

**Educating the Dropouts; the Case of Street Children in
Maputo City, Mozambique**

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ABSTRACT

Almost every country in the world is committed to offer primary education for every child in 2015 at the latest yet many children have been left out of school. Mozambique is one of the countries which is still struggling to get all children through a full course of primary education. The street children are part of this phenomenon. Many of them have once been enrolled to primary school but at some point they have dropped out and are now surviving on the street without basic education. In this study the focus is in the question of *how to create the possibility of basic education for a dropout living on the street*.

The data collection took place in Maputo City, Mozambique during the spring 2008. The material was collected with ethnographic methods from 12 children who have dropped out of primary education and are now living on the street. These children were between 13 and 17 years of age and all of them were boys. When collecting the data observation and semi-structured interviews were used as well as photographs and drawings to supplement the research material. This material was collected in a close interaction with the children while working with them.

The research follows the ideas of Paulo Freire and it concentrates on analysing the reality of a street child, their vision of a better future and finding means to achieve that better future. All of the researched children said that the mean to achieve their dream is to get education. This created the vision of a better future which is education for all. The means to achieve this were created together with the children.

In order to attend school the street children would require a private place to do their homework, wash their clothes and deposit their personal belongings. The children also need school materials and clothes as well as shoes for going to school. Some of the regulations of schooling need to be modified, like the possibility to influence on school shifts and the physical place of school. Also huge modifications should be made in the public. The attitudes towards the street children should be changed so that they could sleep in peace, their rights would not be neglected and they would not have to face so much hostility rather they would encounter support, help and kindness.

Key words: street children, primary education, dropout, the reality of street children, education for all, Mozambique

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1. Introduction

I step out of the plain. The hot and humid air strikes me. I am trying to convince me that I am in Africa though it is hard to believe. I want to do something to help the street children and I have my head full of ideas. Very idealistic ideas which I soon discovered. I planned to do my master's thesis by following the ideas of Paulo Freire. I would set myself in a dialog with the street children and collect data for my study while I was working with them to improve their living conditions. This way I could create ideas how to improve the street children's possibilities to attend school and how the dropout rates among them could be reduced in order to give them all a primary education. All this I planned to do in five months.

When I set a foot on the streets of the capital of Mozambique, Maputo City, the reality hit me. The street children were scary. They were big and strong teen aged boys who probably would not immediately share their life stories with me. They walked in big groups and wore dirty clothes. At nightfall they lit fires on the streets and got drunk. I was even too scared to walk on the same side of the street with them. I could not help wondering if I had bitten more than I could chew.

Even though my task seemed extremely hard at the moment I knew that I was doing it for a reason. According to Ennew (2003) the studies of street children usually do not rely on children's thoughts or experiences. They are adults' assumptions and interpretations about the children's lives, about their needs and feelings. Children themselves are rarely asked questions about their lives. In my study I wanted to ask questions from the street children themselves and to listen what they have to say.

The street children are the most visible children; they work, eat and sleep in public places yet to the world they do not exist. They are the hardest group to protect and also the hardest group to reach with vital services like education. In order to help these children their reality and problems need to be understood better and their issues addressed. In order to gain a more complete understanding of the issues of excluded children we need more information. This is the way of helping these children; by making the world to see them and by making their voice heard. (UNICEF 2006a.)

Millions of children get enrolled to primary school every year, yet many of them are left out or they do not benefit of the education. Mozambique is one of the many countries still struggling with the national primary education for every child. A lot has been done but not enough. Mozambique is also committed to the goals of Education for All (EFA) and to the Millennium Development Goals. One of the goals is getting all children through a full course of primary education by 2015. This means that every child in Mozambique should get enrolled to primary education by 2010 and the dropout rates should be reduced dramatically. Almost every child gets enrolled to primary school in Mozambique at some point of their lives yet only 41% of them complete it (UNESCO 2). We need to understand better why those 59% of the children do not get through the primary education. The street children are part of this phenomenon and their situation needs to be addressed, assessed and understood.

In my research my objective is to understand the difficulties that the street children face when attending school. By creating a deeper understanding to these issues, it would be possible to find answers to these problems and by doing this it would be possible to reduce the barriers to education among the street children. I intend to find ideas how the school attendance of the street children could be better supported and in this way contributing to the promotion of child rights, especially the right of every child to have equal access to basic education. The children living on the street also have the same rights as any other child and if they do not have the same possibility to education we need to create one.

In my study I also aim to create an understanding of how a dropout living on the street sees his/her future life and how s/he thinks this future could be achieved. With this I hope to get them motivated to strive for the future that they want for themselves. I also want to understand the factors that motivate a street child to drop out of school in order to reduce these dropout rates.

I think it should be made possible for a child living on the street to attend school. The amounts of street children and orphans are increasing, the amount of caring adults is decreasing and the population structure in developing countries is imbalanced. In the case of Mozambique every fifth child is orphan, half of the population is children and pandemic of HIV/AIDS is making all this even worse. The case being there are not enough adults to take care of these children, the children living on the street do not have homes or families where they could be integrated. We need to find means how it would be possible to get basic

education while still living on the street instead of a house. Otherwise we will be drifting further away from achieving the universal basic education instead of getting closer to it. After ten years the situation will be much worse and more difficult to fight against. We need to act now and find the solutions for this problem.

2. Background

First I needed to make myself clear in which context I was doing the research. These preparations I started already back home in Finland before heading to the field.

2.1. An overview of Mozambique

Mozambique is a country in the coast of south-east Africa with population about 20 million. When Mozambique got its independence, 1975 from Portuguese colonial rule, it was one of the poorest countries in the world. Mozambique's independence was followed by nearly two decades of civil war which ended in 1992 leaving the country even in worse distress. Its people had lost their families and relatives, homes and belongings and they were deeply traumatized. (USAID.) Nearly 60 percent of all the schools in the country were destroyed and the re-building of the whole country and its administration had to begin. (Virtanen & Ehrenpreis 2007.) It is estimated that 93% of the people were illiterate in Mozambique at independence. (UNESCO 1).

The country has made a lot of progress since then. Poverty rates in Mozambique are dropping, primary enrollment ratios are increasing and also access to other vital services such as health care, clean water and proper sanitation. Mozambique is one of the few countries in Africa that has successfully made the transition from a long-term colonial and civil war to long-term peace and democracy. (USAID) Though Mozambique and the state of its people have developed a lot since the colonial period and its civil war, there are still major problems to overcome. Over half of the country's population are illiterate and do not have access to health care. Almost half of its people are under the age of 15 with life expectancy being only 40,8 years. (UNICEF 1.) Its economy has improved a lot in recent years yet there are 37,8% living with less than 1\$ per day. (USAID) Mozambique is still ranked as one of the poorest countries in the world. United Nation's Development Program (UNDP) gives Mozambique a

rank of 9th poorest country out of 177 countries with data when comparing the Human Development Index (HDI) ¹. Huge problems in the country are also inequality and corruption in all sectors. (WORLD BANK 1.)

Child mortality is high and many of the children die totally preventable deaths. (UNICEF 3). The fear of malaria is everywhere in Mozambique and for a good reason. Malaria still remains the leading cause of infant mortality. (UNICEF 2.) Yet the biggest health problem in Mozambique, as in many other African countries, is HIV/AIDS. Estimated number of adults (15-49 years) living with HIV in Mozambique is 1,8 million. This means that 16,2% of all the Mozambicans are HIV-positives. Estimated number of children (0-14 years) living with HIV is 140,000. (UNICEF 1.) The pandemic is affecting everyone and its impact is felt everywhere leading to even worse cycle of increasing poverty. Education is seen as a solution to end this vicious circle. Where children are not infected, education can provide them information and skills to fight against HIV and to reduce stigmatization and discrimination. If a child is infected with HIV, education can give him/her tools to cope and in best case to promote a caring environment. (Keatinge, Heuberger and Amoaten 2006, 1.) HIV/AIDS also has a huge impact on people's social lives due to stigmatization. Person's HIV infection or even if one has relatives with HIV/AIDS can create a stigma which often leads to exclusion. (UNICEF 2006a, 16.) There is 1,5 million orphaned children (0-17 years) in Mozambique which of whom the third is due to HIV/AIDS. (UNICEF 2006b). This exposes the children to exploitation, like child labor, prostitution, drug trafficking etc.

2.1.1. Education

The national education system, including primary education, has witnessed an impressive expansion since the signing of the Peace Agreement in 1992. Education system in Mozambique consists of pre-school, primary school, secondary school, technical and professional education and higher education. Primary education comprehends 7 grades and is divided into two levels; first level (EP1) which includes grades from 1 to 5 and second level

¹ HDI is a number that looks beyond GDP to a broader definition of well-being measuring life expectancy, education level and the standard of living. The index is not in any sense a comprehensive measure of human development. It does not, for example, include important indicators such as inequality and difficult to measure indicators like respect for human rights and political freedoms. (UNDP)

(EP2), grades 6 and 7. In Mozambican context the full course of primary education is considered to be only the EP1, grades 1-5. The official age of beginning basic education is 6 years. (UNESCO 1.)

In Mozambique the primary enrollment ratios are quite high. The gross enrollment ratio (GER), which is the total enrollment of education regardless of age, is in Mozambique 94,9%. (USAID.) Net enrollment ratio, which means the percentage of children in primary school that are in the age group that officially corresponds to primary schooling, is 71%. Though these figures are quite promising, the primary education in Mozambique is facing other problems. In Mozambique inequalities can be found throughout the whole education system. Mostly these inequalities occur between the social classes but it can also be found between girls and boys. Boys get more often educated and the duration of their education is longer.

The enrolment ratios are quite high in Mozambique at the moment, but only 41% of all children complete a full course of primary school (grades 1-5) and even fewer children continue to secondary education or higher. (UNESCO 2.) So the main problem in education seems to be *how to keep the children in school*. Because of the huge inequality in the country it is more meaningful to examine the statistics between the rich and the poor people where the biggest variation can be found. Table 1 shows this very clear inequality in completion of schooling. So the main problem is more how to keep the *poor* children in school.

Indicator	Poorest (20% of the population)	Richest (20% of the population)
Completion of primary education (%)	8,2	54,2
Completion of secondary education (%)	0,1	8,8
Completion of tertiary education (%)	0,0	2,6

Table 1. Percentages of 25 years old and older that have completed primary, secondary or tertiary education in Mozambique 2003. (WORLD BANK 1.)

Usually the inequality is highest between the urban and rural population. The Table 2

compares the poor population living in urban areas and in rural areas. Here I only present the statistics of the poor because the poor population is significant considering the theme of my study. The street children in Maputo City are poor and are living in urban area. Usually the urban people are considered to be more privileged than rural people but curiously here in Mozambican context the urban-rural setting is almost upside-down. In Mozambique the poor people in rural areas seem to have better chances in getting education than the poor people in urban areas. Though there are more poor adults with education living in urban areas which might be explained with the fact that the educated people have moved to cities to look for a job.

Indicator	The poorest (20% of the population) in urban area	The poorest (20% of the population) in rural area
Net primary participation (%)	29,7	39,0
Gross primary participation (%)	62,0	79,9
Ages 15-19 who have completed primary school (%)	24,8	7,8
Adults (+25) who have completed primary school (%)	12,1	8,0
Out-of-primary-school-children (%)	70,3	60,8
Primary drop-out rate (%)	15,6	3,0

Table 2. Education indicators by Urban-Rural areas in Mozambique in 2003. (WORLD BANK 1.)

The quality of education varies a lot. Many countries forget the quality of education while trying to get the enrolment ratios high. In Mozambican primary schools there are on average 62 pupils per one teacher making the quality of education poor in huge classes. Also the language is affecting the quality of education; Portugal being the official teaching language. (UNESCO 2.) We should not only try to offer education for all but *quality* education for all. This means that every child should be able to benefit of the education. This might be one of the reasons why the dropout rates are so high. Parents do not want to keep their children in school where they do not learn useful skills and the children see education meaningless if they do not understand what have been taught. The quality education motivates people to

study.

2.1.2. Maputo City

My study is concentrated on Maputo City which is the capital of Mozambique. There lives over one million people and it is one of the smallest provinces of Mozambique. Over half of Maputo City's population lives below the poverty line. In general the access to water, sanitation and health services in Maputo city is good though prevalence of HIV/AIDS is higher than the national average; in Maputo City 17,3% of its population are living with HIV infection. Measured by the educational indicator the situation of the people in Maputo City is better than the national average. Primary enrollment rate is 84,5% and adult literacy rate is 84,9%. (WORLD BANK 2.)

So it looks like the living conditions are better for people in Maputo City but there are also a lot of problems behind the scenes. The problems of education in urban areas mentioned above are present in Maputo City. The biggest numbers of inequality can be found in Maputo city and Maputo province. (Simler & Nhate 2003). The rich people make the statistics look good and the poor people stay uneducated and poor. Many children are living on the streets. My colleague from the local NGO in Mozambique estimated that there are over 1000 street children in Maputo City with numbers growing. Nowadays there are a lot of children coming from South-Africa to Maputo. They have come to the city center to earn money – to survive.

2.2. Significance of the study

According to UNICEF reliable data of the lives of excluded and invisible children is scarce. This is because of practical difficulties for data collection. This data is essential in improving the quality of life of these children. Evidence-based interventions could be developed and performed better. Studies based on the experiences of individuals are particularly valuable. It creates a possibility to intervene effectively and produce knowledge of root causes of exclusion and of protection violations that make children less visible. Monitoring and evaluation is also important in order to ensure that the children most in need are being reached and to make adjustments over time as their situations change. Collecting accurate data and making qualitative researches of these children is essential to the assessment process. (UNICEF 2006a, 61-62.)

Estimated amount of street children in Mozambique is between 3 500 and 4 000 with numbers growing. (www.streetchildren.org/uk/reports/Mozambique%20Child.doc). Many of these don't have basic education and they will never get one. Though many of them have once been enrolled to primary school. So what went wrong? Why aren't they getting any education? One might also want to ask, why education? How can that be the priority of a child who lives on the street fighting for his/her life everyday?

Education is thought to be a human right because of its developing effects. Education has a lot of benefits such as economical growth, poverty reduction, and improvements on social equality, health, political democracy, tolerance and enhancements in environment protection etc. (Takala 2001, 8.) The benefits of education on person's and community's lives are undeniable. Education is a sustainable way of improving one's quality of life. It is proved that educated mothers can take better care of their children. (UNICEF 2005). Educated people learn about hygiene, birth control, diseases such as malaria or HIV/AIDS, they learn their rights, they enlarge their world view and therefore they can improve their own living conditions.

They also learn to read, write and count which are essential skills in participating the society. These skills make it able for a person to enter the working world and to participate the society as a full member and to make an influence. In Mozambican context it is also essential for a person to learn Portuguese because it is the only official language. Usually people learn Portuguese in school and only few speak it as a native language. This makes schooling even more important. Among these basic skills education should give a person the ability to question and to criticize. Very important in this, making education possible in a developing country, is that we do not transfer our own models, habits and systems from the western context rather they can create their own models, habits and systems that are fit to their own needs. They live in a different context and in different culture; their sociocultural environment must be respected.

The importance of my research comes from its perspective. In the study I try to reveal the ideas of the street children themselves. They are the experts of their own lives so they are also the key to solve their problems. In my study I want to concentrate on their education because I believe that education can be the solution for many prevailing problems of the world. I am

convinced that education will create a better world for everyone if it is used correctly. Education should promote equality not inequality between people. This means that quality education should be in the reach of every child – including the children without homes. In my study I try to look for answers to reduce the street children's barriers to education.

I work as a part of an international research team, which consists of 5 people that are interested in the issues of street children and especially their wellbeing. Our research team is composed of two Mozambican students and three Finnish students from the fields of education and social sciences. (See appendix 1.) Together we are trying to create a more complete understanding of the street children phenomenon in Mozambique and hopefully to create new perspectives of action in promoting child rights and child welfare in Mozambique in order to contribute to the sustainable development of the country. Therefore I have two roles in this research project; one as a student making my master's thesis and the other as a member of a research team. As a student I make my research individually, but as a team member I find and share basic information with the other members of the group e.g. the concepts concerning street children. Our whole research team is using the same definition of street children so that the data we gather can be compared. The team is supporting each other through this project and together we are able to share experiences, ideas and emotions.

2.3. Explaining the concepts

The concepts that are used in my research I defined before entering the field. This was important so that I could concentrate strictly to the issues that I wanted the information of. It is also important that other people can tell exactly what I have researched. The key concepts in my study are primary education, drop out and street children.

Primary education refers to the formal school system's first level. In developing countries it varies from 4 years to 10 years, the most common being 6 years. (Takala 2001, 12.) In Mozambique this primary education is considered to be the EP 1, meaning the grades from 1 to 5. When speaking of primary education or primary school in my research I refer to the formal schooling of the country. Basic education on the other hand takes into consideration also the in-formal education given by different organizations. In in-formal education the time tables, curriculum, evaluation and teacher's quality demands are more flexible. (Takala 2001, 12.)

When a child is officially registered as enrolled to primary school but stops coming to school, s/he is considered as a *dropout*. (Badloe et al. 2007). Often a child becomes a dropout when he/she is over aged to primary school. Many children from poor living conditions often end up becoming over aged because they begin their schooling late and they repeat classes. (UNESCO 2005.)

There is a strong connection between the dropouts and *street children*. Many of the children living on the street were once enrolled to primary school but they had to give up on education. The concept of a street child I have defined as our whole research team has defined it. This is the definition of UNICEF and it divides street children to two categories: *Children on the street* and *Children of the street*. *Children on the street* are those children who work there on daily bases but they have a home to go to where they usually spend the nights. These children on the street need to improve the family incomes by begging, prostitution etc. *Children of the street* mean those children that work and sleep on the streets. For these children street is home and they use it as a means of food and shelter. Their social lives are also on the street. Often these children are abandoned and they do not have any family besides their new street family.

There are millions of street children around the world with numbers growing and most of them are not orphans as many people might think. Many are in contact with their families and they are on the street to increase the family income. Many children living on the street have ran away from home because of unbearable circumstances like psychological, physical or sexual abuse. The majority of street children are male. The streets are more dangerous for girls and they seem to bear the abusive and exploitative situations longer at home. (UNICEF 2006a, 41.)

Once on the street these children have hard times ahead. They become more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse and the chance to a proper childhood is slipping away. Those who should be protecting them become the ones disregarding their rights and their integrity. Street children often have conflicts with the authorities, such as the police. They get harassed and beaten by them, they get driven outside the city limits and left there, they even get murdered by vigilantes in the name of “cleaning up the city”.(UNICEF 2006a, 41.) These children could protect themselves and reduce the risk of exploitation if they knew their rights, and that

they have options in fighting against violence. Health workers, teachers, police officers, social workers and all the people working especially with vulnerable children should have the motivation, skills, knowledge and authority to identify and respond to child protection abuses. Parents and communities, if the child is so lucky to have this kind of social networks, should be provided the knowledge and skills to protect their children. (UNICEF 2006a, 54.)

3. Theoretical tools for a research with the street children

My theoretical background comes from *social pedagogy* because I thought that the most suitable tools for my research would be found from there. Social pedagogy is a tradition of thinking and action. It combines these two; the other one cannot exist without the other. Social pedagogy basically means educating the communities and its objective is to make a qualitative change in people's lives through their own participation and dialog. The idea of social pedagogy is to prevent and relieve the social inequality and disadvantages in communities and promote people's wellbeing with political and pedagogical means. (Hämäläinen & Kurki 1997, 10-11.)

3.1. Methodological steps of Paulo Freire

The theoretical tools for my research I found from the theory of Paulo Freire. His ideas guide me through the whole research process. They give practical tools for collecting data and theoretical tools for creating solutions and ideas for discussion. His theory includes the aspect of combining the theory and practical work. Paulo Freire is the answer to my question "How?". How to make research with street children? How to approach them? Freire also has the answers to my question "Why?". Why the society is formed the way it is? Why do the poor stay poor? Why the poor children do not usually go to school? Why they do not have the same chances as other children? When we now why, we can move on to the question of how to help them. When we know why, we know the best point and way to intervene. For this intervention Freire gives us tools.

Paulo Freire (1921-1997) is a well-known representative of social sciences. He has developed a theory and practice of education which goal is as much social as individual change. This is *the pedagogy of the oppressed*. Freire states that education is a human act of intervening the

world and with intervention, Freire says, “I refer both to the aspiration for radical changes in society in such areas as economics, human relations, property, the right to employment, to land, to education, and to health, to the reactionary position whose aim is to immobilize history and maintain an unjust socio-economic and cultural order.” (Aronowitz 1998, 6.) Freire thinks of himself as one of those who still dream and keep alive hope of a world without exploitation, inequality, and cultural enslavement. (Aronowitz 1998, 7). From Freire’s work can be found three methodological steps to guide the research process (Kurki 2005, 2007). In Freire’s mind the research is much more than theoretical discussion; it is a combination of theoretical and practical work which aims to create a better reality to the researched people. (Freire 2005.) In my thesis I tried to follow these steps as profoundly as I could in such a short time that it was possible for me to spend on the field.

3.1.1. Analysing the reality

First Freire advises us to get familiar with the environment. It is crucial to know the social reality which you want to change and where you are making the research. Then the reality should be analysed. The researcher should have a clear understanding of the society where he works. (Kurki 2007, 60.) Freire has a theory of the structure of societies. Freire feels that a society consists of two groups; the oppressors and the oppressed. Oppressors are a small minority, the elite, that controls the rest. They have built the society in a way that suits them best and maintains their power. Freire does not clearly explain who are the oppressed or the oppressors though in his book *Pedagogy of Hope* he does speak of working class and employers. In the other words the oppressors and the oppressed are different social classes in a society. (Freire 1994.)

The oppressors are denying the possibility of the oppressed to become complete persons by making them passive and obedient. The world can only be just when everyone has the possibility to develop a whole person. (Freire 2005.) For the oppressors “humans” mean only them and the other people are “objects” to them. The oppressors do not see that owning more than others is not just. They believe that they have deserved it and those who do not have as much are just lazy and incapable. They do not see that they are violating the rights of others. (Freire 2005, 60-61.) Freire (2005, 57) states that every situation where a person is using another person or preventing another person to strive a position as an independent and responsible human being, is oppressed situation.

Sooner or later the oppressed get frustrated of the situation and when frustration is overwhelming they use violence against their own companions. Their dignity is gone and they have nothing left. Their last mean to defend their ego is to defend it in front of their own brothers. The oppressed will attack each other from a smallest reason, not because they want to but because they cling to it as a last resort to keep the pieces of their self. (Freire 2005, 65.) One aim of the oppressors is to make the oppressed become estranged to each other. This will keep them from uniting with each other and they will be easier to control. (Freire 2005, 157.) The oppressed violate each other, they drift further and further apart and they also despise themselves. Self-hatred characterizes them. They have adopted the oppressor's conception of their selves. They constantly hear how they are stupid, lazy, worthless and incapable of doing anything. Little by little they accept that and they believe that they are no-good. (Freire 2005, 66.)

According to Freire the structures of a repressive reality are hard to change. The problem of the oppressed people is that they are living inside their oppressed reality and because of their circumstances they see the oppressors as superiors and themselves as inferiors. The oppressed see the reality as given and unchangeable. They feel that they have deserved what they have been given. They do not see their opponents as something they need to liberate themselves from rather as something they need to identify to. They need to realize their own circumstances but also that all people are equal and no one should be oppressed. (Freire 2005, 46-47.) When they do become conscious of this, then the only thing standing in their way are the objective circumstances of the situation which can be changed (Tomperi 2005, 25.)

This oppressive situation is mostly held up with education but education is also the key to freedom. With education one can break away from the oppression of a society and be free to strive for one's whole humanity. Freire has said that education is never neutral, in the background there is always a certain way to see the world, a philosophy to guide the action. Education can make you passively submit to the prevailing situation or it can encourage you to believe in the possibility of a change. (Freire 2005.) Freire believes that social oppression is concentrated on the people who do not possess power. He speaks of the *culture of silence* meaning that there are always people that are left out in a society, their voice is not heard. Education can give a voice to this silence yet the prevailing education more keeps up this culture than encourages to speak out. (Hannula 2000, 1.)

When education is used as a tool for oppression, it makes people to accept and adjust to their situation. The education is designed and controlled by a small minority that is considered as the elite. They can decide what others should learn and how they should learn it. They can also define what is desired and valued in a society in order to gain power and money. They have determined what is considered as knowledge, what kind of skills are valued and who can get in on these. They control the education and they control the whole society. They make up the rules and others play along with it. (Freire 2005.)

The elite control the others not only with the means of education but also by who is able to get educated. School should be available for everyone yet there are many who do not get any education. Or at least the higher education is out of their reach. The fact that the popular masses are without a more critical understanding of how society functions does not depend on the fact that they are incapable to do so. It is because of their situation where they live in – they are forbidden to know. (Freire 1994, 105.)

The society is built on myths. Education is a channel to pass on these myths. The oppressors have created these myths to keep the other people satisfied under their rule. The oppressors “bank” these myths into the minds of the oppressed. These myths are meant to maintain the social situation as it is, it is meant to keep people passive and easy to manipulate. These myths are for example a myth that society is free, meaning that people are free to study if they please, to work where they please etc.; a myth that people are equal and that everyone’s human rights are respected; a myth that the oppressors are hard-working and the oppressed are lazy and dishonest and the oppressors are meant to be superior and the oppressed inferior. The living conditions of the oppressed are worse because they have failed in life and they need help in adjusting to the society (Freire 2005, 155-156.)

The oppressors have taken the right to determine what knowledge and ignorance are and they have determined it in the way that they are the ones who know. This way they can classify the others as alienated or marginalized and deny their right to speak. They have also created a myth that the world is an unchangeable system, something that everyone needs to except and adjust to. (Hannula 2000, 62.) These myths are presented to the oppressed as organized propaganda and through media without real communication between people. (Freire 2005, 156). The elite have no reason to engage in a dialog with the popular classes. They only tell them what they should do. (Freire 1994, 104.) Freire says that people have only two choices;

they can accept the situation and submit themselves to the oppression or they can unite and fight against oppression (Freire 2005, 165).

In my research I wanted the oppressed street children to fight for their rights. In Freire's terms I consider the street children to be oppressed, their voice have been silenced and their needs neglected by the majority. In order to make a research in the Mozambican context it is crucial for me to get to know the reality. I also needed to familiarize myself with the culture of street children. However I, as a researcher, am not the only one who needs to familiarize herself with the reality. The street children in particular need to realize the reality where they live in. They need to critically analyse it and questions should be asked, why is our reality the way it is and what could it be like at its best.

3.1.2. A vision of a better future

The next methodological step is a phase where the people should see a picture of a better future (Kurki 2007, 60). In the context of research the researcher along with the researched should create a vision of a better future. This is impossible to do if the people have not realized that the reality, where they live in, can be changed. Then they can see what kind of reality they would like to have for themselves. With this change of a reality Freire means a change towards a world where there is no oppression and where everyone can develop fully humane. The change is happening both in people's minds and in social structures. (Hannula 2000, 39.)

The way to freedom starts with *conscientization* or consciousness-raising of the social reality around us. People need to see their lives from a distance and evaluate it problematically in order to avoid seeing things as obvious and given. If this works the people can realize the inequality of their reality and they will start to act for changing it. (Freire 2005.) The oppressed are also their own oppressors, when they adjust to the prevailing system without criticizing it and they take it as given. The oppressed keep up the power structures of the society by giving the power to the oppressors. (Freire 2005, 49.) The oppressed need to become conscious of the *reasons* of the oppression in order to create a new world without oppression. (Freire 2005, 48).

When describing the oppressive situation and consciousness-raising Freire (1994, 48) tells an

example of a peasant who believes that he does not have an education or money because of the will of God. It is easy to believe that one's life was meant to be like that and it cannot be any different because of the will of God. God is an easy scapegoat. God is the answer to their questions of why and they do not need to find other answers, the will of God cannot be rationally explained. The people need to realize that *the reality is neither given nor unchangeable*. Just like the objective reality is not there by coincidence, it will not change by coincidence. The reality is man-made and needs a human to change it. (Freire 2005, 52.)

Freire's utopia of a society is a society where no one prevents another person to become humane, where every person can act as subject and where a mutual dialog prevails. (Hannula 2000, 86). Freire fights against oppression and his main aim is to support people's life skills and develop their social competence so that there no longer would exist this division of oppressed and oppressors. (Tomperi 2005, 30). The whole dominating and unequal system must be destroyed and people should be free. (Tomperi 2005, 25.) With being free Freire does not mean that people could indefinitely execute their desires rather with freedom he refers to possibilities or even obligations to act for more humane world. (Hannula 2000, 87).

Freire criticizes the banking idea in education. This is the idea where the teacher just lectures and the pupils only need to remember what they have been told without questioning or problematicizing it. (Freire 2005.) The banking-idea of education is strongly related to oppressing education. People are receivers of knowledge and education makes them even more passive that they are. (Freire 2005, 81.) According to Freire education should be problem based learning where the students can act as subjects and create the knowledge by themselves. (Hannula 2000, 75.) The education should inspire and motivate people. It should be based on a *dialog*, meaning equal interaction and bilateral recognition and respect. In a dialog the both parties are equal persons and interaction is based on love. (Freire 2005.)

Freire believes that everyone should have dreams. He states that "there is no change without dream, there is no dream without hope". (Freire 1994, 91.) When there is a dream it transforms into a necessity that people try to fulfill. (Freire 1994, 100). I created my dream of a school that is open to every child. This is my vision of a better future; a school that even the street children could attend. There every pupil would be respected and valued. The learning environment would be based on pedagogical love. The key factors in pedagogical love are the confrontation of the other person, ability to see the value of another person and ethicality. The

teacher ought to see the children as unique and respect their value and the possibilities they possess. (Viskari 2003, 163-164.) The curriculum and the teaching should be student-oriented where the pupils are seen as individuals with different life experiences.

3.1.3. Finding means to achieve the vision

Nothing happens only by becoming conscious – action is also needed. Aware acting Freire calls *praxis* in which the action and reflection, the contemplation of the reality and action for rebuilding it, are as one. Praxis can be defined also as aware practice where people become subjects in their action for social change. The people become makers of history whose purpose is to emancipate the society and its people, and give them a chance to become fully humane. (Freire 2005.) Praxis is action where one knows what he/she is doing and especially *why* he/she is doing it. The idea is to participate and motivate people to act for a social change and to unite them. Together they change the social structures that would be impossible to change alone. No oppressive system can allow the people to start asking *why* and this is exactly what Freire encourages people to do. (Freire 2005.)

People are afraid of the unknown, the freedom. The current situation of the oppressed feels safe; everything is in place and ready. They know what they are expected and what they should do. They do not need to think, evaluate or criticize, they need to act as they are told. If they give this up, they will have to build their whole lives again from a scratch. Everything will be insecure, unpredictable and hard. This requires a lot of strength, courage and patience. (Freire 2005, 38.) The oppressors are also afraid of the freedom, but in a different way. They are afraid of losing their power to control others. (Freire 2005, 47-48.)

The oppressed and those who have adjusted to the prevailing power structures of the oppression cannot start the fight for freedom as long as they feel unable to take the chances needed to overcome the situation. Their fight for freedom is not only a threat to themselves and their oppressors but also to their peers who are oppressed. They might be afraid of even worse oppression after the “mutiny”. (Freire 2005, 48.) The people who are fighting for their freedom need a lot of encouraging and comforting because they are afraid. Their self-esteems need to be built and strengthened.

Along with the encouraging, in the beginning the point to concentrate is literacy. It is the first

step of education and also the first step towards social influence. (Tomperi 2005, 27). Literacy was and still is a political question and it is essential in participating the society. Along with the skill to read and write people should also understand the power of words in changing the world. (Hannula 2000, 51.) The oppressed need to understand that future is something that they write themselves not just something that they receive. (Freire 2005, 41). It would be really idealistic to argue that only by reflecting the oppressive situation and by realizing their position as objects people would become subjects. It is not so simple, but by becoming conscious people start the process towards becoming subjects of their lives. This whole process needs time and effort. (Freire 2005, 145.) It happens along these three described steps.

Education is needed for this process. It can be a trigger to get the process started and it can provide the needed skills and support along the process of change. The contents of education need to be produced together with the people from their everyday lives and from their real situations. Otherwise the education cannot motivate the people to change their reality. (Tomperi 2005, 28-29.)

The only person that can help the oppressed people to gain their freedom is a person that is truly loyal to the oppressed and the liberation can be assisted with education practices that are based on dialog. (Freire 2005, 46). Both parties are learning from each other, both are teachers and students at the same time. The pedagogy of the oppressed needs to be created *with* the oppressed, not *for* them. This requires the teacher to make himself/herself familiar with the reality of the people she/he is helping. (Freire 2005, 49.) Both teacher and student come to the learning situation as possessors of past knowledge, though it is different sort of knowledge. The student has his/her own life experiences and previous schooling in hand. The teacher should take this into consideration. (Freire 1998, 36.) Freire states that “progressive educators have never to underestimate or reject the knowledge had from living experience”. (Freire 1994, 84).

The teacher should realize that he/she does not know everything and that the student is not ignorant of everything. There are also many ways to interpret the world; none of them has more value than another. (Freire 1994, 188.) Especially with children in vulnerable situations it is essential that teacher is familiar with the reality of the child and takes his/her life experiences into account. This child has so much knowledge and wisdom though it may not

be the same sort of knowledge or wisdom that one can gain by sitting in school. Most truly Freire's pedagogy can be implemented in the field of informal education. Freire does not give a method that can be implemented directly rather teaching requires appliance. (Hannula 2000, 6-7.) I believe that also the formal education can be based on the pedagogy of the oppressed if it is designed as learner-centered and problem based learning.

This kind of education teaches to analyze, criticize and be creative. It teaches that nobody is superior, nothing is predetermined and everyone has a chance to make their own destiny. Rules can be changed and future rewritten. (Freire 2005.) In liberating education the knowledge is created together. Both parties have some kind of knowledge, both can learn something from each other. Education is not adoption rather it is discussing about opinions, mine and others. The reality of both people is taken into consideration. (Freire 2005, 106.) The teacher needs to give up the role of "the owner of information" and forget the idea of the banking of knowledge. The teacher needs to believe in the abilities of the pupils. They should not be treated as *tabula rasa*, blank board. I believe that this is possible even in the formal school.

5. Research questions

The research questions I defined before entering the field. When I was on the field they were revised and specified when I understood the reality of the street children in Mozambique better. The last step in Freire's methodological tools was to create means to achieve the vision of a better future. This step creates my aim of the research and my research question which is:

1. How to create the possibility of basic education for a dropout living on the street?

In order to find out answers for this question I need to follow the two previous steps of Freire's theory. First I analyse the reality where a street child lives in. There my more specific reasearch questions are:

- a. What are the reasons given by the street children for dropping out of school?
- b. Could he attend school while living on the street? What problems would he face if he attended school?

Then I want to know about their future plans and what is their vision of a better future. This I will examine by the following questions:

- a. How does a street child see his/her future? Is education in his opinion important for the future?

My meaning is to try to understand how it would be possible for the street children to attend school and what are the reasons for dropping out of school explained by the children.

Through these explanations I intend to find ways of making school more suitable for the needs of the street children. What kind of school they would attend in order to get basic education? What are their needs? I also want to know these children's future plans. I am curious to know about their intentions concerning their futures and would education be important in their opinion considering their future lives or how have they thought to achieve their goals in life.

6. Collecting data

My approach in this study is social pedagogical which creates the methodology and methods of my research. There are particular methods that are most suitable for a social pedagogical research. A social pedagogical study should be flexible and it should be able to adjust to every concrete situation and environment. The researcher has to be able to approach the social reality through the study. The study should be directed at making a qualitative change and research process always includes a vision of a better future. It is strongly connected to practice. Research should never be made without practice. (Hämäläinen & Kurki 1997, 44.) Praxis is one of the most important concepts of social pedagogy and it means the interaction between theory and practice. Through theory practice can be improved and theory is made in practice. This creates a constantly evolving system of social practices. Another important issue in making social pedagogical study is reflection. Afterwards researcher needs to evaluate and analyze the whole process and this way it is possible to develop himself/herself. The idea is to evaluate the value that the project had in improving the people's lives, not to evaluate the effectiveness of the project. (Hämäläinen & Kurki 1997, 53-54.)

6.1. Using ethnography in data collection

As a research method I chose ethnographic approach because it supplements perfectly my theoretical background. In ethnographic study the goal is to understand the social reality where people live in. For this approach it is typical that the research is made in real conditions, taking part in the people's everyday lives. It takes place in a certain limited area and the research is made in a close interaction with the researched people. Research plan in ethnographic study is open and flexible; it may specify or even change in the field when gathering data. It evolves during the whole research process. Ethnographic study is mainly developed in the fields of anthropology and sociology but in this study I intend to keep in mind the social pedagogical view. (Hämäläinen & Kurki 1997, 44-45.)

In social pedagogical ethnographic study the focus is on the cultures and sub-cultures. It is interested in people's realities; what they do and what are the strategies for their action and the meanings behind these. The major difference between social pedagogical view and others is the idea of change. Social pedagogical view does not just describe and explain rather it is based on action in improving the situations of the researched people or society. The idea is to get more information and deeper understanding in order to improve the quality of life of the researched. The problem of this approach from the pedagogical view is its descriptiveness. Traditionally pedagogical approach has been more prescriptive, but this ethnographic approach gives more tools to understand the complex reality differently than traditional pedagogical study. (Hämäläinen & Kurki 1997, 44-45.)

Ethnographer's job is to listen and to hear. (Hakala & Hynninen 2007, 211). Ethnographer can be seen as a student. He/she is in the field learning from the informants; asking them to teach him/her. Ethnographic knowledge is built little by little through observation, participation, discussions, interviews, collection of different kind of available material in the field and through wondering. (Hakala & Hynninen 2007, 214.) In its most characteristic form ethnography is ethnographer's participation in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, "watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions – in fact collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research". (Hammersley & Atkinson 1995, 1).

Amanda Coffey (2005) states that researcher needs to find his/hers way to the border of familiar and unknown - try to understand the social environments that are not familiar and at the same time try to analytically alienate himself/herself from the social context that he/she assumes to know. The researcher can for example be in between the adults and children. (Lappalainen 2007, 65). Starting an ethnographic study means committing to a long process and preparing to unexpected changes. Researcher is a long time in the field and data is collected in many ways. Ethnographers portray people as constructing the social world, both through their interpretations of it and actions based on those interpretations. (Hammersley & Atkinson 1995.) The researcher can be said to work as a research instrument who uses reflection in order to develop himself/herself. (Gordon et al. 2007, 43).

Ethnography is usually considered to give a voice to the people that are not heard in a society. Critically oriented ethnographer tries to make people see the injustice and inequality in predominant practices. (Hakala & Hynninen 2007, 223-224.) This is the reason I chose ethnography as my research method. Street children need to be made conscious of the reality they live in and they need to know that also they have rights. The certainties need to be questioned, familiar practices challenged and people's conceptions need to be changed. These children need to be seen, their voice need to be heard and their needs taken into consideration. I believe that when I follow these ethnographic working methods I will be able to get closer to the real reality of street children and their opinions. I want to hear their real voice.

I collected my data using ethnographic approach while keeping in mind the pedagogical ideas of Paulo Freire. I thought that this would be the best way to approach these children who were all the time on the alert and were not easy to come near to. The ideas of Paulo Freire gave me guidance throughout the data collection. I tried to be in a dialogical interaction with the children when we were together. My ambition was to treat them as subject, who are teaching me and who I am teaching at the same time. Freire taught me that I should not only make my own research but I should combine it with practice. This is why I was working at the same time with the children and I hopefully gave them some ideas how their situation could be different. At least we spoke of the rights of a child and how the children are living in Finland etc.

The collection of data took place between February 2008 and June 2008. This is the time that I spent in Maputo City, Mozambique being there all together almost five months. The first month I spent getting to know the new country and its capital city; the new culture, its habits, beliefs and ways of action. I was also learning the language, meaning Portuguese but even some words of Shangana (the local language mostly spoken in Maputo) rubbed off on me.

In March 2008 I started my voluntary work at a local organization called Meninos de Moçambique (meaning The Children of Mozambique). This was an open centre for street children, which was operating only during the daytime. The children could come and go as they wanted; there were no structured activities or education. The centre was equipped with TV, DVD-player, stereo, books and games for recreational purposes of the children. There was always health care and the possibility for shower and washing clothes available at the centre. The children were also assisted with all the other problems they encountered for example with the authorities or with the re-integration to families or to school. The policy of the centre concerning the street children's education was that they re-integrated the child first to the family or to relatives before matriculating them to school.

6.2. Researched group

My researched group consists of street children with whom I was working in Maputo during the spring 2008. In my study I interviewed 12 street children who all had been enrolled to primary education but had dropped out at some point. The interviewed children were the children who I knew the best. These children were attending the centre almost daily so I had been able to interact with them a lot. We had been communicating a lot and building trust in both ways. This way I was able to gather more relevant, reliable and truthful information about these children's lives. I also made one interview to our employee who was responsible of the school matriculations of the children. This way I could understand the process of matriculation in the Mozambican context.

All the interviewed children were boys. The majority of street children are boys and the children attending our centre were mainly boys. This made it hard to find girls for interviews. Also the centre where I worked was only open during the daytime and like I was told this was one of the reasons why there weren't many girls. The street girls usually work as prostitutes during the night so they are sleeping in the daytime and cannot attend a centre that is open

only during the day. The street girls that I met in my work only came to the centre to see a nurse or to take a shower, not to hang out. All the girls were adolescents or even adults (in this case meaning over 18 years old) and many of them had children of their own. Yet many of them were attending school at the moment, finishing their earlier interrupted primary education. I did not get a chance to interact with these girls so much so I thought there would be no point in interviewing them. Probably I would not get very reliable information and all the girls I interacted with said they were attending school or they were over 18 years of age. So they did not fit to my profile.

The children who were interviewed were born between 1990 and 1995. They were all still under 18 years at the time of the interview and in that means were considered as children. I intentionally chose a little bit older children because they normally had more school experiences and their cognitive skills were more developed giving them a better potential to state reasons for their actions. The ages of the interviewed children can be seen from table 3.

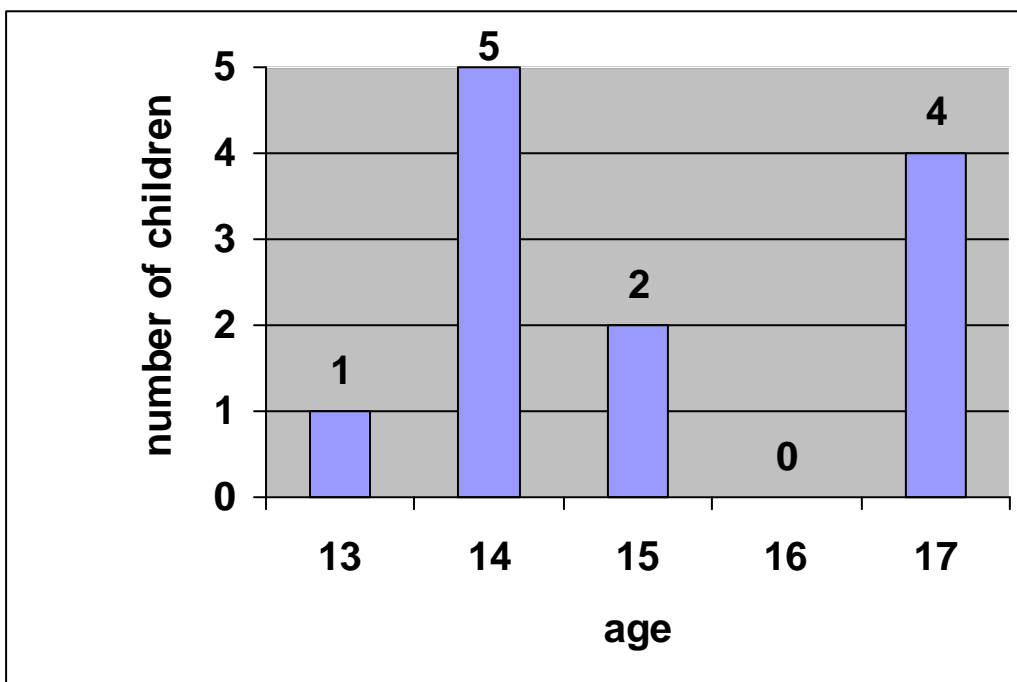


Table 3. The number of interviewed children by their age.

My workplace gave me a good opportunity to interact with children still living on the street and the children were not for example street children who were living in the centers or were re-integrated to families. They might have had different perspectives of the street life and they might have forgotten some things or their information might be outdated. All the

children in my study were children of the street at the moment and for them the cruel reality of the street was home, work place and playground. This gave me a good chance to see the real reality of children living on the street and the information I gathered was current and it came from the present situation of the children. They are exactly the target group to whose situation I am trying to look for answers through my research and these are the children who most need help in every sector including education.

6.2. Methods of data collection

My main data are the interviews and my notes and diaries that I made during my working period. All the time I kept a field diary and wrote it every day after work and during lunch brakes. I tried to interact with the street children daily as much as possible and talk about their lives and their feelings about education and future. The basic information about the children I got from the information charts that the organization had made of the children in vulnerable situation. From these charts I could find the ages of the children, their origins, the date when they left home and the reason why they did this. In some charts there was also special information of the child in question. This made my interviews easier because I did not have to ask the basic information again and some of these questions about their past might even cause pain to these children. So we did not have to go through them anymore.

6.2.1. Observation

Ethnographer uses all his/her senses when he/she observes the community; he/she watches, listens, feels, smells and tastes. To help the observation process the researcher can beforehand make a framework for the observation. Writing is as accurate and detailed as possible and the researcher always is making decisions what to write and how or where to do it. He/she is always analyzing. In observation process the researcher can not observe everything, does not have time to write down everything and can not put use all the data in his/her research. (Lappalainen 2007.)

This is what I did; I observed everything and wrote them down to my field diary. I was trying to understand the reality of a street child better and I wrote everything that I saw or heard, even the smell of their clothes, the taste of the food they offered me or the biscuits they always ate. I went to see the places where the street children slept, where they ate, where they

worked and where they played. I saw the place where they went to doctor, where they went to church and where they cleaned up. I met their friends, some of their families or relatives, the adults who were helping them. Most of all I got the chance to interact with the street children; learn more about their ideas, their desires, their needs and problems as well as their favorite music, their favorite actors and movies, their favorite plays etc. Once I even went to meet the children during night time with my colleagues to the places where they hanged out at that time. Later when I knew more about their lives in general I began to concentrate more closely to the questions of my research. The overall picture of a life of a street child was very important in the beginning because this all was very strange to me and it helped me to understand the context of creating the possibility of education for a street child.

Before I started my work with the street children I made an observation frame (appendix 2.) This helped me to pay attention to the relevant issues while observing the children though in the beginning I wrote down almost everything. It all was anyway very important and useful information of a field that I was not familiar with. Sometimes I made notes to my notebook during the day at work but I didn't do this frequently because I thought it might disturb the children. Then during lunch brakes and after work I wrote my experiences to my field diary. I was trying to act as normally as I could and the writing might have seemed strange in the eyes of the children. Though sometimes the children started writing or drawing to my notebook. They knew that I was there to make my school assignment and I think they didn't really pay attention to it. I played and talked with them, read books for them and watched movies with them. I didn't try to use any authority like my colleagues and I was more like an ally for them. I didn't write everything down from my notebooks to the field diary because the context where a street child lives started to become more obvious for me during this time spent with street children and I was trying to concentrate more closely to the issues that I was actually researching. At the end of my research period my field diary contained more than 70 pages. I also had stories and drawings from the children in my notebooks and in my mind I had some kind of picture of the genuine reality of a street child in Maputo City.

Many adults share the conceit that they understand the children at least as well as the children do but it can be really difficult for a fieldworker to penetrate to children's world. Though children tell about themselves they are careful in what they say. Children are smart and they quickly learn what can and should be said in which company. Adults always see and understand things through their own view of the world. With children observational and in-

depth research is the best way to learn more about their culture. (Fine & Sandstrom 1988, 9-10.) Children have their own culture or cultures and the children I am studying are also part of the Mozambican culture. I need to understand both of these cultures and also the culture of street children which is very different from a culture of a cared child living with his/her family. When researching children methodological self-reflection is essential. (Fine & Sandstrom 1988, 12).

Fine and Sandstrom (1988, 17) suggests that the best participant observation role when researching children is the role of a friend. The idea is to become friends with the subjects and interact with them in the most trusted way possible – without having specific authority role. In their opinion “the key to the role of friend is the explicit expression of positive affect combined with both a relative lack of authority and a lack of sanctioning of the behavior of those being studied. In turn, adopting the friend role suggests that the participant observer treats his or her informants with respect and that he or she desires to acquire competency in their social worlds.” When interacting with the children I tried to take the role of a friend, though in five months I could never become real friends with the street children. Anyway I am an adult and I am there only a short period of time making my research. To promote the friendly atmosphere I tried to avoid taking the role of authority in my work rather I aimed to achieve the position of an adult who pays attention to the children and is interested in their opinions and well-being.

As an adult and an employee I had some power over the children. I needed to be careful how I use this power. From the social pedagogical perspective I need to achieve a dialog with these children where both parties are equal and both person’s opinions are important. A dialog is based on consensual trust and appreciation. The genuine dialog is hard to achieve and it will take years to gain the trust needed on that. In my interaction with the children there were elements of a dialog. Little by little the atmosphere in our engagements shaped more respectful and trustful. In children’s eyes the adult usually is the authority and this position I tried to avoid in order to reach the deepest thoughts and opinions of a mistreated child. I had to pay a lot of attention to the ethical questions of this study. These children are very vulnerable and their situation is very difficult. I tried to be very sensitive and understanding with them.

6.2.2. Interviews

In all interviews the social context, the situation of the interview and time and place are meaningful but this especially comes up in ethnographic interviews. The relationship between the interviewer and interviewee affects to how the themes and questions of the research are approached, how they are negotiated, how they are reacted to and answered to and also how the co-construction of meanings happen. The most important criterion in an ethnographic interview is the time spent with the interviewees and the quality of the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee. When the researcher has respectful and continuous relationship with the informants the study allows them to exchange ideas, perspectives and views creating an open study where there is a place for the informants to express their own views and meanings. The fundamental matters in ethnographic study are presence and context. The interviewer and the interviewee already know each other and at least somehow the context they are in. (Tolonen & Palmu 2007, 91.)

In ethnography the questions for the interviews form in the field. They are not based on the pre-understandings from the earlier studies rather they are related to the field where the research is done. (Tolonen & Palmu 2007, 92.) The interview is shaped more like an interaction between two friends. The both, interviewer and interviewee, have their own history and their own lives but also they have shared history and shared experiences. Yet usually the interviewer and the informant do not share the same knowledge or culture before the study, but the interaction is different than in normal interview because these people somehow know each other. Relationship is different than in an interview that takes place in one certain day between two strangers, but this does not always guarantee explicitness. The addressed issues can be hard to talk about. The interview might arouse different feelings or memories and those need to be handled. Interview can sometimes also work therapeutically. (Tolonen & Palmu 2007, 98-99.)

However the interviewer always has his/her position and that gives him/her power. (Tolonen & Palmu 2007, 98-99.) This power can not be used wrong. A part of researcher's ethical responsibility is to consider what thing can be asked but also what can be written and how to write it so that it does not hurt the informants. (Tolonen & Palmu 2007, 102.) Though the research situation should be equal and confidential the researcher always has the power to ask, interpret and write about someone else's life. The researcher should be aware of this and

take it into account. (Tolonen & Palmu 2007, 109.) The interview should always be based on a subject-subject-relationship, where both are participating and equal. (Mietola 2007, 162).

I began to make the interviews after one month of working with the children. By this time my language skills were a bit better, I had gotten to know the children better and I had had time to think about my interview questions (Appendix 3.). I made these interviews in one month, usually one or two in one day. It was really hard to plan the time or the place of the interviews beforehand because I could not know which children were at the centre in which day or time. Also I could not know beforehand if I could use the one classroom the centre had for my interviews or were the other employees making some interviews for new kids or if there was some education etc.

In my interviews I did not use a tape recorder because I thought it might make the situation uncomfortable for the children. Them feeling comfortable was more important than me feeling comfortable. So I wrote the answers down to my notebook, partly during the interview and the rest right after it. If I could not keep up with the interviewee I just wrote some keywords and then after the interview I added the rest. The interviews mostly took place in a quiet classroom and there were only me and the interviewee. In three interviews I used my colleague as an interpreter because all the children did not speak very well Portuguese so he translated my questions from Portuguese to Shangana and then the answers from Shangana to Portuguese. I thought it would be more comfortable for the children to speak in their own language. Though this arrangement made me feel more uncomfortable because I could not understand what the child and the interpreter were talking. It also made me feel more insecure about my data. I was wondering if the interpreter was leading the child to answer certain things or maybe he did not translate all the things that the child had said to me and he was already defining my data.

All together the interviews went really well and most of the children spoke freely. They were excited to be interviewed and none of them asked anything as a reward or blamed me for using them to develop my own career. These things I was afraid before starting the interviews. But the children were fabulous! I got so much information about their lives and I really felt that we got even closer because of the interviews. I was really surprised how easy they were to interview and sometimes the interviewer could not even keep up the pace when they were talking a lot and I had to write down. When I was making the interviews I noticed

that some questions were hard for them and some maybe felt uncomfortable answering them. I always told them that they do not have to answer if they do not want to but always they answered. Sometimes I really had to drag out the answers because their answers were very simple and obvious. So I made many more specific questions in order to find out the real reasons. After the interview we talked about their lives, what they like to do and what makes them happy, what they had done that day etc. so that they would not feel bad when the interview was done.

6.2.3. Photos and drawings

I also used photographs and drawings to support my data collection. The photographs helped me to remember better the children, their experiences and the context where a street child lives in. I thought that the drawings might help them to explain their situation better and they also are a good reminder for me. I asked the children to draw me a picture of their lives after 10 years and then to explain me what is in that drawing. This might help them to imagine their future and make their dreams more concrete and this gave me useful information about their needs and desires.

“Then I got my camera out and I asked the boys if I could take pictures of them. They agreed and right after I had taken the first picture all of them wanted to take pictures themselves. They took a lot of pictures of themselves, of me and of each others. They also wanted to see all the pictures right after they had taken one. They were so excited about it! Every now and then I was a little afraid that they might break my camera because there were so many boys hanging onto the camera but they handled it very well and every time they even got into an agreement who will take the picture and of whom.”

I was also surprised how well they reacted to the camera and taking photos. The drawing some of the children did not take so seriously. Mostly the younger children were drawing and explaining their drawings very eagerly and also the few key informants I had in my study though they were older. The older children or the adolescents did not take it so seriously and they were mostly making jokes about their drawings.

6.3. Reflections of the data collection process

6.3.1. Getting started

I had planned my research well in Finland before entering the field. The field for me was a country far in southern Africa, Mozambique – more specifically its capital city Maputo. The name, Mozambique, only brought to my mind an image of a developing country which was still struggling with many severe problems that we had left behind over hundred of years ago. I did not know what was expecting me there though I had been preparing myself by reading a lot of information about Mozambique and the street children. I was aware that the street children would be a challenging target group for my research and that they may not be very easy to get close to. Yet it was a shock to enter the streets of Maputo.

During the first days I got very desperate. “What had I thought back in Finland? That I can just walk to a place where the street children hang out, ask few questions and complete my research?” I was even too afraid to walk on the same side of the street with the street children or even to look at them! And the street *children* weren’t exactly children! They were mostly adolescents or even adults living on the streets and many of them were boys. I was scared to go close to them. Many of them were bigger than me and probably all of them were stronger. There was no way I could have protected myself, if the situation would have gotten out of hand. I was thinking that maybe I had bitten off more than I could chew.

When I started my first day at work I was nervous, but then everything worked out very well. The children were far more open, talkative and joyful than I could have ever imagined. They were very curious about me. They asked a lot of questions and made me feel like I was very welcome. First time after I left Finland I felt like maybe it is possible for me to get some data collected.

“One boy gave me a “silver” bracelet and other one draw me few pictures. (...) It feels so good that they are easy to approach and that they really are so open, happy and interested in me.”

With time I learned when and how I could talk with the children about their lives most naturally.

“During some activities it is easy to start a conversation with the children about some everyday things and then ask even some personal questions.”

“Playing and drawing seems to be a good way to get in contact with the children; it is possible to ask questions quietly about everything and even the children seem to be more open to the conversations.”

“It is great that they accompany me home, because then it is easy to talk with them about everything in their lives.”

After the ice was broken, it was very easy to be with the street children at the centre. Little by little I gained their trust more and the children started to include me more to their lives.

“I was playing cards with the boys. I had no idea of the rules of the game but all the time I had one or two boys telling me which card I should play.”

“After work the boys wanted to accompany me home. We could talk while walking and when we got to my apartment, they wanted me to go up and then when I was there come to the balcony to wave to them. And that’s what I did! There they still were waiting for me and waved to me (I have to climb 13 floors to get home). That made me feel really good! J “

I did not use any authority on the boys if the situation did not get really rough and when somebody might have gotten badly hurt. In many occasions I noticed that the boys were considering me as their ally and they started to trust me.

“One boy lied his name and age to the visitors we had from UNESCO and he was looking at me and smiling. Of course I didn’t say anything about it, because I thought that I should be on the children’s side and try to see the world in their eyes and it would also betray their trust if I would give away that kind of things.”

“Today the boys were touching the stereos even though it is forbidden for them. They weren’t even trying to do anything special it was just that that they could touch it and do it without our guard noticing. I was standing next to them and to me they were just laughing and explaining that it is forbidden and they try to do it without the guard noticing it.”

“After work I went to buy a DVD for me from the street. Two boys came with me to show where they always buy their DVDs. When I had chosen my DVD and I was buying it, the boys told to the vendor that if it doesn’t work they will come back tomorrow. It felt so funny that they were threatening the vendor for me.”

“When I had been little sick and didn’t go to work for two days, one of the boys had said to my colleague that if I don’t show up for work soon, he will go to my home and see if I am

alright.”

All these incidents gave me more courage to start with my interviews. I believed that they would trust me enough to tell me about their lives.

6.3.3. Working on the field

Besides getting to know the children and their habits I had to learn the habits of a Mozambican culture. This was not always easy. Sometimes it was very frustrating. Here in Finland we have grown to think that everything that is said will happen and it will happen on a certain time that is mutually agreed on. This kind of model of thinking I had to abandon. My learned effectiveness was useless in the context of Mozambique. I really had to learn a lot of patience in my new home country and a big part of my days I spent waiting. This was not an easy task for my self-centered, effective-minded and impatient Finnish ego.

The most nerve-racking for me was that people couldn't say straight to my face if there was some problem or if they didn't know the answer. In our culture things usually go as they are said, but in Mozambique it was more like a rule than an exception that things didn't go as they were told. For example when I was trying to arrange the interviews with the adults they always said “tomorrow” or “soon” and neither “tomorrow” nor “soon” nothing happened.

“This morning I again waited to get started with the interviews but surprise I didn't. When I asked about it from my colleague (who was supposed to be the interpreter) he told me that this afternoon. This never happened either...”

During the data collection I had to reflect a lot of my methods and action because the topic and the issues of my research are very sensitive. This was not an easy task. I always explained to the children why I was asking that kind of questions and doing the interviews. I also always asked permission from the child to make the interview and I told him that it is okay to refuse from it and that everything they say to me is totally confidential. The hardest part was asking the delicate questions about their personal lives. When we were just hanging out I did not know when it would be appropriate to ask personal questions and how personal questions I could ask in order not to cause more distress to these children. Sometimes my researcher-side was taking over and I really had to remind me that I am doing this research in

the terms of the children, not in the terms of me as a researcher. In my field diary I have many markings considering this issue. Here are presented some of them:

“He (one of my informants) walked me home again and in the way we talked a lot about everything. Or mostly I asked questions from him. (...) I really have to start talking more about some happy things during those walks and not just all the things that he is lacking or he has problems with. He seemed so happy when were talking about music. And now I feel so stupid; what kind of right I have to ask questions that can make the child feel bad!”

“Then we spoke a little bit about his past. I have no idea how personal things I can ask from them so soon because we don’t know each other well yet, and I should do it in the way that they don’t totally shut down. So I am trying to go along slowly.”

I was trying my best not to make the children feel uncomfortable but I am not sure how well I always pulled that through. It was really hard, like rope-walking; if you lean too much to the one side, you’ll fall and if you lean too much to the other side, you’ll fall. It was balancing between these two; do not ask too many question or at the wrong time, yet you need to ask some questions at some point.

“I will try to make my interviews on the terms of the children. I will not wake them up if they are sleeping, I will not ask them to come to the interview when they are showing some movie at the centre rather I make the interviews when there are no other activities for the children and it is okay for them.”

I was prepared that the children would ask many things from me, after all I was a white person which for them represents money. When leaving Finland I thought that I will not pay the children for the interviews nor will I try to “win them over” by giving them food or goods. Few times they asked me to buy them food, but I refused because I could not buy food for all the children and it would be unfair to buy food for one or two. Sometimes they asked me to give them money or to buy other things for them. One boy wanted my sneakers because it was getting colder there to walk with flip-flops. I did not give these for them instead I bought them things to the centre where they all could use them. I also offered all of them candy of chewing gum on special days at work.

Some problems also caused the language. Portuguese is not my native language yet it is the only official language in Mozambique. I had only done a beginners course in Portuguese when I left for Mozambique. Little by little I learned it. My Spanish skills were a great help

and of course all the local people I interacted with.

“Now I have learned the language pretty well and I can converse with the children about almost anything. If I don’t know some word or the child doesn’t know some word in Portuguese, they will explain it differently or some other child will help.”

But even if I learned Portuguese it was not enough. I still could not talk with the street children in their own language. They spoke Shangana or other different kind of dialects related to that. The knowledge of Shangana would have really helped me in my work.

“The language is still troubling me because I can not speak shangana and the boys always speak it together and a lot with the other employees.”

“The children are speaking shangana together all the time and also the employees are communicating in shangana with the children. They only speak Portuguese with me and I feel so ashamed when I don’t understand and it is frustrating to ask “what?” many times and still you don’t get it. But of course the best interest of the children comes first before mine and it is important that the employees communicate with the children in their own language. Their lives are hard enough as they are and this way the employees can build up trust among the children, but of course this makes my observation more difficult.”

When I was working on the field my emotions swung from tears to happiness.

“It is so strange how mood swings a lot. Sometimes I feel so great and then I feel like shit.”

All the unpleasant emotions (e.g. sadness, frustration, inadequacy etc.) felt sometimes so hard to handle in that context because all my closest people were far away, everything around you was new and different.

“In the night at home a terrible feeling of anxiety, frustration and irritation struck me; everything feels so meaningless because there will always be people you can not help. With my room mates we had a really long talk about the defects of the world and when I was going to bed I felt like I just want to bang my head against the wall and maybe even few tears were shed. It just feels so impossible to come up any solutions to the problems of street children because the problems are so complex and deep. “

The hardest situations were when there was a new boy on the street. I was so scared for him and I couldn’t get him out of my head. I could only hope that everything goes well and that I will always see him the next day at work. This did not always happen.

“I was so scared how he will survive his first weekend on the street alone, but I really couldn’t bring him home either.”

“Tonight at home I really couldn’t get our little boys out of my mind and in the bed I started crying because they are spending their first weekend on the street and it might be really rough. I was just thinking what they were doing, if someone was beating them or having anal sex with them or stealing their clothes and stuff. Then it feels so bad that the sleeping on the street is so hard and for the little children it is very tough to stay awake. They need to rest.”

“When I asked him if he wanted to go to live in a closed centre, he said that he would like to live with me.”

The street children are visible and they are there whether we notice them or not. This I really discovered during my stay in Mozambique. I saw the street boys all the time on the streets during my free time. When they had gotten to know me, they always came to say hello. This also gave me mixed emotions. It was really nice to see them and it was nice to notice that they liked to talk with me, but then again meeting them on my holidays made me feel even more privileged. Mostly I was dressed-up and coming from or going to shopping or eating out.

“Yesterday we went to a theatre with my friends. It was the same theatre in front of which our boys sleep. Some of them were there on their cardboard boxes and I was all dressed up for a theatre. It made me feel so bad that I am there having my “upper crust-evening” and they are there on a veranda without anything.”

“When I was walking home from work I saw one of our boys crying on the street. I asked what was wrong and he couldn’t answer to me, he was just sobbing. After a while he said that he was crying because he was so hungry. Damn that felt bad! I had few candies in my purse and gave those to him. He stopped crying but I know that those couldn’t really take his hunger away.”

In the field even some small things felt like heaven. I was surrounded with so many sad things and problems and when one thing succeeded it felt unbelievable good.

“I took the board with me and went to him (one young street boy) and asked if he wanted to play with me. And a huge smile appeared to his face (the first smile I had ever seen on his face) and he nodded to me. That felt sooo good!” (He was new on the street and I hadn’t ever seen him smile before and he seemed so sad and scared.)

One issue that I really thought many times when I was working on the field was the

relationship between me and the children. I didn't know what kind of relationship I should have with the children and how attached I could get with them or how attached I could let them get to me.

“Then it occurred to me; can I let myself get attached to our street boys and on the other hand can I let them get attached to me? I will anyway leave soon. I know I will survive from that though even now the leaving feels a really difficult thing to do. But how will the children feel about that? Will I just be another shitty adult who didn't care for them?”

“I was leaving for my lunch brake and I wasn't coming back for the afternoon. When I told about this to one street boy, he first asked me “Why not? Are you going back to Finland?” I said that no I wasn't going back to Finland, I was going to the university. Then he asked me if I someday will go back to Finland and I said yes. Then he asked “When? Next week?” and I answered that after two months. After that he seemed normal again, because at first he seemed so worried. I really started thinking my leaving and if I will cause more sorrow than happiness with my being here. It is a tricky situation!”

6.3.6. Leaving the field

If going to the field was difficult, so was the leaving.

“I bet I will feel bad when I am leaving and later I really would like to hear how the boys are doing.”

I thought about it a lot during the whole research process but even more when I had gotten to know the children better and I had learnt more about the culture and habits of the field. When the leaving was close I tried to postpone the moment when I would have to say goodbye to the kids. They had asked me many times if I would come back to see them and when or if they could come with me to Finland. I did not know the answers to those questions. I always had to answer that “probably I wouldn't come back and that it would be impossible for me to take the children with me to Finland”. Sometimes I was trying to convince the children that they didn't even want to live in cold and dark Finland because it always felt so bad just to say “no”. To my protesting one child answered that I don't need to worry about that chilliness in Finland, if I take him with me he can wear the same clothes that the Finnish children wear.

When the time finally came that I had to leave and to say goodbye to the children it was devastating. Many of them were acting cool and did not really care about my leaving but few

of them were very sad. The boys who I had been in interaction the most and who were my key informants in this study were a bit hurt when I was leaving. I really had to hold back my tears when I was saying goodbye to these boys when I saw that they were feeling bad. Few weeks after leaving the field I was again spending my nights thinking about the children there somewhere far, at the streets of Maputo City.

7. Data analyses

I analyzed my data after returning home from the field though in an ethnographic study the defining of data happens all the time during the research process. First when setting the research questions and thinking what kind of data should be gathered. Defining also happens when planning the research and when being on the field. On the field the defining of data happens with those decisions that are made, with the looks that are given, with definitions and notes that are made during the process. After the field work the researcher needs to organize the material that has been gathered, type it up, read it analytically and thematically and then start to interpret and write it down again. (Palmu 2007, 144.) Like there are many different kind of materials in ethnography there are also many kind of ways to analyze the material collected. I analyse it with the methodological tools of Freire. Mietola (2007, 175-176) states that the best that ethnography can offer is the dialog that forms between the different materials and the questions, findings and wondering arising from them. Through different materials the comprehension of the issue being studied deepens, widens and specifies – becomes more multidimensional. Hopefully in my analyses I will be able to bring out some of the good qualities of ethnography – the dialogical processing of the material.

7.1. Analysing the reality of a street child

I will start my analyses following again the steps of Paulo Freire. First we need to make ourselves familiar with the situation of the street children and their education. Then we analyse the reality; what is the reality of a dropout living on the street and what are their current possibilities to get education in formal school?

7.1.1. Dropping out and its reasons

First I will discuss of dropping out of school and its reasons. From Table 4 can be seen when the interviewed children have dropped out of school and what are the reasons given by the children for dropping out and for leaving home. These two incidents were closely connected to each other in the children’s lives. So there would be no point in discussing them separately. When I asked the children why aren’t they going to school anymore, many of them answered “because I live on the street” or “because I don’t have a home”. When I first asked the question why you dropped out of school, many answered to me “because I left home”. Then I had to make more specific questions for them to find out the real reasons behind the dropping out and leaving home.

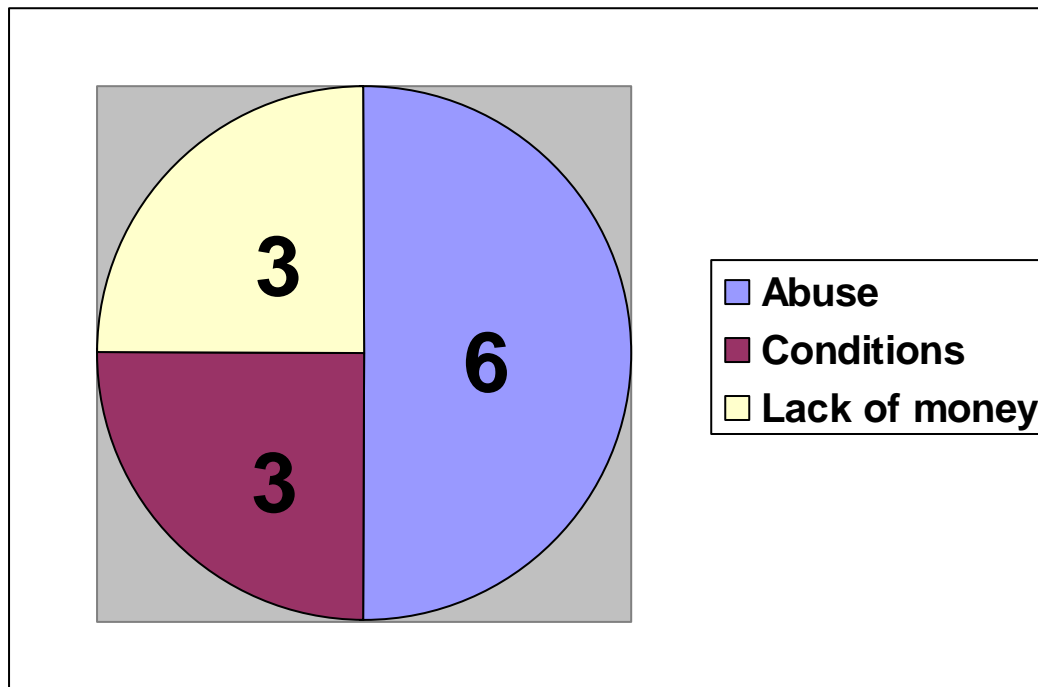


Table 4. The reasons for dropping out of school and leaving home.

I divided the reasons for dropping out of school and leaving home into three categories. These categories were *abuse*, *conditions* and *lack of money*. Conditions and lack of money are both related to poverty. The division into these two categories was made based on the child’s story if the family had no *money for schooling* or if the living conditions were unbearable as a whole. Probably the living conditions were bad in all of these cases but the reasons presented here are the reasons that the children themselves considered the most

relevant reasons for them to end up on the street.

The most common reason for dropping out of school and leaving home was physical and mental abuse. Mostly the person who abused the children was their stepfather, this happened in three cases. In other cases the assaulter was stepmother or own father and the children said they were better off on the street than at home. The lack of money for schooling was mentioned by three boys. They stated that the reason for not attending school was that the family did not have money to matriculate them to school anymore or that they did not have money to buy all the materials and clothes for school.

When the living conditions as a whole made it impossible for the child to participate school the particular reasons were that the family didn't have any food and the child was so hungry all the time that he could not study, or that the child had to work so much to raise the family incomes or to complete household chores that he did not have time for school anymore. In one case the father even sent the child away from home to earn money. Another child left voluntarily to earn money from the city for the family and even now six years later he is still sending some money back home to his family.

Many times the reasons, that drive the children away from home, are various and complex. One reason to explain the situation cannot be identified – there are several. Many of this kind of cases occurred in my research. One child said that

“I dropped out of school because I did not have good living conditions². I envied my friends with new clothes or if they had money for lunch. Sometimes I went to school without eating any breakfast, in those days that I ate breakfast it was just leftovers from the previous day's dinner. When I got home from school I had to do the house hold chores; fetch water, wash dishes and garden. I walked a long distance with a can of water above my head and this happened every day. That day that I started to miss out on school I woke up with so many chores to do and I got late from school so I decided to miss the classes that day. This went on and then I never again returned back to school. One day my dad wanted to know why I wasn't going to school anymore and I did not answer him. He gave me a caning and that made me to run away from home.”

Here the problems in the child life have piled up resulting him to abandon school and leave

² Boas condições de vida is a commonly used phrase in Mozambique and it occurred often in the talk of the street children though when translated into English it sounds very sophisticated.

home. The final drop for him was the violence of his father. When the people live under the oppression and they do not have even the lowest living standards, they turn against each other to maintain the last pieces of themselves as Freire explained. Even in the families they need to use their power against each other when they are cornered. The children get beaten and maltreated which makes the children to alienate from their families. They abandon their family and they start searching for something else to fill their emotional needs. This something else is the children living on the street – their new family.

Most of the children dropped out on 5th grade and all together there were five children who dropped out at that time. Four of the children dropped out on the 3rd grade. One child attended school until the 2nd grade and two of the children survived even on the 6th grade but then dropped out. All these children had been in school for more than one year, some of them even 5 years yet none of these children could read or write properly. For example a child who had attended school until 6th grade, did not even recognize the letters. Few of the children could read though it was more like spelling than reading and they really liked when I read them books though I could not even spell Portuguese correctly. This tells something about the quality of education in over-crowded classes but the benefit of the education was not the reason the children stated as one of the reasons for dropping out. The reason for dropping out of school with the children who did not attend school for many years was usually abuse. The older children, or the children who survived the longest time in primary school, stated the lack of conditions as the reason for dropping out.

In the older age the children are maybe required to contribute more to the raising of family incomes so they quit their schooling. Also the material issues become more important and the older children start comparing the matter with the other children. They become ashamed if they do not possess the same things as others. In schools they even might be picked on if they do not have new clothes, mobile phones etc. This might encourage them to earn money or just to stay out of sight of others.

Table 5 shows us how old were the children when dropping out of school and what grade they were attending when this happened. There can also be counted in which age they started their schooling. The one who started his schooling the latest was a boy who dropped out of school the earliest. He was on the second grade and at the time of dropping out he was already 15 years old, meaning that he started the school at 13 years old at the earliest. The

children have a tendency to drop out more easily when they are over-aged to primary school. This boy was already over-aged for primary school when he began his schooling. This does not really motivate the studying and it might make the child feel more stupid and embarrassed.

Only two of the interviewed street children started their schooling at the age of six and attended school every year until they dropped out. Both of these two boys dropped out on the fifth class and they were 11 years old at the time. Some of these children have dropped out one or many times before so their schooling has been postponed. This is the time that they have dropped out the last time. Most of the children in my study dropped out of school when they were 13 years old.

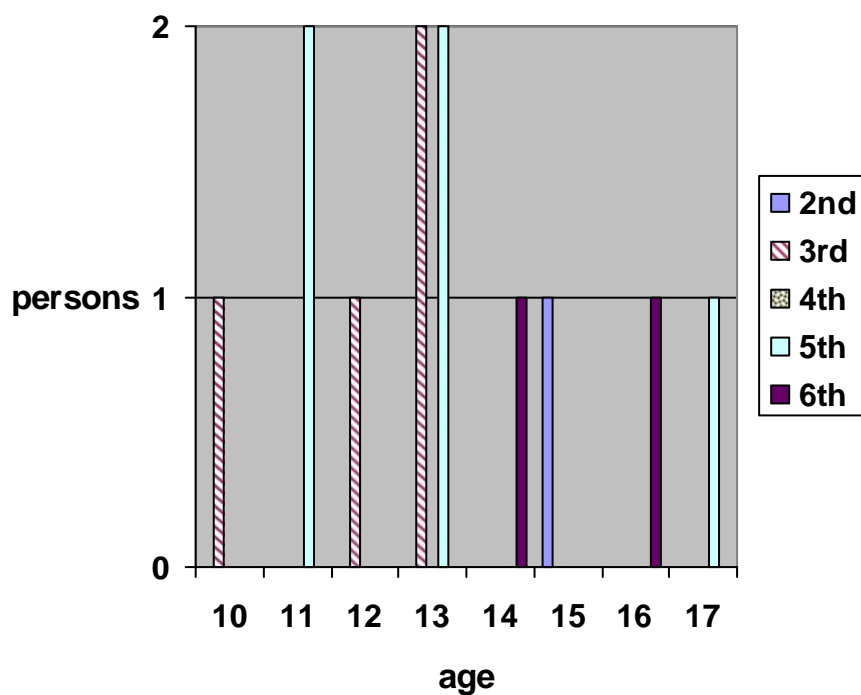


Table 5. The ages and grades of the children when dropping out of school

These children have dropped out of primary school and are living uneducated on the streets. Why them? Is it just by chance that these particular children are the ones living on the street uneducated or why this happened to them? When the children's living conditions became unbearable, they had no choice but to abandon education. The human instinct to survive is much stronger than the instinct to get basic education. And what has made these children's living environment so unacceptable that it does not support their education? The prevailing

society. By influencing the conditions where a child lives in we can increase the child's possibilities to education.

In Freire's terms these children belong to the group of the *oppressed*. They have been marked to stay uneducated by the elite of the country when the rules of the society were created. These children's families are poor and uneducated, so they have not learned the rules of the elite that are required to succeed in the culture of the elite, in this case the school. These children have not adopted the same readiness for schooling from their homes; other things might have been more valued there. Going to school might be the first place where a child needs to adjust to the rules of the elite, the oppressors. If one does not adjust, s/he will drop out of school and stay without a formal education. The children become estranged of the society and they become children of the street. They create their own culture and community there and disregard the norms of the prevailing society. This concludes to the situation where both parties, the society and the street child, ignore each other. The society denounces the children for not adapting; the street children are despised and looked down on. They become invisible to the rest of the society, to the ones that have adjusted to the norms of a society. The street children discard the society because it was not there for them. The society did not help them and left them to survive on their own. They do not want to be part of it and they denounce the society for being unfair. These two drift even a further apart from each other.

The exclusion of education is done by the society. It does not recognize the contribution of the poor for its maintenance or development. The stakeholders in the society have not created the possibility for these children to attend school, it considers them not worthy of education. At least at the moment there are other children that are more worthy of education. Otherwise there would be means to organize education for them. These children have dropped out because it was impossible for them to attend school. Has the society created this division between people to keep up the balance of knowledge? Everyone cannot know the same things, otherwise nobody would be more valued than others. Somebody has to stay uneducated, someone who does not know to boost up the ego of those who do know. In a society there are different roles and structures and education is a mean to maintain these. The street children's families were poor and uneducated, their children will stay poor and uneducated so that the rich can stay rich, well-educated and recognized. The selection for education is used as a tool for oppression.

7.1.2. Attending school and its problems

All the interviewed children wanted to attend school but it would be too complicated for them right now. Many of them said to me that they do not go to school because they live on the street and they do not have a home, but only two of the children said that attending school from the street would be impossible. Though all of them said it would be extremely difficult. Reasons for this difficulty I categorized into three categories; *lack of materials*, *bureaucratical barriers* and *the need for private space*.

The street children do not have *school materials*. The school materials are not given by the government and they should be bought by the families themselves. The street children do not have families to take care of them and they do not have money for the materials. The materials needed would be books, notebooks, pens, backpacks etc. This is one problem in attending school for the street children.

Also the *bureaucracy* in Mozambique set some problems between the street children of Maputo and their schooling. The children were mostly from outer skirts of the city but now they were living on the streets in the downtown. They were supposed to attend school in the place where they were from and where their families lived. The children thought that it would be impossible.

“I do not have transportation to school or the money for the transportation.”

Another bureaucratic barrier in these children’s education was the school shifts. In Mozambique the children go to school in three different shifts, one shift early in the morning, the next one during the day and the last one is the night shift. The shifts usually go by age, but the street children always need to attend the night shift because they might be bad influence to the other children. Some of the children said that they have to work and if they could go to school at the time that is most suitable for them, they would not find it so hard.

My colleague said that they have tried matriculating some children of the street to school but many of them end up dropping out again. They face many problems once they are attending school. First of all they have a lot of problems with Portuguese. It is a language that these children do not know very well. The children have a lot of problems with their behavior in

school. They are aggressive and they cannot concentrate. Paying attention seemed to be a major problem for these children and my colleague mentioned it many times during the interview. He also mentioned that the street children need flexibility and understanding from the school. They usually stay up late, so they sleep late and they do not often have time to do their homework. Yet doing those would be very important in order them to catch up with the other children.

The need for a *private space* is very obvious for a person whose whole life is on a display for every by-passer. The street children said that they need a place to do their homework.

“It is impossible to study on the street because others fight around you all the time.”

“The older children would harass you all the time if you would be studying. “

Another place was also missing in these children’s lives. This place was a place where they could wash their clothes. Even my colleague said that the street children are dirty and their clothes are dirty. Yet it is obligatory to go to school with clean clothes. Along with the clothes the children needed a place to keep their personal belongings. Including their clothes and shoes for school because as the children said all the things one has on the street get stolen. My colleague who I interviewed mentioned that it is hard for the street children to keep their things safe on the street and in good condition. It is very important in Mozambique that the child’s school materials are well kept and that they are brought to school every day. For example at least in some schools the children cannot enter the class if they do not have a pen. When a child sleeps it is easy to steal his/her stuff. Of course in the culture of the street children it is more common that you are forced to give up your personal things to someone who is bigger and/or stronger than you. There prevails a strict hierarchy among the street children. They live in gangs where some children are superior and others inferior. Even in their culture there are clear power structures yet those structure are there in the open for everyone to see. They do not try to hide them as often happens in our culture. There also prevails a clear channel to gain power, the strongest rule.

To get some sleep on the street is not easy. Their sleeping is harassed by the other street children as well as the other members of the society. Some children said that they cannot sleep because the night watch wakes them up and forces them to leave or another watch

wakes them up very early in the morning when his shift begins and forces the children to leave. Many of the children said that it is hard to sleep on the street because other people living on the street make noise and many of them said that it is hard to sleep because you get beaten when you sleep. So one very important thing that the children needed was a place to sleep. For a child who does not live in a house this is a hard wish to fulfill.

Freire states that eventually the oppressed start attacking each other because that way they are trying to preserve the pieces of their humanity. They feel that they can not attack the oppressors yet they are frustrated by the situation and they feel that they need to defend themselves. Their last resort to defend their humanity is to defend in front of their brothers. This creates violence between the oppressed and alienates them from each other. This serves the goals of the oppressors and prevents the oppressed to unite and fight back. The street children fight all the time with each other. With fighting they create and maintain the hierarchy of the street. The city is divided into different zones and if you happen to cross the line where another street gang is the ruler you will get badly hurt. The sleeping places, personal possessions etc. are divided with fights. But the children seemed to hurt each other even without a reason. I heard terrible stories how the adolescents burned the younger children when they were sleeping, how the older ones forced the younger ones to have anal sex or how the children were beaten with iron sticks for no reason. It seemed like the older and stronger ones were enjoying the hurting of the younger ones. The violence seemed so irrational and it was just pure subjection.

“One of the problems that I fear (at the street) is that the older children will hurt me. They use us in the silence of the night and beat us and force us to have anal sex. The police also take advantage of us and they take our possessions.”

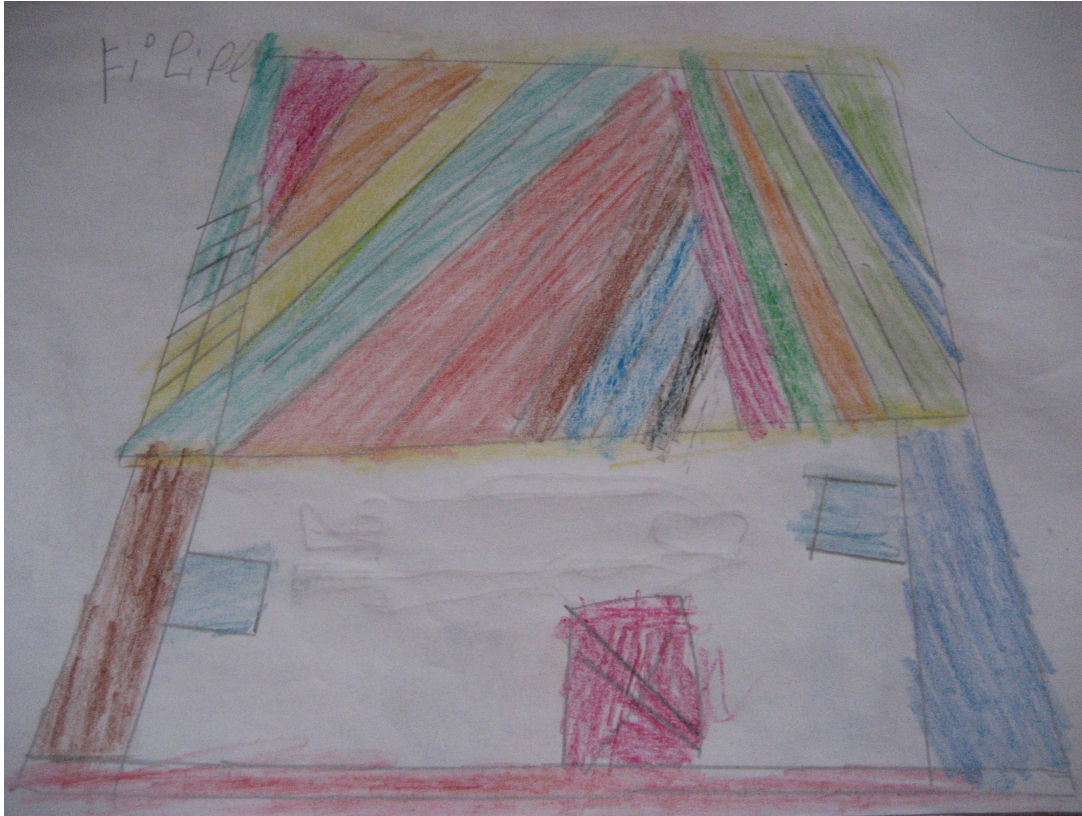
“The life on the street is not easy, I have spent days and nights without eating anything... The biggest fear I have is to be maltreated by the older children or to be dead.”

Maybe this violence is a way for the older children to discharge their feelings. They are all oppressed and the older and stronger ones have adopted violence as a way to take it out on the others. They have been through a lot; they have been beaten, rejected, repressed, insulted etc., and now they are trying to be something. They still idolize those who have hurt them and now they can be like them. Now they have the chance to hurt someone else. The street children turn against each other which is exactly the opposite that they should be doing. Their

aim is to become the oppressors of their own community. This thinking should be changed and they should create another aim for their lives to improve their living conditions.

7.2. A vision of a better future

The next step in the analyses is the phase where I, as a researcher, and the researched children create a vision of a better future. All the interviewed children had dreams for the future and some ideas what they would like to do when they are grown ups. All of them said that they wanted *a job* and *a house*. A house seemed to be really important for them because when I asked them to draw me a picture of their future almost all of the children drew a house. When I asked them to explain what was there in the picture, they said “a house where I will live when I am a grown up”. Also every time that they were drawing in recreational purposes they usually drew a house. Their drawings never included any people which I found curious. Not even these pictures where I had asked them to draw a picture of their lives after 10 years. They did not draw a family who would live in that house. I think that Finnish children very often draw pictures of their families. These children never did. This can be explained with the fact that they did not have a family but did they not want a family in the future either? The picture was always just a building. Sometimes they draw a school and I asked where all the pupils are. Then they draw one child on the school yard to please me. There were never playing children, happy families or any other decorations. It was a building made with a ruler.



Picture 1. A house drawn by a 15-year-old street child.

Every child mentioned that they wanted a job when they are adults and they could name a certain profession that they would like to do. Only one boy could not tell what he would like to be in the future. He only knew that he would not like to work in a hospital because there are dead people and he also would have to be responsible for the deaths of some people. Later on he told me that maybe he would like to be a street educator like the workers in Meninos de Moçambique. The other children had more specific goals in mind concerning their future careers. I have divided their job prospects into two categories; professions that are *socially valued* and professions that are more *practical* and easier to reach.

The professions that are socially valued are usually the ones where you can make a lot of money. The street children have also heard about these professions and they know that these are valued professions where one can make money. This kind of professions that the children mentioned were doctor, pilot, engineer, nurse, teacher and a company manager. Seven of the children mentioned one of these occupations as their future profession.

These professions are socially valued and when they are socially valued they also bring

power to the holder of the position. So it is not in the interests of the society to give this kind of positions to someone who does not belong to the group of the oppressors. Though these groups, oppressors and oppressed, are not unchangeable. When someone who has been oppressed gains power s/he can become the oppressor. Through education the society is trying to keep the power structures stable and to maintain the existing society as it is. If someone who is oppressed gains some power, through education s/he is tried to be shaped as the society wants him/her to be. So that s/he would not jeopardize the prevailing system. This is why the pedagogy of the oppressed is needed; so that those who gain power would start fighting for the rights of the others and would not start enslaving the majority.

If the street children do not realize that the society has deliberately made their schooling so hard in order to maintain the prevailing structures of the society, they might give up too easily thinking that they are not good enough for the education or for the job. If they do realize that this image of them being no good is created by the society to keep them from participating it, it might give them the motivation to fight for the change. They could fight for their right to education and for their right to be full members of the society. Even they could achieve professions that are socially valued and that give them power to influence the society.

The practical professions are usually easier to reach. The required education does not last very long time, if there even is any education needed, and the education is more accessible. Some of these professions can also be learned through practice without proper education. These professions even the society accepts to be done by the poor. These professions do not require education, they only require training. They are very important for the society though their value is not recognized in public. Society needs the working class in order to function and the oppressors need some people to be bossed around in order to keep their status.

The street children may find these practical professions more familiar and more probable for them. They may have also seen these people doing their work many times so their working methods are familiar. These desired professions mentioned were driver, artist and construction worker. All these working groups are very visible in Maputo City. The minibus drivers are everywhere all the time and they carry big piles of money in their hands. Artists are selling their works all over the city center mostly for tourists as well as road and building construction is being made everywhere.

7.2.1. Education as a way to better future

When I asked the children how those dreams could be achieved their answers varied. One boy answered that he needs to go to a driving school when he is old enough because he wanted to be a driver. One of the children drew me a picture of a school when I asked him to draw a picture of his future. He said that he would like to study, but he would like to do it here at the centre of Meninos de Moçambique not in a formal school and maybe in the future it would be possible. He knew that he would have to study in order to get a house and a job in the future and he was already thinking of means to achieve those.



Picture 2. A picture of a school of MDM (Meninos de Moçambique) drawn by a 14-year-old street child.

Other children did not have that clear ideas. They all drew a house when they were asked to draw a picture of their future and that was their future dream but they did not know how to achieve that. One boy answered to me that he will need outside help. He did not know other ways to achieve his dreams. This boy was already somehow subjugated. He thought that he was no good and he needed others to help him. He did not believe that he could do it on his own. He believed that he was inferior and the other superior people should help him.

Freire stated that some people accept their situation believing that it was the will of God. This creates the image that the situation is out of their hands and that it is unchangeable. The thing that surprised me when I was working with the street children was the fact that they all believed in God. All the children I interviewed went to church every week and they said that they prayed a lot. Maybe this was the way to accept their situation and to cope with it. Maybe some of them even believed that it was the will of God why they were on the street. The religious morals are important and they should teach us to believe in good and to respect and help each other. The street children were not implementing the morals of a bible yet they believed in God. Maybe this religion gave them strength to accept their situation and gave them comfort that there was someone who loved them. But they should not accept the situation silently believing that it is the will of God rather they should act as subjects to change it.

Though the children did not have clear ideas how their desired future could be achieved. But when I asked the children about it almost all of them answered that they need to study. This creates our vision of better future and our vision is education that is for everyone. All the studied children said that, though they were out of school at the moment, they would like to attend school. The reasons for the need of school were various though all the reasons were related to the children's future. They needed the school to carry out their future dreams. Through education they thought they could earn money, get a good job, get out of the street or simply just a chance to get on in life.

“So that I would become good and get along in life.”

“So that I could have a future of my own.”

The children wanted to learn many things in school. The most needed skill for the street children were how to read and write. Also Portuguese and mathematics were considered very important things to know in life. Some thought they wanted to learn arts to make a living out of it, two boys wanted to learn how to build a house and one boy wanted to learn how to drive a car. All this the children were missing out because they could not attend school.

“Those are the basic things that everyone should know. Those are the most important things in my mind.”

The society is built that way that if you do not follow the rules you will leave with nothing. The street children have chosen their own way to live but they still dream of the life style of the ones who have adjusted to the society. They idealize those who are valued and have succeeded in a society. They believe that education would bring them there. Somehow even they still believe that their life would become better if they followed the rules of the society. This is the way to achieve their dream. And perhaps it is. If they would study they might get a job, then they could build their own house and they would live there happily ever after. What makes this a conditional sentence is that they still need to face the adjusting to the society. The society is the same and before they did not adjust. Now they have drifted even further apart from it. But is it them who needs to adjust or is it the society? Should the society better recognize the needs of different individuals? Yes it should. Education is also the way to change the society. Through education the next generation can learn the new ways of action. This action is not exploitative, it is not oppressive rather it is encouraging, supporting, loving and tolerant.

Education is a way to be accepted. It is like a rite that one needs to pass through in order to stay as a member of the society. These children still want to be part of the society, they just could not pass the rite and they did not accept its rules. Someday they want to accept those because they desire the things that the society could give them. Even if they have not adopted the rules of the society, they have adopted the valued dreams in the society. The norm is that everyone gets an education, finds a job and starts a family. They did not dream of a family in the future but dreamt of education and job. In Freire's mind the dream of the oppressed should be a free society but they are still too attached to their reality and they do not see how it could be different. They should not try to be a part of this society that oppresses them but to create a new and better one. In order to do this the children still need education. Education gives them the tools to influence the world and most of all it can give them a chance to realize their oppressed situation and that they can influence on it.

7.3. Finding means to education for all

Our last step is finding the means to achieve our vision – education for all. I will examine it in three parts; private space, school materials and overcoming the bureaucratic barriers. Earlier I have already categorized the problems that the street children face when attending school into the same three categories. To these problems I try to find some answers. Some of them are easier to answer but some are impossible without the support of the whole society.

7.3.1. Private space

The first need for schooling that the children could think of was a house. After few more specific questions some of the children said that they only need a place where they could do their homework and where they could stay to attend school. A house for every street child might be a too big of a goal to reach. Though there are many closed centers for street children in Maputo where the children could live, but the children do not like those places because they have rules. They still would not like to follow the rules set by other people. They would like to have a house where they could be free. This could never happen in a country which does not possess a lot of resources. Also these children are still under the age of 18 years and are legally considered as children who need a guardian. The government could not really even invest in building houses for children without an adult.

So the best way for these children to have a house would be that the living conditions in their families would be sufficient for the child to live there. The living conditions at home were unbearable for many of the children because of abuse and poverty. The abuse towards children could be reduced by informing the parents and the public of the rights of a child. The people should be animated to reconsider their attitudes and habits and supported to keep the children's best interest in mind maybe by using drama pedagogy. The issue of poverty is wide and its reasons are various but the reduction of the extreme poverty would help many children to attend school. The children would not have to work all day and they would have money for food, clothes and for the costs of "free" education. This issue I will not discuss here rather I am concentrating on supporting the schooling for the children living on the street without a house.

The children said they needed a place to do their homework and I believe that this could be

arranged. The school for example could offer the children a room for studying and for doing their homework. Though all the schools in Mozambique are over-crowded and the children study in three different shifts and yet there are not enough schools to educate all the children. So maybe this free room from school would not be an option right now because this room should be available all the time. All the children have different schedules and they should be able to use the studying room when they need it. There should also be someone to keep an eye on them so that there would not be a lot of noise or harassment or that this space would only be used in the purpose of education. Some organizations probably could arrange this room for the children. It should be close to their school and it would have to be open from dusk 'til dawn and the children should be able to deposit their personal belongings there safe.

Along with the place to do their homework the children needed a place to deposit their personal things and a place to wash their clothes. The personal belongings easily get stolen on the street or at least it is impossible to keep them in a good condition. So they need a locker. The children also need to keep their school clothes clean and safe so they could deposit them to the same locker for the time that they are not in school. The place to wash their clothes should be close to the place where they deposit their clothes so that they would not need to risk it for them to be stolen. The ideal situation would be that all these places; a place to study, a place to keep personal belongings and a place to wash clothes, would be in the same place. At best it would be at the school building or near to it and the street children should have 24-hour access to it. This place should be open to all street children and the children should be explained that there nobody was superior. All the children from different gangs could come there and the place was meant to promote their education. The children should be motivated to keep it in order and this would happen if they were motivated to study. There would have to be some rules but if they were made together with the children they would be more engaged in following them. This place should also be designed with the children. They could design it in the way they saw fit in order it to best meet their needs.

The problem of sleeping place is really hard to solve. The children are not getting enough sleep on the street which really complicates their studying. Some improvements might happen by giving out information to other street children as well as to the public, informing them about the situation and about the rights of the child so that they would not disturb the sleeping children. The public should not despise or disturb the street children anyway, including the guards and police. The street children hear daily how they are nothing and they

never will be and they start believing that. Some signs can be seen in some of the children that I met. They thought they were no good. Their self-esteem is very low. The public should start seeing the street children as children who have suffered a lot instead of something disgusting that need to be swept away from the streets. If the children were treated better they might start considering the feelings of other people more. Now they just seek the opportunity to hurt others – in this case meaning mostly the other street children.

7.3.2. School materials

The street children mentioned few material things besides the house that they would need in order to be able to attend school. Some of them said that they simply needed money. With that money they could buy all the things for school and for living in general, e.g. food, clothes etc. One boy suggested that they should offer free lunch for the street children at school so that they would not need to earn so much money for food. If the street children were given money or food, they would not have to work and they would have time for school. I believe that giving out money or food might create a chaos and it would not solve the problems of the street children. Instead they should be given the change to earn money even though they are studying.

When I asked the children more specific material needs for schooling many of the children said they needed school materials. That could be arranged by the organizations working with the children in difficult circumstances or the government. Then the children mentioned that they needed clothes and shoes. They were too ashamed to go to school without shoes and with torn and dirty clothes. Also in Mozambique they are very strict about the clothing in class. The pupils need a school uniform and shoes but the children could not take these things with them back to the street because they would get stolen or torn. These should also be able to keep in the locked locker at the school or at some organization like the school materials too.

My colleague mentioned that the materials the children need for schooling are backpacks, notebooks, books, pens and uniforms. All these need to be bought by the pupils themselves and their families though at the moment some organizations are donating these materials to the children who can not afford them by themselves. The pupils also need money to pay for the matriculation and test fees. So the “free” school in Mozambique is not actually free. If

you add up all these it is a lot of money and then of course there are the losses in income while the child is in school. These costs need to be covered somehow and the materials and school fees paid. One option would be a free school instead of a “free” school which has all the hidden costs.

7.3.3. Overcoming the bureaucratic barriers

There were also some problems with the regulation of schooling – bureaucratic barriers. The first bureaucratic barrier was the location of school. The children did not want to go to their old school and it was impossible for them to do that now when they were living far away from it. Their old schools were at the outskirts of the town and now they were living on the streets in the city center. Two of the children said that it would be easier to attend school if they could do it here in the downtown of Maputo.

There are not many resources in the government and it cannot take into consideration all the wishes of the children but the street children should be given the chance to choose their school. Though they are minors and their guardians should have the responsibility to make the decisions for the child but in the case of street children it is hard. These children make all the decisions in their lives and there is no one else to look after them so they should be given the chance to attend that school that they are able to attend.

The other bureaucratic barrier was the school shift. The children wanted to have an influence on the time that they were supposed to attend school. Because the school is in three shifts in Mozambique the street children should have the chance to choose the most suitable shift for them. In other words in order to make the school attendance easier for the street children, they should be able to influence to the time they need to be at school. Then they would be able to work, beg money or steal using the time that is the most suitable for them. This could solve their problem to get food and little bit money for living.

The fact that education is in Portuguese does not make the schooling of the less-fortunate any easier. The language is totally new to the poor children and very different from their own. It would not be enough that they learn the new culture of school – they have to do it in a foreign language. The power of words can be huge. In order to participate in the society in Mozambique one needs the skills of Portuguese. By denying the chance to learn Portuguese

is almost as denying one's chance to participate in the society. This is why it would be important to use their own language in teaching in order to keep up the motivation to study. They still need to learn Portuguese but their own language could be used as a side in the class. They have a lot to learn in the school environment even without a foreign language.

The learning environment in schools should also be made safe for all the children. This is not always the case; children can confront mental, physical or sexual violence in school, they can learn the basics of corruption from teachers that give good grades with money or they will just suffer from bad education. The street children can be easily teased in school. They look different, they might talk different and they have different life experiences than other children. They might be looked down on even in school and the potential in them will stay hidden. The teaser might be a teacher as well as other pupils or their peers on the street. The other street children might pressure him/her to drop out of school because it is not valued in the culture of street children.

The former experiences of the children are so different from the children of the wealthier and educated families. These experiences should somehow be taken into consideration and the curriculum should be modeled to meet the needs of the less-fortunate children. This would motivate the children and their families to invest more on education. Right now the situation is that as long as there are still many children who even have homes without an education in the country, the donors will not invest on street children. They are the last in line and the last ones in school. Somebody should invest on them and that somebody should invest on them now! After 10 years there will be a multiple amount of street children and their situation will be much worse, what can we do then? Then we will need much more recourses to intervene.

8. Discussion

First I want to examine a little bit of the reliability of the analyses. The reliability of the analyses is strongly connected to the reliability of the data. The data that I gathered was gathered from children who have been treated very badly and unfairly by the adults. They do not easily trust on adults and they do not easily tell truth about their lives to the adults. I heard these children lie many times. In the beginning they laid me many times about their age or name etc. Every time I asked about those I got different answers. After a while they started

telling me the same answers – hopefully the truth. I hope that the stories they have told me were true yet I can never be sure. Maybe they have changed some details or the whole story or they do not remember their experiences correctly. I tried to find out the truth by first gaining their trust and by talking with them about the interviewed questions many times before and after the real interview. The children's stories were about the same every time I talked with them so I believe that they were telling me the truth about their lives.

Often studies are analyzed and interpreted with research instruments derived from the Northern context even though the research is from Africa. (Ennew 2003). This is the same problem that I am facing in my study, but hopefully my stay in Mozambique and interaction with local people made me understand their reality better. Five months is not a long time in a totally different culture and maybe it is not enough for me to understand their everyday lives and their reality but I did my best and at least I recognize my deficiencies. I see the results through my own life experiences in Finland and my short term experiences in Mozambique. In some cases it can be good that someone from outside intervenes to people's routines and maybe the outsider can see new solutions to the problems. Of course the different cultures and realities can cause problems; maybe the outsider does not understand them or the meanings created by the local people. My understanding I tried to improve by making research of the country before going there and when I was there I tried to interact with local people as much as possible.

In the analyses I tried to link these children experiences into a larger context. I tried to analyze the data from the perspective of the society and find meanings to their experiences from the social context. In this I used the ideas of Paulo Freire. With this I tried to uncover the "why". When we understand that, we can figure out "how". Next I will give some suggestions how the society could take these children's needs better into consideration in designing the education.

Primary education is needed to learn to read and write. In Mozambican context it is also needed to learn Portuguese. In many ways it would be useful for the street children but does it encourage them to silently accept their situation to be poor and less-fortuned? Freire believes that this is exactly what oppressive education does. It shows the social structures in that light that they cannot be changed concluding the people to accept them. Therefore does the formal schooling do more harm than good? I believe that it doesn't. The formal education

can be designed in the way that it is not oppressive. The curriculum should be designed more according to the pedagogy of the oppressed and the quality of the education should be improved.

Even if I have criticized the formal school organized by the government I still believe that it would be the best channel for these children to get education. Of course it has the hidden curriculum that tries to socialize these children to the prevailing society but it also makes these children literate and teaches them how to influence the society through formal channels. If it wasn't the government school that these children should attend, from where would they get their education? From a school that is led by the Catholic Church? From a school that is led by some organization? All of these are also pleading their own cause and all of them have their hidden curriculum. The realistic choice for the street children would be the formal school.

After all the idea of Freire was to change the society more just and its people equal. Education should promote this equality and the only way to do this is to develop the formal education to better meet the needs of everyone. Non-formal education can never be in the reach of every child, formal education has this chance. In Mozambique there already is a wide network for formal education but it will need some modifications.

The learning environment should be created according to Freire's thoughts. This should help the street children to adjust to the new situation and help them to study. The teaching should not be banking rather it should be learner-centered and problem-based. The teaching emphasizes the building of knowledge not transmitting it and it is based on interaction. There the former experiences of the learner will be taken into consideration and the knowledge is built on them. Also the teacher is there to learn and the traditional teacher-pupil setting might even be turned upside down. In problem-based learning the principle is to bring the students into a situation where they need to solve a problem. Students can use that kind of methods that suit them best. Education is more informal and takes into consideration the individual needs and differences. The pupils can shape their learning according to their own preference. This kind of method also forces you to take into consideration the interpretations and assumptions of others, to work responsibly and let you to bring out your own comments and opinions. (Enkenberg 2000.) Though the self-direction required in this method might be hard for the street children who usually have hard time in concentrating but I believe that with the right motivation this problem could be overcome.

The curriculum should be made more motivating. Motivation is a powerful force. When a person is motivated to do something the barriers on the way can be easier to tackle. It is important to inspire people and even more important to inspire people to participate the society from which they are in a risk to be left out. I believe that with the right motivation the street children could attend school. Their needs should be taken into consideration as well as their life experiences. These children have so much knowledge already but it is different kind of knowledge than the one that is being taught in school. This should not be used against them but as a resource.

One good motivator can be the teacher. In a supportive and loving environment it is easier to learn and to develop. Pedagogical love is based on dialogical confrontation where both parties are treated with respect. It includes the belief that every person has value and potential. They have capability and power to create new and develop a better person. (Viskari 2003, 163-165.) This also follows the ideas of Freire and his pedagogy of the oppressed. The teachers should be trained to practice methods that are based on pedagogical love. Caring is something that the street children are missing. In schools they should be made feel cared for and wanted. Their self-esteem should be built and their talents recognized.

Some changes are also required in the attitudes of the public. The street children should be accepted as a part of the society. They are children who are living in vulnerable conditions and they need even more support and affection than other children. So much information should be given in the society about the street children, about the rights of the child, democracy etc. It is not enough that there are few organizations doing their best to help the street children, the whole society should be committed to it, including its administration. I believe that solutions would be found if people would search those together. The society, the street children and the organizations should be asked questions and should be made to interact and their opinions should be presented to each other. The structures of the society should be made to work. There should be a place where a child could report an abuse, maltreatment, corruption in school etc. and where some official would do something about it. The children should be listened. The children should feel that they are safe and that the adults and the whole social environment are there to support them.

It is not easy to change people's thoughts, attitudes or action. This change needs time but it

has got to start at some point. Today is a good day to start spreading the information. It could be done with conversations, public panels, drama etc. What ever suits the society and the situation best. Something needs to be done and it needs to be done in a cooperation of different actors.

Besides the need of the society to change the concrete needs of the street children should also been given some consideration. These needs were a place for studying and for washing clothes, a locker where they could keep their things that would be open 24 hours, free school instead of “free” where the materials, uniforms, enrollment and test fees would be paid. Also they wanted a chance to influence to the school shifts and to the place where they attend school. It should be close to their new home of the street. With these improvements in the schools and in supporting the street children’s school attendance, I believe that we are on the right path to education for all.

For me making this research has been an amazing adventure. I really feel like I have grown during the time that I spent on the field and outside the field thinking about the situation of the street children. I learned so much about life itself and I had so many great experiences, but mostly I learned a lot about the lives of street children.

“When walking on the streets I look at it so differently than when I first got here; the children, the corners, the dumpsters etc. It is not just a street anymore where people walk, it is a place where people sleep, eat, work and live their everyday lives. Now I look possible places where the children might sleep etc. The street is a place where some people struggle daily to survive.”

My perspectives changed a lot during this process. I hope that I have here been able to give at least some insight of the experiences and ideas that I encountered during my adventure.

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Appendix 1. The research team

Name	Topic	Department	Degree
Miguel Marrengula	Child rights and child welfare in Mozambique: Promoting community based social work practice using social animation.	Department of Social Policy and social work, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Tampere- Finland	PhD student in Social work
Riikka Salokangas	Educational possibilities for street children: Non-formal education	Faculty of Education, University of Tampere- Finland	Master student in education sciences
Mirja Hentilä	Conception of child rights and child's advantage in family court process in Maputo City.	Department of Social Policy and Social Work, Faculty of social sciences, University of Tampere- Finland	Master degree student
Célia Ivete da Conceição	Social work practice with children living with Disabilities in Mozambique	Department of sociology, Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique	Bachelor degree student
Jaana Salo	Educating the dropouts; the case of street children in Maputo city Mozambique	Faculty of Education, University of Tampere- Finland	Master student in education sciences

Appendix 2. Observation frame.

Basic information of the informants:

sex

age

education

- what age started
- in which age ended
- how many years in total
- any informal education, where, what kind

street life

- in what age started living on the street
- why
- how many years has lived on the street
- has tried living somewhere else, what happened

Experiences:

Education

- experiences of education
- reasons for dropping out
- has anyone tried to get them back to school? how?
- if now in education, reasons for starting again, was it hard, how happened
- is education important for the future life
- does know some street children with education

Future

- hopes and dreams for the future
- how to achieve those dreams
- does know some street children who has gotten out of street, how

Ideas for the development of education

- how they could attend school
- what they need from education
- what kind of education is essential for them
- what kind of education would be useful for their future

Appendix 3. Interview frame for the street children.

1. Do you go to school?
2. Why do you not attend school?
3. Did you attend school before? Until what class?
4. When did you drop out of school?
5. Why did you drop out?
6. Do you still want to go to school?
7. Why do you want to attend school?
8. What do you want to learn in school?
9. Why do you want to learn these things in school? For what do you need them?
10. What are the difficulties for attending school while you still live on the street?
11. What is necessary for you to attend school now?
12. What would you like to be in the future? What kind of work would you like to do?
13. What do you have to do to achieve this? How do you think you can get the education for this profession you want?

Appendix 4. Interview frame for the person in charge of the matriculation of the dropout children in MDM.

1. If a child living on the street wants to be matriculated, how does it happen?
2. Do the children always get matriculated to their old school?
3. Do the children have to go to their old school or is it possible to be matriculated to an other school, for example to here at downtown?
4. What do these children need when being re-matriculated to school?
 - a. ID?
 - b. school materials? Which materials they need to buy?
 - c. permanent address?
 - d. What else?
5. Can they get all these things that they need from here, from MDM?
6. Is it possible to matriculate a child who is still living on the street?
7. Have you ever tried to matriculate a child still living on the street? How did it go?
8. What are the problems when matriculating a dropout who is living on the street?
9. How these problems could be conquered?
10. What are the problems they would face if they go to school without having a house?
11. Do you have any suggestions how a child living on the street could go to school?
12. Can you estimate how many street children there are in Maputo? Is the number increasing or decreasing?
13. Isn't it impossible to find a home for every child living on the street?
14. Could education be in the reach of all the children, even if they do not have a home?