



University of Venda

**Factors that contribute to the street children phenomenon in Thohoyandou Town
at the Vhembe District in Limpopo province**

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the factors that contribute to the street children phenomenon in Thohoyandou Town. Street children remain a problem because many street children are adopted by gangs who form and function to satisfy a much needed sense of belonging for children without families or support systems. The general public tends to be unsympathetic towards street children. Many people regard street children as young criminals and they treat them accordingly. Street children are overlooked by society, they are best disregarded and at worst dehumanized because they lack identification document. Street children are also targeted in ways that perpetuate unacceptable abuse of human rights.

The study used both quantitative and qualitative techniques for data collection and analysis. Quantitative and qualitative techniques were mostly used in that they provided the researcher with an understanding of experiences and the factors that contribute to the street children phenomenon in Thohoyandou Town. Purposive sampling was used for selection of sample for the study. Both primary and secondary data were used for analysis in this study. Secondary data were obtained from government publication, research publication, and report. Primary data were obtained through questionnaires and interview.

Major Findings of this study are the following:

- Most of the NGOs cater for street children who are boys or girls. The street children have little or no education at all. The underlying factors that push and pull children onto the streets are socio-economic factors which include poverty, unemployment, war, peer pressure, HIV and AIDS, abuse and neglect by parents or extended family members.