Parenting in Urban Slum Areas
Families with Children in a Shantytown of Rio de Janeiro

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Abstract

This is a study of parenting and child development in a slum area in a developing part of the world. The aims of the study were threefold. The first aim was to explore the physical and social contexts for parenting in a shantytown in Rio de Janeiro using an ecological perspective. The second aim was to examine parenting and subsequent child outcomes among a sample of families living in the shantytown. The third aim was to explore what factors contribute to differences among parents in how they nurture and protect their children. The theoretical framework of the study was an updated version of Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model of human development. Using self-report questionnaires developed by Rohner, data on perceived parental acceptance–rejection were collected from 72 families with adolescents 12–14 years old, representing approx. 75% of all households with children in this age group in the shantytown. Besides self-report questionnaires, each adolescent's main caregiver replied to several standardized questionnaires developed by Garbarino et al., eliciting demographic and social-situational data about the family, neighborhood, and wider community. The results of the study paint a complex portrait of the social living conditions of the parents and children. Despite many difficulties, most parents seemed to raise their children with loving care. The results from the self-report questionnaires indicate that the majority of the adolescents perceived substantial parental acceptance. The adolescents' experience of greater or lesser parental acceptance–rejection seems to influence their emotional and behavioral functioning; it also seems to be related to their school attendance. Much of the variation in degree of perceived acceptance–rejection seems to be related both to characteristics of the individual adolescents and their main caregiver(s) and to influences from the social and environmental context in which they and their caregivers interact and live their lives.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Worldwide a large and increasing number of children and adolescents are being raised in families living in urban slums. According to a recent report on the results of the first global assessment of slums, issued by the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat, 2003), nearly one billion people alive today, or 31.6% of the global urban population, live in slums – the majority in the developing regions. Estimates presented in the report indicate that Asia has about 554 million people living in slums, followed by Africa with 187 million, and Latin America and the Caribbean with 128 million. While slums have largely disappeared in the developed regions, the report still found that there were approximately 54 million urban dwellers in high-income countries living in slum-like conditions. In his foreword to the report, United Nations Secretary-General Mr. Kofi Annan pointed out that the locus of global poverty is moving to cities, a process now recognized as the urbanization of poverty. According to the report, the high rate of rural-to-urban migration that is now occurring throughout the developing world parallels that which occurred in England and some other European countries during the industrial revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries. What is different now is that urbanization is not being accompanied by adequate economic growth in many developing countries (UN-Habitat, 2003, p. 25). The ongoing slum development is fuelled by a combination of rapid rural-to-urban migration, spiraling urban poverty, the inability of the urban poor to access affordable land for housing, and insecure land tenure. In the next thirty years, the number of slum dwellers worldwide is projected to double to about two billions (UN-Habitat, 2003).

Although the report gives no specific attention to the proportion of children and adolescents living in urban slums, it is reasonable to believe that the figures presented comprise a large number of individuals younger than 18 years of age. The majority of these, in all probability, hundreds of

1 The term “adolescents” is used differently within and between various societies. This study uses a definition that is commonly used in various demographic, policy, and social contexts, to the effect that adolescents are any persons aged 10 to 19 years (cf. UNFPA, 2003).

2 The term “slum” is used in the report to describe a wide range of low-income settlements and/or poor human living conditions (for a further discussion see UN-Habitat, 2003, pp. 8–12).
Chapter 1

millions children and adolescents³, are growing up in families that live in urban slums in the developing countries where the quality of housing is generally low and often lacks the most basic amenities, including clean water and satisfactory sanitation.

A long line of research, primarily reflecting experiences from the United States, shows that children and adolescents in urban neighborhoods in poverty, as compared with their counterparts in more advantaged neighborhoods, fare poorly on many outcomes (see Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000 for a comprehensive review). For example, studies demonstrate that children who grow up in low-income neighborhoods score lower than other children on IQ, vocabulary, and reading achievement tests (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Klebanov, & Sealand, 1993). They complete fewer years of school and are more likely to repeat grades and drop out of school (Brooks-Gunn, et al., 1993; Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Crane, 1991). They also experience more stressors (see McLoyd, 1998a) and show higher rates of behavior and emotional problems (Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000).

It is difficult to separate the direct and indirect effects of neighborhood on children’s and adolescents’ development. Some differences between children and adolescents in poverty-stricken urban neighborhoods and their counterparts in more advantaged neighborhoods appear to be related directly to structural factors such as quality of housing, access to adequate and affordable services (e.g. medical facilities, childcare, and schools), availability of learning, recreational, and social activities, neighborhood safety, and presence of positive role models and social support (cf. Ambert, 1998; Bradley & Corwyn, 2002; DeHart, Stroufe, & Cooper, 2000; Garbarino, 1995; Guo & Harris, 2000; Jencks & Mayer, 1990). At the same time, the physical, social, and economic contexts seem to affect children and adolescents indirectly by influencing their parents’ behavior. Research consistently indicates that poverty and poor living conditions are likely to bring with them a host of negative events and chronic problems that can cause parents to become depressed, irritable, and distracted, resulting in an inability to successfully care for and protect their children (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Collins, Maccoby, Steinberg, Hetherington, &Bornstein, 2000a; DeHart et al., 2000; Elder, Eccles, Arde, & Lord, 1995; Halpern, 1990; Magnuson & Duncan, 2002; McLoyd, 1998b). Specifically, studies have demonstrated that economic and social stress can cause parents to become less nurturing and more rejecting of their children (Weatherburn & Lind, 2001). Economic hardship is also related to a decline in parental supervision and monitoring of children (Sampson & Laub, 1994), reduced

³ A conservative estimate by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF, 2002) suggests that some 300 to 500 million urban children are living in poverty.
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Parental warmth (Furstenberg, 1993; Klebanov, Brooks-Gunn, & Duncan, 1994), and an increase in the use of physical punishment and other forms of power-assertive discipline (Guo & Harris, 2000; Halpern, 1990; McLoyd, 1990, 1998a). Although child abuse occurs in all social groups, research shows that poor parents are more likely than more financially advantaged parents to abuse or neglect their children (Azar, 2002; Rodriguez & Green, 1997).

Although research on low-income parenting using a comparative framework in which parenting styles or parenting behaviors of low-income parents are contrasted with those of more affluent parents has generated important insights and information, this approach has been criticized for its deficit orientation and inattention to individual differences in parenting among disadvantaged populations (Magnuson & Duncan, 2002). Critics have argued that research on parenting under conditions of poverty often holds a notion of nurturant parenting that derives from the study of the social world of white middle-class families (see e.g. Halpern, 1990). Parents who live in poor urban neighborhoods are raising children who face different demands, threats, and opportunities in the immediate physical and social context of their daily lives that might require different parental care and nurturance strategies (Halpern, 1990; see also Hoff, Laursen, & Tardif, 2002). Ethnographers, for instance, have suggested that parents who reside in impoverished and dangerous neighborhoods often adapt their behavior to become less warm and more controlling because it teaches children to protect themselves from potential harm in the neighborhood (see Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2000). Similarly, the fear felt by parents of children in high crime environments may be manifested as a very restrictive and punitive style of discipline in an effort to protect children from falling under the influence of negative forces, such as gangs, in the neighborhood (Garbarino & Kostelny, 1993). Although this kind of parental adaptation is well intended and may appear to be practically sensible, it can in the long run have unintended negative consequences for children's psychological well-being and future family life (Garbarino & Kostelny, 1993; see also Collins, et al., 2000). Moreover, critics have also stressed that comparative frameworks do not provide information about the extent of sources of variations in parenting among low-income populations (Magnuson & Duncan, 2002). Even if poverty and poor living conditions typically create obstacles to attentive and nurturant parenting, many parents manage to rear their children protectively and nurturantly under conditions of extreme difficulty (Ghate & Hazel, 2002; Halpern, 1990; Röhner, 2001). Studies have demonstrated that a supportive relationship one's spouse or partner, help from friends and relatives, a close supportive network, and a child with an easy temperament are all factors that can have a positive effect on parenting even where other conditions are not optimal (for a review, see Belsky & Vondra, 1989). This fact stresses the importance of considering influences
other than poverty and poor living conditions in accounting for differences in parenting among low-income populations.

Given the contribution of the socialization research of the last decades, parenting is now widely recognized to be determined by a number of complex and interrelated factors (Belsky, 1984; Collins et al., 2000; Luster & Okagaki, 1993a; Maccoby, 2000). In an influential paper, Belsky (1984) argued that parenting is influenced by a variety of forces; the three major determinants are the personality and psychological well-being of the parent, the characteristics of the child, and contextual sources of stress and support. With respect to parental characteristics, studies have demonstrated that parental behavior is influenced by, for example, the parents' personality, cognitive abilities, educational level, and health (Chase-Landale & Pittman, 2002; McLoyd, 1990; Zahn-Waxler, Duggal, & Gruber, 2002). Children influence their parents through their personalities, temperaments, and special needs (Collins et al., 2000; Maccoby, 2000; O'Connor & Rutter, 1996; Reiss, 2000). And examples of contextual sources of stress and support include parents' satisfaction with school, their own work situation, and, as already noted, the neighborhood and childcare support. Each individual determinant of parenting finds its own distinct expression in the parent-child relationship, but each is also linked to the others and modifies their effects (Halpern, 1990; see also Chase-Landale & Pittman, 2002; Luster & Okagaki, 1993b).

This understanding of parenting is most clearly described within the ecological model of human development proposed by Bronfenbrenner (1979a, 2005; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). Although Bronfenbrenner's ecological model is not specifically a theory about parenting, it provides a theoretical framework for understanding how the interplay between characteristics of the child and his or her social environments affect developmental processes over the life course. The number and scope of investigations that explicitly or implicitly employ an ecological perspective has increased substantially over the past decades, with most of the attention being focused on the family as the primary context of childrearing, and its linkages with other key contexts that affect development such as childcare, school, neighborhood, parents' workplace, and public policy (see e.g. Bornstein, 1995, 2002; Ghate & Hazel, 2002; Luster & Okagaki, 1992; Moen, Elder Jr., & Lüscher, 1995). To date, however, most research dealing with these phenomena has been conducted in the developed regions of the world.

So far, relatively little seems to be known or documented about parenting among families who live and raise children in urban slums in the developing regions of the world. Much of the research dealing with parenting among urban low-income families in developing countries has focused on specific groups of the children to whom UNICEF (1986) refers as “in particularly difficult circumstances,” such as working children, street children, and children who are abused, neglected, or abandoned. Even though these kinds of studies
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may add to the understanding of parent–child interactions among the urban poor, critics have argued that most research on children in particularly difficult circumstances holds an overly idealistic and Western ethnocentric conception of childhood, which conceives the ideal child—who is also seen as typical—as carefree, playful, innocent, and in need of constant attention (Aptekar & Stocklin, 1996; see also Panter-Brick, 2003). Since few children in the developing world have an ideal Western childhood, any such notion can contribute to cultural biases not only against children but also against parents who are assumed to neglect or abuse their children and their coping strategies and capacity is ignored (Aptekar, 2004; Aptekar & Abebe, 1997).

Latin America and the Caribbean together make up the most urbanized region of the developing world, with more than 75%, or some 400 million, of its people living in cities (UN-Habitat, 2004). The region hosts a large urban slum population. In 2001, approximately one third of the urban population in Latin America and the Caribbean were living in slums, representing 128 million people and 14% of the world’s urban slum population (UN-Habitat, 2004). Brazil is one of the most highly urbanized countries in the region. According to data from the 2000 Brazilian census, 81.25% of the Brazilian population, or about 138 million people, live in urban areas (IBGE, 2001). Contrasted with most other Latin American and Caribbean countries that have only one major city, Brazil has nine metropolitan regions, including the ten-million-plus cities of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro (Fix, Arantes, & Tanaka, 2003). In 2000, the metropolitan area of São Paulo with 18.1 million people and the metropolitan area of Rio de Janeiro with 10.6 million people ranked 3rd and 15th, respectively, among the world’s largest urban agglomerations (UN-Habitat, 2004).

The Rio de Janeiro metropolitan area consists of 18 municipalities (COMUDES, 2003), but has more than half of the population, about 6.1 million people, located in the municipality of Rio de Janeiro (IBGE, 2005a). At least one fifth of the municipality’s population live in urban slums. In 2000, the census recorded almost 1.1 million people living in substandard agglomerations4 in the municipality of Rio de Janeiro (IBGE, 2001). These data, however, refer only to the number of residents in squatter settlements and illegal subdivisions on public or private land, and exclude people living in other types of slum or in slum-like conditions (see Xavier & Magalhães, 2003, for further discussions on census data on slums in Rio de Janeiro). According to 1991 data, around 2 million or two fifths of the Rio de Janeiro municipality’s population live in urban slums (O’Hare & Barke, 2002). Of this population, almost one million live in favelas, another 200,000 in

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4 A substandard agglomeration is a group made up of over 50 housing units located on plots belonging to others (public or private), with disorderly and dense occupation and generally lacking essential public services (IBGE, 2001).
irregular subdivisions without services, and a further 900,000 in low-income housing complexes, including slum tenements in the inner city districts.

No figures were found for how many children and adolescents there are in the slums of Rio de Janeiro. However, given that the slum dwellers have about the same proportion of individuals younger than 18 years of age as the overall population – that is, 36% according to the latest Census (IBGE, 2001) – one might assume that some 400,000 children and adolescents between the ages of 0 and 17 years reside in squatter settlements and illegal subdivisions in the municipality of Rio de Janeiro. If other types of slums were included, this figure would probably be significantly higher. Moreover, it must be remembered that this estimate includes only slum dwellers younger than 18 years of age in the municipality of Rio de Janeiro, and not those children and adolescents who reside in different types of slums in other municipalities in the metropolitan area.

Throughout the last decades, Brazil, and particularly Rio de Janeiro, has been the focus of much of the debate and research on street children, and relatively little attention has been paid to low-income children and adolescents more generally. For much of the 1980s and 1990s, the presence of children and youth living and/or working on the streets in Rio de Janeiro and other major cities in Brazil has elicited emotive public concern, been given considerably media coverage, and become a matter of priority for national and international child welfare organizations as well as the focus of considerable research (Hecht, 1998; Rizzini, Barker & Cassaniga, 2002). While academic publications in the 1980s emphasized how widespread across Brazil’s urban centers is the occurrence of children and adolescents on the streets and by the end of the decade sought to distinguish an adequate typology of this young population, researchers in the 1990s attempted to look into the motivation and identities of young people who live on the street (see Butler & Rizzini, 2003, for a review of the literature on young people living and working on the streets in Brazil). In doing so they have shed light upon the lives of street children in terms of more general analyses of poverty, social exclusion, coping strategies, vulnerability and resilience in adversity (see e.g. Gregori, 2000; Hecht, 1998; Huggins & Rodrigues, 2004; Rizzini & Butler, 2003). Research from this period also began to question the estimates of how many street children there are in Brazil. Estimates of Brazilian street children, by the press as well as by international and national organizations working for children’s well-being, have ranged from 2 million to 30 million, depending on the source and the definition of street children being used. Many of these estimates have been

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5 The term street children generally refers to children and youth who work or spend most of their time on the streets, as well as to the far smaller subset who sleep in the streets and are no longer connected to their families (Rizzini, Barker, & Cassaniga, 2002, p. 113).
criticized as being over-inflated and flaws of the methodology have been pointed out; some of the figures seem to be guesses rather than solid data, and some data may not be representative (Aptekar, 1994; Hecht, 1998; Lusk, 1989, 1992; Lusk & Mason, 1994; see also Butler & Rizzini, 2003 and Rizzini et al., 2002). One of these critics (Hecht, 1998) has estimated from survey data collected during the first half of the 1990s in five large cities in Brazil\footnote{The surveys referred to were conducted in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Fortaleza, Recife, and Olinda (for further details, see Hecht, 1998, pp. 98–101)}. Of these critics (Hecht, 1998) has estimated from survey data collected during the first half of the 1990s in five large cities in Brazil\footnote{The surveys referred to were conducted in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Fortaleza, Recife, and Olinda (for further details, see Hecht, 1998, pp. 98–101).} that for every 1 million urban residents in these cities, there are about 115 children living in the street. If this ratio holds true for all of Brazil’s urban population, then Brazil in year 2000 would have approximately 16,000 street children. Of these children and youth, about 1200 would be living on the streets in Rio de Janeiro. However, as consistently noted in the literature, counting the number of street children is a complicated undertaking. As the group is highly mobile and often moves fluidly back and forth from street to home life, estimates of its extent are exceedingly difficult to ascertain (Lusk, 1992, p. 293; see also Aptekar, 1994 and Hecht, 1998). According to Rizzini et al. (2002), the consensus now emerging in Brazil is that the number of young people living in the streets is not nearly as large as once estimated and represents only the most visible tip of a huge “iceberg of low-income children, the majority of whom continue to live with their families, but often in precarious situations” (p. 117). These authors find compelling reasons for changing policy and program attention in Brazil from street children to all children, with interventions giving social and developmental support not only to the relatively small number of children in the most dire situations, but also to the far larger number of low-income children and youth who live with their families but nonetheless require additional support – support that may prevent them from becoming street children, or that may simply promote their healthy development.

To understand how to best support low-income children and adolescents in Rio de Janeiro and other cities in Brazil, it is important to learn not only about the situation of those children and youth who work or spend most of their time on the streets, but also about their counterparts who remain at home in the slums or on the outskirts of the city. Studies of street children have shown that overwhelmingly most of the children and youth found on the streets in Rio de Janeiro and other major cities in Brazil are boys ranging in age from 7 to 17 years, with greater concentration on the 11 to 14 age group (Rizzini, Rizzini, Munoz-Vargas, & Galeano, 1992; 1994). As research in Latin America has repeatedly confirmed, most of the children and youth are on the streets to earn money because there is not enough at home, and many return to their families either every night or at least with some frequency (Lusk, 1992; Swift, 1991). A significant number come from
female-headed families, and only a small fraction of the children and youths are unattached or uninvolved with a family of their own, though many studies point to a tendency for family ties to be weakened by the absence of parental supervision and by the relationship the children and adolescents form on the streets (Rizzini et al., 1994). From a study on life trajectories of young people living on the streets of Rio de Janeiro, Rizzini and Butler (2003) conclude that “what unites the children and adolescents who come from different family environments and who enter the street for quite diverse reasons, is the lack of tutelary attention from responsible adults in their home settings … these boys and girls share an experience of poverty, exclusion and prejudice, that they live in precarious circumstances where a lack of affection and feeling protected and secure probably pushed them away from their homes and communities.” This raises the question of how other groups of low-income children and adolescents in Rio de Janeiro are growing up in their families and communities, for instance those who live in the famous shantytowns or *favelas* that climb the hillsides around the city. How are these children and youths being cared for? Whether and how do the living conditions of families in a shantytown affect the quality of parenting and, ultimately, children’s and adolescents’ development and well-being? What are the conditions for parenting among families who live and raise children in a shantytown in Rio de Janeiro?

**Aims**

First and foremost, this is a study of parenting and subsequent child development in a slum environment in the developing regions of the world. The overall aims of the study are threefold. The first aim is to explore the physical and social contexts for parenting within a shantytown in Rio de Janeiro, using an ecological perspective. What are the social living conditions of parents and children in a shantytown? The second aim is to examine parenting and subsequent child outcomes among a population of families living in a shantytown. How do parents nurture and protect their offspring, and what are the consequences for the children’s and adolescents’ developmental outcomes? What parenting strategies are employed? The third and last aim is to explore what factors may contribute to differences among parents in how they nurture and protect their children. What are the determinants of parenting in a shantytown?

7 *Favela* is the generic Brazilian term for a squatter settlement (Perlman, 1976). As many of these communities have been subjected to different slum-upgrade programs and no longer can be defined by their “illegality” (cf. Perlman, 2004), this study uses the more general term shantytown.
Introduction

Structure of the Thesis

The thesis comprises nine chapters. The introduction, aims, and research questions are contained in Chapter 1. Thereafter follows, in Chapter 2, a detailed outline of the theoretical framework employed to guide the study, namely Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Model of Human Development. The chapter attempts to bring together a series of articles, produced by Bronfenbrenner and his collaborators throughout the last three decades, into a current version of the bioecological model. In Chapter 3 the bioecological model is applied to examine the research literature available on parenting and its impact on children's development. Chapter 4 includes a detailed description of the methods used to draw the sample, and collect and analyze the data, together with a brief consideration of the ethical and practical issues involved in the data collection. Chapter 5 comprises a community profile of the present shantytown that is based on results obtained by the seminal field research techniques of participant observation and interviewing, complemented with information gained through reading official documents, reports, newspaper articles, and other kinds of written material. The community profile sets the scene for the results of the in-person survey presented in Chapters 6 and 7. While the former of these chapters focuses on parent–child interaction processes and their effects on adolescent development in the present shantytown, as well as the way in which individual characteristics of adolescents and parents affect these processes, the latter explores contextual factors that may influence parenting, and is concerned with both the immediate and the larger context in which the sample families function. In Chapter 8, the results are discussed, drawing on the biocological framework; Chapter 9 concludes with a discussion of limitations, generalizations, and future research.
CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

The theoretical framework employed to guide this study is based largely on Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model of human development. As was noted in the previous chapter, this model provides a most useful theoretical framework for the study of parenting, and seems very appropriate to the research questions addressed. Although a number of other contemporary developmental theories might have been used to provide theoretical impetus to understand the relation between individuals and their contexts (see e.g. Lerner, 1998), Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory seems to offer the greatest promise to provide this study with the scientific tools required to understand, not only the interactive nature of individuals and their environments, but also the developmental processes that are at work in shaping parenting behavior and its outcomes. This chapter brings together a series of scientific publications on the ecology of human development, which Bronfenbrenner and his associates produced throughout the last three decades, into a current version of what is now referred to as the bioecological model of human development.

Bronfenbrenner’s Bioecological Model of Human Development

Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model, together with its corresponding research designs, is an evolving theoretical system for the scientific study of human development over time (Bronfenbrenner, 2001, pp. 6963–6964). The bioecological systems theory elaborated by Bronfenbrenner provides a

Within the bioecological theory, development is defined as “the phenomenon of continuity and change in the biopsychological characteristics of human beings, both as individuals and as groups. The phenomenon extends over the life course, across successive generations, and through historical time, both past and future” (Bronfenbrenner, 2001, p. 6964).
structure for an inclusive explanation of variations in human developmental processes and their resultant outcomes as a joint function of the interplay between the characteristics of the person and the environmental context over the life course. The term “evolving” highlights the fact that the model, along with its corresponding research designs, has itself undergone a process of development over its own “life course,” but it also indicates that the defining properties of the bioecological model specify that it deals with two closely related but nevertheless fundamentally different developmental processes, each taking place over time; namely, that of continuity and change in the biopsychological characteristics of human beings, and the development of the scientific tools required for assessing the continuity and change (Bronfenbrenner, 2001). Because its scope is not limited to one particular aspect of the interaction between the developing individual and his or her contexts, but rather attempts to include all the structures involved in human life, the bioecological model provides a set of concepts to express these concerns in a systematic way that permits scientific study. The most recent version of the bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 2001) is comprised of a series of nine propositions pertinent to using the model to frame and integrate existing research, to design new research, and to devise applications for public policy and social programs (see Appendix I for a shortened version of the propositions). These propositions form a deductive system—that is, the propositions are interrelated in a way such that some of them become the foundation for the rest. Several of the propositions of the bioecological model are of relatively recent origin, while others date back to the model’s earliest formal beginnings (see Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000 and Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998).

The bioecological model is a further development of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological paradigm, first introduced in the 1970s (Bronfenbrenner, 1974, 1977a, 1977b, 1979a, 1979b), which represented a reaction to the restricted scope of most research then being conducted by developmental psychologists (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). According to Bronfenbrenner, most of the theories that influenced the contemporary developmental research

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9 Ecology is the study of organism–environment interrelatedness. The term was coined in 1873 by the zoologist and evolutionist Ernest Haeckel, who proposed a new science, called oekologie (from the Greek word oik, for living place or house), to study organisms in their environment, which he believed to be inseparable parts of a whole (Bubolz & Sonnag, 1993).

10 The origins of what is now referred to as the bioecological model have been traced back to Bronfenbrenner’s first scientific publications in the early 1940s (see Cairns & Cairns, 1995), followed by two articles published in the 1950s (Bronfenbrenner, 1951, 1958). However, the first systematic, comprehensive expositions of the model, together with related empirical evidence, appeared in the 1970s (for further details, see Bronfenbrenner, 1994, 1999a; and Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000).
viewed individuals as separate from their social and physical environments, and as a consequence the vast majority of studies on children’s development, particularly in the domain of cognition, treated development as context-free (for a further discussion see Bronfenbrenner, 1977a, 1979a, 1989). In his acclaimed monograph *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design*, Bronfenbrenner (1979a) proposed a new theoretical perspective for research in human development that emphasizes the importance of studying individuals in their natural settings. In this ecological systems approach, the developing individual’s social environment is conceived as a series of nested and interconnected structures, each inside the next like a set of Russian dolls (Bronfenbrenner, 1979a, p. 3). Although Bronfenbrenner’s formulation has had a broad impact on the field of human development, promoting considerable interest throughout the 1980s in the role that the ecological system plays in texturing the life course of individuals (Lerner, Rothbaum, Boulos, & Castellino, 2002), it was criticized for not taking the characteristics of the developing person sufficiently into consideration. One of those critics was actually Bronfenbrenner himself (see the discussion in Bronfenbrenner, 1989). In summary, Bronfenbrenner recognized that his theory would be incomplete unless it included the levels of individual structure and function (biology, psychology, and behavior) fused dynamically with the ecological systems he had described (Lerner et al., 2002, p. 326). Consequently, throughout the last decades Bronfenbrenner and his collaborators have, in successive stages, continued to refine and integrate other levels of the developmental system into the theory-construct that Bronfenbrenner now refers to as a bioecological paradigm of human development (see Bronfenbrenner, 1986a, 1986b, 1988, 1989, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1999a, 1999b, 2001, 2004; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1993, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Crouter, 1983; Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000; and Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998).

**Defining Properties of the Bioecological Model**

In its more recent reformulations, the basic structure and content of Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological model appears in the form of two interrelated propositions (see Bronfenbrenner, 2001; Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000; and Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). In the latest version of the bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 2001), they are referred to as Propositions II and III. The first of the two propositions specifies the theoretical model, while the second foreshadows the corresponding research designs for their assessment. In its contemporary form, Proposition II states:

> Over the life course, human development takes place through progressively more complex reciprocal interactions between an active, evolving biopsychological human organism and the persons, objects, and symbols in its
immediate external environment. To be effective the interaction must occur on a fairly regular basis over extended periods of time. Such enduring forms of interaction in the immediate environment are referred to as proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner, 2001, p. 6965).

In sum, proximal processes are posited as the primary engines of effective development. Nevertheless, like all engines they cannot produce their own fuel nor are they capable of self-steering (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994, p. 572). The next Proposition specifies the interrelated elements that underlie the capacity of proximal processes to operate. The most recent version of Proposition III reads as follows:

The form, power, content, and direction of the proximal processes producing development vary systematically as a joint function of the characteristics of the developing person (including genetic inheritance); the environment – both immediate and more remote – in which the processes are taking place; the nature of the developmental outcomes under consideration; and the continuities and changes occurring in the environment over time, through the life course, and during the historical period in which the person has lived (Bronfenbrenner, 2001, p. 6965, parenthesis in the original).

The two Propositions specifying the defining properties of the bioecological model are theoretically interdependent and subject to empirical tests. For their simultaneous investigation, Bronfenbrenner (1995, 1999a, 1999b, 2001) and Bronfenbrenner and Morris (1998) propose a research design that takes into account four components, identified as the principal elements of the bioecological model, and their interdependencies referred to as a Process–Person–Context–Time model (PPCT). It is important to emphasize in this connection that Bronfenbrenner (1979a) stresses that it is neither necessary nor possible to meet all the criteria for ecological research within a single investigation. Provided the researcher recognizes which qualifications are met and which are not, useful scientific information can be gained (Bronfenbrenner, 1979a, p. 14). The following section is devoted to a more detailed exposition of the PPCT model as delineated in its most recent form.

**The Process–Person–Context–Time Model**

The Process–Person–Context–Time model (PPCT) defines the bioecological model and its approach to the study of human development. According to Bronfenbrenner and his associates, the defining properties of the bioecological model involve four interrelated components: (1) the developmental *Processes* shaped by (2) the characteristics of the *Person*, and (3) the *Context* (4) over *Time*. Together, these four components constitute a
Theoretical Framework

The PPCT model for conceptualizing the integrated developmental system and for designing research to study the course of human development (see Bronfenbrenner, 1999b and Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). That is, Bronfenbrenner's view is that, just as each of the four components of the PPCT model must be included in any adequate conceptual specification of the dynamic human developmental system, so too must research appraise all four components of the model to provide data that are adequate for understanding the course of human development (Lerner et al., 2002, p. 326).

Process

Process is the first of the defining properties and the core component of the PPCT model. As stipulated in Proposition II, the primary concern of the bioecological model is the particular forms of reciprocal interaction between organism and environment, called proximal processes, that operate over time and are posited as the primary mechanisms producing human development. A proximal process involves “a transfer of energy between the developing human being and the persons, objects, and symbols in the immediate environment. The transfer may be in either direction or both; that is, from the developing person to features of the environment, from features of the environment to the developing person, or in both directions, separately or simultaneously” (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000, p. 118). A notable feature of the construct of proximal processes, specified in Proposition II, is that for development to occur, the person must engage in an activity, and to be developmentally effective, this activity must take place “on a fairly regular basis over extended periods of time.” One reason this is so is that to be developmentally effective, activities in which the person engages must take place long enough to become increasingly more complex (see Bronfenbrenner, 1999a).

The proximal processes are distinguished in terms of the two major kinds of developmental outcomes they produce, namely competence and dysfunction. The term competence refers to “the demonstrated acquisition and further development of knowledge, skill, or ability to conduct and direct one’s own behavior across situations and developmental domains. The outcome can occur in any domain – intellectual, physical, motivational, socio-emotional, or artistic – either by itself or in combination with one or more other spheres of activity” (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000, p. 118). By contrast, dysfunction refers to “the recurrent manifestation of difficulties in maintaining control and integration of behavior across situations and different domains of development” (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000; see also Bronfenbrenner, 1999b and Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). At the level of theory, proximal processes operating in a given environment may enhance development simultaneously in several psychological domains or
have a greater effect on some outcomes than on others (Bronfenbrenner, 1995) — that is, proximal processes may have different outcomes in different areas of the individual's life. Examples of enduring patterns of proximal processes producing competence or dysfunction are found in parent–child and child–child activities, group or solitary play, reading, learning new skills, working at hobbies, athletic activities, problem solving, caring for others, making plans, performing complex tasks, and acquiring new knowledge and know-how (see Bronfenbrenner, 1995, 1999a, 1999b, 2001 and Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). In other words, proximal processes have to do with what occurs in the course of everyday activities between the developing individual and the persons, objects, and symbols in his or her immediate environment.

Note that the bioecological model stresses the importance of those proximal processes that involve interactions between children and their major caregivers. To be more precise, Proposition IV states: “In order to develop — intellectually, emotionally, socially, and morally — a child requires, for all of these, the same thing: participation in progressively more complex activities on a regular basis over an extended period of time in the child's life, with one or more persons with whom the child develops a strong, mutual emotional attachment, and who are committed to the child's well-being and development, preferably for life” (Bronfenbrenner, 2001, p. 6967). The prerequisites stipulated in Proposition IV are then assumed to lead to the developmental consequences described in Proposition V, which reads: “The establishment and maintenance of a strong mutual emotional attachment leads to internalization of the parent's activities and expressed feelings of affection. Such mutual ties, in turn, motivate the child's interest and engagement in related activities in the immediate physical, social, and — in due course — symbolic environment that invite exploration, manipulation, elaboration, and imagination” (Bronfenbrenner, 2001, p. 6967). The attachment relationship is thought to not only exert significant influence on the child's subsequent psychological, social, and cognitive development, but also to serve as a foundation upon which the continued parent–child relationship is built. Proposition VIII stipulates: “Over the life course, the process of attachment exhibits a turnaround. In the beginning, it is the children who are the beneficiaries of the parents' irrational commitment, whereas toward the end the roles are reversed. Then it is the elderly parents who receive the love and care of their now middle-aged children. If, however, there was no attachment in the beginning there may be no attachment at the end” (Bronfenbrenner, 2001, p. 6969).
Theoretical Framework

**Person**

The second component of the PPCT model is the influence of the biopsychological characteristics of the Person on his or her own future development. As made clear from Proposition III, the characteristics of the developing person play a critical role in shaping the proximal processes and their resultant outcomes. In the more recent versions of the bioecological model, three types of Person characteristics are distinguished as being most influential in shaping the course of future development through their capacity to affect the direction and power of proximal processes through the life course (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 995). These three kinds of process-relevant Person attributes, labeled force-, resource-, and demand characteristics, are described as follows:

**Force characteristics** are active behavioral dispositions that “can set proximal processes in motion in a particular developmental domain and continue to sustain their operation, or – conversely – actively interfere with, retard, or even prevent their occurrence” (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 1009). The former of these two propensities is referred to as *developmentally generative characteristics*, while the latter is called *developmentally disruptive characteristics*. These characteristics share a critical feature of the bioecological model incorporated in Proposition II; namely, they reflect a conception of the human organism as an active agent in, and on, its environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1995). Examples of developmentally disruptive dispositions include, at one pole, such characteristics as impulsiveness, explosiveness, distractibility, inability to defer gratification, or, in a more extreme form, readiness to resort to aggression and violence; and, on the other pole, person attributes such as apathy, inattentiveness, unresponsiveness, and lack of interest in one's surroundings, feelings of insecurity, shyness, or a general tendency to avoid or withdraw from activity (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 1009). According to Bronfenbrenner and Morris, persons exhibiting either of the preceding propensities would find it difficult to engage in proximal processes requiring progressively more complex patterns of reciprocal interaction over extended periods of time. By contrast, developmentally generative characteristics involve such active orientations as curiosity, tendency to initiate and engage in activity alone or with others, responsiveness to initiatives by others, and readiness to defer immediate gratification to pursue long-term goals.

**Resource characteristics** are Person attributes that in themselves involve no selective disposition to action, but constitute biopsychological liabilities and assets that influence the capacity of the organism to engage effectively in proximal processes. Developmental liabilities are conditions that limit or disrupt the functional integrity of the organism, such as genetic defects, low
birth weight, physical handicaps, severe and persistent illness, or damage to brain function through accident or degenerative processes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; for details on genetic heritability in the bioecological model, see Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1993, 1994). By contrast, developmental assets take the form of abilities, knowledge, skills, and experience that, as they evolve over most of the life course, extend the domains in which proximal processes can do their constructive work – thereby becoming another source of the “progressively more complex” patterns of interaction constituting a defining property of proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998).

**Demand characteristics** are attributes of the Person that invite or discourage reactions from the social environment of a kind that can disrupt or foster processes of psychological growth; for example, a fussy versus a happy baby, attractive versus unattractive physical appearance, or hyperactivity versus passivity (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 1011).

The differentiation of these three forms of individual characteristics leads to their combination in patterns of Person structure that can further account for differences in the direction and power of resultant proximal processes and their developmental effects. In the bioecological perspective, the human organism functions as an integrated system in which the various biopsychological characteristics interact with each other in shaping the course of future development (see Bronfenbrenner, 1993, 1995). That is, not only the three general types of Person characteristics described above, but also their joint synergistic\(^{11}\) effects influence the effectiveness of proximal processes and their outcomes.

Furthermore, it might be useful to point out that the biopsychological characteristics of the person play a dual role in the PPCT model. To be more precise, in Proposition III the characteristics of the developing person appear twice; first as one of the elements influencing the “form, power, content, and direction of the proximal processes”; and then again as the “developmental outcome.” According to Bronfenbrenner (1995, p. 635), “the reason for their reappearance is that the developmental outcomes at one age become the Person characteristics that influence the outcomes of development at a later age.” In other words, within a bioecological framework the characteristics of the person function both as an indirect producer and a product of development (Bronfenbrenner, 1999b).

Apart from the individual qualities set out above, the bioecological model also gives due recognition to three other types of Person characteristics of relevance to human developmental processes. According

\(^{11}\) The term *synergism* is used to describe a phenomenon of this kind in which the joint operation of two or more forces produces an effect that is greater than the sum of the individual effects (Bronfenbrenner, 1989, p. 199).
to Bronfenbrenner and Morris (1998), the demographic factors of *age, gender,* and *ethnicity* are so pervasive in affecting future development that their possible influence routinely needs to be considered. Another reason for this recommendation is that all three of these factors, although based on differing physical characteristics of the Person, also place that person in a particular environmental niche that defines his or her position and role in society (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 1013; see also Bronfenbrenner, 1988). Lastly, it is important to note that Bronfenbrenner in his theoretical writings underscores the importance of viewing either type of Person characteristics that shape individual development in relation to their changing nature over the life course – from early infancy, through adolescence, into and beyond adulthood.

**Context**

The third component of the PPCT model is the environmental Context in which human development takes place. As stipulated in Proposition III, the characteristics of the environment – both immediate and more remote – affect proximal processes and their resultant developmental outcomes. That is to say, the environmental context in which human beings live can be positive or negative influences on development – or both at one time or another. It is important, however, to remember that Proposition II defines proximal processes as bidirectional. Individuals are thus not seen as being passively shaped by their environments, but rather as active agents who, within certain limits, have a bearing on the character of the environmental context in which they live and develop. In other words, human beings are not only the partial products, but also the partial producers of their environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1993, p. 6). In the biocological model, as in its earlier prototype (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), the environment, defined as relevant to developmental processes, is conceptualized as a nested arrangement of four successively more encompassing levels of social structures, referred to as the micro-, meso-, exo-, and macrosystems. The subsequent section concentrates on the various contexts and their impact on proximal processes and outcomes. These more detailed descriptions should not detract from Bronfenbrenner’s explicit premise that the subsystems of the overall ecological environment are inextricably interrelated – one with the other.

**Microsystems**

Microsystems are the immediate settings in which the individual lives and develops. At the innermost level of the ecological environment described by Bronfenbrenner is the microsystem, defined as “a pattern of activities, social
roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given face-to-face setting with particular physical, social, and symbolic features that invite, permit, or inhibit engagement in sustained progressively more complex interaction with, and activity in, the immediate environment" (Bronfenbrenner, 1994, p. 1645). In Bronfenbrenner's terminology, a setting is a place where people can readily engage in interaction with each other and with the objects and symbols that feature in that context. The factors of activity, role, and interpersonal relation constitute what are designated as the elements of the microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979a). Another significant ingredient in the definition of the microsystem is the term experience, which indicates a feature of the bioecological model incorporated in its first proposition, namely, that the model puts equal emphasis on a phenomenological and an "objective" view. To be more precise, Proposition I stipulates that the term experience is used to indicate that "the scientifically relevant features of any environment for human development include not only its objective properties but also the way in which these properties are subjectively experienced by the persons living in that environment" (Bronfenbrenner, 2001, p. 6964). Microsystems are the actual settings in which the individual experiences day-to-day life, such as family, daycare, school, peer group, or workplace.

It is within the immediate environment of the Microsystems that proximal processes operate to produce and sustain development. Proposition II stipulates that proximal processes involve interaction with three features of the immediate environment: persons, objects, and symbols. The principle vehicles for the direct influence of the microsystem environment on a person's development are activities others engage in with that person or in that person's presence (Bronfenbrenner, 1979a). Through reciprocal interaction with, or even mere exposure to, people in a variety of different roles and relationships, the developing person's "phenomenological field expands to include ever wider and more differentiated aspects of the ecological environment, and she becomes capable not only of participating actively in that environment but also of modifying and adding to its existing structure and content" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979a, p. 47). Thus, the activities a person engages in constitute both the internal mechanisms and the external manifestations of psychological growth (Bronfenbrenner, 1979a, p. 6). Also

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12 The elements of the microsystem can briefly be described as follows: (a) activity is an ongoing behavior possessing a momentum of its own and perceived as having meaning or intent by the participants in the setting; (b) role is a set of activities and relations expected of a person occupying a particular position in society, and of others in relation to that person; and (c) an interpersonal relation obtains whenever one person in a setting pays attention to or participates in the activities of another (for further details see Bronfenbrenner, 1979a).
note that the significant others\textsuperscript{13} who constitute a part of the developing individual's immediate environment have existence not only in terms of their roles and relationships, but also as persons possessing distinctive characteristics (Bronfenbrenner, 1989, 1995). The developmentally relevant characteristics of such “others” cover the same range of attributes as that set forth in the preceding section. That is, the three types of process-relevant Person attributes, referred to as force-, resource-, and demand characteristics, are incorporated in the microsystem as personal characteristics of parents, relatives, close friends, teachers, mentors, coworkers, spouses, or others who participate in the life of the developing person (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). Because the proximal processes between the developing person and his or her immediate environment are seen as mutually shaping, the interpersonal relationships are assumed to have developmental consequences also for the persons with whom the individual interacts on a face-to-face basis. This phenomenon is reflected in Proposition VII, which stipulates that “the psychological development of parents is powerfully influenced by the behavior and development of their children” (Bronfenbrenner, 2001, p. 6968).

When the proximal processes do not involve interpersonal relations but rather interaction with objects and symbols, for reciprocal interaction to occur the objects and symbols must be of a kind that invites attention, exploration, elaboration, and imagination (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). Because many activities with objects and symbols can be carried out in solitude, the significance and effectiveness of these developmental processes are not directly influenced by another participant’s characteristics. One would therefore expect that the person’s own dispositions and resources would play a far stronger role in affecting the direction and power of the proximal processes than in the case of interpersonal interaction (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 1013).

The influences of the immediate environment are not limited to the features of the microsystem that directly impinge on the proximal processes, but also include the possibility of higher order effects operating indirectly. The microsystem environment is conceived as extending beyond the immediate situation affecting the developing person – the objects and symbols to which he or she responds and the people with whom he or she interacts on a face-to-face basis. Regarded as of equal importance are connections between other persons present in the setting, the nature of these links, and their indirect influence on the developing person through

\textsuperscript{13} To refer to other people in the environment as distinguished from those whose development is under immediate consideration, the bioecological model borrows G.H. Meads (1934) term significant others (see Bronfenbrenner, 1989, 1995 and Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998).
their effects on those who deal with him or her at first hand (Bronfenbrenner, 1979a, p. 7). That is, when a microsystem involves more than two people, it allows for indirect influences of third parties on the interaction between the members of the dyad (see also Bronfenbrenner, 1977a, 2001). This kind of indirect influence, which can enhance or impair the developmental potential of the original dyad, is referred to as a second-order effect (Bronfenbrenner, 1974, 1977b, 1979a, 1979b). The principle of indirect influence from third parties, as a property of an effective context for child rearing, is stipulated in Proposition VI, which specifies that: “the establishment and maintenance of patterns of progressively more complex interaction and emotional attachment between parent and child depend to a substantial degree on the availability and involvement of another adult, a third party, who assists, encourages, spells off, gives status to, and expresses admiration and affection for the person caring for and engaging in joint activity with the child” (Bronfenbrenner, 2001, p. 6967). Moreover, in the biocological model some aspects of the physical environment are recognized as possible indirect influences on proximal processes and the resultant developmental outcomes. To be more precise, Bronfenbrenner (1999a, p. 16) distinguishes two general aspects of the physical environment that can affect the course of cognitive development, one for the better, the other for the worse. On the constructive side are areas and objects that invite exploration, whereas the instability, lack of clear structure, and unpredictability of events result in insufficient feedback for proximal processes to be set in motion and sustained. Examples of such aspects of the physical environment include material, physical, and social resources, the stability of those resources, and the extent to which they are organized or disorganized (see also Bronfenbrenner, 1997b, 1993, 1995, 2002; and Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). Furthermore, the biocological model stipulates that the effects of proximal processes will vary systematically as a function of the quality of the physical environment in terms of available resources, on the one hand, and the nature of the developmental outcome in terms of competence versus dysfunction, on the other (Bronfenbrenner, 1999a). For outcomes reflecting developmental competence, proximal processes are posited as having greater impact in more advantaged and stable environments, whereas in poorer environments major developmental impact of proximal processes can be expected only for indexes of developmental dysfunction (see also Bronfenbrenner, 1999b).

In sum, the quality of a microsystem depends on its ability to sustain and enhance development and to provide a context that is emotionally validating and developmentally challenging (Garbarino, Vorras, & Kostelny, 2002, p. 489). People who enjoy opportunities for rich and stimulating experiences in the microsystem are likely to increase their capacity to understand and successfully deal with ever-wider spheres of reality – that is, the micro-
system becomes “a gateway to the world, not a locked room” (Garbarino & Abramowitz, 1992, p. 39). Conversely, a microsystem becomes a source of developmental risk when it is socially impoverished – that is, the individual’s development suffers whenever the microsystem is stunted, be it because of too few participants, too little reciprocal interaction, psychologically destructive patterns of interaction, or a combination of the three (Garbarino & Abramowitz, 1992, p. 38).

**Mesosystems**

Mesosystems are relationships between settings frequented by the developing person. The mesosystem is the second stratum of the environmental layers specified in the bioecological model, and refers to “the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings containing the developing person” (Bronfenbrenner, 1994, p. 1645). In other words, a mesosystem is a system of microsystems. For example, the mesosystem of a child might include the interconnections between home, school, and neighborhood peer group; and that of an adult might include the interconnections between family, work, and social life.

A mesosystem is formed or extended whenever the developing person moves into a new setting. When this occurs it is an instance of what Bronfenbrenner calls an “ecological transition.”14 Each such transition has developmental consequences since the involvement in joint activity in a new setting with different role demands and interpersonal relationships requires the developing person to adapt to more people, tasks, and situations, thus increasing the scope and flexibility of his or her cognitive and social skills (Bronfenbrenner, 1979a). From infancy onward, the number of settings in which the growing person becomes active gradually increases (Bronfenbrenner, 1979a, p. 212). In the bioecological perspective, this evolving participation is both a product and a cause of development.

The possible interrelations among the settings in a mesosystem are of several types. The most basic form of interconnection is what Bronfenbrenner refers to as a multisetting participation. It occurs when the same person engages in activities in more than one setting, for example, when a child spends time both at home and in the neighborhood peer group. Since such participation necessarily occurs sequentially, multisetting participation can also be defined as the existence of a direct or first order social network across settings in which the developing person is an active

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14 An ecological transition occurs whenever a person’s position in the ecological environment is altered as the result of change in role, setting or both (Bronfenbrenner, 1979a, p. 26). Examples cited by Bronfenbrenner include entering a new school, the move from school to one’s first job, changing jobs, vacations, and emigrating.
participant (Bronfenbrenner, 1979a, p. 209, italics in the original). The interconnections between settings in a mesosystem are, however, not limited to those made by the developing person, but can take a number of additional forms. They may, for instance, include links between other persons who actively participate in “two or more settings containing the developing person” (e.g. parents involvement in the child’s school life), intermediate links in a social network, various forms of communication among settings (e.g. telephone conversations, e-mails, letters, announcements), and indirect connections via the “grapevine” or social network (see Bronfenbrenner, 1977b, 1979a). Similar to the interactions that occur within settings at the microsystem level, the processes of interchange between settings in a mesosystem are regarded as reciprocal. In some cases, there are consistencies between activities and interpersonal relations in the various microsystems within which the individual lives and develops, in other cases the linkages are less consistent. Moreover, the interaction of developmentally instigative or inhibitory features and processes present in each setting of a mesosystem are also likely to create synergistic effects that impact on the individual’s development (see Bronfenbrenner, 1986a, 1993).

The social richness of an individual’s mesosystem derives from the number and quality of its connections. Individuals participating in a large and diversified set of microsystems enjoy a special opportunity for rich and stimulating experiences. When there is a range of interpersonal interconnections between two or more of the settings and total agreement in their values, these developmental opportunities are enhanced. Mesosystem risk is defined first by the absence of connections and second by conflicts of values between one microsystem and another (Garbarino & Abramowitz, 1992, p. 44; for further details on risks and opportunities in the mesosystem, see also Garbarino & Eckenrode, 1997; Garbarino et al., 2002).

**Exosystems**

Exosystems are settings of which the person is not a part but which nevertheless influence his or her development through the meso- or microsystems. The third layer of the ecological environment is the exosystem which consists of “the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings, at least one of which does not contain the developing person, but in which events occur that indirectly influence

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15 When the same person does not actively participate in both settings, a connection between the two may still be established through a third party who serves as the *intermediate link* between persons in the two settings. In this case, participants in the two settings no longer meet face-to-face so that we speak of them as members of a *second-order network*. Such second-order connections can also be more remote, involving two or more intermediate links in the network chain (Bronfenbrenner, 1979a, p. 210).
processes within the immediate setting in which the developing person lives” (Bronfenbrenner, 1994, p. 1645). As the definition indicates, the exosystems are contexts with which the developing individual does not have direct contact, but which exert an indirect effect. An example of an exosystem in the case of young children can be the link between the home and the parents’ workplace, while an example in the case of adults can be the link between the home and their children's peer group. A noteworthy feature of the concept of an exosystem is that it illustrates the projective nature of the ecological perspective, for the same setting that is an exosystem for a child may be a microsystem for a parent, and vice versa (Garbarino et al., 2002, p. 490).

Exosystem influences can both impoverish and enhance developmental processes taking place at micro- or mesosystem level. In exosystem terms, such risks and opportunities come about in two ways. The first is through significant others in the developing person's life whose active involvement in settings that the person might never enter brings with them experiences that impoverish or enhance the significant others’ behaviors in the microsystems they share with the person. Examples include elements of parents’ work experiences that impoverish or enhance family life, such as unemployment, low pay, long or inflexible hours, traveling, and stress, on the one hand, and an adequate income, flexible scheduling, an understanding employer, and childcare subsidies, on the other (Bronfenbrenner & Crouter, 1983). However, the active involvement of people from the developing individual's own world in other settings is not the only source of exosystem influences. The second way risk and opportunity flows from the exosystem is when decisions made in those settings affect peoples’ day–to–day experiences, such as decisions taken by school boards, church councils, planning commissions and other centers of power that impact on the social and physical context in which people live their everyday life, and thereby have a bearing on the individual’s development (Garbarino et al., 2002). For example, when the state legislature suspends funding for early intervention programs, it jeopardizes children’s development (Garbarino et al., 2002, p. 490). Conversely, when public officials expand prenatal health services or initiate specialized daycare in high-risk communities, they increase developmental opportunities for children and reduce risk (for further details on opportunities and risks in the exosystem, see also Garbarino & Abramowitz, 1992a and Garbarino & Eckenrode, 1997).

**Macrosystems**

Macrosystems refer to the broad ideological, demographic, and institutional patterns of the particular culture or subculture in which the developing person lives. The most distant and expansive layer of the ecological environment is the macrosystem, which “consists of the
overarching pattern of micro-, meso-, and exosystems characteristic of a
given culture or subculture, with particular reference to the belief systems,
odies of knowledge, material resources, customs, lifestyles, opportunity
structures, hazards, and life course options that are embedded in each of
these broader systems” (Bronfenbrenner, 1994, p. 1646). The macrosystem
can be thought of as a societal blueprint for a particular culture or
subculture, which incorporates values, customs, belief systems, laws, and
resources that influence the way life is organized, passed on through social,
religious, and government institutions. In other words, the macrosystem
refers to the overarching institutional patterns of the culture or subculture,
such as the economic, social, legal, educational, traditional, religious, and
political systems in which the micro-, meso-, and exosystems are the
concrete manifestations.

It follows that cultures and subcultures can be expected to be different
from each other but relatively homogeneous internally in the form and
content of the micro-, meso- and exosystem settings they contain, along
with any belief systems or ideology underlying such consistencies
(Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This means that developmental processes
occurring in the lower-order systems are “likely to differ significantly – not
just statistically, but substantially – from one macrosystem to the next”
(Bronfenbrenner, 1993, p. 25). In order to identify a macrosystem, it is
necessary to go beyond the conventional labels used to distinguish social
groups in a society (e.g. class, ethnicity, nationality, family structure, etc).
That is, what Bronfenbrenner (1979a, 1986a, 1986b, 1988) and
Bronfenbrenner and Crouter (1983) call social addresses – environmental
labels that have no explanatory power in themselves. What defines a
macrosystem is the sharing in common the kinds of characteristics specified
in the above definition (i.e. similar belief systems, bodies of knowledge,
material resources, customs, lifestyles, opportunity structures, hazards, and
life course options). From this perspective, social class, ethnic or religious
groups, or persons living in particular regions, communities, neighborhoods,
or other types of broader social structures constitute a macrosystem
whenever the above conditions are met (Bronfenbrenner, 1989, p. 229).

The macrosystems are carriers of values and ideology that can impede or
promote human development. Such risks at the macrosystem level include
an ideology or cultural alignment that threatens to impoverish individuals’
micro- and mesosystems and set exosystems against them; opportunity
promises to enrich development (Garbarino & Abramowitz, 1992). As the
authors point out, it can also be a national economic policy that tolerates or
even encourages economic dislocation and poverty for families with young
children versus one that gives special financial priority to families with
young children. Another example is a pattern of racist or sexist values that
lower some individuals in dignity and/or status versus a pluralistic ideology
Theoretical Framework

that welcomes diversity and increases self-worth (for further details on risks and opportunities in the macrosystem, see also Garbarino & Eckenrode, 1997 and Garbarino et al., 2002).

**Time**

The fourth and final component of the PPCT framework is the dimension of Time as it relates to stability and change in the developing individual's environments. As indicated in Proposition III, a major factor influencing the proximal processes and their resultant developmental outcome is “the continuities and changes occurring in the environment over time, through the life course, and during the historical period in which the person has lived” (Bronfenbrenner, 2001). The underlying premise of this proposition is that environments influence proximal processes and developmental outcomes not only in terms of the resources that these environments make available, but also in terms of the degree to which they provide the stability and consistency over time that proximal processes require for their effective functioning (Bronfenbrenner, 1999b; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994). The principle that proximal processes require environmental stability for optimal human development is embodied in Proposition II through the stipulation that, to be developmentally effective, proximal processes “must occur on a fairly regular basis over extended periods of time” (Bronfenbrenner, 2001). Moreover, in a corollary to Proposition II, Bronfenbrenner and Evans (2000) suggest that not only the *duration*, but also the *frequency, interruption, timing* and *intensity* of exposures to people, objects, and symbols play critical roles in determining the proximal processes and their resultant developmental outcomes.

The element of Time underscores that the Process producing human development is not instantaneous, but rather takes place over time. This Process is, in turn, largely affected by the impact of changes in both the characteristics of the developing Person and the nature of the environmental Context. In the biocultural perspective, the individual's lifelong development is embedded in an ever-changing set of contexts at every layer of the entire ecological environment, from changes within and between the settings at the level of the micro-, meso-, and exosystems to changes at the broader macrosystems level. Examples provided by Bronfenbrenner (1994, p. 1646) include changes over the life course in family structure, socio-economic status, employment, place of residence, or the degree of “hectiveness” and “ability” in everyday life. According to Bronfenbrenner (1988), these kinds of changes over Time may have their origins in the external environment (e.g. the birth of a sibling, parental divorce, economic depression, war), or within the individual (e.g. puberty, severe illness, aging), and can include both normative experiences (e.g. school entry, marriage, retirement) and non-normative events (e.g. an
unexpected death or severe illness in the family, winning the sweepstake). The critical feature of such life events and experiences, singly or sequentially, is that they alter the existing relationship between person and environment, thus creating a dynamic that may serve as impetus to developmental change (Bronfenbrenner, 1988, 1989, 1995).

Environmental changes across the life course are not the only temporal force shaping human development; changes on a much shorter time scale or across history may be equally consequential (Bronfenbrenner, 1999b). In the current version of the bioecological model, Bronfenbrenner and Morris (1998) define three successive levels of Time, referred to as: micro-, meso-, and macrotime. Microtime applies to continuity versus discontinuity within ongoing episodes of proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 995). Mesotime is the periodicity of these episodes across broader time intervals, such as days and weeks. Macrot ime focuses on the changing expectations and events in the larger society, both within and across generations, as they affect and are affected by, processes and outcomes of human development over the life course.

The dimension of Time is essential to the functioning of the system constituting the ecology of human development in all of its parts. In a corollary to Proposition III, Bronfenbrenner and Morris (1998, p. 1020) suggest that:

The degree of stability, consistency, and predictability over time in any element of the systems constituting the ecology of human development is critical for the effective functioning of the system in question. Extremes either of disorganization or rigidity in structure or functioning represent dangerous signs for potential psychological growth, with some intermediate degree of system flexibility constituting the optimal conditions for human development. In terms of research design this proposition points to the importance of assessing the degree of stability versus instability, with respect to characteristics of Process, Person, and Context, at each level of the ecological system.

Summary

The theoretical framework employed to guide this study is broadly based on Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model, which is an evolving systems theory for the study of human development over time. The defining properties of this model comprise four interrelated components: (1) the developmental Process, involving the reciprocal interaction between the individual and the people, objects, and symbols in her or his immediate environment; (2) the developing Person, with an individual repertoire of
process-relevant attributes labeled force-, resource-, and demand characteristics; (3) the environmental Context of human development, conceptualized as a set of nested structures — referred to as the micro-, meso-, exo-, and macrosystems; and (4) a Time dimension acknowledging change in the developing person, the nature of the environmental context, and their interaction or proximal processes. Together, the four components of Bronfenbrenner’s formulation of the bioecological theory constitute a Process–Person–Context–Time (PPCT) model for conceptualizing the integrated developmental system and for designing research to study the course of human development.
CHAPTER 3

ECOLOGY OF PARENTING – A REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

The bioecological model provides a useful map for steering a course of study in virtually any domain of human development. To set the stage for the specific aims of this study, the following chapter uses the Process-Person-Context-Time (PPCT) framework, described in the previous chapter, to examine the extensive body of research literature available on parenting. The review is not intended to be comprehensive, but is limited to literature that illustrates the four components identified as the principal elements of the bioecological model and their interdependencies – thus, focusing the model for the purposes of the present study. The literature reviewed is mainly identified through searches of online databases, such as Annual Reviews, ERIC, PsychARTICLES, and the Social Science Citation Index, and from reference lists in retrieved articles. Most of the literature reviewed is based on research conducted in the United States, and includes work of researchers which have explicitly or implicitly employed an ecological perspective for the study of parenting and its impact on children's development. By way of introduction the review begins with a discussion of the central definitional question of what is meant by parenting. Thereafter the review concentrates on findings in the literature that can be related to the parent–child interaction Processes that are involved in children's development – that is, parenting – and the impact of Person, Context and Time on these processes.

What is Parenting?

Parenting is a concept that subsumes many different tasks and behaviors that influence child outcomes. It is usually carried out by one or both birth parents, but the term refers to the activity rather than the biological relationship (Jackson, 2000, p. 245). A review of the use of the term parenting in the contemporary social science literature from social work, developmental psychology, and anthropology, as well as in recent handbooks and encyclopedias focusing on this issue, reveals that modern scientists’ notion of parenting means far more than solely the act of taking
care of children (e.g. Bornstein, 2002b; Chase-Lansdale & Pitzman, 2002; Collins et al., 2000; Darling, 1999; Fagot, 1994; Jackson, 2000; Maccoby, 2000; Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Rohner, 2001; Smith, 1999; Steinberg, 2003). The literature reviewed points out a wide-range of responsibilities parents are expected to fulfill to meet their children's individual and evolving needs. The tasks and behaviors emphasized fit nicely into the four broad categories of parental caregiving that Bornstein (1995b, 1998, 2002b) suggests as the central, perhaps universal, domains of parenting. These four principal functions are: (a) nurturant caregiving that meets the biological, physical, and health requirements of children; (b) material caregiving which includes the ways in which parents provision, organize, and arrange the child's physical world, including home and local environment; (c) social caregiving which includes the variety of visual, verbal, affective, and physical behaviors parents use to engage children emotionally and manage their interpersonal exchanges; and (d) didactic caregiving which consists of the variety of strategies parents use in stimulating their children to engage in and understand the world outside the parent–child dyad. The central task of parents, then, is to create the conditions in which children can develop to their fullest capacity both inside and outside the family (Cowan, Powell & Cowan, 1998). For this reason, it can be argued that parenting is most important to the life of the human community (cf. Zigler, 1995).

As noted in the literature, there are different types of parents (e.g. mothers, fathers, single parents, adolescent parents, adoptive parents, foster parents, lesbian and gay parents) who are responsible for the care of different kinds of children (boys and girls of different ages, normally developing children, and children with physical, cognitive, social, and emotional disabilities or difficulties (Cowan et al., 1998; see also Bornstein, 2002b; Lamb, 1999; and Luster & Okagaki, 1993). The literature also suggests that pluralistic caregiving is common and significant in the lives of children and adolescents. It is well documented that other members of the parents' household or kin group, such as siblings and grandparents, as well as nonfamilial caregivers, such as neighbors, child-minders, and teachers, at one or another time can be centrally engaged in parenting activities (Bornstein, 2002a; Clark-Stewart & Allhusen, 2002; Cowan, Powell, & Cowan, 1998; Fitzgerald, Mann, Cabrera, & Wong, 2003; McGurk, Caplan, Hennessey, & Moss, 1993; Nunn, 2002; Werner & Smith, 1982; Zukow-Goldring, 2002).

**Parenting Proximal Processes**

The progressively more complex pattern of reciprocal interactions that develops between a child and his or her main caregivers – usually the
parents – represents an instance of what Bronfenbrenner calls proximal processes. As noticed in the previous chapter, the concept of proximal process is used in the bioecological model to denote a particular form of enduring reciprocal interactions between organism and environment that are posited as the “engines” of human development (cf. Bronfenbrenner, 1995). In the bioecological perspective, children are learning many things through their daily experiences in interacting with the social and physical environment, and many enduring interactions, other than with their parents, influence how children grow and develop. Yet, given the biological fact that human children do not – and cannot – grow up as solitary individuals, parenting constitutes an all-encompassing ecology of the child’s development (Bornstein, 2001, 2002b).

A substantial body of research over the past two decades provides clear evidence that parents have a significant influence on the characteristics children develop and the directions their lives take (Collins, et al., 2000; Maccoby, 2000, 2001; Steinberg, 2003). Biological parents contribute directly to the nature and development of their children by passing on a significant and pervasive genetic make-up (see e.g. Plomin, 1999, 2000), and all parents shape their children’s experiences (Bornstein, 2002b). The way parent-provided experiences influence children’s development is obvious – through parent–child interaction. In the contemporary literature there is broad consensus that this relationship is a bidirectional one, with parents influencing their children as their children influence them (e.g. Bell, 1968; 1974; Bell & Harper, 1977; J.Lerner, 1993, 1994; J. Lerner & Castellino, 2000; R. Lerner, 1998; R. Lerner, Rothbaum, Boulos, & Castellino, 2002; Maccoby, 2000, 2001). Certainly, of course, a good case can be made for parents having greater influence because they have more power, control, more resources, have greater knowledge, and are needed by the child for safety and protection (Grusec, 2002; see also Bradley, 1995; Bronfenbrenner & Crouter, 1983; Maccoby & Martin, 1983; and Sidebotham & Heron, 2003).

As was noted above, parenting is a complex activity that includes many tasks and behaviors that work individually and together to influence child outcomes. In an influential article drawing on historical review, Darling and Steinberg (1993) suggested that, to improve the possibilities for discovering the processes, or mechanisms, through which parent’s behavior influence child development, researchers should maintain a distinction between parenting practice and parenting style.

**Parenting Practice and Parenting Style**

Parenting practice refers to the specific goal-directed behaviors in which parents engage in order to change or shape the child’s behavior, whereas
parenting style is defined as “a constellation of attitudes toward the child that are communicated to the child and that, taken together, create an emotional climate in which the parents’ behaviors are expressed” (Darling & Steinberg, 1993 p. 493). Although both parenting practices and parenting styles result from the goals and values held by parents, they influence outcomes for the child through different processes. Parenting practices have a direct effect on specific child developmental outcomes, while parenting style influences child development primarily through its moderating influence on the relationship between parenting practices and developmental outcomes (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Thus, a particular parenting style can enhance or inhibit the effectiveness of specific parent practices. In other words, “it is not just what parents do that matters, but the emotional climate in which they do it” (Steinberg & Silk, 2002, p. 121). Although specific parenting behaviors may influence child development, many writers have noted that specific parenting practices are less important in predicting child well being than is the broad pattern of parenting (Darling, 1999) – that is, parenting style.

In studying parenting style, researchers have applied both dimensional and configurational approaches (Darling, 1999; see also Steinberg, 2003; Steinberg, Darling, Fletcher, Brown, & Dornbusch, 1995; and Steinberg & Silk, 2002). The two traditions have different theoretical orientations and are based on different assumptions (see Darling & Steinberg, 1993 for further details). In the dimensional tradition, links between parenting and child adjustment are examined for specific dimensions of parenting (Steinberg & Silk, 2002). More specifically, researchers employing this approach attempt to isolate critical dimensions of parenting along which parents differ, and examine the relations between variability in one or more of these dimensions and variability in one or more child outcomes (Steinberg, 2003, p. 1848). According to Steinberg (2003), the most frequently studied dimensions of parenting have been warmth (sometimes referred to as acceptance or responsiveness), firmness (sometimes referred to as demandingness or behavioral control), and restrictiveness (sometimes referred to as intrusiveness or psychological control). The findings regarding these dimensions show that children and adolescents fare better when their parents are warm, firm, and nonrestrictive (Steinberg, 2003; see also Belsky, 1984 and Maccoby & Martin, 1983). To be more exact, empirical studies in this domain show that children and adolescents whose parents are warm and supportive have high levels of self-esteem and social competence and low levels of depression, anxiety, and problem behaviors (Shumow, Vandell & Posner, 1998; Weiss & Schwartz, 1996). Warm responsive parenting has also been positively associated with later child language development, cognitive development, school success, and behavioral adjustment (for a review see Rintoul et al., 1998). Conversely, parents who are less involved
and affectionate with their children are more likely to witness a variety of academic and behavior problems in the children as they grow (Rintoul et al., 1998). At the far end of the spectrum, different forms of parental rejection (e.g. child abuse and neglect) are strongly related to poor developmental outcomes, in both the short and long term. Studies on rejection in cultures all over the world suggest that children who are rejected by their parents and adults who were rejected as children develop: hostility, aggression, passive aggression, or problems with management of hostility and aggression; dependency; emotional responsiveness; negative self-evaluation, negative self-esteem, and negative self-adequacy; emotional instability and a negative world view (Rohner, 2002).

In contrast to the dimensional approach which attempts to separate various aspects of parenting from one another, the configurational, or typological, approach to parenting attempts to identify particular types or styles of parenting that are defined by certain constellations of parenting characteristics (Steinberg, 2003, p. 1848). This has been done by using configurations that are defined \textit{a priori} on the basis of theory as well as by identifying naturally occurring clusters of parents whose parenting behavior has been assessed on several of the key dimensions just described (i.e. warmth, firmness, and restrictiveness). The most widely used configurational model is one that derives from the theoretical ideas originally presented by Baumrind (1967) and later revised by Maccoby and Martin (1983). Baumrind categorized parents’ interaction with their children using a typology based on the configuration of two major stylistic dimensions of parenting: warmth/responsiveness and control. On the basis of this typology, Baumrind (1968, 1971) developed a tripartite classification system whereby parents could be categorized as authoritarian, authoritative, or permissive. Later, Maccoby and Martin (1983) related these constructs more broadly to the parenting literature and suggested that parenting style should be assessed along two separate linear dimensions, responsiveness and demandingness, which they combined to devise a fourfold scheme where parents could be classified as authoritarian—autocratic, indulgent—permissive, authoritative—reciprocal, or indifferent—uninvolved. In the light of research findings, the configurational model of parenting style has been found to predict child well-being in the domains of social competence, academic performance, psychosocial development, and problem behavior (Darling, 1999). More specifically, empirical findings show that children and adolescent from authoritative homes score better than their peers on most measures of psychosocial development, school achievement, internalized distress, and problem behavior, whereas children and adolescents whose parents are uninvolved perform most poorly in all domains (Darling, 1999; see also Baumrind, 1991; Holmbeck, Paikoff, & Brooks-Gunn, 1995; Smetana, 1994; Steinberg, 1990, 2000, 2003; and Steinberg & Morris, 2001).
Although these findings have been confirmed in samples from countries around the world (see Steinberg & Silk, 2002), various researchers have suggested that the most commonly used configurational models of parenting have greater applicability within white, middle-class, American samples than within samples of parents from other backgrounds (Chao, 1994, 2001; Chao & Tseng, 2002; Gonzales, Cause, & Mason, 1996; Kim, 1996).

**Influence of Person on Parenting**

In the view of a bioecological perspective, the parent–child interaction processes that are involved in children’s development are shaped by the characteristics of the developing child and of the parents who constitute a part of the child’s immediate environment. Contemporary research literature provides substantial empirical support for this notion. Yet, what an investigator views as the key characteristics of the child and of the parent varies widely as a function of the study’s objective, the investigator’s theoretical perspective, and the sample under investigation. In consequence, the research literature in this domain comprises a wide range of child and parental attributes that affect parenting. As noted in the previous chapter, the bioecological model suggests that the developmentally relevant characteristics of the developing individual and his or her significant others cover three types of process-relevant Person attributes, referred to as force-, resource-, and demand characteristics.

**Child and Parental Characteristics**

The first of the bioecological model’s categories of developmentally relevant characteristics, the one labeled force characteristics, covers the behavioral dispositions of the individual and his or her significant others who “can set proximal processes in motion in a particular development domain and continue to sustain their operation, or – conversely – actively interfere with retard, or even prevent their occurrence” (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 1009). An example of a force characteristic of the child that has received considerably attention in terms of influencing parenting is temperament. As Putnam, Sanson, and Rothbart (2002) have noted, the general relations between parenting and temperament are rather expected; for example, that the more adaptable, easy-to-sooth, or sociable child would elicit warm and responsive parenting, whereas the more irritable, demanding, or withdrawing child would elicit parental irritation. It is, however, also clear that the influence of child temperament on parenting is moderated by a variety of other factors including age, gender, parental
personality, and characteristics of the home environment (Putnam, Sanson, and Rothbart; 2002; Thompson, 1999; Wachs, 2006).

Examples of parental characteristics favorable to good parenting that fall in the category labeled force characteristics include empathic awareness, predictability, emotional availability, and psychological maturity and well-being (Belsky & Barends, 2002; Martin, 1989). Perceived self-efficacy is also likely to positively affect parenting because parents who feel competent are reinforced and thus motivated to engage in further interaction with their children (Bornstein, 2002b; see Coleman & Karraker, 1998 for a review). In addition, it has been suggested that parents with higher intellectual ability and levels of education tend to display more effective parenting (see Collins et al., 2000; Kelley, Power, & Wimbush, 1992). Such parents tend to be more responsive to children’s emotional needs, engage with their children more, provide a more cognitively stimulating environment, and explain their punishments (Chase-Lansdale & Pittman, 2002; Duncan, Brooks-Gunn, & Klebanov, 1994). By contrast, various studies suggest that low levels of parental education are strongly associated with indicators of less than optimal child development, including impaired play behavior, behavior problems, and poor academic achievement (see Rintoul et al., 1998 for a review). Other parental dispositions that negatively affect parenting involve such characteristics as impulsiveness, excessively control, inattentiveness, neglectfulness, or lack of interest in the child (Belsky & Vondra, 1989; Polansky, Gaudin, Ammons, & Davis, 1985).

Resource characteristics encompass biopsychological resources which in themselves involve no selective disposition to action, but which constitute liabilities and assets that can influence the capacity of the organism to engage effectively in proximal processes. Examples of child resource characteristics of relevance for parenting include, on the one hand, dispositions that may limit or disrupt the functional integrity of the child such as severe and persistent illness, physical disabilities, mental diseases, and child mental retardation (see Field, 1995; Hodapp, 2002; Huston, 1991; Meadow-Orlans, 2002; Melamed, 2002; Zahn-Waxler et al., 2002), and, on the other hand, developmental assets of the child, such as healthy development (Mercer, 1986, 1990). Premature infants, sickly, and handicapped children have been shown to be at increased risk for physical abuse and neglect by their parents (Belsky, 1984; Belsky & Vondra, 1989; Leventhal, 1996; Wolfe, 1999).

Examples of parental characteristics that fall in this category are instance mental illness, depression, parental mental retardation, persistent illness, and physical disability (Belsky & Barends, 2002; Polansky et al., 1985; Zahn-Waxler et al., 2002). Various studies have demonstrated that parents’ mental illness tends to negatively affect parenting (Cleaver, Unell, & Aldgate, 1999;
Garmezy & Rutter, 1983; Rutter & Quinton, 1984; Skerfving, 1996; Skerfving, forthcoming).

Lastly, demand characteristics refer to personal dispositions that invite or discourage reactions from the social environment of a kind that can disrupt foster processes of psychological growth. This category includes child characteristics that may influence parents’ expectations, goals, and values. The idea that parents respond differently to children with different predispositions seems to be widely accepted in the parenting literature. It has repeatedly been suggested that, for example, gender differences in children may evoke parents’ different treatment of sons and daughters, which, in turn, may contribute to the socialization of gender in children (see McHale, Crouter & Whiteman, 2003 and Leaper, 2002 for reviews). Other examples of child characteristics that may evoke differentiating behaviors in parents include children’s genetic makeup (Collins et al., 2000; Maccoby, 2000; Plomin, 2000; Reiss, 2000); age as a marker of the child’s developmental stage (Johnson, Emde, Pennbrok, Stenberg, & Davis, 1982; Steinberg & Belsky, 1991), and children’s physical appearance (Elder, Van Nguyen, & Caspi, 1985). It is important to note that any of these notions may, of course, reflect different beliefs that parents, within and across different social, ethnic, and cultural groups, harbor about children and childrearing (Bornstein et al., 1995; Buggental & Happaney, 2002; Goodnow, 2002; Murphy, 1992; Siegel & McGillicuddy-De Lisi, 2002).

Parents are, of course, also likely to possess characteristics that can influence children’s expectations, goals, and values. For example, findings from a study on British school children, aged 11–12 years, from various ethnic groups have shown that these children’s idea of what it means to be “a proper parent” was that parents ought, first and foremost, to “be there for their children” – to care for their emotional needs, to support them with their problems, and to help them with their homework; in short they should spend time with their children (Brannen, Heptinstall, & Bhopal, 2000).

Influence of Context on Parenting

In a biocultural perspective, the parent–child interaction processes that are involved in children’s development are not only shaped by the characteristics of the developing child and of the parent, but also by the contexts in which their relationship evolves and develop. This viewpoint seems to be widely acknowledged in the contemporary literature. Among the most frequently mentioned contexts of parenting found in the literature reviewed are the family, parents’ support systems, poverty, and the neighborhood.
The Family

The family is the principal social environment within which parent–child interactions takes place. Family is an ambiguous concept, however, and there is no consensus among scholars on what a family is and ought to be (Allen, Fine, & Demo, 2000). The literature reviewed makes clear that there are many different types of families – both across cultures and within societies – who use a multitude of ways to meet their needs for reproduction, cohabiting, nurturance, economic cooperation, affection, protection, and meaning (Demo, Allen, & Fine, 2000; Gottlieb, 1993; Macionis, 2001). Existing literature in this area embodies a wide range of family contexts in which parenting takes place, for example: two-parent intact families, one-parent families, divorced and remarried families, adoptive families, foster families, and gay and lesbian families (see Bornstein, 2002a; Lamb, 1999). The literature reviewed on parenting also comprises a diversity of family forms associated with minority and ethnic variations in general, and among African-American, Asian-American, and Latino populations in the United States in particular, as well as among poverty-stricken and near-poor populations in the United States (see Bornstein, 2002a; Lamb, 1999). To attempt a definition of families that encompasses all possible variations is a difficult task, and, therefore, modern notions of family often allow the individual’s own perception of who is in his or her family to prevail (Rothausen, 1999; see also Gubrium & Holstein, 1990 for further discussion).

Several studies have demonstrated that family environments have important consequences both for children’s later cognitive performance and academic achievement, and for their emotional well-being and any behavior problems (e.g. Parcel & Menaghan, 1994a, 1994b). Similarly, a wide range of research on family structure and child outcomes indicate that, compared with children of two-parent families, children of single-parent families are more likely to have difficulties with their emotional and psychological adjustment, their school performance and educational attainment, and they are more likely to have behavioral adjustment problems, later marriage, earlier childbearing, and to live in poverty as adults (Mercer, 1990; Painter & Levine, 2000; Weinraub, Horvath, & Gringlas, 2002). It has, on the other hand, also been suggested that the families of abused children are frequently nuclear and isolated, are headed by lone and often young mothers who have a large number of young children (see Egan-Sage & Carpenter, 1999 for a review). By the same token, numerous studies have found that neglectful families, on average, have more children than non-neglecting families. For example, in studies of neglectful low soci-economic status (SES) families in two different cities in the United States, Polansky, Gaudin, Ammons, & Davis (1985) found that neglectful families averaged 3.5 or more children, which was significantly more children than in non-neglecting control
families. This may be because a large sib group contributes to the dilution of parents’ economic and interpersonal resources and increases stress (Downey, 1995; see also Ghate & Hazel, 2002).

**Parent’s Support from a Third Party**

Caregiving principles and practices constitute the direct effects of parenting. Parents have an indirect influence on their children as well, for example, through their relationships with each other and the local community. Parents’ bearing toward their spouse and their marriage, as their associations with larger social networks, modify their interactions with their children and, in turn, their children’s development (Bornstein, 2001). Although assistance with childcare and emotional support can be achieved from a social network outside the household, intimate support from a second adult in the family setting seems to have the most general positive consequences for the parent–child relationship (Belsky, 1984; Crnic et al, 1983; Gable, Crnic, & Belsky, 1994; Garbarino & Abramowitz, 1992). A logical corollary, then, is that parenting figures who are on the same side and who work in concert are in a better position to afford a stable, consistent, and predictable environment for children than are parents who work at cross purposes (McHale, Khazan, Erera, Rotman, DeCourcey, & McConell 2002; see also Fincham, 1998). Empirical findings indicate that parents who are satisfied with their marital relationship are much more likely to display characteristics of positive parenting such as parental warmth, communication, monitoring, and authoritative discipline (see also Grych, 2002 and Wilson & Gottman, 2002). Conversely, studies on co-parenting consistently show that interparental discord or conflict may undermine the quality of the parent–child relationship (see Grych, 2002 and Wilson & Gottman, 2002 for recent reviews). For example, parents who are preoccupied with worries about the future of their marriage or are exhausted by marital problems may be less able to focus on their children's needs and desires (Grych, 2002), and, as a consequence, their parenting might become lax or overly permissive or their children may feel rejected (Fincham, Grych, & Osborne, 1994; Osborne & Fincham, 1996). Similarly, experiencing discord or conflict in the marriage can be a source of parental stress, which may lead to impaired, harsh, or even abusive parenting (Dix, 1991; Fincham et al., 1994; Jouriles & Norwood, 1995; Ross, 1996). Although most studies seem to support a spillover effect in which the

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16 Coparenting refers to the process by which spouses support each other in the parenting role and share the responsibilities and tasks of childrearing (Grych, 2002, see also McHale, 1995 and McHale et al., 2002).
positivity (or negativity) of the interparental relationship leads to a similar quality in parent–child relationships, in a review of studies examining associations between marital quality and parenting. Erel and Burman (1995) found a number of investigations that reported a negative association between the constructs. More precisely, these studies support a compensatory model in which parents invest more in their relationship with their children when there are problems in the marriage, or conversely, are less focused on their children when marital satisfaction is high. Thus, although there is ample evidence that marriage and parenting are related, precisely how they affect each other is a question that remains unanswered (Grych, 2002, p. 205).

Parent's Social Network

Several studies of parents’ social networks conducted during the 1980s and 1990s indicate that assistance with childcare, unconditional emotional support, and advice on how to maintain authoritative control over the child’s behavior proved particularly helpful to young mothers, especially when the mothers are single, divorced, or separated (see Cochran & Niego, 1995, Weinraub et al., 2002). For example, in an often cited study on social supports and the risk of maternal rejection by adolescent mothers, Coletta (1981) noted that mothers with high levels of support were more affectionate and showed their love by comforting, cuddling, playing with, and praising their children, whereas mothers with low levels of support tended to be hostile, indifferent, and rejecting of their children. Close relatives and a partner or spouse were found to be the most important sources of support. Along the same lines, many authors have suggested that the supportive involvement of other adults appears to be positively related to the quality of parent–child interactions (Belsky, 1984; Bradley & Whiteside-Mansell, 1997; Cochran, 1993; Cochran & Niego, 2002; McHale et al., 2002), and it seems to be especially important in mitigating the effects of stressful life events or circumstances (Crnic & Greenberg, 1990; Crnic & Low, 2002; Crockenberg, 1988; Mercer, 1990; Vondra & Garbarino, 1988). Conversely, absence of social support has consistently been related to problematic parenting, and there is an abundance of evidence linking social isolation and limited social ties with elevated risks of child abuse and neglect (see Belsky, 1993).

Parenting and Poverty

Parenting behavior in circumstances of poverty has been conceived as both mediating and moderating the effects of “high-risk” conditions on the child. Research has demonstrated, for instance, that many of the deleterious
effects of poverty on children's development are mediated through the effects of poverty on parenting: economic stress and disadvantage can aggravate parents’ mental health problems, psychological distress, and punitiveness, which in turn adversely affect the child (Brooks-Gunn, Britto, & Brady, 1999; Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Chase-Lansdale & Gordon, 1996; Conger, Ge, Elder, Lorenz & Simmons, 1994; McLoyd, 1990; 1998a; 1998b; Zahn-Waxler, Duggal, & Gruber, 2002). Parental depression and irritability related to the stressful conditions associated with poverty, such as unsafe housing, overcrowding, and lack of money, also affect children through increased marital discord, which has a spillover effect that can undermine the quality of the parent–child relationship (MacPhee, 1999; Grych, 2002; Wilson & Gottman, 2002). In addition, the family's economic resources may constrain the quality and quantity of goods and services such as access to childcare or books that parents can purchase for their child’s benefit (Magnuson & Duncan, 2002).

**Neighborhood Influences on Parenting**

It has been argued that the mainstream notion of nurturant parenting derives from the study of a particular (i.e. white, middle-class) social world that requires particular child competencies. Children from especially low-income minority families face different demands, threats, and opportunities in the immediate physical and social context of their daily lives; often, these children require different parental care and nurturant strategies (Laosa, 1979; LeVine, 1974; Ogbu, 1985; 1987). When an area is seen as physically unsafe, for example, parents may move toward isolating their children or attempt to build up neighborhood connections that help them know what their children are doing or can help when problems arise (Furstenberg, Cook, Eccles, Elder, & Sameroff., 1999). When an area is seen as containing values that undermine a parent's effort to establish a particular worldview, they may move toward “cocooning” a child or toward teaching them, in advance, defensive and discounting strategies (Goodnow, 2002 p. 441).

**Influences of Time on Parenting**

Although parent–child relationships are life course in nature, the influence of parents on children's development is thought to be especially important during the formative years – that is, the period from infancy through young adulthood. This phase of the parent–child relationship is not static, however. As noted in the literature reviewed, the focal contents of parent–child relationships change as children grow older, and, presumably, as their parents mature as well (Lamb, Hwang, Ketterlinus, & Fracasso,
Parents adapt to the changes in the child's capacities and interests that occur as the child grows up. For example, parents make attributions of intentionality to the actions of an older child that they would never make to the actions of a toddler. Children too, as they grow older, begin to develop ideas about the legitimacy of parental authority, which affects their readiness to accept reciprocal obligations (Damon, 1977).

The literature reviewed indicates that continuity in the parent–child relationship appears to be an important ingredient for optimal child development (e.g. Vondra & Belsky, 1993). This is very much in keeping with the bioecological model's stipulation that developmentally effective processes of proximal interaction must take place “on a fairly regular basis, over an extended period of time.” An occasional weekend of doing things with one's mum or dad does not count, nor do activities that are often interrupted (Bronfenbrenner, 1999a, p. 6).

Moreover, some of the literature reviewed also emphasizes that family dynamics and structures are changeable. Normally, the parent–child relationship evolves and develops in several different kinds of family arrangements over the course of time (Hetherington & Stanley-Hagan, 2002; Steinberg & Silk, 2002; Weinraub et al., 2002; Zarit & Eggebeen, 2002). For example, new siblings are born, adult siblings move out to live on their own, and parents separate or divorce.

**Summary**

This chapter has reviewed research literature pertinent to the study of parenting. The chapter began with a discussion of the central definitional question of what is meant by parenting, followed by a review of previous research centered on the bioecological model's four key elements of Process, Person, Context, and Time, i.e. the four cornerstones upon which the present study is based. The literature reviewed shows that parenting is a complex construct that subsumes an array of activities and skills performed by birth parents and/or other adults who provide childrearing and caregiving to enable the child to become a competent caring adult who is able to function well in society. The progressively more complex interaction processes between caregivers and children include many specific parenting behaviors that work individually and together to influence child outcome. Many writers have noted that specific parenting practices are less important in predicting child well-being than is the broad pattern of parenting — that is, parenting style. In both dimensional and configurational approaches to parenting style, warmth and acceptance in caregivers appear as a key ingredient for positive child outcomes. Moreover, in the contemporary
literature, there seems to be a broad consensus that parenting is determined by the person characteristics of the child and the parent(s), and by the context in which their relationship develops over time. Notable characteristics in children are age, gender, physical condition, and temperament, while notable parental characteristics include age, educational level, cognitive ability, and other personal traits. The characteristics of the family, household, neighborhood, and the parents’ support systems are seen as important context for parenting.
CHAPTER 4

METHODS

In the following chapter are described the methods used in the present study to examine parenting and its impact on children's development in families in a shantytown in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The primary goals of the chapter are to enable the reader to follow the different phases of the research process and to comprehend the decisions taken in relation to the overarching research strategy, the research approach, the selection strategies, the methods and instruments of investigation, and the analysis of data. Throughout the course of research, the theoretical framework employed, based on Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 2001), was of paramount importance. It influenced the questions that were asked and the analysis of the data collected. Yet the means for gathering information were to a great extent shaped by the complex and changing context in which the research took place. The following is a detailed description of this research process.

Overarching Research Strategy

Field research on social conditions in shantytowns entails a number of methodological and ethical challenges. The overarching research strategy developed in the present study embodied the idea that the systematic collection of information in shantytowns should not be carried out without a feedback dialogue. Similar to many other cities in Latin America, Rio de Janeiro is highly segregated (cf. Fay, 2005). Poverty and social exclusion coexist in physical proximity to wealth, services, and opportunities (cf. Bastos & Gomes, 1993, 1994, 1995; Medeiros, 1991; Medeiros et al., 1999; Perlman, 1976, 2004, 2006). Social and economic inequalities, often in combination with high levels of violence, tend to create barriers between the shantytowns and the surrounding urban areas. Researchers seeking to study social issues in the shantytowns are likely to face the challenge of gaining access to the research setting and to the local culture. There is really no way in which researchers can work openly in a shantytown without gaining access to the research site and without anchoring themselves and their activities among the local residents. First-hand research experiences
from other shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro has shown that sensitivity to, and awareness of, the local conditions are all-important (see Kejerfors, 1996a, 1996b). Without proper understanding of the socio-cultural context in which the research is carried out, the researcher's frames of reference and those of the informants may be entirely at variance. Naturally, the same problem can occur even when the researcher and the informants are citizens of the same country, or even the same city, for example because of class and educational differences (cf. Bulmer & Warwick, 1983). Another challenge in social research concerns the ethical principle of reassuring the inhabitants of the local setting that the research is useful for them. Therefore, it was important to produce knowledge that would contribute both to academic advancement and to the practical concerns of the people being studied. Awareness of the methodological and ethical challenges involved in conducting research in a shantytown guided the decision to adopt an approach to inquiry that included the local residents as active participants in the production of knowledge. Since the initiating researcher was external both to the particular setting and to the conditions for parenting in shantytowns, it seemed a rational decision to invite local residents to participate in the planning and implementation of the study.

**Study Methods and Instruments**

The study described in this thesis consisted of two components: a community profile of the shantytown selected, and an in-person (i.e. face-to-face) interview survey among children and parents living there. The purpose of constructing a community profile was twofold. First, it was important to clearly identify the unique character of the shantytown in question as a context for parent–child relationships. Secondly, it was a means for becoming familiar with the setting and the people living there. The aim of the in-person interview survey was to investigate parenting and subsequent child outcomes among families living in the shantytown selected, and also to explore possible variations in children's perception of treatment received by their parents, how parenting was influenced by forces emanating from within the individual child, the parent, and from the broader social context in which the parent–child relationship was embedded.

**Methods for Collecting Community Profile Data**

The methods for collecting community profile data included reading written material, interviewing, and participant observation. The first step in constructing the community profile was to compile an overview of the
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shantytown in question using information gathered by others. This material included statistical reports, official documents, survey data, research reports, and newspaper articles. Although the data obtained from these sources were sometimes incomplete or contradictory, the material provided a general picture of the shantytown, its history, its geographic location, population, and services. This information was later supplemented by participant observations of everyday-life in the shantytown, and by interviews with various people, including long-time residents, formal and informal leaders, and knowledgeable outsiders.

Instruments for the In-person Interview Survey

The in-person interview survey was based on a series of seven previously designed and well-established questionnaires. As shown in greater detail in Table 4:1, these instruments included three self-report questionnaires concerning parental acceptance and children’s personality dispositions, and four questionnaires eliciting detailed demographic and social-situational information about each family in the sample. In addition to the standardized questionnaires, a simple self-report “diary” was specifically devised for the study wherein a sub-sample of ten children made day-by-day notes about their social networks.

Table 4:1. Instruments and procedures used for researching the conditions for parenting in Buriti Congonhas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument/Procedure</th>
<th>Used as a measure of:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child PARQ</td>
<td>Child’s perception of parent’s acceptance–rejection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child PAQ</td>
<td>Child’s self-reported personality and behavioral dispositions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mother PAQ</td>
<td>Adult’s assessment of the behavioral dispositions of the child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background Data Schedule</td>
<td>Social-situational data and demographic information about the family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood and Community Assessment Questionnaire</td>
<td>Assesses the neighborhood and community as sources of stress and support for parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Social Network Interview</td>
<td>Assesses family members’ social networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Networks of Youths</td>
<td>Assesses the social networks of children and adolescents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-report Diary</td>
<td>Children’s day-by-day notes about their social networks</td>
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</table>
The selection of this battery of research instruments was based on several considerations. First and foremost, the research problem under investigation and the phenomenologically orientated theory adopted for the study called for instruments that could provide data about children's and parents' actions and perceptions in regard to parenting within their social environments. Many writers, including Bronfenbrenner himself, have argued that children's perception of their parents' behaviors may be as an important influence on their development as the parents' actual behaviors (cf. Bronfenbrenner, 1979; see also Rohner, 1986, 1989). Secondly, the research instruments were considered appropriate for use among the sample population defined. Thirdly, as the already existing data on the shantytown and its population were incomplete, it was necessary to collect additional background information. Fourthly, the use of questionnaires seemed to be a relatively economic and quick means for collecting social data from a large number of people.

The selection of the research instruments was developed through the work of constructing the community profile. After a few months of reading the literature and conducting participant observations and interviews, it was possible to make a list of items that emerged as especially interesting or important in regard to parenting in the local context. This list of items and the study's theoretical perspective then guided the selection of research instruments. Since previously designed instruments that measured the concepts of interest were available, it was decided to use a selection of seven already existing assessment instruments. To enable a more detailed examination of children's social network, the battery of questionnaires was supplemented by the self-report “diary” referred to above. The seven research instruments selected are briefly described below. Note that the English language versions of all the survey instruments are included in Appendices II – IX.

**The Self-report Questionnaires**

Consistent with the bioecological model's emphasis on the phenomenological perspective, data on parenting and its outcomes were gathered by a series of three self-report questionnaires: the child versions of the Parental Acceptance Rejection Questionnaire (Child PARQ), the Personality Assessment Questionnaire (Child PAQ), and the mother's assessment the behavioral dispositions of the child (Mother PAQ). These self-reported questionnaires are based on Rohner's (1986, 2001) parental acceptance–rejection theory (PARTTheory), which is a theory of socialization that aims to explain antecedents, consequences, and correlates of parental acceptance and rejection. In support of the bioecological perspective, this theory stipulates that parental acceptance–rejection is shaped by the characteristics of the developing child, the parent, and the surrounding
social and physical environment (for further details, see Rohner, 1986 and Rohner, Khaleque, & Cournoyer, 2004). PARTheory predicts that parental rejection has consistent negative effects on the psychological adjustment and behavioral function of both children and adults worldwide. In PARTheory, parental acceptance–rejection refers to a bipolar dimension of parental warmth, with parental acceptance at the positive end of the continuum and parental rejection at the negative end. Parental rejection may take the form of physical or verbal hostility and aggression or of indifference and neglect. Paralleling this continuum of parental behaviors, children tend to feel loved and accepted in decreasing degree until they feel unloved and rejected. According to the PARTheory, rejected children are likely to manifest hostility, dependency, neuroses, delinquency and conduct problems, psychosomatic reactions, emotional problems, poor self-concept formation, academic problems, and disturbed body image (Rohner, 1986). Evidence from empirical studies in a large number of societies distributed throughout the major geographic regions and cultures of the world shows that members of every society and ethnic group so far studied tend to respond to perceived acceptance–rejection the way the theory predicts (see Rohner & Brittner, 2002; Rohner & Khaleque, 2002; Rohner, 1975; Rohner & Rohner, 1980). Two complementary sets of self-report questionnaires have been developed for the study of parental acceptance–rejection: the Parental Acceptance Rejection Questionnaire (PARQ) and the Personality Assessment Questionnaire (PAQ). The versions of the self-report questionnaires used in this study are described below.

**Child Parental Acceptance–Rejection Questionnaire – Child PARQ**

The child version of the Parental Acceptance–Rejection Questionnaire – Child PARQ (Rohner, 1986), is a 60-item self-report questionnaire in which children are asked to respond to their perception of the way their parents' behavior toward them in terms of warmth and affection (20 items), hostility and aggression (15 items), indifference and neglect (15 items), and undifferentiated rejection (10 items). Undifferentiated rejection refers to forms of rejection where children perceive their parents to be rejecting or unloving without necessarily seeing them to be hostile, aggressive, indifferent, or neglecting. The Total PARQ score, which is the sum of the 60 items on the four constituent scales, measures the overall parental acceptance or rejection that children perceive themselves to be experiencing.

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17 The Child PARQ may be used with any aged child or youth who continues to live with his/her main caregiver(s), perhaps down to age six in many instances (Rohner, 1989, p. 19; see also Rohner & Cournoyer, 1994)
All items are closed-ended. An important characteristic of the instrument is its phenomenological perspective – that is, the PARQ asks children to interpret caregiver behavior through their own personal and cultural lenses (Rohner & Cournoyer, 1994, p. 371). Evidence and results from research within more than 80 sociocultural groups distributed around the world lend strong support to the presumption of the validity of the PARQ as a cross-cultural measure of parental–acceptance rejection (Rohner & Cournoyer, 1994). Specifically, the research shows that children everywhere, regardless of racial, language, sociocultural, gender, or other such differences, tend to respond in the same way when they experience themselves to be rejected by their parents. In technical terms, the internal consistency of the scales is good. It ranges from .72 to .90 (see e.g. Rohner, 1989 and Rohner & Cournoyer, 1994). Each of the four PARQ scales and the Total PARQ are briefly described below18.

**Parental warmth and affection.** The parent–child relationship is characterized by warmth and affection insofar as parents give love without qualification. Warmth and affection may be manifested by hugs, kisses, caresses, and the like. Routine caretaking and amusing the child as part of a schedule or as a matter of felt duty or responsibility do not automatically indicate emotional warmth and affection.

**Parental hostility and aggression.** Parental hostility is an internal or emotional reaction of anger, enmity, or resentment, whereas aggression is any overt action that is intended to physically or verbally hurt the child. Parents may express their hostility/aggression toward children either verbally or physically. For example, mothers may curse their children or say thoughtless, unkind, or cruel things to them, or mothers may beat their children, burn them, cut them, or aggress against them in other physically harmful ways.

**Parental indifference and neglect.** Neglecting (or indifferent) parents show a restricted concern for their children’s welfare or development. They may be cold, unsympathetic, distant, or unconcerned about their children. Such parents tend to be inaccessible both physically and/or emotionally, and unresponsive to their children.

**Parental undifferentiated rejection.** As indicated earlier, this scale refers to conditions where parents are perceived as withdrawing love from the child (i.e., they reject the child), but where such rejection does not clearly reflect either aggression/hostility, or neglect/indifference per se.

**Total PARQ score.** The Total PARQ score is a summary measure of the overall parental acceptance or rejection that children perceive themselves to be experiencing.

**Child Personality Assessment Questionnaire – Child PAQ**

The child version of the *Personality Assessment Questionnaire – Child PAQ* (Rohner, 1989) is a cross-culturally tested and validated self-report questionnaire in which children and adolescents are asked to reflect on their own personality and behavioral dispositions. There are a total of 42 (closed-ended) items on the Child PAQ, six for each of the following seven scales: (a) hostility/aggression, (b) dependency, (c) self-esteem, (d) self-adequacy, (e) emotional responsiveness, (f) emotional stability, and (g) worldview. The sum of the scores on the seven scales forms a composite test score (Total PAQ) indicating the overall personality and behavioral dispositions that children perceive themselves to be experiencing. The internal consistency of the scales ranges from .46 to .74 (see Rohner, 1989). Each of the seven personality dispositions measured on the Child PAQ is likely to appear to a significantly greater degree among children who perceive them to be rejected than children who perceive them to be accepted. These outcomes of perceived rejection versus acceptance are expected to appear the world over, regardless of variations in culture, language, race, geographic region, or other limiting condition (Rohner & Chaki-Sircar, 1988, p. 129).

**Mother Personality Assessment Questionnaire – Mother PAQ**

The parental version of the *Personality Assessment Questionnaire – Mother PAQ* (Rohner, 1989) is a cross-culturally tested and validated self-report questionnaire in which mothers (or other caregivers) are asked to reflect on their child’s personality and behavioral dispositions. There are a total of 42 (closed-ended) items on the Mother PAQ, six for each of the following seven scales: (a) hostility/aggression; (b) dependency; (c) self-esteem; (d) emotional responsiveness; (e) emotional stability; (f) self-adequacy; and (g) worldview. The sum of the scores on the seven scales forms a composite test score (Total PAQ) indicating the overall personality and behavioral dispositions that mothers perceive their children to be experiencing. The internal consistency of the scales ranges from .46 to .74 (see Rohner, 1989). Each of the seven personality dispositions measured on the Mother PAQ is likely to appear to a significantly greater degree among children who perceive them to be rejected than children who perceive them to be accepted. These outcomes of perceived rejection versus acceptance are expected to appear the world over, regardless of variations in culture, language, race, geographic region, or other limiting condition (Rohner & Chaki-Sircar, 1988, p. 129).

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19 The Child PAQ is designed to be used with children from about 7 to 12 years of age. Adolescents normally use the adult version of the Personality Assessment Questionnaire (Adult PAQ); however, because the vocabulary in the child version is simplified and thereby probably easier to grasp for young persons with presumably little schooling, it was considered more appropriate for use among the adolescents included in the sample. This decision was reached after consultation with researchers at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro – UFRJ.
self-adequacy; (e) emotional responsiveness; (f) emotional stability; and (g) worldview. The sum of the scores of the seven scales forms a composite test score (Total PAQ), indicating the overall personality and behavioral dispositions that mothers reflect in their feelings about the child. The internal consistency of the scales ranges from .73 to .85 (see Rohner, 1989). Each of the seven personality dispositions measured on the PAQ and the Total PAQ are described below. Note that even if the continuum-like quality of the behavioral and personality dispositions is not emphasized in the following definitions, it is important to keep in mind that individuals are not, for example, either dependent or independent; rather, all persons are dependent to a certain extent or in varying degrees (Rohner, 1989).

**Hostility** is an internal emotional reaction of anger, enmity, or resentment directed toward another person or situation or toward oneself; aggression, on the other hand, is any act that intends to hurt physically or psychologically someone (including oneself) or something. Active aggression may be manifested verbally or physically, such as cursing someone or hitting them, respectively. Passive aggression is a less direct expression of aggression manifested as pouting, sulking, passive obstructionism, bitterness, vindictiveness, or irritability. Aggression is here distinguished conceptually from assertiveness. Assertiveness refers to individuals’ attempt to thrust themselves or their ideas forward boldly or with confidence, or to place themselves in physical, verbal, social, or some other position of equality and/or priority over others. Unlike aggression, however, assertiveness does not imply an intention of “hurting” someone or something.

**Dependence** is the emotional reliance of one person on another for comfort, approval, guidance, support, and reassurance. Independence is the essential freedom from such emotional reliance, or at least the freedom from having to make these bids very often. The goal of dependency behavior among children is usually the elicitation of warm, affectionate attention from an adult. Indicators of dependency include clinging to the

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20 The validity of parents’ reports about the personality dispositions assessed on the Mother PAQ, especially dispositions such as self-esteem, self-adequacy, and worldview, has later proven to be questionable. Parents often appear to have trouble or even an inability to differentiate among the items on the Mother PAQ. In effect, parent reports often seem to reflect an overall appraisal of children as a “good” child or a “bad” child (R.P. Rohner, personal communication, July 5, 2005).


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parent, attention seeking, becoming anxious, insecure, and unhappy when they are separated from their parents, and so forth.

Self-esteem is a global, emotional evaluation of oneself in terms of worth. Positive feelings of self-esteem imply that individuals like or approve of themselves, accept themselves, are comfortable with themselves, are rarely disappointed with themselves, and perceive themselves to be persons of worth and worthy of respect.

Self-adequacy is an overall self-evaluation of one’s competence to perform daily tasks adequately, to cope satisfactorily with daily problems, and to satisfy one’s own needs. Positive feelings of self-adequacy imply that individuals view themselves as competent, able to deal satisfactorily with daily problems, and successful or capable of success in the things they set out to do.

Emotional responsiveness refers to the individual’s ability to express emotions freely and openly. Emotional responsiveness is revealed by the spontaneity and ease with which individuals are able to respond emotionally to other persons. Emotionally responsive people generally have little difficulty forming warm and lasting attachments, and their attachments are not troubled by emotional constrictions or defensiveness. They are able to show spontaneous affection toward their friends and family, and they are able to express easily their sympathy and other feelings on appropriate occasions. The interpersonal relations of emotionally responsive people are often close and personal.

Emotional stability refers to the individual’s conception or steadiness of mood and the ability to withstand minor setbacks, failures, difficulties, or other stresses without becoming overly emotionally upset. Emotionally stable people are able to maintain their composure under minor stress. They are not easily or quickly excited or angered, and they are fairly constant in their basic mood.

Worldview is a person’s often unverbalized global or overall evaluation of life and the universe as being basically a good, secure, friendly, happy, unthreatening place (positive worldview) or as being a bad, insecure, threatening, unpleasant, hostile, or uncertain place (negative worldview). Worldview does not refer to an individual’s empirically derived knowledge of the economic, political, social, or natural environment.

Total PAQ is an overall assessment of the (partial) “mental health” status of respondents. Parental rejection tends to impair healthy emotional and behavioral functioning. That is, rejection affects one's “mental health.” Thus individuals who achieve high score on the PAQ may be regarded as having “poorer” mental health status than persons who achieve low scores.
Chapter 4

**Background Data Schedule**

The *Background Data Schedule* (Rohner, 1986) provides social and situational data on each family in the sample. The Schedule elicits information such as the age and gender of all household members, their geographical origins, religious preferences, educational attainment, occupation and employment status, marital status, family stresses experienced and recreational preferences. The Background Data Schedule contains three main sections, one to be completed about the child participating in the study (five items), one to be completed by or about the child's mother or main female caregiver (sixteen items), and one to be completed by or about the child's father (or whoever is the most significant adult male in the child's life, if any) (ten items). The questionnaire includes both closed- and open-ended questions.

**Neighborhood and Community Assessment Questionnaire**

The Neighborhood and Community Assessment Questionnaire (Garbarino & Sherman, 1980) is an instrument designed to assess the neighborhood and community as sources of both stress and support for parents. There are a total of 63 questions (closed- and open-ended) covering 13 domains on the Neighborhood and Community Assessment Questionnaire. More specifically, it asks parents about the neighborhood, the church, childcare arrangements, their own employment and schooling, recreational preferences, finances, health, community services, childrearing, television, parenting information, the future, and oneself as parent. For each domain, the questionnaire starts with open-ended questions and concludes with a scaled evaluation which reflects the person's phenomenological orientation to life-space.

**Family Social Networks Interview**

The Family Social Networks Interview (Garbarino & Sherman, 1980) is an instrument developed to assess family members’ relations with relatives, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and other acquaintances who interact with a family member in regard to an emotional or material issue. There are a total of 21 items (with both closed- and open-ended questions) on the Family Social Network Interview. More precisely, it asks parents about their social networks and social participation, the parents’ relationship with these network members, the parents’ use of community services, the family’s history of residence, and a separate inventory about parents’ insight into their child's social networks.
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**Social Networks of Youth Questionnaire**

The Social Networks of Youth Questionnaire (Blyth, Garbarino, Thiel, & Crouter, 1977) is an instrument developed to assess the social networks of children and adolescents as a way of assessing the ecology of youth. There are a total of 19 questions, both closed- and open-ended, on the Social Network of Youth Questionnaire. More precisely, it asks the child about his or her friends (including some background data such as age, school attendance, place of residence, meeting points, etc), other people whom the child feels know him or her well, persons with whom the child spends time, people who know the child well, and the ten people whom the child thinks know him/her best.

**Self-report Diary**

The Self-report Diary is specifically devised for this study. The instrument is designed to allow children to make day-by-day notes about their social networks, including relationships and meeting points. The Self-report Diary covers 14 days in the child's life.

**Selection of a Research Site**

The research site selected for the main data collection was a shantytown named Buriti Congonhas, located on a hillside in the midst of the northern suburbs of Rio de Janeiro. It is a medium-sized shantytown or favela\(^{23}\) encompassing different types and standards of housing, and there are a number of inadequacies in its basic infrastructure. Like many other shantytowns in the region, Buriti Congonhas was settled through a gradual invasion; it has a rather heterogeneous low-income population consisting of people from the city and state of Rio de Janeiro as well as migrants from the interior and northeastern Brazil and their descendents. Although Rio de Janeiro, with its large number of shantytowns spread across the municipality, was a natural choice for the purposes of this study, it was not so evident which shantytown could serve as an appropriate site for researching the conditions for parenting. Although most shantytowns appear to look much the same from the outside, the large number of illegal settings spread over a vast geographical area implies variety. For example, the size, infrastructure, demographic patterns, and socio-economic levels can vary considerably from one shantytown to another. Moreover, access to the shantytowns is

\(^{23}\) According to a municipal classification of the favelas. For further details see IPLANRIO, 1993.
never a given. Besides the formal requirement that non-Brazilian citizens must obtain the permission of national and local authorities before conducting research in a shantytown, the consent of the local community leaders should preferably be obtained, and last but not least the informants themselves must be persuaded. An additional and even more complex challenge for gaining access to the shantytowns is the local drug dealing which in Rio de Janeiro is controlled by a few large cartels. In many shantytowns the local drug dealers are the most important gatekeepers. Although the degree of interest in control varies, the drug dealers are often suspicious of strangers and can make it very difficult for an outsider to carry out a systematic data collection.

The principal motive behind the decision to select Buriti Congonhas as research site for the study was the degree of access it provided. Through a collaboration agreement with a local university, where a senior researcher had influential contacts with the Residents’ Association in Buriti Congonhas, the study gained the support and co-operation of the local community leader. Moreover, the collaboration with a Brazilian university implied that the permission of the appropriate authorities was not required for the research. The local university also provided the study with qualified field supervision from a senior researcher knowledgeable about the setting in question, and through the co-operation with Brazilian academics the study obtained information on local and national research. Although the inclusion of other shantytowns would have increased the external validity of the study, it would have been difficult, within the time and funding constraints, to seek access to more than one squatter settlement.

Sample

The size of the sample drawn for the main data collection included almost 75% of all families with children, 12–14 years of age, that were living in Buriti Congonhas at the time of the study. The sample yielded a total of 144 persons representing 72 families that were distributed within different geographic sections in the shantytown, and where there was a variety of places of origin, family structures, schooling, and religious preferences. In each family one child (aged 12 to 14 years of age) and one adult defined as the “main caregiver” were interviewed. The children in the sample were

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24 An exchange program comprising research, teaching and field education training, between the Department of Social Work, Stockholm University and the School of Social Work, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, based on a cooperation agreement between Stockholm University, Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm, and Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, signed on July 19 1991.
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evenly divided by gender into two groups: 36 boys and 36 girls. Also, the distribution among the three age groups of children represented in the sample was quite closely balanced. Most frequent were children 12 years of age \( (n = 26) \), followed by children aged 13 \( (n = 25) \), and children aged 14 \( (n = 21) \). The great majority of the main caregivers interviewed were women \( (n = 68) \). Only four men were included in the sample. Not included in the sample were households in which the caregivers could not be interviewed, either because of their long and erratic working hours \( (n = 14) \) or because they refused to participate as “no payment was to be received” \( (n = 1) \), and households in which the child could not be interviewed, either because of mental or physical handicap \( (n = 10) \) or the child was working in the streets and thus not available in the home \( (n = 1) \). Observations from personal visits to nearly all households in the target population did not reveal any significant differences between the two groups with respect to family structure, housing standard, amenities at home, or children’s school attainment – though it never became clear whether all children with mental or physical handicaps attended school.

The decision to limit the sample to children in the age bracket 12–14 years and their main caregivers was based on findings from participant observations and interviews with residents in the shantytown. These findings indicated that adults often appear to consider the first years of adolescence as a critical developmental period for children in the neighborhood. More specifically, several informants suggested that children in this age span “make the choice of who they are going to be.” According to the informants, some adolescents continue with their studies and work toward long-range career goals (covering everything from mechanics to medicine), whereas others drop out of school and either try to find a job or remain unemployed, or they may become pregnant or start to experiment with drugs and/or become involved in the local petty drug dealing operation. These opinions were not confirmed in the study. International research on child development, however, supports the idea that the first years of adolescence are a crucial period in many young peoples’ lives (see e.g. Hessle, Ioka, & Yamano, 1996).

Moreover, a sub-sample was taken of 20 children who were asked to make day-by-day notes about their social networks in the self-reported “diary” specifically devised for the study. The sub-sample included the first 10 boys and 10 girls interviewed. However, only half of them (8 girls and 2 boys) completed this task. The main reason given for not making day-by-day notes was forgetfulness.

The sample children’s main caregivers were determined by asking each child to indicate the female and male responsible for him/her. As can be
seen from Table 4.2, all the children in the sample \((n = 72)\) stated that they had access to a female caregiver, and most of them \((n = 61; \text{ i.e. } 85\%)\) also indicated the presence of a significant male caregiver. The majority of the caregivers indicated \((n = 103, \text{ i.e. } 77\%)\) were the sample children’s biological parents. However, nearly one forth of the carers \((n = 30; \text{ i.e. } 23\%)\), were women and men substituting in the function of mothers or fathers.

### Table 4.2. Characteristics of the sample children’s major caregivers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of parents</th>
<th>Biological parents</th>
<th>Stepparents</th>
<th>Grandparents</th>
<th>Other relatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The female substituting caregivers were grandmothers \((n = 5)\) and maternal aunts \((n = 2)\). These women were parenting the child because the biological mother had “disappeared” \((n = 2)\) or was deceased \((n = 1)\), or had the major responsibility for the care of the child because of the biological mother’s long and erratic working hours \((n = 4)\). According to the information given, the mothers of the latter all lived in the neighborhood and had daily, or almost daily, contact with their offspring.

The males indicated as substituting in the function of fathers were stepfathers \((n = 19)\), maternal uncles \((n = 3)\), and in one case the child’s adult brother \((n = 1)\). These men were parenting children whose biological fathers had no or only occasional contact with the child \((n = 10)\), had “disappeared” \((n = 7)\), or were deceased \((n = 6)\). Note that a couple of children reported that they had an ongoing contact with a biological father living elsewhere, but chose to indicate their stepfathers as the male responsible for them. For the sake of brevity, throughout the report the female and males indicated as the sample children’s main caregivers are referred to as “parents”, although not all were biologically related to the children they cared for.

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25 \(n\) refers to the number of cases in the sample.

26 Various studies have observed that the practice of fostering out a child is widespread among lower-income groups in Brazil – a phenomenon that is called *child circulation*, or in Portuguese *crianças de circulação* (Fonseca, 1986, 1994; Hecht, 1998; Scheper-Hughes, 1992). According to Hecht, it is quite common for poor children to grow up under a maternal figure other than the biological mother.
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Sampling Procedure

The sample was selected by means of a quota-sampling method employed in a multi-stage strategy, with the random creation of clusters from which the informants were drawn through a snowball-sampling technique. This sampling procedure was devised for the shantytown environment which lacks adequate demographic data, registration lists, school rolls, phone directories, formal street addresses, and even the possibility to make a census without attracting suspicion from the local drug dealers, which might have jeopardized the whole study. Although quota-sampling is not an approach in which each individual is equally likely to be chosen, by selecting informants who represent a range of variables in the population this form of non-probability sampling approximates representative sampling without using random selection (see e.g. Bernard, 1988, 1994). Naturally, a sampling method based on the principles of probability theory would have increased the possibility to generalize beyond the sample population, but in view of the actual circumstances, quota sampling seemed to be an appropriate alternative. First and foremost, the research design called for a sampling strategy that took ensured that certain characteristics assumed to influence the individual's responses to the study would be adequately represented in the final sample. Secondly, there was no sampling frame available from which a probability-based sample could be drawn. The sampling design devised for the study was employed in a three-stage process.

In the first stage, the intended sample size was broken down into quota-groups characterized by the children's gender, age, and place of residence in the shantytown. In the absence of data defining the characteristics of the sample population, these categories at least ensured that the children included in the final sample would be evenly divided by gender into two groups, and also evenly distributed, insofar as possible, among the various age groups represented and across the different ecological environments of the shantytown. Any more detailed specification would have made it difficult to find people who matched all the desired characteristics.

In the second step, clusters from which the sample was to be taken were randomly created by means of a map obtained from the Municipality's Housing Secretariat (Secretaria Municipal de Habitação/IPLANRIO, Map no. PI-UR-04). The map, drawn in 1996, had to be verified and updated before it proved useful for creating clusters. Since it was suspected that the boundaries marked on the map did not necessarily coincide with the community's boundaries, it was important to let informants define the community they referred to as Buriti Congonhas. In a series of extensive walks together with local leaders and other knowledgeable residents in the shantytown, new streets and reestablished boundaries were filled in on the map. As dwelling units were of secondary interest to the sampling design
(and their mapping was regarded as too time-consuming a task), no attempt was made to bring up to date the number of houses and shacks in the shantytown. Considering the fact that the distribution of the population in the shantytown was unknown, the revised version of the map was then randomly divided into nine clusters of different sizes. By drawing the same number of informants (12 children evenly divided by gender and age) from each of these made-up clusters, this technique maximized the chance for a sample to be drawn that had probability proportionate to size (cf. Bernard, 1988, p. 107). Although the best estimates of a parameter are obtained in samples taken from homogenous clusters, by creating a series of random chunks of different sizes potential sampling errors introduced by not knowing the population density are distributed, which lowers the possible number of errors (Bernard, 1988). The creation of clusters was made by placing 40 numbered dots, more or less equidistant from one another, around the edge of the map. A pair of numbers was randomly selected and a line drawn between them. The numbers were replaced, and the process repeated until 20 lines had been drawn across the map. After excluding a few of the chunks where no dwelling units were indicated on the map, there remained nine uneven spaces created by the lines.

In the third and last stage of the sampling process, the final sample was drawn by means of the so called snowball-sampling technique. As quota-sampling relies on the interviewer’s choice of informants as well as the availability of persons who are to be interviewed, the representativeness of a sample selected by this method is seriously compromised (see e.g. Bernard, 1988 and Hall & Hall, 1996). To avoid the selection of biased samples in filling the quotas, in each cluster the inhabitants were asked to indicate potential informants and these were asked in turn to refer the interviewers to other persons matching the desired characteristics. The first persons asked in each of the clusters were chosen with the help of the map. All dwelling units specified were numbered, and from each cluster one main and one alternate number was drawn at random. If no one was at home in the dwelling unit chosen by the first number, the alternate one was used. Once a dwelling with people at home had been located, whoever came to the door was asked to name persons who could be likely candidates for the study. Starting with these names of potential contacts, the interviewers were thereafter referred on to others.

The quotas, characterized by the children’s gender, age, and place of residence, required that at least six children should be drawn from each of the nine clusters, representing a total of 54 sample families. Given the need for a fairly large sample to allow statistical analysis, it was decided to double the sample size to comprise a total of 108 children and their main caregivers. However, when it was time to conduct the interviews, it became evident that a sample of that size would include more or less the whole
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target group. Because of its impracticability, the decision regarding sample size was again reviewed, whereafter it was decided that the quotas should include the largest number of families possible. By the time the round of interviews was being concluded, the final sample included 72 of the total of 98 families that had children in the age bracket 12–14 years and that had been identified during the course of the research.

Anchoring the Study

One of the first stages in the research process was to anchor the study in the shantytown as well as within the Brazilian academia. Although the study, through contacts at a local university, had already gained a certain amount of support and co-operation from the leaders of the Residents’ Association in Buriti Congonhas, it was still necessary to obtain formal approval. To avoid misunderstanding about what to expect from the study, a research proposal was presented to persons actively involved in the Residents’ Association. As in many other shantytowns, throughout the last decades several feasibility studies on proposals for implementing different kinds of public (work) programs, as well as some philanthropic actions, have been carried out in Buriti Congonhas. Accordingly, it was essential that the study be properly set up from the beginning so that at least the people involved in the Residents’ Association would be clear about what to expect. Besides presenting the overall aim of the study and some general ideas on how to conduct the research in co-operation with the local community, it was made clear that no material or financial benefits were involved. The expected outcome was nothing other than systematic knowledge. Before approving the research proposal, the Residents’ Association’s president of the time, aware of the importance of obtaining data on the local community, stipulated that the neighborhood, represented by the Residents’ Association, must be given a report on the results from the study.

Simultaneously, negotiations regarding the project were being conducted with the School of Social Work at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (Escola de Serviço Social, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro – UFRJ). As result of this discussion, the study became an integrated part of an interdisciplinary research and educational project called Project Buriti Congonhas (Projeto Buriti Congonhas), which has a long-standing program on extending its research activities beyond the academia and into the present shantytown. This co-operative scheme of many years’ standing between the shantytown and the federal university was initiated in 1986 when Escola de Serviço Social – UFRJ was asked by the Residents’ Association in Buriti Congonhas to help them find ways to better understand and deal with their situation (see, e.g. Medeiros, Kejerfors, Géa, Grave, & Pinto, 1999; and Reis,
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1995). Participation in Project Buriti Congonhas led to the development of a number of research contacts both within the Brazilian academia and in the field, which contributed to further anchoring the study within the Brazilian society. As the study was carried out over quite a long period of time, maintaining good relationships with the people of the shantytown was essential for accomplishing the research.

Establishing and Maintaining Relations

Through participation in different activities organized by the local Residents’ Association and/or Projeto Buriti Congonhas, the study was offered a point of entry into the shantytown. Even if the study had gained formal access to the research site, it was still necessary to find a way to win the support and cooperation of the local residents. As in many other shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro, there are hardly any natural meeting points in Buriti Congonhas. As violence connected to the local petty drug dealing is an almost daily occurrence in the shantytown, few residents hang out in the streets and it is rare to see non-residents in the neighborhood. Accordingly, the classic approach to study urban localities by means of “tramping the streets, observing people and listen to what is said” (see e.g. Burgess, 1986, 1995; and Schutt, 1996) was not considered a feasible alternative for establishing rapport with people in the shantytown. The entry gambit that worked was to rely on the then president of the Residents’ Association for introductions. Through his efforts the university researcher met with local people, participated in various activities taking place in the community, and was by such means able to win acceptance fairly quickly. Initially, access was given only to official community activities, for example meetings of the Residents’ Association, courses, and football games. Acceptance was gained fairly rapidly, however. After only a few weeks, the researcher had reached the point where he was invited to participate in most of the usual activities in the shantytown, for instance accompanying parents who were leaving their children at school, visiting people in their homes, and participating in recreational activities and family celebrations.

Recruitment and Training of Local Research Assistants

In accordance with the study’s overarching research strategy, several youths from the shantytown were recruited and trained to participate in conducting the research. It was evident from the start that some kind of assistance would be needed for the planning and implementation of the
field research. Although the study had been approved by the local Residents’ Association, access to the potential interviewees or to the local culture was not a given. For fear of becoming involved in something that could attract the attention of the local drug dealers, not all residents in the shantytown were eager to be interviewed. Similarly, it was obvious that the research instruments selected had to be adapted for use with the sample population, and it was also considered necessary to interpret the outcome, insofar as possible, within the particular socio-cultural context of the shantytown. Moreover, it was desirable to find methods for conducting the study that could contribute to the local development of the shantytown. Instead of the common method of involving university students in research projects carried out in the shantytowns (Kejerfors, 1996a; Marques, 1986; Medeiros et al., 1999), it was decided to attempt to recruit and train local volunteers to participate as far as was feasible in the research process. Although it was apparent that this kind of approach could be quite time-consuming, the inclusion of residents provided a way to come into contact with the local culture; at the same time it guaranteed that the investments made in training, at least at a theoretical level, would benefit the community. However, through the participant observations and intensive interviews conducted in the shantytown, it was evident that volunteers would not be easy to come by. Most people had to struggle quite hard for their family’s survival and had little or no spare time for participating in a study such as this, which could offer no other payment than the experience itself. Nevertheless, young community members without children of their own were identified as feasible persons for this assignment. Besides being knowledgeable about the shantytown, in general the youths appeared to have more spare time and more years of schooling than did many of the adult residents. Furthermore, as the youths usually seemed to have few, if any, financial responsibilities for the household and many of them were still in school, there was a chance that they would accept the learning experience as the primarily payment for their efforts.

The recruitment of young community members was made through the Residents’ Association. After being informed about the nature and conditions of the assignment, the local leaders handpicked three young persons whom they considered appropriate for the undertaking – two boys in their late teens and a young woman. All three were living with their families in the shantytown, all had prior work experience from the Residents’ Association, and each had schooling appropriate to their age group. At the time of the study, the teenage boys were still in secondary school, whereas the young woman, having completed her second level of education some years earlier, was employed at the community’s public day-nursery. Besides these three specially selected persons, several other young community members expressed to the Residents’ Association an interest in
participating in the study. Through the spread of rumors within the shantytown, they had heard about the recruitment of youths and were eager to participate in the research. Because it was in the interest of the study to look for any possibility to gain support from the local inhabitants, no self-recruited candidate was turned away. In all, some 20 youths attended the introductory meetings where the overall aim of the research and the plans for its implementation were explained. As the novelty wore off, and it became clear to everyone that the only payment would be the experience itself, most of the youths lost interest and dropped out one after the other. Only those youths who had been chosen for the assignment by the local leaders remained interested.

The training of the three local youth volunteers continued throughout the whole research process. Periods of formal training alternated with practical exercises and site visits. The formal training began with a series of seminars, which took its starting point in the ambiguous concept of environment, and then evolved into a discussion of the shantytown environment where people live out their daily lives. In this manner the youth volunteers had the possibility to explore and reflect on different aspects of their own environments at the same time as they became familiar with the basic ideas of the study’s theoretical framework, which was based on Bronfenbrenner’s (1979a) ecological model of human development. The seminars also provided valuable data about the local culture, which contributed to the progress of the study. After about three months the focus of the theoretical seminars gradually shifted and began to centre on methodological considerations concerning the planning and implementation of a study in the particular context of the shantytown. As the focus changed, the seminars began to include practical exercises linked to the development of the research instruments and their implementation. The youth volunteers participated in the translation and cultural adaptation of the pre-test questionnaires, in their application, coding and analysis, and in the development of the final research instrument. For penetrating more deeply into the theory and methods, the seminars and practical exercises were alternated with site visits. Throughout the course of the research, the youths made a number of visits to research institutes, libraries, university departments, and projects in other shantytowns.

Besides acquainting the volunteers with a range of theories and research methods, these site visits meant first and foremost that the youths had the opportunity to discuss their own empirically acquired knowledge with university researchers and other knowledgeable persons. The experiences gained from these meetings proved to be very useful for the youths’ comprehension of the research process, and thus contributed to their efforts to integrate the study into the local culture of the shantytown. Moreover, with respect to local development, it is worth noting that the
youths’ participation in the research process stimulated them to be supportive of the Residents’ Association.

Translation and Development of the Research Instruments

Brazilian-Portuguese language versions of six of the seven research instruments used in the study were developed with the help of the young volunteers from the shantytown, supplemented by the assistance of researchers and students at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ). One of the questionnaires, the Child PARQ, was already available in a Brazilian-Portuguese language version (Marques & Fahlberg, 1997). Studies using the questionnaire in Brazil have shown the instrument to be appropriate for use with children, aged 12 to 17 years, from low-income families (Bastos, Gomes, Fernandes, Hessle, & Kejerfors, 1996; Kejerfors, 1996a, 1996b; Marques & Fahlberg, 1997).

A major problem in the development and administration of research instruments for use in the third world is the difficulty of ensuring linguistic equivalence (Bulmer & Warwick, 1983). The issue is most acute in translating a question from one language to another. The meaning of words is not always identical across cultures. “Married” in English, “casado” in Brazilian-Portuguese, for example, has different meanings depending on the context in which it is used. Thus, securing linguistic equivalence is by no means merely an operational or technical problem of obtaining an exact translation. Literal translations may overlook the different meanings that words have in different cultures.

In the present study, the primary aim in translating the research instruments from English into Brazilian-Portuguese was to secure, as far as possible, conceptual equivalence. Since linguistic equivalence requires a proper understanding of the socio-cultural context in which the research is to be carried out, the youth volunteers had a crucial role to play in the translation process. Besides being native speakers of Brazilian-Portuguese, the youths had acquired through their secondary school some basic knowledge of the English language.

However, the main reason for involving the youths in the process of developing the research instruments was that they were knowledgeable

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27 In Portuguese, “casado” literally means “married”, in Brazilian-Portuguese the meaning of the word also includes “consensual union”, and in the context of the shantytowns it might even mean “any adult persons living together” (e.g. adult children living with their parents).
about the daily language used by the people of the shantytown and had the necessary cultural competence. Because of the generally low educational level of people living in the shantytown in combination with assumed dialectal/rural influences, there was reason to believe that the everyday language spoken by the sample population would differ somewhat from the formal Brazilian-Portuguese spoken by the more affluent classes in Rio de Janeiro.

Most of the translation and development of the research instruments took place on location in the shantytown. This facilitated the presence of the three youths, all of whom participated in the translation process in their spare-time. The English-language versions of the questionnaires were first translated, word-by-word, into Brazilian-Portuguese. Thereafter, the conceptual meanings of each of the questions were discussed. Since the youth's knowledge of English was rather modest, dictionaries, role plays, and pantomimes were frequently used for identifying certain words and expressions. Moreover, the youths were instructed to try to find suitable words and expressions in the everyday language spoken in the shantytown that would approximate as closely as possible the meaning of the more formal words. On a few occasions, doubts about the appropriateness of a word or phrase were immediately "tested" on whichever local inhabitants happened to be in the vicinity.

On the advice of the youths, several of the items in the questionnaires were changed to better fit the local context of the shantytown under study. More precisely, in the Background Data Schedule (Rohner, 1986) some questions on ethnicity were altered to comprise geographical origin and migration, and the questions on schooling were adapted to fit the Brazilian educational system. Similarly, in the Neighborhood and Community Assessment Questionnaire (Garbarino & Sherman, 1980), the nine-point scaled evaluation for each of the 13 domains was replaced by a simpler three-point scale, and the questions on family organization, programs, and services were adapted to fit local conditions.

Once the translation and cultural adaptation of the questionnaires was completed, a university student, who was both a native speaker of Brazilian-Portuguese and fluent in English, “back-translated” (Brislin, 1970, 1976; see also Rohner & Chaki-Sircar, 1987, 1988) the questionnaires into English. The original English language versions were compared word for word with the back-translated versions, and semantic discrepancies were noted. The translation/back-translation process was repeated until a Brazilian-Portuguese language version that closely matched the original English language version was created.

Thereafter, some researchers in social work and social ecology at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro – UFRJ reviewed the Brazilian-Portuguese language version of the questionnaires. In accordance with their
recommendations, a few expressions were changed to facilitate comparing the results with the outcome of other studies and a few questions on recreation were added to the Neighborhood and Community Assessment Questionnaire.

Lastly, with help of the youth volunteers and with the collaboration of the Municipal Federation of the Residents’ Association in Rio de Janeiro (FAF-RIO), the Brazilian-Portuguese language version of the questionnaires was tested and adjusted. The test was carried out on a small but reasonably stratified sample of ten adolescents and their parents in Muzema, a shantytown similar in size and structure to the target one. The administration of and results from the test interviews were analyzed and discussed, after which a few words and expressions were substituted with synonyms, some ambiguous questions were simplified and/or divided into separate questions, and the structure of the questionnaires was adapted to make the interviewers’ job easier.

**The Main Data Collection Procedure**

The primary data were collected by means of questionnaires administrated in face-to-face interviews in the informants’ home. The decision to use in-person interviews for the main data collection was guided by its appropriateness to the sample population. Several studies using questionnaires among non-literate populations or those with low educational levels have shown face-to-face interviews to be the most appropriate alternative for data collection (Kejerfors, 1996a, Marques, 1986 and Perlman, 1976; see also Frankfort-Nachmiias & Nachmiias, 1996 and Rohner, 1989).

The data collection procedure spans three months, all days of the week, and from early morning until late afternoon. The field researcher and one of the trained assistants from the shantytown, the young woman, carried out the in-person interviews in pair. Upon arrival at the defined interview persons’ residence, the interviewers stated their purpose briefly. Many, but not all, residents were already aware of the study so little explanation was needed. In each household one child, aged 12 to 14 years, and his or her main caregiver were interviewed individually. In households with more than one child in the appropriate age bracket, the flip of a coin determined which one was interviewed. As the interviewers worked in pair, the child and the adult interviews were usually conducted simultaneously. For both children and parents, the interview questions were read out loud, and the informants’ verbal answers were recorded in writing on the questionnaires. Depending on the informants, the parent interviews typically took one and a half to two hours to administer; occasionally, longer. The child interviews usually
required 45 minutes to one hour to complete. The interviewers were very well received and the interviewing went even better than hoped. The great majority of the sample were judged to be receptive and enthusiastic, either from the very start or after some initial reluctance. Two persons, however, remained suspicious and/or reluctant throughout the whole interview. The persons in the sample seemed to have understood all the questions and were judged to have responded “openly and honestly to all of the questions.” Some of the informants actually provided the interviewers with much more information than was asked for, and a few informants revealed “secrets” about illegal actions that could have put them and/or their families in jeopardy.

Although the interviews went better than hoped, the researchers had to overcome some obstacles linked to the context in which the research took place. Because the way houses and shacks are built in the shantytown, it was not always easy to locate the potential informants indicated. In some of the sample families, it was difficult to schedule the parent interview (mainly because of the parents’ erratic and long working hours). Furthermore, the threat of violence or potential violence linked to the local petty drug dealing complicated the carrying out of the research. For example, it was not possible to carry out the interviews in the evening when some working parents’ were at home. And on a few occasions, shootings in the streets made it impossible to carry out the research activities as planned. Moreover, it was not uncommon to find an indicated dwelling closed up because the residents were at work. In most cases, however, the informants were at home and were interviewed on the second or third visit.

**Data Preparation, Coding, and Analyses**

The data collected through the questionnaires required different methods of preparation prior to coding and analysis. The three self-report questionnaires (Child PARQ, Child PAQ and Mother PAQ) were scored on their respective scoring sheets (see Rohner, 1989, for details about the scoring procedures for each of the three questionnaires). On the other four questionnaires (Background Data Schedule; Social Networks of Youth; Family Social Networks Interview, and Neighborhood and Community Assessment), the open-ended questions were categorized inductively according to a coding scheme based on the responses of the persons in the sample (cf. Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996). In the coding scheme, the level of detail in the categories depended on their appropriateness to the research question posed. As the remaining questions were all closed-ended, and the responses thus had been directly classified into categories, no further data preparation was needed. Since the data were to be used for
computer applications, each questionnaire item was then keyed in as a numeric code in a database program, dBaseIII, usable for various statistical analysis packages. The analysis was preceded, however, by the systematic editing of the keyed in data to check for errors and omissions. The statistical analyses were executed by means of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). A range of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques was used to explore the data, including simple frequency counts, cross-tabulations, comparisons of means, and correlations.

**Interpretation of Preliminary Results**

Interpretation of the results from the first descriptive data analyses was undertaken in close dialogue with individuals and concerned groups in the shantytown. The long time spent gathering data and our involvement in community activities throughout the course of the research made it possible for us to probe and clarify many of our interpretations, questions, and observations directly with the local people. Thus, it was only natural to feed back the preliminary results from the in-person interviews to all concerned groups and individuals.

The interpretation process went through several feedback circuits involving different groups of people. In a first stage, numeric summaries of the basic descriptive data, including percentages and frequency distributions, were discussed in detail with the leaders of the local Residents’ Association and the youths who had participated in the planning and implementation of the study. On the basis of these discussions, some topics of common interest to the community and to the particular aim of the study were selected for presentation at an open seminar in the shantytown.

In cooperation with the youth volunteers and a researcher at Escola de Serviço Social – UFRJ, the seminar was carefully prepared and implemented. The selected data were organized in such a way as to allow a simple and direct presentation, including the use of bar graphs and drawings. Personal invitations were distributed to each family in the sample and to other people involved in the study. The seminar was also advertised on posters displayed at strategic places in the shantytown. In all, 25 persons showed up for the seminar. Most of them were parents and children who had participated in the study, but some of the local leaders and a few other persons also attended. The visual impact of the pictorial presentation was accompanied by a lecture on the preliminary results and their possible interpretations. As the presentation was intended to be easily understood, it was kept as non-technical as possible.

The audience was then invited to participate in group and seminar discussions. The aim of these discussions was to give the local residents an
opportunity to reflect on the interpretations of the preliminary results and to exchange experiences about the conditions for parenting in the particular context of the shantytown. During the vivid discussions, it became obvious that the audience understood the data presented, and largely agreed on the interpretations of the preliminary results – though the theoretical underpinnings of the study did not always coincide with the practical everyday knowledge of the residents in the shantytown. For example, most of those attending the seminar did not consider “child dependence” to be a problem, but rather a positive quality because it keeps children close to the family and home and thereby away from dangers in the neighborhood (for further details on this discussion, see Chapter 6). Moreover, many of the parents attending the meeting expressed surprise at the finding that most adolescents in the sample perceived themselves as loved and accepted by their parents. The cause of this surprise appeared to be a lack of confidence in their neighbors’ parenting capacity. To be more precise, several parents said that they already knew that they themselves were raising their children with loving care, but were surprised to hear that this seemed to be true also for other parents in the neighborhood. At the end of the seminar, it was suggested that a group for discussion on parenting issues be formed as soon as possible. This idea, however, never came to pass because none of those parents present at the seminar seemed to be interested in accepting the responsibility of leading the group.

The presentation was very well received and the audience seemed to have understood the data presented. It is worth noting that all those present at the seminar participated actively in the discussions, which focused on the interpretations of the preliminary results. The seminar was documented by video and in a written report (Kejerfors & Martines, 2001), copies of which were distributed to the Residents’ Association and Projeto Buriti Congonhas. Seminars based on preliminary data from this study have also been given at a non-governmental organization (NGO) in the adjacent neighborhood Rocha Miranda, as well as at Escola de Serviço Social – UFRJ.
A COMMUNITY PROFILE OF BURITI CONGONHAS

This chapter gives a community profile of Buriti Congonhas. The chapter includes a description of the community’s geographical location, history, population characteristics, physical nature of the environment, and services/facilities that provide for the welfare of local residents. This overview can be seen as “setting the scene” of the study. The information presented is based on findings from a systematic study of written material about Buriti Congonhas. The data obtained from these sources have been supplemented by participant observations and interviews with local residents, including formal and informal leaders. To place the shantytown concerned within a larger social, cultural, and geographical context, the chapter begins with a brief overview of Brazil, Rio de Janeiro, and the phenomenon of squatter settlements. Thereafter follows a more detailed overview of Buriti Congonhas.

Brazil, Rio de Janeiro and the Squatter Settlements

The Federative Republic of Brazil (República Federativa do Brasil) is the world's fifth largest nation in physical size, surpassed only by Russia, China, the United States of America, and Canada. It occupies nearly half the landmass of South America and borders every country of the continent except Chile and Ecuador. With about 170 million people by the latest census (IBGE, 2001), Brazil has the world's sixth largest population. The country's demographic profile shows a generally young population. According to the 2000 census (IBGE, 2001), there are more than 60 million Brazilian children and adolescents between the ages 0 and 17 years, and this age bracket accounts for 36% of Brazil's total population.

28 The August 19, 2007 population estimate for Brazil is nearly 187 million people (Official Brazilian Population Clock, http://www.ibge.gov.br)
Brazil possesses enormous natural resources, and is one of the world's largest agricultural producers of such commodities as soybeans, coffee, sugar, oranges, and meat (OECD, 2006). Being a big industrial nation, Brazil benefits from its abundant mineral resources: it is the second largest exporter of iron in the world, and one of the main aluminium producers (FITA, 2007). The country is now increasingly standing out in sectors like textile, aircraft, pharmaceuticals, cars, steel, and chemicals. Brazil is also self-sufficient in oil, and an exporter of ethanol. According to the Federation of International Trade Associations (FITA, 2007), Brazil is the 10th largest economic power in the world and the highest GDP in Latin America.

For many Brazilians, it is however a country of great poverty. According to 2003 data, about one fifth of Brazil's total population, or some 34 million people, live on less than US$2 a day and 8% or 14 million people live on less than US$1 a day (World Bank, 2006). According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP, 2000), the incidence of poverty in Brazil is practically the same as it was in the late 1970s, and the most important explanation for this persistence is the highly concentrated distribution of income. Figures presented by the World Bank (2001, p. 282), show that the richest 20% of Brazilians hold 63.8% of the country's wealth (GDP), while the poorest 20% share only 2.5%. This means that Brazil has one of the most unequal income distributions in the world (cf. UNDP, 1995; World Bank, 2006).

The uneven economic distribution is biased to the disadvantage of the rural population, but also sharp regional disparities are pronounced (UNDP, 2000, see also Faria, 1990; Hoffman & Centeno, 2003). The worst level of inequalities and living conditions are found in those areas dominated by agricultural production (Leme & Biderman, 1997). For example, the northeast region of Brazil contains the single largest concentration of rural poverty in Latin America (World Bank, 2006). In the 1980s, there was a 25-year gap in the life expectancies of the poor in the northeast and the well-to-do in the south (Schepker-Hughes, 1992).

Push and pull factors closely linked to these inequalities have over the years resulted in massive waves of city ward migration, especially from the poverty-stricken Northeast to the more developed Southeast and South regions (see e.g. Perlman, 1976). Internal migration reached during the period 1950–1980 when some 20 million Brazilians moved from rural to urban areas (Hudson, 1997). This rural-to-urban population movement has been described as one of the fastest and largest of its kind in human history (cf. Granotier, 1980; Castells, 1983). Although the internal migration rate

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29 Push factors are those conditions that drive a person to leave his or her current residence, state, or country (e.g. drought, famine, lack of jobs, over-population), while pull factors are those conditions that attract a person to move to another area (e.g. a chance for a better job, better education, a higher standard of living).
has been declining in recent years, the rural–urban flow of young people, especially women, is still quite intense (see Camarano, 1999).

The influx of rural migrants to the cities, along with a high natural growth rate, has contributed to the rapid increase of Brazil's urban population (Camarano, 1999; see also Dowell, 2006; Pino 1997). On average, Brazil's urban population grew by almost two and a half million people per year between 1950 and 2000 (Dowell, 2006). From being a predominantly rural nation only some 40 years ago, Brazil is now a highly urbanized country. In the period from 1960 to 2000, the urbanization rates soared from 47 to 81% (IBGE, 2001). This means that approximately 138 million Brazilians at present live in towns, large cities, or the suburbs. Brazil has at least eight cities with more than 2 million people, including the mega-cities of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. As noticed in the introductory chapter, greater São Paulo, with more than 18 million people, was in 2000 ranked as the world’s third largest metropolitan area after Tokyo and Mexico City, while Greater Rio de Janeiro with 10.6 million people was ranked as the 15th largest urban agglomeration in the world.

In conjunction with the unbalanced economic distribution, the rapid and uncontrolled urban growth has led, especially in the large cities, to a mushrooming of squatter settlements known in Brazil as favelas (in English, shantytowns). These self-constructed settlements, originally built without any public services on unoccupied land illegally used without the consent of the owners, became homes for thousands of migrant families. The shantytowns can be seen as the low-income population’s self-created solution to the severe shortage of affordable housing (Perlman, 1976; Castells, 1983). Although there has been some improvement in access to housing in Brazil, the housing deficits remain high, especially in the lower income groups. According to a report issued by the Federal Government (refereed to in Xavier & Magalhães, 2003), in 1998 there were 1.3 million permanent dwellings in slums with 79.8% located in the metropolitan regions. Rio de Janeiro is believed to have one of the largest concentrations of shantytowns in Brazil. The number of shantytowns is disputed, however. The municipal Planning Institute recorded in 1996 a total of 605 squatter settlements, but it has also been estimated that from 1996 to 2002 around 100 new squatter settlements appeared in the city (Xavier & Magalhães, 2003). Officially, it is said that Rio de Janeiro has some 500 shantytowns. It is difficult to find any statistics supporting these statements, however, and it is unclear whether this figure covers only the municipality of Rio de Janeiro or as well the shantytowns of the other 14 municipalities that constitute the metropolitan area of greater Rio de Janeiro. These figures include, however, only the municipality of Rio de Janeiro. According to information given by members of the Board of the Municipal Federation of the Residents’ Association in the Favelas in Rio de Janeiro (FAF–RIO), there were in 2001
some 800 shantytowns in the metropolitan area of Rio de Janeiro and about 1,500 in the whole State of Rio de Janeiro.

The physical characteristics of the shantytowns vary considerably, as does their size. There are 479 small squatter settlements, defined as having less than 500 dwellings, which together house approximately 30% of the total population of the settlement; at the other extreme there are squatter settlements with more than 40,000 inhabitants (O’Hare & Barke, 2002). The settlements are scattered in a wide variety of locations. Many occupy the hillsides, but some are located on flat land, along motorways, or in swampy areas (Xavier & Magalhães, 2003). Housing construction can range from very poor, temporary, arrangements – such as pieces of plywood, corrugated tin, cardboard boxes, sheets of plastic, or any other material that will provide cover – to reasonably good conditions – brick walls, concrete or tile floors, and tin roofs.

The condition of the dwellings often varies with age and location of the settlement. Newer shantytowns generally have a more precarious existence, while more established settlements tend to have better housing and infrastructural conditions. In the same way, people in the shantytowns located closer to the more affluent areas of the city and to the sea tend to report a higher standard of living with larger household incomes than do people who live in shantytowns on the peripheral outskirts of the city (Rizzini, 2005).

Over time, virtually all settlements go through an incremental process of upgrading (Dowell, 2006). Some of the upgrading results from investments made by the dwellers, and some is based on government slum-upgrade programs where government agencies work with residents in informal settings to provide secure tenure, make infrastructural investments in water, sewage, drainage, electricity, roads, and solid waste collection (Dowell, 2006; O’Hare & Barke, 2002). Some of these programs also include assistance to homeowners to make improvements to their houses. In cases where governments do not support or sanction upgrading, community-based efforts may be made to improve conditions through self-help activities. The overall result is that the stock of informal housing is constantly changing through additions, resettlements, and upgrading efforts (Dowell, 2006).

Significant changes over time were observed by Perlman (2004, 2006) in a re-study of residents originally interviewed in some of Rio de Janeiro’s favelas in 1969. Specifically, it was noted that there has been a clear upgrading in infrastructure in these communities and an overall increase in household goods and appliance over the past 35 years. Of these improvements, perhaps the most important have been piped water and electricity. In terms of individual consumption of household appliances, Perlman notes a significant improvement among the adult children of the original interviewees. For example, television ownership went from 27% in
1969 to 98% in 2001, refrigerators from 38% to 97%, and stereos from 25% to 85%. Moreover, 88% had land or cell phones; 67% had washing machines; 69% owned VCRs; 30% possessed microwave ovens; more than 25% owned cars; and 22% had computers. Perlman also notes that the kinds of floor and wall tiling in kitchens and bathrooms of favela homes exceed in luxury and cost that found in many middle-class housing, as does the quality of furniture in living-rooms, dining-rooms, and bedrooms. Perlman (2006, p. 167) concludes that “this conspicuous consumption appears to represent an attempt to overcome the sense of exclusion and stigma that the poor feel as a result of their residence in the favelas, a stance expressed in their complaint that they are not seen as people … by the middle and upper classes.” Another significant change noted in this study is the sense of isolation in comparison to earlier times, and a fear that pervades all aspects of life, which “may be traced to the violence between drug dealers and the police, and among various gangs” (Perlman, 2004, p. 119).

Increasing armed violence and the changes in scale and structure of Rio de Janeiro’s drug trade, which came with the arrival of cocaine at the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, have had a very detrimental affect on the favelas (Dowdney, 2003). With the arrival of cocaine and its extreme profitability came an increase in violent and repressive policing, inter-faction disputes, and the trafficking and use of war-grade small arms in the city. Because of the favelas’ network of alleys, limited access points, and the fact that many of them are built on hillsides, they provide a perfect defendable base where drug sales can be protected from police surveillance and rival faction take-overs. In addition to spatial protection, controlling the community via “forced reciprocity” means that the factions receive community protection from the police and take-overs by rival factions. An enforced “code of silence” protects traffickers from arrest and prosecution, and knowing everyone and everything that happens within the community insulates them from rival faction invasion and police infiltration (Dowdney, 2003, p. 73).

In 2001, practically all of the Rio de Janeiro’s shantytowns were under control of a drug faction. According to members of the FAF–RIO, there were at that time only four squatter settlements in the municipalty of Rio de Janeiro that not were controlled by a drug faction. Typically, these fall under the control of one of three main factions: the Comando Vermelho, the Terceiro Comando, or the Amigos dos Amigos. These groups are well-known for maintaining a high level of control over social behavior, prohibiting street-crimes such as muggings, rape, and burglary in the shantytowns and sometimes in their immediate surroundings as well. Violation may lead to brutal punishment, expulsion from the community, or execution (cf. Dowdney, 2003). Despite the low incidence of street crime in the shantytowns, the frequency of gun battles between police and rival gangs of drug dealers in these neighborhoods presents a real danger to the residents.
who are regularly caught in the cross-fire of rival faction disputes and police raids. It is important to stress that the great majority of the residents in the shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro are not involved in the drug trade. According to Dowdney (2003), security experts tend to agree that around 1% of the population, or a total of 10,000 people, in the shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro are involved directly in drug trafficking. It is estimated that about half of these are under the age of 18. The perhaps main reason that youths are involved in drug trafficking is that the amount of profit reaped by the drug dealers in the slums in Rio de Janeiro is contingent on cheap labor (Zaluar, 1994a, 1994b, 2000). Consequently, gang members (who rarely live beyond the age of 25) are inevitable replaced by younger and younger men.

**Buriti Congonhas**

Buriti Congonhas is one of six shantytowns that compose a hillside squatter settlement complex named Complexo do Sapê which is located in the North Zone of Rio de Janeiro. With a distance of some 25km by land from the city’s more affluent southern areas and surrounded by the predominantly working- and lower middle-class neighborhoods of Madureira, Vaz Lobo, Rocha Miranda, Turiaçú and Itaú, Complexo do Sapê is situated almost right in the geographic center of the North Zone. Although most of the squatter settlements in Rio de Janeiro are recognized nowadays by the public authorities, the complex still appears on official maps as a vacant green land area elevated 142 meters above sea level (see e.g. SMU/IPP, 2000). The hill on which Complexo do Sapê is located overlooks a large section of the northern suburbs of Rio de Janeiro. Except for the hills of Morro do Dendê and Morro do Juramento, both blanketed with squatter settlements, the natural feature of the nearby landscape is quite flat, almost without any kind of greenery. In all probability by coincidence, these characteristics are reflected in the architecture of the surrounding neighborhoods. Apart from a biscuit factory, a large shopping center, a few churches, and some tower blocks scattered about, the widely spread out urban townscape in view from the slopes of Complexo do Sapê is predominantly built with low-rise buildings and is only sparsely adorned with parks and green fields. In contrast to the bleak urban landscape nearby, the scenery further to the south presents a broad vista of the forest-crowned mountain ranges that serve as the natural border to the South Zone. This view includes a distant but clearly visible sight of one the most famous tourist attractions in Rio de Janeiro, namely the *Christ the Redeemer* statue on the mountain of Corcovado.

Buriti Congonhas occupies the southwestern slopes of the hillside complex and faces the communities of Madureira and Turiaçú. It is
bordered on the sides and back by the shantytowns of Morro do Sapê, São Miguel de Arcanjo, and Morro do Sossego, the latter one also known as Cajueiro or Tatuí. To the southeast, Buriti Congonhas is bounded by a string of low-rise buildings which separates the shantytown from the heavily trafficked Avenida Ministro Edgard Romero which is one of the main roads connecting the nearby commercial district of Madureira with the eastern suburbs of the North Zone. On the northeast is the narrow steep alley of Rua Vila Queiroz dividing Buriti Congonhas from São Miguel de Arcanjo, and further up north steep and thickly forested hillsides form a natural boundary to Morro do Sapê. To the northwest the forest-clad slopes end abruptly with an abandoned quarry, sporting a football field that fronts the residential neighborhood of Turiaçú. The southwestern boundary is a little less distinct. Starting in the south from the thoroughfare street Avenida Ministro Edgard Romero, which is the actual frontier between Buriti Congonhas and Morro do Sossego, Rua Piraquê and its northern extension Rua Manoel Machado serve as a kind of boundary between the “morro” and the “asfalto.” This notion is not shared, however, by all the residents of Buriti Congonhas. When residents living alongside the intersection streets of Rua Piraquê, Rua Buriti, and Rua Pedro Alexandrino were asked where the lower parts of the shantytown end, nobody seemed to know exactly, nor did they know where the immediate adjoining working- and lower middle-class residential areas began. While some people suggested that a narrow alley, named Rua Miguel, at the immediate foot of the hill, is to be considered as the edge of the shantytown, others claimed that the community continues all along Rua Buriti until it intersects with Rua Leopoldino de Oliveira some 200 meters further away.

Buriti Congonhas has several entrances that link the community with the surrounding neighborhoods and the adjacent shantytowns. The major access by car into Buriti Congonhas is from the community of Madureira; more precisely, from entrances at the streets of Rua Buriti, Rua Vila Emilia, and Rua Piraquê/Rua Manoel Machado. The last mentioned is also reachable by car from Rua Silvio Tibiriçá in the neighborhood of Turiaçú. Besides making use of these entrances, pedestrians can enter the community from several of the four narrow steep alleyways that lead up to the shantytown from Avenida Ministro Edgard Romero. There are also some entrances from the immediate adjoining shantytowns, two of which are passable by car directly into Buriti Congonhas. These are the accesses to Rua Piraquê/Rua Manoel Machado from Morro do Sapê and Morro do Sossego.

30 These two expressions are commonly used among the residents in the shantytown to distinguish between the unpaved streets without formal residents’ addresses on the hillsides (morro) and the officially recognized streets covered with asphalt (asfalto).
History and Ownership

Like many other shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro, the settlement of the area that today is known as Buriti Congonhas is the result of a lengthy process of gradual invasion of unoccupied land, the legal ownership of which is not clearly defined (cf. e.g. Bastos, 1989; Perlman, 1976; Preteceille & Valladares, 2000; Valladares, 1983; and Santos, 1981). According to a study commissioned by the Municipal Housing Secretariat (see Archi5, 1996a), the occupation of Morro do Sapê can be traced back to the early 1920s. The first settlers on the hillside where Buriti Congonhas is located today were workers from a local quarry who started to build their houses and shanties on lots parceled out for rent by the landowner. At that time, Morro do Sapê was a semi-rural area on the outskirts of the city. Besides some minor quarries, the hill was only sparsely built with a few small farms that used the slopes mainly for growing oranges. In the 1940s, the occupation of the area was intensified. The new settlers, building their dwellings up the steep and rocky slopes where no regular construction could take place, were rural migrants in search of homes joined by city dwellers who were no longer able to afford the high rents. Throughout the following decades, a constant increase of people moving into the area had the result that two communities developed simultaneously on the hillside that today is the current site of Buriti Congonhas.

On the slope and lower land area next to the main quarry was the community of Morro da Pedra do Urubu31 (later renamed Vila Buriti), settled predominantly by migrants from northeastern Brazil. On the other slope was the community of Morro de Congonhas, populated mainly by people from different parts of the city and the State of Rio de Janeiro (Archi5, 1996a, p. 43). Although Vila Buriti and Morro de Congonhas had already grown together by the 1960s, it was not before the early 1980s that the two communities were officially united and given the name Buriti Congonhas32. In 1993, the community of São Miguel de Arcanjo was incorporated in Buriti Congonhas. This was, however, only a temporary union lasting for six years and ceased in 1999 when the newly formed Residents’ Association of São Miguel de Arcanjo declared it independent of Buriti Congonhas.

As a result of a number of confusing, legal as well as illegal, circumstances throughout the years, no one in the shantytown or any official

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31 In English “Morro da Pedra do Urubu” means Hill of the Vulture Rock, referring to a strangely shaped rock on the more elevated parts of the slopes.
32 According to a common report, the compounded name of Buriti Congonhas might derive from two municipalities in the neighboring state Minas Gerais. According to Aurélio’s Portugues Dictionary (1997), “Buriti” is the Brazilian denotation for a type of palm and “Congonha” is the Brazilian name of a type of shrub.
agency seems to know for certain who owns the legal title to the land. According to a preparatory investigation for a municipal program of infrastructural development in Buriti Congonhas conducted by the Municipal Secretary of Social Development (SMDS, 1992), the area formally belongs to three different landowners: Mr. Gilberto, Mr. Mota, and Mr. Miguel (none of them is mentioned by last name). The same source contends that the first known landowner seems to have been a woman (not referred to by name) who, at the time of the earliest settlement, claimed to be the rightful heiress of the area, and subsequently also seems to have been the first person to hire out lots. After her death, the residents on the hillside continued to pay rent for the use of land to her granddaughter and her niece. Because of unpaid taxes, the area was later sold by public auction to a Mr. Manoel. When he died in 1952, it appears that the settlers stopped paying rent, which by then had become quite high, whereupon the heir of the area, Mr. Miguel, initiated litigation in an attempt to expel the settlers and reestablish his right to the land. The report by SMDS (1992) does not, however, give any information about whether the court, at the time of the investigation, had passed a decision or if litigation and appeals were still on process. In like manner, besides a remark indicating that the southeastern slope, where the former community of Morro de Congonhas was situated, belongs to Mr. Gilberto, and that Mr. Mota owns the site of the nowadays abandoned main quarry, the report of the investigation does not provide any further information on the respective proprietorship of these two presumed landowners. Despite these and several other shortcomings, the data collected by SMDS (1992) are probably the most complete that can be found regarding land possession in Buriti Congonhas.

Only a few years later, however, additional but contradictory information was presented by another municipal preparatory investigation (Archi5, 1996a, 1996b). A series of interviews with residents in Buriti Congonhas revealed that they had no knowledge of any formal landowners nor of court proceedings for retaining title to the land upon which the shantytown was located. Moreover, the investigation stated that the land areas of the main quarry formally belonged to a private enterprise by the name of Marabô, but that this quarrying company apparently lost its proprietary rights in the early 1990s when the long abandoned quarry was proclaimed through a process of law to be a common area of use for the community of Buriti Congonhas. Besides confirming some of the details in the reports of the two municipal investigations presented above, additional and somewhat

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A probable error of writing in the original by Archi5 (1996a, p. 62) indicates that the year of this property transference was 1947. According to the Residents’ Association in Buriti Congonhas, the transformation of the proprietorship was undertaken first by the early 1990s (writer’s remark).
incompatible information concerning land ownership in Buriti Congonhas was obtained from a series of interviews carried out in connection with the present study. Although several of the senior residents in Buriti Congonhas remembered that they used to pay a high monthly rent to a Mr. Manoel, a few of the informants also recalled the names of some of the other previous landowners. According to the information given, in the 1940s the area belonged to two men from the same family, known as Mr. Neco and Mr. Teco, who lost their title to the land because of unpaid taxes. It is worth noting that neither the heir of Mr. Manoel nor any of the other landowners referred to in the report by SMDS (1992) were mentioned by any of the informants. In like manner, no one seemed to know, or to remember, exactly when or for what reason the practice of paying rent ceased. According to several senior residents, they had stopped paying rent by the 1950s when Mr. Manoel suddenly disappeared. A few other residents claimed that the practice of paying rent was abolished first in the early 1960s by support of a decree of Governor Carlos Lacerda prohibiting the unauthorized letting of land. Regardless of which of these statements lies closest to the truth, a more interesting finding is that a number of residents in Buriti Congonhas claim to be the rightful owner of the land on which they have constructed their homes. Several of the local dwellers stated that throughout the decades small plots of land had not only been parceled out for rent, but had also been put up for sale.

Because of a relatively low land value, it seems that rather a large number of residents, especially on the slopes of the former community of Morro de Congonhas, have managed to purchase a place of their own. This information was later confirmed by the leaders of the Residents’ Association, who also added that only a few of these purchases had actually been legally registered for the land title. In addition to these predominantly unauthorized arrangements, as a further complication information was given that throughout the years, owner-occupied lots, and even land plots parceled out for rent, have been divided, sold, re-sold, given away, abandoned, and in some cases illegally invaded. As an illustration to the illicit land transfers, at the time of the present study someone had posted a handwritten placard at one of the entrances to the shantytown advertising illegally invaded plots for sale.

However, despite these extremely complex circumstances in which neither the public authorities nor the residents seem to know who has the legal title to the land, the residents of Buriti Congonhas appear to be quite secure in their tenure. In contrast to many other shantytowns, especially those in the South Zone of Rio de Janeiro, it seems that the residents of Buriti Congonhas have never been subjected to any real threat of eviction. Despite decades of excluding policies towards the shantytowns, with official eviction programs reaching a peak in the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s (see e.g. Perlman, 1976; SMH, 1999b; and Valladares 1978, 1983),
none of the senior residents interviewed for this study could recall any specific threat of being evicted from their homes on the hillside. By way of explanation, several informants mentioned that because land values are lower in the North Zone of Rio de Janeiro, especially on the hillsides, they have never had to live in fear of being evicted from their homes and forced to relocate elsewhere. Being somewhat secure in their tenure, new generations of settlers continue to make their homes on the hillside.

Population

Although there have been several censuses for Buriti Congonhas in recent years, facts concerning the population are quite contradictory due to discrepancies in the estimated number of inhabitants and of housing units. Estimates for the last 12 years range from 427 dwellings with 1587 inhabitants to 1100 dwellings with nearly 5000 inhabitants. The shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro were generally not officially recognized and it is only in the last few decades that population statistics have been compiled in census data. In Buriti Congonhas the first census was apparently taken in 1989 by a research team from the School of Social Work at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (ESS–UFRJ, 1993). By interviewing 981 persons, it was estimated that the population in Buriti Congonhas consisted of nearly 5000 people distributed among some 1100 household units. However, only two years later another census, carried out by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 1991), estimated the number of inhabitants to be 2034 with 489 dwelling units. And in the following year, an additional census carried out by the Municipal Secretary of Social Development (SMDS, 1992) estimated the number of inhabitants to be 3025 persons distributed among 663 housing units, many of which were multiple-family dwellings. In 1996, by comparing the outcome of a recent census with the figures for 1991, the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics reported a diminishing number of residents and housing units. Although the community of São Miguel de Arcanjo was by then formally incorporated in Buriti Congonhas, the population was estimated in this additional census to have declined by 21.98% to a total of 1587 persons, and the number of housing units dropped to 427 or a 13.21% decrease (IBGE, 1996). None of these figures are in keeping with what is the probably most recent estimate of 2636 persons and 659 housing units, reported in 2001 by the Municipal Secretary of Habitation (IPP, 2000, p. 481). Because of the many discrepancies among the census estimates of the population of Buriti Congonhas, it is difficult to come to any conclusion about the number of inhabitants and housing units or population growth. However, without knowing the actual size of the population, several of the residents interviewed stated that the number of people and dwellings in the
Chapter 5

shantytown is probably still rising. Although most of the interviewees spoke about a declining birth-rate, apparent in the number of families with fewer children, they believed that this natural decrease was compensated for by the younger generations of dwellers, along with with a certain influx of newcomers making their homes and starting families in Buriti Congonhas. Although it is not unusual for young adults with children to build a shack of their own in their parents' backyard, or even to add on a story to their parents' home, the accuracy of these statements is somewhat questionable because there is simply very little room in Buriti Congonhas for more dwellings to be built.

Physical Properties

The boundaries of Buriti Congonhas encompass a large land area, unevenly divided between large woodlands and a smaller quite densely built up residential area spread out along the steep and rocky slopes. The results of several municipal studies indicate that Buriti Congonhas covers a territory of about 239,000 m², including a residential area of some 89,000 m² (IPP, 2000; SMDS, 1992), and an additional 150,000 m² of unoccupied land thickly covered with trees and bushes (Archi5, 1996b). The last mentioned of these two areas is the result of a municipal reforestation project, initiated in 1988 for the purpose of reinforcing the slopes of the hillside to prevent landslides. The forest-clad, uninhabited area covers the more elevated, and thus also more inaccessible, parts of the hillside, while the residential area is concentrated to the lower slopes.

The housing area at the base of the forest-crowned hillside is quite densely settled. It is covered mostly with brick-colored shacks crowded together in a disorderly fashion, many of them fully open to view because the slopes are so steep. However, in contrast to the apparent impression of overcrowding and disorder, things look very different from the inside. In like manner with many other hillside shantytowns, Buriti Congonhas is characterized by careful planning in the use of limited housing space and innovative building techniques on slopes considered too steep for regular construction (cf. Perlman, 1976). Although there is very little vacant land in Buriti Congonhas, the residents say that their houses are “spread out,” at least compared with those in some of the adjoining shantytowns. This general perception probably derives from the fact that most of the dwellings have backyards which are normally used for storage and/or for doing the laundry. The impression of roominess is also reinforced by the existence of a few small public squares and some recently widened and extended streets that make up part of the complex network of narrow alleys and stairs that link together different areas within the community. The houses are often built with a keen eye to comfort and efficiency, given the nature of the
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terrain, climate, and available building materials. Accordingly, the large majority of the hillside dwellings are constructed using redbrick and concrete (see Archi5, 1996b) which are considered to be strong and practical, but relatively inexpensive, building materials.

Many of the houses have a second, and a few of them even a third, story. Some of the constructions, especially at the more precipitous slopes, are buttressed by ingenious stilt-like supports. Nearly all the houses are equipped with water-tanks and have television antennas on the rooftops. Moreover, it is worth noting that most dwellings seem to be in a permanent process of expansion and/or reconstruction. According to residents interviewed for this study, the constant alterations represent the accumulated savings of families who are improving and/or adapting the houses to their necessities, little by little. Although it is commonly assumed that people living in shantytowns make large investments in their houses (cf. SMH, 1999b), several of the interviewees pointed out that all such efforts must be kept on par with the relatively low sales price for houses located in a shantytown. Thus, the styles and standard of the dwellings in Buriti Congonhas are dependent not only on the residents’ financial situation, but also on investments made in relation to the market value, which varies in different parts of the community.

Although the settlement on the hillside might appear to outsiders to be an undistinguished mass, it follows a horizontal as well as vertical line of stratification corresponding roughly to the individual’s social class and length of stay in the shantytown (cf. Perlman, 1976). The residents divide Buriti Congonhas into three distinct areas which refer to the three adjacent slopes on which the community is located. The one closest to the abandoned main quarry is named Buriti after the former community of Vila Buriti, but as many of the first settlers in this area were migrants from the northeastern part of Brazil, the slope is also known as Paraíba34. On the middle hillside is Congonhas, named after the former community of Morro de Congonhas, inhabited predominantly by settlers from the city and the State of Rio de Janeiro and therefore commonly called Carioca35. Although the third slope, which faces Avenida Ministro Edgard Romero, is also included in the area called Congonhas, many of the residents still use the names of the former farming grounds (e.g. Vila Emília, Vila Queiroz) when referring to this part of the community. A plausible explanation for this practice is, naturally, that the names of the streets and alleys in the area actually derive from these earlier farmlands; another is that the slope has

34 Popular nickname for natives of the northeastern region of Brazil
35 Denomination for natives of Rio de Janeiro, deriving from a Tupi Indian term roughly meaning “white house” or “house of whites,” referring to the first dwellings built by the Portuguese (Wikipedia, on-line at http://en.wikipedia.org).
kept its rural characteristic longer than any other part of the shantytown. According to some of the senior residents, settlers were using the land plots on this slope for small-scale farming up to the early 1960s.

Beside this physical division, it is generally held among the residents that a transverse socio-economic hierarchy divides the three slopes. A common view of the local dwellers is that the Buriti slope is a relatively calm and wealthy part of the shantytown inhabited “by hard-working rural migrants from the northeastern part of Brazil who are striving to improve their living conditions.” In contrast, the natives of Rio de Janeiro residing on the slopes of Congonhas are commonly regarded as more poorly off due to “indolence and lack of motivation.” Especially the slope fronting Avenida Ministro Edgard Romero has a reputation for being poorer and also more dangerous than other parts of the shantytown.

However, independent of the veracity of these and other such vague reports, there is hardly any doubt that living standards vary within the community. In addition to the resident's horizontal, and somewhat diffuse, division of the community into different socio-economic strata, what is more obvious to an outsider is the vertical stratification that is visible both in the construction of dwellings and in the use of land. At the foot of the hill, which is the oldest, wealthiest, and best-developed part of the shantytown, the houses are in general larger and more comfortable. Some of the houses in the lower parts of the community, especially along the roadsides, are actually built in similar styles and standards as those in the nearby working- and lower middle-class neighborhoods. Higher up on the concave and steep slopes of the hill, the houses change to predominantly redbrick, and lastly there are some shanties constructed fully or in part by pieces of wood, sheets of corrugated iron, and other waste materials; in addition, some shanties are constructed wholly or partly using pieces of wood, sheets of corrugated iron, or other waste materials. Besides the apparent difficulties of access for deliveries of building material, there is generally also more hardship in the elevated parts of the community. It is therefore perhaps not so strange that a part of the poorest upper portions of the slopes named Congonhas is known by the local dwellers as “a favelinha” – the little favela.

**Urban Services**

Since the shantytowns were previously not officially recognized by the public authorities, it is only in recent decades that the residents of Buriti Congonhas have begun to have access to some of the basic urban services and infrastructures that exist within the official city limits. Similarly to other shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro, the area that today is known as Buriti Congonhas was settled without any formal investment in infrastructures.
(see e.g. SMH, 1999b). In interviews conducted for this study, many residents on the hillside vividly recalled that for decades they had to descend the steep and rocky slopes to get water from the surrounding neighborhoods and then climb back up the slopes carrying water in cans on their heads or in buckets hanging from yokes on their shoulders. Some of them could also recall that electricity was obtained from enterprising subcontractors who, for a rate several times higher than that charged by the former State Commission of Electric Energy (C.E.E), strung wires from their own homes near the edge of the settlement to their customers’ houses in the shantytown. In like manner, it was stated that neither the unpaved alleys nor the rocky trails running up the hillside were passable by motor vehicles, and that there was no street lighting. Likewise, it was reported that some dwellings at the more precipitous slopes had been in danger of landslides, especially during heavy rains. For sewage there was a series of open connecting channels, dug out by the residents, in which wastewater and toilet disposals ran down through the shantytown. Moreover, as there was no regular collection of domestic waste or other rubbish, garbage dumps of different sizes were spread out over the hillside.

In 1956, the first public water-tap was inaugurated at the lower slope of the community of Morro de Congonhas. According to some of the senior residents, the supply of water was turned on only occasionally. Throughout the day and night, dwellers used to take turns at the tap waiting for the water to be turned on. Because of the inadequate supply, the residents had to continue for many years to get their water from taps and wells in the vicinity. In 1978, as the result of a political election campaign, some of the households situated close to the foot of the hillside, more precisely those located in the area between Rua Piraquê and Rua Miguel, were provided with water conduits by the public utility CEDAE, and an official lightning system was installed by the electricity company LIGHT. However, for the next several years, the electricity supply in this area was being constantly interrupted due to the inadequate system (Archi5, 1996a).

By the early 1980s, as a consequence of a new national intervention policy towards the low-income population in Brazil, official action was taken to promote the social and infrastructural development of the shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro (SMH, 1999b). In Buriti Congonhas, this new policy was manifested in various actions and programs related to basic urban services and infrastructure. For example, in 1982, with the consent of, or at least without any objections from, the state-owned water company (CEDAE), water pipes were laid for most of the houses on the hillside from an “illegal” pump at Avenida Ministro Edgard Romero (SMH, 1999a). However, because the pressure was so low, there were still frequent shortages of water. At about the same time this semi-official water service was installed, all sections of the shantytown were provided with electricity.
and meters were installed in most of the dwelling by the public utility LIGHT.

The installation of an official lightning system was followed by two municipal large-scale programs on social and infrastructural development; “Projeto Mutirão Remunerado” (Rewarded Collective Work Program), conducted by the Secretary of Social Development – SMDS and “Favela-Bairro” coordinated by the Housing Secretariat – SMH. Throughout the period of 1985 to 1994, by employing workers from the community, the program conducted by SMDS provided a number of basic infrastructures in Buriti Congonhas. Besides installing a closed sewage system and pluvial water drainage, alleys were paved, stairs constructed, a street-lightening system installed, a reforestation program initiated, and some of the slopes were reinforced to withstand landslides.

According to the wish of many working parents, the community was also provided with a public day nursery. In March 1997, the municipal slum upgrade program Favela-Bairro resumed the provision of infrastructures in Buriti Congonhas. By providing basic structures and necessities, the overall objective of this both publicly and privately financed program, sometimes called “the world’s largest social project,” is to transform squatter settlements (favelas) into formally recognized neighborhoods (bairros). In addition to continuing to develop some of the infrastructural work initiated by SMDS, the main interventions of Favela-Bairro in Buriti Congonhas (SMH, 1999b) include the expansion and paving of narrow alleys, the installation of a large water tank, the construction of a new apartment building as well as a football field and a volleyball court, and the creation of a few small public squares with urban outdoor furniture. Furthermore, in the last few years the community has been provided with regular garbage collection by the public utility COMLURB and a state-run project designed to prevent dengue.

Although the policies of the last few decades have brought many infrastructural improvements to Buriti Congonhas, some of the basic necessities of life are still inadequate. The most urgent of these necessities is probably the water supply, which is still insufficient in most of the houses in the shantytown. The water passage through the pipes from the “illegal pump” at Avenida Ministro Edgard Romero is still at low pressure. This means that there are frequent interruptions of the water supply, especially during the hot and dry summer months when the general water

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36 The new apartment building was constructed to provide substitute housing for families living in dwellings demolished to make way for the new infrastructures, and families living in areas in risk of landslides.

37 Dengue is a widely spread acute viral disease transmitted by mosquitoes, characterized by headache, fever, pains in the joints, and skin rash; also called breakbone fever.
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consumption increases in the surrounding neighborhoods. Accordingly, it is not unusual that most parts of Buriti Congonhas lack water for days, and sometimes even for weeks at a time. The water tank on the upper section of the slopes of Congonhas, constructed by the municipal project “Favela-Bairro” in order to supply the community with water at a steady pressure, has not yet been installed and a timetable has not yet been set. At the turn of the year 2000/2001, although there were still a number of incompleted projects, all ongoing works carried out in Buriti Congonhas by “Favela-Bairro” were stopped due to the entrance of a new municipal government for the city of Rio de Janeiro. At the time of this report, it is uncertain when, or whether, these works are to be resumed.

Apart from the unresolved problem of insufficient water supply and a few other shortcomings, most of the residents seem to be satisfied with the urban services and infrastructures implemented in Buriti Congonhas. Although opinion is sometimes divided, it is not unusual to hear dwellers comment in the most laudatory terms the structural changes that have taken place in the community. For example, many of the residents regard the installation of a closed sewage system as representing a general improvement of the living environment in that it reduces the health risks and dangers, especially for children at play. In like manner, most residents seems to be pleased with the widening of narrow alleys into streets, which means that most parts of the shantytown are now passable by cars and trucks, thus allowing the transport of people, goods, and building materials to the more elevated areas. On the other hand, some residents complain that the community has become more dangerous for children due to speeding motor vehicles. Similarly, some families living in areas at risk for landslides are still waiting for substitute housing, and a few of the dwellers living along the narrow steep alleys that lead up to the shantytown from Avenida Ministro Edgard Romero seem to be dissatisfied with the transformations of the paths into stairs, which they say complicates deliveries to their houses. The following comment from one of the residents is an example: “Although the former trails were steep and muddy, at least they allowed deliveries by wheelbarrows and/or horses.” This excerpt from an interview sheds light on a criticism shared by some of the residents that they were not consulted about the infrastructural changes in the community. Although most dwellers seem to be satisfied with the structural changes in the community, and although general meetings were held, at least by the slum upgrade program Favela-Bairro, in interviews conducted for this study several of the residents expressed their disappointment at not having had greater influence over the development of their community.
Residents’ Association

In Buriti Congonhas, as in many other shantytowns, the Residents’ Association is an important membership organization that assumes many of the responsibilities which in the formal city are incumbent on public authorities and/or public utilities (cf. Bastos & Gomes, 1994, 1995). Because of their situation in the urban structure, squatters in metropolitan areas of developing countries tend to organize themselves at community level (Castells, 1983). In Rio de Janeiro, many shantytowns have a Residents’ Association composed of voluntary members living in the community. Besides working for the improvement of the social and communal facilities, the Residents’ Association usually acts as a formal intermediary between the residents in the shantytown and the public authorities. The organization of the inhabitants in the shantytowns thus normally revolves around demands for basic services such as electricity, water, sewage, transportation, medical care, dental care, childcare facilities, and schools.

The first Residents’ Association in Rio de Janeiro had been established by the 1940s. It was not until the late 1970s, however, that this form of community organization spread to most of the shantytowns (Boschi, 1987). The Federation of the Residents’ Associations in the Favelas in the State of Rio de Janeiro (FAFRJ) was instituted in 1963. In 1993, it assisted in founding the Federation for the Residents’ Associations in the Favelas in the Municipality of Rio de Janeiro (FAF–RIO) (see Filipe, 1996). According to the president for the latter organization, Antonio Tito, some 1500 Residents’ Associations are now affiliated with the FAFERJ, some 700 of which are affiliated with FAF–RIO.

In Buriti Congonhas the dwellers made several attempts to organize themselves before the present Residents’ Association was founded. According to a report on memories from 53 years of residing in Buriti Congonhas, written (by hand) for this study by one of the senior residents, the first attempt to form a Residents’ Association was made in 1960, in the community of Morro de Congonhas. This association did not last for long, however. After only a few months, the elected board had to resign because of certain irregularities and the Residents’ Association closed down. According to the same source, the dwellers in the community of Vila Buriti also made an attempt to set up a Residents’ Association. Similarly to what had occurred in Morro de Congonhas, even this association had to close down after a relatively short period because the founder, known by the nickname Cigano, had abused his power by appropriating the premises of the Residents’ Association for his own purposes. A few years later, an electric commission was set up for the neighboring communities of Vila Buriti and Morro de Congonhas. It was started by a group of volunteers who were dissatisfied with the exploitation in connection with the provision
of electricity. This was a precursor of the lasting cooperation that now exists between the two communities.

The present Residents’ Association, União Comunitária Buriti Congonhas (UCBC), was founded in 1980; in accordance with its statutes, it has held elections for officers every two years since then. Apart from the elected voluntary board of directors composed of a president, a vice-president, a secretary, a treasurer, and several deputy members, four employees\(^\text{38}\) administer the daily work of the Residents’ Association. According to the secretary at the time, there were 1500 registered members in July 2001, although only about 600 regularly paid the monthly dues of R$0.60 (equivalent to US$0.25 at the currency value of August, 2001).

According to various members of the board, it is difficult to mobilize the inhabitants in Buriti Congonhas. Hence, only a few persons are active in participating in the affairs of the association. For example, it was mentioned that normally 20 to 50 persons attend the general meetings and that only 115 of the associated members voted in the last election for officers. Nevertheless, despite the relatively low number of active participants, the Residents’ Association appears to have considerable support from the dwellers. In interviews conducted for this study, most of the informants acknowledged the Residents’ Association, and especially its former long-time elected president, Antonio Tito, for having created the conditions needed to implement the two municipal large-scale social and infrastructural development programs that were mentioned earlier in this chapter. Several of the dwellers interviewed also called attention to the fact that since the Residents’ Association is a membership organization, “you can’t expect the association leaders to solve all problems without the participation of the people living in the locality.”

Among the benefits provided by the association are the distribution of post to residents living in houses without a formal address, the issuing of identity cards and documents concerning proprietary rights to one’s dwelling (free for members), the voluntary services of a nurse and a lawyer once a week, the distribution of food and medicines occasionally donated to the community, premises for vaccination and other health campaigns, maintenance of the street-lightening system and two public telephones, and help with obtaining funeral insurance designed especially for Residents’ Associations linked to FAF-RIO.

The Residents’ Association is also responsible for maintaining the community’s water supply. For this service, each household was, in July 2000, charged a monthly fee of R$3 (equivalent to US$1.20), which included the cost of the electricity needed for the water pumps. Because of the

\(^{38}\) Two of these employees are paid by the public utility CEDAE to maintain the community’s “illegal” system for water supply (see Archi5, 1996).
difficulty of defining household units in multiple family dwellings and/or because some residents could not afford the fee or simply did not bother to pay it, the Residents’ Association has had difficulties in paying the electricity account for the water pumps. According to various members of the board, as a result of unpaid bills the public utility LIGHT has on several occasions turned off the electricity to the pumps.

**Commerce**

Despite its proximity to the commercial district of Madureira, Buriti Congonhas has an extensive and diversified small-scale commercial life within its borders. Like numerous of other city dwellers in Rio de Janeiro, many residents of Buriti Congonhas either have their main livelihood, or try to improve their income, by performing some kind of work within the so-called “informal sector” (cf. Castells, 1983). As formal employment is difficult to find and wages for poorly skilled workers are usually low, there is a great number of small-scale merchants in Buriti Congonhas. Most of them sell goods and services from their own home.

Thus, there are many small shops (tendinhas) and bars (boutequins) in the shantytown that are located in front of the owners’ dwelling. Since the holders usually combine their commerce with family life and sometimes even with a formal employment, there are often no fixed business hours. This means that many of the small shops and bars in the shantytown simply function when the owner is at home.

Many dwellers also put up signs on the wall of their house advertising the sale of goods and services in their home. While the small shops in the shantytown sell mostly groceries and cleaning agents, the home-based merchants usually offer mail-order products (e.g. cosmetics, ladies lingerie, clothing, trinkets) and/or different kind of services (e.g. manicure, pedicure, hair-styling, and catering). In addition to the merchants who sell goods and services from their homes, the shantytown has two grocery stores, a joinery shop, a tailor, a construction material store, a manufacture and retailer of loudspeakers, and several repair shops. The prices within the shantytown are often higher than elsewhere, but merchants offer certain advantages to their customers such as extending credit when needed, allowing purchase by installment, dividing merchandise into small packets to allow the purchase of small amounts at a time, and some of the bars and small shops serve as social gathering places and local news centers.

**Childcare Facilities**

For working parents, there are a number of alternative childcare facilities in Buriti Congonhas and its surroundings. Since 1992, there is a public day
A Community Profile

nursery located at Rua Buriti, right at the center of the shantytown. As mentioned earlier, this is the result of an infrastructural program carried out by the Municipal Secretary of Social Development – SMDS. The nursery provides daycare from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday, to 85 preschool children from three months to four years of age, enabling their parents to work full time. The young children cared for receive four meals and two baths a day. In addition to the costs for these facilities, SMDS also pays for the maintenance of the building and for the nursery staff’s salaries. The three-story building that accommodates the day nursery has four playrooms for the children, five bathrooms, one dining-room, a small office, and an attached backyard. Except for the head teacher, who is employed by the municipality, the staff of ten nurses, four female cooks, and three janitors have all been subcontracted by a philanthropic NGO. Although the childcare facilities are free of charge, parents are charged a monthly fee for the purchase of toys and other pedagogical material. According to some of the nursery staff, these fees are, for various reasons, paid only sporadically. Consequently, the children have very few toys to play with.

Beside this more or less permanent lack of toys, the daycare offered is also frequently hampered by infrastructural limitations. For instance, the inadequate water supply means that the day nursery often has to close owing to general shortages of water in the community. Similarly, at the time this study was being conducted, the provision of daycare was suspended on several occasions, for some days and even for a few weeks at a time, because the nursery staff, in a collective action, stopped work to protest that their salaries had not been paid. On all such occasions, the parents have to find someone else to look after their children. Another complication for working parents who depend on full-time childcare is that the day nursery in Buriti Congonhas takes in children only up to the age of four. Thereafter, nursery schools offer part-time attendance for preschool children, usually for four hours a day, Monday to Friday.

To the dismay of many parents, there are no public nursery schools in Buriti Congonhas. Especially those parents who work full time and/or at a distance from the shantytown complain about the difficulty of leaving off and picking up their children at the nursery schools in the vicinity. Thus, despite the existence of three public nursery schools in the surrounding neighborhood, many children from the shantytown drop out of preschool already at four years of age. Staff at the day nursery in Buriti Congonhas estimate that fewer than half of the children in the community attend nursery school. They commented that many children are “left on the streets” until compulsory education begins at six years of age. This statement should not be taken literally, however. It appears that most of the children who do not attend preschool have someone to look after them when their parents are at work. In interviews conducted for this study, it was
reported that many working parents take advantage of family and friends for care of their young children. Some parents make use of child-minders living in the community who, for a small fee, look after children in their own home. There is also a small group of parents in Buriti Congonhas who use the more distant public childcare facilities or who prefer, and have the financial means, to use the private day nurseries and/or nursery schools in the surrounding neighborhoods. These private childcare facilities include special establishments that provide round-the-clock residential care for preschool children whose parents work irregular hours and/or live at their place of employment, for example single mothers working as live-in maids.

**Schools**

Like most small and medium-sized shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro, there are no schools in Buriti Congonhas. In accordance with the municipality’s integration policy, schools are set up inside the shantytowns only in exceptional cases (i.e. in very large and/or isolated settlements). The basic idea of this policy is that children living in the shantytowns should mix with children of the external community. Public schools in adjacent neighborhoods are therefore responsible for making vacancies available for children from the shantytowns. Buriti Congonhas has five public primary schools in its immediate vicinity. All five schools are within walking distance from the shantytown, but only one can be reached by crossing streets with heavy traffic. According to what the residents in the shantytown say, drivers often ignore existing stoplights – and pedestrians. Many children are therefore accompanied to and from school by a parent, an older sibling, a relative, or a neighbor. Some families in the shantytown take turns with their neighbors to accompany the children each day.

None of the schools in the vicinity of Buriti Congonhas offers a complete basic education. Three of the schools accept pupils from grades 1 to 4, and only one accepts pupils from grades 5 to 8. Like most other public educational institutions in Rio de Janeiro, classes are held five days a week, from Monday to Friday. The pupils are divided into two groups, one that has morning classes from 7 a.m. to noon, and one that has afternoon classes.

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39 In the Brazilian National Educational General Act (LDB/1996), education for children from 7 to 17 years of age is referred to as Basic Education (Educação Básica), and comprises the compulsory eight-year primary education (Ensino Fundamental) and the three-year secondary education (Ensino Médio). The age for enrollment in compulsory education is seven, although children may enroll as early as six years of age (for further details on the Brazilian educational system, see EFA, 2000).
from noon to 5 p.m. A main reason for this division is the lack of enough classrooms (cf. Marques, 1986).

**Religious Services**

Religion seems to be an important issue for many of the inhabitants in Buriti Congonhas. There are at least three churches in the community and numerous others in the surrounding neighborhood. During the field studies it was noted that quite a few people from the shantytown attended religious services regularly. Some frequented Catholic churches, others were members of Protestant sects, and a few practised Afro-Brazilian religions. Many people, however, seemed to have an eclectic relation to their church or temple of choice. It was quite common for different members of the same household to practise different religions, and some people actually frequented different churches or temples on a regular basis.

**Violence in the Neighborhood**

Like many other shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro, Buriti Congonhas serves as a base for the organized sale of drugs (cf. Dowdney, 2003 and Perlman, 2003, 2004). At the time of the study, the neighborhood was under the control of one of the largest drug cartels in Rio de Janeiro. Very few residents seem, however, to be a member of the drug gangs – though some young men and women do become involved in drug trafficking. Some of the residents interviewed described the local drug dealers as young men in their late teens or early twenties who come to Buriti Congonhas from elsewhere to “take care of the local drug trade and the neighborhood” by commission of the present drug cartel. The residents are often caught in the middle of armed conflicts between different groups of drug dealers and the police. From time to time the shantytown turns into a war zone, with shootings incidents in the streets that can go on for weeks. This naturally impacts on the everyday life of the residents. For example, adults cannot go to their workplaces outside the shantytown, children and adolescents cannot go to school, and some informants remarked that they often cannot sleep at night because of fighting in the streets.

**Summary**

This chapter has presented a community profile of Buriti Congonhas, including a brief overview of Brazil, Rio de Janeiro, and the phenomenon of squatter settlements. The chapter begins by providing an outline of the larger historical and economic context in which the squatter settlements in
Rio de Janeiro exist, followed by a description of Buriti Congonhas in some details as to location, history and ownership, population, physical properties, urban services, local commerce, childcare facilities and schools, churches, and community violence. In summary, the community profile shows that Buriti Congonhas, like many other urban slum areas in Rio de Janeiro and elsewhere in the developing world, has come about through the gradual invasion of unoccupied land, fueled by a rapid rural-to-urban migration. Facts concerning the number of residents in Buriti Congonhas are somewhat contradictory, which makes it difficult to come to any conclusion about the accurate size of the population. When it comes to urban services, the last decades’ policies to upgrade the living conditions of the residents in the squatter settlements in Rio de Janeiro have brought many infrastructural improvements to Buriti Congonhas, including a public day nursery, paved streets, a closed sewage system, and an official lightning system. Nonetheless, at the time of the study, the water supply to most houses in Buriti Congonhas was still insufficient. Other deficiencies and disadvantages in Buriti Congonhas, shared with most other shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro, are the generally low quality of housing and the lack of neighborhood safety. Because of the proximity to schools, work options, and supermarkets in the surrounding neighborhoods, an active board of the Residents’ Association, and the long-term relative security of tenure, the residents of Buriti Congonhas are relatively privileged compared with dwellers in some of the other shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro.
CHAPTER 6

RESULTS FROM THE IN-PERSON SURVEY ON PARENTING

Introduction

Turning from the community to the individuals, the aim of this chapter is to present findings from the in-person survey conducted in Buriti Congonhas, focusing on interactions between the sample adolescents and their parents. The chapter begins with a presentation of the results from the questionnaires used to measure perceived parental acceptance–rejection and its effect on adolescents’ personality development and school attendance. Thereafter, some personal characteristics of the adolescents and their parents will be explored as potential determinants of variations in perceived parental acceptance–rejection in this particular shantytown. Lastly, a summary of the key findings is provided. The chapter also includes brief outlines of the three self-report questionnaires employed, to aid in interpreting the results presented. Note that although the names and abbreviations used in the self-report questionnaires are similar, they are not the same. As was described in Chapter 4, the child version of the Parental Acceptance–Rejection Questionnaire (Child PARQ) is a measure of the child’s perception of parent’s acceptance–rejection, the child version of the Personality Assessment Questionnaire (Child PAQ) measures the child’s self-reported personality and behavioral dispositions, and the parental version of the Personality Assessment Questionnaire (Mother PAQ) measures parents’ perception of their child’s personality and behavioral dispositions.

Perceived Parental Acceptance–Rejection

Parent–child relations in Buriti Congonhas were examined from the sample adolescents’ own point of view. More specifically, the Brazilian-Portuguese translation of the child version of Rohner’s (1986) Parental Acceptance–Rejection Questionnaire (Child PARQ) was used to measure the sample adolescents’ assessment of their main female and male
caregiver's behavior in terms of four scales; (1) perceived warmth and affection, (2) perceived hostility and aggression, (3) perceived indifference and neglect, and (4) perceived undifferentiated rejection. As defined by Rohner (1986), warmth and affection refer to the physical and verbal love that parents can give to their children, such as hugging, fondling, kissing, smiling, praising, and complimenting them. Hostility includes feelings of anger, resentment, or ill-will toward children, and aggression refers to physically or verbally hurting them, such as hitting and pinching or cursing and belittling them. Indifference is a lack of concern for, or not really caring about, the child. Neglect, on the other hand, refers primarily to the physical or psychological nonavailability of parents, as when parents fail to attend to the physical or psychological needs of their children. Undifferentiated rejection refers to conditions where parents are perceived as withdrawing love from the child – that is, the child interprets the parent’s behavior as rejecting, but where such rejection does not clearly reflect either perceived or objectively measured hostility, neglect, or indifference. Each of the four scales on the Child PARQ is designed such that the higher the test score, the higher is the level of the parental behavior being assessed (the possible extremes of scale scores and scale midpoints are presented in Table 6:1). The total Child PARQ score, which provides an overall acceptance–rejection profile, is obtained by summing the four scales after reversing the score of the warmth/affection scale to produce the measure of parental coldness and low affection. Total PARQ score range from a possible low of 60 (revealing maximum parental acceptance) to a high of 240 (revealing maximum rejection). Scores at or above 150 reveal that the child perceives more parental rejection than parental acceptance.

The results from the Child PARQ indicate that a majority of the sample adolescents in Buriti Congonhas experience on average, but with a few notable exceptions, substantial parental acceptance. In the sample, almost all of the adolescents (96%) reported perceiving more overall maternal and paternal acceptance than rejection (i.e. with scores below 150 on the maternal and paternal Total PARQ scale). Only a small number (4%) of the adolescents reported being rejected by one or both parents (3 and 1%, respectively) – although it should also be taken into consideration that a few adolescents were close to fulfilling the criterion for rejection on the Total PARQ scale. A similar finding was noted in Rohner and Chaki-Sircar’s (1988) study on women and children in a rural village in India, in which about 3% of the sample children reported being rejected by their mothers (R.P. Rohner, personal communication, June 2, 1997). In the United States, about 7 to 10% of the children reported rejected by parents (Rohner, 1986). This latter figure is approximately consistent with findings from previous studies on perceived parental acceptance–rejection conducted in Brazil (Kejerfors, 199a; Marques & Fahlberg, 1997).
As shown in Table 6.1, the adolescents in the sample scored on the average fairly low on the four scales of the Child PARQ, indicating the perception of considerably maternal and paternal warmth and affection, low maternal and paternal hostility and aggression, low maternal and paternal indifference and neglect, and low maternal and paternal undifferentiated rejection. However, each of the four scales shows a range of variation in perception of the maternal and paternal behaviors assessed.

Table 6.1. Descriptive statistics for Child PARQ scales and Total PARQ score among the sample adolescents in Buriti Congonhas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Subjects’ responses in relation to</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Possible scores</th>
<th>Mid-point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Highest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warmth/affection¹</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>30.85</td>
<td>8.45</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Father</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>34.05</td>
<td>9.09</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostility/aggression</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>29.29</td>
<td>8.22</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Father</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>29.67</td>
<td>6.99</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indifference/neglect</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>24.14</td>
<td>5.34</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Father</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>25.28</td>
<td>6.08</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undifferentiated rejection</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>20.61</td>
<td>5.53</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Father</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>19.87</td>
<td>4.78</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total PARQ</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>104.89</td>
<td>22.60</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total PARQ</td>
<td>Father</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>108.87</td>
<td>20.83</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
1. Warmth and affection scale-scores were reversed to make them a kind of “rejection” (i.e. “low warmth” or “coldness”). Therefore, the higher the warmth scores, the “colder” (less warm) the mother/father is perceived to be.
2. 240 means maximum rejection (not maximum acceptance).

Specifically, the results reveal that 10% of the adolescents experience qualitatively more maternal and/or paternal coldness than warmth and affection (i.e. with scores at or above 50 on the reversed maternal and/or paternal warmth and affection scale); 21% perceive significant degrees of maternal and/or paternal hostility and aggression (i.e. with scores at or above 37.5 on the maternal and/or paternal hostility and aggression scale); 11% experience maternal and/or paternal indifference and neglect (i.e. with scores at or above 37.5 on the maternal and/or paternal indifference and neglect scale); and 25% feel unwanted (or unloved) to a greater degree than they feel cared about by one or both of their parents (i.e. with scores at or above 25 on the maternal and/or paternal undifferentiated rejection scale).
Effects of Perceived Parental Acceptance–Rejection

The perception of parental acceptance–rejection seems to have consistent effects on the personality development and functioning of children and adults wherever in the world the question as been researched. Studies on the effects of parental acceptance–rejection in numerous geographically and culturally disparate societies suggest that, compared with children who perceive themselves to be accepted, children who perceive themselves to be rejected report more often that they have a specific constellation of personality and behavioral dispositions (see e.g. Rohner, 1986, 1989 and Rohner & Rohner, 1980). These dispositions include: (1) hostility, aggression, passive aggression, or problems managing hostility and aggression; (2) dependence or defensive independence, depending on the severity, chronicity, and form of rejection experienced; (3) impaired feelings of self-esteem; (4) impaired feelings of self-adequacy; (5) emotional instability; (6) emotional unresponsiveness; and (7) negative worldview. Hence, perceived parental rejection typically has serious consequences for the psychological development and personality functioning of children during their growing years and in adulthood (Rohner & Khaleque, 2002). Empirical evidence strongly supports the view that parental rejection is universally associated with depression and depressed affect, behavioral problems including conduct disorders, externalizing behaviors, delinquency, and substance abuse (Rohner & Britner, 2002). Children who feel rejected have also often been found to have greater academic and intellectual performance problems than children who feel accepted (Rohner, 1986). The data collected in Buriti Congonhas allowed the examination of two sets of outcome variables, one of which is the adolescents’ personality and behavioral characteristics, and the other the adolescents’ school attendance.

Perceived Parental Acceptance–Rejection and Adolescents’ Personality and Behavioral Characteristics

The personality dispositions associated with perceived parental acceptance and rejection were examined among the sample adolescents in Buriti Congonhas by means of a second self-report questionnaire: the Brazilian-Portuguese translation of the child version of Rohner’s (1989) Personality Assessment Questionnaire (Child PAQ). The Child PAQ contains seven scales designed to measure children’s assessment of themselves with respect to the seven personality and behavioral dispositions listed above. All scales range from a low of 6 to a high of 24, with a midpoint of 15. Scores at or above the midpoint indicate the “negative” end of each of these scales, namely high hostility, dependence (vs. independence),
negative self-esteem, negative self-adequacy, emotional unresponsiveness, emotional instability, and negative worldview. The sum of the scores on the seven scales forms a composite test score that indicates the overall personality and behavioral dispositions that children perceive themselves to be experiencing. The Total PAQ ranges from a low of 42 to a high of 168, with a midpoint of 105. Scores at or above the midpoint indicate significant self-reported emotional and behavioral problems. Thus, children who attain a high score on the Total PAQ may be regarded as having a “poorer” mental health status than children who attain low scores (Rohner, 1989).

The results from the Child PAQ indicate that the majority of the sample adolescents in Buriti Congonhas seem to perceive their own socio-emotional functioning as fairly positive. To be more precise, 82% of the adolescents reported having an overall positive mental health (as assessed by the Total PAQ). The remaining 18% achieved Total PAQ scores at or above 105, revealing considerable self-reported emotional and behavioral problems. Perhaps unsurprisingly, these adolescents reported on average significantly higher levels of overall perceived maternal and paternal rejection on the Child PARQ than did the other adolescents (Total PARQ for mother $M = 127.23$ compared with $M = 99.96$, $t = 4.421$, $p < 0.001$; Total PARQ for fathers $M = 128.36$ compared with $M = 104.58$, $t = 3.791$, $p < 0.001$). As one could expect, the latter group include those adolescents who reported being rejected by one or both parents.

The adolescents had fairly low mean scores on most of the seven Child PAQ scales. As shown in Table 6:2, the sample adolescents on average reported that they had no specific problems with managing hostility and aggression, feeling fairly good about themselves in terms of self-esteem and self-adequacy, being emotionally responsive and emotionally stable, and having a rather positive worldview, but at the same time, they reported being considerably dependent.

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40 $M$ refers to the mean or arithmetic average; $t$ refers to the t-test statistic, and $p$ refers to the probability value of the statistical test, in this case the t-test.
Chapter 6

Table 6.2: Descriptive statistics for Child PAQ Scales and Total PAQ Score among adolescents in Buriti Congonhas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Subjects’ responses</th>
<th>Possible scores</th>
<th>Midpoint</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hostility/Aggression</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>12.36</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependency</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>20.26</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative self-esteem</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>9.83</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative self-adequacy</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>12.03</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional unresponsiveness</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>12.43</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional instability</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative worldview</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>12.67</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total PAQ</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>94.49</td>
<td>13.07</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The adolescents’ levels of socioemotional functioning, as self-assessed on the Child PAQ, covary directly with the variation in their perception of parental acceptance–rejection on the Child PARQ. As can be seen from Table 6:3, all seven personality dispositions and the overall level of socioemotional functioning (i.e. Total PAQ) correlate significantly with the overall levels of perceived maternal and paternal acceptance–rejection (i.e. Total PARQ).

Table 6.3: Correlations between perceived Maternal and Paternal Rejection (Total PARQ) and Personality and Behavioral Dispositions (Child PAQ Scales) among adolescents in Buriti Congonhas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hostility/Aggression</th>
<th>Dependency</th>
<th>Negative self-esteem</th>
<th>Emotional unresponsiveness</th>
<th>Emotional instability</th>
<th>Negative worldview</th>
<th>Overall PAQ Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>.388**</td>
<td>.392**</td>
<td>.411**</td>
<td>.332**</td>
<td>.438**</td>
<td>.284*</td>
<td>.439**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>.296*</td>
<td>-.284*</td>
<td>.488**</td>
<td>.434**</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.270*</td>
<td>.45**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01

To sum up, this means that insofar as the adolescents in the sample perceive themselves as being loved and accepted by their parents, they also appear to have positive feelings of self-esteem and self-adequacy, to be emotionally responsive and emotionally stable, to have a positive worldview, and to be non-hostile or non-aggressive. These outcomes of perceived parental acceptance can be expected to appear the world over, regardless of variations in culture, language, race, geographic region, or other limiting conditions (cf. Rohner & Khaleque, 2002).
At present, there is no clear explanation for the correlation found between the sample adolescents’ reports of perceived parental acceptance and their feelings of dependency. As defined by Rohner (1989), dependency is the emotional reliance of one person on another for comfort, approval, guidance, support, reassurance, etc. It follows that a high level of dependency is likely to appear to a significantly greater degree among children who perceive themselves to be rejected than among children who perceive themselves to be accepted. Nevertheless, the results from the Child PARQ indicate that although a majority of the sample adolescents in Buriti Congonhas experience substantial parental acceptance, all but one (99%) reported being significantly dependent (i.e. with scores above the midpoint of 15 on the Child PAQ dependence scale). A possible explanation for this finding is that the accepted adolescents’ report of themselves as dependent might be due more to the Child PAQ’s incomplete assessment of the theoretical construct “dependence” than to a true relationship between the two variables (cf. Rohner & Chaki-Sircar, 1988). As noted by Rohner (1986, p. 107), the Child PAQ dependence scale emphasizes children’s desire for sympathy and encouragement from their parents when they are sick or in trouble more than it assesses important indicators of dependence, such as approval seeking or proximal seeking – that is, the desire to be near or in physical contact with a significant other.

The sample adolescents’ high level of self-reported dependency was discussed at an open seminar held in Buriti Congonhas (see Chapter 4). Although no consensus was reached at the seminar, it was evident that the participants from the shantytown did not consider child dependence, as defined by Rohner (1986), to be a problem. On the contrary, most of those attending the seminar seemed to regard children’s seeking of emotional and physical closeness with their significant others (parents or other attachment figures) as a positive quality in the sense that it kept the children close to their family and home, and thereby away from dangers in the neighborhood. From this perspective, children’s and adolescents’ reliance on their parents seems a natural way for families to cope with dangers they perceive in the surrounding environment (cf. Garbarino & Kostelný, 1993 and Garbarino, Kostelný, & Dubrow, 1991).

**Perceived Parental Acceptance–Rejection and Adolescents’ School Attendance**

Although the sample adolescents were all in the age bracket for mandatory school attendance, no obvious pattern in their educational status was found. Information elicited on the Background Data Schedule (BDS) shows that all of the adolescents in the sample had enrolled for the eight years of compulsory school. At the time of the study, nearly all (95%) of
the adolescents were still enrolled in and attending studies in compulsory school. These figures mirror official statistics showing that Brazil in 1996–2004 had a net compulsory school enrolment/attendance rate of 95% (UNICEF, 2005).

The findings from Buriti Congonhas also reflect that the primary education system in Brazil is marked by age–grade disparities caused by high repetition rates (cf. EFA, 2000). Of the adolescents in the sample who were enrolled in and attending school, more than half (53%) had repeated one or more grades (37 and 16%, respectively), and for this reason had fallen one to five years behind in relation to their age. These figures can be compared with findings from a recent study demonstrating that 20% of the children, aged 10 to 14 years, in the favelas in Rio de Janeiro have a schooling gap of more than two years (Cardoso, Elias, & Pero, 2003).

However, not all of the adolescents in the sample attended school. The information provided shows that, at the time of the study, 5% had dropped out of the mandatory primary school. The motives given by these adolescents for no longer attending school were “general lack of interest in school,” “inadequate documentation,” and “was expelled because the school had no longer had room for all the pupils.” These latter accounts are rather remarkable, given that the possibility to attend school is guaranteed by the Brazilian Constitution (cf. Ribeiro & Sabóia, 1994).

Although there are a number of barriers to education for children and adolescents from the shantytown, the experience of maternal warmth, responsiveness, and overall acceptance seems to have had an important influence on the sample adolescents’ school attendance. On the Child PARQ scales, the adolescents who had repeated grades or dropped out of school reported perceiving significantly less maternal warmth and affection than did the other adolescents in the sample (M = 27.89, t = 2.639, p < 0.01), and also significantly (if slightly) more maternal neglect and indifference (M = 25.31 compared with M = 22.69, t = 2.089, p < 0.05), and less overall maternal acceptance (Total PARQ M = 110.59 compared with the Total PARQ M = 98.86, t = 2.265, p < 0.05). No significant variations were noted, however, in relation to the fathers’ accepting or rejecting behavior. The finding that those adolescents in the sample who had repeated grades or dropped out of school reported perceiving significantly less maternal warmth and affection, more maternal neglect and indifference, and less overall maternal acceptance than those adolescents who had advanced a grade each year without repeating or dropping out of school concurs with the finding that rejected children often

41 According to information given at a later occasion by an employee at the Residents’ Association, the adolescent who had been expelled from primary school was allowed to return to his studies a few months after his parents were interviewed.
have greater academic problems (cf. Rohner, 1986). It is worth noting, however, that at the time of the study none of the adolescents who reported being rejected by one or both parents had dropped out of school, and only one had repeated grades.

**Personal Determinants of Perceived Parental Acceptance–Rejection**

Buriti Congonhas is, as mentioned earlier, characterized by a range of variation in perceived parental acceptance–rejection. As can be seen from Table 6.1, overall parental acceptance ranged from exceptionally high perceived acceptance (the lowest Total PARQ score reported in relation to mothers being 65 and in relation to fathers 63) to exceptionally high perceived rejection (the highest Total PARQ score reported in relation to mothers being 187 and in relation to fathers 166). Previous studies have demonstrated that several factors – including the personal characteristics of the child and the parent – appear to be significant determinants of variations in perceived parental acceptance–rejection (cf. Rohner; 1986; Rohner & Chaki-Sircar, 1988; Rohner & Rohner, 1980).

Children's and parents’ personal characteristics encompass a wide variety of attributes. In the present study, information collected from each sample adolescent and his or her main caregiver allowed the examination of two classes of potential determinants of acceptance–rejection within the category child characteristics: age and gender of adolescents, and parents’ perception of the index child’s personality and behavioral dispositions. The data also allowed the exploration of six potential determinants of variations in perceived parental acceptance–rejection within the category parental characteristics: gender and age of parents, self as parent, education level, occupation, place of origin, and religious preference.

**Variations in Perceived Parental Acceptance in Relation to Age and Gender**

As previously mentioned, data on perceived parental acceptance–rejection were collected from a sample of 72 adolescents aged 12–14 years. The distribution among the three age groups represented in the sample was quite closely balanced: there were 26 twelve-year-olds, 25 thirteen-year-olds, and 21 fourteen-year-olds.

The sample adolescents’ perception of their parents’ behavior varied significantly by age, such that the younger the adolescent, the more overall maternal and paternal acceptance was reported on the Child PARQ. The overall correlation between perceived maternal acceptance and the
adolescent's age is $r = .243\ (p < 0.05)$, and between perceived paternal acceptance and adolescent's age is $r = .592\ (p < 0.01)$\textsuperscript{42}. As can be seen from Table 6:4, the 12-year-olds scored on the average lower for both their mothers (Total PARQ $M = 100.42$) and fathers (Total PARQ $M = 102.48$) than did the 13-year-olds (Mother Total PARQ $M = 101.52$; Father Total PARQ $M = 112.05$), and the 14-year-olds (Mother Total PARQ $M = 114.43$; Father Total PARQ $M = 114.56$).

Table 6:4. Mean Total PARQ scores in relation to mothers and fathers by age of adolescent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>12 years $(n = 26)$</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>13 years $(n = 25)$</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>14 years $(n = 21)$</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>100.42</td>
<td>19.87</td>
<td>101.52</td>
<td>17.41</td>
<td>114.43</td>
<td>28.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>102.08</td>
<td>19.40</td>
<td>112.05</td>
<td>20.01</td>
<td>114.56</td>
<td>21.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although, it has been suggested that the display of warmth by both mothers and fathers decreases as children get older (Child Trends, 2002), the age differences in perceived parental acceptance–rejection noted for the sample adolescents in Buriti Congonhas do not seem to concur with findings from other studies. In the United States, for example, younger children are no more nor less likely than older children to report being accepted or rejected, and the same holds true for children in central India as well as in the former Czechoslovakia (see Rohner, 1986).

In Buriti Congonhas, no significant gender differences were found with respect to the sample adolescents’ perception of parental acceptance–rejection. The 72 adolescents were evenly divided between boys $(n = 36)$ and girls $(n = 36)$. Although the girls in the sample scored on average lower for both their mothers (Total PARQ $M = 104.5$) and fathers (Total PARQ $M = 106.34$) than the boys did for both their mothers (Total PARQ $M = 105.3$) and fathers (Total PARQ $M = 111.66$), no significant differences between the genders in perceived parental acceptance occurred on the Child PARQ scales. According to Rohner (1986), the same holds true for children in the United States and southern India, whereas gender differences in perceived parental acceptance–rejection were found for children in central and north India. Boys in West Bengal, for instance, perceived slightly more maternal warmth than did girls (Rohner & Chaki-Sircar, 1988).

\textsuperscript{42} \textit{r} is the conventional statistical symbol used to designate a correlation coefficient.
Variations in Perceived Parental Acceptance in Relation to Personality and Behavioral Characteristics

In Buriti Congonhas, parents’ perception of their child’s personality and behavioral characteristics appears to be a predictor of variations in perceived maternal and paternal acceptance and rejection. Although research on perceived parental acceptance–rejection has concentrated primarily on the influence flowing from parent to child, there seems to be little doubt in the study of parental acceptance–rejection – as with the study of other forms of parenting – that the personal and behavioral characteristics of the child as instigator of parental action should be taken into account (Rohner, 1986, 1989).

In an attempt to examine reciprocal effects between children’s reports of their parents’ behavior in terms of acceptance–rejection and parents’ perception of their child’s personality and behavioral characteristics, the main caregiver for each of the 72 adolescents in the sample was asked to complete the Brazilian-Portuguese translation of the parental version of Rohner’s (1989) Personality Assessment Questionnaire (Mother PAQ). The Mother PAQ is a self-report measure that asks mothers (in this case the main caregiver, whether mother or father) to respond according to their perceptions of their child’s behavior in terms of the same seven behavioral and personality dispositions that are assessed on the Child PAQ. The Mother PAQ scales range from a low of 6 to a high of 24, with a midpoint of 15. A high score indicates the “negative” end of the continuum for each of these scales. The sum of the scores on the seven scales forms a composite test score indicating the caregiver’s perception of the child’s overall personality and behavioral dispositions. The Total Mother PAQ ranges from a low of 42 to a high of 168, with a midpoint of 105. The higher the total test score, the more emotional and behavioral problems of the child the parent recognizes.

The results of the Mother PAQ indicate that a majority of the 72 caregivers, 68 women and 4 men, who had completed the questionnaire, perceived their child’s socio-emotional functioning as fairly positive. To be more precise, 78% of the parents reported that their children have an overall positive mental health status (as assessed by the Total PAQ), whereas the remaining 22% reported that their child had significant overall emotional and behavioral problems (i.e. Total Mother PAQ scores at or above 105). As can be seen from Table 6:5, the parents reported that on average their children had positive feelings of self-esteem and self-adequacy, were emotionally responsive, and had a positive worldview, but at the same time the parents also reported that their children had some problems in managing hostility and aggression, were somewhat emotionally unstable, and were fairly dependent.
Table 6.5. Descriptive statistics for Mother PAQ Scales and Total Mother PAQ score in Buriti Congonhas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Subjects' responses</th>
<th>Possible scores</th>
<th>Mid-point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Lowest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostility/Aggression</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>16.06</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependency</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>19.50</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative self-esteem</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>9.10</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative self-adequacy</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>10.99</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional unre sponsiveness</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>11.81</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional instability</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>17.44</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative worldview</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>10.76</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Mother PAQ</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>95.65</td>
<td>13.83</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The parents’ scores tended to agree fairly closely with their children’s scores on the Child PAQ (see Table 6.2), but on average they seemed to regard their offspring as having more problems in managing hostility and aggression, as being more emotionally unstable, and also as having a more positive worldview than the adolescents reported themselves. As shown in Table 6.6, the overall composite test score and three of the seven personality dispositions assessed on the Mother PAQ correlate significantly with the sample adolescents’ responses on the Child PAQ scales.

Table 6.6. Correlations between main caregivers’ reflection on their child’s Personality and Behavioral dispositions (Mother PAQ) and adolescents’ perception of their own Personality and Behavioral Dispositions (Child PAQ).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personality and Behavioral Dispositions (PAQ Scales)</th>
<th>Hostility/Aggression</th>
<th>Dependence</th>
<th>Negative self-esteem</th>
<th>Emotional unre sponsiveness</th>
<th>Emotional instability</th>
<th>Negative worldview</th>
<th>Overall PAQ Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>.363**</td>
<td>.462**</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>.192</td>
<td>.310**</td>
<td>.034</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: ** p < 0.01

The parents’ appraisal of their child’s personality and behavioral characteristics varied by age and gender on only a few of the Mother PAQ scales. The 12-year-old adolescents were reported by their parents as being slightly more dependent than the 13- and 14-year-olds (M = 20.58 compared with M = 18.76 and M = 19.05, r = -.259, p < 0.05). The parents also reported perceiving the girls in the sample as having a significantly higher level of negative self-esteem than the boys (M = 9.94 compared with
Results from the In-person Survey on Parenting

$M = 8.25, t = 2.667, p < 0.01$). Moreover, it is worth noting that about twice as many girls ($n = 11$) than boys ($n = 5$) were reported by their parents as having substantial overall emotional and behavioral problems (i.e. with Total Mother PAQ scores at or above 105).

The parents’ perception of their child’s personality and behavioral dispositions appears to have influenced their parenting behavior. As shown in Table 6.7, all personality dispositions assessed on the Mother PAQ correlate significantly with the varying degrees of parental acceptance–rejection reported on the Child PARQ, except the caregiver’s appraisal of the adolescent’s level of dependence. This means that to the extent that the caregivers perceive their child’s personality and behavioral characteristics as fairly positive, they tend to behave in an accepting fashion toward the child.

Table 6.7. Correlations between main caregivers’ reflection on their child’s Personality and Behavioral Dispositions (Mother PAQ) and adolescents’ perception of overall parental acceptance–rejection (Total PARQ).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total PARQ</th>
<th>Hostility/Aggression</th>
<th>Dependence</th>
<th>Negative self-esteem</th>
<th>Negative self-efficacy</th>
<th>Emotional unreponsiveness</th>
<th>Emotional instability</th>
<th>Negative worldview</th>
<th>Overall PAQ Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caregiver</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>.343**</td>
<td>.218</td>
<td>.264*</td>
<td>.283*</td>
<td>.356**</td>
<td>.335**</td>
<td>.238*</td>
<td>.429**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

In addition to responding to the Mother PAQ, the main caregivers were asked on the Neighborhood and Community Assessment Questionnaire whether there were things about their child that made him or her easy or difficult to raise. The majority (69%) of the parents reported that their child’s behaviour (e.g. calmness, docility, comprehensiveness, hominess) made the child generally easy to raise. Some 7% of the parents reported that their child was neither easy nor difficult to raise, but was sometimes hard to deal with; 24% said that their child’s behavior made him or her difficult to raise (e.g. having a rebellious temperament, being irritable, or being taciturn and/or introverted).

The adolescents regarded as being easy to deal with were reported by their main caregiver on the Mother PAQ as having on average fewer overall behavioral and emotional problems than the more “difficult” adolescents (Total Mother PAQ $M = 93.18$ compared with $M = 101.86, t = 2.519$, $p < 0.05$), as having fewer problems in managing hostility and aggression ($M = 15.02$ compared with $M = 18.18, t = 3.3161, p < 0.001$), and also as being more emotionally responsive ($M = 10.88$ compared with $M = 13.91, t = 3.242, p < 0.01$). Moreover, the adolescents indicated as being easy to
deal with reported on the Child PARQ that they perceived more overall acceptance from their main caregiver than the other adolescents did, although the difference was slight (Total PARQ M = 101.3 compared with Total PARQ M = 114.45, t = 2.39, p < 0.05). In sum, these results suggest that the sample adolescents’ actual or perceived personality and behavioral dispositions shaped their caregivers’ parenting behavior.

**Variations in Perceived Parental Acceptance in Relation to Parents’ Gender and Age**

The sample of 133 parents for whom the adolescents responded on the Child PARQ comprised more women (n = 72) than men (n = 61). Seventy-six percent of the caregivers were the sample adolescents’ biological parents, while the remaining 24% consisted of men and women substituting in the function of father and mother (18 and 6%, respectively).

Although the results show that most parents were perceived as being basically warm and affectionate, the adolescents tended to report somewhat more perceived warmth and affection from their female parent than from their male parent. For almost every form of perceived acceptance, apart from undifferentiated rejection, the sample adolescents scored on average somewhat lower for their female parents than for their male parents. However, only with respect to perceived parental warmth and affection were the differences between the scores for mothers and fathers statistically significant (M = 30.85 compared with M = 34.05, t = 2.102, p < 0.05), which indicates an overall tendency for the sample adolescents to perceive their female parent as being slightly warmer and more affectionate than their male parent. This can be compared with Rohner & Rohner’s (1981) holocultural study on parental acceptance–rejection and parental control in six of the world’s major geographic regions. That study showed that fathers around the world are not (statistically) significantly less warm toward their children than are mothers; nor on average are fathers significantly more or less hostile, neglecting, or controlling than are mothers. Note that the adolescents in Buriti Congonhas who were raised by women substituting as mothers tended to report slight but significantly less perceived maternal warmth and affection than did adolescents raised by their biological mothers (M = 37.7 compared with M = 30.11, t = 2.331, p < 0.05).

The parents for whom the sample adolescents responded on the Child PARQ were on average relatively mature – though the age range covered a wide span. According to the information given by the main caregivers on the Background Data Schedule (BDS), the parents’ average age was 40 years (S.D. 9.0), ranging from 22 to 67 years, with a median of 39 years. Forty-six percent of the parents were in their thirties, 31% in their forties, and 16% were 50 years or older. Only 7% were in their twenties.
Results from the In-person Survey on Parenting

There were no significant differences in age between the female and male caregivers (\( M = 39.9 \) years compared with \( M = 40.4 \) years, \( p = n.s \)). Female parents’ age ranged from 27 to 67 years, with a median of 37.5 years. The women older than 55 years (\( n = 4 \)) were all grandmothers and aunts of the adolescents in the sample. The male parents’ age ranged from 22 to 66 years, with a median of 40 years. The men younger than 29 years (\( n = 4 \)) were all non-biological fathers.

Parents’ age did not seem to be an important determinant of variations in the sample adolescents’ perception of parental acceptance–rejection; the correlation between parents’ age and adolescents’ report of perceived parental acceptance was not significant. However, the adolescents’ scores on the Child PARQ indicate that the fathers aged 50 years or older were perceived to be slightly more generally accepting than the fathers in their forties (Total PARQ \( M = 96.2 \) compared with \( M = 114.43 \), \( t = 2.295 p < 0.05 \)), and also somewhat warmer and more affectionate than the fathers in their thirties (\( M = 27.8 \) compared with \( M = 34.8 \), \( t = 2.262 p < 0.05 \)). This finding can be compared with Finlay, Janovetz, and Rogers’ study on university students’ perception of parental acceptance–rejection as a function of parental age (referred to in Parke, 2002). In retrospective accounts by adults, fathers who were between the ages 30 and 39 years when the informant was born were reported as being more accepting than fathers who were younger or older.

The information provided by the main caregivers in Buriti Congonhas also reveals that 21% of the biological parents had been in their teens at the birth of the index child. The average age among these parents at the birth of the child was 17.9 years (\( S.D = 1.32 \)), ranging from 15 to 19 years, with a median of 18.5 years. A considerably higher proportion of the biological mothers (26%) than of the biological fathers (8%) had been in their teens at the birth of the index child. The average age of the teen mothers at the birth of the child was 17.8 years, and for the teen fathers 18.3 years.

On the Child PARQ scales, no significant differences in perceived parental acceptance–rejection occurred between the adolescents born to teenage parents and other adolescents. This finding is in accord with other studies showing that teenage mothers tend to be as warm as older mothers toward their children (Moore & Brooks-Gunn, 2002).

Variations in Perceived Parental Acceptance in Relation to Caregivers’ Self-perception as Parent

Information elicited through the BDS indicates that the parents for whom the sample adolescents responded on the Child PARQ had an
average of 3.8 (S.D. 1.82) natural children\footnote{In the present study, natural children refers to children of the parents by natural procreation or adoption.} each, ranging from one to twelve, with a median of 4.0 children. The number of children increased significantly with parents’ age ($r = 0.407 \ p < 0.01$). On average, the parents aged 39 years or younger had 3.4 (S.D. 1.3) children, the parents in their forties averaged at 4.0 (S.D. 1.4) children, while the parents 50 years or more had an average of 5.4 (S.D. 3.1) children.

When asked whether they planned to have any more children, 92\% of the informants gave an answer in the negative. Only 8\% of the parents interviewed said that they planned to have more children; in fact, at the time of the study a few of them were pregnant. The most common reason given for not planning to have more children was that the existing number of offspring was already adequate. Other commonly reported motives included inadequate finances, difficulties in raising a child, and being too old.

The majority of the parents interviewed seemed to learn about parenting from various sources. When the informants were asked where they turn for parenting advice, 81\% responded that they turned to one or more informal or formal sources. The most commonly mentioned source of information on parenting was the informants’ own families of origin (55\%). The next most frequently mentioned source was parenting books and articles in news papers and magazines (46\%), followed by television (24\%), professionals working with children and families (19\%), the informants’ neighbors (10\%), and God (5\%). However, 19\% of the parents interviewed said that they never sought parenting advice.

For me, it has never been a problem to parent my children. I have learned it on my own, though for some parents it may be very helpful to have advice and tips about parenting.

The parents interviewed were asked on the Neighborhood and Community Assessment Questionnaire whether they were satisfied with themselves as a parent. About half of the informants (51\%) said that they were satisfied with themselves as parents. Nearly as many informants (47\%) reported being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Only one informant reported being dissatisfied with herself as a parent.

If I had known how difficult it is to be a parent, I would never have had any children – though I love the ones I have.

During the interviews, other parents gave similar accounts (i.e. informants who reported themselves as being satisfied or middling), which
perhaps suggests that parents can have doubts about their capacity to raise children, regardless of their overall assessment of themselves as a parent. Moreover, it is worth noting that the informants who were satisfied with themselves as parents were on the average slightly younger than the parents who reported themselves as middling ($M = 39$ years compared with $M = 40.7$ years), and they also had a slightly lower average number of children ($n = 3.7$ compared with $n = 4.1$).

The informants' satisfaction with themselves as parents correlates significantly with their reported perception of the child's overall socio-emotional functioning on the Mother PAQ ($r = 0.661 \ p < 0.01$). Insofar as the caregivers perceive their child's personal and behavioral characteristics as fairly positive, they seem to be satisfied with themselves as parents. This assumption can be compared with Sigel and McGillicuddy-De Lisi's (2002) evaluation research on parental beliefs showing that parents’ beliefs about their competence as parent are often related to the children's behavior.

Parents’ perception of themselves as parents did not appear to contribute to variations in perceived parental acceptance. The informants’ satisfaction with themselves as parents did not correlate statistically with the way they behaved towards their children. Nevertheless, the children of those parents who reported being satisfied with themselves as parents scored on average lower on all scales of the Child PARQ than did the other adolescents in the sample. Although none of these differences was statistically significant, parents' satisfaction with themselves as parents is interesting as a manifestation of adult cognitive development and perhaps as indicating their personal investment in the parental role (cf. Sigel & McGillicuddy-De Lisi's, 2002).

**Variations in Perceived Parental Acceptance in Relation to Parents’ Educational Level**

The educational achievement of the parents was on average quite low. According to information provided by the main caregivers on the Background Data Schedule (BDS), the average grade completed by the parents in the sample was 4.5 grades ($S.D. 2.66$) of compulsory school, which is considerably lower than the figure for the general population in the southeastern region of Brazil. The Brazilian National Household Sampling Survey and the so-called Population Count carried out in 1996 estimate an average of 6.6 years of schooling in the Southeast, which is the highest average registered in any region in Brazil (PNUD/IPEA, 1996).

Most of the parents (86%) had had at least some schooling, but the remaining 14% had no schooling at all. As can be seen from Table 6:8, 25% of the parents had completed the eight years of primary education. Of these parents, 22% had accomplished an additional three grades of
secondary education, and 6% had experience of studies at university level – although only one had graduated.

Table 6.8. Parents’ educational achievement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest level of education completed</th>
<th>Number of parents</th>
<th>Percent of parents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admission to high school or higher</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth grade in compulsory school</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh grade in compulsory school</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth grade in compulsory school</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth grade in compulsory school</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth grade in compulsory school</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third grade in compulsory school</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second grade in compulsory school</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First grade in compulsory school</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No formal schooling</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>133</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The remaining 75% of the parents had completed less than eight grades of primary school. Of these parents, 81% had an incomplete primary education, and the remaining 19% had no formal school qualifications at all. The latter group comprised parents who had enrolled in school but dropped out before completing the first grade \( (n = 9) \), parents who never had attended school \( (n = 8) \), and parents who had no other education than a six-month literacy program \( (n = 2) \). Unsurprisingly, quite a few of the caregivers interviewed mentioned that they themselves and/or their child’s other parent had low or no literacy skills. According to a recent study, one in ten adults in the favelas in Rio de Janeiro is illiterate, 82% have less than eight years of schooling, and only 2% continue on to studies at university level (Cardoso, Elias, & Pero, 2003).

The mothers were somewhat less likely than the fathers to have completed eight grades of primary school or more, but more fathers than mothers had no school qualifications at all. The average number of primary school grades completed by the female parents was 4.6, and for the male parents 4.4 grades, which is not statistically significant. The information provided shows that 21% of the mothers compared with 28% of the fathers had completed all eight grades of primary school. Moreover, 4% of the mothers and 7% of the fathers had an additional three years of secondary education or higher. The finding that more fathers than mothers had completed eight grades of primary school reflects the fact that in traditional Brazilian culture men have had to be better educated than women because they needed to work outside the home, while education was thought to be less important for women because their role was that of
housewife (cf. Marques, 1986). On the other hand, 23% of the fathers and 7% of the mothers had less than one year of or no formal schooling.

The information provided indicates that many parents had repeated grades in school. Of those who had ever attended school, 47% of the mothers and at least 18% of the fathers had repeated one or more grades. As the data on the male caregivers’ school attendance were for the most part provided indirectly by the female caregivers, information on repetition rates is lacking for 39% of the fathers. Several of the primary caregivers interviewed also said that they did not remember exactly how many grades they had repeated in school. In fact, more than a few explained that it had taken them at least twice as long as intended to complete the highest grade they attained in primary school. A number of parents commented, for instance, that they were fifth-grade dropouts with ten years of schooling.

The parents who were younger than 40 years of age were more likely than the older parents in the sample to have completed eight grades of primary education. This fact probably reflects the last decades’ expansion of the Brazilian educational system (cf. EFA, 2000).44 The information given shows a significant correlation between parents’ age and their educational attainment. The parents who had completed eight grades of primary school were on average almost two years younger than the parents with an incomplete primary education, and nearly ten years younger than the parents who had no school qualifications at all ($M = 37.5$ years compared with $M = 39.2$ years and $M = 47.1$ years, $r = .292, p < 0.01$).

Moreover, the information given shows that only 14% of the parents who had been in their teens at the birth of the index child had completed eight grades of primary school, and none of them had continued on to secondary education. This finding is in accord with studies from the United States showing that teenage mothers are less likely than their age mates to complete high school and go on to postsecondary education (Moore & Brooks-Gunn, 2002).

The parents who had eight grades or more of schooling received on average lower scores on the Child PARQ scales, except on the undifferentiated rejection scale, than did the parents who had less or no schooling. However, only the warmth and affection scale showed a significant difference, indicating that the parents who had completed eight grades of schooling were perceived by their children as being slightly warmer and more affectionate than the parents who had no school qualifications at all ($M = 30.0$ compared with $M = 35.26$, $t = 2.352, p < 0.05$).

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44 Until the early 1970s, compulsory education in Brazil was restricted to a four-year primary education (EFA, 2000).
Chapter 6

Variations in Perceived Parental Acceptance in Relation to Parents’ Place of Origin

Over half of the parents for whom the sample adolescents responded on the Child PARQ were born in the metropolitan area of Rio de Janeiro⁴⁵, and a good number have always lived in Buriti Congonhas. As can be seen in Table 6.9, information provided by the main caregivers on the Background Data Schedule (BDS) shows that almost two thirds (65%) of the parents originated from the State of Rio de Janeiro.

Table 6.9. Parents’ place of origin.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region and state⁴⁶</th>
<th>Number of parents</th>
<th>Percent of parents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southeast:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rio de Janeiro</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Espírito Santo</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minas Gerais</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraíba</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahia</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rio Grande do Norte</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceará</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maranhão</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sergipe</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pará</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of these parents, 61% had always lived in Buriti Congonhas, while 31% came from adjacent neighborhoods (16%) or other localities in the metropolitan area (15%). Fewer than one in ten (8%) of the parents originating from the State of Rio de Janeiro came from smaller towns or villages in the surrounding rural municipalities.

The remaining 35% of the parents had migrated to Rio de Janeiro from other Brazilian States. Of these parents, 70% came from states in the

⁴⁵ According to Rio de Janeiro’s Municipal Developmental Council (COMUDES, 2003), the metropolitan area of Rio de Janeiro consists of 18 municipalities – Duque de Caxias, Itaguaí, Mangaratiba, Nilópolis, Nova Iguaçu, São Gonçalo, Itaborai, Magé, Maricá, Niterói, Paracambi, Petrópolis, Rio de Janeiro, São João de Meriti, Japeri, Queimados, Belford Roxo, and Guapimirim – which comprise “Greater Rio de Janeiro”

⁴⁶ The grouping of regions follows the division used by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2005b).
Northeastern or Northern regions of the country, while 30% were from neighboring states in Southeastern Brazil. Eighty-three percent of the migrated parents came from smaller towns or villages in the rural countryside, and the remaining 17% originated from larger cities – usually state capitals. Fully two-thirds (66%) of the migrated parents are women.

The parents who had come to live in Rio de Janeiro as adults had attained on average about the same level of education as the parents who were born in Rio de Janeiro or who had come to live there in childhood or adolescence. The average number of grades completed by the migrated parents was 4.8 and for the parents born or raised in Rio de Janeiro 4.4 grades, which is not statistically significant.

Consistent with local popular belief, as mentioned in Chapter 5 some 48% of the informants who had migrated to Rio de Janeiro from states in the northeastern regions of Brazil lived on the slope closest to the abandoned quarry – that is, the area called Buriti. However, the data do not support the local belief that, compared with natives of Rio de Janeiro, migrants from northeastern Brazil were more eager to improve their living conditions.

The sample parents who had migrated to Rio de Janeiro had many years experience of the city. At the time of the study, the migrated parents had lived in Rio de Janeiro for about 27 years (S.D. 11.0), with a length of residency ranging from 6 to 59 years.

The migrated parents had left their place of origin and moved to Rio de Janeiro for many diverse reasons. Sixty-four percent of the migrated parents gave, or were reported to have had, as the main reason for their migration to Rio de Janeiro “better life opportunities” (47%) or “family reasons” (17%). The informants’ account of “better life opportunities” include a number of push and pull factors such as escape from poverty, drought and famine, chance of employment and a higher standard of living, and/or the lure of the “bright lights” of the city. Furthermore, the descriptions of “family reasons” comprised a number of diverse causes such as joining a relative or a spouse, and/or escaping from a difficult family situation. The remaining 36% of the migrated parents had in childhood or adolescence accompanied their parents’ move to Rio de Janeiro. According to the information given, economic factors, such as low income, unemployment, and/or poverty, had influenced their parents’ decision to migrate.

The largest part of the migrated parents had not arrived in the city as total strangers with no one to turn to. Nearly all (96%) of the migrated parents in the sample stated that they had, or were reported to have had, relatives, friends, or both already living in Rio de Janeiro. This is consistent with findings from other studies conducted in shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro which show that most urban migrants already had relatives, friends, or both in the city when they arrived (Marques, 1986; Perlman, 1976).
Many of the migrated parents maintained contact with people at their place of origin. The data show that 62% of the migrated parents had regular contact by mail or phone with relatives and friends at their place of origin – though the frequency of contact varied. However, 38% of the parents stated that they did not have, or were reported not to have, any contact with people at their place of origin. During the interviews, several of these parents expressed anger at having had to experience poverty, famine, and work in childhood, and a few said that they deliberately had broken all contact with people at their place of origin, including their own family of origin – primarily because of their parents’ neglect and/or incapacity to protect them from the adversities they had experienced.

I will never forgive my parents for depriving me of the opportunity of a decent childhood. How can a mother or father be so ignorant that they let their children starve and work as slaves in the sugarcane plantations in the countryside instead of moving to a shantytown in a city with better chances of having a decent standard of living?

Aside from a couple of migrated mothers who expressed dissatisfaction with living away from their family and friends, all the migrants interviewed seemed pleased with their own, or their parents’, decision to migrate to Rio de Janeiro. By way of example, several of the informants commented that the move to Rio de Janeiro meant that they could give their children better life opportunities (e.g. food, health-care, and education) than they could in the poverty-stricken rural areas from which they came.

Although values about child-raising and parenting practices are likely to vary both within and between different states and regions in Brazil (cf. Marques, 1986), the parents’ place of origin did not seem to be a significant predictor of variations in perceived parental acceptance in Buriti Congonhas. On the Child PARQ scales, no significant differences in perceived parental acceptance–rejection in relation to the parents’ place of origin were noted. Parenting practices may alter, however, as migrants move from one place to another. For example, in a review of parenting studies that incorporated a perspective on cultural context (Youniss, 1994), it was found that migrated parents often adopt practices that they believe will benefit their children in the child’s future social adaptation, regardless of the extent to which the parents themselves are assimilated to the host culture.

Variations in Perceived Parental Acceptance in Relation to Parents’ Religious Preferences

The great majority (83%) of the parents for whom the adolescents responded on the Child PARQ stated that they had, or were reported to have, some religious affiliation. Of these parents, 69% identified themselves,
or were described as being Catholics, 21% as Protestants, and 10% as “Candomblistas.” It is uncertain how many of these parents were actually affiliated with a particular system of religious belief. Some informants, for instance, stated that they belonged to the Catholic tradition, but also remarked that they were “not practising Catholics” or that they were “Catholics only on paper.” The remaining 17% of the parents in the sample said that they had, or they were reported to have, no religion. The latter group comprised more fathers (56%) than mothers (44%); 82% of the non-religious fathers and mothers were born in Rio de Janeiro (54 and 27%, respectively). Moreover, the data show that only 4% of the adolescents who responded to the Child PARQ had two non-religious parents.

The parents’ religious preferences did not seem to be a determinant of variations in perceived parental acceptance–rejection among the sample adolescents in Buriti Congonhas. The religiously affiliated parents were not reported on the Child PARQ scales as being significantly more nor less accepting or rejecting than were the parents’ who had no religious affiliation. Nor were any differences noted between parents of different faiths.

Summary

The results presented in this chapter show that a majority of the sample adolescents in Buriti Congonhas, with a few notable exceptions, perceived on average, according to the Child PARQ, substantial parental acceptance from their caregivers. The adolescents’ individual experience of parental acceptance or rejection appears to have influenced their emotional and behavioral functioning and their school attendance. More specifically, the results show that the degree to which adolescents in Buriti Congonhas report having positive feelings of self-esteem and self-adequacy, being emotionally responsive and emotionally stable, having a positive worldview, having few problems in managing hostility and aggression, and having overall positive mental health (as assessed by the Total PAQ) correlates significantly with the degree of acceptance they report experiencing from their mothers and fathers. In addition, the results suggest that individual experiences of perceived maternal acceptance and rejection also contribute to variations in the sample adolescents’ school attendance. To be more precise, the sample adolescents who had repeated grades or dropped out of school reported perceiving significantly less maternal warmth and affection, more maternal neglect and indifference, and less overall maternal acceptance.

47 Denomination for persons religiously affiliated to Candomblé, which is an African religion practised chiefly in Brazil.
than did the adolescents who had advanced a grade each year without repeating grades or dropping out of school. Significant portions of the variation in perceived parental acceptance noted in Buriti Congonhas seem to be related to the adolescent’s age and to the parents’ gender, educational level, and perception of the adolescent’s personality and behavioral characteristics, while the other personal attributes explored (i.e. adolescents’ gender, parents’ age, parents’ perception of themselves as parents, parents’ place of origin and religious preference) did not appear to contribute to variations in perceived parental acceptance.
CHAPTER 7

RESULTS FROM THE IN-PERSON SURVEY ON THE CONTEXTS OF PARENTING

Introduction

Parents behave as they do toward their children for many different reasons (Rohner, 1986, p. 58). The results presented in the previous chapter have already suggested that variations in perceived parental acceptance among adolescents in Buriti Congonhas are related to the adolescents’ age and to the parents’ gender, educational level, and perception of the adolescents’ personality and behavioral characteristics. However, the contexts within which the sample adolescents and their parents interact and live their lives are also likely to play a role in the process. These contexts are, of course, complex and diverse. The data collected through the in-person survey allowed the exploration of some of the aspects of five broad contexts which, in complex, interlocking, ways, are likely to affect adolescent development through their influence on the quality of the parent–child relationship. These contexts are the families and households in which the sample adolescents interact with one or both of their main caregivers, the neighborhood in which the adolescents and their parents live, the adolescents’ school, the parents’ work, and the recreational activities in which the sample adolescents and their parents participate. The chapter concludes with a summary of the key findings.

Family and Household as Contexts for Parenting

The parents for whom the sample adolescents responded on the Child PARQ were mostly, but not always, members of the same household. As can be seen from Table 7:1, more than two thirds (68%) of the adolescents responded to the Child PARQ in relation to a female and male caregiver both of whom were living in the same household as the adolescents themselves. The remaining 32% had either responded to the questionnaire...
in relation to their parents living in separate households (17%) or in relation to only a female caregiver in the absence of a significant male (15%). Note that nearly twice as many boys as girls did not seem to have a significant male caregiver in their life.

Table 7.1. Living arrangement by gender of adolescent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Adolescents living with both parents</th>
<th>Adolescents living with female parent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Male parent living elsewhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The adolescents with parents living in separate households all lived with a female caregiver, but were reported to have an ongoing relationship with either a biological father (75%) or other significant male living elsewhere (25%). Of these adolescents, 75% reported seeing their non-resident father at least once a week, while 25% said that they generally saw their non-resident father a few times a year or less. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the frequency of contact seems to be dependent on the distance between the adolescent’s home and that of the non-resident father’s. All the adolescents who lived in the same neighborhood as their non-resident father (n = 5) met them daily. A few adolescents actually lived next door to their non-resident father. The adolescents whose significant males lived in adjacent neighborhoods (n = 5) spent time with them every week, except for one girl who saw her father only a few times a year. And the adolescents whose fathers lived more distantly, for example in another part of the city (n = 1) or another state (n = 1), met them rarely but were reported to have more or less regular contact by phone or letter.

The father’s presence in the child’s life seems to have had a positive influence on the sample adolescents’ self-evaluation of their ability to freely and openly express emotions. On the Child PAQ, the adolescents who lived in the same household as their father, or had an ongoing relationship with a non-resident father, reported perceiving themselves as significantly more emotionally responsive than did the adolescents with absent fathers, although the difference is slight (M = 12.1 compared with M = 14.4, t = 2.104 p < 0.05).
Marital Status and Household Composition

The information elicited through the Background Data Schedule (BDS) shows that 71% of the parents interviewed lived with partners, either cohabiting (40%) or married (31%). The remaining 29% of the informants lived without a partner. The latter were parents who had never married (14%) or were widowed (13%) or separated (2%) from their partner.

The households in which the main caregivers interacted with their respective index child can be roughly divided into four different categories, as shown in Table 7:2. Thirty-three percent of the informants lived in nuclear family households consisting of two parents and their common children. Some 24% lived in step- or reconstituted families – that is, families where the informant was partnered and at least one child in the household was from a previous relationship of either the informant or partner (cf. Ghate & Hazel, 2002). One in six informants (17%) lived in single-parent family households containing just the informant and her children. The remaining 26% lived in some form of extended family household.48

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of members in the household</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Nuclear families</th>
<th>Extended families</th>
<th>Step- or reconstituted families</th>
<th>Single-parent families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean size of household</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The informants living in step- or reconstituted families differed from the informants living in other types of households in several ways. They were on average about six years younger ($M = 35$ years compared with $M = 41$ years, $t = 2.509, p < 0.05$), had a lower mean number of biological children

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48 The category “extended family households” as used here includes any household in which parents and children live together with other relatives, such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, or cousins. Nineteen sample families in Buriti Congonhas lived in some form of extended family household, ten 2-parent families and nine single-parent families.
(\(M = 3.2\) compared with \(M = 4.1\)), and almost twice as many of the informants who lived in step- or reconstituted families (47%) than the informants who lived in other types of households (25%) were in their teens at the birth of the index child.

As also can be seen in Table 7.2, the mean average size of household across the sample was 5.3 members (\(\text{S.D.} 1.8\)), but the number of individuals in each household ranged widely from two to ten members. The differences in size among the types of households included in the sample are relatively small, with the average size ranging from a high of 6.6 in the extended families to a low of 4.1 in the single-parent families, and intermediate values for nuclear families (\(M = 5.4\)) and step- or reconstituted families (\(M = 4.6\)). The mean number of 5.3 members per household across the sample slightly exceeds the average household size of 4.8 in Latin America (cf. Bongaarts, 2001).

The data obtained on the BDS show that nearly all sample adolescents interacted with their main caregiver in households that comprised other children and adolescents younger than 18 years of age (e.g. biological-, half-, and step-siblings, nieces, nephews, and cousins). The mean number of children and adolescents under age 18 in the households studied was 3.0, which is somewhat higher than the average in Latin America of 2.2 children per household (Bongaarts, 2001). The number of children and adolescents in the households included in the sample ranged from one to seven, and more than half (54%) of the informants had three or more children and adolescents under age 18 living at home. The mean number of children and adolescents per household did not vary significantly in relation to family structure. The extended family households contained the highest mean number of children and adolescents (\(M = 3.3\)), followed by the nuclear families (\(M = 3.1\)), the single-parent family households (\(M = 2.8\)), and the step- or reconstituted family households (\(M = 2.6\)).

**Variations in Perceived Parental Acceptance in Relation to Availability of Childcare Support**

Most parents reported receiving assistance with childcare in their home, although the availability of childcare varied by household structure. When the parents interviewed were asked on the Neighborhood and Community Assessment Questionnaire whether they receive help from anyone else in caring for the index adolescent during his or her waking hours, 74% responded that they had one or more persons with whom they shared the everyday responsibilities of caring for the children. Of these parents, the largest part (83%) reported receiving assistance with childcare from one or more adults residing in their household, 30% got help with childcare from kins or friends living nearby.
The nature of the support received did not seem to differ depending on whether the helpers lived in the household or not. Actually, it became evident during the interviews that most of the informants who received childcare support from relatives or friends living nearby appeared to regard themselves and their non-resident supporters as members of a kind of extended household encompassing several housing units. For example, it was noted that several informants and persons indicated as non-resident childcare supporters helped each other with basic household chores like cooking, washing, and cleaning.

The childcare support received varied by household structure. The informants living in single-parent family households cited on average significantly fewer people as being engaged in providing childcare assistance than did those parents who lived in other types of households ($M = 1.2$ supporters compared with $M = 2.5$ supporters, $t = 2.118$, $p < 0.05$), and there was evidence that household structure influenced not only the extent but also the composition of parents’ social networks in relation to childcare. Whereas spouses and partners were the most frequently named sources of help and support among parents with a resident partner (62%), for parents living without a partner (i.e. informants in single-parent and extended single-parent family households) their adult children (58%) and parents (33%) were the most frequent sources of help. It is worth noting that half of the non-resident fathers were reported as being engaged in providing their former partners with different types of childcare assistance. Some helped with routine childcare tasks and gave advice on raising the children, while others assisted primarily with financial and material support.

However, 26% of the parents interviewed said that they had no one with whom they shared the everyday responsibilities of caring for the children. Of these informants, 47% lived in single-parent family households, 37% lived in nuclear family households, and 16% lived in step- or reconstituted family households. In other words, some of the parents interviewed seemed to be “single” in the sense that they were alone in their childrearing efforts, even if they had a resident partner (cf. Garbarino & Abramowitz, 1992c).

The lack of access to childcare assistance appeared to make parents less warm and disposed toward undifferentiated rejection. The sample adolescents whose parents stated they were alone in their everyday childrearing efforts reported experiencing significantly more parental “coldness” than did the other adolescents, although the difference was slight ($M = 33.7$ compared with $M = 29.5$, $t = 2.074$, $p < 0.05$), and also more undifferentiated rejection ($M = 22.79$ compared with $M = 19.77$, $t = 2.071$, $p < 0.05$). This finding is supported, for instance, by results from Longfellow, Zelkowitz, Saunders, and Belle’s study on social support in relation to parent–child processes among low-income families in the United States (referred to in Cochran & Niego, 2002), in which they found that the
availability of support in the area of childcare (baby-sitting, discussions of childrearing problems) was positively related to the quality of mother-child interactions.

Despite the differences in childcare accessibility among the various types of families, there were no significant variations in the sample adolescents’ report of perceived parental acceptance based on household composition. In the sample, the parents living alone with their children were, as one could expect, the least likely to have access to childcare support. Only a third of the single parents reported having someone with whom they could share the everyday responsibilities of caring for the children. Parents in step- or reconstituted family households and nuclear families were intermediate with respect to the availability of childcare support (76 and 71%, respectively), while parents living in different types of extended families were most likely to have access to childcare assistance. As already mentioned, all parents living in extended family households reported having access to childcare assistance.

Overall, there were no significant differences in the sample adolescents’ report of perceived parental acceptance based on household structure. This result is unusual given that household structure and the accompanying availability of childcare support universally is an important predictor of parental acceptance and rejection (see Rohner, 1975, 1986). It is unclear why differences in household structure did not seem to affect parental acceptance in Buriti Congonhas, although one has to take into consideration the difficulty of assigning parents and children to different household categories. At the same time, the reported childcare assistance received might of course differ in quality. For example, during the collection of data several of the mothers living in step- or reconstituted family households mentioned that their present partner helped with childcare, but did not fully assume an active parenting role in relation to the stepchildren.

Variations in Perceived Parental Acceptance in Relation to Family Size

The information obtained on the BDS also allowed the examination of whether family size (i.e. the number of children in a household) affected the sample adolescents’ perception of parental acceptance. There are a number of ways to measure family size (Downey, 1995). The measure used in the present study is the adolescent’s total number of siblings residing in the household, including biological-, half-, and step-siblings.49 Across the

49 Another measure of sibling size was also tested, but was not used in the study: the total number of children under age 18 residing in the household (i.e. biological-, half-, and step-
Results from the In-person survey on the Contexts of Parenting

sample the mean number of siblings (both younger and older than 18 years) residing in the household was three (S.D. 1.4), ranging from one to eight. About half (53%) of the adolescents lived in households with two or three siblings (35 and 18%, respectively), whereas 36% lived in larger households containing four or more siblings. Only 11% of the adolescents had no siblings residing in the household.

The number of siblings in the household did not seem to affect the sample adolescents’ reported experience of parental acceptance. On the Child PARQ scales, there were no significant differences in perceived parental acceptance that could be linked to the number of siblings residing in the household. This result was quite unexpected in that a number of studies have found that children in large families (i.e. with four or more children) tend to perceive less overall maternal acceptance than do children in smaller families (see Rohner, 1986). Large family size has also been shown to increase the risk of child neglect and abuse (Zuravin, 1991; see also Ghate & Hazel, 2002). The lack of sib-size effects may be because the data collected in Buriti Congonhas did not provide information on the sample adolescents’ total number of siblings, but measured only the number of siblings who were residing in the household at the time of the study. For example, it is likely that at least some of the sample adolescents either had additional older siblings living on their own or half-siblings living in the household of the non-resident father. Moreover, several of the parents interviewed mentioned that, because of erratic or long working hours and/or financial difficulties, one or more of the children were living with relatives – usually the children’s grandparents or aunts.

Variations in Perceived Parental Acceptance in Relation to Family Stress

A number of questions on the Background Data Schedule measured the extent of family stress experienced during the last five years. Family stress is defined in the present study as the experience of serious family conflict or divorce, the death or desertion by someone for whom the informant or his or her partner (if any) really cared, the serious physical or mental illness of a family member, the experience of long-time unemployment, or other problems defined by the informant as seriously affecting his or her family.

The most frequently reported source of stress was the death or desertion of relatives and close friends, which 64% of the informants reported having experienced during the last five years. Of these informants, 55% referred to siblings, nieces, nephews, and cousins). Nor did this measure indicate any substantive variation in perceived parental acceptance.
the death of an elderly parent or parent-in-law, 13% have had to cope with the death of a spouse, and 11% reported that they had experienced the death of a child. In addition, one mother reported that one of her younger children had vanished without a trace some years ago.

Another problem frequently mentioned was long-term unemployment. More than half of the informants (57%) reported that they and/or their partner throughout the last five years, periodically or permanently, had been without regularly waged jobs – and thereby had also been subjected to financial uncertainty. Nearly all (93%) reported having access to other sources of income, such as temporary jobs, or relied on other income earners in the household. However, for the remaining 7% of the parents, the periods of long-term unemployment had resulted in a lack of money and food. Several of these parents mentioned that on repeated occasions over the last five years they did not have any food to give their children.

Serious family conflict was indicated as a source of stress by 21% of the informants. Apart from one mother who reported being involved with her ex-husband in an ongoing battle over child custody, the conflicts were related primarily to marital problems or disagreements with parents or parents-in-law. A few informants, for instance, said that their mother-in-law's interfering, disapproving, and demanding behavior caused problems for them personally as well as for their families.

Nineteen percent of the parents interviewed reported incidences of serious physical or mental illness in the family. Apart from some reports of children who had suffered from depression in connection with the death of the father, these incidences referred primarily to ill-health among children or other family members. The most common serious health problems reported for children were pneumonia, respiratory difficulties (including asthma), bronchitis, severe attacks of diarrhea or fever, and children’s diseases such as mumps, chickenpox, and measles. About a third (32%) of the parents interviewed had at least one child who had been hospitalized on one or several occasions. Most of these parents seemed to be satisfied with the medical service their children had received at various hospitals in the public domain. Several parents, however, complained about the high price of medicine at the pharmacies. Indeed, some informants said that they could not always afford to buy their children's prescription drugs, such as asthma medicine or antibiotics. The adults’ health problems included, among others things, respiratory, lung, and cardiac diseases, gastric ulcers, burns, and fractures. It is worth noting that several female caregivers reported having tended to an elderly parent or parent-in-law with serious

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50 A serious health problem is defined in the present study as one that prevented the child from carrying out a normal daily schedule for at least a week (cf. Garbarino & Sherman, 1980).
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health problems (e.g. suffering from the aftereffects of a stroke or cerebral hemorrhage) in their home.

Moreover, 10% of the female informants reported having experienced a temporary or permanent separation from their husband or common-law spouse. According to the information given by these mothers, the most common reason for the separation was that they had discovered that their husband or common-law spouse had been unfaithful. In two of the households visited, this information was confirmed by men telling almost identical stories of how they had been thrown out of their marital home because their wife had found out that they were having extra marital affairs and that there were children from these relationships. In both these cases, the spouses seemed to have solved their marital problems and were living together again – with the extra-marital children visiting on week-ends.

An equal number of caregivers (10%) enumerated other serious problems with which they had to cope. Except for one mother who was concerned about her unwanted pregnancy and the consequences of a failed illegal abortion, these problems were almost solely related to parental worries about the well-being of their offspring, such as the children's failing performance in school and the adult children's substance misuse, marriage or unemployment problems.

On average, the informants reported that they themselves and/or their partner had experienced 1.7 of the six indicators of stress listed, but the number ranged widely from zero to five. More than half (53%) of the parents interviewed reported having experienced two or more of the stress indicators listed, while 40% reported experiencing only one of the indicators. Only 7% of the informants reported having no experience of the stress indicators. The highest mean number of stress indicators was noted for single-parent families ($M = 2.2$), followed by nuclear family households ($M = 1.8$), extended family households ($M = 1.6$), and step- or reconstituted family households ($M = 1.6$).

The accumulated experience of family stress that some of the interviewed parents have had to deal with seems to have contributed to the variations found in perceived parental acceptance among the sample adolescents in Buriti Congonhas. None of the indicators of family stress measured contributed individually to any significant variation in the sample adolescents’ report of perceived parental acceptance. However, adolescents in households where the main caregiver reported having experienced on average two or more of the stress indicators listed reported perceiving significantly more indifference and neglect from their main caregiver than did adolescents whose parents reported having encountered fewer indicators.

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51 Abortion is illegal in Brazil except in the case of rape or life-threatening risk to the mother (for further details on abortion law, see § 124 – 128 of the Brazilian Penal Code).
of family stress, although the difference was slight ($M = 25.28$ compared with $M = 22.66$, $t = 2.107$, $p < 0.05$).

The combination of high family stress and lack of access to childcare assistance appears to have placed the parents at greater risk of withholding some of the warmth and acceptance they might otherwise have expressed toward their children. The sample adolescents whose main caregiver had experienced two or more of the stress indicators listed and who reported that they were alone in their everyday childrearing efforts (i.e. 22% of the parents interviewed) reported perceiving significantly more undifferentiated rejection than the other adolescents reported ($M = 23.7$ compared with $M = 19.7$, $t = 2.643$ $p < 0.01$), and also less overall parental acceptance (Total PARQ $M = 117.4$ compared with Total PARQ $M = 101.4$, $t = 2.605$ $p < 0.01$). These results are consistent with findings from numerous studies showing that various stressors or set of stressors have the power to seriously disrupt parenting practices by causing parents to be more irritable, critical, and punitive, especially if the parents perceive a lack of support or are socially isolated (cf. e.g. Webster-Stratton, 1990).

**Variations in Perceived Acceptance in Relation to Household Income**

Although the sample in Buriti Congonhas was comprised solely of low-income families, some households had more adults in paid work than others. Table 7:3 shows that the average number of income earners per household surveyed was 1.5, ranging from zero to four. More than half (53%) of the households had one income earner, 29% had two income earners, and 11% had three or four income earners (7 and 4%, respectively). Only 7% of the households had no adults in paid work. The members of the latter households were either retired with a pension or were provided for by income earners living elsewhere, such as ex-husbands, parents, or adult children. During the interviews, it also became evident that many unwaged adults, especially women, earned money in their own home on a more or less regular basis, for example by selling mail-order products, taking in washing and ironing, looking after children, and/or assembling telephone sockets for a local small-scale company. None of the adolescents in the sample were reported to work and contribute to the household income, though several of the parents interviewed said that they were eager to help their index adolescent find a part-time after school job because the adolescent had “too much free time.” As can be seen in Table 7:3, the single-parent family households had the lowest mean number of adults in paid work ($M = 0.9$), preceded by the step- or reconstituted family households ($M = 1.2$), the nuclear family households ($M = 1.6$), and the extended family households ($M = 1.9$).
Results from the In-person survey on the Contexts of Parenting

Table 7.3. Income earners by family structures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of income earners</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Nuclear families</th>
<th>Extended families</th>
<th>Step- or reconstituted families</th>
<th>Single-parent families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The differences in the number of household members per income earner were relatively small, with the average number ranging from a high of 4.1 in the nuclear families to a low of 3.0 in the single-parent families, and intermediate values for the extended families (M = 3.7) and the step- or reconstituted families (M = 3.1). However, 24% of the families in the sample had two or fewer household members per income earner, while in 17% of the families there were between six and ten household members per income earner. Thus, it is likely that children and adolescents in Buriti Congonhas are raised in households that have quite different financial resources available to them.

When the parents interviewed were asked how their money situation was working out in terms of being a parent of an adolescent, 69% responded that their money situation worked relatively well – if nothing unforeseen happened. The remaining 31% expressed dissatisfaction with their financial situation. Many of these parents complained that their adolescents pestered them for expensive brand-name clothes and leisure pursuits, such as the movies, video-games, and membership dues for private sport clubs. Some mothers interviewed complained that their adolescent children were spoiled by their non-resident fathers who bought them expensive presents which the mothers could not afford. Several of the parents who had migrated to Rio de Janeiro also expressed frustration at not having money enough to let their children visit relatives at their place of origin. A few migrated mothers said that their index adolescent had never met his or her grandparents residing in the northeastern region of Brazil. Those parents who were displeased with their financial situation lived, as compared with the more contented ones, in households with a slightly but significantly lower mean number of income earners (M = 1.1 compared with M = 1.6, t = 2.282, p < 0.05). Nonetheless, some informants living in households with no adults in paid work said that their money situation was better than ever because of regular contributions from adult children.
Overall, there were no significant variations in the adolescents’ report on the Child PARQ scales based on the parents’ assessment of their financial situation, number of adults in paid work per household, or number of household members per income earner. However, the combination of dissatisfaction with the financial situation and lack of access to childcare assistance appears to have placed parents at greater risk of withdrawing some of the warmth that they might otherwise have expressed towards their children. The sample adolescents whose main caregiver was dissatisfied with the family's financial situation and who stated that he or she was alone in his or her childrearing efforts (i.e. 8% of the parents interviewed) reported perceiving significantly more maternal neglect than did the other adolescents in the sample, although the difference was slight ($M = 24.9$ compared with $M = 22.3, t = 2.006, p < 0.05$). This result was somewhat expected since “single parents (most often mothers) in social isolation without social and emotional support, especially if the parents are economically deprived, appear universally to be at greatest risk for withdrawing love and affection from their children” (Rohner, 2001, p. 14).

**Variations in Perceived Acceptance in Relation to Quality of the Dwelling**

The houses in which the families studied resided varied in tenure, size, and comfort, and there were also variations between the households in the length of time they lived at the current address. Compared with residents in the surrounding official neighborhoods, the residents in Buriti Congonhas generally have a poor quality of housing. Since nearly all of the interviews took place in the informants’ home, it was possible, however, to observe differences in living standard among the households in the sample. While some of the homes visited were cramped, uncomfortable, and dilapidated, others had relatively spacious rooms and were furnished and equipped to a surprisingly high standard for houses in a shantytown.

As the sample had been drawn to include all geographic sections of the shantytown, the characteristics and spatial properties of the immediate physical area around the houses and homes of the families studied varied considerably. Most of the visited houses on the lower densely built slopes were located along streets or alleys paved with concrete, while in the elevated and more sparsely built parts of the shantytown several houses, especially those situated at the edge of the unoccupied forest-clad land, could only be reached by ascending steep dirt trails. Still other houses visited were rather difficult to find because they either were built hidden in the middle of huge rocks or were accessible only by passing through another family's house or backyard.
The households in the sample that were owner-occupied heavily outnumbered the households that lived in other types of accommodations. Approximately four fifths (78%) of the parents interviewed stated that they and their families owned the house in which they lived. This usually meant either that they themselves had constructed their house on a plot of land purchased from a relative or neighbor, or that they had bought the house from a former resident. The remaining 22% reported that they lived in houses that were borrowed (10%), rented (8%), or abandoned and illegally occupied (4%). The nuclear family households encompassed the highest share of owner-occupiers (96%), followed by the extended family households (89%), the step- or reconstituted family households (65%), and the single-parent family households (42%).

Information obtained through the Neighborhood and Community Assessment Questionnaire shows that the mean number of rooms (including kitchen and room for sanitary facilities) was 4.6 per housing unit, ranging from one to eight. About half of the sample families (51%) had one or more rooms per household member, while 19% of the households had between two and five people per room. It is noteworthy that 4% of the families in the sample lived in houses with only one room that also served as kitchen.

In terms of basic amenities at home, most households seemed to have essential items. The families studied all lived in houses equipped with electricity and piped water – though neither the cables nor pipes laid were always officially recognized. All households had a kitchen, or kitchenette, equipped with refrigerator, bottle-gas stove, and sink. Most households had also a room for sanitary facilities equipped with shower (usually with an electric shower head and water heater), flush toilet, and basin. However, a small number (4%) of the sample families had no indoor sanitary facilities in their home. Moreover, the data obtained shows that nearly all (97%) households had a color TV. It was also observed that many households owned a VCR player, a stereo, a microwave, and mobile phones, while only a small number of households owned stationary telephones, washing machines, air conditioning, or personal computers.

Information elicited from the Family Social Networks Interviews indicates variations between the households in length of residence at current address. Nearly three fifths (58%) of the parents interviewed said that they and their families had been living in the same house for a decade or more. Five percent of these informants were actually living in the same house in which they had been born. The remaining 42% reported that they had moved at least once in the past ten years, mostly between houses in the neighborhood.

As could be expected, the informants’ satisfaction with the household’s accommodations varied. When the parents interviewed were asked whether
their present house was a good place for the family to live in, 64% replied
that they were satisfied or relatively satisfied with the quality of their
accommodations. In fact, many parents said that their present home was the
best house they had ever lived in. However, 36% of the informants replied
in the negative. Of these parents, 81% stated that they were dissatisfied with
their accommodations primarily because of the cramped or overcrowded
living conditions. This finding is not unexpected given the fact that those
parents who were displeased with their accommodations lived in houses
with a significantly lower average number of rooms per household member
\((M = 0.73\) compared with \(M = 1.1, t = 3.436, p < 0.001\)\). The remaining
19% of the informants were dissatisfied with the accommodations because
they feared that the house would collapse, either because it was located in an
avalanche zone (13%) or because of a faulty building design (6%). Also
commonly reported were problems with damp or wet or dry rot, infestation
by insects or rodents, and rain water leaking through roofs, windows, and
doors. Perhaps unsurprisingly, several of the caregivers interviewed blamed
their children’s chronic health problems, such as asthma, bronchitis, allergies
and eczema, on the poor quality of the housing. Moreover, it is also worth
noting that the sample adolescents (64%) living in families with more than
two household members per room were more likely to have repeated grades
in school than those adolescents (36%) who lived in households with one or
more rooms per household member. This might be because an overcrowded
living environment offers children and adolescents less privacy for their
studies and homework.

Although poor quality housing in all probability is a stressor in the daily
lives of many families in Buriti Congonhas, the parents who were
dissatisfied with their accommodations did not seem to be more nor less
accepting or rejecting towards their children than were the parents who
reported that their house was a good place for the family to live in. Overall,
there were no significant variations in the adolescents’ report on the Child
PARQ scales based on their main caregivers’ satisfaction with the
household’s accommodations, form of tenure, or mean number of rooms
per household member. However, the adolescents in extended families
living in dwellings with more than one person per room reported perceiving
significantly less warmth \((M = 37.1\) compared with \(M = 29.7, t = 2.325,\)
\(p < 0.05\) and significantly more indifference and neglect \((M = 28.3\)
compared with \(M = 23.7, t = 2.219, p < 0.05\) from their main caregiver
than did the other adolescents in the sample. These results are consistent
with conclusions drawn from studies in India, hypothesizing that low
maternal warmth in extended family households might be attributed to
crowded multifamily arrangements with a minimum of privacy, because in
such households a greater amount of emotional control might be adaptive
for minimizing interpersonal conflict (for further details see Rohner &
Chaki-Sircar, 1988). Perhaps the same mechanisms are at work among overcrowded extended family households in Buriti Congonhas.

**Neighborhood Influences on Parenting**

Most of the sample adolescents and parents who responded on the Child PARQ had many years experience of living in Buriti Congonhas. Information obtained through the Background Data Schedule (BDS) shows that 85% of the adolescents and 40% of the parents had always lived in the shantytown. However, more than half of the parents (55%) and 15% of the adolescents had moved to Buriti Congonhas from other locations in Rio de Janeiro or elsewhere in Brazil, and 5% of the parents did not actually reside in the neighborhood. The latter were fathers who either had never lived in Buriti Congonhas (3%) or had moved from the neighborhood years ago (2%). The parents who had come to live in Buriti Congonhas had on average lived there for about 18 years (S.D. 10.9), with a length of residence ranging from 9 months to 43 years.

The incoming parents had previously lived in different types of areas. About half of the incomers (52%) stated that they came, or were reported to have come, to live in Buriti Congonhas directly from another shantytown, 38% had earlier lived in a working-class neighborhood, suburb, or illegal subdivision of land, 5% moved to the shantytown directly from the rural countryside, and 4% of the incomers reported that they previously resided in a middle-class or upper middle-class area in the southern part of the city. Of the latter, all but one had lived and worked in their employers’ home as live-in maids.

The incomers interviewed gave different reasons for opting to live in Buriti Congonhas. Almost two fifths (38%) reported that they joined relatives or moved in with a partner already residing in the shantytown, 31% stated that they chose to live in the neighborhood because of affordable housing, another 29% had moved into the area in childhood or adolescence in company with their families of origin, and the remaining 2% had been relocated from an adjacent shantytown by a municipal slum-upgrade program.

Despite various reports of difficulties in becoming accustomed to the neighborhood, nearly all (90%) of the informants who had come to live in Buriti Congonhas stated that, compared with the place where they had lived before, the shantytown was a better alternative for them and their families. Several of the incomers cited “space” as being what they liked most about their neighborhood – reflecting the fact that Buriti Congonhas is less densely built than many other shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro. Other physical characteristics of the neighborhood that several parents reported liking were
accessibility to public transport and proximity to “everything you need” (e.g. schools, medical care, supermarkets, and shopping malls). It is nevertheless noteworthy that 10% of the incoming parents interviewed said that Buriti Congonhas was inferior to the neighborhood where they had lived before. All these parents described their current neighborhood as unfriendly, and some informants who previously had resided in officially recognized neighborhoods said that they were ashamed of having to live with their children in a squatter settlement.

**Neighborhood Participation and Interaction**

The majority of the households in the sample appeared to make use of the services and programs available in the neighborhood. As the community profile presented in Chapter 5 attests, services and programs in Buriti Congonhas include the Residents’ Association, a small library, a daycare center and a program for school drop-outs run by the municipality, some private child-minders, social organizations (a soccer team, a capoeira\(^{52}\) club, a handicraft group for women, fortnightly activities for children and adolescents in the library), annual municipal vaccination campaigns, and a funeral insurance program administrated by the Residents’ Association. According to the information given by the parents interviewed, members of 78% of the households in the sample had used, or participated in, at least one of these services or programs during the last year. The neighborhood service most commonly reported as used by the households was the Residents’ Association. Specifically, 40% of the informants reported that one or several members of their household had frequented at least one meeting or event arranged by the Residents’ Association in the last year. The number of neighborhood resources utilized increased significantly with size of household \((r = 0.327, p < 0.01)\). The households comprising six or more members had on average made active use of twice as many services and programs in the neighborhood than did households with four or less members \((M = 2.8\) compared with \(M = 1.4\), \(t = 3.074, p < 0.05)\). The high number of households utilizing services and programs in the neighborhood is consistent with findings from Perlman’s (1976) well-known study of several favelas in Rio de Janeiro revealing that 68% of the residents belonged to at least one community group.

The majority of the sample adolescents reported having friends in the neighborhood. Data elicited through the Social Network of Youth Questionnaire reveals that 75% of the sample adolescents had one or several friends living in the neighborhood. The adolescents’ neighborhood

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\(^{52}\) Capoeira is a Brazilian martial art that blends elements of dance, music, rituals, acrobatics, and fighting.
peer networks varied in size and composition. On average, the adolescent nominated 5.1 (S.D. 3.1) neighborhood friends to their networks, ranging from one to ten. Nearly half (46%) of the adolescents included peers of both genders, 33% indicated friends who were at least five years older or younger than themselves, and 85% said that all their friends in the neighborhood knew each other. The relatively large number of adolescents with friends who were significantly older or younger is quite likely a result of the high primary school repetition rates and the following age-grade disparities as noted in the preceding chapter.

The parents seemed to have quite a good view of their children’s circle of friends. All adolescents who had peers in the neighborhood reported that their parents knew who these friends were. It is worth noting, however, that 15% of the adolescents nominated one or several neighborhood peers to their networks with whom they thought, or knew, their parents would not like them to be friends.

Many parents had family and friends in the neighborhood who they could count on for assistance and support. Data elicited on the Family Social Networks Interview reveals that nearly all (98%) of the informants had relatives who lived in the neighborhood, and 61% of them had daily to weekly contact with them. In addition, more than one half (53%) of the parents interviewed reported that they had friends in the neighborhood, and 50% of these parents identified non-relative neighbors as their best friends. The data also reveal that 42% of the informants more or less regularly received help of some kind from kin and/or friends in the neighborhood (including childcare as noted earlier in this chapter). Almost as many (40%) parents said that they had friends and/or relatives in the neighborhood with whom they could talk about their concerns and problems.

However, nearly half (47%) of the parents interviewed seemed to have little or no contact with their non-relative neighbors. During the interviews, many of these parents said that they trusted only people who are their kin, or that they preferred not to mix with their non-relative neighbors.

Most of my neighbors are good and reliable people, but we never spend time together. I prefer to keep a distance and avoid any intimacy with people in the neighborhood other than my family.

Some parents talked about others in their neighborhood as “bad people,” or as people who “misuse alcohol and drugs,” are “promiscuous,” “slander and spread rumors,” or “neglect and abuse their children.” Perhaps somewhat unexpectedly, it was mainly informants brought up in the shantytown, and not those who had come to live there as adults, who had no close contact with their neighbors. About nine in ten (91%) parents who did not include any non-relative neighbor among the people whom they
knew well had either always lived in Buriti Congonhas (50%) or had moved in there in childhood or adolescence (41%).

**Neighborhood Problems**

Despite improvements in their physical environment, many parents reported perceiving different types of material problems in their neighborhood. Almost nine in ten (88%) of the parents interviewed stated that their neighborhood had changed for the better since they had lived there. The changes mentioned all referred to infrastructural improvements such as streets built, alleys paved, water mains laid, and sewage systems installed as a replacement for the original open channels for wastewater and toilet disposal. Despite these improvements, mostly resulting from different slum-upgrade programs, it seems that some problems in the neighborhood remain. When the informants were asked if there were any neighborhood problems, the majority (83%) cited one or more problems. Of these parents, 78% complained about an inadequate water supply, 8% mentioned “incomprehensible” or incomplete works by the latest slum-upgrade program, and 7% pointed out other types of deficiencies in the neighborhood such as inadequate sewage disposal and public telephones out of order. The frequent complaints about an inadequate water supply may be partly due to the fact that almost all the households in the neighborhood were out of water during the initial two weeks of data collection for the in-person survey.

Aside from these material problems, the lack of neighborhood safety seemed to be a major concern for many of the parents interviewed. More than three in five informants (61%) reported perceiving their neighborhood as unsafe because of frequent outbreaks of shooting between rival gangs of drug traffickers and police officers. Many of the parents interviewed said that often at night, and occasionally also during the day, they would hear gunshots outside their house. To emphasize the danger he perceived, one informant demonstrated marks on the wall in his bedroom from stray bullets fired during a night-time fight between rival gangs of local drug traffickers.

The more or less constant exposure to violence in the neighborhood almost certainly means that all parents and adolescents in the sample have experienced first-hand encounters of shooting, and many of them have probably also seen dead bodies in the street and perhaps even witnessed homicides. Nonetheless, more than one in five (22%) informants said that their neighborhood was relatively safe compared with other shantytowns in

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53 An example of such “incomprehensible” works is the transformation of step-mud trails into stairs, as mentioned in Chapter 5.
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Rio de Janeiro. Some parents interviewed actually described their neighborhood as more secure than the middle-class and upper middle-class areas in the southern part of the city, because the local drug traffickers “don’t allow assaults or property crime” in the shantytown.

They [the local drug traffickers; writer’s remark] protect the community – if someone steals in the shantytown, he dies.

These accounts were supported by various examples of how people who had committed, or been suspected of, a crime in the neighborhood had been killed. It is worth noting that during the interviews it was observed that none of the informants ever used the concept “drug traffickers.” The adolescents and parents interviewed always spoke about the drug traffickers as “them” – often in a low almost whispering voice.

The parents’ concern over dangers in the neighborhood seemed to have consequences for their participation in the community. More than half (52%) of the informants stated that, due to the danger of drug-related violence on the streets in the neighborhood, they rarely if ever visited other sections of the shantytown apart from the one in which they and their family live. For instance, some of the parents residing on the lower slopes said that they never had been further uphill than to the daycare center, which is located about half way up the hill. Thus, nearly half (47%) of the informants could not describe the boundaries of their neighborhood (i.e. name the specific streets where the neighborhood ends), and 6% of the parents living on the outskirts of the shantytown were not even familiar with its name.

Another consequence of the dangers seemed to be that few non-resident people dared to visit the neighborhood. During the interviews, many parents mentioned that they rarely, if ever, received in their home relatives and friends who lived outside Buriti Congonhas. According to the parents interviewed, people living in the officially recognized parts of the city are often afraid to visit the shantytowns because of actual or perceived dangers. Nor was it always possible for residents from different shantytowns to visit each others’ homes because of rivalry between the local drug-dealers. One of the single mothers interviewed, for instance, said that her daughter could not visit her father and his family in their home located in an adjacent shantytown because the local drug-dealers in that area did not allow anyone from Buriti Congonhas to enter. As a consequence, the girl used to meet with her father and paternal grandmother in a nearby shopping-mall.

Although none of the households in the sample had specific plans to leave Buriti Congonhas, 60% of the informants interviewed said that, given the choice, they would move to another area. Of these parents, 72% gave lack of neighborhood safety as the main reason for wishing to leave Buriti Congonhas.
No human should have to live with such fear. I wish I could afford to let my children grow up in a safer neighborhood.

Other motives given included deficiencies in the physical environment (e.g. risk for landslides, difficulties with accessibility to homes located in the more elevated areas, and inadequate water supply), and perceived negative social characteristics (e.g. lack of cooperativeness among the residents in the neighborhood, discrimination, and feelings of shame for living in a shantytown, and/or slanders from neighbors).

**Neighborhood Dangers and Parental Strategies**

Many parents seemed to be concerned over their children’s exposure to potential dangers in the neighborhood. The majority (79%) of parents interviewed said that they were worried about their children’s play environments and friends in the vicinity. These worries seemed primarily to reflect the parents’ fear that their children might be harmed or killed by stray bullets, or become involved in crime and drug traffic. Many parents also mentioned that they were worried about their children’s exposure to narcotics on sale at a number of fixed drug-selling points scattered throughout the neighborhood. Other concerns described by parents were that their teenage daughters would fall in love and become pregnant with a local drug trafficker, or that their adolescent sons would be beaten up by police officers who occasionally patrolled the area. Note that during the interviews, a few informants mentioned that they had older children who were or had been involved in drug gangs.

The parents’ concerns over dangers in the neighborhood prompted them to employ different strategies to protect their offspring. A common parental strategy, employed by 79% of the informants, was to keep children and adolescents close to home or indoors. Of these parents, 42% said that their children were allowed to play only in the immediate physical surroundings of their house, while 37% reported having prohibited their children from playing outside for fear of dangers in the neighborhood. As a part of this strategy, many parents sought to keep their children busy with different types of indoor activities, such as household chores, television, and video games. Nearly all the adolescents were also allowed to invite peers to their home, and to visit friends in their homes. Another common parental strategy was to control children and adolescents’ exposure to negative peer influences. More than three in five (63%) parents reported monitoring their children’s choice of friends. Many of these parents said that they explicitly forbade their offspring to play with children and adolescents from “bad families” — that is, families linked in some way to the drug traffickers (writer’s remark based on an interpretation of a local expression) — and
some parents actually stated that their children were not allowed to play with any other children and adolescents living in the shantytown. Perhaps as a result of such restrictions, 25% of the adolescents said that they had no friends in the neighborhood.

As could be expected, none of the parents employing either or both of these strategies allowed their offspring to visit any of the places in the neighborhood arranged for children and adolescents to play – that is, the soccer field, the volleyball ground, and the two playgrounds. Several informants described these places as dangerous. The sports ground was pointed out as the haunts of drug dealers, and a number of parents complained about the local authorities’ decision to build the playgrounds in the “firing lines” between rival gangs of drug traffickers operating in the surroundings. During the interviews, several informants said that they were concerned about their adolescent children’s increasing demands for independence.

It is still possible for me to control my son through strict rules, but in the next few years he will be a young man who makes his own decisions and follows through with them. If he then decides to hang out with friends at the sports ground, there is nothing I can do but try my best to convince him of the dangers.

The use of these parenting strategies was confirmed by a small number of the adolescents in the sample. The day-by-day notations made by 11% of the adolescents in the Self-report Diary suggest that at least these youngsters respected and obeyed their parents’ rules. According to the adolescents own notations, most days appeared to be structured around school, homework, household chores, and recreational activities such as watching television and playing video games. The neighborhood peers saw one another in the streets or visited each others’ homes, although the adolescents living on the lower slopes were not allowed by their parents to go uphill to visit friends living in the more elevated parts of the shantytown. A few adolescents also reported that they met with friends in church. The data collected on the Social Networks of Youth Questionnaire reveal that all the neighborhood friends indicated were the kinds of people that the adolescents thought their parents would like them to have as friends.

Variations in Perceived Parental Acceptance in Relation to Parents’ Assessment of the Neighborhood

When the parents were asked on the Neighborhood and Community Assessment Questionnaire how they would rate their neighborhood as a place for parents with children to live and raise their family, 58% responded that their neighborhood was a relatively good place to bring up a family or
that their neighborhood had several strengths. Of these parents, 74% mentioned good neighbors and interaction as a positive feature, 50% reported that their neighborhood was safe compared with other shantytowns, and 43% mentioned that they liked the physical aspects of their neighborhood. However, 42% of the informants said that their neighborhood was not a good place in which to raise children. Of these parents, practically all (94%) were concerned about safety and drugs, 33% mentioned bad neighbors and negative interactions, and 20% mentioned a lack of neighborhood resources and activities. Overall, there were no significant differences in parents’ reports of their neighborhood as a place in which to raise children based on family or child characteristics. However, the parents who had been raised in the shantytown were more likely to indicate that their neighborhood was not a good place in which to raise children (63%) than were the parents who had come to live there as adults (47%). This perhaps means that at least some of the incoming parents’ reason for moving to Buriti Congonhas was a wish to live in a better neighborhood.

The parents’ perception of their neighborhood as a good place in which to raise children seems to have affected the quality of the parent–child relationship. The adolescents whose main caregiver stated that the neighborhood was not a good place in which to raise children reported perceiving significantly more indifference and neglect than did the other adolescents in the sample (M = 23.9 compared with M = 19.29, t = 3.367, p < 0.001), and they also experienced somewhat more hostility and aggression (M = 33.0 compared with M = 27.87, t = 2.456 p < 0.05), and overall parental rejection (Total PARQ M = 114.95 compared with Total PARQ M = 101.03, t = 2.421, p < 0.05). Although these scores all are on the positive end of the Child PARQ scales, dissatisfaction with the neighborhood in which they live appears to have promoted stress that placed parents at greater risk of withdrawing some of the warmth and acceptance they might otherwise have expressed toward their children.

Influence of Adolescents’ School on Parenting

As noted in the preceding chapter, nearly all (95%) of the adolescents in the sample were enrolled in and attended primary school at the time of the study. There were about a dozen public different schools in which the adolescents in the sample studied, located both close to and at a distance from Buriti Congonhas. Specifically, 75% of the adolescents attended municipal schools in adjacent neighborhoods within walking distance of Buriti Congonhas, while the remaining 25% went to public schools in more
 Results from the In-person survey on the Contexts of Parenting

distant neighborhoods. The latter schools are all located within a radius of 5 km from Buriti Congonhas, and are accessible by public transport. The majority of the adolescents made their own way to and from school, though many parents expressed concern about their children's safety. The data elicited through the Neighborhood and Community Assessment Questionnaire show that 91% of the adolescents who were in school went to and from school unaccompanied by an adult. As many parents believed the route to be hazardous, most (67%) of the informants had not allowed their children to make their own way to and from school before they were about ten years old. Fixed drug-selling points located both within and outside the neighborhood were regarded by many parents as the main threat to the safety of the children and adolescents on their way to and from school. Aside from the risk of exposure to narcotics and related criminal activities, the fixed drug-selling points were described as scenes of shooting between rival gangs of drug dealers and police officers. During the interviews, several parents said that their children often had to stay at home from school because of shooting in the area. For the same reason, the children and adolescents were not always able to return home after school but had to stay overnight with relatives or friends living elsewhere. A number of parents mentioned that during the last few years affordable mobile phones had made things easier for both them and their children by facilitating communication.

It happened from time to time that my children could not return from school because of shooting in the area, and I was at home waiting for them without knowing where they were or when they would be able to return home. When that happens nowadays we can at least communicate over the phone.

Aside from the dangers linked to the local drug dealers, being robbed on the way to or from school, traffic accidents, sexual assaults, and kidnapping were also mentioned by many parents as major threats to the life and safety of their children on the way to and from school.

The adolescents attended school five days a week, either in the morning or in the afternoon. The information obtained through the Background Data Schedule (BDS) shows that the sample adolescents attended school for about four hours a day, Monday through Friday. More than one half (54%) of the adolescents attended school in the morning from approximately 7.00 a.m. to 11.00 a.m., and the other 46% attended in the afternoon from about 1.00 p.m. to around 5.00 p.m.

54 Students attending public schools in Rio de Janeiro ride buses for free – if they wear a school uniform consisting of a white T-shirt with the school logo.
Although the adolescents spent four hours a day, five days a week, in school, many of them did not appear to have any close friends from school. When the sample adolescents attending primary school were asked on the Social Network of Youth Questionnaire to list the people they considered their friends, only 32% included one or several school peers. Those adolescents who had repeated grades in school were much less likely to indicate school peers as close friends (24%) than were the other adolescents (40%) in the sample. The majority (74%) of the school friends listed comprised teenagers from other neighborhoods, while the remaining 26% lived in Buriti Congonhas. The school peers indicated were invariably described by the adolescents as the kind of persons their parents would like them to be friends with, and 76% reported that their parents knew at least one of their close school friends. The relatively low number of close school friends reported might be due in part to the fact that the data were collected in the adolescents’ home environment only a few weeks after the more than two-month long summer holiday break from school. If the in-person survey had been taken in school in the midst of a semester, perhaps the results would have been different.

Parents’ Expectation and Involvement in Their Children’s School

Most parents in Buriti Congongas seemed to be well aware of the importance of schooling and education for their children’s future – at least at an abstract level. When the parents were asked what they expected for their index adolescent’s future, most of them (81%), including the parents of those adolescents who had dropped out of school, expressed an expectation for post-secondary education. Of these parents, 52% said that they hoped their child would continue his or her education beyond secondary school and attend or graduate from university, while the remaining 48% expected their child to undertake a post-secondary vocational education. The parents’ expectation for post-secondary education is not very surprising, given that in an urban society like Rio de Janeiro, education is vital to employment and success in a large number of occupations. Moreover, information elicited through the BDS shows that a few (5%) of the parents who expressed expectations for university education already had an older child who attended a public or private university. However, 19% of the parents interviewed did not mention any expectations for education beyond the eighth grade in primary school. Of these parents, 57% said that they hoped their adolescents would realize their dream of becoming a professional soccer player or basketballer, while 43% articulated a general desire that their adolescent would succeed and have a better life than their own. Overall, there were no significant differences in
the parents’ educational hopes for their children based on their own educational level, place of origin, family structure, or the child’s gender.

The majority (85%) of the parents interviewed described themselves as highly, or reasonably highly, involved in their children’s schooling. All these parents said that they attend at least one school meeting per semester, 26% reported having additional individual contacts with their children’s teachers and other school personnel (e.g. the principal, the assistant principal, counselors, or administrators), and 9% stated that they regularly checked over and helped their children with their homework. The information provided also reveals a positive attitude toward written material among those parents who were actively involved in their children’s schooling. More specifically, 33% of these parents said that they read books, magazines, or newspapers with more or less regularity, and an additional 10% reported reading and learning from their children’s schoolbooks. However, 15% of the parents reported little or no involvement in their children’s school activities. The largest part (82%) of these parents said that they never attended meetings in school, while the remaining 18% reported that they attended school meetings about once a year. According to the information elicited through the Neighborhood and Community Assessment Questionnaire (NCAQ), this group of parents neither showed any effort to support and encourage their children’s school activities by checking homework, nor did they communicate a positive regard for schooling by reading books, magazines, or newspapers. The parents who reported little or no involvement in their children’s schooling differed from the actively involved parents in several ways. They were less likely to have completed five years of school (36% vs. 56%), were more likely to originate from states other than Rio de Janeiro (73% vs. 48%), and none of them lived as single parents.

The parents’ self-rated involvement in their children’s schooling did not seem to have a significant effect on the adolescents’ grade repetition and drop-out rates. The sample adolescents’ whose main caregivers described themselves as highly or reasonably highly involved in their children’s schooling were not more nor less likely to have repeated grades or dropped out of school than were the sample adolescents with parents who reported little or no involvement in their children’s school activities. This is somewhat surprising since parental involvement in education is often cited as vital to children and adolescents’ academic performance (e.g. Henderson & Berla, 1994; Nye, Turner & Schwarts, 2006). For example, students whose parents who are involved in their school tend to earn higher grades and receive higher scores on tests, attend school more regularly, complete homework assignments, and are more likely to complete secondary education than are students whose parents are not involved in their school.
Variations in Perceived Parental Acceptance in Relation to Parents’ Satisfaction with School

Most of the parents seemed to be satisfied with their children’s school situation, although there were exceptions. When the informants were asked how the school situation looked from their point of view as a parent, 72% replied that they were satisfied with their children's school or that their children's school had several strengths. Of these parents, practically all (98%) said that school was a help to them as parents, and 65% mentioned knowledgeable and helpful teachers as a positive feature. However, more than one in four (28%) of the parents interviewed responded that their children's school had several problems or weaknesses. Of these parents, 73% were concerned about unqualified teachers, oversized classes, and low expectations for poor students’ achievement; 15% expressed concern about their child's exposure to negative peer influences; and 10% said that their child was afraid to go to school because he or she was bullied by older classmates. Another source of concern, which was shared also by those parents who reported being satisfied with their children's school, was the adolescents’ account of fellow pupils involved with gangs who supplied drugs and carried weapons in school.

Moreover, several of the parents interviewed also said that they were discontented with the relatively short school day. The reason they gave was, in essence, that the short school day deprived their children of an adequate basic education, which could seriously disadvantage them in the labor market once they left school. Some informants also stressed that the short school day meant that many children and adolescents in the neighborhood were left without adult supervision and care during a substantial part of their waking hours. This seemed to be a rather limited problem for the adolescents included in the sample, however. Information provided by the main caregivers on the NCAQ reveals that only 9% of the sample adolescents were left without adult supervision and care before or after school. These adolescents lived either with a single working mother (4%) or in nuclear family households with two working parents (5%).

Overall, there were no significant differences in the parents’ perception of their children's schooling based on their stated involvement in the school or on which school their children attended. However, the parents who replied that their child's school situation was unsatisfactory or poor were more than twice as likely to have completed eight grades of primary school (35%) as were the parents who reported being satisfied with their child’s schooling (15%). Note that most (88%) of the parents who knew at least

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55 As noted earlier, students with disparities between age and grade are not unusual in Brazil
one of their child’s close school friends reported being satisfied with the child’s school.

Parents’ dissatisfaction with their children’s school situation seems to have negatively affected the quality of the parent–child relationship. On the Child PARQ scales, the adolescents whose parents had responded that their children’s school situation was unsatisfactory or poor reported perceiving significantly more parental “coldness” than did the other adolescents in the sample ($M = 35.5$ compared with $M = 28.5$, $t = 3.460$, $p < 0.001$), and also more parental aggression ($M = 33.6$ compared with $M = 27.6$, $t = 2.935$, $p < 0.01$), and less overall parental acceptance (Total PARQ $M = 117.2$ compared with Total PARQ $M = 100.17$, $t = 3.012$, $p < 0.01$). It is possible that the emotional distress associated with the urban society’s demand for school success places parents’ dissatisfied with their children’s school situation at greater risk for withdrawing some of the warmth and affection they would otherwise have expressed toward their children.

**Influence of Parents’ Work on Parenting**

The Background Data Schedule (BDS) elicited information about the main occupation of each parent for whom the sample adolescents responded on the Child PARQ. As can be seen from Table 7:4, 52% of the parents were presently employed (40%) or self-employed (10%). A considerably larger number of the employed parents worked full time (91%) than part time (9%). The data also reveal that education seemed to be an important precursor to employment among the parents surveyed. Almost two thirds (63%) of the parents with eight grades of primary school or more were employed, compared with 33% of the parents with less than eight years of schooling. However, 44% of the parents were neither employed nor self-employed. Of these parents, 40% were mothers who gave “looking after the family or home” as their main occupation, another 40% were parents who were unemployed and actively seeking work, and 20% were classified as unemployed and not looking for work (e.g. retired or chronically ill). Information on occupation is missing for 4% of the parents because all the informants were not familiar with the everyday activities of their child’s non-resident father.
Table 7:4. Parents’ main occupation by mothers and fathers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main occupation</th>
<th>Number of parents</th>
<th>Mothers</th>
<th>Fathers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed full time</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed part time</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking after the family or home</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed looking for work</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed full time</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed, not looking for work</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data are missing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>133</strong></td>
<td><strong>72</strong></td>
<td><strong>61</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important to stress that being unemployed is not the same thing as being without a job. The data elicited through the BDS indicate that 66% of the unemployed parents looking for work were in the meantime doing odd jobs to eke out a living. It is also worth noting that several unemployed informants looking for work said that job-seekers from shantytowns are discriminated against, since many employers have negative stereotypes about slum dwellers.

In the sample, the employment rate for men was higher than for women, while the rate for self-employment was about equal for both genders. According to the information given, 59% of the fathers compared with 26% of the mothers had a regular employment. The majority of these parents held jobs with low status and, in all probability, low pay. Aside from a few fathers in clerical occupations, the male parents with regular employment worked as construction workers, industrial workers, or had some kind of service occupation (e.g. salesclerk, waiter, watchman, bus driver, or doorman). The employed mothers held jobs in such occupations as cleaners, maids, bus conductors, or shop assistants, with the exception of one mother who held a lower managerial position in a larger supermarket. About the same proportion of fathers (11%) as of mothers (9%) were self-employed. Whereas the self-employed fathers worked as street vendors, street repairmen, or were shopowners, the self-employed mothers worked as cleaners, seamstresses, or manicurists.

**Parents’ Workplaces and Work Hours**

Information obtained on the Background Data Schedule (BDS) shows that most (89%) of the employed or self-employed parents had their workplace outside Buriti Congonhas. Of these parents, 85% had their workplace in the industrial districts and working-class areas in the North and Eastern Zones of Rio de Janeiro, while the remaining 15% worked in
Results from the In-person survey on the Contexts of Parenting

the middle-class and upper middle-class residential and commercial districts in the southern part of the city. The remaining 11% of the employed or self-employed parents had their place of work in Buriti Congonhas. Of these parents, 66% were employed by the municipality, by non-governmental organizations, or by local small-scale companies, while the remaining 33% were self-employed and had their business in the family home. Although most of the employed or self-employed parents had their workplace outside of Buriti Congonhas, only 13% of the sample adolescents responding to the Child PARQ had two resident parents working outside the neighborhood.

Seventy-five percent of the employed or self-employed parents who worked outside Buriti Congonhas went to their workplaces by bus, although a combination of bus and subway would have been a much faster alternative for some of them. However, at the time of the study, the bus and subway combination was more than twice as expensive as a single bus ticket. Several of the working parents interviewed reported that they and/or their partner had to travel by bus for well over an hour to reach their place of work, and often more than the double during rush hours or when it rained. The remaining 25% of the employed or self-employed parents who worked outside Buriti Congonhas had their workplace within walking distance from the shantytown, mainly in the nearby commercial center of Madureira.

In keeping with what had been said previously during the interviews about children's safety on the way to and from school, it seems that also the parents encountered difficulties on their way to and from work. During the interviews, several parents remarked that they and/or their partner occasionally had to stay home from work because of a shooting in the area. As a consequence, some of the parents had lost their job. Many parents had also experienced being assaulted on the bus on their way to and from work.

The working parents generally seemed to spend much time at their workplace. The data elicited through the BDS show that the employed or self-employed parents’ average basic work week was about 59 hours. The mothers had a somewhat lower mean number of working hours per week than the fathers (M = 52.8 hours compared with M = 62.8 hours, t = 2.086 p < 0.05). On average, the mothers worked almost nine (M = 8.75) hours a day, six days a week, while the fathers worked ten and a half (M = 10.5) hours a day, six days a week. Of the employed or self-employed parents, 23% of the mothers and 17% of the fathers stated that they worked, or were reported to work, eight hours or more a day, seven days a week.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the employed or self-employed parents interviewed were more than three times as likely to report that they had too little time to spend with their children (64%) compared with the non-working informants (17%). When the parents who reported having too little time with their children were asked what they would like to be able to do
with their children that they were not doing. 78% replied that they would like to spend more leisure-time together with the children, and the remaining 12% said that they would like to help with their children's homework.

Given the long working hours and the travel to and from work that many of parents have to do, it is not surprising that many of the families used professional childcare. Information elicited through the Neighborhood and Community Assessment Questionnaire reveals that more than two-thirds (68%) of the working parents interviewed had or have had one or several children attending the local daycare center (60%) or had a private childminder (8%). Nonetheless, nearly two thirds (57%) of the working mothers said they had difficulties finding someone to take care of those children who were at home ill on a school day. Perhaps unsurprisingly, several of the non-working mothers said that they either chose to, or were forced to, quit their job because of the long working hours and inadequate childcare.

Variations in Perceived Parental Acceptance in Relation to Parents’ Work Situation

When the informants were asked how they would rate their work situation in terms of bringing up an adolescent child, 66% responded that their present work situation worked out well or had several strengths. Of these parents, 70% said that they appreciated the possibility to be available at home or close to home to administer the care their children needed. As one could expect, this group was comprised mainly of those parents who gave “looking after the family or home” as their main occupation, parents seeking employment, and self-employees. More than half (52%) stressed the importance of coworkers as a source of advice and support in their parenting, and 25% mentioned their contribution to the family income as a positive feature. However, 27% of the parents interviewed said that their present work situation did not work out very well when it comes to raising an adolescent child. Of these parents, the largest part (70%) said that their work situation meant that they were not always available when their children needed them, and the remaining 30% were concerned that they could not contribute to the family income and thereby improve their children's well-being. The latter were all unemployed and looking for work. Only 5% of the parents interviewed responded that their work situation was of little or no importance for them as parents of an adolescent child.

Overall, there were no significant variations in the adolescents’ report on the Child PARQ scales with respect to the parents’ occupational status, parents’ place of work and number of working hours, or main caregivers’ self-rated assessment of how their work situation worked out in terms of raising an adolescent child. However, the adolescents whose parents had
responded that their work situation was of little or no significance for them as parents reported perceiving significantly more parental rejection than did the other adolescents in the sample, although the difference was slight ($M = 27.2$ compared with $M = 20.2$, $t = 2.563$, $p < 0.05$). It is unclear why this difference appears, though some of the discrepancy in the adolescents’ report of perceived parental rejection might indicate that the informants who reported that their work situation was of little or no importance for them as parents of an adolescent child were unemployed and displeased with their financial situation.

**Influence of Leisure-time Activities on Parenting**

The data suggest that the adolescents in the sample had a considerable amount of unconstrained or free time. Although nearly all the adolescents attended school five days a week, and most of them were also reported to have duties at home (e.g. homework, household chores, and helping with the care of younger siblings), leisure clearly occupied more of the typically sample adolescent's waking hours than their studies and other obligations combined.

In general, the parents interviewed seemed to have much less leisure-time than their adolescent children, in that they managed the home activities and were also often active in income-generating work. The parents varied greatly, however, in their perception of how much spare time they had. When the informants were asked how much time they had to do the things they would like to do, more than half (54%) responded that they had too little time free time, 41% reported having about the right amount of time for leisure and recreation, and 5% said that they had too much spare time.

The unemployed informants who were looking for work were more likely to report that they had too little leisure-time (72%) than were the informants who were employed or self-employed (53%). This can perhaps be seen as a result of the financial uncertainty that accompanies unemployment. Given that many unwaged adults in Buriti Congonhas have creative ways of making ends meet, it is likely that job-seeking parents, stressed by financial uncertainty, give priority to every opportunity to make money over the option to have leisure-time.

**Television Viewing**

Television viewing appears to be a common leisure-time activity among the sample families in Buriti Congonhas. As noted, the great majority (97%) of the households studied owned a television. These households all had
access to a number of national and regional channels free of charge – though the television signals received by their roof-top aerials were often quite poor. In nearly all of the homes visited, the television was centrally located in the room where most activities took place – usually the livingroom. This probably means that television viewing is often a communal household activity. In fact, some informants mentioned that they and their families ate their meals in front of the television. It was also noted that in many of the homes visited the television seemed to be on most of the time, but was not always being watched.

The sample adolescents and parents interviewed who had a television in their home watched television every day, except for a few informants who were affiliated to certain Protestant churches that did not allow its members to watch television. The most preferred and widely watched programs were telenovelas (i.e. limited-run television serials, or soap operas in mini-series format, produced in Brazil), and soccer games – especially important ones as when Brazil plays in the world cup. Aside from these programs, which many of the informants reported viewing together with their children, American action movies (always dubbed in Brazilian-Portuguese), cartoons and children’s programs emerged as the most popular with the sample adolescents, while the news and factual programs attracted the highest interest among the parents interviewed. A number of informants who worked outside of Buriti Congonhas remarked, however, that they were often too busy to watch anything else but the news.

The parents interviewed differed in their opinion about television. When the informants were asked how they would rate television from the point of view of parent, 52% replied that television made it easier to raise their children. Of these parents, 65% said that the television made life easier for them as parents because it helped to keep their children at home, and 35% remarked that the television programs provided both their children and themselves with knowledge about the world and human relationships. Several of the parents interviewed said, for instance, that they had learned a lot about marital relationships and parenting from watching telenovelas.

However, 24% of the informants replied that television made it more difficult for them to raise their children. The prevailing opinion among these parents appeared to be that television and the programs showed had a negative impact on children and adolescents. For example, several parents said that the television programs “teach children and adolescents a lot of rubbish,” while other parents expressed concern because television made children and adolescents forget or neglect their duties, such as household chores and homework.

If I could decide, cartoons should only be allowed on weekends – because they interfere with children and adolescents school homework tasks.
The remaining 24% of the informants seemed to have ambivalent feelings towards television and the programs showed. On the one hand, these parents reported that they regarded television as a help in keeping their adolescent children at home, but on the other hand they complained about the quality of the television programs which exposed children and adolescents to sexually explicit, profane, and violent entertainment.

**Neighborhood Recreational Activities**

Data obtained on the Neighborhood and Community Assessment Questionnaire shows that 61% of the households surveyed had one or several members who participated in at least one of the recreational activities available in the neighborhood. As noted in Chapter 5, the neighborhood recreational activities for children and adolescents comprised a soccer team, a capoeira club, and activities in the local library, while parents in their spare time could attend meetings and events arranged by the Residents’ Association, and there was also a handicraft group for women.

Twenty-five percent of the sample adolescents reported that they regularly attended one or several neighborhood recreational activities. Of these adolescents, 66% participate in the fourth-nightly activities for children and adolescents in the local library, 61% played on the soccer team, and 38% trained with the capoeira club. However, 75% of the sample adolescents did not attend any neighborhood recreational activities. During the interviews, several parents said that they did not let their children participate in any of the recreational activities for children and adolescents in the neighborhood because they perceived the localities for these activities to be unsafe. A few parents also mentioned that they worried about their children’s exposure to negative peer influences or that they did not rely on the leaders of the recreational activities.

Only a small number of the parents interviewed participated in one or both of the neighborhood recreational activities for adults. The data show that 6% of the informants regularly attended either the handicraft group (4%) or both the handicraft group and the Residents’ Association (2%). When the parents interviewed were asked if there were any neighborhood recreational activity that they felt they could use but were not using, nearly a quarter (23%) gave a positive answer. Of these parents, 47% said that they would like to train with either the soccer team (29%) or the capoeira club (18%), 35% would like to participate in the handicraft group for women, and 18% said that they would like to attend meetings and events arranged by the Residents’ Association. All the parents identified time or age constraints as the main barriers to participating in these neighborhood recreational activities. It is worth noting that several of the parents interviewed also indicated a number of recreational activities they would like to have in their
neighborhood. The two most common suggestions were an evening school for adults with an incomplete primary education and physical recreational activities for women, such as soccer, volleyball, and aerobics.

**Church Attendance**

Attending church appears to be a common leisure-time activity among the sample families in Buriti Congonhas. Information elicited through the Neighborhood and Community Assessment Questionnaire reveals that almost three of four (72%) of the households surveyed had one or several members who regularly attend religious services. In most (82%) of these households, all church attendees were reported to go to the same, or same type of, church, while 18% of the households comprised individuals who frequented different types of religious services.

Nearly two fifths (38%) of the sample adolescents were reported to regularly attend either a Catholic (23%) or Protestant church (15%). Of these adolescents, practically all (92%) participated in the church’s youth group. Despite wide variation among the different churches and groups, the overall common purpose of the youth groups seems to be to energize parish youth in their faith through social activities, discussion topics, scripture reflection, and church-related activities. Given that most youth groups meet at least once a week, surprisingly few adolescents reported having any close friends in church. When the sample adolescents were asked on the Social Network of Youth Questionnaire to list the people they considered their friends, only 13% of the adolescents who regularly attended church listed one or several church peers. However, since most adolescents attended churches located in areas adjacent to Buriti Congonhas, it is likely that at least some of them attend the same church youth group as their friends from the neighborhood and/or from school.

Not counting baptisms, weddings, and funerals, half (50%) of the parents interviewed said that they regularly attended religious services. Of these parents, 67% attended Protestant churches, 28% Catholic churches, and 5% Candomblé temples. The Protestants outnumbered the Catholics by more than double since many parents had changed church affiliation. Specifically, 44% of the church attending informants reported having changed from a Catholic to a Protestant church since the index child was born. The most common motive given by the parents for this change of church affiliation was that they had found “better religious services” or “a much friendlier atmosphere” in the Protestant churches. Some parents also remarked that it was handier to attend the same church as their spouse or that their new church was conveniently located within walking distance from home. None of the informants, however, reported attending any of the churches located in Buriti Congonhas.
The largest part (69%) of the informants who regularly attended religious services said that they went to church either several times a week (50%) or weekly (19%), whereas the remaining 31% reported attending religious services either once a month (17%) or more seldomly (14%). Slightly more Protestants than Catholics (75% vs. 70%) reported attending church on at least a weekly basis. The parents who said that they went to church several times a week were all housewives engaged in different church groups, such as Bible study and discussion circles, prayer groups, and sewing circles. Perhaps unsurprisingly, all these women reported having made new friends through the church.

Although church activities are usually free of charge, many of the parents interviewed mentioned that they and their spouse (if any) regularly donated money to the church and, especially, its charity to the poor. In fact, some informants said that they occasionally gave as much as up to a tenth of their household's monthly income to the church.

When the informants who regularly attended religious services were asked whether there were ways in which the church, or temple, helped them to raise their children, all responded that the church or temple was a support to them as parents in one or several ways. Of these parents, nearly all (94%) said that the church or temple helped with both parental and child guidance, 41% mentioned the priest or minister as a source of advice and support for them and their families, another 40% stressed the importance of friends in the church or temple as a source of support in their parenting, 33% mentioned Christian values as an important help in raising children and adolescents, and 16% said that the church helped them and their children through charity in the form of staple food and money.

**Recreational Activities outside the Neighborhood**

Many adolescents appear to spend some time engaging in recreational activities other than church, outside the neighborhood. A good number of adolescents reported that they occasionally visited friends living in neighborhoods adjacent to Buriti Congonhas. Data obtained on the Social Network of Youth Questionnaire indicate that more than half (55%) of the sample adolescents had one or several friends living in the officially recognized neighborhoods surrounding Buriti Congonhas. All the adolescents reported visiting their friends in their friends’ homes, because none of the friends living in the officially recognized neighborhoods were allowed by their parents to enter Buriti Congonhas or any other shantytown. Moreover, during the interviews, a few (6%) adolescents reported that they regularly either took English lessons at a private language school (4%) or played basketball outside their neighborhood (2%). Some adolescents also mentioned that they occasionally spent free time with their friends at a
nearby shopping mall, and when they could afford it they sometimes ate at a fast-food hamburger restaurant or went to a movie.

When the parents were asked how they used their free time, 47% replied that they engaged in one or several recreational activities other than church, outside their neighborhood. Of these parents, 64% said that they went to the beach or a park with their family or friends, 55% visited relatives or friends living in adjacent neighborhoods or more distant parts of the city, 44% attended soccer matches, 23% ate dinner out on occasion, and 3% reported going to a movie or visiting dancing-halls in the city center. More than half (53%) of the parents interviewed did not seem to spend any leisure-time outside Buriti Congonhas. Of these parents, 83% said that they spent the major part of their leisure-time at home, either with their immediate family (73%) or alone (10%). While the latter preferred to spend their spare time reading, doing handiwork, listening to music, or sleeping, the former reported that they and their family, or part of it, did things together at home, such as watching television, renting a video, ordering in pizza, having a barbeque, or cleaning the house.

Variations in Perceived Parental Acceptance in Relation to Parents’ Access to Recreation

When the parents interviewed were asked how they, taking everything into account, would rate their chances to enjoy recreation, 71% responded that they rated their chances to enjoy recreation as good (50%) or fairly good (21%). Of these parents, more than half (54%) reported having enough or too much time for recreation. The data show that 80% of the parents who were satisfied with their access to recreation regularly attended religious services, and 52% also reported that they spent the major part of their free time at home, either alone or with their family. However, 29% of the informants rated their chances to enjoy recreation as poor. Of these parents, about 76% said that they had too little time to do the things they would like to do. Nonetheless, 57% regularly attended religious services, and 66% reported spending some of their spare time in one or several recreational activities other than church, outside the neighborhood. Moreover, the data reveal that the parents who rated their chances to enjoy recreation as poor had a significantly higher average number of schooling years than the parents who rated their access to recreation as good or fairly good ($M = 6.2$ years compared with $M = 4.2$ years, $t = 2.941, p < 0.01$), and they were also more likely to be employed (57%) or self-employed (27%).

Although insufficient time for recreation is in all probability a potential stressor in the lives of many people in Buriti Congonhas, the parents who were dissatisfied with their access to recreation did not seem to be more rejecting towards their children than were the parents who reported that
their access to recreation was good or fairly good. Overall, there were no significant variations in the adolescents’ report on the Child PARQ scales based on the parents’ assessment of access to recreation, or on different types of recreational activities.

Summary

The results presented in this chapter provide further support for the view that parenting in Buriti Congonhas is determined by a multiple of factors. The findings from the study show that variations in perceived parental acceptance in Buriti Congonhas are related not only to adolescents’ age and gender and to the parents’ gender, educational level, and perception of adolescents personality and behavioral characteristics, but also to influences from the contexts in which the sample adolescents and their parents interact and live their lives. More specifically, the results presented in this chapter show that significant contextual determinants of variations in perceived parental acceptance in Buriti Congonhas are parents’ experiences of family stress and perceived childcare support, parents’ perception of their financial situation in combination with childcare support, number of persons per room in the dwelling occupied by extended families, parents’ perception of the neighborhood as a place to raise children, and parents’ satisfaction with their children’s school situation. None of the other contextual influences explored (i.e. family size, parents’ satisfaction with accommodations, parents’ work situation, and parents’ access to recreation) contributed to any statistically significant variation in perceived parental acceptance.
CHAPTER 8

ECOLOGY OF PARENTING IN BURITI CONGONHAS

The aim of the following chapter is to reassemble and discuss the results of the study on parenting in Buriti Congonhas, presented in the previous chapters, drawing on Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological model of human development presented in Chapter 2. The discussion is organized into three major sections based on the overall aims of the study specified in the introductory chapter with particular reference to Buriti Congonhas: Social living conditions of parents and children; Parenting and subsequent child outcomes; and Determinants of parenting.

Social Living Conditions of Parents and Children

The results of the study present a complex portrait of the social living conditions of parents and children in Buriti Congonhas. Specifically, the findings show that the social living conditions of families with children are shaped by multiple, overlapping, and cumulative social and situational influences at all levels corresponding to Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological model. The following section summarizes and discusses some of the main findings that emerged from the study. Although they are discussed separately, the different levels of the bioecological model are interrelated and work together in complex ways.

Time

It is essential in considering the contemporary social living conditions of parents and children in Buriti Congonhas to consider what Bronfenbrenner has termed macrotime. The immense changes that have taken place Buriti Congonhas, and in the society at large, since the area was first settled in the early 1920s have had profound effect on the physical and social living conditions of the residents in the shantytown. As described earlier, the
Chapter 8

The hillside where Buriti Congonhas is located today has changed from a sparsely built area with only a few small farms, where the slopes were used mainly for growing oranges, into a high density urban shantytown with a population of several thousand people – though it is difficult to come to any conclusions about the actual number of inhabitants. The increase in the number of people living in Buriti Congonhas reflects the massive rural-to-urban migration in Brazil that started more than a half century ago. Findings from the study indicate that slightly more than one third of the parents included in the sample had migrated to Rio de Janeiro from other Brazilian states. In the bioecological perspective, these parents’ move into a new setting (i.e. ecological transitions) has had developmental consequences. The involvement in different levels of joint activity in a new setting with different role demands and interpersonal relationships requires the developing individual to adapt to more people, tasks, and situations, thus increasing the scope and flexibility of his or her cognitive and social skills (cf. Bronfenbrenner, 1979a). This possibly could explain the finding that the parents who had come to live in Buriti Congonhas as adults were somewhat more likely than those who were brought up in the neighborhood to list in the questionnaire non-relative neighbors among the people they knew well. The migrated parents’ decision to move also illustrates the bioecological model’s stipulation that individuals are active agents who within certain limits have a bearing on the character of the environmental context in which they live and develop.

Like many other shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro, Buriti Congonhas was illegally settled without any formal investment in infrastructure (cf. SMH, 1999b; Perlman, 1976). It is only in recent decades that the residents in the shantytown have begun to have access to some of the basic urban services that exist within the official city, such as running water, closed sewers, electricity, a public day nursery, and recently paved access roads into the neighborhood. These improvements have undoubtedly affected the everyday life of parents and their children in Buriti Congonhas. Although the water supply in the neighborhood is still inadequate, the access to running water is likely to free more time for interpersonal relations and activities (i.e. microtime, which has to do with continuity versus discontinuity within ongoing episodes of proximal processes). The access to tap-water and electricity probably also means that the residents now have more time for income-generating activities. On the other hand, there is the risk that access to tap water might impoverish relations among residents in the neighborhood (mesosystems) since it is no longer necessary for people to leave their house to get water. At the same time, the existence of paved roads is likely to facilitate contact with various settings in the surrounding areas, such as the children's school (a microsystem from the perspective of the child and an exosystem from the perspective of the parent) and the
parents’ workplace (a microsystem from the perspective of the parent and an exosystem from the perspective of the child). The opening of a public nursery in the neighborhood has in all probability also facilitated the possibility for parents with young children to earn a living.

**Macrosystem Influences**

At the level of the macrosystem, which includes societal attitudes and values, results from the present study suggest that stereotypes held about the slums and slum dwellers in Rio de Janeiro impact in various ways on the social living conditions of parents and children in Buriti Congonhas. From the bioecological model’s perspective, the macrosystem is of critical importance because it influences all other systems. Data collected in the study indicate that both the sample parents and their adolescent children experience incidences of social exclusion that risk impoverishing both the settings (microsystems) where the family’s everyday activities and interactions (proximal processes) occur and their connections with relatives and friends (mesosystems) living outside the shantytown. Furthermore, such stereotypes may also impede the parents’ employment opportunities in the labor market (exosystem, from the perspective of the child).

As was noted in the previous chapter, neither the parents nor their teenage children receive in their home relatives and friends who live outside Buriti Congonhas. According to their accounts, people living elsewhere are often afraid to visit the shantytown because of actual or perceived dangers. This means that those parents and adolescents in Buriti Congonhas who do not spend time with other residents in the neighborhood face an increased risk of being socially isolated from their relatives and friends as well. In the bioecological perspective, social isolation becomes a developmental risk when the family microsystem has an insufficient range of roles, activities, and relationships that individuals can use in their personal development (cf. Garbarino & Abramowitz, 1992a). Social isolation has also been linked to increased risks of child abuse and neglect because parents have less emotional support, have no positive parenting role models, and feel less pressure to conform to conventional standards of parenting behaviors (Harrington & Dubowitz, 1999).

Moreover, data from the present study suggest that negative stereotypes held about slum dwellers in Rio de Janeiro might affect parents’ access to employment opportunities. Several of the parents interviewed reported that access to certain jobs was denied them because of their place of residence. This is likely to indirectly also have consequences for the healthy development of the children and adolescents in the shantytown. Even though most of the unemployed parents in Buriti Congonhas seem to have creative ways earning their livelihood, secure parental employment is of
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critical importance for a family's financial stability. Having a secure job provides not only a steady income but also retirement and other benefits for employees and their families. In addition, studies have shown that secure parental employment can contribute to healthy family functioning and psychological well-being, and protect against the stress associated with unemployment, underemployment, and poverty (Mayer, 1997; Smith, Brooks-Gunn & Jackson, 1997).

Findings from Perlman's (1976, 2003; 2004, 2006) studies in various shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro confirm that the stigma attached to living in a slum negatively affects the slum dweller’s access to jobs and intensifies other forms of discrimination as well. Many slum dwellers are “afraid to give correct addresses on job interviews, knowing that eyebrows would be raised and the interview terminated if this were known” (Perlman, 2004, p. 135). The majority of the informants in Perlman’s study also reported being discriminated against for their skin color or style of dress. Discrimination of slum dwellers also appears in other forms. For example, a recent study on residents in the squatter settlements in Rio de Janeiro shows that they earn 10 to 47% less than people from other neighborhoods who work in similar occupations and have the same education, age, and gender characteristics (Cardoso, Elias, & Pero, 2003).

It is also noteworthy that the data collected in Buriti Congonhas suggest that negative stereotypes about slum dweller and slums are held not only by people living elsewhere, but also seem to be shared by people who actually live in the slum. For example, a number of the parents interviewed reported that they explicitly forbid their offspring to play with other children and adolescents living in Buriti Congonhas, and some informants described the people in their neighborhood as “bad people,” or as people who “misuse alcohol and drugs,” are “promiscuous,” “slander and spread rumors,” or “neglect and abuse their children.” Moreover, at the open seminar where preliminary results from the study were presented, it was noted that various parents seemed to lack confidence in their neighbors parenting capacity. The prevalence of such attitudes and comments may indicate that at least some people living in the shantytown have internalized the negative stereotypes perpetuated about them by the society at large.

Exosystem Influences

At the level of the exosystem, it was noted that a variety of settings indirectly exert influences on the social living conditions of the parents and children in Buriti Congonhas. The data collected indicate that parents and children share a number of exosystems; for example, the slum upgrade program, the school board, and the local government, all of which impact on their everyday life. The findings from the study suggest that the presence
and activities of drug traffickers in Buriti Congonhas is a highly pervasive exosystem shared by all parents and children in the sample. The actual or perceived danger of drug-related violence, in fact, seems to impact on more aspects of daily life in the shantytown than the neighborhood's material and infrastructural deficiencies, including the inadequate water supply. Data from the study indicate that the residents' experiences of drug-related dangers in the neighborhood risk impoverishing the family settings (microsystems) and the family's connections with other settings (mesosystems) both within and outside the shantytown, such as relatives, friends, schools, workplaces, and recreational activities.

As noted, the parents' concern over dangers in the neighborhood prompted them to employ different strategies to protect their offspring, for example by keeping their children and adolescents close to home or even indoors, as well as monitoring the children's choice of friends. Moreover, it was noted that some families living on the lower slopes did not allow their children to go uphill to visit friends living in the more elevated parts of the shantytown. In the same way, many of the parents interviewed reported that, due to the danger of drug-related violence on the street in the neighborhood, they rarely if ever visited other sections of the shantytown apart from the one in which they and their family live. Moreover, several parents reported that family members occasionally had to stay at home from work or school because of shooting in the neighborhood. There were signs, however, that despite these problems, the majority of the parents interviewed did not, in fact, perceive their neighborhood as being characterized by a sense of isolation and lack of community. For example, most parents described the people in the neighborhood as good and reliable. Many parents had relatives in the neighborhood whom they met at least once a week, and a good number of parents identified neighbors as their best friends. Moreover, most households appeared to make use of the services and programs available in the neighborhood.

Furthermore, as was noted in Chapter 2, the “concept of an exosystem illustrates the projective nature of a biocological perspective, for the same setting that is an exosystem for a child may be a microsystem for the parent, and vice versa” (Garbarino, et al., 2002, p. 490). For example, the data collected in the present study show that the actual or perceived quality of the children's school may affect the parents’ well-being (exosystem influence), whereas the working parents’ place of employment and working hours clearly affect the time available to be with the child (exosystem influences).
As was noted in Chapter 6, the results from the child version of Rohner's Parental Acceptance–Rejection Questionnaire (Child PARQ) indicate that the majority of the sample adolescents in Buriti Congonhas, on average but with a few notable exceptions, experience substantial parental acceptance. In the bioecological perspective, the acceptance (or love) that the sample adolescents report that their parents give or withhold is an example of what Bronfenbrenner calls proximal processes, i.e. a transfer of energy between the developing adolescent and the parents who constitute a part of his or her immediate environment or microsystem. In accordance with the bioecological model's notion of proximal processes as the mechanism driving human development, a vast body of research shows that the quality of parent–child relationships characterized by parental acceptance and rejection has a profound influence in shaping children's personality development over the life span (for reviews, see Rohner, 1986 and Rohner & Britner, 2002). Parental acceptance and rejection have been shown, for example, to affect the emotional, behavioral, and social cognitive development of children as well as their psychological functioning and well-being as adults (Rohner, 2001).

In the present study, adolescents' individual experience of more or less parental acceptance emerges as a predictor of the two types of developmental outcomes examined, i.e. adolescents’ personality and behavioral characteristics [as measured by the child version of Rohner's (1979) Personality Assessment Questionnaire, i.e. the Child PAQ], and rate of school grade repetition. As noted, the data collected show that the degree to which the sample adolescents in Buriti Congonhas report themselves as having positive feelings of self-esteem and self-adequacy, as being emotionally responsive and emotionally stable, as having a positive worldview, as having few problems with hostility and aggression, and as having overall positive mental health (as assessed by the Total PAQ) correlates significantly with their individual reports of perceived maternal and paternal acceptance.

In addition, the experience of maternal warmth, responsiveness, and overall acceptance also seems to have an effect on the sample adolescents’ school attendance. The adolescents who had advanced a grade each year without repeating or dropping out of school reported perceiving significantly more maternal warmth and affection, less maternal neglect and indifference, and more overall maternal acceptance than did the adolescents who had repeated grades or dropped out of school. These findings indicate that perceived parental acceptance–rejection can, like the bioecological model's concept of proximal processes, produce both competence and dysfunction. Numerous studies have shown that parental acceptance appears
to enhance positive behaviors in children and adults, while parental rejection is associated with a long list of negative developmental outcomes, such as clinical and non-clinical depression, almost all forms of behavior problems (including conduct disorder, externalizing behavior, and delinquency), and substance abuse (for a review, see Rohner, Khaleque, & Cournoyer, 2007). Evidence from such studies shows that as much as 26% of the variation in children's psychological adjustment can be accounted for by the degree to which they perceive themselves to be accepted or rejected by their main caregivers (Rohner, Khaleque, & Cournoyer, 2007). This figure leaves a large proportion of children's adjustment to be explained by other factors, such as other interpersonal relationships, sociocultural factors, and behavioral genetic factors, as premised by the bioecological perspective.

**Variations in Parenting**

Consistent with the bioecological model's stipulation, perceived parental acceptance–rejection in Buriti Congonhas varies as a function of the characteristics of the developing person and the environment over time.

**Person Characteristics**

The data collected in Buriti Congonhas show that the sample adolescents' experience of their parents' behavior varied significantly by age, such that the younger the adolescent the more overall maternal and paternal acceptance was reported. Although the age differences in perceived parental acceptance–rejection noted in Buriti Congonhas are not consonant with findings from other studies reviewed. From the bioecological model's perspective, the influence of proximal processes on developmental outcomes is expected to vary with the characteristics of the person. According to Bronfenbrenner and Morris (1998), age is one of several demographic factors which are so pervasive in affecting future development that their possible influence routinely needs to be considered. It is unclear why, in Buriti Congonhas, adolescents' age seems to affect perceived parental acceptance–rejection, though one has to consider that parents concerned with dangers in the neighborhood might employ age specific strategies to control their children's activities outside the home. Given that adolescents' demand for independence tends to increase with age, it possible that parents with older children use harsher discipline and more excessive control compared with parents with younger children. Another possible interpretation that emphasizes the bioecological model's phenomenological perspective is that the older adolescents in the sample, perhaps because of
increased demands for independence, experience their parents’ control as harsher than do the younger adolescents.

In addition, the data obtained also suggest that parents’ perception of their index adolescent’s personal and behavioral characteristics (as measured by the Mother PAQ) is a predictor of variations in parental acceptance in Buriti Congonhas. This finding reflects one other key element of the bioecological model stipulated in Proposition III, namely that the “the form, power, and direction of the proximal processes producing development” also “vary systematically as a function of … the nature of the developmental outcomes under consideration.” In other words, from the bioecological model’s viewpoint, the sample adolescents’ personality and behavioral characteristics function both as an indirect producer and as a product of development. It follows that the behavioral and personal characteristics that are assessed on the child and parental version of the PAQ to some extent are comparable to the “force characteristics” described in the bioecological model – that is, active behavioral dispositions that both respond to and affect responses from the persons with whom the developing person interacts (for further details see Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, Chapter 2).

**Contexts**

Parents’ gender and educational level are two other significant determinants of variations in perceived parental acceptance in Buriti Congonhas. In the bioecological perspective, these determinants underscore that not only the sample adolescents, but also the parents who constitute a part of their immediate environment or microsystem, possess distinctive characteristics that may contribute to variations in perceived parental acceptance. Given that nearly all sample adolescents indicated their mother as their main caregiver on the Child PARQ, it is not unlikely that the adolescents’ report of their mothers as slightly but significantly warmer and more affectionate than their fathers mirrors the fact that it is mainly women who care for children and adolescents in Buriti Congonhas and thereby may have more opportunities to engage in interaction with their children. This assumption, in turn, raises the question of whether the division of childcare responsibilities between the genders in Buriti Congonhas is primarily a practical arrangement based on the parents’ work situation (i.e. in many cases an exosystem effect), or whether it is a result of traditional values about the roles that men and women can or should play in childrearing (i.e. a macrosystem effect). The finding that parents who have completed eight grades in school are perceived as slightly warmer and more affectionate than are the parents who have no school qualifications at all may indicate that parents with a higher level of education tend to display more effective
parenting through a variety of behaviors with positive implications for child outcome (see Chase-Lansdale & Pittman, 2002; Collins et al., 2000).

Moreover, findings from the present study suggest that elevated levels of stress resulting from perceived family problems or financial difficulties and actual or perceived dangers in the neighborhood appear to place parents at significantly greater risk of withholding love and affection from their children, especially if the parents lack access to assistance with childcare. These assumptions are consistent with findings from Rohner’s wide-ranging studies of parenting behaviors in several geographically and culturally disparate societies (see e.g. Rohner, 1975, 1986 and Rohner & Rohner, 1980) indicating that rejecting parents generally appear overwhelmed by a convergence of social and economic hardship such as inadequate material resources, too much stress, and too little practical and emotional support. When viewed from a biocultural perspective, the harsh and dangerous living conditions in Buriti Congonhas, coupled with different types of family stress, financial difficulties, and absence of adequate childcare support in the home, establish a background for psychological child maltreatment (cf. Garbarino, Guttmann, & Wilson Seeley, 1986). Parents stressed by their everyday living situation and overwhelmed by their childcare responsibilities tend to lose whatever positive coping skills they may have possessed and convert their stress into behavioral aggression or neglect of their children’s physical and/or emotional needs (Garbarino, Guttmann, & Wilson Seeley, 1986; Rohner, 1986).

**Time**

The dimension of time appears somewhat implicitly in the data collected in Buriti Congonhas. The Child PARQ is a dimensional measure of parenting style that examines the broad pattern of parenting in terms of parental acceptance and rejection. Thus, it is likely that the overall pattern of parental acceptance, noted in most of the sample families, results from a process of regular interaction between parents and children over time. As noted in the literature reviewed, the influence of parents on children’s development is thought to be especially important during the formative years – that is, the period from infancy through young adulthood. In this perspective, the data suggest that most adolescents in the sample have had a good start in life, but that a few seem to be in trouble. According to Rohner & Khaleque (2002, p. 3) important elements of rejection are apt to linger into adulthood, placing people who were rejected as children at somewhat greater risk of social and emotional problems later in life than people who were loved continuously. However, it is important to note that not all accepted children and adults necessarily develop in a favorable manner. Some accepted individuals develop adjustment problems similar to those of
rejected individuals for reasons other than parental acceptance—rejection (Rohner & Khaleque (2002). Similarly, not all rejected individuals appear to develop serious adjustment problems. Some are able to cope with the pain of perceived rejection more effectively than others (Rohner, 2001).
CHAPTER 9

A WIDER VIEW OF PARENTING: LIMITATIONS AND GENERALIZATIONS

The overall aims of the study were threefold. The first aim was to explore the physical and social contexts for parenting in a shantytown in Rio de Janeiro using an ecological perspective. What are the social living conditions of parents and children in a shantytown in Rio de Janeiro? The second aim was to examine parenting and subsequent child outcomes among a population of families living in a shantytown. How do parents nurture and protect their offspring, and what are the consequences for children's and adolescents' developmental outcomes? What parenting strategies are employed? The third and last aim was to explore what factors may contribute to differences among parents in how they nurture and protect their children. What are the determinants of parenting in a shantytown?

Limitations

Although the present study has limitations, the research approach used for the study of parenting in a shantytown enables comparatively high validity and reliability. Several limitations arose while conducting the study. The main limitation was that the sample included no more than one female parent and one male parent per adolescent, thereby excluding other types of parenting situations. However, many studies on parenting have focused solely on the mother and her impact on the child’s development. Another limitation is that the number of households included in the sample was less than the original target, which reduces the available statistical power. The conclusions that can be drawn from the study are also limited by the fact that the sample was taken from only one shantytown. Moreover, statistical analysis was limited to t-tests and correlations, and no multivariate techniques were used to examine the combined effect of several influences, which limited the statistical conclusions that can be drawn from the data. On the other hand, it can be argued that statistics are often not the most accurate way to study parent–child relations (cf. Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998; Rintoul et al., 1998).
Chapter 9

Reliability and Validity

This study is based on nearly three years of field studies in a shantytown in Rio de Janeiro. The emphasis in the approach to inquiry was on establishing a dialog with residents in the shantytown. The initial entry to the shantytown was through a senior researcher at the School of Social Work at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, who also supervised the field work. The conduct of the study on parenting was realized through the involvement of local youth volunteers. They assisted in translating the research questionnaires from English into Brazilian Portuguese, pre-tested research protocols in another shantytown, and helped to integrate the study into the local culture of the present shantytown.

The selection of a shantytown with a long-standing contact with a local university was a rational choice. First and foremost because of the possibility to receive qualified field supervision from a senior researcher knowledgeable about the setting in question, but also because the study was offered a point of entry into the shantytown. It is important to underscore, however, that the contacts gained were with the Residents’ Association, which meant that it was still necessary to find ways to win the support and co-operation of the local residents. Despite the Residents Association's long-standing contact with the university, many residents of the shantytown were unaware of it.

The size of the sample drawn for the main data collection included almost 75% of all families with children 12 to 14 years of age who were living in the shantytown in question at the time of the study. Although 75% is a fairly high figure, there is still the risk that the 25% of the target population who were not included in the study would have presented an entirely different picture, either much better or much worse than the study's findings indicate, and that it therefore would not be possible to generalize from the findings (cf. Perlman, 2003). However, as the sampling procedure included personal visits to all households in the target population, it was possible to check on some basic information also on the households not included in the study. Apart from inquiring about the parents’ or adolescents’ motives for not participating in the study, some basic questions were asked about each of the households. However, because a few of the dwellings were closed up, it was not possible to gather information from all the households. Observations from the visits did not reveal any significant differences between the two groups of households with regard to family structure, housing standard, amenities at home, or children's school attainment. Although it is still possible that the households not included in the sample differed with respect to other characteristics, it can at least be concluded that the sample was not biased against any particular type of household, such as single-mother families or households with school drop-outs.
A series of previously designed and well-established instruments was selected for the data collection. These instruments included three self-report questionnaires regarding parental acceptance-rejection and children's personality dispositions, and four questionnaires eliciting detailed demographic and social-situational information about each family in the sample. In addition to these questionnaires, a self-report diary was specifically devised for the study. The self-report questionnaires were selected not only because they were most appropriate for the research problem under consideration and the phenomenological theory adopted, but also because extensive validation studies have shown the instruments to be valid and reliable as cross-cultural measures of the warmth dimension of parenting (see e.g. Rohner & Cournoyer, 1994 and Rohner, Khaleque, & Cournoyer, 2004). The empirical work based on these instruments is also highly developed. Nearly 400 studies have been completed in more than 60 nations, including various ethnic groups in the United States (Rohner, 2007). Among these works are two studies conducted in Brazil. One study was conducted in a wide range of school settings in Brazil and concerned children's experience of physical and psychological violence (Marques & Fahlberg, 1997); the other concerned perceived maternal acceptance-rejection among teenage mothers and teenagers without children in two shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro (Kejerfors, 1996a, 1996b; see also Bastos et al., 1996). The selection of the instrument was also guided by the fact that various researchers have stressed the importance of finding “culturally free data collection” instruments for social studies in the developing regions of the world (see Aptekar & Stocklin, 1996 and Bulmer & Warwick, 1983).

To secure, as far as possible, conceptual equivalence, all questionnaires were translated from English to Brazilian-Portuguese on location in the shantytown, except for the main instrument of the study, the Child PARQ, which was already available in a Brazilian-Portuguese translation (Marques & Fahlberg, 1997). The youth volunteers had a crucial role to play in the translation process. Besides being native speakers of Brazilian-Portuguese, they were knowledgeable about the daily language used by the people in the shantytown and the local culture. On the advice of the youths, some items in the questionnaires were changed to better fit the local context. They also clarified that the questionnaires should not include any questions about local drug dealers or drug-related violence because it probably would “scare the informants to silence.” This advice was probably correct. In a study published a few years after this discussion (Perlman, 2003), a high rate of refusal to answer questions about violence was noted among dwellers in another shantytown in Rio.

A major problem in the development and administrations of research instruments in the developing world is the difficulty of finding adequate language equivalents (cf. Aptekar & Stocklin, 1996; Bulmer & Warwick,
1983). For this reason, a university student who was both a native speaker of Brazilian-Portuguese and fluent in English was asked to “back-translate” the questionnaires into English (cf. Brislin, 1970, 1976; Rohner & Chakir-Sircar, 1987, 1988). The original English language versions were compared word for word with the back-translated versions, and semantic discrepancies were noted. The translation/back-translation process was repeated until a Brazilian-Portuguese language version that closely matched the original English version was created. A difficulty in connection with this procedure was that the same person made all the back translations. Even if the translator was not familiar with the English original, it is not unlikely that the words replaced in the questionnaires could have been noted and, deliberately or accidentally, substituted with synonyms in a trial-and-error search.

The primary data were collected by means of questionnaires administrated in face-to-face interviews in the informants’ home. This method was used because firsthand research experiences from other shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro had shown it to be most useful with low educated or illiterate populations (Kejerfors, 1996a; see also Marques, 1986 and Perlman, 1976). Other advantages of in-person interviewing are: (1) the response rate is high; (2) the feasible length of the questionnaire is much longer than with other kinds of surveys; (3) the questionnaire can be complex with both open- and closed-ended questions; (4) the order in which questions are read and answered is controlled by the interviewer; (5) the physical and social circumstances of the interview can be monitored; and (6) the informants’ interpretation of the questions can be probed and clarified.

As one of the voluntary youths from the shantytown, a young woman, participated in the data collection procedure, the child and the adult interviews were often conducted simultaneously in separate parts of the house or backyard. One advantage of this approach was that the degree of privacy tended to increase because more persons in the household were thus occupied. Lack of privacy was in general not a serious problem, however. Usually the informants could find a place in the house or in the backyard where the interviews could be conducted in more or less privacy. Note that all of the adolescents were interviewed in private. The great majority of the sample were judged to be receptive, enthusiastic, and spoke cordially about their everyday lives and families. Many of the informants seemed eager to give correct information. It was, for instance, not unusual that a simple question about age was verified with an ID-card. Some informants provided the interviewers with much more information than was asked for. A number of parents spoke openly about personal or marital problems and a few informants revealed “secrets” about illegal actions that could have put them, their families, and/or the interviewers in jeopardy. No differences could be noted with respect to the type of information that was given to the two interviewers. The fact that one of the interviewers resided in the shantytown...
did not seem to “filter” the information given. This may be because the interviewers had made a commitment to preserve the anonymity of the informants. It is also important to stress that many informants were not familiar with the interviewer from the shantytown. Given the size of, and the dangers in, the neighborhood, this is not very surprising. When informed about the female interviewer’s place of residence, many informants seemed to be positively surprised. For example, several informants said that they thought it was good that a young woman from their neighborhood showed interested in university research.

**Limitation of a Theory**

Throughout the course of the research, Bronfenbrenner's bioecological paradigm (Bronfenbrenner, 2001, 2005) was of paramount importance. It influenced the questions that were asked and the collection and analysis of the data. Although Bronfenbrenner's theoretical work is widely referred to in the literature and used for research and policy development across a wide range of disciplines, including social work, no current version of the model could be found. From reviewing the literature, it became evident that the successive development of the theoretical perspective, first published in the 1970s, seems to have created a number of misconceptions, and much of the contemporary critique of the theory was based on the earliest version of the ecological model. To find an appropriate theoretical framework for the present study, and to learn more about the theory, the present study has brought together a series of scientific publications on the ecology of human development produced by Bronfenbrenner and his associates throughout the last three decades into a current version of what has now come to be referred to as the bioecological model of human development.

Although these efforts resulted in a theoretical framework that was most useful for the aims of the study, it became evident that it is an impossible mission to try to meet all the criteria for ecological research within a single investigation – a fact that Bronfenbrenner (1979) himself pointed out in his acclaimed monograph. Although the four key elements of Process, Person, Context, and Time are all represented in the study conducted in Buriti Congonhas, they are not of sufficient detail to permit fulfilling the requirements of the theoretical model in full. A more stringent operationalization of the bioecological model would require the incorporation of many more factors. For example, to more fully understand the way parents behave towards their children, it would have been useful to consider the person’s history prior to parenthood, including his or her own experiences of being parented. A further implication for research is that the bioecological model’s scope is not limited to one particular aspect of the interaction between the developing individual and his or her contexts, but
rather attempts to include all the structures involved in human life. For the
purposes of this study, therefore, only those aspects of the model relevant
to parenting have been used. Using Bronfenbrenner's model has meant, in
turn, excluding much of the existing research on parenting produced in, for
instance, the Nordic countries.

**Generalizations**

Although the fact that the sample was taken from only one shantytown
may limit the generalizability of the findings, it is unlikely that the
population of families with children in Buriti Congonhas differs in all
respects with other populations of families with children that are to be
found in the shantytowns of Rio de Janeiro and, perhaps, also elsewhere in
the world. The main result of the study indicating that the large majority of
adolescents (aged 12 to 14 years) in Buriti Congonhas perceive themselves
to be loved and accepted by their parents is supported by findings from a
study conducted in two other shantytowns in Rio de Janeiro (Kejerfors,
1996a). Furthermore, findings from worldwide studies of the effects of
parental acceptance and rejection indicate that most parents around the
world raise their children with loving care despite the fact that much of
humanity is now and always has been in a state of relative poverty (Rohner,
2001). Hence, from a global perspective, poverty itself is not necessarily
associated with increased rejection. Rather, it is poverty in association with
other social and emotional conditions that promote the breakdown of
primary emotional relationships and social supports that place children at
greater risk (Rohner, Khaleque, & Cournoyer, 2007). Parents in Buriti
Congonhas are typically exposed to such risks at all levels of the
bioecological model. However, as most of the risks seem to have their
origin in the environment outside the family, it is most likely that families in
other shantytowns of Rio de Janeiro are exposed to similar risks.

**A Wider View of Parenting**

The findings of the study in Buriti Congonhas confirm that parents and
children living in poor environments are typically exposed to a host of
negative events and chronic problems in the physical and social
environments in which they interact and live their lives. High incidence of
such major social problems as poverty, unemployment, neighborhood
violence, and exclusion makes it difficult for parents in urban slum areas to
create a decent life for themselves, much less protect their children from
harm and plan for their future. The negative stereotypes held about the
slums and slum dwellers in Rio de Janeiro often appear to find support from studies focusing on the minority of children who live in the street.

As a result, parents who live in the slums suffer from additional discrimination by being automatically assumed to neglect or abuse their children. Negative stereotypes about slum and slum dwellers are not something unique for Rio de Janeiro, however, but are likely to be found in many places in the world. Nor is it likely that it is only the children and adolescents living in the slums of Rio de Janeiro who perceive themselves to be loved and accepted by their parents. In all probability, there are many children and adolescents in families living in urban slums around the world who are being raised with loving care, and thereby are being given a good start in life. The central task of the society at large then is to create the conditions in which the youths can continue to develop their competences.

Further Research

Given the large and growing number of children and adolescents who are being raised in urban slum areas in the developing regions of the world, it is important to continue the research on parenting and child development. An understanding of parenting and its antecedents should be an important issue for social work and other disciplines concerned with social change and the well-being of individuals and communities – locally and globally.

This research has raised many questions. There are therefore many opportunities for deeper exploration. One possibility would be to conduct a follow-up study among the adolescents studied in Buriti Congonhas, to find out what has happened to them at a later point in time. Have they developed as was predicted by the measure of perceived parental acceptance and rejection? This is an important aspect in the sense that longitudinal research can give important information for social work practice in urban slum areas.

Another worthwhile project would be to replicate this study in other urban slum areas in Brazil and elsewhere. This would shed light on how similarities and differences in physical and social contexts affect parenting and subsequent child outcome.

The third area of research that deserves more attention is how parenting affects the outcomes of children in different cultural contexts. This is important since cultural similarities and differences in parenting have implications for developmental theory as well as practical implications, such as the development of parenting education. Such research is also important because it can challenge negative cultural stereotypes.
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Appendix I. Defining Properties of the Bioecological Model

The current version of the Bioecological Model comprises a series of nine propositions pertinent to using the model to frame and integrate existing research, to design new research, and to devise applications for public policy and social programs. Several of these propositions are of relatively recent origin, while others date back to the model’s earliest formal beginnings. The following is an abbreviated version of the Bioecological model that attempts to concentrate the essence the nine propositions.

**Proposition I.** The scientifically relevant features of any environment for human development include not only its objective properties but also the way in which these properties are subjectively experienced by the persons living in that environment.

**Proposition II.** Over the life course, human development takes place through processes of progressively more complex reciprocal interaction between an active, evolving biopsychological human organism and the persons, objects, and symbols in its immediate external environment. To be effective, the interaction must occur on a fairly regular basis over extended periods of time. Such enduring forms of interaction in the immediate environment are referred to as proximal processes.

**Proposition III.** The form, power, content, and direction of the proximal processes producing human development vary systematically as a joint function of the characteristics of the developing person (including genetic inheritance), the environment – both immediate and more remote – in which the processes are taking place, the nature of the developmental outcomes under consideration, and the continuities and changes occurring in the environment over time, through the life course, and during the historical period in which the person has lived.

**Proposition IV.** In order to develop – intellectually, emotionally, socially, and morally – a child requires, for all these, the same thing: participation in progressively more complex activities on a regular basis over an extended period of time in the child’s life, with one or more persons with whom the child develops a strong mutual emotional attachment and who are committed to the child’s well-being and development, preferably for life.

---

Appendix I

**Proposition V.** The establishment of a strong mutual emotional attachment leads to internalization of the parent's activities and expressed feelings of affection. Such mutual ties, in turn, motivate the child's interest and engagement in related activities in the immediate physical, social, and — in due course — symbolic environment that invite exploration, manipulation, elaboration, and imagination.

**Proposition VI.** The establishment and maintenance of patterns of progressively more complex interaction and emotional attachment between parent and child depend to a substantial degree on the availability and involvement of another adult, a third party, who assists, encourages, spells off, gives status to, and expresses admiration and affection for the person caring for and engaging in joint activity with the child. It also helps, but is not absolutely essential, that the third party be of the opposite sex from that of the other person caring for the child, because this is likely to expose and involve the child in a greater variety of developmentally instigative activities and experiences.

**Proposition VII.** The psychological development of parents is powerfully influenced by the behavior and development of their children. This phenomenon occurs through the life course, is more evident during the formative years when most children are living at home in the care of their parents, and often becomes especially pronounced during adolescence when the young begin to strive for independence both as individuals and as members of peer groups.

**Proposition VIII.** Over the life course, the process of attachment exhibits a turnaround. In the beginning, it is the children who are the beneficiaries of the parents' irrational commitment, whereas toward the end the roles are reversed. Then it is elderly parents who receive the love and care of their now middle-aged children. If, however, there was no attachment at the beginning, there may be no attachment at the end.

**Proposition IX.** If an investigation conducted in the past has met the requirements of the bioecological model, including assessment of developmental outcomes "over an extended period of time," then replication of the study at a later point in time would reveal whether the processes under investigation were still valid or had been nullified or superseded by subsequent historical changes.
Appendix II. Child Parental Acceptance–Rejection Questionnaire – Child PARQ

The child version the Parental Acceptance–Rejection Questionnaire (Child PARQ), is a cross-cultural tested and validated self-report questionnaire in which children are asked to respond to their perception of the way their parents’ behave toward them in terms of warmth and affection (20 items), hostility and aggression (15 items), indifference and neglect (15 items), and undifferentiated rejection (10 items). (Undifferentiated rejection refers to forms of rejection where children perceive their parents to be rejecting or unloving without necessarily seeing them to be hostile, aggressive, indifferent, or neglecting). The Total PARQ score, which is the sum of the 60 items on the four constituent scales, measures the overall parental acceptance or rejection that children perceive themselves to be experiencing.

CHIL D PAREN TAL ACCE P TANCE–REJEC TION QUESTIONNAIRE – CH ILD PARQ57

© 1976 by Ronald P. Rohner58

Name (or I.D. number) ______________  Date _________________

Relationship of referent to respondent (if not Mother) ____________________

Questionnaire administered by ________________________________

Here are some statements about the way mothers act toward their children. I want you to think about how each one of these fits the way your parents treat you.

Four lines are drawn after each sentence. If the statement is basically true about the way your parents treat you, then ask yourself, “Is it almost always true?” or “Is it only sometimes true?” If you think your mother or father almost always treats you that way, put an X on the line ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE; if the statement is sometimes true about the way your mother or father treats you, then mark SOMETIMES TRUE. If you feel the statement is basically untrue about the way your mother or father treats you, put an X on the line RARELY TRUE; if you feel the statement is almost never true, then mark ALMOST NEVER TRUE.

Remember, there is no right or wrong answer to any statement, so be as honest as you can. Answer each statement the way you feel your mother and father really are rather than the way you might like them to be. For example, if your mother almost always hugs and kisses you when you are good, you should mark the item as


58 This questionnaire is copyrighted by the author, who have kindly given his permission to include the questionnaire in appendix to this thesis.
Appendix II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MY MOTHER</th>
<th>TRUE OF MY MOTHER</th>
<th>NOT TRUE OF MY MOTHER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Almost always true</td>
<td>Sometimes true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rarely true</td>
<td>Almost never true</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. My mother hugs and kisses me when I am good … X

O.K., now let’s try three more to make sure you know how to answer these questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MY MOTHER:</th>
<th>TRUE OF MY MOTHER</th>
<th>NOT TRUE OF MY MOTHER</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Sometimes true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rarely true</td>
<td>Almost never true</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1…thinks it is my own fault if I get into trouble …
2…likes for me to bring friends home…
3… spends as much time with me as she can …

NOW GO TO NEXT PAGE AND BEGIN
Remember, there is no right or wrong answers, so answer each sentence the way you really feel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MY MOTHER:</th>
<th>TRUE OF MY MOTHER</th>
<th>NOT TRUE OF MY MOTHER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Almost always true</td>
<td>Sometimes true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rarely true</td>
<td>Almost never true</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. says nice things about me … X
2. nags or scolds me when I am bad …
3. totally ignores me …
4. does not really love me …
5. talks to me about our plans and listens to what I have to say …
6. complains about me to others when I don’t listen to her …
7. takes an active interest in me …
8. encourages me to bring my friends home, and tries to make things pleasant for them ...

9. ridicules and makes fun of me ...

10. ignores me as long as I don’t do anything to bother her ...

11. yells at me when she is angry ...

12. makes it easy for me to tell her things that are important ...

13. treats me harshly...

14. enjoys having me around her...

15. makes me feel proud when I do well...

16. hits me, even when I don’t deserve it...

17. forgets things she is supposed to do for me...

18. sees me as a big bother

19. praises me to others...

20. punishes me severely when she is angry...

21. makes sure I have the right kind of food to eat...

22. talks to me in a warm and loving way...

23. gets angry at me easily...

24. is too busy to answer my questions...

25. seems to dislike me...

26. says nice things to me when I deserve them...

27. gets mad quickly and picks on me...

28. is concerned who my friends are...

29. is really interested in what I do...

30. says many unkind things to me...

31. ignores me when I ask for help...

32. thinks it is my own fault when I’m having trouble...

33. makes me feel wanted and needed...

34. tells me that I get on her nerves...

35. pays a lot of attention to me...

36. tells me how proud she is of me when I am good...

37. goes out of her way to hurt my feelings...

38. forgets important things I think she should remember
### Appendix II

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>39. makes me feel I am not loved any more if I misbehave...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. makes me feel what I do is important...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. frightens or threatens me when I do something wrong...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. forgets important things I think she should remember</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. makes me feel I am not loved any more if I misbehave...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. makes me feel what I do is important...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. frightens or threatens me when I do something wrong...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. likes to spend time with me...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. tries to help me when I am scared or upset...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. shames me in front of my playmates when I misbehave...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. tries to stay away from me...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. complains about me...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. cares about what I think and likes me to talk about it...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. feels other children are better than I am no matter what I do...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. cares about what I would like when she makes plans...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. lets me do things I think are important, even if it is inconvenient for her...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. thinks other children behave better than I do...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. makes other people take care of me (for example, a neighbor relative)...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. lets me know I am not wanted...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. is interested in the things I do...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. tries to make me feel better when I’m hurt or sick...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. tells me how ashamed she is when I misbehave...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57. lets me know she loves me...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58. treats me gently and with kindness...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. makes me feel ashamed or guilty when I misbehave...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. tries to make me happy...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix III. Child Personality Assessment
Questionnaire – Child PAQ

The Child Personality Assessment Questionnaire (Child PAQ) is a self-report questionnaire in which children and adolescents are asked to reflect on their own personality and behavioral dispositions. There are a total of 42 items on the Child PAQ, six for each of the following seven scales: (a) hostility/aggression, (b) dependency, (c) self-esteem, (d) self-adequacy, (e) emotional responsiveness, (f) emotional stability, and (g) worldview. The scales are designed to assess the individual child’s perception of him-/herself with respect to the seven behavioral dispositions. The sum of the seven scale-scores forms a composite test-score, indicating the overall personality and behavioral dispositions that children perceive themselves to be experiencing.

CHILD PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE – CHILD PAQ59
© 1979 by Ronald P. Rohner60
Name (or I.D. number) __________________________ Date __________________
Questionnaire administered by ________________________________________

Here are some sentences that tell how different people feel about themselves. Read each sentence and think how well it describes you. Work as fast as you can; give your first thought about each item and move on to the next one.

Four lines are drawn after each statement. If you feel the statement is mostly true about you, then ask yourself “Is it almost always true?” or “Is it only sometimes true?” If you think the statement is almost always true, put an X on the line ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE; if you feel the statement is only sometimes true, mark SOMETIMES TRUE. If you feel the statement is mostly untrue about you, then ask yourself, “Is it rarely true?” or “Is it almost never true?” If it is rarely true, put an X on the line RARELY TRUE; if you feel the statement is almost never true, mark ALMOST NEVER TRUE.

Remember, there is no right or wrong answer to any statement, so be as honest as you can, and answer each statement the way you think you really are rather than the way you would like to be. For example, if you almost always feel good about yourself, put an X on the line below the words “Almost Always True.”

60 This questionnaire is copyrighted by the author, who has kindly given his permission to include the questionnaire in an appendix to this thesis.
Appendix III

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MY MOTHER</th>
<th>TRUE OF ME</th>
<th>NOT TRUE OF ME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Almost always true</td>
<td>Sometimes true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. I feel good about myself</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

O.K., now let’s try three more to make sure you know how to answer these questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MY MOTHER</th>
<th>TRUE OF ME</th>
<th>NOT TRUE OF ME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Almost always true</td>
<td>Sometimes true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I like my friends to cheer me up when I’m unhappy...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I get mad when I cannot do something I want...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I am in a bad mood...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOW GO TO NEXT PAGE AND BEGIN

Remember, there are no rights or wrong answers, so answer each sentence the way you really feel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MY MOTHER</th>
<th>TRUE OF ME</th>
<th>NOT TRUE OF ME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Almost always true</td>
<td>Sometimes true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. I think about fighting or being mean...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I like my mother to feel sorry for me when I feel sick...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I like myself...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I feel I can do the things I want as well as most people...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I have trouble showing people how I feel...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I feel bad or get angry when I try to do something and I cannot do it...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I feel that life is nice...</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>I want to hit something or someone...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I like my parents to give me a lot of love...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I feel that I am no good and never will be any good...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>I feel I cannot do things well...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>It is easy for me to be loving with my parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>I am in a bad mood and grouchy without any good reason</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>I see life as full of dangers...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>I get so mad I throw and break things...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>When I’m unhappy I like to work out my problems by myself...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>When I meet some-one I don’t know, I think he is better than I am...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>I can compete successfully for things I want...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>I feel I have trouble making and keeping good friends...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>I get upset when things go wrong...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>I think the world is a good, happy place...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>I make fun of people who do dumb things...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>I like my mother to give me a lot of attention...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>I think I am a good person and other people should think so too...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>I think I’m a failure...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>It is easy for me to show my family that I love them...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>I’m cherry and happy one minute and gloomy or unhappy the next...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>For me the world is an unhappy place...</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Appendix III

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29. I pout or sulk when I get mad...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. I like to be given encouragement when I am having trouble with something...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. I feel pretty good about myself...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. I feel I cannot do many of the things I try to do...</td>
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<tr>
<td>33. It is hard for me when I try to show the way I really feel to someone I like...</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. It is unusual for me to get angry or upset...</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. I see the world as a dangerous place...</td>
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<tr>
<td>36. I have trouble controlling my temper...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>37. I like my parents to make a fuss over me when I’m hurt or sick...</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. I get unhappy with myself...</td>
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<tr>
<td>39. I feel I am a success in the things I do...</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. It is easy for me to show my friends that I really like them...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. I get upset easily when I meet hard problems...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Life for me is a good thing...</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix IV. Mother Personality Assessment
Questionnaire – Mother PAQ

The Mother Personality Assessment Questionnaire (Mother PAQ) is a self-report questionnaire in which mothers (or other caregivers) are asked to reflect on the child’s personality and behavioral dispositions. There are a total of 42 items on the Mother PAQ, six for each of the following seven scales: (a) hostility/aggression; (b) dependency; (c) self-esteem; (d) self-adequacy; (e) emotional responsiveness; (f) emotional stability; and (g) worldview. The scales are designed to assess parents’ (usually mothers’) perception of their children’s behavior in terms of these seven personality dispositions. The sum of the seven scale-scores forms a composite test-score, indicating the overall personality and behavioral disposition that mothers reflect on their feelings about their child.

MOTHER PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE – MOTHER PAQ
© 1976 by Ronald P. Rohner

Name (or I.D. number) _______________________  Date _________________
Questionnaire administered by ______________________________________

The following pages contain a number of statements describing the way different children behave or feel. Read each statement carefully and think how well it describes your child. Work quickly, give your first impression and move on to the next item. Do not dwell on any item.

Five lines are drawn after each sentence. If you think the statement is basically true about the way your child feels about him-/herself, then asks yourself, “Is it almost always true?” or “Is it only sometimes true?” If you think the statement is almost always true, put an X on the line ALMOST ALWAYS TRUE; if you feel the statement is only sometimes true, mark SOMETIMES TRUE. If you feel the statement is basically untrue about the way your child feels about him-/herself, then ask yourself, “Is it rarely true?” or “Is it almost never true?” If it is rarely true, put an X on the line RARELY TRUE; if you feel the statement is almost never true, mark ALMOST NEVER TRUE. If you are uncertain or cannot make a judgment about a statement, mark UNCERTAIN OR CANNOT JUDGE.

Remember, there is no right or wrong answer to any statement, so be as frank as you can and respond to each statement the way you think your child really feels about him-/herself. For example, if you believe your child almost always thinks highly of him-/herself, mark the item as follows:

---

62 This questionnaire is copyrighted by the author, who has kindly given his permission to include the questionnaire in an appendix to this thesis. Note that the author no longer recommends use of this measure.
## TRUE OF CHILD | NOT TRUE OF CHILD | UN-CERTAIN OR CANNOT JUDGE
---|---|---
### MY CHILD

1. My child thinks highly of him-/herself... X

### MY CHILD

1. Has trouble controlling his/her temper...
2. Likes people to feel sorry for him/her when he/she is hurt...
3. Likes him/herself...
4. Seems to feel he/she can do things as well as most people...
5. Seems to have trouble showing people how he/she feels...
6. Gets angry when he/she tries to do something and cannot do it...
7. Seems to feel that life is nice...
8. Hits other people...
9. Seems to like people to show a lot of love to him/her...
10. Seems to feel that he/she is no good...
11. Seems to feel he/she cannot do things well...
12. Seems to be easy for him/her to be loving with other people...
13. Gets in a bad mood and grouchy without any good reason...
14. Seems to see life as full of dangers...
15. Gets so mad he/she throws things...
16. When unhappy, likes to work out problems by him-/herself...
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17. When meeting someone new, he/she seems to think that person is better than he/she is...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Competes successfully for the things he/she wants...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Has trouble making and keeping good friends...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Gets upset when things go wrong...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Seems to think the world is a good, happy place...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Makes fun of people who do dumb things...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Seems to like people to give him/her a lot of attention...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Seems to think he/she is a good person and other people should think so too...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Seems to think he/she is a failure...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Seems to be easy for him/her to show others that he/she likes them...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Is cheery and happy one minute and gloomy or unhappy the next...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Seems to see the world as an unhappy place...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Pouts or sulks when he/she gets mad...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Likes to be given encouragement when he/she is having trouble with something...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Seems to feel pretty good about him/herself...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Seems to feel he/she cannot do many of the things he/she tries to do...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix IV

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33. Seems to be hard for him/her to show the way he/she really feels toward someone he/she likes...</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. It is unusual for him/her to get angry or upset...</td>
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<tr>
<td>35. Seems to see the world as a dangerous place...</td>
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<tr>
<td>36. Fights or is mean...</td>
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<tr>
<td>37. Likes other people to make a fuss over him/her when he/she is hurt or sick...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Seems to get unhappy with him/herself...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>39. Seems to feel he/she is a success in the things he/she does...</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>40. Seems to be easy for him/her to show his/her friends that he/she really likes them...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Gets upset easily when he/she meets hard problems...</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>42. Seems to feel that life for him/her is a good thing...</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix V. Background Data Schedule

The Background Data Schedule developed by Ronald P. Rohner provides social and situational data on each family in a sample. The Schedule elicits information such as the age and sex of all household members, ethnicity, major language(s) spoken, religious preference, educational attainment, occupation and employment status, marital status, family stresses experienced, and recreational preferences. The Background Data Schedule contains three main sections, one to be completed by or about the child’s mother or major female caretaker (if any), and one to be completed with, by, or about the child’s father (or whoever the most significant adult male is in the child’s life), if any.

BACKGROUND DATA SCHEDULE

© 1979 by Ronald P. Rohner (Revised June 1985)

Name of respondent ______________________ Date __________________

A. CHILD DATA. This section refers to the child participating in the research.

Name: (or ID number of child) ____________________________

1. Sex: 1. Male □ 2. Female □

2. Birth date: Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

3. Age: How old was (s)he on his/her last birthday? _____

4. Education: What grade in school is (s)he in now? (If not in school, what grade was (s)he in when (s)he last attended school?)

B. MOTHER DATA. This section refers to (and is usually completed by) the mother or major female caretaker (if any) of the child described in section A above.

6 What is your relationship to the child?
   1. □ Mother 2. □ Other __ (please specify)

7 Birthdate: Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

8 Age: How old were you on your last birthday? __________

9 Ethnicity: Are you member of a minority (i.e., national or ethnic) group?

---


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 Appendix V

1. No  2. Yes ______ (name of minority group)

10 Language: What is the major language you speak at home?
   1. English  2. Other _____________ (please specify)

11 Religion: What is your religious preference?
   4. None  5. Other__ (please specify)

12 Education: What is the highest grade you completed in school?
   1. Less than high school (grade 12)
   2. High school (or passed high school equivalency test)
   3. High school, plus business or trade school diploma or equivalent
   4. One to four years of college, but did not graduate
   5. Graduated from college with B.S., B.A., or equivalent degree
   6. Postgraduate professional degree (e.g., M.A., M.S.W., D.D.S., L.L.D., Ph.D., M.D.)

13 Employment: Are you now employed?
   1. Unemployed; not looking for work (including retired, sick, disabled, on strike, etc.)
   2. Unemployed; looking for work
   3. Employed part-time
   4. Employed full-time
   5. Other _______________ (please specify)

14 Occupation: What is (was) your usual or main occupation (including housewife)?
   Occupation name or title _______________ (please specify)
   (Please give the most specific title appropriate)
   What are (were) your main duties _______________ (please be specific)

15 Household composition: List below all persons now living in your household and indicate their relationship to you. (Include persons who usually live with you but who are now absent.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age at last birthday</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Relationship to you</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

16 Marital status: Check all the following that are true.
   1. Married and living with husband
   2. Not married but living with someone (consensual)
   3. Separated (i.e., married but not living with husband)
Appendix V

☐ 4. Divorced
☐ 5. Widowed
☐ 6. Never married (including annulments)

17 **Children**: How many children do you have? _______________

18 **Birth order**: Putting all your children in order from oldest (first born) to youngest (last born), where does the child described in this research fall (e.g., only child, first born, second born etc.)?

19 **Family stress**: Have you or your husband (or the “man of the house,” if any) experienced any of the following problems during the past year?

- Death or desertion by someone you (or he) really cared for (e.g. spouse, close friend, relative)?
  - ☐ No  ☐ Yes
- Divorce?
  - ☐ No  ☐ Yes
- Serious physical or mental illness?
  - ☐ No  ☐ Yes
- Long-term unemployment?
  - ☐ No  ☐ Yes
- Serious family conflict?
  - ☐ No  ☐ Yes
- Other serious problems?
  - ☐ No  ☐ Yes (specify)

20 **Recreational preferences**: When you have free time, how often do you visit friends or relatives (other than members of your own household)?

☐ 1. Rarely or never  ☐ 2. Sometimes, but not often
☐ 3. Often (or, “As often as I can.”)

How often do you get outside your home, e.g. to visit friends, attend sports events, go to a movie, have dinner out, etc?

☐ 1. Rarely or never  ☐ 2. Sometimes, but not often
☐ 3. Often (or, “As often as I can.”)

C. **FATHER DATA**. This section is to be completed with reference to the child’s father (or whoever the most significant male is in the child’s life).

21 **What is his relationship to the child?**

☐ 1. Father  ☐ 2. Other (please specify)

22 Does the child’s father (or “significant male”) normally live in the same household with the child?

☐ 1. No  ☐ 2. Yes

23 **Birthdates of father (or significant male): Month ___ Day ___ Year ____

24 **Age**: How old was he on his last birthday? __________

25 **Ethnicity**: Is he a member of a minority (i.e., national or ethnic) group?

☐ 1. No  ☐ 2. Yes _______ (name of minority group)

26 **Language**: What is the major language he speaks at home?

  1. English  ☐ 2. Other ______________ (please specify)

27 **Religion**: What is his religious preference?

  ☐ 1. Protestant  ☐ 3. Jewish  ☐ 5. Other _______ (please specify)
Appendix V

☐ 2. Catholic  ☐ 4. None

28 Education: What is the highest grade he completed in school?
☐ 1. Less than high school (grade 12)
☐ 2. High school (or passed high school equivalency test)
☐ 3. High school, plus business or trade school diploma or equivalent
☐ 4. One to four years of college, but did not graduate
☐ 5. Graduated from college with B.S., B.A., or equivalent degree
☐ 6. Postgraduate professional degree (e.g., M.A., M.S.W., D.D.S., L.L.D., Ph.D., M.D.)

29 Employment: Is he now employed?
☐ 1. Unemployed; not looking for work (including retired, sick, disabled, on strike, etc.)
☐ 2. Unemployed; looking for work
☐ 3. Employed part-time
☐ 4. Employed full-time
☐ 5. Other _______________ (please specify)

30 Occupation: What is (was) his usual or main occupation?
• Occupation name or title _______________ (please specify)
  (Please give the most specific title appropriate)
• What are (were) his main duties _______________ (please be specific)
Appendix VI. Neighborhood and Community Assessment

The Neighborhood and Community Assessment is an instrument designed to assess the neighborhood and community as sources of stress and support for parents. It thus approaches the exosystem and microsystems impinging on the developing child’s life. Note that for each domain of life the approach starts with open-ended questions and concludes with a scaled evaluation (including a rating by the interviewer). This reflects the phenomenological orientation to life-space. In using this instrument, the open-ended quantitative data are used both to illustrate the analysis of the scaled evaluative ratings and as the basis for content analysis.

NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT65

By James Garbarino and Deborah Sherman

Name (or I.D. number) __________________ Date ______________
Questionnaire administered by _______________________________

1. NEIGHBORHOOD

First I’d like to find out some things about the neighborhood and to hear what you think of it

1.01 How long have you and your family been living here? ___years ___months
1.02 Does your neighborhood have a name? What is it?
1.03 Could you describe the boundaries of this neighborhood? Are there specific streets where it ends?
1.04 What is it like to bring up a child in this neighborhood? 
   PROBE: 
   (a) Are there other children in the neighborhood? Are they at the same ages? Do they play together?
   (b) Are there places for children to play?
   (c) Is this a safe neighborhood? If not, why not?
   (d) What are the people like around here?
   (e) Is your house (apartment) a good place for your family to live in?
1.05 Moving in 
   (a) Why did you choose this neighborhood to move into? 
   (b) How easy/hard was it to get used to the neighborhood? 
   (c) Using a scale - 4 to + 4 (from very bad to very good) how would you rate the neighborhood?
1.06 What kinds of help do you give to or get from your neighbors? How often?
   (PROBE: Can you give an example?)

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Appendix VI

1.07 Are there any neighborhood problems? What kinds? What is usually done?
1.08 Has the neighborhood changed since you’ve lived here? In what ways?
1.09 How long do you think you will stay in this neighborhood? Why?
   (PROBE: Are there things about this neighborhood that would make it difficult to leave? Specify:)
   (PROBE: Are there things about this neighborhood that sometimes make you want to leave? Specify:)
1.10 OVERALL RATING
   Taking everything into account, how would you rate this neighborhood as a place for parents with children to live and raise their family?
   Present card (score – 4 to + 4).

Interviewer’s rating  Respondent’s rating

Comments:

2. CHURCH
2.01 Now let’s talk a bit about your family and church. Do you attend or does anyone in your family attend church? How regularly?
   More than weekly  Year or less frequently
   Several times a month  Never
   Several times a year
2.02 What is your religious preference?
2.03 Has this changed much since ___________ was born? How?
2.04 Are there any way in which the church helps you in terms of bringing up___?
2.05 Have you made any friends through your contacts with the church?

3. CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS
3.01 ‘Now let’s talk about some of the things involved in caring for your child. Who has the main job of taking care of __________ during their waking ours? For example, mealtime, bedtime, playtime, etc.? What % of the care do you, your husband/wife, or another person do?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Spouse</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feeding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedtime</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.02 How much time are you able to spend with ____________?
   Circle: too much  about right  too little
   IF TOO LITTLE: What would you like to be able to do with _______ that you aren’t doing?
3.03 Does anyone else besides you – and your husband/wife – care for __________ here at home?
   (For example, a relative, a neighbor, a baby-sitter, or friend?) How much time do you leave the child with her/him or others?
   (PROBE: How many hours per week with each person?)
3.04 Does anyone else take care of _______outside the home? How much time?
3.05 How difficult or easy is it to find someone to take care of ______? Can you usually find the right kind of person?
3.06 Who would care for ___________ if you were home sick on a school day?
3.07 What happens when ___________ comes home from school? Who else is there then?

3.08 OVERALL RATING
In general, how would you rate the kind of care ___________ is getting when you yourself are not around? Present card (score – 4 to + 4).

Interviewer’s rating  Respondent’s rating

Comments:

4. EMPLOYMENT, SCHOOLING, VOLUNTEER WORK

4.01 In addition to being a parent, are you also employed, going to school, or doing anything else that takes a lot of your time?
Circle: YES  NO  IF YES: What?

4.02 How much time does that involve? Record part-time, full-time hours.
From ______ to ______ day’s a week Overtime: ______

4.03 Is your husband/wife presently employed, going to school, etc.?
Circle: YES  NO  IF YES: What does he/she do?

4.04 What are his/hers hours like?
From ______ to ______ day’s a week Overtime: ______

4.05 How does your work situation work out in terms of ___________?

4.06 OVERALL RATING
Taking everything into account, how would you rate the work situation in terms of bringing up a young child? Present card (score – 4 to + 4).

Interviewer’s rating  Respondent’s rating

Comments:

5. RECREATION
Now let’s talk a little bit about the spare times you, your husband/wife and children have.

5.01 How much time do feel you have to do things you would like to do?
Circle: Too much  About right  Too little  None

5.02 What kind of things do you do for recreation?
(PROBE: Sports, social activities etc.)

5.03 What kind of things do you do together with your family?

5.04 Do you spend the major part of this time with or without your family?
(PROBE: What %)
Alone ______  Children ______
Spouse ______  Children and Spouse ______

5.05 OVERALL RATING
Taking everything into account, how would you rate your chances to enjoy recreation? Present card (score – 4 to + 4).

Interviewer’s rating  Respondent’s rating

Comments:

6. FINANCES

6.01 How is the money situation working out in terms of being a parent of a young child?

OVERALL RATING
In general, how would you rate the money situation? Present card (score – 4 to + 4).
Appendix VI

Interviewer’s rating     Respondent’s rating

Comments:

7. HEALTH

7.01 Since ___________________ was born, has she/he had any serious health problems, been hospitalized?
(Interviewer: A serious health problem is one that has prevented the child from carrying out a normal daily schedule for at least a week)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illness</th>
<th>Age of child when</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>How often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.02 Who took care of him/her then? And how did that work out?
(Probe: When she/he was at home?)

1.  
2.  
3.  

7.03 Has anyone else in the family, including yourself, had a serious health problem, or been hospitalized since ___________________ was born?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age when</th>
<th>Illness</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>How often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>2.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

7.04 What happened in terms of ______________? Who took care of him then?

7.05. OVERALL RATING

In general, how much of a problem has health been in your family? Present card (score – 4 to + 4).

Interviewer’s rating     Respondent’s rating

Comments:

8. FAMILY ORGANIZATIONS, PROGRAMS, SERVICES

8.01 Now I’d like to ask you about some of the services, programs, and organizations in the community. Could you check off the ones on this list that you know something about and those you have used since __ was born?
(Interviewer: Present list of services. See next page. Have respondents check columns for familiarity, use and evaluation of the organization)

8.02 Are any of these services that you feel you could use but aren’t using? Why?
(Probe: Unfamiliar, transportation, unsure of eligibility, spouse disapproves, no one to go with).

8.03 Are there any other services or organizations you know about or have used?
Repeat questions.
8. FAMILY ORGANIZATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Know something about</th>
<th>How often used</th>
<th>Would recommend</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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</table>

9. RAISING THE CHILDREN

9.01 Now let's talk about ________ for a while. Are there things about ________ that make him easy or difficult to bring up? (PROBE: Behavior, personality, similarity to self or spouse, health) (a) Behavior at School (b) Behavior at Home (c) Personality (d) Health (e) Other

9.02 How does ________ compare in this way with their brothers and sisters?

9.03 OVERALL RATING
In general, how would you rate ________ in terms of how easy or difficult it is to bring him/her up. Present card (score – 4 to + 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewer’s rating</th>
<th>Respondent’s rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. TELEVISION

10.01 Do you have a television?

10.02 In what ways has TV made it easier or more difficult to bring up ________? (PROBE: Is it entertaining, educational, harmful, or poor quality?)

10.03 In general, how would you rate television from the point of view of a parent? Present card (score – 4 to + 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewer’s rating</th>
<th>Respondent’s rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comments:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix VI

11. PARENTING INFORMATION
11.01 We’re interested in knowing about how people learn to be parents. How did you learn to be a parent? (PROBE: Where do you turn for advice — family, neighbors, TV or books, professionals?)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Who/which ones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV or Books</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional agencies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11.02 Which of the above sources has been the most important to you? Rank the above in importance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbors</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV or Books</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals Agencies</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11.03 Are there any particular people who are helpful to you as a parent? In what way? (What about friends, relatives, neighbors, professionals, people at work?)

11.04 Are there any people who cause problems for you personally or for your family? In what way? (PROBE: Are there any who you think may be making some problems for you?)

11.05 How about other children? Do your own or other people’s children make problems for you?

11.06 From your point of view as a parent of a child, how does the school situation look? (PROBE: Is the school a help or a problem to you?)

11.07 How involved are you and your spouse with the schools? (PROBE: Are you a member of PTA? Do you volunteer time?)

11.08 How much contact do you have with ________ teachers? Circle:


11.09 OVERALL RATING

In general, how satisfied are you with the kind of help you get as a parent. Present card (score – 4 to + 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Friends</th>
<th>Neighbors</th>
<th>Professionals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviewer’s rating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent’s rating</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:

12. FUTURE

Now I’d like to ask you some questions about the future.

12.01 Do you plan to have any more children?

Circle: Yes    No
12.02 What are the main reasons for your decision?

12.03 If you had it to do over again, would you have __ (x number of) children? Why?

13. SELF AS A PARENT

13.01 We’re getting to the end of the first part of the interview now. Could I ask you if there is anything about you, yourself, which makes it easier or harder to bring up ______ the way you want to? (PROBE: personal traits, abilities?)

13.02 In general, how satisfied are you with yourself as a parent. Present card (score – 4 to + 4)
Appendix VII. Family Social Networks Interview

The Family Social Networks Interview is an instrument developed to assess family members’ relations with relatives, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and other acquaintances who interact with a family member in regard to an emotional or material issue. More precisely, it asks about parent’s social networks and their social participation, which is augmented by a determination of the relationship of these network members, as well as a separate inventory of the child’s social networks.

FAMILY SOCIAL NETWORKS INTERVIEW\textsuperscript{67}

By James Garbarino and Deborah Sherman

Name (or I.D. number) __________________________  Date ____________
Questionnaire administered by ________________________________

We’ve now finished the first section of the interview. We would like to get more of an idea about the important people in your family’s life who are not living in your home. Let’s begin by making a list of the people outside your immediate family who you know best or who know you best.

PROBE: Is there anyone else (of any age) you know well, or who knows you very well? (Interviewer: Couples who are seen together and not visited as separate people should be counted as one person).

1 a. NAME OF PEOPLE YOU KNOW BEST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Relationship:</th>
<th>Others known (identify by number)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

I would like to know a little more about the things you do with the people who are especially important to you. Let us start by picking the 10 people who are most important to you. (Place an X in front of the appropriate names). What is the relationship of_____ to you? Does ____ know any of the other people on your list?

1b. NETWORK CONTACTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Person known</th>
<th>How often do you see or talk with ___?</th>
<th>What do you usually do together?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. Have you belonged to any club, groups, or organizations since ______ was born? (PROBE: such as bowling league, church group, social club, etc.) What kind of things do you do with that group, and how much time do you spend with them?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group name:</th>
<th>Activities:</th>
<th>Dates of membership:</th>
<th>Frequency of meetings:</th>
<th>Leadership:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Besides yourself, who are the people who know your children best? How much time do they spend with the children?

IN INVOLVEMENT WITH CHILDREN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Relationship to the child</th>
<th>How often do they see the child?</th>
<th>How long have they known the child?</th>
<th>Activities:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Now I would like to ask you about concerns that you may have had. Tell me if this has happened.

| (a) Felt so depressed that it ruined the day | Last month | Last year | Never |
| (b) Child not doing well or having behavior problem at school |               |           |       |
| (c) Child seems out of control at home |               |           |       |
| (d) Child doesn’t eat or sleep well |               |           |       |
| (e) Got so tense at work that you “blew up” |               |           |       |
| (f) Wanted to change job |               |           |       |
| (g) Wanted to move out of the neighborhood because of problems |               |           |       |
| (h) Wanted to change the division of duties with your husband/wife |               |           |       |
| (i) Had a disagreement with your spouse |               |           |       |
| (j) Other (specify) |               |           |       |

(Interviewer: If at least one concern is indicated, continue. If none, go to Question 11)
Appendix VII

5. Whom did you talk to about these concerns? (Check all that apply)

1. Coworker  
2. Friend  
3 Relative  
4. Spouse  
5. Clergy  
6. Counselor  
7. Teacher  
8 Doctor  
9. Neighbor  
10. Police

6. Which of these things happened when you talked with Person # ________?

   #1  2#  3#  4#  5#  6#  7#  8#  9#  10#
   a. They just listened to me  
   b. They asked me questions  
   c. They told me who else to see  
   d. They told me to see someone else  
   e. They showed me a new way to look at things  
   f. They took some action about the matter

7. How satisfied were you with the help from Person # ____________________?

Were you:  #1  2#  3#  4#  5#  6#  7#  8#  9#  10#
   Very satisfied  
   Somewhat satisfied  
   Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
   Somewhat dissatisfied  
   Very dissatisfied

Interviewer: Have the respondent fill out the following page

8. Did you talk with any of the following people when these things happened? (Check all that apply)

1. Coworker  
2. Friend  
3 Relative  
4. Spouse  
5. Clergy  
6. Counselor  
7. Teacher  
8 Doctor  
9. Neighbor  
10. Police

9. Which of these things happened when you talked with Person # ________?

   #1  2#  3#  4#  5#  6#  7#  8#  9#  10#
   a. They just listened to me  
   b. They asked me questions  
   c. They told me who else to see  
   d. They told me to see someone else  
   e. They showed me a new way to look at things  
   f. They took some action about the matter

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10. How satisfied were you with the help from Person # ____________________?

Were you:  
#1 2# 3# 4# 5# 6# 7# 8# 9# 10#  
Very satisfied  
Somewhat satisfied  
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied  
Somewhat dissatisfied  
Very dissatisfied  

2. HISTORY OF RESIDENCE

We would also like to get an accurate picture of where you have lived in the past ten years. Let's start with your present address and move back in time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Reason for change</th>
<th>Satisfaction Rating* (1 – 5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
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<td>1977</td>
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<td>1975</td>
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<td>1974</td>
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<td>1973</td>
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<td>1969</td>
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<tr>
<td>1968</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Ratings: Very satisfied = 5, Somewhat satisfied = 4, Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied = 3, Somewhat dissatisfied = 2, Very dissatisfied = 1
Appendix VIII

Appendix VIII. Social Networks of Youth

The Social Networks of Youth is an instrument developed to assess the social networks of children and adolescents as a way of assessing the ecology of youth.

SOCIAL NETWORKS OF YOUTH⁶⁸
By Dale A. Blyth, James Garbarino, Karen Smith Thiel and Ann Crouter

Name (or I.D. number) __________________________  Date ____________
Questionnaire administered by ________________________________

Now I would like you to help me make a list of some of the people in your life.

1. First of all, who are the people you consider your friends? PROBE: Are there any other people who are your friends?

FOR ALL FRIENDS LISTED ASK
A. How old is this person?
B. What grade is this person in?
C. What school does this person go to? (name)
D. Is this person a male or a female? 1. Male  2. Female
E. Where does this person live?
   1. In the neighborhood  2. In or around Omaha  3. Outside Omaha
F. Where do you usually see this person?
   1. At school  2. Outside school (at clubs or on teams)  3. Around the neighborhood
G. Is __________ the kind of person your parents would like you to be friends with?  1. Yes  2. No
H. Do your parents know this person?  1. Yes  2. No
I. Is this person friends with ___? (Interviewer: go through all other names on the list).
J. Who are your five closest friends? (Interviewer: Number them in the order they are mentioned.).

### FRIENDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>A. Age</th>
<th>B. Grade</th>
<th>C. School</th>
<th>D. Sex</th>
<th>E. Race</th>
<th>F. Where does this person live?</th>
<th>G. Where do you see this person?</th>
<th>H. Is this the kind of person your parents would like you to be friend with?</th>
<th>I. Do your parents know this person?</th>
<th>J. Is this person friend with ____?</th>
<th>K. Top five friends</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2. Aside from your friends you’ve just mentioned, are there any other people that you feel you know well? (*These could be kids, adults, members of your family or other relatives.*)

**PROBE:** Who else do you know well?

*FOR ALL PERSONS LISTED ASK*

A. Who is this person?
B. Is this person a male or a female? 1. Male  2. Female
C. About how old is this person? If necessary ask: Is this person...
   1. a little kid  2. someone your age  3. a teenager  4. an adult, or
   5. an elderly person

### PEOPLE R KNOWS WELL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>A. Relationship</th>
<th>B. Sex</th>
<th>C. Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Are there any other people that you see a lot or *spend a lot of time with? These could be parents’ brothers or sisters, teachers or anyone else.*

**PROBE:** Is there anyone else you can think of?

*FOR ALL LISTED ASK*

A. Who is this person?
B. Is this person a male or a female?
C. About how old is this person? If necessary ask: Is this person...
   1. a little kid  2. someone your age  3. a teenager  4. an adult or
   5. an elderly person
### PEOPLE R SPENDS TIME WITH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>A. Relationship</th>
<th>B. Sex</th>
<th>C. Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
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4. Now I'd like to find out if there are any people who know you well that we haven't talked about.

**PROBE:** Who else do you feel really know you well?

**FOR ALL LISTED ASK**

A. Who is this person?
B. Is this person a male or a female?
C. About how old is this person? If necessary ask: Is this person ...
   1. a little kid  2. someone your age  3. a teenager  4. an adult or  5. an elderly person

### PEOPLE WHO KNOW R WELL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>A. Relationship</th>
<th>B. Sex</th>
<th>C. Age</th>
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5. Now, of all these people we've talked about who would you say are the 10 people that really know you best?

**Interviewer:** Only if necessary: go back and read entire list of names "Who know R well?" and work back to his friends.

**FOR 10 LISTED ASK**

A. Where does this person live?
   1. in the neighborhood  2. in or around Omaha  3. outside Omaha
B. How many years have you known this person? ________ years
C. Do you see this person...
   1. almost every day  2. two or three times a week  3. once a week  4. every two or three weeks, or  5. less than once a month
D. Sometimes you see people in different places. At what kinds of places do you see this person?
   1. at your home  2. t his or her home  3. at school  4. at a club or sports activity  5. someplace else, where? _______________
E. Does this person know _______________? **Interviewer:** Go through all the names on this list only.
F. How much would you like to be like this person? (Show card)
### FOR TOP 10 ONLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>1.</th>
<th>2.</th>
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Appendix IX

Appendix IX. Self-report Diary

The Self-report Diary is specifically devised for the present study. The instrument is designed to allow children to make day-by-day notes about their social networks, including relationships and meeting points. The Diary of Youth covers 14 days of the child's life.

**SELF-REPORT DIARY**

By Johan Kejerfors

Name (or I.D. number) __________________________  Date ____________

Questionnaire administered by __________________________

DAY..... MONTH .......YEAR……..

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What did you do this morning?</th>
<th>At what location?</th>
<th>Together with whom?</th>
<th>Where does this person live?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What did you do this afternoon?</th>
<th>At what location?</th>
<th>Together with whom?</th>
<th>Where does this person live?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What did you do this evening/night?</th>
<th>At what location?</th>
<th>Together with whom?</th>
<th>Where does this person live?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>
Avhandlingar i socialt arbete framlagda vid Stockholms universitet sedan 2000*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Avtalad av</th>
<th>Utdrag</th>
<th>Datum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forinder, Ulla</td>
<td>I skuggan av cancer – benmärgstransplantation hos barn ur ett föräldraperspektiv</td>
<td>Rapport 94 2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Billinger, Kajsa</td>
<td>Få dem att vilja – motivationsarbete inom tvångsvården av vuxna misshåkare</td>
<td>Rapport 95 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sallnäs, Marie</td>
<td>Barnavårdens institutioner framväxt, ideologier och struktur</td>
<td>Rapport 96 2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trydegård, Gun-Britt</td>
<td>Tradition, Change and Variation. Past and present trends in public old-age care</td>
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<td>Topor, Alain</td>
<td>Managing the Contradictions – recovering from severe mental disorders</td>
<td>SSSW 19 2001</td>
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<td>Ekendahl, Mats</td>
<td>Tvingad till vård – missbruкаres syn på LVM, motivation och egna möjligheter</td>
<td>Rapport 100 2001</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karlsson, Magnus</td>
<td>Själv men inte ensam – om självhjälpgrupper i Sverige</td>
<td>Rapport 104 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nordin, Håkan</td>
<td>Permanenta eller tillfälliga placeringar? Om lag och verklighet vid flyttningsförbudställningens tillämpning</td>
<td>Rapport 106 2003</td>
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<td>Whitaker, Anna</td>
<td>Livets sista boning — Anhörigskap, äldre och död på sjukhem</td>
<td>Rapport 108 2004</td>
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<td>Forssell, Emilia</td>
<td>Skyddande fortsatt – En studie om anhöriga till hjälpbehövande äldre som invandrat sen i livet</td>
<td>Rapport 109 2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>Larsson, Kristina</td>
<td>According to Need? Predicting Use of Formal and Informal Care in a Swedish Urban Elderly Population.</td>
<td>SSSW 20 2004</td>
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