Street children: jugglers of exclusion

Crianças em situação de rua: malabares da exclusão

Niños en situación de calle: malabarismos de la exclusión

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Abstract: This article discusses the behaviors of street children attending traffic lights in the city of Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. The data collection consisted of 12 simple observations, each lasting 2 hours, aiming to collect information about the behavior of children at traffic lights. For material analysis, the Bardin Content Analysis strategy was used. From the results, the data were contrasted with theories that present analyzes about child development and social vulnerability. It is noticed that, since intelligence is something that is also built, socially and economically, street children are at a disadvantage. Social vulnerability, coupled with an exclusion that is also affective, produces in children very specific ways of living linked to strategies for survival on the street.

Key Words: street children, behavior, social exclusion, vulnerability, child development

Resumo: Este artigo discute os comportamentos de crianças em situação de rua, que frequentam semáforos, na cidade de Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brasil. Para o levantamento de dados foram realizadas 12 observações simples, com duração de 2 horas cada, objetivando coletar informações referentes aos comportamentos das crianças nos semáforos. Para análise do material, foi utilizada a estratégia de Análise de Conteúdo de Bardin. A partir dos resultados contrapôs-se os dados à teorias que apresentam análises sobre o desenvolvimento infantil e vulnerabilidade social. Constata-se que, sendo a inteligência algo que se constrói, também, social e economicamente, as crianças em situação de rua encontram-se em desvantagem. A vulnerabilização social, somada a uma exclusão que é também afetiva, produz nas crianças modos muito específicos de viver ligados à estratégias de sobrevivência na rua.

Palavras chave: crianças em situação de rua, comportamento, exclusão social, vulnerabilidade, desenvolvimento infantil

Resumen: Este artículo discute los comportamientos de los niños en las calles, que frecuentan los semáforos en la ciudad de Porto Alegre, Río Grande del Sur, Brasil. Para la recolección de datos se llevaron a cabo 12 observaciones simples, con una duración de 2 horas cada una, con el objetivo de recopilar información sobre el comportamiento de los niños en los semáforos. Para el análisis del material, se utilizó la estrategia de Bardin Análisis de Contenido. Los resultados de los datos fueron contrarrestados con las teorías que proporcionan un análisis del desarrollo del niño y la vulnerabilidad social. Se confirma que, en tanto la inteligencia es algo que se construye, también, social y económicamente, los niños en situación de calle están en desventaja. La vulnerabilización social, añadida a la exclusión que también es afectiva, produce en el niño formas de vida muy específicas en relación con las estrategias de supervivencia en la calle.

Palabras clave: niños en situación de calle, comportamiento, exclusión social, vulnerabilidad, desarrollo infantil

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Introduction

This article aims to discuss the behaviors of street children attending traffic lights in the city of Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. For the discussion, following the qualitative method, simple observations were made (Gil, 2010) with the objective of analyzing aspects related to children's behaviors at traffic lights. Aiming to bring elements to the discussion, it was observed how society interacts with children. From the results, the obtained data were placed in opposition to the theories that present analyzes on the child's development and social vulnerability.

Even though there are a number of policies and interventions, it is contrasting that in the twenty-first century there are still street children who are excluded from social rights considered as basic education, health, housing, food and transportation (Ferreira, 2011). In the absence of rights, subjects become relatively forced to develop other survival strategies. In the case of children, because they are more sensitized to them, they are induced by the parents or led, due to their social vulnerability, to become beggars so that they can guarantee the family's livelihood.

Childhood, according to Papalia and Olds (2013), although operating in different ways according to the social context, has been identified as a stage of life significantly responsible for the physical, cognitive and psychosocial development of children. If you have access to the school between the ages of 6 and 11, infants would go through the so-called 'school years', making the school institution a central experience at this stage of development. Although the parents still have great importance, in this stage of life the groups in which the children coexist happen to become more influential than before.

In the case of children with socioeconomic deprivation, entering school may present a number of difficulties. As assessments are performed by teachers taking into account cognitive abilities, which depend on economic and social issues to be developed, there would be no egalitarian judgment. Assessments, rewards for behavior, and reliability in meeting obligations, while teaching techniques try to measure fairly, unfortunately end up involving and giving greater prestige to children perceived as 'smart' (Lidz, 1983).

Since intelligence is something that is constructed, also, socially and economically, street children can be placed at a disadvantage when inserted into school institutions: unless differentiated care is taken, which take into account the adaptive behaviors they have developed in the realities of the street, difficulties can intensify in school. In this sense, for the formulation of public policies, it is important to consider elements about the behaviors of street children in order to qualify interventions in the different processes of their lives.

For this, the present article presents a qualitative approach study on street children attending traffic lights. In the following text, in a first approach theoretical aspects regarding the development of children, the role of the family and the school in education, and questions about social vulnerability and affection in the production of street children will be presented . Then, after detailing the methodological processes, the data obtained in the observations will be described and discussed, opposing them to the debates found in the literature.

Through the perspective of child development

For Ferreira and Ries (2004), between 6 and 11 years the child goes through the development phase called latency, where the sexual experiences are neutral and the libido (psychological, gratifying and pleasurable energy) focuses on the learning, the intellectual achievements and the development of friendships and groups. It is a time when opinion in children arises, in which language serves not only to understand the elders, but to affirm the self. Words become an instrument of interest, feeling, and curiosity when they arise in the child›s mind (Coles, 1998). At that age, they will be investing their interests outside the family, creating an emphasis on finding their places in peer groups and forming intimate relationships with friends (Pansini, & Marin, 2011).

According to Lewis and Wolkmar (1993), earlier parts of the child›s development in this age group seem to organize themselves, suddenly, to operate in a fluent and integrated manner. However, all this set of phenomena seen in childhood, called latency, can be modified by cultural factors. Daniel and Shapiro (1996), in systematically reviewing some key areas of data on biopsychological events during the evolutionary process of childhood, concluded that the basis of development during this period lies more in processes located within the central nervous system,

developing increasingly sophisticated and mature cognitive strategies. Maturity is then considered as a significant discontinuity in the behavioral development of childhood. Thus, the term latency, when used in its fullest sense, is limited to the intrapsychic changes that are occurring, especially when it concerns those functions that aid in the improvement of internal controls, such as defense mechanisms, increasing capacities of socialization, the formation of moral values and the changes in relationships.

For Papalia and Olds (2013), it is in childhood that children, on average, double their body weight. Generally, during this time, they have a good appetite and a balanced diet is necessary so that the child becomes more alert and productive. Food and exercise need to be stimulated for healthy growth, but around 40-60% of the world›s children suffer from malnutrition, as they live in poverty and are therefore influenced by other types of environmental deprivation that can affect not only the physical well-being, but also cognitive abilities, social and emotional development (Papalia, & Olds, 2013).

According to the authors, children develop their motor skills, such as the notion of laterality, especially in activities developed in schools or recreational areas. As Pansini and Marin (2011) cites, entrance into school is a crucial issue in this period, as children will move to a different place from their homes and will have to find themselves in these spaces. In this process, children›s self-concepts, value systems, and cognitive abilities change.

For Papalia and Olds (2013), most children develop a variety of skills that help them succeed in life from the moment they enter school. They create strategies for learning, creating, remembering things, and solving problems. These children are increasingly able to show their knowledge, to ask and answer questions, to discuss ideas, and to take on responsibilities such as doing their homework. It is at this stage that their cognitive processes are improved, information processing time decreases, attention span and memory increase, and the child becomes more apt to use mnemonic strategies such as external resources, trial, organization and elaboration.

Thus, it would be during the 6 and 11 years that the children would develop the so-called *feeling of belonging*, which would bring the sensation or guarantee to be accepted by part or all of the group and society as a whole. This process would include identification with the society in which one lives and commitment to one's values and ethics. If this feeling is not developed in the child, it may develop a certain mistrust of parents and society in a broader way, reflecting on actions of their behavior. Another important point regarding development at this age, according to Lidz (1983), would be the *sense of responsibility* that would involve the willingness and ability to learn and comply with social rules. The learning, referring to the social rules, are pointed out by the author as very centralized from actions within the daily life of the school and the family.

Role of school and family in education

Historically, the school has been presented for its primary function of teaching children skills and knowledge. These teachings generally act to prepare children for adulthood. At school, cognitive, psychological, biological and relational aspects are worked out concomitantly, developing students in their various dimensions (Enguita, 1989). The school thus becomes a great socializing organ, complementing the actions of the family with regard to the education of children. Like the family, the classroom becomes a social system, but it can perform socializing functions different from those that parents care about (Pansini, & Marin, 2011).

At school, the child projects his interests to other adults - such as teachers, scout leaders, counselors and others - who can overestimate them. All these projections and fantasies from the minor are part of a process of increasing separation and autonomy (Ferreira, 1979). In addition, it is in school that the child creates companions with whom he plays and identifies himself. The school also has an indispensable role when it comes to learning and intelligence. Although intellectual development is irregular and also socially created, I.Q. of children can increase or decrease from 10 to 20 points during the school years. In addition to the child's innate ability, emotional intelligence is in part based on the degree of motivation, emotional stability, stimulation, suitability of the model and opportunity that are heavily involved in school activities (Lewis, & Wolkmar, 1993).

According to Papalia and Olds (2013), as well as school, parents will also have a strong influence on their children's education, including indirectly, through their ways of motivating children to engage in activities, encouraging them to engage in

school, mainly, in the positive attitudes and beliefs that they transmit. In the case of street children, Gregori (2000) argues that early entry into work causes a substitution of childhood time (play, study and care) for 'adult time', thus creating a break in family ties. As these children will not be welcomed into their families or their communities, they will have their borders of protection broken, facing an extremely hard reality that demands survival strategies.

The difficulty is that while the lower class children are presented with the need to ensure their own survival, assuming adult behaviors, the upper classes live a long period of 'social latency' where they are prepared and protected, with motivating methods, to adults as a previously trained function. Thus, children who come from homes where they suffer deprivations as a result of precarious socioeconomic levels usually enter the school with a number of disadvantages regarding life in society. Unless differentiated care is taken for them, obstacles can increase in school. As teachers evaluate and reward children for cognitive abilities, reliability in meeting their obligations, as well as classroom behavior, despite their efforts to evaluate equally, they unfortunately end up giving greater prestige to children considered to be 'smart' (Lidz, 1983).

According to Fagundes (1995) schools often develop an education that does not take into account the different realities in which children live, which facilitates school drop-out. The removal of school space creates a fragility in the development process of the child, producing in it an inversion of values and a gap created by the lack of play that may even accentuate vulnerabilities. However, for Paica-Rua (2002), not to be in school, but in the street, asking for alms or selling something at traffic lights, can give the child a concrete, immediate gain. Through it, it would become possible to assist in the subsistence and maintenance of his family. According to Gregori (2000), for some parents early work is positive because it would occupy the child's free time and would become an educational practice in terms of establishing responsibilities such as knowledge about the use of money and, even, as a way of social interaction.

Social vulnerability and relations of affection

In the literature there are a number of groups identified as vulnerable: the elderly, children, people with disabilities, street people, women, homosexuals, blacks, among others. Being placed as a vulnerable subject sometimes operates as a government strategy for the development of public policies. However, even if they receive attention from the policies, be it by guaranteeing benefits or services, these are not enough to guarantee the minimum Social Rights provided for in the Brazil Federal Constitution that guarantee a dignified survival and a change in the poverty and exclusion framework (Fagundes, 1995).

Poverty, here defined as a lack of rights, opportunities and hopes, complements social exclusion by marking the "lack of social integration manifested through rules that limit the access of particular groups or individuals to resources or citizenship rights" (Bento & Carone, 2003, p.45). It is understood that in a group, in order to be excluded, the excluded should be considered worthless, unworthy and therefore liable to be harmed or exploited. Exclusion is pointed out as the political disengagement of those who hold power with the suffering of those in precarious socioeconomic conditions. It encompasses a large part of the world's population, both those who have been excluded by the transformation of labor (unemployment and higher demands) and those who have been excluded by economic structures that generate absurd inequalities in the quality of life of different population groups (Wanderley, 1997).

According to Vargas (2002), historical processes evidence a certain alliance between the State and Brazilian elites in the construction of ideologies around the subjective production of different population groups. For López Autin (1980), ideology is a set of representations, beliefs and ideas that, among their various functions, shape the simple preferences, attitudes, and even values that drive the behavior of certain social groups. In this, it becomes possible to build ideologies that, as Vargas (2002) cites, make society have a conflictive and misguided view of street children. According to the author, fear and piety would characterize the paradoxical feelings that mark, as Ferreira (1979) points out, the sensationalism with which some cases about street children have

been reproduced in the media. In this, it ends up transforming vulnerable children into 'inflatable children', popular myths, who operate negatively, spreading feelings of insecurity and stigmatizing this population.

The processes of exclusion and stigmatization of the less favored classes act intensely and effectively, not only by placing them against other social groups, but also to differentiate the ways in which the difficulties faced by each are solved. Thus, what means legitimate right and actions of maintenance of the quality of life for the upper classes, transform themselves into repression and imposition for the popular layers considered as marginalized. These mechanisms are so efficient that the individuals themselves, excluded and stigmatized, begin to admit and justify their condition (Ferreira, 1979).

According to Fagundes (1995), facing impoverishment, children and adolescents, as a survival strategy, seek the street to generate income. Often, they are boys and girls who have been forced to leave their homes and abandon their families, either because of a lack of housing, because of the violence of their relatives against them or because they have nothing to eat. To Vargas (2002), these situations are complex and involve several device factors. Among them are, for example, the elitisation of urban centers that end up further weakening the poorest subjects. Children, in this process of vulnerability, become the target of the consequences of social inequalities: either by not obtaining access to basic Social Rights or by insertion into the informal labor market.

According to Machado (2005), in general, the minors work due to three fundamental factors: the exploitation of poverty, the expectations of the family tradition and the lack of access to education, which results in idle times filled with the experience on the street. For the author, children submitted to work can have this function reflected in their lives in different ways: from a perspective of beneficence, bringing economic acquisition and occupation, without interfering in their education, rest or leisure; to a perspective of maleficence, which will contribute negatively to the development of the child, through work that implies exploitation. For the researcher, between these two extremes, there would be enormous

varieties of activities performed in the street that could or could not interfere negatively in the development of the children, being necessary to evaluate each situation in its singularity.

The street, for Leczneisk (1995), is produced not only as a space where children would develop subsistence strategies but, moreover, it would become a space for social interaction. Space for the production of bonds of affection, mainly shown in the relation with the friends, passers-by or drivers and passengers that circulate in the different means of transport and pedestrian ways. The social interaction produced when the children are in a street situation ends up being the basis of their socialization processes, since many of the minors would not have family ties and the companion group of the street ends up being an accomplice and serving as a form of protection. The quarrel among street children, when it occurs, is also pointed out by the author as largely necessary to maintain healthy affective relationships (Leczneisk, 1995).

According to Papalia and Olds (2013), affection bonds would be primarily responsible for the development of self-esteem in the child, since it would be through them that the infants would develop their social skills, while in the other an important recognition for the maintenance of the abilities acquired. The process of self-knowledge, differentiation, mirroring, similarity, identification, among others, would occur in the relationship with the other. Cognitive and emotional development, central to sustaining self-esteem, tends to be fully internalized as the child moves into the world, in touch with others, thus making the emotions learned from experience directly related to the ways in which developed.

Methodological processes

Considering aspects previously presented, the present article is the result of a qualitative study[1] that aimed to discuss the behaviors of street children attending traffic lights in the city of Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. As a research query, the following questions were asked: what modes of interaction do street children play in the society that surrounds them? How can the experience of these children be related to theories about child development and social vulnerability?

Twelve (12) simple observations[2] (Gil, 2010), with a duration of 2 (two) hours each, were performed to collect data, in order to collect information regarding the behavior of children at traffic lights. Of the 12 observations, 6 (six) were performed in the morning shift and 6 (six) in the afternoon shift. Regarding gender, the presence of girls at the traffic light was not observed. In the total of the observations, 8 different boys were found, since many of them returned to the same traffic light in more of a day. By inference, it is believed that all boys are between the ages of 6 and 11.

According to Gil (2010), the simple observation method allows the creation of hypotheses about the problem researched and makes it possible to obtain data without direct relation or interference to the research object. In order to bring more elements to the discussion, the observation looked at how society interacts with children at traffic lights. For the analysis of the data, the Content Analysis of Bardin (2011) was used, being the creation of inferences one of the strategies for problematization of the collected materials. For data organization, field diaries were recorded in voice by the researcher, concomitantly the scenes visualized, and after transcripts.

Through the results of the study, the material collected in counterpoint was discussed and articulated the theories presented initially in this text. These, when proposing analyzes on child development and social vulnerability, offer important elements for reflections on the children's production of street children.

Results and discussions

Through the perspective of child development

As observed in the study, all the children observed appeared to be physically thin and precarious, or none at all, during the stoplight period. If, as Papalia and Olds (2013) point out, it would be in infancy that children would double their body weight, it is inferred that the precarious and non-diversified feeding of street children can adversely affect their physical development. The only time food was observed was when one of the children "*picks up one of their oranges that*

was being used to juggle and eats it"[3]. Thus, it is believed that the precarious conditions that the children live in begging at traffic lights may come to exert negative interferences in their well-being and physical development.

In compensation, referring to motor skills pointed out by authors as mainly developed in schools or recreational areas (Pansini, & Marin, 2011), it was verified that the practice of juggling (with oranges or wooden sticks) seems to be useful for the development of notions of laterality in children. However, only the use of juggling can be singled out as a single, and therefore limited, stimulus, thus reducing the spectrum of stimulation of children's abilities. The lack of dialogue (a long time at the traffic light without contact with others) may interfere with the way attention, memory, the capacity to create, remember things and solve problems are stimulated, producing in children a cognitive capacity in a mode very singular to the operation of the streets.

The reflection on the *feeling of belonging*, quoted by Lidz (1983), emerges in the observations when the child was seen being ignored by the drivers. Many of the drivers close the windows, park at a distance from the traffic light, or look at the opposite side of the child as they approach the vehicle. It is questioned whether this mode of driver behavior can interfere in the way the child does not feel ownership and acceptance on the part of them, nor does it allow the child to develop feelings of identification inherent in the emotional development of that phase. It was observed that the presence of other lesser beggars, and a few adults, functioned as certain models of behavior to children who began to repeat similar gestures to those that were also in the place.

According to Lidz (1983), the *feeling of belonging* is important that it be produced so that the child does not develop distrust of his or her peers, family or friends, as well as society in a broader way. Similar to this feeling, the author also points out the *sense of responsibility* as something that permeates this phase of development. It would involve the willingness and ability to comply with social rules that, to be produced, it would be important for street children to get in touch with others to internalize rules about social life from their experiences and examples.

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2 *With the presence of only one observer. There was no road map for observation. In order to remain anonymous, the space in which the observer was located was located in a bus station on the public highway.*

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3 *For illustration of the observations will be enclosed in quotation marks and in italics literal fragments of the field diaries, recorded in voice and transcribed.*

However, it is believed that, even though it is excluded and ignored, the experience of the child at the traffic light allows learning about social functioning. Even if they are learning from a place of vulnerability and exclusion, from the observations it is inferred that the energy invested by the street child serves as a propellant spring so that it learns how to survive in the environment to which it is exposed. It was observed that children start to develop specific behaviors that in some way facilitate their relationship with society, drivers and passers-by. Often the observed boys showed aggression, a very effective way to intimidate drivers and make them end up giving something to them, or they expressed a captivating face, making people feel conquered, especially being moved by the fact that the beggars were children. Thus, the intellectual achievements end up developing in these children in a very specific way linked to strategies of survival in the street.

The language used by them, according to the observations, presented a very specific elocution of the street, also marking in infants a social place that somehow identifies those who belong to the streets and those who do not belong. As at this age there is an investment of interests outside the family, it turns out that it is the street companions, or the lack of them, that the child mirrors their development. It was observed and inferred that, often, the child's learning seems to operate, because it has no examples, by trial and error: its capacity for socialization and moral values are being built daily according to each situation experienced.

Role of school and family in education

From the observation, there were no signs that children at the traffic lights were attending school. The only boy seen with a backpack, for example, when he opened the backpack, did not carry any teaching material other than the sticks used for juggling and a transparent bottle that was inferred to be some kind of inhalable drug because, "*after picking the bottle with the transparent liquid, the boy wets a cloth and puts it in his mouth as if he were vacuuming ... repeating this action several times*". Thus, if one does not go to school, one can reflect that all the socializing and stimulating functions that the school can have (Pansini, & Marin, 2011) ends up being lost, being occupied this gap by the reality in which the boys live.

Regarding the idea of Lidz (1983), that the school assumes and complements the family function normally different from the ones that the parents care about, it was not possible to observe in the cases of the study because there is not sufficient information for it to be affirmed that those boys attended school. However, it is inferred that the lack of adults, teachers, counselors, among others that permeate the school context, can drastically limit the way children acquire knowledge, experience the world and develop their ethical and moral values.

The need of the child from this period, from 6 to 11 years old, in relation to having playmates with whom to play and identify, as assumed by Papalia and Olds (2013), insists in the observations when the child is visualized sharing his objects of begging with other children as well as when it shares the inhalant fluid. Moments of smiles and jokes, often solitary, emerged to a limited extent in the remarks as, in this example: "*He picked up a piece of wood and slammed the billboard of a political advertisement. He smiles and seems to amuse himself at the same time that his movements seem to denounce some boredom or non conformity. It is a strange smile, which intersperses with a serious face, as if the joke would serve to try to make you smile at the same time that your body feels something opposite to joy*".

Regarding the role of the family, the presence of family members, father or mother, was not observed, since all the observed children arrived and left the traffic light alone or with a child close to their age (which might have been some kind of family). In only one of the remarks was an adult seen nearby and it was inferred that he was only working as a fruit seller, and in another situation, there were girls who handed out flyers talking and smiling to the children during much of the contact between them. Thus, one points to a limited contact with adults that would possibly preclude what Papalia and Olds (2013) cite as necessary for the stage of child life and which would be a function of the family: to acquire positive attitudes and beliefs through the example of adults. Motorists and passers-by, who largely ignore and sketch out repulsive behaviors to children, may be the adults most likely to be present in the time the children are at the traffic light.

At the same time, it becomes difficult to counterpose a theory about the role of the family

to the specificities presented in the lives of street children. Affirming the view of Ferreira (1979), the difficulty is that the children of the popular classes are presented at an early age to the need to guarantee their own survival, a necessity that shapes the behavior of children as small adults, organizing family members and their functions of other way. The vulnerability in which children and their families are placed, because there is no guarantee of basic Social Rights, requires the child to work at an early age: the sale of sweets, flowers or the exercise of juggling and begging seems to have a useful economic development in the child's life and, by inference, it is believed that this can be an important form of subsistence for her and her family.

Social vulnerability and relations of affection

Based on the observations, it is inferred that street children present significant elements of social vulnerability. The presence on the street, perhaps as a reflection of the lack of rights, torn clothes, old, dirty, disproportionate ("*the slipper that the child uses should be almost twice the size of his foot*" (...) *perhaps earth or mud, in all their clothes, this must cause a significant discomfort in her*") precarious feeding, low or no hygiene, lack of socially typical stimuli to children her age ("*they do not play, they smile a little, and the more ignored it seems that the more serious and uncomfortable they are, there at the traffic light, in front of all who little look at them*"), the absence of adults and other elements mark in the bodies of the children the exclusion in means that juggle distracting.

Regarding access to school, or in relation to other benefits and public services of guarantee of rights, cited by Fagundes (1995) as essential for a full and healthy development, was not present. The absence of State actions to guarantee basic social rights of children in the street situation observed makes inaccessibility to material goods at the same time as vulnerability is enhanced by an inaccessibility to subjective goods. Social exclusion also becomes a subjective exclusion from the way children are treated: "*the child walks toward another car, offers the bullets, one does not look at it*".

In this, the use of inhaled drugs seems to be a strategy to withstand a seemingly very unpleasant reality. As Torres and Ecker (2017) point out,

attention should be paid to the multiple, not only negative, meaning that the use of chemical substance acquires in this context: "*the child is being ignored by drivers already 30 minutes ago, it seems to bother and starts to inhale the substance again. Under the effect of the inhalant, she goes in the window of a car that ignores her with the driver looking the other way. The child walks to the front of the same car and almost lies on top of it. It's like begging to be looked at. The signal opens, it does not leave the front of the car and the driver starts. The boy is pushed, leaves the front of the car after being dragged for more than a meter. A passer-by shouts, 'Hey, do you want to die?' The child goes back to the sidewalk looking anesthetized by the drug. Anesthetized, she may not realize all these unpleasant scenes that she experiences*".

Possibly, as proposed by Bento and Carone (2003), the marks of exclusion reflect in the way children are treated by society. Being 'badly dressed', poor or black marks prejudices that reinforce the idea of the excluded as worthless subjects, unworthy and therefore liable to be harmed, exploited or even dragged by cars at the traffic light. The sensationalism of the media is perhaps another strategy to reinforce stereotypes and to potentiate the erroneous view that there is about children in street situation: that child that would be seen as innocent if it were in another social context, at the traffic light is interpreted almost like a criminal adult.

In this context of vulnerabilities and tensions, affective relations seem to present themselves as a possibility to produce a lighter and more cheerful childhood. However, in 9 (nine) of the 12 (twelve) observations, a total of 2 hours remained in the place, it was observed that the children had extremely low contacts with adults and other children. At no point were they seen talking or interacting in any way except when the cars bought the candy or gave something to the child. In one of the observations, a boy of, on average, 8 years remained alone seated during 45 minutes. In this case, it becomes difficult to challenge the group-developed skills development discussed by Papalia and Olds (2013), since the children were largely in the observations alone.

The salesmen, the leaflet distributors and the newsboy saw figures present in the children's lives at the traffic lights: they were part of the observations and served as links to the infants,

either through contact (jokes, physical interactions, help carrying newspapers, and so on) or by the company itself that they carry the child when they share the same place. Possibly, these adults serve as a way of protecting the children, because in one of the observations the journeyman was seen giving the boy food to make him feel cared for and welcomed. Care, which may not yet be enough to sustain the weaknesses of being socially and emotionally vulnerable. Juggling, which children use to distract and cheer drivers and passers-by, do not seem to cheer everyone: "*after 2 hours at the traffic lights the boy seems to be leaving. Grab one of your juggling oranges and play hard against the glass of the bus stop. Take the other orange and hurl towards a transit board. Juggling does not seem to represent something happy for him*".

Final considerations

Through this study, we aimed to discuss the behaviors of street children, who attend traffic lights, articulating the data obtained in the observations with theories that present analyzes on child development and social vulnerability. From the collected materials, a series of reflections on children's production in the street situation were observed and inferred: marked by material, social and affective vulnerabilities, their lives are marked by a daily life that presents conditions of existence with stimuli limited, and seemingly uncomfortable when compared to the lives of those children who have access to their basic Social Rights.

Living on the street, specifically in the situation of traffic lights as beggar or seller, produces in the child specific social relations, cultural values and productions of subjectivity. Loneliness, exclusion, silence, lack of gaze, allied to precarious structural conditions, develops in infant adaptive behaviors to deal with a difficult reality. The behavior of a large number of drivers and pedestrians who cross in some way with these children in daily life, whether by giving money, interacting or ignoring them, make them the mark of a difference: between those who live on the street and those who only cross for her. In the habitation, vendors, day laborers and pamphleteers become companies and bonds of affection of children in the midst of the circulation of a city that does not yet include everyone.

Finally, in order to qualify the formulation of public policies that intervene in the lives of street children, it is suggested to consider the elements raised in the study: intelligence being something that is also built, socially and economically, children in situations are at a disadvantage. It is concerned with the precarious and not diversified diet of the children observed, the lack of diversified physical and cognitive stimuli and the possible negative consequence that this can entail in its integral development

Social vulnerability, coupled with an exclusion that is also affective, produces in children very specific ways of living linked to strategies for survival on the streets. These apprenticeships, sometimes constituted by the trial and error of a solitary child, refer to ethical and moral values that are being constructed disjointed from a wider social life. The juggling, symbols of joy and distraction of those who circulate in a city, seem to represent the mark of exclusion in the bodies of those who manipulate them or are manipulated by them: the poor children.

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