Deborah J. Johnson
DeBrenna LaFa Agbényiga
Robert K. Hitchcock
Editors

Vulnerable Children

Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights

Foreword by
James Garbarino

Springer

Vulnerable Children

Deborah J. Johnson • DeBrenna LaFa Agbényiga
Robert K. Hitchcock
Editors

Vulnerable Children

Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights

Springer

Editors
Deborah J. Johnson
Department of Human Development
and Family Studies
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI, USA

Robert K. Hitchcock
Department of Geography
Center for Global Change
and Earth Observations
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI, USA

DeBrenna LaFa Agbényiga
School of Social Work and Department of
Human Development and Family Studies
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI, USA

ISBN 978-1-4614-6779-3 ISBN 978-1-4614-6780-9 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9
Springer New York Heidelberg Dordrecht London

Library of Congress Control Number: 2013935218

Printed on acid-free paper

Springer is part of Springer Science+Business Media (www.springer.com)

Foreword

My mentor, Urie Bronfenbrenner, was fond of quoting a line from the German poet Goethe that translated as "What is most difficult? That which you think is easiest, to see what is before your eyes." I thought of this in connection with this book because one of its principal themes is the "invisibility" of vulnerable children around the world, indeed that the fact of their invisibility contributes to their vulnerability. In one sense, it is hard to imagine that any children are invisible in the face of contemporary globalization and access to information. Yet, these children often are invisible in at least three ways. First, they are hidden away behind doors that few outside can open. I visited Cambodia in 2010, in the company of a couple of professional friends who work for World Vision. We spent some time in a village where the local program had reported, via a house-to-house survey, that there were virtually no children with disabilities. Yet, when we gained access to a few homes and gently persisted in our intrusion, we identified several children who clearly qualified as having disabilities. The local stigma about disabilities made these vulnerable children invisible, and that very invisibility added to their vulnerability (because it made it highly unlikely that they would ever benefit from the educational services that were being made available through World Vision's efforts).

Second, some vulnerable children are hidden "in plain sight," in the sense that they become part of the social background even though they are needy, and thus do not appear on the humanitarian radar screen. Traumatized children in many societies exemplify this kind of invisibility. When I visited Kuwait and Iraq for UNICEF after the first Gulf War (in 1991), I spoke with many children who obviously felt internal and external pressures to "be ok" despite having been traumatized by their experiences with war and political violence. Parents often find it intolerable to stay with the pain of knowing their children have been psychologically wounded, particularly when there are political forces at work around (and perhaps within) them that require a speedy return to normality for everyone.

Third, vulnerable children may be invisible in the sense that they are seen one-dimensionally, only as passive victims rather than as complex and complete human beings with capacities for recovery, resilience, and transcendence. Visiting with young girls who had been rescued from sex trafficking and received trauma-focused

cognitive behavioral therapy, life skills coaching, and protection in Cambodia in 2010, I was impressed with how many of them had marshaled their internal and external resources for a positive life.

Vulnerability and resilience are two sides of the same developmental coin in the lives of children. The first refers to the escalating odds of harm as risk accumulates; the second, to the odds of physical and psychological integrity as developmental assets, social support, and spiritual resources are marshaled. For me, each is linked to three "secrets" that underlie the experience of developmental risks and assets, in the form of trauma, on the one hand, and the three "secrets" that underlie thriving, on the other (Garbarino, 2011).

Three Dark Secrets of Vulnerability

The first of these three secrets is that despite the comforting belief that we are physically strong, the fact of the matter is that the human body can be maimed or destroyed by acts of physical violence. Images of graphic violence demonstrate the reality of this. I call this *Snowden's Secret* after a character in Joseph Heller's 1961 novel "Catch 22," who is grievously wounded during a World War II mission on an American military aircraft. Hit by antiaircraft fire, airman Snowden appears to have suffered only a minor injury when first approached by fellow crewman Yossarian. However, when Snowden complains of feeling cold, Yossarian opens the young man's flak jacket, at which point Snowden's insides spill out onto the floor. This reveals Snowden's Secret: that the human body, which appears so strong and durable, is actually just a fragile bag filled with gooey stuff and lumps, suspended on a brittle skeleton that is no match for steel. Children can learn this secret from their visual exposure to car crashes, shootings, and terrorist attacks, and it is one of the principal sources of trauma for them.

The second dark secret is that the social fabric is as vulnerable as the physical body, that despite all their power, institutions and authority figures cannot necessarily keep you safe when an enemy wishes you harm. Experiences in which parents, teachers, and other adults are present but unable to protect children effectively reveal this to children—and by extension to adults as well. I call it *Dantrell's Secret* in commemoration of a little boy in Chicago who, in 1992, was walked to school by his mother. When they arrived, teachers stood on the steps of the school, and a police car was positioned at the street corner. Nonetheless, as 7-year-old Dantrell Davis walked the 75 ft from his mother to his teacher, he was shot in the head and killed. Learning this secret can turn us away from the structures and values of social authority to fend for ourselves out of a sense of self-defensive adaptation, knowing now that society cannot protect you, that the social fabric of power and authority can be as fragile as the human body.

The third secret is *Milgram's Secret*, the knowledge that anything is possible when it comes to violence; there are no limits to human savagery. Stanley Milgram was the researcher who conducted what was certainly among the most controversial

experiments ever conducted by an American psychologist. He organized a study in which volunteers for an experiment on "memory" were positioned in front of a control board designed to allow them as "teacher" to administer electric shocks to an unseen "learner." The question underlying the study was: Would the "teachers" administer what they knew were painful electric shocks to the "learner" if they were told it was their duty to do so? Before conducting the experiment, Milgram surveyed people as to what they thought would happen in his experiment. Most people said that they thought "normal" people would refuse to inflict such torture and that only a few "crazy" sadists would do so. The results of the study were that although many participants were uncomfortable doing so, 65 % of the "teachers" administered the torture—sometimes cursing the "learner" as they did so. This is Milgram's Secret, that comforting assumptions about what is and what is not possible all disintegrate in the face of the human capacity to commit violence when ordered to do so by an authority figure, particularly "for a good cause."

Milgram's Secret is coming to grips with the fact that any form of violence that can be imagined can be committed. True believers will fly planes into buildings at the cost of their own and thousands of other lives or will strap explosives on their bodies, walk into a school full of children, and detonate the explosives or will spread lethal chemical, biological, and radioactive toxins in the food and water of a community. Fathers and mothers will murder their children. Mobs will beat innocent students to death. Soldiers will burn down houses with their occupants inside. Whatever can be imagined can be done. Learning this secret can drive children and youth to emotional shutdown or hedonistic self-destruction and adults to despair.

Are there three *bright* secrets of resilience to parallel the three *dark* secrets of vulnerability? I believe so.

The Three Bright Secrets of Resilience

Benedict's Secret: Mellen-Thomas Benedict "died" from a brain tumor in 1982, returning to life an hour and a half later. He provided a detailed account of his "near-death experience" and has spent the years since making sense of his experience and its implications for how he lives his life and communicating its implications to others (www.mellen-thomas.com). The core insight he returned with is this: physical experience is just the beginning of human reality. Human beings *are* spiritual beings having a physical experience on this planet, and encounters with the magnificence and beauty of the natural and social worlds can reveal this truth, even if this encounter only comes in death.

The Good Samaritan's Secret: The Parable of the Good Samaritan appears in the biblical book of Luke (Chap. 10: verses 25–37) and has come to represent a compelling message about compassion in the face of adverse social conventions and self-doubts. The Samaritan helps a victimized stranger, who belongs to a group with whom Samaritans share an abiding hostility. The message is this: the human capacity for goodness is amazing, and it offers a path to Heaven. Encounters with altruism

and service can inspire an appreciation for the wondrous positive potential of human life that elevates us and, in so doing, stimulate transformational grace.

Buddha's Secret: After nearly 10 years of searching, the Indian prince Siddhartha realized that enlightenment is possible. He spent the rest of his time on Earth exploring and communicating the practices and beliefs that flowed from this insight. Buddha's Secret is that Heaven is here in every present moment for those who train themselves to know how to see and feel it. Knowing this pushes aside conventional fears, concerns, and suffering and puts our divine opportunities center stage. It is resilience built on the human capacity for finding meaning in life.

As children grow and develop, these three "bright secrets" play a large role in their path, even if at first mostly implicitly and perhaps even "unconsciously." As their minds develop, they more and more come to reflect the fundamentals embodied in these secrets: children know that relationships of love and friendship are paramount, that there is goodness in the world, and that joy and meaningfulness are to be valued. Of course, like adults (and perhaps particularly adolescents), children can be deluded by the social toxins of consumerism, cynicism, and materialism. When they do, it is judgment upon the heads of adults who fail to teach them through example.

As we seek to understand the lives of vulnerable children, we can join the authors of this book in seeking out not only the facts of vulnerability in the lives of children but also the sources of resilience. The dark and bright secrets help us do that. Beyond this list lie the conventional lists of "risk factors" and "developmental assets" or "sources of resilience." No such discussion is complete, however, without attending to the concept of "hardiness."

What are the elements of hardiness? One is commitment rather than alienation. People who do not withdraw from life show greater resistance to the effects of experiencing traumatic events. In the face of war or community violence or personal tragedy, one person says, "No matter what happens I still believe there is goodness in the world," while a second responds with, "I think all you can do is get as far away as you can and just forget about it."

A second element of hardiness is feeling in control rather than feeling powerless. Particularly in Western cultures like our own, people place a high value on feeling powerful and in control, and psychological terms like "agency" and "effectance" speak to this. It is understandable that if people feel totally out of control, they are more likely to succumb to the psychological and philosophical effects of traumatic events. One person responds, "There are things I can do to stay safe," while another says, "I am completely at the mercy of the bad things in the world; there's nothing I can do about it."

A third element of hardiness is seeing the world in terms of challenge rather than threat. One person says, "We can find ways to make things more peaceful and I can be a part of those efforts," while another says, "All I feel is fear; fear that it will happen again and there is nothing I can do about it." Building upon these findings, psychologist Salvatore Maddi and his colleagues have developed a training program to enhance hardiness (the "HardiTraining Program"). Its aim is to increase individual resilience in the face of life's bad things and in the face of trauma.

It is not all this simple, of course. We must be careful not to assume that people who are coping well with trauma in their day-to-day activities ("functional resilience") are necessarily at peace inside ("existential resilience"). Some traumatized people who are very competent and successful on the outside are tormented on the inside. I have a friend who is spectacularly successful as a child psychologist, but whose inner life is tormented, and his intimate relationships often fractured because of his childhood experiences of physical and psychological maltreatment. Any truly positive psychology must go beyond day-to-day functional resilience to consider the core inner psychological virtues of "thriving," "happiness," and "fulfillment." The key is to find ways to harness the human capacity for imagination in order to reprocess traumatic challenge into inspiration.

The Dalai Lama teaches that compassion is more than a feeling dependent upon the sympathetic character of the other. It is the ability to remain fixed on caring for the other person regardless of what that person does, not just out of sympathy for the other person but from the recognition that it is best for ourselves to live in a state of compassion rather than hatred, in part because it stimulates forgiveness. One of the Dalai Lama's most important lessons is this: true compassion is not just an emotional response but a firm commitment founded on reason. That is what we find in this volume: intelligence and knowledge in the service of compassion for vulnerable children. Amen to that.

Chicago, IL, USA James Garbarino, Ph.D.

Reference

Garbarino, J. (2011) The Positive Psychology of Personal Transformation: Leveraging Resilience for Life Change. NY: Springer.

Preface

In the summer of 2006, we attended an administrative retreat commensurate with our roles in the college at the time, while also being active scholars with global interests in children. Our collective and interdisciplinary interests somehow became known to one another and Dr. Agbényiga asked Drs. Hitchcock and Johnson to assemble for a discussion around the Global and Area Thematic Initiative (GATI)[1] grants at MSU. We represented the right mix of social science disciplines—social work, human development and families studies, and anthropology—to cover an expanse of global issues of children's development from varying vantage points.[2] By the end of the 2-day meeting, we were a team having settled on writing a grant for a 3-year project that would bring in scholars from across the globe, develop a conference, and end in a research-based product that could be widely disseminated. The great adventure had begun; new relations, exciting ideas, and contacts were being forged.

We conceived a project that would bring together scholars involved in international work who might wish to make mutual contact and learn about varying approaches to conducting global work and solving the problems of invisible and vulnerable children in the world. Indeed we found that the ideas were intriguing and of value to researchers engaged in such work.

There were three layers of goals we wished to achieve. In the initial phase of the university-wide colloquium series, we intended to provide a forum to explore

[1] The original project was sponsored by the Global and Area Thematic Initiative (GATI) at Michigan State University. Funding for GATI is provided by the US Department of Education through MSU's Title VI-funded National Resource Centers including the African Studies Center, Asian Studies Center, Center for Advanced Study of International Development, and Women and International Development Program (WID) as well as the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies and the Office of the Dean of International Studies and Programs with support from the Office of the Provost.

indigenous perspectives on "undefended" and children's issues internationally. We considered the term "Indigenous" knowing that it does not apply to every cultural context and sought to learn more about the contexts in which it was a relevant and meaningful term. National scholars from Ghana and Australia were invited along with one other scholar whose work represented Indigenous views on education and learning in South America. We planned small gatherings with formal presentations and informal discussion afterward to address perspectives and systems of meaning beyond Western thought. And, of course, the most important ingredients for that process of discovery were food and an informal atmosphere.

In the second phase we planned a conference around the broader themes of the grant, *Undefended Children in Global Contexts*, which has now been updated to incorporate the more broadly used term "vulnerable" children. Here the goal was to bring together international and domestic scholars conducting work on unprotected and invisible children globally as a great opportunity for sharing research, fostering collaborations, and providing forums for addressing children's rights issues as well as solving the policy and intervention problems that emerged in the discussion of the research. One of our greatest honors was to have the then Hon. Dr. Judith Mbula Bahemuka, a Kenyan sociologist and recent ambassador to UN as well as High Commissioner to Canada from Kenya, accept our invitation to keynote the conference.

In the third stage we thought it critical to capture the excellent work shared and produced for dissemination to a wider audience, hence this edited volume. Not only is our anticipation that this volume will be used to further a better understanding of vulnerability and child distress for scholarly use, but also to expose child rights issues and provide updated material for classroom teaching.

Despite the great ideas we launched, we did need assistance to make it all this happen. Our efforts might not have come to such successful fruition if it were not for the herculean efforts of graduate students and other staff who supported us at various stages, Yeon Soo Kim, Linda Hancock, Rosa Homa, Lisa Parker, Lynn Lee, Adell Flourry, Nancy Fair, and Shondra Marshall. Special thanks to Dr. Andrea G. Hunter and Rosa Homa who provided vital feedback and editorial assistance. Key administrators in our departments, Karen Wampler and Gary Anderson, made it possible to acquire additional resources and supports. We are most appreciative of the talent and the passion demonstrated by the contributors to this volume. It is their work, their observations that bring the lives of the world's children seemingly effortlessly to the doorstep of the reader.

East Lansing, MI, USA

Deborah J. Johnson
DeBrenna LaFa Agbényiga
Robert K. Hitchcock

Contents

Contributors

Emmanuel K. Adusei Community Development Specialist & Researcher, Osu, Accra, Ghana

DeBrenna LaFa Agbényiga School of Social Work and Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, USA

Robert Kwame Ame Tshepo Institute for the Study of Contemporary Africa, Wilfrid Laurier University, Brantford, ON, Canada

Judith Mbula Bahemuka Department of Sociology, University of Nairobi, Nairobi, Kenya

Laura Bates University Outreach and Engagement, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, USA

Megan Biesele Kalahari Peoples Fund, Austin, TX, USA

Jill Brown Department of Psychology, Creighton University, Omaha, NE, USA

Anne Ferguson Anthropology and Center for Gender in Global Context, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, USA

Simon Forrest Centre for Aboriginal Studies, Curtin University, Perth, Western Australia

Andrea Freidus James Madison College, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, USA

Lia B.L. Freitas Institute of Psychology, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, RS, Brazil

James Garbarino Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, IL, USA

Deborah J. Johnson Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, USA

Tom Luster Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, USA

Jill R. Gnade-Muñoz Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE, USA

Robert K. Hitchcock Department of Geography, Center for Global Change and Earth Observations, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, USA

Guofang Li Department of Teacher Education, College of Education, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, USA

Rita S. Lopes Institute of Psychology, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, RS, Brazil

A. Bame Nsamenang University Cooperation Division, University of Bamenda (UBa), Bamenda, North West Region, Cameroon

Human Development Resource Centre (HDRC), Bamenda, North West Region, Cameroon

Dolphine Odero-Wanga Applied Community Development Studies, Egerton University, Njoro, Kenya

Cesar A. Piccinini Institute of Psychology, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, RS, Brazil

Desiree Baolian Qin Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, USA

Meenal Rana Department of Education, Brown University, Providence, RI, USA

Joanne Riebschleger School of Social Work, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, USA

Beverly C. Sealey Simmons College, School of Social Work, Boston, MA, USA

Arvind Singhal Department of Communication, University of Texas @ El Paso, El Paso, TX, USA

Tania M. Sperb Institute of Psychology, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, RS, Brazil

Jonathan R.H. Tudge Department of Human Development and Family Studies, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, NC, USA

Chapter 1
Vulnerable Childhood in a Global Context: Embracing the Sacred Trust

Deborah J. Johnson, DeBrenna LaFa Agbényiga, and Judith Mbula Bahemuka

> *There is no trust more sacred than the one the world holds with children. There is no duty more important than ensuring that their rights are respected, that their welfare is protected, that their lives are free from fear and want and that they can grow up in peace.*
>
> (Kofi Annan)

Vulnerable Child: Invisible, Unprotected, and Undefended

Globally we have departed from the sacred trust. Many of today's children exist as invisible, undefended, and unprotected members of society, in essence, vulnerable, (Human Rights Watch 1999). For millions of children, the main cause of their vulnerability is due to violations to their human rights. These violations are encapsulated in issues of (1) invisibility due to family secrecy and abuse, mobility within and across national and international borders, poor government oversight, etc;

D.J. Johnson, Ph.D. (✉)
Department of Human Development and Family Studies,
Michigan State University, 552 W. Circle Drive, East Lansing,
MI 48824, USA
e-mail: john1442@msu.edu

D.L. Agbényiga, Ph.D. LMSW
School of Social Work and Department of Human Development and Family Studies,
Michigan State University, 201 F Berkey Hall, 509 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing,
MI 48824-1118, USA
e-mail: agbenyi1@msu.edu

J.M. Bahemuka, Ph.D.
Department of Sociology, University of Nairobi, Nairobi, Kenya
e-mail: judithbahemuka@yahoo.com

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9_1,

(2) protections that are either poor or nonexistent, families weakened by war, disease and poverty, inadequate or absent laws, policies, supports, or interventions UNICEF, 2005a; (3) and "undefendedness", the inability or lack of will by adults, communities, or governments to be the advocates ensuring basic needs and the betterment of children's lives. The incidences of threats trauma and exploitation are numerous, indeed, what does it mean to be a vulnerable child today?

Threats to child security come in many forms, among the most devastating are war and disease that leave children without parents for long periods of time or permanently. Children are losing their parents in record numbers; 132 million children are orphaned in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean (UNICEF, 2005a, 2005b, 2012). Unaccompanied minors and orphans defined as having lost one or both parents are highly vulnerable to abuses by family and strangers UNICEF 2006d. One surviving parent or grandparents may not be adequate to guarantee the child's right to protection. Among orphaned youth, are refugee children and youth, numbering as many as 15 million (UNICEF, 2012). Refugee children are crossing national and international borders to flee prosecution, seek asylum, and end long-term displacement. The experience of parental loss (Luster, Qin, Bates, Johnson, & Rana, 2009) reverberates throughout life, and among the challenges facing young survivors is the unexpected need to take on adult responsibilities.

Exploitation and stigma add to the burden of orphaned children and children in fosterage. The vulnerability that arises from health related stigma, like HIV/AIDS, can cause them to disappear from view of other living relatives and their communities. The risk is compounded when feelings of shame and parental loss are used to recruit them as child soldiers (HRW, 1994a). The exploitation is complete when the child soldier is then exposed to torture and maltreatment during training to force his compliance (HRW, 1992; Wessells, 2010).

Child laborers in industry or on farms are also invisible and extremely difficult to defend. It is estimated by the International Labor Organization (ILO) (IPEC, 2011) that 215 million of the world's children are caught up in labor of various kinds. In 2012, 115 million children were engaged in what has been reported as some of the worst forms of child labor (Agbényiga, 2006; IPEC, 2011; UNICEF, 2012), including thousands of child slaves (Lee-Wright, 1990; Seabrook, 2001). Undefended children are recruited by adults because they are cheap, often submissive, and more easily trained than adults. Children not paid for their labor are also the unseen victims of some of the most hazardous forms of labor (IPEC, 2011).

Another 100 million children are engaged in work for pay in support of families or other child relatives (HRW, 2000; UNICEF, 2012). Children work because they may be the sole source of support to themselves or their families. Critical distinctions are made among harsh, unsafe, involuntary practices, that create vulnerability, and safer family, community-based, graduated apprenticeship approaches, mutually valued by the child and the family (Agbényiga, 2006, 2011). Irrespective of the distinctions among the contexts of children's labor, millions of children continue to be engaged in these activities at early ages. Even these safe forms of work can be disruptive to educational attainment for boys and especially for girls.

While child labor can be a short-term fix to the immediate needs of the child and the family, education is an important pathway to escaping the long term constraints

of poverty, race, and gender. These opportunities for children's futures and their development are not well protected. Yet, 115 million children are not in school, and two thirds of them are girls (IPEC, 2011; World Bank, 2011). The supports that children need to ensure educational opportunity involve multiple challenges. Education is disrupted when the care of parents, perhaps ill from HIV/AIDS, falls to young girls (HRW, 2000; UNICEF, 2006c) as with other household duties. Given current trends like these, even with extensive efforts in expanding education and training, by 2015, there will still be more than 70 million children who are not attending school, most of them in Africa. Children encounter many obstacles that interfere with their educational attainment or effective schooling experiences; labor and gender are among the most common, but there are others. Ethnic and racial discrimination accounts for a number of systemic interactions between families, communities, and schools, leading to overt exclusion from school, significant deterrents to attendance, and early exit. A UNICEF report (2008) found that disproportionately, 101 million children currently out of school were ethnic minority or indigenous children. So one consequence of discrimination is limited or complete lack of access to school.

Even when children attend school, they may be plagued with cultural, religious, or racial discrimination that disrupt attendance and threaten their educational attainment and economic empowerment through adulthood (UNICEF, 2005a, 2006a). Discriminatory treatment in school can push children and youth out of school before they complete their educational goals. Educational inequality of schools globally may exist not only as poor quality education and resources but more insidiously as cultural domination in schools and school systems. In this process the identities and cultures of children are subjugated to a singular set of ethnocentric values reinforced by policy, curriculum, and transactions with school personnel (Biesele & Hitchcock, 2000). Under these circumstances, the child's right to agency (Nsamenang, 2012), cultural identity, and self-determination are undermined and sometimes arrested. This oppression drives the child toward further invisibility increasing educational exclusion while blocking access to social and economic success (UNICEF, 2005a).

Mental Health and Well-Being

Children's vulnerabilities are interwoven by the commons threads of oppression, poverty, lack of cultural security, family stability, child labor, and the many faces of discrimination. Undefended status, not only limits educational opportunities and quality of life but threatens physical and mental health both in childhood and later in adulthood. Long-term psychological trauma is a problem for children who experience war, those with backgrounds as child soldiers, and those who have been denied their religious or cultural freedoms (HRW, 1994b, 1996; UNICEF, 2006d). Reintegration into society or into healthier families occurs eventually after demobilization but is then fraught with emotional and psychological

difficulty as are other forms of reentry (HRW, 1992, 1994b, 1994c, 1996; UNICEF, 2006b). For example, Sudanese refugee youth entering the USA and living with American foster families suffer ongoing effects of PTSD (e.g., sleep disturbance, depression, alcoholism) (Bates et al., 2005; Luster, Johnson, & Bates, 2008) but are also resilient (e.g., completion of high school and college, maintenance of job and family, development of bridging organizations for Sudan) (Luster, Johnson, et al., 2008). Their resilience is bolstered by a range of supports, including family, and institutional services. Their example show us how the course of children's lives can be changed, perhaps even saved through mental health and other support services. However, globally, mental health services are highly underdeveloped for children (Saxena, 2005).

Child as Entity: Culturally Bound and Centered Development

Considerations of perspective and voice are central when addressing themes in global context. Indigenous voices and cultural variation must not be ignored in our discourse and assessment of common problems, and problems across contexts. Nuances associated with cultural perspective, practice, or social history should not lose our attention in the discussion and development of strategies or policies (Johnson, 2000; Johnson, Dyanda-Marira, & Dzvimbo, 1997). These issues are especially important when applied to the often eclipsed voices of children.

Agbényiga (2011) and others (Bahemuka & Mutie, 2008; Giovannoni, 1995) have described how Western conceptualizations of adulthood have shifted to accommodate industrial, economic, and social change and how these factors may differ in whole or in part for children in various parts of Africa and elsewhere. Developmental researchers and theorists (Nsamenang, 1993; Super & Harkness, 1986) have identified culturally bound features of development and child agency (Nsamenang, 2012). For instance, in understanding child development outside of Western cultural contexts, Nsamenang (1993) argues for additional stages in human development that families and community members might consider and that could have importance in the development of practice for problems such as early infant death or the meaning ascribed to child play vs. child work. These differences in context and perspectives on development shape expectations and define what is normal and healthy for children where they live.

In this volume we want to respect and be inclusive of these diverse world views but also strongly engage UNCRC (1989) that bind disparate cultures and world views together. Western values have often set the tone for child rights standards and as such may be at odds with other global child rights norms centered in the child's own circumstance and culture (Myers, 2001). The work of authors in this volume will highlight how those places of conflict may have arisen, and they will also provide perspective on the best paths toward elevating child-centered, context-relevant research, intervention, and programming.

Layered Vulnerability and the Approach

What is essential in understanding vulnerability and the plight of children, is the complex and layered nature of that existence. Vulnerability is rarely a single issue. Violations to children's rights and the issues they face are experienced as multiple risks or embedded layers of risk. For instance, to address fosterage or mental health or race as separate experiences is a false discussion of the problem. The problem for children is that they live at the intersection of many of these problems. This point is also the challenge of this book; we have created sections that fit topical matters but we readily recognize that children of war are also orphans, that school grounds interface with battle grounds (HRW/A, 1996; HRW, 2011), that gender suppression in education interfaces with labor, and that little or no access to health care, lack of cultural security, and child abuse can be imbedded in problems associated with parenting and parental loss (Luster, Qin, Bates, Johnson, & Rana, 2008). Agencies accustomed to serving American mainstream groups are ill-prepared and rarely anticipate the previous experience or the consequences in the short- and long-term futures of immigrant and disadvantaged youth. These are just a few examples demonstrating how intertwined the connection is between the problems and circumstances of children that challenge communities, social agencies, and governments.

An interdisciplinary systems approach (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) is used to explore the intersections of child vulnerability, child rights, and child well-being within a global perspective and linking the works in this volume together (Garbarino, 2008; Nsamenang, 1993). Transactional, developmental, and structural challenges facing minority, refugee, and indigenous children are the central focus of this volume. Highlighting research on children's vulnerabilities as produced by national and international research scholars whose work is linked to child rights perspectives is vital to this focus. Specifically, we are interested in schooling, health, child security, identity and self-determinism, child well-being, and policy. This book reflects collaboration among scholars emphasizing child development in context and across disciplines. The bridging of these areas will provide knowledge for understanding other underlying factors that are significant to a global appreciation for and resolution of the problems faced by the unseen, the often unprotected, and undefended children (UNICEF, 2006a). Significant contributions are made by the authors and through the organization of the book. It provides a critical forum to address these concerns and to work through the complexities of varied cultural contexts, toward greater sharing of information and of problem solving. If we can detail the problems, we can better detail the responses and be the adults/parents we need to be at the levels of the family, community, and government.

The paradox in discussions of child rights and disadvantagement from a global perspective is that child rights standards are predominantly centered in Western thought (Kent, 1995), but the discourse around child rights issues tends to exclude discussion of risk and vulnerability in the lives of Western children. A strength of this volume is to reverse this trend. We de-emphasize Western views of child rights and provide greater inclusiveness of children lives with research that traverses

Western and non-Western contexts, sometime within the same study. We consider it critical that these problems be presented in tandem. We reasoned that refugee and immigrant experiences, for instance, are transnational experiences, and we must follow the movements of children to understand their experiences. That indeed, global issues of child vulnerability and protection also emerge in the Western society or can be tracked into the west given the mobile nature of children in previous to current national contexts.

Garbarino's vast experience in the global world of the child sets a critical tone for centering on children's vulnerability. Contributors to this volume have addressed both the "dark and bright secrets" of a vulnerable childhood as Garbarino suggests in the Foreword. Authors presenting research on hardships and the unseen and inhuman sides of childhood provide us with the dark secrets. The bright secrets are shared through information policy and program development and through the discussions of child agency and voice. Contributing scholars' chapters are organized by their critical and unique perspectives on the themes of cultural empowerment, education, health and well-being, child security, and child rights policy.

In the first section on *cultural empowerment and self-determination*, each author takes on the questions of "in whose voice?" and "by what standard?" The chapters emphasize the importance of cultural meanings associated with children's development and how those meanings can be preserved against regular assaults or direct efforts to diminish or eliminate core culture such as language. Nsamenang (Chap. 2) describes the subjugation of African interpretations of child development to Western concepts of the developing child and healthy activity and then links them to tensions of the standard of rights of the child; he offers a framework for an appropriate African world view of children developing in that context. Elevation of a culturally centered developmental process can better differentiate what is normative across contexts from what is problematic. Both Gnade-Munoz (Chap. 3) and Biesele (Chap. 4) provide examples of the importance of preserving indigenous language and thereby preserving both culture and the people. Language, education, and resistance are intertwined in the work of these authors. Gnade-Munoz focuses on the indigenous Maya-Tojolabal of Mexico where education is being used to "standardize" all groups to mainstream Mexican language and culture and the resistance of this homogenization in school. Biesele acknowledges similar contexts of oppression among the !Kung Bushman or Ju/'hoan San of the Kalahari of Namibia. Her focus is on the efforts to preserve language and in so doing culture. She provides a key example of an inclusive school-based curriculum.

Community-centered education and the daily lives of schoolchildren and their families are emphasized in the section on *education and school experiences*. How does one negotiate refugee status, newcomer status, mistaken race and caste, and the dominant cultures of mainstream America as well as the foreign culture of American schools? Sudanese refugee families and their children in Li's research (Chap. 5) must successfully manage the multidimensional and complex characteristics of their statuses, ties to the homeland origins, and establishment of ties to the new homeland while addressing race and class. Li's discussion is timely as the immigrant experience represents the challenges of childhood and parenting in the context

of one of the fastest-growing American experiences. In the recent documentary film, Waiting for Superman (2011), poor schools may perpetuate poor communities, a by-product of which is crime and incarceration among disillusioned youth. Hope resides in the desperation of some parents to extricate their children from this devastating path to nowhere. In Sealey's research (Chap. 7), she creatively globalizes these connections by looking at youth in the African diaspora (Caribbean, Ghanaian, and African-American) with common destinies. The buffer between the negative outcomes of poor school attitudes and delinquency among these youth seems to be good relations with and monitoring by their parents. Indeed families are protective when they function properly irrespective of their resources. Exclusion from educational opportunity and the "fix" for this kind of discrimination are the topics of Forrest's (Chap. 7) "Boodja Marr Karl" that reflects the idea of a community-focused educational environment. Forrest lays out a model for integrative culturally centered education that incorporates the needs of both children and adults and is grounded in the values and the world view of Australian Aboriginal or indigenous communities.

Health and well-being is a broadly defined section of this volume encompassing physical mental health, risk, and endangerment. Children labor the inadequacies of services for children's mental health (Saxena, 2005; Saxena, Thornicroft, Knapp, & Whiteford, 2007). The other question about health and well-being is asked as a question of world view and cultural context: what is normative and what are the indicators for child outcomes of concern? Both Agbényiga (Chap. 8) and Adusei (Chap. 10) address the controversial issue of child labor. Agbényiga provides a foundation for differentiating the labor experiences and risks for children. The finer points of risk in the worst forms of child labor have only recently moved from the policy arena to the research arena. Having done that, Adusei's chapter describes a work context for children in a Ghanaian fishing village where the physical dangers may be better managed to some extent but are also more complex given consequences such as school disruption. Through the research, Adusei weaves into the discussion the child's own agency and the needs of the family against issues of safety and risk. What happens when our parents can't protect us? In Riebschlegers' Chap. (11), she discusses the impact of psychiatric illness of parents on children. In particular, she reviews mental health programs and services to highlight the underserved needs of children. The need for integrated health for families is underscored in her systematic review of programs. Tudge, Piccinini, Sperb, Odero-Wanga, Lopes, and Freitas (Chap. 9) use play behavior as a focal point to emphasize variation across several countries, Brazil, Kenya, and Europe, and the appropriateness of context for again understanding what is normative. Unique in this work is not only cross-cultural diversity but also socioeconomic diversity.

The vast and rising number of children growing up without their parents has been a concern given poor and partial solutions that are increasingly inadequate to support their needs. In this section on *orphans and fosterage*, the authors take up the challenges and contexts of these children's experiences as orphans or in various forms of foster care. Understanding their own lack of protection, some youth have developed strategies for self-reliance, for better or worse. In the discussion of Sudanese youth,

Bates, Luster, Johnson, Qin, and Rana (Chap. 12) find that there is significant evidence of resilience but also conflicts in being and attempting to foster self-reliant postwar youth. In the Namibian circumstance described by Brown (Chap. 13), children are orphaned due largely to HIV/AIDS parental debilitation and death. Socially distributed care or kinship care take center-stage as risks to the child that arise from the tensions around familial duty, burden, and the stigma of losing a parent to AIDS that follows the child. These themes are shared in the study of fosterage in Malawi explored by Freidus and Ferguson (Chap. 14). The work is deepened through the discussion of what transpires in the larger community and beyond the family to the organizational contexts and the supporting activities of those communities.

Contexts for *children's rights* and policy examples are raised in the final section of the volume. The "trokosi child" tradition highlights a disturbing conflict between child rights, ethno-religious tradition, and a society that has evolved beyond this narrow slice of culture. Ame (Chap. 16) attempts to share a very difficult lens of embedded layers of transactions between the trokosi system and Ghanaian society and policy, Ghanaian government, and the rights of young girls globally as represented by the UNCRC (1989). At the center of all these layers is the question of "whose life" may be determined and whose "voice" silenced by tradition and cultural beliefs about collective morality. Though murky, in the end we must serve the needs of the child. Hitchcock (Chap. 15) has blended history and the discussions of self-determination from earlier in the book with the broader issues of education involving indigenous peoples. Solutions for evading what can be or has been oppression in education are at the center of this fluid demonstration of child rights. Singhal (Chap. 17) highlights the efforts of UNICEF in strategic communication approaches that have ultimately been successful in bringing the plight of countless numbers of children to the world community. He underscores the critical nature of these programs and methods for initiating change and enhancing the pace of change. Where they flourish, these types of communicative approaches also provide the opportunity for children's agency to be activated and their voices heard.

References

Agbényiga, D.L. (2006). *The dividing lines: Cultural understanding of child labor and child abuse in Africa*. Unpublished paper, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI.

Agbényiga, D. L. (2011). Defining childhood: A historical developmental perspective. In R. K. Ame, D. L. Agbényiga, & N. A. Apt (Eds.), *Children's rights in Ghana: Reality or rhetoric?* (pp. 15–36). Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.

Bahemuka, J. M., & Mutie, P.M. (2008). *Undefended childhood in Africa*. Unpublished paper, University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Bates, L., Baird, D., Johnson, D. J., Lee, R. E., Luster, T., & Rehgan, C. (2005). Sudanese refugee youth in foster care: The "lost boys" in America. *Child Welfare, 84*(5), 631–648.

Biesele, M., & Hitchcock, R. (2000). Ju/'hoan language education in Namibia and its relevance for minority-language education in Botswana. In H. M. Batibo & B. Smieja (Eds.), *Botswana: The future of minority languages* (pp. 227–265). Basel: Peter Lang.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments in nature and design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Garbarino, J. (2008). *Children and the dark side of the human experience: Confronting global realities and rethinking child development*. New York, NY: Springer.

Giovannoni, L. (1995). Child welfare overview. In R. L. Edwards & J. G. Hopps (Eds.), *The encyclopedia of social work* (19th ed., Vol. 1, pp. 424–432). Washington, DC: National Association of Social Work.

Human Rights Watch. (1992). *Nothing unusual: Torture of children in Turkey*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Human Rights Watch. (1994a). *Easy prey: Child soldiers in Liberia*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Human Rights Watch. (1994b). *The lost boys: Child soldiers in Sudan*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Human Rights Watch. (1996). *Children in combat*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Human Rights Watch. (1999). *Promises broken: An assessment of children's rights on the 10th anniversary of the convention on the rights of the child*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Human Rights Watch. (2000). *Fingers to the bone: United States failure to protect child farmworkers*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Human Rights Watch. (2011). *Yemen: Troops used schools, endangering children*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Human Rights Watch/Asia. (1996). *The small hand of slavery: Bonded child labor in India*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC). (Dec, 2011). Children in hazardous work: What we know what we need to do. International Organization on Labor (ILO). http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/download.do?type=document&id-17035.

Johnson, D. J. (2000). Disentangling poverty and race. In S. Zeldin, L. Camino, & W. Wheeler (Eds.), *Applied developmental science* [Special issue: Promoting adolescent development in community context: Challenges to scholars, nonprofit managers and higher education] (Vol. 4, Supp. 1, pp. 55–67) Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Hilldale, NJ USA.

Johnson, D. J., Dyanda-Marira, C., & Dzvimbo, P. K. (1997). Urban Zimbabwean mothers' choices and perceptions of care for young children. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 12*, 199–219.

Lee-Wright, P. (1990). *Child slaves*. London: Earthscan.

Luster, T., Johnson, D. J., & Bates, L. (2008). "Lost boys" finding their way: Challenges, changes, and small victories of young Sudanese refugees in the United States. In R. Dalla, L. J. Defrain, J. Johnson, & D. A. Abbott (Eds.), *Strength and challenges of new immigrant families: Implications for research, education, policy, and service* (pp. 265–286). Lanham: Lexington Books.

Luster, T., Qin, D., Bates, L., Johnson, D. J., & Rana, M. (2008). The lost boys of Sudan: Ambiguous loss, search for family, and reestablishing relationships with family members. *Family Relations, 57*, 444–456.

Luster, T., Qin, D., Bates, L., Johnson, D. J., & Rana, M. (2009). The lost boys of Sudan: Coping with ambiguous loss and separation from parents. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 79*(2), 203–211.

Myers, W. E. (2001). The right rights? Child labor in a globalizing world. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 575*(1), 38–55.

Nsamenang, A. B. (1993). *Human development in cultural context: A third world perspective*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Nsamenang, A.B. (2012). On researching the agency of Africa's young citizens. Issues, challenges and prospects for development. In D. T. Slaughter-Defoe (Ed.), & L. Nucci (Series Ed.), *Race and child development, contributions to human development* (Vol. 25, pp. 90–104). S. Karger: AG Switzerland.

Saxena, S. (2005). *Atlas: Child and adolescent mental health resources: Global concerns, implications for the future*. Switzerland: World Health Organization.

Saxena, S., Thornicroft, G., Knapp, M., & Whiteford, H. (2007). Resources for mental health: Scarcity, inequity, and inefficiency. *The Lancet, 370*, 878–889. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(07)61239-2.

Seabrook, J. (2001). *Children of other worlds: Exploitation in the global market*. London: Pluto.
Super, C., & Harkness, S. (1986). A developmental niche: A conceptualization at the interface between child and culture. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 9*, 545–569.
UNICEF. (2005a). *The state of the world's children 2006: Excluded and invisible*. New York: United Nations Children's Fund.
UNICEF. (2005b). *Orphans*. Press Center.
UNICEF. (2006a). What is child protection? Unite for Children.
UNICEF. (2006b). Children associated with armed groups. Unite for Children.
UNICEF. (2006c). Children without parental care. Unite for Children.
UNICEF. (2006d). Commercial sexual exploitation. Unite for Children.
UNICEF. (2007). *State of the world's children 2007*. New York: United Nations Children's Fund.
UNICEF. (2008). *The state of the world's children 2009*. New York: United Nations Children's Fund.
UNICEF. (2012). Promoting equity for children living in a world with HIV and AIDS. Unite for Children and Unite Against AIDS.
United Nations. (1989). *Convention on the rights of the child*. Geneva, Switzerland: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.
Wessells, M. (2010). Youth in combat. In R. A. Shweder (Ed.), *The child: An encyclopedic companion* (pp. 179–181). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
World Bank. (2011). *World Development Report 2012: Gender equality and development outline*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

Part I
Cultural Empowerment and Self Determination

Chapter 2
Dilemmas of Rights-Based Approaches to Child Well-Being in an African Cultural Context

A. Bame Nsamenang

The title of a recent early childhood development book, *Africa's Children*, *Africa's Challenge* (Garcia, Pence, & Evans, 2008), captures the interest and concern for Africa's difficulties with its huge child populations. The child and adolescent cohorts exceed 60 % in many African countries (Nsamenang, 2002). Fourteen of the eighteen countries in the world whose population of children ages 0–14 years is 45 % or more are African (CIA, 2007). About 20 % of sub-Saharan Africa's total population of children below 6 years of age is seriously at risk. While Africa's mortality rates are declining, they are still the highest in the world. The children who survive are not thriving optimally. Of those who survive through age 6, nearly one-third are chronically malnourished, weighing only three-fourths of the weight standard for their age (Britto, Engle, & Alderman, 2007). About 35 % of the children are stunted in growth from persistent malnutrition before their third birthday. The worst case scenario in most sub-Saharan African communities is even more disquieting than the overview of the state of Africa's children depicted above.

The appalling condition of the African child is obvious and undeniable, and it seems odd to think that extreme life circumstances only partially explain the hardship of Africa's children. If we could apply a truly fair cross-cultural, context-sensitive happiness index, we might discover Africa's children to be among the world's happiest sample of children, perhaps oblivious to their adversities. One significant but usually unthinkable source of Africa's difficulty with its next generations is the "intervention factor." This is a multilayered state of affairs that has seldom been mentioned, much less scrutinized. By "intervention factor," I mean all or any effort, act, idea, and practice such as policies, research, education, child rights

A.B. Nsamenang (✉)
University Cooperation Division, University of Bamenda (UBa), P.O. Box 39, Bamenda, North West Region, Cameroon

Human Development Resource Centre (HDRC), P.O. Box 270, Bamenda, North West Region, Cameroon
e-mail: bame51@yahoo.com; bame@thehdrc.org

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9_2,

convention, and services development that are extraneous to the child's status quo and introduced by individuals, governments, interest groups, and communities, including the local, national, and international development communities, to bring Africa out of its quagmire of underdevelopment and poverty. The intent of such interventions is to launch Africa on a sustainable path to measurable development in terms of quality of life, resources transformation, and societal progress, typically against indicators external to African cultural circumstances and sociohistorical experiences. This statement is not tantamount to a rejection that Africa and Africans should not compare on league tables of nations and human development. Instead, it is a plea that the signals for such comparisons ought to be culture-fair and context-valid and have not been, hitherto.

This chapter takes a glimpse at the intervention factor in Africa's difficulties with giving its children—the future hope of their families and nations—"a good start in life involving nurturing, care, and a safe environment" (African Ministers and Representatives of Ministers, 2005). However, it seems rational to first examine the African childhood context and key issues underlying such interventions. For example, why should we critique goodwill interventions intended to uplift Africa? Are Africa's prolife values really adversarial to proper care and effective guidance of development, or is it that the moral imperatives and existential realities within which Africans value and socialize children differ from those that frame interventions based on child rights approaches? Why can't Africa garner the means to optimize the care and development of its children? If Africa were to work out suitable policies and programs and build effective capacity for enhanced productivity and networking (Pence & Marfo, 2004), in whose "image will those programs take shape? Will they emerge from within Africa or from outside" or is their origin a mute point (Nsamenang, 2008, p. 135)?

Overview of Childhood in an African Cultural Setting

Parental values organize daily parenting routines for child and family life (Harkness & Super, 1996). Parents' cultural belief systems channel elements of the larger culture to children. Accordingly, childhood in Africa is best visualized within an African theory of the universe, which envisions a circular path to human ontogenesis in three phases, identifiable more by cultural imperatives than by the biological markers that trigger them (Nsamenang, 2008). *Social selfhood* is an experiential reality, the physically existing human being that begins with conception and connects the two metaphysical phases of *spiritual* and *ancestral selfhood* (Nsamenang, 1992b, 2005). The existential self or social selfhood, the primary subject content of developmental science, develops through seven stages—namely, prebirth/neonatal, social priming, social apprenticing, social entrée, social internment, adulthood, and old age/death (Nsamenang, 1992b, pp. 144–148). The ontogenetic phases I discuss in this chapter cover social apprenticing, social entrée, and the early period of social internment. These phases correspond to the conventional developmental stages from the toddler years to pubescence.

An African theory draws from life journeys in African cultural settings (Serpell, 1993) to recognize the transformation of the human newborn from a biological entity into a viable cultural agent of a particular community en route to adulthood. As children develop, they gradually and systematically enter into and assume different levels of personhood, identity, and being (Nsamenang, 2005). Children are not born with the knowledge and cognitive skills with which to make sense of and to engage the world; they learn or grow into them as they develop (Nsamenang, 2004). Based on perceived child states and milestones of human ontogenesis, Africans assign sequential cultural tasks to the stages of development they recognize. In this way, they organize child development as a sociogenic process, with cultural beliefs and practices that guide systematic socialization, education, and the expectations required for each ontogenetic stage. Accordingly, we can interpret child development as the acquisition and growth of competencies in the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional domains and the moral maturity required to competently engage in the world, implying the family, community, and the society at large.

With the lens of availability to and the amount of awake-time spent with children, we qualify the African peer group as the most handy companion, socializer, and caregiver during the toddler and childhood years (Nsamenang, 1992b). This is possible because African participative pedagogies embed educational ideas and caregiving practices into family traditions, children's daily routines, and interactive processes (Nsamenang, 2004) in a manner that rapidly and systematically transforms the child into a cultural "agent" of his or her own developmental learning from an early age (Nsamenang et al., 2008). Children "extract" the social, emotional, practical, cognitive, relational, and other situated intelligences from the activity settings of the home, society, and peer culture through contextual embedment and active participation and less through explicit instruction. In so doing, they "graduate" from one activity setting and participative sector of the peer culture to another, steadily maturing toward adulthood. The "extractive" processes they employ are similar to the interactional-extractive learning process described by Piaget (1952) but differ in being entirely child-to-child interstimulation and mentorship. That is, the mentors in the children's zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978) are not adults but peers, who initiate and promote significant self-education and developmental influences.

African parents, caregivers, and peer mentors use tacit cultural techniques and strategies that provoke the cognitive faculties to induce behavioral and affective changes and adjustment to knowledge and skills acquisition and social situations. They trigger and prime children's agency, such as that incited by not providing direct answers to children's queries or curiosities (Nsamenang, 2004). If a child asks for an explanation of how a parent or mentor performed a specific skilled activity or procedure, the characteristic query would refer to whether the child does not "see" or "hear." This translates literally into anticipation that "You are expected to observe, notice, learn, and understand what and how to do what I did. You don't have to ask me. Learn!" Accordingly, most African parents "responsibilize" children from an early age by teasing and assigning livelihood duties and engaging them in real-life interactions. In African family traditions, instances in which children engage in

nonsense or pretend play are rare indeed. Instead, they undertake productive play, often within the peer groups of neighborhood and school, but these ubiquitous developmental spaces have not been researched. The participative pedagogies and interpersonal processes of child-to-child interactions and encounters preclude lonesome sovereignty but embrace and support relational individuation and social integration through "child work" in familial and social life (Nsamenang, 2008).

Social and intellectual transformation in the individual is brought about by participation in family and societal life (Rogoff, 2003). African families guide the social and cognitive transformation of children through child work, which is a pivotal mode of preparing the next generation in African cultures. The family and the child understand it as useful to the family and necessary for the child's developmental learning (Nsamenang et al., 2008). It is graduated on the culture's perceived developmental trajectory and the child's level of developmental competence (Nsamenang, 2005, 2008). The showpiece of participation is agency or personal responsibility and commitment to mature into and make progress toward one's prompted, desired, or imagined endpoint(s) of development (Nsamenang et al., 2008). Africa's enduring traditions of child work encourage children "to become independent at a [very] early age, and this independence is fostered and enforced by letting a child do even difficult things on his own" (Munday, 1979, p. 165). African families do not traditionally tolerate child abuse that is not synonymous to child work, the participative mode of education, and civic sensitization (Nsamenang, 2008). Participatory learning is open to abuse and, indeed, has been abused by individuals and families. The confusion between child work and child abuse is only one of several issues that "problematize" the intervention of childhood in Africa, however.

Intervention of Africa's Childhood at Issue

The hub of Africa's difficulties is the dilemmas that derive from the tensions intrinsic in the mélange of local and global imperatives that now live together in the same individuals and communities (Nsamenang & Dawes, 1998). The hybridism inheres in the interfaces of Africa's heritage of three significant world civilizations from Eastern, Western, and indigenous sources (Mazrui, 1986). Most analyses of Africa's undesirable condition tend to position the African source of this heritage as inimical to development and progress and Western legacies as unproblematic, emancipatory solutions to the continent's multiple challenges. The non-fit of some Western models is often not considered. For instance, in its classical form, the inclusive fitness paradigm does not seem to fluently explain why sub-Saharan Africa sustains the highest fertility of any world region (Smith, 2004) when the continent is said to lack the mettle and depends on foreign aid to cater to its offspring. It is not quite evident what justifies intervention on behalf of African children—the adversities they suffer or the high fertility rates of most African communities?

Should Africa "stand against" the maxims and spirit of "the current of received wisdom" or continue uncritically to receive "those things that are given to" its

"present experience as if they were timeless, natural, unquestionable" (Rose, 1999, p. 20)? Of course, Africans have benefited enormously and continue to gain from values, lifestyles, and technologies imported into Africa, especially from the West. However, we also need to gain from Foucault's (1980) insight that everything is not bad, but everything is potentially dangerous. This wisdom obliges critical appraisal of even the "best" of intentions or the most benevolent attitudes and behaviors. After all, scientific evidence alerts us to the possibility of unanticipated outcomes from research procedures, given that every study is a kind of intervention. Even the legitimate duties of researchers, nation states, charities, and organizations, including the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions, ought to be critiqued (Nsamenang, 2007). The huge variety of childhoods reinforces such a critical spirit in order to avoid or at least reduce the "construction of *a* knowledge which is exclusive of many other knowledges" (Urban, 2006). "Questioning the expectation that academic research can provide knowledge as base for political decision and, in consequence, administrative and managerial action does not mean, of course, to deny the importance and possibilities of research in this field in general" (Urban, 2006, p. 1). To be useful, research ought to be context-responsive!

Discourse on child development and the "quality" of childhood care and services inspired by and framed within the dominant mainstream narratives generally pathologize African forms of childrearing and child guidance. LeVine's (2004, p. 163) research in Africa revealed that African reproductive ideologies and parenting practices were built on "alternative patterns of care based on different moral and practical considerations" that constituted "normal patterns of development that had not been imagined in developmental theories." Similarly, Zeitlin (1996) explained how the feeding habits of Nigerian parents that non-Africans regard as counterproductive are useful. By contrast, Weisner, Matheson, and Bernheimer (1996) thought that American parental beliefs on the importance of early "stimulation" for optimal child development could lead to an unnecessary concern about the earliest possible interventions for children with developmental delays. Serpell (1994) concluded from a review of *Human development in cultural context*: *a third world perspective* (Nsamenang, 1992b) that it espoused a theory of the universe that diverges from that which informs contemporary Western developmental science. Thus, the huge diversity in parenting practices results in differentiation in desirable child outcomes. Moreover, Africa's sociogenic developmental trajectory "differs in theoretical focus from the more individualistic accounts by Freud, Erikson, & Piaget" (Serpell, 1994, p. 18). Ngaujah (2003) felt that Africa's peculiar theories and the developmental processes and practices that follow from them cogently posit the impetus to look at Africa from a different perspective in the field of psychology and human development. The most appropriate framework would be a learning posture (Agar, 1986) framed by the scientific method, as a generic approach that could "discover" new methodologies, new ways of understanding, and new concepts about development and situated intelligences, for example, in any culture and context.

A largely unexplored feature of efforts at development and quality of child life in Africa by both local and foreign interest groups and agencies is that Africa's "progress" is being planned "almost entirely on foreign aid" (Nsamenang, 2007, p. 7), against the

evidence that "donor presence remains uneven across the world's poorest countries" (UNESCO, 2006, p. 21). Africa is and has always been a low-priority world region (Nsamenang, 2007), and a scrutiny of such attitudes toward Africa might implicate UN agencies. The humanitarian and sociopolitical crises in Africa such as those in the Darfur, Kenya, Somalia, and Zimbabwe tend to be seen as self-inflicted, often without any attempt to locate or diagnose their remote or immediate external triggers and deep-seated causes. Further, natural resources in Africa have forever been exploited by and for foreign interests, with minimal to no benefit to Africans. Indeed, Africa is rich in natural resources and human capital but cannot muster the funds to give its next generations a decent start in life. A moral hub and social Darwinian motive drape the "aid" Africa receives from some foreign partners who gain huge profits in unfair trade and exploitation of Africa's reservoirs of material and human resources, through intriguing strategies. This sorry state of Africa prompted Frederick Masinde to muse: "If Africa could be granted an additional 1 % share in global trade, she would earn for herself much more than she is currently being given in foreign aid" (Barsby, 2006, p. 52).

If suitable policies and effective programs were to emerge and be sustained in Africa, how might they be achieved? How would the imported imperatives from which Africa can no longer escape mesh with or be crafted into stark African realities to output a serene, conducive developmental environment? We reason with Smale (1998, p. 3) that work that focuses on addressing these and similar questions connotes the dilemmas, which characterize rights-based approaches to child well-being in African cultural settings and may support "the need for changes in attitudes, approaches, methodologies and service provision" therein.

Dilemmas in Rights-Based Interventions in Africa

Africa's ways of thinking about children and their development are regrettably subverted by developmental science theories and principles that are deeply "psychologized" and increasingly homogeneous and Western derived (Pence & Hix-Small, 2007). They depict maternal influences as if they were the single most determinant nurturing force in childhood. But the psychological and sociological realities of children in much of Africa from toddlerhood diverge remarkably from this theoretical positioning and purportedly science-based assumptions and practices. LeVine (2004) insinuates that developmentally appropriate practices have been crafted and proselytized in the semblance of science-based knowledge in a formula based heavily on American middle-class ideology and cultural values. Gould (1981, p. 22) adds that theories like scientific "facts are not pure and unsullied bits of information, culture also influences what we see and how we see it."

Both African and expatriate scholars almost uncritically apply imported theories and methods in Africa, largely ignoring the values that guide African parenting ideas and educational praxes. This implies that the orienting values and methods that now frame an emerging developmental science in Africa are Euro-western conceptual systems and techniques. In this sense, conceptualizing early childhood

research and intervention in contemporary Africa within a narrative that is saturated with Euro-western developmental metaphors and ethos in the face of Africa's developmental precepts and practices is a real "struggle," a fraught matter indeed.

From their toddler years, most African children are more appropriately seen immersed in sociological networks wherein parents or other adults only partially play a nurturing role in children's daily routines and direct developmental inputs, as the sibling or peer group and the peer culture increasingly become more salient as a dynamic developmental space in homes, neighborhoods, and school settings. The social world of African childhood typically is a multiaged, mixed-ability, interactive context that contrasts with that focused mainly on the microsystem of parent–child, child-teacher, and practitioner-child gaining greater force in the childhood literature. Given the high density of siblings per African family, as supported by 4.7 siblings in the Bamenda Grassfields of Cameroon (Nsamenang, 1992a) and a West African range of 4.5 for Cameroon to 7.0 siblings per family across other countries to Ivory Coast (Ware, 1983), toddlers in Cameroon, in particular, and West Africa, in general, are more likely to experience daytime interaction with peers or siblings rather than with adults or "busy" mothers (Ogbimi & Alao, 1998) and significant but often distant or absent fathers (Nsamenang, 2010).

As childhood is being forced into the central agendas of African governments (Pence, 2004), Africans are being alerted to notice how participation "furthers children's survival, protection, and development, and how children as rights-bearers actively contribute to our society as a whole" (Cook, Blanchet-Cohen, & Hart, 2004, p. 1). It is, therefore, plausible to juxtapose the continuing disapproval and condemnation of African forms of children's participation against the accentuating interest in "children's participation at different levels" (Alfageme, Cantos, & Martinez, 2007) enshrined in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child [UNCRC]. Young people's right of participation is approved and outlined in Article 12 and 17 (UNCHR, 1989) of the UNCRC and states that children have a right to be heard and considered in decisions that affect them. The CRC, therefore, ensures that children have their place in civil society, along with opportunities to contribute, exchange ideas with other social players, and be consulted about matters that concern them (Alfageme et al., 2007). Yet, the "productive" participation of Africa's massive generations of children and adolescents in the lives of their families and communities has been stigmatized as child labor by international advocacy and child rights interveners. We acknowledge, sadly, that various forms of child labor, child abuse, and child enslavement increasingly are intolerably sneaking into Africa's developmental task of child work. This is what ought to be intervened into extinction but not the hands-on responsibility-training component of childhood work that the CRC incidentally stirs and that should be injected as the participatory component of education curricula.

The CRC has opened a new era to redefine childhood and denounce the "discourse of vulnerability" (Golden, 2005, p. 79) and "the dichotomy adult/child" that sets children aside into an adult-designated zone of non-adults (Munday, 1979, pp. 162–165). The institution of the school further segregates children from society, and there is lingering doubt if this institution is still "the protected world of children

and childhood" (Golden, 2005, p. 80) as it was designed to be. The extent to which adults still effectively safeguard this protected space is the greater doubt. Consequently, it is essential to explore alternative spaces and pedagogies that can responsibilize and empower children and adolescents into self-protection and self-motivated learning.

The convention has "emancipated" children from traditional understandings of childhood and citizenship, which ignore or limit children's autonomy, their knowledge and concerns about the world in which they live, and their ability to organize, manage, and decide about many aspects of their lives (Hart, 1997; Nsamenang & Lamb, 1993). In brief, the CRC has broken the traditional paradigm of considering minors as non-capable people (Alfageme et al., 2007) to begin priming their recognition as valid citizens with cultural differences, ideologies, identities, knowledge, and particular forms of learning and relating (Hart, 1997). Indeed, young people are new generations capable of participating in the dialogue of knowledge. Our role as adults is to "sharpen our listening ability and become mediators so that they [i.e., children] may exercise their right to produce knowledge about the reality that they face" (Corona & Morfín, 2007, p. 112). The first challenge in the social reconstruction of childhood is to reflect on how to intervene, not to replace or bypass, Africa's patterns of children's participation but on how best to build and enhance more cohesive and productive communities of Africa's next generations. The second challenge relates to how to incorporate and actualize young people's voices into discourses and interventions (Corona & Morfín, 2007, p. 112). It is from the platform of participative productivity that we can hope to truly position Africa's next generations—children and youth—as a reliable and hopeful bridge to Africa's uncertain future.

Are rights instruments and the practices they inspire unproblematic?

The Ambiguities in Rights Instruments and Practices

Various tensions are perceptible with both the interpretation and implementation of the CRC, in general, and its articles on children's participation and cultural identity, in particular. The nature of children's participation invoked by the relevant CRC articles and how to judge its appropriateness and efficacy are not obvious, particularly in the face of the convention's provision on rights to a cultural identity and heritage. In the African world, cultural identity includes child work during childhood. Children's participation represents an important societal challenge that leads directly to the polemics of the social participation of minors—a topical issue today, but one on which Africa has long been chastised and condemned. It is not clear if the participation specified in Article 12 is inconsistent with children's participation in indigenous African family traditions. Further, "it is a great irony of the contemporary world that while children of the Third World have far too much work and very little time to play, those of the industrialized countries lack opportunities for meaningful work" (Hart, 2002, p. 2). Today, one hears a repeat of Ellis's (1978, p. 50) curiosity "whether in Britain too little is expected of children, their activities being

restricted almost entirely to play" in informal exchanges and insinuations by Western media. Also ironic is that while middle-class children of the cities of the Southern Hemisphere do not have time to play, increasingly their parents dare not let them play, because the growing violence of these cities, a natural response to the enormous social inequities that increasingly characterize contemporary life, leads parents to lock their children inside housing complexes or sheltered family residences, denying them freedom of association and interaction with peers and with a diverse, natural environment (Hart, 1997).

The CRC has proposed a major shift in the social representation of children, who are not defined in terms of "problems" or "victims" but as active social agents (Alfageme et al., 2007). This means that children have rights and are judged capable of striving to achieve these rights if they are denied or violated. Children's pursuit of their rights would be found to vary by cultural and family circumstances and self-perceived agency of child, as a function of developmental stage and poverty index. However, there are anxieties, first, over "all those who are concerned about sustainable development but have not worked with children before" (Morales, 2007); second, over the not-so-clear link between those who write and talk about childhood and those struggling to improve the lives and life circumstances of children because of the disturbing gulf between theory and practice, rhetoric and relevant, effective intervention. Reid's (2006, p. 18) viewpoint is that the CRC was "developed far from the lived experience of children, their families, and communities." In addition, it is not quite obvious whether implementers of CRC still consider the family "the best promoter, provider, and protector of children's rights" or if international human rights instruments are (Claiborne & One, 2007). Reid (2006) differentiates parents from advocates, arguing that a growing body of powerful interest groups of "experts" and professionals has "captured" children's rights. The media has supported this trend, which effectively silences and enfeebles families, opening the way for advocacy for the group care of like-aged preschool children (Pence & Nsamenang, 2008) instead of fostering genuine efforts to strengthen existing community structures that reach children in the cultural contexts in which their communities would fully participate (Lanyasunya & Lesolayia, 2001).

Conclusion

Childhood is a complex social phenomenon in relation to which the double hermeneutic of the social sciences is acutely present (Giddens, 1976). The CRC has instigated "a new paradigm of childhood sociology," but "the process of reconstructing childhood" (Prout & James, 1990, p. 9) in the image of the CRC is as yet unclear. How the reconstruction would handle the inclusiveness of the variety of childhoods across the globe to ensure appropriate contextual participation and cultural identity is a fraught matter. Where would the reconstruction situate Africa's timeless traditions of family-based participation and self-construal? The responsibility training of African children through participative learning is analogous to the fate of African-enduring

breastfeeding practices, which were intervened into irrelevance and replaced with formula feeds but are now being advocated back into practice as the state-of-the-science nutrition for the first year of life.

While Euro-western cultures view child care skills as a specialized task of adulthood, African cultures separate the learning of childhood skills from the life stage of parenthood and position sibling and peer caregiving as a domestic task for children to learn (Weisner, 1987) as part of their own developmental knowledge and skills acquisition (Nsamenang et al., 2008). African children are accredited partners in family life and communal affairs in the protection and caregiving roles they take as part of sharing family duties (Nsamenang, 1992a; Weisner, 1997). This state of childhood opens up a disposition to figure out how best to strategize the enhancement of the African peer culture that handles and creates child-to-child opportunities for significant learnings and development into an ingeniously transformative children's and adolescents' participative spaces. More than any other region of the globe, focused attention is required in Africa to research, understand, and boost the responsible participation of African children and adolescents in the livelihoods of their families and communities instead of devaluing and intervening them into extinction "as being anti-progressive and somewhat outdated" (Callaghan, 1998, p. 30).

The "growing imposition of a particularly Western conceptualization of childhood" (Prout & James, 1990, p. 9) on Africa's starkly different circumstances not only pathologizes but also stigmatizes childhood in low-status Africa. The call to "always contextualize our study findings, our policies, our programs in the sociohistorical and cultural contexts from which they arise" (Hoskyn, Moore, Neufeld, LeMare, & Stooke, 2007, p. ii) is in recognition that "human development always occurs in a specific cultural context" (Dasen & Jahoda, 1986, p. 413). It underscores the significance of context and culture and the need to notice, accept, and be inclusive of the huge variety of childhoods that international child rights instruments appear to subvert. The complexity of childhood in Africa today is exacerbated by a triple inheritance (Mazrui, 1986), which "no existing theory fittingly explains it and no antecedent evolutionary template exactly corresponds to its triple-strand braid" (Nsamenang, 2005, p. 276).

References

African Ministers and Representatives of Ministers. (2005). *Moving Early Childhood Development Forward in Africa*. Communiqué of the third African International Conference on Early Childhood Development. Accra, Ghana, May-June.

Agar, M. H. (1986). *Speaking of ethnography*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Alfageme, A. E., Cantos, V. R., & Martinez, M. M. (2007). De la participación al protagonismo infantil: propuestas para la acción [From Participation to Child Protagonism: Proposals for Action]. *Children, Youth and Environments, 17* (2). Retrieved March 17, 2008, from http://www.colorado.edu/journals/cye/.

Barsby, J. (2006). Fair trade: What cost a cup of coffee? *The Traveler Msafiri, 57*, 50–54.

Britto, P. R., Engle, P., & Alderman, H. (2007). Early intervention and care giving: Evidence from the Uganda Nutrition and Child Development Program. *Child Health and Education, 1*, 112–133.

Callaghan, L. (1998). Building on an African worldview. *Early Childhood Matters, 89*, 30–33.
CIA. (2007). *The World Factbook, Geography: Age structure*. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/.
Claiborne, L. B., & One, S. T. (2007). [Book review]. From innocents to agents: Children and children's rights in New Zealand by Michael Reid. Maxim Institute, Auckland. 2006. *New Zealand Journal of Social Sciences,* 279. Retrieved February 19, 2008, from http://www.rsnz.org/publish/kotuitui/2007/05.php.
Cook, P., Blanchet-Cohen, N., & Hart, S. (2004). *Children as partners: Child participation in promoting social change*. Victoria, BC: International Institute for Child Rights and Development.
Corona, Y., & Morfín, M. (2007). A dialogue of knowledges about child participation. *Children, Youth and Environments, 17*, No. 2. Retrieved March 17, 2008, from http://www.colorado.edu/journals/cye/.
Dasen, P. R., & Jahoda, G. (1986). Editorial preface. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 9*(4), 413–416.
Ellis, J. (1978). *West African families in Great Britain*. London, England: Routledge.
Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings*. Brighton, England: Harvester.
Garcia, M., Pence, A., & Evans, J. L. (Eds.). (2008). *Africa's Future—Africa's Challenge: Early childhood care and development in sub-Saharan Africa* (pp. 135–149). Washington, DC: World Bank.
Giddens, A. (1976). *The new rules of sociological method*. London, England: Hutchinson.
Golden, D. (2005). Childhood as protected space? Vulnerable bodies in an Israeli kindergarten. *Ethnos, 70*(1), 79–100.
Gould, S. J. (1981). *The mismeasure of man*. New York: Norton.
Harkness, S., & Super, C. M. (Eds.). (1996). *Parents cultural beliefs systems: Their origins, expressions and consequences*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
Hart, R. (1997). *Children's participation: The theory and practice of involving young citizens in community development and environmental care*. London: Earthscan.
Hart, R. (2002). Introductory Essay to Children and Young Peoples Participation (with G. Lansdowne). *Special Issue of the Child Rights Information Network Newsletter, No. 16*, October 2002.
Hoskyn, M., Moore, D., Neufeld, P., LeMare, L., & Stooke, R. (2007). Letters from the editors. *Child Development, Health & Education, 1*(1), i–iii.
Lanyasunya, A. R., & Lesolayia, M. S. (2001). *El-barta Child and Family Project*. Working Papers in Early Childhood Development, No. 28. The Hague, The Netherlands: Bernard van Leer Foundation.
LeVine, R. A. (2004). Challenging expert knowledge: Findings from an African study of infant care and development. In U. P. Gielen & J. Roopnarine (Eds.), *Childhood and adolescence: Cross-cultural perspectives and applications* (pp. 149–165). Westport, CT: Praeger.
Mazrui, A. A. (1986). *The Africans*. New York: Praeger.
Morales, J. M. (2007). *Review of R. Hart (2001): Children's participation: The theory and practice of involving young citizens in community development and environmental care*. Barcelona, Spain: UNICEF and P.A.U. Education. Retrieved March 17, 2008, from http://thunderl.cudenver.edu/cye/review.pl?n=227.
Munday, R. (1979). "When is a child a child?" Alternative systems of classification. *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford, 10*, 161–172.
Ngaujah, D. E. (2003, Fall). *An eco-cultural and social paradigm for understanding human development: A (West African) context*. Graduate Seminar Paper (supervised by Dr. Dennis H. Dirks), Biola University, La Mirada, CA.
Nsamenang, A. B. (1992a). Early childhood care and education in Cameroon. In M. E. Lamb et al. (Eds.), *Day care in context: Socio-cultural perspectives* (pp. 419–439). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
Nsamenang, A. B. (1992b). *Human development in cultural context: A third world perspective*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Nsamenang, A. B. (2002). Adolescence in Sub-Saharan Africa: An image constructed from Africa's triple inheritance. In B. B. Brown, R. W. Larson, & T. S. Saraswathi (Eds.), *The World's Youth: Adolescence in eight regions of the globe* (pp. 61–104). London, England: Cambridge University Press.

Nsamenang, A. B. (2004). *Cultures of human development and education: Challenge to growing up Africa*. New York, NY: Nova.

Nsamenang, A. B. (2005). Educational development and knowledge flow: Local and global forces in human development in Africa. *Higher Education Policy, 18*, 275–288.

Nsamenang, A. B. (2007). A critical peek at early childhood care and education in Africa. *Child Health and Education, 1*(1), 14–26.

Nsamenang, A. B. (2008). (Mis)understanding ECD in Africa: The force of local and global motives. In M. Garcia, A. Pence, & J. L. Evans (Eds.), *Africa's Future-Africa's Challenge: Early childhood care and development in Sub-Saharan Africa* (pp. 135–149). Washington, DC: World Bank.

Nsamenang, A. B. (2010). Childhoods within Africa's triple heritage. In Gaile S. Cannella & Lourdes Diaz Soto (Eds.), *Childhoods: A Handbook* (pp. 39–54). New York: Peter Lang.

Nsamenang, A. B., & Dawes, A. (1998). Developmental psychology as political psychology in sub-Saharan Africa: The challenge of Africanisation. *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 47*(1), 73–87.

Nsamenang, A. B., Fai, P. J., Ngoran, G. N., Ngeh, M. Y., Forsuh, F. W., Adzemye, E. W., et al. (2008). Ethnotheories of developmental learning in the Western Grassfields of Cameroon. In P. R. Dasen & A. Akkari (Eds.), *Educational theories and practices from the "majority world"* (pp. 49–70). New Delhi, India: Sage.

Nsamenang, A. B., & Lamb, M. E. (1993). The acquisition of socio-cognitive competence by Nso children in the Bamenda Grassfields of northwest Cameroon. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 16*(3), 429–441.

Ogbimi, G. E., & Alao, J. A. (1998). Developing sustainable day care services in rural communities of Nigeria. *Early Child Development and Care, 145*, 47–58.

Pence, A. R. (2004). *ECD Policy Development and Implementation in Africa, #9, UNESCO Early Childhood and Family Policy Series*. Paris, France: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Education Sector.

Pence, A. R., & Hix-Small, H. (2007). Global children in the shadow of the global child. *International Journal of Educational Policy, Research, and Practice, 8*(1), 83–100.

Pence, A. R., & Marfo, K. (Eds.). (2004). Capacity building for early childhood development in Africa [Special Issue]. *International Journal of Educational Policy, Research and Practice, 5*(3), 5–12.

Pence, A., & Nsamenang, A. B. (2008). *A case for early childhood development in sub-Sahara Africa*. The Hague: Bernard van Leer Foundation.

Piaget, J. (1952). *The origins of intelligence in children*. New York, NY: International Universities Press.

Prout, A., & James, A. (1990). A new paradigm for the sociology of childhood? Provenance, promise and problem. In A. James & A. Prout (Eds.), *Constructing and reconstructing childhood: Contemporary issues in the sociological study of childhood* (pp. 7–34). London, England: The Falmer Press.

Reid, M. (2006). *From innocents to agents: Children and children's rights in New Zealand*. Auckland, New Zealand: Maxim Institute.

Rogoff, B. (2003). *The cultural nature of human development*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Rose, N. (1999). *Powers of freedom: Reframing political thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Serpell, R. (1993). *The significance of schooling: Life-journeys into an African society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Serpell, R. (1994). An African social ontogeny: Review of A. Bame Nsamenang (1992): Human development in cultural context: A Third World perspective. Sage Cross-cultural Research and Methodology Series. *Cross-cultural Psychology Bulletin, 28*(1), 17–21.

Smale, J. (1998). Culturally appropriate approaches in ECD. *Early Childhood Matters, 89*, 3–5.

Smith, D. J. (2004). Contradictions in Nigeria's fertility transition: The burdens and benefits of having people. *Population & Development Review, 30*(2), 221–238.

UNESCO. (2006). *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2007: Strong Foundations*. Retrieved January 5, 2007, from http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/evphp-URL_ID=49640&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html.

United Nations. (1989). *Convention on the rights of the child*. Geneva, Switzerland: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Urban, M. (2006, November). *Strategies for change: Reflections from a systematic, comparative research project*. Paper presented to the early childhood care and education policy seminar on "A Decade of Reflection from the Introduction of the Childcare Regulations 1996 Through to Today." Dublin, Ireland.

Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Ware, H. (1983). Male and female life cycles. In C. Oppong (Ed.), *Male and female in West Africa* (pp. 6–31). London: Allen & Unwin.

Weisner, T. S. (1987). Socialization for parenthood in sibling caretaking societies. In J. B. Lancaster, J. Altman, A. S. Rossi, & L. R. Sherrod (Eds.), *Parenting across the Lifespan: Biosocial dimensions* (pp. 237–270). Hawthorne: Aldine de Gruyter.

Weisner, T. S. (1997). Support for children and the African family crisis. In T. S. Weisner, C. Bradley, & C. P. Kilbride (Eds.), *African families and the crisis of social change* (pp. 20–44). Westport: Bergin & Garvey.

Weisner, T. S., Matheson, C. C., & Bernheimer, L. P. (1996). American cultural models of early influence and parent recognition of developmental delays: Is earlier always better than later? In S. Harkness & C. M. Supper (Eds.), *Parents cultural beliefs systems: Their origins, expressions and consequences* (pp. 496–531). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Zeitlin, M. (1996). My child is my crown: Yoruba parental theories and practices in early childhood. In S. Harkness & C. M. Super (Eds.), *Parents' cultural beliefs systems: Their origins expressions and consequences* (pp. 175–188). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Chapter 3
Undefended Children in the Classroom? Looking at Textbooks, Cultural Difference, and Other Aspects of Indigenous Education in Mexico

Jill R. Gnade-Muñoz

Mexico and other countries of Latin America have recently and officially recognized the "pluricultural" character of their populations. The constitution of Mexico was amended in 1992 to take this reality into account. The educational systems of these countries have been charged with assuring equality and intercultural interaction within the classroom and beyond. In Mexico, the creation of bilingual and intercultural educational programs for Indigenous[1] children began in 1992 and has intensified and grown considerably since then. The landscape of the Chiapas Highlands has changed; colorful cement buildings with bold lettering have popped up in the center of most villages alongside better-adapted wooden homes. Indigenous children are attending schools in higher numbers than they ever have before. What is this experience like for them? Is it possible that Indigenous children of Mexico should be considered culturally undefended and as such vulnerable in the classroom?

The Maya-Tojolabal People

In order to begin to understand what is meant by cultural difference and culturally undefended children in the classroom, it is necessary to take a brief look at what constitutes this difference. To this end, we explored how power and authority are conceptualized by the Maya-Tojolabal culture of Chiapas through the prism of linguistic analysis, emphasizing the intersection between language and culture/worldview.

[1]In this chapter, we utilize the term "Indigenous" to describe the autochthones people in Mexico. It does not carry a negative connotation there, unlike the term "indio."

J.R. Gnade-Muñoz, Ph.D. (✉)
Department of Modern Languages and Literatures,
University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE, USA
e-mail: jgnade2@unl.edu

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9_3,

The Tojolabal people inhabit the valleys of Independencia and Comitan of Chiapas, Mexico, as well as the forests of Altamirano, La Trinitaria, and Las Margaritas. They make up a small percentage of the more than ten million Indigenous people of Mexico and are the smallest of the four major Mayan cultures of Chiapas: the Tzeltal, the Tzotzil, the Chol, and the Tojolabal. The word *Tojolabal* can be translated into English as "language of truth" or "authentic language." *Tojol* denotes "straight" or "legitimate," while *'ab'al* means "language," derived from the verb *a'bi*, signifying "to listen" in the Tojolabal language. Thus, *Tojolabal* may also be translated as "language of good listeners" (Lenkersdorf, 1996).

The Tojolabal people constitute an idiosyncratic and unique culture that has survived through active resistance for more than 500 years. Since the "Conquista," which took place during the sixteenth century in Chiapas, the Tojolabal people have endured colonial or neocolonial conditions. The living memory of this community is marked by deceptions both past and present, but especially during the *baldío* period, which lasted from colonial times until the middle of the twentieth century. The word *baldío* in Spanish means "waste" or "wasteland" in English. During that extensive period of time, many of them were serfs or slaves and labored under the absolute authoritarian rule of the *patron*, the hacienda owner. In those times, the Tojolabal people worked from sun up to sun down, without rights or pay, earning only tokens valid exclusively at the store of the hacienda, which was owned and operated by the *patron*. Thus, the majority of them soon became indebted and enslaved for life to the hacienda. On the community level, five community elders were charged with solving small disputes. Meanwhile, the authority over the land, or "our mother land" for the Tojolabal people, fell solely to the arbitrary judgment of the *patron* landowner (Lenkersdorf, 1996).

Centuries later, agrarian reform brought about after the Mexican Revolution of 1910 broke the *baldío* system and, thus, gave new hope to the Tojolabal people, facilitating the recovery of certain autonomy. The redistribution of land in Chiapas took place during the 1950s and 1960s, when small *ejidos*, or land parcels, were formed to the benefit of the Tojolabal people.

Sak K'inal Tajaltik, a Tojolabal author and poet, described this pivotal event:

> Our parents and grandparents were slaves. However, later national lands were redistributed, and so, we came one step closer to a just society, to freedom. Perhaps our ancestors felt happiness in their hearts when this step was taken. (Tajaltik & Lenkersdorf, 2001, p. VI)

Tajaltik continued by explaining the process that led to what today is called a system of "obeying authority." He asserted that after the decline of the *baldío* system, the Tojolabal culture began a gradual change from vertical to horizontal or circular authority, including extreme accountability of authority figures to the community as a whole. The community leaders gradually earned respect by organizing fiestas, pilgrimages, and collective work. Thus, the monopoly on power and decision-making passed from the hands of one leader to those of the entire community, to "all of us" (Tajaltik & Lenkersdorf, 2001).

Language and Culture

Within the Tojolabal language, we find evidence of this horizontal authority. What can language structure tell us? Depending on how different peoples perceive reality, they name or define it. The organization of reality depends on this "naming." Language is the vehicle for the said organization, and within the language structure of a given culture or language group, information may be gleaned about priorities and societal organization. We suggest, therefore, that language and culture are strongly linked and that by taking a closer look at the linguistic structure of the Tojolabal language, we may find clues about why the authoritarian classroom environment is incompatible with the Tojolabal worldview.

In the structure of Tojolabal culture, we find several distinctive elements not found in Indo-European languages like English or Spanish. The most important of these differences is the nonexistence of objects, direct or indirect, and, consequently, a lack of objectification and subordination. There are only subjects who communicate on a level playing field.

An example of this absence of objects can be seen in the following example:

English	Tojolabal
I told you.	I told. You listened.

(Lenkersdorf, 1996, p. 30)

This phrase in Tojolabal illustrates how the object disappears and a dual structure emerges. In it, two subjects (I and you) are carrying out equally important functions. "I told … you listened." In other words, if you are not listening, I, in reality, didn't tell "you" anything. The Tojolabal language requires two distinctive phrases with two verbs to convey this idea. On the other hand, the phrase in English contains a direct object pronoun, which is subordinate. This object does not carry out as important a function nor is it a subject of action. The "intersubjectivity" of the Tojolabal language enters into contradiction with the subordination in English or Spanish and illustrates a distinctive view of the same reality. In other words, the same reality is perceived in different ways by different individuals and cultures.

The Concept of Authority

Ja ma' 'ay ja'tel kujtiki mandar 'ay kujtik. Translation: The government, which has been chosen by us, has to obey us.

This phrase is representative of the Tojolabal worldview and demonstrates what being an authority figure means to the Tojolabal people: a community servant who simply carries out the wishes of the collective. In this context of "obeying authority," power hierarchies have little or no place, which makes the presence of a teacher, an outsider who arrives to take a power position, so problematic. We also observed that in this language there exists no concept or translation for the verb "to order" or "to command," rendering it necessary to borrow from the Spanish and

to utilize the verb *mandar*. In a classroom, however, discipline and order are of utmost importance, and power is concentrated in the hands of only one agent, the teacher, who commands, orders, and disciplines the students.

By contrast, power is distributed horizontally in a Tojolabal community and depends on a total consensus of all involved. There is no above or below, no asymmetrical power relation. Thus, all members of the community have the same clout when it comes to decision-making. Consensus and unanimity are mandatory, and any "authority" figure is subjugated to the desires of all of "us." In order to assure that all are on board, often the least committed or most marginalized of the community is elected leader so that he/she is obliged to commit. To be present at an assembly meeting in a Tojolabal community is fascinating, because all present speak in unison, and when the voices die down, one person, usually an elder, summarizes the opinions and thoughts of everyone involved. This phenomenon attests to the definition of Tojolabal as people who know how to listen. Do teachers and school officials or government representatives know how to listen to the Tojolabal people? Can Indigenous children be considered subjects of action within an authoritarian classroom setting? This brief discussion of the concept of authority of the Maya-Tojolabal people gave us a basis for further deepening our study of how it is that Indigenous children may be considered undefended in a classroom setting.

Incompatible Concepts of Education

Horizontal power relations are also apparent in child-rearing practices of the Tojolabal culture as well as other Indigenous cultures of Mexico. Anthropologist Chamoux explains:

> Indigenous people apparently do not consider direct repression a valid disciplinary technique for use in the process of socialization or education. […] One common characteristic found during the three stages of socialization—early infancy, infancy, and preadolescence—is the extreme rarity of an authoritarian tone used with children. A militant tone, so common in a school system and classroom setting, as well as within the mainstream *mestizo* family structure, is almost completely absent among Indigenous peoples. It is totally absent during early infancy and is an exception—looked upon very poorly—in the later stages. The same can be said for verbal violence and insults. All in all, the typical tone and conduct of the instructor-student relationship is the exact opposite of what prevails in a classroom and in mainstream culture (Chamoux, 1992, p. 79).

Children are, therefore, considered subjects from birth and are not "subordinated" or subjugated. Because of this, their first encounter with a classroom setting can result in a chaotic situation, a clash of cultures. The teachers, who are often Indigenous, have been trained to be traditional instructors and absolute authority figures. They are met with considerable difficulty when instructing and spend most of their time disciplining and trying to maintain order, so valued in the classroom. Moreover, these children are entering an enclosed space where they are made to sit still for long periods of time. There is no precedent for this sort of behavior or setting within their community. "Education" takes place out in the open and does not

require hours of sitting still in a classroom. The classroom is, thus, an alien or foreign environment that is often hostile, torturous, or simply boring. An Indigenous teacher[2] elaborated:

> When the children arrive for the first time in the classroom, they feel claustrophobic. And the attitude of the traditional teacher—"I know, you don't, and I am going to teach you"—still persists. It is chaotic, especially for preschoolers, even though it is only three hours. Those who are in first grade suffer more because it is five hours that they have to be seated. The children need to be in constant activity. Many objectives are not reached due to the level of distraction of the children. When Fridays rolled around, they became ecstatic. One day I told them that the following day there would be no class. They all jumped to their feet and shouted for joy. I asked myself, why? They should enjoy coming to class. So I asked them. They told me that they only come to school because their parents make them. They gave me no more explanations as to why they didn't like to come. This is especially true for the girls. They are made to come, and they show little or no interest. By the fifth grade, there are very few girls. They are aware that schooling has no relevance to their lives if they have decided to stay in the community.

When visiting schools in Chiapas, I observed an overall level of "chaos" and distraction of the students, a situation which pressures the teacher to become even stricter. Unfortunately, the old saying in Spanish, *Con sangre entra la letra*—letters enter by blood—becomes more poignant in these contexts, and sometimes students are still being physically punished for speaking in their native languages. Indigenous teachers, cultural intermediaries as such, are "educated" within a Western institution and become convinced that Western cultural values are superior to their own and often bring this attitude to the classroom. One of highest values of a Western classroom setting is order.

The question of relevance of schooling in this context is important and may help explain the high levels of absenteeism and scholastic failure among this population, not only in Mexico and Latin America, but also in other countries around the world. Additionally, the types of jobs available to people who decide to leave the community are largely low paying and generally undesirable, i.e., domestic servants or construction workers. Schooling is not a requirement for these types of jobs. Another teacher affirmed:

> The argument of many parents and children is that schooling is not practical for them. It does not put food on the table. Why? It is such a long process. If they finish sixth grade they will not find work. These days not even after finishing middle school because the rules have changed and you have to have a high school education to become a teacher. Of all of the students who do finish grade school, of, let's say, a hundred, maybe two or three will go on to middle school. There is no money and no middle school facilities in the communities.

Rather than becoming easier, it is becoming more and more difficult for Indigenous people to see how schooling is relevant and practical for their lives. As the mounds of new programs and policies for intercultural education pile up, the door is closing even tighter on Indigenous individuals who wish to become teachers

[2]Due to the delicate nature of the topic, teachers' names are not revealed. These interviews were carried out between November 20 and 28 of 2003 with three different instructors, one Tzotzil and two Tzeltal.

of their own people. These blatant contradictions are widely ignored as the new policies and "pluriculturalism" of Mexico are heralded. The same is true for the teaching of the Indigenous languages. The "bilingual" character of most schools stays on paper. There are many reasons for this, not the least of which has to do with most bilingual teachers are sent to communities where their native language is not spoken (Interview DGIE,[3] 2005). One teacher observed:

> About this new policy of teaching the languages, I don't say that it is not occurring at all, but it is minimal. The teachers speak in Spanish. We return to the original problem, we are not speakers of the same language of the children we teach. I am Tzeltal but was sent to a Chol community. I do not speak Chol nor can I learn it from one day to the next.

Another reason was explained to me by an Indigenous teacher, whose argument is that the cornerstone of Indigenous identity, resistance, and persistence in Mexico is the languages:

> They are to be guarded and protected. The pretention of the government to teach the Indigenous people their own languages is absurd and dangerous. Very few non-Indigenous people in Mexico speak these languages, and their mode of expression is oral, not written. Many parents send their children to school so that they learn Spanish, citing that teaching them their native language will be done at home.

Suffice it to say that the teaching of Indigenous languages is highly controversial in Mexico. For the purposes of this chapter, what further contributes to a feeling of alienation of children in the classroom is that most Indigenous children do not speak Spanish, nor do their parents. The teacher may be bilingual, but not in the language spoken in the community. This problem constitutes perhaps the most fundamental contradiction of the new "bilingual" and "intercultural" programs for Indigenous children in Mexico.

Indigenous Education

How do Indigenous teachers describe their own education within the community? What is Tzeltal education like? It takes place in the home, in the family, through observation of parents and other adults. Many things that are learned are practiced later. A boy is never told, for example, "Let's go to the fields." The steps are not mapped out or made explicit. Everything is through observation. The same occurs with the girls. They are never told to make to tortillas or to knit. Nothing is authoritarian; it is implicit. The Tzeltal society knows that everything comes from the family. Another Tzeltal teacher shared:

> The education in my culture is much more open, much lighter. You are never made to feel as if you were being taught by the adults, you just do it. I remember learning how to make

[3] DGEI is the "Dirección General of Indigenous Education": The Secretary General of Indigenous Education. An official was interviewed on the basis of anonymity. This interview took place on February 22, 2005.

> tortillas. I began by grinding the corn when I was very young. I was told if it needed to be finer or not. The same happened with planting potatoes, beans or zucchini. The children are there and the adults help us. We have so much fun. There is such happiness among the children during those times and it is a beautiful experience.

Thus, children are not separated from adults but accompany them throughout the day, constituting another major cultural difference. Author and anthropologist Maldonado reasoned that the long, time-consuming process of schooling distances Indigenous children from their traditional cultural practices and generates ignorance of their own culture (Maldonado, 2002). Education takes place in the "real" world for these children, not behind closed doors under the watchful eye of a lone authority figure. They are subjects of action, not objects.

Consistent with this view, as Chamoux (1992) pointed out:

> Informal education is, by definition, education which is transmitted outside of institutional structure. Within indigenous communities there exists no organized institution or systematic form of instruction. There are no rigid courses, quantified stages or grades, initiation rituals, and no exams. (pp. 74–75)

Additionally, Carlos Lenkersdorf, a philologist who lived and worked among the Tojolabal people for more than twenty years, noted that while teaching a literacy course to Tojolabal adults, exams quickly became collective affairs as the entire class would come together to try to answer the questions. When he asked them why, they responded that many minds working together are much better than one (Lenkersdorf, 1996). Herein lies another key cultural difference. Individualism and competition are not considered valuable in many Indigenous cultures. Thus, children in the classroom are pitted against each other and made to compete for grades, another reason for a general feeling of discomfort, confusion, and cultural defenselessness.

Discriminatory Textbooks?

One of the elements affecting the everyday lives of Indigenous children who attend school is the textbook. The last general revision and large-scale content overhaul of textbooks in Mexico took place in 1992. The official textbooks analyzed in this section were reprinted by the Secretary of Public Education (SEP) in 2002 and were still being used in Mexican classrooms in 2008. We limited our scope to grade school textbooks covering History and Geography. These two subjects allowed us to better examine visibility and overall treatment of Indigenous people within the texts. Additionally, most Indigenous children do not study past primary school; therefore, we looked at textbooks for grades 1–6 only.

In addition to the official primary school textbooks which are edited by the "SEP," the Secretariat of Public Education of Mexico (SEP, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c, 2002d, 2002e, 2002f, 2002g, 2002h, 2002i, 2002j), and are utilized by all Mexican children in the public education system, we subsequently explored the more recent "Intercultural Workbooks (SEP, 2002k, 2002l, 2002m)," which were prepared and partially translated into twenty Indigenous languages. We asked ourselves: What will

an Indigenous child find when studying these social documents? Will he/she feel represented and reflected in an adequate and/or respectful manner? Some of the aspects examined were visibility, imagery, and general respect for cultural diversity. Throughout this analysis, we endeavored to place ourselves in the position of an Indigenous child and sought evidence that could contribute to a condition of defenselessness in the classroom.

The Official Textbooks

Children in the first two grades, who are 6 or 7 years old, study one textbook each year entitled *Integrated Textbook for Grades 1 and 2*, covering the subjects of History, Geography, Natural Sciences, and Civic Education (SEP, 2002i). In the first grade textbook, ten historical topics are covered, none of which deals specifically with the pre-Hispanic period nor is there any allusion made to the existence of Indigenous peoples. Moreover, the Conquest of Mexico by Spain is presented in a non-problematic manner. We read: "A long time ago, the inhabitants of America and Europe didn't know each other. Columbus crossed the ocean and found a pathway between the two continents" (SEP, p. 49). In the second grade textbook, we found: "Columbus arrived to America on October 12. We remember this day, because since that time the inhabitants of the two continents have been able to communicate with each other and learn from each other," (SEP, 2002j, p. 45). This version is in direct contradiction to what Indigenous children learn from their parents about the "Conquista" and the subsequent *baldío* system (Tajaltik & Lenkersdorf, 2001). Furthermore, most of the children represented in these two textbooks are very light-skinned, making it difficult for most children in Mexico, let alone Indigenous children, to feel identified or represented. Also, many of the objects illustrated are not found in a typical Indigenous community, such as toys, electronics, and processed foods.

In the third grade, when the children are 8 years old, each state has a specific textbook to cover both the history and geography of the state (SEP, 2002g, 2002h). We discovered that, for both Mexico State—which borders Mexico City—and Chiapas, the past tense is used almost exclusively when referring to Indigenous people, even when naming their contributions to, for example, herbal medicine. The "dead Indian" or *indio muerto* is exalted while his/her contemporaries are made invisible. The terms used to describe them are natives, native groups, native population, "naturals," aborigines, communities, or Indigenous groups. By far, the term most often used is "ethnic group" or simply "group." It is only in the section dealing with the pre-Hispanic period that they are referred to as "cultures." The status of "culture" is not conferred to Indigenous people after the Conquista, making the very idea of implementing "intercultural" education questionable. The textbook for Chiapas presents the population of the state in graphs that are manipulated to suggest a very small Indigenous population and then coyly asks the children, "If we compare the urban population with the Indigenous population, which is smaller?"

(SEP, 2002h, p. 59). An Indigenous child would not feel well represented or well respected in these textbooks.

In the fourth grade, when the children are 9 years old, two separate textbooks are used for History and Geography (SEP, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c, 2002d, 2002e, 2002f). The History textbook blames the Mesoamerican lordship for not being able to achieve unity, something only the viceroyalty could achieve. It gives thanks to Catholicism and to the priests for having opposed Indigenous religions and having evangelized the people (SEP, 2002d, p. 81). The text triumphantly states, "During viceroyalty a new society was formed in which the indigenous, Spaniards, Africans, and the castes, the most important of which was the *mestizo*, lived harmoniously" (SEP, p. 81). The Mexican identity hinges on being *mestizo*, or mixed race, excluding *no-mestizos*, or Indigenous people. In the Geography textbook, we found a telling quote: "In Mexico there lived different indigenous peoples, who forged great cultures. Later the Conquista took place, and the Spanish and the indigenous gave birth to a new race. They are our ancestors" (SEP, 2002a, p. 149). Autochthonous peoples are relegated definitively to the past, and their continued presence is somehow aberrant, their present subjectivity denied. They, like the Spaniards, are simply "our ancestors."

The children, now age 10 or 11, study Universal History in the fifth grade and National History in the sixth (SEP, 2002e, 2002f). Both textbooks include timelines denoting important events in history. Considering the information from the previous texts, it is not surprising that in the fifth grade timeline Indigenous people disappear after the Conquista. However, what is rather surprising and telling is that they are not included whatsoever in the timeline of the sixth grade National History textbook. In fact, the said textbook only includes six mentions of Indigenous people total. In the fifth grade textbook, there is a section dedicated to pre-Hispanic cultures and the regions they inhabited (SEP, 2002e, p. 103). It poses the question: "What other *cultures* developed in these regions?" followed by "What *indigenous groups* exist there today?" (SEP, p. 103). This textbook appropriates a grandiose Indigenous past as "ours'" and gives thanks to erudite Mexicans and foreigners for having recovered knowledge of these great cultures. The disconnect between past and present is absolute. The decline of the Indigenous population after the Conquista and the growth in importance of the *mestizo* population are recurring themes.

It is perhaps clear that the eyes of an Indigenous child will not find much in the content of these textbooks that would be reaffirming, reassuring, or respectful. In fact, to the contrary, he/she would find that what they possess is not a culture and that their presence is not valued or even recognized.

Intercultural Workbooks for Indigenous Children

As mentioned above, these relatively new workbooks were first published in 2002 by the General Office of Indigenous Education as part of the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP, 2002k, 2002l, 2002m). The content is exactly the same for all of

the workbooks; the standard text was partially translated into 20 different Indigenous languages by bilingual Indigenous teachers. It is important to note that these workbooks are conceived as auxiliary materials to accompany the official textbooks explored above and do not have a broad distribution.[4]

There are three workbooks, one for every two grades of primary school (SEP, 2002k, 2002l, 2002m). In this analysis we examine what the Mexican government wants to transmit to Indigenous children and how its content could further contribute to an "undefended child" in the classroom. What is it that these children need to learn, above and beyond what is expected of the rest of the country's children? We will also search for evidence of stereotypes and cultural condescension or disrespect.

The images on the cover of these three workbooks give us an indication as to what awaits us inside. Front and center stands an Indigenous child pledging allegiance to the Mexican flag. The workbooks include eight sections: *We are Tojolabal Mexicans; Let's Express What We Want, Think and Feel; Democracy Is the Responsibility of Everyone; Solidarity Between People and Cultures; Let's Take Care of Our Health; Let's Take Care of the Environment; Let's Practice Science;* and *Let's Practice Technology* (SEP, 2002k, 2002l, 2002m). The prologue clearly states the intention of these materials. Here the children are addressed directly:

> We know that basic education is the key to continual development. Therefore, we want to offer you some activities that will help you obtain knowledge, abilities and skills, as well as habits, attitudes and fundamental values which will train you to be *good, smart, honest, clean, hardworking men and women*, and, above all, committed to the development of your culture and your country. (SEP, 2002k, 2002l, 2002m)

What does it mean to be trained or educated to be good, intelligent, clean, honest, and hardworking? Does this imply that these qualities do not currently describe Indigenous children? In the third and fourth grade workbook we found our answer and an echo of this message:

> The indigenous heritage of all Mexicans is represented in our national coat of arms. On it the courage and tenacity of our indigenous ancestors is recognized, *smart, good, honest, clean and hardworking men and women*, who covered a great distance before finding the site where our homeland would be built. (SEP, 2002l, p. 26)

In other words, Indigenous people of the past had these qualities, but those who exist today don't. These citations give us a clear picture of how the state perceives Indigenous people, past and present. Implicit in the allusion to honesty is historic mistrust, bringing to mind the stereotype of "a lying and cheating Indian." The institution of Indigenous education will take on the grueling but noble task of teaching these children how to become desirable citizens, like their ancestors were. Indigenous children are not only undefended but are described here as undesirable, second-class citizens, in need of redemption through schooling.

[4]When visiting an "intercultural, bilingual" school in Cruzton, Chiapas, in 2005, I found only official textbooks.

Before delving into each workbook individually, we would like to point out some of the commonalities found in all three series. First of all, I call attention to the number of images depicting an activity I often observed in my visits to bilingual schools in Chiapas, i.e., the act of cleaning: Indigenous children dutifully cleaning the schools. The number of times this activity is represented in the workbooks, both of one's body and the surroundings, is significant. What is behind this? Are we seeing one of the most entrenched and derogatory stereotypes of Indigenous people, that they are unclean? Another common characteristic of the workbooks that we did not find in the textbooks is the representation of anger and people who are fighting, drunken, or just sad in general. On the contrary, the children who appear in the regular textbooks are oftentimes cartoonlike characters that seem eternally happy and cheerful. These commonalities betray the presence of a stereotypically negative representation of what life is like in an Indigenous community.

The first unit of the workbook for the first and second graders is dedicated to inculcating "Mexicanness" and love of country (SEP, 2002k). On page 23 in large bold letters, we read: "WE ARE ALL MEXICANS." "We Mexicans have a flag that represents us and identifies us as a great, free and glorious people. When we sing our national anthem we feel great emotion and joy, because our hymn unites us as Mexicans" (SEP, p. 25). These declarations are reoccurring in all three workbooks and give the impression of trying to convince the Tojolabal children of the greatness of Mexico and how grateful they should feel about belonging to the Mexican State. The workbooks read at times like publicity pamphlets for Mexico and "Mexicanness." Implicit is the knowledge that these people might reject this affiliation if they ever had the opportunity. The echo of the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas of 1994 is present here.

In a section about personal hygiene, we meet Hilario, "who is unkempt, his body and clothing almost always dirty" (SEP, 2002k, p. 117). Hilario is portrayed surrounded by garbage, next to a garbage can on its side with a rat. In my visits to Chiapas, I never saw garbage or garbage cans strewn around any of the communities I visited or passed. This gives us an idea about the level of ignorance about the reality and landscape of Indigenous communities. Another example of this ignorance can be found in a section with recipes for caramel and other foods not available in the communities.

In the workbook dedicated to the third and fourth graders, we find more of the same. This time being Mexican is reduced to three characteristics. We paraphrase: "We all eat tortillas, we mostly all have Indigenous roots and the immense majority of us speak Spanish" (SEP, 2002l, p. 16). Again, we are remitted to the past with no mention of contemporary Indigenous people who do eat tortillas but do not speak Spanish. Again, the children read about how beautiful Mexico is and how wonderful one feels while singing the national anthem. The children are guided through moral lessons on how to show solidarity and are given an example of a community where "the people think that they don't need anyone, so they don't help anyone" (SEP, 2002l, p. 103). Nothing could be further removed from the daily life experience of solidarity in any Indigenous community in Chiapas. They are also taught about the greatness and power of science and technology and told that without these,

problems cannot be solved. Images abound of the fruits of technology they "should" aspire to: planes, telephones, computers, cars, blenders, helicopters, digital cameras, etc. On the final page, we read what this workbook is supposed to mean to the Indigenous children who read it:

> Don't think for a moment that the work of this Workbook is done: take care of it, keep it safe, and remember that it is your companion and a friend who is always by your side. As you grow up and you need it, take a look at it again: it will always have something to tell you. (SEP, 2002a–m)

This third and fourth grade workbook would pretend to have almost biblical importance for the Indigenous child. Finally, in the fifth and sixth grade workbook, the same topics are dealt with in a more in-depth manner (SEP, 2002m). Again, the courage and tenacity of "our indigenous ancestors" is mentioned, and how those men and women should be an example for all Mexicans today. No such qualities are attributed to the "living" Indigenous. What stands out most in this workbook is the lesson dedicated to health. It begins: "Do you know what health is? It is not enough to know, you also have to act" (SEP, 2002m, p. 117). The children are to decide, based on looking at images of people in different situations, who is taking care of their health and who isn't. Of the eight situations, six depict "unhealthy" situations: The first five are children in stained clothing eating fruit surrounded by flies, a man drinking alcohol, two men smoking, people drinking from a river, and children seated on the ground with flies around their heads. The sixth is of a man who looks as if he just struck his wife; she is flinching while two children hide behind her back. These images culminate the negative stereotypes so common in Mexico: Indigenous people as dirty, violent, drunken, and irresponsible. Only two images depict "healthy" situations: a couple cleaning their home and people bathing in a river with soap.

> Subsequently the paternalist and pejorative tone intensifies:
>
> So how do I stay healthy? You can start by taking a few steps towards general hygiene. We need to keep our bodies and clothing clean […]. Basically you need three things. Do you know what they are? Find the hidden words, illuminate them and you will know. (SEP, 2002m, p. 118)

Willpower Water Soap

Does citing willpower suggest that Indigenous people are somehow too lazy or apathetic to keep clean? This reoccurring stereotype of uncleanliness, conveyed in a paternalistic tone, permeates the pages of these workbooks. In general, the children are told who they are; how they should feel, think, and act; and even how to wash themselves. Implied is the supposed ignorance in general of Indigenous people, even of their own sexuality. Worse is the supposition of dishonesty, laziness, stupidity, and overall maliciousness. These aspects clearly contribute to a condition of defenselessness of Indigenous children in the classroom and beyond.

Conclusion

Maya-Tojolabal children and other Indigenous children in Mexico struggle daily in the classroom due to extreme cultural differences, a lack of respect for their cultures in general, and textbooks that do not represent them. On the contrary, they are made invisible and, when addressed, are patronized and condescended to. We can conclude that these children are, unfortunately, culturally undefended in the classroom, making them vulnerable across their educational life and beyond. What does this mean for future policy? What changes can be made to better this situation?

First of all, it is imperative that communities be consulted about diverging educational techniques and the specific needs of their children. Secondly, the prejudice and the discrimination toward Indigenous people need to be recognized and addressed. Denial of such problems in Mexico and Latin America only exacerbates the situation. Continued research into what underlies these problems is needed. Finally, humility and respect are of utmost importance in cross-cultural communication. These are especially lacking in the area of Indigenous education in Mexico. Stepping back from our universalizing ideas about schooling and being willing to listen and learn from Indigenous peoples like the Maya-Tojolabal of Chiapas will facilitate a better formulation of future policy and may help alleviate the condition of cultural defenselessness of Indigenous children in the classroom.

References

Chamoux, M. (1992). *Trabajo, técnicas y aprendizaje en el México indígena*. Mexico City: Secretary of Public Education (SEP).

Gnade-Muñoz, J. (2008) *Raza, racismo y educación escolar en México*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. Mexico City: National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM).

Lenkersdorf, C. (1994). *Tojolabal para principiantes, lengua y cosmovisión Mayas en Chiapas*. Mexico City: Centro de Reflexión Teológica.

Lenkersdorf, C. (1996). *Los hombres verdaderos, voces y testimonios tojolabales*. Mexico City: Siglo XXI.

Maldonado, B. (2002). *Los indios en las aulas: Dinámica de dominación y resistencia en Oaxaca*. Mexico City: Instituto de Antropología e Historia.

SEP. (2002a). Geography: Fourth Grade. *Geografia Cuarto Grado.* Mexico City: Secretariat of Public Education.

SEP. (2002b). Geography: Fifth Grade.*Geografia Quinto Grado.* Mexico City: Secretariat of Public Education.

SEP. (2002c). Geography: Sixth Grade. *Geografia Sexto Grado.* Secretariat of Public Education, Mexico City.

SEP. (2002d). History: Fourth Grade. *Historia Cuarto Grado.* Mexico City: Secretariat of Public Education.

SEP. (2002e). History: Fifth Grade. *Historia Quinto Grado.* Mexico City: Secretariat of Public Education.

SEP. (2002f). History: Sixth Grade. *Historia Sexto Grado.* Mexico City: Secretariat of Public Education.

SEP. (2002g). History and Geography: Third Grade, Mexico State. *Historia y Geografía, Tercer Grado, Estado de México.* Mexico City: Secretariat of Public Education.

SEP. (2002h). History and Geography: Third Grade, Chiapas. *Historia y Geografía, Tercer Grado, Chiapas.* Mexico City: Secretariat of Public Education.
SEP. (2002i). Integrated first grade textbook. *Libro Integrado Primer Grado*. Secretariat of Public Education Mexico City.
SEP. (2002j). Integrated second grade textbook. *Libro Integrado Segundo Grado*. Mexico City: Secretariat of Public Education.
SEP. (2002k). Intercultural Workbook for Indigenous Girls and Boys (First and Second Grades) Intercultural Bilingual Education: *La Educación Intercultural Bilingüe: Cuadernos de Trabajo par las Niñas y los Niños de Educación Primaria Indígena.* Mexico City: General Secretariat of Indigenous Education/SEP.
SEP. (2002l). Intercultural Workbook for Indigenous Girls and Boys (Third and Fourth Grades) Intercultural Bilingual Education: *La Educación Intercultural Bilingüe: Cuadernos de Trabajo par las Niñas y los Niños de Educación Primaria Indígena.* Mexico City: General Secretariat of Indigenous Education/SEP.
SEP. (2002m). Intercultural Workbook for Indigenous Girls and Boys (Fifth and Sixth Grades) Intercultural Bilingual Education: *La Educación Intercultural Bilingüe: Cuadernos de Trabajo par las Niñas y los Niños de Educación Primaria Indígena.* Mexico City: General Secretariat of Indigenous Education/SEP.
Tajaltik, S., & Lenkersdorf, C. (2001). *El Diario de un Tojolabal*. Mexico City: Plaza y Valdés.

Chapter 4
The Nyae Nyae Village Schools Project: Indigenous Community-Based Education in Namibia

Megan Biesele

Twenty years ago, an experimental school project was begun among indigenous people, the Ju/'hoan San, in a remote part of Namibia, then still apartheid South West Africa. The children of the Ju/'hoan people, or Ju/'hoansi, had been identified as "educationally marginalized" in the late 1980s, before Namibia's Independence from South Africa (March, 1990). Those few children who had access to national schooling showed a very high dropout rate; the schools were clearly not appropriate to their needs. Accordingly, they were the "blamed victims" and an embarrassment to the national education system (Hays, 1999; Le Roux, 1999).

The Nyae Nyae Village Schools Project (VSP) was an attempt to provide appropriate and effective primary schooling to this marginalized minority as a bridge to participation in the national system. The social and cultural situation of the time, with enormous prejudice against nonwhite people, and especially nonwhite indigenous people, made the start of the project a colossal struggle. The practical and logistical problems themselves were extremely daunting. There were also predictable but challenging arguments made about its relatively high cost for a small target group. Ju/'hoan childhood clearly was "undefended" from the point of view of access to education that would allow them to participate in the life of the new nation to which they belonged.

The project remained a struggle—practically, politically, and philosophically—for many years. However, by 2008, it was clear that this ambitious pilot had borne fruit as a model for the wider area of southern Africa. In a major poster exhibit about the VSP created by the staff and students at !Khwa ttu, a San people's learning center in South Africa, the VSP was said to be perhaps the most progressive and best-known minority education initiative in southern Africa (Hays, 2007, Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, Namibia, personal communication, 2008). In this

M. Biesele, Ph.D. (✉)
Kalahari Peoples Fund, 4811-B Shoalwood, Austin, TX 78756, USA
e-mail: meganbie@gmail.com

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9_4,

chapter, I outline the history of the Nyae Nyae Village Schools Project (VSP) that was already in beginning stages in the late 1980s in the Ju/'hoan communities of northeastern Namibia. The VSP was an ambitious, radical approach to providing the formerly hunting and gathering Ju/'hoan San (known to many as the !Kung Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert) with appropriate, accessible, and effective primary education in their mother tongue. The mother-tongue emphasis was adopted not only for itself but as the most reasonable bridge to the new national language, English, that replaced Afrikaans, regarded as the language of the oppressor. The VSP was an attempt to remedy the educational problems of a small, scattered group of people living in substantial isolation from the rest of the Namibian population. Linguistically, the San have been isolated from their African neighbors by the Khoisan, or "click," languages they speak. Further, their languages have not been in written form until very recently (Miller-Ockhuizen, 2000; Miller-Ockhuizer & Sands, 1999). The distance between the Ju/'hoansi and the mainstream population was not only physical and linguistic but social and economic. Apartheid—added to the ancient mistrust between hunter-gatherers and pastoralists in that part of the world—had put the Ju/'hoan and other San at the bottom of every human ladder.

Basically, the San are a "Fourth World" people living in the developing "Third World" countries of Namibia, Botswana, and a few neighboring nations of southern Africa. Their educational problems have presented, in microcosm, the class and racial issues dividing them from an equitable share in the future of southern African countries (Hitchcock, 1992; Hays, 2007).

In our book, *The Ju/'hoan San of Nyae Nyae since Namibia Independence*: *Development*, *Democracy*, *and Indigenous Voices in Southern Africa* (Biesele & Hitchcock, 2011), we detailed the historical matrix out of which the VSP grew. This community-based educational project, a part of the national school system of Namibia since 2001, was begun under the auspices of the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDFN, formerly the Ju/wa Bushman Development Foundation). The VSP resulted from a collaboration among anthropologists (including myself), linguists, several educators, writers, development workers, and the Ju/'hoan community as represented by their people's organization, the Nyae Nyae Farmers Cooperative (2011) (NNFC, which has since become the Nyae Nyae Conservancy).

I described the necessary orthographic, grammatical, dictionary, and curriculum work carried out in the Ju/'hoan language to make the VSP possible. I also presented a bibliography containing materials produced by and about the project. The VSP language work was carried out under the direction of a linguist hired by the NNFC. The linguist, the late Patrick Dickens of the University of the Witwatersrand, was involved along with me in early community consultation leading to the VSP. The VSP spent a great deal of time getting parents actively involved in hands-on teaching of traditional skills, and this is seen as one important key to its success.

A second key was the respect and attention shown to the effective, long-honed educational and child-socialization systems of the Ju/'hoansi themselves. The achievements of the Namibian VSP provide useful examples and positive suggestions for the educational future of both the Ju/'hoan who live on the Botswana side of the international fence shared with Namibia, and other minority-language

communities. In particular, the VSP experience underscores the need for any such project to take time to adjust to the pace of a local community. It highlights the need to understand local cultures of communication as well as local languages. It holds cautionary lessons on the danger of "top-down" educational planning for children in vulnerable communities. Finally, its cultural spin-offs (rapidly spreading literacy in mother tongue and English, empowering connection to the Internet) help to defend San childhood in unexpected ways.

The Need for the Village Schools Project

The problems of remoteness and the painful legacy of apartheid combined in Nyae Nyae to create an educational crisis that was deeply worrisome to the leaders of the NNFC. As the quote from then chairman Tsamkxao =Oma below shows, the NNFC around the time of Independence was very much motivated to tackle it:

> When I look into the future to see what (our children) will see, one thing I see is that my children have come to fear schooling. They fear it because they fear being beaten. So they've all separated, left school and gone off in all directions. Every time I'm in Tsumkwe I see kids who aren't in school. They say they're tired of trying. They got along all right with the earlier teachers, but now there's no understanding with the new ones. All (the children) see is pain. And that's why they go about avoiding school these days. They don't want to be there.
>
> A while back we went to the (school administrator) and asked, 'If beating a child makes him leave school, what good does that do?' And all he said was 'Mmm.' So we said, 'Misbehaving is one thing. If a child acts badly on many occasions, and the teacher discusses it with the parents so they understand each other, well, okay, go on and hit the child. But don't just beat him as an ordinary thing!' Sometimes they beat them for very small things. They don't even tell the child why. They don't even speak to the father about it.
>
> If the child learns some things but doesn't learn others, you shouldn't just beat him, but tell him what he hasn't learned. You say, 'This is the name of this,' and you teach him along, teach him along, and then finally you ask him if he has learned the thing…If instead you go around beating the children, pretty soon you'll see they'll all be gone. This is how we tried to talk to the school administrator. But he persisted and finally we gave up.
>
> But if the children *did* get good schooling? Some of them could get work in hospitals, medical work, and some could teach children in schools, and some could be police, and some could work in offices and do secretarial work; there'd be men's work and women's work. Or they could have shops, or some could learn to work on machines, machines that build trucks, or (welding) machines that work with fire, because these days people don't just do one thing but do lots of kinds of things. Some are truck people and others are welders and some work on truck machines and others keep hostels for schoolchildren. Some could go to work for the government in another area, maybe in waterworks, or some might be in agriculture, and many of them might want to work in water detection and borehole drilling.
>
> If they had a chance to learn these things, they'd know how to do them. My heart burns for them to learn. That's how our work would go forward (Biesele & Hitchcock, 2011, p. 233–234).

Tsamkxao =Oma's statement in 1987 reflected some of the social problems with the government school at Tsumkwe, which since 1978 had been increasingly staffed

with white South African military personnel as teachers. Corporal punishment, punitive and rote instruction in Afrikaans, terrible sanitary and social conditions in the hostel, and a cap on San education levels that meant that even the San kids who finished school couldn't obtain jobs anyway and led to a high dropout rate. The effective, permissive traditional child socialization and hands-on learning system the Ju/'hoansi enjoyed in their earlier community context was the opposite of what was being offered by the government system under apartheid. The NNDFN, following repeated requests from Nyae Nyae community members and the NNFC, determined to explore the possibility of a more appropriate educational system that would be based in the communities where children could live with relatives and keep learning the traditional skills their elders still wanted to teach them, along with becoming literate and possibly employable.

Patrick Dickens worked tirelessly to render Ju/'hoansi a professionally documented and professionally taught language. Dickens' *Ju/'hoan-English*, *English-Ju/'hoan Dictionary* (Dickens, 1994) has become an indispensable tool of literacy and scholarship for the Ju/'hoan community as well as for linguists of the Khoisan languages. At the same time, there was growing awareness on the part of the Ju/'hoan people of the power of media and of their own need for the tools of literacy (Biesele et al., 2009). World literacy experience has affirmed that the most effective approach is to become literate in the mother tongue and then generalize this skill, after the first 3 or 4 years, to a national language. Around the time of Independence, English was replacing Afrikaans in Namibia, and the Ju/'hoansi, like many other minority groups, were anxious to develop skills both in English and a written form of their own language.

Dickens based his work on that of the linguist Jan Snyman of the University of South Africa (Snyman, 1975). He trained four young Ju/'hoan men, who already had some schooling in Afrikaans, to read and write Ju/'hoan using his newly streamlined, "practical" orthography. The VSP education program was a pioneer in the creation of a "self-literate" population, helping to design curriculum communally in a newly written language.

Education in Nyae Nyae After Independence

During 1991, the newly independent nation of Namibia made a commitment to support minority-language education for the first 3 years of school (Biesele & Hitchcock, 2000, p. 240). Partly, this commitment was made because of an internationalist perspective on ethnicity fostered by the South West Africa People's Organization's (SWAPO) leadership on its return from exile. Partly, it was made because of the historical circumstances of separate development during the period of South Africa's illegal mandate over South West Africa. At the time of Independence, fully 11 "national" languages were in use (Biesele & Hitchcock, 2011, p. 234). Ironically, however, it also owed at least something to experiences with results of the opposite educational policy in Botswana.

At the time of Independence, the new Namibian director of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Richard Shortlidge, who was transferred to Windhoek from Gaborone, shared with other involved parties an expressed mission to foster minority-language education in the new Namibia. In Shortlidge's view, Botswana's educational language policies had contributed to increased marginalization for minorities (Shortlidge, personal communication, November 1989). This view meshed well with that of Namibian Education Minister Nahas Angula, who opened the way for Ju/'hoansi to form one of several recognized national-language pilot projects in education (Biesele & Hitchcock, 2011, p. 234).

It is important to realize, however, that had the Ju/'hoan community not already had their community-based education VSP program well started by the time of Independence, their minority-language concern might have gone unnoticed in the general clamor of many groups for recognition after Independence. Not only did the Nyae Nyae community have a people's organization already well formed and operative, they had mobilized both a Namibian nongovernment organization (NGO) and overseas interest and funding in support of their education program (Biesele & Hitchcock, 2011, pp. 233–239). Partly, they were able to do this because literacy and early childhood education were integrated as goals into their overall community development program. Overseas funders and Namibian government agencies alike saw this integration in a most positive light and accordingly made pilot funding available.

In 1991, the Namibian Ministry of Education and Culture accepted the Dickens orthography as the official one for Ju/'hoan schools. At the same time, linguist Dickens and anthropologist Biesele made their contributions and were preparing texts in the Ju/'hoan language for the NNFC's requested school curriculum. Because these activities were already ongoing, the Ju/'hoan language was accepted under the Namibian Basic Educational Reform Program (BERP) as the medium for a pilot project in curriculum development for 5 years (1991–1996).

It would have been difficult for the new government either then or since to afford to set a precedent for the scholarly input to Ju/'hoan education that was already in place due to the development program. The NNFC/NNDFN was able to afford it because the linguist, Dickens, and anthropologist, Biesele, made their contributions as volunteer spare-time work outside of their regular job descriptions. But the Namibian Ministry of Education was receptive to the work done in this case, because the people themselves, via their own community organization, their NGO, and international funding, had a language and literacy program virtually ready to go.

The pilot program called for participation of the Ju/'hoan communities in deciding what from their own traditions would go into literate form as enrichment materials for their children's curriculum. A starting class of 16 teachers from these communities was trained to teach at 5 local schools. The schools were located in villages strategically chosen to maximize parental help from families of the students. This and other ideas of the VSP were worked out in consultation between the NGO and the Nyae Nyae community members. The Nyae Nyae people concurred with educators who had identified the unfamiliar cultural and linguistic environment of the few schools formerly available to Ju/'hoan children as the single greatest factor contributing to the existing high dropout and failure rates.

Self-Literacy

Of the original intentions of the project, one of the most exciting was community collaboration in the preparation of materials for what international educators referred to as "self-literacy." Curriculum written in Ju/'hoan includes materials developed by (1) scholars working within NNDFN, (2) local people within the NNFC, (3) the education team of the VSP, and (4) local teachers in the pilot project. These materials include orthography and dictionary materials, along with folktales, oral history, and song texts used in readers for the primary school grades. A numeracy booklet was also produced. The student teachers made tape recordings of older community members telling stories, and they transcribed the stories as group exercises in Ju/'hoan literacy. Also, creative writing in Ju/'hoan was promoted via workshops, which were met with great enthusiasm by the student teachers.

The first phase of the VSP (ca. 1989–1992) was characterized by the challenge of bringing relevant learning experience and literacy to a group of people whose own educational system is integrated into all aspects of life—a people, thus, with high educational standards. The challenge was approached via an innovative 2-year set of preschool pilot projects carried out for NNDFN on a volunteer basis by Melissa Heckler, a children's librarian now living in Cross River, NY, who holds an MA in early childhood education from Bank Street College of Education, New York City. Lessons learned from the preschool projects ranged from the effectiveness of high-level community involvement to the desirability of a holistic program carried out in the children's mother tongue.

The VSP also understood the need to communicate with the many villages of Nyae Nyae about the social, as well as linguistic, bridge that the VSP plan could provide in answer to their expressed needs. It also demonstrated to the existing national educational entities that the Ju/'hoansi were a people who had a robust educational system of their own, one which sufficed for their lives previously. With changing times, however, the Ju/'hoansi were aware of a need for further education to allow them to participate in the wider society. At the same time, the VSP planners—both community workers and development workers—recognized the importance of preserving the strengths of the Ju/'hoan's own oral learning system, which involved hands-on experience and emphasized the learning and creativity of groups rather than of individuals alone.

The second phase, the challenge of preparing to dovetail with the developing new educational system in Namibia, commenced after Independence. It was approached by writing a general proposal for Ju/'hoan education to the Namibian Ministry of Education (Biesele, Dickens, & Beake, 1991). Under this proposal, groundwork for the eventual accreditation of the five village schools—and the credentialing of the local teachers—was laid. Two Ju/'hoan teachers were hired by the national school system on an in-service training basis, and they began lengthy

careers in the Tsumkwe Junior Secondary School. Dialogue between these two teachers employed by the national system and the teachers (also Ju/'hoan, from the local communities) eventually employed to teach in the five Nyae Nyae schools was critical to the eventual national acceptance in 2001 of the VSP as a bona fide part of Namibian education.

The position of education coordinator (EDCO) created within NNDFN ensured that the necessary liaison work would be done with the Education Ministry and with donor agencies, as well as with other NGOs, colleges of education, and other schools working along the same lines. At the start of her work, EDCO Magdalena Broermann worked with Lesley Beake, a South African writer of award-winning children's books, to produce sample desktop-published curriculum materials for testing in the first phase of the VSP.

Perhaps most critical in Broermann's work as EDCO was the lobbying she did for equivalent accreditation for the student teachers. She was also responsible for coordination, with Joachim Pfaffe, of the extensive program of training young Ju/'hoansi from the villages to serve as teachers for the village schools. From a starting class of 16, 5 eventually filled the school posts. As village schools coordinator (VISCO), Pfaffe produced, with the participation of the student teachers, a series of training modules called *TEACH*!

Those associated with the VSP lament the tragic loss in March 2008 of a Swedish educator whose work was crucial to the project, Dr. Ulla Kann. Her 1991 consultancy on the VSP for the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and for NNDFN covered the interlocking issues of language and orthography, primary education and adult literacy, teachers and teacher training, and curriculum and materials production. Titled "Where the sand is the book: Education for everyone in the Nyae Nyae area—A challenge" (Kann, 1991), her report focused on the importance of local language education in the development of critical thinking and the consequent upcoming need for the training of local teachers. Kann (1991) concluded from her research that the VSP must strive to prepare Ju/'hoan children and adults to participate in the national education system. "The intent is *not*," she wrote, "to develop a separate education system for the Ju/'hoansi." Kann's influence as a respected national education adviser in Namibia went a long way toward allowing the VSP to begin and eventually to prosper.

The five pilot schools of the VSP were built and enthusiastically received by the communities. The involvement of parents and other community members (as storytellers, cooks, brick makers, builders, and thatchers, as well as providers of housing and transport) was central to their success. The most practical lessons from the VSP came out of this community involvement. By contrast, the most egregious problems the VSP has had to rectify (such as that of paying teachers and making sure they have food in a remote situation where the teachers' relatives can and do demand egalitarian sharing of pay and food) have come from decision making that took place after the VSP became part of the national system, far from consultation with the Ju/'hoan communities.

Spin-Offs of the Village Schools Project

The Ju/'hoan Transcription Group (JTG)

In 2002, a project in cultural heritage preservation, language development, and linguistics training for local people spun off from the VSP. Here is where a second NGO, a US 501(c)(3) called the Kalahari Peoples Fund (KPF), began to support projects made possible by the linguistic work and the VSP. Tired of the few flimsy mimeographed and desktop-published curriculum materials available in Ju/'hoansi, the VSP teachers and other Namibian educators called for attractive published schoolbooks in their own language. With funding from the US government's National Science Foundation and National Endowment for the Humanities as well as the KPF, I was able to collaborate on a heritage conservation project with the Ju/'hoansi to continue to provide them with printed curriculum materials reflecting their own culture. Some of these materials were contemporary essays written by the teacher trainees in a creative writing course. The project produced a number of materials developed both by the Namibian government's National Institute for Educational Development and by the Trafford First Voices Publishing Program, British Columbia, Canada (Biesele et al., 2009).

The project, still ongoing, is envisioned as a long-term effort to transform an extensive "legacy collection" of audio textual material in Ju/'hoan into authoritative digital texts and sound files, enabling the responsible posting of the material to inter-collaborating Internet archives. The texts, gathered between 1970 and the present, ranged from folklore, dreams, and narratives of trance healing to political meetings and oral history. Later, interviews and conversations about the Nyae Nyae Conservancy, the Namibian Ju/'hoan people's organization that grew out of the NNFC, were recorded as well. These materials focused on the environment, land rights, and new issues in governance and representation. Transcribed and translated with precision by a collaborative team including computer-literate native speakers trained originally by the VSP, these texts are not only providing valuable research tools for anthropologists, archaeologists, and linguists, but valuable archive materials for the Ju/'hoan Transcription Group. They contribute to a movement now developing among indigenous people in many parts of the world, to document and develop their own culture and language for educational, political, and economic goals.

The JTG uses an innovative workshop format for processing authoritative texts made possible not only by new technology but by the "old" technology of collaborative learning that was traditional among the Ju/'hoansi and other San. The JTG has become a comprehensive, contextualized, and critical language project, building as it has on the original work of Dickens and his Ju/'hoan students and on my own collected materials now being digitized. At first carried out only when I and my technical assistants could be in Tsumkwe from 2006 to 2008, JTG was ongoing throughout the year under the supervision of Dam Kim Debe, the Ju/'hoan librarian at the Tsumkwe Community Learning and Development Center (CLDC). From August 2008 to 2010, the supervisor of the project has been Jafet

Nqeni, also Ju/'hoan. The CLDC and the new library it features were established by the Namibia Association of Norway (NAMAS). NAMAS has an ongoing San Education Project based at the CLDC, and this project works closely with both the KPF and NNDFN to foster community education in Nyae Nyae.

The uniquely productive and authoritative heart of the transcription work is its collaborative workshop format. To add to the project's efficiency, the NGOs involved have constructed—now that Namibia has signed the international broadband protocol—a high-speed Internet connection at the center in Tsumkwe to allow exchange of translation drafts between scholars overseas and the trainees in Namibia. This connection was used to speed preparation of authoritative material for both publication and online dissemination and for the people's archives.

The first two Ju/'hoan trainees, Kaqece Kallie N!ani and Dam Kim Debe, received training in computer literacy, language preservation, and linguistic techniques, including interlinearization training, from German linguist Tom Gueldemann. By 2007, the number of competent trainees had risen to eight (including two women), all keen to continue the work. What the trainees have learned from the JTG has made a substantial contribution to the development of human resources for the study of the Ju/'hoan and other San languages. Now in 2013, Ju/'hoan, especially in Nyae Nyae as enabled by VSP, the JTG, and a new Namibian commitment to minority radio, can genuinely be said to be experiencing community-based revitalization.

The Youth Transcription Project and Dictionary Update

In early February 2008, the JTG trainees asked to expand their program. They wanted to add a youth component to their work so younger people, especially young women, could receive training in transcription, translation, and other linguistic techniques. They proposed to do the training themselves, in the spirit of "each one teach one." The KPF was pleased to provide funds to support their aim, and by August 2008, the Youth Transcription Project (YTP) had already held several 2-week training sessions.

The trainees and I are working with US linguist Amanda Miller to expand the Dickens Dictionary, which will be jointly edited with a Ju/hoan man, Hacky Kxami Kxao. Hacky Kxao wrote an essay in English on the importance of the Transcription Group and other Ju/'hoan language work. Here is an excerpt from his written composition:

> I'm…attending the Ju/'hoansi Transcriptions Project. It's very important, and also a good way to learn. I'm also able to write the Ju/'hoansi Language now at the computer.
>
> I think that to write and read your own language is a very important skill to teach our younger generation. Our younger generation must start early with our Ju/'hoansi language, how to read and write it. I believe that when our young children know how to read and write our Ju/'hoansi language, all will be developed and like white people and the other groups of people in Namibia.

> I'm very happy that we now have schools at our villages, that can teach our young generation to read and write Ju/'hoansi. I think that if the children can read and write the Ju/'hoansi language, they will be able to compile books in our own language.

Technology has finally caught up with the enthusiasm of the Ju/'hoan people for both preserving old knowledge and learning new things. It is salient that all the educational activities stemming from the VSP have been characterized by a high degree of collaboration between young and old. Although some young people have had the chance to become literate, they do not know the old lore and are finding the knowledge of nonliterate elders indispensable to the creation of good community records. The following account of a work session with transcription trainees is a case in point:

> In June and July 2006, in Tsumkwe, Nyae Nyae, Namibia, six young Ju/'hoan trainees, trained in computer literacy and transcription of their only-recently-written language, were hard at work on donated laptops. They were transcribing and translating, from digital soundfiles, hundreds of hours of folktales, healing narratives, and other materials recorded in their language as long ago as 1970. At one point in a detailed phenomenological description of the mechanisms of traveling on the "threads of the sky" to God's village, which Ju/'hoan healers do in an altered state of consciousness, a trainee sighed, "If only/Kunta Boo (the raconteur on the old soundfile) were here to help explain all this to us so we could get it written down right!" At that moment, the trainees looked towards the doorway of the community library where they were working. There stood old/Kunta himself, having trekked in from his far-off camp when he heard about the project. Without further ado,/Kunta and his wife N!ae sat down by the computers in the midst of the young people and didn't get up for two solid weeks except for breaks or to go to bed at night. They went through the soundfiles with the trainees word for word. Excitement erupted around this collaborative process, which, along with transcriptions, began to generate many esoteric vocabulary words for the trainees to use in updating their dictionary. The result was over 200 pages of authoritative, annotated, richly nuanced, transcribed and translated Ju/'hoan material that answers many questions outsiders have had about the people's famous, but mysterious, healing dance. When /Kunta and N!ae were leaving to go back to their village, one of the trainees was moved to read them a speech he had written, which contained the words "We young people could never have done this work correctly without you, our elders."

Young people's interest in producing, about their lives, stories (imaginary and historical), essays (thoughtful and critical), and images (moving and still) is a major force in the complex educational legacy left in Nyae Nyae by the collaboration of concerned outsiders with the Nyae Nyae people's movement that continues today. Though there is much that is challenging, difficult, and even tragic about life in Nyae Nyae today, cultural revitalization is occurring, and it involves far more than simply conserving past heritage. It is creative, enthusiastic, and thoughtfully critical of the new realities the Ju/'hoansi see today and in their future.

The Kalahari Peoples Network

The last spin-off of the VSP I will mention was a website aiming to bring a connection between widely separated groups of San people who speak many different

languages and live throughout southern Africa. Drawing on the experience of San peoples in South Africa, Namibia, and Botswana, the website has provided up-to-date and accurate information to many people, worldwide, who look to the Internet for authoritative information about the San.

Now an archive to be found at www.kalaharipeoples.org, was based in Cape Town under the editorship of Lesley Beake, one of the original planners of the VSP. Kalahari Peoples Network (KPN) was created under the auspices of the KPF and was launched in Windhoek and Tsumkwe, Namibia, in July 2008. KPF worked closely with San communities to populate the site with information and to create the network of communication that the San peoples have asked us to provide.

The VSP Model

The Nyae Nyae VSP is still on a frontier and continues to experience massive problems, even after its absorption into the national education system of Namibia. Despite these continuing challenges, the experiences and materials of the VSP have utility as examples for use in other communities with educationally marginalized children. In particular, the example of the VSP and its spin-offs may be found instructive in neighboring Botswana (Biesele & Hitchcock, 2000), where San populations are still offered only mainstream schooling in Setswana and English, despite rising support for mother-tongue and more culturally specific educational opportunities.

References

Biesele, M., Dickens, P., & Beake, L. (1991). *Education proposal for Ju/'hoan speakers in Namibia*. Windhoek, Namibia: NNDFN.

Biesele, M., & Hitchcock, R. (2000). Ju/'hoan-language education in Namibia and its relevance for minority-language education in Botswana. In H. Batibo & B. Smieja (Eds.), *Botswana: The future of the minority languages*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.

Biesele, M., & Hitchcock, R. (2011). *The Ju/'hoan San of Nyae Nyae and Namibian independence: Development, democracy, and indigenous voices in Southern Africa*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Biesele, M., et al. (2009). *Ju/'hoan Folktales: Transcriptions and English translations*. Victoria, BC: Trafford First Voices Publishing Program.

Dickens, P. (1994). *English-Ju/'hoan, Ju/'hoan-English Dictionary. Kokxuisi =xanua Inglici-Ju/'hoan, Ju/'hoan-Inglici*. Windhoek, Namibia: NNDFN.

Hays, J. (1999). Global problems, local solutions; an overview of indigenous peoples in education systems worldwide (Appendix IV). In W. LeRoux (Ed.), *Torn apart: San children as change agents in a process of acculturation*. Windhoek, Namibia: Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa.

Hays, J. (2007). *Education, rights and survival for the Nyae Nyae Ju/'hoansi: Illuminating global and local discourses*. PhD dissertation, Cornell University.

Hitchcock, R. K. (1992). *Communities and consensus: An evaluation of the activities of the Nyae Nyae Farmers Cooperative and the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation in Northeastern Namibia*. New York: Ford Foundation, and Windhoek, Namibia: NNDFN.

Kann, U. (1991). *Where the sand is the book: Education for everyone in the Nyae Nyae area—A challenge*. Consultancy report to Swedish International Development Authority and Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia. Windhoek, Namibia.

Le Roux, W. (1999). *Torn apart: San children as change agents in a process of acculturation*. Windhoek, Namibia: Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa.

Miller-Ockhuizen, A. (2000). Issues in Ju/'hoansi orthography and Implications for the development of other Khoisan language orthographies. In H. M. Batibo & J. Tsonope (Eds.), *State of Khoisan language studies in Botswana* (pp. 111–l27). Gaborone: University of Botswana.

Miller-Ockhuizen, A., & Sands, B. (1999). !Kung as a linguistic construct. Selected papers from the conference titled, "When Languages Collide: Sociocultural and Geopolitical Implications of Language Conflict and Language Coexistence". In B. Joseph (Ed.), *Language and communication* (pp. 401–413). 19.4.

Nyae Nyae Farmers Cooperative. (2011). Tape archive: Meetings 1987–1993. Cassettes and transcriptions (English and Ju/'hoansi) prepared by M. Biesele. Baraka, Namibia. Digital versions deposited in 2011 with Endangered Languages Archive (ELAR), School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

Snyman, J. W. (1975). *Zu|'hoasi Fonologie & Woordeboek, Communication No. 37 of the University of Cape Town School of African Studies*. Cape Town, South Africa: A. A. Balkema.

Part II
Education and Schooling Experiences

Chapter 5
Poverty and Minority Children's Education in the USA: Case Study of a Sudanese Refugee Family

Guofang Li

Poverty has been a persistent problem, endangering immigrant children's education in the United States for the past few decades. Despite an unprecedented period of economic growth in the 1980s and 1990s, poverty persists in the USA, especially among the immigrant population. Worse yet, the poverty rate among the immigrant populations has been on a continuous rise. In 1970, poverty rates of children of immigrants were lower than among children of the native-born populations, 11.6 % vs. 14.1 %. But by 1980, only 10 years later, this pattern had reversed itself, with poverty rates for immigrant and nonimmigrant populations being 16.7 % vs. 14.7 %. In 2000, poverty rates among children of immigrants rose to 21.6 % (with 14.7 % for the nonimmigrant population) (Hook, 2003). By 2004, there were 8.7 million, or 17.7 %, poor persons among first-generation immigrants and their family members in the USA. That is, roughly one in four poor persons was an immigrant or member of an immigrant's family. By contrast, 11.7 % of persons living in nonimmigrant households were poor, and only 8.6 % of persons living in households headed by nonimmigrant White, non-Hispanics were poor. The poverty rate for immigrants was, thus, twice the rate for nonimmigrant non-Hispanic Whites (Rector, 2006).

Poverty is closely linked to children's educational experiences and achievements. Recent 2010 census figures show that low-SES (socioeconomic status) immigrant and minority groups are highly segregated racially, economically, and residentially (Rothstein, 2012) and are under the impact of a series of social factors such as poverty, racism, negative contexts of reception, and/or language and cultural barriers (Li, 2008, 2010; Portes & Zhou, 1993). Most refugees and asylum seekers are assimilated in urban poverty and resettle in economically depressed urban areas with high rates of crime and unemployment (McBrien, 2005). In general, new

G. Li, Ph.D. (✉)
Department of Teacher Education, College of Education, Michigan State University, 350 Erickson Hall, East Lansing, MI 48823, USA
e-mail: liguo@msu.edu

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9_5,

professional and entrepreneurial immigrants (e.g., those from Asia) are reported to settle in suburbs outside their urban ethnic enclaves (e.g., Monterey Park in California, nicknamed the "Chinese Beverly Hills"), while many low-skilled primary labor immigrants and refugees (e.g., Vietnamese, African refugees, and Hispanic immigrants) settle in urban enclaves as they often receive government assistance or work in low-wage occupations (Li, 2005, 2007; Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). Since most of the low-SES immigrants concentrate in urban centers, their children often attend highly racially and linguistically segregated schools. According to Ruiz-de-Velasco and Fix (2001), nationwide, almost half of the LEP (limited English proficient) students attend schools where 30 % or more of their fellow students are LEP. The segregation of LEP from other students is particularly pronounced in elementary schools; 53.3 % of LEP primary school students vs. 31.3 % of LEP secondary school students attend schools in which 30 % or more of the students are LEP.

The high levels of racial, economic, and linguistic segregation determine the kinds of schools immigrant children attend and the kind of education they receive (Kozol, 2004; Li, 2005; Orfield & Lee, 2005). The physical capital of schools such as available resources, the social organization of the student population, the teaching force, the learners, and the nature of curriculum and instruction differ in terms of the SES status of the community (Knapp & Woolverton, 2004). Schools in higher SES communities tend to possess more physical capital—they attract better-qualified teachers, receive more resources and funding, and are better equipped with technology (Kozol, 2004; Orfield & Lee, 2005). In contrast, schools serving students from low-income families tend to have fewer resources, experience greater difficulties attracting qualified teachers, and face many more challenges in addressing students' needs (Lee & Burkam, 2002). In addition to the differences in physical capital, schools with different SES statuses also tend to differ in their cultural and symbolic capital such as leadership, staff morale, expectations for students, and values placed on students' cultures and languages (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001). Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco (2001) discover that schools serving low-SES immigrant and minority children tend to be catastrophic ones, characterized by ever-present fear of violence, distrust, low expectations, and institutional anomie. These "fields of endangerment" are usually located in neighborhoods troubled by drugs, prostitution, and gangs, with families and faculty members focusing on survival.

Poverty and segregation also correlate with students' achievement gaps. A recent National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (2007) report suggests that the achievement gap between different SES groups has been persistent throughout the years. For example, the 2003, 2005, and 2007 results in reading and math indicated that students who were eligible for free or reduced lunch programs (high poverty) and those who were not (low poverty) had substantial differences in their achievement. In fact, low-SES students' average scores have been consistently lower than their higher SES peers since the 1990s. In 2007, trends in fourth-grade NAEP reading average scores showed that students who were eligible for free or reduced lunch programs scored 203 and 215, respectively. In comparison, students

who were not eligible scored 232. In addition, 81 % of students eligible for free lunch programs performed at or below the basic level for reading compared to 44 % of students who were not eligible. Similar trends were also observed in fourth-grade math and eighth-grade reading and math and between different racial groups (e.g., between the Whites and the Blacks).

Disparities in educational achievements suggest that we must address the issue of poverty in immigrant children's education. As Hook (2003) notes, child poverty poses a significant social problem because childhood poverty is linked to a number of long-lasting developmental and schooling problems that often translate into poor SES outcomes in adulthood. Many also argue the issue of poverty is more than the issue of SES outcomes—it also concerns the question of human rights, as poverty limits one's access to education or quality education (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 2007). As Padres and Jovenes Unidos (2008) write:

> Immigrant children, as well as native-born poor children and children of color, have all faced a system of educational apartheid that has denied them equal opportunity and resulted in a disenfranchisement of their democratic rights. All have been scapegoats for the failures of the public education system—for being too poor, non-citizens, non-English speakers, of the wrong race or national origin. They are labeled a drain on the educational system and that they have made it "impossible" to improve the quality of education. Immigrants in particular have been pushed to the margins through denial of education based on their immigration status and native language. (p. 1)

While we know much about the overall impact of poverty on immigrant and minority students' educational achievement, we know little about how poverty is lived by low-SES immigrant minorities in their daily lives and experienced in their interactions with the public schools. Sitting at the bottom of the richest country in the world, they are often depicted as "the *cause* of national problems" and "the *reason* for the rise in urban crime, as embodying the *necessity* for welfare reform, and of sitting at the *heart* of moral decay" (Fine & Weis, 1998, p. 1, italics original). Yet, members of this group, especially the foreign-born immigrants and refugees, are often excluded in national conversations and ignored in the policy-making processes—their voices are often not heard, and their experiences remain foreign to their middle-class neighbors and to the general public (Fine & Weis, 1998).

Examining how "limit situations" (Freire, 1970) such as poverty shape the lives and educational experiences of immigrant children and their families is significant to the understanding of issues pertinent to immigrant children's adjustment and schooling. Issues such as immigration, institutional forces, policy, and practices can become barriers and constraints in immigrant children's lives. Li (2008) argues that poverty and immigrant children's experiences with urban schooling must be understood as products of dialectical interaction in relation to not only the individual's cultural and familial milieu but also the interactive contexts between the individual and the more powerful cultural sites such as schools. As Shannon (1998) notes, however it is that poverty may be understood or experienced, it "has everything to do with schooling—how it is theorized, how it is organized, how it runs" (p. viii). In this chapter, I pay attention to interactions between poverty and family milieu and school contexts.

Method

The Participants: The Myer Family

The Myer family came to the USA as refugees in 2000 from a southern Sudanese city called Wāw. They had experienced much hardship before coming to the USA. The father, Mahdi, was an accountant in Sudan. Because of the civil war, they had lost six of their family members. In 1995, when it became unsafe to stay any longer, Mahdi and his family fled the country. He joined the 20,000 Christians in southern Sudan who walked on bare feet from Sudan to Kenya, without regular food for 3 months. He was one of the final 4,000 survivors who finally made it to a Kenyan refugee camp. For a long time, he did not know where his wife and two children were, and, finally, he learned that his wife and children were in Egypt. After many more hardships, in 1998, he reunited with his family in Egypt, where they gave birth to a twin boy and girl in 1999. In 2000, they came to the USA, and in 2001 they had another twin boy and girl in the city where they resettled (Table 5.1).

At the time of my study, the Myer family's oldest son, Rahman, was 14 and was in the eighth grade. He had been in the ESL (English as a Second Language) program since he started school in the USA 5 years previously. He was one of the "long-term LEPs" or low-literacy students who came to the US educational system without prior schooling experiences (Ruiz-de-Velasco & Fix, 2001). According to Mahdi, Rahman "is not good with English, and he is behind in all subjects," and he

Table 5.1 The Myer family profile

Name	Age	Occupation	Education	Languages	Other information
Mahdi	50	Meat slicer	High school in Sudan; Community college in US	Dinka Arabic English	Was an accountant in Sudan
Gloria	40s	Food factory worker	Undergraduate in Arabic in Sudan	Dinka Arabic English	Was an Arabic teacher in Sudan
Rahman	14	Student	Green Middle School	Dinka English	Born in Sudan
Abok	11	Student	Rainbow Elementary 1 year of schooling in Egypt	Dinka English	Born in Sudan
Mading	7	Student	Rainbow Elementary	Dinka English	Born in Egypt
Achan	7	Student	Rainbow Elementary	Dinka English	Born in Egypt
Sadiq	4	Preschool	Hurley Charter School	Dinka English	Born in the US
Sattina	4	Preschool	Hurley Charter School	Dinka English	Born in the US

also had been involved in fighting with other children in the school. Their eldest daughter, Abok, was performing better in school and had no problem with English. She had come to the USA when she was age 5 and received only 3 years of ESL support. Mading, who was repeating grade 1, was not doing well in English, but his twin sister, Achan, was doing well and had moved on to grade 2. The youngest twins, Sadiq and Sattina, were attending preschool in a charter school and were doing well thus far.

Data Collection and Analysis

In order to provide rich, descriptive data about the contexts, activities, and beliefs of the families, I used semi-structured interviews and participant observations (Creswell, 2005). The Myer family was selected through a local, international elementary school designated for refugees, called Rainbow Elementary. The family was part of a larger study on school and home literacy connections of fourth-grade students (Li, 2008). During May 2004 and July 2006, my research assistant and I visited the Myer family and carried out observations and interviews more than six times. We formally interviewed the family twice at their home during the research process. Both parents and the older children were interviewed. The two interviews were conducted as a means to understand the family's beliefs and values about their children's education and to gain more specific information about their literacy practices and parental involvement at home. We also asked them to reflect on their thoughts about race and class issues and cultural differences living in the USA. We also conducted participant observations and recorded them in field notes while the children played on the computer, watched TV, or interacted with each other at home.

Data analysis continued throughout the data collection period. Following Glaser and Strauss's (1967) grounded theory approach, I first coded the transcripts and field notes, using the open coding methods. Examples of these categories included literacy practice, interaction with school, interaction with the system, immigration, cultural differences, and work. After these initial coding, I further coded the data chunks into smaller categories. For example, in the literacy practice category, several other codes such as reading, writing, mathematics, and language use were developed. In the cultural differences category, further themes such as culture, parenting, community support, and schooling difference were identified. Based on the identified patterns, a table of contents that contained bigger themes was created to visualize the data in a categorical organization for each family. Themes and data chunks relating to the research questions were also identified and categorized for each family. This step allowed me to better demonstrate the "true value of the original multiple realities" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) by using direct quotes from the formal and informal interviews to give voice to the participants.

Poverty and Schooling: The Myer Family's Educational Experiences in the USA

Barton, Ivanic, Appleby, Hodge, and Tusting (2007) theorize that to understand people's engagement with formal learning, four aspects of their lives must be taken into consideration: their histories, current identities, current circumstances, and imagined futures. By describing one Sudanese refugee family's experiences of urban schooling, I examined how poverty intersected with the family's immigration histories and cultural backgrounds, their racial identities, their present work circumstances, and the public school programs and practices in shaping the children's educational successes and failures as well as their future trajectories.

Immigration and Adjustment to Life in the USA

Along with many other African refugees, the Myer family received government assistance and was brought to resettle in the urban center of a city, where problems of drug use and violence were and still are rampant. Like many immigrants and refugees, the Myer family experienced tremendous difficulties with language and culture differences upon their arrival in the USA. Mahdi and Gloria knew no English before they came to the USA. Once here, for a few months they attended ESL classes offered by the Catholic Charities, where they learned basic survival English. As Gloria pointed out, the short English classes only helped them to speak some simple sentences, but they did not learn how to read or write English. Mahdi also participated in a 6-week job training program and got a job in a meat factory as a meat slicer. Gloria stayed home for a few months before she got a job in a food factory about an hour away from their home. Their hard work eventually allowed them to purchase a two-story house in 2004 in the same neighborhood where they could afford to live.

The Myer family was grateful for the opportunities they had in America, but adjustment to their new life was difficult. Rahman put it succinctly, "Everything is different." One of the biggest challenges was that "language is difficult" (Abok). For Rahman and Abok, the first 2 years had been especially difficult as they could neither follow nor understand many of the classroom activities. Rahman, for example, relied on his Sudanese classmates to translate for him in class. Though Gloria and Mahdi studied English, their short training was not enough for their daily lives, especially when they wanted to be more involved in their children's homework. For the children, language became a barrier to doing well in school. Mahdi described the children's struggles: "When we came here, don't know anything about English to assimilate, so even they doesn't know how to greet people that day. My elder son was just came when he was 10 years, and when we came, he was just couldn't communicate full without knowing ABC … And he don't [know] how to count one, two, three."

Mahdi and Gloria also experienced a decline or drop in terms of their occupational statuses in the USA (Chiswick, Lee, & Miller, 2003). Although both Gloria and Mahdi were employed, their jobs here were very different from the positions they held in Sudan. For Mahdi, the most important thing was to have a job that enabled him to pay for the house and to support the children. He went to work at 4:00 p.m. and returned home around 2:30 a.m., except Saturday night. He slept about 2–3 h after he came home from work, then he would get up around 5:00 a.m. to drive Gloria to work. After he came back from Gloria's workplace, he drove the children to school. After that, he attended classes at the community college where he took courses in business administration. When his classes finished at 2:00 p.m., he went to a computer lab to do his homework before he went to his job. Sometimes he went home to check the children's homework or to take a quick nap before going to work. On Saturdays, he shopped for the family groceries in the morning and took the children to a laundry mat in the afternoon, and on Sundays he took the whole family to church in the morning. In the afternoon, he had a couple of hours to run errands or catch up with his schoolwork before going to his job. Though work (and life) was hard, Mahdi knew that this was what he had to do in America: "Now I know a little bit English. So, I want to go ahead. For instance, my major is now business administration because I was working as an accountant in my country. I like my job that time. But here like, can I do that? Here, I have to do, start from the beginning, so that I can get my degree or my certificate so that I can work … you don't want [this meat slicing] work in my country. I don't do that. I was sitting at the office and doing the calculation thing."

For Gloria, the change was even greater. In Sudan, her job as an Arabic teacher was neither stressful nor physically demanding. At home, she had relatives to help with house chores, and she did not have to do much. Here, she had to get up at 4:00 a.m. every day to get the children's meals ready before going to work at the food factory. In the afternoon, she took the bus home and was often so exhausted that she could barely move, but still she had to make sure that the children completed their homework while she prepared dinners for them.

From the perspective of outsiders, Mahdi and Gloria had achieved the so-called American dream—they had their own house, both were employed, and they had a car. But Gloria had never felt happy here; she really missed her life in Sudan and would return at any time if possible. "Here I have to do everything. I'm all alone here. I am not alone back home. I have a lot of people." For her, being in America was like being "a guest in another person's house." However, she knew that she would not be able to return because her family had fled to different places all over the world as a result of the war in Sudan.

In addition to being uprooted from her family and community, Gloria also missed the vast safe and open spaces they used to enjoy back home in Sudan. She noted, "Back home, you know everyone, you have a lot of place for kids to go out and play. Here you don't know your neighbors, and houses are so close to each other, no yard. No place for kids to play. It's driving them crazy." To her, the only solace was that she could get together with a few other Sudanese families on weekends once in a while.

The Myers maintained a strong Sudanese identity. Mahdi stated, "We are not African Americans, we are Sudanese American." Gloria commented that even though African Americans and Sudanese have the same skin color, they "behave differently." Mahdi explained the difference:

> Africa is composed of many countries, more than 40 countries, and people say that I'm African American because they don't know their origin from Africa. This is Sudanese, Nigerian, Egyptian, Ethiopian … you don't know … you don't know where you came from, but to me, or my kids, they know that origin where they came from. I know my country, I know my hometown. I know my village, I know my parents like that. Even my kids, I have to tell them, that twins, they were born in the USA. I used to tell them. Now Sudanese, their hometown is Waw, that village, something like that and also there were cultures, you, everybody … has to learn, to know, to teach them from his father [to] grand, grand, grandfather … they supposed to know that.

For the children, being Sudanese meant being respectful to others, while African Americans tended not to be. In their view, African Americans did not like to listen to elders or parents. The Myer children mostly socialized with Sudanese friends at school, because "you can talk to them normally" (Abok). They were also very sensitive to how others treated them as Blacks. Abok, for example, noticed that a White bus guard treated Black students differently from the Whites. "If a Black student chew gum on the bus, he'll say it's not good, but when White students chew gum, it's okay."

In order for the children to keep up with their home culture, Mahdi and Gloria bought a satellite dish in order to receive TV programs from Sudan. However, the programs were mostly in Arabic, which their children did not understand since they spoke only Dinka at home. To them, raising children in a different culture was quite difficult because the basic ideas of childrearing were different. Mahdi elaborated, "Because in my country we have the concept that the children [are] the property of that family issue, property of the nation … you should take [care] of that child …. If I don't know how to brought up my kids, somebody must interfere … come and talk to the kids and children how to behave …. Like when you bring them up here … the concept is the opposite. Like your business is always your business, nobody else's."

Despite the hardship they were going through, Mahdi and Gloria wanted their children to "get the opportunities" in America. Mahdi, for example, wanted the children to "go ahead with education." He did not want to choose their future career, but he told them, "I don't want anyone of you to do the hard job I'm doing now." He and Gloria wanted the children to finish school and attend college. They did not have any specific expectations for them, except for their youngest daughter, Sattina, who was only 4 and in preschool: "This one going to be a doctor … because I will be very old when she becomes a doctor," said Gloria.

Parental Involvement in Homework

Contrary to the stereotypical notion that low-SES families are not involved or do not care about their children's education, the Myer family was actively involved in their

children's education at home. Their efforts, however, were constantly thwarted by their work and financial demands. Since two of their children constantly had problems at school, Mahdi and Gloria really wanted them to do better in school, utilizing all kinds of methods to help them overcome the language barrier. They understood the importance of mastering English: "English is an international language. If you know English, you going to survive; you work with a lot of people."

In order to help his children learn English during the first few months after their arrival, Mahdi borrowed video cassettes from a school teacher to help them: "They can saw pictures and they learn how to pronounce it and how to exercise … they learn how to pronounce A and B, how to read letters …." But Mahdi soon realized that his limited English was not enough to help the children successfully complete their school work, which made him decide to go to school himself. He said, "I want to go to a high school if there's a chance." Eventually, he attended an adult ESL program for 9 months where he received a certificate: "I started to learn English so that I can help my kids." After he gained enough English, he decided to attend a local community college with the assistance of a government subsidy. His original intention was to show his children, especially, to Rahman, in a direct way that one could learn at any age: "Education, that is not age [issue], don't standardize because you are refugee."

Juggling his work and studies, Mahdi had even less time to be with the children. He joked that he did not have much time to read with the children or help them with their homework because "I need somebody help me work." Since he was so busy, Gloria took up the daily responsibility of checking the children's homework. Since she did not know how to read English, she could only supervise the completion of the children's homework. After she returned from work, she would tell the children to "come and sit there, and everyone have to open his book … even if you don't have homework, you have to read. No play." Since Gloria could not help, the children usually helped one another, especially with math and English. The younger children spoke better English, so they sometimes helped Rahman with pronunciation. Abok, as the eldest daughter, took on the responsibility of checking everyone's homework, ensuring it had been done correctly. Sometimes, she helped the younger ones with spelling or math problems and volunteered to read to them. After finishing homework, the children usually watched TV for 1–2 h before they had supper about 8:30 p.m.

Cultural Differences in Schooling

For Mahdi and Gloria, they were happy that the children had the opportunity to go to school and learn English "with more materials and facilities" than those in Sudan. "[There're] more students in Sudan, and the teacher only has one book. They have to copy the book. Some books on the blackboard. Everything is here better, much better facilities." However, they also saw some significant differences between the school systems in the two countries. For example, he learned that curriculum in the USA was not centralized: "I don't have experience about how education is working

in this country, and I don't have other kids in different schools and I don't know, I don't contrast …. What I know in this country, each school has its own program. But in our country … Ministry of Education … decide the curriculum." Mahdi liked the centralized curriculum. He reasoned, "It's probably better because some school, if they don't have qualified teachers, but they don't work, they are not going to produce a good program because of the teachers … and that may be going to affect the children. But if … Department of Education in the state design the program, and set up school as a uniform to every public school. It's supposed to do the same program or same teachers for education because I'm going to seek the same across a nation and how you can accept as a nation without your knowing the program?"

As a parent, he also felt that schools here placed much more responsibility on parents: "Actually in Sudan … it is responsibility … from both school and parent … and here sometimes parent have to take three quarters of responsibility of education of children." Both Mahdi and Gloria felt that it was very difficult for them to take responsibility as parents in the USA because physical punishment was not allowed: "if you hit your child, they call police. What can you do?" Mahdi further explained, "In Sudan, by law, teacher can beat the child. But here, no. And even talking bad word is forbidden in our country. If the teacher … is going to punish that child by his hand, and [parents] also have to punish your child by doing so … You have to punish him because … the child believe if in the school, teacher is going to beat him and then when they come back home, the parents are going to beat them, so there is no initials … you have to accept what the teacher, you have to accept what a parent [does]. But here … I have to accept that, I know also this country … I don't want do [it] … they may call police and police may take my child away from me."

Since they could not discipline the children in the same way as in Sudan, they now tried to "talk to them." Mahdi also wanted to educate the children by being a role model for them. "If I have time, I have to go with [them to] everything [in] my car, [to] workers, so that they can see from how I can behave with others." However, despite his efforts at home, the children misbehaved in school, and Mahdi was called frequently to the school to meet with teachers. He was disappointed that the school did not make his children behave better. "In my country, children's school, they are supposed to behave better, but here, there's a lot of freedom in school, this is a big problem." He described an incident when he was called to school because his son, Rahman, "talked in a bad way":

> I went there, the teacher told me, "Your son talk a bad way at school; [it] is no good." I felt sorry but when I come to this country with my child, I was better than my child, my child don't know … any single word in the English. I took my child to that school to learn English. I've been [expecting] that he should learn the better, the good language, not the bad language. I don't know where he found that bad language, maybe from the school, not my mistake, that's the school's mistake.

Mahdi was very upset that the teacher blamed him for his son's behavior. "The teacher cannot blame me. He should blame himself and the administration …. I don't know it was from the teacher or from that school, I don't know. But [it's] from school, not from my house." Again, he was torn between the different ways of disciplining the children. "They said that you should talk to your child. I said OK, we

should talk to [him]. But in my country, I have to beat my child, but here, that's the crime …. All our kids come from this [culture], the same thing must be … from home and school. Here they got lot of freedom; if you beat your child that is a crime. I don't know what to do … I cannot change it at all. If I don't like here, I have to go back to my country or to keep silent."

Of course, since they cannot go back to Sudan, Mahdi decided "to keep silent" even though sometimes he wanted to express his own educational beliefs. However, he was still concerned that "in this country, there is no control in the school. Children [are] used to playing bad things in the school." His "big fear" was that his children might have been involved in drug use and drinking alcohol and the teachers did not care:

> In America, it's a country of freedom, teacher is free to do anything, like I see accident [fights] from here sometimes between teachers and students …. The teacher should respect themselves, respect that job, because respect got us to respect them …. That's why my child learn the bad way, to talk in bad way …. That's why drug use in school is very common. Because teachers are not care enough … [when] I went [to school], sometimes they smoking inside school, [kids] learn with somebody, they get the children [smoke] that … Sometimes I see [students] sitting on the table, his teacher's table. Look, unless you [are] a teacher, you sit down, no problem, not to sit down on teacher's desk.

Realizing that he could not rely on the school, he resorted to his strategy of being a role model for the kids at home. "I don't want my child to see that you're doing bad and you prevent me from that." He reasoned:

> I try to show him that … I was a smoker, I smoke twenty years. And I don't like them now, I discover that smoking is not good. Now because it's no good, I'm going to stop smoking in front you, I promise you, I am not going to smoke again. The point [is], you don't smoke, you don't do bad, something bad … I can quit. That is no good. From cigarette and others, don't do that, because it's not good … At home we don't drink beer something like that … I don't drink, my wife, don't drink, so we don't buy any beer for our guests. That is I don't like any alcohol, it's not good.

In addition to these issues, Mahdi was also puzzled by all the subject areas that American teachers taught in the lower grades. He explained the difference: "Teachers [in Sudan] …go from class to class …. For instance, the school start at 8:30. From 8:30 to 9:00 … [math] teacher come and teach math. After 9:00, math teacher need to go a different class, grade 6. English teacher may come after him and teach that class …." Mahdi believed that the American system was not an efficient way in teaching the children. "Here [teachers] almost won't share one class. That is to me, it's not good … if teacher cannot find several himself doing [all the things, there must be] a big gap …." One of the twins, Mading, for example, had troubles because "he don't like the homeroom teacher," and the teacher did not like him, either. Since the teacher taught all the subjects, Mading got stuck with the teacher for a whole year. In Mahdi's opinion, this might have affected his attitude toward learning.

Interactions with the Public School System: Fighting Against the ESL Programs

Mahdi was extremely unhappy about the ESL programs—its placement policy and structure. He believed that his children, especially Rahman and Mading, were behind academically because of the school's system. Rahman came to the USA at the age of 10 and was placed in grade 4, "simply because of his age." Mahdi considered this inappropriate placement as the primary reason why Rahman was not doing well. "Because he did not know how to write a word … how to do … so when he was in school, there is no difference between him and this table. Because he don't understand, he don't listen, he don't know what the teacher is talking about. And they give him psychological effect, because [he] don't understand, he got himself behind in schooling, he was not happy … from that day on."

In order to make a case for Rahman, Mahdi went to the school to talk to the teachers, but what he heard was, "That is our system. We work that way." He did not think that age should be the sole basis for placement. Rather, what matters was a student's proficiency level. "Because you don't know how to write, so you have to study from the beginning, not your age from the beginning, you have to study how to learn." He recounted what he told the teachers: "I told them … I know it's the system in your country, but if possible, try to start him with the beginning from ABC. Now he's in grade 4. But…how to write A. He don't know how to write it, maybe alone. He don't know how to, to listen, how to make calculations in math, he don't know anything about science …. They just go ahead and … they push on him with no base. But the sister start from first grade, they are good now, because even although she don't know English by then, but she start from ABC."

When Mahdi discovered that Rahman was pulled out of regular classes to study ESL, he became even more upset. "That is sad to me, I think it's not good because some time they can get a problem because they pulled him to go to that class meanwhile [his] colleagues are being taught a different subject. Sometimes, they give them test without his presence, and teacher will give him zero. He knows that he's in different class, but in other subject. Giving test without ask where the child is absent from school or is in different class." He described one incident involving Rahman: "Sometimes they call me to come to school and told me, 'Your child never turn in homework that day … and that month. The score is zero.' So I have to ask my child, 'Why? What happen? Is it difficult?' He tells me that, 'I was not in there that day. I was attending other class. My teacher [assigned] work to class in my absence, then, he never remind me, he never told me.'"

To his surprise, the teacher did not want to take any responsibility for it. Mahdi retold the teacher's words in anger: "In that case … he should not say that, 'I have nothing to do with it, he was not here, and he never did that job. I have to give him zero. What do you think I have to give it to him, your child?'" He knew that a zero score was going to affect the child's grades, and he concluded that, "They don't care … sometimes he missed that lesson, then miss that subject, he cannot get it. Nobody will fit that to him."

He is puzzled by this arrangement. In his view, this is just a matter of rearranging the schedules. "They are supposed … to put that subject in the timetable, if … he's going to attending ESL class. They can repeat that, they can [be] re-taught, if English in the after the school it should be good, so that he can attend his all regular classes." He argued that the best way to solve the problem was to get rid of ESL programs. "I think there is no need for something called ESL that you promote other children to go and attend. They shouldn't have [students] out of the class."

Another frustration Mahdi had with the schools was the teachers' lack of knowledge of the children's cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Whenever his children had difficulties in school, the homeroom teachers often referred them to an Arabic teacher so that the teacher could translate for them. However, the homeroom teachers did not know that his children did not speak Arabic. Instead, the homeroom teachers "who don't know a word in Arabic" assumed that Sudan is an Arab country so his children must understand Arabic. Mahdi was quite frustrated by teachers' lack of knowledge about the students they taught. "They base that because Sudan is an Arab country. That's nonsense … [We] have [civil] war between Sudanese themselves. Now, you transfer that war from Sudan to here …!" He further expressed his frustration: "Now they …remove my kids from school to go to attend ESL. They brought this some Arabic guy to come and translate to my child in Arabic way …. Myself, I know Arabic. But my kids, they don't know Arabic. How can you tell them to that child? That child cannot understand subject in Arabic. My child, nobody understand [Arabic]. They understand English more than Arabic, so … no need for that."

All these frustrations with the school caused Mahdi to conclude that American schools pay attention to quantity, not quality. "In my country, they cannot permit you go ahead unless you have to pass all the subjects, but in this country, like my kids, sometimes they don't do well and they pushed them ahead. That is no good." Mading, for example, was not doing well in school, and they tried to pass him to grade 2; therefore, Mahdi went to the City Hall to make sure that he repeated grade 1. He explained:

> They said that he's going to [grade 2], and let him go ahead and he's going to improve because he's still a child, like to play and laugh. I said no. I want him to know the best… and how to write his name, how to read, how to spell the word and know everything, and he need help. If you push him now he don't know anything in grade one. Automatically he's going [to do] bad.

Mahdi himself experienced similar issues while attending his community college classes when his teacher asked him to watch a football game to get extra points for his class:

> I went to ECC and … my teachers …give [homework]: if you need extra point … see a show … go and buy ticket and go attend it, and bring that ticket and I will give you extra point. But … simply because I went to watch that football, my teacher to give me extra point? … I have 85 point and I went to show, I brought that ticket, he give me five point, I pass. That is quality or quantity? … I don't want to do that. I want to pass my subject. I don't want the teacher give me the marks without [my] understanding that one, I cannot be happy …. Marks [are] a different thing, grade is different things, I want something in my mind. I'm not learning [for an] A or B or C, I learn after learning, you know something.

Conclusions and Implications

The Myer family's experiences described in this chapter informed us that poverty has had a great impact on their everyday lives and schooling. The Myer family came from a harsh environment, but they came with many strengths such as a healthy, intact family, strong work ethics and aspirations, and strong cultural values. Though these strengths helped to shield their children from various negative influences in the school and neighborhood, they were not sufficient to ensure their academic success as they had to navigate the difficult process of acculturation from a position of social disadvantage, with limited language skills and minimal support from school (The Future of Children, 2004). First, immigration has streamlined them into an "urban underclass"—a position of social disadvantage that leads to poverty (Li, 2008). The need to provide and survive forced them to work long hours with minimal wages, and, as a result, they did not have much time to spend with their children. While Mahdi understood the importance of English proficiency and parental involvement and tried to improve his education and language skills by going to school himself, his own need to study and work long hours to support the family further prevented him from spending more time with his children. Since parental attention is found to be indispensable for immigrant children's educational outcomes and psychosocial well-being (Beiser, Hou, Kaspar, & Noh, 2000), Mahdi and Gloria's inability to spare much time for their children undoubtedly put the children at a disadvantage.

Further, their financial situation as well as their long work hours also prevented them from accumulating "cultural capital" for school success (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990). Unlike many of their middle-class counterparts, they could not afford stimulating experiences such as books, toys, outings, or activities that would have provided opportunities for the children to acquire knowledge, skills, and advantages needed to succeed in the current educational system. On the contrary, their financial situation only allowed their children to stay home all the time after school and to live in the most impoverished neighborhood with poor-performing schools. Poverty also brought with it a high risk of exposure to harmful socio-environmental elements such as drugs, alcohol, and violence (Beiser et al., 2000; McLeod & Edwards, 1995). Poverty, therefore, not only shaped the families' lives but also refused them access to better schools and neighborhoods which, in turn, put them at a disadvantage in achieving success (Li, 2010; Shannon, 1998).

The Myer family's experiences also suggested that poverty interacted with several other limit situations in their lives. While trying to adjust to the inner-city environment and the American school system, they encountered multiple layers of cultural differences and challenges, which were not only social and linguistic but also educational and institutional. The parents and children's limited English proficiency was a significant factor that hindered their successful acculturation in America. For Mahdi and Gloria, their English language ability severely limited their chance for better employment. Mahdi, for example, had a pessimistic view about the possibility of getting a white-collar job even if he kept going to school to get

certificates and degrees in America. Their language ability also limited what they could do with their children at home in terms of helping with homework and their interactions with the schools about their children. Their situation was further compounded by the conditions of the inner-city schools that their children attended. As their stories demonstrated, the teachers knew very little about the children's cultural and linguistic backgrounds and their educational needs, and they did not listen to the parents' cries for help and requests to improve its ESL programs. The lack of institutional support from the school further disadvantaged the children.

Therefore, for immigrants and refugees like the Myers, poverty has had cyclical effect on their everyday life and educational future. The Myer children's struggles in school demonstrated that poverty probably will likely be reproduced and sustained among the next generation. As Beiser et al. (2000) note, for them, poverty was probably not part of an unfolding process, but the end stage of a cycle of disadvantage. Their difficult paths to success suggested that it is important to understand their unique life histories and circumstances, and their experiences and interactions with the public schools. This nuanced understanding will provide us with in-depth knowledge about how limit situations such as poverty, limited English proficiency, and institutional barriers play a role in preventing success among the immigrants' next generation. It will help us identify problems that block immigrants' success, seek resources that facilitate success, and design/improve programs that better address the children's educational needs. Future research and practice must further efforts in these three areas to help break the cycle of poverty among immigrants and refugees' next generations.

References

Barton, D., Ivanic, R., Appleby, Y., Hodge, R., & Tusting, K. (2007). *Literacy, lives and learning*. New York, NY: Routlege.

Beiser, M., Hou, F., Kaspar, V., & Noh, S. (2000). *Changes in poverty status and developmental behaviours: A comparison of immigrant and non-immigrant children in Canada*. Hull, QC: Applied Research Branch, Strategic Policy Human Resources Development Canada.

Bourdieu, P., & Passeron, J. C. (1990). *Reproduction in education, society, and culture*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Chiswick, B. R., Lee, Y. L., & Miller, P. W. (2003). Patterns of immigrant occupational attainment in a longitudinal survey. *International Migration, 41*(4), 47–68.

Creswell, J. (2005). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating qualitative research*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall Pearson Education.

Fine, M., & Weis, L. (1998). *The unknown city: Lives of poor and working class young adults*. Boston, MA: Beacon.

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: The Seabury Press.

Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago, IL: Aldine.

Hook, J. V. (2003). *Poverty grows among children of immigrants in US*. Retrieved 4 August, 2008, from http://www.migrationinformation.org/USfocus/display.cfm?ID=188.

Knapp, M. S., & Woolverton, S. (2004). Social class and schooling. In J. A. Banks & C. A. M. Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education* (pp. 656–681). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kozol, J. (2004). *The shame of a nation*. New York, NY: Crown.
Lee, E. V., & Burkam, D. T. (2002). *Inequality at the starting gate: Social background differences in achievement as children begin school*. Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute.
Li, G. (2005). *Asian-American education across the class line: A multi-site report*. Buffalo, NY: GSE Publications, State University of New York Press.
Li, G. (2007). Parenting practices and schooling: The way class works for new immigrant groups. In L. Weis (Ed.), *The way class works: Readings of school, family and the economy* (pp. 149–166). New York, NY: Routledge.
Li, G. (2008). *Culturally contested literacies: America's "rainbow underclass" and urban schools*. New York, NY: Routledge.
Li, G. (2010). Race, class, and schooling: Multicultural families doing the hard work of home literacy in America's inner city. *Reading & Writing Quarterly, 26*(2), 140–165.
Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, G. E. (1985). *Naturalist inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
McBrien, J. L. (2005). Educational needs and barriers for refugee students in the United States: A review of literature. *Review of Educational Research, 75*(3), 329–364.
McLeod, J. D., & Edwards, K. (1995). Contextual determinants of children's responses to poverty. *Social Forces, 73*, 1487–1516.
National Assessment of Educational Progress [NAEP]. (2007). *The nation's report card*. Retrieved 18 July, 2008, from http://nationsreportcard.gov/
Orfield, G., & Lee, C. (2005). *Why segregation matters: Poverty and educational inequality*. Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project at Harvard University.
Padres & Jovenes Unidos. (2008). *Intersect of educational justice and immigrant rights*. Retrieved 3 August, 2008, from http://www.padresunidos.org/node/402.
Portes, A., & Rumbaut, R. (1996). *Immigrant America*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Portes, A., & Zhou, M. (1993). The new second generation: Segmented assimilation and its variants. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 530*, 74–82.
Rector, R. (2006). *Importing poverty: Immigration and poverty in the United States: A book of charts*. Retrieved on June 20, from http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2006/10/importing-poverty-immigration-and-poverty-in-the-united-states-a-book-of-charts.
Rothstein, R. (2012). *Racial segregation continues, even intensifies.* Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute. Retrieved on March 5, 2013, from http://www.epi.org/publication/racial-segregation-continues-intensifies/.
Ruiz-de-Velasco, J., & Fix, M. (2001). *Overlooked and underserved: Immigrant children in U.S. secondary schools*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.
Shannon, P. (1998). *Reading poverty*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
Suárez-Orozco, C., & Suárez-Orozco, M. M. (2001). *Children of immigrants*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
The Future of Children. (2004). Children of immigrant families: Analysis. *The Future of Children, 14*(2), 1–2.
Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children. (2007). *Your right to education: A handbook for refugees and displaced communities*. New York, NY: Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children.

Chapter 6
Boodja Marr Karl: A Whole-Community Approach to Aboriginal Education—The Development of a Cultural Framework for Aboriginal Participation in Education and Schooling

Simon Forrest

I write this with an Aboriginal objectivity, just as a non-Aboriginal person (Wudjella) would write a similar piece with a non-Aboriginal objectivity. We are all influenced by our life and cultural experiences. As Aboriginal people, our lives are constantly bombarded with and dominated by others' cultural perspectives and influences that exert control over our existence. We understand that we have to live within the dominant culture, but as a minority, having our voices heard is so much harder. This Aboriginal objectivity is an important basis for not only hearing our voices but acknowledging that they need to be heard more and more.

Boodja Marr Karl is a term used in the Nyungar group of languages in the south-western corner of Australia. Literally translated to English, it means "Earth, Wind and Fire." This term attempts to succinctly and vividly label concepts that significantly influence Aboriginal society today: community grief (*boodja* or earth); constant turbulence (*marr* or wind); and violent cultural contact (*karl* or fire).

I believe the concepts of *Boodja Marr Karl* have influenced contemporary Aboriginal society in Australia so significantly that they have even changed the way we communicate, behave, and think among ourselves and how we interact with the dominant culture. These three concepts have contributed to the situations that many of our people find themselves in today in modern society. This chapter brings *Boodja Marr Karl* into the discussion about us as a people—who we are, where we are, and where we are going. This chapter also suggests how a community initiative

This is chapter is dedicated to the many Aboriginal Australians who have walked this land before me, particularly those who have lived and died since the invasion. For many of our people, their short lives during colonization must have been "Hell on Earth." A particular dedication is to Kirsty, Snowy, and Karen, whose lives ended recently and inspire me to persist with the struggle.

S. Forrest, M.Ed. (UWA) (✉)
Centre for Aboriginal Studies, Curtin University, Perth, Western Australia
e-mail: S.Forrest@curtin.edu.au

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9_6,

could work with the current educational contexts for Aboriginal children and the Aboriginal community through the development of a cultural framework for Aboriginal participation in education and schooling that can deal with the current educational contexts for Aboriginal children and the Aboriginal community.

How Concepts of *Boodja Marr Karl* Define Us

The Aboriginal community collective in which I live is made up of individuals and groups of Aboriginal people from many parts of Australia. Thus, many of today's families (immediate and extended) who live in different towns nearby originated from those distant regions. Individuals have married partners from within their own towns and from surrounding towns, thus creating super extended family networks. Consequently, many members of the community collective know personally the numerous families who live within the cluster of different discreet towns and surrounding areas.

Between July 2006 and July 2007, this Aboriginal community I refer to above is comprised of an Indigenous population of approximately 2,500 people. Within that 1-year time frame, a total of 27 funerals of identified Aboriginal individuals occurred. On average, there was one such funeral every other week. While every community member might not have known every deceased individual, he or she would have known someone who was related to or was a friend or acquaintance of the deceased, or the person may have heard about the funeral on the "Aboriginal Grapevine." Basically, the individual in the community collective would know of the funeral and know what families were involved. Aboriginal community organizations such as medical centers and/or cultural and resource centers often serve as hubs of the Aboriginal community; they are places where funeral information is always present: people talk about recent funerals, funerals coming up, and funerals in far-off places, particularly if they are funerals of people who are extended family members of the community (Bresland, personal communication, 28 August 2008). Notices are posted on walls about funerals; Aboriginal flags are constantly flying at half mast, acknowledging that a someone in the community has died.

Funerals in the Aboriginal context are a major subject of initial contact in conversations. In a conversation with another Aboriginal person recently, one of the first topics of the conversation was "What funeral are you going to tomorrow?" Many Aboriginal people make the death notices section in newspaper compulsory reading every day to be kept informed about which Aboriginal people have died—where, when, and their funeral details.

Thus, a sense of grief is always present among individuals of our community, lying just below the surface of our consciousness, only to resurface as a full-blown grief when someone close to us dies. A funeral every other week in the space of 1 year does not give an individual much time to recover from grief. The closeness of our extended family and community connections makes the sense of grief a constant that affects our mental well-being as individuals and as a community.

Literature on the subject of grief mostly focuses on an individual's experience (Parkes, 2001; Stroebe, Hansson, Stroebe, & Schut, 2001). There appears to be a common agreement about grief and what it means for a person, although different writers may refer to a different number of stages of grief. Kubler-Ross (1969) details the five stages of an individual's grief with the death of a close loved one. I have attempted to correlate these different stages of individual grief with what I have witnessed and experienced as community grief. It is like a cloud hanging over the community. Depending on the closeness of the relationship between a community member and the individual who has died, the feelings of grief differ from person to person, of course. The broader community grief (*boodja* or earth) is more about respect and acknowledgement of the individual.

Constant turbulence (*marr* or wind) is a concept that I believe has been present in our community since the early days of colonization. Turbulence in this instance is the lack of stability in our community that affects us as individuals, families (immediate and extended), and communities. It is not only the turbulence that concepts such as community grief bring but also the political "footballization" of us as a people and cultural group in modern-day Australia. Political footballization is a term used to describe how issues affecting us are used by politicians of various persuasions to chop and change Aboriginal policy, legislation, and funding. The goalposts are forever changing. How do we as a community move things forward with a positive energy and perspective when there is no stability and no extended periods of calmness or serenity?

Violent cultural conflict (*karl* or fire): In recent years, there has been renewed debate as to the extent of conflict between the original inhabitants of Australia and those who came to stay post-1788. Reynolds (2000) highlights that previous generations of Australians kept the violent frontier history secret, or as Pilger (1986) states "The true history is never read, for the black man keeps it in his head." Elder (1992) acquaints us with a number of different violent conflict events between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, one of which is commonly known as the Battle of Pinjarra. The use or misuse of terminology, the word "battle" is entirely consistent with the "passive and secret history" approach to the conflict between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groups. This passive view is reflected in the word "settlement" of Australia, which seems to describe a sort of passive, settled takeover of the Australian continent, when the opposite seems to have been true.

One of the significant aspects the Battle of Pinjarra was its having been led by the governor, an English government representative of the Swan River Colony. Governor Stirling received no reprimand for his actions from the government he represented in this violent event, and from that lack of action, it can only be assumed that the events in Pinjarra were condoned.

Such incidents (Connor, 2002; Elder, 1992; Reynolds, 1981; Schulunke, 2005) were seen as a strategic, government-sanctioned practice of subjugation to oppress and force the Aboriginal inhabitants to conform, to beat them into submission to be beholding to understand that white man was now the leader and all pervading force…, and to do as they were told. The violence and carnage achieved its objectives. Stirling's military training and strategy in his assault on the Binjareb was to attack the most "ferocious group of natives" (as indeed they were regarded by other

Nyungars), and if successful, the weaker groups would fall into line. It did indeed prove to be a successful strategy not only because he had violently punished the strong group of Binjareb so vehemently, but then as leader of the colony, he was not punished for his actions; thus, the rest of the colony could only assume that violence against the natives was a government-sanctioned strategy.

These actions against natives throughout the colony created a state of mind of suppression, containment, and conforming to the white man's ways among the Aboriginal inhabitants. Thus, *Boodja Marr Karl* is the end result of colonization.

A Whole-Community Approach to Aboriginal Education

The preamble to the Coolangatta Statement on Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Education includes the following:

> Most all indigenous peoples, and in particular, those who have suffered the impact and effects of colonization, have struggled to access education that acknowledges, respects and promotes the right of indigenous peoples to be indigenous—a right that embraces indigenous peoples' language, culture, traditions, and spirituality. This includes the right to self-determination. (*Coolangatta Statement* 1999)

The development of a cultural framework for Aboriginal participation in education and schooling will indeed address the principles of the Coolangatta Statement and in doing so consider the impacts on our culture of *Boodja Marr Karl*.

Educational services are currently delivered to our communities by a compartmentalized education system on a chronological basis. Our community is divided into different age groups, with each required to participate in an educational setting that in many places is void of our own communities. In its place, a Whole-Community Approach to Education would build on the strengths of Aboriginal cultures, including that of community and relationships, in the provision of education to our people. A Whole-Community Approach to Education also would put into practice the principles and ideals of the Coolangatta Statement.

A local group of Aboriginal people have decided to pursue an educational approach through an Indigenous knowledge center, believing this would best reflect a Whole-Community Approach to Education. An Indigenous knowledge center would bring together in one location the following:

- 0 years to preschool educational services
- A preschool
- A primary school
- Links to high schools
- Support facility for indigenous students studying TAFE (Technical and Further Education) courses
- Support facility for Indigenous students studying university courses
- Community courses and other employment and training

The center as a place would be an Aboriginal place, and the physical environment and ways of doing things would reflect Aboriginal cultures. The students and

workers would be predominantly but not exclusively Aboriginal. It would be a place where the Aboriginal community in all age groups could access and participate in educational services.

It would be an Aboriginal place where young parents, their children, their cousins, their uncles and aunties, and grannies could go. Their children could attend preschool or primary school in one part of the complex; the parents would walk down a path to go to TAFE or university lectures with their cousins and uncles in another segment of the complex. Aunties and grannies would go down another path to attend a community education course on language teaching. Our community and families would be there, providing support to one another to ensure they each have successful experiences in participating in education.

The impetus for the development of the idea was to deal with education, training, and employment issues for the Aboriginal community, by the Aboriginal community, using models that reflect Aboriginal ways of doing business. By following this process, it is believed the concept of an Indigenous knowledge center would reflect community capacity building and empowerment. Ultimately, it would bring to fruition the aims and objectives of government policy in relation to Aboriginal community capacity building and empowerment over the last decade.

Key Concepts and Features of the *Boodja Marr Karl* Educational Model

An Indigenous Lifelong Learning Community

It needs to be stressed that while the pressure for an alternative approach may have had its roots in concerns about the poor educational achievements of Indigenous students, the fundamental underpinning rationale for the center comes from some deeply embedded, traditional concepts. Of key significance is the Indigenous notion of community, the significance of familial relationships, and the integrated way that learning takes place within the community. In the proposed model, these come together in what can best be described as an "Indigenous lifelong learning community."

It is clear that the concept of the Indigenous Education Centre is not simply a response to immediate educational problems. Rather, it is an idea that has grown from many years of Indigenous people's firsthand experience of the schooling system—their own and their children's experiences—and it has developed from their careful consideration, over an extended period, of possible alternatives.

Code Switching

A key concept in relation to the establishment of a center relates to the linguistic concept of "code switching." Code switching (Alver, 1998; Cantone, 2007; Cheshire, 1996;

Harris, 1990; Romaine, 1991) typically relates to involve Indigenous students learning to switch from "home language" to "school language." However, the concept also more broadly refers to the switch Indigenous students make from "family and home code" to "school code." Code switching highlights the profound differences between the cultural experiences of Indigenous children in their homes and communities and their experiences at school. Indigenous students live by a cultural code in their home and community settings that is markedly different from the rules, expectations, and underlying cultural assumptions of the school. For many, school is "unfamiliar," "uncomfortable," and "alienating"—a place where they are "not allowed to be Aboriginal." At a more personal level, schools are also seen to not be good, viewed as lacking in their understanding of individual students' family backgrounds; as pointed out by Bonney (personal communication, 27 August, 2008), "kids at school often have huge problems at home, and no one at the school knows about it at all."

In essence, the center concept would overcome Indigenous students' need to code switch. The center would be more in tune with the culture of the home and community of the student. It would be an inviting and natural learning place for Indigenous people of all ages and the transition much easier and smoother for young students going to school for the first time. It should also be noted that the idea was strongly put that while the center would be about easing students' first transition to school, students would also have the opportunity to achieve and to learn the skills to operate more successfully within the regular school structures at the secondary level and beyond.

A Holistic Approach

One aspect of the school code that makes school unfamiliar and alienating for Indigenous students is the segmented nature of schooling. Education is split into sectors—preschool, school, vocational education, and university—and students start their early schooling divided into age-segregated groups. At the secondary level they are further divided into subject groupings. These subject groupings assume even greater significance beyond secondary schooling. Siblings and families find themselves in different geographic locations.

The current structure of schooling is a compartmentalized participatory system that by its very nature is not conducive to ongoing significant community involvement in the schooling of children. Schools are chronologically based in different geographic locations. If a parent has children ages 4, 10, 13, and 16 and happens to be studying at a university or TAFE, they may be required to drive to up to five different locations for their children to access school and for them to attend their own study.

As a major aspect of a place of learning, the center would be more in tune with the holistic nature of Indigenous culture. The center would create an Indigenous education environment essentially controlled by Indigenous people, where a majority of the employees would be Indigenous, and the culture of the center would be

reflective of Indigenous cultures. The center would reflect a *Whole-Community Approach* to education and lifelong learning from spanning the learning period before kindergarten to the university level and beyond. In contrast to the divisions of current schooling practices, the center would be a place that mirrors what happens in Indigenous society where children and adults of all ages intermingle.

Features, Components, and Characteristics of the Center

An Indigenous knowledge center would uniquely develop a comprehensive learning environment for Indigenous people of all ages and stages, providing support for their educational needs and endeavors in a variety of ways. While much of its focus would be on formal education, it would also be a place that recognizes and supports informal learning. In its provision of educational services for people of all ages, it would break down the barriers between education sectors that have traditionally operated independently and created impediments to people moving from one sector to another.

The center would be a welcoming place for the youngest Indigenous child as well as the oldest possible Indigenous person. While it would be a place designed and controlled by Indigenous people, it would also welcome others, whatever their background or past experiences, provided they are interested in and committed to Indigenous learners and learning.

What follows is a description of the various components that could be incorporated into an Indigenous knowledge center. Not all of these components need to be part of the center, and certainly, there is no need for any component to be established immediately. Indeed, a more viable option is probably to start at some point with one component and then add other components or move in other directions as success is demonstrated and funding is acquired.

Early Childhood (0–4)

Learning does not just begin when children go to school or preschool. Much of children's most important learning occurs in the first 3 years of life, and most of that happens, and needs to happen, informally (Connell, Ashenden, Kessler, & Dowsett, 1982). Flexible, integrated services for children below school age can enhance children's learning and assist parents in their vital role (Connell et al.).

The center may well be able to fulfill the role of coordinating existing services and creating new ones to fill identified gaps by:

- Providing a welcoming, safe, and stimulating Indigenous environment for young Indigenous children and their families
- Enhancing the learning opportunities for young Indigenous children

- Supporting families in their vital role of raising their children to be strong, competent, resilient Indigenous people
- Providing care for Indigenous children whose parents are involved in further educational studies offered by the center partners or who are involved in other education or work activities elsewhere
- Providing opportunities for senior members of the Indigenous community to formally and informally nurture young children and their families and build around them a strong cultural base
- Providing opportunities for various members of the Indigenous community who might choose to work in these services to gain formal recognition of their prior learning
- Providing opportunities for various members of the Indigenous community who might choose to work in these services to undertake additional formal studies in child care/early education

Most importantly, the center will be able to celebrate and value traditional Indigenous antenatal experiences and practices.

Primary School

The first and foremost consideration in creation of a primary school is to assure that it is a welcoming place for Indigenous students as opposed to an environment that is perceived or experienced as negative or hostile. The school would be place for predominantly but not exclusively Aboriginal students. The aims of an Indigenous primary school would include:

- Provision of a positive, welcoming educational environment for primary school-aged Indigenous children and their families
- Creation of a school administered primarily by Indigenous people (through a school board/council) sensitive to the specific cultural needs and social situations of Indigenous people
- Development of a quality school setting committed to improving the educational outcomes for Indigenous children

Student Support Services

The aims of student support services could include:

- Assistance for students with their cultural, social, and economic concerns as well as their academic needs using a holistic approach
- Provision of a safe and welcoming environment where problems are heard, privacy is respected, but “solutions” are not imposed

- Assurance that students attain qualifications that are fully accredited and recognized by sponsoring educational institutions and accepted by potential employers
- Advocacy for the students
- Communication with staff of partner institutions to enable them to understand better the needs of their Indigenous students.

Adult Community Education

Adult community education typically embraces all those course majors that do not have direct industry connections. In the non-Indigenous community, these are provided by countless organizations, including universities. The majority of organizations which that effectively provide for the needs of non-Indigenous people in this area are generally neither ideally equipped nor constituted to provide appropriate options for Indigenous people and are rarely accessed by them.

The sorts of courses study areas or courses the center might provide include adult literacy and numeracy programs, small business courses, and general interest courses in, for example, art, music, gardening, cooking, and car maintenance. However, there is no real reason why current effective services should not continue to deliver such areas of study or courses if they are well subscribed and meeting identified needs.

These types of courses could:

- Provide a welcoming, safe, and stimulating Indigenous environment for adults of any age seeking to gain new knowledge and skills, which may or may not lead to further accredited courses
- Deliver those courses for which there is an identified need and demand in the Indigenous community
- Use, wherever possible, the skills and talents of local Indigenous people to deliver courses.

Community Learning Resources and Outreach

There is a growing realization in many parts of the non-Indigenous community that much can be learned from and about Indigenous people in Australia. Across Australia, cultural centers are being created by Indigenous people to improve the knowledge and understanding of non-Indigenous people about Indigenous people and to better educate and train them to work with Indigenous people.

The center itself could be a significant employer of Indigenous people. Its capacity to create specialized training programs and host conferences as well as establish an international exchange program for Indigenous people would add to

its prominence and prestige. The aims of any community learning resources and outreach projects to be developed might include:

- Designing and delivering resources in a way that will make them accessible to non-Indigenous people as well as Indigenous people
- Focusing specifically on the development of educationally relevant materials
- Growing the skills and knowledge of Indigenous people themselves to design and deliver such resources
- The capacity to contribute to the establishment of the center as a truly International Centre of Excellence.

Conclusion

The development of the concept of a *Whole-Community Approach* for the education of Indigenous Australians has evolved because of the continued failure of a dominant cultural educational model to bring about equitable educational outcomes for Indigenous Australian students. The preamble to the *Coolangatta Statement on Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Education* 1999 states:

> Over the last 30 years, Indigenous peoples throughout the world have argued that they have been denied equity in non-Indigenous education systems which has failed to provide educational services that nurture the whole Indigenous person inclusive of scholarship, culture and spirituality.
>
> The statement continues:
>
> Meaningful, empowering and culturally sustainable education for Indigenous peoples will be possible only when Indigenous peoples have the control (a fundamental right) and the resources (an inarguable responsibility of states/governments) to develop educational theories, curriculum and practices that are Indigenous and are able to determine the environment within which this education can best occur.

These two statements provide a powerful rationale and justification for the rejection or significant adaptation of the current dominant cultural educational model delivered to Indigenous Australians. The educational model delivered to Indigenous Australians is one of the most powerful and significant instruments of the colonization process. Indigenous Australians have had this model imposed on us, with little thought given to its appropriateness or workability. Focus on Indigenous educational policy and practice since the early 1970s (when Indigenous Australians began to be allowed a voice in education policy development) has been about the type of programs or projects (normally short term) targeting Indigenous students, parents, and communities that would assist them in participating and gaining success within the current educational model. In the 40 years since, while there has been some success, overall there has been a continued failure of the current educational model to provide Indigenous Australians with a successful school or educational experience. The policy development and practice since the 1970s in Indigenous education was made with an assumption that the current educational model was/is the right one. What if it was/is the wrong one?

A whole-community approach, alluded to by the Coolangatta Statement, is a community-based initiative that seeks to fundamentally modify the current model of educational service delivery to Indigenous people. It places an Indigenous cultural imperative as the fundamental key component of educational service delivery. From the beginning of an educational philosophy to guiding principles, from building design to curriculum, and from the youngest child to the eldest adult, it is Indigenous culture that will be the guide. In the words of US President Barack Obama, "Yes we can," but with an Indigenous cultural imperative, "Yes, we have to."

References

Alver, P. (Ed.). (1998). *Code-switching in conversation: Language, interaction and identity*. London: Routledge.

Bonney, R. (2008). Personal communication, July 2008.

Bresland, G. (2008). Personal communication, August 2008.

Cantone, F. (2007). *Code-switching in bilingual children*. The Netherlands: Springer.

Cheshire, J. (Ed.). (1996). *English around the world: Sociolinguistic perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Connell, Ashenden, Kessler, & Dowsett. (1982). *Making the Difference: Schools, Families and Social Division*. Allen and Unwin, Sydney.

Connor, J. (2002). *The Australian frontier wars 1788–1838*. Sydney: University of New South Wales Press.

Elder, B. (1992). *Blood on the wattle: Massacres and maltreatment of Aborigines from 1788*. Brookvale, Australia: National Book Distributors.

Harris, S. (1990). *Two way Aboriginal schooling: Education and cultural survival*. Canberra, Australia: Aboriginal Studies.

Kubler-Ross, E. (1969). *On death and dying*. New York, NY: Macmillian.

Parkes, C. M. (2001). *Bereavement: Studies of grief in adult life*. Philadelphia, PA: Taylor and Francis.

Pilger, J. (1986). *The Secret Country: The first Australians fight back [DVD]*. Canberra: Ronin Films. Ronin Films.

Reynolds, H. (1981). *The other side of the frontier: Aboriginal resistance to the European invasion of Australia*. Sydney: University of New South Wales Press.

Reynolds, H. (2000). *Why weren't we told?: A personal search for the truth about our history*. Ringwood, Australia: Penguin.

Romaine, S. (Ed.). (1991). *Language in Australia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schulunke, K. (2005). *Bluff Rock: Autobiography of a massacre*. Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Centre.

Stroebe, M. S., Hansson, R. O., Stroebe, W., & Schut, H. (Eds.). (2001). *Handbook of bereavement research: Consequences, coping, and care* (pp. 89–118). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Education. (1999). *The Coolangatta statement on indigenous peoples' rights in education*. World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Education, Hilo, Hawai'i.

Chapter 7
Self-Perceptions of Relations with Parents, Attitudes Toward School, and Delinquency Among African-American, Caribbean American, and Ghanaian Adolescents

Beverly C. Sealey

M is an 18-year-old Black male who resides in a large, metropolitan city in the Northern Region of Ghana, W. Africa, with his biological father, stepmother, and two half siblings. M's mother died when M was about 12 years old, leaving him in the custody of his biological father. According to M, "he does not believe his father and his stepmother like him. He often hangs out at his paternal grandmother's home, located in the same village as he, to avoid going home to his father's house." During the day, M hangs around the streets, bus stations, and other public facilities, where he meets many international tourists, who often provide financial donations to M for his upkeep. M presents as a very outgoing, sociable, friendly, bright, intelligent, articulate, and handsome young man with a dim future. M has very fond memories of his mother. He recalls that his mother was "pretty rich" by Ghanaian standards, when she was alive. He believes that if his mom were still alive today, his struggles would be nonexistent, or minimal. M cries some when sharing his memories of his now-deceased mother. His dream is to one day complete school and become a medical doctor. He sporadically attends a government school, when he is able to raise enough money to pay for his tuition, school fees, and books.

For M and so many children and adolescents like M, the dream of acquiring a formal education is common. An education is seen as an important ticket out of poverty and impoverished circumstances. For many Black youth within the African Diaspora, and for Black males in particular (Jackson & Moore, 2006), they often do not have access to quality formal education nor do they have the opportunity to complete high school and/or college (Hale, 1994, 2001; Harris & Graham, 2007; Hill, 1999). For these youth, their academic and career aspirations are often circumscribed, which limits their job prospects to menial jobs, no jobs, and/or a life of crime and delinquency to survive (Mauer, 1990; Miller & Garran, 2007; Thompson, 2004).

Access to education, completion of high school, and graduation from college is a global concern that cuts across all races, ethnicities, nationalities, socio-economic

B.C. Sealey, Ph.D. (✉)
Associate Professor, Simmons College, School of Social Work,
300 The Fenway, Room P408B, Boston, MA 02115, USA
e-mail: Beverly.sealey@simmons.edu

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9_7,

status (SES), and religions. Adolescents from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds in the United States, the Caribbean (Crawford-Brown, 1999; Waters, 1996), and the continent of Africa share in this concern (Simons, Chen, Simons, Brody, & Cutrona, 2006). Johnson and Stanford (2002), in their book "Strength for Their Journey," suggest that according to recent research, "African American parents are now 50 % more likely than white counterparts to rank a college education as the most important ingredient in their child's success (p. 140), and that these lofty educational aspirations apply to the entire [B]lack community, including families who live in poor urban areas" (p. 140).

For youth in Ghana (W. Africa) and their parents, access to education is of equal, if not greater, importance as it is with their counterparts in the United States. Youth in that country may experience similar circumstances as Black youth from other countries, nationalities, and/or ethnic backgrounds, such as an unstable family life, poor or inadequate parent–child relations, poverty, inadequate or insufficient resources, and/or the lack of adult mentoring or positive role models (Andrews & Ben-Arich, 1999; Belgrave & Allison, 2006; Bulanda, 2010; Casely-Hayford & Wilson, 2001; Gutman & Eccles, 1999). Differences across nationalities and cultures may not suggest significant differences in one's expectations for an education, a good job, and a successful life.

Review of the Literature

There have been significant advances in empirical research on the relationship between family-level variables (Dmitrieva, Chen, Greenberger, & Gil-Ravis, 2004; Gutman & Eccles, 1999; Herbert & Harper-Dorton, 2002) and an adolescent's attitude toward school, academic achievement (Baharudin & Luster, 1998; Clark, 1984; Mandara, 2006), occupational or career aspirations (Jodl, Michael, Malanchuk, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2001), future orientation, or involvement in delinquency (Crawford-Brown, 1999; Loeber & Strothamer-Loeber, 1986). Family-level variables that influence these attitudes include parent–child relationships (Bowlby, 1988; Hair et al., 2005; Hayden et al., 1998); parenting style (Aunola & Nurmi, 2005; Bradley, 1998; Darling, 1999); attachment (Allen, Moore, Kuperminc, & Bell, 1998; Kenny, 1994; Kenny & Rice, 1995); adolescent perceptions of parental warmth, caring, love and acceptance, and parental involvement (Paulson, 1994); supervision, discipline, and/or monitoring (Statin & Kerr, 2000) of an adolescent's activities. Additionally, the role of negative neighborhood factors on adolescent development (Jarrett, 1998, 1999), and poor parent–child relations correspond to adolescent's increased involvement in delinquent behavior (Quay, 1987; Simons, Simons, & Wallace, 2004; Tonry, 1995). Very few studies have examined the effects of the child's perceptions of parent–child relations on attitudes toward school or education, academic achievement, future aspirations, and involvement in delinquent behavior (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987; Greenberg, Siegal, & Leitch, 1984; Greenberg, Speltz, & DeKlyen, 1993) among Black adolescents from diverse ethnic

backgrounds and cultures (Hughes & Thomas, 1998; Joseph, 1995; Rubin & Chung, 2006).

In the United States, overrepresentation of Black youth in the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems today is alarming (Mauer, 1990, 1997; Mauer & Huling, 1995; Joseph, 1995; Tonry, 1995; Alexander, 2010). Research that examined the representation of Black adolescents in the juvenile justice system has found young Black men to have the largest percentage of the population involved in the system (Mauer, 1990). Many of these youth are victims of racial and class stratification (Hughes & Thomas, 1998; Miller & Garran, 2007; Alexander, 2010). Often they are socialized into a career trajectory of delinquency, crime, and criminality, rather than to the completion of a sound, formal education and career counseling for a successful working life. Poor attachment could lead to such a trajectory as insecure or disorganized attachment bonding between parents and children has been linked to low self-esteem and conduct disorders in adolescent children (Allen et al., 2002). New attachments to poor "parent-like" role models in juvenile detention, or unsafe community contexts, could mean that children become securely attached and subsequently model the "wrong" types of parenting figures.

A small number of studies have focused on parent–child relations and delinquency in Black populations in the Diaspora (African-American and Afro-Caribbean American) (Cauce, Ryan, & Grove, 1998; Waters, 1996). However, it appears that no studies to date have focused solely on the examination of self-perceptions of parent–child relations, or attachment, on academic achievement, delinquency, or social functioning among Black youth from multiple countries and diverse ethnic backgrounds. Given parallel global experiences, this group of diverse youth from three nations in the Black Diaspora will be treated as a single group.

For the purposes of the research described in this chapter, "delinquency" is defined as those youth who violate the statutes and laws of a given geographical jurisdiction, warranting police arrest and processing in a juvenile court of law. Delinquency refers to persons under a given age, usually age 17 or 18 depending on the geographical jurisdiction, who are tried in a juvenile session of a criminal court or placed on probation by a juvenile court justice. Both official and self-reports of delinquency by youth are included in the definition of delinquency.

Few studies have examined parent–child relations and attachment among Black adolescents, and some have looked at differences among Black adolescents from different cultures, countries, nationalities, and/or ethnic groups, such as African-Americans, Afro-Caribbean American, Afro-Brazilian American, African-Latino/a American, Afro-European American, or Africans who reside on the continent of Africa. And, studies that have examined factors such as parenting, parent–child relations, attachment, and delinquency or antisocial behaviors among diverse groups have tended to focus on differences between Caucasian and Latino, and/or Black youth, but not diversity within one racial group. This study is the first to examine intragroup, cross-national differences and similarities.

McLoyd and Steinberg (1998), in their book "Studying Minority Adolescents: Conceptual, Methodological, and Theoretical Issues," state that "The relative absence of systematic research on normative development among ethnic minority

youth is a little bit like the weather. Everyone complains about it, but no one ever does anything. … Leading journals in adolescent development continue to show a conspicuous paucity of research in this area. [Moreover], the little research that does include ethnic minority youth focuses disproportionately on problematic aspects of adolescence, such as delinquency and/or academic failure" (p. vii).

Overview of Attachment Theory

Attachment theory offers a framework for understanding parent–child relations in this study. Empirical research involving attachment theory (Ainsworth, 1989; Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Ainsworth & Bowlby, 1991; Bowlby 1958, 1977; Bretherton, 1987; Bretherton & Munholland, 1999; Carlson & Sroufe, 1995; Cassidy, 1999; Cassidy & Berlin, 1994; Cowan, 1997; Cowan, Cowan, Pearson, & Cohn, 1996; Crowell, Fraley, & Shaver, 1999; Jackson, 1996; Main, 1996; Rhodes & Simpson, 2004) focuses on behaviors primarily during infancy but also applies to functioning across the lifespan, addressing the relations of personal, close, and intimate relations of a child and her parents or primary caretakers—particularly mothers—and the ability to cope with challenging and stressful circumstances. Long considered more universal in its application, according to Bowlby (1982, 1988) and Ainsworth et al. (1978), human beings are born with basic human needs such as proximity to their parents (usually the mother figure) which results in the feeling of protection, safety and support. Ainsworth and Bowlby (1991), in their research, determined that an infant's secure base of attachment with her attachment figure allows the infant to explore the universe, and that the infant will use their attachment figure as a secure base to return to when distressed.

Attachment theory postulates that the early experiences infants have with their caregivers can influence subsequent behavior and psychological well-being through "working models" of representation (Bretherton, 1987; Bretherton & Munholland, 1999; Greenberger & McLaughlin, 1998; Main, 1996) and perceptions of the proximity and affection of self and others. Infants who experience secure attachment (Herbert & Harper-Dorton, 2002) have mothers or primary caretakers who are responsive to their needs. These infants are likely to develop internal representations of others as caring and dependable.

Attachment theorists (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby 1958, 1977, 1988, 1982; Bretherton, 1987, 1992; Bretherton & Munholland, 1999; Carlson & Sroufe, 1995; Cassidy, 1999; Cassidy & Berlin, 1994) argue that parental responsiveness and sensitivity to the needs of their infants promote healthy attachments and provide children a secure base that helps them to explore their environment freely (Bowlby, 1988), to develop a positive self-image of themselves and a sense of competence (Carlson & Sroufe, 1995; Sroufe, 1990), to develop expectations for friendly interpersonal interactions (Sroufe, Shork, Motti, Lawroski, & LaFraniere, 1984), and to form a solid foundation for affective and behavioral self-regulation (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Sroufe, 1990).

Internalized representations of attachment relationships (internal working models) are formed in a person based on early relational experiences of attachment with one's mother and father. Bowlby (1988) and Ainsworth (1989) believed that attachments formed in early childhood influence a person's relationships and social functioning throughout his life.

Children who live in cultures and societies whose child-rearing practices may differ from European society's are often exposed to a variety of caretakers in their lives, where important bonds and attachments are formed. For these children, their early attachments and, hence, internalized representations reflect the cultures from which they came. The primary caretaker may be adults other than the child's biological parent (mother or father) and may include grandparents, aunts and uncles, older siblings or cousins, godparents, and/or foster parents or neighbors acting as informal foster parents. Studies that have examined the effects of culture on attachment (Ainsworth, 1967; Belgrave & Allison, 2006; Harwood, Miller, & Irizarry, 1995; Jackson, 1996; Main, 1990; Marshall, 1994; Van Ijzendoorn & Sagi, 1999) found that there is no difference in an infant or a child's attachment to their primary caretaker from those raised by biological parents. Thus, in Ghana where the primary caregiver may be, typical attachment figures may be the parent, grandparent, other relative even trusted community member, that parent figure would not then be distinguished in attachment outcomes from biological parents in cultures where the nuclear family structure is more typical. The diffusion of primary attachment figures is common throughout the Black Diaspora. African-American families have been shown to have fluidity in the roles of caretakers for children (Hunter & Ensminger, 1992) and similar extended family functioning for children in the Caribbean (Stacks, 1983).

Research on Family-Level Variables, Parent–Child Relations, and Delinquency

Studies that examined family-level variables on delinquent behavior in adolescence (Geismar & Wood, 1986; Loeber & Strothamer-Loeber, 1986, 1987; Pittman & Chase-Lansdale, 2001; Rankin & Kern, 1994) found that parenting may be an important factor in an adolescent's negative behaviors. The results of these studies showed that the quality of the parent–child relationship (Greenberg et al., 1993), parental emotional closeness (warmth, caring, and acceptance) or parental emotional distance (unavailability, harsh, too lenient, or inconsistent parental discipline and supervision, or authoritative parenting style) (Aunola & Nurmi, 2005; Bradley, 1998; Darling, 1999), poor parenting, and amount of time parent spends with a child all have a significant influence on the development of delinquent behavior in adolescence and poor outcomes in social functioning (attitude toward school, work, later years, and future orientation).

Research on Delinquency and Black Adolescents

Studies that examined delinquent behavior among Black adolescents (Pittman & Chase-Lansdale, 2001; Rodney, Tachia, & Rodney, 1999) have focused mostly on crime and criminal behavior among this population. These studies suggest that the cause of high involvement of Black youth in the justice system is due to their over-involvement in criminal activity and delinquent behavior, rather than to parental- or family-level factors, adolescent's perceptions of their attachment relationship with their parent or primary caretaker, or future orientation. Research that examined the influence of parenting, parent–child relationships, or attachment on adolescent delinquent behavior found that racial groups differ in parenting styles and practices. These differences may be due, in part, to variations in parenting beliefs, style of parenting, parental attitudes, differences in parent–child relations, or future orientation and the role of the father in the child's development (Hair et al., 2005; Hamer, 2001; Hill, 1999; Hyman, 2006; Scanzoni, 1977; Stewart, 2007).

Methodology

This study focuses on parent–child relations, attachment, and educational outcomes for Black adolescents in two nations: the United States and Ghana, W. Africa. In particular, the focus on academic and delinquency outcomes for cross-cultural study is novel. In this section, I will first present exploratory research questions and then the specifics of the methods utilized.

Research Questions

The study addressed the following specific questions:

1. Is there an association between respondent's self-perception of their relationship with their parents (mother and father), attachment, and their attitude toward school?
2. Is there an association between respondent's self-perception of their relationship with their parents (mother and father) and their involvement in delinquency?

Participants

A nonrandom, convenience sample of 148 subjects were recruited between 2004 and 2006, utilizing a variety of methods i.e., fliers, word-of-mouth, and informants such as directors and staff of educational, social, and recreational groups (e.g., including

college Upward Bound programs, youth academic support programs, teachers, community agencies, churches, and juvenile court personnel). Respondents were seen in a variety of settings and locations, such as schools, community agencies, restaurants, their homes or compounds (in Ghana), and other locations. Attempts were made to recruit a representative number of subjects from juvenile courts to ensure that there was inclusion of adolescents in the sample who have had some involvement with the justice system.

Stipend

A stipend for participation in the study was provided to each subject prior to the beginning of the study. Study participants were informed prior to the administration of the study that should they decide to terminate participation at any time prior to the completion of the study, they would not be required to return the stipend.

Measures

Data for this study was collected using paper and pencil, self-administered, structured questionnaires, a demographic questionnaire, and a brief interview.

Predictor Variables

Attachment: The Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment Instrument (IPPA; Armsden & Greenberg, 1987), a self-report measure, was used with adolescents, ages 12–20, to assess positive and negative affective and cognitive dimensions of respondent's relationships with parents and close friends and how well these relationships provide psychological security. Items were designed to assess the adolescent's trust (felt security) that attachment figures understand and respect her/his needs and desires and perceptions that they are sensitive and responsive to her/his emotional states and helpful with concerns. For purposes of this study, only the parent subscales for mother and father were used and consisted of 28 items.

The IPPA instrument uses a five-point Likert scale with response categories of (1) Almost Never or Never True, (2) Not Very Often True, (3) Sometimes True, (4) Often True, and (5) Almost Always or Always True. Examples of the items include the following: (1) My mother (or father) respects my feelings; (2) My mother (or father) accepts me as I am; (3) My mother (or father) trusts my judgment; (4) My mother (or father) expects too much from me; (5) I trust my mother (or father); (6) My mother (or father) does a good job; (7) I don't get much attention from my

mother (or father); (8) I feel angry with my mother (or father); and (9) I wish I had a different mother (or father).

School Attitudes and Achievement Motivation. Two subscales of the Denver Youth Survey (Institute of Behavioral Science, 1990), the Attitude Toward School Subscale and the Achievement Motivation Subscale, were used to assess respondent's attitude toward school, homework, teachers' opinions, and attitude toward motivation to achieve (e.g., future outcomes associated with job, family, and community). Each of these two subscales uses a five-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Examples of the items include the following: (1) In general, I like school; (2) Education is so important to me that it is worth it to put up with things I don't like; (3) I will graduate from high school; and (4) I will go to college.

Interview: Demographic and Delinquent/Criminal History Data

Data was collected on the background of each participant, including but not limited to the following variables: month and year of birth, current age of subject, current grade in school, number of times in which participant repeated a grade and which grade, primary caretaker, parent/caretaker's marital status, birth order, number of siblings, country of origin of family, nationality, ethnic identification, and orientation. Self-reports of legal variables, such as ever arrested by the police, current or past involvement in juvenile and/or adult criminal justice system, probationary status, and number of times ever placed on probation, were gathered from the respondents.

Outcome Variables

Outcome/dependent variables used in this study were whether or not respondent has a positive attitude toward school and their education and legal variables such as ever arrested by the police, number of times arrested by the police, and ever sentenced to juvenile and/or adult criminal justice system.

Findings

In this section, I will describe the analyses, which were inclusive of univariate and bivariate analyses, as well as descriptive statistics and measures of association (correlational analyses). In this section, I will first present the findings of the respondents' Attitude Toward School and Future Aspiration, Delinquency, and Social Responsibility and then the results of the scores for the Measure of Association.

Table 7.1 Attitude toward school

Variable	SA	A	D	SD
In general, I like school	39.9 (59)	45.9 (69)	10.1 (15)	4.1 (6)
I try hard in school	52.7 (78)	38.5 (57)	6.1 (9)	2.7 (4)
Education is so important to me that it is worth it to put up with things I don't like	48.0 (71)	35.1 (52)	8.8 (13)	6.8 (10)
Homework is a waste of time	3.4 (5)	10.1 (15)	34.5 (51)	52.1 (77)

Table 7.2 Future aspirations

Variable	Very important	Important	Somewhat important	Not at all important
I will graduate from high school?	93.1 (138)	6.1 (9)	–	–
I will go to college?	77.7 (115)	18.2 (27)	1.4 (2)	2.7 (4)

Demographics

The total number of respondents for this research project was $N=148$, of which 58 % were males ($N=86$) and 42 % females ($N=62$). In terms of ethnicity, 27 % of the respondents were African-American ($N=40$), 25 % were Caribbean American ($N=37$), less than 1 % were South American ($N=1$), 9.4 % were Latin American ($N=14$), and 37.6 % lived in Ghana, W. Africa ($N=56$).

Attitude Toward School and Future Aspirations

Subjects' responses to the statements about their attitude toward school (Table 7.1), their education, and their future aspirations indicated that the majority, in general, liked school (85.8 %), that homework was not a waste of time (86.6 %), and that they try hard in school (91.2 %).

For future aspirations (Table 7.2), 99.3 % of the sample indicated that it was important to them to graduate from high school, while 95.9 % said it was very important or important for them to go to college.

Delinquency

Responses to the Delinquency Questionnaire (Table 7.3) indicated that 90 % of the sample ($N=133$) reported having no record of ever being arrested by the police, while 10 % report having been arrested by the police at least one time as adolescents. Of the 15 subjects who had been arrested, 13 were males and 2 were females.

Table 7.3 Delinquency by gender

Item	No (%)	Yes (%)
Ever arrested by the police		
Total	133 (89.9)	15 (10.1)
Male	73	13
Female	60	2
Ever involved with the juvenile court		
Total	133 (89.9)	15 (10.1)
Male	74	12
Female	59	3
Ever involved with adult court		
Total	133 (97.3)	4 (2.7)
Male	71	4
Female	62	0
Total	133 (89.9)	15 (10.1)
Ever placed on probation		
Male	74	12
Female	59	3

Table 7.4 Social responsibility

Item	SA %*n*	A %*n*	D %*n*	SD %*n*
It is hard to get ahead without breaking the law every now and then	18.1 (26)	23.6 (35)	32.4 (48)	25.0 (37)
If I want to risk getting into trouble that is my business	12.8 (19)	28.9 (42)	32.4 (48)	26.4 (39)
What I do with my life won't make much difference	8.1 (12)	19.6 (29)	29.1 (43)	43.2 (64)
I really care about how much my actions might affect others	46.6 (69)	37.2 (55)	8.1 (12)	8.1 (12)
I have a responsibility to make the world a better place	43.9 (65)	35.1 (52)	14.9 (22)	6.1 (9)

Social Responsibility

Responses to the Social Responsibility Scale (Table 7.4) assessed subjects' civic responsibility by eliciting their reactions to a set of questions that pertained to their antisocial behaviors. Responses to "it is hard to get ahead without breaking the law every now and then" indicated that 41.2 % strongly agreed or agreed to this statement. Another statement, "if I want to risk getting into trouble, that is my business," showed that 41.2 % of the subjects, again, responded that they either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement.

Self-Perceptions of Relationship with Parents

The scores for the adolescent responses to self-perceptions of their relations with their parents (Mother, $N = 148$; Father, $N = 138$) were, not surprisingly, similar on

some measures and different on others. Mothers tended to receive a higher score than did fathers. The majority of the respondents completed the IPPA questionnaire for both mother and father, with only about 10 % of such respondents not completing the father portion of the IPPA questionnaire.

Responses to "my mother/father respects my feelings" showed that most of the subjects perceived that it was almost always or often true that their mother and father respected their feelings, "accepted them as they are," and that their "parent trusted their judgment." On the other hand, a substantial percent of respondents perceived that their mother and father "expected too much from them" and responded that this was almost always or often true (57 % and 56 %, respectively). Eighty-one percent of respondents perceived that their mother "does a good job," and 50.3 % felt that their father was "doing a good job." When asked if they felt they do not get enough attention from their mother and father, 61.1 % responded that this was not very often or almost never true for mothers and 51.4 % for fathers. Approximately 62.7 % of respondents felt that they were angry with their mother, while for fathers, 53 % responded that they "felt angry with their father." Interestingly, 19.5 and 19.8 % of respondents indicated that they "wish they had a different mother and a different father."

Gender and ethnic differences: Mean scores were calculated for parent attachment, gender and education, ethnicity and parent attachment (mother and father), ethnicity and attitude toward school, social responsibility, and future aspirations.

The mean scores for parent attachment for mother and father were close, with a mean of 3.71 for mother ($N=148$) and 3.33 for father ($N=136$). Across ethnic groups, there was wide variation among the various groups and maternal and paternal attachment. For paternal attachment, Ghanaians reported higher mean scores on paternal attachment (3.76) than African-American (3.18) or Caribbean Americans (2.80). The higher the score, the stronger the adolescent's perception of their relation with their mother and/or father on key indicators.

The mean scores for gender and ethnicity of participants and their attitude toward school were similar, and means ranged from 2.80 to 2.92.

Measures of Association

Correlational analyses were performed on all of the IPPA attachment questions (Table 7.5), with the variables of attitude toward school ("homework is a waste of time," "I try hard in school," and "in general, I like school"), delinquency (ever arrested by the police, number of times ever arrested by the police, have they been involved with the juvenile court, and/or the adult court), and social responsibility ("if I want to risk getting into trouble with the law that is my business" and total score for social responsibility).

Results showed an association between the respondents' self-perceptions of their relationship with their parents and their attitudes toward school ("homework is a

Table 7.5 Correlations of self-perception of relationship with parent and attitude toward education

Independent variable	Homework waste of time	I try hard in school	In general, I like school
Trust mother	–0.245**	0.259**	0.199*
Alienation mother	–0.230**	–	0.184*
Trust father	–0.192*	0.202*	0.358**
Attachment mother	–0.275**	0.235**	0.244**
Attachment father	–0.213*	–	0.310**

*$p<0.05$ level; **$p<0.01$ level

Table 7.6 Correlations of self-perception of relationship with parent and delinquency

	No. of times	Juvenile	
Variable	Arrested police	Delinquency	Involved adult court
Mother communication	–0.226**	–0.220**	–
Father communication	–0.211*	–0.234**	–
Father trust	–0.234**	–0.291**	–
Father alienation	–0.199*	–	–0.189*
Mother attachment	–0.176*	–	–
Father attachment	–0.259**	–0.274**	–

*$p<0.05$ level; **$p<0.01$ level

waste of time," "I try hard in school," and "in general, I like school") (Table 7.5). Respondents' self-perceptions that their mother and father trusted them showed a significant association with the three variables of attitude toward school. Similarly, variables such as "communication with mother and father," "trust father," and "feeling alienated from father" were all significantly associated with delinquency (number of times arrested, involved juvenile court and/or adult court) (Table 7.6). Respondents whose IPPA scores were lower showed an inverse association with delinquency. One item from the Social Responsibility Instrument (Table 7.6), "if I want to risk getting into trouble with the law, that is my business," was treated as the respondent's perception of delinquency. Results showed significant associations with this item and IPPA variables such as "I trust mother or father," "I feel alienated from mother or father," and "total attachment score" (see Table 7.7).

Summary

The findings of this cross-national, global study support the literature on attachment theory and the importance of adolescents' perceptions positive of parental relations for academic success, future orientation, and avoidance of delinquent behaviors. The positive memories of his deceased mother held by the youth described earlier in this chapter may be the reason for his high self-esteem, self-confidence, and positive career interests. He is a resilient youth who uses his personal skills in a productive and positive way.

Table 7.7 Correlations of self-perception of relationship with parent and social responsibility

Variable	If I want to risk getting into trouble, my business	Total score Social responsibility
Mother		
Trust mother	0.214*	0.218**
Alienation mother	0.262**	–
Mother communication	–	0.171*
Mother attachment	0.224**	0.198*
Father		
Trust father	0.205*	–
Alienation father	–	–
Communication father	0.186*	–
Father attachment	–	0.205*

*$p < 0.05$ level; **$p < 0.01$ level

Discussion

Previous research on Black youth's self-perceptions of their relationships with their parents (mother and/or father), or attachment, is virtually nonexistent. The present study aimed to fill that gap in the literature relative to this population, to gain understanding from, and to inform. The present study, perhaps the first, contributes to the literature on attachment theory by examining the role of internal attachment representations in youth from diverse racial ethnic groups, determining if there is an association between individuals' self-perceptions of their relations with their mother and/or their father and their attitude toward school, their education, future aspirations, and involvement in delinquent behavior.

Examination of the univariate and bivariate statistics indicates that the respondents generally scored in the direction of positive (secure) attachment and positive internal representations of their relations with their mothers and their fathers. Most of the respondents rated items on the IPPA instrument high in their trust of their mother and/or father, mother and/or father respects their feelings, mother and/or father accepts them as they are, mother and/or their father trusts their judgment, and that they feel their mother and/or father does a good job as a parent. Seventy-nine percent of the sample reported their mother and/or father accepts them as they are. Only a small percent of the sample reported that they felt angry with their mother and/or father (9.4 %), while most reported that this was almost never true or not very often true (62.7 %). Similarly, when asked if they wish they had a different mother and/or father, only 8.4 % responded that this was almost always or often true, and 80.5 % reported that this was almost never or not very often true. For future aspirations, the majority of respondents said that it was very important that they graduate from high school, and 96 % said that it is very important to them that they go to college.

The number of youth who reported they were ever arrested by the police, or were involved in the juvenile justice and/or adult criminal justice systems, represented a small number of the sample ($N = 15$). The respondents with the highest responses to

delinquency were the youth from African-American ethnic backgrounds, who reside in the United States. For youth in Ghana, the number reported who had any involvement with the juvenile justice and/or adult criminal justice system was less than 0.05 %.

Limitations of the Study

This study had a number of limitations that impacted the overall findings, conclusions, and the ability to generalize to the general population. Limitations of the present study included the reliance on data from a small, nonrandom, convenience sample selected from schools, community programs, and/or after-school academic enrichment programs. Another limitation was that the sample was limited exclusively to high school students and not college-level students or those who have dropped out of school, or youth referred from a juvenile justice system such as the juvenile court or probation departments. The complexity of recruiting such subjects both in the United States and in Ghana prevented this researcher from including these youth. The study was cross-sectional rather than longitudinal, limiting the analysis to current behaviors and not to outcomes. Moreover, the analyses were primarily descriptive and correlational and not predictive. These limitations made it difficult to generalize the results and conclusions of the study to all youth and to youth from each of the ethnic backgrounds. Also, the small number of youth involved in the juvenile justice system represented in the sample makes it difficult to generalize about the youth who had more delinquency involvement.

Another limitation of the study was the reliance on self-reported data relative to each subject's involvement in delinquent and/or illegal behavior. The existing literature and prior research on delinquency suggest that self-reported data on this variable can tend to be underreported by respondents and that confirmation from court and probation records provide the most accurate data.

Implications and Future Direction

In spite of the limitations enumerated above, this study does have implications for policy and practice changes and/or enhancements that should be addressed internationally. The findings of this study support the theory that the parent–child relationship is an important indicator and facilitator in adolescent growth and development, particularly as it relates to one's education and future aspirations. The study also confirms that Black youth in the Diaspora are invested in their education and their future. Most, if given the opportunity, want to complete their education, have bright futures, and contribute positively to society. Policy implications include advocacy for building sound, accessible, high-quality education opportunities for all youth and increased governmental funding and other forms of international aid for academic

enrichment programs for marginalized youth, wherever they may be, to enhance their academic performance so that they may experience academic successes and a positive future.

Acknowledgments This study was supported by a faculty research grant from Simmons College, Boston, MA. I wish to thank the many people who assisted with meeting appropriate persons at the various schools and programs in order to access subjects for this study.

References

Ainsworth, M. (1967). *Infancy in Uganda: Infant care and the growth of love*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Ainsworth, M. (1989). Attachments beyond infancy. *American Psychologist, 44*, 709–716.

Ainsworth, M. D., Blehar, M., Waters, E., & Wall, S. (1978). *Patterns of attachment*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Ainsworth, M. D. S., & Bowlby, J. (1991). An ethological approach to personality development. *American Psychologist, 46*, 333–341.

Alexander, M. (2010). The color of justice. In *The new Jim crow: Mass incarceration in the age of colorblindness* (pp. 95–135). New York, NY: The Free Press.

Allen, J. P., Marsh, P., McFarland, C., McElhaney, K. B., Land, D. J., Jodl, K. M., et al. (2002). Attachment and autonomy as predictors of the development of social skills and delinquency during midadolescence. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 70*(1), 56–66. doi:`. Retrieved.

Allen, J. P., Moore, C., Kuperminc, G., & Bell, K. (1998). Attachment and adolescent psychosocial functioning. *Child Development, 69*(5), 1406–1419.

Andrews, A. B., & Ben-Arich, A. (1999). Measuring and monitoring children's well-being across the world. *Social Work, 44*(2), 105–115.

Armsden, G. C., & Greenberg, M. T. (1987). The inventory of parent and peer attachment: Individual differences and their relationship to psychological well-being in adolescence. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 16*, 427–454.

Aunola, K., & Nurmi, J.-E. (2005). The role of parenting styles in children's problem behavior. *Society for Research in Child Development, 76*(6), 1144–1159.

Baharudin, R., & Luster, T. (1998). Factors related to the quality of the home environment and children's achievement. *Journal of Family Issues, 19*(4), 375–403.

Belgrave, F. Z., & Allison, K. W. (2006). *African American psychology: From Africa to America* (pp. 133–134). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Bowlby, J. (1958). The nature of the child's tie to his mother. *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis, 39*, 350–373.

Bowlby, J. (1977). The making and breaking of affectional bonds. *The British Journal of Psychiatry, 130*, 201–210.

Bowlby, J. (1982). *Attachment and Loss* (Attachment 2nd ed., Vol. 1). New York, NY: Basic Books.

Bowlby, J. (1988). *A secure base: Parent–child attachment and healthy human development*. London, England: Routledge.

Bradley, C. R. (1998). Child rearing in African American families: A study of the disciplinary practices of African American parents. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 26*, 273–281.

Bretherton, I. (1987). *(Ed.). New perspectives on attachment relations: Security, communication, and internal working models* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Wiley.

Bretherton, I. (1992). The origins of attachment theory: John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth. *Development Psychology, 28*(5), 259–275.

Bretherton, I., & Munholland, K. (1999). Internal working models in attachment relationships. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (pp. 89–114). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Bulanda, R. E. (2010). Poverty and parenting style among black married couples. In R. L. Coles & C. Green (Eds.), *The myth of the missing Black father* (pp. 47–64). New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Carlson, E. A., & Sroufe, L. A. (1995). Contribution of attachment theory to developmental psychopathology. In D. Ciccheti & D. J. Cohen (Eds.), *Developmental psychopathology* (Theory and methods, Vol. I, pp. 581–617). New York, NY: Wiley.

Casely-Hayford, L., & Wilson, S. (2001). *How the poor get poorer. Investigation of the needs of females in rural deprived areas*. Accra: Girls' Education Unit, Ministry of Education.

Cassidy, J. (1999). The nature of the child's ties. In J. Cassidy & P. L. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (pp. 3–20). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Cassidy, J., & Berlin, L. J. (1994). The insecure/ambivalent pattern of attachment: Theory and research. *Child Development, 65*, 971–991.

Cauce, A. M., Ryan, K. D., & Grove, K. (1998). Children and adolescents of color, where are you? Participation, selection, recruitment, and retention in developmental research. In V. C. McLoyd & L. Steinberg (Eds.), *Studying minority adolescents: Conceptual, methodological, and theoretical issues* (pp. 147–166). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Clark, R. M. (1984). The family and the bases for academic achievement: Support, control, and power: A theoretical contribution. In *Family life and school achievement: Why poor black children succeed or fail* (pp. 197–201). Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Cowan, P. A. (1997). Beyond meta-analysis: A place for a family systems view of attachment. *Child Development, 68*(4), 601–603.

Cowan, P. A., Cowan, C. P., Pearson, J. L., & Cohn, D. A. (1996). Parents' attachment histories and children's externalizing and internalizing behaviors: Exploring family systems models of linkage. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 64*(1), 53–63.

Crawford-Brown, C. (1999). The impact of parenting on conduct disorder in Jamaican male adolescents. *Adolescence, 34*(134), 417–436.

Crowell, J. A., Fraley, R. C., & Shaver, P. R. (1999). Measurement of individual differences in adolescent and adult attachment. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (pp. 735–759). New York NY: The Guilford Press.

Darling, N. (1999, March). Parenting styles and its correlates. *ERIC Digest.* Champaign, IL: University of Illinois. Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education.

Dmitrieva, J., Chen, C., Greenberger, E., & Gil-Ravis, V. (2004). Family relationships and adolescent psychosocial outcomes: Converging findings from Eastern and Western cultures. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 14*(4), 425–447.

Geismar, L. L., & Wood, K. M. (1986). *Family functioning and the resocialization of juvenile offenders, family and delinquency: Resocializing the young offender*. New York, NY: Human Sciences Press, Inc.

Greenberg, M. T., Siegal, J., & Leitch, C. (1984). The nature and importance of attachment relationships to parents and peers during adolescence. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 12*, 373–386.

Greenberg, M. T., Speltz, M. L., & DeKlyen, M. (1993). The role of attachment in the early development of disruptive behavior problems. *Development and Psychopathology, 5*, 191–213.

Greenberger, E., & McLaughlin, C. S. (1998). Attachment, coping, and explanatory style in late adolescence. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 27*(2), 121–139.

Gutman, L. M., & Eccles, J. S. (1999). Financial strain, parenting behaviors, and adolescents' achievement: Testing model equivalence between African American and European American single-and-two-parent families. *Child Development, 70*(6), 1464–1476.

Hair, E. C., Moore, K. A., Garrett, S. B., Kinukawa, A., Lippman, L. H., & Michelson, E. (2005). The parent-adolescent relationship scale. In K. A. Moore & L. H. Lippman (Eds.), *What do children need to flourish? Conceptualizing and measuring indicators of positive development* (pp. 183–202). New York NY: Springer.

Hale, J. E. (1994). *Unbank the fire: Visions for the education of African American children*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Hale, J. E. (2001). *Learning while black: Creating educational excellence for African American children*. Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press.

Hamer, J. (2001). *What it means to be daddy: Fatherhood for black men living away from their children*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Harris, Y. R., & Graham, J. A. (2007). *The African American child: Development and challenges* (p. 185). New York, NY: Springer.

Harwood, R. L., Miller, J. G., & Irizarry, N. L. (1995). *Culture and attachment: Perceptions of the child in context*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Hayden, L. C., Schiller, M., Miller, I., Keitner, G., Sameroff, A. J., & Rasmussen, S. (1998). Levels of family assessment: I. Family, marital, and parent–child interaction. *Journal of Family Psychology, 12*(1), 7–22.

Herbert, M., & Harper-Dorton, K. V. (2002). *Working with children*, *adolescents*, *and their families* (3rd Ed.) (pp.19-22, 131–141). Chicago, IL: Lyceum Books.

Hill, S. A. (1999). *African American children: Socialization and development in families: Understanding families* (pp. 59–60). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hughes, M., & Thomas, M. E. (1998). The continuing significance of race revisited: A study of race, class, and quality of life in America, 1972–1996. *American Sociological Review, 63*, 785–795.

Hunter, A. G., & Ensminger, P. (1992). Diversity and fluidity in children's living arrangements: Family transitions in an urban Afro-American community. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 54*(2), 418–426.

Hyman, J. B. (2006). Men and communities: African American males and the well-being of children, families, and neighborhoods. *The Dellum Commission: Better health through stronger communities: Public policy reform to expand life paths of young men of color.* Washington, DC: Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, Health Policy Institute.

Institute of Behavioral Science. (1990). *Youth interview schedule: Denver youth survey*. Boulder, CO: University of Colorado.

Jackson, J. F. (1996). An experimental procedure and scales for assessing attachment relationships in African American infants—Alternatives to Ainsworth methods. In R. L. Jones (Ed.), *Handbook of test and measurements for black populations* (Vol. 1). Hampton, VA: Cobb & Henry.

Jackson, J. E. L., & Moore, J. L., III. (2006). African American males in education: Endangered or ignored? *Teachers College Record, 108*(2), 201–205.

Jarrett, R. L. (1998). African American children, families, and neighborhoods: Qualitative contributions to understanding developmental pathways. *Applied Developmental Science, 2*(1), 2–16.

Jarrett, R. L. (1999). Successful parenting in high-risk neighborhoods. *The Future of Children: When School is Out, 9*(2), 45–50.

Jodl, K. M., Michael, A., Malanchuk, O., Eccles, J. S., & Sameroff, A. (2001). Parents' roles in shaping early adolescents' occupational aspirations. *Child Development, 72*(4), 1247–1265.

Johnson, R. L., Stanford, P. (2002). Why higher education is especially important for African American children. In *Strength for their journey* (p. 140). New York, NY: Harlem Moon, Broadway Books.

Joseph, J. (1995). Juvenile delinquency among African Americans. *Journal of Black Studies, 25*(4), 475–491.

Kenny, M. E. (1994). Quality and correlates of parental attachment among late adolescents. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 72*, 399–403.

Kenny, M. E., & Rice, K. G. (1995). Attachment to parents and adjustment in late adolescent college students: Current status, applications, and future considerations. *The Counseling Psychologist, 23*(3), 433–456.

Loeber, R., & Stouthamer-Loeber, M. (1987). The prediction of delinquency. In H. C. Quay (Ed.), *Handbook of juvenile delinquency* (pp. 325–382). New York, NY: Wiley.

Loeber, R., & Strothamer-Loeber, M. (1986). Family factors as correlates and predictors of juvenile conduct problems and delinquency. In M. Tonry & N. Morris (Eds.), *An annual review of research* (Vol. 7). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Main, M. (1990). Cross-cultural studies of attachment organization: Recent studies changing methodologies, and the concept of conditional strategies. *Human Development, 33*, 48–61.

Main, M. (1996). Introduction to the special section on attachment and psychopathology: 2. Overview of the field of attachment. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 46*(2), 237–243.

Mandara, J. (2006). The impact of family functioning on African American males' academic achievement: A review and clarification of the empirical literature. *Teachers College Record, 108*(2), 206–223.

Marshall, S. (1994). Ethnic socialization of African American children: Implications for parenting, identity development, and academic achievement. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 24*(4), 377–396.

Mauer, M. (1990). Young Black men and the criminal justice system: A growing national problem. *Corrections Compendium, 15*(2), 4–7.

Mauer, M. (1997, January). *Intended and unintended consequences: State racial disparities in imprisonment.* Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project.

Mauer, M., & Huling, T. (1995, October). *Young black Americans and the criminal justice system: Five years later*. Washington, DC: The Sentencing Project.

McLoyd, V. C., & Steinberg, L. (1998). *Studying minority adolescents: Conceptual, methodological, and theoretical issues*. Mahway, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Miller, J., & Garran, A. M. (2007). The web of institutional racism. *Smith College Studies in Social Work, 77*(1), 33–67.

Paulson, S. E. (1994). Relations of parenting style and parental involvement with ninth-grade students' achievement. *Journal of Early Adolescence, 14*(2), 250–267.

Pittman, L. D., & Chase-Lansdale, P. L. (2001). African American adolescent girls in impoverished communities: Parenting style and adolescent outcomes. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 11*(2), 199–224.

Quay, H. C. (1987). Patterns of delinquent behavior. In *Handbook of juvenile delinquency* (pp. 118–138). New York: Wiley.

Rankin, J. H., & Kern, R. (1994). Parental attachments and delinquency. *Criminology, 32*(4), 495–514.

Rhodes, S., & Simpson, J. (2004). Attachment theory: Basic concepts and contemporary questions. In S. Rhodes & J. Simpson (Eds.), *Adult attachment: Theory, research and clinical implications* (pp. 3–14). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Rodney, H. E., Tachia, H. R., & Rodney, L. W. (1999). The home environment and delinquency: A study of African American adolescents. *Families in Society, 80*(6), 551–562.

Rubin, K. H., & Chung, O. B. (Eds.). (2006). *Parenting beliefs, behaviors, and parent–child relations: A cross-cultural perspective*. New York, NY: Psychology Press.

Scanzoni, J. (1977). *The Black family in modern society: Patterns of stability and security*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Simons, L. G., Chen, Y., Simons, R. L., Brody, G., & Cutrona, C. (2006). Parenting practices and child adjustment in different types of households. *Journal of Family Issues, 27*(6), 803–825.

Simons, R. L., Simons, L. G., & Wallace, L. E. (2004). *Families, delinquency, and crime: Linking society's most basic institution to antisocial behavior*. Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury.

Sroufe, L. A. (1990). An organizational perspective on the self. In D. Cicchetti & M. Beeghly (Eds.), *The self in transition: Infancy to childhood* (pp. 281–307). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Sroufe, L. A., Shork, E., Motti, E., Lawroski, N., & LaFraniere, O. (1984). The role of affect in social competence. In C. Izard, J. Kagan, & R. Zojone (Eds.), *Emotion, cognition, and behavior* (pp. 289–319). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Stacks, C. (1983). Cultural perspectives on child welfare. *NYU Review of Law and Social Change, 12*, 539.

Statin, H., & Kerr, M. (2000). Parental monitoring: A reinterpretation. *Child Development, 71*, 1072–1085.

Stewart, P. (2007). Who is kin? Family definitions and African American families. *Journal of African American Behavior in the Social Environment: New Perspectives, 15*(2/3), 163–181.

Thompson, G. L. (2004). *Through Ebony's eyes: What teachers need to know but are afraid to ask about African American students* (pp. 13–39). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Tonry, M. H. (1995). *Malign neglect: Race, crime, and punishment in America*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Van Ijzendoorn, M. H., & Sagi, A. (1999). Cross-cultural patterns of attachment: Universal and contextual dimensions. In J. Cassidy & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (pp. 713–734). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Waters, M. C. (1996). The intersection of gender, race and ethnicity in identity development of Caribbean-American teens. In B. J. Ross Leadbeater & N. Way (Eds.), *Urban girls: Resisting stereotypes, creating identities* (pp. 65–81). New York, NY: New York University Press.

Part III
Health and Well Being

Chapter 8
Child Labor: A Child Development Perspective

DeBrenna LaFa Agbényiga

Introduction

Child labor is identified as a global issue that impacts child developmental paths to health and well-being into adulthood (Otis, Pusztor, & McFadden, 2001; Woolf, 2002). Childhood is a time to explore and learn various developmental tasks and other aspects of life that are necessary for the progression toward adulthood. In this new century, the global incidence of child labor is 13.7 % for children aged 5 through 14 years (ILC, 2006). This statistic is true for developing and developed countries and across diverse socioeconomic groups (Basu & Zarghamee, 2009; Hurst, 2007). The International Labour Organization (ILO) has estimated that there are 250 million child laborers (5–14 years old) worldwide, with more than 120 million working full time. Working children aged 5–14 years old are mostly concentrated in Asia and Africa, with 61 % full-time working children in Asia and 37 % in Africa with the highest incidence in sub-Saharan Africa. However, legally employed child workers are not uncommon in developed countries (Entwisle, Alexander, & Olson, 2000; Pollack & Landrigan, 1990; Wihstutz, 2007). For instance, it is estimated that 5.5 million youth were employed in the United States from 1997 to 2001.

In the research on child labor, there has been a recognition of the importance of child labor on child development and it effects familial and national economics. Children may provide 25 % or more of a family's total income and many traditional and contemporary cultures include child labor as an integral part of the child's socialization and achievement of status in the local community (Psacharopoulos, 1997). In some cases, governments may regard child labor as a key factor in keeping

D.L. Agbényiga, Ph.D., LSMW (✉)
School of Social Work and Department of Human Development and Family Studies,
Michigan State University, 201 F Berkey Hall, 509 E. Circle Drive,
East Lansing, MI 48824-1118, USA
e-mail: agbenyi1@msu.edu

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9_8,

their economy competitively viable through the provision of cheap labor for commercial interests (Robson, 2004). Reorganizing the understanding of economic contributions of child laborers has been influential in uniformly treating all child economic activities and it has allowed for more empirical evidence to be used to support and advocate for the rights of the child.

The definition of childhood varies across different socioeconomic and societal beliefs. Recently, research has begun to differentiate among a critical set of meaning labels when it comes to children and work, including differentiating between "child labor" and "working children," "unconditional" and "unresolved" worst forms of child labor. Also, efforts have been made to seek diverse and reliable evidence of the effects of child labor on children's successful transition into adulthood (Edmonds & Pavcnik, 2005; Hungerland, Liebel, Milne, & Wihstutz, 2007; Woodhead, 2004). A number of studies have reached a more inclusive view on gains and losses of child labor while arguing that not all child labor is by definition harmful to children (McKechnie & Hobbs, 1996; Robson, 2004). Furthermore, researchers have argued that cultural and social circumstances ought to be taken into account in determining well-being of the child laborer and specific claims about outcomes of child labor have to be made with careful investigation (Baland & Robinson, 2000; Entwisle et al., 2000; Woodhead, 2004). The invisible nature of child labor and unreported child laborers as migrant and seasonal farm workers, domestic workers, or workers in sweatshops and on the streets suggest great challenges to defining and quantifying physical, economic, and psychosocial outcomes of child labor (Hurst, 2007; Ide & Parker, 2005; Levison & Murray-Close, 2005).

Definitions

Differentiating "child labor" from "child work" could avoid some debates over theoretical explanations of child labor. "Child work" or "economically active children" includes all children under the age of 18 working more than 1 h per week in paid or unpaid work, on a casual or regular basis, legal or illegal; "child labor" implies any economic activity undertaken by children under the minimum age for admission to employment, as defined by the International Labour Organization (ILO) *Minimum Age Convention*, 1973 (No. 138). However, the concept of "child labor" encompasses "children in hazardous work," a category defined as "children working in any activity or occupation that, by its nature or type, has or leads to adverse effects on the child's safety, health and moral development as described in ILO *Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention* 182". The ILO report stated that of the 166 million child laborers under the age of 15, 74 million were engaged in hazardous work. Worst forms are practices such as child slavery, forced labor, debt bondage, trafficking, serfdom, prostitution, pornography, and various forms of work that is hazardous to a child's health, safety, and moral being. Woodhead (2004) made two distinct categories of the worst forms identified by *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 32* and *ILO Convention 182* as a scientific issue.

First, the "unconditional" worst forms, such as all forms of bondage, trafficking, child soldiers, and use of children in prostitution and illicit activities, violate basic human rights and they are subjects of international and regional child protection law. Secondly, the "unresolved" worst forms are conditioned by the probability that harm will result and are not necessarily human rights issues (Woodhead, 2004).

General Effects of Child Labor

Despite challenges to quantify the number of children working around the world and developmental outcomes of child labor, significant efforts have been made to examine the link between child labor and the long-term well-being of working children in many countries. Research has recognized both benefits and risks of child labor as well as the heterogeneous nature of the outcomes of child labor. Woodhead (2004) acknowledged that child labor provides children and their families with both economic and psychosocial rewards. The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (2002) and other researchers from the working children movement also hold a view that there is a positive link between child labor and certain psychosocial gains, which reiterates the need to weigh risks against benefits. Those benefits include preparing working children with the skills and attitudes needed in the future as responsible adults and workers, within their cultural and societal setting; for example, a sense of responsibility, independence, accomplishment, discipline, and teamwork are a few of the learned behaviors thought to be garnered (Hungerland et al., 2007; Pollack & Landrigan, 1990). The 2002 I.E. report argues that light work, when carefully monitored, can be an essential part of children's socialization and development process, where they learn to take responsibility and gain pride in their own accomplishments (IPEC, 2002).

The majority of child labor studies have paid more attention to child labor that put children's well-being at risk. For example, economists examining the economic loss of child labor have suggested that child labor is neither economical nor efficient in creating or increasing social capital and earning ability of children and families. Furthermore, child labor has a negative impact on adult earnings for working children even when controlling for schooling (Baland & Robinson, 2000; Emerson & Souza, 2007). Consistent with the concerns for the long-term social capital loss of child labor, efforts have been made to examine the relationship between child labor and school attendance, which leads to low human capital among working children whereby they are limited in their ability to connect and socialize with children as a part of the growth and development process (Jensen & Nielsen, 1997; Post, 2001). Although cautions have taken on simplified generalizations, more studies have contributed to establish a global policy that aims to end child labor based on risk outcomes of child labor. These studies have provided evidence from across regions and countries confirming that child labor, especially its "unresolved" worst forms, can impede a child's education or harm the child's health, safety, physical, mental, spiritual, moral, and social development. Most of

the available empirical evidence suggests that inappropriate manual labor exposes children to injury and to poisoning from chemicals such as solvents, pesticides, metals, caustic agents used on the job, fumes and dust, and other toxic, work-related by-products (Ambadekar, Wahab, Zodpey, & Khandai, 1999; Woolf, 2002). In addition to the negative effects on immediate and long-term physical development and health, children at work are also vulnerable to anemia, fatigue, early initiation of tobacco smoking, and other mental health and behavioral health problems (Woodhead, 2004; Woolf, 2002).

Differing from predominant child labor literature, this chapter will focus on child development perspectives rather than on the causes of child labor. Special attention will be given to the distribution of child labor and the physical, behavioral, and social developmental effects of the worst forms of child labor, especially the "unresolved" worst forms, on children and adolescents.

The Distribution of Child Labor

To articulate health effects of child labor, it is essential to specify the circumstances in which child labor may negatively affect children's development and to identify the distribution and different types of child labor carried out by children in the world (Edmonds & Pavcnik, 2005). The ILO's SIMPOC estimates that a total of 8.4 million children are involved in child trafficking, forced or bonded labor, as soldiers, prostitutes, pornography, or participated in other illicit activities.

Although formal "unconditional" worst forms of child labor and children working in sweatshop, run-down factories, and construction projects have received great international attention, the informal sector of child labor has the highest incident rate with "parents as the number one employer of children" (Edmonds & Pavcnik, 2005). ILO defined the informal sector as either self-employed workers and their unpaid family members or workers in very small business, apprentices, contract labor, home workers, and paid domestic workers. Child farm workers and domestic child workers are examples of the most prominent hidden child labor in the informal sector globally (Baron, 2005; Zenaida & Camacho, 1996).

Farm Work

Farm work is the dominant form of child labor (O'Donnell, Rosati, & van Doorslaer, 2005). It is estimated that over 65–70 % of working children are engaged in family-based work, mainly farm work (Edmonds & Pavcnik, 2005; O'Donnell et al., 2005). These children's school schedule is worked around the planting and harvesting time which puts them at high risk for chemical contamination and increases the likelihood that they will be illiterate and will not complete school beyond the primary level. These children are most likely to sustain pesticide exposure, musculoskeletal

trauma, and other injuries that are common health consequences of farm work (McKnight & Spiller, 2005; Pugh, Pienkowski, & Gorczyca, 2000). According to the ILO 2006 report, children in hazardous forms of child labor count for approximately 53 % of all working children in 2000 and farm work was identified as being one of the most hazardous forms of child labor, with one in eight child workers suffering illness or injury (Cooper et al., 2005).

Domestic Work

Using the ILO's SIMPOC data, Edmonds and Pavcnik (2005) suggest that almost 65 % of children aged 5–14 report participation in domestic work within the household (Edmonds & Pavcnik, 2005). The authors also found that three subgroups had the highest participation rates of domestic work: older children aged 10–14, girls, and children in rural areas. As domestic workers, girls are more likely to work longer hours than boys because of the nature of domestic work performed by girls such as laundry, cooking, cleaning, and providing care to children at various ages.

Children also perform domestic work outside of their own household as care providers (for children and relatives) and more girls than boys provide kinship care. Robson (2004) documented that rural children in Zimbabwe were withdrawn from school and brought to the city to do unpaid domestic work, including care for ailing relatives. The author argues that child caregiving in Zimbabwe is a largely hidden and unappreciated aspect of national economies which is growing as an outcome of conservative macroeconomic policies and the advancement of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Camacho (1999) interviewed 50 child migrants who worked as waged domestic workers in Metro Manila, Philippines. They reported that domestic work was imperative for them and contributed to their family economic benefit and stability.

Another group that is often mentioned in child labor literature is the "street child." It is important to clarify that "street child" is not a type of child labor, although there are an estimated 100 million street children who are among the working children worldwide (Judson, 1994). Rather, it is a living condition that some working children have in terms of their relationship with their family or lack of care and protection from responsible adults. Homelessness leads to many health risks of street children ranging from violence to drug use which ultimately leads to their involvement in various unsafe work environments (Baron, 2005).

The Developmental Effects

Research has recognized that the health consequences of child labor are heterogeneous as a result of the diverse forms of child labor, circumstances, the child's age and health, and other key variables and characteristics of children. Although available evidence cannot establish a clear-cut conclusion about developmental effects of child

labor, an extended body of research indicates that child labor actually or potentially has caused multiple physical illnesses and psychosocial problems among children (Ambadekar et al., 1999; Woodhead, 2004; Woolf, 2002). The World Health Organization (1984) indicated that child labor involving exposure to chemicals has a negative effect on the growth and development of children. These negative effects include increased muscular and skeletal disorders, higher incidence of respiratory and gastrointestinal diseases, poorer nutritional status, lower hemoglobin levels, more frequent headaches, fatigue, vision problems, lower average height and weight than children in a control group, and behavioral problems (McKnight & Spiller, 2005; WHO, 1984; Woodhead, 2004). In many cases, these illnesses are left untreated or improperly treated for years. Ultimately, the children are left to face a lifetime of physical and mental problems that impede their ability to strive to their potential.

Physical Development

A number of empirical studies have examined physical development effects of labor on participants working at a young age. A cross-sectional study in Jordan suggests that the length of time that children have been working and low monthly income have a detrimental effect on growth (BMI for age) of working boys, independent of the effects of low household per capita income and small maternal stature (Hawamdeh & Spencer, 2003). Ambadekar et al. (1999) also observed deleterious effects of child labor on the growth of children measured by BMI as a part of their research in India. Using longitudinal data from the Vietnam Living Standards Survey 1992–1998, O'Donnell et al. (2005) found mixed results: while there was no evidence that work impedes the growth of the child, individuals working during this childhood period were significantly more likely to report illness up to 5 years later even after controlling for a range of individual-, household-, and community-level variables as well as for unobservable variables of past work and current illness. Another aspect of child development stifled by child labor is genital development. A cross-sectional study in India showed that genital development was significantly delayed in male child laborers (Ambadekar et al., 1999). Furthermore, emerging research on farm work shows that working children and adolescents are experiencing injuries and illnesses including musculoskeletal disorders, fractures, acute and chronic toxic exposures, significant disease and disability, sprains, strains, lacerations to the head, eye injuries, rashes, and coughing (Fassa, Facchini, Dall'Agnol, & Christiani, 2005; Ide & Parker, 2005; Mull & Kirkhorn, 2005). Currently, empirical evidence suggests that inappropriate manual labor exposes children to injury and to poisoning from chemicals such as solvents, pesticides, metals, and caustic agents used on the job, to fumes and dust, and other toxic work-related by-products that lead to numerous incidents of accidents and injuries (Ambadekar et al., 1999; Woolf, 2002). Baron (2005) reports that 68 % of 584 injured children in Mexico were injured while working; the most frequent types of work-related injuries were extremely traumatic and severe. In addition to the negative effects on immediate and long-term physical development and

health, children at work are also vulnerable to numerous physical ailments such as anemia, fatigue, early initiation of tobacco smoking, and other mental health and behavioral health problems (Woodhead, 2004; Woolf, 2002).

In recent years, special attention has been given to chronic effects of toxic environmental exposures for child laborers (Landrigan & Garg, 2002; Mull & Kirkhorn, 2005). For example, McKnight and Spiller (2005) called attention to the green tobacco sickness (GTS), a nicotine poisoning associated with tobacco farming; this is now listed in the North American Guidelines for Children's Agricultural Tasks list. From a scientific perspective, Bearer (1995) provides the scientific foundational knowledge for the awareness of vulnerability of children to toxic environmental exposures. From a child development perspective, Bearer (1995) explains that the reason children are more vulnerable to toxic environmental exposures than adults is because children are different from adults in the ways they are exposed to environmental contamination and the ways they react to environmental health hazards. These differences can be attributed to the growth and maturation children's organs are undergoing and the corresponding greater vulnerability and organ health risk they experience. These organ differences also provide a knowledge foundation for understanding the differences between children and adults. Lead accumulates twice as fast in children's bones than in adult bones and the occupational limit for exposure to lead for children is six times lower than for adults (Barry, 1975; Bearer, 1995). According to Bearer (1995), such effects of a hazardous work environment on working children include poor growth, diminished intelligence quotient (IQ), precocious puberty, and diminished lung capacity. Hurst also (2007) suggests that this occupational health hazard can have more devastating and long-lasting consequences for children than adults.

Cognitive Development

Research shows that child labor has affected working children's school attainment and performance, neurobehavioral performance, motor intelligence, and memory. Several studies have documented a negative correlation between working and grade advancement, years of completed education, and test scores. Based on household surveys in Bolivia and Venezuela, Latin America, Psacharopoulos (1997) discovered that child labor reduced the child's educational attainment by about 2 years of schooling compared to the control group of nonworking children.

Child labor is also closely associated with grade repetition (Beegle, Dehejia, & Gatti, 2006). Orazem and Gunnarsson (2004) found that third and fourth graders in Latin America who attend school but never worked in the market or engaged in domestic work perform 28 % better on mathematics tests and 19 % better on language tests than children who attend school and work. Heady (2003) examined a dataset from the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS) and suggested that work outside the household has a substantial effect on learning achievement in the key areas of reading and mathematics.

Several studies have paid more attention to other aspects of cognitive developmental effects of child labor. For example, Woodhead (2004) found that when work situations are marked by extreme deprivation, lack of stimulation, or mundane and repetitive activities, children's general development and spatial, motor, and verbal intelligence are likely to be seriously impaired. Consistent with Woodhead's findings, studies on hazardous child labor have begun to explore the cognitive developmental effects of child labor.

After having reviewed available empirical studies on hazardous child labor among children aged 6–15 in Ecuador and Manila, Philippines, Ide and Parker (2005) linked hazardous child labor to IQ decline and lifetime earning loss. The authors argued that child lead exposure is associated with decreases in IQ and a subsequent percent decrease in lifetime earnings, as the result of the IQ decline. Saddik, Williamson, Nuwayhid, and Black (2005) interviewed 300 male children aged 10–17 in Lebanon using a standardized questionnaire and found that solvent-exposed working children performed significantly worse than the nonexposed working children and school children on the motor dexterity and memory test.

Social Development

Child labor research has recently begun to explore outcomes related to social development. Robson (2004) found that child caregivers lost touch with their friends and withdrew from peer activities because their experiences meant they did not have much in common with their peer group or because they have moved away to care for ailing relatives or paid care work. Woodhead's (2004) work support the findings that children are more likely at risk when they are not psychologically supported by personal social networks. They may be deprived of core experiences that are considered to be a necessary part of normal childhood within the community, schooling, for example. Increasingly, a large and growing number of children globally migrate in order to find work, especially female domestic workers (Camacho, 1999; Robson, 2004). It is critical to emphasize the importance of age-appropriate personal social networks for social development of working children, especially migrant child workers, and homeless street children. Working children may face new situations, new sets of relationships, new daily patterns, and social stimulation. Meanwhile, they may be disoriented by the sudden loss of familiar settings, cultural routines, and social practices, as Woodhead (2004) observed. Personal social networks of migrant working children are commonly disrupted when they are separated from parents, siblings, other family members, and peer groups, in many cases, without a regular contact channel. Woodhead (2004) points out that although child labor can be both an asset and a hazard to children's well-being, the disrupted social networks greatly threaten working children's psychological adjustment and social integration. This argument is supported by the child development framework developed by Cochran and Brassard (1979).

Table 8.1 Woodhead psychosocial effects of child labor

Major psychosocial hazards	Major negative psychosocial effects
Breakdown of social networks Disruptions to familiar surroundings Monotonous or inappropriate activities	Delayed development, narrow range of cognitive, technical and communication skills maladaptive for future prospects
Neglect, emotional, physical or sexual abuse	Insecurity, inhibition, low social confidence, conflictual relationships
Isolation from peers, bullying, stigmatization	Social exclusion or rejection, deviant or antisocial behavior
Working conditions/workload, accidents and toxins Insecurity, exploitation, powerlessness	Feelings of worthlessness, fear of failure, self-denigration, negative social comparisons, shame, stigma
Unreasonable parental expectations, collusion with employers Incompatibility of work vs. school demands	Learned helplessness, external locus of control, hopelessness, apathy, fatalism, feelings of confusion, betrayal, abandonment
Acute poverty, political/social upheaval	Stress, trauma, fear, anxiety, depression, anger, distress, despair, disturbed sleep and eating, substance abuse, self-harm

From Woodhead (2004). Psychosocial impacts of child work: A framework for research, monitoring and intervention. *International Journal of Children's Rights*, *12*, 321–377

Behavioral and Emotional Development

Recently, research has emphasized not only the physical threats of child labor (O'Donnell et al., 2005) but also its behavioral and emotional consequences for children (Safron, Schulenberg, & Bachman, 2001; Woodhead, 2004). From a child development perspective, working children can be exposed to hazards in many settings. Robson (2004) indicated that child caregivers may be at extreme emotional risk. These children may mature fairly quickly and may also suffer extreme loss and bereavement without appropriate intervention as a consequence of their current situation. Woodhead (2004) systematically outlined major psychosocial hazards and major negative psychosocial effects of child labor, as shown in Table 8.1.

Woodhead (2004) argues that family-based work, either farm work or domestic work, can strengthen personal identity. It is a primary source of emotional security, socialization, learning, and sense of loyalty. At the individual level, psychosocial effects of child labor vary with age, type of work, number of work hours, health status, and social and psychological resources. Most children have the sociocultural, psychological, and health resources to cope with new roles and routines without serious development risk. For others, initiation into work means a dramatic upheaval in the psychosocial systems that support their general development and well-being. In spite of children's resilience and cultural values, working children may be at risk especially when they face extreme or unstable patterns of change and/or multiple stressful adversities. They may be at risk for emotional, physical, and sexual abuse from parents, teachers, and police, as well as from employers. The nature of the informal section isolates working children from public scrutiny and posits them as

a special risk for exploitation and abuse. In their hazardous child labor study in Lebanon, Saddik et al. (2005) found evidence to support the argument that hazardous work environments also contributed to harmful behavioral and emotional consequences. They found that solvent-exposed working children aged 10–17 were more angry and confused than nonworking children in comparison peer groups. Pollack and Landrigan (1990) stated that child labor can encourage antisocial and risk-taking behavior.

American child labor research has shown a special interest in the link between child labor and problem behavior, mainly substance use. Three national representative longitudinal studies are noticed in this article. Safron et al. (2001) drew data from the "Monitoring the Future" project to examine the relationship between adolescent part-time intensity and substance use. The study supports the argument that work intensity is associated with drug use and physical health behaviors. Bachman, Safron, Sy, and Schulenberg (2003) looked at interrelations among American adolescents' educational engagement, desired and actual school-year employment, substance use, and other problem behaviors as a part of a longitudinal study. The findings suggest that employment preferences are correlated with educational disengagement and problem behaviors and that those who prefer to work long hours tend to be more likely than their average counterpart to use cigarettes, alcohol, and marijuana. Using the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY) of the USA, Paternoster, Bushway, Brame, and Apel (2001) also found a positive relationship between intensive adolescent work and antisocial behavior, but this relationship disappeared after controlling for observed and unobserved heterogeneity.

In short, researchers have presented the argument that child labor has actual or potential benefits and/or risks to a child's health, survival, and development. From a child development perspective, physical, social, behavioral, and emotional risks may impact children's health and well-being in the short, medium, or long term. The extent of the developmental effect depends on their characteristics and experiences such as age, gender, health status, social resource, and type of child labor as well as environmental characteristics and protection such as economic conditions, available child welfare policy, and particular chemical exposure protection within their societal context.

Research Gaps

Research on child labor and its developmental effects has made progress over the past two decades as national and international attention has been given to this issue across the globe. The goal to eliminate all of the worst forms of child labor by 2016 and the emerging working children movement are few examples about this progress (Hungerland et al., 2007). In order to actualize all children's development potential and eliminate all of the worst forms of child labor, research has to emerge in terms of giving children a voice and an outlet to be heard around the world by conducting more scientifically rigorous studies that fulfill current research gaps.

Table 8.2 Empirical studies of developmental effects of child labor

References	Location	Data	Effect
Ambadekar et al. (1999)	India	Cross-sectional	Negative in growth
Bagley (1999)	Canada & Philippines	Cross-sectional	
Baron (2005)	Mexico	Cross-sectional	Negative in injuries
Camacho (1999)	Manila	Cross-sectional	
Castro, Gormly, and Ritualo (2005)	Phillippines	Cross-sectional	Negative in injury incident
Chapman, Newenhouse, Meyer, Karsh, Taveira, and Miquelon (2003)	USA	Cross-sectional	Negative in injury incident
Cortez, Barbieri, Saraiva Mda, Bettiol, da Silva, and Cardoso (2007)	Brazil	Cross-sectional	
Entwisle et al. (2000)	USA	Cross-sectional	Positive on later high school work
Fassa et al. (2005)	Brazil	Cross-sectional	
Hawamdeh and Spencer (2003)	Jordan	Cross-sectional	Negative on growth
Heady (2003)	Ghana	Cross-sectional	Negative on learning achievement
Mull and Kirkhorn (2005)	Ghana	Cross-sectional	Negative in injuries
Robson (2004)	Zimbabwe	Cross-sectional	Mixed in social development
Saddik et al. (2005)	USA?	Cross-sectional	Negative on neuro-behavioral performance, memory, & motor
Safron et al. (2001)	USA	Cross-sectional	Negative on substance use
Uddin, Hamiduzzaman, and Gunter (2009)	Bandladesh	Cross-sectional	
Emerson and Souza (2007)	Brazil	Longitudinal	
Bachman, Safron, Sy, and Schulenberg (2003)	USA	Longitudinal	Negative on problem behavior
O'Donnell et al. (2005)	Vietnam	Longitudinal	Illness up to 5 years later
Paternoster, Bushway, Brame, and Apel (2001)	USA	Longitudinal	

Table 8.2 shows 20 empirical studies that contribute to the current knowledge on developmental effects of child labor. It highlights three research gaps: (1) Research is over-concentrated in developing countries. Only 32.5 % of studies were conducted in developed countries and the majority of studies (67.5 %) were in developing countries. Child labor is not solely a poverty issue or phenomenon that only happens in developing countries. Little has been revealed about health and well-being of child migrant farm workers in the United States as well as their counterparts in other parts of the world. Furthermore, usually hidden within studies is the number of children who are caring for a physically ill parent/relative or those who

are actually caring for siblings because of parents that suffer from alcohol and/or substance abuse or mental illness. (2) Research is dominated by Western concepts and frameworks of child development (Nsamenang, 2010). Few studies challenged universal child rights and universal features of child development, needs, and well-being. (3) Evidence is overwhelmingly drawn by cross-sectional studies with a lack of longitudinal data to establish the relationship between child labor and child development from a global perspective. The majority of studies (80 %) draw conclusions from cross-sectional data. Among the four longitudinal studies listed, only two were conducted in the United States. These three points provide a new platform for research and policy development that takes a more inclusive perspective for understanding and changing the issues that cause children to participate in various forms of child labor. Ultimately, this approach would move the dialogue from a developing country problem to a more global issue that would benefit us all by increasing children's opportunity to be children and develop into active and engaging adults.

Conclusion

Available evidence has recognized the multifold contributions of working children and the diverse contexts of child labor as well as multiple developmental effects of child labor. This conclusion has important implications for a wide range of appropriate interventions and policy. These include sociocultural approaches to child development, reopening public conversations about child labor across disciplinary boundaries, and advocacy for child-centered, culturally sensitive child labor policy.

Rogoff (1990) proposed an inclusive child development theory almost 20 years ago. For child labor studies, diverse conditions of child labor indicate that the goal of child development includes but goes beyond skills in academic activities such as formal operational reasoning and scientific, mathematical, and literate practices. Rogoff (1990) also states that each skill is an asset for the community of a child and constitutes local goals of development. A scientifically sound child labor study shall value any goals and skills valued by the community of the child. In accordance with Rogoff's work, Woodhead (2004) states that working children's multiple potential intelligences are shaped by the contexts of their development, the opportunities that are available to them, and the skills valued by their community considered appropriate in relation to their age, gender, ethnicity, and social status. The sociocultural approach of child development fits within and across various social science disciplines. These perspectives are needed to garner a better understanding about child labor that can ultimately change the outcome for millions of children globally who are working daily to scarcely survive.

The hope for the end of child labor does not eliminate the severity of child labor. Unfortunately, international human rights protection organizations, especially the child-rights abuse protection community, face extreme challenges to end child labor. Since 2004, research shows that 13.9 % of children are involved in child labor

and 8.1 % in hazardous work, while at the same time, several nations have not ratified Convention No. 138 and the Convention No. 182, respectively. Among them, the United States has not ratified either the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child 1990 (UNCRC) or Convention No. 138. In the first 18 months of his presidency, President Obama's administration has begun to play a role in looking at the UNCRC and Convention No. 138 as part of a growing effort to begin multidisciplinary discussion on this issue.

A call for social workers and other human services practitioners and researchers to reengage in child labor elimination nationally and internationally has been articulated since 1999, but child labor stays outside of the scope of child welfare and child protection (Otis et al., 2001). Within the United States, social work fails to recognize the issue of child labor and to protect child laborers from economic exploitation and child-rights violations. A change in the structure of child welfare and child protection services is the first step to take child labor into consideration in the development and implementation of child welfare policy and child protection services that could be used beyond the United States from a sociocultural appropriations perspective.

Cultural appropriation stresses the reorganization of cultural factors associated with child labor as important determinates of child labor (Weston, 2005), without simplifying all cultural practices and traditions. It not only involves identifying the harmful developmental effects of child labor but also the engagement of various stakeholders who encourage the necessity of child labor for the family and the child's survival, development, and dignity. Therefore, studies that reflect a culturally appropriate perspective may provide more insight into this phenomenon that highlights the similarities within and across ethnic, tribal, and racial community groups through various societal structures. From this stance, as a global community, we will likely help to create a unified global voice to address this issue while creating better outcomes for children. Ultimately, they are our future; we can assist in building a strong future by ensuring that they have an equal opportunity to develop and thrive.

References

Ambadekar, N. N., Wahab, S. N., Zodpey, S. P., & Khandai, D. W. (1999). Effect of child labour on growth of children. *Public Health, 113*(6), 303–306.

Bachman, J., Safron, D., Sy, S., & Schulenberg, J. (2003). Wishing to work: New perspectives on how adolescents' part-time work intensity is linked to educational disengagement, substance use, and other problem behaviours. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 27*(4), 301–315.

Bagley, C. (1999). Adolescent prostitution in Canada and the Philippines. *International Social Work, 42*(4), 445–454.

Baland, J. M., & Robinson, J. A. (2000). Is child labor inefficient? *Journal of Political Economy, 108*(4), 663–679.

Baron, S. L. (2005). Injuries in child laborers in the informal sector in Mexico City, Mexico, 1997. *Public Health Reports, 120*(6), 598–601.

Barry, P. S. I. (1975). A comparison of concentrations of lead in human tissues. *British Journal of Industrial Medicine, 32*, 119–139.

Basu, K., & Zarghamee, H. (2009). Is product boycott a good idea for controlling child labor? A theoretical investigation. *Journal of Development Economics, 88*(2), 217–220.

Bearer, C. F. (1995). Environmental health hazards: How children are different from adults. *The Future of Children, 5*(2), 11–26.

Beegle, K., Dehejia, R. H., & Gatti, R. (2006). Child labor and agricultural shocks. *Journal of Development Economics, 81*(1), 80–96.

Camacho, A. Z. V. (1999). Family, child labor and migration: Child domestic workers in Metro Manila. *Childhood, 6*(1), 57–73.

Castro, C. L., Gormly, S., & Ritualo, A. R. (2005). The SIMPOC Philippine survey of children 2001: A data source for analyzing occupational injuries to children. *Public Health Reports, 120*(6), 631–641.

Chapman, L. J., Newenhouse, A. C., Meyer, R. H., Karsh, B.-T., Taveira, A. D., & Miquelon, M. G. (2003). Musculoskeletal discomfort, injuries, and tasks accomplished by children and adolescents in Wisconsin fresh market vegetable production. *Journal of Agricultural Safety and Health, 9*(2), 91–105.

Cochran, M. M., & Brassard, J. A. (1979). Child development and personal social networks. *Child Development, 50*(3), 601–616.

Cooper, S. R., Cooper, S. P., Felknor, S. S., Santana, V. S., Fischer, F. M., Shipp, E. M., et al. (2005). Nontraditional work factors in farmworker adolescent populations: Implications for health research and interventions. *Public Health Reports, 120*(6), 622–629.

Cortez, S. A., Barbieri, M. A., Saraiva Mda, C., Bettiol, H., da Silva, A. A., & Cardoso, V. C. (2007). Does child labour affect final height? *Occupational Medicine, 57*(2), 118–125.

Edmonds, E. V., & Pavcnik, N. (2005). Child labor in the global economy. *Journal of Economic Perspectives, 19*(1), 199–220.

Emerson, P. M., & Souza, A. P. (2007). *Is child labor harmful? The impact of working earlier in life on adult earnings*. The Institute for the Study of Labor Discussion Paper No. 3027. Germany: IZA.

Entwisle, D. R., Alexander, K. L., & Olson, L. S. (2000). Early work histories of urban youth. *American Sociological Review, 65*(2), 279–297.

Fassa, A. G., Facchini, L. A., Dall'Agnol, M. M., & Christiani, D. C. (2005). Child labor and musculoskeletal disorders: The Pelotas (Brazil) epidemiological survey. *Public Health Reports, 120*(6), 665–674.

Hawamdeh, H., & Spencer, N. (2003). Effect of work related variables on growth among working boys in Jordan. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, 57*(2), 154–158.

Heady, C. (2003). The effect of child labor on learning achievement. *World Development, 31*(2), 385–398.

Hungerland, B., Liebel, M., Milne, B., & Wihstutz, A. (2007). *Working to be someone: Child focused research and practice with working children*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Hurst, P. (2007). Health and child labor in agriculture. *Food and Nutrition Bulletin, 28*(2 Supplement), S364–S371.

Ide, L. S., & Parker, D. L. (2005). Hazardous child labor: Lead and neurocognitive development. *Public Health Reports, 120*(6), 607–613.

International Labour Conference. (2006). *The end of child labour: Within reach*. Geneva: International Labour Office.

International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour. (2002). *Every child counts: New global estimates on child labor*. Geneva: International Labour Office.

Jensen, P., & Nielsen, H. S. (1997). Child labour or school attendance? Evidence from Zambia. *Journal of Population Economics, 10*, 407–424.

Judson, K. (Ed.). (1994). *Street life: An educational resource for secondary schools about street children*. Guildford: Jubilee Action.

Landrigan, P. J., & Garg, A. (2002). Chronic effects of toxic environmental exposures on children's health. *Clinical Toxicology, 40*(4), 449–456.

Levison, D., & Murray-Close, M. (2005). Challenges in determining how child work affects child health. *Public Health Reports, 120*(6), 614–621.
McKechnie, J., & Hobbs, S. (1996). Child labour: The view from the North. *Childhood, 6*(1), 89–100.
McKnight, R. H., & Spiller, H. A. (2005). Green tobacco sickness in children and adolescents. *Public Health Reports, 120*(6), 602–606.
Mull, L. D., & Kirkhorn, S. R. (2005). Child labor in Ghana cocoa production: Focus upon agricultural tasks, ergonomic exposures, and associated injuries and illnesses. *Public Health Reports, 120*(6), 649–656.
Nsamenang, B. A. (2010). Issues in and challenges to professionalism in Africa's cultural settings. *Contemporary Issues in Early, Childhood, 11*(1), 20–28.
O'Donnell, O., Rosati, F. C., & van Doorslaer, E. (2005). Health effects of child work: Evidence from rural Vietnam. *Journal of Population Economics, 18*, 437–467.
Orazem, P., & Gunnarsson, L. V. (2004). *Child labor, school attendance and performance: A review*. Department of Economics Working Paper 04001, Iowa State University. Ames, IW: Iowa State University.
Otis, J., Pusztor, E. M., & McFadden, E. J. (2001). Child labor: A forgotten focus for child welfare. *Child Welfare, 80*(5), 611–622.
Paternoster, R., Bushway, S., Brame, R., & Apel, R. (2001). The effect of teenage employment on delinquency and problem behaviors. *Social Forces, 82*(1), 297–335.
Pollack, S. H., & Landrigan, P. J. (1990). Child labor in 1990: Prevalence and health hazards. *Annual Review of Public Health, 11*, 359–375.
Post, D. (2001). *Children's work, schooling, and welfare in Latin America*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
Psacharopoulos, G. (1997). Child labor versus educational attainment: Some evidence from Latin America. *Journal of Population Economics, 10*, 377–386.
Pugh, K. J., Pienkowski, D., & Gorczyca, J. T. (2000). Musculoskeletal trauma in tobacco farming. *Orthopedics, 23*(2), 141–143.
Robson, E. (2004). Hidden child workers: Young carers in Zimbabwe. *Antipode, 36*(2), 227–248.
Rogoff, B. (1990). *Apprenticeship in thinking: Cognitive development in social context*. New York: Oxford University Press.
Saddik, B., Williamson, A., Nuwayhid, I., & Black, D. (2005). The effects of solvent exposure on memory and motor dexterity in working children. *Public Health Reports, 120*(6), 657–664.
Safron, D. J., Schulenberg, J. E., & Bachman, J. G. (2001). Part-time work and hurried adolescence: The links among work intensity, social activities, health behaviors, and substance use. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 42*(4), 425–449.
Uddin, M. N., Hamiduzzaman, M., & Gunter, B. G. (2009). *Physical and psychological implications of risky child labor: A study in Sylhet city, Bangladesh*. Falls Church, VA: Bangladesh Development Research Center.
Weston, B. H. (Ed.). (2005). *Child labor and human rights: Making children matter*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
Wihstutz, A. (2007). The significance of care and domestic work to children: A Germany portray. In B. Hungerland, M. Liebel, B. Milne, & A. Wihstutz (Eds.), *Working to be someone: Child focused research and practice with working children*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
Woodhead, M. (2004). Psychosocial impacts of child work: A framework for research, monitoring and intervention. *International Journal of Children's Rights, 12*, 321–377.
Woolf, A. D. (2002). Health hazards for children at work. *Clinical Toxicology, 40*(4), 477–482.
World Health Organization. (1984). *Principles for evaluating health risks to progeny associated with exposure to chemicals during pregnancy*. Geneva, Switzerland: WHO.
Zenaida, A., & Camacho, V. (1996). Family, child labour and migration: Child domestic workers in Metro Manila. *Childhood, 6*(1), 57–73.

Chapter 9
Vulnerable Children? The Heterogeneity of Young Children's Experiences in Kenya and Brazil

Jonathan R.H. Tudge, Cesar A. Piccinini, Tania M. Sperb, Dolphine Odero-Wanga, Rita S. Lopes, and Lia B.L. Freitas

The literature on young children's experiences in Kenya and Brazil provides a fairly clear picture. Kenyan children are characterized as growing up in rural areas and have minimally educated parents who rarely communicate or play with their children. Instead, young Kenyan children spend a good deal of time in the company of other children. Although they spend some time in play, they often do so while working. Children are quite heavily involved in work early in life; girls as young as age 5 work in and around the house and are responsible for their younger siblings, whereas boys work further from home, often looking after animals. In the case of Brazil, there has been more research on children in urban areas. However, much of this work has also focused on the very poor, including "street children" trying to make a living or simply surviving, and on families so poor that they make decisions about which of their children can be helped to survive and which will be allowed to die.

Indeed, many children in both Kenya and Brazil do experience childhood just as described, and it is highly appropriate to refer to them as "undefended" and certainly "vulnerable," and efforts should be directed to defend them, their rights, and their futures. But we are not being fair to either Kenya or Brazil if we view those children, families, and groups who are the most vulnerable as somehow representative of the

J.R.H. Tudge, Ph.D. (✉)
Department of Human Development and Family Studies, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 248 Stone Building, P.O. Box 26170, Greensboro, NC 27402-6170, USA
e-mail: jrtudge@uncg.edu

C.A. Piccinini, Ph.D. • T.M. Sperb, Ph.D. • R.S. Lopes, Ph.D. • L.B.L. Freitas, Ph.D.
Institute of Psychology, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Ramiro Barcelos 2600, Porto Alegre, RS 90035-003, Brazil
e-mail: piccinini@portoweb.com.br; sperbt@gmail.com; sobreiralopes@portoweb.com.br; lblf@ufrgs.br

D. Odero-Wanga, Ph.D.
Applied Community Development Studies, Egerton University, House No. BH 74, Njoro, Kenya
e-mail: wangadake@yahoo.com

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9_9,

society as a whole. As Serpell (2008) has argued: "Despite the existence of real problems, to portray the general population … as characterized by pervasive poverty, disease, or corruption … is to commit the synecdochal error of representing the whole by one of its parts." Kenya and Brazil, like many other nations, are too heterogeneous to be so easily described. In both societies, a wide variety of ethnic groups can be found living in both rural and urban areas, and although many people live in impoverished surroundings, many others are well educated, with professional occupations, and a clear middle-class or wealthy lifestyle. Between those living in poverty and those who are affluent, there are also others who have some education, are employed, and have regular incomes even if they do not make much money.

Given this within-society diversity, is it worth asking the question: why have scholars focused their attention on the poorest children of each of these countries or on children and families growing up in very different conditions than those typically found in many parts of the industrialized world? One reason is to cast doubt on the supposedly "universal" appropriate ways to raise children. If one can show that children are successfully raised to become competent adults in ways that look very different from those considered normal in the industrialized world, there can clearly be no single "measuring stick" with which to evaluate appropriate child-rearing techniques (Keller, 2007; LeVine, 1989). Therefore, a good deal of research has been conducted on child-rearing practices in different cultural groups. In order to show just how varied children's experiences are, cross-cultural psychologists have largely been interested in "maximizing the differences" between the groups studied, often comparing White middle-class practices in some part of the industrialized world (typically North America) with practices from rural and/or poor areas of the "Majority" World (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1996; Nsamenang, 2008; Rogoff, 2003; Whiting & Edwards, 1988).

Thus, it has become increasingly commonplace to distinguish between Majority World child-rearing practices and those from the Minority World (i.e., Anglo-American and European). Many scholars have noted the ways in which Minority World practices are treated as the norm, with Majority World practices viewed as deficient to the extent that they do not match up to the Minority World norm (Serpell, 2008; Serpell & Jere-Folotiya, 2008). As such, the Majority World is encouraged to adopt Minority World practices, as an example of what used to be considered colonization but now is often treated as globalization, an apparently hegemony-free spread of ideas around the world (for critiques of this position, see, e.g., Fleer, Hedegaard, & Tudge, 2009; Nsamenang, 2004, 2005).

One problem with this dichotomy between Majority and Minority worlds is that it is too simplistic, as is common with most dichotomies. True, there is some justification for contrasting educational practices that are relatively formal and didactic in much of the Minority World with those that are relatively informal and based on close participation in much of the Majority World (Rogoff, 2003). But then what can one make of Islamic educational practices, well known for their didactic approach (Cole & Scribner, 1974; Wagner, 1993)? And what do Moroccan and Kenyan educational approaches have in common, though both are considered Majority World practices?

A second problem with this categorization is that it ignores the within-society variability that exists within any single representative of either the Majority or Minority World. Ignoring this variability means that some particular types of Majority World experiences are brought to the fore and treated as though they are the norms in the society or cultural group being studied (the synecdochal error noted above). Typically, these experiences are maximally different from those in the researcher's home culture. Cultural differences, in other words, are reduced to the exotic. An alternative approach—one that we espouse—is to take seriously the heterogeneity that exists within any cultural group and to identify variations even among groups that are not maximally different.

Kenya provides a good case in point. Child rearing in Nyansongo, featured as one of the Whitings' original *Six Cultures* studies (LeVine & LeVine, 1963; Whiting & Whiting, 1975), and data from several rural areas of Kenya were included in the follow-up book (Whiting & Edwards, 1988). Whether discussing Gusii, Kikuyu, Kipsigis, Giriama, Embu, or Luo young children, the research (primarily from rural areas) showed young children spending a good deal of their time working (sometimes while playing), in the company primarily of other children rather than adults, who interacted with them primarily to give them tasks (Ember, 1981; Harkness & Super, 1985; LeVine et al., 1994; LeVine & LeVine, 1963; Sigman, Neumann, Carter, D'Souza, & Bwibo, 1988; Weisner & Gallimore, 1977; Wenger, 1989; Whiting, 1996; Whiting & Whiting, 1975). Only Weisner (1979, 1989) studied the impact of Kenya's city life on young children's experiences, contrasting the lives of Abaluyia children living in Nairobi with those in rural areas.

For the most part, therefore, scholars have left the impression that Kenya is populated with non- or semi-educated parents who raise their children in rural areas. Kenya, however, has large and complex cities (e.g., Nairobi, Kisumu, and Mombasa), in which some families are wealthy, others live in large slums and struggle to find work and bring in enough money, and many children live on the streets, either having been orphaned by the growing AIDS crisis or because their parents cannot afford to feed them (Swadener, 2000). So, one may ask, how do patterns of raising children in the city compare to those in rural areas of Kenya? Weisner's data suggest that there may be important differences. One also has to recognize the impact of the passage of time—ideas about raising children have changed since the days of the *Six Cultures* study, although this may not have been adequately accounted for (Edwards & Whiting, 2004; Weisner, Bradley, & Kilbride, 1997; Whiting, 1996).

The situation is different in Brazil, where children's development in rural communities has been given far less attention than children's development within cities. An exception is the work of Nancy Scheper-Hughes (1990, 1992). However, there is an almost equal lack of concern with the huge heterogeneity of children's experiences in Brazil, at least on the part of non-Brazilian authors. Almost all of the focus has been on children living in poverty (Rebhun, 2005), with particular attention paid to children who spend a good deal (or all) of their time on the streets (Alves et al., 2002; Campos et al., 1994; D'Abreu, Mullis, & Cook, 1999; Hecht, 1998; Koller, 2004; Silva et al., 1998), to families with limited or no schooling who live in extreme poverty (Scheper-Hughes, 1985, 1990, 1992), or to the cognitive development,

particularly the limited mathematical skills, of children who make a living on the streets (Guberman, 1996; Nunes, Schliemann, & Carraher, 1993; Saxe, 1991; Schliemann, Carraher, & Ceci, 1997). This focus on the non- or barely schooled is particularly surprising given that in Brazil education to age 14 is compulsory, by law, and more than 95 % of children to this age attend school, with over half of Brazilian children, from both working- and middle-class backgrounds, attending some type of child care center before going to school (Freitas, Shelton, & Tudge, 2008).

Our goal was, therefore, to explore at least one part of the heterogeneity that exists within these two societies, by examining children from two types of families living in a single city in each society. Families were included in the study if they could be considered either middle class or working class by our criteria (educational background and current occupation). Middle-class families were those in which parents had higher education and professional occupations, and working-class families consisted of those in which parents had less than higher education and whose jobs were nonprofessional. Although we were interested in comparing the experiences of children in these different groups, the goal was not to judge on a single measuring stick (a way of assessing which groups do better or worse) or to look at what is standard across all children, but to study the ways in which culture and children's development are intertwined among groups that are not maximally different. In other words, rather than discuss those types of children who have commonly been studied, we focus in this chapter on less-studied groups of children, part of a large study examining the everyday lives of children in a range of societies (Tudge, 2008).

The Cultural Ecology of Young Children Project

Cultural-Ecological Theory

The data we present in this chapter were collected as part of the Cultural Ecology of Young Children project, a cross-cultural and longitudinal study conducted in seven different societies, including Kenya and Brazil. The foundational theory for this project was based in large part on the ideas of Lev Vygotsky and Urie Bronfenbrenner (Tudge, 2008). According to this theory, to understand development one should focus on the typical everyday activities and interactions that occur among developing individuals and their social partners. Children and adolescents become part of their cultural world by engaging in the activities and interactions made available to them by others as well as those they initiate themselves. In the course of acting and interacting, one learns what is appropriate and inappropriate to do and say, one learns how to act and interact, and one learns how to deal with and respond to others.

The activities and interactions in which individuals engage are of paramount importance; however, the form that these practices take is highly influenced both by culture, as it has developed (and is currently developing) over historical time, and by the characteristics, inclinations, motivations, past experiences, and so on, of the individuals involved in these practices. Thus, if, as Weisner (1996) argued, the most

important thing to know about how a child is likely to develop is the culture of which he or she is a part, the next most important thing is to examine the "interpretive" way in which children recreate the practices that their culture sanctions (Corsaro, 2005). Although the older generation may try hard to transmit their values, beliefs, and practices to the members of the younger generation, the latter do not always adopt or accept their parents' values and ways of doing things, and may either transform them creatively or choose different values and/or behaviors. In cultures where tradition is considered highly important, there is greater pressure to follow the lead of the older generation, but in cultures where creativity and independence are valued, practices are likely to change faster. Cultural groups thus develop under the influence of the new generation, while at the same time members of the older generation help the young become competent in the ways of the group.

Culture has been defined (Tudge, 2008) as consisting of a group that shares a general set of values, beliefs, practices, institutions, and access to resources. The group may have a sense of shared identity (the recognition that people are in some way connected and feel themselves to be part of the group), and the adults of the group should attempt to pass on to younger members the same values, beliefs, practices, and so on. Members of different countries or societies clearly constitute different cultural groups. But the same can be said of groups within any given country or society, to the extent that their members share values, beliefs, practices, institutions, resources, etc.; have a shared sense of identity; and attempt to pass on to their young those shared values, beliefs, practices, and resources. Rather than think about people being part of just one culture, it makes more sense to think of them as being part of several cultures: their society, their ethnicity, their social class, perhaps their geographic region, and so on. The cultural group with which a person identifies at any one time is likely to be dependent on a relevant comparison group: someone who has grown up in Rio Grande do Sul is Brazilian when talking with a group of Europeans, a Gaucho when talking with people from other areas of the country, of Italian descent when talking with Gauchos of German descent, or a middle-class descendent of Italians when meeting working-class people from the same ethnic background.

The activities and interactions in which children engage are a complex function of the cultural groups of which they are a part, the personal characteristics of those people (particularly family members) with whom they interact, and their own personal characteristics. Culture does not determine activities and interactions any more than they are determined by the personal characteristics of the individuals involved, but both are heavily implicated in a synergistic fashion. In other words, cultural-ecological theory treats development as a complex interplay among cultural context, individual variability, and change over time, with the key aspect being activities and interactions, where context and individual variability intersect.

The Cities and Participants

In this chapter, we focus on some of the everyday activities and interactions engaged in by young Kenyan and Brazilian children, from the cities of Kisumu and Porto

Alegre, respectively, comparing them to the activities and interactions engaged in by children in a single city in the United States (Greensboro), Russia (Obninsk), Estonia (Tartu), Finland (Oulu), and Korea (Suwon) (Tudge, 2008). Each city is medium sized by the standards of the country, with at least one institution of higher education and a wide range of occupations. The children in the study were drawn from middle- and working-class families, with the parents' educational background and occupation being the criteria for social-class membership. When the children were 3 years of age, each child was observed for the equivalent of one complete day. Our focus was on the activities and interactions going on around the children, those they became involved in, their manner of involvement, their partners in those activities, and so on.

Kenya. Kisumu is the third largest urban area in Kenya (with a municipal population of a little over 200,000) and is situated about 300 miles (500 km) from Nairobi on the shores of Lake Victoria. It is the major administrative, commercial, and industrial center for Western Kenya. Agriculture is the primary industry, but tourism also plays an important role (Odero, 1998), and Maseno University is situated there. A number of different ethnic groups live in Kisumu, but the large majority (85 %) is Luo, the second largest ethnic group in Kenya. Kisumu is divided into "estates" (housing compounds) approximately 1 km^2 in size, clearly differentiated by social class. Those for middle-class families feature houses and apartments that are clearly larger and better appointed than those for working-class or poor families. Given the movement away from the rural areas, one can increasingly also find large slums, with families living in very crowded conditions as well as individuals, including children, who have no fixed residence and live on the streets (Swadener, 2000).

The families in this study were recruited in the mid 1990s, primarily through the local office of birth records. We initially tried to contact the parents of all 30 children who had been born 2–3 years earlier in five different estates (three middle-class estates and two working-class estates). Six of the nine families were still residing in the middle-class estates, and all five of those living in the working-class estates agreed to participate, and the remaining nine families were recruited by "snowballing" techniques. A total of 20 Luo families from Kisumu, equally divided by social class, were included in the study.

Brazil. Porto Alegre has over a million and a half inhabitants and is the capital city of the southernmost state in Brazil. Although the state as a whole has a strong agricultural base, Porto Alegre has a wide range of industries, a full range of cultural and educational opportunities, and one of the foremost federal (public) universities in the country. A few descendents of the indigenous population are still found in Porto Alegre, although they constitute a very small proportion of the population. The large majority of the population is descended from Portuguese, German, and Italian families who moved to the area in the nineteenth century or earlier. Although a small minority can trace their roots to Africa, there has been a huge amount of mixing across different ethnic groups, and the range of skin colors and other combinations of features that characterize racial groups is far greater than the range found in the United States.

As in Kisumu, middle-class and working-class families live in very different circumstances. Middle-class people tend to live in large houses or apartment buildings

(all surrounded by tall metal fencing and typically with a porter or night watchman on duty around the clock) that are sometimes situated in fairly close proximity to poor neighborhoods, known as *vilas*, distinguished by large numbers of small houses.

The families from Porto Alegre were recruited in a different manner from those from any of the other cities. We originally recruited 81 first-time mothers-to-be (Piccinini, Tudge, Lopes, & Sperb, 1998). When their children had reached 3 years of age, we selected 20 of the families (9 middle class and 11 working class) who met the same educational and occupational criteria as families in the other cities, and data were collected in the same manner as elsewhere (Tudge, 2008).

In both cities, all middle-class mothers and fathers had had at least some college education, and some had a graduate degree. Fathers' occupations in Kisumu included university lecturer, sales manager, public administrator, and owner of a travel agency, and in Porto Alegre, they included a teacher, a businessman, and a doctor. All of the middle-class mothers in Kisumu worked outside the home, with occupations such as high school teacher, registered nurse, and nutritionist, as did most of the Porto Alegre mothers whose occupations included teacher, dentist, and jeweler.

By contrast, the working-class fathers in Kisumu were primarily skilled and semiskilled manual laborers and had jobs such as plumber, pipe fitter, store clerk, and messenger. None of the mothers worked outside the home, with the exception of one who had a job as clerk, but all of them engaged in some type of subsistence selling (vegetables, fruit, bread, etc.) to supplement the family income. In Porto Alegre, working-class fathers' jobs included gardener, painter, guard, and messenger, and the mothers worked as maids, a typist, a cleaner in a hospital, and so on. Some of the mothers and fathers were not employed.

As for the children, the settings in which they spent their time were different in the two cities. In Kisumu, all the middle-class children attended some type of private preschool, each of which was well equipped with commercially made learning and play equipment. By contrast, most of the working-class children did not attend preschool, consistent with the fact that fewer than 30 % of Kenyan 3- to 6-year-olds attended preschool at the time we collected our data (Swadener, 2000). Those who did go attended community schools, where the equipment and play materials were of much lower quality or were objects made by hand from local materials (such as a car made from juice cans and bottle tops for wheels). In Porto Alegre, the majority of the children from both social classes attended preschool, reflecting the nationwide proportion of preschool-aged children from urban areas who attended. As in Kisumu, a good deal more money had been spent both on the environment and materials used by the middle-class children than those used by the working-class children.

Methods

As the goal of our project was to discover the types of typical activities and interactions in which young children engaged, we simply observed the children wherever they were situated, alone or interacting with whichever people were in that setting. We followed each of the children for 20 hours, spread over a week, covering the

Table 9.1 Definitions of major activities of interest

Lessons	Deliberate attempts to impart or elicit information relating to:
Academic	School (spelling, counting, learning shapes, comparing quantities, colors, etc.)
World	How things work, why things happen, safety
Interpersonal	Appropriate behavior with others, etiquette etc.
Religious	Religious or spiritual matters
Work	Household activities (cooking, cleaning, repairing, etc.), shopping, etc.
Play, entertainment	Activities engaged in for their own enjoyment, including:
Toys	Play with objects designed specifically for play or manipulation by children
Natural objects	Play with objects from the natural world, such as rocks, mud, leaves, sand, sticks, etc.
No object	Play that does not feature any type of object, such as rough and tumble play, chase, word games, singing, etc.
Adult objects	Play with objects that were not designed for children, such as household objects, games designed for adolescents, etc.
Pretend play	Play involving evidence that a role is being assumed, whether part of the normal adult world (a mother shopping, a teacher) or purely fantasy (being a super-hero, fantasy figure, or baby)
Academic object	Play with an object designed with school in mind, such as looking at a book, playing with shapes or numbers, etc., with no lesson involved
Entertainment	Listening to radio, going to a ball-game, circus, etc.
TV	Watching television, video, or DVD, whether school-related, child-focused, or not designed with children in mind
Conversation	Talk with a sustained or focused topic about things not the current focus of engagement
Other	Activities such as sleeping, eating, bathing, and those that were uncodable

equivalent of one complete day. On one day, each child was observed when he or she woke up, on another day in the hours before going to sleep, and on other days during the hours in between. There were no restrictions, other than the fact that an observer was present. Data were systematically gathered during a 30-second period every 6 minutes. The rest of the time the observer spent coding and writing field notes, while continually tracking what the participants were doing. Time was signaled in such a way that the participants were unaware of when their behaviors were being coded, and the child who was the focus of attention wore a wireless microphone so that the observer could hear what was being said, even when at a distance from the child's activity.

We observed for enough time, we believe, to get a reasonable sense of the types of activities that typically occurred in these children's lives. The approach also allowed us to examine the types of activities the children did not participate in or those in which they would have liked to participate but were discouraged from so doing. The major activities of interest are displayed in Table 9.1 and are divided into five major groups (with multiple subgroups), comprising lessons, work, play, conversation, and "other." Lessons and conversation necessarily involved some type

of interaction with one or more other people; play and work, by contrast, were activities that did not necessarily involve interaction. For more details about the coding scheme, see Tudge (2008).

Results

Engagement in Activities

One of the questions of interest was the extent to which the children in these two cities engaged in similar or different types of activities. However, to put these data into context, we also provide relevant information from the other five cities from which we collected data (Tudge, 2008; Tudge et al., 2006). Looking first at the broadest categories, the children in Kisumu and Porto Alegre were almost as likely to spend their time in play (just under 60 % of the observations), similar to their counterparts in Greensboro (United States) and Tartu (Estonia). They spent less time in play than did children in Suwon (Korea) and Oulu (Finland) but were more than did children in Obninsk (Russia).

There was a good deal more variability across cities in the extent to which the children were observed in lessons, with those in Kisumu observed in this type of activity almost three times as often as were children in Porto Alegre (6 % vs. 2 %). To put these figures into a broader context, children in Obninsk and Tartu were involved in lessons in about 10 % of their observations, those in Greensboro in about 6 % of their observations, and those in Oulu and Suwon in 3–4 % of their observations. Children in Kisumu were involved in conversation in 7 % of their observations, less than those in Porto Alegre (9 %), Greensboro (9 %), Obninsk (10 %), Tartu (11 %), and Oulu (17 %), but more than the children in Suwon (6 %).

Kisumu children were much more involved in work (15 % of their observations) than were their counterparts in Porto Alegre (5 %). However, the children in the remaining cities were observed being involved in work between 8 and 13 % of the observations. Thus, it is difficult to argue that the children in Kisumu were engaged in work to a much greater extent than those in other cities, a finding that does not fit well with what scholars of child rearing in Kenya have traditionally portrayed. Moreover, children in Porto Alegre were less likely to be involved in work than in any city where we collected data, hardly supporting the idea that Majority World children are more likely than those in the Minority World to be involved in work.

On the basis of these data, one might be tempted to say that children in these Kenyan and Brazilian cities engaged in similar types of everyday activities and interactions as did children in cities in other parts of the world and thus hardly seem "vulnerable" or in need of "defending." After all, they spent the majority of their time in play and were involved in the other activities to similar extents as their counterparts elsewhere. However, before yielding to this temptation, we need to consider (a) variations in the subcategories of each of these activities and (b) within-city variations, as a function of social class.

Across-group differences were seen most clearly in the play objects of Kisumu children (from both social-class groups). They were the only children who played to a similar extent with toys (13 %), objects from the natural world (8 %), with no object at all (9 %), and, most frequently, with objects from the adult world (16 %). For example, children in Kisumu were seen playing with Vaseline containers, bottle tops, an old oil bottle, a tube of toothpaste, old cassette tapes, a spice container, a box of cookies, a walking stick, an abandoned wheel, and innumerable other objects from the adult world. The Kisumu children also played far more with objects from the natural world (leaves, branches, clay) or with no objects at all than did other children (Tudge, 2008; Tudge et al., 2006). Perhaps not surprisingly, they watched television less often, both among the middle-class children (3 % of observations), whose families owned televisions, and working-class children (2 %).

By contrast, middle- and working-class children from Porto Alegre played with similar types of objects as did children elsewhere. For example, they played with toys in about a quarter of our observations and also watched television a lot, in 8 % (middle-class children) and 12 % (working-class children) of our observations. They were far less likely to play with objects from the natural world (1 %), with objects from the adult world (7 %), or with no object at all (4 %).

We were also interested in the extent to which children played with objects that were designed to be relevant to school and learning (looking at books, playing with things that had numbers on them, geometric shapes, etc.). Middle-class children in Kisumu engaged in these activities in almost 7 % of their observations, twice as often as their working-class counterparts and almost twice as often as their middle-class counterparts in Porto Alegre (3.5 %). The working-class children in Porto Alegre, however, were almost never observed in this type of play (0.3 %), less often than any other group of children. To put these data into broader perspective, middle-class children in Suwon (Korea) were by far the most likely to have been observed engaged in this type of play (over 14 % of their observations), but their middle-class counterparts in Kisumu played with school-relevant objects more than children from any other group.

A similar pattern was observed when looking at the lessons in which children were involved—particularly school-relevant lessons (providing information or asking questions about numbers, letters or words, time, etc.). The middle-class children in Kisumu were observed more than those in any other group in this type of lesson (4.5 %), whereas the children in Porto Alegre were among the fewest engaged in such lessons (1 % and 0.4 % for the middle-class and working-class children, respectively). To put these data into broader perspective, White middle-class children in the United States are portrayed as being regularly engaged in rather didactic lessons (Rogoff, 1990, 2003; Tudge, 2008). Not only did the middle-class children in Kisumu engage in twice as many such lessons as did children from White middle-class families in Greensboro (2.2 %), they also did so almost twice as often as their middle-class counterparts in Suwon (2.6 %) and Obninsk in Russia (2.3 %). Middle-class children in each city were involved in more of these types of lessons than were their working-class counterparts.

Conversations, like all types of lessons, necessarily involve interaction with someone else. The Kisumu children were involved in relatively little conversation with adults, although still more so than the literature on Kenyan child-rearing practices has suggested (around 3 % for both the middle- and working-class Kisumu children). The Porto Alegre children, by comparison, conversed twice as much with adults (8 and 6 %), which was about the median across all groups. However, the Kisumu children were involved in more child-to-child conversation (around 2 %) than were children in any other group, more than twice as often as their Porto Alegre counterparts.

Young middle-class White children in the United States are said to converse a lot with adults, particularly with their mothers (Rogoff, 2003). We found that this group of children from Greensboro was involved in far more conversation with one or more adults (over 11 % of our observations) than were their working-class counterparts (6 %) and more than the two equivalent groups of Black children (3 % and 4 %, respectively). However, this amount of conversation pales by comparison with the Finnish children (almost 12 and 16 % of observations of the middle- and working-class Oulu children).

The final type of activity in which we were interested was work. Although the children we observed were only 3 years old, many of them were involved in little tasks around the home, and some went on small errands to nearby shops. The literature on child rearing in Kenya suggests that children there are quite heavily involved in work, and, as noted earlier, these Luo children were more involved in work than were children in any other city. However, when looking separately by the social-class background of their families, only the working-class children were heavily involved in work.

Our measure of work included both participation in and close observation of others working. When we examined only participation in work (doing chores, going to fetch something from a local shop, etc.), we found that the working-class Kisumu children did indeed participate more in work (8 % of their observations) than did children from any other group, but not greatly more so than did children from Obninsk and Tartu (around 6–7 % of their observations). In other words, these Luo children did work, but not to a much greater extent than children from parts of northeast Europe. More interestingly, their middle-class counterparts in Kisumu participated in work in just 2 % of their observations, a proportion that was lower than that of the children in Greensboro and Suwon and very similar to the extent to which children in Porto Alegre participated in work.

The impact of child care. We can understand better why it was that the Kisumu children (but not those from Porto Alegre) engaged in the activities in which they did by looking at where they spent their time. As mentioned earlier, the children were observed everywhere they spent time, and one of the settings in which some of the children were found was a formal child care center.

However, there were some clear social-class differences in both attendance and in child care facilities. Six of the ten Kisumu children from middle-class

backgrounds spent more than 20 % of their time in a formal child care setting, whereas only one of the working-class children did so (and his child care setting had materials that were either old or locally constructed). By contrast, in both social-class groups in Porto Alegre, eight of the ten children spent at least this proportion of their time in child care, although the facilities, again, differed greatly by social class. Examining just those children who spent a significant proportion (20 % or more) of their time in child care, those in Kisumu engaged in very different proportions of activities when at child care compared to elsewhere. For example, they spent a much smaller proportion of their time engaged in play when in child care. By contrast, the children in Porto Alegre spent a greater proportion of their time playing while at child care than they did elsewhere (as was also the case for the White children in Greensboro).

Virtually all of the children from each group who were often in child care spent more time playing with school-relevant objects (looking at books, playing with mathematically shaped blocks, etc.) inside child care than outside. In Kisumu, however, the differences were dramatic; the middle-class Luo children were observed in some type of school-relevant play in 15 % of their observations in child care, compared to just 5 % when not in child care. The one working-class Luo child who spent much time in child care was actually observed in this type of play in 25 % of his observations there, but virtually never outside of it. To put these findings into perspective, children in the other groups were typically observed playing with school-relevant objects in less than 5 % of their observations within child care. Children from middle-class homes in Porto Alegre engaged in this type of play in a little over 4 % of their observations; their working-class counterparts were almost never seen playing with school-relevant objects (0.4 % of their observations).

The findings were even more striking when looking at school-relevant lessons. In all other groups, the proportion of these types of lessons observed within child care was similar to the proportion observed when the children were in other settings. The children in Kisumu (middle class and working class alike) were engaged in school-relevant lessons in approximately 20 % of their observations within child care and 1–2 % elsewhere. By contrast, the middle-class children in Porto Alegre were involved in school-relevant lessons in just over 2 % of their observations and their working-class peers in just 0.2 % of their observations. To put these percentages into a wider perspective (Tudge, 2008; Tudge et al., 2006), it is worth noting that the White Greensboro children from both social classes were involved in these types of lessons in approximately 1 % of their child care observations and the Black children from Greensboro in over 2 % (middle class) and almost 4 % (working class) of their child care observations. In other words, the Kisumu children who attended formal child care spent a large proportion of their time engaged in either play with school-related objects or in school-relevant lessons. By contrast, the working-class children in Porto Alegre were almost never involved in these types of activities, although their middle-class peers were more likely to be observed in these activities than were White children in Greensboro.

Discussion and Conclusion

The data that we have reported here look different from much that has been reported in the existing literature about children's experiences in both Kenya and Brazil. The middle-class children in Porto Alegre were typically involved in similar activities and interactions as were their counterparts in other parts of the world. This was also true, with the exception of school-relevant activities and interactions, of the middle-class children in Kisumu. The experiences of the working-class children in both cities were different from those of their middle-class counterparts, although in neither case were these experiences much like what has been reported in the literature. The only similarity with the literature was that the working-class children in Kisumu were involved in somewhat more work than was true for children in any other group. They were observed helping their older siblings clean the house, taking laundry to be cleaned, helping chop vegetables for dinner, and going on errands to nearby shops.

The clearest difference between the activities and interactions of children in Kisumu and Porto Alegre and those of children in the other cities related to their experiences within child care. Clearly, the function of child care centers in Kisumu is to give children experience with school-relevant objects and concepts—almost half of the time that children spent in child care was devoted to explicit or implicit preparation for school. By contrast, in Porto Alegre (as in many other groups), the function of child care seemed to be more related to allowing children to play. This is not to say that the child care teachers were not interested in preparing children for school, but perhaps believed that children learn in the course of their play. At least, this may be the case for the teachers of middle-class children in Porto Alegre. Given the history of a two-tiered system of early care and education in Brazil (care for the children of poor and working-class families; education for the children of the wealthy—see Freitas, Shelton, & Sperb, 2009), teachers in child care centers that can be afforded by working-class parents may have seen their role as simply providing a secure place for children to play while their parents were working.

Although these data are merely a sketch of the types of activities in which children in Kisumu and Porto Alegre are involved (Tudge, 2008), they provide a different picture of children's lives than that provided by the existing literature on children's lives in Kenya and Brazil. We are not trying to deny, by any means, the poverty that can be found in both countries, where many children go hungry on the streets of large cities, and others spend more time engaged in work than attending school. These children are vulnerable and clearly would benefit from being protected from hunger, from too much labor, and from many other social inequities.

But we cannot talk about the Majority World experience as though it is simply of one type, as these data clearly demonstrate. Both Kenya and Brazil are large, complex, and highly diverse societies (Freitas et al., 2009; Swadener, 2000); we would be equally guilty of committing the synecdochal error (Serpell, 2008) were we to describe Kenyan or Brazilian childhood as exemplified by the children in our study (whether from middle-class or working-class backgrounds) as would those who focus exclusively on children of non-schooled parents living in rural areas or on children living on the streets of Kenya or Brazil.

But by the same token, it would be a mistake to view the Minority World experiences as uniform. Concerns about the ways in which the Minority World has exported its views regarding "appropriate" values and practices to the rest of the world are not misguided, but should be expressed in a more subtle form, as being reflective of the current values and practices of particular groups (dominant groups, needless to say) within some Anglo-European Minority World societies. In fact, precisely the same argument about the impact of the Minority World on the Majority World could be made about the attempts on the part of middle-class educators and psychologists to impose their particular sets of values and practices onto members of nondominant groups within their societies (e.g., on working-class families and children or on racial or ethnic minorities).

Both Kenya and Brazil are considered part of the Majority World, but children's child care experiences in Kisumu and Porto Alegre could not look much more different. In one case children are being prepared for formal schooling, and in the other they are being given opportunities to play in a safe environment. We make no claims that one approach is "better" than another—such a judgment surely depends on the society's current values, beliefs, and expectations about child development.

Moreover, even within these two countries can be seen different approaches to child care. In Kenya and Brazil, when children of the poor spend time in a child care center, they are much more likely to be cared for rather than educated. As Swadener (2000) has documented, the major goal behind providing child care settings for young children in Kenyan tea and coffee plantations is to make it easier for mothers to work. Children of middle-class or wealthy Kenyan families, however, go to a child care center in order to ensure that they will later be able to enter one of the more prestigious schools. A very similar claim can be made for both the United States and Brazil (Freitas et al., 2008), with two parallel systems of care and education being developed.

If we want policy makers to use resources wisely and help those children and families who really are in need of assistance because of the difficult, dangerous, and poverty-stricken conditions they are in, we, as researchers, have to do a better job of showing that heterogeneity exists in any society. It is insufficient to rail at the nefarious impact of the Minority World on the families and children of the Majority World. Instead, we need to show the ways in which the values, beliefs, and practices of some groups in the Minority World are exported to some parts of the Majority World (and to some parts of the Minority World, as well) and how they are welcomed by some groups in the Majority World at the expense of other groups. Only then can we begin to consider appropriate ways of combining both local and global policies and practices relating to raising children (Fleer et al., 2009).

References

Alves, P. B., Koller, S. H., Silva, A. S., Santos, C. L., Silva, M. R., Reppold, C. T., et al. (2002). Atividades cotidianas de crianças em situação de rua [Daily activities of children in the street]. *Psicologia: Teoria e Pesquisa [Psychology: Theory and Research], 18*, 305–313.

Campos, R., Antunes, C. M., Raffaelli, M., Halsey, N., Ude, W., Greco, M., et al. (1994). Social networks and daily activities of street youth in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. *Child Development, 65*, 319–330.

Cole, M., & Scribner, S. (1974). *Culture and thought: A psychological introduction*. New York, NY: Wiley.

Corsaro, W. A. (2005). *The sociology of childhood* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

D'Abreu, R. C., Mullis, A. K., & Cook, L. R. (1999). The resiliency of street children in Brazil. *Adolescence, 34*, 745–751.

Edwards, C. P., & Whiting, B. B. (2004). *Ngecha: A Kenyan village in a time of rapid social change*. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Ember, C. R. (1981). A cross-cultural perspective on sex differences. In R. H. Munroe, R. G. Munroe, & B. B. Whiting (Eds.), *Handbook of cross cultural human development* (pp. 531–580). New York, NY: Garland Press.

Fleer, M., Hedegaard, M., & Tudge, J. R. H. (Eds.). (2009). *The world year book of education 2009: Childhood studies and the impact of globalization—Policies and practices at global and local levels*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Freitas, L. B. L., Shelton, T. L., & Sperb, T. M. (2009). Conceptions of early early child care and education in Brazil. In M. Fleer, M. Hedegaard, & J. R. H. Tudge (Eds.), *The world year book of education 2009: Childhood studies and the impact of globalization—Policies and practices at global and local levels* (pp. 271–291). New York, NY: Routledge.

Freitas, L. B. L., Shelton, T. L., & Tudge, J. R. H. (2008). Conceptions of US and Brazilian early childhood care and education: A historical and comparative analysis. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 32*(2), 161–170.

Guberman, S. R. (1996). The development of everyday mathematics in Brazilian children with limited formal education. *Child Development, 67*, 1609–1623.

Harkness, S., & Super, C. M. (1985). The cultural context of gender segregation in children's peer groups. *Child Development, 56*(1), 219–224.

Hecht, T. (1998). *At home in the street: Street children of Northeast Brazil*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Kağıtçıbaşı, C. (1996). *Family and human development across cultures: A view from the other side*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Keller, H. (2007). *Cultures of infancy*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Koller, S. H. (Ed.) (2004). *Ecologia do desenvolvimento humano: Pesquisa e intervenção no Brasil* [The ecology of human development: Research and intervention in Brazil]. São Paulo, Brazil: Casa do Psicólogo.

LeVine, R. A. (1989). Cultural environments in child development. In W. Damon (Ed.), *Child development today and tomorrow* (pp. 52–68). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

LeVine, R. A., Dixon, S., LeVine, S., Richman, A., Leiderman, P. H., Keefer, C. H., et al. (1994). *Child care and culture: Lessons from Africa*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

LeVine, R. A., & LeVine, B. B. (1963). Nyansongo: A Gusii community in Kenya. In B. B. Whiting (Ed.), *Six cultures: Studies of child rearing* (pp. 14–202). New York, NY: Wiley.

Nsamenang, A. B. (2004). *Cultures of human development and education: Challenge to growing up Africa*. New York, NY: Nova.

Nsamenang, A. B. (2005). The intersection of traditional African education with school learning. In L. Swartz, C. de la Rey, & N. Duncan (Eds.), *Psychology: An introduction* (pp. 327–337). Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Nsamenang, A. B. (2008). Culture and human development. *International Journal of Psychology, 43*(2), 73–77.

Nunes, T., Schliemann, A.-L., & Carraher, D. (1993). *Street mathematics and school mathematics*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Odero, D. A. (1998). *Everyday activities and social partners of Luo children in an urban Kenyan setting*: *The roles of culture*, *class*, *and gender*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Piccinini, C. A., Tudge, J. R. H., Lopes, R. S., & Sperb, T. M. (1998). *O impacto de fatores iniciais do desenvolvimento nas interações pais-crianças e no comportamento social de crianças: Estudo longitudinal da gestação ao 7th ano de vida das crianças* [The impact of initial factors of development on parent–child interactions and on the social behavior of children: A longitudinal study from gestation to the 7th year of life]. Unpublished research proposal, Porto Alegre, Brazil.

Rebhun, L.-A. (2005). Families in Brazil. In J. L. Roopnarine & U. P. Gielen (Eds.), *Families in global perspective* (pp. 330–343). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Rogoff, B. (1990). *Apprenticeship in thinking: Cognitive development in social context*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Rogoff, B. (2003). *The cultural nature of human development*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Saxe, G. B. (1991). *Culture and cognitive development: Studies in mathematical understanding*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Scheper-Hughes, N. (1985). Culture, scarcity, and maternal thinking: Maternal detachment and infant survival in a Brazilian shantytown. *Ethos, 13*, 291–317.

Scheper-Hughes, N. (1990). Mother love and child death in northeast Brazil. In J. W. Stigler, R. A. Shweder, & G. Herdt (Eds.), *Cultural psychology: Essays on comparative human development* (pp. 542–565). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Scheper-Hughes, N. (1992). *Death without weeping: The violence of everyday life in Brazil*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Schliemann, A. D., Carraher, D. W., & Ceci, S. J. (1997). Everyday cognition. In J. W. Berry, P. R. Dasen, & T. S. Saraswathi (Eds.), *Handbook of cross-cultural psychology. Vol.2: Basic processes and human development* (pp. 177–216). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Serpell, R. (2008, July). *African socialization*: *Goals*, *practices and policies*. Invited address, biennial meetings of the International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development, Würzburg, Germany.

Serpell, R., & Jere-Folotiya, J. (2008). Developmental assessment, cultural context, gender, and schooling in Zambia. *International Journal of Psychology, 43*(2), 88–96.

Sigman, M., Neumann, C., Carter, D. J., D'Souza, S., & Bwibo, N. (1988). Home interactions and the development of Embu toddlers in Kenya. *Child Development, 59*(5), 1251–1261.

Silva, A. S., Reppold, C. T., Santos, C. L., Prade, L. T., Silva, M. R., Alves, P. B., et al. (1998). Crianças em situação de rua: Um estudo descritivo [Street children in Porto Alegre: A descriptive study]. *Psicologia: Reflexão e Crítica [Psychology: Reflection and Criticism], 11*(3), 441–447.

Swadener, B. B. (2000). *Does the village still raise the child? A collaborative study of changing child-rearing and early education in Kenya*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Tudge, J. R. H. (2008). *The everyday lives of young children: Culture, class, and child rearing in diverse societies*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Tudge, J. R. H., Doucet, F., Odero, D., Sperb, T., Piccinini, C., & Lopes, R. (2006). A window into different cultural worlds: Young children's everyday activities in the United States, Kenya, and Brazil. *Child Development, 77*(5), 1446–1469.

Wagner, D. A. (1993). *Literacy, culture, and development: Becoming literate in Morocco*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Weisner, T. S. (1979). Urban–rural differences in sociable and disruptive behavior of Kenya children. *Ethnology, 18*(2), 153–172.

Weisner, T. S. (1989). Cultural and universal aspects of social support for children: Evidence from the Abaluyia of Kenya. In D. Belle (Ed.), *Children's social networks and social supports* (pp. 70–90). New York, NY: Wiley.

Weisner, T. S. (1996). Why ethnography should be the most important method in the study of human development. In R. Jessor, A. Colby, & R. A. Shweder (Eds.), *Ethnography and human development: Context and meaning in social enquiry* (pp. 305–324). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Weisner, T. S., Bradley, C., & Kilbride, P. L. (1997). *African families and the crisis of social change*. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.
Weisner, T. S., & Gallimore, R. (1977). My brother's keeper: Child and sibling caretaking. *Current Anthropology, 18*(2), 169–190.
Wenger, M. (1989). Work, play, and social relationships among children in a Giriama community. In D. Belle (Ed.), *Children's social networks and social supports* (pp. 91–115). New York, NY: Wiley.
Whiting, B. B. (1996). The effect of social change on concepts of the good child and good mothering: A study of families in Kenya. *Ethos, 24*, 3–35.
Whiting, B. B., & Edwards, C. P. (1988). *Children of different worlds: The formation of social behavior*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Whiting, B. B., & Whiting, J. W. M. (1975). *Children of six cultures: A psycho-cultural analysis*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Chapter 10
Child Labor and Child Well-Being: The Case of Children in Marine Fishing in Ghana

Emmanuel K. Adusei

In Ghana, work in children's lives is part of the socialization process and a means of transmitting acquired skills from parents to children in preparation for responsible adulthood. But the type of work and conditions under which some children work are excessive and hazardous. The Ghana Child Labour Survey (GSS, 2003) estimated the number of Ghanaian children (aged 5–17 years) to be 6,361,111 (35.5 % of Ghana's national population). Of this number, about 20 % were involved in child labor, and 3.9 % aged 13–17 years were involved in hazardous work. Most children (57 %) engaged in child labor were associated with agriculture including the forestry and fishing industries. The survey revealed that 64.3 % of working children combined school and work. According to *The State of The World's Children 2006* (UNICEF, 2006), children engaged in hazardous labor not only risk injury and sickness but also miss out on education that would provide them with the foundation for future employment.

As a source of income and livelihood, fishing in general is an occupation with specialized activities that are recognized as inherently hazardous. The majority of the fisher folk in Ghana are small-scale artisanal fishermen with many challenges. The sector is generally characterized by low levels of production, leading to low incomes, poor living conditions, and chronic indebtedness (ICSF, 2004). Studies have described numerous risks and dangers associated with child labor in fishing. Children engaged in fishing activities are faced with the potential hazards of drowning, sunstroke, insect and mammal attacks, respiratory problems, blindness, hearing problems, drug exposure and addiction, and physical and psychological mistreatment (Godoy, 2002).

Ghana has over a decade-old policy of child rights protections that prohibits child labor and a comprehensive legal framework for child protection. The Constitution of

E.K. Adusei, M.Phil (✉)
Community Development Specialist & Researcher, P.O. Box OS 2800, Osu, Accra, Ghana
e-mail: keadusei@yahoo.com

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9_10,

Ghana (1992), in Chapter five (Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms), Article 28 (2), includes a provision related to work and welfare of children: "Every child has the right to be protected from engaging in work that constitutes a threat to his health, education or development." The 1998 Children's Act (Act 560) specifically bans the engagement of children in hazardous and exploitative labor as does the Criminal Procedure Code, 1960, and the Courts Act, 1994, which mandate that security and judicial services must act on child rights violations, including child labor (Children's Act, 1998).

To strengthen the legal standing and ensure the continuation of the prohibition of child labor as a national agenda, Ghana has ratified all of the International Labor Organisation's (ILO) fundamental rights conventions, except the Minimum Age Convention, No 138(ILO, 1973), which is in the process of ratification. Government and nongovernmental organizations are all implementing various programs that impact various child rights protections, including child labor elimination. In spite of these provisions and activities to combat child labor, the phenomenon still persists (GSS, 2003).

Effective elimination or reduction of child labor in fishing, which is most damaging to the safety, health, and education of children, requires both conceptual understanding and empirical evidence of how it affects the well-being of the children in fishing. Knowledge of the issues is central to the design of policies and programs that protect and promote the well-being of children, especially those in fishing. However, in Ghana, there has been no comprehensive study of child labor in fishing. The aim of the current study is to understand the socioeconomic background of children engaged in marine fishing in Accra, Ghana; the tasks they perform; the conditions under which they work; and the effects of fishing on their health and education.

What Is Child Labor?

In Ghana, a child is defined as a person below the age of 18 years. The term child labor applies to the illegal employment of children under age 15, children of all ages who work between 8:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., and those under age 18 involved in hazardous work. Work is hazardous when it poses a danger to the health, safety, or morals of a person. Going to sea, mining and quarrying, porterage of heavy loads, work in manufacturing industries where chemicals are produced or used, work in places where machines are used, and work in places such as bars (pubs), hotels, and places of adult-focused entertainment where a child may be exposed to immoral behavior are all classified as hazardous work (Children's Act, 1998). Child labor is often associated with any activity performed by children that is detrimental to their health, physical development, and education, which negatively affects their human capital and the prospects for career development in future or adult life (Kooijmans, 1998).

Method

Participants

This study used a mixed descriptive and structured survey along with in-depth interviews on a sample drawn from 100 child workers in a marine fishing suburb. Two groups were compared, children who had dropped out of school or had never been to school were compared to those who combined fishing with schooling. Additionally, inclusion in the study required the following selection criteria specified below:

- Those who lived in Chorkor, a suburb of Accra, and its environs
- Those between the ages of 6 and 16 years old (the study focused on children within the compulsory age of school, being cognizant of the national net enrollment ratio of 68.8 % (MOESS, 2006)

Chorkor was specifically selected because it has marine fishing as the mainstay of its economy, and of the five main fishing areas in Accra, Chorkor is the only vibrant fishing community where no major program to eliminate child labor had been initiated or implemented.

The study recruited equal numbers of children attending school ($n = 50$) who combined fishing and schooling and children who were fishing but not attending school ($n = 50$). Additionally, key informants were interviewed, including two head teachers of basic schools, two chief fishermen, one health worker, one social worker, and the assembly member of the area.

Sampling

The study was conducted between July 2006 and May 2007. Because the number of child workers in marine fishing in Chorkor was unknown, the 100 responding children were selected through a snowball recruitment process. One child worker in marine fishing who had never attended school or dropped out of school was identified and interviewed and asked to suggest other possible respondents who were subsequently interviewed until 50 out-of-school children in fishing had been interviewed. The same process was used to select and interview the other 50 children who combined marine fishing and schooling. Key informants were purposively selected to aid in recruitment but also for interview purposes.

Two methods were used in the data collection: interviews based on a structured survey and in-depth interviews using an interview guide for the key informants and observation.

Ethical Issues

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 12 (UNCRC, 1989), states that a child's viewpoint must be accorded appropriate significance in relation to the child's age and maturity. Children have knowledge and a right to be heard, as they are the best informed about important aspects of their lives. Children should also be given joint determination, such as the right to refuse participation in a given study. Before engaging the children in this study, permission was acquired from the parents and the community leaders. They were provided with sufficient information regarding the aims of the study, the methodology being used, and the discomfort that participation in the study might entail, such as lost work time or fatigue from the hour-long interview sessions.

Additionally, all participants were informed of their right to self-determination to abstain from participation at any time. The integrity of the participants was respected, and all measures were taken to respect the participants' confidentiality, as well. To this end, anonymous survey procedure was used so that data collected could not be linked to respondents as the study becomes public.

Findings

Socioeconomic Background of Child Workers

Age of Respondents: The age distribution of the children interviewed varied between 6 and 16 years. All the respondents were boys from Chorkor, except one who hailed from Osu. The main factor attributed to this particular phenomenon of all boys in fishing is that fishing is considered an activity for males in the study area. The females, however, are involved in fish preservation and sales. Analysis of the age distribution of the children revealed that a majority (85 %) of the children were between 9 and 16 years of age. This confirms a key informant's assertion that children in the community start fishing between age 8 and 9 years, and by age 16 they would have grasped all the skills and experience needed in marine fishing. There was, however, no significant difference in the ages of those in school (mean = 11.50) and those out of school (mean = 12.42).

Who Respondents Live with and Fathers' Occupation: Most (82 %) of the respondents were living with one or both parents. Twelve percent lived with relatives, and 6 %, all of whom not in school, were living with unrelated employers.

A much higher proportion of the respondents' fathers were fishermen (87 %) as compared to those who did not know their fathers' occupation (6 %), others who could only describe their fathers' occupation as "government workers" (4 %), and fathers who were drivers (3 %).

Table 10.1 Distribution of children's educational level

Educational Level	Frequency	Percentage
Children in School		
Primary	43	86
Junior Secondary School (JSS)	6	12
Kindergarten	1	2
Total	50	100
Children out of school		
Never been to school	20	40
Stopped school at primary	29	58
Stopped school at JSS	1	2
Total	50	100

Source: Field survey (2006)

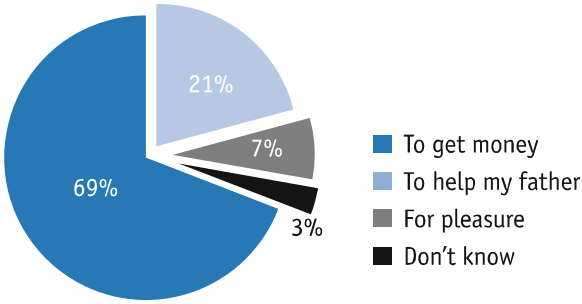

Fig. 10.1 Reasons why children engaged in fishing (*Source*: Field survey 2006)

Respondents' Educational Level: The majority (86 %) of the children in school were in the primary level. Among the out-of-school children, 58 % stopped schooling at the primary level. A significant percentage (40 %) of the children had not been to school as shown in Table 10.1 (Fig. 10.1).

For those who earned income, the least amount earned per month was 8.00 Ghanaian cedis (2.41 %), and the highest income per month was 70 Ghanaian cedis (2.41 %).

Fifty-six percent of those who had never been to school did not go to school because the parents could not pay their school fees, 31 % did not want to attend school, and 13 % were unable to say why they did not enroll in school. When the children were asked whether they would go to school if given the opportunity, 45 % said they would not go to school. Among those who would not go to school, 60 % wanted to remain on their jobs, and the others (40 %) feared they might not be able to catch up with the rest of the children in school.

Reasons given by those who dropped out of school were lack of finances to support their education (41 %), difficulty of studies (22 %), interference of school with work (15 %), and working full time and, therefore, being too tired after work to continue with school work (7 %). An appreciable proportion of children (4 %) who were all age 12 and above said they work to support themselves and family and, therefore, could not combine work with school.

Noticeably, half of the children studied were of school age but had never been to school or had dropped out of school. Surprisingly, a significant number of them would not go to school even though basic education in Ghana has been free and compulsory since 2001. Although only 26 % of children made the explicit connection between work and school attendance, the broader implication can be drawn. It can be concluded, therefore, that since most of the children worked in their household fishing enterprise to support their families and themselves, to stop work and go to school full time would mean household enterprises would not function, and, for that matter, families would lose livelihoods and income.

Reasons for Working in Marine Fishing

Most (69 %) of the children said they went into fishing to get money. A significant proportion (21 %) intimated they were helping with the family business.

Most (35 %) of the child workers earned 40.00 Ghanaian cedis or 30.00 Ghanaian cedis (16 %). Eighty-three percent of those who earned 40.00 Ghanaian cedis a month worked for their fathers. The majority of the children earned incomes less than the national minimum wage of 1.9 Ghanaian cedis a day (as of 2007), thus 57 Ghanaian cedis a month.

The main reason why children worked in marine fishing was to get money to supplement family income and to take care of their basic needs, including education. Most of the child workers' parents were in the fishing industry, and children's labor seems linked to this given their high involvement in the industry.

Who Employs the Children?

In finding out who the children work for, responses revealed that 39 % worked for their parents, while 34 % worked for employers they were not related to. Twenty-two percent said they worked with their relatives, and these children were living with the relatives they worked with. Generally, the most common form of child labor in marine fishing is family labor as reported by 61 % of the respondents.

In explaining why children were engaged in fishing, the chief fisherman said, "There are specific tasks that are the preserve of children because they perform them better than adults did, the fishermen would prefer the children to perform those tasks than adults".

Tasks Performed by Children in Fishing

The children were involved in virtually all the activities in marine fishing, except net casting as shown in Table 10.2.

Table 10.2 Tasks children performed in both lean and peak seasons

Task	Count	Percentage of responses	Percentage of cases
Lean season			
Pull rope	50	39.7	51
Pull net	62	49.2	63.3
Collect water from canoe	8	6.3	8.2
Paddle canoe	2	1.6	2
Go on errands	4	3.2	4.1
Total responses	126	100	128.6
Peak season			
Pull rope	43	32.1	43
Pull net	55	41	55
Collect water from canoe	36	26.9	36
Total responses	134	100	134

Source: Field survey (2006)

Among the tasks performed by the children, net-pulling was the dominant task during both lean (49 %) and peak (41 %) seasons. Children between the ages of 9 and 16 years engage in this aspect of fishing. Rope-pulling in lean season (40 %) and peak season (32 %) was performed mostly by children between the ages of 8 and 16 years. Mostly, the 12-year-olds expelled water that found its way into the old canoes. About 2 % of the children paddled canoes during the lean fishing season (October–March).

Marine fishing is a vocation with very distinct procedures and processes for imparting fishing skills to the young ones. After a child has gained dexterity in a task, he proceeds to learn another task seen as more difficult than the previous one. The first basic task to learn in fishing is going on errands for the fishermen, followed by rope-pulling, net-pulling, expelling water from canoes during fishing expeditions, and paddling canoes. Casting of nets is seen as a task performed by adults or more experienced children. None of the children studied were involved in casting fishing nets.

Although age is a factor in determining the ability of a child to perform a task, it is not always so. The ability of a child to grasp a task faster allows him to progress to the next stage of tasks or activities. The higher one progresses in the stages of tasks, the higher their income.

Working Hours

The number of hours the children worked per day was exhausting, ranging from 2 to 8 or more hours, with night fishing taking most of the time. Most of the children worked between 4 and 5 h in the day (51 %). Only 1 % worked more than 8 hours in a day. In the night, 41 % worked between 5 and 6 h, 35 % worked between 7 and 8 h,

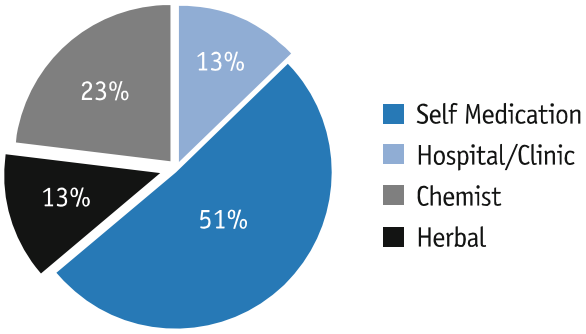

Fig. 10.2 Type of treatment injured children received (*Source*: Field survey, 2006)

and 23 % worked for 8 or more hours. Sixty-one percent of out-of-school children worked more than 8 h in the night as compared to 39 % of the children in school.

Children in marine fishing work 6 days a week during peak fishing season. The majority of them work the same hours as adults in formal employment (8 h) but 1 day more than civil or public servants, who work 5 days a week.

Work-Related Health and Safety Hazards

To a great extent, a majority (90 %) of the children were aware of the risks they were exposed to by working in marine fishing. The most common forms of accident suffered by the children were falling into the canoe (42 %), injury from the rope or net (26 %), falling into the sea (19 %), fish sting (8 %), and canoe capsizing (5 %). A key informant had this to say, "At times a child falls into the canoe and breaks his ribs or falls into the water. It is risky. The propeller (on the outboard motor) could hurt him, especially, if the canoe operator did not see him fall into the water."

About 36 % of the children revealed that most of the injuries they suffered were light and did not stop them from working, 33 % stopped working temporarily, 27 % considered the injuries they suffered as something that needed no medical attention, and 4 % were hospitalized as a result of work-related injuries. Generally, only 13 % went to the hospital or clinic for treatment as shown in Fig. 10.2.

Child workers in marine fishing suffer a lot of hazards. In spite of these hazards, the children are not provided with protective gear while at work, and also, they do not get proper medical treatment for injuries or illnesses they sustain. This can threaten the children's immediate or long-term health and could completely distort their future working capacity. Several studies have shown that individuals who start work earlier have worse self-reported health status as adults (Fassa, Facchimi, Dall'Agnol & Christiani, 2000; Gruiffrida, Iunes & Savedoff, 2001).

It can be concluded that perception of poor health varies with what individuals are accustomed to and with their medical knowledge. In Chorkor where health-care facilities are limited, child workers in marine fishing often have a lower perception of morbidity even though they may be in much worse general health. This has negative implications for their well-being.

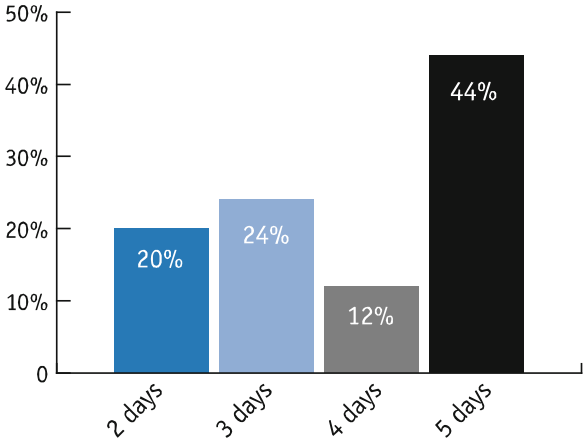

Fig. 10.3 Number of days respondents attended school in a week (*Source*: Field survey, 2006)

Combining Schooling and Fishing

Most (56 %) of the children who combined fishing and schooling did not attend school regularly. Fifty-eight percent reported that fishing activities affected their studies; 62 % forgot whatever they were taught in school due to frequent absenteeism; and 38 % felt too tired to study after fishing expeditions. A school head teacher had this to say, "The nearness of the school to the seashore does not help as schoolboys play truancy to take up odd jobs for money in the fishing activities. This affects the level of education in the community. Most of the child workers in fishing sleep through class and lose out on the teaching-learning interchange."

Time spent by a child on work has a negative impact on academic performance (Heady, 2000; Ray, 2002). In acknowledging that school attendance may not be a good measure of educational achievement, Heady (2000) postulates that time spent by a child in work has a negative impact on reading and mathematics. Although, the extent to which interference of work and its impact on child educational performance is not known, the *prima facie* conclusion is that since child workers do not have enough time for their studies due to child labor, their academic performance is impaired; invariably, this affects their human capital accumulation. Failure to invest in human capital means that the working children will be impoverished parents of tomorrow and perpetuate the cycle of child labor in the future (Esguerra, 2004) (Fig. 10.3).

Conclusion

The main findings of this study showed that the child workers in marine fishing are working for either parents or other relatives. Small-scale artisanal marine fishing in Ghana is generally an occupation with specialized activities that are inherently

hazardous, yet children work in these hazardous fishing environments to the detriment of their well-being due to sociocultural practice, poverty, ignorance, and demand for cheap labor. Fishing in the life of children of Chorkor, Accra, is seen as an integral part of the socialization process and a means of transmitting acquired skills from parents in preparation towards responsible adulthood. Coupled with the inability of households to meet basic needs as a result of poverty and the fact that most children do not go to school, families put children into marine fishing to improve their conditions.

Child labor in marine fishing is closely connected to education. Most of the child workers do not attend school regularly, which impairs their studies, culminating in the loss of human capital. This serves as a recipe for the perpetuation of the child labor phenomenon.

Despite child workers being exposed to hazards such as drowning, cuts from ropes and nets, canoes capsizing, and falling into canoes which mostly results in injury, the children do not have access to protective gear and proper medical care. This is dangerous and poses a threat to their immediate and long-term health and completely distorts their future working capacity as adults.

The absence of enforcement of the legislation against child labor in artisanal fishing has offered fishermen an open and free field to operate, but it can be deduced from the study that merely enforcing the laws against child labor would not reduce child labor in marine fishing.

Child labor in marine fishing is a complex phenomenon, and, therefore, it requires a better understanding of its underpinnings and its' practical implications in light of the realities and constraints families living along the coastal areas face. There is a need for a comprehensive study on child labor in fishing, both marine and inland fishing, in Ghana to develop a holistic understanding and approach to eliminating the problem of child labor in fishing in Ghana.

References

Esguerra, E. F. (2004). An analysis of the causes and consequences of child labour in the Philippines.

Fassa, A. G., Facchimi, L. A., Dall'Agnol, M. M., & Christiani, D. C. (2000). Child labor and health: Problems and perspectives. *International Journal of Occupational and Environmental Health, 6*(1), 55–62.

Ghana Statistical Service [GSS]. (2003). *Ghana child labour survey*. Accra, Ghana: Ghana Publishing Corporation.

Godoy, O. (2002). *El Salvador, child labour in fishing: A rapid assessment*. Geneva, Switzerland: International Labour Organisation.

Government of Ghana. (2002a). *The Children's Act, 1998 (Act 560)*. Accra, Ghana: Ghana Publishing Corporation.

Government of Ghana. (2002b). *The constitution of the Republic of Ghana, 1992*. Accra, Ghana: Ghana Publishing Corporation.

Gruiffrida, A., Iunes, R. F., & Savedoff, W. D. (2001). Health and poverty in Brazil: Estimation by structural equation model with latent variables, preliminary draft. October 2001, Mimeo. Washington, DC: Inter-American Development Bank.

Heady, C. (2000). What is the effect of child labour on learning achievement? Evidence from Ghana. Innocenti Working Papers, No. 79. Florence: United Nations Children's Fund, Innocenti Research Centre.

International Collective in Support of Fish workers [ICSF]. (2004). International labour conference and the proposed comprehensive ILO standard on work in the fishing sector. Workshop report, Accra, 21 April 2004.

International Labour Organisation [ILO]. (1973). *Convention 138 minimum Age convention*. Geneva, Switzerland: International Labour Organisation.

Kooijmans, J. (1998). Definitions and Legal Provisions on Child Labour in Southern Africa. International Labour Organisation, Southern Africa Multidisciplinary Advisory Team [ILO/SAMAT], Policy paper series, No. 6. Harare, Zimbabwe: International Labour Organisation.

Ministry of Education, Science & Sports [MOESS]. (2006). "2005 Annual Report."

Ray, R. (2002). The determinants of child labour and child schooling in Ghana. *Journal of African Economies, 11*(4), 561–590.

U N Convention on the Rights of the Child. (1989). UN General Assembly Document. A/RES/44/25.

United Nations children's Fund [UNICEF]. (2006). The state of the world's children 2006. Oxford, England: Oxford University press.

Chapter 11
A World Tour of Selected Intervention Programs for Children of a Parent with a Psychiatric Illness

Joanne Riebschleger

Ronnie, age 11, carried a handwritten list of alternative caregivers in case his mother became too "upset" to take care of him and his younger sister. He did not know that his mother had a mental illness. Five-year-old Nathan said that his mother had to go to the hospital "when I be bad" (Riebschleger, 2004). Lisa, age 9, worried that her father might "argue with everyone and lose his job again … so we can't pay bills" (Riebschleger).

Background Literature

Mental illness is a global health crisis among adults, and children are often the unintended and invisible sufferers. Insufficient mental health resources intensify the problem (WHO, 2007). In many countries of the world, there are scarce or nonexistent mental health services (WHO). Some nations do provide resources but they may not be integrated. For example, mental health services and may be separately administered from physical health services (Samet, Friedmann, & Saitz, 2001; Üstün & Sartorius, 1995). This is true despite the statistic that one in five adults will experience a mental illness at some time in their lives, and one of four mental health consumers have children (NYSOMH, 1997). As such, millions of children have a parent with a psychiatric illness, e.g., major depression, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia (APA, 2004). Like Ronnie, Nathan, and Lisa, other children are coping day to day with the psychiatric symptoms of a parent. These all-too-often "invisible" children typically have little knowledge of psychiatric illness, experience sometime multiple separations from parents, may blame themselves for the parent's level of symptoms, and may be at risk for a range of developmental risk factors

J. Riebschleger, Ph.D., LMSW, ACSW (✉)
School of Social Work, Michigan State University, 254 Baker Hall,
East Lansing, MI, USA
e-mail: riebsch1@msu.edu

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9_11,

(Bohus et al., 1998; Cowling, 1999; Fischer & Gerster, 2005). In addition, they are at higher risk for developing psychiatric illness through genetic (nature) and environmental stress (nurture) mechanisms.

Children of parents with a psychiatric illness are a high-risk population virtually ignored by most mental health treatment systems. Nevertheless some entities are taking note of the unseen plight of these children and some programs are emerging for the children across a number of nations globally (UP-CCI, 2007; VicHealth, 2006). Little is known about these programs, as there is no centralized program database, and they are scattered across a vast geographic area. The overarching purpose of this study was to identify and describe some of these emerging programs for school-age children of a parent with a psychiatric illness and to provide the information to serve as a resource for developing new and expanded programs for children. In this chapter there will be a review of these risks to children in greater detail before turning to a description of existing programs meant to help and support children and youth in this circumstance.

Experiences of Family Members and Children of People with a Psychiatric Illness

Family members report a number of responses to living with a loved one with a psychiatric illness. After reviewing 5,000 peer-reviewed articles, Riebschleger et al. (2008) were able to ascertain seven major themes of a family with a member having a mental illness. The most common family member-reported experiences while living with a person with a psychiatric illness were: (1) stigmatized encounters with others; (2) subjective and objective caregiver burden; (3) inadequate social support; (4) emotional adjustment to the illness of the loved one, per revolving stages of stress, coping, and sometimes adaptation; (5) insufficient information exchange with mental health professionals pertaining to treatment of their loved one; (6) a need for referral to supportive community resources; and (7) frequent family crises when the loved one's level of symptoms increases (Riebschleger et al.).

Children of a parent with a psychiatric illness are particularly vulnerable as they are dependent upon these family systems while the system is under duress. A few other studies have reported the perspectives of children living in families with a parent with a psychiatric illness. Children in this circumstance were concerned about a range of issues, including: (1) worrying about inheriting the illness; (2) worrying about parental suicide; (3) moving to separate living places from a parent during times of psychiatric crises; (4) receiving less attention from a parent and other family members when parental symptoms increase; (5) lacking knowledge of psychiatric illness and mental health treatment; (6) blaming themselves for the parent's illness symptoms; and (7) having difficulties coping with family stress, particularly during times of parental psychiatric crises (Lenz, 2005; Maybery, Ling, Szakacs, & Reupert, 2005; Sherman, 2007). Of critical importance are the significant environmental risk

factors associated with the secondary effects of psychiatric illness that most children and youth experienced, such as poverty, unemployment, underemployment, poor housing, parental divorce/separation, social isolation, domestic violence, parent–child role reversal, child custody losses, child psychopathology symptoms, and a lack of family support (Beardslee, 2002; Maybery et al., 2005; Riebschleger, 2004).

Developmental Risks, Needs, and Resilience

Multiple risk factors can increase the likelihood that youth will develop a "psychotic illness" (Cannon et al., 2008, p. 1) or depression (Weissman et al., 2006). This risk is heightened when children have an increased genetic risk of inheriting a psychiatric disorder (Addington et al., 2007; Henin et al., 2005; Kessler, Berglund, & Foster, 1997; Leverton, 2003; Lewinsohn, Olino, & Klein, 2005). The risk can increase from 10 % to 200 % depending on the disorder and on whether 1 or both parents have the condition (Center for Genetics Education, 2007). Children of a parent with a psychiatric disorder demonstrate increased risks for developing a psychiatric disorder, particularly during late adolescence and early adulthood (Ahern, 2003; Henin et al., 2005). Further, these children face a host of environmental challenges that can increase the likelihood of developmental risks, such as a lag in age-appropriate development, poor school performance, poor peer relationships, teenage parenthood, impairment in attachments, and decreased social competence (Dickstein, Seifer, & Hayden, 1998; Hay et al., 2001; Kessler et al., 1997; Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2004; Seifer et al., 1996).

Riebschleger (2004) asked minor and adult children of a parent with a psychiatric disorder about their needs. The children and young adults indicated the need for more information about psychiatric illness and mental health treatment. They also provided recommendations to other children that included "talk to someone" and "get help earlier." Above all, they stressed that the youth needed to understand that the parent's psychiatric illness "is not your [youth's] fault." This last message to other children in their situation is considered termination of a blaming cognition.

Indeed, the ability to dissolve "blaming cognitions" is one example of a coping skill (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2001; Pölkki, Ervast, & Huupponen, 2004) a child could have as an ecological system resource (Fraser, 2004) and an asset supporting development (Scales & Leffert, 1999). It is a "protective factor" that may help youth to reduce, delay, or prevent risk factors from contributing to developmental delays and the onset of a psychiatric disorder (AACAP, 2004). More research is needed to understand the confluence of interactions and influences that can lead youth to psychopathology (Leverton, 2003). There is evidence that personal characteristics and interpersonal connections may aid youth in *achieving* healthier development, increasing *coping*, and especially, *enhancing* resilience (Place, Reynolds, Cousins, & O'Neill, 2002; Weissman et al., 2006). Some protective factors that may enhance youth resiliency include: (1) having an easy-going

temperament; (2) accessing concrete information and/or education about parental psychiatric illness; (3) maintaining strong sibling bonds; (4) talking to friends; (5) connecting with nurturing, positive adults; (6) engaging in communication about psychiatric illness within the family; (7) being involved in community/school activities; (8) receiving support from extended family members/others; (9) having a parent involved in one's education; (10) development of problem-solving and emotional coping skills; (11) regulating one's affect; (12) developing/building on special talents and competencies; and (13) having a positive, hopeful view of the future (AACAP, 2004; Beardslee, 2002; Beardslee, Wright, Gladstone, & Forbes, 2007; Handley, Farrell, Josephs, Hanke, & Hazelton, 2001; Maybery et al., 2005; Östman & Hansson, 2002; Pölkki et al., 2004; Scales & Leffert, 1999; Sherman, 2007). Hoefnagels, Meesters, and Simenon (2007) particularly emphasized the importance of social support in reducing the onset of psychopathology among youth.

Child strengths/resources can serve as mechanisms to increase developmental resilience. Adult children of parents with a psychiatric illness identified supportive resources such as personal qualities (appreciating life, engaging in creative activities, being empathetic), family, friends, professionals, advocacy group colleagues, and clergy (Marsh & Dickens, 1997). Nicholson, Henry, Clayfield, and Phillips (2001) cite the work of Goodman and Gotlib (1999), who identified a complex network of mediators of children's risk for depression such as the availability of a father, higher family income, and support from extended family. Other protective factors for children include positive self-esteem, problem-solving skills, contact with a nurturing adult, role models, friends, a sense of being loved by the parent, school success, a stable home environment, and strength-building activities (AACAP, 2004; Bibou-Nakou, 2004; Place et al., 2002). Many children do not have consistent access to the resources that best buffer poor outcomes and promote optimal developmental achievements, and as such additional resources are needed to ensure healthy outcomes over time. Some of these additional resources emerge in the form of programmatic prevention and intervention opportunities.

Program Possibilities

Prevention and early intervention programs for children of a parent with a psychiatric illness can use the child's own needs and resilience to enhance children's development and possibly delay or prevent their advancement or emergence of a psychiatric disorder (Hinden & Wilder, 2008; Weissman et al., 2006). Sherman (2007) recommends "reaching out to children of parents with mental illness" (p. 26) within mental health prevention programs. Outreach activities include reassuring children they are not alone, acknowledging parental difficulties, providing information about the illness, telling children they are not to blame, encouraging children "to be kids" (p. 30), supporting effective child responses to stigma, providing "safe people to talk to" (p. 30), and building child empowerment and hope (Sherman).

Handley et al. (2001), as well as Beardslee (2002), recommend that nurturing adults teach the children about psychiatric illness and mental health treatment, particularly that the children are not to blame for the parental illness. Riebschleger (2004) noted a particular need for programs for school-aged children. Valuable prevention and early intervention programs such as Infant Mental Health, Early On, and Head Start typically discontinue when children enter elementary education. Information about programs for school-aged children of a parent with a psychiatric illness appears to be scant and scattered.

Methods

The major purpose of this study was to identify and describe programs for children of a parent with a psychiatric illness. Data were drawn from many sources, including literature databases (Wilson Select, Medline, ProQuest, Social Science Abstracts, Psychlit, First Search, Google Scholar) and the World Wide Web (Google, MSN, Yahoo). The data on programs was either downloaded directly or obtained from the agency sponsor and/or author of the source document. The primary investigator also contacted international key informant colleagues by e-mail, telephone, or face to face during an international psychiatric rehabilitation conference. Whenever possible, the primary investigator obtained the full program manual and/or other detailed program materials. Sometimes this process involved additional discussion through phone contact with program administrators and facilitators. It is noted that most of the downloaded materials were written in English, although some e-mail exchanges (also English) took place with source individuals that have first languages other than English.

The primary investigator read the material in-depth and coded information about each program into a database, identifying the program name, target group, type of intervention, content, and contact information. Programs limited to infants and toddlers were not included in the database as the research question focused on school-aged children. Using constant comparison method, the primary investigator examined the program constructs such as duration, interventions, and target groups (Dye, Schatz, Rosenberg, & Coleman, 2000). Finally, the primary investigator prepared a short description of the main constructs of each program, per the data available.

Findings

Findings are summarized in Table 11.1. A listing of annotated program description data is provided for the purposes of this chapter is provided herein to convey more information more efficiently. This format also allowed for variation, as different amounts and types of data were available from each program. Twenty-two programs were initially identified that met the inclusion criteria. Internet data from a program

Table 11.1 Programs for children of a parent with a psychiatric illness, by country of origin

1. Australia	*VicChamps* Eastern Health, Box Hill, VIC—http://www.easternhealth.org.au/champs *Description:* This is a compendium of multiple programs for school age youth. The VicChamps program targets children aged 5–12 years old. They talk about living with a parent with a mental illness. The website has information for children, parents, mental health professionals, teachers, and the general public. The program has peer support groups after school and on holidays
2. Australia	*Paying Attention to Self (PATS)* Eastern Health, Box Hill, VIC—http://www.easternhealth.org.au/champs The program is for children aged 13–18 as well as their families and caregivers. It is an eight-week program with social, recreational, friendship, support, and information. There are support groups that continue. Also funded by the Province of Victoria, Australia
3. Australia	*PATS also has a peer leadership component* Eastern Health, Box Hill, VIC—http://www.easternhealth.org.au/champs Peer leaders speak in public agencies, schools, conferences, and other settings. This is a community education intervention to reduce stigma.
4. Australia	*COPMI (Children of Parents with Mental Illness) Services* National Resource Centre, Australian Infant, Child, Adolescent, and Family Mental Health Association There is an excellent website for Children of Parents with a Mental Illness (http://www.copmi.net.au). It includes separate information for parents, children, mental health professionals, and teachers. It gives numerous links to many programs that can be used for teaching children in schools, helping children in groups, and connecting with individual children
5. Canada	*Talking about Mental Illness: A Guide for Developing an Awareness Program for Youth* Canadian Mental Health Association (http://www.camh.net). Toronto, ON Talking about mental illness is a curriculum guide to help secondary school teachers to prepare lessons for youth to learn about mental illness. The content addresses knowledge, stigma, resources, and supports
6. Canada	*Kids in Control program* British Columbia Schizophrenia Society, Vancouver, BC The program consists of a series of psychoeducation meetings for 7- to 12-year-old children of a parent with a mental illness. There is a full curriculum manual
7. Finland	*A national program for families* For further information, contact William Beardlsee at Harvard University Finland has a national family-centered program to help both parents and children cope with parental mental illness. It is a universal national program. Dr. Beardless served as a consultant to the project
8. Great Britain	*YoungMinds* http:/www.youngminds.org.uk/press/03_09_19.php YoungMinds is a national charity in the UK that works to improve the mental health of children. They have a special downloadable document that gives information and advice for youth with a parent with a mental illness. See www.cyh.com; Health Topics

(continued)

Table 11.1 (continued)

9. Greece	*Daphne Project* European Union, see Bibou-Nakou (2004) A pilot project of the European Union joins partners from Greece and England to study and prepare a school-based early identification program for children of a parent with mental illness. There is a lack of identification mechanisms and shared understanding
10. New Zealand	*Like Minds* Wellington, New Zealand This government-financed anti-stigma program engages in many activities. One activity is to provide information about mental illness to local school children. They also engage in a media marketing campaign for the general public
11. Sweden	*Källan* Swedish Schizophrenia Fellowship, Stockholm, Sweden This is a group activity for children with a mentally ill parent. It meets 16 times for once a week for 2 h. Next, the children can attend monthly support meetings
12. USA	*Family Intervention Project* William Beardslee, Harvard University, Boston, MA The Family Intervention Project serves families with a parent with depression. The interventions include either a series of groups for parents with a mental illness or family visits and meetings. A primary purpose is to help the family discuss the parent's psychiatric illness
13. USA	*Integrated Services Program* Bay Arenac Behavioral Health, Bay City, MI Adult consumers specify their interests in specific parenting information. Written resource and pamphlet information is forwarded to assigned adult support workers to give to the consumers. Adult support workers discuss the information and also include support for the consumer parenting role as an option within the consumer-centered planning process. Workers assist consumers to talk to their children about psychiatric illness
14. USA	*Invisible Children's Project* Mental Health Association of New York State, Albany, NY A similar project is conducted by the Mental Health Association of Texas The program helps consumer parents continue and build parenting skills. For example, parents are coached about how to talk to their children about mental illness
15. USA	*Helping Children Understand Mental Illness* Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA—kids@mhasp.org This program consists of on-line content intended help children understand parental mental illness. It includes stories for children. There is additional information for professionals, teachers, parents, and children
16. USA	*Breaking the Silence: Teaching the Next Generation About Mental Illness* National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI), Washington, DC This is a set of three educational modules for using in school classrooms (upper elementary, middle school, and high school). Each is a teaching module to help children and youth decrease stigma assumptions, recognize the warning signs of mental illness, and learn that psychiatric illnesses are treatable brain disorders

(continued)

Table 11.1 (continued)

17. USA	*The Science of Mental Illness*
	National Institute of Health. National Institute of Mental Health, Rockville, MD, NIH Curriculum Series
	Publisher is BSCS—Center for Curriculum Development, Colorado Springs, CO
	This is a curriculum module to teach about brain disorders in a straightforward manner. It also addresses stigma myths. It has a DVD of the curriculum content. The content may fit in a science, psychology, social science, or health class
18. USA	*Family Options*
	Joanne Nicholson, University of Massachusetts Medical School, Worcester, MA
	This is a program to help families with a parent with a mental illness. For up to 18 months, a family coach visits the family regularly. They work on many issues from a strength-based perspective. There is a strong emphasis on supporting consumer parenting skills and contexts. Community resources are broad and inclusive
19. USA	*Youth Education and Support (YES!)*
	Joanne Riebschleger, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI
	The program is youth multi-family psychoeducation, consisting of six weekly 2-h groups of 10- to 15-year-old youth. The youth learn about mental illness, mental health treatment, and coping. The format is a combination of interactive activities and didactic content. Themes are expressing feelings, mental illness, mental health treatment, stigma, coping, and hope for the future
20. USA	*Additional program information available*
	UPENN Collaborative on Community Integration—www.upennrrtc.org
	Parenting with a mental illness: Programs and resources
	Information for children of a parent with a psychiatric illness
21. USA	*Electronic bulletin board for parents with a psychiatric illness* (Scharer, 2005)
	This is an Internet discussion board for parents with a psychiatric illness, children aged 5–12, and a current or recent inpatient psychiatric hospitalization. The intent is to provide parental social support
22+. Other	*Other program information/comments*
	Information obtained from participants at international psychiatric rehabilitation conference (World Association for Psychosocial Rehabilitation—WAPR)
	Parenting/child programs exist or are under development in the Netherlands, Germany, Greece, Korea, and Italy
	In the Netherlands, program staff members recruit the children and parents through national public housing projects
	Interest in addressing the needs of the children was expressed to the primary investigator by people from additional countries, including Morocco, Norway, Portugal, Kenya, Korea, France, Spain, Brazil, and India

in the state of Ohio, USA, was discarded as a telephone call to the agency revealed that no one at the agency remembered the program or could produce program documents. The 21 remaining programs are listed in Table 11.1 by country of origin. Note that additional program information is included in an "other" section. The "other" information was not complete enough to describe unique programs, but served as evidence of other evolving programs across the globe.

Discussion

Variable Program Characteristics

While the program literature about the needs of the children was strikingly similar, data about programs appeared to vary widely by target group, approach, and intervention. While most programs described their primary target as children of a parent with a psychiatric illness, a number of them appeared to work most closely with the parent consumer (Family Intervention Project, 12; Integrated Services Program, 13; Invisible Children's Project, 14; and Electronic Bulletin Board, 21). Small groups of parents assembled in the Finland program, 7, as well as the Family Intervention Project, 12.

Other programs assembled children and youth in a series of small group sessions, providing social support and information about psychiatric illness/treatment (VicChamps, 1; PATS, 2; Kids in Control, 6; Källan, 11; YES, 19). The Daphne program, 9, used school personnel as a source of identifying youth at risk. In the Netherlands, a key informant reported that the children were recruited from public housing projects (see 22).

A number of programs tried to address the entire family's needs for communication, community resources, and social support (Finland National Program, 7; Preventive Intervention Project, 12; Family Options, 18). These programs seemed to emphasize coordination of services to help the family learn to communicate about the parental illness and, sometimes, to increase access to community services. Some included direct outreach in the form of "friendly visitors" to families (Finland National Program, 7; Family Intervention Project, 12).

A number of programs employed a primary prevention approach by providing information about psychiatric illness and mental health treatment to groups of students within classrooms (Talking about Mental Illness, 5; Like Minds, 10; Breaking the Silence, 16; and Science of Mental Illness, 17). These tended to have manual-based curriculum materials of excellent quality. Some involved youth as leaders and participants within community-based, anti-stigma programs (PATS Peer Leadership, 3; Like Minds, 8).

A number of programs were web-based. They provided information about psychiatric disorders, mental health treatment, coping, stigma, and the important message that psychiatric illnesses are not anyone's fault (PATS, 2; COPMI, 4; YoungMinds, 8; Mental Health Association, 15; and UPENN, 20). Anyone with Internet access could obtain these materials, but some were clearly intended for children of a parent with a psychiatric disorder, parents, children in general, additional family members, teachers, and/or mental health professionals. Often they separated website content by these groups. Two had interactive activities such as online quizzes, games, and/or a place to read or tell stories (COPMI, 4; PATS, 2).

Many programs used multiple interventions; as such they are discussed in more than one area of interpretation in this section. Identification of evaluation criteria and outcomes varied widely across programs. Many evaluations were pilot studies. It was not clear if all of the programs were currently operational.

It *is* clear that our study had a number of limitations, including nonrandomized sampling, some self-report data, and a lack of inter-rater reliability testing within coding and analyses. Additionally, the data from non-English-speaking countries was limited. It is likely that other programs exist that are not included in this body of work, especially if they are set in a country with people speaking languages other than English.

However, the purposive sampling of this study is appropriate, considering the early exploratory and formative state of knowledge development about programs for children of a parent with a psychiatric illness. While assessing programs at a global level is a challenge, much can be gleaned by sharing knowledge across countries. Program information was verified by printed documents. Additionally, in many cases, the data was triangulated by sources of original program documents, additional program documents, and/or telephone, e-mail, or face-to-face contact with key informants.

Implications and Summary

The program findings yielded implications for future policy, practice, and research. When a World Wide Web search reveals only 22 programs for school-aged children of a parent with a psychiatric illness, this is a clear evidence of the lack of attention to millions of children living with many developmental risks. Except for Finland and the province of Victoria in Australia, it appears that policymakers need to increase attention to children of a parent with a psychiatric disorder. Programs need to be developed, tested, and funded by government agencies. It may be useful to consider the costs of *not* serving the children earlier, particularly if a sizable portion of them enter child welfare settings or become future consumers of public mental health services. Currently, no agency is "responsible" for the children, and thus few services exist. The children's needs should be considered within efforts to coordinate services for children in community services settings. A lead agency is essential. In addition, coordination among child welfare and mental health services is recommended (Sheehan, 2004).

Mental health prevention services for school-aged children are needed. It is logical that these service programs target the needs of children, parents, and other family members. It would make sense to coordinate with school-based and/or school-linked health services and primary health-care providers. Programs for school-aged children should include information about psychiatric illness and mental health treatment. The children need to develop coping skills and learn that they are not responsible for a parent's symptoms. Both small groups and primary prevention programs are needed. Anti-stigma programs could go a long way toward reducing family shame and increasing family communication. Additional interventions demonstrated by the programs identified in this chapter should be considered, e.g., friendly visiting, community resources for families, child social activities, parent groups, and Internet sites.

Consumers' parenting roles appear to merit more respect and consideration within adult and child mental health services. Better interfaces could be easily developed to increase services to children. For example, adult consumers could routinely be asked if they have children. Care plans for children could be a mainstream feature of person-centered crisis planning (Reupert, Green, & Maybery, 2008). In the future, family-driven and family-centered health and mental health-care system could replace the current system that separates children and adults, as well as physical and mental health. All of these program recommendations presume that public policymakers prioritize and sufficiently fund services to assure the health of our children.

In an era of evidence-based mental health services, research is critical to the development of services for children of a parent with a psychiatric illness and their families. Formative research is needed to build new programs with the input of key stakeholders, including children and parents. Summative research is needed to test the outcomes of new programs and utilize the results to improve and replicate program effectiveness. Longitudinal studies are recommended to assess the impact of a range of prevention programs. The costs of not providing prevention services should be studied. Finally, as global communication continues to grow, it is recommended that researchers of many regions and nations collaborate regularly to share research findings, particularly in developing nations where such programs are nonexistent or barely emerging. This collective effort could increase the depth, breadth, and speed of knowledge development and ultimately assure the needs of children such as Ronnie, Nathan, and Lisa are met.

References

Addington, A. M., Gornick, M. C., Shaw, P., Seal, J., Gogtay, N., Greenstein, D., et al. (2007). Neuregulin (NRG1, 8, p. 12) and childhood onset schizophrenia: Susceptibility and haplotypes for diagnosis and brain development trajectories. *Modern Psychiatry, 12*, 195–205.

Ahern, K. (2003). At-risk children: A demographic analysis of the children of clients attending mental health community clinics. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing, 12*, 223–228.

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry [AACAP]. (2004). *Children of parents with mental illness*, No. 39. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved 23 October 2007 from http://aacap.org.

American Psychiatric Association [APA]. (2004). *Diagnosis and statistical manual of psychiatric disorders (TR)*. Washington, DC: Author.

Beardslee, W. R. (2002). *Out of darkened room: Protecting the children and strengthening the family*. New York, NY: Little, Brown.

Beardslee, W. R., Wright, E. J., Gladstone, T. R. G., & Forbes, P. (2007). Long-term effects from a randomized trail of two public health preventive interventions for parental depression. *Journal of Family Psychology, 21*, 703–713.

Bibou-Nakou, E. (2004). Helping teachers to help children living with a mentally ill parent: Teachers' perceptions on identification and policy issues. *School Psychology International, 25*, 42–58.

Bohus, M., Schehr, K., Berger-Sallawitz, F., Novelli-Fischer, U., Stieglitz, R. D., & Berger, M. (1998). Children of the mentally ill: A study on problem consciousness in clinical everyday practice. *Psychiatrische Praxis, 25*(3), 134–138.

Cannon, T. D., Cadenhead, K., Cornblatt, B., Woods, S. W., Addington, J., Walker, E., et al. (2008). Prediction of psychosis in high-risk youth: A multi-site longitudinal study in North America. *Archives of General Psychiatry, 1*, 28–37.

Center for Genetics Education (2007). Mental illness and inherited predisposition-schizophrenia and bipolar. Fact Sheet (pp. 1–3). *Australia Genetics Resource Book*: *Australia*.

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (2001). *Talking about mental illness: A guide for developing an awareness program for youth*. Contact: www.camh.net.

Cowling, V. (Ed.). (1999). *Children of parents with mental illness*. Melbourne, VIC: Australian Council for Educational Research.

Dickstein, S., Seifer, R., & Hayden, L. C. (1998). Levels of family assessment II: Impact of maternal psychopathology on family functioning. *Journal of Family Psychology, 12*, 23–40.

Dye, J. F., Schatz, I. M., Rosenberg, B. A., & Coleman, S. T. (2000). Constant comparison method: A kaleidoscope of data. *The Qualitative Report, 4* (1/2). Retrieved 1 May 2008 from www.nova.edu/sss/Q4-QR4-1/dye.html.

Fischer, M., & Gerster, S. (2005). Overlooked and overstrained: The children of the mentally ill. *Neuropsychiatrie, 19*(4), 162–167.

Fraser, M. W. (Ed.). (2004). *Risk and resilience in childhood: An ecological perspective* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: NASW Press.

Goodman, S. H., & Gotlib, I. H. (1999). *Children of depressed parents: Mechanisms of risk and implications for treatment*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Handley, C., Farrell, G. A., Josephs, A., Hanke, A., & Hazelton, M. (2001). The Tasmanian children's project: The needs of children with a parent/carer with a mental illness. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Mental Health Nursing, 10*, 221–228.

Hay, D. F., Pawlby, S., Sharp, D., Asten, P., Mills, A., & Kumar, R. (2001). Intellectual problems shown by 11-year-old children whose mothers had postnatal depression. *Journal of Child Psychology, Psychiatry, and Allied Disciplines, 42*, 871–879.

Henin, A., Biederman, J., Mick, E., Sachs, G., Hirschfeld-Becker, D. R., Siegel, R. S., et al. (2005). Psychopathology in the offspring of parents with bipolar disorder: A controlled study. *Biological Psychiatry, 58*, 554–561.

Hinden, B., & Wilder, C. (2008). Family options: Supporting parents with mental illness and their children. *Focal Point: Research, Policy, and Practice in Children's Mental Health, 22*(2), 7–9. Available from Portland State University Research & Training Center, Portland, OR.

Hoefnagels, C., Meesters, C., & Simenon, J. (2007). Social support as predictor of psychopathology in the adolescent offspring of psychiatric patients. *Journal of Child and Family Studies, 16*, 91–101.

Kessler, R. C., Berglund, P. A., & Foster, C. L. (1997). Social consequences of psychiatricdisorders, II: Teenage parenthood. *The American Journal of Psychiatry, 154*, 1405–1411.

Lenz, A. (2005). Children's ideas about their parents' psychiatric illness—An explorative study. *Praxis der Kinderpsychologie und Kinderpsychiatrie, 54*(5), 382–398.

Leverton, T. J. (2003). Parental psychiatric illness: The implications for children. *Current Opinion in Psychiatry, 16*, 395–402.

Lewinsohn, P. M., Olino, T. M., & Klein, D. N. (2005). Psychosocial impairment in offspring of depressed parents. *Psychological Medicine, 35*, 1493–1503.

Marsh, D. T., & Dickens, R. (1997). Troubled journey: Siblings and children of people with mental illness. In L. Spaniol, C. Gagne, & M. Koehler (Eds.), *Psychological and social aspects of psychiatric disability* (pp. 254–269). Boston, MA: Boston University.

Maybery, D., Ling, L., Szakacs, E., & Reupert, A. (2005). Children of a parent with mental illness: Perspectives on need. *Australian e-Journal for the Advancement of Mental Health, 4*(2), 1–11.

New York State Office of Mental Health [NYSOMH]. (1997). Parents: Helping Moms and Dads to do the best job possible. *OMH Quarterly, 3*(3), 11.

Nicholson, J., Henry, A. D., Clayfield, J. C., & Phillips, S. M. (Eds.). (2001). *Parenting well when you're depressed: A complete resource for maintaining a healthy family*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger.

Östman, M., & Hansson, L. (2002). Children in families with a severely mentally ill member: Prevalence and needs for support. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology, 37*, 243–248.

Place, M., Reynolds, J., Cousins, A., & O'Neill, S. (2002). Developing a resilience package for vulnerable children. *Child and Adolescence Mental Health, 7*, 162–167.

Pölkki, P., Ervast, S., & Huupponen, M. (2004). Coping and resilience of children of a mentally ill parent. *Social Work in Health Care, 39*, 151–163.

Reupert, A. E., Green, K. T., & Maybery, D. (2008). Care plans for families affected by parental mental illness. *Families in Society, 89*, 39–43.

Riebschleger, J. (2004). Good days and bad days: The experiences of children of a parent with a psychiatric disability. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal, 28*, 25–31.

Riebschleger, J., Scheid, J., Luz, C., Mickus, M., Liszewski, C., & Eaton, M. (2008). How are the experiences of families of patients with mental illness reflected in medical education guidelines? *Academic Psychiatry, 32*(2), 119–126.

Royal College of Psychiatrists. (2004). *Parents with a mental illness: The problems for children*. Factsheet 16. Obtain from www.rcpsych.ac.uk.

Scharer, K. (2005). *Internet social support for parents: The state of science.* Journal of Child and Adolescent Nursing, *18*(1), 26–35.

Samet, J. H., Friedmann, P., & Saitz, R. (2001). Benefits of linking primary care and substance abuse services: Patient, provider, and social perspectives. *Archives of Internal Medicine, 161*(1), 85–91.

Scales, P. C., & Leffert, N. (1999). *Developmental assets: A synthesis of the scientific research on adolescent development*. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute.

Seifer, R., Sameroff, A. J., Dickstein, S., Kiterner, G., Miller, I., Rasmussen, S., et al. (1996). Parental psychopathology, multiple contextual risks, and one-year outcomes in children. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 25*, 423–435.

Sheehan, R. (2004). Partnership in mental health and child welfare: Social work responses to children living with parental mental illness. *Social Work in Health Care, 39*, 309–324.

Sherman, M. (2007). Reaching out to children of parents with mental illness. *Social Work Today, 7*(5), 26–30.

University of Pennsylvania Collaborative on Community Integration [UP-CCI] (2007). *Parenting with a mental illness: Programs and resources*. Obtained from organizational website: www.upennrrtc.org.

Üstün, T. B., & Sartorius, N. (1995). *Mental illness in general health care: An international study*. Commissioned by the World Health Organization, Geneva. New York, NY: Wiley.

VicHealth. (2006). *Children and young people of parents with a mental illness*. Retrieved 3 August 2006 from www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/Content.aspx?topicID=222.

Weissman, M. M., Pilowsky, D. J., Wickramaratne, P. J., Telati, A., Wisniewski, S., Fava, M., et al. (2006). Remissions in maternal depression and child psychopathology. *JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association, 295*, 1389–1398.

World Health Organization [WHO]. (2007, September 6). National global survey reveals significant gaps in meeting world's mental health care needs. In National Institute of Mental Health (USA), Rockville, MD. Retrieved 11 September 2007 from www.nimh.nih.gov/press/wang_globalhealth.cfm.

Part IV
Child Security: Orphans and Fosterage

Chapter 12
Sudanese Refugee Youth: Resilience Among Undefended Children

Laura Bates, Tom Luster†, Deborah J. Johnson, Desiree Baolian Qin, and Meenal Rana

In recent years, changes in the nature of warfare have increased the risks for children. During the decade 1986–1996, UNICEF (1996) estimated that two million children were killed in wars, one million were orphaned or separated from their parents at least temporarily, and 12 million were displaced from their homes. Children separated from their parents and other adult relatives during conflict are a particularly vulnerable group. In 2003, 12,800 unaccompanied refugee children applied for asylum in developing countries—4 % of total asylum applicants (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2004). Unaccompanied children are "children under 18 years of age who have become separated from both parents and are not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible to do so" (UNHCR, 2004, p. 2). These children are both vulnerable and undefended children in the fullest sense. As Save the Children notes (Hepburn, Williamson, & Wolfram, 2004), they not only face the stresses all children experience in times of war but also must endure the grief of separation and loss while dealing with the chaos of displacement and conflict on their own. They must take on immediate responsibility for their own survival and, in some cases, for the survival of younger siblings. Remarkably,

†deceased

L. Bates, M.A. (✉)
University Outreach and Engagement, Michigan State University,
East Lansing, MI 2195, Harrison Rd., 48824-1030, USA
e-mail: bateslau@msu.edu

D.J. Johnson, Ph.D. • D.B. Qin, Ph.D.
Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Michigan State University,
552 West Circle Drive, East Lansing, MI 48824, USA
e-mail: john1442@msu.edu, e-mail: Dqin@msu.edu

M. Rana, Ph.D.
Department of Education, Brown University, 116 Barus Building,
Box 1938, Providence, RI 02912, USA
e-mail: meenal_rana@brown.edu

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9_12,

many of these children do adjust and manage well despite the many challenges (Ressler, Boothby, & Steinbock, 1988).

Although the negative effects of war on children are well documented (Joshi & O'Donnell, 2003; Shaw, 2003), much less is known about resilience among children exposed to war and, in particular, resilience among unaccompanied children. In 2000–2001, a large group of unaccompanied Sudanese refugee youth was resettled in the United States, approximately 150 of whom were resettled in the small Midwestern city where our work was conducted. The arrival of this group, who by all published reports (e.g., Duncan, 2000a, 2001) appeared to be well-adjusted youth and young adults, afforded a unique opportunity to learn more about resilience among a group of young people who were separated from parents at an early age and endured multiple risks, but eventually managed to survive and adapt under very trying circumstances. These refugee youth were known in the media as the *Lost Boys of Sudan* (although 10 % were young women), and their compelling story was widely publicized.

We use the term "Lost Boys" to identify refugee youth from Sudan with a particular experience and recent history, recognizing that the refugee youth have been resettled in the United States and other places for 7–8 years. As they have integrated themselves into their new communities and lives, some have expressed the sentiment that they are no longer lost. Other youth in our group have told us they do not feel uncomfortable with the designation, and these views have also been expressed by other members of this refugee group across North America. Given their widely publicized designation in the media, our rationale for continuing to use the term despite the changes that have taken place in the group is to make sure the reader will recognize exactly who we are describing as well as to distinguish them from family-based Sudanese refugee youth. Still, it is important that we also convey that we do not use the term to describe their current status and experience.

The *Lost Boys* were separated from their parents in the late 1980s during the civil war between the Sudanese government in the north of the country and the rebels of Southern Sudan. The civil war, which lasted 2 decades until a peace treaty was finally signed in 2005, involved conflicts between the Arab-dominated Muslim government centered in Khartoum and the black African south, where most people practiced either Christianity or animist religions. The conflict was exacerbated by struggles over natural resources, as Southern Sudan has rich oil reserves. Most often, the Southern Sudanese children were separated from their parents when their villages were attacked by government troops or government-sponsored militias. People fled in panic, and families were separated in the chaos. Most refugees, including the unaccompanied youth, fled initially to Ethiopia where they lived in refugee camps in Panyido, Dimma, and Itang. In 1991, a regime change in Ethiopia brought in a government that was not sympathetic to the Sudanese rebels (the SPLA), and the refugees were violently expelled back into Sudan. They then made another long trek across the desert to Kenya, where they were resettled in the Kakuma refugee camp. There they remained from about 1992 until 2000–2001 when many of them were resettled finally to North America, Europe, and Australia. Numerous accounts and memoirs (Bixler, 2005; Dau, 2007) tell the story of this trek.

The Sudanese youth represent an extreme example of undefended children. James Garbarino (Garbarino, 1999; Garbarino, Kostelny, & Dubrow, 1991) has pointed out that children exposed to war and some children in American cities share a common experience of learning early in life that adults around them are not able to protect them. Like other children with this experience, the Sudanese youth developed strategies for survival through self-reliance, self-care, and the formation of strong peer groups. Although some adult support was available, by and large, circumstances rendered them "undefended," many from early childhood. However, for the most part, these youth found strategies that promoted positive development, unlike many other children in these situations.

In this chapter we will review findings from our research concerning the youth's own perspectives on the risks they faced and the protective factors that helped them during their lives in Africa as refugees. We address three questions: How did the youth experience separation and ambiguous loss after separation from their parents? From their perspective, what were the risks they faced in Africa during flight and in the refugee camps? What protective factors buffered their exposure to these risks?

Theoretical Framework

In this study we used a risk and resilience framework (Luthar & Zelazo, 2003; Masten & Powell, 2003) to help us understand the experience of the unaccompanied refugee youth and how that experience affected their development. Risk factors can be characteristics of the individual or his/her environment, including both family characteristics and extrafamilial factors (Werner & Smith, 2001). Risks can also be experienced as single traumatic events or chronic situations that affect an individual over a long period of time (Masten & Powell, 2003). One of the most important conclusions of research on risk is that children who developed problems were more likely to have been exposed to several risk factors, a phenomenon termed *cumulative risk* (Masten & Powell, 2003).

However, some children exposed to multiple risks continue to develop normally and pose few problems. The concept of resilience attempts to explain this phenomenon. Resilience is defined as "patterns of positive adaptation in the context of significant risk or adversity" (Masten & Powell, 2003, p. 4). Protective factors are characteristics of the person or the environment that contribute to healthy development among people exposed to significant adversity (Werner & Smith, 2001). Building on the work of Garmezy (1991) and Werner and Smith (1982), Masten and Powell (2003) proposed that protective factors tend to fall into three categories: (1) individual characteristics, (2) relationships, and (3) community resources.

In addition, we used Boss's (2006) theory of ambiguous loss to help us better understand their experience of separation from families. Boss (2004, p. 554) defines ambiguous loss as "a situation of unclear loss resulting from not knowing whether a loved one is dead or alive, absent or present." She describes two types of

ambiguous loss: one in which the loved one is physically absent but psychologically present because it is unclear whether or not the person is still alive and the other in which the loved one is physically present but psychologically absent, as when the loved one is suffering from substance abuse or dementia. The *Lost Boys* experienced the first type of ambiguous loss, because most of them did not know for years if their parents and other family members had survived attacks on their villages. Although refugees as a group often experience ambiguous loss, limited research actually addresses this issue (Rousseau, Rufagari, Bagilishya, & Measham, 2004; Luster, Qin, Bates, Johnson, & Rana, 2008).

Effects of War on Children

A number of researchers have identified negative outcomes among children exposed to war and conflict. Psychological and emotional consequences include post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression and other forms of psychopathology, poor health, behavioral disorders, substance abuse, delinquency, and low academic achievement (Joshi & O'Donnell, 2003; Shaw, 2003). Children who are not accompanied by their parents are particularly vulnerable to traumatic outcomes of war, because they lack the emotional support and protection of parents and other adult relatives (Ressler et al., 1988).

Few studies have focused on Sudanese refugee children in Africa; however, available research did document the adversity they faced. A research team from the Netherlands (Paardekooper, de Jong, & Hermanns, 1999) interviewed Sudanese children in refugee camps in Uganda who differed from the *Lost Boys* in that they lived with at least one parent. Compared with local children from Uganda who had not experienced war and flight from their country, the Sudanese youth were more likely to have experienced traumatic events, including loss of property, lack of food, loss of a family member, lack of water, ill health without medical care, torture, isolation from a family member, or sexual abuse. They were also more likely to have been lost or kidnapped and to have witnessed the injury or murder of a family member. Not surprisingly, they were more likely than local children to report symptoms of PTSD such as trouble with sleep, nervousness, and intrusive memories, or symptoms of depression.

A report on the unaccompanied Sudanese refugee youth for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops concerning "best interest determination" interviews with 174 Sudanese youth living at the Kakuma refugee camp (Duncan, 2000a) described similar symptoms among this group of refugees. Duncan reported that "Virtually every child is suffering from symptoms of unresolved trauma …." (p. 4). She reported that youth were repeatedly traumatized and 7 years after arriving at the camp, were still experiencing disturbed sleep, nightmares, startle reactions, and other trauma symptoms. Further, she indicated, "Sadness is a pervasive feeling among our population for reasons which are understandable" (p. 5).

The trauma faced by the *Lost Boys* was documented by Geltman et al. (2005) after they had resettled in the United States. In a study of mental health among 273 youth, they reported the following traumatic experiences: 74 % had been in their villages when they were attacked; 60 % had witnessed the torture of a close friend or family member (20 % had been tortured themselves); 76 % had seen a close friend or family member killed; 47 % had had a near-drowning experience; and 29 % reported having been injured.

Protective Factors for Children Exposed to War and Conflict

Much of the research on protective factors for children exposed to war has focused on how parental adjustment and behavior affects the children (e.g., Garbarino et al., 1991; Shaw, 2003) and, thus, has limited applicability to the unaccompanied children. In their pioneering study of children separated from parents during the World War II, Freud and Dann (1951) noted the importance of precocious peer relationships in helping children separated from their parents in the Holocaust. In his observations of Cambodian children in a holding center, Boothby (Ressler et al., 1988, p. 152) found that the efforts of adults in the camp to restore religious and cultural traditions, such as ceremonies for the dead, helped the youth recover psychologically from their trauma. In a study of Basque children who were voluntarily sent away from their parents during the Spanish civil war, Legarreta (1984) noted that the presence of Basque priests who accompanied the children served a similar function of helping the children feel safe by keeping Basque culture alive for them. Several studies have identified cultural factors, such as experience living in peer groups and other alternate family forms, as helping unaccompanied children adapt (Mann, 2004; Rousseau, Said, Gagne, & Bibeau, 1998).

Despite the extreme trauma and chronic adversity experienced by the Sudanese unaccompanied refugee youth, many observers noted their resilience and positive adaptation. In the words of Duncan (2001, p. 10): “Strength and resilience are the overwhelming characteristics of this group of children.” She also described them as “really nice kids.” In this chapter, we will describe, from the perspectives of the youth themselves, the risks that they faced during their flight from Sudan and life in the refugee camps, as well as the personal and environmental characteristics that protected them from developing a wider range of problem outcomes.

Method

Participants

Data utilized in this chapter were gathered from the refugee youth after they were resettled in the United States. We conducted nine focus groups involving 49 youth

(five of whom were females) in 2001 and 2002, about 12–18 months after their resettlement in the United States. At that same time, we conducted individual interviews with 70 youth that included a PTSD measure (Foa, Johnson, Feeny, & Treadwell, 2001). Forty-three of those interviewed were minors (38 males, 5 females); that is, they were under age 18 and living in foster care at the time of the interview; the others were young adult males. They completed this survey with the assistance of a trained interviewer who read all questions, providing clarity where needed, and recorded their answers. For this group, Cronbach's alpha for the PTSD measure was 0.85.

In 2007, approximately seven years after resettlement, we conducted ten in-depth interviews with young males about their experience of separation, loss, flight out of Sudan, and life in the refugee camps. A snowball sampling technique was used to recruit participants, and for ethical reasons we only talked with young men who had eventually found and reconnected with surviving family members after resettling in the United States. Seven of the ten participants were members of the Dinka tribe, the largest tribe in Southern Sudan; the others belonged to the Moru tribe from the Western Equatoria area of Sudan. One of the youth interviewed had earlier engaged in 40 hours of individual interviews about his life with the second author. At the time of their separation, the children ranged in age from 3 to 12 years old (Mean = 7.4 years, SD = 2.62). When interviewed, their average age was 25.8 years (SD = 5.99).

Data Analysis

For each set of findings, a similar analytical process was followed, consistent with a modified grounded theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). We began with a theoretical framework that was adjusted as the voices of the youth emerged in the analysis. Focus groups and interviews were video- and audiotaped, and the sessions were transcribed. Transcripts were initially analyzed for themes of resilience and coping by investigators and research assistants. Each reviewer independently identified themes, and then themes and evidence were discussed. Overlapping themes were given higher priority for discussion and recording. The investigators then reviewed these themes again, and consensus on key themes was achieved. Additional details about data collection and analysis can be found in earlier publications from this project (Bates et al., 2005; Luster, Qin, Bates, Johnson, & Rana, 2008).

Findings and Interpretation

First, we will review the risk factors to which the refugee youth were exposed; next, we will discuss their experience of separation from family and ambiguous loss; finally, we will present their views on the protective factors that helped them to survive and adapt.

Risks Experienced During the Flight

Table 12.1 presents the risk factors experienced by the *Lost Boys* during their flight to Ethiopia, their life in the camps at the Ethiopian border, the forced expulsion from Ethiopia and long trek to Kenya, and, finally, during their 8-year stay in the Kakuma refugee camp. The list of risk factors was compiled based on what the youth reported during focus groups and individual interviews as well as other published accounts of the experiences of the Sudanese youth (Bixler, 2005; Dau, 2007; Duncan, 2000b; Geltman et al., 2005). In focus groups and in individual interviews, youth reported consistent accounts of the risks they encountered, including continuing exposure to violence from government militias, other tribes they met on their

Table 12.1 Risks and trauma experienced by the lost boys in Africa

Sudan: late 1980s and trek to Ethiopia
Civil war, villages attacked
Separation from family
Ambiguous loss—not knowing if family members were alive or dead
Inadequate food while walking hundreds of miles to Ethiopia
Attacks by lions and hyenas on vulnerable members of group during trek
Constant fear of attacks by government army or bandits
Crossing a desert in eastern Sudan—thirst, dehydration and witnessing deaths
Ethiopian refugee camps in Panyido, Dimma, and Itang: Late 1980s to May, 1991
Grouped together with other children in the refugee camp with few adult caretakers
Youth from dozens of tribes living together, each speaking a different tribal language
Sanitation problems, contaminated drinking water, disease and death
Limited medical care
Mosquitoes (malaria) and chigger problems
Expelled from Ethiopia and returned to Sudan: May 1991 through August 1992
Violently expelled from camps by Ethiopian army; witnessed death of others by drowning in the Gilo River or being shot
Starvation in Pochalla and Pakok because of inability of relief agencies to deliver food
Witnessed the deaths of friends
Bombings by government forces
Attacks by snipers near Kapoeta
Illness, thirst, and lack of food during the trek to Kenya with little assistance from UN
Kakuma, Kenya: 1992 through 2001
Inadequate food rations starting in the mid 1990s
Females used as domestic servants, prevented from attending school
Lack of books, educational materials, and trained teachers
Difficulty attending class or concentrating on school because of malnutrition
Violence in the camp—tribal conflicts and attacks by local tribesmen
Disease and limited medical facilities
Restrictions on movement outside of camp
Lack of employment opportunities
Sense of no future until plans to resettle in the US emerged starting in 1998

flight, and others in the refugee camps. They also experienced hunger and thirst, disease without adequate medical care, and lack of educational resources. They reported witnessing the death of friends and sometimes of family members as a result of conflict, disease, or attacks by wild animals. As one youth reported, "In Ethiopia we were the first group in Ethiopia. We were like 500 children. And then around 300 died of those children."

After resettlement in the United States, most youth initially reported good adjustment; however, some continued to experience symptoms of PTSD resulting from their experiences in Africa. Among the youth who completed the PTSD measure, some reported many symptoms, but others reported none. The mean score for symptoms was 13.9, with a range of 0–41 out of a possible 51 points. The most common symptoms they reported were intrusive thoughts and feelings in the day or nightmares. The measure also asked about the effect of PTSD symptoms on their daily life: 53 % reported that symptoms interfered with "general happiness in life," and 36 % said they interfered with "fun and hobby activities." In addition, 27 % said symptoms interfered with schoolwork, and 26 % said symptoms interfered with relationships with family (youth who entered the United States before 18 years of age were placed with foster families).

Experience of Separation from Families and Ambiguous Loss

Two of the most significant stressors that the youth faced were living without parents and coping with ambiguous loss. In the ten in-depth interviews we conducted, the youth told us the circumstances of their separation from parents. Seven of the ten were separated when their villages were attacked by government troops or militias and one when the SPLA counterattacked, and civilians were caught in the cross fire. One youth described the chaotic scene:

> When we leave the town, there was too much bombardment. And among the people who had escaped the town, no one was thinking about going back. The houses were destroyed. The people, they were crying. Everybody who escaped that chaos believed that those who are not out of the town are dead.

Two others were moved from their village in an attempt to protect them. However, one of these youth did not think his parents had a choice in the matter: "My family did not give me up saying something like we don't love you. There was no choice. I have to go." At the time of separation, the youth in our sample were between 3 and 12 years of age. Most reported fleeing into the bush to avoid the attack and losing track of family members in the chaos. After the original panic subsided, some youth had to decide whether to go back to the village to try to find family members or flee with other refugees. Some were with siblings or adult relatives or members of their village, but others did not know the other refugees with whom they fled to Ethiopia. Some were helped by other clan members during the trek because, as one youth noted, in the Dinka culture, "Any child is everybody's child."

All of the youth we interviewed noted a range of negative emotions they felt while in the camps in Ethiopia, including sadness, depression, fear, loneliness, and frustration. As one youth noted, "It was really a nightmare. It was really, really bad …. Some people would be calling their parent's name at night." Another youth described his experience of ambiguous loss, "From the beginning it is very hard because every night, day, you have to think about them. Sometimes you dream about them." The situation of not knowing was very hard for many youth to bear, particularly at the beginning.

One youth reported that he was hospitalized while in the camps for depression and mental illness. He did not report receiving help there; instead, the poor conditions and frequent deaths of other children made him decide that he had to help himself:

> When I was hospitalized it was not like a good clinic that you should be in …. There is a blanket that you sleep in, and there is like thirty people in the room sleeping by each other. And when you will wake up tomorrow, you will find like maybe fifteen of them. Where are the rest? They are gone; they are dead. And that really blew my heart away. And I was like, do I have to die like them or do I have to do something else? And I guess my strong heart bring me out from that situation.

He and several others who participated in in-depth interviews reported the belief that some children actually died because of their inability to cope with ambiguous loss: "But those who used to think about their parents day and night were the depressed people. Actually some of them died." Another observed, "So many kids were dying because they were thinking about something they left back …. And some people went crazy. You could stay with a person today, and tomorrow he would be dead. And you wouldn't know what killed him. He was not, like, sick or anything. But part of it was they just have to think back about their families."

When asked about the times when they missed their parents the most, youth often noted times when they struggled to obtain basic necessities that a parent naturally would provide. In the word of one youth:

> Sometimes you have no clothes. Sometimes you see yourself as a person who has no parents. Those situations make you think of your parents. If my parents were here, they could have done this for me. They could have found me something to eat. They could have cooked for me. They could have made me sleep in a nice place.

Another youth reported missing his mother most when he got home from school, "The time that I would think about my mom was when I would get out of school—when I get home and lay down. So I was thinking about her a lot …." Several youth also mentioned missing the guidance that parents give to their children about how to behave.

As time passed, the youth reported that gradually they came to terms with their situation and learned to live with the ambiguity of not knowing. With help from peers and encouragement from adult caretakers and tribal elders in the camps, they learned to focus on what they could control while maintaining hope of eventually being reunited with their families. As one youth said, "It happened. I did not have any control over it. I … wish it did not happen, but it did and I could not do anything about it." Another noted, "Life is something you get used to."

Protective Factors and Resilience

Consistent with Masten and Powell's (2003) resilience framework, in the focus groups and in-depth interviews youth reported three types of protective factors that helped them to cope with the situation: (1) individual characteristics, (2) relationships, and (3) community support. Cultural values also seemed to play an important role in adjustment for some youth. Table 12.2 summarizes the protective factors we found in our research.

Individual characteristics. Sociability, or the tendency to stay with the group, was essential to survival while in flight. One youth noted that those who strayed from the group or sat down to rest when the others moved on made "bad decisions" and were vulnerable to attacks by wild animals. Most of those who coped well with chronic adversity had the ability to elicit positive reactions and support from others; many of the youth told us of adult mentors who befriended them and helped them along the way.

Intelligence, or resourcefulness, was another characteristic of the youth we interviewed. In the series of interviews with one young man, the interviewer asked him if intelligence was an important factor in their survival. He noted resourcefulness or "street smarts" and good decision-making skills were more important than

Table 12.2 Protective factors identified in our research

Characteristics of the individuals
Religious faith: belief that God would protect them
Ability to elicit positive reactions and support from adults
Sociability and ability to maintain supportive peer relationships
A commitment to education
A future orientation—a desire to help rebuild Southern Sudan when the war is over
Resourcefulness and problem-solving skills/decision making skills
Self-efficacy that develops from dealing successfully with adversity over and over again
Personal coping strategies (e.g., focusing on the present situation, suppressing any thoughts of the past, tempering mastery)
Relationships
Supportive peer relationships
Psychological presence of parents for older youth
Support from those assigned as teachers, caretakers, or foster parents
Involvement of tribal elders or mentors among the adults in the camp
Extra-familial factors and community resources
Activities provided in the Kakuma Refugee Camp—sports, drama club, a library, church youth groups
Cultural dances on Sunday afternoons
School
Churches in the camp
Cultural values and beliefs such as sharing with others and not damaging the reputation of the individual or the family
Previous cultural experience with alternate family forms, self-competence (Dinka)

academic ability in school. Although other youth did not specifically mention intelligence as an attribute that helped them, they gave us numerous examples of their own resourcefulness. For example, one youth told of how he managed to cross the Gilo River between Ethiopia and Sudan without drowning, as so many of the refugees did. Although only a boy of age 7 or 8 at the time, he and his friends fashioned a raft from plastic that the UN had left in the refugee camp and floated across safely.

A third personal characteristic that helped the youth cope with ambiguous loss was having a future orientation. As mentioned earlier, several youth told us that those who looked back at what they had lost became depressed and died. With the help of elders in the camps, these young men reported that they decided to focus on their education so that they could help themselves and also help Sudan in the future. If they eventually found their families, their parents could be proud of their accomplishments.

Religious faith helped some of the youth find meaning in their experience. As one youth put it, "If God wanted me to be dead, I would be dead now. But I am not, so He must have other plans for me." The belief that God would protect them helped some youth cope with the many things they could not control in their lives. The same youth quoted above named several times when he could have died but didn't as a support for his belief. Once when he became very sick, he remembered that God had helped him survive in the past, and that thought gave him hope as he lay near death in his hospital bed. As another youth expressed it, "If there is no place to go, God can work you through bad things."

Relationships. The peer group was acknowledged by all of the youth as a primary source of support. Although a few of the youth we interviewed fled with siblings, most were without family and depended on the peer group for emotional and instrumental support. As one youth noted, "What helped me most was my friends." Although a few of the younger boys had foster parents in the refugee camp, they all maintained a close relationship with their peers. Peers provided protection and mutual support, and talking or playing with friends was a welcome distraction from their daily stresses. Because they shared common problems, some youth said they found relief in being able to talk about problems with others who would understand. After years of being together, the peer group functioned like a surrogate family for the youth. As one youth said, "We decided to come together, older boys and younger boys and those in the middle, and stay together as a family."

Tribal elders and caretakers in the refugee camps were another important source of support for the youth. A few of them reported having individual families from their tribes who took them in and provided care at various times in their journey. However, for the most part, it was the elders from their tribe living in the camps or functioning as caretakers assigned by the UN who provided support to the unaccompanied youth. There were a few caretakers for the number of youth, so their time was mostly spent helping youth who were sick or had other serious problems. For example, at the refugee camps in Panyido, Ethiopia, there were 12 adult caretakers, on average, for each group of 1,000–1,350 children (Derib, 1998, quoted in

Hepburn, 2006, pp. 80–81). Nevertheless, these adults played an important role for many youth. They helped them obtain necessities and provided some comfort and encouragement to the boys. Some youth reported that tribal elders helped provide guidance to them on appropriate behavior.

The elders also suggested specific coping strategies to some youth, suggesting that they focus on the present rather than what was lost and doing what would make their parents proud. One youth described how for one year he had been too distraught to go to school and sat around watching others play or cried in his room. An elder came to him, listened to his problems, and advised him to make good use of his time by attending school. He suggested that by becoming educated he would be a better person when he meets his parents again. Several youth mentioned that elders encouraged them to maintain hope for finding their parents and to go to school so that their parents would be proud of them.

For older boys, the psychological presence of their parents served as a source of guidance about how to conduct themselves. Youth reported remembering things their parents had told them and tried to live as they thought their parents would have wanted.

Community and cultural supports. After arriving at the Kakuma refugee camp, youth had some supports from both nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and tribal elders. School was a central source of support for many youth, as it provided a distraction from their problems and also offered some hope for a better future. One youth described the importance of school in these words: "I say I have to go to school, you know, so that I can support myself. Cause there's nobody now gonna support me. That was the only thing that keep me strong [sic.]."

Activities and outings sponsored by churches and relief organizations provided relief from the daily monotony of camp life and distraction from their problems. One youth told of participating in a drama club that helped him develop self-confidence. Another talked of the support he received from a church group; this group also afforded him an opportunity to help others.

Church attendance was important for most of the youth. Clergy members provided guidance in the absence of their parents, encouraged the youth to remain hopeful of finding their parents, and assured them that God had kept them alive because there was something important that they still needed to do. The youth recalled hearing the story of the Israelites in exile and found a parallel with their own situation.

Staying connected to their own culture was very important to many youth, and cultural beliefs and values helped them to avoid getting into trouble. For example, one youth mentioned that cultural dances, held on Sunday afternoons, helped him keep in touch with his culture. Elders from their respective tribes gave the youth advice on appropriate behavior and admonished them to stay focused on improving themselves to benefit their families and Sudan in the future. Elders were highly respected in Sudanese culture, because "age is wisdom," so youth were predisposed to listen to the advice of elders. When asked what kept youth from getting involved in negative behaviors, two of the youth mentioned maintaining the family reputation. One commented that if a person got a bad reputation, he would not be considered a

suitable marriage partner within the tribe. Finally, as cattle herders, Dinka boys were expected to be self-competent at a young age and had early experiences with separation from parents. In Dinka culture, boys left the family home as young as age 6 to live in the cattle camps for part of the year. There they lived with older boys and a few elders and so had experience living apart from parents. One of the youth noted that this experience prepared them to function more independently.

Conclusions and Implications for Policy, Practice, and Research

All children are entitled to care and protection under international law.[1] According to Save the Children (Hepburn et al., 2004, p. 11) the rights of particular significance for unaccompanied children include the right to a name, a nationality, and a birth registration; the right to physical and legal protection; the right to know and be cared for by their parents or legal caregivers; the right to maintain personal relations and direct contact with their parents; the right to provisions for basic subsistence; the right to care and assistance appropriate to their age and developmental needs; and the right to participate in decisions about their future. The International Committee of the Red Cross and the UNHCR have recognized mandates to support separated children in refugee settings (Hepburn et al., p. 13).

In the case of the Sudanese refugee youth, international agencies were late in coming to their aid, and total support was often inadequate to meet their developmental and safety needs. In discussing the situation of unaccompanied and separated children, Hepburn et al. (2004, p. 8) described their particular vulnerabilities: inability to access food and healthcare without the intervention of an adult; a loss of identity and belonging that can affect children's behavior; psychological distress from having to process their conflict experience alone; and potential exploitation by adults. If children do not have access to basic necessities, they are more likely to be coerced into joining the armed forces, becoming domestic servants, or being exploited sexually.

The Sudanese youth's descriptions of the multiple traumas and chronic adversity they experienced for over a decade make them an extreme example of undefended children. Although we know much less about the girls, we know that many were absorbed into families in the refugee camps and, thus, were not resettled in the United States. From the little information we have from the girls' focus group, we know that these arrangements were not necessarily "protective" for the young women, who often were exploited as domestic servants, lacked opportunity to go to school, and sometimes were subjected to sexual exploitation.

Some of the male youth were also exploited by adults who viewed them as potential recruits to the Southern Sudanese cause. At least one of the young men we

[1]Geneva Conventions, 1949; 1959 Declaration of the Rights of the Child, Principle 6; UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1986.

interviewed was recruited by the SPLA and served with them for a time before ending up in Kakuma camp.

In spite of the limited level of support and assistance that international agencies were able to provide, the youth, with the aid of their peers and elders from their respective tribes, devised strategies to protect themselves and cope with their psychological vulnerabilities. In particular, those who adapted and made it to the United States were able to deal successfully with ambiguous loss. Boss (2006) describes resilience in the face of ambiguous loss as the ability to live comfortably with the ambiguity. To live well, the person must be able to manage having a loved one who is psychologically present but physically absent. Cultural factors may have helped the Sudanese youth to manage ambiguous loss, as Boss notes that cultural and personal attitudes about mastery can influence resilience in the face of ambiguous loss. Tempering mastery, or recognizing that there are things in life we cannot control, can help people come to terms with an ambiguous loss (Boss). Western culture features a strong sense of mastery, which is more nuanced in the cultures these youth represent. To accept that life may be out of their control helped some youth to move on.

The strategies that worked for these youth suggest how agencies responsible for the care of unaccompanied children could strengthen protections and supports. Our research supported previous studies (Legarreta, 1984; Ressler et al., 1988), indicating that having a connection with elders from their respective communities helped them maintain a sense of cultural connection and belonging. The community connection also provided guidance on behavior and some social control in the sense that youth felt the need to maintain their personal and family reputations within their cultural group. Second, the positive peer group provided essential support for the youth and should be maintained as an intact group to the greatest extent possible.

The youth selected for resettlement in the United States were among the most resilient youth and, indeed, functioned at high levels, managing complex new living situations and integrating successfully into American life, school, and work. However, the psychological challenges of ambiguous loss and of past trauma were not always evident, understood, or addressed appropriately, thus extending or exaggerating their effect. As our research showed, some youth continued to experience symptoms of PTSD that interfered with their daily lives. In addition, although agencies made a serious attempt to resettle youth who had connections to each other in the same cities, there were inevitable separations. Those who were resettled as minors went into the refugee foster care program and were placed with American foster families, often in locations that were isolated from other Sudanese youth. In previous work (Bates et al., 2005; Luster et al., 2010) we found that some foster parents lacked an understanding of the importance of maintaining cultural identity for the healthy adjustment of the youth.

Through a federally funded program for the *Lost Boys* in the city where they were resettled, the youth had access to individual counseling and weekly group meetings offering cultural education, recreation, and group support. This program was only partially successful, as the older youth had to meet work requirements that often prevented their attendance at group activities. In addition, providing mental

health counseling in a culturally acceptable manner was a challenge, and only some of the youth took advantage of this service.

Our research indicated that once resettled, the youth had continuing needs for support and protection. In particular, maintaining connections with their culture and peer group must be central considerations of any resettlement plan, as is developing a method to help youth process their trauma experiences in a manner that is in line with cultural beliefs and values. The agency responsible for the resettlement of unaccompanied refugee minors now places all new arrivals into counseling as a matter of routine to reduce the potential stigma of participating in therapy.

Research must continue to unearth the strengths and potential vulnerabilities of the youth as they form new families in the United States and reconnect with found family members in Africa. Qualitative methods seem best suited to getting at these core theories, where survey research might be less successful. There is a particular need to examine the experiences of women in this group, as their stories are more hidden and the vulnerability greater. The youth, now young men and women, continue to show resilience in their new country (Luster, Qin, Bates, Rana, & Lee, 2010; Rana, Qin, Bates, Luster, & Salterelli, 2011). Many have completed college, are working to support themselves, forming families, and becoming US citizens. Of the ten youth we interviewed in 2007, all are contributing to the support of remaining family members in Africa. For all the youth, there are numerous success stories, and we hope to continue to be a research vehicle for describing and understanding their experiences.

References

Bates, L., Baird, D., Johnson, D. J., Lee, R. E., Luster, T., & Rehagen, C. (2005). Sudanese refugee youth in foster care: The "lost boys" in America. *Child Welfare, 84*(5), 631–648.

Bixler, M. (2005). *The lost boys of Sudan: An American story of the refugee experience*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

Boss, P. (2004). Ambiguous loss research, theory, and practice: Reflections after 9/11. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 66*(3), 551–566.

Boss, P. (2006). *Loss, trauma, and resilience: Therapeutic work with ambiguous loss*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton.

Dau, J. B. (2007). *God grew tired of us*. New York, NY: National Geographic.

Derib, A. (1998). *Group care and fostering of Sudanese children in Pignudo and Kakuma refugee camps: The experience of Save the Children Sweden from 1990 to 1997*. Stockholm, Sweden: Save the Children Sweden.

Duncan, J. (2000a). *Overview and mental health findings for UAM and separated children: Interviews as part of the UNHCR best interest determinations*. Kenya: Kakuma Refugee Camp.

Duncan, J. (2000b). *Sudanese girls in Kakuma*. Unpublished report from the Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya.

Duncan, J. (2001). *Sudanese "lost boys" in the United States: Adjustment after six months*. Paper presented at the United States Catholic Conference, Washington, DC.

Foa, E. B., Johnson, K. M., Feeny, N. C., & Treadwell, K. R. H. (2001). The child PTSD Symptom Scale: A preliminary examination of its psychometric properties. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 30*(3), 376–384.

Freud, A., & Dann, S. (1951). An experiment in group upbringing. *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child, 6*, 127–168.

Garbarino, J. (1999). *Lost boys: Why our sons turn violent and how we can save them*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Garbarino, J., Kostelny, K., & Dubrow, N. (1991). *No place to be a child: Growing up in a war zone*. Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.

Garmezy, N. (1991). Resiliency and vulnerability to adverse developmental outcomes associated with poverty. *American Behavioral Scientist, 34*(4), 416–430.

Geltman, P. L., Grant-Knight, W., Mehta, S. D., Lloyd-Travaglini, C., Lustig, S., Landgraf, J. M., et al. (2005). The "lost boys" of Sudan: Functional and behavioral health of unaccompanied refugee minors resettled in the United States. *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, 159*, 585–591.

Hepburn, A. (2006). Running scared: When children become separated in emergencies. In N. Boothby, A. Strang, & M. Wessells (Eds.), *A world turned upside down* (pp. 63–88). Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian.

Hepburn, A., Williamson, J., & Wolfram, T. (2004). *Separated children: Care and protection of children in emergencies.* Westport, CT: Save the Children Federation. Retrieved August 1, 2008 from http://www.savethechildren.org/publications/technical-resources/child-survival/SEPARATED_CHILDREN_CONTENTS.pdf.

Joshi, P. T., & O'Donnell, D. A. (2003). Consequences of child exposure to war and terrorism. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review, 6*(4), 275–292.

Legarreta, D. (1984). *The Guernica generation: Basque refugee children of the Spanish Civil War*. Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press.

Luster, T., Qin, D., Bates, L., Johnson, D., & Rana, M. (2008). The lost boys of Sudan: Ambiguous loss, search for family, and reestablishing relationships with family members. *Family Relations, 57*, 444–456.

Luster, T., Qin, D., Bates, L., Rana, M., & Lee, J. A. (2010). Successful adaptation among Sudanese unaccompanied minors: The perspectives of the youth and foster parents. *Childhood, 17*(2), 197–211.

Luthar, S. S., & Zelazo, L. B. (2003). Research on resilience: An integrative review. In S. S. Luthar (Ed.), *Resilience and vulnerability: Adaptation in the context of childhood adversities* (pp. 510–549). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Mann, G. (2004). Separated children: Care and support in context. In J. Boyden & J. de Berry (Eds.), *Children and youth on the frontline: Ethnography, armed conflict and displacement* (pp. 3–22). New York, NY: Berghahn Books.

Masten, A. A., & Powell, J. L. (2003). A resilience framework for research, policy, and practice. In S. S. Luthar (Ed.), *Resilience and vulnerabilities: Adaptation in the context of childhood adversities* (pp. 1–25). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Paardekooper, B., de Jong, J. T. V. M., & Hermanns, J. M. A. (1999). The psychological impact of war and the refugee situation on south Sudanese children in refugee camps in northern Uganda: An exploratory study. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 40*, 529–536.

Rana, M., Qin, D., Bates, L., Luster, T., & Salterelli, A. (2011). Educational resilience among Sudanese unaccompanied minors. *Teachers College Record, 113*(9).

Ressler, E. M., Boothby, N., & Steinbock, D. (1988). *Unaccompanied children: Care and protection in wars, natural disasters, and refugee movements*. New York, NY: Oxford University.

Rousseau, C., Rufagari, M., Bagilishya, D., & Measham, T. (2004). Remaking family life: Strategies for re-establishing continuity among Congolese refugees during the family reunification process. *Social Science & Medicine, 59*, 1095–1108.

Rousseau, C., Said, T. M., Gagne, M. J., & Bibeau, C. (1998). Resilience in unaccompanied minors from the North of Somalia. *Psychoanalytic Review, 85*, 615–637.

Shaw, J. A. (2003). Children exposed to war/terrorism. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review, 6*(4), 237–246.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. London, England: Sage.

UNICEF. (1996). *The state of the world's children.* Retrieved April 20, 2007 from http://www.unicef.org/sowc96/.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR]. (2004). *Trends in unaccompanied and separated children seeking asylum in industrialized countries, 2001–2003.* Retrieved September 20, 2006 from http://www.unhcr.org/statistics.

Werner, E. E., & Smith, R. S. (1982). *Vulnerable but invincible: A longitudinal study of resilient children and youth*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Werner, E. E., & Smith, R. S. (2001). *Journeys from childhood to midlife: Risk, resilience, and recovery*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Chapter 13
When All the Children Are Left Behind: An Exploration of Fosterage of Owambo Orphans in Namibia, Africa

Jill Brown

When looking at the complex societal and interrelated factors that impact a child's access to the most fundamental rights—the right to be educated, to be safe, and to be healthy—one cannot overlook the children in sub-Saharan Africa and the current orphan crisis due to HIV/AIDS.

By the year 2015, 20 million children will have lost at least one parent to HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa alone (UNAIDS/UNICEF, 2011). The burden of caring for orphans in sub-Saharan Africa has followed four primary models, listed in order of prevalence: (1) care by the existing family structure; (2) care by neighborhoods, allowing children to remain in familiar environments; (3) care through enterprise-centered collectives, formed by a consortia of government, nongovernmental, and private sector organizations, and modeled on traditional extended family (i.e., foster villages); and, finally, (4) institutional care (Sewpaul, 2001). Nontraditional methods of caring for orphans, such as institutional care and collectives, have not been viewed as viable solutions or as socially acceptable. As child care has historically been thought of in Africa as a social task performed by an entire extended family, adoption and care by strangers is deemed a last resort (Levine et al., 1994; Madhavan, 2004).

I have lived and worked much of the last 12 years in sub-Saharan Africa and have become increasingly interested in both the defended and undefended nature of the children of Africa. While high levels of HIV and the rising number of orphans have placed enormous stress on communities worldwide, this may be less true of Africa than any other region of the world, due to the dominance of the extended family over the nuclear family and the African cultural complex of socially distributed child care (Caldwell, 1997; Weisner, Bradley, & Kilbride, 1997). Weisner et al. (1997) described socially distributed child care as a set of loosely interwoven ecological characteristics, beliefs, and practices that coexist and contribute to one another.

J. Brown, Ph.D. (✉)
Department of Psychology, Creighton University, 2500 California Plaza, Omaha, NE 68131, USA
e-mail: jillbrown@creighton.edu

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9_13,

Some key components follow. Child caretaking often occurs as a part of indirect chains of support in which one child assists another, who assists another. Children look to other children for support as often as or more often than they look to adults. Care often occurs in the context of other domestic work. Aggression, teasing, and dominance coincide with nurturance and support—all from the same people. Dominance increases with age. Food and other material goods are used to threaten, control, soothe, and comfort. Mothers provide support and nurturance to children as much by securing others to support their children as by supporting their children directly (i.e., child fosterage).

Most orphans are being cared for through a culturally specific child care practice of child fosterage. In Africa, child fosterage has been described as a social welfare system revolving around kinship and defined as the rearing of a child by someone other than the biological parent (Bledsoe & Brandon, 1992; Brown, 2011). What makes fosterage unique is the semipermanent yet adjustable nature of the relationship, one of the most distinct elements of African families (Bledsoe, Ewbank, & Isiugo-Abanihe, 1988). In countries without institutional systems to better the welfare of children and the resources of families, fosterage serves a crucial role and may be a key component in African communities' response to HIV/AIDS.

But what does it mean to be an undefended child? Some scholars have argued that the nature of being raised away from one's biological parent places children at a disadvantage (Anderson, 2005; Foster, 2000). But such definitions have been tempered by more ethnographic accounts of children thriving in extended kin care. Thus, one cannot define being undefended simply as living without birth parents or not going to school; a dynamic mix of factors works in collaboration to defend the rights of the child.

From an academic standpoint, the study of child fosterage bridges the disciplines of anthropology and developmental psychology. For years, anthropologists have documented child rearing in diverse cultures and described child care patterns in Africa (Levine et al., 1994; Whiting, 1963; Whiting & Whiting, 1975). Developmental psychologists have stressed the importance of how we are raised, moving in and out of paradigms that stress biological or social influences as fundamental (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). In anthropological literature, much is written about child fosterage. Ethnographers began documenting fosterage, using different terms as early as 1937 (Herskovitz, 1937). Influential work by Goody (1973) and Bledsoe (1990a, 1990b) in Africa began to shed light on the variations of fosterage in Africa. Since then, scholars have studied motivations to foster (Isiugo-Abanihe, 1985; Payne-Price, 1981; Pennington, 1991) and predictors of fostering (McDaniel & Zulu, 1996; Vandermeersch, 2002). Fewer studies have examined the outcomes (Oni, 1995; Verhoff & Morelli, 2007). The research findings are contradictory regarding the effects of fostering and care by the extended family structure as the primary way of caring for orphans. Some scholars report uniformly negative effects for fostering, finding that children experience less education, more work, and less well-being (Bicego, Rutstein, & Johnson, 2003; Bledsoe, 1990a, 1990b). Other scholars regard the fostering system as stressed beyond repair (Foster, 2000). Still others hold that fostering is culturally appropriate, with built-in protective factors, and argue that

orphans and non-orphans do not show significant disparity in developmental outcomes (Ankrah, 1993; Monasch & Boerma, 2004). These debates elicit questions regarding the family unit, the mother, and the individual child. Understanding how families negotiate fosterage in times of crisis may help explain some of the disparate results in treatment between fostered children, orphans, and biological children and individual developmental outcomes.

When addressing the impact of HIV on children, donors and governments in Africa have focused on orphan. Although definitions vary, an orphan is widely defined as a child under the age of 15 who has lost one or both biological parents (UNICEF, 2004).

Using UNICEF's definition of an orphan as a child under age 15 who has lost one or both parents, over five million children in sub-Saharan Africa became orphans in 2003 alone. By 2010, sub-Saharan Africa will be home to an estimated 32 million orphaned children, more than two-thirds of whom will have lost one or both parents to AIDS.

Monasch and Boerma (2004) looked at national surveys from 31 countries in sub-Saharan Africa to assess, among other things, the impact of orphanhood on education and health. While school attendance varied by country and region, the odds of orphans attending school were less than for non-orphans. Double orphans have a greater disadvantage than maternal or paternal orphans. And, orphans have a lower level of education, regardless of overall attendance. Recent work in rural Zimbabwe showed that maternal orphans, but not paternal or double orphans, have lower primary school completion rates. For paternal and double orphans, a higher rate of school competition is attributed to the presence of an adult female in the household (Nyamukapa & Gregson, 2005).

This study addressed two primary questions. First, are Owambo orphans lower in developmental markers than non-orphans? Second, what is the Owambo cultural logic of fostering during times of crisis?

Methods

The Owambo Context

This study utilized the 2000 Namibian Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) collected from a random sample of all ethnic groups in Namibia and a qualitative case study. The four northern regions of Namibia (Oshana, Ohangwena, Omusati, and Oshikoto) are the traditional homeland for Owambo-speaking people and the setting for this study (Fig. 13.1).

Among Oshiwambo-speaking people, seven Owambo language groups exist today. Owambo societies during the precolonial and colonial periods were predominantly matrilineal agropastoralist societies demarcated from each other by large areas of forest and savanna (Salokoski, 1998).

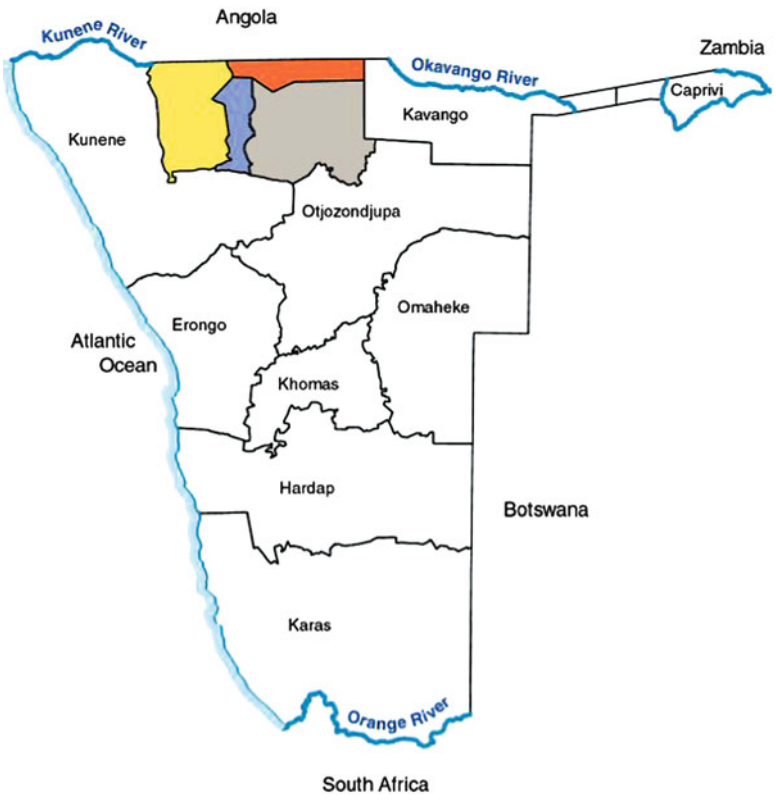

Fig. 13.1 Four North Owambo-speaking regions of Namibia included in the household sample

Kinship is an organizing principle in Namibia, holding more importance than class and playing a critical role in decisions regarding socially distributed child rearing (Hayes, 1998). What class does in advanced capitalistic societies like the United States kinship does in Namibia—it shapes peer relationships, choices about marriage, and choices with whom one can be raised. Kinship in Namibia is complex, with some groups classified as bilateral or unilineal; and among the Herero speakers, a double-descent system exists. Matrilineal descent systems are found among Owambo speakers (Hayes, 1998). Lebert (2005) studied inheritance of land, cattle, millet, and children among Owambos in the northern region of Namibia and described a traditionally matrilineal system. Upon the death of a man, the first order of inheritance is his oldest brother. If there is no oldest brother, then inheritance goes to his oldest sister's oldest son, followed by his sister's daughter's oldest son. If a man has no siblings, inheritance goes to the oldest living male descendent of his mother's sister. Upon the death of a woman, her children receive the inheritance—girls receive ornaments and jewelry, and boys receive the cattle.

Children traditionally belong to their mother's family, and men do not pass on their matrilineal membership to children. The mother's brother often plays a pivotal role in the care of the children, including providing care through fosterage. Even within this system, however, there is significant variation and complexity. Recent adaptations in the matrilineal inheritance system are due to the impoverished state of widows, as the husband's matrilineal kin traditionally have rights to all of the wife's possessions after his death. Similarly, the rising number of orphans has forced both paternal and maternal kin to raise children.

Namibian Demographic and Health Survey

The quantitative portion of the study utilized the 2000 Namibian DHS collected from a random sample of all ethnic groups in Namibia and focused on all children under age 19 in all households identified in the Owambo homeland ($N=5{,}949$). The four northern regions of Namibia (Oshana, Ohangwena, Omusati, and Oshikoto) are the traditional homeland for Owambo-speaking people. All children whose mothers identified as Owambo were utilized ($N=4{,}030$). For the qualitative portion, Oshiwambo families ($N=4$) were also selected (see Fig. 13.3). The DHS is a nationally and regionally representative survey conducted by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Foster children were defined in the DHS survey as children with both parents alive but residing with neither parent. An orphan was defined as a child under age 19 whose mother or father (or both) has died. A child whose mother is deceased was described in the data as a maternal orphan. A child whose father is deceased was described as a paternal orphan. If both are deceased, the child was referred to as a double orphan.

Variables

Child's Residence Status. The DHS survey afforded two ways of discerning a child's fosterage status. First, DHS data on *Child's Residence Status* (fosterage and orphan prevalence) was collected by asking for each child the following: "Is [name]'s mother still alive?" and "Is [name]'s father still alive?" If the parent was still living, the household head was asked whether the parent currently resides in the reference household. Each head of household reported on all members of a household and their *Relationship to the Head of Household* (spouse, son/daughter, grandchild, sister/brother, other relative, foster/adopted child, non-relative). Second, all individual females aged 15–49 were asked about birth histories. Information on each child was recorded, including with whom the child currently lived, and was recorded as either "lives with respondent" or "lives elsewhere."

Developmental Markers. The nutritional status of children under age 5 was measured by three standard indices of physical growth: *height for age* (which can be used as an index of stunting), *weight for age* (which can be used as an index of underweight status), and *weight for height* (which can be used as an index of wasting). Height was recorded in centimeters, and weight was recorded in kilograms. These indices were calculated using the Center for Disease Control (CDC) Standard Deviation-derived Growth Reference Curves derived from the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS/CDC) Reference Populations, which sample international populations. Education was measured by two variables for children over age 5. First, *attendance status* was measured by asking the head of household if the child attended school in the previous year and in the current year. Attendance status was coded *yes* or *no*. Second, *Education in Single Years* was measured as a continuous variable.

Qualitative Data Collection

Multiple Case Study. A multiple case study of four Owambo families was conducted to better understand the cultural logic of fostering. In-depth interviews were conducted in Namibia, Africa, between September and November 2006 with four female heads of household.

Two sampling techniques were utilized. A *purposeful sample*, designed to intentionally select individuals to understand the central phenomena, was used. All families interviewed were interconnected through the practice of child fosterage. *Maximum variation sampling*, in which the research samples' cases or individuals differed on some characteristics, was also used. Participants were initially recruited through contacts with women I knew well. I began with a female head of household whom I have known for over 10 years. From the information obtained about the children in the house, the second household was selected. If the family had fostered out a child, the recipient family was contacted and asked to participate in a similar interview. This process was repeated. The fourth family was not connected through child fosterage or kinship but was identified by the first family as a potential outlier. In line with recommendations for the number of cases to select in a multiple case study, four families were interviewed, as the goal of a case study is to gain in-depth understanding, not generalizability (Creswell, 2003; Stake, 1995).

An initial visit was made to ask if the family would be interested in participating, and if so, additional meeting times were scheduled. I utilized some elements of postmodern anthropology theory when conducting the case studies. In an attempt to be self-reflexive and remove the dominant position of the researcher, I disclosed to participants my own experiences of being adopted in the United States, being a mother myself, and my own experiences of living in Namibia previously and returning to do research on child fosterage. I encouraged participants, if questions arose, to stop and ask about my own experience.

Interviews lasted between 2 and 4 hours. Three of the interviews were conducted over multiple days. The fourth interview was conducted during a daylong visit. All

interviews were tape-recorded and translated if needed. Participants were invited to speak in their language of choice, either Oshiwambo or English. I encouraged participants to switch between languages if it made explanation easier. All interviews were conducted in English, with passages in Oshiwambo. Participants were paid 50 Namibian dollars for participation. This is equivalent to seven US dollars.

Qualitative Data Analysis. A case study is a type of ethnographic design (Stake, 1995) and is an exploration of a "bounded system" or a case over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information and rich in context (Merriam, 1998). In this study, the multiple cases served the purpose of "illuminating a particular issue" (Creswell, 2003)—namely, what is the cultural logic of fostering during crisis?

Analysis of the case study followed Stake's (1995) technique and occurred in three phases. I performed the initial coding and thematic analysis. First, a detailed description of each family was created from filed notes, observations, and information gathered during the interviews. All interviews and field notes were typed for analysis. Second, thematic analysis was performed on two levels: within each case and across the cases (Stake, 1995). Thematic analysis of the interview data was done by (1) initially reading the data for overall understanding and writing preliminary notes, (2) partitioning segments of text and labeling them with codes, (3) aggregating similar codes together to develop themes, (4) connecting and interrelating the themes, and (5) constructing a narrative. The interconnected themes were of particular interest to the study, as the relationships that exist between families are subjects of the central questions of the study. The final phase of analysis was to integrate the cases and themes and report on the "lessons learned" or assertions put forth from the study (Stake, 1995).

Results

Information analysis about households, mothers, and children in Namibia revealed a demographic picture of family life in Namibia. Owamboland has the highest rates of children in Namibia who do not live with either parent but whose parents are both alive. Rates range from 29.4 to 36.9 % in the four northern regions and from 11.5 to 28 % in the rest of the country. Rates of living with both parents are much lower, ranging from 13.6 to 18.4 % in the northern regions and from 23.0 to 48.2 % in the rest of the country. Table 13.1 shows demographic information about Owambo children, mothers, and households.

Table 13.2 shows the height and weight of Owambo children. Owambo children under 5 years old averaged 10.8 kg and 84.5 cm. Height and weight percentiles were calculated for all children under 5 years of age using the CDC Standard Deviation-derived Growth Reference Curves derived from the NCHS/CDC Reference Populations. Owambo children registered in the 19th percentile on average for weight and in the 25th percentile for height. Their weight-for-height average percentile was

Table 13.1 Demographic information on Owambo children, mothers, and households in Namibia

Description	Percentage and mean values	*SD*	Range
Child			
Age	8.85	5.2	0–18
Gender			
Boy	2,641 (48.1 %)		
Girl	2,853 (51.9 %)		
Child lives with whom			
Respondent	2,299 (57.0 %)		
Elsewhere	1,731 (43.0 %)		
Mother			
Age of mother	34.28	7.2	16–49
Age at first birth	20.78	4.16	11–42
Total children born	4.47	2.6	1–16
Number of living children	4.19	2.4	1–12
Number of children died	.278	.716	0–7
Education			
No education	18.5 %		
Primary	39.1 %		
Secondary	39.7 %		
Higher	2.7 %		
Current married status			
Never married	1,426 (36.5 %)		
Married	1,291 (32.0 %)		
Living together	949 (23.5 %)		
Widowed	140 (3.5 %)		
Divorced	22 (0.5 %)		
Not living together	153 (3.9 %)		
Household			
Total people in house	8.36	3.67	1–30
Number of children under 5	1.55	1.2	1–6
Head of household age	56.9	17.6	16–98
Place of residence			
Urban	654 (11.9 %)		
Rural	4,840 (88.1 %)		
Education of head of household			
No education, preschool	2,442 (45 %)		
Primary	2,634 (48.5 %)		
Secondary	353 (6.4 %)		
Sex of head of household			
Male	46.3 %	`	
Female	53.7 %		
Relationship structure			
One adult	8.2 %		
Two adults opposite sex	11 %		
Two adults same sex	6.9 %		
Three + related adults	57 %		
Unrelated adults	16.9 %		

Table 13.2 Mean level of education and height and weight of Owambo children in Namibia

Description	Percentage and mean values	SD	Range
Education in single years	3.96	2.9	1–12
Attended school in current year			
Yes	3,309 (87.3 %)		
No	483 (12.7 %)		
Weight in kilograms	10.80	3.2	2.3–23.6
Height in centimeters	84.53	25.6	36.4–999.80
Height/age percentile	25.24	28.5	0–99
Weight/age percentile	19.49	25.6	0–99
Weight/height percentile	29.91	28.2	0–99

Note: Height and weight percentiles were calculated for all children under 5 years of age using the CDC Standard Deviation-derived Growth Reference Curves derived from the NCHS/CDC Reference Populations ($N=1,388$)
Education indices were calculated for all children age 5 years to 19 years ($N=4,106$)

Table 13.3 Distribution of Owambo children's kinship relationship to head of household

Head of household				
Relationship	Male	Female	Frequency	Total valid percent
Son/daughter (biological)	1,053	968	2,021	36.8
Grandchild	932	1,348	2,280	41.5
Brother/sister	28	44	72	1.3
Other relative	317	449	766	13.9
Adopted/fostered	56	53	109	2.0
Non relative	140	81	221	4

29.9, meaning children on average compared to other children internationally are in the 29th percentile on weight-for-height measures.

Univariate statistics on all outcome variables used in the study are presented in Table 13.2.

From the household interviews, each person's relationship to the head of the household was gathered. Table 13.3 shows the number of Owambo children and their various relationships to the head of household. Biological children made up 36.8 % of the children under 19 years old living in households, 41.5 % were grandchildren to the head of household, 13.9 % were other relatives, 2 % were adopted or fostered children, and 4 % were not related to the head of household.

The relationship that maternal and double orphans had to the head of household was explored. The majority of maternal orphans ($N=160$) lived with a grandparent (64 %), although it is not known if it was the maternal or paternal grandparent; 17 % were living with other relatives; and 7 % were living with the father. For double orphans ($N=44$), 68 % lived with grandparents, 16 % lived with other relatives, and 9 % lived with non-relatives. Table 13.4 displays the results.

To test the main research question—Within the fosterage system, does being orphaned affect developmental markers of health and education?—a series of 2×2

Table 13.4 Relationship to the head of household of Owambo children who are maternal and double orphans

Relationship to head of household	Maternal orphan	Double orphan
Son/daughter (biological)	11 (7 %)	0 (0 %)
Grandchild	102 (64 %)	30 (68 %)
Brother/sister	6 (4 %)	3 (7 %)
Other relative	27 (17 %)	7 (16 %)
Adopted fostered	6 (4 %)	0 (0 %)
Not related	8 (5 %)	4 (9 %)
Total	160	44

Table 13.5 Mean differences in years of education for maternal and double orphans and non-orphan boys and girls

		Gender				
		Male		Female		
Orphan status	*N*	M	SD	M	SD	Main effects
Maternal orphan	161	2.92	2.2	3.63	2.4	3.27
Non-orphan	2,623	2.98	2.2	3.40	2.4	3.20
Main effects		*2.95*		*3.51*		
Double orphan	44	3.09	2.0	3.65	2.5	3.37
Non-orphan	2,740	2.97	2.2	3.40	2.4	3.20
Main effects		*3.03*		*3.53*		

Note: Italicized = significant adjusted mean differences

factorial ANCOVAs, controlling for age of the child, were used to examine adjusted mean differences in education and health between male and female orphans and non-orphans. Maternal orphans under age 5 ($N=18$) and between ages 5 and 19 ($N=161$) were defined as having mother not alive but father still living. Double orphans under age 5 ($N=2$) and between ages 5 and 19 ($N=44$) were defined as having neither mother nor father alive.

Years of education for male and female maternal and double orphans, as well as non-orphans, are summarized in Table 13.5. There was not a significant interaction between gender and maternal orphan status ($F_{(4,2779)}=1.64$, MSE = 2.24, $p=0.20$). There was no main effect for maternal orphan status ($F_{(4,2779)}=0.519$, MSE = 1.15, $p=0.47$). There was, however, a significant gender main effect ($F_{(4,2779)}=21.31$, MSE = 47.75, $p=0.001$), with orphaned girls having significantly more years of education than orphaned boys. The effect size was $r=0.18$ (see Fig. 13.2).

Similar patterns were found with double orphans. There was not a significant interaction between gender and double orphan status ($F_{(4,2779)}=0.09$, MSE = 0.212, $p=0.76$). There was not a significant main effect for double orphan status ($F_{(4,2779)}=0.64$, MSE = 1.43, $p=0.42$). However, there was a significant main effect for gender ($F_{(4,2779)}=4.60$, MSE = 10.32, $p=0.03$), with girls having significantly more years of education than boys. The effect size was small at $r=0.1$ (see Fig. 13.2).

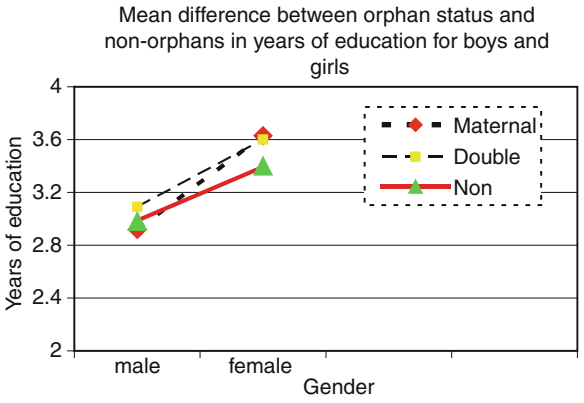

Fig. 13.2 Education in single years for male and female maternal orphans, double orphans, and non-orphans

Table 13.6 Mean differences of school attendance in current year for maternal and double orphans and non-orphan boys and girls

		Gender				
		Male		Female		
Orphan status	*N*	M	SD	M	SD	Main effects
Maternal orphan	161	0.894	0.31	0.939	0.22	0.917
Non-orphan	2,608	0.891	0.31	0.910	0.28	0.900
Main effects		0.893		0.924		
Double orphan	44	0.922	0.27	0.951	0.22	0.937
Non-orphan	2,725	0.891	0.31	0.910	0.28	0.900
Main effects		0.906		0.931		

Note: School attendance was coded 0 for no attendance and 1 for attended in current year

Whether male and female maternal and double orphans attended school in the current year was examined, and adjusted mean differences are presented in Table 13.6. There was no significant interaction between gender and maternal orphan status ($F(_{4,2764})=0.319$, MSE = 0.028, $p=0.572$). There was no significant main effect for maternal orphan status ($F(_{4,2764})=0.470$, MSE = 0.041, $p=0.493$) or gender ($F(_{4,2764})=1.70$, MSE = 0.149, $p=0.192$).

Similar results were again found when comparing school attendance of double orphans to non-orphans. There was no significant interaction in school attendance between double orphan status and gender ($F(_{4,2764})=0.012$, MSE = 0.001, $p=0.912$). There was no main effect for gender ($F(_{4,2764})=0.634$, MSE = 0.055, $p=0.426$) or for double orphan status ($F(_{4,2764})=0.285$, MSE = 0.025, $p=0.593$) (see Fig. 13.3).

Height and weight percentiles were calculated for maternal and double orphan boys and girls and compared with non-orphans. Because of the small number of double orphans ($N=2$), only maternal orphans were used in this analysis. Adjusted mean differences are found in Table 13.7. There was no significant interaction in height between maternal orphan status and gender ($F(_{4,1293})=0.755$, MSE = 581.34, $p=0.385$). There was no main effect for maternal orphan status ($F(_{4,1293})=1.85$,

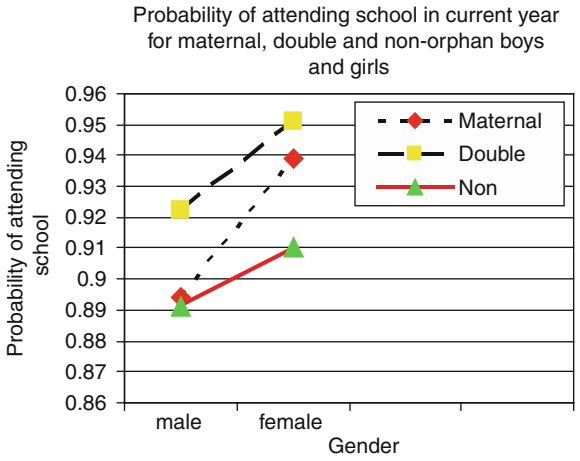

Fig. 13.3 School attendance for maternal orphans, double orphans and non-orphan boys and girls

Table 13.7 Mean differences in height and weight percentiles for maternal and double orphans and non-orphan boys and girls

		Gender				
		Male		Female		
Orphan status	*N*	M	SD	M	SD	Main effects
Height						
Maternal orphan	18	10.01	9.1	22.83	32.9	16.46
Non-orphan	1,280	24.79	28.1	26.01	29.1	25.44
Main effects		17.45		14.46		
Weight						
Maternal orphan	18	12.27	9.4	21.79	32.3	17.03
Non-orphan	1,280	18.66	18.6	20.38	26.5	19.52
Main effects		15.46		21.08		

Note: Height and weight percentiles were calculated using the CDC Standard Deviation-derived Growth Reference Curves derived from the NCHS/CDC Reference Populations. Height and weight were not calculated for double orphans due to the small sample size ($N=2$)

MSE = 1424.66, $p=0.174$). There was no main effect for gender ($F_{(4,1293)}=1.13$, MSE = 872.47, $p=0.287$) (see Fig. 13.4). Likewise, when examining weight percentiles, there was no significant interaction in weight between maternal orphan status and gender ($F_{(4,1293)}=0.45$, MSE = 269.32, $p=0.505$). There was no significant main effect for maternal orphan status ($F_{(4,1293)}=0.182$, MSE = 109.78, $p=0.67$) or for gender ($F_{(4,1293)}=0.93$, MSE = 559.69, $p=0.336$) (see Fig. 13.4).

The quantitative analysis reveals that orphans do not seem to be undefended in terms of education and height and weight. While nonsignificant, orphans often have higher raw scores in years of education and probability of attending school. Gender is the one characteristic that may explain the divergent experiences of orphans, with boys having fewer total years of education. In this case, null results are hopeful for Owambo children. Several questions come to mind when incorporating these

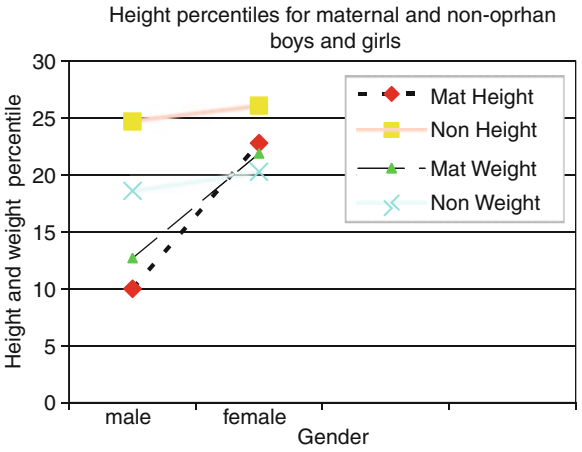

Fig. 13.4 Height and weight percentile for maternal orphan and non-orphan boys and girls

findings with the existing literature from other communities in Africa where orphans are experiencing significantly worse conditions than non-orphans.

How families negotiated fosterage arrangements, specifically when biological parents were ill, was an important theme of the study. Different means of negotiation existed for the donor family and the recipient family. In these negotiations, children were requested by the receiving family or given by the donor family.

Early arrangements were honored when negotiating where children would live, both in and out of times of crisis. For example, if a child had lived with a maternal grandmother since she was age 4, the preference among both maternal and paternal family members at the time of a parent's death was to leave the child where she was. Ndeleo explains:

> It depends where the child has been brought up. When they are young, if the child is with the father then he has a right to the child. If the child stays with the mother, then she has more rights. It depends on who brought up the child.

In times of crisis, living arrangements for children were collectively made before the mother died. In this way, the culturally normative practice of fosterage was evoked to make the transition to a new home easier by preventing children from witnessing the parent's death. However, siblings were often split. While all homes in the study were involved in caring for orphans, only one family fostered two siblings.

Magdelena, Nangula's only fostered child, came to live with Nangula when Magdelena's mother fell ill. Magdelena's biological mother had previously lived with Nangula and helped her care for her two boys and do domestic chores.

> When I came to Eenhana, she (Magdelena's mother) had a baby and then a second baby and then became sick. She went back to Ombalantu to stay with her parents. She was tested (for HIV) and the first one was positive, a baby boy, and he passed away. She then wrote me a letter and said she is sick and said I can take Magdelena to care for her. My husband was working in Arandis and I tell him, but then another letter came and repeated that I was supposed to take the child. She is now my kid. I can take her with me. Then I go there with my husband and we pick up Magdelena. In only two years, she (mother) passed away.

Two examples were found of children negotiating living arrangements themselves. While this was incongruent with cultural rules, it mimicked the practice of voluntary fosterage. In one instance, a 17-year-old girl (Aune) was a second-generation orphan who chose to live with the Nakele family. Second-generation orphans are children who have been placed in a home before or at the death of a parent, and then the caregiver of the new home also dies. Usually, these children are more removed from close kin than is typical of fostered children. Therefore, the possibility of being absorbed into a new family diminishes with each death of a caregiver. Meme Nakele explains how Aune came to live with them.

> She was not living with her mother when she died. When she was three, right straight after breast feeding, her grandmother took her from the mother and kept her. Her grandmother was working as a cleaner in the hospital when she became ill and died. Then Aune is staying in the location with a distant relative.

Aune encountered conflicts with the people staying in the house with her and was locked out of the house without a place to stay. So she went to the Nakele house.

> We thought she was just coming to visit but after one, two, three days we then asked, "Aune when are you leaving?" Aune said, "No, Meme, I am not leaving." I said, "For what good reason?" I couldn't say go back so I said, "Wait until Tate comes home and we will sit and talk because you can't just come and stay with someone without informing them." I know she is a true orphan and that is why we allow it.

Women explained that at times, "You can do no other than take the child," as no alternatives exist. Women expressed worry and concern as motivations that prompted these relationships. Being fostered in times of crisis did not have the same advantages to the recipient family as being fostered voluntarily, and children often did not have advocates or adults to hold the recipient family accountable. Hilde, an orphan from the sister of Meme Nakele, had her maternal grandmother intervene and move her to the Nakele house. After her mother's death, Hilde was first placed with her mother's sister. The woman's husband was not happy with all the orphans in the house, and word got back to the maternal grandmother. Meme Nakele described:

> So my mother heard this bad talking of Martin (husband) and she came to us and asked us to take Hilde. At the time my sister had taken all the kids to Hamutenya's house and I said, "Oh, they have too many children and Meme is old." There is no other place to stay so Meme came to us to see if we can take her.

Grandparents acted with vigilance when they heard of an abusive fostering arrangement, often negotiating other living arrangements for young children without birth parents.

Discussion

The questions addressed by this study asked if children fostered in times of crisis (orphans) differed from biological children in education and health markers. There was no difference found in education or health between orphans and biological children. The findings suggest that orphan status, alone, does not have the impact on education

and health in Owamboland that it has been found to have in other communities. Past research has found differences in education between orphans and non-orphan foster children in Zimbabwe (Foster, Makufa, Drew, Mashumba, & Kambeu, 1997) and between orphans and non-orphans in Uganda (Kamali et al., 1996). Monasch and Boerma (2004) combined DHS data from all Southern African countries (South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Lesotho, and Swaziland) and found that orphans were less likely to attend school than non-orphans. Both maternal and double orphans in this study had nonsignificant but higher rates of school attendance than non-orphans, with female orphans having the most education.

I am not suggesting that Owambo orphans are not suffering and do not need to be considered and defended. The case study revealed instances where children were struggling to secure shelter. However, results from the case study may help illuminate why orphans and non-orphans do not differ in education and height and weight from non-orphans. In the study, care for orphans was collectively negotiated prior to the death of a parent. The indigenous system of child fosterage and care by extended kin is defending Owambo children on basic levels.

Gender and kinship may also play a role in the null findings. Both maternal and double orphans primarily lived with their grandparents. Grandparents may have defended these orphans by providing education and access to food with more vigilance than a more distantly related kin would have. Again, both fostered and biological males were lower in education than were females. This poses questions about the gendered nature of work and how traditional gender roles may shape the experiences of Owambo children.

What remains a crucial question is not whether children orphaned by AIDS have psychological and circumstantial problems, but whether the current system of absorbing, nurturing, and caring for these children is meeting children's basic developmental needs. There is no doubt orphaned children anywhere experience psychological trauma, but within a system that possesses indigenous practices and knowledge of shared childrearing, do these children have a better prognosis? Among Owambo-speaking people in Namibia, kinship relationships, more than orphan status, affected children's developmental markers, and these markers interacted with gender almost always to the disadvantage of boys (Brown, 2009). Orphans did not differ from non-orphans in terms of education and health, unlike in other communities across Southern Africa. This study illustrated that it is the interaction between context and developmental practices that was crucial, not the specific practice. For example, because fosterage was a common practice in many African communities, there was not the social stigma attached to this practice that one might see in the United States. On the contrary, fosterage provided a culturally intuitive mechanism for successfully managing parental absence.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations existed for the current study. First, the Namibian DHS data is now nearly 13 years old. A new wave of data collection is scheduled in 2012. This new

data will be able to show, more accurately, how the burden of Namibia's orphans is being addressed by families in Namibia. As the HIV/AIDS epidemic increases, the burden of orphans increases, though at a slower rate. More recent data may provide quite different results.

Second, because ethnicity information was not available for the household survey, the four northern regions (known as Owamboland) were chosen. This sampling procedure excluded the children fostered to the capital of Windhoek. As seen in the case study, fostering to the capital for better educational opportunities was not only common but important. These households were excluded from the study. While sampling the four northern regions allowed a focus on the Owambo ethnic region, it most probably underrepresented the whole picture of child migration and fostering among Owambo speakers in Namibia.

Future Directions

Is the extended family system stressed beyond the point that children's developmental needs are being met? This becomes a crucial question if we accept that there is a limit to the capacity and acceptability of existing family kin networks, and that many of these children are likely to be emotionally, behaviorally, and physically compromised. The practice of fosterage exists, at least in part, to extend kinship and create cultural and social ties. Thus, this study attempted to understand fosterage not only from a sociobiological perspective but also from a cultural perspective.

Who will care for these children in the future if projections are correct that 20 million children will be orphaned by 2015? I believe that using what we know about child fosterage and the current experience of orphans, a developmentally informed approach could be better utilized when planning and providing support to orphans and vulnerable children. Keeping sibling groups together, not overlooking the experiences of boys, and finding close kin to provide care are important, but so are the quality and dynamics of the relationships between donor and recipient families. Developmental knowledge can help reshape the orphan crisis by connecting culture, the family, and the child. John Caldwell, a demographer who has written extensively about HIV, believes that Africa is uniquely poised to handle the HIV crisis (Caldwell, 1997). This study affirms his beliefs and provides some description of how the cultural ecology of childrearing is defending those children thought to be the most defenseless.

References

Anderson, K. G. (2005). Relatedness and investment in children in South Africa. *Human Nature, 16*(1), 1–31.

Ankrah, E. M. (1993). The impact of HIV/AIDS on the family and other significant relationship: The African clan revisited. *AIDS Care, 5*, 5–22.

Bicego, G., Rutstein, S., & Johnson, K. (2003). Dimensions of the emerging orphan crisis in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Social Science & Medicine, 56*, 1235–1247.

Bledsoe, C. (1990a). The politics of children: Fosterage and social management of fertility among the Mende of Sierra Leone. In W. P. Handwerker's (Ed.), *Births and power: Social change and the politics of reproduction* (pp. 81–100). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Bledsoe, C. (1990b). 'No success without struggle': Social mobility and hardship for foster children in Sierra Leone. *Man (NS), 25*, 70–88.

Bledsoe, C., & Brandon, A. (1992). Child fosterage and child morality in Sub-Saharan Africa: Some preliminary questions and answers. In E. Vande Walle, G. Pison, & M. Sala-Diankanda (Eds.), *Mortality and society in Sub-Saharan Africa* (pp. 279–302). Oxford, England: Claredon Press.

Bledsoe, C., Ewbank, D., & Isiugo-Abanihe, U. C. (1988). The effect of child fostering on feeding practices and access to health services in Sierra Leone. *Social Science & Medicine, 27*(6), 627–636.

Brown, J. (2009). Child fosterage and the developmental markers of Ovambo children in Namibia: A look at gender and kinship. *Childhood in Africa: An interdisciplinary journal, 1*, 4–10.

Brown, J. (2011). Child fostering chains among Owambo families in Namibia. *Journal of Southern African Studies, 31*(1), 155–176.

Caldwell, J. C. (1997). The impact of the African AIDS epidemic. *Health Transition Review, 7*(2), 169–188.

Creswell, J. W. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed method research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Foster, G. (2000). The capacity of the extended family safety net for orphans in Africa. *Psychology, Health & Medicine, 5*(1), 55–62.

Foster, G., Makufa, C., Drew, R., Mashumba, S., & Kambeu, S. (1997). Perceptions of children and community members concerning the circumstances of orphans in rural Zimbabwe. *AIDS Care, 9*, 393–407.

Goody, E. (1973). *Contexts of kinship: An essay in the family sociology of the Gonja of northern Ghana*. London, England: Cambridge University Press.

Hayes, P. (1998). *Namibia under South African rule: Mobility and containment 1915–1946*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press.

Herskovitz, M. (1937). *Life in a Haitian valley*. New York, NY: A. A. Knoff.

Isiugo-Abanihe, U. C. (1985). Child fosterage in West Africa. *Population and Development Review, 11*(1), 53–73.

Kamali, A., Seeley, J. A., Nunn, A. J., Kengeya-Kayonds, J. F., Ruberantwari, A., & Mulder, D. W. (1996). The orphan problem: Experience of Sub-Saharan Africa rural population in the AIDS epidemic. *AIDS Care, 8*, 509–515.

Lebert, J. (2005). Inheritance practices and property rights in the Ohangwena region. In R. Gordon (Ed.), *The meaning of inheritance: Perspectives from Namibia* (pp. 71–94). Windhoek, Namibia: Legal Assistance Center.

Levine, R. A., Dixon, S., Levine, S., Richmean, A., Leiderman, P. H., Keefer, C. H., et al. (1994). *Childcare and culture: Lessons from Africa*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Madhavan, S. (2004). Fosterage patterns in the age of AIDS: Continuity and change. *Social Science & Medicine, 58*, 1443–1454.

McDaniel, A., & Zulu, E. (1996). Mothers, fathers, and children: Regional patterns in child parent residence in Sub-Saharan Africa. *African Population Studies, 11*, 1–28.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Monasch, R., & Boerma, J. T. (2004). Orphanhood and childcare patterns in Sub-Saharan Africa: An analysis of national surveys from 40 countries. *AIDS, 18*(2), S55–S65.

Nyamukapa, C., & Gregson, S. (2005). Extended family's and women's role in safeguarding orphans' education in AIDS-afflicted rural Zimbabwe. *Social Science & Medicine, 60*, 2155–2167.

Oni, J. B. (1995). Fostered children's perception of their health care and illness treatment in Ekiti Yoruba households, Nigeria. *Health Transitions Review, 5*(1), 21–34.

Payne-Price, A. C. (1981). Etic variations on fosterage and adoption. *Anthropological Quarterly, 54*(3), 134–145.

Pennington, R. (1991). Child fostering as a reproductive strategy among southern African pastoralist. *Ethology and Sociobiology, 12*(2), 83–104.
Salokoski, M. (1998). An analysis of the Big-Bird Ritual and its relation to the consolidation of kingship during the mid-1800s in the Owambo societies of northern Namibia. Working paper.
Sewpaul, V. (2001). Models of intervention for children in difficult circumstances in South Africa. *Child Welfare, 5*, 571–586.
Shonkoff, J. P., & Phillips, D. A. (2000). *From neurons to neighborhoods: The science of early childhood development*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
UNAIDS/UNICEF. United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS/United Nations Children's Fund. (2011). *Children orphaned by HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa*. *Factsheet*. Retrieved June 10, 2011, from http://data.unaids.org/publications/FactSheets03/fs_orphans_africa_en.pdf.
United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF]. (2004). *Children in the Brink, 2004: A joint report of new orphan estimates and a framework for action*. Washington, DC: TvT Associates.
Vandermeersch, C. (2002). Child fostering under six in Senegal in 1992–1993. *Population, 57*(4/5), 659–685.
Verhoff, H., & Morelli, G. (2007). A child is a child: Fostering experiences in Northwestern Cameroon. *Ethos, 35*(2), 33–64.
Weisner, T. S., Bradley, C., & Kilbride, P. L. (Eds.). (1997). *African families and the crisis of social change*. Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey.
Whiting, B. B. (Ed.). (1963). *Six cultures: Studies of child rearing*. New York, NY: Wiley.
Whiting, B. B., & Whiting, J. W. M. (1975). *Children of six cultures: A psychocultural analysis*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Chapter 14
Malawi's Orphans: The Role of Transnational Humanitarian Organizations

Andrea Freidus and Anne Ferguson

"I Am Because We Are," Madonna's documentary focused on orphans in Malawi, begins with a disturbing description of what is happening to children in Southern Africa as a result of the AIDS pandemic. She recounts a story in which a local Malawian woman, Victoria Keelan, calls her for assistance, pleading the case that there are over a million children orphaned by AIDS. Victoria says there are not enough orphanages, and children are sleeping on the streets, in abandoned buildings, and under bridges. Children are being abducted, kidnapped, and raped. We are told, "this is a state of emergency." Throughout the course of the documentary, a vivid picture emerges of Malawian children in despair, facing malnutrition, physical and emotional suffering, discrimination, exploitation, and vulnerability. We are encouraged to contribute to the cause of orphans for the sake of humanity and in recognition of a new global consciousness and connectedness. This is effective. Who would not want to support innocent children in such dire circumstances? In this chapter, we examine these pleas for support. Who responds? What assumptions do they bring with them as they support orphan care programs in Malawi?

In her article, "Where Ethics and Politics Meet: The Violence of Humanitarianism in France," Miriam Ticktin (2006) draws attention to the emergence of a new form of humanitarianism. Ticktin and others (Nguyen, 2009; Pandolfi, 2003; Ticktin, 2006) suggest that humanitarianism today often functions as a transnational system of governance that creates new subjectivities adapted to the neoliberal global order. Humanitarian efforts can be conceptualized as "mobile or migrant sovereignties," transcending the boundaries of the nation state. Depicted as a

A. Freidus, Ph.D., MPH (✉)
James Madison College, Michigan State University, Case Hall, 842 Chestnut Road, Room S352, East Lansing, MI 48824-1118, USA
e-mail: freidusa@msu.edu

A. Ferguson, Ph.D.
Anthropology and Center for Gender in Global Context, Michigan State University, Baker Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824-1118, USA
e-mail: fergus12@msu.edu

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9_14,

humanitarian crisis or emergency, these programs create a legitimate space for nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to govern populations (Appadurai, 1996; Nguyen, 2009; Pandolfi, 2003).

Emerging literature on the new humanitarianism, outlined in this chapter, provides a lens to consider the work of transnational orphan care organizations. We draw on this literature to examine the images and discourses transnational orphan care organizations in Malawi use to enlist support for their endeavors. These included the websites, picture galleries, fund-raisers, and volunteer tours of orphanages that they develop, using sentiments of compassion in order to enlist international contributors and volunteers in their activities. Our chapter is based on research conducted between 2006 and 2008 in Malawi and the United States (USA).

The New Humanitarianism

Ticktin (2006) traces the emergence of what she terms the new humanitarianism to the 1970s, particularly the founding of Doctors Without Borders and the emergence of the NGO industry. She suggests that humanitarianism functions as a political regime, or way of governing, with a logic that differs from that of human rights.[1] Human rights institutions are grounded in law and are constructed for furthering legal claims, responsibility, and accountability. Humanitarianism, on the other hand, is about the moral imperative to bring relief to the suffering and to save lives. The morality of humanitarianism emphasizes benevolence, charity, and generosity more so than justice, obligation, and entitlement (Ticktin, 2006, p. 45). Both are universalistic discourses, but they employ different logics—one juridical and the other the ethics of compassion—and they give rise to different ideas of humanity (Ticktin, 2006, p. 35). Thus, humanitarianism is an emergent discourse that coexists with human rights discourses and is becoming increasingly powerful as neoliberalism advances.

Drawing on Agamben's (1995) conceptualization of *zoe*, or "bare life," Ticktin argues that the humanity produced by the politics of compassion is often a limited or circumscribed one, focused on suffering and its alleviation. As such, it may be devoid of the political and social content that distinguishes humankind from other types of life (Redfield, 2005). Ticktin's article examines illegal immigrants in France who trade in biological integrity for political recognition. Due to new legal clauses granting residency to those with life-threatening conditions not treatable in their home country, she found that illegal immigrants embraced an *illness* identity as a means of gaining immigration papers. Malkki (1996) has made similar observations,

[1]Pandolfi (2003) argues that new humanitarianism as demonstrated in military conflicts is premised on the "right to interfere." In her work in southeastern Europe, she argues that NGOs are then able to employ their own forms of governance that are often informed by Western, neoliberal ethics which values a particular way of being and include forced democratization (see also Allen & Styan, 2000; Macrae, 2000). We would add to the discussion that while the right to interfere may legitimize the presence of these organizations, securing the rights of individuals or providing rights themselves does not always inform their actual programming or outcomes.

pointing out how humanitarianism may reduce refugees to passive and innocent victims who are objects of charity rather than active subjects with particular rights.

Malawi is a good context in which to examine these issues. The country has nearly one million orphaned children, many of whom face poverty, stigmatization, food insecurity, and limited access to education and health care (Conroy, Blackie, Whiteside, Malewezi, & Sachs, 2006; UNICEF, 2006). UNAIDS (2004) defines an orphan as a child who has lost one or both parents to death and who is under the age of 18. In the past, children who lost a parent or parents were usually taken in by extended family members and remained integrated in their communities. Even today, only in unusual circumstances do children fall through these local safety nets. In Southern Africa, only 1–3% of orphaned children are in formal orphanages or other residential care centers (Subbarao & Coury, 2004). However, a growing number of those who remain in communities in Malawi are assisted by community-based childcare centers (CBCC), many of which depend on funding from transnational humanitarian sources. Thus, the reach of humanitarian organizations extends well beyond children in orphanages to include many of those who continue to reside in their communities of origin.

In 1991, the Malawian government ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and in 1992 it published its first orphan care policy (National Plan of Action, 2005; UN, 2000; UNICEF, 2006). However, humanitarianism is assuming a primary role in the governance of vulnerable children, largely eclipsing the rights-based approach found in many of the government policies. Because of decades of neoliberal reform and the resulting increase in poverty, the Malawian state does not have the human or financial resources needed to implement its own plans and visions regarding vulnerable children (Conroy et al., 2006). Instead, it has turned to a variety of humanitarian-oriented groups, ranging from locally based community-based organizations (CBOs) and churches through transnational organizations with differing ideologies that support orphan care programs.

Transnational Orphan Care Programs in Malawi

There are numerous transnational orphan care organizations operating in Malawi today, many of them faith-based in nature. Our research focuses on four of them as described in this chapter.[2] The first is the Miracles Complex headed by a Malawian entrepreneur but supported principally by an evangelical, faith-based organization headquartered in the southern part of the United States. It provides a hospital, orphanage, and food distribution program targeting CBOs. Miracles has ties to US churches, carries out fund-raising, and hosts over 200 international volunteers annually. Its projects are designed and initiated by the transnational community and are implemented by Malawian counterparts.

[2] We have changed some of the names of these organizations to protect their identities.

Based in the western region of the United States, the second organization we examine, Interfaith Coalition (IC), supports Malawian-led grassroots projects on HIV/AIDS-related orphan care and nutrition programs. In contrast to the top-down orientation used in Miracles, it follows a liberal, nondenominational, community-oriented, participatory approach that draws on development ideologies of empowering women by creating income-generating activities meant to promote sustainability.

The third organization is Madonna's orphan project, Raising Malawi, inspired by the Kabala faith. Madonna supports a variety of projects, including CBOs, community centers focused on orphans and vulnerable children, and the orphanage where she found her adopted son, David Banda. Madonna relies on her position as a prominent celebrity to raise awareness about the issue of orphans and vulnerable children in Malawi. She hosts concerts, appears at various celebrity events and on television shows, and produced a documentary to demonstrate "the plight of Malawi's orphans." As illustrated below, she draws heavily on modernity ideology and constructs images of the poor, diseased, unloved, and desperate African orphans in need of the modern, saving, advanced, and benevolent hand of the West.

The fourth organization, Rescue Children's Home, had no overt religious affiliation. Rescue, the world's largest orphan and abandoned children's charity, has built orphanages throughout Africa meant to simulate rural village communities and is founded on four principles—mother, brothers and sisters, house, and village. The director is referred to as *bambo* (father), and the children are supervised by housemothers. Children who entered Rescue generally relinquished ties to their village of origin as Rescue gains legal custody of them. In the Malawian context, this orphanage is considered the deluxe model of orphan care. The children receive some of the best health care (including access to anti-retroviral drugs) and education in the country; some even go on to attend high school or the university in Ghana or Germany.

The case studies described in this chapter illustrate that transnational humanitarianism has many faces—it does not constitute a single homogenous governance system. The appeals these organizations make to recruit funders and volunteers differ in many ways from one another, but nonetheless they retain certain key elements of humanitarian discourse and governance discussed above. We explored three features of this new transnational humanitarianism—the use of compassion and a moral imperative, the creation or reinforcement of unequal power relations, and the concept of bare life, particularly how children become marginalized from their families and communities. To explore these features, we examine the images and discourses of compassion these organizations use, particularly in fund-raising in the United States. This included the kinds of subjectivities they invite donors and volunteers to ascribe to via websites, orphan tours, picture galleries, and fund-raisers.

The Moral Imperative

Humanitarian responses rely on and are ultimately supported by compassion (Malkki, 1996; Manzo, 2008). Suffering must be palpable enough to spur action, and such action requires compassionate funders and volunteers. Moreover, the

feelings of compassion and morality evoked by this humanitarianism often depoliticize the circumstances that lead to suffering (Malkki, 1996). In Southern Africa, orphaned children have increasingly become an ideal trope for humanitarian appeals (Manzo, 2008; Meintjes & Giese, 2006).

One of the reasons for this is related to dominant Western constructions of childhood rooted in modernity ideology (Zelizer, 1985). In the West today, children are viewed as innocent, pure, and passive beings who occupy a sacred or secure space—childhood (Christensen & Prout, 2005). They are imagined as naive, unsocialized, and biologized beings, which often relegates them to the status of victims in the context of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Rescue House's website draws on the idea of an innocent victim left isolated. The following story was highlighted on their central webpage:

> Mary shares her sad fate with thousands of children, but at the same time it was a stroke of good fortune that gave her a new home at Rescue House. A wicker basket is the only relic recalling her past. A local woman found Mary hidden behind a pile of firewood, so she put her into a wicker basket and took her to the local hospital. She then came to live at Rescue House. Enquiries made by the social authorities about the child's family led to a village near Lilongwe, where it turned out that both parents had died, probably of AIDS.
>
> In the meantime, Mary is developing in a marvellous [sic] way. The little bundle whose provisional home had once been a basket, has turned into a happy 5-year-old girl who loves walking around Rescue House with her friend Tikondani. She knows already a few words in English, and every Saturday, she helps her housemother clean and tidy up.

Arendt (1990, quoted in Ticktin, 2006) noted that compassion is most effective in intimate interactions between those who suffer and those who do not. This is also illustrated by the Miracles Complex's webpage, which contains pictures of individual children and compelling stories of their suffering. Children speak about hunger, illness, exposure to the suffering of dying parents, abuse, sadness, and lack—lack of education, health care, and love. These appeals are constructed to draw potential contributors into face-to-face virtual encounters/relationships with children. In one fund-raising pamphlet, the story is told of a young child who has no parents, does not know her birth date, and has "mental problems." "Nothing else is known about her." We then learn in the pamphlet that she died:

> "We knew the day would come. It had to. It was inevitable. It was just a matter of who, when, and why. But even though we knew it would come, this fact did not take away the suddenness, or the pain with which it came into our lives." The bed near the door contained the little girl's body wrapped in a green blanket. It was so tiny, and seemed to fill such a small amount of space in the big hospital bed. Everyone waited as though by some chance Mphatso would move the blanket that covered her head and look up at us and smile. There was no movement. "Today," the speaker at the funeral said, "Mphatso speaks a new language; a language that does not contain the words such as pain, hunger, darkness, fear, disease, or death. For in the language of heaven, none of these words exist."

Presented on the back page of the pamphlet is a statement by another orphan, thanking everyone for giving and praying that God would bless them with more wealth to support more children. Such appeals are ubiquitous because they are so effective. Anyone channel surfing late at night has found themselves watching an advertisement for "Save the Children" or another similar sponsorship program. In the comfort of their homes, many Americans have come face to face with the suffering of children in these impoverished circumstances and, through such discourses

and images, are encouraged to give in order to prevent another unnecessary death or to ease the suffering of another innocent child.

Large international organizations focused on children's issues, such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), differ from the smaller organizations we have examined here, as many have adopted codes of conduct based explicitly on human rights discourses (Manzo, 2008). Such codes discourage the use of images and approaches that depict children as "passive sufferers," near death, and "pathetic" in an attempt to legitimize their presence as well as evoke sympathy and donations (Manzo, 2008). These depictions are considered a violation of the human right to dignity that all children should be afforded (Manzo, 2008). This stance contrasts with the images and discourses used by the organizations we study that purposefully depict suffering as a means of invoking a compassionate response from donors.

In the four humanitarian organizations we examine, children often function as "depoliticizing" agents, allowing capital to be redistributed, and Western malaise about structural violence, global inequalities, and the HIV/AIDS epidemic ease. For example, Rescue advertises on its website that for $28 dollars a month children's lives could be transformed, providing them an education, food, basic health amenities, a roof over their head, and even a family—yours! Through these supposed intimate relationships, contributors are assured they are making lives better without having to recognize or grapple with systemic processes that perpetuate and create inequality and poverty.

Bornstein (2001) explores some of the negative local-level consequences of child sponsorship in World Vision (WV) programs in Zimbabwe, including disruption of familial relationships and feelings of alienation on the part of sponsored children. Sponsors are allowed to dictate how money is spent, usurping parents' or guardian's rights. Sponsored children often reside with siblings or other extended family members who are not under sponsorship, but live in the same impoverished context. Despite WV compassionate appeals to help build a caring global community and strengthen local families, jealousy and anger are frequent outcomes of funneling resources to a single child in such households.

Another widespread practice with similar outcomes is the phenomenon of orphan tours. Interfaith Coalition (IC) leads groups of influential donors (often affluent members of the clergy or medical professions) on tours of their programs in Malawi on a yearly basis. These potential donors act as liaisons between Malawian children and transnational capital. On tours, volunteers are encouraged to take pictures for use as fund-raising tools in their home communities. These pictures are sometimes included in website galleries and used at large fund-raising events as well. IC's founder said: "There are some tactics we have to employ in order to be a successful nonprofit in the US. We really have to work to differentiate ourselves from other NGOs. 'AIDS' helps to raise money if we explain it sufficiently well." He illustrates how he invokes AIDS as a means of encouraging his audience to care and donate through the story of a dying girl who captured his heart, explaining his fund-raising philosophy in the following manner:

> If you can open people up in a non-threatening way about the life of another person—like what happened to this girl can happen to my own child—then one story can relate to another person's. I want them to feel like, "I see myself reflected in that person's story."

This emphasis on suffering enlists people in the United States and around the world to participate and donate by creating relationships based on compassion. Yet, as Bornstein's work (2001, 2005) illustrates and as discussed below, the results may be discrimination and stigmatization.

Reproduction of Unequal Power Relations

Another feature of transnational humanitarianism is its frequent production or reproduction of existing unequal power differentials and their abilities to make a difference in other people's lives. Mphatso's story in the Miracles fund-raising pamphlet, mentioned above, noted: "Mphatso passed away knowing the love of Jesus and the love of others because of people like you who are willing to give." More generally, the pamphlet provided the following description of the physical and spiritual care Miracles makes available through donations:

> The children of Miracles never miss a nourishing meal. Each day, they receive vita-meal (a protein enriched food substitute) to care for their nutritional needs. Your giving goes a long way in providing for their needs. There is a hospital a few yards away that cares for children when they are sick. Every child is cared for and loved spiritually. Each child learns about Jesus through Bible study and worship. It is amazing to see the hope in the eyes of the children and the glory they give God for having a place like Miracles.

Another example from the Miracles website centers on a call to support a health education program for girls. The program preaches abstinence only and conversion to a moral Christian worldview to ensure health and well-being. Girls are depicted as the gatekeepers of promiscuous sexual activity, when in reality they wield limited power. Structural factors, including poverty, gender inequality, failing social systems, and neoliberal economic policies leading to increased poverty are rendered invisible in this solicitation. Potential contributors are encouraged to donate funds to "save" these African orphans spiritually and physically. Echoes of colonial ideology, including gendered and racial power differentials, are being reproduced in the postcolony context (Redfield, 2005).

Perhaps the best-known illustration of this practice is Madonna's orphan care project and her adoption of two Malawian children. The power of this pop star to create and disseminate an image of Malawi—a Malawi in need of a savior—is particularly revealing. In her 2005 Confessions tour, she publicizes her organization, using powerful images to represent herself and Malawi. In one example, she is dressed in red, wearing a crown of thorns and standing in front of a cross. In the background, on either side of the cross, flash images of children's faces (presumably orphaned children in Malawi). These pictures are engulfed in red, fiery imagery. The following scriptures appear: "When I was hungry, you gave me food," "I was naked, and you gave me clothes," and "Whatever you did for one of the least of my brothers…you did it to me." She concludes the song by falling slowly to the floor, as if sacrificed, laying on her stomach with her arms outstretched. This imagery as well as her documentary film, "I Am Because We Are," suggests that a White

Madonna sees herself as a savior for these Black children and that she is able to help them escape the hell that is their reality in Malawi.

Madonna began her crusade with the colonial-esque idea of wanting to "save" a child through international adoption from the ravages of HIV/AIDS and poverty ubiquitous in Africa. The "West" is depicted as the key to a better, happier, and healthier life for a poor, diseased child from Africa (Sharra, 2006). Madonna assumes that Baby David, one of the children she adopted, will benefit from her wealth and fame, thus suggesting that money and a "key to the global North" (Sharra, 2006) will ensure this child a rich, full life not obtainable in Malawi. Madonna also suggests that Malawians are premodern when she claims that Yohane, David's father, is a "simple" man from a poor rural village who is overwhelmed by the intrusion of Western people and technologies, such as cameras (Oprah Winfrey Show, aired October 25, 2006). For these reasons, he is confused about the adoption procedures.[3]

On October 4, 2007, *Slate Magazine* ran a satirical article on Madonna's adoption of David Banda, a Malawian child. Its implausibility is meant to elicit Western laughter while confirming its superiority. The title of the story is "Save the (Celebrity) Children! African Family Adopts Britney's Kids." In it, a Malawian couple seek to adopt Britney Spears' children to protect them from narcissism, Scientology, cell phone abuse, and being dangled over hotel balcony railings. Much like the Madonna controversy, these and other similar media depictions highlight the continued racial assumptions of African "backwardness" that form part of many of the web-based appeals and other humanitarian fund-raising efforts.

Bare Life

Agamben's (1995) concept of bare life is the final characteristic of humanitarian governance we explore. The morality of humanitarianism based on a politics of compassion gives rise to images of circumscribed lives focused on suffering and potential alleviation via Western assistance (Malkki, 1996; Redfield, 2005). As noted above, bare life is a life abstracted from the political and social circumstances that distinguish humanity from other types of life (Ticktin, 2006, pp. 34–35). In the case of orphans, the concept of bare life is evident at multiple levels that affect the lives of children.

[3] Madonna's adoption of Malawian David Banda was finalized in May of 2008. She was awarded custody of Mercy, another Malawian child, in June of 2009. Madonna has sparked controversy in her adoption bids for several reasons. First, both children have identifiable living family members. As mentioned above, in the case of David, he has a father. Mercy has a grandmother and uncles, among other relatives. Secondly, international adoption, for the most part, in Malawi is illegal. There are cases in which foreigners can legally adopt children, but usually the foreigners have to remain in Malawi for a period of 18 months so that the Department of Women and Child Development can monitor the situation. In Madonna's case, a consortium of human rights groups emerged to legally block the adoptions, claiming that ignoring the residency rules opens the potential for human rights abuses, especially child trafficking (BBC, 2006). She successfully won the lawsuit and was awarded legal custody of David Banda.

First, this concept is reflected on most of the websites and other means used to recruit contributors and volunteers to the humanitarian causes we examine. Many of the websites present orphaned children as existing in a social and political vacuum (Malkki, 1996; Manzo, 2008), children that are suffering, isolated, and in need of support. These children's appeal mostly resides in this separation from family and community, as demonstrated in the above example of Mphatso, even though in reality many of those in rehabilitation centers and in formal orphanages retain ties to their extended families and communities. Bornstein (2001) describes the effects of presenting children as isolated, bare, and suffering in the WV Zimbabwe child sponsorship program. WV ignores the existence of parents and other siblings in delivering resources to an individual sponsored child, which creates problems for both the family and the child. Sponsored children face sibling jealousy. Guardians lose their ability to parent as donors dictate how money is spent. Sponsored children feel spiritually insecure because they fear being accused of participating in witchcraft or are afraid they will be targets of witchcraft activity.

Second, many of the orphan care programs we examine are premised on providing a minimal threshold of life or a life conceptualized and governed from a Western, neoliberal perspective that did not correspond to Malawian cultural, social, and other values. For example, Rescue, a total care orphanage, is unusual in Malawi in assuming legal custody of its resident children and in discouraging their continued interaction with their families and communities of origin. It has been the policy of all orphanages to send children "home for the holidays," but this does not necessarily encourage or facilitate the continuation of ties to rural communities. For example, one Rescue orphan said that going home to rural villages is considered a punishment threatened by Rescue employees to discipline children. An older Rescue orphan named John, who has been at the orphanage since 1994, explained:

> Yes, yes … it's more or less like a punishment. I have seen this other [orphan] it's just that he misbehaved. You know. He went out drinking and he was coming [to Rescue] drunk. And then [Rescue employees] met him at the gate and said, "Hey, where are you coming from?" Whilst he was drunk you know. They asked him, where are you coming from? He failed to answer because he was drunk. They said, "Well, get in [your room]. Go and sleep. We'll see you tomorrow morning." And the next morning they go to him and said, "Today, pack, you are going for a holiday." His name was Peter. Peter said, "Ah, are you telling me to go for holiday because you caught me yesterday whilst I was drunk?" They said, "YES! Go for a holiday." They do this because they know that where we are coming from is not a good place because people have failed to take care of us which is why Rescue went there to pick us up in the first place. They know that when you get [to your rural village] some way, some how, you still suffer.

By separating children from their villages, keeping them further separated from the wider Malawian society through maintaining their own schools, and sending the best students abroad for university education, Rescue seeks to create a new polity and transnational identity for these children similar to the one WV imagined for its sponsored children in Zimbabwe (Bornstein, 2005). This embodies a "bare life" trade-off similar to the one that Ticktin (2006) describes for illegal immigrants to France who are seeking to gain legal residence papers. Rescue orphans—too young to be aware of the trade-off between an imagined transnational identity and polity providing superior health care, education, and nutrition on the one hand and

enduring ties to a Malawian family and community on the other—have these decisions made for them by this transnational organization.

While orphanages provide materially for children, complicated and unanticipated outcomes result from their removal from villages and extended family systems, which demonstrates the trade-offs we elude to. One example mentioned by two older male orphans is the inability to gain employment, tied to issues of kinship and belonging. Lack of gainful employment is problematic for children who find themselves situated between the urban economic milieu that they hope to access and the rural, farming traditions they left behind and no longer desire. These children adopt Western neoliberal ideals and expectations of modernity. Many are struggling to fulfill these expectations. Both children recognize their struggle as being influenced by their Rescue identity. Joshua explains:

> … here in Malawi, I think it's everywhere, the working capacity is more like tribalism, like, if it's not tribalism then it's like regionalism, if it's not regionalism then its like family. If you are from the same roots, the same background, if your parents were known to someone, if your parents are working for someone in the same company you are working for, then you always get [the job] if you've got good friends there. But with the Rescue kids it's not like that. It's not easy for us to penetrate into organizations … so it's really hard when it comes to that. When someone looks at your name they'll just throw it away because you are just not in the society.

Another orphan, Sam, who has already gone through "deregistration"—whereby older children are meant to "graduate" and move out of the orphanage, live independently, and provide for themselves—expresses anxiety over his current situation:

> [ALF] What are your fears?
> Well, my fear is where will I get the stuff. Where will I get the money if Rescue fails to support me and if they happen to sack me out of this place, where am I going to be staying? How am I going to start? … These are some of the challenges that I am always thinking about. If [Rescue] finally says "bye" because there is no way they can take me back to my original family.
>
> [ALF] Why not?
> I don't know if you have visited these typical, typical you know biological families here in Malawi. I wish maybe I could take you to my family so that you could see my biological relatives. So that you see what I mean here because you will see that life is just different. Very different. You would not wish me to stay there. I tell you, honestly. The way you are seeing me, the way you are looking at me here you would not wish me to stay there. If I am staying there it means dumping me there. Because when I am going to my relatives, my biological relatives, I feel sorry for them.

Sam's case demonstrates the predicament faced by other children in similar circumstances. He is straddling two worlds without being fully integrated into either one. He does not belong in the rural village, but without familial connections, he is also struggling to find his place in the urban area.

A Rescue identity is problematic in other ways, as well. Socially, children report being stigmatized and discriminated against because they have been designated orphans. Joshua explains how his residence in Rescue was problematic, causing him to hide this aspect of his life from his peers and other community members:

> [ALF] Do people treat you differently when they learn you went to RESCUE?

> I should tell you the truth, that up to now, even where I am schooling I haven't told anyone, maybe the administration, maybe. But as much as I usually can, I try to hide it.
>
> [ALF] Why hide it?
> Yeah, because, as I told you, it becomes sort of that people try to embarrass you that you are under sponsorship or you are maybe an orphan. They will try to do everything to make fun of you and you will not always be comfortable with the community. A lot of people will just be talking of your thing as if it is something vile.
>
> [ALF] When people ask where you are from, what do you say?
> Believe it or not, I am living [in a Rescue house outside the orphanage for children who are older and have "graduated" from the orphanage but still require Rescue support]. I am outside of Rescue, so I usually tell them I from here. I don't tell them I am from Rescue. Because if you do, they are usually like, "Ah! That village for orphans. So, are you an orphan? Were you raised there?" No, I don't find that good. I try to hide that … even girls. First of all they look at your status.
>
> [Girls you are dating ask about your status?]
> No, it doesn't come easily, because most of us hide our identities. So, it's like we cheat them. Yeah, you see. So you see, if you tell them they will think like, "Can this guy afford to take me out?" Because, I mean, they will say, "Ah, if I see him with some money that means he is being sponsored. That means he cannot even take his own money to take me for an outing, or what."

Both Joshua and Sam are attempting to negotiate their identities in an effort to feel a sense of belonging. It is unclear how their institutionalization will shape their future experiences, but these are critical issues to bear in mind as more and more children will be "graduating" from similar institutions.

Conclusions

We have presented an overview of the functioning of transnational orphan care organizations in Malawi, concentrating on the discourses, images, and practices they employ in attracting international funders and supporters to their programs. We suggest, along with Ticktin (2006) and others, that humanitarian governance is particularly well suited to the neoliberal state. In Malawi, despite official endorsement of a human rights-based approach in government policy documents concerning vulnerable children, these principles (based on jurisprudence, entitlement, and accountability) are difficult to put into practice with the state's limited financial, judicial, and human resources. Meanwhile, international funding continues to pour in for orphan care projects sponsored by a wide assortment of transnational humanitarian organizations and their local Malawian counterparts. As illustrated above, these organizations, while they differ in many ways from one another, are driven by an ethical code and form of governance involving benevolence and charity. Many of the websites, fund-raisers, picture galleries, and orphan tours we examined rely on notions of suffering and intimate encounters with the other. Some reinforce colonial images of Africans and gendered and other power differences. Some aim to abstract orphaned children from their families and communities, promising instead a type of

transnational citizenship that Bornstein (2005) so aptly describes in her study of World Vision, Zimbabwe.

This chapter also calls attention to some of the unanticipated outcomes that result when transnational orphan care organizations implement projects that do not necessarily consider the local cultural milieu. As more resources and programs develop, we hope engaged actors will consider first the local needs and how Malawians would chose to proceed with these projects.

References

Agamben, G. (1995). *Homo sacer: Sovereign power and bare life*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Allen, T., & Styan, D. (2000). A right to interfere? Bernard Koucher and the new humanitarianism. *Journal of International Development, 12*, 825–842.

Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large: Cultural dimensions of globalization*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Arendt, H. (1990). *On revolution*. Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin.

Bornstein, E. (2001). Child sponsorship, evangelism, and belonging in the work of World Vision Zimbabwe. *American Ethnologist, 28*(3), 595–622.

Bornstein, E. (2005). *The spirit of development: Protestant NGOS, morality, and economics in Zimbabwe*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

British Broadcasting Corporation [BBC]. *Father questions Madonna adoption* [Electronic document]. Retrieved October 22, 2006 from http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/6075476.stm/.

Christensen, P., & Prout, A. (2005). Anthropological and sociological perspectives on the study of children. In S. Greene & D. Hogan (Eds.), *Researching children's experience: Approaches and methods* (pp. 42–60). London: Sage.

Conroy, A. C., Blackie, M. J., Whiteside, A., Malewezi, J. C., & Sachs, J. (2006). *Poverty, AIDS and hunger: Breaking the poverty trap in Malawi*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Macrae, J. (2000). Humanitarianism: Facing new challenges. *Great Decisions, 8*, 87–96.

Malkki, L. (1996). Speechless emissaries: Refugees, humanitarianism, and dehistoricization. *Cultural Anthropology, 11*(3), 377–404.

Manzo, K. (2008). Imagining humanitarianism: NGO identity and the iconography of childhood. *Antipode, 40*(4), 632–657.

Meintjes, H., & Giese, S. (2006). Spinning the epidemic: The making of mythologies of orphanhood in the context of AIDS. *Childhood, 13*(3), 407–430.

Government of Malawi (GoM) (2005). National plan of action for orphans and vulnerable children 2005–2009. *The Republic of Malawi Government Document*, prepared by the National Taskforce for Orphans and Vulnerable Children. http://sentebale.com/html/12067761.php.

Nguyen, V.-K. (2009). Government by exception: Enrolment and experimentality in mass HIV treatment programmes in Africa. *Social Theory and Health, 7*(3), 196–217.

Pandolfi, M. (2003). Contract of mutual (in)difference: Governance and humanitarian apparatus in Albania and Kosovo. *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies, 10*(1), 369–381.

Redfield, P. (2005). Doctors, borders, and life in crisis. *Cultural Anthropology, 20*(3), 328–361.

Sharra, S. (2006). From material girl to spiritual mom: Madonna, Malawi, and Baby David. Posted Tuesday, October 16, 2006 at http://mlauzi.blogspot.com/. Accessed June 10, 2010.

Slate Magazine. (2007). *Save the (celebrity) children! African family adopts Briteny's kids*. Retrieved from http://www.slate.com/id/2175303/. Accessed May 5, 2011.

Subbarao, K., & Coury, D. (2004). *Reaching out to Africa's orphans: A framework for public action*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

Ticktin, M. (2006). Where ethics and politics meet: The violence of humanitarianism in France. *American Ethnologist, 33*(1), 33–49.

United Nations [UN]. (2000). *Convention on the rights of the child: Malawi* (pp. 1–82). United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. Electronic document, Accessed May 5, 2011.

United Nations AIDS [UNAIDS]. (2004). *Malawi: Country situation analysis*. Retrieved from http://www.unaids.org/en/CountryResponses/Countries/malawi.asp. Accessed May 5, 2011.

United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF]. (2006). *Malawi's children: The missing face of AIDS*. Lilongwe: UNICEF Malawi. Retrieved from http://www.unicef.org/malawi/resources.html/. Accessed May 5, 2011.

Zelizer, V. A. (1985). *Pricing the priceless child: The changing social value of children*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Part V
Children's Rights

Chapter 15
Indigenous Children's Rights and Well-Being: Perspectives from Central and Southern Africa

Robert K. Hitchcock

> It is often assumed that the solution lies in 'universal education', that if indigenous peoples have access to formal education and can proceed through that system they will gain the skills and cultural understandings they need. However, it is also well-known that, around the world, indigenous children and their communities have suffered enormously from (sometimes forced) participation in unsympathetic – and often abusive – education systems. Participation in educational institutions often entails a shift away from their own culture, and undermines indigenous identity and community relationships. Effective education must be able to help bridge current gaps – but not at the expense of cultural integrity. Jennifer Hays (2011, p. 128)

Introduction

Children's human rights and well-being have been the focus of attention of virtually all African countries (African Child Policy Forum, 2007; Colletta, Balachander, & Liang, 1996; Ncube, 1998; Sloth-Nielsen, 2008). This is in part because substantial numbers of children in Africa lack access to protection, education, clean water, and health services. Children in many parts of Africa today face a variety of problems, including being conscripted against their will into militaries, working under

An earlier version of this chapter was presented at the Undefended Childhood conference at Michigan State University on 4 April 2008. Subsequent versions of the chapter were presented to meetings on indigenous peoples at the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs in Copenhagen and at Michigan State University, the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Truman State University, the State University of New York at Cortland, and the University of California–Santa Barbara in 2008 and 2009.

R.K. Hitchcock, Ph.D. (✉)
Department of Geography, Center for Global Change and Earth Observations,
Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1117, USA
e-mail: hitchc16@msu.edu

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9_15,

arduous conditions, being exposed to conflict, and living in poverty (Amnesty International, 1999; Honwana, 2005; Minority Rights Group International, 1997). These problems are evident particularly among indigenous and minority children, the children of groups that see themselves as socially and culturally distinct from the majority in the countries where they live.

Many indigenous and minority children in Africa are excluded from government programs. There are many causes of this exclusion, including remoteness, poverty, limited government or private sector capacity, racial discrimination, conflict, violence, and health difficulties. Hundreds of thousands of indigenous and other African children are on the streets, invisible in many ways to other members of their societies (Human Rights Watch, 1997; UNICEF, 2006, 2009).

Indigenous and minority children tend to be exploited more often as domestic and commercial laborers than are children from other groups, according to African indigenous peoples' support groups (e.g., the Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee, http://www.ipacc.org) and the International Labour Organization (Vinding, 2007). Some of the children involved in agricultural work in Africa are exposed to dangerous equipment and hazardous chemicals such as pesticides and herbicides; children are also involved in dangerous work in the industrial and military sectors. While African hunter-gatherer children tend not to be involved to the same extent in agricultural, pastoral, and wage labor as are children from indigenous families of farmers, pastoralists, and urban dwellers, over time, the children of foragers have also been pressed into service as laborers (e.g., on farms and cattle posts). Laws have been passed in nearly all African countries concerning child labor. Ironically, as Seabrook (2001: 18) points out, "The fundamental issue is, if you stop child labor, you stop the most fundamental human right of all—the right to survive."

The United Nations Children's Fund *State of the World's Children* report for 2005 points out, invisible children are undefended and unprotected children—those children who are "hidden from view"—the children of the homeless, street children, child laborers, child soldiers, the children of domestic workers and farm laborers, and children who have been trafficked across borders (UNICEF, 2005). Many of these children are exposed to violence, some of it structural violence. Structural violence, as Scheper-Hughes (2007: 287) notes, "refers to the social machinery of social inequality and oppression that reproduces pathogenic social relations of exclusion and marginalization via ideologies and stigmas attendant on race, class, sex, and other invidious distinctions." As Scheper-Hughes (2007: 288) goes on to point out, "Structural violence is violence that is permissible, even encouraged." Violence can be seen, for example, in schools, where children are sometimes beaten for failing to learn their lessons or for using the wrong language in conversation. One also sees violence perpetrated upon street children, as occurs, for example, in Kinshasha in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), in Kampala in Uganda, or on the streets of Ghanzi, Botswana.

According to UNICEF (2005), millions of children in Central and Southern Africa are not in school, over two-thirds of them girls. Given current trends, even with extensive efforts in expanding education and training, by 2015 there will still be 75 million children in the world who are not attending school, the majority of them in Africa.

This chapter explores the situations facing indigenous children in Africa, with particular reference to the Batwa ("Pygmies") in Central Africa and the San (Bushmen, Basarwa) in Southern Africa. Particular emphasis is placed on issues relating to child vulnerability. The socioeconomic statuses, health, and well-being of indigenous children in Central and Southern Africa are considered, as are some of the strategies that are being implemented to meet the needs of these children, especially ones relating to education.

Indigenous Peoples in Africa

Indigenous groups across Africa maintain that they share common experiences, including discrimination, impoverishment, dispossession of land and natural resources, forced conscription, and human rights abuses (Veber, Dahl, Wilson, & Waehle, 1993; Barnard & Kenrick, 2001; African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights [ACHPR], 2005, 2006). Representatives of African indigenous groups have come together to discuss issues of concern, including the situations facing children. Meetings of indigenous groups and their supporters have been held in various parts of Africa, and some representatives of African indigenous peoples have attended international meetings such as the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and the African Union.[1]

The human rights of indigenous peoples in Africa have been the focus of much deliberation and debate in Africa (ACHPR, 2005, 2006; ACPHR, 2009; Saugestad, 2001; Viljoen, 2007, p. 277–287; Hodgson, 2009; Kaunga, 2008). Some African countries such as Cameroon and Congo-Brazzaville have taken important steps toward recognizing the rights of indigenous peoples. At the same time, there are numerous places in Africa where indigenous peoples have been targeted for destruction, subjected to severe discrimination, dispossessed of their ancestral lands, deprived of their rights to resources, and have had their children taken away from them forcibly.

The preferences of indigenous peoples in Central and Southern Africa and other parts of the world are relatively similar: They wish to have their human rights respected; they want ownership and control over their own land and natural resources; and they want the right to be able to participate through their own institutions in the political process at the national, regional, and international levels. They want to ensure that they and their children are protected in the face of conflicts and state and individual efforts to dispossess them or deprive them of their rights to life, liberty, and livelihoods. At the same time, they wish to pursue their own cultural

[1] For example, Sinasi Maleko, a representative of the Mbuti Pygmies (Batwa) of the Ituri Forest of the Democratic Republic of Congo, called for an investigation into genocide, massive human rights abuses, and cannibalism against the Mbuti by other groups in the eastern Congo; this plea was made before the Permanent Forum of Indigenous Issues in May 2003. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/Africa/2933524.stm.

traditions, and they wish for their children to learn about their own cultures and to be allowed to speak mother-tongue languages in schools.

An examination of the various interactions between indigenous peoples and the states of Central and Southern Africa reveals that there is a wide range of variation in the ways in which indigenous groups are treated. In the case of Burundi, for example, which has experienced cycles of violence and clashes among various groups over time, the situation of the minority Batwa population, which makes up some 2 % of the total population of the country of some eight million, has improved over time. Burundi has signed and ratified a number of the international conventions that deal with human rights, including the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (20 July 1983) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (10 October 1990). The 2004 Constitution of Burundi guarantees seats in both the Parliament and the Senate for members of the Batwa community (ACPHR, 2007a, p. 11). Both government and civil society are seeking to promote Batwa rights and to provide development opportunities and access to health and education services.

The government claims to be fully aware of the marginalized situations of the Batwa in Burundi (ACPHR, 2007a, p. 16–27), though there are some government ministers who feel that the Batwa are attempting to exclude themselves from the rest of the country by wishing to be identified as indigenous (ACPHR, 2007a, p. 26–27). A major problem facing the Batwa in Burundi is debt bondage, and several thousand Batwa are in complex positions vis-a-vis people to whom they owe money and for whom they have to work under complex and slavery-like conditions. It is interesting to note in this regard that the government of Burundi is one of the few African countries that has yet to ratify the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery (ACPHR, 2007a).

Some of the Batwa children in Burundi have been able to attend school, starting with primary school and continuing through secondary school. They do face challenges, however, including discrimination by teachers and other students in schools and corporal punishment. As a result, the dropout rate of Batwa children is much higher than the national average, and as a result the literacy rates among Batwa are lower than is the case among other groups in Burundi (Rwantabagu, 2009).

In some ways, the situations of the Batwa in Burundi can be contrasted with those of Batwa peoples in the DRC, where Batwa groups such as the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest region of eastern DRC have been subjected to massive human rights violations and have largely been excluded from government development programs other than those involving education (Minority Rights Group International, 2004). Problems facing Batwa communities include, like Burundi, debt bondage and high rates of arrests and imprisonment. There are numerous cases of sexual violence against Batwa women and girls and instances of killing Batwa adults and children by other groups with apparent impunity. As is the case with many Batwa in various parts of Central Africa (see, e.g., the Republic of Congo; ACPHR, 2007b), Batwa tend not to be treated the same way as other members of the population, and they experience violence, dispossession, and lack of access to health and educational services at rates higher than other citizens of the countries in which they reside.

Batwa populations are found currently in ten Central African countries: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo-Brazzaville, DRC, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda, and Uganda (ACPHR, 2009; Biesbrouck et al., 1999; Cavalli-Sforza, 1986; Hewlett, 1992, 1996; Jackson 2003; Wodon et al., 2011). Known historically as "forest people" (see Turnbull, 1961), the Batwa have existed as specialized hunters and gatherers and traders who interacted extensively with other groups, many of whom they were dependent upon for access to goods and services.

In virtually all of the countries of Central Africa in which they are found, the Batwa represent a small minority of the overall population, averaging less than 1 % of the total (e.g., 0.3 % of the Central African Republic, 1.1 % of the DRC, and slightly less than 1 % in Gabon) (Wodon et al., 2011). Characteristic features of Batwa populations in these countries include (1) high percentages of people living below the poverty line, (2) low rates of educational attainment, (3) low literacy rates, (4) high rates of unemployment, (5) largely rurally oriented economies, (5) low rates of access to land and resources, (6) low to moderate health statuses, (7) high rates of exposure to discriminatory practices at the hands of other groups and the state, and (8) high degrees of vulnerability (ACHPR, 2005, 2006; ACPHR, 2007a, 2007b, 2009; Wodon et al., 2011). Many Batwa complain about the situations they face, citing unfair treatment at the hands of the state and its institutions (e.g., courts). At the same time, Batwa are involved in both the formal and informal sectors of the economy and play important roles in resource procurement and management in the various countries in which they reside.

Many indigenous peoples in Africa including the Batwa fit the category of being "vulnerable groups." The definitions of "vulnerable groups" tend to focus on those who have unequal access to health and social services, those who lack the ability to sustain themselves without external inputs, and those who are considered low-status subjects, taking into account such issues such as age, ethnicity, class, and gender. Vulnerable groups include those who are exposed to risk in various ways. Individuals and groups living in poverty, ethnic minorities, the physically and mentally challenged, children, the elderly, those in chronic pain, and those who have experienced some physical or psychosocial stress such as rape, torture, war, or going through a natural disaster are vulnerable. Categories of persons identified as especially vulnerable among Batwa and San are orphans; people afflicted with diseases, including tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS; disabled people; and people who are destitute, with no visible means of support. As noted by UNICEF (2006), children can disappear from view in their own communities or sometimes in their own families. They are neglected, in some cases, because of their size, their age, their gender, or their mental or physical condition. The vulnerability of children derives from their age, their size and strength, the legal status as minors, and their dependence on others for their well-being.

Batwa children in the ten countries in Central Africa where they are found frequently face major constraints when it comes to obtaining an education. Many of them live in areas that are far from schools. Those Batwa children that do live close to schools find themselves in complex positions when they attend classes. Sometimes they are criticized by children from other groups because of their culturally distinct

ways of doing things. Some of them are very poor, and they go to school without shoes or wearing old clothes. Often, Batwa children in school are older than their classmates. Nearly all Batwa children speak the same languages as other groups living nearby, and as a result they do not face some of the same challenges as do San children in Southern Africa.

There are efforts throughout Central Africa to provide schooling for children in remote areas, where a significant percentage of Batwa reside. These efforts are being undertaken by the state and by nongovernment organizations, some of them faith-based groups (Hewlett, 2000; Rwantabagu, 2009; Warrilow, 2008; Wodon et al., 2011). The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities has undertaken trips to a number of Central African countries and has highlighted some of the issues facing indigenous peoples and made recommendations aimed at the improvement of their statuses and well-being (e.g., Burundi, the DRC, Gabon, Rwanda, and Uganda). Some of the constraints that the Batwa face in these countries include the requirement to pay school fees, the lack of trained Batwa teachers, the difficulties faced by children to attend school when their parents have to move to other places for work, and the challenges children face in the schools themselves. Batwa in the Great Lakes region have argued vociferously for "the right to learn" for Batwa children (Warrilow, 2008), something that San in Southern Africa have also echoed.

An examination of data on school attendance, enrollment rates, and educational attainment in Central African countries reveals that all of these are much lower among Batwa groups than other groups (Wodon et al., 2011). In the DRC, for example, the school enrollment rate for Batwa children 6–11 years of age was 18.7 % vs. 56.12 % for the children of other groups. Literacy rates for Batwa stood at 30.5 %, much lower than the national average. In Gabon the average years of schooling for an adult male Batwa was 3 % and for females 2.8 %. In the Central African Republic, the average years of schooling were much lower: 0.3 % for males and 0.1 % for females (Wodon et al., 2011). When asked why they do not attend school for very long, Batwa say that they cannot afford the school fees, that the school environment is an alien one to them, and that their parents need their labor so they drop out of school. The pressures faced by students in school are sometimes cited as reasons for low rates of school attendance. Lack of food security and poverty are oft-cited reasons for the low rates of school attendance as well. Virtually all Batwa say that they see the value of formal education and that they would like to have their children attend school. A major constraint in all of the countries of Central Africa is the capacity of the governments and NGOs to be able to afford to provide broad-based education. Indigenous peoples have responded to these constraints by attempting to set up their own schools, seeking out teachers who are willing to help them, applying for funding and assistance from nongovernment organizations and international institutions (e.g., United Nations agencies, the World Bank, the European Union), and working on culturally relevant curricula which draws on indigenous knowledge and perspectives.

Batwa parents are widely known for investing considerable care in the nurturing and raising of their children (Hewlett, 1992). Patterns seen among Batwa are also

found among other hunter-gatherers around the world, including the San (Hewlett & Lamb, 2005). Many Batwa parents want their children to be treated well in school, and they express deep concern when they see that their children are unhappy or want to drop out of school because of the ways that they are treated. Batwa children and parents have sought to have schools be more friendly and accepting of cultural difference, and they have suggested that indigenous systems of child care, training, and education should be brought to bear in both formal and informal institutional settings, including schools and training facilities. Batwa, like other peoples in Africa, feel that their cultures and traditions have value and should be viewed as worthy of inclusion in educational curricula and teacher training programs. Fortunately, more and more personnel of education ministries and nongovernment organizations in Central Africa feel the same way.

Transformations in Southern Africa

The states of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), now 15 strong, have undergone enormous changes over the past several decades, especially in the areas of democratization, economic transformation, and social and cultural development. In a region covering 10,028,182 km^2, there is tremendous environmental and cultural diversity. The Southern African region supports nearly 1,000 different ethnic groups who speak some 450 different languages.

Southern African governments have pursued a variety of different kinds of approaches when it comes to the treatment of indigenous peoples. While none of the governments of Southern Africa have signed the International Labor Organization's Convention 169 on the Rights of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, for many years the only human rights instrument relating specifically to indigenous peoples, they all supported the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples of the United Nations on 13 September 2007.[2]

While colonial settler societies in Africa generally did not openly espouse extermination policies, they did engage in the destruction of indigenous and other peoples either directly or indirectly. Forced relocation, education of indigenous children in Western Euro-American concepts rather than indigenous ones, destruction of the subsistence economies of indigenous groups, and imposition of new forms of sociopolitical organization all were implemented by colonists in Africa. Cultural genocide or ethnocide also took place under conditions of state imposition of educational programs, modernization efforts, and nation building as well as the efforts of faith-based institutions to transform cultures (Smith, 2010).

Throughout Africa and other parts of the world, indigenous peoples have been coerced or cajoled into giving up their cultural traditions. Sometimes this was done

[2] In international human rights law, declarations are not treated the same way as conventions, which are considered binding on states that are signatories.

in the name of "national reconciliation" after decolonization. Even countries with generally positive human rights records, such as Botswana, have implemented programs that were aimed at getting national education systems in place that do not allow for the instruction of students of indigenous groups in their own customs and languages (Biesele & Hitchcock, 2000; Hays, 2004, 2007, 2011).

Under the white minority regime in Zimbabwe and under apartheid in South Africa, per capita spending on education for black children was one-sixth that of white children, and the teacher to pupil ratio in South Africa for blacks was 1:39 and 1:18 for whites. Racism was clearly entrenched in the educational systems of white minority-ruled Southern African states. In South Africa, under "apartheid"—a term that means "apartness" in Afrikaans—the national language was Afrikaans. In 1976, school children in the township of Soweto outside Johannesburg rioted when they were told that they had to learn Afrikaans in school. Hundreds of children and other people died in the subsequent uprising.

The end of apartheid in South Africa resulted in an entirely new approach to education and political participation. Today in South Africa, which characterizes itself as "the Rainbow Nation," students are taught in at least ten mother-tongue languages. Evidence suggests that children who participate in Mother Tongue Education (MTE) have easier times learning and are able to integrate more fully into contemporary society, although admittedly there is considerable debate about this issue. The right to education in one's mother-tongue language is considered a human right by many indigenous people, who today make up some 4 % of the world's population and at least 10 % of Africa's population.

Challenges for Indigenous Women and Children

Deliberations at a regional conference, Research for Khoe and San Development, held at the University of Botswana in Gaborone, Botswana, 9–12 September 2003, underscored the increasing roles of indigenous peoples in participating in decision-making about education, health, and social well-being (Motshabi & Saugestad, 2004). Reports from Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa at this conference outlined experiences and cases where community involvement in development and education were having positive results in terms of school attendance and outcomes. The spread of education was making people more aware of their own histories and the challenges they were facing.

Indigenous women's and children's groups are beginning to emerge, notably in connection with income-generating projects in remote area settlements, and some of the ministries in the government and bilateral aid agencies working in Southern Africa have developed policies that aim to promote gender and social equity. Gender mainstreaming and awareness raising about children's issues have taken place in a number of the nongovernment organizations and community-based organizations in Botswana, for example, with the assistance of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Kuru Family of Organizations, and some local development workers

(see, e.g., the annual reports of the KFO and the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa). San adults and children have had the opportunity to participate in workshops and training sessions on women's and children's rights.[3] These meetings have enabled them to meet other San and to share their experiences, thereby increasing their own awareness of the problems they are facing as indigenous peoples and enhancing their ability to identify the kinds of action they can take in order to improve their status.

To understand ways in which indigenous issues have been addressed in Southern Africa, I focus briefly on Botswana. While Botswana does not recognize San, Nama, or other groups in the country as indigenous (Saugestad, 2001; Suzman, 2001), it does have a program aimed at assisting people in remote areas who are marginalized geographically, socially, and economically and who have lower access to development opportunities than other groups. The Remote Area Development Program (RADP) in the Ministry of Local Government of Botswana has, since 1974, dealt with health, education, and development issues relating to San and other rural populations that live outside of villages.

One of the major problems of remote area dwellers is that some of them live outside of settlements where there are schools and health posts. This is true, for example, for those people in rural agricultural areas, known in Botswana as lands areas, those living on cattle posts (*meraka*), and those residing on freehold farms such as those in Ghanzi, Southern, and Central Districts. In the past, the San in these places had difficulty in accessing education, health, and employment opportunities, and they have experienced what they see as discrimination (e.g., in getting land from district land boards or getting antiretroviral and other kinds of drugs and assistance from government health workers). Indigenous peoples generally have had complicated experiences when it comes to education. In many cases, they were required to leave their homes and go to what in the United States were known as boarding schools and in Botswana as primary schools with hostels. There they were not allowed to speak their own languages or to practice their own cultural traditions. Assimilation policies were aimed at enculturating indigenous and minority children in the languages and cultures of the dominant society. In essence, indigenous peoples were marginalized in the education process.

As Hays (2011, p. 72–73) notes, "Although many San see the formal education system as their best hope for accessing greater economic opportunity and gaining control over their lives, in practice, the experience of San children in government schools across southern Africa has largely been characterized by very high dropout rates." Substantial numbers of San in Botswana did not attend primary school until the 1970s, and even now, the percentage of San in school is much lower than it is for other groups in the country. Many San children speak mother-tongue San languages at home. There are over a dozen major San languages in the country and many more dialects. Only three San languages have had substantial work done on

[3]One such meeting was held in June 2007 in Ghanzi in western Botswana; it was a children's forum organized by UNICEF. At that meeting, school children described what they said were cases of child trafficking for purposes of providing labor on commercial farms in Ghanzi District.

them which could serve as the basis for a mother-tongue language curriculum: Ju/'hoan, Khwe, and Nharo.

The government of Botswana, under the RADP, has a development project known as LG 127, a part of Botswana's National Development Plan (NDP) that has funded projects aimed at expanding development opportunities and activities aimed at promoting education, institution building, training, and health. This program has been the subject of controversy, in part because it is seen by some as aimed at assimilating indigenous peoples (Saugestad, 2001). One of the major activities of the RADP has been to provide education for remote area communities in several ways. Schools were built in remote area settlements, with the management of the schools under Village Development Committees. Teachers were often brought in to the settlements from outside; often not from the same groups whose children they were teaching; and the degree to which they knew local languages and customs was highly variable. As a result, there have been concerns on the part of remote area settlement residents about the quality of the education that their children receive.

The RADP has provided transport for students to school, picking them up at their home villages and taking them to schools, some of which are long distances away. Given the distances, it is not possible in many cases for students to stay at home, so they either have to stay with people who live close to the school or, alternatively, they stay in hostels close to the school. The Botswana government and the district councils have provided the funds to hire teachers, cooks, and personnel to staff the hostels, and the program covers the costs of the maintenance of the schools and hostels.

The RADP has provided students with food, clothing (e.g., school uniforms), and paid their school fees. The RADP, sometimes in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, has provided curricular materials and supplies for these schools. Some assessment teams (Kann, Hitchcock, & Mbere, 1990) noted that in some cases the remote area dweller schools had greater access to textbooks, exercise books, pencils, and other materials than was the case for schools in less remote areas or even in major villages in Botswana. It was also noted that some of the children complained of being mistreated at the schools and hostels by teachers, adult overseers, and, in some cases, peers. Several San children with whom I spoke in 1990, 1995, 2000, 2004, 2005, and 2011 compared their experiences in the remote area schools and hostels with those of indigenous children in Australia and North America (for a discussion of indigenous peoples and boarding schools, see Smith, 2010; for Botswana's perspective on boarding schools, see Republic of Botswana, 2010).

The RADP has helped to support training workshops aimed at teachers and other school-related personnel. In some cases, these individuals also had the opportunity to get vocational (skills) training. Workshops were held for San teachers and learners in which RADP officers took part. The RADP has tried to encourage its officers to play an active role in education, but generally these officers have felt more comfortable dealing solely with issues such as transport of children to schools and the provision of food and payments to teachers. They were much less comfortable dealing with pedagogical and curricular issues.

According to people in remote communities to whom I have spoken, one of the problems with the approaches of the RADP is that they tended to create dependency. As a result, people at the local level, including students' parents, tend to take relatively

Table 15.1 Number and population of remote area dweller settlements in Botswana

District	Number of remote area Dweller settlements	Population
Central	25	10,929
Chobe	2	1,500
Ghanzi	13	5,575
Kgalagadi	14	1,114
Kgatleng	2	700
Kweneng	16	2,777
Northwest (Ngamiland)	39	8,811
Southern (Ngwaketse)	10	1,650
Totals: 8 districts	121	33,058

Note: The Ghanzi District settlements do not include the communities in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve of which there were nine before the resettlement; Data from Cassidy, Good, Mazonde, and Rivers (2001) and the Remote Area Development Program and from the various district councils

little interest in the activities of the program, unless, of course, the activities provide income-earning opportunities. In some cases, parents have forgone the opportunity to deal with the education of their children, leaving that responsibility to Remote Area Development Officers, Social and Community Development (S&CD) Officers, and teachers. Indigenous parents often did not take part in Parents–Teachers Associations, although there were cases where they did play a fairly significant role, one example being Manxotae in the Nata River region of northern Central District, a San community school established in 1976.

Mobility of San in the past sometimes militated against their receiving education, something that is also said to be the case for San in other parts of Southern Africa and for Batwa in Central Africa. It is often noted by government officials that San mobility is the reason that they are not literate (i.e., they are always on the move and as such are not getting educated). In fact, very few San today are mobile. Nearly all San are sedentary, and they stay in their residential locations year round. Table 15.1 presents data on the population sizes of the 121 Remote Area Dweller settlements that existed in Botswana in 2001. In many of these settlements, the government has established schools as well as health posts and other kinds of social facilities (e.g., community centers). Data on the numbers of primary school students for 63 of these schools are presented in Table 15.2 for the years 2001, 2002, and 2003. It can be seen that the number of remote area students in school is on the increase, in spite of some of the constraints that students face.

From an educational standpoint, one of the critical problems facing San families in Botswana is the high dropout rate from school among San children (Kann et al., 1990; Kann, Mapolelo, & Nleya, 1989; Hays 2004, 2007, 2011; Kiema, 2010; Sekere, 2011). Various reasons for this situation have been given for the poor retention rate. These include the following:

- The educational systems in Botswana tend to emphasize the dominant culture, in the case of Botswana, Tswana culture, rather than the cultures of indigenous and minority groups.

Table 15.2 Data on education among remote area dwellers in Botswana

Year	2001	2002	2003
Settlement residents	32,206 (census for 64 settlements)	na	na
Primary school students	13,489 (enrolment for 63 schools)	15,461	15,295
Secondary school students	2,887	3,188	3,746
Tertiary level students	241	328	323

Notes: Data obtained from Economic Consultancies, Ltd. Remote Area Dweller (RAD) children at all levels are, by definition, "Needy Students" in terms of the Botswana government's Remote Area Development Program operational guidelines. 2001—RAD Needy Students: 16,617. 2002: 18,977. 2003: 19,364

- The primary schools generally are staffed by teachers who have cultural backgrounds and speak languages different from those of the San children.
- Teaching methods are employed that sometimes fail to take into consideration the cultural background of the students and which are unfamiliar to them.
- There is often a separation of students from their families since many of the remote area schools in Botswana are boarding schools, leaving the children in a position where they lack a family support system.
- Disciplinary standards sometimes include corporal punishment, something that causes resentment and dissatisfaction on the part of San children and their parents.
- Parents may be unable to provide sufficient economic support for their children to attend school (e.g., having the cash to pay for school uniforms and shoes).
- Parents may need their children's labor at home.
- San parents feel that they lack a say over decision-making in schools.
- Participation in Parents–Teachers Associations is low.

The consequences of these factors include a high dropout rate from school among San and other minority group children in Botswana's remote areas, and there are difficulties faced by those students who do remain in school, not least among them poverty and, in some places, hunger.

It is important to note that the structural violence often afflicting San in the larger societies in which they live continues to have deleterious effects on their education as on other areas of life. Interethnic strife is frequent in school contexts and is often sufficient to contribute to San student absenteeism and educational failure. Requiring children and their parents to leave their ancestral territories and move to new places has effects on the social relationships of children, kin, and non-kin. The relocation process sometimes has wrenching effects on the abilities of students to learn and get along with others. Resolution of conflicts at the local, regional, and national levels will go a long way toward ensuring that indigenous and other students have the opportunity to attend school and get skills training in nonformal settings. Governments, civil society, and indigenous communities all need to pay greater attention to establishing safe, healthy, and supportive environments in schools and communities which, in turn, will contribute to social sustainability.

While social and physical infrastructure was provided in recognized remote settlements by the Botswana government, there was little emphasis on job creation or

Table 15.3 Food rations provided per person by Beneficiary Group in the Republic of Botswana

Beneficiary Group	Maize Meal	Sorghum Meal	Vegetable Oil	Beans	Corn-Soya Meal (CSM)	Powdered Milk
Vulnerable groups (drought ration)			0.025 L/day		100 g/day	
Vulnerable groups (non-drought ration)			0.020 L/day		100 g/day	
Primary school students		100 g/day	0.015 L/day	60 g/day		10 g/day
Remote area dwellers (RADs)	12.5 kg/ month		1 L/month	3.5 kg/ month		

Note: Data obtained from Chris Sharp, Economic Consultancies, Ltd. Botswana

on the provision of income generation opportunities; as a result, unemployment levels were high, and families had a difficult time earning a living other than depending on transfers from relatives. It was not uncommon for children in remote area settlements to go hungry. One of the reasons that parents send their children to school, according to San and others in Botswana, is so that their children could get food. This, they say, reduces the pressure on families to supply food to their children. The government of Botswana provides a number of different kinds of livelihood supports and feeding programs to its population. Table 15.3 presents data on some of these programs, with a breakdown of food rations that are provided per person in the various beneficiary groups identified by the Botswana government. Children, when asked why they go to school, will often say that they go for the food as well as for the opportunities to learn and become "good citizens." One of the advantages of the approach taken by Botswana to rural development is that it provides a diversified set of opportunities for people to access social services and meet some of their nutritional needs.

African indigenous peoples generally have had complicated experiences when it comes to education. In the past and in some cases today, indigenous children are required to leave their homes and families and go to what in North America were known as residential schools and in Africa as mission schools (Smith, 2010). In these institutions, indigenous children often were not allowed to speak their own mother-tongue languages or to practice their own cultural traditions. Assimilation policies were aimed at enculturating indigenous and minority children in the languages and cultures of the dominant society. In the past, indigenous African peoples' cultural traditions were rarely reflected in educational curricula, and as a result, indigenous children often found themselves marginalized in the education process.

A major problem facing San in Botswana (from their perspective) is the degree to which they are able to learn mother-tongue languages in schools. Except for the Nharo education program carried out in D'Kar, Ghanzi District, by missionary linguists, no other mother-tongue San education language activities occur in Botswana. According to assessments of language use among San in Botswana (Cassidy et al., 2001), fewer

than 10 % of all San today speak their own language(s) better than they speak Setswana. In other words, the vast majority of San today tend to speak the dominant language in the country, much to the chagrin of the elderly, many of whom wish to retain their languages and cultures. San children are not learning their mother-tongue languages as much as they did in the past, and this has implications for language survival.

The language policy of the government of Botswana is that Setswana and English are the official languages of the country (Biesele & Hitchcock, 2000; Hays, 2011). Mother-tongue San languages are not taught to San or other minority children in Botswana schools. There is a movement in Botswana among minority groups (e.g., the San, Nama, Bakgalagadi, Yeei, Herero, and Kalanga) to promote minority cultural rights and to liberalize the educational process (Biesele & Hitchcock, 2000; Hays 2004, 2006, 2007, 2011). All of these groups are agitating for greater recognition of their cultural rights, including the right to have their children taught in their own languages.

The difficulty that San and other minority communities face, however, is how to go about establishing mother-tongue language programs. Lessons can be learned from the fine work carried out in D'Kar by the Kuru Family of Organizations and work that is ongoing in Namibia (Biesele, this volume) and South Africa (e.g., with the ǂKhomani in South Africa). It remains to be seen how Botswana will deal with the issue of language education, but indications are that the position of the government may be evolving toward a more inclusive approach (Hays, 2006, 2011). This evolution is, in part, a response to rising pressure to recognize minority rights in Southern Africa. San themselves have called for a more multicultural approach to education and a more positive environment in school settings (Kiema, 2010; Sekere, 2011).

Preschool Education Among San in Botswana

In 1975–1976, a schoolteacher from Long Island, Larry Northam, spent a year in the Kalahari Desert working on issues relating to education and the development and well-being of the San. At the time of his visit, he expressed the opinion that San children would be better able to complete their primary and secondary educations if they had an opportunity to attend preschool.

Assessments of the situations facing San in western Botswana mirrored what educator Ulla Kann (personal communication, 1991) called "an educational crisis." Many of the San on the Ghanzi farms and other parts of Botswana and Namibia had not had the opportunity to attend school. The dropout rates for those who did attend school were relatively high, with the result that a relatively small proportion of San had been able to complete their primary education, something that affected their opportunities for employment and higher income levels and, thus, their standards of living (Kann et al., 1990; Le Roux, 1995, 1999).

The Kuru Family of Organizations, a multipurpose nongovernment organization working with San and other groups in western Botswana, developed a multipronged

approach to education and training of San (Le Roux, 1995, 1999). Kuru staff initiated an Early Childhood Care and Education Program (ECCE), part of which was devoted to establishing and running preschools. The Bokamoso Preschool Program, as it is known, does in-service preschool teacher training. It also assists in the development of curricula and materials for use in the schools. In addition, the preschool program works in San communities without schools and establishes playgroups for children (Bollig, Hitchcock, Nduku, & Reynders, 2000).

The type of approach employed by the Bokamoso teachers and their trainers can be characterized as holistic, covering a variety of skills and building on the knowledge of the teachers and the children with whom they interact. The program emphasizes creative play, telling of stories, arts and crafts work, and exchanging of information about the natural and social environment. Classes are given in mother-tongue San languages, including Nharo, the language spoken by many western Botswana San. The parents of the local children are also involved extensively in the preschool program, which has helped to institutionalize the program and has contributed to its sustainability over the long term.

The Bokamoso program has cooperated with the Botswana Ministry of Education in its educational and outreach work. Food is provided by the government of Botswana for the preschool feeding programs, which serve an important function in terms of enhancing the health and nutrition of the children. Management costs, salaries, and transport costs have been covered through donor assistance and contributions. The Bokamoso program has also benefited from the Nharo Literacy Project, which has helped develop curricula and provided advice on spelling of Nharo words and the use of click symbols.

In an assessment carried out in July–August 1999, it was found that San parents generally were very satisfied with the preschools. Some parents noted that they were pleased that their children had the opportunity to achieve a degree of success in what they felt to be a culturally conducive learning environment (Bollig et al., 2000). Particular appreciation was expressed for the fact that efforts were being made by the Bokamoso preschool teachers to incorporate information on San culture, traditions, and lifeways into the curriculum. The reason that this was important, they said, is that it serves to enhance the pride that the San children have in their culture. Judging from the lower dropout rate in the schools where children attended preschools, the Bokamoso activities were having positive effects. The collaborative manner in which education and training have been approached, with the close cooperation of Bokamoso staff, local people, development workers, and social scientists, has proved beneficial to all concerned.

Conclusions

The indigenous peoples of Central and Southern Africa are undergoing substantial social, economic, and cultural changes. Some indigenous peoples in Africa have argued that their socioeconomic statuses and well-being are deteriorating in the face

of conflicts, government intransigence, globalization, economic decline, and climate change. It is for these reasons, they say, that greater attention has to be paid by African nation-states to indigenous peoples' collective rights and issues of gender, class, age, and ethnicity. As some of them put it, "Human rights are peoples' rights." At the same time, they note, there are rights that are inherent to individuals in societies that have varying traditions, values, customs, and beliefs.

The development, education, health, and language policies of Central and Southern African states can and must take into consideration the societies of which the children and their mentors are a part. One way to approach education is to have the students and their parents describe and analyze their own personal experiences as part of their activities. Educational curricula need to be developed that are based on the cultures, traditions, and belief systems of the diverse communities that make up African states.

Education can further development—the multifaceted enhancement of the lives of all people—if it is culturally sensitive, participatory, and equitable in the ways in which it is approached (Hays, 2004, 2006, 2007, 2011; Smith, 2010). If empowerment is to be achieved, efforts must be made not only to respect cultural differences but also to promote and enhance the basic rights both of individuals and communities. But education has to be supplemented with some other kinds of development if students are to be able to learn; it is hard to absorb lessons in school if children are hungry or if they are constantly being pulled out of classes by their parents for work purposes or because of what the parents see as inappropriate actions on the part of teachers and administrators, including corporal punishment of children.

Clearly, greater progress is needed in such critical areas as child health, nutrition, and education if the United Nations Millennium Development Goals are to be achieved. According to UNICEF (2008, p. 22), Africa presents the largest global challenge to the survival of children. Over half of all deaths of children before the age of 5 in the world were in Africa in 2007 (4.7 million, or 51 % of the total) (UNICEF, 2008, p. 22). Between 9 and 11 million households in Africa have had their livelihoods destroyed as a result of conflict, and millions more have been affected by drought, floods, and development-related displacement. A sizable proportion of those people displaced internally or forced to flee across international borders seeking refuge from persecution are children. As noted in this chapter, indigenous children in Africa are facing conditions that are especially stark, making them some of the most vulnerable groups on the planet.

One of the misunderstandings of African governments about indigenous peoples' rights is the idea that protecting and promoting the rights of indigenous peoples necessarily means that a government would be giving special rights to one group over another. Indigenous peoples are quick to point out that they are seeking equitable treatment, not special treatment. They want the same rights as other groups: the right to be protected from arbitrary arrest and mistreatment, the right to health and education, the right to organize and take part in the political process, the right to be consulted, and the right to benefit equally from development projects. They also want cultural rights, including the right to speak their own languages and to have their children learn mother-tongue languages and cultural traditions of their

communities. Indigenous and other peoples in Central and Southern Africa would like to have a rights-based and broad-based participatory approach to development, education, health, and well-being of communities and individuals, one that takes into full consideration social, cultural, and economic diversity and needs at all levels. They would also like to have a greater voice in public policy.

Indigenous peoples in Central and Southern Africa are making some progress in their efforts to promote human rights and social justice. They are encouraged by the fact that the African Union and a number of African governments are paying more attention to indigenous issues. They are also encouraged to note that indigenous groups and their supporters are more vocal about the discrimination that they are coping with. Indigenous peoples throughout Africa are greatly appreciative of the fact that all of the African governments either voted in favor of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples or abstained when the Declaration came up for a vote in the United Nations General Assembly on 13 September 2007. Virtually all African states have committed themselves, at least on paper, to the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination. While they still have a long way to go, the indigenous peoples of Central and Southern Africa are convinced that their rights will be recognized and that they will be able to enjoy the fruits of development, democracy, and social justice.

Acknowledgments Support for the research upon which this chapter is based was provided by grants from the US National Science Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and Hivos and by the US Agency for International Development, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, the RADP of the government of Botswana, the Kuru Family of Organizations, Ditshwanelo (the Botswana Center for Human Rights), the Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa, the San Studies Center at the University of Botswana, and the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs. Maria Sapignoli, Megan Biesele, Jennifer Hays, Alice Mogwe, Magdalena Brormann, Axel Thoma, Kuela Kiema, Bihela Sekere, and the late Ulla Kann provided useful insights and perspectives. I wish to express my deepest appreciation to the communities and individuals with whom I had the privilege to work in Botswana, Gabon, Namibia, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe who shared their experiences and perspectives so willingly.

References

African Child Policy Forum. (2007). *In the best interests of the child: Harmonizing laws in Eastern and Southern Africa*. Addis Ababa: African Child Policy Forum.

African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), African Union. (2005). *Report of the African Commission's Working Group of Experts on Indigenous Populations/Communities*. Banjul, The Gambia: African Commission on Human and People's Rights and Copenhagen, Denmark: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.

African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), African Union. (2006). *Indigenous Peoples in Africa*: *The Forgotten Peoples*? *The African Commission's Work on Indigenous Peoples in Africa*. Banjul, The Gambia: African Commission on Human and People's Rights and Copenhagen, Denmark: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.

African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACPHR) Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities. (2007a). *Research and Information Visit to the Republic of Burundi*,

27 March–9 April, 2005. Banjul, The Gambia: African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, African Union and Copenhagen, Denmark: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.

African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACPHR) Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities. (2007b). *Report of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities in Africa Research and Information Visit to the Republic of Congo 5–19 September 2005*. Banjul, The Gambia: African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, African Union and Copenhagen, Denmark: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.

African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACPHR) Working Group on Indigenous Populations/Communities. (2009). *Regional Sensitization Seminar*: *The Rights of Indigenous Populations/Communities in Central Africa*, *13–16 September*, *2006*. Banjul, The Gambia: African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, African Union and Copenhagen, Denmark: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs.

Amnesty International. (1999). *In the firing line: War and children's rights*. Washington, DC: Amnesty International.

Barnard, A., & Kenrick, J. (Eds.). (2001). *Africa's indigenous peoples: 'First Peoples' or 'Marginalized Minorities'?* Edinburgh: Center of African Studies, University of Edinburgh.

Biesbrouck, K., Elders, S., & Rossel, G. (Eds.). (1999). *Challenging elusiveness: Central African hunters in a multidisciplinary perspective*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Research School CNWS, University of Leiden.

Biesele, M., & Hitchcock, R. K. (2000). Ju/'hoan language education in Namibia and its relevance for minority language education in Botswana. In H. Batibo & B. Smieja (Eds.), *Botswana: The future of the minority languages* (pp. 237–265). Frankfurt, Bern: Peter Lang.

Bollig, M., Hitchcock, R. K., Nduku, C., & Reynders, J. (2000). *At the crossroads: The future of a development initiative. Evaluation of KDT, Kuru Development Trust, Ghanzi and Ngamiland Districts of Botswana*. The Hague, The Netherlands: Hivos.

Cassidy, L., Good, K., Mazonde, I., & Rivers, R. (2001). *An assessment of the status of the San in Botswana*. Windhoek, Namibia: Legal Assistance Center.

Cavalli-Sforza, L. L. (Ed.). (1986). *African Pygmies*. New York: Academic.

Colletta, N. J., Balachander, J., & Liang, X. (1996). *The Condition of Young Children in Sub-Saharan Africa*: *The Convergence of Health*, *Nutrition*, *and Early Education*. World Bank Technical Paper No. 326. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

Hays, J. (2004). Indigenous rights in education: The San of Southern Africa in local and global contexts. In R. K. Hitchcock & D. Vinding (Eds.), *Indigenous peoples rights in Southern Africa* (pp. 228–248). Copenhagen: International Working Group on Indigenous Affairs.

Hays, J. (2006). *For the Benefit of All*: *Mother Tongue Education For Southern African Minorities*. A Comprehensive Summary Report from the Regional Mother Tongue Conference, a Conference on Multilingualism in Southern African Education, 1–2 June 2006. Windhoek, Namibia: Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa.

Hays, J. (2007). *Education, Rights and Survival for the Nyae Nyae Ju/'hoansi: Illuminating Global and Local Discourses*. PhD Dissertation, Department of Anthropology, State University of New York at Albany, Albany, New York.

Hays, J. (2011). Educational rights for indigenous communities in Botswana and Namibia. *International Journal for Human Rights, 15*(1), 127–153.

Hewlett, B. S. (1992). *Intimate fathers: The nature and context of Aka Pygmy paternal infant care*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Hewlett, B. S. (1996). Cultural diversity among African Pygmies. In S. Kent (Ed.), *Cultural diversity among Twentieth Century Foragers: An African perspective* (pp. 215–244). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hewlett, B. S. (2000). Central African Governments' and International NGOs' perceptions of Baka Pygmy development. In P. P. Schweitzer, M. Biesele, & R. K. Hitchcock (Eds.), *Hunters and gatherers in the modern world: Conflict, resistance, and self-determination* (pp. 380–390). London and New York: Berghahn Books.

Hewlett, B. S., & Lamb, M. E. (Eds.). (2005). *Hunter-Gatherer childhoods: Evolutionary, developmental, and cultural perspectives*. New Brunswick, London: Aldine Transaction.

Hodgson, D. L. (2009) Becoming Indigenous in Africa. *African Studies Review 52*(3), 1–32.

Honwana, A. (2005). *Child soldiers in Africa*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Human Rights Watch. (1997). *Juvenile injustice: Police abuse and detention of street children in Kenya*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

Jackson, D. (2003). *Twa women, Twa rights in the Great Lakes Region of Africa*. London: Minority Rights Group International.

Kann, U., Hitchcock, R., & Mbere, N. (1990). *Let them talk: A review of the accelerated remote area development program*. Gaborone, Botswana: Ministry of Local Government and Lands and Norwegian Agency for International Development (NORAD).

Kann, U., Mapolelo, D., & Nleya, P. (1989). *The missing children: Achieving universal basic education in Botswana. The barriers, and some suggestions for overcoming them*. Gaborone, Botswana: National Institute of Development Research and Documentation, University of Botswana.

Kaunga, J. M. O. (2008). Being indigenous in today's world. *Indigenous Affairs, 3–4/08*, 8–9.

Kiema, K. (2010). *Tears for my land: A social history of the Kua of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, Tc'amnqo*. Gaborone: Mmegi Publishing House.

Le Roux, W. (1995). *The challenges of change: A survey of the effects of preschool on Basarwa Primary School Children in the Ghanzi District of Botswana*. Ghanzi, Botswana: Bokamoso Preschool Program, Kuru Development Trust.

Le Roux, W. (1999). *Torn Apart*: *San Children as Change Agents in a Process of Acculturation*. A Report on the Educational Situation of Children in Southern Africa. Ghanzi, Botswana: Kuru Development Trust and Windhoek, Namibia: Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa.

Minority Rights Group International. (1997). *War: The impact on minority and indigenous children*. London: Minority Rights Group International.

Minority Rights Group International. (2004). *"Erasing the Board": Report of the International Research Mission into Crimes under International Law Committed Against the Bambuti Pygmies in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo*. London: Minority Rights Group International.

Motshabi, K., & Saugestad, S. (Eds.). (2004). *Research for Khoe and San Development: International Conference, University of Botswana, 10–12 September 2003*. Gaborone, Botswana: University of Botswana and Tromso, Norway: University of Tromso.

Ncube, W. (Ed.). (1998). *Law, culture, tradition, and children's rights in Eastern and Southern Africa*. Brookfield, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Company.

Republic of Botswana. (2010). *Remarks by M. Phologo Gaumakwe, Charge D'Affaires, A.I., Permanent Mission of the Republic of Botswana to the United Nations, at the Ninth Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on the Issue of Boarding Schools and Indigenous Peoples. 29 April, 2010*. New York: Republic of Botswana and United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII).

Rwantabagu, H. (2009). Problems and prospects in the education of a marginal community: The case of the Batwa Community in Burundi. *Diaspora, Indigenous, and Minority Education, 3*(2), 110–118.

Saugestad, S. (2001). *The inconvenient indigenous: Remote area development in Botswana, donor assistance, and the first people of the Kalahari*. Uppsala, Sweden: The Nordic Africa Institute.

Scheper-Hughes, N. (2007). Dangerous and endangered youth: Social structures and determinants of violence. In M. Kirsch (Ed.), *Inclusion and exclusion in the global arena* (pp. 287–317). New York: Routledge.

Seabrook, J. (2001). *Children of other worlds: Exploitation in the global market*. London: Pluto Press.

Sekere, B. (2011). Secondary education for San Students in Botswana: A New Xade Case Study. *Diaspora, Indigenous and Minority Education, 5*(2), 76–87.

Sloth-Nielsen, J. (Ed.). (2008). *Children's rights in Africa: A legal perspective*. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate.

Smith, A. (2010). *Indigenous peoples and boarding schools: A comparative analysis*. New York: United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

Suzman, J. (2001). *An introduction to the regional assessment of the status of the San in Southern Africa*. Windhoek, Namibia: Legal Assistance Center.

Turnbull, C. (1961). *The forest people: A study of the Pygmies of the Congo*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2005). *The State of the World's Children 2005: Childhood Under Threat*. New York: United Nations Children's Fund.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2006). *The State of the World's Children 2006: Excluded and invisible*. New York: United Nations Children's Fund.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2008). *The State of the World's Children 2009: Maternal and newborn health*. New York: United Nations Children's Fund.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). (2009). *The State of the World's Children 2009: Maternal and newborn health.* New York: United Nations Children's Fund.

Veber, H., Dahl, J., Wilson, F., & Waehle, E. (Eds.). (1993). "*. . . Never Drink from the Same Cup": Proceedings of the Conference on Indigenous Peoples in Africa, Tune, Denmark, 1993*. IWGIA Document No. 74. Copenhagen: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs and the Center for Development Research.

Viljoen, F. (2007). *International human rights law in Africa*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Vinding, D. (Ed.). (2007). *Handbook on combating child labour among indigenous and tribal peoples*. Geneva: International Labour Organization.

Warrilow, F. (2008). *The right to learn: Batwa education in the great lakes region of Africa*. London: Minority Rights Group International.

Wodon, Q., Backing-Yetna, P., & Achour, A. B. (2011). Central Africa: The case of the Pygmies. In G. Hall & H. Patrinos (Eds.), *Indigenous peoples, poverty, and development* (pp. 125–176). Washington, DC: The World Bank.

Chapter 16
Traditional Religion, Social Structure, and Children's Rights in Ghana: The Making of a *Trokosi* Child

Robert Kwame Ame

The *trokosi* system lies at the interface of traditional religion, social structure, and social/crime control; hence, one cannot fully understand the system without also understanding these factors. While the human rights violations inherent in this practice are numerous and include violation of both national and international legal instruments such as the Ghanaian Criminal Code (Act 29), the Children's Act (Act 560), the African Charter on the Welfare and Rights of the Child, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Ababio, 1995; Ameh, 1998, 2004a, 2004b; Bilyeu, 1999; Short, 1995, 1997, 2001), the primary focus of this chapter is not the violations per se but a demonstration of how Ewe traditional religion and social structure produced and sustained the *trokosi* system for more than 300 years. It is hoped that in doing this, both children's rights scholars and practitioners occupied with addressing the *trokosi* problem will have a better understanding of the complexities of the problem they are dealing with.

Another benefit of such understanding is to help refocus attention on transforming the practice rather than the current focus on demonizing Ewes in popular media (www.ghanahomepage.com), which could be counterproductive. As Sandra Greene (1996) has rightly argued, discussions of gender relations must move beyond, "The simplistic, analytic categories of oppression and agency" (p. 182). Writing about gender relations among the Anlo-Ewe, she posited that it is important to determine why individual Africans and social groups made particular choices and when they did. To that end, she situated her own studies within the demographic, political, social, economic, and religious factors that impinge upon the people. A benefit of this approach, she pointed out, is "it avoids demonizing the individuals and groups

R.K. Ame, Ph.D. (✉)
Tshepo Institute for the Study of Contemporary Africa, Wilfrid Laurier University, Grand River Hall Room 127, 73 George Street, Brantford, ON, Canada N3T 2Y3
e-mail: rame@wlu.ca

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9_16,

who marginalized members of their own families on the basis of gender" (p. 181). "Only then," she added, "can we begin to understand why gender relations in any given society changed in particular ways" (p. 182). Similarly, this chapter argues that the method suggested by Greene is a more productive approach to resolving the *trokosi* problem than the simplistic approach of demonizing Ewes.

In this vein, while grappling with the *trokosi* problem, it is important to seek to understand some of the factors that made Ewes create and maintain a system that looks abhorrent, oppressive, and horrendous today. What would prompt presumably loving parents to surrender and send their child to a lifetime of bondage? Were the Ewes wicked, barbarous, and pedophiles as some within the *trokosi* debate have sought to make them appear (discussed later in this chapter)? An understanding of Ewe social structure, the concept of "collective responsibility" and its implications for individual choice and action among Ewes (Nukunya, 1969, 1997b) would help address some of these questions. Understanding the traditional religious and crime control systems would provide further insight into these cultural systems. In particular, understanding the Ewe concepts of "sin," "crime," "forgiveness," "sacrifice," and "punishment" and the institution of *troxovi* as analyzed by anthropologists, criminologists, and sociologists such as Abotchie (1997), Gaba (1997), and Nukunya (1969, 1997b) will shed light on the questions raised.

This chapter argues that while the *trokosi* system developed out of "a coherent system with its own values, beliefs, and ritual conduct" (Diouf 1985), that does not justify its existence in Ghana today, especially when viewed through the lens of international human rights. A religious and social control system that makes slaves of innocent children for life is indefensible in Ghana and anywhere else today. The sociopolitical situation in present-day Ghana is significantly different from that of 300 years ago when the system was developed; hence, there is a need to adapt the institution and practice accordingly. Apart from its own national legislation, Ghana is signatory to several regional and international legal agreements, by which it is bound to comply as a member of the international community. Understanding the sociocultural factors that created the system should only hasten the transformation of the *trokosi* and *troxovi* systems.

The *Trokosi* System

The *trokosi* system is a practice whereby a child who is a virgin, preferably a female, is selected by her family to serve time in a shrine in reparation for crimes committed by a member of her family, often a male. The child becomes known as a *trokosi*, an Ewe word variously translated as "wife of the gods," "slave of the gods," and "a person consecrated to the gods." The plural form of the word is *trokosio* or *trokosis*. The practice is found among the Dangme, the Fon-speaking, and Ewe ethnic groups in West Africa, with the Ewes being the main practitioners. The Dangme word for *trokosi* is *woryokwe*. While the length of service varies from one shrine to the other,

in theory, it does not exceed 3 years. In practice, however, it becomes a lifetime of service because, once sent to the shrines, the families are reluctant to take back their children mainly because of the stigma attached to *trokosis*. Hence, trokosis as old as 65 years have been encountered at *trokosi* shrines.

The system is set in motion when a crime occurs, and the offender is not known. In line with the Ewe virtue of seeking the truth in all circumstances, as will be discussed below, the victim seeks the assistance of a shrine[1] to find the offender. Once the shrine finds the offender, they strike by causing sudden and unnatural deaths, mysterious diseases, serious accidents, and tragedies in the family of the offender but make sure they spare the life of the culprit to live to confess his crime. Following the same practice of seeking the truth, the offender's family, in turn, seeks the cause of the deaths, diseases, accidents, and tragedies from a shrine. They are then told about the offense, the identity of the offender, and the solution, which often translates into a sacrifice to the gods. If the particular shrine accepts human beings as objects for sacrifice (as indicated in the section below on traditional religion), then the offender's family would send a child, usually a female virgin, to serve in the shrine in atonement for the crime.

Trokosis perform several functions at the shrines, including house chores, auxiliary functions during religious rites, and lending free labor to the economic activities of the shrine priests and owners. In some practicing communities, the priest must be the first to have sexual intercourse with them, which often takes place just after a girl's menarche. The vast majority do not go to school. The negative label attached to *trokosis* is a product of several factors. For one, how the shrines operate is shrouded in mystery, instilling much fear in the people. So community members would rather stay clear of anything that has to do with the shrine, including *trokosis*. Second, *trokosi* girls are feared in the community because it is forbidden to have sexual relations with them. The family of anyone who has sexual relations with them must, as punishment, also provide a girl to serve in the shrine. This reinforces the negative perception community members have of *trokosis* to the extent that even those who are fortunate to be redeemed must often move away to other parts of the country in order to find partners for marriage.

It is important to make a distinction between *trokosis*, known in the trokosi system as "wives of the gods" and by some opponents in this controversy as "slaves of the gods" and related practices such as *fiashidis* and *dorflevis*. *Fiashidis*[2] are initiates of the Nyigbla and Yewe religious order, who are either given by their families, inducted by the deities, or voluntarily choose to serve in the shrines. They are *exclusively* perceived as the "wives of the gods" and, consequently, are treated with respect by all in the community, including the priests. It is deemed an offense to the gods if their husbands maltreat them. They own property and are not

[1]A shrine is a place of worship for adherents of African traditional religion. Thus, it is similar to a church, mosque, or synagogue.

[2]*Fiashidis*, also written as *fiasidis*, is plural; the singular is *fiashidi* or *fiasidi*.

considered poor by community standards. *Fiashidis* who serve at the insistence of their families do so as compensation for services rendered by the gods to the families in their times of difficulty (Greene, 1996, pp. 87–88). Many girls and women on their own accord opted to serve as *fiashidis* because of the benefits that accrued from doing so. Greene explains that association with one of the most powerful gods in Anlo, Nyigbla, (1) granted the women prestige, (2) gave their families the opportunity to establish close ties with the most powerful political and religious families or clans, and (3) provided them with an expanded set of contacts that could be of potential social and economic benefit (pp. 89–91).[3] For most *fiashidi* women at the time, it was the only opportunity to associate directly with the political and religious elite of Anlo society, leading to respect from their own husbands and the rest of the community. It is no wonder that some young women were actively encouraged by their mothers to become *fiashidis*. Even for the Anlo state as a whole, the practice of *fiashidi* was seen as bringing unity to the whole polity as the state deity, Nyigbla, recruited initiates from every clan in the state. Nukunya and Kwafo (1998, p. 38) have also noted that because most *fiashidis* live with their parents and not in the shrine and are only summoned to the shrine on festive and special occasions, the harsh treatment meted out to *trokosis* in Tongu shrines is absent in the shrines in Anlo.

A subcategory of *fiashidi* practice is when a barren woman solicits the help of a god to reverse her infertility.[4] According to Dovlo and Adzoyi (1995), this act is known as *dorfefle* (womb purchasing) and the offspring are known as *dorfleviwo* or *dorflevis* (children of womb purchasing). The first product of *dorfefle* if male is called *Klu* and if female is called *Kosi*. Dovlo and Adzoyi point out that these names denote indebtedness to the gods since in the Ewe language, the name *Klu* or *Kluvi* means slave.

Ewe Social Structure and Rights

The Southern Ewe are comprised of a group of autonomous Ewe states whose people migrated from Ketu in the modern Republic of Benin and *stopped over* in Notsie in the present Republic of Togo before settling down in the southeastern corner of contemporary Ghana (Amenumey, 1986; Asamoa, 1986). The eminent Ewe historian, Professor Amenumey (1997) dismissed claims of migration from "Babel" of the Bible—Mesopotamia and Egypt—on the basis of lack of scientific evidence.

[3]Chris Abotchie's (1997, p. 80) account of the origins of *fiashidi* portrays the practice as girls serving the Nyigbla deity in atonement for breaking a taboo. This account, however, equates *fiashidi* practice with that of *trokosi*.

[4]This is akin to the biblical practice when Hannah, who was barren, prayed to God to open her womb and vowed to give the child back to serve the Lord in the temple all his life. When Hannah begot Samuel, she fulfilled her vow (See 1 Samuel, Chapters 1 and 2).

This invalidated the claims of *trokosi* proponents such as Dartey-Kumordzie[5] and Robert Barker (2007a, 2007b; 2011a, 2011b)[6] who argue that Ewes are Israelites and that *trokosi* practice identifies them as one of the lost tribes of the kingdom of ancient Israel. They occupy the southern part of the Volta Region and are spread

[5]Dr. Dartey-Kumordzie's view on *troxovi*/*trokosi* and the origins of Ewes is spread across several unpublished papers authored by him and articles published in Ghanaian newspapers and an interview in a magazine. See Sammy Dartey-Kumordzie (1995, July 15) "*Trokosi* or *Fiasidi*: Pillar of Africa's Survival" in *Weekly Spectator*, p. 5; Sammy Dartey-Kumordzie (n.d.) "Report on *Fiasidi*-Vestal Virgins" Accra, Ghana: Hu-Yehweh Society; Sammy Dartey-Kumordzie (n.d.) "Origin and the Importance of *Troxovi* or Fiashidi (*Trokosi*) in Modern Ghana"; Sammy Dartey-Kumordzie (n.d.) "The Relevance of *Trokosi* (*Fiasidi*) in Modern Ghana"; Sammy Dartey-Kumordzie (2000, July 1) "Re-defining Hu-Yehweh the Knowledge of Africa and the Various Organs for Development of Human Resources" in *The Ghanaian Times*, p. 14; *Progressive Utilization Magazine* (1994) "*Trokosi*—Virgins of the Gods or Concubines of Fetish Priests?" 1, 1, pp. 2–6. He traces the origins of Ewes, originally called Amus, to the Amorites, Noah, and the Babylonians of the Christian Bible, who after migrating through several places such as Yemen and Abyssinia, founded Egypt and its ancient civilization. "The whole gamut of life of the Amu race was governed by the mystical religious philosophic system called Hu-Yehweh—(Yahweh) System" (n.d. (b): 2) on which, he claims, the trokosi system is based. Dartey-Kumordzie claims that Moses and such great Greek philosophers such as Plato, Socrates, and Pythagoras learned at the feet of the Ewes in Egypt. He notes that the Ewes moved after the fall of ancient Egypt to ancient Ghana before finally settling in present-day Southeastern Ghana. A problem with Dartey-Kumordzie's account of the origins of Ewes is that he did not make any attempt to compare his version with other well-documented versions such as Ansa Asamoa (1986), Amenumey (1986, 1997), Nukunya (1997a), and Francis Agbodeka (1997). Neither did he compare his version of world civilization to other versions put forth by other scholars nor provide sources of his information. Apart from inferring that he interviewed priests and inmates of *trokosi*/*troxovi* shrines, he did not indicate his sources about the history and religion of the Ewes, the Hu-Yahweh system, and his "original" version of *troxovi* about which he has written and talked so much. In fact, Dartey-Kumordzie does not provide *any* references in his works that are available to this writer and cited in this footnote. This is a major deviation from the established norm in scholarship and casts doubts on the validity and reliability of his works. In the end, his works raise more questions than are answered and rest at the level of opinion, not evidence.

[6]Robert Barker, "Trokosi, Ewes and the Israelites." Feature article posted in four parts on Ghana Home Page on Friday, 12 January 2007 <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=117122> and Tuesday, 27 February 2007 <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=119855>. The last two parts of the article were posted on Wednesday, 29 June 2011 at http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/features/artikel.php?ID=212157 and Saturday, 2 July 2011 at <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/features/artikel.php?ID=212587>. All the articles were retrieved on the same day as they were published. The stated objective of his articles was "to show the connection between the Ewes and how their religious practice known as *fiashidi* or *trokosi* helps identify them as part of the twelve tribes of the kingdom of ancient Israel." He argued that after the main biblical exodus from Egypt to Israel, some of the tribes, including the Ewes, embarked on another exodus back to Africa. He also traced the origins of *trokosi* and *fiashidi* to two practices in the Bible based on the story of Hannah's pledge of Samuel (1 Samuel Chapters 1 and 2) and the story of Jephthah (Judges Chapter 11), whose pledge—to sacrifice as a burnt offering to the Lord the first person he met after his victory in a war—turned out to be his own daughter, but whom he granted time to bewail her virginity in the mountains before being sacrificed. But just like Dartey-Kumordzie, Barker did not provide much evidence to back his assertions. So they cannot be taken seriously by scholars.

across five administrative districts—Keta, Ketu, Avenor, and South and North Tongu—within the local government organizational structure in Ghana. The most dominant states among the Southern Ewe are the Anlo, the largest polity among the Ewes, and the 13 states that constitute Tongu (Nukunya, 1997a). Though autonomous, the southern Ewe states, like all the Ewe states in Ghana, are known for their unity as one people. The basis of this unity is founded on a common history of migration from Ketu, language (though with dialectical variations), and shared social, political, and religious values and institutions (Nukunya, 1997a).

Patrilineal descent is the main principle around which southern Ewe social organization revolves (Nukunya, 1997b). Families are built around a group of people who can trace common descent to a known male ancestor (Nukunya, 1969). To the southern Ewe, family is not, however, limited to a nuclear family of father, mother, and children. In fact, the mother is not a member of her nuclear family as she rather belongs to the family of her father. The family of prime importance to the southern Ewe is the extended family of people, male and female, who trace their descent through the male line. The extended family is important because a group of extended families constitutes a lineage or clan, the most important social unit among the Ewes (Amewudah, 1984; Nukunya, 1969, 1997b).

Lineage or clan membership carries with it rights, duties, and obligations. In traditional Eweland, whatever rights an individual was entitled to, and did enjoy, was by virtue of his or her membership of a particular lineage or family. Members were entitled to political, economic, social, and religious rights such as succession, inheritance, help during emergencies, and plots of land for farming or access to creeks for fishing (Nukunya, 1997b). Very few rights, such as the right to life, existed outside clan or lineage. Even then, individuals enjoyed the right to life only within the parameters of the clan's collective interests. The lineage or clan was thus a corporate unit of great socioeconomic importance to every individual. However, as Nukunya (1969, 1997b) explains, members were also obliged to observe the clan/lineage taboos and norms, rules of exogamy, bear a family name, defend and protect other family members, and offer assistance to other family members in need. Thus, the principle of "collective responsibility" (group rights and duties) was the major notion that informed clan membership and action (Abotchie, 1997; Nukunya, 1969, 1997b). From the foregoing, it is clear that this principle is reciprocal: just as rights accrue to an individual by being a member of a clan, a member could be asked to pay for acts of omission or commission by other members of the clan. For example, the clan *must* seek vengeance on behalf of a victimized member.

Collective responsibility constitutes a major ground for members to be interested in the conduct and discipline of other members, to ensure they comport themselves in a manner as to bring no disgrace to the name of the clan. In effect, the clan takes precedence over the individual, and group rights surpass individual rights. In this way, it is not difficult to understand how children (*trokosis*) or any other member of the family could be asked to pay for crimes committed by other members of the family. What is not easily explained is, "Why the preference for female children?" which relates to the wider question generally asked of the victims of most negative traditional practices in Africa, "Why is it always girls and women?" The importance of

males in patrilineal systems does not fully explain the choice of females as victims regarding most negative traditional practices considering the prominent status of males in even matrilineal systems where the family is traced through a known female ancestor (e.g., the preeminent significance of mother's brother and the fact that women are the victims of traditional widowhood rights among the matrilineal Asantes in Ghana). Hence, it is proposed that patriarchy, the system and practice whereby everything male is deemed as more important than anything female, better explains the choice of women to become the victims of controversial traditional practices such as the *trokosi* system (Ameh, 2004b). Among the Ewes, as will be explained below, the type of sacrifice that produced and maintains the *trokosi* system is regarded as punishment and making a *trokosi* sacrifice connotes losing a family member, since it ends up becoming servitude for life. If sacrifice entails "losing" a family member, it is better to lose the least important than the most important members.

Religion Among the Ewes

One cannot completely understand the practice of *trokosi* without also comprehending the religious worldview and practices of the southern Ewe. The Ewes perceive the world as consisting of the living and the dead, of the natural, and of the supernatural. As Abotchie (1997) points out, however, they believe that the beings of the supernatural world hold the key to life and death, to justice and fairness among human beings. Staying in harmony with the supernatural beings, i.e., strict observance of the moral codes presided over by the supernatural beings, ensures abundant life, a state of *fafa* or *dagbe*, which means "peace" (Gaba, 1997). This state leads to all the good physical and material things of life. Offending the supernatural powers, however, leads to curses and afflictions, which include tragic deaths, accidents, and mysterious diseases. With this cosmology, the Southern Ewe perceives sin, *nuvo*, like crime, as an act offensive to the gods such that they withhold the good things of life from the individual, offender, and society in general (Abotchie, 1997). In effect, sin or crime is not a state but an act with negative consequences for life (Abotchie, 1997; Gaba, 1997). Considering the negative consequences of sin (crime), the Ewes place a strong value on leading a morally pure life. They question every misfortune, accident, and affliction, such as those that trigger the *trokosi* system, and believe the truth must be found in every instance. Finding the truth and appeasing the gods restores the state of harmony that ensures peace (*fafa*), the ultimate stage of the good life. Abotchie (1997) contends that this quest for finding the truth accounts for the abundance of gods (*trowo*), cults (*voduwo*), and ancestral spirits (*togbenoliwo*), which serve as mediums of religious worship and for detecting criminals and discovering the truth, in Eweland.

But sin, or crime, requires atonement in order to restore the state of harmony with the gods so they do not withhold the good physical and material things of life from the people. According to Gaba (1997), "forgiveness," *tsotsoke*, is achieved through prayer, *gbedododa*, which he defines as an intense "petition for evil, pain and suffering to be

removed from the human condition and replaced with material prosperity and long life (p. 97)." However, forgiveness is achieved not only through words (prayer) but through action. As Gaba (1997) puts it, forgiveness "is something that must be done rather than asked (prayed for) by the worshipper, who needs to be indispensably assisted by his objects of worship (p. 97)." For the southern Ewe, as Gaba explains, this means prayer must be accompanied by offerings to the gods, which constitutes "sacrifice." Gaba argues that "sacrifice" constitutes an important aspect of religious worship among Ewes. He identifies several types of sacrifice, drawing particular attention to two major categories. First, *dza* sacrifice involves giving physical and other material gifts to the gods. The purpose of the offertory may vary from asking for favors, gratitude for a fulfilled need or received favor, or even simply a heartfelt show of appreciation to the gods from a devoted worshipper. According to Gaba, these gestures form part of the everyday worship as thanks offerings.

The second major type of sacrifice of significance to the *trokosi* system is the *nuxe* (*nuxexe*) or *vosa* (*vosasa*) sacrifice. Gaba explains these words very well:

> *Nuxe* is a combination of two words, a noun, *nu* which means a thing and a verb *xe* which means to pay a debt or to prevent from happening. Similarly in *vosa*, *vo*, a noun, means evil and *sa*, a verb, which means to bind or to pass by or over. *Nuxe* and *vosa*, then, convey the same idea and mean the removal of an over-hanging or the stopping of a threatening danger which comes from the sacred. In short, *nuxe* or *vosa* sacrifice becomes necessary when the Ewes of southeastern Ghana desire to remove a life-negating manifestation of the sacred from human affairs thereby restoring communion with the object of worship so that the human condition would be full of life-affirming experiences. (1997)

This category of sacrifice reflects a spirit of reparation or atonement—the payment of a debt to avoid or stop the gods from visiting their wrath on the people. Faced with recurring tragedy and misfortunes, an attitude of urgency is associated with this type of sacrifice, and premium is placed on it. Thus, among the Southern Ewe, like all other Ewes, "sacrifice" has the connotation of "punishment," and it is not easy to separate the religious from the criminal justice system. As Gaba points out, objects for sacrifice include different types of drinks, food, other material things, and even human beings, depending on the gravity of the issue at stake. Besides, each god has its preference for objects of sacrifice. Deities that accept human beings as sacrifice are known as *troxoviwo*, an Ewe word, which simply means "deities that accept human beings," the institution around which the practice of *trokosi* is built. The committal of *trokosis* to serve in shrines falls within the category of sacrifices meant as atonement, with the aim of preventing recurring tragedy in the family. On the one hand, the Anlo deities of Nyigbla at Afife and Anloga, Togbe Adzima and Vena at Klikor, Sui, and Tormi in Anloga accept *fiashidis*, virgin girls, and consider them as *wives* of the deity (Abotchie, 1997). On the other hand, the numerous deities in Tongu, including Korlie at Mafi Dugame, Avakpe at Avakpedome, Koklofu at Dorfor, Vena at Kebenu, Ba at Bator, Korti at Tefle, Kaklo at Fevie, Adido at Mepe, and Adzemu at Agave take *trokosis*, female girls who are virgins, and treat them as *slaves* of the deity.

Thus, the Ewe religious worldview and practice and a social structure that puts premium on collective responsibility (group rights and duties) rather than individual

rights contributed to the creation of the institution of *troxovi* and the *trokosi* system. The importance of maintaining a good and prosperous life, the emphasis placed on living a pure moral life and living in harmony with the gods as the means for attaining prosperity, the desire to seek the truth in all matters especially when faced with recurrent tragedies, the values of truth, honesty, and peace constitute the backdrop to the emergence of the *trokosi* system. It can, then, be inferred that the institution of *troxovi*, and the practice of *trokosi*, to use the words of ex-President Abdou Diouf (1985), "evolved out of a coherent system with its own values, beliefs, cultural and ritual conduct." So it was not that the Ewes did not love their children or that they were naturally wicked or were just pure pedophiles to have created the *trokosi* system after all. To them, it was one of several ways of creating a just and morally upright society. The principle of collective responsibility, which guides conduct in the clan and lineage, accounts for why any member of the clan could be asked to atone for the crimes committed by another. Just as members of the clan must avenge injustice suffered by any member of the clan, so could a member of the clan be sacrificed on behalf of other members of the family or clan. By the terms of the principle of collective responsibility, the family and the clan (group rights) took precedence over individual rights. Consequently, the Southern Ewe are not a group of weird, wicked, and barbarous people to have created such a system of bondage as the *trokosi* practice as some Ghanaians and human rights advocates have been portraying them since the practice became a national and international human rights issue in Ghana in the 1990s (Ameh, 1998, 2004a, 2004b).

Trokosi and Negative Traditional Practices in Ghana

Negative traditional practices abound in Ghana. These include female genital mutilation; funeral and widowhood rites and related inheritance practices; marital practices such as child marriage, polygamy, levirate, and sororate (i.e., inheritance of an in-law upon the death of a spouse); witch camps; *kayayee* (female porters); and domestic servants. Most of these were known as common practices among specific ethnic groups before *trokosi* practice became described as "a national social problem." Yet, within this relatively short time of taking on the status of a national social problem, *trokosi* practice is now presented as *the symbol*, *the ultimate example* of negative traditional practices in Ghana. Since the mid-1990s, pieces on negative traditional practices in the Ghanaian media most often cite *trokosi* practice either as the only example or the primary example.[7] It is even worse on Ghana Home Page

[7]The only example of negative traditional practice in Ghana cited by the Nigerian Nobel laureate, Wole Soyinka, when he launched a biography of President JAK Kufuor in 2007 was *trokosi*. See Samuel Amoako (2007, January 12, 2007) Between Faith and History. *Ghanaian Times*. Retrieved January 13, 2007 from http://www.newtimesonline.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=6919&Itemid=181.

(www.ghanahomepage.com), the most popular and important Ghanaian news, information, and Internet discussing website, where discussants and commentators on news items and feature articles presumably take advantage of the anonymity of the Internet to spew some of the vilest and most virulent attacks not only on *trokosi* practitioners but on Ewes, in general. Examples of *trokosi* feature articles on Ghana Home Page include Nana Yaw Ossei's (2008a, 2008b, 2008c) three-part feature article "Trokosi—An Opportunity to Abuse Women" and Asante Fordjour's (2007) "Trokosi 'Sex-Slaves,' Ewes, the Israelites and …," which was itself a response to Robert Barker's (2007a, 2007b) feature article "Trokosi, Ewes and the Israelites" that was dismissed earlier in this chapter on grounds of lack of sufficient evidence to support his assertions. But in combination, these three articles have attracted 1,108 comments. The majority of these comments can only be described as "Ewe-bashing," as contributors ascribed every type of vile label such as "pedophiles," "rapists," "wicked," "barbaric," "backward," "primitive," and "uncivilized" to Ewes. Although the authors of the feature articles did not engage in as much Ewe-bashing, as did the commentators, they however, display an astounding lack of knowledge on key issues regarding *trokosi* practice.[8]

Ewe-bashing will not solve the *trokosi* problem.[9] It only stands to stall the phenomenal progress already made in combating the practice. As argued elsewhere (Ameh, 1998, 2004a), a cross-cultural universal approach has been effective in

[8]Nana Yaw Ossei (2008a, 2008b, 2008c) and Asante Fordjour (2007), for example, imply in their articles that the *trokosi* system was created as an opportunity to sexually abuse women. An understanding of the social structure, religion, and social control mechanisms of the Ewes as presented in this chapter debunks such a view. Nana Yaw Ossei displays sheer ignorance of the *trokosi* system when he writes, "the aggrieved person determines what the crime or offence is and reports it to the shrine priest in order to punish the guilty party's family with mysterious deaths and diseases." As presented in this chapter, the detection of the offender is done by the shrine priest who also assigns the punishment. Asante Fordjour was either being economical with the truth or is not well versed with the international human rights literature when he presents human rights as a concept whose meaning all scholars and practitioners agree upon. He did not mention that there are protracted controversies within the field such as the clash between universalism and relativism and between group and individual rights, just to mention a few of the debates directly relevant to negative traditional practices such as *trokosi*. Even John Locke and Thomas Hobbes, two of the philosophers he cited in support of his unitary notion of human rights, have different perceptions of what constitutes human rights. Several scholars agree that human rights is a contentious concept, and certainly, many African scholars (e.g., Busia (1994), Ziyad Motala (1989), and Makau wa Mutua (1995)) have different perceptions of human rights from the one presented by Asante Fordjour in his article. To presume that there is only one conception of human rights seems like biased scholarship.

[9]Daniel K. Pryce (2007), made a similar point in a recent feature article, "Trokosi and the Malevolent Stereotyping of Ewes," posted on Ghana Home Page on Monday, 22 October 2007 (http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=132719) (retrieved 16 May 2008). He bemoaned the malicious labeling of all Ewes on account of trokosi. While emphasizing his disagreement with the practice he, nevertheless, asked fellow Ghanaians to stop the stereotyping of all Ewes, drawing parallels between the negative impact of this act with that of racism on Ghanaians who find themselves as immigrants in the developed world and the havoc tribalism has wreaked on the African continent. His article attracted 144 comments in which the "Ewe-bashing" continued unabated.

addressing the problem, and the evidence supports this. According to the report of Yarkin Erturk, the Special Rapporteur of the United Nations Human Rights Council on Violence Against Women, based on her mission to Ghana in July 2007, of all the negative traditional practices in Ghana that entail violence against women and children, only *trokosi* practice and female genital mutilation are on the decrease (UN Human Rights Council, 2008). While I cannot speak for the practice of female genital mutilation for lack of current hard data on the practice, research has shown that about 59 % of all known *trokosis* have been liberated (Ameh, 2004a). The US State Department Human Rights Country Reports for Ghana have consistently maintained since 2001 that there were not more than 100 *trokosis* throughout the Volta Region (http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/). Even though the State Department figures seem highly underreported,[10] for a ritual practice that had been in existence for several centuries, that is a phenomenal achievement on the part of the anti-trokosi movement in Ghana, an achievement that has not been equaled by any other attempt to transform or abolish a negative traditional practice in the country nor anywhere else in the world, considering that *trokosi* practice was only identified as a national social problem in the early 1990s. One, then, wonders how *trokosi* practice could be the symbol or even the ultimate negative traditional practice in Ghana.

Do Culture and Religion Justify Trokosi Practice in Present-Day Ghana?

But does understanding the sociopolitical context that created the *trokosi* system in southern Eweland since the fifteenth century justify its existence in Ghana today? And if not, what has sustained the *trokosi* system for so long? I will address these two questions in the same order. My answer to the first question is an emphatic *no*! Inasmuch as the sociocultural and religious context as shown in the preceding pages fosters the understanding that the southern Ewes are not callous and barbaric to have created such a system as *trokosi*, the fact remains that the sociopolitical milieu in which the system operates has undergone significant changes since the first half of the twentieth century when Ewes had their first contact with Europeans and,

[10]The number of *trokosis* is not exactly known partly due to the secrecy surrounding the activities of the religious shrines where *trokosi* is practiced and also since the census taken in 1996 by Dovlo and Kufogbe (1997) (See also Kufogbe and Dovlo (1998)), which was commissioned by the International Needs Ghana, no other census of *trokosi* shrines and victims has been taken. Their census put the population of *trokosis* at 4,714, which has been the most reliable number (often rounded up to 5,000) available and did not include the number of children of *trokosis* involved. The most recent statistics available show that 3,500 *trokosis* and 10,000 children of *trokosis* (of an estimated 15,000) were liberated between 1991 and 2003 (Professor Joe Remenyi and Development Professionals International Pty Ltd. (2007). *Trokosi*: *Mid Term Evaluation Report of Ex-Trokosi Liberation and Rehabilitation Program Modular Vocational Training*, *Phase II*. Evaluation commissioned by International Needs Ghana with support of AusAID and International Needs Australia. Report available from International Needs Ghana). This puts the percentage of liberated *trokosis* at 70 %. This recent evaluation used the Kufogbe and Dovlo number as their baseline.

subsequently, became part of the new state of Ghana. Consequently, Southern Eweland, like other ethnic areas in Ghana, has undergone some transformation and is no longer the exact same society it was in the period before the twentieth century.

Significant political, economic, social, gender, cultural, and religious changes have occurred as a result of Southern Eweland's new relationship with colonial and postcolonial Ghana as a result of both cultural imposition and diffusion. By the nature of this relationship, ultimate legislative, administrative, and executive power shifted from the traditional council of state, comprising chiefs and elders, to the colonial rulers based in Accra and, subsequently, to the indigenous Western-educated elite after independence. Some cultural and customary practices such as human sacrifice have been prohibited. The power and significance of the clan have somehow waned, and the family structure has been altered, as members do not necessarily need to depend on the clan and its resources for economic survival. Western education has become a means to other economic opportunities outside the traditional economic system. Ghanians can now seek employment in either the public or private economic sectors created by the new state of Ghana. In addition to traditional religion, almost all the major religions of the world are represented in Southern Eweland today, attracting thousands of followers. Moreover, Ghana is a secular state, and so it is the Laws of Ghana, the Constitution of Ghana (1992), the Ghana Criminal Code (Act 29) (1960), and Ghana's Children's Act (1998) in the case of children, and not those of the deities, chiefs, or clan heads, that have the "final say" in Southern Eweland. The overall consequence is that the tight grip that the once all-powerful clan and traditional rulers—chiefs, priests, and elders—had over their people has been considerably weakened.

In addition to these changes, by virtue of its membership in such international organizations as the United Nations (UN) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Ghana is obliged to respect the provisions of several international human rights instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1981). By becoming an integral part of Ghana and the international community, Southern Ewes are in a new dispensation, requiring new ways of doing things. This requires that some traditional practices such as *trokosi*, which violate the rights of its victims, must be modified accordingly to conform to the requirements of the new dispensation. Indeed, as President Diouf (1985) rightly pointed out, even though such practices evolved out of a coherent system with its own values and ritual conduct,

> [t]hese practices, however, raise a problem today because our societies are in a process of major transformation and are coming up against new socio-cultural dynamic forces in which such practices have no place or appear to be relics of the past. *What is* (*sic*) *therefore needed are measures to quicken their demise*.

I have shown elsewhere how certain measures and attitudes adopted in the Ghanaian anti-*trokosi* campaign have helped quicken the transformation of the *trokosi* system in Ghana in less than one decade (Ameh, 2004a, 2004b). Thus, a good understanding of the sociocultural and religious context that gave birth to the practice of *trokosi* was key to the adoption of effective strategies for winning the trust of practitioners, opinion leaders, and the community that proved crucial in bringing about change.

What Sustains the Trokosi *System?*

But what has sustained the *trokosi* system for so long? The key factor is its perceived efficacy. It is important to note that the changes that occurred in the traditional social structure and religious system were not deep enough to completely erode the beliefs and values of the people. For example, the people still believe in the efficacy of traditional crime control mechanisms. They still believe they will bear the wrath of the gods if they violate the norms associated with the *trokosi* practice or, for that matter, any traditional religious norm. From this standpoint, the religious system of which *trokosi* was part is still seen as an effective mechanism of social and crime control. Chris Abotchie's (1997) study shows that the Southern Ewes, including some Western-educated members, still trust the efficacy of the traditional mechanisms of social and crime control, which are rooted in religious practice, and deem them as more efficacious than the modern Western-imported criminal justice system. He attributes this to a belief in the omniscience and escapelessness from the wrath of the gods, the severity of their sanctions, and the delayed effects or "capriciousness of their unsolicited sanctions."

Abotchie may be right as other observers of the crime control scene in traditional African societies such as Clifford (1963) have concluded that there was a general atmosphere of conformity that discouraged unconventional behavior. Ababio (1995) has argued that *trokosi* practice thrives not only because the perpetrators of the practice are not being brought through to the legal system but also because the people who are accustomed to "instant justice" do not have enough confidence in the modern Western-imported criminal justice system. Hence, she cautioned that legal measures alone will not eradicate the *trokosi* problem. It was on these grounds that she strongly advocated for the involvement of the local people in efforts to solve the *trokosi* problem. In a similar vein, Justice Emile Short (1997) giving an address on *trokosi* practice stated:

> [i]t must be recognized that the practice is based on the entrenched and deep seated belief of the people … The system has thrived for so long because the practitioners lost confidence in the … [Western imported]…criminal justice system, particularly the ability of the Police to apprehend people who commit crimes. People were therefore more disposed to consulting the shrines which they claim were able to detect the perpetrators and inflict instant justice. (Short, 1997, p. 2)

Loss of confidence in the modern criminal justice system could be attributed to several reasons (Ameh, 2006). Chief among these are the protracted trials that draw heavily upon the already meager resources of the people. Also, lack of resources and corruption of the law enforcement agencies, such as the police and the courts, have greatly contributed to the ineffectiveness of the modern criminal justice system, and lack of faith in its ability to deliver justice leads to heavy reliance on the traditional ethnic mechanisms for doing justice. Preference for traditional mechanisms for social control and conflict resolution is, however, not unique to the Ewes. It is commonly acknowledged in Ghana that a majority of the people, especially those who live in the rural areas, prefer to redress their grievances through the

traditional mechanisms than through the modern, imported criminal justice system for the same reasons as Ewes do, such as the speed of redress and perceived efficacy of the traditional over the modern crime control mechanisms (Ghana Law Reform Commission, 1995). But heavy reliance on the traditional mechanisms and lack of confidence in the modern imported mechanisms for doing justice only underscore the importance of sensitivity to the cultural and traditional religious issues that are integral to many Ghanaian negative traditional practices such as *trokosi*. It is within this context that I have argued for the "cross-cultural approach" for understanding and resolving traditional practices that violate contemporary human rights standards (Ameh, 1998, 2004a).

Conclusion

The *trokosi* system is a by-product of Ewe social structure, religion, and social control. Ewe social organization is built around the extended family or clan, which is identified through the principle of patrilineal descent. Whatever rights that are afforded to any community member (including children) exist only because of one's membership in a particular family. The core operating principle of the family is, however, collective responsibility. By the terms of this principle, the family transcends its individual members in that the interests and rights of the family are deemed as more important than those of the individual. Thus, group rights take precedence over individual rights. But for the Ewes, rights must go with responsibilities. Just as individuals are entitled to rights from the group, the individual must also take up responsibilities and duties on behalf of the family. The duties and obligations imposed upon individuals include being asked to serve time in a shrine for crimes committed by other members of the family as happens in the case of *trokosi* practice.

Ewe traditional religion has also contributed to the creation and maintenance of the *trokosi* system. In Ewe cosmology, the world comprises the supernatural and the living, with the former having control over the affairs of the latter. The gods, represented on earth by their priests and worshipped in shrines, hold the power of life and death over the living. Conformity with their laws and demands confers on one all the good things of life, while deviating from them leads to a visitation of their wrath on the people. All the negative things of life such as those that set the *trokosi* system in motion—sudden deaths, incurable diseases, recurring accidents—are, thus, seen as products of violating the rules of the gods. For the Ewe then, "sin" or "crime" is a violation of the edicts of the gods such that they withhold the good things of life from individuals and the community, in general. Thus, the Ewes would investigate every misfortune to determine if it, indeed, was a result of a sin. It is only "sacrifice" that can atone for sin. The objects for sacrifice vary among shrines. Shrines that accept human beings as sacrifice are the *troxovi* shrines, which are the centers for *trokosi* practice.

So the *trokosi* system emerged out of "a coherent system with its own values, beliefs, and ritual conduct" (Diouf, 1985). However, that does not justify its

existence today in view of international human rights norms and Ghana's obligations as a member of the international community. It is hoped that this chapter has shed sufficient light on the origins of the system that would help human rights scholars and activists engaged in the anti-*trokosi* campaign to devise a culturally sensitive approach to dealing the final fatal blow to a system that is already crumbling.

References

Ababio, A. (1995). *The legal basis for abolishing the Trokosi system*. In International Needs report of first national workshop on Trokosi system in Ghana, Accra, pp. 37–43.

Abotchie, C. (1997). *Social control in traditional Southern Eweland of Ghana: Relevance for modern crime prevention*. Accra, Ghana: Ghana Universities Press.

African Charter on Human and People's Rights, adopted by the 18th Assembly of Heads of State and Governments, 1981.

Agbodeka, F. (1997). "Introduction" in Francis Agbodeka (Ed.) *A handbook of Eweland Volume I: The Ewes of Southeastern Ghana* (pp. 2–7) Accra: Woeli Publishing Services.

Ameh, R. (1998). Trokosi (child slavery) in Ghana: A policy approach. *Ghana Studies, 1*, 35–62.

Ameh, R. (2004a). Reconciling human rights and traditional practices: The anti-Trokosi campaign in Ghana. *Canadian Journal of Law and Society, 19*(2), 51–72.

Ameh, R. (2004b). Human rights, gender, and traditional practices: The case of *Trokosi* practice in West Africa. In A. Kalunta-Crumpton & B. Agozino (Eds.), *Pan-African issues in crime and justice* (pp. 23–39). Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Press.

Ameh, R. (2006). Doing justice after conflict: The case for Ghana's National Reconciliation Commission. *Canadian Journal of Law and Society, 21*(1), 85–109.

Amenumey, D. E. K. (1986). *The Ewe in pre-colonial times*. Accra, Ghana: Sedco Publishing.

Amenumey, D. E. K. (1997). A brief history. In F. Agbodeka (Ed.), *A handbook of Eweland* (The Ewes of southeastern Ghana, Vol. I, pp. 14–27). Accra, Ghana: Woeli Publishing Services.

Amewudah, N. D. K. (1984). *A study of Mafi traditional religious thought*. Unpublished MA thesis, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon-Accra, Ghana.

Asamoa, A. K. (1986). *The Ewe of south-eastern Ghana and Togo on the eve of colonialism*. Accra-Tema, Ghana: Ghana Publishing Corporation.

Barker, R. (2007a). *Trokosi, Ewes and the Israelites*. Ghana Home Page. Retrieved January 12, 2007, from http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=117122.

Barker, R. (2007b). *Trokosi, Ewes and the Israelites—Part two*. Ghana Home Page. Retrieved February 27, 2007, from http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=119855.

Barker, R. (2011a). *Trokosi, Ewes and the Israelites—Part four*. Ghana Home Page. Retrieved June 29, 2011, from http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/features/artikel.php?ID=212157

Barker, R. (2011b). *Erveh (Ewe) Means Hebrew*. Ghana Home Page. Retrieved July 2, 2011, from http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/features/artikel.php?ID=212587.

Bilyeu, A. S. (1999). Trokosi—The practice of sexual slavery in Ghana: Religious and cultural freedoms vs. human rights. *Indiana International and Comparative Law Review, 9*(2), 457–504.

Busia, K. (1994). The status of human rights in pre-colonial Africa: Implications for contemporary practice. In E. McCarthy-Arnolds et al. (Eds.), *Africa, human rights and the global system* (pp. 225–250). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Clifford, W. (1963). The evaluation of methods used for the prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency in Africa South of the Sahara. *International Review of Criminal Policy, 21*, 17–32.

Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Nov. 20, 1989 (entered into force Sept. 2, 1990).

Dartey-Kumordzie, S. (1995, July 15). Trokosi or Fiasidi: Pillar of Africa's survival. *Weekly Spectator*, p. 5.
Dartey-Kumordzie, S. (2000, July 1). Re-defining Hu-Yehweh the knowledge of Africa and the various organs for development of human resources (2). *The Ghanaian Times*, p. 14.
Dartey-Kumordzie, S. (n.d.). *Report on Fiasidi-vestal virgins*. Accra, Ghana: Hu-Yehweh Society.
Dartey-Kumordzie, S. (n.d.). *Origin and the importance of Troxovi or Fiashidi (Trokosi) in modern Ghana*. Accra, Ghana: Author.
Dartey-Kumordzie, S. (n.d.). *The relevance of Trokosi (Fiasidi) in modern Ghana*. Accra, Ghana: Author.
Development Professionals International Pty Ltd. (2007). *Trokosi: Mid term evaluation report of Ex-Trokosi liberation and rehabilitation program modular vocational training, phase II*. Review Team Leader: Professor Joe Remenyi. Evaluation commissioned by International Needs Ghana with support of AusAID and International Needs Australia. Report available from International Needs Ghana.
Diouf, A. (1985). Cited in Lillian Passmore Sanderson (1986). *Female genital mutilation excision and infibulation*: *A bibliography*. London, UK: The Anti-Slavery Society for the Protection of Human Rights.
Dovlo, E. & Adzoyi, A. K. (1995). *Report on Trokosi Institution* Legon-Accra: Department for the study of religions, University of Ghana. Report commissioned by International Needs.
Dovlo, E. & Kufogbe, S. K. (1997). *Baseline survey on female ritual "Bondage" in Ghana: the geographical spread and count of victims (Phase I: Southern Sector)* A Survey Report for International Needs Ghana and Canadian International Development Agency.
Fordjour, A. (2007). *Trokosi 'Sex-Slaves', Ewes, the Israelites and* …. Ghana Home Page. Retrieved January 25, 2007, from http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=117859.
Gaba, C. R. (1997). The religious life of the people. In F. Agbodeka (Ed.), *A handbook of Eweland* (The Ewes of Southeastern Ghana, Vol. I, pp. 85–104). Accra, Ghana: Woeli Publishing Services.
Ghana Children's Act (Act 560) 1998.
Ghana Criminal Code (Act 29) 1960.
Ghana Law Reform Commission. (1995). *The impact of the constitutional provisions on the customary disabilities of women in Ghana: Report on the abolition of ritual slavery, forced labour and other related practices*. Accra, Ghana: Ghana Law Reform Commission.
Greene, S. E. (1996). *Gender, ethnicity, and social change on the upper slave coast: A history of the Anlo-Ewe*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
Kufogbe, S. K. & Dovlo, E. (1998). "The Geographical Spread of Trokosi in Ghana" in International Needs *Report of the Second National Workshop on Trokosi System in Ghana* (Accra), (pp. 87–103).
Motala, Z. (1989). Human rights in Africa: A cultural, ideological, and legal examination. *Hastings International and Comparative Law Review, 12*, 373–410.
Nukunya, G. K. (1969). *Kinship and marriage among the Anlo Ewe*. London, UK: The Athlone Press.
Nukunya, G. K. (1997a). The land and the people. In F. Agbodeka (Ed.), *A handbook of Eweland* (The Ewes of Southeastern Ghana, Vol. I, pp. 8–13). Accra, Ghana: Woeli Publishing Services.
Nukunya, G. K. (1997b). Social and political organization. In F. Agbodeka (Ed.), *A handbook of Eweland* (The Ewes of Southeastern Ghana, Vol. I, pp. 47–72). Accra, Ghana: Woeli Publishing Services.
Nukunya, G. K., & Kwafo, S. K. (1998). *Report on de-criminalizing Trokosi: A research into the nature and operations of ritual enslavement in south eastern Ghana*. Accra, Ghana: National Population Council.
Ossei, N. (2008a). *Trokosi—An opportunity to abuse women*. Ghana Home Page. Retrieved February 19, 2008, from http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=139375.

Ossei, N. (2008b). *Trokosi—An opportunity to abuse women and girls in the name of religion and culture. Part 2*. Ghana Home Page. Retrieved February 23, 2008, from http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=139525.

Ossei, N. (2008c). *Trokosi—An opportunity to abuse women and girls in the name of religion and culture. Part 3*. Ghana Home Page. Retrieved March 2, 2008, from http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=139900.

Pryce, D. K. (2007). "Trokosi and the Malevolent Stereotyping of Ewes' Ghanaweb Feature article of Monday, 22 October. Retrieved October 23, 2007, at http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/features/artikel.php?ID=132719.

Short, E. (1995). *Trokosi—Legal or illegal?* In Report on first national workshop on Trokosi system in Ghana (pp. 22–28). Accra, Ghana: International Needs Ghana.

Short, E. (1997). *Trokosi transformation*. Unpublished speech delivered 18 July at Trokosi liberation ceremony, Dzangpong Shrine, Tokpo (Copy obtained from a friend who attended the ceremony).

Short, E. (2001). *Harmonizing the laws, policies, and programmes to transform ritual servitude in the West Africa sub-region*. Paper presented at the first sub-regional workshop on ritual servitude in Accra, February 7, 2001.

The Constitution of the Republic of Ghana. (1992). http://www.judicial.gov.gh/constitution/home.html, Retrieved April 12, 2013.

UN Human Rights Council. (2008). *Report of the special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences. Yakin Ertuk Addendum. Mission to Ghana A/HRC/7/6/Add.3*. Retrieved March 26, 2008, from http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G08/106/90/PDF/G0810690.pdf?Open Element.

US State Department (multiple years). Human rights country reports on Ghana. State Department Website. http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/.

wa Mutua, M. (1995). The Banjul Charter and the African Cultural Fingerprint: An evaluation of the language of duties. *Virginia Journal of International Law, 35*, 339–380.

Chapter 17
Defending and Nurturing Childhood in Media, Public, and Policy Discourses: Lessons from UNICEF's Juanita Communication Initiative in Colombia

Arvind Singhal

Addressing an audience of pediatricians in Rio de Janeiro, the late Jim Grant, former executive director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (from 1980 to 1995) and perhaps one of the staunchest defenders of children's rights, recalled the story of a young woman who was walking along the beach, picking up starfish and throwing them back into the sea. When an old man asked her why she was doing this, she said: "The starfish would die if left on dry sand." "But the beach goes on for miles, and there are millions of starfish," countered the old man. "How can your effort make any difference?" The young woman looked at the starfish in her hand, threw it to safety in the waves, and replied: "It makes a difference to this one."

To make a difference for one and all children, under Grant's leadership, UNICEF took the lead in launching some outstanding, innovative advocacy, mobilization, and strategic communication interventions to defend, uphold, and nurture childhood globally. As a result, tens of millions of children's lives have been saved, especially since the decade of the 1980s.

This chapter describes and analyzes UNICEF's strategic communication approaches to defending childhood in public, addressing what for the most part is a "silent emergency"—the daily tragedy of millions of undefended children dying as a result of poverty, pestilence, disease, and environmental degradation. Through the historical backdrop of UNICEF's Child Survival and Development Revolution

This chapter builds on the author's previous writings on overcoming childhood vulnerability (Singhal, 2008a, b; Singhal & Howard, 2003; Singhal and Rogers, 2003). The author thanks UNICEF's Communication for Development (C4D) Unit in New York for supporting the documentation of this project and especially acknowledges Colin Fraser and Sonia Restrepo Estrada for serving as key informants for the Juanita Communication Initiative in Colombia. Robert Cohen, Ketan Chitnis, and Rina Gill of UNICEF's C4D also provided helpful comments on a draft version of this manuscript.

A. Singhal, Ph.D. (✉)
Department of Communication, University of Texas @ El Paso,
202 Cotton Memorial, El Paso, TX 79968, USA
e-mail: asinghal@utep.edu; utminers.utep.edu/asinghal

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9_17,

(CSDR) of the 1980s, which sparked countless global, national, and local initiatives to safeguard and enhance the health of the world's children, we specifically focus on the Juanita Communication Initiative in Colombia, which translated national-level goals for children's causes into local plans for action. In a world where childhood is still largely muted and goes undefended, the Juanita Communication Initiative provides important lessons on the role of communication strategies in defending, upholding, and nurturing childhood.

The Child Survival and Development Revolution

Under Jim Grant's leadership in the early 1980s, UNICEF launched the CSDR, riding on four available, simple, and low-cost technologies known as GOBI: *G* for growth monitoring to detect under-nutrition in children, *O* for oral rehydration therapy to treat childhood diarrhea, *B* for breast feeding, and *I* for immunization against the six childhood diseases (tuberculosis, polio, diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, and measles). As part of high-level global advocacy, Grant personally met with more than 100 heads of state to enlist their personal and political support for the achievement of CSDR goals. He kept his messages simple and pockets full. Sitting with a prime minister, a president, or a king, he would pull out a packet of oral rehydration salts and say: "Do you know that this costs less than a cup of tea and can save hundreds of thousands of children's lives in your country?" (Bornstein, 2004, p. 248).

At the country level, Grant provided incentives for UNICEF country offices to work with national government agencies to mobilize around GOBI. In later years, GOBI became GOBI-FFF as food supplements, family planning, and female education were added (Singhal, 2008b). He utilized the annual State of the World Children's Report (SOWCR), which he launched in 1980 upon assuming office, as a forum to both report and rank child survival achievements by country. SOWCR became a leading tool of advocacy on behalf of the world's children, achieving worldwide outreach. Released annually with fanfare, it often received front-page media coverage. Now, a country's performance in meeting the goals of the CSDR was more visible. There was no hiding. Now, one could know the rates within a country and, more importantly, how they compared with others.

Grant's vision, launched in the form of CSDR, was to orchestrate a global movement—a "Grand Alliance for Children," he called it—in which governments, civil society, international agencies, and nongovernmental organizations formed creative and dynamic partnerships for children and sustainable human development. UNICEF forged partnerships with hundreds of groups—the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Catholic Church, the International Council of Nurses, associations of pediatricians, mayors associations, and others. UNICEF was also instrumental in mobilizing Rotary International to underwrite the costs of all the vaccines needed to eradicate polio. Rotary pledged to raise $100 million within a few years. By 2000, they had raised over $400 million.

In 1984, Grant persuaded Belisario Betancur, president of Colombia, to back a national vaccination campaign. Betancur had grown up in a large family in which a number of his siblings had died young. Three national vaccination days were declared. Media promoted the campaign, and 100,000 volunteers from the church, police, military, trade unions, public school teachers, Boy Scouts, and Red Cross vaccinated 800,000 children. It was the first large-scale, nationwide effort at mobilizing all sectors of society, and it proved to be a trend setter. Many other countries followed suit.

In 1985, Grant engaged in this effort Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Ozal, whom he knew personally from when he was national director of United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (Turkey) in the 1960s. With Turkey's immunization rate then below 20 %, an unprecedented social mobilization campaign was launched to vaccinate five million children. On the launch day, Prime Minister Ozal, President Evren, the Turkish Minister of Health, the Chief Imam, and Jim Grant each vaccinated a baby against polio. It was covered by the national electronic and print media and hailed as a momentous national event. Astutely, Grant had personally invited the ministers of health from Egypt, Pakistan, Sudan, and Syria to attend the launch ceremony (they would become champions of such immunization drives upon returning home).

Along with extensive mass media coverage, 200,000 school teachers, 54,000 *imams*, and 40,000 *muhtars* (village leaders) were mobilized to help out with the immunization campaign. The country's meat and fishing industries offered use of their cold storage facilities by the campaign to preserve the efficacy of the vaccines. Vaccines were moved on cars, trucks, horseback, mules, and foot. Constant radio and television announcements had reached 30 million Turkish homes, ensuring everyone knew what was at stake, what to do, and where to go. Within 2 months of the campaign's launch, 84 % of the target group was immunized (Bornstein, 2004).

With Colombia and Turkey as spectacular showcases, dozens of countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America followed suit soon thereafter. Amazingly, the 1990 CSDR goal of immunizing 80 % of the world's children under age 1 with vaccines against the six major child-killing and crippling diseases was realized, up from a meager 20 % a decade before. While some countries lagged behind the stated goals, an estimated four million child deaths were now being prevented each year from immunizations and diarrhea control. Millions who would have been crippled by polio could walk and run; millions who would have been blinded from lack of Vitamin A could see. An estimated 50 million children's lives were saved during the decade of the 1990s; and an estimated 20–25 million during the decade of the 1980s, when the CSDR was launched (Black, 1986, 1996; Jolly, 2001).

By any measure, UNICEF could claim to be the moving force behind these spectacular achievements and strategic communication: in the form of global, national, and local advocacy; cross-sectoral mobilization of civil society groups; and using behavior change communication for creating demand for services. Here, we profile one of UNICEF's exemplary strategic communication initiatives—The Juanita Communication Initiative in Colombia, drawing lessons for defending and nurturing childhood in public.

The Juanita Communication Initiative in Colombia[1]

In 1988, when mayoral elections were being held in Colombia for the first time, each candidate received a letter from a young, fictional schoolgirl: Juanita. On a page torn from her school notebook and in her own handwriting (with punctuation glitches), Juanita told the future mayor about the problems facing Colombian children and asked for help (Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada, 1994, 1998):

> I am Juanita, you do not know me, but I know you. I know you are a very important person. Who is going to be in charge here. Who is liked and respected by people. My mother says that you are going to do a lot for us, because now there is money to do things in this community, and that you will do them. For this, you must think about me and the other children like me. I would like you to know that we are lacking schools, clean water, food, and health. Our problems are many but there are easy solutions that don't need much money, only that you want to do them. I cannot vote because I am a child.
>
> I cannot give you my support yet, but you, yes, you can give me yours.
>
> Excuse me and thank you!!!
>
> Juanita

Juanita's letter arrived on each mayoral candidate's desk in the form of a leaflet, which had a photograph of the face of Juanita, with a thoughtful expression, and with the campaign slogan: "Mr. Mayor, I cannot give you my support yet, but you, yes, you can give me yours. Juanita."

The other side of the leaflet contained information about the problems of children in Colombia, including high rates of infant mortality, malnutrition, lack of access to preschool child care and primary education, and vulnerability of certain children and youth. Each problem was defined and explained, and solutions were suggested. For example, Problem: 34,000 of the 700,000 children born in Colombia each year died before their first birthday; these deaths occurred because not enough doses of vaccines were available against diseases such as measles, polio, tetanus, diphtheria, and whooping cough. Solution: Mayors could take corrective actions by procuring vaccines and launching immunization drives.

The children of Colombia, through their representative, Juanita, had laid out a challenge to the hundreds of mayoral candidates all over the country, asking what they would do for them locally and how their plan was better than their local competitor's plan.

The idea of linking local mayoral elections with children's causes and placing the burden of articulating a plan on the mayoral candidates, who, once elected, would be held accountable, was brilliant in its creativity, simplicity, and audacity. Its timing was uncanny as well, for it was only 2 years previously (in 1986) that Colombia had begun its political and administrative decentralization, and local municipalities (run by mayors) had assumed responsibility for providing services such as primary health care, water and sanitation, and primary and secondary education. Thus, in 1988,

[1]This draws upon a personal conversation with Colin Fraser and Sonia Restrepo-Estrada in October, 2007, and several rounds of follow-up email correspondence.

when the mayoral elections were announced, UNICEF considered this new political situation in the country an excellent opportunity for advocating for children's causes with the mayoral candidates as well as with citizens of each municipality, who would elect the mayors.

The final sentence of Juanita's letter to the mayor, "I cannot give you my support yet, but you, yes, you can give me yours," became the slogan for this campaign and was repeated in all the communication media—the main newspapers, all radio networks, private television stations, and Inravisión, the National Radio and Television Institute in Colombia. This slogan was accompanied by the motto of the campaign: "The children of Colombia: a great responsibility for mayors and communities." Radio and television spots featuring Juanita were crafted and broadcast widely. The main purpose of these spots was to raise public consciousness so that voters would choose the mayoral candidate who offered the best programs for the children in their municipality. Further, to publicize the tie-in, Juanita's face, her letter, and the campaign slogan appeared on large posters in streets all over Colombia, next to the candidates' campaign posters.

The Juanita materials were also sent to the various mass media outlets (radio, television, and print) with a personalized cover letter explaining the strategy and asking for their support. Dozens of journalists thus quizzed the mayoral candidates about their electoral platform with regard to children's interests. Children became, for the first time, a theme of Colombian political campaigns.

The Juanita campaign was the brainchild of Programme Communication officer Sonia Restrepo-Estrada in UNICEF's Bogota office who, along with her team, worked with various in-country partners to make it a reality. In a personal interview in the fall of 2007, when I asked Sonia to elaborate on the conceptual genesis of the Juanita campaign, she was modest. As our conversation progressed, I learned that her undergraduate training was in social communication and her postgraduate work in political science. The Juanita campaign was a creative and strategic layering of political processes with localized communication advocacy. The premise that guided the Juanita campaign was that democracy is fundamentally local. That is, only when the issues and actors are rooted and/or relevant locally, can effective action and accountability be assured. Not surprisingly, in the World Summit for Children in 1990, heads of state insisted on the importance of translating national action plans into provincial and local plans. UNICEF Colombia was ahead of the game.

The chief reason for the effectiveness of the Juanita campaign, especially with respect to advocacy for children's causes at the local level, was the linkage between the campaign activities, children's causes, and current political events within Colombia. While the news services covered the first-ever mayoral elections in Colombia, UNICEF and its partners strategically dovetailed the various components of the Juanita campaign with the current political events, eliciting widespread media coverage. Another key reason for the campaign's effectiveness was the high quality of the printed and audiovisual materials.

In 1989, a year after the original Juanita campaign was carried out, another opportunity arose for UNICEF to capitalize on the experience gained. Colombia was working feverishly, along with other Latin American countries, to eradicate

polio from the continent by 1990. UNICEF's Colombia office worked with the Ministry of Health to implement a "Juanita 2" communication strategy at the local level to achieve Universal Child Immunization and eradicate polio. The strategy consisted of converting the national immunization objectives, for which the responsibility was often diffused and diluted between partnering institutions, into limited but concrete and municipal objectives for local authorities to achieve.

For each of the 1,018 municipalities in Colombia, customized printed materials—posters and leaflets—with immunization data on the five preventable childhood diseases were delivered to each mayoral office. Specific proposals, tailored to local conditions, were provided to the mayors, suggesting actions they might take to benefit children within their localities. A parallel purpose was to sensitize and mobilize local communities to immunize their children.

There was a need to avoid any possibility that mayors receiving posters that showed poor vaccination coverage might hide them in their bottom drawer. Strategically, they were also sent to the local health service outlets and a whole raft of other local entities who were asked to display them in the municipality. This meant, as Sonia Restrepo-Estrada explained[2]: "That any mayor who hid his posters would find the things plastered all over the town!" An average of seven separate packages of posters was mailed to local entities in each municipality.

The idea of the customized immunization posters emerged from the previous Juanita campaign experience in mayoral elections. Municipalities were categorized into three groups: (1) *good* for those that had already reached 80 % immunization coverage, (2) *fair* for those that were between 60 and 79 % coverage, and (3) *poor* for those that had below 60 % coverage and had reported cases of polio in the previous 3 years. For each municipality, data on the numbers of children who were not covered for each of the five antigens were obtained and listed. The idea was not to say that so much success has been achieved but, rather, how much more distance needed to be covered. For each municipality, the immunization rates for each antigen (polio, DPT, and measles) were converted into three simple ratings: good, fair, and poor. In this way, 1,018 different posters were designed, one for each municipality, with print-runs that varied from 50 to 3,000 copies, depending on the population.

Astutely, each poster included the final part of Juanita's letter (on her handwritten notebook paper) to the mayor with its punch line, "I cannot give you my support yet, but you, yes, you can give me yours." The purpose was for mayors, as well as the public, to make the link to the commitments made in the previous year's campaign. In the lower part of the poster was the campaign slogan and call to action: "Mr. Mayor, let no child remain without immunization at the end of your term of office."

Leaders of all partner agencies—the Colombian Ministry of Health, the Corporation Agency for the Promotion of Municipal Communities (PROCOMÚN), UNICEF, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)/WHO, and Rotary International—signed a letter addressed personally to each mayor, and this letter

[2]In an email memo to the present author on March 10, 2008.

was sent to them with their respective customized posters and leaflets. The letter explained Colombia's commitment to Universal Child Immunization and the eradication of polio.

The printed materials were complemented by 30 television and radio spots, designed to sensitize the mayors and municipal officials about their role and to generate public awareness about participating in the immunization campaign. Inravisión (the National Radio and Television Institute), private television stations, and radio networks provided free airtime to broadcast the spots.

The campaign was launched with fanfare in Bogota with representatives of partner organizations, journalists, and prominent Bogota citizens in attendance. A special invitation card was designed for guests that on the outside said: "Do you know what immunization rating your municipality was given?" Upon opening, it read: "Please make yourself aware of it and commit to ensuring that, in the municipality where you were born, no child remains unvaccinated." Upon arrival, each guest was given a copy of a poster with vaccination figures for their local municipality. The intention was to obtain their commitment, whatever his or her field of activity, to support the immunization targets set for their municipalities.

The strength of the second Juanita campaign was that national level data was compiled and broken down into localized figures that were meaningful to the community. These figures revealed the local reality, which national figures often hide. In so doing, an alliance for children's health was created at the national level, yet firmly rooted in local municipalities. Further, as the rates of vaccination coverage were presented in terms of how many children were still not covered, precise targets for every municipality were established. This generated momentum in many communities to find the non-immunized children.

The final outcome: Colombia not only met its immunization target of 80 % coverage for children under 5 years of age against preventable diseases, it exceeded it.

However, in spite of its widespread appeal and accompanying national and local buzz, regrettably, no formal monitoring and evaluation was done of the two Juanita campaigns. Informal monitoring conducted by the publicity agency that was executing the campaign on behalf of UNICEF, showed that "the majority of the Colombian population had received the Juanita message and were favorably disposed to it" (Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada, 1994, 1998).

A qualitative study, comprising some 60 in-depth interviews in 12 municipalities with a range of respondents who were directly involved with the initiative or were targets of the campaigns, showed that Juanita's "direct appeal to mayoral candidates was perceived as ingenious," and the calls for action on behalf of children were perceived to be "nonpolitical" and nonpartisan in spite of their overt tie-in with the current political events in Colombia. One mayoral candidate wrote a public letter addressed to Juanita saying that he, too, "had been a poor child, and that through hard work and study had qualified as a lawyer, and pledged that children would be my main priority if I am elected."

Was the Juanita campaign a one-of-a-kind burst of brilliance or has its experience influenced other UNICEF initiatives? While the lessons from Juanita were not immediately and fully capitalized on (as lamented by Sonia Restrepo-Estrada in a

personal conversation), UNICEF's current high profile *Hechos y Derechos* (Facts and Rights) initiative in Colombia, in which local authorities are held accountable for creating an enabling environment for the realization of children's rights, builds on the experiences gained in the municipality-focused advocacy and social mobilization strategies employed in the Juanita campaigns of the late 1980s (http://www.unicef.org/colombia/pdf/FactsRigths1a.pdf).

Lessons Learned

What lessons can be learned about defending and nurturing childhood in public from the Juanita Communication Initiative in Colombia?

1. The power of Juanita-type campaigns lies in that they were essentially political: they aimed at making democracy deliver on its promises by holding elected officials accountable for children's rights and well-being.
2. Strategic communication initiatives at the national level are more likely to succeed if the issues become meaningful at the local level.
3. Harnessing disaggregated data with messages tailored to local communities is a key factor in successful communication and advocacy interventions.
4. Children need not be construed as only "objects" of a campaign but as activist subjects, as was the case with Juanita.
5. When children pose questions, adults tend to listen. When children throw out public challenges, adults tend to respond with a sense of public accountability and responsibility.
6. Communication strategies and tools like Juanita can be used by a wide variety of implementing partners, thereby galvanizing a process of social mobilization for common development objectives.

References

Black, M. (1986). *The children and the nations.* New York, NY: UNICEF.

Black, M. (1996). *Children first: The story of UNICEF, past and present.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Bornstein, D. (2004). *How to change the world: Social entrepreneurs and the power of new ideas.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Fraser, C., & Restrepo-Estrada, S. (1994). *Juanita: Putting children in the electoral arena. A case-study of advocacy and social mobilisation for children linked to decentralisation and elections in Colombia.* Bogota, Colombia: UNICEF.

Fraser, C., & Restrepo-Estrada, S. (1998). *Communicating for development: Human change for survival*. London/New York: I.B. Tauris.

Jolly, R. (Ed.) (2001). *Jim Grant: UNICEF visionary.* New York, NY: United Nations Publications.

Singhal, A. (2008a). *Defending and nurturing childhood in media, public, and policy discourses: Lessons from UNICEF's Juanita Communication Initiative in Colombia*. Paper presented to Undefended Childhood in Global Contexts Conference, Michigan State University.

Singhal, A. (2008b). *Where practice has led theory: UNICEF's Contributions to the field of communication and social change*. New York, NY: UNICEF, C4D Unit.
Singhal, A., & Rogers, E. M. (2003). *Combating AIDS: Communication strategies in action*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
Singhal, A., & Howard, W. S. (Eds.) (2003). *The children of Africa confront AIDS: From vulnerability to possibility*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Press.

Chapter 18
Epilogue

DeBrenna LaFa Agbényiga and Deborah J. Johnson

The United Nations solidified the vulnerable status of children around the world in the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), declaring a "need to extend particular care to the child." As the chapters of this volume have demonstrated, children have been exploited as workers and warriors or have been sold or indentured to servitude for both their labor and their bodies (Derluyn, Broekaert, Schuyten, & Temmerman, 2004; Honwana, 2007; Larson, Russ, Crall, & Halfon, 2008; Smolin, 2005). However, alongside the accumulation of literature highlighting this global vulnerability, there is a growing body of literature describing these children as also undefended and invisible (Garbarino, 2008; Healy, 2001). Municipalities and governments, language, and cultural communities sometimes bypass the needs of children to elevate other economic, cultural, or social goals. In these instances, their needs are given lesser status or no voice at all. "No care is extended" to these children because the invisibility, lack of recognition, or lesser status and their needs may not be encompassed by the vulnerability label as defined across any number of contexts. Culture can sometimes be elevated over the needs of children. For instance, when lower risk labor when there produces are educational costs or when tradition/traditional religion supersedes the potential exploitation of children. In other instances, children are undefended because there is no voice of advocacy for

D.L. Agbényiga, Ph.D., LMSW (✉)
School of Social Work and Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Michigan State University, 201 F Berkey Hall, 509 E. Circle Drive, East Lansing, MI 48824-1118, USA
e-mail: agbenyi1@msu.edu

D.J. Johnson, Ph.D.
Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Michigan State University, 552 West Circle Drive, East Lansing, MI 48824, USA
e-mail: john1442@msu.edu

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9_18,

them. Orphans in various forms of fosterage may be described as "lucky" to have any kind of ties or resources, and, as such, any needs or problems become silenced. Vulnerability then is only partially applied or not at all by their communities.

How we approach developing the agenda and solving the problems of children globally is crucial for the enactment of policies or programs that come into greater alignment with UNCRC goals and also respect context. It is becoming increasingly clear that any approach to defending, broadening the vulnerability category, or accentuating advocacy for children must be situated squarely within an ecological framework (Bruyere & Garbarino, 2010). We are reminded that an ecological approach is both useful and critical in this global work with children's rights. An ecological approach to addressing the vulnerability of children is implicit in the UNCRC where child vulnerability is highlighted on multiple systemic levels, from the individual to the institutional and even at the level of local societies. The UNCRC emphasizes that "rights of participation and provision are as important as rights of protection" (Reading et al., 2009, p. 332). An ecological approach emphasizes a person-in-environment perspective on human development and agency. Bronfenbrenner historically aptly described the ecological approach. This perspective more strongly incorporated culture and non-Western perspectives later when Nsamenang (1992) and Garcia Coll et al. (1996) elaborated on the concepts and model. Nevertheless, the core tenants of the visionary theoretical perspective established by Bronfenbrenner (1977) described human development as

> the progressive accommodation, throughout the life span, between the growing human organism and the changing environments in which it actually lives and grows. The latter include not only the immediate settings containing the developing person but also the larger social contexts, both formal and informal, in which these settings are embedded. (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, p. 513)

In this framework, stress on the system at any level, individual, family, institution, government culture, or in the spaces between these systems increases the vulnerability of the child. As an example, child labor is often conceived of in terms of predatory business practices and most frequently addressed through policies imposing age restrictions on employer. Child labor is "fundamentally… a symptom of poverty" (Edmonds & Pavcnik, 2005, p. 200). Rising economic inequality will result in the expansion of child labor. Thus, while it is clear that children in West Africa have left home for agricultural work in other parts of the country for a very long time, more recent economic difficulties have supported a consensus in the literature that such practices are increasingly common globally as well (De Lange, 2007). An ecological approach to child labor would focus on addressing the root of the situation through policies such as conditional cash transfers, which give parents financial incentives to send their children to school (Edmonds & Pavcnik, 2005).

An evaluation of conditional cash transfer programs in Colombia found that they improved educational outcomes, increasing "attendance, pass rates, enrollment, graduation rates, and matriculation to tertiary institutions" (Barrera, Bertrand, Linden, & Perez Calle, 2008). However, the study also found that "siblings (particularly sisters) of treated students work more and attend school less than students in families that received no treatment" (Barrera et al., 2008). Far from a discouragement, this finding highlights the ecological nature of a problem like child labor and the need for a truly

ecological approach in combating it. This research also serves as an example of the continued need for a dialogue on the issues relating to vulnerable children globally.

In this volume, children's vulnerabilities are highlighted across many levels and in many contexts. Our journey through the book provides some important support for an agenda moving forward. In the section on empowerment and self determination, we should take note of the strengths of children and their families with a strong connection to their cultural context. Here, visibility can mean recognizing these strengths and children's voices. For the development and stability of vulnerable children, the foundational aspects of education and schooling experiences across diverse communities play a significant role. The health and well-being of children in fosterage can be enhanced by understanding the complex circumstances of their in-country or transnational experiences and seeing beyond their perceived "luck" to through to the invisibility of their needs, particularly around child security. Foster parents of blood or agreement must be better informed about the needs of their charges and more knowledgeable advocates in the communities of their foster children and youth. Finally, the children's rights perspectives explored in the final grouping of chapters underscore points made in earlier segments about education, health, well-being, and security for children. This group of chapters provides information and an entry point for further development to enhance our understanding of and support for vulnerable children globally.

In the beginning, we asked if as adults and governments we were failing the children. This collection of research and policy arguments helps to demonstrate several types of responses to a broader charge. First, where issues of vulnerable children have been previously highlighted, new assessments or arguments have been presented for our consideration and action; next, some authors have highlighted lesser known issues of child rights also for consideration and action. In many of the chapters, the notion of nuance and voice is central. Finally, it is not appropriate for Western views to dominate the discourse of child rights that children's voices must be made more prominent and understood in the contexts of building healthy lives and competences with a lens that does more than acknowledge worldview.

While this volume covers a number of areas that are significant for the understanding of issues that affect vulnerable children and ultimately impede their ability to strive and move through the various stages and milestones of development, this book also serves as an entry point for researchers, practitioners, students, and community developers to better understand the characteristics and experiences of vulnerable children while establishing and initiating further the dialogue and research that is cross-cultural, global, and contextual in its approach to move a child-centered agenda forward. Developing solutions that can be translated and transformed in various global contexts is made possible, in part, by incorporating the human development perspective and emphasizing children development principles and concerns.

There are chapters that highlight some failure in the protection of children by adults and the governments around them. In most contexts of vulnerable and invisible children progress and changes have been made reducing risky labor contexts for children generally and even moreso for girls. More kids are in school than in the previous 10 years. So these are enormous successes. Programs and ideas that protect culture and mental health have emerged and expanded. These are certainly among

the changes that are taking place. So Annan's powerful statement about the rights of children and our responsibility to uphold the "sacred trust" is a call to action at various level of society to make certain a quality future for children.

What we hope we have advanced in this volume is a perspective that incorporates and extends the notion of child vulnerability and its relation to child rights but keeps that view within the bounds of two strengths; one that is developmental and also contextualized culturally appropriately/respectfully. In so doing, we anticipate the added voices of children, calling upon their families of whatever making, their communities, and their governmental caretakers to "extend their care" and be true change makers in the quest to achieve greater strides in children's rights attainment.

References

Barrera, F., Bertrand, M., Linden, L. L., & Perez Calle, F. (2008). *Conditional cash transfers in education design features, peer and sibling effects evidence from a randomized experiment in Colombia*. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. *The American Psychologist, 32*(7), 513.

Bruyere, E., & Garbarino, J. (2010). The ecological perspective on the human rights of children. In S. B. Kamerman, S. Phipps, & A. Ben-Arieh (Eds.), *From Child Welfare to Child Well-Being* (pp. 137–154). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Springer. Retrieved from http://www.springerlink.com/content/uvx286q7j8680364/.

De Lange, A. (2007). Child labour migration and trafficking in rural Burkina Faso. *International Migration, 45*(2), 147–167. doi:10.1111/j.1468-2435.2007.00407.x.

Derluyn, I., Broekaert, E., Schuyten, G., & Temmerman, E. D. (2004). Post-traumatic stress in former Ugandan child soldiers. *Lancet, 363*(9412), 861–863.

Edmonds, E. V., & Pavcnik, N. (2005). Child labor in the global economy. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives, 19*(1), 199–220.

Garbarino, J. (2008). *Children and the dark side of human experience: Confronting global realities and rethinking child development*. New York, NY: Springer.

Garcia Coll, C., Crnic, K., Lamberty, G., Wasik, B. H., Jenkins, R., Garcia, H. V., et al. (1996). An integrative model for the study of developmental competencies in minority children. *Child Development, 67*, 1891–1914.

Healy, L. M. (2001). *International social work: Professional action in an interdependent world*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Honwana, A. (2007). *Child soldiers in Africa*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Larson, K., Russ, S. A., Crall, J. J., & Halfon, N. (2008). Influence of multiple social risks on children's health. *Pediatrics, 121*(2), 337.

Nsamenang, A. B. (1992). *Human development in cultural context: A third world perspective*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Reading, R., Bissell, S., Goldhagen, J., Harwin, J., Masson, J., Moynihan, S., et al. (2009). Promotion of children's rights and prevention of child maltreatment. *Lancet, 373*(9660), 332–343.

Smolin, D. M. (2005). Intercountry adoption as child trafficking. *Valparaiso University Law Review, 39*(2), 281–325.

About the Editors

Deborah J. Johnson is Professor of Human Development and Family Studies at Michigan State University. Her research focuses on status-based, race, and culturally related development, parental socialization, and parent/child relations in early and middle childhood. Much of her work has been in the area of racial/ethnic identity development and racial socialization in varying context including child care principally among African-American and other ethnic children and families, but also internationally with Zimbabwean youth. Her international interests and collaborations also focus on the issues among Sudanese refugee youth and indigenous youth of Western Australia. Of more than 55 published books, monographs, articles, and chapters, several recent publications have focused on disentangling race, poverty, and culture; on theory development in the area of racial-ethnic socialization; and on research methods in cultural communities in America and across the globe. Selected publications include Johnson, D. J. and Spicer, P. (Eds.) (Special Section, 2009). Racial/Ethnic socialization, identity, and youth outcomes: Excavating culture. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*; Slaughter-Defoe, D.T., Stevenson, H., Arrington, E., and Johnson, D.J. (Eds.) (2011) *Black Educational Choice*: *Assessing the Private and Public Alternatives to Traditional K-12 Public Schools*; Rana, M., Johnson, D.J., and Bates, L.(2011) Parental Choice and Involvement in the Education of Sudanese Unaccompanied Minors in *Black Education Choice* volume; Johnson, D.J. (2012) *What's Not in the Box*?: *Historical and Population Change as Contextual Features in the Study of Race-Based Development of Children*, *Racial Stereotyping and Child Development*; and Kickett-Tucker, C. and Johnson, D.J. (2004). Challenges in the Context of the Changing Roles of Nyoongah Women. *Family Focus On…International Perspectives*.

DeBrenna LaFa Agbényiga, Ph.D., LMSW, is Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Inclusion in the College of Social Science and Associate Professor in Human Development and Family Studies and in the School of Social Work at Michigan State University. Currently, her research looking at the international, social, and economic development spans across issues pertinent to access and sustainability that are linked to the rights of women and children that has been used to

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9,

inform policies. In particular, she has addressed issues of child labor, domestic violence, water rights, health disparities, access to education, and economic capacity building throughout West Africa and parts of Southern and Eastern Africa. She continues to explore these issues within an international context with migrant populations from Africa who recently resettled in the USA. She is also the coeditor, with Robert Ame and Nana Apt, of *Child Rights in Ghana*: *Reality or Rhetoric* (Lexington Books, 2011). Her recent journal articles focused on refugee resettlement, gendered immigration, child labor, global climate change linkages to economic stability and education, and organizational culture impact on effective service delivery. At the national level, she is a part of the Council on Social Work Education Governance as the Chair of the Council on External Relations and a member of the Commission on Global Social Work Education.

Robert K. Hitchcock is a Professor of Geography and Anthropology at Michigan State University. He has worked with San communities in Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe, and Zambia since 1975, and he serves on the board of the Kalahari Peoples Fund. He worked for the government of Botswana in the Ministry of Local Government and Lands (1977–1979) and Ministry of Agriculture (1980–1982) and has also served as a consultant to the Department of Wildlife and National Parks in Botswana. He has also worked for the governments of Somalia, Swaziland, and Lesotho, as well as for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Bank. His books include *Kalahari Cattle Posts* (Government of Botswana, 1978), *Endangered Peoples of Africa and the Middle East*: *Struggles to Survive and Thrive* (coedited with Alan Osborn, Greenwood, 2002), and *Indigenous Peoples*' *Rights in Southern Africa* (coedited with Diana Vinding, International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2004). He is also the coeditor, with Kazunobu Ikeya, Megan Biesele, and Richard Lee, of *Updating the San*: *Image and Reality of an African People in the 21st Century*. Senri Ethnological Studies No. 70 (Osaka, Japan: National Museum of Ethology, 2006). He is the coauthor, with Megan Biesele, of the book *Ju/'hoan San since Independence*: *Development*, *Democracy*, *and Indigenous Voices in Namibia* (Berghahn Books, 2009).

Index

D.J. Johnson et al. (eds.), *Vulnerable Children: Global Challenges in Education, Health, Well-Being, and Child Rights*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-4614-6780-9,