

A SOCIOLOGICAL PROFILE OF STREET CHILDREN IN ANKARA

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ABSTRACT

A SOCIOLOGICAL PROFILE OF STREET CHILDREN IN ANKARA

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This thesis draws a profile of children who work/ live on the streets of Ankara relying on children's life histories and social workers' opinions about the situation in the context of Social Exclusion. Social is a new concept, was first used in 1960's around Europe in order to define the groups, who are faced to material and socio-cultural deprivation due to the difficulties experienced by the Welfare States. This study assumes that street children can be explained in the context of social exclusion. Employing qualitative methods, this study main aim of this study is to understand the reasons for children to start working on street. After the introductory chapter, Chapter II provides a theoretical framework, in which street children and the concept of social exclusion are examined. Chapter III focuses on the findings from the life histories of children who work/live on streets of Ankara. Chapter IV contains the information about the interviews with social workers and a comparison part, in which two types of information, is analyzed in the context of Social Exclusion.

Keywords: Street Children, Street life, Working Children, Children Live on Street, Social Exclusion, Social Worker, Ankara, Turkey

ÖZ

SOKAK ÇOCUKLARI HAKKINDA SOSYOLOJİK GERÇEKLER VE ÇÖZÜM ÖNERİLERİ

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Yüksek Lisans, Sosyoloji Bölümü

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Bu çalışma, Ankara’da sokakta çalışan veya yaşayan çocukların bir profilini çizilebilmek amacıyla düzenlenmiştir. Bu kapsamda, çocukların hayat hikayeleri ve Sosyal Hizmet Uzmanları ile yapılan derinlemesine mülakatlardan faydalanılarak, sokak çocukları Sosyal Dışlanma Kavramı çerçevesinde ele alınmıştır. Sosyal Dışlanma 1960’lı yıllar Avrupa’sında, materyal ve sosyo-kültürel anlamda yoksun grupları tanımlamak için ortaya atılmıştır. Bu çalışma, niteliksel araştırma metotlarını kullanarak çocukları sokakta yaşamaya ve çalışmaya iten nedenlerin Sosyal Dışlanma ile açıklanabileceği varsayımı ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Giriş bölümünün ardından, İkinci Bölüm Sosyal Dışlanma ile ilgili kuramsal çerçeveyi çizmekte. Üçüncü Bölüm, Sokakta yaşayan ve çalışan çocukların hayat hikayelerine odaklanırken, dördüncü bölüm sosyal hizmet uzmanları ile yapılan derinlemesine mülakatlardan elde edilen bilgileri sunduktan sonra bu bilgileri hayat hikayeleriyle karşılaştırarak, genel olarak çocukların sokakta bulunma ve çalışma nedenlerini Sosyal Dışlanma çerçevesinden anlamaya çalışmakta.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sokak Çocukları, Sokakta Yaşam, Çalışan Çocuklar, Sokakta Yaşayan Çocuklar, Sosyal Dışlanma, Sosyal Hizmet Uzmanı, Ankara, Türkiye

To My Family

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION, METHOD OF THE STUDY AND STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

1.1 Introduction

The idea that growing economic development would bring better life chances and emancipation does not collide with today's reality. Promising ideas of 19th century could not hold the commitments. Increasing industrialization, uncontrollable growth of free market, exceeding private property of some parties, seems to be ally with poverty, unemployment, uneducatedness, and exploitation of some others. The assumption of seeing economic development as a solution for the problem of inequality turned to become an assumption of accepting the never-ending existence of inequalities and trying to alleviate them. (Jeffrey Sachs, 2000) "A more realistic projection of today's politics; economic exclusion with minimal welfare by formal as well as informal methods of isolating, the excluded from the rest of the society." (Mingione, E.,1996)

According to 2003 Human Development Report, some 54 countries are poorer now than in 1990. In 21 countries a larger proportion of people are going hungry. In 14 countries more children are dying before age five. (UNDP, 2003:34) In addition, inequality across the world's people is also growing. The inequality in distribution of income across citizens of the world, regardless of national borders, increased between 1987 and 1998. (UNDP, 2003:39)

On the basis of these, it can be claimed that some groups cannot benefit from the previously mentioned developments due to the unequal adaptation of countries to economic development. Children are one of those disadvantageous groups. Among

children, the ones who work or live on street are one of the outcomes of this unequal adoption.

According to 2000 Human Development Report, worldwide, there are about 50 million children live or work on street; nearly half of this figure lives in Latin America. (UNDP, 2000: 4) It is estimated that, in the USA and Canada there are almost 2 million street children. In UK there are 98000 reported incidents of young people under 18 are gone missing, (Browne and Falshaw, 1997:242). Moreover, estimations show that there are 200.000 to 8 million street children in Brazil, 1.5 million in Argentina, and in Nepal there are 40.000 street children (Altanis and Goddard, 2003:301). In Mexico City, street children constitute 9 % of the whole population. In Columbia, children work in cemeteries, or they sell flowers, and clean car windows on streets. In Thailand, it is thought that 200.000 children are employed in prostitution. Those children are between 12-16 years old. (Polat, 2002)

The occurrence of street children in cities began as a result of growing urbanization and industrialization. (Atauz, 1990; Atauz, 1997; Acar, 2006; Gövercin, 2000; Yılmaz, 1998; Duyan, 2005; Konanç, 1992; Kulca, Korkmazlar-Oral, 2003; Ögel, Yücel, Aksoy, 2004) Although, child work has never been a new issue for societies, children who are simply sent to street by their parents were new. It has been known that children would work, usually alongside with their parents, in the fields, in workshops, or in home. (Bulutay, 1995:3) However, street children are different from other children who try to contribute in family income. In fact, the phenomenon of street children should be considered not only in terms of informal child labor, exclusion of children from social institutions, but also it should be examined as a result of neglect, abuse and exploitation of children by the families. (Altıntaş, 2003:13)

Neither the concept of street children is peculiar to one country, nor can it be explained by only one reason. Referring to the various researches from all around the world, the crude reasons for children to live or spend time on streets is said to be related to economic problems, rapid urbanization in a country, problems related to family, child abuse or neglect in the family, unemployment, and migration. (ILO, 1998; Atauz, 1990; Atauz, 1997; Acar, 2006; Gövercin, 2000; Yılmaz, 1998; Duyan,

2005; Konanç, 1992; Kulca, Korkmazlar-Oral, 2003; Ögel, Yücel, Aksoy, 2004) Moreover, children's being on the street can not simply be explained by looking at major or minor inconsistencies in a country, rather it is the articulation of many contradictions in fields such as; economic, politic, and social. (Atauz, 1990; Gövercin, 2000; Yılmaz, 1998; Duyan, 2005; Ögel, Yücel, Aksoy, 2004; Altanis, Goddard, 2003; le Roux, Smith, 1998; Kidd, 2003; Brink, 2001) For instance; according to the studies on the issue, the phenomenon of street children is an urban theme. It is argued to be the product of rapid urbanization and migration from rural areas to cities for the case of developing countries. As for developed countries, urban corruption, unemployment, dissolution of close family ties, and poverty is said to be the source. (le Roux, Smith, 1998; Earls, Carlson, 1999; Akşit, Karancı, Hoşgör, 2001; Ataöv, Haider, 2006)

This study was conducted to figure out a social profile of street children in Ankara, especially the reasons behind their working/living on street by using children's own ideas about themselves. It was also important to learn the view of social workers about street children and current situation in institutional help, so that a picture could be drawn about street children in Ankara by comparing two opinions. In order to realize this aim, qualitative research methods were used. Life-story analysis was conducted among child respondents and in-depth interviews with social workers.

1.2 Method of the Thesis

From the beginning of this research idea, it was thought that life-story analysis instead of surveys among street children is crucial. It is because of the fact that, life-story method is flexible; it is easy to probe for more specific answers, and it gives the opportunity to repeat the question in order to get rid of misunderstandings. Another reason is that the interviewer has the chance to observe nonverbal behaviors. This is very crucial in the case of street children. Because, they may not be willing to talk at the beginning, but by observing the reactions, interviewer can change her/his attitude to get a better moderation. Thirdly, researcher can reach spontaneous answers, which could be more informative than thought answers (Bailey, 1987).

Thus, life-story analysis was used to get detailed and specific information about the factors children pointed out for their being on street. Their thoughts were obtained about “why they think they are on street”, “what do they think is the difference between a child work on street with the one live on street”, “how do they feel about their families”, “what risks do they face with on the street”. This method was seen to be efficacious to learn the real thoughts of street children about themselves, their families, helping institutions and working on street.

Life-stories were moderated through semi-structured questions, examining the factors that push children to work on street, family relations, economic situation of the families, street-life, and their expectations from the future. Questions were composed of close and open-ended questions. Close-ended questions were designed to figure out the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Therefore, participant’s age, place of birth and current place of living, mother and father’s education, employment status, and participant’s education was asked by using close-ended questions. On the other hand, apart from demographic information, financial situation of the family, reasons to live or work on street, issues with family members or family itself, street-life, dangers of street, process of getting involved with institutional help and expectations were asked through open ended questions. Respondents were expected to tell their own stories through their own definitions. Thus, respondents themselves manipulated the interviews.

From the beginning of the research idea, it was decided to use a small sample of 15 respondents so that children’s life stories could be examined in detail. Therefore, first respondent was reached with the help of Ulus Child and Youth Center; other respondents were contacted through snowball sampling method. Snowball sampling method is intentionally preferred, since street children were mobile during the day and it was difficult to find them in one single place.

Besides life-story analysis, in-depth interviews were conducted among 6 social workers who work in Ulus Child and Youth Center, in Ulus Child Observatory (ÇETEM) and in Behice Eren Dormitory. These interviews were also moderated with semi-structured questions about “what do social workers think the reasons behind child workers on street are”, “why do some children live on street”, “do they

think the institutional help is efficient and enough”. No question was asked about demographic features; rather respondents were expected to tell their professional experiences and ideas about street children.

In order to conduct this research, official permission was needed from the Institution of Social Services and Child Protection (SHÇEK). Application process took approximately two months, and the research started in September 2007. Interviews took place in Ulus Child and Youth Center, in Ulus Observatory (ÇETEM), which is another center, located in İsmetpaşa neighborhood of Ankara, and in Behice Eren Youth Dormitory, another center works under the title of SHÇEK. Those interviews were realized due to the helpfulness of each center, and through informal social networks among child respondents, we could reach children living without family contact in Kızılay and in Ankara Bus Terminal.

Ulus Child and Youth Center has been established in 1997. In September 2007, 5 social workers and 1 psychologist were working in the center. Social workers also constitute a field team, whose function is to point out street children while working on street and persuade their families for registration.

Beginning from the foundation, 3000 children were registered. In 2007, center was serving to 900 children from ages 7-18. Registered children were mostly street workers; they sell handkerchief, water, and bandages around Ulus Square. Those children were not necessarily street workers of present time; they might be quitted working on street. The main task of Ulus Child and Youth Center is to find out street children around Ulus, contacting their families, and get their records for the center. Center contacts children’ families and persuade them not to send the children to work on street. If the family is in a financial crisis, temporary monetary help is provided by the center. The respondents call this payment “salary”, and it is approximately 300 YTL ¹. Later, center tries to advance mother’s status by sending them to primary school and find jobs to fathers. In addition, if families do not have enough financial resources to send their children to school, center helps them to

¹ The monetary aid provided by SHÇEK is temporary and it is approximately 175 EURO for every three month.

realize this aim. After and during these interventions, children began to be controlled by social workers until the age of 18.

Ulus Child and Youth Center provided the contact information for 1 respondent. Then with the help of this participant, some of other interviews were realized in another institution in İsmetpaşa Neighborhood, where registered street children were mostly living.

Second, Ulus Child Observatory, (ÇETEM) is another institution works with Ulus Child and Youth Center. ÇETEM is located in a İsmetpaşa neighborhood, which is constituted of “gecekondu” houses, and situated close to Ankara Castle. In the Observatory, there were 2 social workers. During the interviews in İsmetpaşa, one room was assigned for our study to conduct the interviews. 9 interviews with street children and 1 with social workers conducted in ÇETEM. The rest of the sample was reached from Kızılay, and Ankara Bus Terminal (AŞTİ).

Thirdly, Behice Eren Youth Dormitory in Kızılay was the third place to conduct interviews with 3 social workers. After getting information from Ulus Child and Youth Center and ÇETEM, the research continued among social workers in Behice Eren, since the dormitory hosted street children in the past.

As it was mentioned above, the taken permission to make research was valid only for Ulus Child and Youth Center. Therefore, interviews started in Ulus and continued in regard to the directions of social workers in the first two centers, namely; Ulus Child and Youth Center and Ulus Child Observatory. Finally, 3 interviews conducted in Behice Eren Child Dormitory with social workers.

As for the limitations of methodology, sampling method might contain some disadvantages. In this study, it was disadvantageous to talk to children from the same neighborhood, because, they became pretty much accustomed to questions in time. It seemed that they talked about the general framework of the study within their peer group and some respondents told very similar stories on some points.

According to UNICEF people who are between the ages of 3-18 are considered to be children. In addition, UNICEF provides a commonly used definition in 1986, which examines street children in 3 groups in regard to the frequency of their seeing their family. (UNICEF, 1986:13-15).

1. Children who have continuous family contact: Those children are coming from families with poor life standards. They work or hang around on street during daytime and go back home during the night. Those children still have the protection and guidance from their family. Children in this group are called “children-at-high-risk”.
2. Children with occasional family contact: Those children have far relations with their family but still they do not leave home for a long time. Children in this group are called “children-in-the-streets”. There are 2 subcategories for this group. First, the ones who live in big cities far away from their origin city and they send money to home. Second, children whose relation with family is getting blurred.
3. Children without regular family contact: Children who are coming from the poorest part of the society and they have no relation with their family. They spend the whole day on the streets. Those children are called “children-of-the-streets”.

In this research, the sample was constituted of 15 children from the age group of 11-16. Among those, 8 children who live with their family and 6 children who live on streets, 1 child does not have a certain status, and she was sent to a dormitory of SHÇEK by public prosecution services. Therefore, according to UNICEF’s definition, this sample consisted of children with family contact and children without regular family contact.

On the basis of the literature review, migration, economic problems, unemployment of parents, low education among parents, emotional, physical abuse and neglect were reported to be the main factors for the occurrence of street children. Thus, our hypotheses for this study are;

Migration can be one of the possible reasons of children’s work/live on street,

Parents of street children might have low education status,
Parents' unemployment may be influential in street work of children,
It is possible that there is income efficiency and economic problems in the family,
Children may be subjected to emotional, physical abuse and neglect,
There may be children, who do not have any relation with any institution of SHÇEK.

As for street-life experiences for street children, this study hypothesizes that;
Smoking and thinner sniffing may be common among street children,
They may engage in illegal activities,
Street children may also live and work in peer groups on streets.

1.3 Structure of the Thesis

This study starts with a theoretical framework on street children and *Social Exclusion*. It is suggested that the concept of *Social Exclusion* might be effective in explaining the feelings of thoughts of street children about themselves. Therefore, firstly definitions about street children are discussed. Different definitions, gives different clues about the nature of street children and the way are excluded. Secondly, *Social Exclusion* and its nature are discussed in accordance with the weakening of welfare states in Europe. In addition, the evolution of the concept, indicators of social exclusion are examined. Within the framework of *Social Exclusion*, street children are argued to be one of the disadvantageous groups, and lastly, a model of characteristics for the measurement of *Social Exclusion* is introduced. (Jehoel-Gijsbers, 2004) In addition, the situation of street children in Turkey is given in regard to a literature review of some researches in Turkey. Finally, the chapter is elaborated with brief information about support services towards street children in Turkey.

Chapter III is based on findings from the life histories of child respondents. Findings are examined under three titles, which are separately discussed for three groups of participants, namely; children who live with family and work on the street, children who live and work on the street and social workers. Firstly, the reasons for children to begin working on street are discussed with each group. It is important to note that children start working on street and then they might decide to live on street

depending on their experiences within family. Second, street-life experiences are analyzed. Different stories from children respondents and opinions of social workers are provided in this section. Finally, future expectations of children are paid attention. It is crucial to remind that findings from this chapter were totally based on the opinions of respondents about themselves and about each other, as they define each other as distinct.

Chapter IV focuses on comparison of the information gathered from children who live/work on street and social workers. Findings from the life histories of children and opinions of social workers are compared, and street children are tried to be located in the context of *Social Exclusion*. Social workers commented on the current situation of street children in Turkey and they made suggestions for improvement. In the summary chapter of this study, the significant findings of this study are discussed in regard to the concept of *Social Exclusion*.

CHAPTER 2

STREET CHILDREN IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

2.1 Definition of Street Children

A definition for the term “street children” is an ongoing debate among scholars, researchers and international organizations. In some countries, this concept refers to children who commit crime, run away from home, dropped out of school, abandoned by their family, and to the ones who work on the street. Yet, while conceptualizing a definition, it is crucial to pay attention to particular meanings and give importance to differences among countries. Because, those very definitions become generalizations and they even diffuse in the daily usage of the term, which would be influential in stigmatization of the children and in political interventions (Browne and Flashaw, 1997:241). Besides, it is necessary to categorize the issue in order to make research. Some examples of commonly used definitions are shown as such.

According to United Nations, Street child is a boy or a girl... for whom the street has become his or her abode and/or source of livelihood; and who is inadequately protected, supervised, or directed by responsible adults (United Nations in ICCB, 1985, in Altanis and Goddard, 2003:300).

For Council of Europe, Street children are children under 18, who for longer or shorter periods, live in a street milieu. They are children who live wandering from place to place and who have their peer groups.

...Most significantly, they have few or no contact with those adults, parents, school, child welfare institutions, social services, with a duty towards them.” (1994 in Altanis and Goddard, 2003:300). In addition, as it was mentioned before, UNICEF provides another categorization for defining street children in regard to frequency of seeing the family. (UNICEF, 1986:13-15).

Street children are urban children in distress” (Barette, 1995, in Brick, 2001:80)

Street children are those for whom the street more than their family has become their real home, a situation in which there is no protection, supervision, or direction from responsible adults.(Ennew, 1994:15)

The term street youth, or street children...conceals enormous variation in the experiences of youngsters, who share the common condition of being “out of place” in street environments, spending their lives largely outside the spheres typically considered appropriate for children, such as home, school, and recreational settings. (Rafaelli&Larson, 1991:1, in Panter-Brick, 2002:149)

Apart from commonly used definitions, some countries have peculiar ways to appellate the phenomenon, which give clues about the country and the way they approach street children. For instance, in the UK and the USA, street children are defined as “runaways”, who leave home without permission and stay away during the night (Altanis and Goddard, 2003). In Columbia they are called “gamin” (urchin) and “chinchas” (bed bugs), in Brazil; “resistoleros” (little rebels), in Italy “bui doi” (dust Children), in Vietnam; “saligoman” (nasty kids”, in Rwanda “moustiques” (mosquitoes) and “mala pipe” (pipe sleepers) in South Africa (Barrette, 1995:7, in Brink, 2001).

Similarly in Turkey, from the time street children appeared in 1940’s, and since they settled under the Galata Bridge in İstanbul, they are called “children under the bridge” (Uluğtekin, 1997:113-114).

Street children are thought to appear because of economic and political inconsistency; thus, especially middle-income countries like Brazil, Mexico and East European countries are facing with this issue the most. To add, after the dissolution of USSR, political upheaval and economic instability in Eastern European countries brought negative consequences for children. For instance; in Bulgaria and in Romania, street children occurred in urban centers. (Govercin, 2000; Dikici-Bilgin, 2006)

On the other hand, it should be noted that street children are a common issue for both developed and developing countries. It is also argued that nature of street children experiences in the USA is different from Brazil. Ethiopian street children

are argued to be different from the Brazilian, not in terms of age and gender may be, but forms of attitudes and activities on street (Altanis and Goddard, 2003:301).

2.2 Social Exclusion

“Exclusion” (*les exclus*) as a term, was first used in France, in 1960’s as a form of social critique. Rene Lenoir in the Gaullist government in 1974 first spoke of the “excluded”, referring to “various classes of “misfits”, such as intellectually and physically disabled, suicidal persons, substance abusers, single parents, and various other marginal and asocial persons unprotected by social insurance.” (Ryan, 2007) The concept of exclusion first officially involved in a European Council Document in 1984:

The poor shall be taken to mean persons, families, and groups of persons whose resources (material, cultural and social) are so limited as to exclude them from the minimum acceptable way of life in the member state, in which they live. (Room 1990:40; Holland, 1993:122, in Ryan, 2007)

Later on, this conception turned to another idea of including those “misfits” back into society. Since that time, the term has been changed and gained a key role in social policy objectives of European Union. (Ryan, 2007:21)

The term social exclusion has become the subject of many theoretical discussions especially during 1990’s. As welfare states had to face with difficulties in providing egalitarian opportunities to each groups in society, they began to promote a more aggressive assault on income and resource differences. In order to define these differences on a large scale, social exclusion appeared as a new concept.

The concept and use of social exclusion seem as a matter of fact to have two different “families” of linked terms and phenomena, which keep surfacing in a quite unsolved alliance in social exclusion discourses. Poverty and material deprivation on the one hand, reviewed in the light of social rights thinking; social disintegration, marginality, un-belonging, up-rootedness and so forth on the other hand. Thus, on the one hand it points to the social conditions by which individuals and groups are included in or excluded from relevant resources and particularly social rights; on the other hand it points to processes by which individuals and social groups belong to, or are detached

from, relevant and meaningful social networks and share in the values and identifications within a given community.(Saraceno, 2002)

Saraceno noted one other aspect related to social exclusion. According to this assumption, 'the culture of poverty' has loomed in the 1960s, it offered a mirror in which the society could view itself, giving a rich account of the plight and experiences of those living at the margins and connecting material deprivation with self perception, identity and way of living. It also offered a theoretical rationale to blame the poor for their situation. In shifting the focus from the deprivation itself to its symbolic and behavioral consequences, it turned away from the excluding process (and actors) to self-exclusion. (Saraceno, 2002) On the other hand, social exclusion draws attention to the social as against individual mechanisms producing un-belonging – for instance discrimination in the labor market or in access to social security benefits or housing, or credit, or more generally in access to consumption (Atkinson 1998).

According to Paugam, (1996:7) social exclusion is the paradigm on the basis of which our society becomes aware of its own dysfunction and looks, possibly through confusion and urgency, for solutions. He also argues that

Defining the 'excluded' according to precise long-term criteria leads almost to a reification of new social groups or ones that are similar to the current categories and gives the impression that the study of poverty and exclusion is an exact science which can divorce them from their social and cultural context (Paugam, 1998:45).

Debates for ethnic, community, or group rights, point to a radically different path towards social integration, actually barring some individuals (e.g. women, the young) from obtaining individual rights may be, and often is, advocated as a means for preserving social (family, community, ethnic) integrity (on this, see. Sahgal and Yuval Davis 1992, Yuval Davis 1996, Okin 1989 in Saraceno, 2002:4)

For Esping-Andersen, socially excluded groups are more or less similar to casts; as they have ascribed socially defined roles, inherited unemployment, deficient income, and limited access to resources.

The less skilled, youth, and single parent families are becoming high risk groups almost everywhere. But one thing is momentary underprivileged, another lifelong entrapment. There are signs that some losers are forming into long-term socially excluded strata. (Esping- Andersen, 1999:10)

The term of social exclusion, starting from France, following the economic crisis in 1980's, became the key concept of European policy agenda. (Jehoel-Gijsbers and Vrooman, 2007:11) Thus member states drew a common definition for social exclusion within National Action Plans by defining the risk factors, which may lead to social exclusion. These are; "low income, unskilled labor, poor health, immigration, low education level, school dropout, gender inequality, discrimination and racism, old age, divorce, drug abuse, alcoholism and living in 'problem accumulation area'."(European Commission 2002:10) Yet, interventions of combating with social exclusion concentrated in economic terms, indicators of unemployment, and income has seen as the main risk factors which give rise to social exclusion.

2.3 The Nature of Social Exclusion

When the term social exclusion began to be discussed in the literature, it was also argued that people might be socially excluded even if they do not have low income or they are not unemployed. (Levitas 2006:155; Jehoel-Gijsbers and Vrooman, 2007:12) As a matter of fact, there have been contradictions in the literature in regard to the frame of the concept; some think that poverty and social exclusion go always hand in hand (Room, 1997:256-257; Saraceno, 2001:6), some others build the conceptualization upon Durkheim, and argue social exclusion is accepted to be a problem of social cohesion and solidarity, thus as a risk of alienation. (Jehoel-Gijsbers and Vrooman, 2007) Furthermore, social exclusion thought to be connected with social inequality and relative deprivation (Runciman, 1966), which refers to unequal access to income, basic goods, public services and citizenship rights. (Jehoel-Gijsbers and Vrooman, 2007)

On the basis of the given definitions and clues above, it is possible to get an understanding of what social exclusion is. But how can it be measured? As it was mentioned before, social exclusion became the subject of European Action Plans. In order to create indicators to measure the level of social exclusion, there have been discussions on the nature of the term; whether it is dynamic or static, absolute or relative, unidimensional or multidimensional, and distributional or relational. (Berghman 1995; Room, 1995; Vrooman and Snel, 1999; Saraceno, 2001; Papadopoulos and Tsakloglou, 2001; Abrahamson, 1997; 2001; Todman, 2004; in Jehoel-Gijsbers and Vrooman, 2007; MacDonald, 1997; Ryan 2007) Given these oppositions, the nature of social exclusion can be summarized as:

- Social exclusion is dynamic, it refers to a process of exclusion
- As social exclusion is a process, it can also not be absolute. Thus, social exclusion is relative; it depends on the circumstances of people in comparison to the others.
- Social exclusion is not unidimensional, rather it refers to lack of monetary resources, lack of citizenship rights, education, housing, and health care.
- Social exclusion is relational because, it concerns social cohesion, solidarity, integration, participation and discrimination.

Given these features, one can say that the concept of social exclusion depends on multidimensional indicators, rather than relying only on poverty and material pointers. Therefore, it should be considered not only in material level but also in non-material level. By non-material level, it is referred to relational character of the concept, since exclusion of people can only be argued in comparison to other people.

2.4 Social Exclusion and Street Children

This study analyzes the phenomenon of street children in the context of social exclusion. Street children are usually referred to as children living in poverty, young transgressors, or children under vulnerable conditions. In a broad sense, social exclusion implies the inability of an individual to participate in the basic political,

economic, and social functioning's of the society in which he or she lives (Tsakloglou and Papadopoulos, 2002:135). It is suggested that street children are denied rights such as personal security, political representation and their disadvantages conflict with the principles of equality of opportunity and the rule of law (UNDP 1992).

Street children are argued to be among the homeless, the vagrants, the informal street traders and the chronically unemployed. Hence, some scholars view street children as part of the socially excluded population (Bhalla and Lapeyre 1999). Moreover, children who live and work on street are socially excluded, because they lack the opportunity of accessing to basic services including health, education, and adequate housing. They are also deprived of social respect and of a mere measure of power to control the course of their lives, they are subjected to abuse, they experience dangerous conditions on the street, and are perceived as a threat to society. (Ataöv and Haider, 2006; De Venanzi, 2003:472-494)

It is crucial to put here that children are forced to work or live on streets because of several reasons. These reasons will be elaborated in the next chapter. In short, many poor children contribute in family income, they are subjected to abuse and neglect within the family, and they cannot attend school because of the burdens. This overbearing responsibility and the hardships associated with poverty, force children to the streets where they can live with certain independence. (De Venanzi, 2003: 472-494)

Moreover, it is indicated that street children are mostly coming from migrant families, who live in poor neighborhood, whose family is in income deficiency, and parents are unemployed. In addition, children are subjected to physical and emotional abuse and neglect from the parents. Street children are under the risk of being malnourished, and being infected of various diseases due to unhealthy living conditions.

Nonetheless, once these kids are on the street their experiences are unified by a series of adverse material circumstances, which contribute to the

development of a common culture, the culture of the street, and a strong social identity based on their awareness of having been stigmatized and rejected by mainstream society. (De Venanzi, 2003)

Street kids represent one of the most critical cases of social exclusion in contemporary urban life, yet they are the ones who receive the harshest treatment from state authorities in the form of legal and illegal incarcerations, beatings, and tortures which occasionally lead to death. (Scheper 1992)

This study adopts a recent model of Jehoel-Gijsbers (2004) for characteristics of social exclusion as the theoretical guide (see figure 1) in order to understand whether street children in Ankara can be argued as socially excluded, based on their own opinions about themselves and the way they live:

As it can be seen from the figure 1, social exclusion is conceptualized in two dimensions, namely; economic and socio-cultural. Material exclusion refers to deficiencies in access to basic goods and needs. In the case of street children, this point is operationalized as the lack of access to basic needs such as housing and food. Second subtitle of economic dimension, refers to inadequate access to government and semi-government provisions. Restricted access to health care, education, social security and safety will be considered in the sense of street children.

As for socio- cultural exclusion, insufficient social integration and insufficient cultural integration are noted. While insufficient social integration refers to a lack of participation to any kind of social events that may take place in any given society. In terms of street children, social networks, family, protection mechanisms among peer group will be examined. Insufficient cultural integration refers to a lack of compliance with the basic norms and values of the social environment. For insufficient cultural integration, illegal activities among street children and street-life experiences will be crucial.

Characteristics of Social Exclusion

A. Economic/structural exclusion:

1. Material deprivation:

Deficiencies in relation to basic needs and material goods; 'Lifestyle deprivation'; problematic debts; payment arrears (i.e. housing costs).

2. Inadequate access to government and semi-government provisions ('social rights'): Waiting lists, financial impediments and other obstacles to: health care, education (especially of children), housing, legal aid, social services, debt assistance, employment agencies, social security, and certain commercial services (such as banking and insurance); insufficient safety.

B. Socio-cultural exclusion:

3. Insufficient social integration: A lack of participation in formal and informal social networks, including leisure activities; inadequate social support; social isolation.

4. Insufficient cultural integration: A lack of compliance with core norms and values associated with active social citizenship, indicated by a weak work ethic; abuse of the social security system; delinquent behavior; deviating views on the rights and duties of men and women; no involvement in the local neighborhood and society at large.

Figure 1.Characteristics of Social Exclusion

(Derived from Jehoel-Gijsbers (2004); in Jehoel-Gijsbers and Vrooman, 2007:1.)

2.5 Children Living/Working on Street in the World

Studies concerning street children in the world will be examined under two titles; reasons for children to be on street and street-life experiences.

2.5.1 Reasons for Children to be on Street

To begin with, according to the researches done in the world, migration, economic problems, education, family relations, abuse and neglect are noted as the main causes of the phenomenon. (Altanis & Goddard, 2003; Le Roux and Smith, 1998; Blanc, 1992; Brink, 2001; Browne & Falshaw, 1998; Aptekar, 1988; 1989; Childhope, 1990; Kidd, 2003; Karabanow & Naylor, 2007; Ives, 2003; Schimmel, 2006) Without giving the details of each cause, significant studies will be summarized in this part.

About two-fifths of the world's street youth are found in Latin America, with the majority of this figure lives in Brazil. Estimates of the number of working street children in Brazil range from 7 to 17 Million. Rizzini and Rizzini (1991) reviewed 16 studies focusing on youngsters living and/ working on streets of seven Brazilian cities. According to results, the majority of children were male, and they were between 7-17 years old. Most were from peri-urban slums and had parents; reason for leaving home included economic necessity, and family dysfunction. In a comparison of working and homeless youth a few varieties appeared, but more homeless youth had troubled interpersonal relationships and a history of school problems. (Campos; Raffaelli; Ude; Greco; Ruff; Rolf; Antunes; Halsey; Greco; Street Youth and Study Group, 1994:320)

According to a study conducted by Schimmel in Canada (2006), children who are in search of realization of basic needs move to the street. Running away from home might be an act of resistance and an expression of frustration with life circumstances.

It is the strongest possible response to poverty and abuse that children in circumstances of deprivation and vulnerability can exercise. Their home life and street-life are both defined by two major forms of deprivation of basic needs and that are essential for healthy child development and socialization: a sound family life defined by supportive parents and intimate relationships and adequate social provisions of food, shelter, clothing, and quality schooling. (Schimmel, 2006:212)

Family history was argued to be affective on children' being on street. Family histories are mostly troubled often consisting of disrupted home environments, extreme family conflicts. In addition children might experience physical, sexual abuse as a result of leaving home. (Kidd, 2003:235)

According to Panagiotis and Goddard, the phenomenon of street children in Greece is related to family breakdown, unemployment, poverty, membership of a minority group, armed conflict and natural disaster. In addition, escape from abusive backgrounds and the attractions of the city might be influential in children' being on street. Authors' contribution is significant because it notes that working on street is

attractive for many children. “This position gives them a privileged economic status in their family, because they start to earn money and gain a feeling of independence both in their family and among friends.” (Beazley 2003; Ennew & Swart-Kruger 2003; Hanson, 2003; in Ataöv & Haider, 2006)

As for the UK, there is high incidence of running away from home. It is claimed that those children are attempting to escape and from family conflict and violence in home. However, this attempt is argued to be a conscious act. According to Browne and Falshaw (1998), children with a history of problematic family experiences, are more likely to commit offences in an effort to maintain a life outside society, living on street. (Browne & Falshaw, 1998: 243)

On the other hand, in some countries there are specific characteristics of street children. For example in Greece, street children are mostly composed of Albanian immigrants and asylum seekers for European Union. (Altanis and Goddard, 2003:302). In Asia, there are more female street children than in any other region, because of sex trade and prostitution finally in South Africa, street children are the ones who were separated from their family by revolutionary groups because of political reasons and they are used as the child soldiers of those groups (Le Roux and Smith, 1998).

2.5.2 Street-life Experiences of Street Children

Studies concerning street experiences of street children are mainly based on the habits, which children develop during the time they spent on street, dangers of street-life, and social networks and daily activities of street children. It is crucial to note that street researches about street-life experiences mostly analysis children who live on street rather than street workers.

It is argued that children who live on street are faced with a worldwide problem of volatile substance abuse. (Ives, 2003) This problem usually reflects itself in thinner sniffing among street children. Since those substances are very easy to find and not so expensive, children develop have a tendency to use them. It is also

claimed that children who sniff substances like thinner, feel themselves more confident and courageous to do anything. (Ives, 2003)

As for the dangers of street-life, involvement in illegal activities should be considered as the most significant. Researches have shown that there is a relationship between being a street child and criminal behavior. (Baron, 2001; le Roux & Smith, 1998) The longer a child stays on street; the more likely it is that he/she will enter into illegal activities either as being the illegal or victim; boys are likely to involve in petty crime while girls might engage with prostitution. These are attempts to support themselves on street, which is why they try to find work, seek money, deal drugs and engage in theft. (Greene, Ennett& Ringwalt, 1999; Hagan and McCarthy, 1997, in Kidd 2003)

One of the most significant aspects of street-life is, social networks among within children. It is observed that children who work/ live on street are mostly found in peer groups. Those groups have the ability to perform many functions usually fulfilled by the family. They provide protection, confidence and sense of belongingness to children, which they are lacking from their families. (Barker & Knaul, 1991, in Kidd, 2003)

2.6 Children Working /Living on Street in Turkey

Beginning with 1950's, Turkey has witnessed a vast migration movement from rural to urban areas. The massive population shift from villages to cities prepared a base for new social, economic and demographic changes. This was not only caused by the situation just after the World War II, but also conditions in rural areas was deteriorated because of lack of investment, and the ruling elite sought to improve the cities as models of progress. (Karpat, 1976:56)

For almost forty years, people continued to settle down in urban centers, and in 1985, urban population became 51 % percent of the total population. These migrations were mostly because of social and economic deficiencies and terror activities in South Eastern Turkey. Hence, many families migrated to big cities like İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir, Adana, Antalya, Diyarbakır, Gaziantep without any

preparation. It can be said that relatively poor regions of Turkey, namely; East and South Eastern parts, witnessed the migration of a big population to bigger cities. Migrants wanted to find better life chances, more opportunity to work, and more money (Atauz, 1990:5-6). Since, city centers did not have enough sources to provide the needed accommodation, education, health services, job opportunities, this period of migration has brought several troubles. In addition, this new situation had a direct effect on income distribution and on housing (Atauz, 1990:5).

The new arrivals faced with an acute shortage of suitable low-cost housing. (Karpat, 1976:57) Therefore houses, which are illegally built areas on land, which is either squatted, or subdivided in an unauthorized way and sold, occurred in cities. (Duyar-Kienast, 2005:1) *Gecekondu* was first seen in big cities, and in time, new comers settled down in those houses, “a relatively integrated and cohesive communal form of organization and several leadership sets that reflected both the migrant’s village culture, and the problems confronting them in the city.” (Karpat, 1976:117)

Through the help of close social networks, those families easily settled down the places close to their relatives who have already migrated. Although, migrants came for seeking better life chances and opportunities, they face with infrastructural problems, trouble in regard to education, and unemployment (Yıldız and Adaş, 2006).

Changing financial conditions of families, especially for the newcomers to city, created serious changes in the family structure. As a matter of fact, employment of more than one member of family became a necessity. Since the breadwinner is expected to be the father of the traditional Turkish family, supplementary breadwinner becomes the male children. This situation leads to dissolution of the traditional close family ties, children lack of support and guidance of their families. (Atauz, 1996:1-2)

When we take a look at the state of Turkey’s children, according to estimations in the light of 2000’s census data, children between the ages of 0-18, were expected to become 25 million in 2004; which was 38 % of the total

population. 51 % of this proportion was composed of males, and 49 % was females (DTP, 8th Development Report, 2005).

Turkish law states that children who live in poor conditions, who have inadequate schooling and who are forced to work, should be under the protection of the state. At this point, institutional help gains importance. With the admission of Children' Rights Agreement, SHÇEK became the responsible institution, which provides systematic assistance to those children who are in need of help.

According to SHÇEK's legislation, children who are neglected by their parents, who are subjected to begging, drinking alcohol, drug addiction, working and prostitution, are in need of protection.² In September 2007, 51 Child and Youth Centers provided shelter for 319 children, approximately 8531 children were already registered in the centers at that time and 8060 children took the advantage of the services provided in those centers under the supervision of SHÇEK.³

When we look at Table1, 75334 children were brought into police stations in 2005. These were composed of children who are suspects, foundlings, abandoned, lost, victims, drug addicts, beggars, who work on street and the ones who have escaped from home. The Table also shows that there are more male offenders and victims than females for all categories. In addition, when males and females compared in terms of working on street, and begging, there is a considerable difference between males who work and beg on street and females who do the same activities.

² <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/sirasayi/donem22/yil01/ss829.pdf> , 13/10/2007, .3:20

³ www.SHCEK.gov.tr 14/09/2007, 11:08

Table 1 Children Received into Security Unit by Reason for Reception

Reason for Reception	Male_2005	Female_2005
<i>Offense Charged</i>	40 574	3 925
Suspect	553	95
Abandoned	96	31
Escape from Home	1 773	959
Foundling	1 551	818
Lost	702	626
Victim	10 109	6 714
Drug Addict	160	9
Working at Street	4 139	478
Beggar	161	120
Other	1 321	420
Total	61 139	14 195

TÜİK, 2005

However, it is difficult to gather data about children working or living on streets. Because, children are mobile during the day, they do not have a permanent place to stay in the evenings; sometimes they stay with their family, some do not go back home. According to crude estimations, there are about 6000 street children in İstanbul only. (Kulca and Korkmazlar-Oral, 2003:3) İstanbul is one of the cities that street children can be seen. On the basis of this number, it would not be wrong to state that Ankara, İzmir, Adana, Antalya, Diyarbakır, ŞanlıUrfa has considerable populations of children living or working on the street. (Acar, 2006)

2.6.1 Reasons for Children to be on Street

As it was mentioned before, researches about street children appeared in last 20 years in Turkey. Those studies mostly examine the causes of street children phenomenon. Studies about street-life experiences and dangers on street are rare. Countries like Turkey, which witnessed fast urbanization and had to face with difficulties of providing needs and services for increasing needs of the population, newcomer families that could not adopt big city life become inert due to financial problems. If an institutional mechanism is not provided to support those families in

every meaning, they have to develop their own survival strategies. Children employed by their families as street workers are just an example to those strategies. (Atauz, 1990; Kulca and Korkmazlar-Oral, 2003) Relying on the researches, literature review in Turkey will be given in detail, divided by two parts: reasons for children to work/live on street and street-life experiences.

In accordance with researches, results of previous studies about the reasons for children to be on street will be classified as: migration, economic problems, family relations, education, emotional, physical and sexual abuse.

2.6.1.1 Migration

Rapid urbanization made changes in many societies. When families from rural areas migrated to cities, infrastructural problems emerged due to increasing population. In time those families became the poorest segments of urban life. Child labor became a necessity, as the deepening poverty, and increasing demand for basic needs. (Atauz, 1990:6)

Sevil Atauz conducted several studies about street children in Turkey. (1989, 1990, 1995, 1997) According to Atauz, children who are coming from *gecekondu* neighborhoods are densely populated, tend to spend more time on the street while selling handkerchief, chewing gum, bandages, cleaning car windows waiting for the red light, sniffing substances, and stirring up garbage. She argues that correspondent to traditional Turkish family structure, female child is raised under pressure of honor and honor mostly refers to virginity. Girls grown to be a housewife, their education is secondary compared to male children. Girls have an inferior role, because they are not the primary labor force for the family. Studies about working male and female children showed that those children have to bring money back home and until they earn that money, they stay on the street. (Atauz, 1990:13)

Karatay (2000) conducts another research on working street children in Beyoğlu, İstanbul. The study, adopts the three-fold categorization for defining street children. Focusing especially on “totally abandoned children”, major pushing factor for the occurrence of street children in Turkey was stated as migration due to terror

and unemployment. In this study, most of the fathers are employed. Families are crowded; they have at least 3 children. The study puts a mark on the relation between the age and the nature of the item, which is sold. Results imply that the younger a child, the smaller items he/se sells on street. (Karatay 2000:447)

2.6.1.2 Economic Problems

According to former researches conducted in Turkey, it is suggested that street children are mostly coming from poor, migrant families. Unemployment, difficulties to adopt the city, unfavorable environment for living can be counted for the reasons for children to end up on the street. Moreover, cities do not have enough resources to provide education and health for a constantly enlarging population (Kulca, Yusuf Ahmet, Korkmazlar-Oral, 2003).

Esin Konanç, conducted the first research about street children in 1988, in Turkey; her findings were quite striking. In that research, she surveyed 233 children under the age of 15 in Ankara. According to the results, 52 %of the children decided to live on street due to economic problems at home. 69.9 % started to work before the age of 11, since they earn little money; they frequently have the tendency to change job. In addition, 20 % of their mothers were stated to be illiterate; fathers' education level was far below the average of Turkey of that time (Konanç, 1992).

Another research on this issue is Hüseyin Gövercin's PhD thesis. When we look at the results of this study, parents of street children have low education level. Fathers have manual jobs and they are unqualified. Most of those children have to work and they have to contribute in the family income. (Gövercin, 2000:150).

Inequality in income distribution is another difficulty. There is a considerable gap between people's income, which determines children's access to basic needs. Poor families have poor opportunities to supply chances for children in the family. That is why, some child members of such families have to start working from an early age. Since, parents are influenced by the relative deprivation (Runciman, 1966) of unequal income distribution and poverty; they might reflect their feelings to children. Furthermore, instable economy in a country and inconsistent inflation

creates financial pressures on poor families. As a result of those, especially male children of the families have to work and make addition to family income (Atauz, 1990:5)

As it is mentioned above, male child is usually raised as the future breadwinner. Therefore, they start to work from an early age. The most important reason for this is poverty. Another reason is lack of educational opportunities due to financial deficiencies. As a result of all those and defective educational infrastructures, some children cannot enter into education system and they have to work. Employing children as labor force is related to increasing population and migration from rural to urban areas. As child population gets bigger, the need for services is increasing. In economies, which cannot handle with this demand it becomes inevitable for many children to work from an early age (Karataş, 1993:93).

Furthermore, it is also argued by the previous studies that working children cannot attend school properly, their grades decrease, and in the end they quit school or dropped out of it due to nonattendance. Due to working conditions, poverty of family, violence, and neglect leads children start living on the street or even think that a life on the street is more attractive than her/his present life (Acar, 2006; Yılmaz, 1998; Gövercin, 2000; Atauz, 1994; Baştaymaz, 1990; Duyan, 2005; Karataş, 1993; Kars, 1996; Konanç, 1989, 1992; Kulca and Korkmazlar-Oral, 2003; Ögel, Yücel, Aksoy, 2004; Uluğtekin, 1997; Zeytinoğlu, 1989).

Furthermore, children who work cannot attend the school and might find marginal job on the street in order to bring money to home. Poverty, unemployment, or inequality in financial balance of a country should not be seen the only causes for children to live on the streets. Family relations are also one of the underlying reasons for this phenomenon.

2.6.1.3 Family Relations

Parents' behaviors have a big impact on the construction of a child's personality. During this process, parents might, intentionally or unintentionally, harm their children. According to Kars, parents might give more responsibility than a child

can deal with and they might make them work in unhealthy conditions (Kars, 1996:13).

Another factor is that parents' relation to each other might not be appropriate for the development of a child. This situation also negatively affects child's socialization and adaptation to his/her relations with other people. As children grow up in non-peaceful environments, it would possibly have non-peaceful relations with their own environment (Arkan, 1988:77). In addition, divorce of parents, death of one parent or two, separation from the parents, and broken family relations have a direct impact on children's socialization (Uluğtekin, 1991:38).

Furthermore, if parents use alcohol or any kind of drug, children who see this behavior might also develop the same sort of acting (Uluğtekin, 1991:43). Children, whose parents have a habit of drinking alcohol, might face violent behavior. In addition to physical violence, parents' instable manner, rude and offending verbal violence, ages children's self esteem and in the end, children might percept her/his parents as enemies.

2.6.1.4 Low Education among Parents

In many developing countries, except for the big cities, the level of literacy for women remains in primary school standards. (UNDP, 2003) For instance, in Turkey, primary school is compulsory, but many children cannot continue their education after the primary school especially if they are female. However socialization starts in family, school life and environment are also apart of the socialization process. As for education, it should not be forgotten that it is a kind of articulated cultural knowledge and it is carried by generations. For that reason, not only children's schooling but also education provided by the family is significant. Specifically, mother's education is crucial because, she is the one who spends more time with children, main caregiver is the mother. Attitudes and reactions of parents towards events and their way of perceiving the education and schooling are effective on child's development (Yılmaz, 1998:13).

Children who come from families with financial problems do not find the chance to attend school as the way the other children do because, family cannot reproduce the basic needs for children. Meaning, child cannot eat enough, cannot sleep enough, and do not have access to health services when it is needed. In addition to financial deficiency, quarrels between parents, divorces, and aggressive reactions of the parents have a key impact on children's schooling.

In some parts of Turkey, there is still the tendency of not sending girls to school. Even though, primary education is made compulsory by law, some families insist on limiting female schooling. Social roles for women and men are distinctly separated. Men is the breadwinner, women is the mother. As a matter of fact, male child has a superior role than female child, because male is the continuation of the offspring and the family name. Thus, male child is grown to be outgoing, yet female child has to stay home and help her mother in order to act properly in her role-frame. So it is not that significant for those families to send the girl to school because, it is not necessary and it is waste of time for the family. This situation has very serious consequences. Those girls become the mother of next generations as their mothers did. But things have changed in Turkey in the mean time; most of those families from East and South East migrated to big cities without education and with very strict social roles. Women who remained uneducated and they raised their children the way they saw from their mother even after they migrated. Low education status among parents results in various forms within family life. Conceiving children as labor force is one of those perceptions.

2.6.1.5 Physical Abuse

UNICEF defines physical abuse is the violent acts which do not happen accidentally, which is forbidden, that cause pain to child, constantly damages child's development and functionality (Koşar, 1992:48). As a result of physical abuse; ecchymoses, injuries, edemas, scars, burns, scars might occur because of being scaled, and retardation in physical development (Bilir et al; 1991:58). To add, some researches conducted on abuse and neglect cases in Turkish courts show that there is a concrete relationship between physical and sexual abuse and children working and living on the street (Zeytinoğlu, Kozcu, 1988; Konanç et al; 1988).

Results of a study directed by Ögel, Yücel & Aksoy (2004) in İstanbul, were also striking. According to the findings, more than half of the street children from the sample were subjected to physical violence by one of their family members. The same amount of respondents was physically and mentally neglected, and 68.5 % was emotionally abused in the sense that they were degraded, threatened, or humiliated by the family members. It was also shown that girls, more than boys, were subjected to any sorts of abuse and neglect. Parents were reported to be mostly divorced. In addition, Families migrated from rural areas are 48.6 %. Family's economic condition is declared to be "medium" by 67.4 % of the sample population.

Further, children pointed that their mothers or fathers beat them. Violence affects development in a harmful way if they witness through family relations. Plus, there are examples of beaten mothers who reflect their anger to children.. (Gövercin, 2000:148)

2.6.1.6 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is defined to be the exploitation of child by one of the family members as a means of sexual satisfaction (Bulut, 1996:14). This situation might occur by force or threat, or child might be too young to understand what is happening to her/him. We cannot know the real dimensions of sexual abuse because, many attempts of sexual abuse stays in the family. As the actions are not reported it is difficult to comment on the numerical facts of Turkey. Although, female child seems to be the first victim of sexual abuse; male victims are also subject to sexual abuse as the way girls do.

Yüksel, who made a research on 27 cases of sexual abuse in İstanbul University Faculty of Medicine, Department of Psychology, abusers were mostly fathers, brothers, stepfathers, uncles, and cousins. (1993 in Yılmaz, 1998). Sexually abused child may start taking drugs and alcohol, might injure her/himself, escape from school, and they might have unsuccessful school records (Sezgin and Öktem, 1996:127-128).

2.6.1.7 Mental Abuse

UNICEF gives the definition of mental abuse and neglect: it is the act of slandering child's capacity, eligibility, and constantly slandering of her/his desires, isolating the child from social relations and resources, frightening the child with superstitious beliefs, threatening with leaving the child, and demanding more things from a child that she/he can really give (Koşar, 1992: 48).

Kars' research shows that rejection, degrading, isolation, scarring, threatening, manipulation to commit crime, exploiting and denying emotional responsiveness is typically the behaviors of mental abuse and neglect (Kars, 1996). Apart from sexual and physical abuse, mental abuse creates lack of self-esteem, becoming distant from the family, lovelessness, and unresponsiveness. In further cases, child might turn to violence or she/he gets introvert.

For the case of street children both of the reactions are observed. The moment children begin to live on the street; risk of being hurt gets higher. Child gets away from family life; she/he cannot get love and start to work in marginal jobs or even they tend to commit crime (Kars, 1996).

Although it is difficult to get information about any kind of abuse, it is argued to be affective for children to decide living on street.

2.6.2 Street-life Experiences of Street Children

As it was mentioned before, researches about street children are mostly dealing with the reasons for children to be on street. Studies concerning street-life experiences are rare and for this reason these below mentioned studies are important and this side of the topic needs more elaboration. Fighting, thinner sniffing, to be raped, to be beaten by the police or other children on street can be argued as the most pronounced types of dangers in street-life.

According to Gövercin, biggest dangers on street are, fighting, being bruised by knife, being burned by thinner, traffic accidents, and to be raped. Big majority of children have contact with police while living on street. Some children stated that

they were beaten or tortured when they are investigated for theft or sniffing thinner. But sometimes police give them something to eat and talk to them without causing any hurt. In anyway, the fact is that children are taken to police station are freed to go back to street, not home (Gövercin, 2000:150).

Baştaymaz worked on another study in 1990, about working children in Bursa. Although, it is not directly related to street children, his research has important findings to draw a picture of children workers. Research contains surveys of 249 participants between the ages of 6 and 15. Participants were dealing with peddling, collecting junks, and repairing cars. In regard to results, 43 % of the respondents' works 5 to 6 days a week; they spend 8 hours away from home. This study is important the sense that, it clearly shows how working children is busy with earning money, they are away from family warmth, and they have to get responsibility very early (Baştaymaz, 1990). As it was mentioned before, working from an early age leads children to a life on street, as they cannot find the respect and love from their home. This street-life may be full of dangerous experiences and risks for children as well.

Moreover, some children think that life on the street is freer than living with family. However, being acknowledged about the risks of street-life, in time, they learn to survive and get used to this sort of living. (Atauz, 1990) In one other research of Atauz, 64.6 % of the participant families did not know that their children get help from social projects and related institutions. Parents have no idea about the aim of those projects, no information about social workers and psychologists working in projects. The ones, who know about any attempt, are the families of "children of the street", and they got support from social workers, through the projects of turning those children back home. When theft and similar other crimes are the considered, first suspects of cops are street children, they can be taken to station and police might sometimes beat them (Atauz, 1994:24).

In addition, majority of children on street experienced physical violence; almost 36 % was subjected to torture by police or by their peers. The ones who fell into sexual abuse was 31 %, rape was 11 %. Risk of being sexually abused was higher in girls than in boys. Most of the children and adolescences stated they use

substances. According to their declarations, first ages to start smoking were between 3 and 9, sniffing substances, and drinking alcohol was between 12 and 13. (Ögel, Yücel, Aksoy, 2004)

Duyan, (2005) conducted a recent study, concentrates on the feeling of hopelessness among street children and behaviors under this feeling's motive. Duyan points that hopelessness origins from the unrealized expectations, the gap between what was expected and what has experienced, lack of opportunities to keep on living. It also argues that, hopelessness might be an individual feeling but when it affects a social process, it might be an indicator of dysfunction. In his research Duyan, interviewed 195 street children and found significant relations between physical violence, father's alcohol usage, unemployment, threatening of the child at home, and hopelessness (Duyan, 2005).

Baybuga and Çelik (2004) organized another research focusing on sexually transmitted diseases among street children and about the level of knowledge and views of street children/ youth about AIDS in Turkey. This study is very significant in the sense that it is shown that children on street do not have enough information about sexually transmitted diseases. It is stated by the authors that % 58 of the sample do not have any information about AIDS. 22 % of the sample listed the main cause of transmission of AIDS as having sexual relationship with prostitutes. The main reasons of defining themselves at risk were being substance addicts (24.3 %) and unhygienic practices (21.6 %) (Baybuga and Çelik, 2004).

2.7 Support Services towards Street Children in Turkey

Institution of Social Services and Child Protection (SHÇEK), Ministry of Interior, General Directorate of Security Child Bureau, Gendarme, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Work and Social Security, Ministry of Justice, Local governments, UNICEF and ILO are the institutions and organizations, which contributes directly and indirectly in the situation and protection of street

children in Turkey.⁴ In addition, non-governmental organizations provide aid and several educational activities for street children.

2.7.1 Institution of Social Services and Child Protection (SHÇEK): A Brief History of SHÇEK and its Organization

Foundation of SHÇEK can be traced back to Ottoman Empire. Considering the specific conditions after Balkan Wars and World War I, there appeared an inevitable population of homeless children. Starting from İstanbul, and other cities, the problem of homeless children became an issue for the public to find a solution. Therefore, first related association was established in 1917 and it was called Himaye-i Etfal Cemiyeti (Association for Protection of Children).

In the year of establishment, the major principles of Association for Protection of Children were summarized as below:

- Children will not be abused by anyone, including their parents,
- Children will not be physically abused,
- Poor and Sick Children will be cured and treated,
- Children will be protected from smoking or any other harmful habits,
- During the holidays, poor children will be sent to countryside and seaside,
- Children who work as maidservants, who are servants and adopted children will be treated well.
- A Library for Association for Protection of Children will be established.
- Borstals will be founded for children who could not get an appropriate education from the parents,
- Playgrounds will be built for the healthy development of children,
- Meetings international organizations that deal with protection of children will be arranged.

Following 1920, new branches were added to the association. Those branches were spread through the Anatolia, such as; Kırklareli, Samsun, İzmit, Konya, Erzurum, Eskişehir, Kastamonu and Bolu. While those developments were in

⁴ <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/sirasayi/donem22/yil01/ss829.pdf> , 15/10/2007, 05:06

process, the new government was founded in Ankara. From 1923 and on, Association for Protection of Children in Ankara became the only center for the whole activities of child protection. After the centralization of the organization, a lot of new branches were added and they even spread among small cities and towns. In 1976, the association had branches in 67 cities, 450 towns; it gave services with 33 kindergarten, 2 secondary schools, and 14 polyclinics with 2 small restaurants.

During the military coup in 1980, activities of the association were stopped and it went under the supervision of the Ministry of Health. In 1983, Association for Protection of Children gained institutional status and it was called the Institution of Social Services and Child Protection. Right now, Institution has branches in every city and it continues its activities under the supervision of Prime Ministry of Turkey.⁵

Institution of Social Services and Child Protection serves to street children who require protection. In regard to Children' Rights Agreement, this institution creates needed policies and constructs service methods in order to support children at risk both in the short and long term. Among those attempts, rehabilitation centers were built for street children. Those centers do service only during the daytime, social service specialists and psychologists provide consultancy and guidance both for children and their families. Center provides the necessary environment to have enough nutrition, health services, self-care, occupational education, and social and cultural activities.

Under the supervision of SHÇEK, there are 7 Child and Youth Center in İstanbul, 3 in Ankara, 4 in İzmir, 3 in Antalya; several other branches are located in other cities of Turkey. In sum, 42 Child and Youth Centers provides help for street children. Those centers employ social workers and psychologists. Centers' tasks can be summarized in 9 titles. These are:

- Field work; Street children are traced on street and they are brought to the center.
- Psycho-social development of street children
- Education support

⁵ www.SHÇEK.gov.tr , 18/10/2007, 2:30

- Regaining of the children to education
- Providing help for children who attend school
- Occupational education
- Social, Cultural and Sports activities
- Health services
- Treatment and rehabilitation services

One example might be given in terms of the services provided in accordance with Child and Youth Services, from Tuzla, “Center of Occupational Education for Street Children in İstanbul”. This place is specifically for youth of 16 to 20 years, who lived on streets. After persuading the adolescence to stay in the center, and give up the harmful habits or addictions, occupational education is given. At the moment, this center can only serve to males due to its infrastructure and physical deficiencies.

By July 2006, hundred twenty juvenile was staying in Tuzla. Every young person stays in the institution, get educated in master apprentice type, and can choose out of 13 sorts of occupations. Those sorts are; accounting, tailing, barbering, working in construction, gardening, being an electrician, painting, carpentering, installing, cooking, mechanics and automation.

FINDING A JOB:

Youth who completed the education and become a headworker are emplaced to a real job with security. So far 6ty people completed their education from various occupations. The ones older than 18 years old were sent for military service by the center.⁶

Other rehabilitation centers located in İzmir and in İstanbul. It is not compulsory to stay in those centers. Children can participate in activities, as long as they do not hurt their friends and do not intentionally damage anything in center. They also should not use drugs; alcohol and they are expected to adopt the common daily life in the center.

Moreover, Institution of Social Services and Child Protection built a rehabilitation center in İstanbul whose foundation was arranged by an agreement in

⁶ www.SHÇEK.gov.tr 18/10/2007, 03:45

corporation with Non- Governmental Organizations and Municipality of Kadıköy. Those organizations are: Çağdaş Yaşamı Destekleme Derneği, Sokak Çocukları Gönüllüleri Derneği, Çocukları İstismardan Koruma ve Rehabilitasyon Derneği, İstanbul Barosu Çocuk Hakları Komisyonu.

2.7.2 Ministry of Interior: Police Department, Bureau for the Protection of Children

National Police Department has 43 bureaus for child protection in several cities of Turkey. Bureau for the protection of children is concerned with idle, fugitive children who are between 7 and 18. Bureau is looking for the parents or relatives of children. If they can find any relatives, children are confided into their families. Otherwise, they are confided in one of the institutions of Institution of Social Services and Child Protection. Bureau for the protection of children works under the supervision of Directorate of security and there are nine branches of the bureau in Adana, Ankara, Bursa, Diyarbakır, Elazığ, Erzurum, Eskişehir, Gaziantep, Hatay, İzmir, İstanbul.

General tasks of the bureau are:

- To hand over street children to rehabilitation centers, SHÇEK centers and health institutions.
- To hand over street children to public prosecution services, and SHÇEK, who are neglected by their parents, children who are abused.
- To be in coordination with SHÇEK, Ministry of Education, school directors, Police Departments, families and health centers.
- To demand programs from media those show the harmful effects of drug usage.
- To detect whether alcohol and tobacco is sold to children under 18 years old.
- To prevent children from committing crime ⁷

⁷ <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/sirasayi/donem22/yil01/ss829.pdf> , 17/10/2007, 10:23

2.7.3 Ministry Of Justice: Juvenile Courts

In regard to Law of Child Protection, it is decided that children should be away from the judgment process, there should be mechanisms to keep them away from the courts. In other words, children should be protected before they commit crime and the environment, which prepares the efficient conditions for crime, should be wiped out.⁸ Punishments that are given by Juvenile Courts, if they are not monetary punishment, they are implemented in juvenile prisons for correction. Juvenile prisons in Turkey take place in Ankara, İzmir, Elazığ. Courts make contribution to youth problems on judicial level.

According to Uluğtekin (1994), “Reclamation centers in Turkey are a part of harsh bureaucratic system” Bureaucratic system, on the contrary is not suitable for modern treatments for children.” At this point, this paper agrees with Uluğtekin that inside bureaucratic system, people are treated as if they are machines to obey the unnecessary circulation of obligations because; prison system is not only isolating children but also labeling them. Those two outcomes influence child’s psychology and socialization.

2.7.4 Ministry Of Work and Social Security

Ministry of Work and Social Security signed an agreement with ILO in 1992 in regard to child labor and its prevention in Turkey. In terms of this agreement, 101 projects have been conducted. The aim of those projects is to prevent child labor and to improve the condition of child workers in Turkey.⁹

⁸ <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/sirasayi/donem22/yil01/ss829.pdf> , 17/10/2007, .12:34

⁹ <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/sirasayi/donem22/yil01/ss829.pdf> , 19/10/2007, 03:25

2.7.5 Ministry Of Health: Center for the Treatment and Education of Addiction to Alcohol and Substance in Ankara (AMATEM) and Center for the Treatment of Addiction to Volatile Matters (UMATEM)

AMATEM was first established in Ankara and in Adana. Then, a sub center of AMATEM, UMATEM was founded and branches built in Ankara, Denizli, Samsun, Elazığ and Manisa. In 2003, Ministry of Health has conducted a research with UN, showing that 40.000 children had sniffed a kind of volatile substance at least once in her/his life. Both of the centers continue to prepare projects in order to prevent children from substance and alcohol addiction.¹⁰

2.7.6 Local Governments

Municipalities arrange the way the services be brought to children and the way they will get this support. Services are divided into titles like; education, health, and cultural activities. Further, municipalities usually work in corporation with international organizations. For instance, in 1992, Greater Municipality of Ankara went through a project with International Labor Organization.

Under the scope of “Children Working in the Streets of Ankara Project”, a rehabilitation center was founded for working children on street. Centers works for prevention of child workers from abuse, neglect, and exploitation, so that they can create healthy relations with their environment.¹¹

2.7.7 Non-Governmental Organizations

Voluntary organizations are playing a key role for the problem of street children. as it was put above, those organizations work hand in hand with state institutions. They coordinate several projects, give advices for betterment, conduct researches and write articles about the issue. Some of those organizations are

¹⁰ <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/sirasayi/donem22/yil01/ss829.pdf> , 19/10/2007, .04:15

¹¹ <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/sirasayi/donem22/yil01/ss829.pdf> , 19/10/2007, .05:42

- Foundation of Street Children of Turkey (Türkiye Sokak Çocukları Vakfı)
- Association of Volunteers of Street (Sokak Gönüllüleri Derneđi)
- Foundation of Hope (Umut Vakfı)
- Once Again (Yeniden)
- Association of Children of Hope (Umut Çocukları Derneđi)
- Black Pearl (Siyah İnci)
- Flying Balloon (Uçan Balon)
- Deniz Feneri Derneđi

CHAPTER 3

BEING ON STREET AND STREET-LIFE EXPERIENCES FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF CHILDREN AND SOCIAL WORKERS

3.1 Introduction

As it was mentioned before, sample was composed of 2 types of participants. First group was constituted of children who stay with family, and work on street. Those respondents were selling handkerchief, water and bandages around Ulus Square. They do not work anymore due to the payment coming from the institution. Second type of participants were living away from their family and spending the nights on street. It was stated that both group of respondents started to work when they were very young. Second group did not have the chance of getting any long-term institutional help and they indicated that they have problems with their families and do not want to go back home. Those 2 groups of respondents seemed to constitute very similar demographic characteristics but they were distinct in terms of the activities they are involving on street and the longevity of time they spent on street.

Moreover, interviews with social workers were a complementary aspect of the study because; life stories of street children provided only one angle to the same picture of the reasons why children are on street. This very step was thought to provide a professional perception to the whole concept of street children. In this respect, 6 interviews were conducted from Ulus Child and Youth Center, ÇETEM and Behice Eren Dormitory. Questions were designed to learn what specialists of social work think the reasons for children to work or live on street. Therefore, no demographic questions were raised. Interviews were based on 3 questions those are; factors, which push children to work or live on street, sorts of services provided by SHÇEK and problems that specialists may face with and finally, social workers' suggestions for the solution of this problem.

This chapter will examine the demographic and general characteristics of the children, since no demographic questions were raised to social workers. Second, the reasons behind children being on street in regard to the information gathered from children and social workers will be focused on. Finally, street-life experiences of children will be our concern.

3.2 Demographic and General Characteristics of the Respondents

During the research 15 respondents were interviewed between 11 to 16 ages, composed of 8 female and 7 male respondents. It was recorded by other studies that street children are mainly males. However, respondents almost equally took place in his sample. 9 participants were registered in one of the institutions of SHÇEK, the rest 6 did not have a record in an institution, although, they heard about it. All parents were alive; there was only one couple, which was divorced.

As it was hypothesized before the research, 15 respondent's families migrated Ankara from other cities; namely from, Siirt, Batman, Şırnak and Kırıkkale and Elazığ. Among respondents, 8 of them were born in Ankara, while the rest 7 were born in their city of migration. It is stated that families came in order to find better life chances, and more employment opportunities. In addition, fear of ethnic turmoil led them to escape from the East and South Eastern regions.

Many respondents noted that they could migrate with the help of relatives who previously migrated to Ankara. Those families constituted neighborhoods with close and far relatives. It is also indicated that families came previously helped newcomers in terms of accommodation and employment. İsmetpaşa was one of those neighborhoods. As far as they could remember or as they heard within the family, most of the respondents stated that at first, they stayed with their relatives until they have their own place to stay.

“I was 5 when we first migrated to Ankara from Siirt. My grandfather came here long ago. They settled down in this neighborhood. When we came, my aunt, uncle and grandparents were all living together. We also settled down in the same house. We became 22 people in a

single-bedroomed house. It was so difficult to live together. We were sleeping in one small room. Later, my grandfather built a new building, now we all have our own flats.” (B. Girl, 13 years old, living with family)

As for education, 13 respondents out of 15, told their fathers only attended primary school; 2 of the fathers completed secondary school. On the other hand, out of 15 respondents, 3 told their mothers graduated from primary school, and 5 of the respondents’ mothers were literate, the rest did not attend school. As for respondents themselves, there were 8 participants who attended secondary school, one of them did not go to school at all, and the rest’s education was limited to primary school.

About employment status of fathers, 9 respondents said their fathers do not have a regular job; since they work in construction sector. They can only find a job during summer; therefore, they sit at home all winter. Moreover, 3 children defined their father as unemployed, while 2 of the fathers had a regular job and one of them was in jail. Mothers, on the other hand, were mostly housewives; only 2 mothers were employed.

The sample was composed of families who have many children. Among the participants, 3 of them told they are coming from families with 3 children. The rest of the sample had more than 2 siblings. Furthermore, no respondent stated to live in house more than 2 bedrooms.

Table 2 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Variables	N		N
Age		Father's Education	
Male	7	Never been to school	-
Female	8	Primary School	13
Sex		Secondary School	2
Male	7	Father's Employment	
Female	8	Regular Employment	2
Living with Family		Irregular Employment	9
Live with the family	9	Unemployed	4
Live on the street	6	Mother's Employment	
Place of Migration		Regular Employment	-
Siirt	8	Irregular Employment	2
Batman	2	Unemployed	13
Şırnak	2	Number of Siblings	
Bursa	1	1-4	3
Elazığ	1	5-9	12
Kırıkkale	1	10 and more	-
Participants' Education		Number of Bedrooms	
Never been to School	1	1-2	15
Primary School	6	3 and more	-
Secondary School	8		
Mother's Education			
Never been to school	10		
Primary School	5		
Secondary School	-		

When we look at Table3, it is understood that parents of all respondents are alive. There was one divorced couple. Out of 15 respondents, 13 stated their parents live together, one couple was divorced, and one father was in jail.

In terms of feeling peaceful and happy at home, almost half of the respondents told that they do not feel comfortable within the family. Those respondents were the ones who live with their family. Moreover, all respondents stated they experience quarrels at home, especially between parents. Those quarrels are reported to occur because of unemployment and economic problems. 1 respondent pointed alcohol problem of his father, as a cause for quarrels in addition to economic reasons.

As it was hypothesized, all participants noted they are subjected to physical violence from parents. Physical violence is generally accepted to be “normal”. According to participants, when they were subjected to physical violence from their parents, it is because they deserved it.

The number of respondents who stated to be forced to work on street was 4. They also added that their parents want to confiscate the money they earn during the day. Furthermore, when compared to mothers, fathers seem to be more aggressive.

As for alcohol and drug usage, our sample did not meet the hypotheses about the relationship between street children and alcohol or drug usage among parents, as a cause for the former. Only one father reported to be alcoholic.

Finally, among 15 participants 9 of them stated they do not feel trust in their parents. 6 of those participants were living without their family. 1 had a special status; he did not stay either at home or on street. The rest 2 were living with their families but did not feel trust because their fathers did not come home every night.

Table 3 Family Relations of the Respondents

Variables	N
Alive Parents	
Yes	15
No	-
Divorced Parents	
Yes	1
No	14
Feeling happy at home	
Yes	8
No	7
Peace within the family	
Peaceful	6
Medium	2
Non-peaceful	7
Quarrels within the family	
Yes	15
No	-
Reasons for Quarrels	
Unemployment	7
Economic reasons	8
Alcohol	1
Violence from the parents	
Yes, but normal	15
No	
Forced to do something	
Yes	4
No	11
Father is aggressive	
Yes	13
No	2
Mother is aggressive	
Yes	3
No	12
Drinking Alcohol	
Drinking fathers	1
Drinking mothers	-
Feeling of trust in parents	
Yes	6
No	9
Parent/Parents in jail	
Yes	1
No	14

Table 4 Street-life Experiences of the Respondents

Variables	N		N
Currently working on street		Smoking	
Yes	3	Yes	4
No	12	No	11
Peer group on street		Sniffing substances	
Yes	15	Yes	1
No	-	No	14
Making life while living on street		Missing the family	
Begging	3	Yes	3
Selling goods	2	No	12
Stealing	1	Most important thing in life	
Fear on street		Family	10
Yes	7	Money	2
No	8	Education	1
		Friends	2

When street-life experiences are considered, it is crucial to point that among 8 participants who previously worked on street, none of them were going to street selling anymore, since they were registered to SHÇEK and got money for not working on street. Those respondents answered the questions in reference to their previous experiences.

There were 3 respondents who are currently working on street. All respondents indicated the significance of friends in street life; they all had a group of peers to be with on street. Plus, begging, selling handkerchiefs, water and bandages are reported to be the activities in making their life on street.

In regard to risks and dangers of street life, 4 respondents told that they smoke cigarettes, and 1 sniffs thinner in order to get rid of bad thoughts and feelings. They told smoking is common among street children but thinner sniffing is one of the extremes.

3 participants told they miss their family while living on street. On the other hand, 10 respondents stated that family is the most important thing in life. 2 respondents saw money as the most significant, for 1 education was the most crucial and 2 participants pointed friends as being the most important thing in their lives.

3.3 Reasons Behind Children' Being On Street

With respect to life histories and in depth interviews, financial problems, migration, family relations, emotional abuse, neglect, physical abuse were the impact of deprivation and the existence of various alternatives stated as the factors, which push respondents to streets.

3.3.1 Financial Situation of the Families

In accordance with our hypotheses and the studies in literature review, economic problems appeared as the most significant factor in children' being on street. When asked what respondents think about their family's financial situation, all participants answered that they are facing financial problems due to unemployment of fathers. Coming from crowded families was another factor in financial difficulties. All groups of respondents indicated they begin to work because of economic deficiencies in the first place. This study examines economic problems under three titles. Firstly, migration, income deficiency and unemployment of fathers will be discussed. Second, feeling of responsibility among children towards those problems and their being forced to work on street will be considered. Finally, lack of coordination between the Greater Municipality of Ankara, SHÇEK and Deniz Feneri Association will be our concern as an influential factor in the laziness among families.

3.3.1.1 Migration, Fathers' Unemployment and Income Deficiency

Migration is told to be the leading factor for children to work on street. Migration is not pushing factor on its own, but it brings a lot of infrastructural problems to cities; defective health and education services, deficient accommodation,

unemployment and alike. This study clearly shows that migration, financial difficulties and family problems are interrelated and inseparable.

Migration seems to be the beginning of a lot of troubles in urban life. Due to migration, families have to face with adaptation problems, problems about children's schooling, unemployment, and financial deficiency. In addition, migrated families bring not only themselves but also their values into urban life. This makes the situation more complicated as families expect their children to look after the parents by default.

“The phenomenon of street children occurs because there is a contradiction in society. It is like a symptom; it means that there is a problem with the society itself. Families of street children come from Eastern and South Eastern Regions, they have many children, and they do not have enough resources to take care of those children. Fathers are unskilled, so they do not have so much chance in finding opportunities. Therefore, they become unemployed immediately when they migrate to big cities like Ankara or they wait for daily-waged jobs. In this situation, children start to work on street for a little money and they give their earnings to their families. Those affect their schooling; as they cannot attend school, finally they completely find themselves on street.” (M., Behice Eren Dormitory)

“I think financial problems are important. I agree that there is a variety of reasons for children to end up on street, but all those causes are interrelated and actually they are an outcome of economic instability in this country. For instance, economic crisis of 2001 resulted in an increase of street children. Inequality of income distribution has been deepened, and poverty became more visible. As a result, applications to SHÇEK raised, and there became more children on street” (E., Ulus Child and Youth Center)

As it was mentioned before, fathers are expected to be the main breadwinner in the family. In this study, out of 15 respondent fathers, 4 were unemployed, 2 were unemployed and 9 had irregular employment. As for mothers, only two of them were employed, the rest were housewives.

Irregular employment in this study refers to being employed in the construction sector. According to respondents, their fathers do work if they have a call otherwise they sit at home. Majority of the sample told that construction jobs usually come during summer time, and it is possible that there might not be jobs for a whole summer. For that reason, this employment type was called irregular in this study. In addition, as construction jobs are informal, father can provide social security neither for themselves nor for their family. Furthermore, the least crowded family was composed of five people including parents. It seems obvious that without efficient income it is difficult to look after the household and it becomes necessity for children to work beginning from the eldest.

“I think our house is very small for our family. If the income of my father was enough, we did not have to work. My 2 brothers and I started to work when we were very young. Thus, we could not attend school for some time. We sold handkerchief, water and chewing gum on street. (M. boy, 16 years old, living with family)

“My family migrated from Batman but I was born in Ankara. My father does not have a regular job and mother is a housewife. I have four more siblings. I could not attend primary school because of financial issues. (H. boy, 13 years old, living on street)

“It was the first time I came to Kızılay to sell water. I was 9 years old. My father was telling me that there were boys who come to Kızılay to work. They sell water, handkerchief, sometimes beg on street. I did not want to go with them because they were older and I did not know them. He talked to our neighbor’s son to bring me with him to work on street. That was how I started.” (T, boy, 13 years old, living on street)

“Frankly, I cannot point any factor as the most important one. Financial problems, are one of the pioneers, it is for sure. Street children normally come from families with a lot of children. Generally they have more than 2 siblings. Financially it is difficult to look after such a big family. Thus, beginning with the eldest son of the family, other children start to work on street.” (K., Behice Eren Dormitory)

3.3.1.2 “Forced to Work” Children

It is observed that children whether they live with family or not, had a responsible attitude towards the solution of financial problems. Children, especially males think that if they do not have enough resources to afford their living, they have to work so that they can contribute in family income. This attitude originates from two possible sources. One is that children have always been accepted as the work force. It was shown in the study that families simply wait their children to look after them therefore, children from the early childhood, develops a feeling of responsibility and internalizes the idea that they have look after the parents.

“At first I would like to mention that there is no such a concept of children who work on street! There are children who are “forced to work” on street. I do not believe that those children would work if they had a choice. I think this situation is beyond their will before the age of 18 and actually, those children start working younger than this age.” (M, Behice Eren Dormitory)

“Traditional understanding of excepting children as labor force plays a key role in child work. Families migrate from rural areas always think that life will be the same in city. They conceive their children as labor force. This structure is so complicated and so though to break for us. When we go to families to persuade them not to let their children work, they say a child’s mission is to look after his parents..” (A., Ulus Child and Youth Center)

The other source might be forced to work, if they do not show this responsible attitude.

“My family had financial problems. I thought that I could make a difference if I work. Everyone in the neighborhood was working in order to help family income. Group of friends, we were going out in the mornings; we worked until the sun went down. I did not consider it is wrong, because everyone around me was doing the same thing. In addition, it was fun and it was entertaining.” (R, boy, 14 years old, living with family)

...I started working on street in Kızılay. My father beat me in order to get the money I have made during the day. Also, our house was too far from the city center thus, I do not live at home any more.” (H. boy, 13 years old, living on street)

“R. is my brother. Our family migrated from Batman about 10 years ago. We have 4 more siblings. My father is unemployed and mother is looking after sick people in return of money. Our eldest brother left home when he was 15. At the moment he earns some money and often supports us. At the moment, we are staying in Ankara Bus Terminal. We make our lives by carrying luggage.

...I believe that R and I will be like our brothers one day. He earns good money and he will help us doing so.” (S, 14 years old, living on street)

“My mother is looking after sick people. She works everyday. But my father worked once or twice since we have migrated to Ankara. I have 4 more siblings and I am the second eldest. I had to work. Telling the truth, my father did not force me to sell anything on street but he created the situation.” (B, boy, 13 years old, living on street)

As it can be understood from the declarations, children feel responsibility in regard to economic problems. Although they were very young, they think they could

make a difference, and they should somehow help the family to get out of this situation. On the other hand it is also understood that parents can force some children who do not want to work, by creating the situation.

3.3.1.3 Lack of Coordination among the Greater Municipality of Ankara, SHÇEK and Deniz Feneri Association: An Influential Factor in the Laziness of the Families

Lack of coordination between the local government, SHÇEK and Deniz Feneri Association was observed as an influential factor in unemployment and income deficiencies. Before proceeding into details it is important to note that this feature is only valid for 8 respondents who live with their families in İsmetpaşa Neighborhood.

Mentioned respondents who live with their families were registered either to ÇETEM or Ulus Child and Youth Center. Those respondents got in touch with the institution while working on street around Ulus. Then their families started to get a payment for every three months, in return of not letting the children to work on street. Furthermore, some participants from İsmetpaşa told that their families were getting food aid 3 or 4 times a year from Greater Municipality of Ankara. Plus they were getting stationary aid from Deniz Feneri Association.

These aid givers; Ulus Child and Youth Center, Greater Municipality of Ankara and Deniz Feneri Association were seemingly providing enough help for the families. Respondents told that as their families got this payment, fathers had stopped working even they had a duty to do and they started to stay home all the time. Moreover, this payment can be given to more than one child in a family, added by other aids; this situation seems to create laziness among families. In addition, participants told that this payment might be cut off soon, and they added they do not know what to do after that.

...One day, a social worker from ÇETEM talked to us on street and told us not to work on street anymore. Then, he contacted our families and persuaded them for not letting us out to work. ÇETEM began to

*give money to my family not only for me but also for my two brothers.
(S. Girl, 15 years old, living with family)*

...My father does not go to work, my family makes a living with the financial help coming from Greater Municipality of Ankara and the money comes every three months from ÇETEM.” (S. Girl, 15 years old, living with family)

...I also worked on street to help my family. My brothers are still working. Now this center gives money to my mother, so that I do not have to work. But there is a rumor that the money will be cut off, I do not know what we will do after that.” (Y. girl, 13 years old, living with family)

Referencing the information gained from the first group, it was asked to second group whether respondents' families were getting a kind of financial help from any institution or organization. Participants who live on street stated that their families were also provided help from Greater Municipality of Ankara 3 to 4 times a year. This contribution was coming in terms of food and clothes. On the other hand, 3 participants told that SHÇEK institutions registered them; however they did not mention any monetary aid.

Since this finding of the study considered being one of the most significant, it will be elaborated in the coming chapter in detail. Opinions of social workers will be added and it will be presented as a suggestion for improvement.

3.3.2 Family

In terms of family relations, peace in the family, children's thoughts about the significance of family, punishments and rewards, and quarrels at home deserves attention in leading children to streets.

3.3.2.1 Low Education among Parents

Third important factor was mentioned to be the low education status among parents. This factor seems to be interrelated with children's lack of schooling. It is because of the fact that, parents with inadequate education cannot provide the appropriate basis for children to create an appetite for learning.

“Street children come from families who do not have education. Mothers are barely primary school graduates. Although fathers have at least primary education; they never send their children to school, especially if they are girls. I want to remind that primary education is compulsory in our country. A child performs what she/he has seen from the parents. Street children do the same; they do not go to school, because their parents do not have such a foresight to preach their children.” (F., Behice Eren Dormitory)

“Children who are registered in this center have illiterate mothers, and fathers who only have primary school degree. Do you think those parents can provide any future for a child? Can they shape any kind of pathway to their children to walk? (R, ÇETEM)

This study's sample was composed of 13 fathers who have attended primary school. Only two fathers had secondary school degree. As for mothers, 5 were primary school graduate the rest 10 were illiterate. Parents encouraged children's schooling as long as they have enough resources. As it was mentioned above, especially families in İsmetpeşa were dependent on the aids from local government and SHÇEK. It is obvious that if those resources will be cut off, children might leave school in order to work. In addition, as it will be given in the expectations from the future, high school was the highest degree for children's imagination. For most them being a university student is out of this planet.

3.3.2.2 Peace in the Family

When asked whether respondents feel peaceful within the family and with their parents, all respondents who live with family stated that they were very happy; they loved their parents and felt confident at home. On the other hand, for one participant, Y., quarrels at home made trouble. Y. warned me to not to tell those to her friends and she added she does not feel peace at home.

“My father does not come home sometimes. He goes away, we do not know where and until he comes back, my mother cries. She does not tell us anything but cries. I also feel very bad when dad is away. I am very angry with him because he makes my mom cry. I have siblings. We do not have so much money. I do not ask anything to my mom, instead I help her in housework; I cook, I wash the dishes. (Y. girl, 13 years old, living with family)

... Before I contacted Ulus Observatory Center, I was selling water on street. We went out in the morning with friends. But in the evening we had to go home because, it was dangerous. My parents were not against this. (S. Girl, 15 years old, living with family)

As for the children who live on street, among 6 participants, none of them told peaceful stories or ideas about their families. All of the respondents told they started working because of financial reasons, but they decided to stay away from home mostly, because of problems with parents. Story of R. can be a good example for this:

“Even though, I visit my family frequently, I have been staying in Gençlik Parkı for almost 2 years with my peer group. My family lives in Altındağ. We migrated from Elazığ to find various job opportunities in Ankara. In addition, we had relatives who had already settled down in this city. They helped us to find a house and temporary jobs for my father.

...I am the eldest daughter of my family. I have 5 more siblings. I usually have the chance to see my brothers on street, because they are also working on street.

...My father wanted me to marry a relative of his when I was 12. I did not want to because; I did not like the man and actually I wanted to go school. I was selling some goods on street at that time. As my family did not have money they did not let me study after primary school, one day, I escaped and started to stay in Gençlik Parkı.” (R, girl, 14 years old, living on street)

One other participant whose story can exemplify the feelings of participants is U. Although, U. is not unhappy with her family and she told she loves and misses them, she said the situation of her family was unbearable.

“My family lives in Altındağ. We live in a “gecekondu” house, very close to Ankara Castle. I have 4 more siblings. My family migrated from Şırnak due to unemployment and terror activities in South Eastern Turkey. At that time her mother was pregnant to the third child.

My father is primary school graduate and mother is illiterate. When we first came to Ankara, our relatives helped them to find a house in this area and found some temporary construction jobs for my father.

...My father injured his back and he has not worked for 2 years now. Therefore, my mother started to work as a cleaning lady. Other women made gossips about my mother. That is why; I had to fight with a boy on street because he said bad words about my mother. My brothers are also working on street. They are showing the way to Ankara Castle to tourists. They can tell the history of the castle in 3 different languages.” (U. girl, 13 years old, living on street)

Even though, it is reported by other studies that alcohol problem of parents might lead children to work on street, this study contained only one parent who had alcohol problem. In addition to divorce of parents, it was stated by the respondent that this situation created trouble for the mother and the children.

“My father never loved my mother. He was drinking every night. My mother cannot walk properly. So she could not look after the house and us. They got divorced 2 years ago. After the divorce, my mother took us and we went back to our hometown, Delice. My father got married last year and he has a new family now.

I was the eldest so I decided to come to Ankara in order to work and I stayed in the city. I sleep on Sakarya Street. D.

“I am glad that my parents got divorced. My father loves neither my mother nor my siblings. He was drinking so much and some nights he did not come home. He was beating my mother and my siblings. He could not beat me because I was the only one who revolted against him. After the divorce, I came to Ankara. At the beginning, I could send money and visited my family in Kırıkkale. For the last 6 months, I could not earn good money and I have not seen my family.” (D. boy, 15 years old, living on street)

In terms of peace, it is crucial to focus on quarrels, which respondents witnessed within the family and their feelings about the arguments. Participants stated they all had quarrels in family mostly as a result of financial problems. They also added quarrels took place between their parents; sometimes they were about kids' naughtiness. As they did provide common answers, another question followed; whether there were arguments, which contain any kind of physical violence. The striking thing in their answers was that they perceive physical violence normal, as though it is naturally a part of a big argument. In addition, it is argued that mothers use more violence than fathers.

“There are quarrels in every family. My father is an aggressive man. He is depressed because he does not work. He goes to coffee house during the day. He plays “okey”¹² with his friends. My mother is mad at him. She says he is lazy and does not think about any of us. I never

¹² **Okey** is a tile based game. Turkey and among Turkish communities abroad, it is very popular not only at homes but also at coffeehouses. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Okey> , 18/12/2007, 11:38.

saw my father hitting my mother but he frequently beat us when he is angry.” (H., boy, 14 years old, living with family)

“I hate my father. He left us because my mother could not move. He was drunk all the time and he beat my mother, my siblings.” (D., boy, 14 years old, living on street)

“My parents were in argument all the time. Thus, my mom was always angry. She beat me and my siblings in order to take her revenge from my father.” (U., boy, 13 years old, living with family)

3.3.2.2 Significance of the Family

The importance of having an ordered family appeared to be the most crucial indicator for a child, if he/she is on the verge of a decision of leaving home. As it was mentioned above, street work is only the first step of becoming a street child. Very child in the sample, including the one who live on street started working on street at the beginning. The ones, who did not have a peaceful family environment, an the ones who were lacking care, leave home and choose to live on street. This decision seems to be a conscious one. In short, children are aware of what they are doing. They consciously choose to live on street because; family does not give the needed care and protection to them. Therefore, being on street is definitely is a continuous process, in which family intervention and care is crucial.

“A social worker would come across with two kinds of street children in Turkey. First group is the ones who are “forced to work” on street, the other group is the ones who live on street. Former group of children have a relatively ordered family. Children generally have more than 3 siblings, and they probably migrated from the East. Fathers are generally unemployed, or have irregular employment. Mothers on the other hand, are housewives and are barely primary school graduates. Those families come to Ankara with a lot of expectations; they settle down in “gecekondu” neighborhoods where their relatives live. After some time, children have to work in order to contribute the family income.

The other group is mostly coming from a similar background. The only difference is that their families are not ordered, they cannot provide the loving environment to protect their children from the dangers of the street. That is why; some children decide to live away from their parents. For instance, children in Kızılay generally come from Yenidogan, a “gecekodu” neighborhood close to Ankara Castle. They come to Kızılay to work at the beginning, but as they stay longer, they develop addiction to sniff thinner. Hence, they start to find new and easy ways of earning money so that they can buy thinner. In the end, we see them in illegal activities.” (M., Behice Eren Dormitory)

Family was pointed to be the most significant thing for children. Respondents, whether they live with family or not, indicated that a protective, loving and caring family is so crucial for them. According to participants, lacking a protective family is the reason for staying on street. Street workers thought that they did not have to stay on street because they had a loving family to take care of them.

“If I did not have parents, I would be one of those street children. I might have sniffed thinner. I might also carry knife just like them. They may be good children but they do not have an owner. Their parents are bad people, because, they leave their children on street. For instance, my mother was very upset when we were working on street. We had to work because our family did not have enough money. But she would never let us live on street...” (M. boy, 16 years old, living with family)

“My parents love us so much. Father protects us; mother always takes care of us. A child would be lost without a family. I am lucky, because I never had any problem with my parents.” (Ş. girl, 14 years old, living with family)

“If I had a loving family, I would not be on street.” (R, boy, 14 years old, living on street)

“If my father loved us he would not divorce my mom and live with us. (D, boy, 13 years old, living on street)

“Why would I go back home, what will it change in my life? I am not lucky as those other children.” (T, boy, 13 years old, living on street)

3.3.2.3 Rewards and Punishments

About rewards from the parents, respondents gave different answers. Children, who live with family, told that they can even get a mobile phone in return of good grades in school. Contrary to the first type, participants of the second type indicated they do not have enough closeness with their fathers to get any kind of reward. On the other hand, mothers are closer to their children compared to fathers. In this sense, they had the authority to punish them as well as to reward them.

“I have never been a successful student, but when I did not have any bad grades I wanted her to make pancakes for me.” (T, boy, 13 years old, living on street)

However, as for punishments, they all stated they were beaten when they do something wrong or at least they hear bad words. For one participant those punishments were appeared to be a reason from staying away from the family. Generally speaking, mothers were pointed to be the punitive body of the family.

“When I do something wrong, she gives me some housework to do or sent me to buy something form the market. She becomes so angry sometimes and she hits me. When I was selling handkerchiefs, one day I was very late. I was afraid of my mother, because she would have definitely beaten me badly if I went home. It was the first time I spent a night on street. When I went home the other day, she beat me, anyway.” (R, girl, 14 years old, living on street)

3.3.3 Emotional Abuse/ Neglect in Family

Respondents were asked about their feelings within the family. More specifically, they were asked to tell if they feel emotionally abused or neglected inside the family. Answers indicated that street children in our sample were subjected to emotional abuse and some of them were forced to do things, which they do not want to do.

“My father works in a hotel. He is the gatekeeper. Sometimes he does not come home. I am the only boy of my parents. I feel responsible for my mother and my sisters. I know I need to protect them but I sometimes feel scared and alone. My mother often cries in the night. At that time I do not know what to do.

...My father does not think about us and thus he does not come home every night. He earns money but he spends it in the hotel with a women. I heard this from a neighbor of ours. I think my mother knows this and cries for this reason. I do not like my father, because he leaves us alone and even if he is home, he does not pay attention to me and my sisters.” (R, boy, 14 years old, living with family)

As it can be seen, R. felt so much responsibility and he told he sometimes does not know what to do. R. was emotionally neglected by his father’s absence. His father did not give enough emotional support to him, as a result he often found himself in confusion.

Another respondent, Y. is the eldest girl of a family with 5 children. Similarly Y.’s father works in the same hotel as R.’s father does and she was complaining about his father, too. Before giving the details, it should be added that Y. was late for the interview appointment. During the interview she told that she did not want to come across with any friends from her neighborhood. In addition, she made me promise not to tell anything to her friends.

“My father works in Hotel Gülbahar in Ulus. He does not come home every night. I feel upset when he is not home. I do not know why he stays there. My parents have arguments because of that. My mother wants my father to come home every night. Sometimes I think he does not like us, because if he did, he would have come home.” (Y, girl, 14 years old, living with family)

“You saw my mother, my brother is the same. My mother swears to me all the time. She thinks I am waste of time. I am not afraid of her but I am afraid of my brother. Because, when he beats me he really hurts. I do not like any of them. I do not like this institution either. They have never treated me good.” (K, girl, 14 years old, was sent to SHÇEK dormitory)

“My father wanted me to marry with one of our relatives. He was 10 years older than me. At that time my brothers and I had already been selling some goods on street. I did not want to marry and I escaped. Of course my father knows where I am, because I still go home sometimes when he is not home or I see my brothers on street. He does not want me anymore. He thinks I am a bad girl just because I sleep on street.”(B, girl, 14 years old, living on street)

“I started to sell water when I was 11. After the primary school, my father sent me Kızılay to work with other children from our neighborhood. I made good money at the beginning but I had to give the money to my father in the evenings. Our home was too far, so it was difficult to go home every night. Once my best friend M. was beaten by his father very badly because he did not want to give money to his father. The other day, he said that he would not go home that night. Thus, I stayed with him. We have been sleeping in Güvenpark and such places for over a year.” (T. boy, 13 years old, living on street)

3.3.4 Physical Abuse

Participants' told their parents sometimes beat them. According to respondents it was normal, because it was certain for them that they do something to deserve it. They did not conceive it as a way of physical violence. It was a part of the education process, and apart from all, it was a common way of showing anger.

“My dad beats me when I have it coming. For example, once when we were selling on street, we came across with street children. They sniff thinner so they can be dangerous. They wanted to get our money by using a knife. I did not want to give the money, so one of them stabbed the knife on my back. After my father learned about this he was very angry and he also punched me in the face, told me not to revolt against them.” (S. boy, 13 years old, living with family)

İ. told that once his father had beaten his mother very badly. Relatives around were very angry with his father. That is why he said; his father does not want to show that he beats his wife. Apart from İ. no participant told that there is physical violence towards her/his mother. In general, respondents all indicated that their parents, mostly their fathers when they do something to make them angry, beat them. Surprisingly, all respondents were pretty sure that they deserve to be beaten.

“My dad and mom have quarrels. Father works at Hotel Galahad in Ulus. He does not come home frequently. While quarrelling, my father sometimes hits my mother. But he never hits the visible places. For example, he never punches her in the face, instead he hits to her back. He often beats me and my siblings as well.” (İ, boy, 13 years old, living with family)

Another participant, K. told a totally different story than the rest of the respondents who live with their family. K. tried to live away from home but at the time of the interview, she did not have an exact status of being home or not. We

came across with her and her mother in ÇETEM while conducting the interviews with other respondents. Her mother was beating K. when I first saw her. She was shouting and swearing. It was obvious that she has been beaten and she kept saying that she does not want to be home anymore.

...I do not want to stay home because my mother and my brother beat me. They also swear at me. I was also beat by shop owner. I think one of them denounced me.

...I do not want to stay in the dormitory as well, because they beat us there as well. (K, girl, 14 years old, was sent to a SHÇEK dormitory)

K. was one of the participants, who indicated that she is being forced to do something that she does not want to do. She told that her mother sends her to make some money on street just as other children in the neighborhood.

“I had to sell handkerchief on the traffic lights in Ulus. In this neighborhood nobody likes gypsies. They do not talk to us they depreciate us. I fought with some children in the lights and I did not want to go there anymore. My mother beat me and forced me to work, but I did not go.” (K, girl, 14 years old, was sent to a SHÇEK dormitory)

On the basis of those, K's situation was discussed with a social worker in ÇETEM. He told that this is not her first time in the institution. She came here many times before, because of theft. In K.'s case, he believed that her mother forced her to steal as well, but once K was caught, her mother did not protect her. I did not get any information about those from K., as a matter of fact; those comments were only put as acknowledgements.

3.4 Street-life Experiences

3.4.1 Difference between Children Work on Street and Children Live on Street: The concept of having a “Sahip”¹³

Respondents who live with family strongly rejected to be labeled as being “street children”. According to them “A street child is someone who is dirty, sniffs substances, and stays on street, carry knife and threatens other children who work on street”. Thus, they did not accept to be a part of this definition. When they were asked about what they think the difference is between the first group of respondents and the second group, first group answered as follows:

“...Children live on street are different from us. We are out during the day but went back home in the night. The ones who sleep on street are bad people, they sniff thinner, they carry knife. They do sleep there because; they do not have an owner. No one is taking care of them.”
(E. boy, 14 years old, living with family)

To put it clearer, first group of respondents told that they are not “street children” because; they have a “sahip”. Having a “sahip” refers to having a family. Family represents protection and state of belongingness. Street workers think that some children stay on street because they do not have a family to take care of them and to protect them. Similarly, participants of second group made the same definition; family is more than mother, father and children, it is perceived like a power mechanism, which holds the members together. From the frame of this opinion, since some children are lack of this protected environment, they stay on street. Furthermore, participants who sleep on street supported this idea by indicating family problems as a motive in pushing themselves to street.

¹³ “Sahip” refers to be the possessor, owner of something. Though it is related to monetary possession, the way “sahip” was pronounced by the participants did not have relation to money. Rather, it refers to protection, and care of the family.

3.4.2 Longevity of Staying on Street and Importance of the Peer Group

Respondents argued that they decide their longevity of being on street. Parents did not let them stay too late; they went back home when it was getting dark. During this time, they tried to sell some goods, and they ate outside from the money they earned.

It is also stated that it is dangerous to be on street when it is dark, one can easily come across with alcoholics, and with the ones sniffing substances like thinner. Respondents, who live with their family, told they were afraid and they preferred to be home during the nights. Moreover, it was observed that male children could stay longer on street than females.

All Participants told that they were going out to work as a group of children from the same neighborhood. Participants constituted groups of 5 or 6 children and once they began to sell, they were dividing into smaller groups.

For participants who live on street, peer group is very crucial. They live in groups, they share whatever they have and it is also a protection mechanism for them to live in groups. They are mostly afraid of wine addicts, strangers and child police. As they think it is dangerous to sleep during the night, they prefer to sleep in the mornings until noon. In addition, two participants told that they sniff thinner in order to feel stronger. They added that sniffing thinner makes them feel as if they do not have any problems and they forget about the bad experiences.

“For example, one day it was summertime, we went out in the morning. We gathered handkerchiefs and water from a wholesaler in Ulus. With the girls from the neighborhood, we constituted a group of 8 children. Me, my brother, Y., Ş., R., we were all together. First we divided into 2 groups; boys were going to the minibus stops to sell water. We were waiting in the traffic lights and when it is red, we were getting closer to cars and selling handkerchiefs. We ate from the money we earned. Sometimes, people gave something to eat because they pitied us.” (S., girl, 15 years old, living with family)

“I live with my friends in “Gençlik Parkı”. We are like a family, especially I and my best friend U.

...I cannot sleep well during the nights. Sometimes it is too cold. Therefore, I try to sleep in the mornings until noon. During the day, we go out from the park for begging, but we never go away from Ulus. People give money; sometimes they give something to eat as well. They pity us. They give bagel, pancake, candy...If we cannot find anything, we send A. to beg food from shop owners because he is the youngest. They often give, but generally they send him away. We share everything with U. We eat together, we beg together.” (B, girl, 14 years old, living on street)

“I beg during the day on Sakarya Street with my friends. We have a group of 6-7 boys. We beg together, and eat together. We also protect each other. It is dangerous in the nights. Especially on Sakarya Street there are wine addicts. Thus, we are always together to protect one another. Those addicts want money from us or they want to send us to steal. When we do not, they beat us. Actually, I am not afraid of them. I am only afraid of child police; they collect the children and beat them in the police station.” (T, boy, 14 years old, living on street)

3.4.3 Dangers of Street Life

When the issue was dangers of street life, respondents who live with their family and the ones who live on street told different experiences. Girls who live with their family were quite positive about everything. They declared it was not frightening and dangerous. While, boys told that it was more dangerous than girls think it was. Moreover, some respondents told they were afraid of children that stay on street.

“Girls did not stay too long on street. We were hanging around in Ulus and in Gençlik Parkı. There are street children staying in the park. They sniff thinner and they do not think healthy. It is so

dangerous when they crossed your way and want your money. One should not revolt and give the money right away. They stabbed one of my friends because he did not want to share his money with them.”
(T., boy, 14 years old, living with family)

“Actually, it is not dangerous, once you have friends to protect you. There are other children staying on the other side of “Gençlik Parkı”, they sniff thinner, they act weird. I am afraid of them because, sometimes they come and fight with us. I heard one of them stabbed a boy. But we protect each other, for example, there are some men who kidnap girls from street and employ them as prostitutes. They are dangerous, I am only afraid of them. That is why I cannot sleep well in the nights.” (S., boy, 13 years old, living with family)

On the other hand, for respondents who live on street there were dangers such as; thinner sniffing, dangers of working away from home, and possibility of involving in illegal activities.

3.4.3.1 Thinner Sniffing

In this study, there was only one child who sniffed thinner. He thought sniffing thinner helped him get rid of bad feelings like fear. He added he felt like a hero and thought he could do anything when he was sniffing thinner.

“I saw it from a friend of mine. I tried and I like it because I feel better when I sniff it. I feel stronger and I feel relieved. I do not think of anything bad, everything seems to be nice. It is not a waste of money, because nothing gives me these feelings, not even food.” (R. boy, 14 years old, living on street)

3.4.3.2 Working away from Home

This sample also contained two respondents who left home in order to work make money. Another participant is R. He and his brother S. left home with their elder brother's encouragement. They believe that he will help them to find a job just like himself, until that time, they will stay in Ankara Bus Terminal. During the day, they carry passenger luggage. With the money they earn they buy food and they sleep in waiting rooms.

“No. If I felt peaceful at home, I would not be here. My father was hitting us all. My eldest brother left home because of that. Father was swearing at my mother. I told myself that I would also leave just like my brother and earn my own money. My younger brother S. also came with me.”

My father sent me to work as a leather apprentice. Master was beating me, so I did not want to work there. Then we escaped with my brother S. We have a job to do here. Our eldest brother arranged it. We carry the luggage and we earn enough money for two of us. ”
(R&S, boys, 13-14 years old, living in AŞTİ)

3.4.3.2 Illegal Activities on Street

Participants of this study did not engage with illegal activities but it is told by the respondents that in order to survive on street, children have to be a part of illegal activities. Those activities are mostly stealing and pick pocketing. On the other hand, according to some respondents, there are gangs who can protect them in return of doing their small business.

According to social workers, competitive system is diffused in any segment of the society through visual media. As a result of this, children are aware of various alternatives of goods, mobile phones, clothes and so forth. Therefore, they want to earn their own money in order to reach their desires.

“The street has been ranted recently. Pick pocketing and theft rates have risen. Shortcuts of earning money became very popular among street children. Of course, criminal groups manipulate this. Children are just puppets but real reason of this is the variety and charm of alternatives such as new clothes, different indicators of life styles and high technology mobile phones. Children work on street, especially if they do not have an ordered family, can easily be the targets of criminal groups. Those groups employ boys to injure men or to be bodyguards and they employ girls for prostitution. (R., ÇETEM)

Moreover, earning money means achieving to be independent for children. This feature was noted in the review of studies worldwide. It is crucial to mention it once more, because some parents cannot meet the needed responsibilities to their children, children move to streets as an attempt at empowerment. (Schimmel, 2006) Feeling independent might be important for children in showing his power to peers and he/she might see it as an indicator of prestige.

On the basis of those, the factor of deprivation and existence of various alternatives might be one of the most crucial findings of this study since it can be an explanation of the hypothetical relation between being a street child and criminality.

“...Children are not innocent as they were 10-15 years ago because the world has become a worse place. Turkey is not an innocent place; she has to adopt the competitive system. Therefore, children on street, if they stay there long enough-, switch to illegal sectors easily.” (F. Behice Eren Dormitory)

“It is easy to save children whose family is concerned. Otherwise, child would be lost, she/he starts to live on street soon, become a part of a gang, or at least he would try to be involved in a gang. It is the way to survive on street. Either she/he will engage with a criminal group, or would be gangs’ puppets by sniffing substances and using drugs. Gangs are so influential on children. Apart from money,

children seek for prestige and fame. For instance, I dealt with a group of children from Haymana, some years ago. Common mentality among those children was to commit a crime immediately, so that they can go to jail, get involved with the crew of “Kürt Ahmet” and become also a member of this crew. This was the only ambition.” (A., Ulus Child and Youth Center)

3.4.4 Access to Institutional Help

As it was mentioned before, children got to now social workers of SHÇEK on street. That is why, getting in contact with institutional help is a part of street life experiences. On this matter, children who were living with their family had positive thoughts and experiences about SHÇEK. On the contrary, children who live on street did not trust anyone, and they wanted to be left alone, since they did not want to go back to family life.

“One day while we were working in Ulus, a man came closer to us. He introduced himself and told that he works for ÇETEM. He added we should not work on street and he noted our names. At the beginning I was scared of him. Later, when I get to know him, I understood that he is a good man. He contacted our mothers and talked to them. He registered us here and then we began to get money. After that, we started to tell everyone in the neighborhood that there is an institution here. They also came and registered themselves.” (S, girl, 15 years old, living with family)

“First my brother met with Ulus Child and Youth Center. They found us when we were selling water. I was twelve years old. I could not attend to school at that time. I could not follow the attendance and I skipped many lessons. My teacher called my mother but I needed to earn money. My brother was in the same situation as well. This center gave money to our family and sent us to a boarding school for free. I finished secondary school this year, and I will go to high school next semester. It is also a boarding school and it is for free, too. Without

the help of this center, we could have never gotten education.” (M. boy, 15 years old, living with family)

3.5 Expectations from the Future

Among 15 respondents, only one did not have any school experience, the rest were at least primary school graduate. Respondents who live with family told that even they were working on street; they went out for it on their spare time; when there was no school. Moreover, it is observed that the more a respondent has school experience, the further plans she/he has for the future. Among those 8 participants, 4 of them completed secondary school and were registered to high school. Those 4 respondents told that they all want to become teachers in the future. The other 3 respondents were going to secondary school and they told they do not know what they will be in the future.

On the other hand, K. the only respondent who was illiterate and did not complete any school stated that she does not want to go to school and she does not want to be anything, because she is happy with her life.

Participants, who live on street, could not tell so much about expectations. Only T and his brother S. stated that they would make money soon, with their brother's help. Other participants told that they had plans for future like being a doctor or a teacher but they do not think they will achieve it now. Furthermore, it is crucial to mention that participants in second group do not have a school attendance at the moment. Except for one participant, who never attended school, they are all primary school graduates and they did not have the chance to continue to school. It is observed that, if a child goes to school and have an idea of schooling, she/he will have foresight the future. Respondents of this group cannot even think of having a secondary school degree. High school and university is not even a part of their dreams.

CHAPTER 4

COMPARISON OF CHILDREN WORK/LIVE ON STREET AND SOCIAL WORKERS IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT FROM SOCIAL WORKERS

4.1 Comparison of Work/Live on Street and Social Workers in the Context of Social Exclusion

This study, verifies most of the hypotheses, which were put before the research. As proceeding into detail, life histories of street children and the gatherings from the interviews with social workers will be compared in terms of reasons of children's being on street, street-life experiences and problems of intervention.

To begin with, it was observed that both respondents who live on street and who are only working on street were coming from similar backgrounds. They were the children of migrant families, their parents had low education status, and they were living in poor neighborhoods of Ankara. Moreover, fathers were mostly unemployed and children felt they have to work in order to contribute to family income. On the other hand, though it was hypothesized at the beginning, there was no criminality, drug or alcohol addiction or sexual abuse within the families.

When the reasons of children's being on street are considered, children's own thoughts about themselves and social workers' ideas mostly coincided. They pointed out that, migration, financial deficiencies, affects of family relations; which can be expanded with such factors as low education of parents, traditional family structure and significance of having a family; and both physical and emotional abuse and neglect would appear as the factors that push children to street. While interviewing the children, the main reason and thus most important

factor of their situation seemed to be the financial deficiencies as they mostly started to work on streets to help the family income. However social workers argued that migration is the most important factor since it is just a beginning of a lot of troubles in urban life. Due to migration, families have to face with adaptation problems, unemployment, and financial deficiency.

Children's own ideas about the reasons of their being on street and the factors that were put by social workers were similar but not totally the same. It is crucial to note that children who work on the street do not think they are street children. They argue that street child is someone who sleeps on street, sniffs thinner, carries knife, and most importantly, he/she is the child who does not have a "sahip".

The concept of "sahip" appeared to be one of the most important findings of this study, since it tells how children workers on street perceive themselves and the image of the real "street children" in their minds. On the other hand according to social workers, these two groups of children are not distinct categories; rather, they are the two stops of the same process.

The process of working on street according to social workers, begin with economic problems originated from the troubles of migration. Therefore, migration was argued as the reason of origin. Then come low education of parents, and the impact of deprivation and the existence of various alternatives. Family relations, which refer to the general atmosphere of the family life, was reported as the most influential factor in making a child decide to live on street. Family is important because, children perceive it more than the sum of mother and father. Rather it is an entity that protects and takes care of children. Therefore, children without this protection may end up on street, according to child workers. Social workers verify this assumption putting "the family relations" as the most crucial factor in a child's decision to live on street.

Our findings also depicted another factor, which was not mentioned by previous researches. *Deprivation and the existence of various alternatives* were

stated by social workers as a pushing factor. This factor is observed to be influential mainly for children who are on the verge of deciding to live on street. According to social workers, after children begin to earn money, and if they are subjected to abuse in family they decide to stay away from home. It is argued that earning money means dependency for children. The more money can a child earn on street; it is most likely for her/him to decide to leave her/his family.

As for the reasons given by children, economic problems, family relations, emotional and physical abuse was mentioned. Children who work on street did not think that they might start sleeping on street one day. On the contrary, according to social workers, working on street is the first step to be in risk of leaving home.

Second, while examining the street life experiences, it was observed that even though, there are dangers of working or living on street, children are trying to avoid the dangers by various methods. Children whether they work or live on street, they were always within a peer group. Plus, it is found out that children who live with their families try to get back to their home before it becomes dark, on the other hand, some of children who live on street were sniffing thinner to feel stronger. Also in cases of children who live on street, it is argued by social workers that those children may become possible criminals in the near future. This was also verified by the life stories of children. Children who were street workers were not aware of any kind of illegal activities; on the contrary, children who live on street noted stealing food as an activity of their daily life.

According to social workers, in order to earn more money children might engage in illegal activities and they might become an easy target for street gangs. That is why; social workers refer to the *impact of money and prestige* that might be gained from criminal activities because, some children may want to become criminals so that they can get a sort of prestige among their peers. Even though, no one among the participants stated they are a part of criminal gangs; social

workers told street children are usually the potential crew of criminal gangs in order to get some jobs done.

Another significant aspect of street experience is that the time spent on street is a part of *socialization* of children in poor and undereducated neighborhoods. During the research, respondents argued that it is fun to be with other children, because every child in their neighborhood is involved in a sort of street selling. Children in our sample, start to work on street, beginning from early puberty. Parents sometimes support street selling even if it is not supported it is never restricted.

As a matter of fact, working on street is perceived as an ordinary way of spending the day for some neighborhoods, in reference to the life stories of some respondents in İsmetpaşa and in Haymana, for our sample. Parents expect their children to work in the public space and bring money back home. Therefore, children go out to work in the morning in big peer groups. Furthermore, they protect each other against the possible dangers of street. Thus, children in our sample start to socialize not only at primary school and in family but also on street.

While looking at their future expectations, which were discussed in the third part of the study, it is seen that as the children have only a little or no education at all, they do not have many dreams about their future too. Besides because of their situation, children did not believe that they may end up being a doctor, lawyer or teacher even they sometimes dream about it. Moreover, social workers agreed that since their parents are not well educated and becoming lazy as they can get money from their children's work or from various institutions, it is not a surprising output that those children do not have big expectations from the future. On the basis of life histories of children, this study has found the following aspects with respect to its theoretical framework:

Table 5 Social Exclusion and Street Children

	Children Living with Family (Street Workers)	Children Living on Street (Street Workers and Habitants)
Economic Exclusion		
Material Deprivation	+	+
Inadequate Access to Governmental and Semi- Governmental Provisions	-	+
Socio-Cultural Exclusion		
Insufficient Social Integration	-	+
Insufficient Cultural Integration	-	+

1. Material deprivation has been observed in both groups of respondents. In this respect, they argued that since their fathers are mostly unemployed, mothers are housewives and they have many siblings, one of the most important reasons for working on street is lack of material resources.
2. Access to governmental and semi-governmental provisions appeared to be inadequate in children living on street. These children live on street, earn their lives on their own. Although, they have heard of governmental provisions and aids, they could not be able to access to any of those. On the other hand, children living with family expressed that they are getting some sorts of monetary and non-monetary aids from the Greater Municipality of Ankara, SHÇEK and Deniz Feneri Association. Therefore, those respondents do not define themselves as economically excluded in this sense.

3. Children living on street have pointed insufficient social integration. Even though, they live in peer groups, they argued that they do not have a family as a protective body. This very situation creates the biggest difference between the two groups of respondents. Children who live with family, refuse to identify themselves as “street children”, since they have a protective family conversely to children who live on street. It is observed that family is seen as the “sahip” of the children, which provides protection, care and safety.
4. When insufficient cultural integration concerned, it is observed that children living on street are more familiar with illegal activities and crime than the rest of the respondents. Children living with family, though they know illegal activities exist in street life, they do not engage with them. Conversely, among children who live on street, there are examples of smokers and thinner sniffers.

Finally, on the basis of the findings of this research, suggestions for improvement should be considered. This paper shows that there is no cooperation between the interventions of the Greater Municipality, SHÇEK and Deniz Feneri Association in Ulus, Ankara. Moreover, some aids of Greater Municipality negatively influence SHÇEK’s work in İsmetpaşa. Although it is known that Greater Municipality of Ankara has its own center for street children, it is understood that there is limited cooperation between SHÇEK and the biggest local government of Ankara.

Any kind of solution to the phenomenon of street children should be conceived as a long-term process and there must be longitudinal data about street children. As social workers suggested during the interviews, there might be “a change” in the profile of street children, but right now SHÇEK only provides information about numbers of children in each institution. Therefore such a change cannot be empirically examined.

Another point is it is argued that the institutions of SHÇEK take care of many issues at the same time. That is to say, Behice Eren Dormitory has looked after street children, prostitutes, homeless women, and drug addicts in last 8 year. What this study suggests is that there should be specific centers for each issue so that the problems can be handled with efficiently.

Social workers stated that both children work and live away from their families are on street because of the similar fundamental reasons. According to social workers the main difference between children who live with their family and children who live on street, was that the latter is subjected to emotional abuse and neglect from the parents more than the former.

Children who did not feel peace in family might decide to live away from home. Therefore, working on street is only a step in street life, if a child is not taken care by his/her family; there is always the risk that this child might choose to stay on street. In addition, social workers indicated that the longer a child spends time on street the higher risk she/he has for staying on street.

On the basis of the answers of social workers, the most crucial indicator in child's beginning on is a "family in order". In accord with the experts, an ordered and loving family environment is the best way to protect children at risk. Therefore, social workers lined up pushing factors as such; family relations, migration, low education status of the parents, financial problems, and the impact of deprivation and the existence of various alternatives.

4.2 Current Situation of Street Children in Turkey and Suggestions for Improvement from Social Workers

Lack of coordination between municipalities, SHÇEK and NGO's was pointed out to be the most crucial aspect of the current situation of street children in Turkey. Open-door system in SHÇEK and lack of specialization in SHÇEK institutions followed this aspect.

4.2.1 Lack of Coordination between SHÇEK, Local Governments and NGO's: A Tool for Political Benefit

To begin with, lack of coordination between local governments and SHÇEK is noted as the most important problem against the interventions in favor of children. To clarify, although there are many interventions for street children those acts simply does not work, or negatively effects the situation.

To put it clearer, as it was mentioned in the previous chapter, families of working children were getting monetary payment from SHÇEK. In return of this payment, they do not send children to work on street. This aid was called “salary” among the participants. They perceive it as a wage in return of not working on street. It was observed form the interviews that, fathers whose family get the payment, stopped working. Families of street children in our sample survive due to the aids coming from the municipality, SHÇEK and Deniz Feneri Association. Therefore, it seems those aids simply created laziness among respondents from İsmetpaşa. Furthermore, it was obvious that both SHÇEK and the Greater Municipality of Ankara are aware of one another's aids.

On the other hand, social workers who are keeping the records of İsmetpaşa indicated those monetary aids are temporary. Families in İsmetpaşa were informed about this long ago but they became dependent on this payment and created some sort of laziness because of this ready made money. Thus, institution decided to cut the aid off. Furthermore, in İsmetpaşa, respondents declared that their fathers do not work anymore because, they are getting money from SHÇEK, they have the food from the Greater Municipality of Ankara and they also receive stationary aid from Deniz Feneri Association.

“ When we register their children we told parents that this aid would be temporary, just until they are out of the crisis they were in. Frankly, recently, we observed that fathers do not work and they

became dependent to the aids coming from municipalities, our institution and so on. They actually, call this money a “salary” as if they produced a labor and they get their wage. They think that state should look after them even if they do not produce anything.” (A., Ulus Child and Youth Center)

During the research, some respondents argued that they might have to start working on street again, since the monetary aid will be broken off. This very declaration of participants demonstrates that neither, participants and their parents have ever understood the real aim of this aid nor they have never been actually told. Social work experts told that monetary aid usually creates laziness among families. It does so, in İsmetpaşa.

The Greater Municipality of Ankara provides one other aid to the very same families. İsmetpaşa is one of the neighborhoods, the municipality sends big amount of food aids. Municipality gives food packages 3 to 4 times a year. Participants argued they do not have to buy anything else because aid packages are large enough and they can find every need of theirs in them. In addition, just before religious festivals, which happen two times a year, there come packages of food to every household. According to social workers, municipalities influences *gecekondu* neighborhoods with aids and they expect to receive votes in return. Therefore, it is understood that local governments intentionally support undereducated, crowded and poor neighborhoods in order to get political benefit.

Another social worker emphasizes the importance of politics in creation of street children. She tells due to aids, political parties make their own propaganda. Those poor neighborhoods are intentionally selected for those policies, because, they are in need of financial help, and they are easy to be a target of propaganda since they are not educated.

“Children, no matter they live or work on street, become distant to their family because of economic reasons. It is a process of being a street child. First they go out to work, then, if they are subjected to violence at home, or if they are from broken families, they start to sleep on street. The topic of street children is very popular. Many researchers studied this topic for years. Why do we still see children on street? In my opinion, this very population is a target for political parties to persuade for vote. Those uneducated families vote for the party, which helps them. Municipalities are also a part of a specific ideology. They know that those aids are making families lazy and by helping them the problem of street children would only increase. In my opinion, no one thinks that seeing children on street is a trouble. Rather, municipalities and NGO’s, which are a part of similar ideologies, target poor families and try to acquire votes from them.”

Obviously aids do not provide any solution for the phenomenon of street children; rather it makes the situation chronic. Municipalities provide aid to neighborhoods like İsmetaşa so that they can get votes. This system works very well, because, in those neighborhoods education status is well below the average and people are ready to get any kind of help without considering the source. Hence, as long as the families get those aids, they will not pretend to change their lives. In addition, this state of dependency would bring many other problems. For instance, one possible trouble would be the general understanding of parents that they can continue their lives without producing any labor. Children of such parents would develop a similar approach towards life and they might never think that further education and labor is important for an individual.

“The phenomenon of street children would never end in Turkey, because this work needs long term effort. Specifically, local governments, municipalities and NGO’s should play a key role in this. Unfortunately in Turkey, this coordination never works. Those organs generally have disputes and they only think of their own interests. (M., Behice Eren Dormitory)

4.2.2 Open-Door System and Lack of Deterrent Sanctions

Open-door system means that institutions can register children, can warn them against the dangers and risks of the street, but the institution cannot keep the child if there is a crisis in the child's life. Thus, it is not possible to make longitudinal interventions; it is easy to lose a child.

“First of all, I would like to mention that the more a child stays on street to work or for other activities, the easier she/he will begin to live on street. In this sense, longevity of time spent on street is very crucial. If a child has been on street to work for just some days, she/he would have greater chance to be saved. On the other hand, if this time period gets longer, child begins to involve in illegal activities, at least, she/he starts to carry knife in order to protect her/himself.

Thus, the timing of our intervention and its longevity becomes also important. Street children come to the institution, we talk to them but we cannot keep them if there is physical or sexual abuse at home, for instance. Then the child goes back to street, the only thing we can do is to trace the children, talk to their families.” (M., Behice Eren Dormitory)

“Sanctions are deterrent neither for families nor for children. Our institutions are based on open-door system. It means, children come here, we register them, but we do not have any kind of sanction to keep them in order to give the needed rehabilitation. Moreover, even if children stay in the institution, we do not have enough resources to provide rehabilitation for them. For instance, I cannot give rehabilitation with agriculture. Children need something to empty their minds. Furthermore, we are in need of competent experts for pre-study of street children before we choose the best type of help. Actually, there are psychologists in some institutions but, in my opinion, before the psychological help, socio-economic problems of those children should be handled.” (R., ÇETEM)

“Let me tell you an event had happened in 2001. 15 addict children were brought to our institution. They were high and they started to quarrel after some time. In the end, I separated them and talked to the ringleader. I told him to leave this sort of life and quit using drugs. He listened to me and asked: Ok, let’s assume that I quitted everything; I went back to my family. What would it change in my life? Would it give me a better family? Would I have a family in order and peace? Would I have a future?” (R., ÇETEM)

4.2.3 Lack of Specialization

During the study, it was observed that one center of SHÇEK might deal with both street children and homeless women at the same time. Those centers do not have enough number of social workers for more than one task. In addition, in order to make a meaningful contribution, centers have to be specialized in one topic. It is argued that this very problem is originated not only from the conflict of interests between municipalities and SHÇEK but also uncoordinated structure of the application of social policies in Turkey.

“Unfortunately in Turkey, the coordination between municipality, and SHÇEK never works. Those organs generally have disputes and they only think of their own interests. As a matter of fact, they usually conflict during the application of social policies. For instance, this institution (Behice Eren Dormitory), had to deal with many types of social work. We had to cope with prostitution, street children, drug addicts, and homeless women. Each of those issues should be taken into consideration by different specifically specialized institutions. Those groups I mentioned are very different from one another; therefore they have to be treated in their own peculiarity.” (M., Behice Eren Dormitory)

4.3 Further Suggestions for Improvement

In terms of improvement, social workers suggested that the improvement of mother's status in the family, detailed researches on the beginning level about street children and the families would be useful.

“Needed model for this does not exist in Turkey. There should have been a 3-leveled institutional structure. First step would be “first step centers”; in which child would be taken from street and registration would be done in regard to child's street background, health condition and family. Secondly, sheltering institutions should be constructed so that the child can stay, if she/he does not have a place to stay or if her/his parents conduct abuse. In addition, sheltering institutions should be away from children's street environment with the result that children can empty their minds. For instance, while we were sheltering girls from prostitution we could not protect them, because the dormitory was next to a neighborhood full of nightclubs. Third and complementary help for street children should be institutions, which provide occupational training. Furthermore, those 3-levelled work must be interrelated and in coordination with municipalities and NGO's.” (K. Behice Eren Dormitory)

“In order a child to be saved from street life, social workers should behave as though, those children do not have a father. Therefore, study should focus on mother and child. First step is to advance mother's status. She can get monthly money, in return of getting a primary school degree, for example. Payment should not be given to father because; according to our observations mothers think of their children more than the fathers and use this money for children. Second step is to find permanent job for father or at least, a kind of occupational education should be provided. While doing that the child

should attend school and should be kept away from street.” (M., Behice Eren Dormitory)

Another respondent, points the significance of knowing the background of a child in choosing the best type of help. He also stated that social work experts should conduct preparation studies so that the child may be treated accordingly.

“In Ankara, street children generally come from Yenidoğan, Hıdırlıktepe, Haymana, Çukurambar, and İsmetpaşa Neighborhoods. All have different backgrounds. For instance, the ones from Haymana usually migrated from Batman; they work in Ankara to send money to their families. The ones from Yenidoğan also migrated from the East, but they are mostly in drugs business. İsmetpaşa for example, is composed of families migrated from Siirt and their children usually work on street on Ulus Square. I know those, because I have been working in this Center for a long time. The point is that the experts who really know what is going on in those children’s lives should treat those children. Thus, researches on the beginning level should be conducted.” (F. Behice Eren Dormitory)

The same idea is supported by K., another social work specialist who worked with Prof. Dr. Sevil Atauz, with her research about street children in Şanlıurfa. In addition, she elaborated on how to approach street children at the beginning and what has to be done for keeping children away from street.

“In approaching street children, appearance is very important. Specifically for women, we should avoid of wearing clothes, which a child might envy. We should make them feel that we do not look down on them. In time they get to know you and you can communicate with them.”

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of street children has become a subject of interest for social scientists since 1980's. This subject deserves to be popular, since it can be conceived as the failure of the modern state, or at least it refers to a trouble in society in general. Institutional endeavor is gaining speed, as the number of children on the street is getting higher. On the other hand, increasing number of children on street makes the situation complicated, and projects in regard to the solution of this problem become defective. The number of children on street is rising and it brings escalating rates for crime, addiction for substances, begging, pick pocketing and several related issues.¹⁴ Significant findings of this study can be summarized as such:

This study shows that children who work or live on streets of Ankara should be considered two separate groups as children who live with family and children who live on street. Both groups do work on street and they begin from early puberty in order to contribute to family income. If the child is subjected to emotional or physical abuse and lack of love in the family, he/she might decide to live on street. Being dependent from the parents may also be influential in this decision.

Yet, children who simply work on street and live with the family, refuses to be called "street children" since they think there is their family, which provides protection and care. In this respect, the concept of "sahip" needs emphasis. It was the only point street workers give as a mark of the difference from them and the respondents who live on street. The meaning of the term is mostly associated with the possession and being owner of something when it is translated to English. On the other hand, "Sahip" refers to a mechanism in general; it contains protection, care and belongingness. Hence, in this study, it implies the family, as the main difference between street workers and the children live on street.

¹⁴ <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/sirasayi/donem22/yil01/ss829.pdf>, 11/10/2007, 09:34

It is important to note that, the declarations of child respondents and social workers about the reasons for working on street were similar. Social workers also elaborated on the role of being dependent from the family. This feature was explained by the desire of children to have prestige among their peers.

As for street-life experiences, the sample of this study did not meet some hypothesis such as; drug and alcohol addiction among family members. Participants of this research were working on street mostly because of economic reasons, and emotional abuse in the family. Further, street selling is a part of the socialization, some children stated they are enjoying it because; it is fun to be with friends all day away from home.

As for the suggestions for improvement, it is observed that there is lack of coordination between local governments, interventions of SHÇEK and NGO's. Even though, street workers' families are benefited from those provisions, children who live on street do not have access to any intervention, or simply they do not want to be a part of those. It is also indicated that SHÇEK and the centers under the supervision of SHÇEK need more specialization and monetary resources.

When we consider street children's life histories in the context of social exclusion on the basis of the information gathered from social workers, we can argue that children who work on street do not define themselves as socially excluded. On the contrary, children who live away from the family are appeared socially excluded both in material and non- material terms. There are two crucial points here: first, street workers think that they are not a part of the "street children" concept. Thus, in general they have a positive approach towards working on street. While, children live on street, think they are not lucky, because they lack a caring family to hang on. Family here appears as the most important mechanism against non-material exclusion.

Second point is that, street workers do not feel material exclusion in regard to inadequate access to governmental and non-governmental provisions. It was mentioned during previous chapters that local governments provide big amount of

food aid and SHÇEK provides monetary aid in addition to that. These aids, of course, create a positive stand among street workers and their families. On the other hand, it is observed that those aids give way to laziness among the families and children grow up in a family where father and mother do not work, because, they can still survive due to provisions. Furthermore, governments might distribute aids to poor neighborhoods in order to gain political profit.

Do local governments want to compensate the material deprivation of the families by providing provisions? Is it possible that local governments use this strategy to have political benefit? On the basis of the information gathered from this study, these questions need more emphasis.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Questions for Children

- 1- How old are you?
- 2- Your place of birth?
- 3- Do you spend your nights with your family?
- 4- Are you literate?
- 5- Do you attend to school? (If not, until which grade did you attend? Have you been expelled, why aren't you attending?)
- 6- Your mother's education?
- 7- Your father's education
- 8- Is your mother alive?
- 9- Is your father alive?
- 10- How many siblings do you have?
- 11- Do you live with your family? (If not, how often do you see your family?)
- 12- Do you live with your close relatives in the house?
- 13- Is your mother employed? (If so, what's her occupation?)
- 14- Is your father employed? (If so, what's his occupation? Is he unemployed?)
- 15- Does your father have a regular job?
- 16- Does your mother have a regular job?
- 17- Are your family's financial means adequate?
- 18- Who else is bringing money to home besides your mother/father's earnings?
Who else contributes to the family income besides your mother/father?
- 19- How long have you been inhabited in Ankara?
- 20- Where do you live?
- 21- How many rooms does your home have?
- 22- Where are you from?
- 23- How peaceful do you feel in general while you are living with your family?
Can you describe?
- 24- Fights occur in every house. Have you ever witnessed an excessive, disturbing fight in your house?

- 25- What are the reasons of the fights? Can you define?
- 26- Have you faced physical violence during the fights?
- 27- Have you ever felt that your emotions and thoughts have been humiliated; there is a lack of love and courtesy?
- 28- Are you being forced to do something you don't want to do?
- 29- Do you think your father/mother is angry mannered?
- 30- Did you see your parents arguing?
- 31- What do your parents do when you misbehave?
- 32- Does your father drink? How often?
- 33- Does your mother drink? How often?
- 34- Does your father gamble?
- 35- Do your parents feel sorry if something happens to you?
- 36- Do you feel safe because you have parents?
- 37- Have your parents ever hit you?
- 38- Do you have anyone that committed a crime in your family?
- 39- How would you be punished when you do something wrong? Can you give an example?
- 40- Would you be rewarded if you do something right?
- 41- Do you love your family?
- 42- Do you have friends in the street? Can you describe?
- 43- Do you work? Where? For how long?
- 44- How do you spend time on the street?
- 45- Where do you find food?
- 46- Do you ever scare? What are the things that scare you?
- 47- Do you miss your family? What do you miss most?
- 48- What is the difference of the street-life to your life in your house?
- 49- Is it dangerous to be on the street?
- 50- Do you smoke? (What kind of other substances do you use?)
- 51- What do you do to forget when you are scared or angry?
- 52- Where do you spend your nights when you stay on the street?
- 53- Do you think of returning to your family? Why?
- 54- What do you think a child needs most?
- 55- Would you like to take refuge in state institutions if you can't go back to your family?

56- What are the reasons that push you to the street?

57- What is your expectation from the life?

58- What do you want to be in the future?

59- Who is the person you trust most in your life? Why?

Appendix B. Çocuklara Yönelik Sorular

- 1.Kaç yaşındasınız?
- 2.Doğum yeriniz?
3. Akşamları ailenizle mi geçiriyor sunuz?
- 4.Okuma yazma biliyor musunuz?
- 5.Okula devam ediyor musunuz? (Hayırsa, kaçınıcı sınıfa kadar devam ettiniz?, atıldınız mı, neden devam etmiyor sunuz?)
- 6.Annenin eğitim durumu:
- 7.Babanın eğitim durumu:
- 8.Anneniz sağ mı?
- 9.Babanız sağ mı?
- 10.Kaç kardeş siniz?
- 11.Ailenizle birlikte mi yaşıyor sunuz? (Hayır ise; ailenizi ne kadar sıklıkla görüyor sunuz?)
- 12.Evde yakın akrabalarınızla birlikte mi yaşıyor sunuz?
- 13.Anneniz çalışıyor mu? (Çalışıyorsa, ne iş yapıyor?)
- 14.Babanız çalışıyor mu? (Çalışıyorsa ne iş yapıyor?, işsiz mi?)
- 15.Babanızın düzgün bir işi var mıdır?
- 16.Annenizin düzgün bir işi var mıdır?
- 17.Ailenizin maddi imkanları yeterli mi?
- 18.Anne/babanın kazandığı haricinde, evde başka kim para getiriyor?
- 19.Kaç yıldır Ankara'da oturuyor sunuz?
- 20.Nerede oturuyorsunuz?
- 21.Eviniz kaç odalı?
- 22.Nereli siniz?

- 23.Genel anlamda ailenizle birlikte yaşarken kendinizi ne kadar huzurlu hissediyor musunuz? Anlatır mısınız?
- 24.Her evde kavga olur. Evinizde, çok aşırı, rahatsız edici kavgaya tanık oldunuz mu?
- 25.Kavgaların sebebi nedir? Anlatır mısınız?
- 26.Kavgalar sırasında fiziksel şiddetle karşılaştınız mı?
- 27.Duygu veya düşüncelerinizin aşağılandığı, sevgi saygı eksikliği hissettiğiniz olur mu?
- 28.Zorla istemediğiniz bir şey yaptırılıyor mu?
- 29.Sizce babanız/Anneniz sinirli midir?
- 30.Anneniz ve babanızı tartışırken gördünüz mü?
- 31.Anneniz/Babanız yaramazlık yaptığınızda ne yapar?
- 32.Babanız içki içer mi? Ne kadar sıklıkla içer?
- 33.Anneniz içki içer mi? Ne kadar sıklıkla içer?
- 34.Babanız kumar oynar mı?
- 35.Başınıza kötü bir şey olsa anneniz/babanız üzülür mü?
- 36.Ane/babanız olduğu için güvende hissediyor musunuz?
- 37.Anneniz/babanız size hic vurdu mu?
- 38.Ailenizde suç işlemiş biri var mı?
- 39.Yanlış bir şey yaptığınız zaman nasıl cezalandırılırsınız? Örnek verir misiniz?
- 40.Doğru bir şey yaptığınızda nasıl ödüllendirilirsiniz?
- 41.Ailenizi seviyor musunuz?
- 42.Sokakta arkadaşlarınız var mı? Anlatır mısınız?
- 43.Çalışıyor musunuz? Neden? Ne kadar zamandır?
- 44.Sokakta nasıl zaman geçiriyor sunuz?
- 45.Nereden yemek buluyor sunuz?

- 46.Korktuđunuz oluyor mu? Sizi korkutan Őeyler nelerdir?
- 47.Ailenizi 6zlyyor musunuz? En 6ok neyi?
- 48.Sokak hayatının evdeki hayatınızdan farkı nedir?
- 49.Sokakta olmak tehlikeli mi?
- 50.Sigara kullanıyor musunuz? (baŐka ne tur maddeler kullanıyor sunuz?)
- 51.Korktuđunuzda ya da kızdıđınızda unutmak i6in ne yaparsınız?
- 52.Sokakta kaldıđınızda geceleri nerede ge6iriyor sunuz?
- 53.Ailenizin yanına d6nmeyi d6s6n6yor musunuz? Neden?
- 54.Sizce bir 6ocuk en 6ok neye ihtiya6 duyar?
- 55.Ailenizin yanına d6nemiyorsanız, devletin kurumlarına sıđınmak ister misiniz?
- 56.Sizi sokađa iten nedenler nelerdir?
- 57.Hayattan beklentiniz nedir?
- 58.Ne olmak ister siziz?
59. Hayatta en 6ok g6vendiđiniz kiŐi kimdir? Neden?

Appendix C. Questions for Social Workers

- Considering your experience, what do you reckon is the most important reason for children to live on street? Can you narrate a few incidents?
- Are you able to establish dialogue with children?
- What are the main problems faced while the state is protecting the children?
- What do you think may be necessary to be done on that matter?

Appendix D. Kurum Görevlilerine Yönelik Sorular

-Tecrübenizi gözeterek, çocukların sokakta yaşamasının en önemli nedeni nedir?
Birkaç vaka anlatır mısınız?

-Çocuklarla diyalog kurabiliyor musunuz?

-Çocuklara devlet sahip çıkarken karşılaşılan en önemli sorunlar nelerdir?

-Sizce bu konuda yapılması gerekenler ne olabilir?