Master's thesis

NTNU
Norwegian University of Science and Technology
Faculty of Social and Educational Sciences
Department of Education and Lifelong Learning

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# Preparing for Life: Young People's Experiences of Responsibilities and Protection in an Orphanage in Cape Town, South Africa

Master's thesis in Childhood Studies
Supervisor: Vebjørg Tingstad
May 2019

Malaika, 13 years

NTNU
Kunnskap for en bedre verden

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# Acknowledgements

There are several people I would like to show my gratitude towards, for being with me throughout the process of this master's thesis.

First of all, I want to thank all the kids of my study who welcomed me with such opened arms. From the first day, you allowed me to be part of your everyday life and included me in your activities. Also, I want to thank the staff in the orphanage who tried to make my fieldwork as fruitful and amazing as possible. Finally, my stay in Cape Town would not have been the same without my lovely housemates, Georgie and Emma. Thank you, girls, for opening your house to me, experiencing adventures with me and giving me your endless advices!

Secondly, I would like to thank Vebjørg Tingstad, my supervisor. I highly appreciated all of your guiding and supporting comments! Without the sharing of your knowledge and your way of engaging my critical thinking, this thesis would have not been the same. It was an honour to have been one of your last master students!

To my girls, Nianne and Irene. Thank you for these two years of spending endless hours in our reading room together, for sharing our fears and joys and for always being there for each other. You girls made this whole master an amazing experience and I am so glad to have had you two by my side. Nianne, thanks for being my 'second supervisor' during our stay in Cape Town. Without you, I would have been lost so far away from our homes.

I also want to thank all of my friends in Trondheim who became my family away from home during the last two years. I am especially grateful to have shared my home with you girls, Marti, Lea and Camila. During these two years, you made this city my new home, gave me a shoulder to lean on in good and bad times, and shared the amazing experiences of the last two years with me. I am so grateful to have met you and to have gotten the chance to get to know you.

Finally, I want to thank my family for having made this experience possible. Thank you, Daddy, for your endless supports, for always backing me up and for always being there for me, no matter how far I am away from you. Thank you, Lui, my best friend, for always listening to my ridiculous complaints about the world and for sharing my crazy moments!

# List of Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| ACRWC | African Charter on the Rights and the Welfare of the Child |
| AIDS | Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome |
| ANC | African National Congress |
| e.g. | “exempli gratia”, for example |
| etc. | “et cetera”, and so forth |
| HIV | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| NGO | non-governmental organisation |
| NP | National Party |
| OCV | orphans and vulnerable children |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNCRC | United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |

# Abstract

The black and coloured population of South Africa are facing severe obstacles and disadvantages in terms of unemployment, education and health. More than half of the black children are living below the poverty line. Due to the high levels of inequalities and increased rates of HIV-positive people the amount of orphans has been rising steadily. Orphaned children are facing severe circumstances, such as acute poverty and economic challenges.

This study aims to examine the experiences of children living in an orphanage in South Africa. It aims to gain an understanding of how the children living there define and understand the terms 'responsibilities' and 'protection' and how they experience them at this place. Also, the study wants to engage a discussion about how these experiences can be understood in the context of children's rights and how they could be challenging 'Westernized' ideas.

The research was carried out in an orphanage in Cape Town, southern South Africa. 19 children were participating in this research, aged between 8 and 18 years. The sample consisted of 8 male and 11 female participants who have been living in this orphanage between 2 and 8 years.

The basis of this study was created by theoretical approaches from Childhood Studies, seeing childhood as a social structure and children as social actors. It was conducted as a qualitative research project, using the following child-friendly methods engaging the children to participate in the study: Emotion cards, drawings, life stages as well as research interviews.

The findings of this research present 'protection' as defined as keeping something safe. The children said that everybody needs protection and focused the term mainly on physical protection against violence and danger. The term 'responsibilities' was used by the children as taking care for something and was employed as a concept everybody has to fulfil in order to be prepared for the life as an adult. Most of the children were glad to be able to stay in this orphanage and receive its protection. However, the participants experienced a lack of guidance and interest from the workers. Yet, the children have accepted these issues as part of their lives.

The findings also show a close connection to both the UNCRC and the ACRWC in regard to the protection needs of the children. Still, only the African Charter includes responsibilities and respect which were visible in the results of the study.

The study suggests seeing the UNCRC as a useful instrument to create a basis for children's rights. However, it recommends adapting the implementation of the Convention to the local context. More research is necessary to investigate more into experiences of children living in an orphanage setting.

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

In South Africa, as in many other areas of the world, a huge number of children live their lives in orphanages for several reasons. Around half of the cases in Southern Africa is caused by AIDS/HIV (Abebe & Skovdal, 2010; Bicego, Rutstein, & Johnson, 2003; DeSilva et al., 2012). Through my previous education in Psychology, and my voluntary work with young people living in disadvantaged environments, and last but not least, my master work in Childhood Studies, my curiosity has grown about how children themselves would express their lives in an orphanage if they were asked. I was wondering whether the everyday life experiences of these children in any ways were different or similar to global ideas and the UN Convention about children's rights? If so, how? Also, I was wondering whether they think they are protected? I assumed they would have a number of duties and was curious about what kinds of responsibilities they have?

With such kinds of overall questions, I approached my study which in the end focused on experiences of children in an orphanage in Cape Town, South Africa. I examined how they understood whether and how they had responsibilities within the institution, what they thought about themselves about being protected there as well as reflections about their emotional 'needs'.

## 1.1 Background

The Black and Coloured population of South Africa have been facing oppressive and difficult times, especially since the Apartheid regime lasting from 1948 to the early 1990s. Still, the majority of this population are facing severe obstacles and disadvantages in terms of unemployment, education and health. Especially children and women are facing the consequences of these inequalities, visible e.g. through a higher level of unemployment (Statistics South Africa, 2018). These disparities have been generated by Apartheid, and during Post-Apartheid these oppressed majorities were still facing limited opportunities and a lack of education (Seekings & Nattrass, 2008). These social inequalities become even more significant when we turn our attention to the distribution of ethnicities in South Africa: In 2009, while 85% of the children were Black Africans, only 8% were Coloured and 5% were Whites (Statistics South Africa, 2018). More than half of the black children were living below the poverty line.

Specifically in urban areas, children were facing a decreased life quality due to the lack of safety and high levels of violence and crimes (Barbarin, 2003).

The most relevant issue for this study is the one of the missing health care and the high levels of HIV/AIDS. In 2012, 12.8% inhabitants of South Africa were HIV-positive (Shisana et al., 2014). Thompson (2014) stressed that due to HIV/AIDS there has been an increase of orphans, as HIV created the reason for nearly one quarter of the cases of maternal death during pregnancy and birth. However, while only one out of ten black South Africans had a health insurance in 2012, 70.9% of the Whites were provided with one (Thompson, 2014). This again increased the level of inequality between the ethnic groups.

These high levels of inequalities and the increased rates of HIV-positive South Africans lead to a rise of orphans. In Cape Town, 10.3% of the children were orphans in 2016, and around 94% of those were Blacks (Statistics South Africa, 2018). According to Abebe (2010), orphans are facing three main subjects: the lack of a caretaker, severe and acute poverty and economic challenges. When their caretakers get sick, children need to step in and take over adult responsibilities. Thus, the state of orphanhood might start earlier than the death of the parents.

### 1.2. Personal Interest

When I was in the 7th grade of my high school, I joined a UNICEF group at my school, working with them for six years. In my 8th grade, a small group and me developed a 'fair break' where we sold 'fair' products from developing countries. After graduation, I have been co-founding a local group of the NGO Viva Con Agua[1] which was collecting money for water projects in developing countries in collaboration with the Welthungerhilfe[2]. Through all these years, my interest in the African culture has been rapidly increasing. This interest included a more general concept of 'culture' as a way of living and its influencing factors. I felt by growing up in Germany, I know a lot about our way of living and thinking, and I felt the need to see beyond my own nose by experiencing a new place in the world.

From the age of 16, I have been volunteering with an organisation[3] in Germany working on behalf of the Federal States to promote international exchange and cooperation in the school sector. Once a year I have been travelling through Germany with a group of young people from

[1] https://www.vivaconagua.org/home
[2] https://www.welthungerhilfe.org/
[3] https://www.kmk-pad.org/pad/english.html

all over the world. I was very interested in all their different cultures, religions and diversities. How do they grow up and how are their educational systems constructed? How do they live with their families? What languages do they learn? What kind of food do they eat? Additionally, during my bachelor's in Psychology in Germany, I have been working as a supervisor and caretaker for young people coming from troubled families. Many of them have been living in orphanages and/or foster families and were facing troubles, such as criminal involvement, difficulties at school and drug abuse. From my perspective as a psychology student and caretaker, many of them were lacking a close caretaker providing emotional and even physical protection for them. Throughout the initial phases of my master work, my academic focus has therefore been coloured by psychological concepts from developmental psychology combined with practical experiences trying to solve the problems which these young people faced in life.

However, during the first year of my master's study in Norway, my awareness increased about Euro-centrism and Westernized ideas of children and childhood in the ways that I realised that my own assumptions might not be relevant for other parts of the world. Westernized ideas in this study refer to ideas and opinions introduced by Western countries, based on their beliefs and assumptions. Although I realised these approaches, I was facing a new reality for myself when I entered the orphanage. Being biased from my previous education and work experience, I observed a different way the children were treated by the stuff in opposition to what I expected. In my opinion, they got very little protection and had a lot of duties. I was curious whether my observations were similar to or different from the children's point of view. Also, I wondered how many of my ideas have been influenced by how I grew up, got educated and also, my agnostic religious backgrounds. To sum up, when I entered the field, I was influenced by both my psychological background, my work experience and a more critical way of thinking from Childhood Studies.

### 1.3. Research Topic

There has been much research done about orphans, orphanhood and orphanages in Sub-Saharan Africa. Also, the awareness of the rights of the children has been increasing since the implementation of the UNCRC in 1989. Burr and Montgomery (2003) emphasised the 'Four P's' of children's rights which structure the Convention: Provision, Prevention, Protection and Participation. In the Westernized world, much research has been done about the clash of protection and participation rights: e.g. in the health care system, should children be included in the decision-making or should they be protected, as especially sick and vulnerable children

might need more guidance (Coyne, Amory, Kiernan, & Gibson, 2014; Runeson, Enskär, Elander, & Hermerén, 2001)? These concepts have been criticised by childhood researchers as Kjørholt (2008). She claims that concepts like 'children's citizenship' and 'the best interest of the child' are not officially defined and may include cultural differences. Children should be seen as citizens in a manner that opens up for seeing them also in the view of vulnerability and dependencies, she argues. As in her criticism, orphans are often viewed as being exclusively defenceless and vulnerable. Thus, I wondered what the children themselves were thinking about this possible clash between vulnerability and participation. My approach was, as mentioned, strongly influenced by my psychological background which stressed concepts like 'needs' and 'perceptions'. In the beginning, I assumed these concepts were universal and adopted by these young people in the orphanage as well. However, after entering the field and starting with observations, I realised that there has been little relevance of these concepts: I had troubles defining participation in their context and found it difficult to establish this discussion without imposing my Westernized ideas. It was not, as expected, part of the children's or staff's vocabulary and did not seem to be included in their everyday lives as I assumed it would be. Also, I realised a change of my own attitude and approach which became more open for new concepts and ideas. I rather wanted to focus on an issue which was possible for the children to grasp themselves. At the same time, I noticed many responsibilities on the part of the children, and only little protection from the caretakers and workers in the orphanage. Going along with the focus on responsibilities in the African Charter on the Welfare and Rights of the Child (1999), I changed my topics from participation and protection towards the children's experiences and reflections about protection and responsibilities.

## 1.4. Research Approach

### 1.4.1. Research Aim

This study aims to examine the experiences of children living in an orphanage in Cape Town, South Africa. I was especially interested in their reflections about protection and responsibilities. I assumed that after having been moved to an institution and for many also after the loss of one or both of their parents, the children might have faced difficult experiences and might be more vulnerable than other children in different contexts. This might make them more dependent on protection than children living in a family household. On the other hand, these children might have gained more resilience and have had to take on more responsibilities due to the lack of a caretaker, or they even might have been more protected within the

institution. Thus, I was interested in what children understand as ‘protection’ and ‘responsibilities’, and whether and if, in which ways, they want to keep the balance in which responsibilities and protection were practiced in the institution.

### 1.4.2. Research Questions

*Main Research Question:*

What are children’s experiences in a children’s home in South Africa within a discussion about protection and responsibilities?

*Specific Research Questions:*

1. What are the children’s experiences regarding their protection needs and responsibilities? What do these terms include in their opinion?
2. How do the children experience the interplay of protection and responsibilities? How do these experiences go along with their needs? How is this practised in the institution?
3. How are these experiences different or similar to the perceptions in the UNCRC and the ACRWC?

## 1.5. Thesis Outline

*Chapter 1*, the introduction, preluded the thesis with an overview of the background and topic of the thesis. Furthermore, it presented my personal interest on the study and the research aim. Finally, I presented my research questions.

*Chapter 2* will provide information about the background of the study site. First, I will present the theoretical perspectives of Childhood Studies which have influenced this thesis. I will give an overview of the history and challenges South Africa was and is still facing. Afterwards, I will provide general information about the country and finally focus on South African’s children. In the end, I will present a general perspective on orphanhood and give information about orphans in South Africa.

*Chapter 3* will present the methodological reflections upon the study. This chapter will focus on the research design and explain and discuss the methods used during the fieldwork. I will present my field experiences and discuss both the challenges and ethical considerations I faced. Also, I will present the different aspects of my data collection as my sample, the used procedures and the processing and analysis of my data.

*Chapter 4* will present the first part of the analysis, 'Preparing for Life in an Orphanage Setting'. This chapter will concentrate on showing and interpreting my empirical data. First, I will present their everyday life experiences. Afterwards I will discuss how they define, understand and experience their responsibilities and protection needs in the orphanage.

*Chapter 5* will present the second part of the analysis, 'Challenging Westernized Ideas'. In this chapter, I will discuss the presented empirical data. First, I will argue how the understanding of orphanhood and the concepts of responsibilities and protection are depending on the cultural setting. Afterwards I will introduce a legal discussion about the African Charter of the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

*Chapter 6* will conclude the thesis. It will summarize the main findings. I will discuss the process of me entering the African culture as a 'white researcher'. Finally, I will present a possible policy implication and recommend further research aspects.

# Chapter 2: Background

My master thesis project has involved various new experiences for myself. On the one hand, it has been my first study within the Childhood Studies field and also my first qualitative research project. At the same time, both the background of the setting and also the background of my topic have been new for me. Before I started my master in Norway, I have been living my whole life in Germany. Both countries are in many ways very similar to each other and thus, I have not experienced many cultural differences by moving to my new home in Norway. Before I left to Cape Town, I decided to go with an open mind and start reading about the country itself while I was there. As I mainly did my empirical work in the orphanage during the afternoon hours, I was free in the morning and was able to start reading. I found this part very important as I wanted to first get a personal impression of the culture in a broad sense, the people and traditions. I was very lucky and found a place to stay with two local girls. Through them I gained practical experiences of living in the country as well as some knowledge about the life of the children in my orphanage, seen from both their and my own perspective.

In this chapter, I want to present the four main background parts of my research project: Childhood Studies and its crucial characteristics of my main theoretical approach, my research site South Africa and the phenomenon I aimed to study, orphanhood.

## 2.1. Theoretical Approach: Development of Childhood Studies

The position of children in the Western society has changed dramatically during the last decades, both in politics, research and the everyday life. The field of Childhood Studies emerged as an answer to the critics about how children and childhood were seen in mainstream research. Until the beginning of the 1980s, theories and research about children were heavily relying on socialization concepts as well as developmental psychology. Prout and James with their book "Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood. Contemporary issues in the Sociology Study of Childhood" (1990/2015) set the stage for the so-called N*ew paradigm for the Sociology of childhood*. But already earlier, in the early 1980s, Chris Jenks raises the idea that different images of children are produced by using different theoretical concepts. The author criticises concepts such as "childhood is spoken of as 'becoming', as a *tabula rasa*, as laying the foundations, taking on, growing up, preparation, inadequacy, inexperience, immaturity" (Jenks, 1982, p. 13). He especially discusses the fact that children were seen as powerless and

less competent in comparison to grown-ups. Building on these critics, Thorne (1987) raises a feminist approach. She claims that children and women have a lot in common, such as being invisible in society. The author refers to children seen as "adults-in-the-making" (Thorne, 1987, p. 93). Agreeing on this, Jens Qvortrup (1987) criticises the silence of childhood in sociology: Children are being studied e.g. as a part of a family study, but the focus there is on the families instead of the children themselves. From his point of view, children and childhood should be treated as concepts which have always been included in society. The individuals might change, but the structural concept of childhood will consist throughout history, he argues.

During these years, different disciplines and scientists developed common interests and ideas about researching children and childhood. I will now briefly present the six key features which were first introduced by James and Prout (e.g. 2005):

1. *Childhood as socially constructed*. Childhood is part of the society, as a structural and cultural aspect. To see children as socially constructed "is to suspend a belief in or a willing reception of its taken-for granted meanings" (James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998, p. 27). All images and ideas about children and childhood are seen as created by cultural concepts of the people.

2. *Childhood as a variable of social analysis*. It is depending on other variables such as class, gender and ethnicity (James & Prout, 2005).

3. *Children as worthy of study in their own right*. James and Prout (2005, p. 8) argue that children's "social relationships and cultures are worthy of studying in their own right, independent of the perspective and concerns of adults". Nilsen (2003) criticises that children are often seen only in comparison to adults. They are treated as incomplete, incompetent and immature.

4. *Children as active*. James and Prout (2005, p.8) argue that children "are not just passive subjects of social structures and processes".

5. *Ethnography as a useful method*. The authors argue that this method provides the children with a more active position in research than other traditional forms as questionnaires, giving them a direct voice and more participation possibilities.

6. *Childhood as reconstructed in society*. It represents the "double hermeneutic of the social sciences" (James & Prout, 2005, p. 8).

Since the implementation of these key features, childhood scholars have worked with them and continued developing and testing them empirically. In the following chapter I will discuss the methodological reflections being connected to the Childhood Studies field.

## 2.2. The Research Site: South Africa

### 2.2.1. Historical overview

In this part of the chapter I will summarize parts of the South African history. The country has been facing difficult times, especially due to colonialism and Apartheid. However, due to my research setting with black and coloured children, I focus on the history of the happenings between Blacks, Coloureds and Whites. All following historical facts are furnished evidence by the book 'The History of South Africa', written by Roger B. Beck (2000). The book is part of 'The Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations'.

*1488 – 1795: European Invasion*

In 1488, Bartolomeu Dias, a Portuguese navigator, was the first European who rounded the Cape. However, this event had no long consequences due to the lack of interest of the Portuguese in South Africa. However, in 1652, the Dutch East India Company arrived at the Cape. Their commander, Jan van Riebeeck, planned to establish a temporary station for the Dutch East India Company, half way between Europe and the East. The following 150 years were marked by the rise of the freed employees 'freeburghers' who started farming (Beck, 2000). At the same time, the population of slaves increased rapidly, as the Khoikhoi, the Cape's native inhabitants, did not want to cooperate with manual labour. By 1717, slavery was the main source of colonial labour. In this year, there were around 2,000 slaves in the colony. From the 1770s, their population increased rapidly. In 1793, there have been 15,000 slaves and fewer than 14,000 freeburghers. By 1798 there were more than 25,000 slaves (Beck, 2000).

*1795 – 1910: British regime*

In 1795, the British occupied the Cape with a colony including 25,000 slaves, 20,000 White colonists, 15,000 Khoikhoi as well as 1,000 free Blacks. During their occupation, several frontier wars occurred between the White farmers and the Xhosa. In 1852, Britain recognized the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. These were two republics controlled by the Afrikaners. However, these republics failed to establish institutions and most people stayed livestock farmers. By 1898, all independent African populations were ruled by Whites (Beck, 2000).

The time from 1899 to 1902 included the South African War. This was a war between the British who tried to gain the overall imperial rule over South Africa, and the Afrikaners who fought for their independence. However, both Whites and Blacks were part of it. More than 105,000 Africans were detained in British concentration camps. Finally, the Afrikaner republics were not granted their independence, but got some political autonomy, the maintenance of their language and assistance for economic post-war construction (Beck, 2000).

*1910 – 1948: Union of South Africa/Preparing for Apartheid*

In 1910, a single nation was founded, including 1,275,000 Whites, 150,000 Indians, 500,000 Coloureds and 4 million Africans (Beck, 2000, p. 101). However, only white South Africans were treated as real citizens. The white government created laws supporting a segregated society, laying the path for Apartheid. The South African Party, led by Louis Botha and Jan Smuts, won the elections, and Botha became prime minister. By 1914, both, Afrikaners and Blacks, were striking for higher wages and better working conditions in the mines. These strikes ended with a collapse and many arrested strikers and leaders. The Whites feared the Africans to take over their jobs. Therefore, in 1918, mine owners proposed that the Blacks were allowed to take over semi-skilled jobs, but none of the positions of the White. The 1923 Natives Act reduced the Black access to White urban areas. By 1932, the government noticed over 300,000 impoverished Afrikaners. The Union reacted with government policies favouring the Whites, such as job reservations and wage bars. However, the black population was not taken into account. Most of them were at least as impoverished as the Afrikaners (Beck, 2000).

In 1943, Nelson Mandela, Oliver Tambo and Walter Sisulu founded the African National Congress (ANC) Youth League. They fought for a democratic, non-racial society as the ANC, but also for mass action campaigns (Beck, 2000).

*1948 – 1994: Apartheid years*

After receiving the political power, the National Party (NP) implemented a system of racial discrimination and white dominance. Four basic principles constructed the system:

1) The four official racial groups included Whites, Africans, Coloureds and Indians.
2) Whites were the only real citizens who deserved political power.
3) The interest of the Whites was weighted higher than the interest of the Blacks.
4) The European origin of the Whites was irrelevant. (Beck, 2000)

The first of three phases during Apartheid was called *baasskap*, white supremacy, and lasted from 1948 to 1959. During this phase, the NP implemented segregationist policies and turned Apartheid into law. In the beginning of this phase, two highly relevant Acts have been implemented: The Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act (1949), which forbid marrying people from other racial groups, and the Immorality Act (1950) that prohibited interracial sexual relationships (Beck, 2000). A Race Classification Board was established by the government and built a framework to classify every South African. During the Apartheid times, South Africa engaged the best equipped and best trained police force. Around half of the force were Blacks. Mainly crimes against the Whites were punished, while crime and violence in the black townships were not ignored. One of the most severe acts was the Bantu Education Act (1953) which said that different racial groups need different education. Africans were not meant to be educated in a way that they could get employed in job positions of the Whites. They only should serve as common laborers for the Whites. During the phase of *baasskap* a big opposition was created. Both, Whites and Blacks fought against the Apartheid regime. An important part was built by the ANC Youth League who adopted a Program of Action. This program included strikes, boycotts and civil disobedience. After several years of violent resistance from both sides, Mandela and other protesters were sentenced to life imprisonment during the Rivonia Trial in 1964 (Beck, 2000).

The second phase, lasting from 1959 to the early 1970s, is called the high tide of Apartheid. In January 1960, the South African government tried to gain independence from Britain and become a republic which finally happened in May 1961. All political power still belonged to the Whites and the official languages were English and Afrikaans. South Africa's prime minister Vorster tried to hold closer links with other African countries. However, in 1956, the United Nations General Assembly removed South Africa from various UN agencies, forbid them to speak in the General Assembly, while the Organization of African Unity asked all countries to isolate the Apartheid state. In answer to these happenings, Vorster tried to keep a cooperative, neighbouring relationship with the surrounding countries, knowing about their economic dependence on South Africa. His policy was called 'outward-looking policy'. On the other side, Vorster further developed Verwoerd's plan for separate development (Beck, 2000).

The third and last phase of Apartheid have been the final years of white domination, lasting from 1973 to 1994. Especially due to its mineral wealth, South Africa faced a strong economic position within the world these years. At this point, Apartheid and business were colliding: More advanced technologies asked for more skilled workers, which collided with the fact that

the Blacks were not allowed to get higher education. Vorster considered new policies and the enhancement of black education. A big movement, called the *Black Consciousness Movement*, was founded by a black medical student named Steve Biko. It was open to Blacks which included Africans, Coloureds and Indians. The movement challenged the Blacks to improve their self-esteem and to develop a psychological emancipation from feeling inferior to Whites. This led to the famous march of Soweto children in 1976, where 15,000 children demonstrated peacefully and got stopped by the police who opened fire on them. This marked the beginning of many violent demonstrations (Beck, 2000). At the same time, the world recognized the incidents and reacted with the drop of international investments. The country lost capital and businesses failed. Due to an emigration of Whites, there were more Blacks working in more skilled positions, putting stress on the Apartheid system. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, many Apartheid laws were relaxed. In 1983, Botha fought against a Whites-only government. Finally, there were three separate legislative chambers created – for the Whites, the Coloureds, and the Indians. However, the white government still kept control over the Blacks and the other chambers only got some affairs to handle on their own. By 1987, many nations enforced sanctions against South Africa and the Apartheid regime. Botha and the National Party lost more and more of their supporters. By 1988, South Africa's white leaders were forced to consent the change and end of Apartheid. In 1990, Mandela was freed after 27 years of imprisonment and got elected as ANC's president in 1991. Finally, all remaining Apartheid laws were annulled. However, the violent struggle continued, and many Blacks died due to police fires. In 1994, the ANC won with 62,65% the national election and Mandela was elected as the first democratic president. But although the democracy was meant to be starting with the election of the ANC and Mandela as president, the implementation of it was quite difficult. All important roles, such as the judiciary, bureaucracy, army and police force were dominated by the Whites (Thompson, 2001). Another issue was created by the fact that 46% of the population were below 20 years and many of those were raised in troubled backgrounds (Thompson, 2001). Lots of these youths became parts of violent gangs which increased the violence in society rapidly (Beck, 2000).

*Mbeki's legacy*

However, Mandela became a "secular saint" (Berat, 2014, p. 290) and the people were euphoric. He gave hope to the people that the new South Africa could become a democratic country which eventually could overcome its troubled past. Mandela left the office with expectations of the people for his successor. In the 1999 elections, the ANC got around two thirds of all votes under the new presidency of ANC's golden prince Thabo Mbeki and his deputy president Jacob Zuma.

In his speech in 2004, Mbeki stressed the fight against poverty as the main way of building a new South Africa (Government Communications, 2004). Through his attempts to solve South Africa's economic problems he tried to grow the economy rapidly. This led to a higher demand of skilled people. White people and advanced Blacks were finding many job opportunities with high salaries, while fewer labour workers were needed. Thus, the gap between the rich and poor grew and also the intraracial inequality (Berat, 2014).

*Zuma's legacy*

In the 2009 elections, the ANC won with 65.9% and Zuma got elected as the new president. At this moment, South Africa had made first positive step away from the Apartheid times: Poverty, hunger and unemployment were reduced and housing, water, health care and education were more accessible (Berat, 2014). However, Zuma was involved in many issues about free expression. He got furthermore accused for financial chicanery, abuse of official powers and police misconduct. The majority of the people was still stuck in poverty. The amount of protests was increasing (Berat, 2014).

*Clouds over the rainbow nation*

In 2009, the UN declared Mandela's birthday, the 18th of July, to an international event where all people were encouraged to spend 67 minutes for good causes. In 2013 Mandela turned 95 years old. In this year, Mandela became severely sick. On the 5th of December 2013, he passed away in his home in Johannesburg. South Africa experienced a period of national mourning. At this moment, in 2014, the country was facing two opposite experiences: On the one hand, in the last 20 years, millions of people received housing and a better access to water, health care and education. A black elite and middle class were created. On the other hand, however, the country was still stuck in a wide gap between rich and poor, being exposed to antidemocratic biases and on-going corruption (Berat, 2014).

### 2.2.2. Post-Apartheid: Faced problems

In this section, I will continue to briefly present some of the current issues and problems South Africa faced the last years. I mainly focus on relevant matters regarding my research project. Many of them are deeply connected with each other and appear as consequences of each other. Therefore, many South Africans are facing a vicious circle.

*Poverty and inequality*

Poverty and inequality in South Africa are both still very related to races, but also to gender. The data presented in Table 1 show that the employment rate in general is not very high, but

also that especially Africans and Coloureds got less employed, while Indian/Asian and Whites got more employed by 2011.

*Table 1: Employment rates by race and gender for those aged 15 to 64 (Statistics South Africa, 2018)*

| | *2001* | | *2011* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Women (%) | Men (%) | Women (%) | Men (%) |
| *African* | 34.6 | 45.6 | 30.8 | 42.8 |
| *Coloured* | 46.3 | 58.6 | 43.2 | 54.7 |
| *Indian/Asian* | 38.4 | 66.0 | 40.2 | 64.1 |
| *White* | 54.8 | 72.4 | 56.1 | 72.6 |
| *Total* | 38.1 | 50.7 | 31.6 | 47.4 |

Seekings and Nattrass (2008) stress the fact that Apartheid generated these racial inequalities. Even after its end, many of the poor people are facing similar situations as they lack education and face limited opportunities. The labour market is offering more and more positions for skilled and educated workers while the demand of labour workers is decreasing rapidly.

*Crime and violence*

According to Thompson (2014), South Africa faced the tenth-highest murder rate in the world in 2011. Additionally, the country had one of the highest rape rates of children and babies. Due to a lack of confidence in the police, people started creating gangs and neighbour watches which tried to guard their districts for more security (Thompson, 2014).

According to Bhorat et al. (2017), in 2011, around 4800 crimes were reported per 100,000 individuals. One quarter of these were property crimes and nearly the same amount were violent crimes. The Crime Statistics of South Africa Statistics from 2017/2018 show the following data: 1.6 million incidences of individual crime occurred in the years 2017 to 2018, affecting around 1.4 million individuals (Statistics South Africa, 2018). Around 4% of all households experienced housebreaking or burglary and around 16,800 murder incidences occurred. The amount of people feeling safe walking in their neighbourhood declined from 84.5% in 2016/17 to only 79.1% in 2017/18 (Statistics South Africa, 2018). These data show that crime and violence are still very relevant and active in South Africa, and the people notice it.

*Health Care and HIV/AIDS*

According to Seekings and Nattrass (2008), the morbidity and mortality associated with AIDS/HIV was a “major demographic factor affecting inequality” (Seekings & Nattrass, 2008,

p. 333). According to the authors, in 2004, already 10.8% of South Africa's people were HIV-positive. This number increased to 12.8% in 2012 (Shisana et al., 2014) and is still steadily rising. Especially women are affected by this as they are the ones facing the burdens of the illness and additionally have to take care for other HIV-positive household members. Families losing their breadwinner are facing increased poverty (Seekings & Nattrass, 2008).

Regarding the health care system there was also a huge gap created between the Blacks and Whites. By 2012, while only 10.3% of the Blacks had a health insurance, 70.9% of the Whites had one (Thompson, 2014). Especially women and children were affected by this. The high and rising maternal mortality was leading to an increase of orphans. HIV created the reason for 23% of the cases of the death of mothers during pregnancy or birth (Thompson, 2014).

*Education*

As many other problems South Africa is facing, education is also still very related to races. The numbers presented in Table 2 show that although the number of students who did not receive any schooling or only primary schooling decreased, the huge gap between Whites and Coloureds as well as Africans is still existing.

*Table 2: Levels of education in % by race, among these aged 20 years or more (Statistics South Africa, 2018)*

| | *African (%)* | | | *Coloured (%)* | | | *White (%)* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1996 | 2001 | 2011 | 1996 | 2001 | 2011 | 1996 | 2001 | 2011 |
| *Higher* | 3.6 | 5.2 | 8.3 | 4.9 | 4.9 | 7.4 | 26.8 | 29.8 | 36.5 |
| *Grade 12* | 12.0 | 16.8 | 26.9 | 12.3 | 18.5 | 25.2 | 39.3 | 40.9 | 39.5 |
| *Some secondary* | 32.6 | 30.4 | 35.5 | 42.2 | 40.1 | 42.0 | 31.6 | 25.9 | 21.4 |
| *Primary* | 8.3 | 6.9 | 4.9 | 11.1 | 9.8 | 7.4 | 0.5 | 0.8 | 0.7 |
| *Some primary* | 19.5 | 18.3 | 13.9 | 19.6 | 18.4 | 13.8 | 0.7 | 1.2 | 1.3 |
| *No schooling* | 24.0 | 22.3 | 10.5 | 10.0 | 8.3 | 4.2 | 1.1 | 1.3 | 0.6 |

Another issue is the quality of schooling. In 2010, the government admitted that more than 80% of the public schools were failing. Also, South Africa got ranked last of 133 countries in subjects such as maths and science (Thompson, 2014). Teachers got low-paid and were absent during schooling times. The children who were attending school, often faced the problem that the university application required a better curriculum during their high school to be able to enter university. Only privileged private schools were offering an adequate program. However, the minister of basic education denied these issues (Thompson, 2014).

*Water shortage: Day Zero water crisis*

According to the Government Communications (2004), South Africa "is largely a semi-arid, water-stressed country" (Government Communications, 2004, p. 134). According to Sousa et al. (2018) Cape Town and its surroundings were facing the most severe drought within the last century during 2015 to 2017. In January 2018, the government revealed an expected 'Day Zero' in April when the dams would drop the 10% line and the tabs in Cape Town would be turned off. Therefore, Cape Town restricted the daily water use per person to 50 litres (Sousa et al., 2018). Muller (2018) stresses in his comment in the International Journal of Science 'Nature' that this has not only consequences for the individual households but also for surrounding farmers and the tourism.

### 2.2.3. Ethnicity, Religion, Languages

South Africa has many different ethnicities, religions and languages. In the case of this country, ethnicity focuses a lot on the previous racial groups of the people. Table 3 shows the development of the different racial groups in South Africa.

*Table 3: Racial Groups in South Africa between 1911 and 2013 (Statistics South Africa, 2018)*

| | *1911* | *1960* | *1996* | *2013* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) |
| *African* | 67 | 68 | 77 | 79.0 |
| *Coloured* | 9 | 9 | 9 | 8.9 |
| *Indian* | 3 | 3 | 0.3 | 2.5 |
| *White* | 21 | 19 | 10.9 | 9.6 |

The Government Communications (2004) provide the following information:

Nowadays, the South African population includes the following groups: Nguni people, Sotho-Tswana people, Tsonga, Venda, Afrikaners, English-speakers, Coloureds, Indians and immigrants. Also, due to this variety, South Africa has 11 official languages: Afrikaans, English, isiNdebele, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sepedi, Sesotho, Setswana, siSwati, Tshivenda and Xitsonga. The South African Constitution implements the right to select their own language and culture. All public and governmental organisations offer at least two languages, one of these is English. Most of the schools in urban areas are taught in English, but children learn Xhosa and/or Afrikaans as their second language. However, most of the black and coloured children have one of the native languages as their mother tongue.

In 2004, 80% of the people attended the Christian Church. The Muslim community is only creating a small amount of the people, but it is growing steadily (Government Communications, 2004).

### 2.2.4. Growing up – South African children

South African children are facing various social risks due to the social inequality and deprivation caused by Apartheid (Barbarin, 2003). Many of the South African minors are facing a lack of basic needs such as a home, water and food. According to Barbarin, the child mortality before 5 years of age was at 12% in 2003. Already in 1997, around 42,000 children grew up in residential or foster care. In urban areas, the lack of safety and high levels of violence and crimes were reducing the life quality of many children (Barbarin, 2003).

Statistics of South Africa is providing the following data about children and youth in South Africa from their Living Conditions Survey from 2008/2009:

> 85% were Black African, 8% Coloureds, 2% Indian/Asian and 5% were Whites.
>
> 27.2% were between 0-4 years, 27.9% between 5-9 years, 28.1% between 10-14 years and 16-8% were between 15-17 years old.
>
> A bit more than half of the children lived in urban areas, while a bit less than half of them lived in rural or traditional areas.
>
> 69.8% of the children lived in households with more than five members, while 38.6% lived in households with seven or more members.
>
> 75.1% of the children had never experienced child hunger, while 34.9% had experienced it seldom to always. In general, South African's children were more effected by poverty than adults. More than half of the black children live below the lower poverty line, while only 40.3% of the black adults were below this line. In opposite, only 1.6% of the white children and only 0.6% of the white adults were below the lower poverty line.
>
> (Statistics South Africa, 2018)

The following data represent a South African Report about the children aged 7 to 17, which reflects the age group of my research participants. The results show data from 2016.

> In 2016, most of the children lived in Kwa-Zulu Natal (22.4%) and Gauteng (19.5%), while only 10.3% lived in the Western Cape, including Cape Town.

Nearly all of the children were attending an educational institution. The main reason for the children not attending school were no money for fees and already completed education. However, only two out of three of the children completed Grade 7.

5.2% of the children were conducting child labour.

17.9% of the children in Cape Town showed a chronic illness and 9.0% an acute illness.

15.2% of the children experienced any form of violence, corporal punishment or verbal abuse in the last three months.15.4% have been bullied.

These data show in general that the children of the 'born-free' generation were still facing a lot of social inequality and problems. Many of them lived in severe poverty and were struggling in various ways.

## 2.3. The Phenomenon under Study: Orphanages in the Context of South Africa

### 2.3.1. General perspective

Tatek Abebe conducted quite a lot of research regarding orphanhood (e.g. 2010; 2010; 2012). Despite of the fact that his research focused on children in Ethiopia, many of his findings seem very relevant for this study. He claims that "the notion of orphanhood is very complex and multifaceted" (Abebe, 2010, p. 3). According to him, many orphans become orphans before the parents actually die – often due to the process of AIDS and HIV. When the parents or families become sick, the children need to step in and take care for them. They have to take on the adult's responsibilities. He also emphasizes that in many of the African patriarchal countries, losing the father has pretty much the same consequences as losing both parents. Therefore, he says it is difficult to define orphans and orphanhood. Abebe found three common aspects many definitions about orphanhood include:

1. The lack of a caretaker
2. Severe and acute poverty
3. Economic challenges.

(Abebe, 2010)

Bailey points out in her introduction of orphan care that "every society has in place some system for which to care for its parentless children" (Bailey, 2012, p. 5). However, she also points out that in many cases a formal institutional or governmental organ is included. Cultures without this institutionalised care often struggle in crises where children are left without care, e.g. after

wars and epidemics. According to the author, around 140 million orphaned children lived 2004 all around the globe – 87.6% million in Asia and 43.4 million in Sub-Saharan Africa (Bailey, 2012). Southern Africa created a special case as it was the only one where the number of orphans actually increased, mainly caused by the HIV/Aids pandemic. In this geographical area, the number of orphans has increased by over 50% since 1990.

Bailey identifies four main areas how orphaned children can get affected by orphanhood:

1. *Basic needs*. Many orphaned children are facing a lack of their basic needs, such as food, housing and health care.

2. *Protection*. Children without parents are often lacking an adult role to protect the child from danger and exploitation.

3. *Psychosocial effects*. The physical separation of a child from one or both his parents exposes the child to possible risks to their mental health a well-being. Their healthy development, both physical and mental, gets endangered.

4. *Education*. Many orphaned children either have to shorten, interrupt or even finish their education suddenly. Many of them need to help in their households or are facing poverty-related issues of paying the school costs.

   (Bailey, 2012)

### 2.3.2. Orphanhood in South Africa

According to Statistics South Africa (2018), in their Living Conditions Survey from 2008/2009, only one third of the children lived with both their biological parents. 37.8% were living with their mother only and 22.0% have none of their parents in their households. 12.0% of the children were paternal orphans, 3.8% were maternal orphans and 4.2% double orphans. However, children without fathers were facing the highest levels of food poverty (44.7%) in opposite to only 38.6% of the maternal orphans and 32.1% of the children who were living with one or both of their parents.

In 2016, the distribution of the population group of orphans between the age of 7 and 17 is severely depending on the racial group: 93.6% of the South African orphans were Black Africans, 4.7% were Coloureds, 0.5% were Indian/Asian and 1.3% were Whites. Regarding the region of orphans in South Africa, most orphans between the age of 7 and 17 were found in KwaZulu-Natal (27.3% of the children) and Eastern Cape (26.1% of the children). In Cape Town 10.3 of the children were orphans in 2016 (Statistics South Africa, 2018).

Since the implementation of the Children's Act Nr. 38 in 2005, South Africa as a country has decided to avoid the term 'orphanage' and to use the term 'children's home' instead. According to the Act, this place is "a registered child and youth care centre for a period of five years from the date on which that subsection takes effect, unless its registration is withdrawn in terms of section 203 before the expiry of that period" (Republic of South Africa, 2005, p. 184). However, as both the children, the staff and the locals during my Cape Town always referred to the place as an orphanage, I decide to continue using this term instead of the official one being used by the government and politics.

After having presented the theoretical approach and some crucial background information for the study, I will in the following chapter present the methodological reflections which created the base of the study and will explain my empirical research.

# Chapter 3: Methodology

During the first year of my master's in Childhood Studies we got prepared in the most important areas of a research process, such as theory, methodology and ethics. However, as my study has been the first I developed on my own, I got for the first time included in the whole research process: I decided the topic regarding my interests, developed my own research aim and questions, created a process plan with my methods and was finally responsible to write my master thesis about this study. This has been a long process which included fascinating experiences as well as interesting challenges regarding my own ontological and epistemological process. In this chapter I will present my methods and data collection, my field experiences, my ethics and finally a section about transcribing and analysing.

### 3.1. Methodological Reflections

Due to this change of the view upon children and childhood presented in the previous chapter, research with children has, to some extent, changed in various ways during the last decades. Within the Childhood Studies field itself, there were different perspectives and positions. First of all, James (2008, p. 261) claims that there has been an influence of the notion about "giving voice to children". The author argues that by trying to understand the children's understandings and experiences, we receive fruitful insights of their social worlds. Thus, instead of doing the research with adults who were seen as the subjects in society and research, some researchers argued to include children in all steps of the research. While children were the objects in research for a long time, they are more and more seen as subjects and participants of the research (Woodhead & Faulkner, 2000). Thereby, Woodhead and Faulkner come up with a similar argument as Davie that the perspective of children should receive more weight in research (Davie, Upton, & Varma, 1996). They claim that children are more than just objects in a laboratory. Furthermore, they claim that there is a need of "empathizing with children's experience, understanding their beliefs and respecting their concerns" (Woodhead & Faulkner, 2000, p. 11). The authors (2000, p. 31) argue that since some researchers work with children as subjects in research, more and more also acknowledge children as active participants in research. They are, it is argued, to be seen as experts of their own lives and researchers have to get into contact with them in order to gain information about them. James (2007) also argues that by putting emphasis on the children's opinions, someone should not forget to see them in correlation to the structural terms influencing childhood as a generational space.

However, taking these shifts into practice creates a challenge for researchers. Punch (2002) argues that there have been two extreme ways of seeing children: Either as completely different or similar to adults. Some authors such as Solberg (1996) are going so far to claim that there seem to be age-specific differences between adults and children, but nevertheless might to ignore the age provide the researcher valuable insights. Depending on how the researcher sees children, he/she will choose his/her methods and techniques. Punch (2002) questions why specific child-friendly methods are needed if children are treated as similar to adults. She suggests seeing children as equal to adults in their position, but still see their special competencies and skills. Each researcher should have an inventory of different methods and techniques which can be adapted to each research setting and each child individually, she argues. Treating children as equally in value, can evoke practical implications in the research process, such as possible power imbalances. James (2008) argues that it is important to be aware of these imbalances. As Thomson (2007, p. 211) describes, children "require special methods because they are marginalised within society". The author discusses that using specific tools helps to balance these power issues. On the other hand, focussing more on the adult side, James (2001) argues that the researcher needs to try to reduce the children's impulse to treat him as an adult and thus their feeling of being the oppressed part in the research. However, the author claims also that it might be interesting to see whether and if, in how far, these imbalances make a significant and important difference. This could give valuable information about the children's position in the society.

### 3.2. Qualitative Research

The ambition for this study has been to gain a better understanding of the children's experiences. My previous experience in research has been my exclusively quantitative bachelor's project. Therefore, I first thought of combining both qualitative and quantitative research. However, I realised that I did not feel as numeral data could provide me with an understanding of the children's experiences. Also, I did not find it adequate to expect answers from my participants just by approaching them as a stranger and asking them to fill out a questionnaire. Solberg (1996) also claims that questionnaires can seem like a school exam to the children. Instead, I as the researcher should give the children the feeling of being the expert in my study – which they were! Thus, I decided to do a qualitative fieldwork for seven weeks. Qualitative research is often associated with a more flexible and open research design. While e.g. a questionnaire is fixed, Ritchie et al. (2013) state that a qualitative research design can be

adapted to the setting and the children. In their book about qualitative research the authors say that doing qualitative studies includes taking on the "emic perspective" (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013, p. 4). That means that the researcher tries to take on the perspective of the person being studied. In my opinion this helped me to gain a better understanding of the children's experiences. Furthermore, the authors claim that a qualitative approach provides a rather holistic perspective. Thus, I was able to get answers to my research questions, but also to gain more information about the context of the children and their setting.

### 3.3. My Methods

While planning my research design, I went through various methods that could be possibly useful and considered their pros and cons. Finally, I decided that drawings, emotion cards, interviews and life stages would be adjuvant methods to suggest to the participants. These methods seemed to be able to give me rich and good insights. And at the same time, I also wanted my study to be enjoyable for the children. They should not see my study as school work or as a duty they had to do, and I wanted to offer them methods they might enjoy. Meeting the children, and explaining my study to them, I realised that many of them might had a different understanding of the concepts I was using, as e.g. 'needs'. Most of the children immediately said that they do not have needs. They said they are fine, and they do not miss anything. Thus, I decided to lead the children through my research a bit more than primary planned. In the following part of the chapter, I will present these methods in the order I worked with them during my fieldwork. All of my methods build on each other as a thread through the whole research design.

To answer my research questions, I focus on the emotion cards as well as the final interviews. Still, the other methods gave me many valuable information about their backgrounds and in some extant also answers to my research questions. For all of my methods I used standard observation sheets (see appendices) to gain reliable and valid information. In the following part I will explain, why and how I used the different techniques. Table 4 gives an overview of my used methods.

*Table 4: Summary of the used methods*

| Nr. | Method | Participants | Amount |
|---|---|---|---|
| General | | | |
| 1 | Observation | Everybody | All |
| Awareness of needs | | | |
| 2 | Emotion cards | Children | 14 |
| Children's experiences about protection needs and responsibilities and their interplay & how this is handled in the institution | | | |
| 3 | Drawings | Children | 9 |
| 4 | Life Stages | Children | 4 |
| 5 | Interviews | Children | 14 |
| How are these perceptions different or similar to the perceptions in the UNCRC and the ACRWC? | | | |
| 7 | Literature reserach | Me | |

### 3.3.1. Emotion Cards

First, I wanted to make the children aware of their emotional needs. During the explanation of the study, a lot of them denied having any wishes or even emotions. I explained that I would ask different questions regarding their emotions and needs. A lot of them said that they do never experience any of them. Through my background in psychology, I am familiar with the method 'emotion cards', shown in Figure 1 (all emotion cards used: see appendices). These cards include visual stimuli, in my case pictures of monsters, which show different emotions which could encourage the children to speak more about what they think about particular situations and feelings. Fargas-Malet et al. (2010) were able to show that stimulus material such as emotion cards could facilitate talking about emotions and difficult situations.

*Figure 1: Example of the emotion cards*

According to Spyrou (2011), images might evoke quicker emotional responses than writing or talking might do. It also might encourage the children to act as co-creators of the research tool and to participate actively in it. Similar to Spyrou's findings, the emotion cards seemed to enable the children to talk freer children about their emotions.

I used the method in the following way:

1) I informed the children again about the method and about the recording.
2) I showed the child the first card and asked what the monster might feel.
3) After the response I asked if the child has felt like this before.
4) As most of them knew the feelings, I could ask them to give me an example or a certain situation where they felt like this.
5) When they told me about a situation, I asked if they could remember what they wanted or needed in this situation. Also, I added whether and what made them feel happy again or made them stay happy.
6) We repeated this with 12 different emotions.

I switched between more positive emotions as happiness and more negative emotions as fear. I started with a friendly monster and finished with a funny monster. Like this, most of the children left this session with laughter and smiles. These categories are based on my experiences from using these cards with teenagers back in Germany. I was prepared to adapt my questions if the children were seeing the monsters in a different way from my expectations and tried to never assume towards the children that it presents a positive or negative emotion. The only problematic issue was the feeling of many children that there was a right or wrong about the feelings of the monsters. This became obvious when children were unsure about their answer and were asking me whether the monster feels like what they were thinking. I tried to underline during each interview that everybody sees these cards in a different way, and I am just interested in what they think, individually. After this explanation, the worries were reduced for the children.

### 3.3.2. Drawings

After I finished the emotion cards with all the children, I listened to the recordings again. I decided that I wanted the children to gain an understanding of their experiences upon how they would organise or group their emotional needs. After reflecting on different methods, I decided to use drawings for this task.

Drawings are “a popular way for many children to communicate” (Barker & Weller, 2003, p. 13). Many researchers like to use them as they offer a variety of uses and many children feel this is a very natural way of conducting research. According to Punch (2002), drawings are a tool which can be perceived as spontaneous, creative and fun by the children. Fargas-Malet et al. (2010) argue that drawings command no direct and verbal answers to intimating questions. Children get the opportunity to think about their answer and decide on what and how they want to answer. Additionally, Ennew et al. (2009) raise positive arguments for drawings such as reduced eye contact between the researcher and the participant and therefore a higher self-assurance of the child. This again may decrease the power imbalance between the child and the researcher. And finally, drawings (or pictures) can encourage discussions that give voice to the children in a different way than when just using words (Mitchell, 2006). Especially if children enjoy to draw, it is often seen as fruitful experience for both the children and the researcher.

But, on the other hand, drawings can also have downsides. Ennews et al. (2009) stress that each drawing always needs the interpretation of the child. We cannot understand the drawing without including the owner. Furthermore, not all of the children necessarily need to like to draw, and the tool depends on the actual and perceived ability to draw (Punch, 2002). Therefore, Fargas-Malet et al. (2010) argue that we as researchers need to be reflective and include the children from the beginning of the design-process for our study. When I talked to the participants, many of the children seemed to like drawings, which is why I decided to include them in my research.

I prepared a sketch, shown in Figure 2, for each of the participants. I used my notes from the recordings of the emotion cards to give the children a list of possible ‘needs’ that they told me. Like this, I did not put my own assumptions into the exercise.

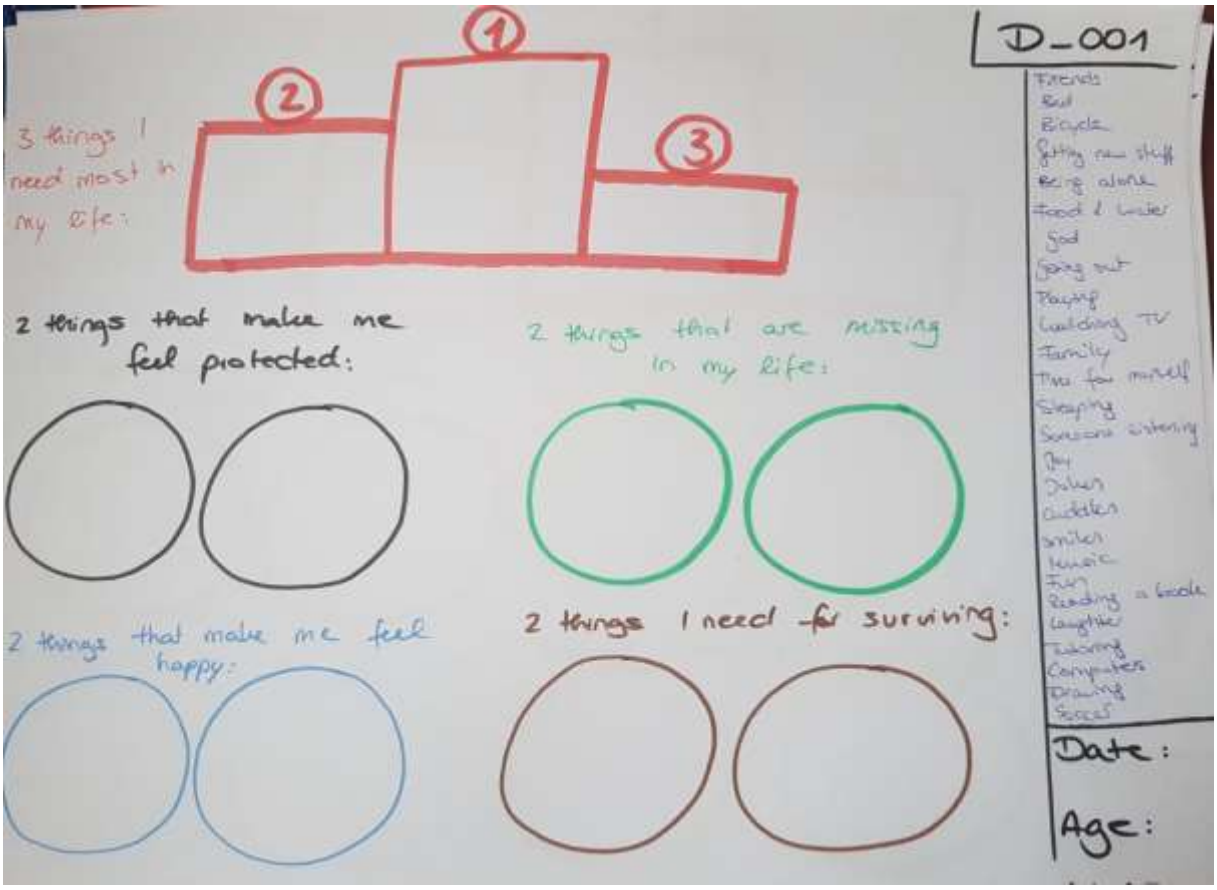


*Figure 2: Draft for the drawings*

Within this task, I asked the children to draw:

- Three things they need most in their life
- Two things that make them feel protected
- Two things that they are missing in their life
- Two things that make them feel happy
- Two things they need for surviving

From the present perspective, using the word ‘things’ might have created a material association, but back in the field this issue was not raised and the children also used personal experiences and people in their drawings. With these questions I aimed at the children to help me to categorize what they expressed as their needs. Thus, I wanted them to reflect on good things (as two things that make them feel happy) and more bad aspects (as two things that they are missing in their life), as well as what they found as their basic needs for survival. The exercise was done as individual work, but still at a table with four or five children. Afterwards I spent a

few minutes with each child individually in the edge of the room on a sofa to talk about their interpretation of their drawing.

Unfortunately, a lot of the children did not want to draw. Furthermore, most of the children only have little or no art education and it was very hard for them to draw in a way that they were able to express answers to my questions. This was surprising to me as my own experience with children in Germany was that children really enjoy drawing. It might have been that the task was too abstract and too difficult to be transformed into drawings. Thus, the children asked to only draw stick figures or to give written answers. I tried to stay flexible and just adapted to method to the wishes of the children who were in the end mainly using written words.

### 3.3.3. Life Stages

After gaining a certain level of understanding of the children's experiences of their needs and their categorizations, I wanted to focus on their responsibilities. Thus, I created a life stages activity. I wanted the children to work in groups on a timeline where they included relevant steps of growing up. Afterwards, I wanted to talk about what these steps meant to them and how they were related to responsibilities and protection. Like this, I planned to gather relevant information about the cultural expectations about responsibilities and protection created by the staff and the children themselves.

In the field I realised that only 4 out of 24 children wanted to join this method. The other children seemed not to be interested in the method or did not understand the task completely, although I used several ways of explaining it. Thus, I let the four participants decide whether they wanted to work in groups or individually and all of them preferred working alone. I asked them to mark the questions about their experiences of their life structure, responsibilities and protection into a timeline (see appendices for the questions). Examples are 'From which age do you do your laundry?', 'To which age do you need protection?' and 'From which age do you take care of small children?'. All of my questions were based on topics and tasks I had observed during the first three weeks. The children were struggling a little with this task as they said they had never thought about this properly. However, after some thinking they were able to answer the questions and gave me rich data about the different life stages.

### 3.3.4. Interviews

Finally, I wanted to discuss the children's experiences of protection and responsibilities. Therefore, I used individual interviews with 14 children. I decided to go with a rather open and flexible semi-structured interview guide. In this way, I could be more adaptive to the children's

responses. I also recorded these interviews to be sure not to change the children's words by writing them down while or after the interview itself. Before I explain my interview guide (see appendices), I want to present briefly what the term 'interview' includes and why I decided on doing interviews.

According to Ennew et al. and their manual upon how to do rights-based, scientific research with children, interview methods "include informal, unstructured discussions on undefined topics, semi-structured interactions about pre-defined topics, and a variety of questionnaires, which can be responded to by talking or writing" (Ennew et al., 2009, p. 5.34). The authors argue that interviews are one of the most useful tools in research, but also difficult to design as a successful tool. They depend on the questions asked and analysis made afterwards.

I like to use this method because of my long experience using interviews during my four years of working in psychological hospitals and youth care centres. However, as Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) argue, the emphasis in therapeutic interviews is more on changing the emotional suffering of the patient through the emotional personal interaction. On the other hand, in research interviews "the emphasis is on knowledge production" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 41) instead of personal change. Yet, the authors argue that therapeutic interviews built a relevant basis for the research interview. Deciding on this method, I tried to stay aware of this difference to avoid using this tool in a therapeutic way. Nevertheless, I see its possibilities for children having the ability to influence research. In my opinion, this method empowers children and sets them on a more equal stage with adults than if they do not participate. The children may then be regarded as the experts of how they experience their life and as researchers who we need to answer our questions. And as Kvale and Brinkmann ask in the start of their book about interviewing: "If you want to know how people understand their world and lives, why not talk with them?" (Kvale & Brinkman, 2015, p. 1). They claim that interviewing is actually a talk between two people to get information through a normal conversation. Thus, many children might feel very natural in an interview as conversations are a main part of human's lives.

However, the success of interviews as a useful tool depends on the researcher. They need to avoid leading questions in order to keep the answers unbiased. These questions "invalidate research results" (Ennew et al., 2009, p. 5.35). Furthermore, researchers need to be aware that direct questions might be too intimate and irritative. Thus, I included interviews in a less examination-like setting.

During the interviews, I tried to avoid leading questions by asking the children first about their understandings of the terms 'responsibility' and 'protection'. Then I continued with talking with them about which people in the world generally have or need responsibilities and protection. Like this, I also ensured not to assume that they have responsibilities or need protection. Afterwards I talked with them about how the interplay of these two aspects is created in this orphanage. However, in the first interview I realised that it was very hard for this child to talk about its situation in such a direct setting. Thus, I adapted the research and gave the following participants a fictive task where I asked them to imagine being an orphanage director themselves and to create a place which is as good as possible for the children. I prepared a sketch, visible in Figure 3, where they could draw lines in their orphanages.

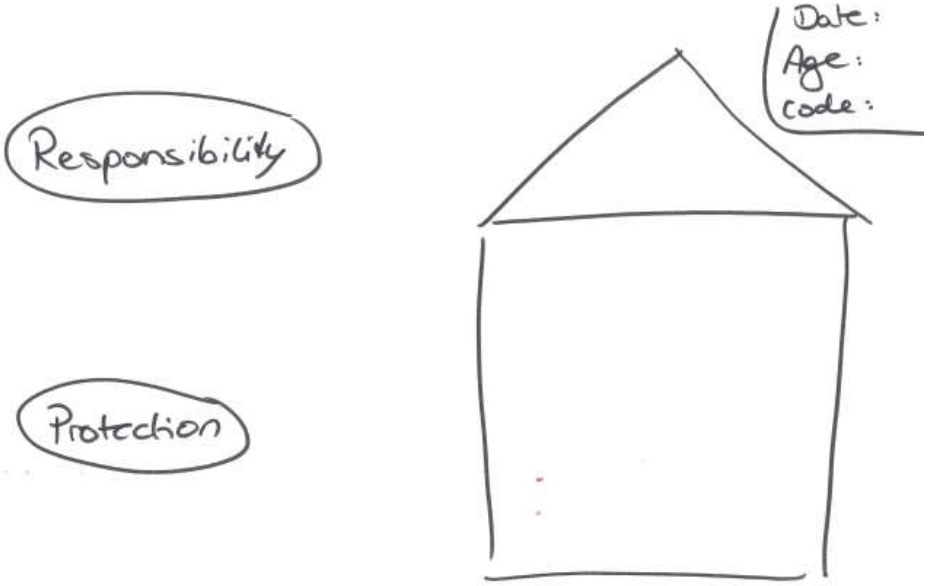


*Figure 3: Draft for the final interviews*

The first task was to make a line for each, responsibilities and protection. The higher the line was, the more these concepts should be fulfilled in their orphanage. Then I wrote the duties the children and the staff should receive, and what they would protect their children from. I decided to write this part myself because I realised before that the writing abilities of some children were not that great, and it gave them more time to give me an answer. Afterwards I asked them to compare these thoughts with the orphanage they are living in. The things which were fulfilled at this place, would get marked or ticked. Finally, I tried to find a positive ending of the interview through talking about their two most important things at this place which were helping them most. The children were, as I interpreted them, very open to the task and willing to participate. The interviews are between 5 and 25 minutes long, and I tape-recorded them.

### 3.4. Data Collection

3.4.1. Target population and sampling

The orphanage I was visiting was a home for 24 children in central part of Cape Town. The children's home is led by Muslims but was teaching both the Muslim as well as the Christian religion. The children and the staff were both, Blacks and Coloureds. Around 70% of the children were so-called orphans. This means that at least their father or both of the parents were dead. The main reason for the children to live in an orphanage was, besides parents' death, poverty of the parents or their extended families. Around half of the children were South-African, while the rest had ethnical backgrounds from countries all around Africa, e.g. Zimbabwe, Kongo and Ruanda. The children were attending different public schools in the surrounding areas. Normally two to four children went to the same school. However, the staff was not allowed to give me insights to the folders of the children, so I am not able to present further information about their personal backgrounds. Table 5 gives an overview of the children who participated in the research.

The 24 children were between 8 and 18 years old, with an average age of 13.5 years. 14 children were girls, while 10 were boys. It did not feel right for me to make a sampling out of these children as the age was quite widely distributed. Thus, I decided to aim for working with all of them. In the end, five children did not participate in my research. The reasons that were given, were related to school work and the lack of motivation. The following facts about the sample will represent the 19 children who have joined my study. The average age was 13.3 with a median of 13.5. They were at this orphanage between 2 and 8 years, but in average for 4.4 years.

Around 10 adults were working in this home. Their work duties included caregiving, cooking, office jobs and administration. Most of the staff had no official contracts. A lot of them neither had not an academic education for their job. They were mainly black women from the townships in Cape Town. They were taking care for the children for getting a shelter and food in the home as well.

*Table 5: List of the participants, their age, gender and if they participated in the two methods*

| *Pseudonym* | *Age* | *Gender* | *Emotion Cards?* | *Final Interview?* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Anele* | 15 | Male | No | Yes |
| *Nkosane* | 8 | Male | Yes | Yes |
| *Kanelo* | 8 | Male | Yes | Yes |
| *Lethuxolo* | 9 | Male | Yes | Yes |
| *Roli* | 12 | Male | Yes | No |
| *Buhle* | 16 | Female | Yes | No |
| *Unathi* | 15 | Male | Yes | Yes |
| *Njemile* | 17 | Female | No | Yes |
| *Nkosazana* | 15 | Female | No | Yes |
| *Serafina* | 12 | Female | Yes | Yes |
| *Kianga* | 10 | Female | Yes | Yes |
| *Malaika* | 13 | Female | Yes | No |
| *Thandiwe* | 12 | Female | Yes | Yes |
| *Fundiswa* | 13 | Female | Yes | No |
| *Akhona* | 18 | Female | No | Yes |
| *Xolelwa* | 18 | Female | Yes | No |
| *Siplikro* | 16 | Male | No | Yes |
| *Vuyelwa* | 14 | Female | Yes | Yes |
| *Arend* | 15 | Male | Yes | No |

### 3.4.2. Equipment and procedures to store data and reflections

*Field notes*

During my time in the field I was writing my fieldnotes. I found it important to do it either directly at work or afterwards on the same day at home. Thus, I decided to write it manually in a notebook to be able to carry it with me all the time. In the evenings I made copies of it and stored them at a different place to make sure that I kept the data safely. All of these notes have already been written anonymously. They helped me both to keep track of all the happenings and also to organise my thoughts and plans for the fieldwork.

*Voice recorder*

I used a voice recorder for recording the emotion cards method and the interviews. Like this I have been able to concentrate on the talks and still receive valid information. Through

transcriptions afterwards I was able to keep the exact words of the participants. I will delete the recordings after submitting this thesis.

*Standard observation sheets*

For all of my methods I used standard observation sheets for each participant and each method. These sheets included general information about the research situation such as the tool, the date, the location and the time. Furthermore, they included more participant related data such as the code of the participant, gender, age, the amount of time the children have already been at this place and factors which might have influenced the study. These standard observation sheets helped me to stay correct and professional in my interpretations. As I only voice-recorded the interviews and only talked about the life stages and drawings without recording it, it was important for me to remember if there had been something special or irregular through this setting. I tried to catch everything which seemed somehow influencing – such as participants or me being tired, interruptions, noises, hectic times etc.

### 3.4.3. Data processing and analysing

Already within my fieldwork, I began reflecting upon grouping and organising the reflections of the children. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p. 102) emphasize to design the study "with regard to obtaining the intended knowledge and taking into account the moral implications of the study". I tried to stay, as recommended by the authors, flexible about my research design and open to new circumstances occurring in the field. Based on my academic knowledge from Childhood Studies and by deciding on the terms 'responsibilities' and 'protection', I more or less began to prepare the following analysis. Through the drawings, the children participated actively in grouping the data from the emotion card interviews. However, I realised during my later analysis that the drawings and life stages reflected my findings from the final interviews and therefore decided not to use them additionally. During these final interviews, I prepared the interview guide with the thought of the analysis, making it easier to group the findings afterwards by already trying to generate sub topics of responsibilities and protection.

After returning to Trondheim in September 2018, I started to get an overview of my empirical data. According to the manual from Ennew et al. (2009), I thoroughly read through my data and searched for main messages and key findings that surprised me or made me feel interested. To prepare for this process, I started with digitalizing my research diary including the observations and all the standard observation sheets. This process of sorting and combining data, as Ennew et al. (2009) name it in their manual, prepared me to analyse the data regarding to each tool. Also, I decided to transcribe all of my 28 interviews completely. I used some basic rules for the

transcriptions: I wrote down everything which has been said and all other for my study relevant noises, e.g. laughter, deep breathes. I did not write down noises which were also hearable in the recording, but not relevant to my thesis. This happened because we made some of the interviews outside, and the recorder also recorded the noises from the other children playing around 30 meters away. If I was not sure if I understood it right, I decided to use ** not understandable ** instead of guessing what they said. Like this, I would however miss out information which was said, but I avoided to change the words of the children.

Analysing these interviews included several steps. After having transcribed all interviews, I tried to get more familiar with my data by reading it several times, highlighting the most interesting findings. Thereby, I also prepared my data for coding which means "attaching one or more keywords to a text segment in order to permit later identification of a statement" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 202). Depending on the method, I coded different aspects of my findings, e.g. problematic issues the children were facing in the orphanage, the definitions of responsibilities and protection, the children's feeling of being protected or items the children would have protected the children in their fictive orphanage from. Having tried to find categories which present the full variety of my data, I continued to follow the plan of Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) by comparing the different findings from the individual interviews and trying to find similarities and differences. I tried to code these findings quantitatively by counting the amount of children who talked about similar experiences. Depending on these results, I decided to analyse my data within the two following topics: Preparing for life in an orphanage setting and challenging Westernized ideas. This step led me to finally report the children's voices in my analysis.

According to Spyrou (2011), reporting the data created by the children is determined by how they are situated and represented. It is depending on the researcher how and where the findings will be presented. I will reflect more upon on this in the second chapter of my analysis, discussing the influence of my underlying assumptions in my research context.

### 3.5. Field Experiences and Faced Challenges

Through this section of the chapter I want to give a more practical insight to my field experiences. First, I will present how I accessed the place, built the rapport and I will describe my role as a researcher. Afterwards I will talk about different problems and issues I was facing during my fieldwork.

### 3.5.1. Access and rapport

In March 2018, I started reaching out to different institutions in Cape Town, South Africa. First, I was writing them emails and waited for several days for a response. I only received two negative responses, since these two orphanages already have accepted a PhD-student within my time period. They explained that two research students would be overwhelming for the institution and the children. Afterwards I tried to call the ones who did not answer, but it was not possible to reach out to them. Finally, I went through the social media channel, Facebook. Here, I came into contact with the institution I hoped to work with from the beginning. It had been recommended to me by a German man who lives in Cape Town and who had volunteering experiences with the orphanage itself. This way, I tried to receive an answer to my email, but at one point they stopped responding to me on Facebook as well.

After some research through my personal contacts, I realised that the South African system works differently from my experiences in Germany and Norway. A South African friend told me that 'everything is working through people'. Thus, I finally decided to go to Cape Town and introduce myself personally at this orphanage. I went there on my first day and presented my study to the manager of the institution. Luckily, he told me I could start immediately, and they were glad that I selected their place of all the other possibilities. After this relieving answer I could finally get properly prepared and adapted my research to the place.

I expected to spend at least around one week to build the rapport between me and the children. Ennew et al. define rapport as a "trusting relationship between researcher and participant" (Ennew et al., 2009, p. 2.10). As they advise in their manual, the relationship should be very clear and honest from the very beginning. I shared as many information about myself and my private life as I felt comfortable with. In my opinion, it is important to open myself to a certain point if I want the children to tell me about their lives. Furthermore, I have prepared social activities such as games and other icebreakers. But I realised very quickly that the children were not interested in such activities. When I proposed these activities to them, they were calling them childish and had no interest. Thus, I just tried to spend time with the children according to their everyday life actions. Like this I was able to gain a better understanding of their setting and get closer to them in the same moment.

Both, the children and the staff working at this orphanage seemed very used to visitors and volunteers. Creating a rapport went very fast. From the first day on, the children were playing with my hair, were hugging me and told me a lot about their everyday life without me even asking something. Therefore, I could start in the first week already with presenting my research

to all of the children and asked for their informed consent (see appendices). This part was very important for me, so I spent a whole week with talking to all of the 24 children. I originally wanted to use diaries in my study, but only 4 children agreed on this method and I did not include them. With hindsight this has been very important. With giving them a choice to choose if they agree on my study and my methods, I separated myself from being one of the workers or a volunteer. Furthermore, within spending so much time for the consent forms, I already got valuable information about my topic which helped me to adapt my research design to their setting.

### 3.5.2. My role as a researcher

My role as a researcher was quite challenging to define and implement. I planned on having a rather equally treated basis with the children, meaning that I did not want to create a person being upon them and forcing them to do things. I wanted to make sure that they understood that they never had to feel forced to do what I was asking them for and that they could take their own decisions in my research, as e.g. withdraw at any time without giving any reason.

However, arriving there showed me that both the staff and the children were mixing up my role with the one of a volunteer. The orphanage never had a researcher before and normally European people come to volunteer at this place. I tried to stress that I am researcher and not here to help out with the work in the orphanage. The understanding rose during my fieldwork. But especially if guests were visiting, I got always introduced as a worker or a volunteer to the people. I sometimes got included in showing people around and helping to organise events with the guests. For me, this was fine, even if I took on a role that I was not supposed to have. I always emphasised that I was doing this as a favour and also to give them something back for their help with my study. Also, in these situations I tried to separate this work from the research with the children.

In the initial state of my study, as a newcomer and with my professional background, I chose a role that was a mix between several positions. They were something between being a friend, a worker and a psychologist. Due to my experience and my studies of becoming a psychologist, it was sometimes hard to keep the borders between intervening in case of troubles and just being an observer of the situation. In most cases I was able to step back and not say anything. Also, I tried to not educate the children when I saw they were, in my opinion, making mistakes etc. This rule was very important for myself, because through this I was able to separate myself from being a staff member. There have been only two exceptions where I broke this rule: The first one was when other children were visiting the orphanage. With these children I was not in

a research position and especially when the younger children were sometimes quite loud and violent to the other children, I interfered and stopped these arguments. The second situation was with the puppy in the orphanage. He was only a few weeks old when I arrived and was living with a man below the orphanage in a very small flat. The children were playing with him a lot. However, nobody of the staff or the children have had any experience of educating a dog and struggled a lot with it. Additionally, many of the workers and the children were very afraid of the dog. As soon as the dog came closer, they were kicking it. To defend himself he started biting back and played very roughly with the children. Thus, I decided to help them a bit to educate the dog. I mainly did this with the four smaller boys. This situation helped me to create bonds with the younger children.

In general, I had quite a personal relation with most of the children. From the first day, the children were hugging me and playing with my hair. During my time in the field I got love letters and they made me bracelets. There were only two children who did not want to talk to me, something I had to accept.

### 3.5.3. Flexibility during research

During my fieldwork, I experienced several situations where I had to stay flexible about my research design, e.g. when I realised that some children were not able to read or one girl had a mental disability. Punch (2002, p.338) argues that we have to adapt our chosen methods depending on the "age, competence, experience, preference and social status of the research subjects but also on the cultural environment and the physical setting, as well as the research questions and the competencies of the researcher". This implicates a necessary reflexibility regarding the children's experiences, their surroundings and my own reflections as the researcher. These factors can make it difficult to plan the research design very narrowly. Thus, I tried from the beginning to have a rather open scheme which I could adapt to the experiences in the orphanage. Also, I decided to inform myself about the topics of my research, but not so much about the research site, South Africa, before conducting my fieldwork. In this way, I tried to avoid presumptions and stigmatizing from my side. Thomson (2007) warns to already take assumptions about the individual's identity by having expectations from this social category. Thus, it is possible to lose their real identities based on their own experiences and reflections. I will reflect more upon how my Westernized ideas and experiences influenced my research process in the conclusion.

### 3.5.4. Gender distribution

Something challenging for me was the fact that the orphanage was quite gender divided. The main reason for this was that the boys and girls had separated dorms. They were not allowed to enter the other dorm. Especially during rainy days, the children were playing and relaxing in their beds. Thus, I could only stay with the girls as I was not allowed to enter the boys' dorm. Additionally, some of the activities were quite separated as well. For example, mainly the boys were using the trampoline as they have been able to make flips and other feats where the girls told me that they did not want to join them. Also, it was mainly the boys who played football. Like this, most of the outdoor activities were mainly for the boys, only. This all made it sometimes harder for me to spend time with both genders. I tried to find a good balance between being outside playing with the boys and being inside in the girls' dorm. During lunchtime in the afternoon, the girls and boys were normally separated as well. They sat on two opposite ends of the table. I tried to switch every day between sitting with the boys and sitting with the girls.

### 3.5.5. Offices and time schedule

Both the children and the staff were usually busy. The children came back from school between 2 and 4pm, depending on the distance to their school and also their levels. Normally the younger ones came home earliest as they have less hours at school. When they arrived, they had to change from their school uniforms to normal clothing. Afterwards was lunch time around 3:30pm and then they had either programs or time to do their homework. Around 6pm they had bible hour and dinner around 8pm. Therefore, I decided to come every day from 3 to 6pm, as this was the time where the children at least were at home. Very often they also slept during the free time in the afternoon as they had troubles sleeping in the night. Both dorms had only one room where all the children slept in bunk beds. Therefore, it was often a little difficult to be able to reach out for the children, since taking part in my research meant to have less free time.

Also, the access to room facilities was a challenge. The staff members needed their offices to work. The orphanage did not have any spare rooms, so I usually tried to work outside with the children. This again created a challenge for my recordings, as it was noisy and windy outside. The garden was quite big, so we were able to sit away from the other children playing and were able to keep the confidentiality. When it was raining I either postponed the interviews to the next day or talked to the manager and were allowed to use his office for some time in the afternoon. For my final interviews I was able to use the room of the social worker because she

left the orphanage two weeks before the end of my fieldwork. Then I had my own office where I could work with the children in a quiet environment.

### 3.6. Ethical Considerations

Doing research always includes several ethical issues which need to be considered. During my time in the field I experienced several challenging topics which I will present now.

#### 3.6.1. Field entry and gate keepers

As I described above, my field entry was very vague and unclear until the day I arrived in Cape Town. I assumed it to be difficult to get accepted in a children's home. I was a stranger from a far-away country, and they had not many reasons to trust me. Thus, back in Norway and Germany, I prepared all the important letters from university as well as my police clearance in English. Thus, I was able to present all the relevant information I thought they might need in the institution. They accepted everything and gave me access to the orphanage and the children. Also, they signed their informed consents (see appendices).

Ennew et al. (2009) warn that especially the field entry with institutionalized children can be difficult. Gate keepers might want to protect their children, or the children might be afraid to give honest answers which could be heard by the workers. However, thanks to the rather supportive role of the gate keepers in the institution I have had rather little concerns regarding this issue. During my first days, the manager was very protective of me and wanted my research to be done without any trouble. Thus, he asked me a lot if I was doing fine and whether I needed anything. Furthermore, he told the children that they should listen to me and do what I say. The other workers always introduced me as 'auntie Steff', which gave me a label as a co-worker in that place. Fortunately, I was prepared for this situation and just stressed reiterating that I was just 'Steff' and I was neither a volunteer nor a worker at this place. However, this was one of the main issues which was difficult to solve until the end of my fieldwork. But at least I was able to gain a more flexible relationship, where the children would still listen to me and also tell me about personal issues they would probably not tell the workers. They treated me as a worker and a friend in some ways.

#### 3.6.2. Informed Consent

I informed all the children about my study and asked for their informed consent. This was very important to me, especially after I realised that most visitors and also the staff never asked for the children's permissions. The visitors who brought e.g. food and personal items often took

photos of the children without asking anyone. And if they asked the manager, the children would still not be included. This confirmed the work of Cocks (2006) who claimed that especially in research in institutions, the informed consent of the children is lacking. Thus, I informed each child individually about their voluntarily participation and asked each of them to sign the informed consent paper I prepared (see appendices).

Most of them told me immediately that they did not care if other people know that they were the informants. Furthermore, some of the children were even asking me to use their names, because then people would actually help them. They wondered how people should support them if they do not know which place and which children I am writing about. I always tried to stress that my work could only be generally helpful. That probably other children in other orphanages in Cape Town face similar feelings and experiences, and research like mine may help more children than just them. Additionally, I stressed that this was my master project, and not part of a political program or something similar, and therefore the reason of doing this was not to change their situation.

### 3.6.3. Confidentiality and sensitive topics

A different issue was the confidentiality and my exposure to sensitive topics. Respecting privacy and ensuring confidentiality are two of the main ethical guidelines a researcher should follow. Ennew et al. (2009) argue in their handbook that it is normal for both children and adults to become emotionally tensed when they talk about difficult topics. The scientist has to reflect on it and consider discussing the issue with either his supervisor or another qualified professional. In both cases, the researcher should discuss the issue with the child first and discuss the case of confidentiality in this situation.

Fortunately, I had only one situation where one child was telling me something and I was not sure what to do. A boy (15) told me that he felt emotionally abused both by a teacher and the staff in the orphanage. He asked me to talk to the staff as they might rather listen to an adult. He told me that the staff was not interested into his problem and they do not care about it. In the end of our conversation he, however, said that he was fine and did not want me to interact. I decided to respect his wish and wait until the next day to make a decision about what to do with this information. Before I arrived in the morning, I had a plan to tell the boy that it seemed to me like a very severe topic and I felt to have the duty to talk to one of the adults. Then he told me that he had talked to his mentor [4] and the mentor talked to the staff. I felt relieved, but

[4] The orphanage was participating in a mentoring programme. It will be more explained in the following chapters.

still a little bit unsure about how to react to the whole situation. However, as he already talked to both the staff and now also his mentor, I felt I could accept his wish to not do anything.

### 3.6.4. Recording of the interviews

Researchers should not change the content of the words of the children. Therefore, it might be relevant to use a recorder in order to keep the children's words. Some people might argue that recorders interrupt the interview and also decrease the authenticity and normality of the talk. In the opposite, Speer and Hutchby (2003) found other results during their research. They claimed that the reactions of the participants towards the tape recorder can be beneficial for the study. For example, if there are some topics the children do not want to discuss while the recording this might be important to know.

In practice, I expected some issues regarding the audio recorder I used during my interviews: I expected the children to feel uncomfortable talking when it was recording or that they did not dare to talk about everything. However, most of the children seemed to be very fine with it and forgot about it during the interview. Others, which were more aware of it, were more curious to hear their own voices afterwards. Thus, we listened to some parts of their own interviews. When they asked for listening another child's interview, I explained again the confidentiality.

### 3.6.5. Racism and apartheid

As I presented in the background chapter, Apartheid has played a big role in the history of South Africa. Still, there is a lot of racism noticeable in Cape Town. In the orphanage, I was treated from everyone, as the children, the staff and visitors, very differently from black people. The staff was asking me to wait for a friend of them who could bring me home. They said several times that I have a better knowledge of many things, e.g. technical stuff, just because I was white. Visitors generally assumed me to be the orphanage leader and never allowed me to help with carrying things. The same was applied for both the children and the staff. The children had to help regularly carrying food and sanitary products to one of the containers. Whenever I tried to help, they were prohibiting it. They claimed that a white person should not be carrying heavy stuff. I have had several situations with the children regarding this topic as well. I found it very challenging to argue about it with them. This mindset is taught to them in all institutional settings and by most of the adults in their lives. I just tried to stress that we are not different, and it is only a skin colour and our place of birth what is making us diverse. However, it was hard to argue as I was in Cape Town due to my studies in Norway. For these children, it will be a lot harder to go to university and travel so far. The tuition fees in South Africa are very high. Even I emphasised that I do not have a lot of money, the children argued that I was able

to come here to the other side of the world, while they cannot afford travelling to the next city. I learned a lot about our different experiences of money, poverty and racism.

### 3.6.6. Short-time stay and protection tool

From the very beginning it was obvious that I was only going to stay for two months. However, this is just a number and for all of us, the children, the staff and me, it was hard to grasp how fast this time could be gone. I tried to stress the time factor of my short-time stay repeatedly to the children. They should know that I was not a person they should find a deep bonding with. Fortunately, the children were very used to visitors and volunteers. Thus, for most of the children it was not a huge issue. And furthermore, in the last three weeks, another German girl studying in Cape Town came for two days a week and was spending time with the children. That made the fact that I had to leave better for both the children and me.

When my stay got closer to the end, I started thinking about giving the children something back. On the one hand, they had all been very generous, helping me with my questions and my study in total. But also, my observations and my first impression of my methods showed me that, according to my norms and values, there was a problem with missing protection for many of these children. Thus, I was thinking about giving them a protection tool which "encourage[s] positive thoughts" (Ennew et al., 2009, p. 2.28). Taking about problematic issues could evoke negative emotions. These tools can prevent the children from these feelings or might it easier to deal with them. Furthermore, I wanted to have a joint activity for all the children where they could create something they like in a social setting. I finally decided to create dreamcatchers with all of the children. Dreamcatchers are a method I already used as a child myself to symbolically prevent myself from negative thoughts and dreams during the night. I bought the necessary materials and made an example at home. Most of the children did, of course, not know about dreamcatchers. Therefore, I explained that they could help them to catch bad dreams in the nights. When they asked me how this could work, I told them that there is no physical mechanism behind it, but they have to believe in themselves. Most of the children really enjoyed this activity. I feel this was a great end of my stay!

### 3.6.7. Mental disability

I had one girl (13) in the orphanage with down syndrome. She was able to answer easy questions and give her opinion about very uncomplicated matters, e.g. what she wanted to eat or if she wanted to go out. However, it was not possible to include her in all parts of my research. But, as e.g. Ennew et al. (2009) stress in their manual, it was important to not exclude her. I tried to explain my study in easier words and also I excluded the more complex methods with

interviews and life stages. She participated in the drawing exercise. Here, I tried to explain her the questions I asked in a simple way. She seemed to enjoy the method. However, the results are difficult to analyse and interpret as she mainly drew what she liked, without giving an answer to my questions.

After having presented the methodological reflections of the study and the methods, experiences and procedures from my fieldwork, the next two chapters will now focus on the presentation, analysis and discussion of the empirical data I gained.

# Chapter 4: Preparing for Life in an Orphanage Setting

The following two chapters are presenting the empirical data I collected during my fieldwork. The methods I focus my analysis on are mainly the final interviews about responsibilities and protection, as well as my own observations. However, the emotion card interviews and the life stages exercise also provided me with important information I want to share in this chapter. I hope to discuss the children's experiences in a valuable way through representing the participant's experiences, my own observations and reflections as well as added theoretical knowledge based on other scholars.

This chapter focuses on presenting the empirical findings from my fieldwork. The first section concentrates on the children's general experiences of emotions they underwent at this place. Afterwards, I will discuss both the described situations and the young people's strategies to cope with their adverse situations. The names of the children have been anonymized.

## 4.1. Everyday Life Experiences in the Orphanage

In this section of the chapter I aim to present the children's experiences of their everyday life in the orphanage. With the emotion cards, I tried to gain information about how the children undergo different situations in which they feel a certain way. Furthermore, I wanted to see how they cope with these emotions. In the following section I will discuss the most relevant challenges and enjoyable situations in the lives of the young people. All emotions have been introduced by the children themselves in reaction to the monsters in the emotion cards. My questions were always in regard to their evaluation of the cards. I will link the findings to the discussion about responsibilities and protection.

### 4.1.1. Friends

"*What do you need when you feel sad?"*

*– "I need… a glass of water, I need a joke and I need a cuddle!"* (Kianga, 10)

The most relevant aspect for most of the children were their friends, the other children at school and at the orphanage itself. They named them in both, when I asked about positive emotions as happiness and when we talked about what they wanted in certain situations. Playing with their friends is a component of their everyday lives which often cheers the children up and shields them from difficult feelings (e.g. Kianga, 10). Ibrahim and Howe (2011) confirm in their

research the collectivistic characteristics in patriarchal family-based cultures. They argue that their identity feelings are strongly connected to the ones of the family and the group. Most of the children in this study were Muslims and got educated in this religious setting. The experiences they were sharing with me reflected these cultural values, for instance the close connection to their peers.

Nkosane (8) answered to the question what he would do to feel better from being scared during the night that he would "*sleep with the guy in the blue jacket, Lethuxolo, I sleep with him*". Some of the children compared their friends at this place with their family. Thandiwe (12) was telling me about her best friend at school and how they would share everything. When I asked what she needs when she is with her, she answered: "*It's like I have the world already, so I don't need anything"* (Thandiwe, 12). The children described these social interactions often as a way to feel better. If they felt distressed, the first thing which would help them to feel better would be the contact with their friends (e.g. Serafina, 12). Thandiwe (12) also said that "*You just need someone to love you. I don't know how my life here would be without the other children. Someone to cuddle you".* It seemed that the children were depending a lot on each other and were using the others as a coping strategy. To stay together at this place, was something they appreciated and made them feel better. From the first days, I also saw the children hugging each other and laughing together. They really seemed to cheer each other up.

4.1.2. Family

"*What do you need?"*

*– "In this moment just to be with my family and just to have peace."* (Xolelwa, 18)

Talking about their families released different emotions for the participants. Also, families were represented not only by the immediate, but also by the extended family. Not all of the children in the orphanage were actual orphans, or if, many of them were either only maternal or paternal orphans.

Some of children spoke about that they were happy to see their families during holidays: Fundiswa (12) told me about her family when I asked her about a situation which makes her happy: "*When I'm at home. With my cousin, my auntie, my family. They are not actually my family, but they are like my family. Because they treat me like it's my home and my house. I am free to do everything. They care about me. And when I come it feels like a safe zone".* Xolelwa (18) agreed with Fundiswa that she was the happiest if she could leave for holidays and stay with her family and friends. Lethuxolo (9) said he was happy "*when my father comes*". His and

his sister Thandiwe's father is one of the parents who is visiting the orphanage from time to time. The children both said they were very excited and happy to see him. However, they also told me that they experienced sadness the days afterwards and felt left behind. In general, many of the children also experienced more difficult emotions when thinking of their families. Fundiswa (12) said: "*I feel like this when I miss my mum. Then it hurts*." and Thandiwe (12) explained the following: "*When you want to go for holidays, but your parents don't have money. Then you feel sad. Then you see that all the other children go away. And you think that your parents don't love you and then you like cry and things like that*." This shows that families provide both an aspect for positive feelings but can also give adverse situations to cope with.

#### 4.1.3. School

"*Because school… that's so different from home. It's just like … school is better than being at home. When I enter school, I play around a lot. And I am always funny because I am never sad at school."* – Fundiswa (12)

School and education presented the third area the children were naming a lot. Skovdal (2012, p. 260) found in his research that "schools were reported as important for the children in developing friendships and in giving them a sense of normality and stability amidst difficult circumstances". The findings in my study support this argument. When I asked the children when they were happy, some answered "*At school. At school with my friends*." (Nkosane, 8) or "*When I go to school. […] Cause they learn us stuff*" (Lethuxolo, 9). For many of them, school represented a place which is very different from the orphanage. It seemed like it gave them a space to forget about their situations and worries, where they could play and be with their friends. Also, nearly all of the children, e.g. Unathi (15), talked about positive feelings when they did good at school. Roli (12) said that he feels great when "*you finish your work and your teacher gives you a star and a tick".* He told me being at school is very hard. It seemed as the children were seeing school as the key to get a better life and they were very glad if they did good in their exams.

On the other hand, school also presented a factor which could be stressful for the children. Many of them told me that their education is very important to them as it would create the basis for their lives. If they do good at school, they might get more possibilities and opportunities as adults. Fundiswa (12) explained these feelings in the following way: "*Yes, I am scared. I am a person that thinks about the future a lot. I keep thinking about is my papers ready for my track, even I am only grade seven. Just if I ever want to go to university, I need to pass this year. I need to have all my papers and all my projects. So, I am scared*." Some of the children were

also facing problems with the schools, as they were lacking resources or had troubles creating contact between the orphanage and the teacher. One example for this has been a personal experience of myself. On one of the first days, the staff asked me if I could join one of the aunties to collect the certificates of some of the older girls from their school. The school did not trust the children to take them home and asked the caregivers of the children to come and pick them up personally. The girls, Nkosazana (15), Njemile (17) and Xolelwa (18), told me afterwards it was actually the first time somebody from the orphanage went to their teacher and talked about them. Luckily, the teacher told me the girls were doing really good and we did not need to worry about them. However, for many other children, failing at school tests would provide the children with both, their own disappointment and also with pressure from the caregivers at the home. Xolelwa said about one of the monsters: "*He looks scared, worried. Yeah. That would maybe be when I write an exam and then I fail it and then I just don't know, that's terrible stuff. And then I am worried if I make it through the next test*." A lot of the children were studying independently when they came home from school and were also very interested in my experiences from studying at university.

#### 4.1.4. Physical threats

"*Like when I have to go to the backyard and take my things in the dark alone. Then I am scared and I pray*." (Thandiwe, 12)

One issue the children seemed to worry a lot about were physical threats. As I mentioned in the background chapter, South Africa and especially Cape Town create a living setting which includes dangerous aspects as robberies, violence and even murders (Statistics South Africa, 2018). This was reflected by many of the children when we were talking about being afraid or worried. There were different areas the participants worried about which I will present in the following section.

First, many of the children were afraid of the night, when it was dark and they were sleeping. Most of the children worried about physical danger from outside, as the orphanage got sometimes robbed during the night. They did not have an alarm system and in the night, there were only the aunties staying with the children. To my question if Malaika (13) is sometimes scared, she answered: "*When I'm sleeping alone in the night and they switch off the light before I go to sleep. Then I just jump on anyone's bed. We have bunk beds, but most of the big girls in the small bed room sleep on the top bed*." Another aspect of the night was the worry about the death. Serafina (12) told me that "*I am worried about when I sleep, I will not wake up the next*

*morning".* It seemed that the night created an unsafe time for the children, and they worried about it as much as about the danger on the streets.

Another aspect of their physical safety was about conflicts. One of the youngest boys, Nkosane (8) said: "*When a ghost is coming, then I am scared. […] And if somebody tries to kill me, I am scared*." He reflected here both on the fear of the night, and also the actual danger happening in Cape Town. All children were going to surrounding schools. They walked to school in groups, because it was dark in the early mornings when they had to leave to school. Still, many of them told me that they were really afraid for both, themselves and me, walking outside the gates of the orphanage and the school. Also, some children told me about anger or fears of being hit. Arend (15) said he got angry "*when somebody fights at school with me. Then I will also maybe kick back. Maybe we both get in trouble then*." and Lethuxolo (9) experienced similar experiences in the orphanage:

Lethuxolo: *"I'm afraid of getting hit."*

Me: *"By who?*

Lethuxolo: *"By auntie."*

Me: *"And what makes you feel better when you're afraid?"*

Lethuxolo: *"Nothing. She is going to hit us every day."*

Many of the children saw the workers as both, caring people and a person controlling them who could be a possible threat. Roli's (12) experiences went along with this:

Roli: "*He's feeling like, when they want to hit you and you feel your heart beat.*"

Me: "*Do you sometimes feel like him?*"

Roli: "*Yeah. […] Actually yesterday, when they were shouting at us.*"

Me: "*Oh, okay. Why did they shout at you?*"

Roli: "*Cause our room was dirty.*"

However, I never experienced any of the workers actually turning violent towards the children. They often raised their voices and used non-violent ways of punishment, for example telling the children to stay in the room during the afternoon instead of playing outside. Rather, I saw many times that the youths themselves were fighting with each other. It was often part of playing. Many of them were also playing with the dog in the orphanage and were trying to

convince the dog to fight more. Roli (12) told me he wanted the dog as a grown-up to be a protection for the orphanage, so they never had to worry about the lack of the alarm system again. Nkosane (8) told me also once that they need to play fighting so they can actually defend themselves on the streets. It seemed like play and the fear of protection was closely connected, especially for the younger boys. I interpret it was a crucial competence for them in order to be able to protect themselves.

4.1.5. Getting disturbed and the need of alone-time

"*I just feel like hiding. Hiding away from everyone. And just stay alone. But that's hard here at this place.*" (Fundiswa, 12)

The biggest challenge the children faced seemed to be to get disturbed. Many of the participants complained about the lack of alone-time since they had no place to ensconce from the rest of the children and workers. Serafina (12) said she feels like hiding "*when I am not in the mood and somebody is calling me to do something for them. Then I will run and hide away".* It seemed that the she wanted to be alone for some time and did not want to fulfil her errands. Also, some of the other children complained about the chores they had to do: "*Like when I'm not in the mood and something or someone comes to me and makes me angry, stuff like that. Or when we have to do this and this, when they give us a lot of things at once, then I get angry. Or when I have to clean*." (Thandiwe, 12). On the opposite, the children felt free and relieved when they were done with their housework and could relax. Fundiswa (12) was one of the participants experiencing this:

> Fundiswa: "*He feels like just relaxing. Just being peaceful*."
>
> Me: "*Do you sometimes feel like him?*"
>
> Fundiswa: "*When I am done with my chores, my homework, done cleaning and I am just free, so I can go sleep or just lay in my bed or play UNO cards. It's when I am sleeping. And no one comes and wakes me up.*"

Buhle (16) also said she can relax best on Sundays, as this is the only day where they did not have to worry about programmes and homework. They were able to do whatever they want to do. It seemed to me as they really valued their alone-time and were enjoying it a lot.

A strategy to cope with many of the adverse situations was to stay away from everything. I interpreted that the children needed their alone-time more than they could receive it at this place. Unathi (15) answered to my question of how he can feel relaxed, the following way: "*Hiding*

*away. When I'm hiding away, I am relaxed. When I just get out of the gate, no asking permission. Then I'm relaxed, I am just out of the road, no one knows me. Just walking around*". It seemed like the orphanage gave him no opportunities to be alone and have some privacy. Additionally, Xolelwa (18) said that she was having troubles making daily plans, because "*sometimes things can happen I didn't know it would happen on that day. […] For example, I was planning to come back and sleep. But then I came back late from school, so now I cannot sleep, I need to do my work*". This example shows how much the children were dependent on the routines and happenings in the institution and were not able to independently organise their everyday lives. I interpret this as the children were limited in their participation of their own lives. This reassures the arguments of Wolff (2008, p. 137) who says that "the participation of children and youth is a component of quality development processes and participation is therefore an essential indicator of the quality of services.". In order to feel implemented in the formulation of their everyday lives, youths need to experience successful participation. That means that they wanted to decide more about their everyday lives to be able to organise their daily lives.

4.1.6. Being in the orphanage

"*I don't know… like for example, the people here. I don't know, I just feel loved. They care about me, they don't abandon me. They don't treat us as problems. They show love*."

(Buhle, 16)

Staying in this orphanage, raised very ambiguous emotions among the children. While some of the participants experienced love and a safe environment, other children felt misunderstood and irritated at this place. Both Malaika's (13) statement "*When I am around, then I am happy."* and the following experience from Thandiwe (12) shows that some of the children were very glad to be at this place: "*Like when I asked them for help, they would help me. When I need the computers, they would help me. If I need tutoring, they would find me tutoring. Things like that. They helped us a lot though*." Both of the girls seemed to be glad to experience the safe and helpful environment of the residential care.

On the other hand, some children told me also about negative emotions towards the home. Lethuxolo (9) told me he gets angry when he had to stay inside the orphanage because he experienced it as a boring place. Fundiswa (12) experienced something similar: "*I feel like this place is so irritating, the people and the children. Sometimes it's just knocks on my nerve. And sometimes I say words I don't like saying. But when I am at school, I don't say these words. But I get so angry when I am here.*" Both were explaining that they were facing negative

emotions being in the orphanage, while they enjoyed going to school. Unathi (15) faced a difficult situation while I was conducting my fieldwork. He felt abused by one of his teachers and sought help from the caregivers. However, he was facing ignorance from the workers and felt misunderstood. During our interview, he told me the following: "*You see my face, but inside I am just tired of this place. All the people I lived with are gone. These here all of them are new except me. Most are here only for two years or four years*." He told me he was missing his friends and did not feel very familiar with the new children. But he felt even more left alone by the caregivers. He stated that "*it's like they don't care. They're not interested*". These experiences show me how different the children can experience their everyday life in the institution. In general, many of them were happy to be able to on outings to excursions and get presents by donors from time to time. For example, Lethuxolo (9) who felt in general bored at this place, told me he feels loved when "*they buy me stuff. And when they care of me*." Especially the younger children were telling me about positive emotion when they receive new material from donors or the staff.

#### 4.1.7. Praying

"*What do you need to be not scared?"*

*– "God. God must be with me. […] Believe in god. God must be with you."* (Kanelo, 8)

As Skovdal (2012) found in his work in Kenya, churches were presenting a social context to establish coping strategies. Especially when the children got worried in the night, they were starting to think about their faith. Both Lethuxolo (9) and Serafina (12) were telling me that they start praying, when they feel worried. As I mentioned before, the children were raised in the setting of this Muslim orphanage. While all of the children were religious, not all of them were following the Islam. Some of them were also Catholics. But however, the children all told me that the faith in a god was helpful to cope with difficult situations and gave them faith. Twice a week, they were having 'Madrasa' hours, where they learned about the Islam.

Once I went to a Chatholic church with the children and they had a performance on the stage, singing and dancing. I talked before with Malaika (13) and Kianga (10) how this goes along with their religions. Malaika said that they for her as a Muslim this is like showing respect for the religion of the Christian children. And these were also fasting with them during Ramadan, so it is a reciprocity. Kianga complemented that they were all praying to a god and it does not matter what they call him. He will still help them in adverse situations. I interpreted these

occasions in a way that the children put a high value on their religion. It seemed to help them coping in difficult moments and provided them with faith.

#### 4.1.8. Acceptance

> "*Say now I am scared. And I just forget about it. That's all*." (Unathi, 15)

Most of the previous parts of this chapter were focusing on positive or negative experiences and strategies to cope with adverse situations. However, I also observed a lot of acceptance of the situations. In many occasions, the young people could not tell me something that made them feel better. Often, they said, they just had to do it and go through it. The interview with Serafina (12) included the following conversation:

> Me: "*What calms you down*?"
>
> Serafina: "*I do so when I sort the problem out. And when I cool down. I tell myself I must cool down, I must just listen. And must not do naughty things*."

Other children were telling me about situations where they got shy talking to certain people or standing in front of the class. All of them said that there was nothing helpful but to just get done with it. Buhle (16) said: "*The others around me they tell me just to do it. There's this other girl she told me I must just do it, cause I must finish and there's no difference everyone must do it.*" In my opinion, this shows that coping strategies do not always include explicit actions but can also consist of accepting the situation.

### 4.2. Being in Need of Protection

The following sections of my analysis will focus on the children's experiences of the terms 'protection' and 'responsibilities'. In the following two sections about protection and responsibilities I will reveal more of the participants' own words and less my own and theoretical reflections. Like this, I want to ensure to present the children's experiences in a descriptive way, and then finally have a more academic discussion in the last part of this chapter.

#### 4.2.1. How do the children define and understand the term 'protection'?

In the beginning of the final interviews, I asked the children if they were familiar with the term 'protection'. Nearly all of them were and they described in a quite similar way. Some of them called it security and guidance, while others named it keeping something or someone safe. Unathi (15) also talked about respecting yourself and therefore taking care of yourself. The

children used the term ‘protection’ in the background of both, physical and emotional protection.

All of the children agreed that everybody needs protection. Njemile (17) said that this is so important “*because there’s a lot of violence going around. People are dying, children… even boys these days get raped and everyone, even adults, need protection! Because they get robbed, some of them get stabbed, so everyone needs protection.”.* Another girl, Nkosazana (15) stated something similar: “*Because it’s everybody needs to be safe, not only a certain person needs to be safe because they are like the president. They don’t need to be safe, because they are the president. Everybody needs to be safe. Everybody deserves to be safe, because it’s also very dangerous out in the world, so everybody deserves protection*.” I tried to provoke an age discussion within this area. When the children told me that everyone needs protection, I was trying to figure out what the word ‘everybody’ included. Vuyelwa (14) was consisting on the fact that everybody includes all people, because “*most people don’t care if you’re young or old, they just do what they think it’s right. Everyone needs protection*.” However, some of the other participants gave me particular examples about which people are especially in need of protection. On the one hand, some children as Thandiwe (12) named sick people. They said these people needed more protection as they did not have as much control over their bodies as healthy people. On the other hand, two of the participants, Serafina (12) and Lethuxolo (9), talked about homeless people without food and money. Other groups of people being called in need of protection were old people (Thandiwe, 12), teenagers (Unathi, 15) and people living in orphanages (Thandiwe, 12). It seemed that the children thought that all of the people being in these categories often seem more assailable and dangerous people could see them as a target. When I asked the children if I needed protection, they agreed that I did. They said I was a stranger at a dangerous place, and I was walking alone in the streets as a person looking very different from most people because of my white skin colour. Finally, only Serafina (12) said there are some people who are able to protect themselves and do not need the protection of somebody else. However, all of the children agreed that they were in need of protection at this orphanage.

Most of the children reasoned this need because of the physical danger and the violence outside the orphanage. Nkosazana (15) argued: “*Because the world out there is very dangerous. A lot of stuff is happening in this world. So, without protection we would all be dead by now. So, there would be nobody left, cause people could do whatever they wanna do to other people*.” Anele (15) also said he needs to feel protected in order to function properly. If the children were

worried about their own safety, they will not be able to do good at school or participate happily in their everyday life. Thandiwe (12) also said she needed to be protected to actually stay alive, as she was very afraid of getting attacked outside the gates. Nearly all of the children focused their need for protection on physical danger. I interpreted that most of them had no capacities to worry about emotional protection as they first had to ensure their physical safety. Only Njemile (17) argued that some of the children might need special protection because of their difficult backgrounds: "*Yes, because some of us come from terrible homes. Some of us were living under the bridges and they need protection because [of] the life outside they lived. They will be scared to trust anyone. So, for them to feel safety they need a place which is safe. Where they can trust anyone and be opened up to other people*." I interpret that Njemile thought that some children might need special protection because of past experiences. However, I think that this does not mean that other people do not need that special protection as they also have might have experienced a difficult past.

4.2.2. How do the children experience protection in this orphanage?

There was only one girl, Akhona (18) who actually said that she did not feel the need for protection because she felt the caregivers in the orphanage already cared a lot. She said:

"*So I don't think we need protection, because for example one thing that I can grant them for, if you do something wrong, if they see that you do something wrong, they don't hide it from you, they tell it straight to your face, no matter if you're going to be angry or not, they tell you. But at least they know, I know I was doing the best for you, not to hurt you, but to make you better. So, I do think we have protection here*." I also observed this attitude during the afternoons I spent in the orphanage. Many of the children got very annoyed when the workers told them to do stuff or were actually shouting at the children. But also, most of them accepted it very quickly and said they did understand why they were acting like this.

However, all of the other children said that they were still in need of protection. Kanelo (8) explained his understanding of protection: "*For example, to protect your body from danger. From violent things. And you must protect… the families must protect you. And your mother must protect you. The whole family must protect you. And they must tell you what you have to learn to protect yourself*." Most of them named incidents which could happen outside of the orphanage. Especially the boys focused on the protection from drugs and gangs. Arend (15) told me that many of his classmates got early involved in these areas, and the boys in the orphanage were glad to be able to stay out of it. One main worry for many of the children was robbery. They were very afraid of somebody breaking into the orphanage in the night and said

they felt protected by the aunties sleeping there with them. However, Unathi (15) for example also mentioned that if they would call the police, they would take too long to come and actually help them. So, this was a point of fear which could not be very relieved by anyone. In general, some participants talked about strangers as an origin of danger. They often came to the gates in the early evenings to ask for leftovers from the kitchen. Some of the girls told me that they were not allowed to talk to them, and they had to send one of the older boys. In this regard, Nkosazana (15) and Akhona (18) were also afraid of getting raped or abused and felt protected by the gates of the orphanage.

Some of the children also experienced protection inside the institution: Anele (15) reported that the orphanage was protecting the children if they got sick and would take them to the hospital if needed. Also, Lethuxolo (9) was telling that he felt protected from feeling as lonely as he did before he came to the institution. Only a few children talked about such kind of emotional care, e.g. Kianga (10) told me about one experience of being an orphan: "*When, for example, people say I don't have a mother. Then they are like: Were you sad on Mother's Day cause your mother wasn't there? And somebody will just say like no you can't say that she doesn't have a mother and blabla*." It often seemed that this place was giving the children a safe zone where they could all play together and feel more understood.

Finally, I talked with the children about what they needed to understand they were being protected. For most of the children this seemed to be the support people were showing towards them. Unathi (15) and me had the following conservation during his interview:

> Me: "*And what does make you feel protected? […]"*
>
> Unathi: "*Say someone is gonna come and hit me. And you stop the person. Yeah*."
>
> Me: *"Hmhm."*
>
> Unathi: *"Like you're standing up for me!"*

He complained that he was lacking this feeling in that case where he felt abused by his teacher. His mentor, however, was more able to give him the feeling to care for him. Kanelo (8) said he would notice it if somebody takes care of him and loves him, and Serafina (12) explained she notices it by being safe: "*Cause nothing usually happens to me. Like I always think that something is gonna happen to me, but there is always somebody protecting me*." Njemile (17) also reported that she felt protected if somebody was caring and was asking her about her day to be sure nothing bad happened. If an incident occurred, the workers would try to deal with it.

It seemed that standing up for the children and actually showing care for them were important factors for the children to feel cared for.

Akhona (18) told me about how she saw he shouting from the orphanage workers actually as a way of showing protection:

"*That will hurt, but I believe that although we always like hate that people that shout at us the most, that are the people that care because when someone wastes their breath on you, they care, because if it was someone who doesn't care, they would be like I don't care, let her do whatever she wanna do, I don't care. But if it was someone that takes the step to tell her what's wrong and what's right, that's when I feel protected if someone shout at me, and tell me, this what you did was wrong instead of just sitting back and doing nothing*."

I interpreted that for most of the children protection constituted an action to prevent them from any physical harm. However, showing it was based on a more emotional level and seemed strongly connected with not being alone. The participants wanted to have somebody with them who would stand up for them and shield them from danger.

### 4.3. Being an Independent Actor in an Orphanage Setting

#### 4.3.1. How do the children define and understand the term 'responsibilities'?

The children used different terms to define the term 'responsibilities'. Most of them called it to take care for something or someone and looking after something. Anele (15) used the words "*The things that you care about. Like you have the responsibility to look after yourself, look after your environment and look after the people around you and yeah. That's it*." Some of the children described responsibilities as something they needed to do because they were told to do so. Kianga (10) said you know you have responsibilities when you did something, and you needed to face the consequences for it. Serafina (12) claimed that it was also a right to do something.

In general, most of the participants claimed that all people in the world have responsibilities. However, some of them pointed out specific groups of people who had more of it than others. One discussion developed with several children about young children and babies. Lethuxolo (9), Nkosane (8) and Akhona (18) thought that only adults have responsibilities. Children were freer to do whatever they like to do. However, I had three interesting interviews where the children told me their explanation why young children also had their duties to fulfil: The talk with Siplikro (16) was the following:

Me: "*What would say which people in the world have responsibilities?*"

Siplikro: "*Everyone.*"

Me: "*Everyone? What about small kids?*"

Siplikro: "*They also have a role to play. Their role is to be a sun or a daughter. To respect the parents. That is their role that they have to play*."

Another girl, Njemile (17) argued that: "*Babies… they don't have much responsibility, because they are not grown up. But they have their own responsibility by crying. And eating! They cry when they're hungry, so their responsibility is to make sure they eat and cry and smile and laugh*." Both Siplikro and Njemile argued that responsibilities are not so dependent on the age as also small children have their role in the world and their duties do not need to be really huge ones. Serafina (12) and Kianga (10) both said that children from the age of seven years were capable of having responsibilities.

Other groups of people the participants named were for example orphanage workers. Anele (15) and Kianga (10) argued that they need to take care for a lot of children who are coming from different and partly difficult backgrounds. Nkosazana (15) said something similar about teachers, they needed to teach and guide the children at school. Finally, Akhona argued:

Me: "*Which people in the world have responsibilities*?"

Akhona: "*Mostly parents. Because they have to look after their children, they have to make sure they are well cared, are in good health, they get the education they need. So, I think it's mostly parents*."

I interpret that most of the children named especially people who act as a caregiver for the children, in the different settings of a (institutionalised) home and at school.

4.3.2. Why do the children have responsibilities?

Most of the children had a positive attitude towards responsibilities and understood why they were important. There were two straits cognizable: Reasons about the presence and reasons about the future. In the presence, some of the participants wanted their home to be a clean and nice place. Njemile (17) argued that "*because if all of us have no responsibilities, everyone's room would be messy, clothes would be laying around, the house is a bit dirty, it wouldn't smell nice and people would be getting sick*." It also seemed for many children that responsibilities were just a normalised part of their daily lives. Nkosazana (15) explained the following: "*Cause everyone has responsibilities, it's a common fact. […] Because wherever you live, in Africa or*

*not, if you don't have responsibilities, the work or the place is not going to run properly. If the mother stops working and the father stops working, people will obviously end up on the streets. So, everybody has responsibilities*." Both girls clarified that having responsibilities made the place working properly. Other children also talked about that visitors coming inside the institution should be welcomed by a nice and clean area. This would give a good impression.

On the other side, the children were arguing that these duties would prepare them for their lives. Akhona (18) argued strongly that she thought responsibilities are important "*because, this is not where we want to end up. This is not our life. We are not going to live here. We want to get out into that world, and we'll meet new people and meet people with different ideas about something. […] These responsibilities are also to teach us how when we become adults, how we are going to be actors*." She further explained that you should have a basic understanding of cleaning and tidying to be able to live with new people. Anele (15) also said that having these responsibilities is a way of being taught to know what to do as an adult. Or, as Thandiwe (12) told me, you have these duties "*because you want to achieve something in life. And you have to go through all these things to get what you want*."

Finally, Serafina (12) argued that fulfilling their responsibilities is also a way of respecting yourself and the others. She said "*if you don't like the things they do to you, you wouldn't like the things others do. Treat them the way you treat yourself."* Thus, she agrees with all other participants that you should do these things in order to live together in a harmonic way, both in the presence and in the future.

4.3.3. How do the children experience responsibilities at this place?

In general, the children seemed to have a lot of responsibilities. The main one which was named by all participants was to clean the house. This included the dorm areas and the 'front', the so-called dining area. Also, they had to clean the reception of the workers and the boys had to take care for the garden if their help was needed. Usually, a man living below the orphanage building was responsible to take care for the outdoor area. The second duty which was named by many children was to do the homework or to do good at school. As mentioned above, many children saw school as a very important part of their lives and also as a preparation for the future. The children worked very independently on their school work. Nobody controlled if they were doing their tasks, but most of the children did so voluntarily and without being asked to do so. If they needed help or the computers, they would either receive direct help from the workers or these would organise them tutors or mentors. The tutor programme consisted of university students from the University of Cape Town who came once a week to help the children with their school

work. The mentoring programme instead was with very different people from various age groups, who were also coming once every other week and were supposed to help the children with both, doing their school tasks and coping with everything concerning the children's lives. But in general, most of the children were working each concentrated on their school work. If it was too noisy and too crowded in the orphanage, they went back to their schools to work there until the late lunch in the afternoon.

Another responsibility which was told by Anele (15) and Thandiwe (12) was to take care for the 'small boys'. These were Nkosane (8), Kanelo (8), Lethuxolo (9) and Roli (12). All other boys were called the 'big boys'. The older children were supposed to watch the small boys and make sure that they would be there for eating times and go to school in the morning. Also, they received more help with doing their laundry and with the cleaning. The older children were supposed to their laundry themselves. Because of the drought in Cape Town in 2017 and 2018, the children had to do it manually in the garden, sharing the water with several of the others.

Following the rules and being respectful to the other children, the workers and visitors were also two of the most relevant duties the children had to do. But also, it seemed like it was part of their cultural understandings. However, Nkosazana (15) called it "entertaining visitors". She said when people were visiting, especially, when they were donating something to the orphanage, the children were supposed to all come to the front and talk to the visitors.

Only Lethuxolo (9) and Nkosane (8) said that as the small boys they were free of any responsibilities. All other children seemed to see their duties as integrated in their everyday lives.

### 4.4. Balancing Protection and Responsibilities

4.4.1. What are the children's ideal pictures of the interplay of protection and responsibilities?

13 out of 14 participants of the interviews took part in the fictive task about being an orphanage director themselves. The first task was to define the levels of responsibilities and protection in their own orphanage. Seven of the children wanted the level of protection balanced, saying that they do need protection, but also not for everything. The other six children wanted the protection for their children as high as possible. If they had to decide about the level of responsibilities, nine of the children wanted to have it balanced as well. They should do stuff on their own, but they also should receive help from the staff. Vuyelwa (14) said: "*No, not*

*everything on their own. They need the adult's help*." Two of the participants wanted a high level of responsibilities, while two wanted a low level.

Afterwards, we talked about the responsibilities the children should do on their own. Nearly all of the participants agreed that their children should keep their environment clean and tidy. A lot of them were focusing the duties on physical actions such as folding clothes, reporting

broken things and fixing the beds in the morning. Unathi (15) stated, as visible in Figure 4, that the children should "*clean their room. And their bed. Finished. That's all. The rest must happen by the staff.*"

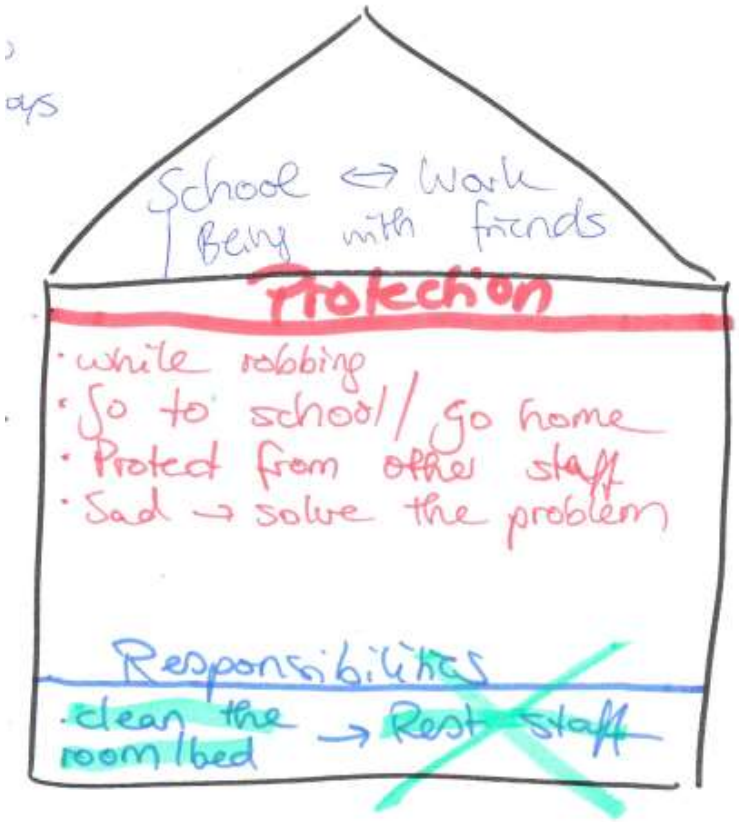


*Figure 4: Unathi's fictive plan for his orphanage.*

Seven of the children were focusing on education and school again. Anele (15) stated that "*they should do their homework, education. They know that there is no other way to success than education. And they should show respect*." Many of them said that the main responsibility should be to do great at school in order to become good in life. As mentioned in this chapter before, the children saw responsibilities as a way of getting prepared for life. The children should learn to think independently and decide for themselves. Kanelo (8) agreed on this by saying "*they should be good children. I want them to be whatever they want to be when they grow up*." He reflected on how listening and being a well-behaved child helps you to become

successful in your life and especially your career. Four other children were also putting their focus on being respectful, both to the other children and the workers. Thandiwe (12) said that they should help one another and follow the rules set by the orphanage.

Next to the responsibilities the children should get, all participants agreed that the staff should do things for the children, as they were working there. These duties were quite balanced between emotional and social support and doing chores on the other side. In general, many stated that the staff should always be there for the young people in the institution:

"*The staff must always be there for the children, no matter what. They have the responsibilities to talk to the children like without swearing, without using like bad language, also if those children don't listen. But they don't have the right to be rude to a child and remind them of the past. […] And the staff has to help to raise the children. If they cannot do something, they must help them, like they must give them the confidence and the potential to do it. So, if the children can be confident in front of them to do it and speak if they have a problem*." (Nkosazana, 15)

Regarding more practical chores, some said that their children should not enter the kitchen. Therefore, the staff should both cook and do the dishes. And although the children should do the cleaning themselves, the workers should supervise them and help them in order to learn how to do it properly. With the small boys, the staff should be helping more with cleaning and doing their laundry. Additionally, if a child gets sick, the workers should care for it and bring it to the hospital if this seems necessary. Kanelo (8) wanted the staff to "*give them food. Take care. And learn them how to do good things. And teach them what they want to be when they are big*." The second part of Kanelo's sentence presents something nearly all of the participants were agreeing on. The staff should supervise and guide the children. Akhona (18) told me that she would like her workers to advise the children. They are the ones who have been living for longer and have experienced the world outside of the orphanage. She said this could be motivating for many children. Also, Thandiwe (12) and Anele (15) argued that the staff should treat the children always in the same respectful way they want to be treated themselves. And finally, they should "*make every child feel happy*." (Njemile, 17).

Next to these responsibilities, the children should also receive a decent level of protection. Most of the participants agreed that the young people in their institution should get a lot of protection, but many of them stated that they should be able to deal with some things on their own. A lot of the origins of danger the children should be protected from, were again harmful for their physical well-being. Anele (15) said: "*I would also protect them from unhealthy things. I would*

*protect them from drugs. From… from violence and gangs and this kind of stuff that can harm them. Things that can destroy their future. And always advise them for education and a clean environment*.". Most of the participants agreed on the protection from violence outside the gates. Unathi (15) said he would especially patronize his children on the way to and back from school, as they were then most exposed to the dangers on the street. Especially the girls said they would protect their young people from kidnappers, abuse and from being raped. The guys were more focusing on strangers and robbery. However, some of the participants talked also about more emotional protection. Both Lethuxolo (9) and Serafina (12) were saying that they would shield their children from feeling sad or angry. Akhona (18) said she would protect them "*From getting depressed. From giving up in life. And from getting maybe being abused*." and Thandiwe (12) from "*sad feelings and from things as when people make fun of them or things they don't even know. I would bring their courage up and not let them down*." This shows me that although protection was by nearly all of them defined as something physical, the children also wanted emotional support. It seemed easier for them to define and explain these wishes through the fictive task than through talking about their own emotions and wishes.

4.4.2. How do the children experience the interplay of protection and responsibilities at this place?

While thinking back to the orphanage they were resided at, I asked the children to compare it with their ideal fictional institution. A lot of the responsibilities and protective factors were fulfilled at the orphanage. Three of the children actually agreed completely on the way the institution was handling these aspects. Serafina (12) wanted the staff to stop the children from being wild and would protect them from danger, strangers and going out alone. Kianga (10) would have helped especially the small children with cleaning and would have patronised them from harming things and strangers. The third child, Anele (15) wanted his workers to protect and supervise his young people, while shielding them from drugs, violence and gangs.

However, most of the other children were either partly discordant or even completely against the way the institution was handling this. I interpret it was in general a lot about their emotional protection and supervision as well as the contact to the staff. The participants talked about very individual aspects and therefore, I will present some of their opinions in a more separated way in the following section.

One of the boys, Unathi (15) told me already in the emotion cards interviews that he felt abused both at school and in the orphanage. During the final interview he told me again that he felt as the staff would not work at all. Neither did he experience protection or trustworthy relationships

with the workers. When I asked how he felt about this, he answered "*It's not good. It's not good!*". He actually gets very annoyed by this and he thinks this needs to be changed. The second child who was very unhappy with this situation was Thandiwe (12). She raised different issues which did not go well in her opinion. She did not feel respected from the staff who was nevertheless asking her to respect them. The workers were not present and if they were, Thandiwe said that "*sometimes they bring my feelings down instead of bringing them up*." She argued that the physical care was also not really provided, as the workers did not care a lot if a child was sick or needed help. She also felt protected in some situations. However, when I asked her how she feels about it, she answered: "*Already used to it… I am already used to everything here*."

Most of the children saw these issues in a less extreme way. For example, Njemile (17) was in general quite satisfied with the regulation of responsibilities and protection. She only criticised that the staff is using the tutoring programme in order to help the children. Njemile said that "*If it would be my orphanage, I would prefer the people, the staff, inside. So, the children think they have parents that care about them. And volunteers can come, but the staff is supposed to spend more time with the children. So, they can feel more secured, more happy. Because they don't think they miss their parents*." She argued that if the staff would be working more with the children, this would also make the young people think better of the workers and they would know that they can ask them for help if they need it.

Nkosazana (15) had her main issues with the way the staff was talking to the children. Figure 5 shows that most of her points from the fictive orphanage are fulfilled.

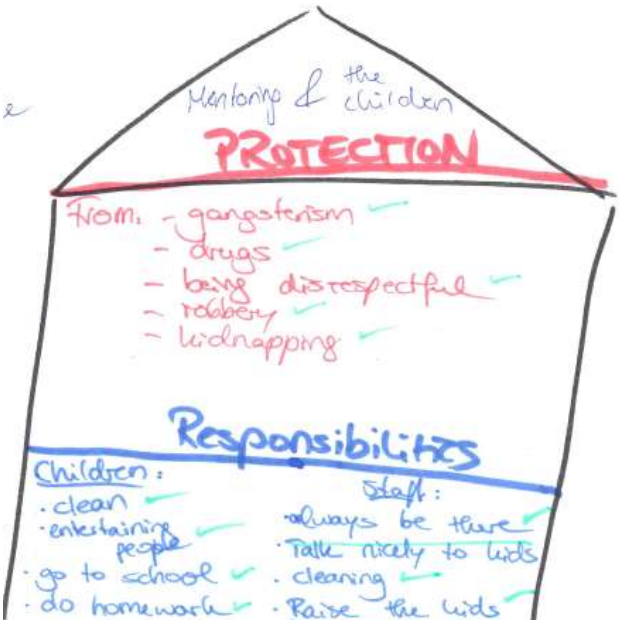

*Figure 5: Nkosazana's fictive plan for her orphanage.*

Two of the small boys, Kanelo (8) and Lethuxolo (9), had a rather emotional struggle in this orphanage. Lethuxolo told me that he did not feel protected if he was feeling sad or angry. However, the orphanage was still preventing him from feeling alone. Kanelo on the other hand wanted more help with finding out what he wanted to become when he grew up. Neither did they support him by getting to this point. Both of the boys felt that the responsibilities of the children and the rest of the protection was fine.

Akhona (18) also raised the request for more supervision and guidance. She said that the children were lacking advices for the world outside the home. After their time in the orphanage which would end for her very soon as she already turned 18, she would need to live outside the institutional life. However, she also said the following: "*Personally, I don't need this from my perspective, because I have seen a lot of things in life. When I started looking after my brothers, I started cooking for my siblings, I was 12. I was living in a house alone looking after my brothers. Just I was acting like a parent, because my mum was very busy because she had work and stuff, so from my perspective, I have seen how life is. I know how it feels to not have anything, I know how it feels. So, I wouldn't say that I need that. But some of the children need that, because once you have gotten through something, you would like work hard to get away from that thing. We all need to learn from our mistakes, if you never made a mistake, you cannot learn from this mistake. I don't think I need this, because okay. But for other children, they would need this*." Thus, she did not see the need for more advises for life herself, but for some of the other children she thought it might be helpful. Partly, this was fulfilled by the tutoring programme in Akhona's opinion, but not by the staff.

Finally, two other children, Siplikro (15) and Vuyelwa (14) were talking about smaller issues. Siplikro agreed, as visible in Figure 6, on the lack of supervision and guidance, and also said the orphanage has only little protection for robbery.

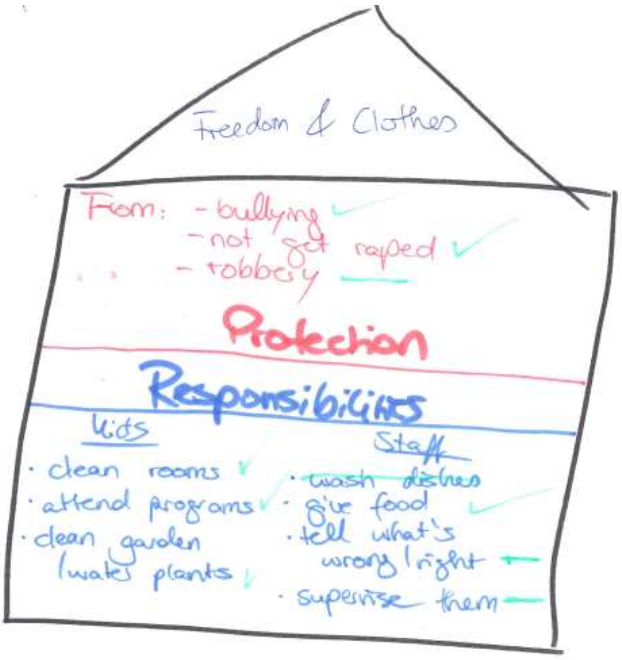


*Figure 6: Siplikro's (16) fictive plan for his orphanage.*

The fences were not very high, and people could climb over it during the night because the orphanage had no alarm system. Vuyelwa criticised that the children had to work inside the kitchen as this is a dangerous place, especially for the smaller children. Also, she did not like that the staff does not clean their own offices. However, both Siplikro and Vuyelwa said they are used to this by now.

The findings from the fictional tasks reflect a lot upon the definitions and understandings of the children about the terms responsibilities and protection. For example, the small boys did not consider themselves as having many responsibilities, and neither did they consider this topic a lot. The older ones often described responsibilities as duties and household chores. During the interviews, when thinking about the staff's responsibilities in their fictive home, a lot of the participants were talking about more supportive things as supervision and guidance. However, the responsibilities of the children themselves seemed to stay the same as they mainly mentioned household chores and being respectful. Many of them actually stated that their children should get only a few responsibilities so they can be freer to study for their education.

I found it surprising that many children first only mentioned physical areas of protection, but later they were talking a lot more about emotional protection during the final interviews. In their definitions most children determined protection as keeping something or someone safe or as taking care of. However, during the interviews, some of children were also including emotional protection in cases of sadness, anger and depression. And although many children

stated that they were not feeling emotionally protected by the staff, they still saw the orphanage as a safe place. Siplikro (15) and me had for example the following talk:

> Me: "*And my last question is, can you tell me two things that help you most at this place?*"
>
> Siplikro: "*Freedom*."
>
> Me: "*Freedom? Okay. What do you mean by this?*"
>
> Siplikro: "*I get the chance to sleep a lot and to study. And to play outside. This kind of stuff*."

Akhona (18) also said a very helpful thing for her is "*the way of life in this place. The way we interact with people, even with the staffs, that is very helpful, yeah*." A lot of the children told me that they really appreciated to get the chance to be at this place. Even if they were not always happy about how the orphanage was organised, they still got a better life and better opportunities than staying in their homes. Many of their families were living in severe poverty or the children were staying as orphans at the street. Due to these situations, many of these young people had no chance to go to school or had to work at a very young age.

4.4.3. My own experiences of responsibilities and protection in this orphanage

My own observations during my fieldwork went along with many of the children's experiences. In the following section, I will present and reflect upon my own observations and experiences during my seven weeks in the orphanage.

In the first days in the orphanage, I was facing a situation which was very different from what I expected and also from what I knew so far. Already on the first day I spent in the orphanage, I wrote into my fieldnotes "*Children are very independent, ironing themselves, cleaning/tidying up the dining room, helping each other straightening their hairs*." and "*Staff let the children do a lot themselves, e.g. one girl didn't do her work, staff told other girl to care for this, otherwise the whole group would get punished*." I also observed on my first day that the children could decide on their own if they wanted to have lunch or not. They had the opportunity to eat at school and/or in the orphanage and nobody checked on them. During the first days, I was also surprised by the dorm situation of the children. Both boys and girls were sleeping in two gender-separated dorms which had two rooms without a door in between. I felt that the children were lacking a feeling of privacy. This goes also along with the need of alone-time a lot of children were experiencing.

During my third day, I experienced the first time how visitors entered the orphanage. My reflections on this were similar to Nkosazana who said that it felt like the children needed to entertain the visitors: "*Treatment of the children by the visitors was really bad. They entered the dining room and just took videos of the kids without asking or introducing themselves. Children seemed used to it, they make fun about it. I complained about it with one of the workers. His response was that this is their position in society. Some groups even asked the staff if the kids could stop eating in order to take photos together*." Later in my fieldwork, I talked to some of the girls about this situation. I asked them about their experiences with visitors and how they felt in these cases. Also, I told them that I was quite surprised by the visitor's reactions. Thandiwe (12) agreed with me and told me that she also thinks they need more protection from the visitors as they only would come in without knowing the children, would take photos and leave again. When I told them I was calling them 'zoo visitors', the girls laughed and agreed.

On the sixth day, one of the social workers talked with me when we walked together to a school to pick up the diplomas of three of the girls. We discussed the difference between a governmental and a non-governmental institution. As a non-governmental one, this place had to face some challenges. She explained me that "*they don't get the salary they should get in this place. Thus, the workers don't work properly and a lot of them are blackmailing the manager: 'I don't need to work more because you still owe me salary for the last ten years'. And he cannot fire them because of this*." We talked about this situation because she also realised that the caregivers were not working properly. The children were a lot on their own, also in the eyes of the workers themselves. This goes along for example with the opinion of Unathi (15) who feels the workers were just not working and were not interested in their jobs. On day 17, I also wrote in my fieldnotes the following: "*However, the workers don't do a lot with the kids. They mainly talk to them if they anything or the kids must do something. Additionally, they are shouting a lot with the kids*." I was also irritated about the sleeping situation. On day 18, I complained: "*I only saw the manager around 4pm, I thought he would be home, but apparently he was sleeping all the time in the boys dorm. The women were as well sleeping within the day. The kids are very open to this, they even offer their beds. In general, the kids have their own beds, but mainly for the night. On the day, they share and switch beds very often*."

On the sixth day, I spent some time with the girls in their dorm. They talked about a girl who had to leave the orphanage last year because she got a baby. All children at this place needed to be older than 6 years old and therefore the teenage mother had to leave with her young child.

The girls in the dorm started arguing about teenage pregnancies. Most of them said they would be feeling blessed to get a baby because a lot of women actually have problems getting children at all and especially teenager pregnancies can be difficult. However, during the final interviews, some of the girls told that they really want to avoid getting pregnant at such an early stage of their life and wanted to finish their education first. I interpret this situation as something very mature. Most of the children always seemed to be playful and did not seem to worry a lot about their future, they were more laughing and not talking about the future. This situation showed me that they were actually concerned about both, their friend who had to leave the institution and also their own futures. Giving birth seemed important to them, already at their early age.

During these seven weeks, I observed several safety issues which were critical in my opinion. On my seventh day, for example, I saw the children jumping on the new trampoline they got on this day. The workers shouted that they were not allowed to jump yet before they would have gotten the safety instructions. The children left the trampoline for ten minutes and started afterwards jumping on it again. From this point, the staff just ignored the children and they actually never received the safety instructions. On the eighth day, we were going to a church with the children. The company who was supplying the bus to go there, forgot our booking and was finally sending a small Volkswagen bus with 9 seats. The social worker from the orphanage was asking me to go with 14 of the children in the bus to church, a place where I have not been before. Also, I had no information about what would be happen at the church. The event went really fine, but the situation around it seemed very unsafe for me. A third critical issue was for me during the last days, when one of the small boys, Nkosane (8) needed to go to the hospital. I was asking the workers what happened to him and if he would get healthy soon again, but nobody was able to answer me something. Neither did they know if they had to pick him up or if his mother would take care for it. In the early evening, Nkosane was suddenly arriving with his mother and he came immediately to me to hug me and told me how happy he was to be home again.

Another issue I found critical was the one of nutrition and food. As the orphanage is a non-governmental one, they are depending on donations. On day 13, I wrote in my fieldnotes: "*When I said goodbye, one staff guy asked me what I can eat at all as a vegetarian. Then he and another woman were discussing it, but they both said that I am living probably healthier than them. The food for the kids contains mainly rice and meat. The old chef also criticised that the kids were eating no green stuff on their plates. And they get meat 5-7 days a week.*" In general, the orphanage workers did not have a lot of knowledge about nutrition and taking care for sick

children. When we had sick children in the orphanage, they often asked me to take for them and to lower their fever.

In my opinion, many of these observations went along well with what the children told me themselves. I saw a lot of both sides, a lack of protection by the workers, but also a lot of collectivism between the children themselves and also with the staff. Many of the young people seemed to have a great time at the orphanage and were not that concerned about the safety issues as I have been. In the following chapter, I will reflect more upon the cultural and judicial aspects of these topics.

### 4.5. Summary of the Chapter

This chapter focused on the presentation of my empirical data. First, I demonstrated which different kinds of experiences the children had regarding their emotions and also their 'needs' in these moments. Afterwards, I presented the children's reflections upon the terms 'responsibilities' and 'protection': How do they define it? How do they experience it as this place? In how far do they agree on how much they have to do and how much protection they receive? Throughout my fieldwork and the followed work with my data, I realised that many of the evoked discussions are very different from my own (possibly Westernized) ideas and expectation. There, I decided to focus the following discussion of these presented empirical data in the next chapter on challenging these Westernized ideas.

# Chapter 5: Challenging Westernized Ideas

This chapter will focus on the discussion of the empirical data I introduced in the previous chapter as well as on the presentation of the theoretical perspectives and concepts that have guided my empirical work. During the time in the fieldwork, I experienced various situations in which I felt surprised and sometimes even confused by the way the institution was working and the people were acting. Adapting to the new culture, in both my private life and in my fieldwork, became a relevant part of my time in Cape Town. Therefore, I decided to analyse my findings within the background of being a 'Westernized' researcher in South Africa. In which ways are the experiences of the children similar or different to my personal expectations and other research findings from the Global North? And in which ways did my role as the 'White Researcher' influence the whole research process, from developing my research questions, the fieldwork and finally writing the thesis itself?

In this chapter, I will try to intermingle existing theories in a discussion with both my empirical data and critical views of other childhood scholars. In the first part, I will focus on the cultural aspects in the discussion about the experiences of the children. Also, I will reflect upon my role as the 'White Researcher' in South Africa. In the second section, I will present the rights-based discussion between the UNCRC and the ACRWC and how the empirical data fit into the conflicting aspects. Finally, I will explain the differences between the 4 P's of the UNCRC and the 3 R's of the ACRWC and compare them with the findings of my study.

### 5.1. Cultural Discussion about Orphanhood

This section will focus on cultural aspects of being an orphan or living in an institution in South Africa. In my opinion, the concept of culture is difficult to define. It is often used as "what is peculiarly human in relation to nature" (Mouritsen, 2002, p. 14). This author suggests that culture is often seen as something generated by a natural basis. This can be activities, expressions, social institutions or productions created by humans. In this study, I will use the term in a similar way by focusing on the ways the institution was working and how the children explained their experiences. I use the concept in a broad way as an overall term to include different perspectives of the lives of my participants. The discussions will focus on different cultural aspects between the 'Westernized' world I grew up in and the knowledge and experiences I gained through my fieldwork and data from South Africa.

### 5.1.1. Orphanhood and orphanages in South Africa

*Defining orphans and orphanhood*

The international campaigns for children's rights in the last decades and the increased awareness of orphanhood as the immense social aftereffect of AIDS/HIV increased the humanitarian attention to orphans in Africa (Cheney, 2017). Within this new alertness, a discussion was raised about an official definition of orphans. While the UNCRC has no particular article about orphans, UNICEF defines orphans as "a child under 18 years of age whose mother, father, or both parents have died" (UNICEF, 2006, p. 4).

However, Kristen Cheney elaborates in her book *Crying for our elders* (2017) that most of Africa's vernacular languages do not have a term that agrees on this definition. Many of them use descriptions as being left behind to describe an orphaned child. Additionally, many African children do not consider themselves as being orphaned if they are still living with their extended families. Cheney also criticises that by focusing on the orphanhood aspect of these children many tend to "ignore their roles in households, families, communities, and even generations" (Cheney, 2017, p. 27). On the other hand, this labelling gives better opportunities for NGOs to implement humanitarian interventions. Starting with the 'AIDS orphan crisis' in the 1990s, UNICEF's campaigns had various conflicting consequences. One of these consequences was the creation of the term 'orphans and vulnerable children' (OCV) which is accentuating the possible vulnerability of these children, e.g. by developing special programmes for them (Cheney, 2017). However, as mentioned before, the author declared that field workers realised that many orphans were showing higher levels of vulnerability than non-orphans, but also realised that the causes of their orphanhood, as for example AIDS/HIV and poverty, were equal if not higher factors of the children's vulnerability than simply being an orphan. But even though these labels are showing critical sides, Cheney (2017) argues that they also improved the work of NGOs supporting the social development, children's rights and child protection.

These are only examples how labelling and defining a certain group can cause adverse consequences. Abebe (2012) emphasizes that defining orphans and orphanhood is depending on the particular society and needs to be treated culture-specific. In the context of South Africa, Meintjes and Giese (2006, p. 415) argue that most South African so-called orphans are actually "not living without adult presence, care, support, supervision or socialization, or necessarily without positive adult role models". The authors argue that the local definitions of orphan and orphanhood are very different from the international definitions from agencies and policies: The Xhosa term 'inkedama' which presents the direct translation of the term 'orphan' refers to

rejection and desertion. Most locals would not use this term as they would only call children an orphan if they live without any adult care and provision. Therefore, most South African local communities tend to avoid labelling the children in practice (Meintjes & Giese, 2006).

Ansell (2016b) claims as well that even though the AIDS/HIV pandemic and its orphans became a global concern, it has for several reasons a strong Western perspective: First, she argues that "in the West, nuclear families have long predominated and are viewed as the 'natural' milieu for child rearing" (Ansell, 2016b, p. 167). Also, different policies and programmes have treated orphanhood as a symbol of disadvantage, as the children are lacking parental protection and depending on other adults. This picture of orphans helps NGOs and governments to raise funding. Ansell argues that although interventions against HIV and AIDS can be controversial, child-saving normally raises the willingness to invest in donations. In the Westernized context, orphans have been a dominating part of heroes in the mythology. The author discussed the image of the independent orphan in both, fairy tales, e.g. Cinderella and Snow White, classic fiction, as books written by Mark Twain and Charles Dickens, and finally in comic books. Kimball (1999) pointed out certain characteristics of fairy tale orphans, e.g. that he/she acts independently and is different from his/her peers. However, Ansell (2016b, p. 172) argues that this Westernized concept of orphanhood does not "reflect the significance of familial relationships for contemporary African orphans". The author also claims that many orphaned children in southern Africa live a comparable life to non-orphaned children. The concept of orphanhood as 'Westernized' also goes along with my findings that although many children and workers used the term 'orphanage', none of the children or workers referred to the children as orphans. It only became obvious that the children were orphans when the children were telling me that they miss their families. Kianga (10) also told me that sometimes children at school would mention that she does not have a mother. However, this was the only reference I experienced in connection to orphanhood at this institution. The research from Skovdal (2016), Abebe (2012) and Meintjes and Giese (2006) which I presented in the previous section, also accorded with my findings. They stated that African cultures often do not include terms as orphans and would only see children as orphans if they would be completely on their own, without any external support systems. The children and the staff in the orphanage were using the term 'orphanage', but they never mentioned being an orphan. The only times talking about this, was when they were telling me that they do not have a mother or a father.

*Living in residential care*

In her book about orphan care, Jo Daugherty Bailey (2012) claims that every country in the world is facing the reality of parentless children and is trying to cope with the consequences of children being on their own. Africa, however, is the place where most of the worldwide orphans are resided. Main causes of orphanhood are "war, famine, disease, and economic circumstances" (Bailey, 2012, p. 6), with AIDS/HIV as the leading cause in Sub-Saharan Africa. This is very problematic with the notion that many countries there are facing economic and health crises which are generating a lack of support systems for parentless children. Sub-Saharan countries are trying to improve this situation by providing education, health care, fostering, adoption and institutionalisation. This study is focusing on a residential care system as it took part in an orphanage. The following section will therefore refer only to institutionalisation as a way of taking care for orphaned children.

Mupedziswa and Mushunje (2012) are describing the institutionalisation system in their book chapter about orphan care in Zimbabwe, one of the neighbour countries of South Africa. The authors claim that although it has been stated that residential care should be the last solution, the number of orphanages has been more than doubled within the last decades. Within these institutions, there are two kinds of models, dormitory and family-based models. While the family-based model tries to recreate a family setting with little groups of children and fixed caregivers, the dormitory model includes one big room with many children living together. Mupedziswa and Mushunje (2012, p. 135) claim that the last model has been criticised as it "does not provide for a sense of family life and privacy". Especially the second model requires a lot of attention of the social staff which is difficult as many countries in Southern Africa are facing a loss of workers in social services. According to the authors, this problem can be explained by the lack of different resources as time, money and skills of the workers. But also, at the same time, these resources are lacking in the institutions themselves. Many child welfare services are missing a proper funding which results in a deficiency of both, caretakers and basic necessities as food and clothes (Mupedziswa & Mushunje, 2012). Although the authors conducted their research in Zimbabwe, I can see many parallels to the experiences of the children in my study. Their lack of alone-time was an issue raised by many children as e.g. Fundiswa (12) who told me that it was hard for her to be alone at this place. Unathi (15) also said that he only can feel well when he is alone on the streets as he can never be alone in the orphanage. Also, as similar to what Mupedziswa and Mushunje state, the orphanage was lacking different resources. The lack of financial support to build another sleeping area was leading to the dorm situation. However, the children complained about this only in the loss of

their alone-time. They were also very dependent on external donations regarding food and material as clothes for the children. The food was mainly maintaining rice and meat, and during the seven weeks I did not see vegetables at this place. The only fruits the children got were oranges. The chefs told me that this might be an inadequate nutrition for the young people, but they had nonetheless no financial resources to afford vegetables and fruits. In my experience, the caregivers themselves had only little knowledge about nutrition and health. This was noticeable both in regard to the food of the children and also in cases of the sick youngsters. This differs from the findings of Serpell and Adamson-Holley (2017) who found that local caregivers in Zambia often contribute to the children's understanding of health and nutrition. An explanation could be that many of the caregivers grew up themselves in challenging circumstances with often insufficient care. Some of them told me that they received a much better life by moving to this institution to live with the children.

In general, the whole way the orphanage was working was different from what I knew and from what I expected before I went into my fieldwork. In Germany, during my bachelor's in psychology, I have been working with different professionals in social care, such as psychologists and social workers. Many of the children I was working with, were either living in foster care or temporary in a children's home. The institutions I visited were all very organised and followed a certain structure and educational background. Much of their work was based on developmental psychology and the children's everyday life in the institution often had a focus on their psychological well-being. Arriving in the orphanage in Cape Town, I realised quickly huge differences in their way of working. Something which really surprised me was that none of the workers had completed an academic education. The manager of the orphanage was at this point 25 years old and he grew up as an orphan himself in this institution. He just stayed there and took over the management responsibilities. They have had a professional social worker during my first weeks, but she resigned because she did not receive a salary in the orphanage. The other workers were either volunteering or they were people living in the townships of the city. They took care of the children in order to get food and a bed for the night. However, I also realised that the lack of the academic education seemed to be an issue only existing for myself. I was wondering if the children had any idea at all about these issues. It was mainly Unathi (15) and Thandiwe (12) who were criticising the way the workers were acting towards them. Unathi said "*It's like they don't care*" and "*They're not interested*", while Thandiwe told me that the staff is not there for the children. Both did not link it to the education of the staff. Nevertheless, there were several children telling me that the aunties of the orphanage are very important to them. Anele (15) answered to my question what he likes of

this place: "*I like the feeling that we're cared. […] And the clothes, the food, everything. […] I like the advices. So, they advise us what we must do for the future, about education and a lot of things.*" The place itself and its workers were called by Lethuxolo (9), Kianga (10), Akhona (18) and Vuyelwa (14) to be the most important and helpful parts in this orphanage. Vuyelwa said "*What helps the most here is the people working here. And the places they take us to*." During my fieldwork I also experienced other areas were the children and the workers seemed very close to each other. For example, the female workers showed the children how to braid their hair themselves, and sometimes the children were braiding the hair of the staff. I also witnessed the girls talking to the aunties about boys or about being worried about being a bad mother later in their lives. They seemed to talk to them often when they wanted to hear about life experiences and advices. This can be called 'Education for life' which is an often-used concept of many scholars. While according to Breedveld and Jansen (2018) the importance of quality education has been raised after the implementation of the sustainable development goals, some researchers as Serpell and Adamson-Holley (2017) argue that informal socialisation practices differ from the pedagogical ones. These authors acknowledge the importance of formal education in order to raise the development, but also state that "traditional African socialization values and nonformal educational practices focus on preparing children and youth for socially responsible participation in the local community" (Serpell & Adamson-Holley, 2017, p. 20). They also argue that the outcomes of the socialization of the children have the same value as formal education and can also provide children with information to become successful in their lives.

### 5.1.2. Vulnerability and Child Protection

*Orphaned children as vulnerable*

In the specific case of orphans, as mentioned before, many policies and organisations treat orphaned children as vulnerable in their public strategies. This is a wide-spread conception which has been strongly connected to Sub-Saharan AIDS-orphans. In my opinion, the term and concept of vulnerability is difficult to define and measure. Arora et al. (2015, p. 193) say that "vulnerability is used in several fields in order to refer to the potential for poor outcomes, risk or danger". Their article is focusing on young people who might be vulnerable because of various reasons such as deprivation, abuse, violence and infections. They state that "orphanhood is one of the well accepted conditions of vulnerability" (Arora et al., 2015, p. 194). The UNCRC (United Nations, 1989, p. 6) stated in Article 20 the following:

"A child temporarily or permanently deprived from his or her family environment […] shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State"

It seems to be generally accepted by both researchers and political organs that orphaned children are in special need of protection and should receive more support and help. However, some authors have lately argued that orphanhood might not be the only reason for their vulnerability but there might be other factors such as poverty: Next to orphanhood, Arora et al. (2015) name three aspects of dependence which might determinate vulnerability: Material aspects (e.g. money, food), emotional aspects (e.g. support, care) and social aspects (e.g. guidance, environmental risks). These research findings support the understandings of my participants. When I asked the children who needs protection, none of the children were talking about orphans. After questioning about specific examples, some of the participants as Thandiwe (12) and Lethuxolo (9) referred to sick people, others as Vuyelwa (14) and Serafina (12) named homeless people one the streets and some as Akhona (18) and Unathi (15) told me about children in general. However, all of the children agreed to the need of protection at this place. They say that everybody needs and deserves protection and so do the children living in this institution. I interpret that the children do not necessarily connect their orphanhood with vulnerability. It seems more like that they need protection because everybody needs it – not just because they are orphans. In my opinion, this reflects upon the criticism Ansell (2016a) raises in her article about globalised models of childhood and youth. She reviews the way media is presenting children in Africa – the images often "represent children as in need of rescue by the viewer" (Ansell, 2016a, p. 34). Development aid tries to induce sympathy by using pictures evoking vulnerability and innocence. She argues that in these cases, the culture and community of these children is neglected, and they could be presented in a passive and helpless matter. Later in this chapter, I will focus more on the children's understandings about their interdepending way of acting.

*Children in need of protection*

During the last decades, protecting vulnerable children became more and more crucial in both, child protection services in the 'Westernized' world and in the work of NGOs in the Global South. When searching for literature about child protection, I became aware that there seem two exist to branches of child protection. On the one hand, social care workers are protecting children from abuses, neglect and domestic violence (Humphreys & Stanley, 2006). Here, the focus is more on the psychological well-being of the children and on creating a safe environment for the child to grow up in. Many of the interventions are happening in close

contact to psychologists and are supporting the relationship between the parents and the child. But, on the other hand, NGOs and states are "preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse" (Unicef, 2008). In their Child Protection Strategy (2008), UNICEF states that it is important to guarantee the child's right to survival, development and well-being. The environment should be a protective one to ensure both, an accountable government and children as resilient agents. Creating this environment should have the following consequences:

"A protective environment for children boosts development progress, and improves the health, education and well-being of children and their evolving capacities to be parents, citizens and productive members of society" (Unicef, 2008, p. 2)

But UNICEF also states that child protection is a global and transnational issue, helping children in critical and stable positions. Another UNICEF report about child protection systems, written by Wulczyn et al. (2010), is affirming this statement. They state that child protection should be both a private and a public concern as it is both the responsibility of the broader community including the kin network of the children and of policies. The authors also claim that the system is depending on the particular situation the child is living in. There are risks which "are found in the economic, social, and political externalities of the communities in which families live" (Wulczyn et al., 2010, p. 5). In the report it is also written that there is a need to locate the violated rights of the children in order to adapt the system to it. In my interpretation, this goes along with the surroundings of Cape Town, which are dangerous and violent in many ways. The needs of the children presented especially the desire for physical protection. Most of the children were worried about robbery, rape and gangsters who could hurt

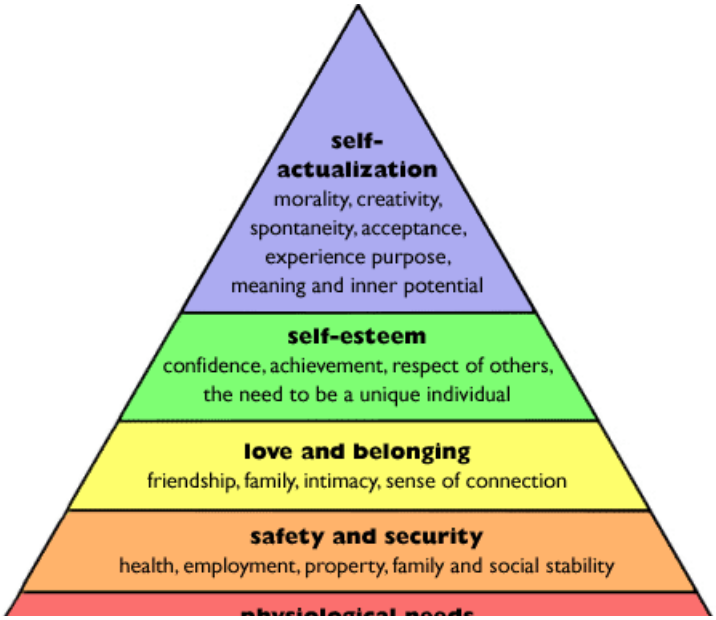


*Figure 7: Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1987)*

them on the streets. This reminded me of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1987) which is presented in Figure 7.

Maslow argues that there are basic needs, first people's phycological needs and later safety and security needs, which humans desire. In my interpretation, the children have granted their physiological needs by staying in the orphanage. The institution is providing the children with nutrition, shelter, bed and clothes. Maslow claims that these needs to be satisfied before the human is able to have motivation to fulfil the higher located needs. In the case of residential care, according to Morgan (2006, p. 112), "a resident will not be able to work on his or her personal issues until basic safety/security and physical needs are first met". While in the 'Westernized' world the safety and security needs are often fulfilled, children in South Africa are often exposed to physical threats because of danger and violence (Statistics South Africa, 2018). Many children told me sentences as "*there's a lot of violence going around*" (Njemile, 17), "*I need protection to stay alive*" (Thandiwe, 12), "*there are some people out there who do the wrong stuff*" (Kianga, 10) and "*the world out there is very dangerous*" (Nkosazana, 15). Also, the staff was from the very beginning worried about me walking home alone on the streets. They wanted to call someone to pick me up, as they thought it might be too dangerous for me to walk outside the gates. Both what the children told me, and the concern of the workers were signals for me that they all are very fearing their physical security. In my own experience, these concerns are not strong at my homes in Germany and Norway. In this sense, I interpret that this presents an explanation why the children were defining protection as something physical and were focusing on threatening violence outside the gate. Agreeing with Maslow, they first need these needs to be fulfilled, before they can desire higher demands. Interestingly, all of the children were characterizing protection as physical as that when I asked them to define the term protection. However, during their fictive task, more children were also talking about the emotional support and protection in case of negative feelings. This might be because in the orphanage itself, their safety and security needs were rather fulfilled and the next step of Maslow's hierarchy, love and belonging could be desired. Unathi (15) said he would protect his children "*when they're sad.*", Lethuxolo (9) "*when they're alone. […] When they're sad. […] When they're angry*" and Thandiwe (12) "*from sad feeling and from things as when people make fun of them or things they don't even know*". In these cases, the participants did want emotional protection for the children in their their fictive orphanage. That was also something some of the children were lacking in their actual institution. I interpret that this shows that protection is something situational and is depending on different aspects as their geographical location and also their subjective surroundings. Apparently, if the children are concentrated at

a safe place, they have different protection needs as if they are asked more general about their understandings of protection.

### 5.1.3. Intergenerational Relations

*Children as interdependent agents*

In opposite to seeing children as vulnerable and in need of protection, more and more childhood scholars have started seeing children as agents in their own lives, living interdependently in their cultures and surroundings. As James and Prout (2015, p. 7) describe in their key features of the paradigm for the sociology of childhood, "children are and must be seen as active in the construction and determination of their social lives, the lives of those around them and of the societies in which they live". Since the first edition of their book in 1997, the concept of children as social actors has been critically discussed and carried further (Abebe, 2019). In general, some Childhood Studies scholars agree that children are reacting to their surroundings in an agent way and agency creates an existing and relevant part of their everyday lives. Children all around the world have been active parts of their families and communities and were able to contribute to the different areas of their lives. The agency of orphans has been intensively researched during the last decades. In the case of South Africa, Adamson and Roby (2011) show that orphaned children score higher on agency thinking than non-orphans. The authors argue that this might be explained by the fact that orphans tend to receive more support to think of the future in order to be prepared to live independently after leaving the institution. Skovdal (2012, p. 155) calls this "to prepare them for life's struggles". This is a similar answer I got from many of my participants when I asked them about the reasoning behind having responsibilities. Children as Thandiwe (12), Anele (15) and Akhona (18) were telling me that they need responsibilities to be taught how to act as an adult and how to achieve something in their lives. However, two of the girls, Nkosazana (15) and Njemile (17) also argued that they needed to do the chores in order to have a functioning household. In my interpretation, this shows that the children are aware of both, their present lives and their futures. They want to live in a healthy and clean home now but are nevertheless aware of the fact that they will have to leave the institution latest when they are 18 years old.

Although the concept of agency has been well established within Childhood Studies, also more criticism has emerged during the recent years. Some scholars started questioning the agency of children because examples given of children exercising responsibilities or conducting work do not "imply that such children are exercising free will or are unaffected by structural constraints" (Ansell, 2016a, p. 40). Abebe (2019, p. 2) raises the argument that "it is important to go beyond

the recognition that children are social actors to reveal the social, cultural, material, and political contexts as well as relational processes within which their everyday agency unfolds". He claims that it is not important to just discuss if children have agency, but rather how this agency looks like. The author differs between the existing versions of agency, described first by Klocker (2007), and discusses two new alternatives to reconceptualise the concept. While thick agency describes the possibility to select or choose things or systems that might improve their living conditions, thin agency must be seen in the restricted everyday life of the children. The first one gives the choice between a selection of restricted alternatives, e.g. selecting a new school or a relationship partner. Thick agency in this orphanage was presented by different situations, e.g. that children can decide to eat lunch or not, or if they want to join the soccer classes. Thin agency "represents the daily struggle of children in the face of difficult material and social circumstances" (Abebe, 2019, p. 7). It is connected to making decisions while having a broad range of alternatives. In my judgement, an example for this can be that most of the children chose to accept their circumstances and to not complain about the lack of balance between responsibilities and protection. They decided for themselves that they prefer not taking it up as an issue, but to just deal with it. Thandiwe (12) and me had the following conversation about this:

> Me: "*Okay. So, you would say that there are some problems at this place? Where you don't feel so well?*"
>
> Thandiwe: "*I can live with it*."
>
> Me: "*You can live with it? So, it's not really a big issue for you?*"
>
> Thandiwe: "*No*."
>
> Me: "*Are you just used to it?*"
>
> Thandiwe: "*Already used to it… I am already used to everything here.*"

Thandiwe and other children as Siplikro (16) and Vuyelwa (14) were saying that they were used to the occurring situations. Therefore, they did not treat it as problem they need to deal with and did decide not to take actions to solve it.

Nevertheless, Abebe (2019, p. 7) criticises that the notion of agency is often connected to African childhood where children are the ones who are facing difficult situations. As it is often linked closely to vulnerability, the concept of agency must be seen in a contradictory way next to being entirely positive. Therefore, the author implemented the term agency as

interdependence. He claims that children can be at the same time independent and interdependent in different aspects of their lives. This is especially represented by the African intergenerational relationships, where children and adults are closely connected in various aspects as decision-making, farming and household activities. Children's agency should be seen as an individual concept of the child itself which is influenced by their social and cultural contexts. Liebel and Saadi (2012, p. 166) criticise that "the liberal reasoning developed in the context of the European Enlightenment suggests conceptualising the subject in an individualistic sense, being total and complete in himself and standing apart from society.". The authors suggest seeing humans as being part of the society and as being in the state of individuation. This means people are always connected to both their personal experiences and the society around them. In the African context, the need of cohesion and solidarity often outweigh the individual interests. According to Liebel and Saadi, children are an integrated part of society. In this way, Abebe (2019, p. 11) agrees, agency might be seen more as "the ability to support interdependent livelihoods and fulfil familial expectations over time". The author concludes that agency is dependent on the occurring situation and context and cannot be treated as a common experience. During my fieldwork, I have often experienced the concept of interdependent agency. From the very beginning, I saw how the children got included into the household chores and the everyday life. One example from my research diary presents when I was trying to find out how many children were living in this orphanage. I wrote: "*So, I finally got a list with all of the kids, they are 24 in total. The secretary has a list on her PC: Here again, she just put my list into a girl's hand and asked her to find out who is still missing. The kids are often included as they are part of the staff. They grow up very independently*." (Day 7). From a later perspective, I would rather say that they grow up interdependently. In my interpretation, the children did not even get the chance to be independently from the others, as the place did not really allow a feeling of privacy and alone-time. All their actions were somehow depending on other actors in this place, both the children and the staff. Buhle (16) told me she can relax best on a Sunday afternoon, because "*this is the day I have nothing to do. Like there are no programs and I don't have anything to study on a Sunday and just lay down and sleep or relax. Yeah, I just relax*." In my interpretation this presents that the children are interdepending on their surroundings. If they have programs organised by the staff, they need to attend. I also saw them getting annoyed in the afternoons when they wanted to sleep while other children were playing cards in the bed next to them. Another example was that sometimes some of the children decided to walk to school to do their homework, while others decided to stay and do the homework in the dining room. When I asked them about their reasons for this

decision, the children explained me that it was depending on the situation: They would not go if it is too late in the afternoon as they wanted to be back before it got dark and dangerous outside. Also, it was depending on the amount of children doing their homework at the same time, as well as if they knew their classmates would also be at school. Thus, the children were taking this decision independently from the staff and were allowed to go or not as they wished.

In my opinion, this concept of responsibilities is also getting more popular in 'Westernized' research about children and childhood. According to Such (2004), the approach of responsibilities can be regarded in various ways. Socialisation theories say that responsibility "is conceptualised as something that is 'learnt by example'; children are socialised into morally responsible attitudes and actions are dependent upon their parents for moral guidance" (Such & Walker, 2004, p. 232). Different educationalists and politicians are discussing the consequences of this approach, e.g. in age discussions and household affairs. From what age is a child old enough to participate in the things affecting it? From what age are children old enough to take part in the household chores? These discussions are strongly connected to the ideas of agency and maturity of children. One current discussion is about children who are working. According to Such & Walker, children all around the globe are involved in both, unpaid and paid labour. One important example is the work in the home. The authors claim that children conduct various kinds of chores as domestic tasks and taking care for their siblings. However, the authors also raise the discussion if delegated housework chores from the parents should at all be considered as responsibilities, because the children in these situations often lack autonomy. On the other hand, research could show that the completion of such tasks can lead to a greater independence and autonomy of the children. In their data analysis with children in England, Such & Walker (2004) investigated into the children's perceptions about the concept of responsibility. The results showed that many children saw the tasks at home as a normal part of growing up. It was natural to them that responsibilities increase when you become older. The children also recognised increased trust from the parents when these noticed autonomous responsibility. Therefore, many of them experienced responsibility generally also positive (Such & Walker, 2004). It seems like that children in both parts of the world see responsibilities as something integrated into their everyday lives. All of my participants agreed that all children in their age should have responsibilities and saw them as something positive, preparing them for life. Only some of the children raised their duties as something negative. Fundiswa (13) said that she feels relaxed "*when I am done with my chores, my homework, done cleaning and I am just free, so I can go sleep or just lay in my bed or play UNO cards*." Thandiwe (12) was complaining about it a bit clearer in my sense:

Me: "*Can you give me an example when you get angry?*"

Thandiwe: "*Like when I'm not in the mood and something or someone comes to me and makes me angry, stuff like that. Or when we have to do this and this, whey they give us a lot of things at once, then I get angry. Or when I have to clean.*"

Me: "*Hmhm. You don't like cleaning? No? That's exhausting?*"

Thandiwe: "*Boring!*"

It seems like that these two girls do not like the process of doing chores. But nevertheless, both of them agreed in the final interviews that their children should have responsibilities.

*Orphaned children as resilient*

Another concept being used in the context of children facing adverse situations is the one of resilience. Many authors (Skovdal & Daniel, 2012; Wood, Theron, & Mayaba, 2012) argue that the presence of risk and predicted negative consequences can be a basis to develop resilience. Children can e.g. adopt or recover to these situations. Wood et al. argue that this positive adjustment is both depending on the individual child and its social ecologies. In the case of South Africa, various studies showed that resilience is depending on cultural, religious and social aspects of the children's lives (Wood et al., 2012). Skovdal and Daniel (2012, p. 157) claim that researchers "need to look at how children's social environments enable or limit their capacity to cope successfully (using their agency) with hardship through interaction with their surroundings". Abebe (2010) also introduces the concept of 'social resilience' which is focusing on the extended family and household systems in order to deal with the increase of orphans. Often, living in a stable and well-functioning place, gives the children more possibilities and opportunities than staying with their own impoverished households. The systems being used to show resilience, are often highly connected to the notion of social coping strategies which are "located within a social context that allows children to exercise agency as they navigate and actively negotiate support" (Skovdal, 2011, p. 260). In his study with children in Kenya, Skovdal (2011) was able to find several support aspects children are using. The biggest part is often created by education, including also the school itself and teachers. For many of the children, school creates a place to socialise and get a feeling of normality. children mentioned more spiritual aspects as church and faith-based groups. The believe in God seemed to be helpful to cope with adverse situations by getting hope and tranquillity. Finally, the author raises the support of families, both immediate and extended. The findings of my study consolidate these presented results. School was also the most relevant factor the children were telling me

as helpful. Lethuxolo (9) said he feels happy at school "*'cause they learn us stuff*" and Fundiswa (13) argued "*because school… that's so different from home. It's just like … school is better than being at home. When I enter school, I play around a lot. And I am always funny because I am never sad at school."* Both examples show that the children were seeing school as a positive place where they could experience joyful moments. Also, e.g. Nkosane (8) said that he finds school most helpful because they were learning him stuff which would help him to become something. It seems as school was a place for the children to be happy at the moment, but also a way to achieve a great life after growing up. Another helpful aspect was, as presented in the previous chapter, the believe in God. Especially in the presence of fear or worries the participants were telling me about their desire to pray. The last aspect from Skovdal (2011) was the family. Some of the children as Xolelwa (18), Fundiswa (12) and Thandiwe (12) were telling me that they are happy when they are with their (extended) families. I experienced one already mentioned situation when the father of Lethuxolo (9) and Thandiwe (12) was visiting. He brought hats for his children and took them out to have ice cream together. The next days, both were wearing the hat of their father all the time and were refusing to take it off. Lethuxolo told me that he is very bored at this place and does not like to be here. But his father promised him that he would take him and his sister out until Christmas, which gave him hope and the power to stay through it. In my opinion, this showed how much the families meant to the children although they were not living with them. It gave them hope and the strength to stay patiently at this place.

## 5.2. The UNCRC: Children in Need of Protection

### 5.2.1. General information

According to Burr and Montgomery (2003), human rights in today's form started flourish around 200 years ago during the times of the French and American Revolutions. During these days people started to realise their wishes and needs. However, only in 1948 the UN Declaration of Human Rights was established. It assigned all humans their rights, independent from skin colour, property and sexes. During this establishment, some people argued that although the UN Declaration is binding for all humans, children are in need of their own specific rights. They have their own interests and are in a special need of protection (Burr & Montgomery, 2003). The authors present four different reasons why some people saw children as different from adults and therefore in need of particular protection:

1. Children are still on their way to maturity and therefore, they might be more vulnerable and dependent on adults.
2. Children have less knowledge due to less experiences and might lack the ability to judge for themselves.
3. Children might have less communicational skills and therefore they might have troubles expressing their feelings and wishes.
4. Children are not as powerful as adults and might be more risked to be abused or exploited. (Burr & Montgomery, 2003)

Already in 1924, the first draft of the Declaration of the Rights on the Child was published. This continued until finally in 1989 the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) was established. It is the most ratified Convention made by the UN by being ratified by all countries worldwide except the United States (Burr & Montgomery, 2003). The rights included in the Convention are touching different aspects such as respecting the best interest of the child or providing food and shelter. Some authors like to group these rights. Burr and Montgomery (2003, p. 144) refer to them as the 'four Ps':

> Provision rights, e.g. the rights to food, housing and education
>
> Prevention rights, e.g. the rights to legal representation or privacy
>
> Protection rights, e.g. the right to protection against exploitation and abuse
>
> Participation rights, e.g. the right to hold an opinion and to freedom of conscience

The authors argue that these rights are often closely linked while some of them might be more controversial than others. Most people would probably agree that children have the right to be prevented from any harm, be provided with food and should receive protection, but there might be disagreements about the participation of children. These rights include that "children must be seen as full human beings […] as full members of society who have a right to be consulted about any decisions concerning them" (Burr & Montgomery, 2003, p. 145). Protection rights are often put at the opposite side of participation rights and in the Westernized world, protection and participation rights are often discussed together in cases as e.g. the health care system about the involvement of the children in the decision-making about their own treatments (e.g.Coyne et al., 2014; Day, 2008; Söderbäck, Coyne, & Harder, 2011). However, as this study puts the focus on protection rights, I will concentrate on them in the following section.

### 5.2.2. Protection rights

While participatory support empowers children and consider children as responsible enough to take their own decisions, protectionist forms of support approve the parents, caregivers or governments as the right ones to take the responsibility for the children. Burr and Montgomery (2003, p. 147) claim that the "protectionist approach legitimizes decision-making that is adult-centred". This goes along with the thinking about children as being vulnerable. Sandberg (2015) discussed this issue in her article about the UNCRC and the vulnerability of children. She states that adults as well as children share a common vulnerability, but children are assumed to have a particular vulnerability. The reason is that "children are not fully developed, physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually, and are consequently to a certain, though varying, extent depending on others for protection, provision and decision-making" (Sandberg, 2015, p. 222).

The UNCRC includes several articles which include protection. In the preamble, it says "the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth" (United Nations, 1989, p. 1). The most relevant article for this study is Article 20, claiming for protection of children deprived of family environment: "A child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State" (United Nations, 1989, p. 6). There are 15 more articles promoting several aspects of possible protection, e.g. protection of rights (Art. 4), protection from all forms of violence (Art. 19), protection of refugee children (Art. 22), protection from child labour (Art. 32), protection from sexual exploitation (Art. 34) and protection from detention and punishment (Art. 37). The experiences of the children about their protection needs go generally quite well along with these rights. As discussed before, the children were also mainly talking about physical protection against strangers, violence and robbery. However, the UNCRC states a particular article only mentioning children deprived of family environment, while the participants in my study agreed that all people need protection. Only Thandiwe (12) said that "*orphanage people also need protection, cause people see them and think they can rob us and so on.*" All of them agreed that they, the young people living at this orphanage, are in need of protection, but nobody else raised orphans in particular. It seems like my participants would not consider themselves as being so different or as being especially vulnerable due to their situation.

### 5.2.3. The UNCRC as Westernized

After the implementation of the UNCRC, several childhood scholars as Boyden (1997), organisations and governments started to raise the criticism towards the Convention as a Westernized product. Liebel and Saadi (2012, p. 162) explained that supporters of this thinking accuse the Convention "of disrespect[ing] toward local cultures and the generational relations and age orders based therein and of imposing a 'Western' conception of children and their rights in a manner reminding of colonialism or missionary practices". The authors claim that in opposite to the Westernized part of the world, the majority world societies treat children as integrated parts of their societies, having their own specific capabilities. Their influence "can go well beyond Western concepts and practices of children's participation, especially when these children are considered as full and responsible members in their respective communities" (Liebel & Saadi, 2012, p. 169). I discussed earlier that the children in my study were often integrated into the everyday life and it's duties. Only the small boys received some more help, often though by the older children. In my interview with Nkosane (8), he told me the following:

> Me: "*Is there something the people tell you you need to do? For example, do you need to clean?*"
>
> Nkosane: "*No*."
>
> Me: "*No? Is it only from a certain age you need to clean?*"
>
> Nkosane: "*Yes*."

I also observed that the small boys got help doing their laundry and the older children asked them sometimes if they did their homework. The older ones received nearly no help from the staff, but I saw them supporting each other a lot. They were often doing deals with each other in order to reduce the work in total. One child would help the other one cleaning if the other one would help with the homework. These findings confirm the early statements of Boyden (1997) who discusses in his book chapter the globalization of childhood. She raised the problem that the UNCRC is based on the concept of individual rights. According to the author, "in many peasant-based societies the desire to sustain group solidarity prevails over individual needs and interests" (Boyden, 1997, p. 201). Through their collectivism, these societies sustain their group cohesion and solidarity. In my case, the whole institution was focusing a lot on the children as a whole group instead of individuals. The staff did not often show interest for the individual child. Also, if some of the children were breaking rules or did something else wrong, the whole group had to carry the consequences. In my interpretation, the grouping of the children

intensified this topic. Both, the workers and the young people, used the terms ‘small boys’, ‘big boys’ and ‘big girls’. Thus, I heard many times sentences such as the big boys should go and help the small boys to clean their laundry, or the small boys should go to the big girls in order to receive help doing their homework. I often told the children that I felt the whole institution was acting as a big family and they were all working together to keep the place running properly. Especially Thandiwe (12) and Malaika (13) were agreeing on this and said they enjoyed it a lot in this place. However, I also think the setting of institutional care makes it difficult to compare my participants with other children in different parts of the world. The UNCRC also states that “the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding” (United Nations, 1989, p. 1). Growing up without their families, changed a lot in the lives of my participants – often including moving to a new city or even country, changing schools and friends and losing their homes. In my opinion, it is very difficult to compare this setting with a child in a family-setting living in Norway or Germany. I think the feeling of cohesion and solidarity also grows through living so close with each other without having another place to escape to. Through the loss of their families, regardless if it was caused by death, poverty or other reasons, they had to move to the orphanage which became their new living environment. However, more children are facing this reality in southern Africa and also the state of orphanages themselves seems to be different from the ‘Westernized’ world, based on my own experiences. Therefore, the next section will discuss the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, created by the African Union in answer to the UN Convention.

## 5.3. The ACRWC: Children as Responsible Parts of their Households

### 5.3.1. General information

One year after the ratification of the UNCRC, many African countries criticised the minimal involvement in the development of this Convention. Additionally, they claimed that the Convention did not represent the real experience of African children (Mbise, 2017). In 1990, the first draft of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child was created as Africa’s own version of the UNCRC and ratified in a rather slow progress of most of the African countries. A huge problem of this progress have been the translation of the charter into the various different languages of the African countries (Mbise, 2017). However, most of both the Convention and the charter treat the children’s rights in a similar way. According to Mbise, only a few rights are adapted to the special situation of children living in Africa. He stresses

that the African charter recognizes "the responsibility of the African child to his or her family, includes additional protection against apartheid and armed conflict, as well as discouraging harmful customs and traditional practices that curtail the rights and welfare of children" (Mbise, 2017, p. 3). Finally, after 10 years of trying to gain one third of the African countries to ratify the charter, the ACRWC was put into force in 1999. 15 members of the Organisation of African Union have ratified it at this point (Lloyd, 2002).

According to Burr and Montgomery (2003), the Charter recognizes the local contexts for children's rights. The focus is more set on the problems African people are facing, such as apartheid, armed conflicts and the resulting migration. The preamble of the Charter states the following:

"Noting with concern that the situation of most African children, remains critical due to the unique factors of their socio-economic, cultural, traditional and developmental circumstances, natural disasters, armed conflicts, exploitation and hunger […]" (African Union, 1999, p. 1)

The authors argue that the main difference towards the UNCRC is the emphasis on both the rights and responsibilities of the child. The Charter stresses that both children and parents have responsibilities towards each other. Article 20 promotes that "parents or other persons responsible for the child shall have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development the child […]" (African Union, 1999, p. 7). These duties include ensuring the best interest of the child, securing the living conditions and ensuring a humane domestic discipline. On the other hand, Article 31 states that "every child shall have responsibilities towards his family and society, the State and other legally recognized communities and the international community." (African Union, 1999, p. 10). Depending on the age and ability, children's duties include working for the cohesion of the family, respecting older people, serving the national community, empowering the solidarity, retaining African cultural values and contributing as best as the child can.

### 5.3.2. The three Rs: Respect, Responsibility and Reciprocity

Twum-Danso (2009) analysed the implementation of the UNCRC in the Ghanaian context. Through her article, she introduces the 'Three Rs' which underly the intergenerational relationships of children in Ghana: Respect, responsibility and reciprocity. In general, the author claimed that many of her findings are more supported by the ACRWC as this one puts the focus on children having responsibilities and respecting parents and elders. Although her

focus was on children living in Ghana, I was able to find many similarities and want therefore to discuss my findings within this background.

The first of the three pillars is the respect the children have towards their elders. The author (2009, p. 420) explains that "children are trained from a very early age that they must respect and obey all elders, be humble towards adults, and take their advice". They are supposed to follow the rules given by the adults and are not allowed to question them. These values are taught to the children in order to be able to interact appropriate with the people in the society and not to bring shame to their households (Twum-Danso, 2009, p. 421). The author reports also that some children found the respect so relevant and important that they highlighted them as a right to have. In my study, several children told me that one of their responsibilities was to be respectful. For example, Serafina (12) and me were talking about the responsibilities in her fictive orphanage:

> Me: "*What would you say, what should the children do?*"
>
> Serafina: "*They must respect and clean*."
>
> Me: "*Something else?*"
>
> Serafina: "*Study.*"
>
> Me: "*Hmhm*."
>
> Serafina: "*They must be kind. That's the same thing as the respect.*"

Nkosazana (15) and Anele (15) also said that the staff should protect them from being disrespectful. It seems like the children raised the respect as both a duty to fulfil and also as something negative they should be protected from. For me, it always seemed like a cultural value the children were having. They never questioned that they need to respect older people. I could see already between the small and big boys. Twum-Danso criticised that this emphasis on respect has as a consequence that children do not dare to express their own views in order to avoid seeming disrespectful or insulting. The children in her study also had struggles asking adults for help or support. However, my findings cannot support this reaction. The children were asking for what they needed and were also telling what they wanted. I realised this already in the very beginning when I explained my study to the children and asked for their informed consent. Only five of the children, namely Anele (15), Unathi (15), Serafina (12), Thandiwe (12) and Xolelwa (18) agreed to do all the methods with me. Everybody else selected between one and three suggested forms and really looked for which ones they liked most. They were

nevertheless treating me with respect. However, I sometimes felt they were behaving slightly different towards me due to my position as a foreigner. Once, we had visitors which came directly to me to talk to me as one of the workers. I had troubles understand the man's dialect, and one of the small boys, Roli (12) came and stood in front of me, saying to the man that I am from Europe and my English is not as great. So, he offered translating for us. Another time, I met some of the girls while walking to the orphanage in the early afternoon. When some of the male strangers on the street started talking about me, the girls shouted at them and told them that I was one of them and they were not allowed to hurt me. It always seemed my position was somehow in between being one of them and they needed to respect me, but also that I needed more protection as a foreigner and therefore had a more equalised position in that place.

The second pillar is responsibility. Twum-Danso (2009, p. 422) calls children's responsibilities as "an indigenous instrument used to integrate children into the social fabric and economic life with little deliberate effort". That means that the children in her study were supposed to work in all areas they were expected to work as adults. Twum-Danso's participants gave examples as running errands, maintenance of the household, helping to cook and looking after younger siblings. Although the children in my study were not anymore living in a family household, many of the duties were similar. Especially the maintenance of the household, including cleaning, was a big part of my participant's everyday lives. For me it often seemed like this orphanage was like a huge family household. Everybody was working together to keep it running and make it a nice place. Looking after the small boys seemed often like looking after younger siblings, although they were not related by blood. The only duty the children were not included in was the cooking. The director of the orphanage wanted to minimize the time the children were spending in the kitchen in order to avoid physical injuries. Often, as Twum-Danso describes, the participation of the children was not only on a household level, but also contributed to the main income of the family. Therefore, some of them were not able to go to school or finish their graduation. This finding is very different from the ones in my research. The children were only allowed to reside in the institution as long as they were attending school until they turned 18 years. Education was seen by both, children and staff, as the key to a successful life and therefore they had to attend schooling until the last grade. In accordance to my experiences in Cape Town during my stay, this would have been different for many of the children if they would have stayed at a family household. During my visits in the townships I saw many children during school times helping their families at the homes. Thus, it seems as the institutional life gives the children the opportunity to attend school and finish their education. This discussion about children as responsible agents is connected to the one of

maturity and age limits. In general, both in the study from Twum-Danso and the present one, the duties depend on the physical size, competence and the abilities of the child. As mentioned above, the small boys at this place have had no or only little responsibilities. The older children shared their duties depending on their preferences and abilities. In my own experience, people tend to see young children as helpless and in need of more protection and support than older children. Alderson (2000) argues for the rights of very small children. She says that babies from a very young age do participate in life by showing their expressions. When I talked with my participants about who has responsibilities, some argued that even very small children do have responsibilities. Siplikro (16) argued that babies have to play their role in the family and Njemile (18) said they have to make the adults aware of when they are hungry by crying. All the three findings, from Twum-Danso's study, my findings and the research of Alderson, support the thought of young children's ability of having rights and responsibilities.

The last pillar is reciprocity and closely connected to the two ones above. According to Twum-Danso, all social relationships in Ghana are underlined by this principle. During her fieldwork, some adults told her that they thought that Western children just take without giving something in return. They claimed that they did not want these values in their culture. In Ghana, children fulfil their duties in order to get their rights fulfilled by the elders. Also, children are expected to take care for their parents when they turn old, as children are also regarded as a social welfare system to ensure security for old age. Even by being born, these children already begin to fulfil their duties by providing them with this security system (Twum-Danso, 2009). As the children in my case had to leave the orphanage at the age of 18, it did not have this last aspect of reciprocity. However, the adults working at this place received a shelter and food for their work with the children. If the children wanted to stay, they also needed to fulfil their responsibilities. However, none of the children was talking about their responsibilities in connection with their needs or wishes about what they wanted to get from the staff. Some of the children, e.g. Nkosane (8) and Lethuxolo (9), said they would be happy if they receive new clothes or materials. This was the only time the children said they would like to receive something. The only event where the reciprocity was used outspoken was when visitors or donors came. Then the children got asked by the staff to meet up and treat everyone with respect. They had to smile, take pictures with them and show their gratitude.

The reciprocity is strongly connected to other values such as respect and responsibility. It is part of what children give to their parents in order to ensure that their rights get provided by adults. Twum-Danso (2009, p. 428) stated that "they accept their position in society partly

because it enables them to receive what they need from their parents, including the payment of school fees and even a roof over their heads". However, the author also argues that parents as well are expected to follow the principle of reciprocity. If they show not to be able to fulfil the children's rights, the child might look for another person ensuring them. This was something I observed mainly when the children wanted something for the staff. They would always treat the auntie or uncle best who could be most for help for what they wanted. If they wanted to use the computers, they asked before the responsible uncle if he needed anything. If they wanted more food, they would talk to the aunties if they could do anything for them. It seemed to me like they were using this reciprocity in a smart way to receive what they wanted.

### 5.3.3. Controversial aspects towards the UNCRC

The first main aspect which occurs as relevant for this study is that there is no equivalent article in the UNCRC to Article 31 from the ACRWC. The Convention does not include any terms regarding duties or responsibilities from the side of the children. They put a higher focus on leisure activities and education. Furthermore, Burr and Montgomery (2003) argue that the Convention has a stronger focus on the individual and autonomous child than the African Charter. In Africa, the children are part of the families and communities. The authors argue that "the African charter views families as much more interdependent – parents must rely on children as much as children on parents and therefore rights come with responsibilities." (Burr & Montgomery, 2003, p. 162) In my experience, I can find fitting aspects in both the African Charter and the Convention stating something similar as my findings. Both legal documents include the right to protection, only that the African Charter focuses the protection more on the particular issues of Africa as for example armed conflicts. The participants of my study also stressed the importance of physical safety which is more violated in South Africa as in many other parts of the world. On the other hand, the issue of responsibilities became so aware for me through my observations that I decided to focus this study on it. Also, nearly all of the children all agreed on having duties and responsibilities in the household. That shows that the ideas of the African Charter seem more fitting to the findings of my research.

# Chapter 6: Conclusion

The aim of this study was to identify and describe experiences of young people living in an orphanage in Cape Town. This chapter will conclude and summarise the findings of the research in regard to the research questions of the study. Afterwards, I will present my reflections about being a 'White Researcher' in South Africa and will briefly discuss if the UNCRC is nevertheless a helpful concept in this setting. Finally, I will reflect upon the policy and research recommendations my findings could indicate.

## 6.1. Summary of the Main Findings

*Children's experiences of the terms 'responsibilities' and 'protection'*

The first specific research question of my study was: What are the children's experiences regarding their protection needs and responsibilities? What do these terms include in their opinion?

The findings demonstrate that the children describe the term 'protection' as keeping something safe and secure. They stated that everybody in this world needs protection, and so do they, the children living in the orphanage, as well. Similar to the findings from Arora et al. (2015), these results show that the children do not necessarily connect orphanhood with vulnerability. The participants justified the need of protection with the criminality and violence existing in the world. Protection would shield them from these dangers. In opposite to these findings, international policies and governments tend to use the orphanhood of these children as a way to promote as being in vulnerable and in need of saving for funding strategies and policies (Ansell, 2016a).

Most of the children experienced protection in this orphanage at level which was satisfying them. Their main worries in the orphanage were about strangers coming into the orphanage to rob them, as well as being in the dark in the night. The findings show that the young people felt protected when somebody was standing up for them and was appearing as careful towards them. I analysed the need of physical protection in the background of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1987) and showed that the children were worrying about their safety and security needs. When focusing only on the protection within the orphanage, these needs were fulfilled, and the children also mentioned emotional protection such as from being sad or angry.

The term 'responsibilities' was defined as taking care for something or looking after something. The children claimed that everybody has responsibilities. However, different opinions appeared

during age-related discussions, sometimes arguing that only adults have responsibilities, while others stated that even very young children have them. They said that everybody has their role to carry. Similar to the findings from Skovdal (2012), the explained reasons behind having responsibilities show that the children wanted on the one hand a clean and tidied home, and on the other hand they wanted to be prepared for their future as adults. In this orphanage, they were telling me mainly responsible for cleaning, doing their homework and taking care for the other younger children. Both, the research from Such et al. (2004) and the results from my study show that having responsibilities seems to be a normal part of the everyday life of the children.

These findings about responsibilities can be seen closely connected to the concept of agency. Abebe (2019) argues for seeing agency more in an interdepending concept. The children in my study also seemed very interdepending on both, each other and the institution. Another relevant concept is the one of resilience. As Skovdal (2011) shows in similar findings, the children are using coping strategies to deal with their situation, such as their peers, the school and their families.

*Children's experiences of the interplay of responsibilities and protection at this place*

The second specific research question of my study was: How do the children experience the interplay of protection and responsibilities? How do these experiences go along with their needs? How is this practised in the institution?

The findings from the fictive task about creating on their own the responsibilities and protection levels for the children, demonstrate that the participants would have strongly protected their children, especially on a physical area. However, some would have also protected their children from emotional harm. Most of them were nevertheless focusing on physical protection from things such as robbery, violence and criminality. The level of responsibilities their children should receive was more a mix of doing duties on their own and receiving help from the staff. Here, the participants focused again on education and the cleaning aspect. Many of them wanted their children to be prepared to live their lives as a responsible adult. The staff was supposed to help the children with the chores, but also give them more guidance and supervision for growing up.

The results about the comparison to the orphanage they were staying it, show different aspects the children were lacking. Some of them complained that the staff was not working properly and did not show interest towards the children. Others did not feel prepared and guided to leave the orphanage afterwards. They felt to shielded from the life happening on the streets. However,

in general nearly all of the children said they have accepted these issues and do not complain about it. They see it as a part of living at this place. And, on the other hand, many of them were also grateful and glad to be able to stay at this place and to receive what they do.

*Comparisons of the findings to the UNCRC and the ACRWC*

The last specific research question of my study was: How are these experiences different or similar to the perceptions in the UNCRC and the ACRWC?

The analysis in this study focused on the discussion of protection and responsibilities in regard of the Convention and the Chapter. Both, the UNCRC and the ACRWC include several articles stating the protection of the child, while only the African Charter is talking about the responsibilities the children have towards their parents and households (Burr & Montgomery, 2003). Several aspects in my findings agreed and disagreed on both rights documents.

The Convention (1989) is stating that orphaned children are in special need of protection, while only one of the participants in my study focused on orphaned children. Everybody said that all the people in the world need protection. My findings show also that the children are integrated into the institutional life and have to fulfil their duties. This goes along with conceptualising the UNCRC as imposing Westernized ideas to the Global South (Liebel & Saadi, 2012). Also, the Convention does neglect the collectivistic aspect of the culture of the children (Boyden, 1997). They are living closely together, depending on each other in many aspects.

According to Twum-Danso (2009) and Burr and Montgomery (2003), the African Charter focuses more on specific cultural values being relevant for African children. The focus is more on responsibilities and respect, two values creating an important aspect for the intergenerational relations of the children. My findings support these values. The children were very respectful towards people being older than them and as concluded before, accepting towards their duties.

## 6.2. The 'White Researcher' Going to Africa

My stay in Cape Town has been an unbelievable and amazing experience. It was the first time for myself living in a cultural setting which was so different from my homes in Norway and Germany. After having spent the first 23 years of my life only living in these countries, I developed a lot of 'Westernized' ideas about children and childhood. Especially my academic and work background provided me with many assumptions about how children were supposed to live. After having been working with youths from different socio-economic backgrounds, my expectations differed in many ways from the reality I was opposed to when I entered the

field. It seemed as the staff was working less, the children had more freedom and the general contact between both of them was warmer and more affectionate than I was used to. My preliminary research design included some concepts and tools which were difficult to implement into the context as they seemed in the case of the term 'participation' not relevant to the children, and sometimes as the children did not have the abilities to fulfil the tasks, as e.g. being able to read. Throughout my fieldwork, I tried to adapt my 'Westernized' concepts and ideas by staying flexible and reflective about my research process. I tried to challenge myself, my way of thinking and always tried to get to the bottom of what I was doing – did I do it, because my assumptions and ideas told me so? Did I do it, because I got influenced by the reality I was facing? Yet, I wonder in how far my personal experiences and thoughts might have influenced and also limited the whole research setting. I was opposed to a new culture, a new setting and a new research format. Thus, in my opinion, one of the biggest limitations of this study is the fact that my own assumptions might have had an impact on the whole research process. In order to gain valid and reliable findings, this research needs to be conducted again in different settings and with different researchers. The results I present show how I experienced the happenings in the orphanage and children's reflections at this place, and cannot be treated as fully trustworthy for another setting. However, I think that conducting a research in a setting which is as different from the homelike one, can be highly valuable and might give the research process new and interesting insights. It is only important to stay aware of the personal influence in the research and reflect upon it.

### 6.3. Policy Implications and Research Recommendations

The outcomes of this study reveal possible implications for both, policies and further research. This study was not able to cover all the experience of young people living in orphanages in South Africa. The findings represent my personal reflections about the experiences of the participating children, based on an academic discussion using relevant literature. In my opinion, there is one main issue that should be discussed for introducing new policy implications.

During my discussion, one important question grew in my mind: Is it even possible to generalise children rights for children living in different cultural contexts all around the world? This question is closely connected to the discussion Burr and Montgomery (2003) raise in their book whether the UNCRC is a helpful instrument, even if it mainly represents the Westernized ideas about children and childhood. The authors (2003, p.164) argue that "looking seriously at the impact of policy decisions on children's lives has led to differences in policies towards children

and some instances to improvements in children's lives". They state that the attention which is spent towards children's rights as a legal implication creates at least a start to improve children's rights. The implementation and the agreement upon which rights should actually be included for the specific local context still need to be discussed. Within this context, I agree that the Convention has helpful approaches and can be used as a useful instrument to create a basis for children's rights. However, I think there is a need of adapting the implementation of the UNCRC to the local context. Only like this, policies can ensure that the transformation of the rights into the everyday lives of the children is possible and ensures the children's best interests.

Immerging deeper into the specific findings of my study, I think it is rather difficult to present generalised implications. The results are limited to the small number of 19 participants, to the orphanage as the only research setting and to my reflections as the one researcher conducting this research. However, I think this research is able to introduce possible questions for further research, e.g. the following: How do the children understand and define the term 'orphanhood'? When do the children focus rather on *emotional* than *physical* protection? What are the values their responsibilities are based on? What does it mean to the children to 'become an adult'? How do the children want to be treated by the adult workers?

In my opinion, this study presents different interesting research topics which might be able to be used to improve the life quality of the children living in these settings. The introduced questions could give valuable insights to the experiences of children living in institutional care. The reflections of the children in this study illustrate what any young people in the world might have replied, as the importance of friendship, love, care and respect. These empirical findings are not astonishing, but it is crucial to have in mind the contextual implications of the structural conditions in which the children live their lives.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A: Informed Consent of the Children

I have been informed about the study and understand the provided information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

I am aware that the data, including copies and records, from the interviews, diaries, drawings, life stages and emotion cards will be kept anonymous and confidential. They will be destroyed after having been used for the transcription for the study. I am however allowed to keep the originals of the drawings and maps I have created. I have been assured that the data will be presented in a way that will make it impossible to be traced back to me.

Hereby I confirm that I agree to the following methods. Please click the ones you agree on!

- □ Interviews
- □ Drawings
- □ Diaries
- □ Life stages
- □ Emotion cards

Name of the participant: _____

Participant's signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of the researcher: _____

Researcher's signature: _____ Date: _____

## Appendix B: Informed Consent of the Institution

We have been informed about the study and understand the provided information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. We understand that participation of the children is voluntary and that they and we are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason. We understand that we will be given a copy of this consent form.

We are aware that the data, including copies and records, from the interviews, diaries, drawings, life stages and emotion cards will be kept anonymous and confidential. They will be destroyed after having been used for the transcription for the study. We have been assured that the data will be presented in a way that will make it impossible to be traced back to the children.

Name of the institution: _____

Institution's signature: _____ Date: _____

Name of the researcher: _____

Researcher’s signature: _____ Date: _____

## Appendix C: Standard Observation Sheet

Code:

Tool used:

Date: __ / __ / ____

Time: From _____ to _____

Place:

Code of Record:

Gender:

Age:

How long here:

Influencing factors:

- Child:
- Researcher:
- Location:

## Appendix D: Emotion Cards

## Appendix E: Life Stages Questions

Can you divide your life into stages? Like when are you a child and when an adult?

From which age/to which age do you…

1. Do you laundry?
2. Clean the house?
3. Do the dishes?
4. Iron your clothes?
5. Cook your food?
6. Walk to school alone?
7. Take care of small children?
8. Go to school?
9. Have a boyfriend/girlfriend?
10. Get your period?
11. Get pregnant? / Become a father?
12. Get married?
13. Get a phone?
14. Work?
15. Live on your own?
16. Need protection?
17. Need hugs?
18. Need help with your homework?
19. Need support when you have problems?

## Appendix F: Interview Guide

Code:

Date:

Age:

How long here:

*Questions*

1. What does the word ‘responsibility’ include for you?
2. Who has responsibilities?
3. Do you have responsibilities here?
4. If yes, which?
5. [If yes] Why do you have responsibilities?

6. What does the word ‘protection’ include for you?
7. Who needs protection?
8. Do you sometimes feel the need for protection?
9. If yes, in which situations?
10. [If yes] Why do you need protection?
11. What makes you feel protected?

12. Fictive task: Imagine to be an orphanage director.

    a. How many responsibilities should your children get?
    b. What should your children do? What should the staff do?
    c. How much protection do your children need?
    d. What would you protect your children from?

13. Which of these things have you experienced in this orphanage? Mark the things!
14. How does this [Their orphanage plan] go along with your needs?

15. What two things/people help you most in this place?

Steffi Schenzle

# Young People's Experiences of Responsibilities and Protection in an Orphanage

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