Teachers' perceptions of learners who are street children: A South African case study

ⒾJacob Dladla and ⒾTeresa Auma Ogina
Department of Education Management and Policy Studies, Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria, South Africa
dladlajmj@gmail.com

Children living in the streets are a global phenomenon and the concept street children have multiple definitions. Yet little is known about what it means to be a street child attending school in South Africa. The focus of this paper is on how teachers conceptualise learners who are street children. Data was generated from interviewing 15 teachers from two primary schools and one secondary school with learners who are street children. The findings of the study show that teachers identify such learners by their physical appearance, their behaviour at school, the lack of care and supervision, and their portrayed living conditions. From the findings of this study, it seems that learners who are street children are conceptualised by the teachers as unable to "fit in and function" in the school environment since they cannot adjust to the norms and culture of the school. There is also need for surrogate parents to fill in the parental gap that poses challenges in the educational experiences of the learners. This creates a gap in the relationship between the learners and the teachers, which need to be addressed through policy, training and practice.

Keywords: concept; learners; schooling; social construction; social constructivist theory; South Africa street children; teachers

Introduction

There is growing literature that recognises the plight of street children across many disciplines and studies have been done globally on the conceptualisation of street children. In Ibadan, Nigeria, Owoaje, Adebiyi and Asuzu (2009) recognise street children as children who migrate to the street as a result of poverty and lack of parental care. A study done in South Africa by Makofane (2014) describes street children as resourceful social agents. Other studies in the sciences and health done in Eldoret, Kenya by Ayuku, Devries, Arap Mengech and Kaplan (2004) found that street children are resilient and can adapt to different situations. Sorber, Winston, Koech, Ayuku, Hu, Hogan and Braitstein (2014) also identify street children as children who need emotional and social support. In another study conducted in Canada, Karabanow (2008) characterises street children as children from dysfunctional families, who are abused, traumatised and exploited. In socio-economic studies, Conticini and Hulme (2006) report from a study on the conceptualisation of street children in Bangladesh that such children escape hostile home environments and adjust to coping mechanisms on the streets. A more recent study by Stephen and Udisi (2016) in Nigeria also report poverty and deprivation as a "push" factor and family relations as a "pull" factor among children living on the streets. All these studies show the different lenses used in exploring and deconstructing the concept street children. It seems that in some studies, disciplines and contexts, street children are perceived as vulnerable victims, while in other studies they are perceived as survivors.

The street children phenomenon has been explored across several disciplines and there are different meanings attached to it. Our concern is as to what is happening in the school regarding how such learners are identified and described by their teachers. Research has consistently shown that street children dwell on the streets and are street workers who earn an income and contribute to the economy (Stephen & Udisi, 2016; Stephenson, 2001). However, some of the street children inhabit the street and also attend school, although they lack adult supervision and other resources, which contribute to their dropout from school (Owoaje et al., 2009). Despite the inability of some street children to attend school, Malindi and Machenjedze (2012) have reported the advantages of school attendance by street children to include, among others, being optimistic about the future, change in social behaviour, the school providing a safe and secure environment, and the children developing resilience and basic skills. The importance of street children attending school is also highlighted by Ward and Seager (2010), who recommend, basing on their study, that ensuring that children stay in school is one of the measures that could reduce the risk of children taking up street life. Although it seems that school plays an important role in the life of street children, there is a lack of discourses on how teachers make sense of learners who are street children in terms of how they identify, describe and characterise them and the relationship with the learners.

Extensive research has shown that "street children" is a socially constructed concept, and is described in different ways by different social actors, depending on the context in which the phenomenon takes place (De Moura, 2002; Stephenson, 2001). Data from several studies suggest that the socio-economic and cultural contexts and the locality in which the street children live influence how people understand and deconstruct the concept (Owoaje et al., 2009; Stephen & Udisi, 2016). Owoaje et al. (2009) found that street children in a rural context are children who live with their parents and work on the street to earn a living, making the construction of the concept different from that in popular literature that depicts street children as children with no family ties. In the light of this emerging common perception of street children as a socially constructed concept, which is understood and described in different ways, we argue that the voices and opinions of teachers as social actors

who interact with learners who are street children in their classrooms and schools should be heard. De Moura (2002) argues that the way in which the concept street children is socially constructed influences perceptions about those to whom the term is applied, and gives direction to the interventions undertaken by various agencies to address the phenomenon. In the same line of argument, we present our assumption that teachers' explanation of how they understand learners who are street children may underlie how the teachers respond to the educational needs of such learners who attend their school.

This paper focuses one of the findings of a doctoral study that explored the management of the teaching and learning of street children in selected schools in Gauteng Province, South Africa. We discuss how teachers conceptualise learners whom they regard as street children. The paper begins by presenting a conversation on discussions of the understanding and description of the concept street children from different perspectives and disciplines. We explain the context of the study, which is followed by the research methodology. In this paper, we describe how teachers identify, describe and characterise learners who are street children based on the qualitative data generated from our interviews with the teachers. We conclude the paper by discussing the implications of how teachers conceptualise learners who are street children and we argue that it is important to establish how teachers conceptualise street children, because their understanding of such learners may influence how they respond to their needs at school.

The Concept Street Children

The street children phenomenon has been experienced across the world over the past decades and remains a reality in many developing countries, including South Africa. Even though there are no consistent statistical figures available in literature, the number of street children, as estimated by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation ([UNESCO], 2000), could be in excess of 150,000,000 worldwide. Although extensive research has been carried out on the phenomenon of street children, the number of street children who attend school is not clear and there is little knowledge of how teachers understand the concept street children and respond to the children's needs.

Data from several studies (Karabanow, 2008; Sorber et al., 2014; Stephen & Udisi, 2016) suggest that there are two emerging perspectives on the concept street children. We identified several lines of evidence from literature that portray street children as impoverished, vulnerable and dysfunctional children who are different from other children. One such definition of street children that

is commonly used in literature is from United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund ([UNICEF], 2000), which defines a street child as any boy or girl for whom the street has become their habitat and source of livelihood with insufficient support and supervision from adult caregivers. The lack of or insufficient support given to street children includes experiences of difficult circumstances at home, unemployment of parents or caregivers, alcoholism, violence, abuse and exploitation (Karabanow, 2008; Volpi, 2002). The inability of parents to provide emotional and financial support at home also drives children to seek social networks in the streets (Conticini & Hulme, 2006; Sorber et al., 2014). Apart from psycho-social factors, poverty and other economic reasons are often cited in literature as factors that "push" children to live on streets (Sorber et al., 2014; Stephen & Udisi, 2016). Prinsloo (2001) and Stephenson (2001) argue against these views, stating that the use of socio-economic factors to describe street children tends to further label, marginalise and stigmatise vulnerable children. We argue that stigmatisation and lack of understanding of the complexity of the street children phenolmenon by the teachers may have an influence on the management of the teaching and learning of such children.

Another emerging perspective on the concept street children recognises the potential of such children and the critical role they play in making meaning of their lives. While there are some published perspectives that define street children based on their vulnerability, others highlight the fact that street children are resilient and capable of adapting to street life (Ayuku et al., 2004). A study conducted by Stephenson (2001) on the homeless street children in Moscow shows how the children develop social skills and are resourceful social agents who are capable of generating social capital and developing social networks for survival. Such children seem independent and in control of their lives, despite the fact that they live in the streets. They are not lost or homeless children as portrayed in the literature, but have family ties and home life relationships, despite the fact that they spend most of their time on the street (Van Blerk, 2012). These findings present another view that conceptualises street children as resilient, optimistic and productive children.

Street Children and Schooling

The street children phenomenon is an old phenolmenon that has affected many African and European countries. Nonetheless, literature focuses mostly on the causes and consequences of the street children phenomenon and there is limited knowledge about the education of such children and their integration in schools (Le Roux, 1996). Based on a study done in major towns in Sierra Leone,

Cummings (2017) acknowledges that there is a gap in policies and a lack of response from the education authorities regarding the teaching and learning of street children. In developed countries like the United States, the education of street children has been central to the planning of education authorities and, as such, it is not just a socio-economic issue but also an educational concern (Cunningham, Harwood & Hall, 2010). Street children in South Africa are among the groups of children who are considered to be vulnerable, owing to the harsh living conditions they are exposed to and the parental care and supervision that they lack. Despite their being considered a vulnerable group, the circumstances of street children in South Africa and their access to education have not improved over the decades. Hansen (2012) reports that the Special Education policy that exists in South Africa may not be beneficial to street children, since White Paper 6 (Department of Education, 2001) does not offer a proper classification of street children mainly because street children may not have visible physical or mental disabilities. This means that educational issues such as teacher preparedness, curriculum design, the legislative and policy framework, and assessment practices have all not been aligned with the educational needs of street children (Engelbrecht, 2006; Pather & Nxumalo, 2013; Schuelka & Johnstone, 2012).

Similarly, Songca (2001) points out that, although section 29 (1) of the Constitution of South Africa (Republic of South Africa, 1996) affords all children the right to basic education, the negative perceptions associated with the street children phenomenon may have a negative influence on the management of the teaching and learning of such children. The perceptions of teachers about street children have created the impression that street children worldwide are not accepted as normal members of society based on their impoverished circumstances (Le Roux, 1996). Street children are identified in schools through their impoverished socio-economic status and deprivation, which are used as a basis to isolate them from other learners (Makoelle, 2012). The integration of street children in schools is, therefore, perceived as imposing additional demands on teachers and causing stress among learners who are not street children, which impacts negatively on their academic achievement (Engelbrecht, 2006). In this study we are of the opinion that teachers need to be able to identify the unique needs of the street children and to manage them to enable effective teaching and learning to take place. This study explored how teachers understand the concept street children and how they identify them. We asked the following research questions:

- How do teachers perceive street children?
- How do teachers identify learners who are street children?

Context of the Study

South Africa is an emerging economy and is regarded as a 'third world' country where poverty, urbanisation, the apartheid legacy, the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) pandemic, the migrant labour system are among the factors that have contributed towards dysfunctional families, and the rising trend in the street children phenomenon (Cummings, 2017). A large number of street children live on the streets of South Africa while others live in squatter camps, which are characterised by poor structures such as mud-and-cardboard dwellings roofed with plastic sheets or with sheets of corrugated iron placed over a stick frame and tied together with twine (Neuwirth, 2007). Such camps usually lack running water, sewers, sanitation or toilets. The lack of water and proper housing is reflected in the physical appearance of the street children who attend school because they cannot access water to prepare for school. The activities that street children engage in to survive, sometimes involving crime, form the basis for the negative perceptions about them. As a result, when they mount service delivery protests to demand some of their rights from authorities, the police subject them to beatings and shooting with rubber bullets (Neuwirth, 2007). Since South Africa is an emerging economy, the teaching and learning of all children ought to be part of the changing society, yet very little is currently known about how teachers perceive street children and how they respond to their needs (Makoelle, 2012). In this paper we argue that it is crucial to explore what teachers think about learners who are street children, how they identify them and how they manage their education.

Social Constructivist Theory

This study follows the social constructivism of Vygotsky. This school of thought assumes that knowledge is constructed through social and cultural interpersonal interactions (Vygotsky, 1978). Social constructivists believe that an individual makes sense of his or her experiences through interaction with the environment and other people. Knowledge of a phenomenon is then constructed through interaction with others. In the case of this study, such interaction is that which occurs between teachers, and learners who are street children. The most important elements and assumptions of social constructivist theory is that human beings can explain their experiences of the social world and through the use of language they can create knowledge (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2009). According to this theoretical framework, there is no absolute knowledge, but multiple realities, because

it is likely that two or more people may have a shared meaning or may interpret their experience of phenomenon in the same way. In this study, we believe that the teachers may perceive the learners who are street children in different ways compared to other social actors. The teachers can then use the meaning that they attach to their experiences with the learners in their schools to deconstruct the concept street children, ascribing a meaning that makes sense in the teaching and learning environment.

Method

This paper draws on the data produced for a study that explored how teachers identify and manage the needs of learners who are street children in their schools. We were interested in presenting the views of the teachers regarding what it means to be a street child and a learner. A qualitative research approach and an interpretive paradigm were employed. A case study research design was used, because it provides deeper understanding and unique examples of the experiences of the participants in real situations which enable readers to understand the phenomenon being studied and the research context (Merriam, 2009). We selected teachers from three schools that are classified as schools for Learners with Special Educational Needs (LSEN) in Gauteng, South Africa. Using the purposive sampling technique, we selected 15 participants, including six teachers (T1 to T6), four Heads of Departments (HoD1 to HoD4), three deputy principals (DP1 to DP3) and two principals (P1 and P2). Ethical issues of confidentiality, anonymity and voluntary participation were addressed in the informed consent and observed throughout the data collection and data processing processes. Semi-structured individual interviews were used to generate data over a period of three months. Interviews and follow-up interviews were conducted for each participant to enable the researchers to collect in-depth data. Each interview lasted for approximately 30 to 45 minutes. The responses of the participants were voice-recorded and later transcribed into notes, which were then sent back to the participants so that they could validate the authenticity of the transcripts. Thematic analysis procedures were used in the data analysis process. The process involved coding and categorising the concepts from the data, followed by identifying patterns in the data that suggested how the teachers conceptualised street children.

Results and Discussion

In this paper, we describe how teachers identify, describe and characterise learners who are street children based on the qualitative data generated from our interviews with the teachers. During the interviews the participants were asked to describe the features of the learners that they regard as street children in their schools. The responses of the participants were analysed and it was evident they constructed the concept of learners who are street children based on their physical appearance, their behavioural patterns, their care and supervision, as well as their perceived living conditions. All these aspects were interconnected and were used to identify and conceptualise learners who are street children in schools. These four sub-themes are described in the following paragraphs.

Physical Appearance of Learners who are Street Children

The participants regarded learners who are street children as children whose physical appearance is not appealing. The participants described the appearance of such learners as follows:

> *Learners who are street children are dirty and smelly [...] I teach and just go out at the end of the period* [T1].
> *They look anxious and isolate themselves more often. They are always bullying others. Some do not dress properly or wear school uniform* [HoD 4].

Another description of learners who are street children comprises a combination of different attributes. One participant reported that:

> *... sometimes I find it challenging to conceptualise learners who are street children. They don't complete schoolwork, have learning difficulties, do not adjust easily to classroom rules, they are ashamed of themselves, dirty, poor communication skills, poor organisation of schoolwork, look physically unhealthy, and sometimes mentally and physically underdeveloped.* [DP 3]

The findings of this theme suggest that the participants used physical appearance as a point of reference in identifying and differentiating learners who are street children from other learners. Street children's physical appearance was observed as a symbol of poverty and exposure to harsh conditions, which are a common feature in literature that conceptualises street children as vulnerable and needy children deprived of basic needs (Stephen & Udisi, 2016). In this study, teachers also associated the physical appearance of street children with lower cognitive levels and cognitive development, physical ill-health, and malnourishment. Such analysis of the street children by their teachers may lead to a negative attitude towards such children and a poor response to their academic needs. This finding is in line with Pather and Nxumalo's (2013) argument that the models for the inclusion of street children have not been able to address the range of issues that affect such children and, as such, they are easily identifiable by their poor living conditions, which in the case of this study, differentiate and alienate them from other learners.

Behavioural Patterns of Learners who are Street Children

In this study, the participants talk about identifying learners who are street children, based on their behaviour at school. The conduct of such learners was perceived negatively in terms of not abiding by school rules, being disruptive in class and poor academic performance. The behaviour of street children was not aligned with the school rules, which were laid out in the learners' code of conduct and classroom rules. The comments below illustrate these findings:

> *My description of learners who are street children is that they are destructive in class, hardly pay attention, always have a problem that needs* [the] *attention of the teacher or the principal* [T2].
> *Learners who are street children are bullies, always tired and very short-tempered, and that is what makes teaching them very difficult.* [As] *a teacher you need to know very well how to deal with those situations* [P2].

Other descriptions of the behaviour of learners who are street children are linked to criminal activities. The participants stated:

> *Street children normally are those who are awaiting trial and then you have those that are here because they were placed for safety reasons either by courts or by social workers. In that you can also tell that homeless children are often not in conflict with the law whereas street children are in conflict with the law.* [T6]
> *Most of the street children are either traumatised emotionally or physically. Many are affected or involved in drug abuse. They do not have a place to stay. And they have violent behaviour.* [HoD 3]

It seems that from the teachers' experience of the behaviour of learners who are street children, they conceptualise them as non-conformists in a school setting. They are described as troubled children, who struggle to establish interpersonal relationships with their peers, and children who are sometimes involved in anti-social behaviour and criminal activities, which make it difficult for them to adjust to school culture and norms. In the literature, Le Roux (1996) describes the diversity in the behavioural patterns among street children as massive, which has made it difficult for researchers to determine with precision how street children behave in different settings. In this study, it appears that learners who are street children struggle to meet the expectations of being a learner in school. On the basis of this finding, we are of the opinion that street children may be able to adjust to a harsh street environment and develop resilience and networks in the streets (Ayuku et al., 2004; Stephenson, 2001), but it seems that the school environment is an alien space, in which they struggle to adjust and fit in.

Supervision and Care of Learners who are Street Children

Another way in which the participants conceptualised learners who are street children was through the care and supervision that the street children were receiving or were not receiving. In this regard, the participants stated:

> *In our case, the street children are in need of care, and those that are in conflict with the law for which there is no responsible parent or guardian to provide a supervisory role or to take custody of the child while the trial is before the courts.* [T5]
> *They are also street children because they don't have parents who really care or have means to look after them* [...] *Yes they are squatter camp children who are staying with their parents, who are sometimes sex workers and cannot take care of them.* [DP1]
> *Supervision and care of street children makes teaching and learning very difficult because you expect the parent to supervise the child at home and ensure that the schoolwork gets priority.* [T3]

The participants' conception of street children based on their social behaviour speaks to the findings of Karabanow (2008), who describes street life as being characterised by physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse, violence and substance abuse, which tend to traumatise street children and change their behaviour once they are integrated in schools. The lack of parental care and supervision is one of the factors that expose children to the street and put them at risk of unacceptable social behaviour (Conticini & Hulme, 2006; Owoaje et al., 2009). The gap in the care and supervision of street children is also a striking identity feature whenever street children are integrated in schools. Teachers perceived care and supervision as conditions that affect such learners' social life and education. It seems that the teachers perceived learners who are street children as children in need of emotional and social support (Sorber et al., 2014). In this study, the teachers constructed learners who are street children as children who are experiencing the absence of or a gap in parental care and the need for surrogate parents to fulfil their psycho-social and educational needs. Lloyd (2008) argues that in the case of marginalised groups of children, the two conditions – care and supervision – often serve as barriers created by social deprivation. These barriers limit the extent to which marginalised groups of children can participate in school activities (Lloyd, 2008). In South Africa, the education policy, which is assumed to be inclusive, seems to be silent on the care and supervision gap experienced by vulnerable children and, in the case of this paper, street children. Teachers of street children in developing countries, including South Africa, are expected to integrate such children in their classes without providing much-needed support in terms of the guidelines, know-how and skills needed to fulfil their needs.

Poor Living Conditions

Teachers identified homelessness and poor living conditions as unique characteristics that define learners who are street children. The following

opinions of the participants encapsulate the sig-
nificance of homelessness and poor living con-
ditions to which such learners are exposed:

> Street children include children who are not
> staying with their parents and who are housed at
> informal settlements without proper adult
> supervision. Street children depend on social
> welfare and income they get from their own means.
> [T3]
>
> Street children are mainly characterised by not
> staying with biological parents and are in the care
> of foster parents but you still find those that are not
> in foster care and prefer to live in groups. [T4]
>
> Street children are learners who are not living with
> their parents or family members at their homes.
> These learners are staying in places of safety
> assigned to them by the social workers and courts
> … street children would see streets as a place
> where they can make a living instead of staying
> with friends and relatives. [T6]
>
> Street children are immigrant learners, learners
> coming from squatter camps, and learners who are
> coming from the child-headed families and those
> who are not affording [a] better life […] Yes, I can
> say that there is no one but many boys who are
> staying under the bridge and that they have been
> there for many years. These are the learners who,
> for one reason or the other, stay in shelters
> managed by non-governmental organisations
> [NGOs], but later they find their relatives and then
> they move to stay with them. [DP1]

The poor living conditions to which street children
are exposed are evident in the identification of
street children in schools and are a distinctive
feature of street children globally (Owoaje et al.,
2009; Stephen & Udisi, 2016). The above quo-
tations seem to conceptualise "a home" not just as a
place or shelter but as a place where there is
parental care and support, which often lead to
attachment. It means that the definition of a home
is incomplete without a sense of attachment as a
result of parental care and support. Learners living
in other forms of shelter in the absence of parental
care are regarded as learners who are street children
in this study.

Conclusion and Implications
This study set out to explore how teachers
conceptualise learners who are street children.
Although extensive research has been carried out
on street children and multiple definitions of the
concept street children exist, there is a knowledge
gap regarding what teachers think about learners in
their schools who live on the streets. We argue that
it is important to establish how teachers con-
ceptualise, identify and describe street children
because their understanding of such learners
provides new insights into the literature on street
children from an educational perspective. This
study has shown that teachers perceive learners
who are street children as victims of socio-
economic hardships as evidenced by their physical
appearance. The physical appearance seems to
evoke negative responses and differentiate the
learners who are street children from other learners.
The study also found that these learners were
described as children whose living conditions are
poor, and who lack emotional support, care and
supervision. Another significant finding that
emerged from this study is that the learners'
behaviour was alleged to be disruptive and not
conforming with school rules and expectations.
While learners who are not street children may also
exhibit undisciplined behaviour, the lack of care
and supervision and the perilous street life
experienced by street children were considered to
be causes of such misconduct. These findings
suggest that street children belong to a certain
social group that the teachers do not fully
understand. It is possible that this is why the
teachers appear to perceive such learners as
"misfits" and a threat to the norms of the school.

Despite the existence of a feeling of empathy
and sympathy for the street children, there was also
a feeling that the teachers lacked the skills and did
not provide the support needed to understand the
educational needs of learners who are street
children. It looks like the teachers based their
description of learners who are street children on
their physical appearance whereas such learners
could possess hidden positive attributes that the
teachers are not aware of and that are not easily
identified through observation. For example, there
is literature that discusses the positive abilities of
the street children, including resilience,
adaptability, networking and playing the role of
active social agents (Ayuku et al., 2004;
Stephenson, 2001). A possible explanation for the
negative description of learners who are street
children could be the gap in the relationship
between the learners and the teachers caused by a
lack of policy and practical measures to be taken in
supporting the education of such learners. Another
possible reason for the gap could be the stereotype
and stigma attached to street children (Makofane,
2014).

This paper contributes to the existing
literature on street children by providing insights
into how teachers conceptualise learners who are
street children in their schools. The findings of this
study show that such learners are conceptualised as
not being able to "fit in and function" in a school
context where there are structured social norms and
a culture different from that of street life. The
findings reported here also shed new light on the
possible types of care and support needed by street
children, especially the availability of surrogate
parents to fill in the parental gap, which poses
challenges in the educational experiences of
learners who are street children. From the
perceptions of the teachers in this study, it seems
that the teaching strategies used in their schools
were not sufficiently flexible to accommodate

street children, despite the fact that the teachers are aware of the challenges the learners experience, and how this influences their learning abilities. The teachers also seemed to have developed negative attitude about the academic potential of street children, and such perceptions could discourage good academic performance of the learners. Furthermore, the teachers who applied strict disciplinary measures based on their perception of the learners as children who are ill-disciplined and lack respect for authority could further discourage the learners from attending school and increase the dropout rate.

We conclude the paper by discussing the implications of how teachers conceptualise learners who are street children. A practical implication from this study is that the appearance of street children, which is one of the aspects of the conceptualisation of such learners, may be used positively as an identifying factor for intervention and providing assistance to such learners, instead of as a means to label and stigmatise them. Another important practical implication is that the conception of street children as learners who are attention-seeking, rowdy, disruptive and unco-operative shows that teachers are observant and such observation skills can be used to psycho-analyse the needs of such children and provide the required psychological and social support. This would serve a more worthwhile purpose than their use as a tool to create a gap in the relationship between the learners and the teachers or other learners. One policy implication is to have guide-lines as to how such learners can be accommodated in a school setting so as to enable them to benefit from education to the extent that other children do.

Note
i. Published under a Creative Commons Attribution Licence.

References

Ayuku DO, Devries MW, Arap Mengech HNK & Kaplan CD 2004. Temperament characteristics of street and non-street children in Eldoret, Kenya. *African Health Sciences*, 4(1):24–30. Available at https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ahs/article/view/6856/13458. Accessed 3 November 2018.

Conticini A & Hulme D 2006. *Escaping violence, seeking freedom: Why children in Bangladesh migrate to the street* (PRCPB Working Paper No. 10). Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a08c2ded915d622c001193/wp10fulltext.pdf. Accessed 3 November 2018.

Cummings PA 2017. Factors related to the street children phenomenon in major towns in Sierra Leone: A comparative study of the city's street children and children in normal family homes. PhD thesis. Sierra Leaone: St Clements University.

Cunningham M, Harwood R & Hall S 2010. *Residential instability and the McKinney-Vento homeless children and education program: What we know,*

plus gaps in research. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute. Available at https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED510555.pdf. Accessed 23 December 2015.

De Moura SL 2002. The social construction of street children: Configuration and implications. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 32(3):353–367. https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/32.3.353

Department of Education 2001. *Education White Paper 6: Special needs education. Building an inclusive education and training system*. Pretoria, South Africa: Author. Available at https://wcedonline.westerncape.gov.za/Specialised-ed/documents/WP6.pdf. Accessed 31 December 2018.

Engelbrecht P 2006. The implementation of inclusive education in South Africa after ten years of democracy. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, 21:253. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03173414

Hansen JH 2012. Limits to inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 16(1):89–98. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603111003671632

Karabanow J 2008. Getting off the street: Exploring the processes of young people's street exits. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 51(6):772–788. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0002764207311987

Leeds-Hurwitz W 2009. Social construction of reality. In S Littlejohn & K Foss (eds). *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412959384.n344

Le Roux J 1996. Street children in South Africa: Findings from interviews on the background of street children in Pretoria, South Africa. *Adolescence*, 31(122):423–431.

Lloyd C 2008. Removing barriers to achievement: A strategy for inclusion or exclusion? *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 12(2):221–236. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603110600871413

Makoelle TM 2012. The state of inclusive pedagogy in South Africa: A literature review. *Journal of Sociology and Social Anthropology*, 3(2):93–102. https://doi.org/10.1080/09766634.2012.11885569

Makofane M 2014. A conceptual analysis of the label "street children": Challenges for the helping professions. *Social Work*, 50(1):134–146. https://doi.org/10.15270/50-1-20

Malindi MJ & MacHenjedze N 2012. The role of school engagement in strengthening resilience among male street children. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 42(1):71–81. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F008124631204200108

Merriam SB 2009. *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.

Neuwirth R 2007. Squatters and the cities of tomorrow. *City*, 11(1):71–80. https://doi.org/10.1080/13604810701200797

Owoaje ET, Adebiyi AO & Asuzu MC 2009. Socio-demographic characteristics of street children in rural communities undergoing urbanization. *Annals of Ibadan Postgraduate Medicine*, 7(1):10–15. https://doi.org/10.4314/aipm.v7i1.64055

Pather S & Nxumalo CP 2013. Challenging understandings of inclusive education policy development in Southern Africa through comparative reflection. *International Journal of*

Inclusive Education, 17(4):420–434. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2011.651821

Prinsloo E 2001. Working towards inclusive education in South Africa classrooms. *South African Journal of Education*, 21(4):344–348. Available at https://www.ajol.info/index.php/saje/article/viewFile/24927/20539. Accessed 27 October 2018.

Republic of South Africa 1996. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act No. 108 of 1996). *Government Gazette*, 378(17678).

Schuelka M & Johnstone CJ 2012. Global trends in meeting the educational rights of children with disabilities: From international institutions to local responses. *Reconsidering Development*, 2(2). Available at https://pubs.lib.umn.edu/index.php/reconsidering/article/view/573/567. Accessed 27 October 2018.

Songca R 2011. Evaluation of children's rights in South African law: The dawn of an emerging approach to children's rights? *Comparative and International Law Journal of Southern Africa*, 44(3):340–359.

Sorber R, Winston S, Koech J, Ayuku D, Hu L, Hogan J & Braitstein P 2014. Social and economic characteristics of street youth by gender and level of street involvement in Eldoret, Kenya. *PLOS ONE*, 9(5):e97587. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0097587

Stephen EN & Udisi L 2016. Street children in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria: Br beyond economic reason. *Cross-Cultural Communication*, 12(10):19–28. https://doi.org/10.3968/8926

Stephenson S 2001. Street children in Moscow: Using and creating social capital. *The Sociological Review*, 49(4):530–547. https://doi.org/10.1111%2F1467-954X.00346

UNESCO 2000. *The Dakar framework for action. Education for all: Meeting our collective commitments*. Paris, France: Author. Available at http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001211/121147e.pdf. Accessed 6 November 2018.

UNICEF 2000. *Children working on the streets of Ethiopia* (A UNICEF report). Available at https://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/ETH_2000_800.pdf. Accessed 16 September 2016.

Van Blerk L 2012. Berg-en-see street boys: Merging street and family relations in Cape Town, South Africa. *Children's Geographies*, 10(3):321–336. https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2012.693381

Volpi E 2002. *Street children: Promising practices and approaches* (WBI Working Papers 26388). Washington, DC: The World Bank. Available at http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/344301468763803523/pdf/263880WBI0Street0children.pdf. Accessed 18 September 2017.

Vygotsky LS 1978. *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Ward CL & Seager JR 2010. South African street children: A survey and recommendations for services. *Development Southern Africa*, 27(1):85–100. https://doi.org/10.1080/03768350903519374