bad, like when there is typhoon, where do you go for shelter?

When you get sick or get hurt what do you do?

Are you aware of what help is available, like where to go for free consultation or medicine?

Where did you learn of this project? What do you like about it?

If you were not in the streets, where would you want to be?

What would you like to be when you grow up? Why?

If you were able to change some of the things in your life, what would you like to change? Why?

If you were to make 3 wishes about anything, for yourself, for your family, for your friend, what would these wishes be?

APPENDIX D
Ecomapping Instrument

No. _____

Girl _____

Boy _____

Age _____

English translation of the instructions:

(By using circles ○ , small and big circles, show the place where you are in relation to where your family members are, friends are, and other important persons are located. Label the circles. You need not mention the name, but please put how he or she is related to you)

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APPENDIX E
Sociogram Instrument

(English translation of instructions and guide questions)

Instructions:

In the questions that I am to ask you, you need not say the names but if you can tell me how they are related to you, I will appreciate it; If you do not want to answer or tell me something, I will not pursue the question. I can stop at any time, if you do not want to continue.

Guide Questions:

In the circles that you have labeled and drawn, which of these do you think should be nearest to your circle? Why?

Who do you like to be with most of the time when you are on the streets?

Who gives you information on social services, assistance provided by the government and other charity organizations?

Where or from whom have you learned about this center?

Who gives you moral support or helps you with your problem at home or with regard to your "work"?

When you are sick, who takes care of you?

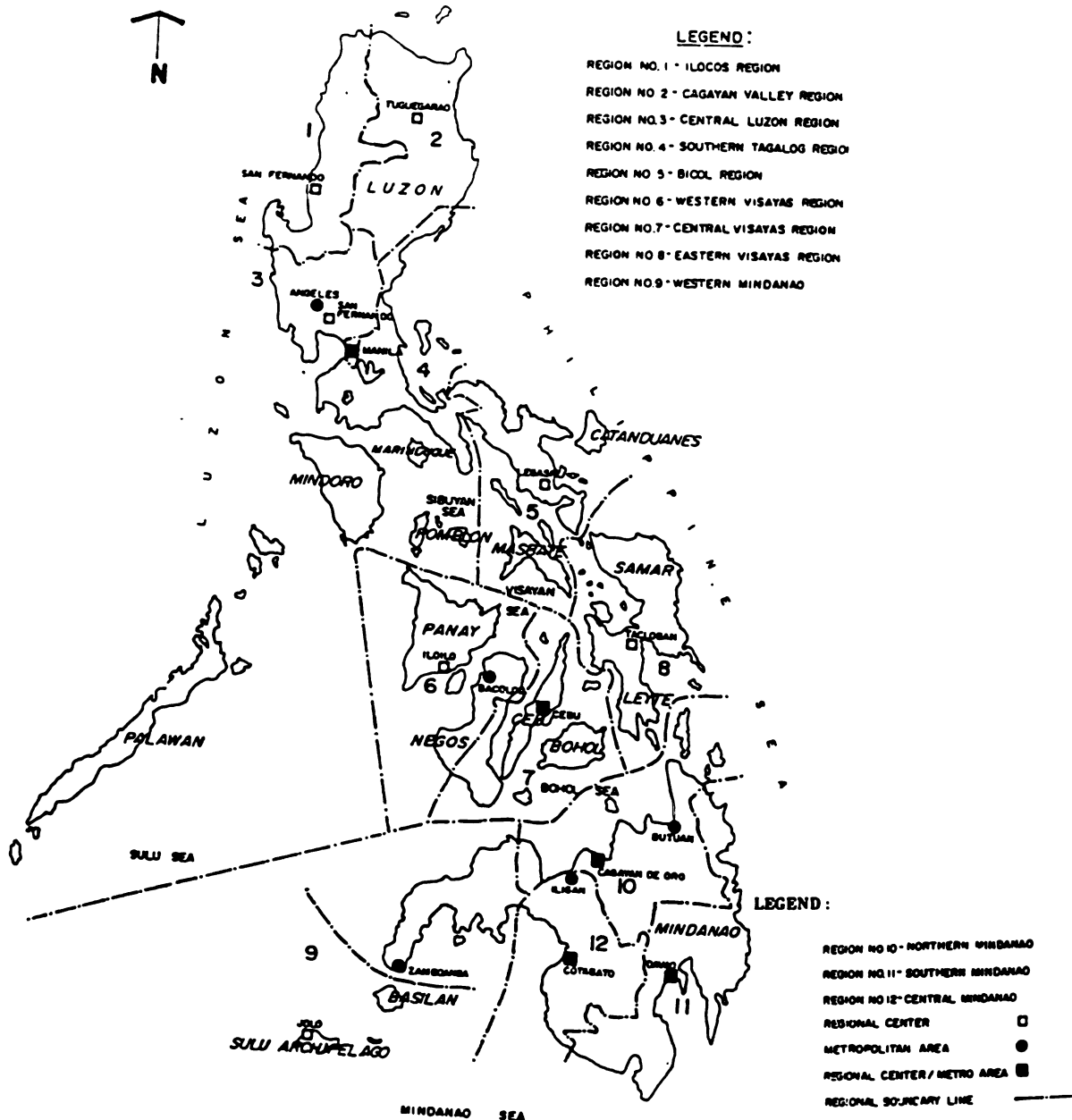
Do you have a group that you enjoy being in? Why do you enjoy the group?

If you are "working" how did you learn of the job? Do you have your friends working in the same place?

When you do not have your family with you on the streets, who acts as your family, or is/are closest to you or takes care of you?

APPENDIX F

Map of the Philippines (Regional Map of the Philippines)



Source: Department of Trade and Industry, Republic of the Philippines. The master plan study: The project CALABARZON. (1991). (master plan study of the CALABARZON project entrusted to the Japan International Cooperation Agency JICA). Manila, Philippines.

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