Chapter 1
Introduction
1.1. Salaam Bombay: Introducing the Problem

Krishna, barely ten, is forced by his mother, a prostitute, to join a circus party to pay off his brother’s debts. However, this does not work. Abandoned by the circus group, he went to the city of dreams – Bombay to earn a living. Bombay, popularly dubbed Mayanagari (the city of dreams), provided a little place for destitute children like Krishna. Living on the streets, without any protection, the toddler finds a menial job in a tea stall. But the spiral web of poverty and deprivation kills the innocence of young Krishna. The brutal realities of life draw him into an entirely different world of aggression, violence and crime. Baba, a racketeer, and Chillum, a drug addict become his close confidants and this is the world where Krishna’s secondary socialization takes place.

The state, with its limited resources cannot provide Krishna a social safety net where his childhood could bloom. However, the legal machinery, with its harsh insensitivities, caught up with Manju and Krishna as street dwellers are perceived as a threat to the city’s orderliness. Krishna is sent to a juvenile home. He escapes from the reform school and in a fit of rage kills Baba over a minor squabble. His transformation into a hardcore criminal begins which eventually leads him to the ill-famed underworld of Bombay, where drugs, extortion and kidnapping become a part of his daily life.

This story-line of Mira Nair’s Oscar nominated Salaam Bombay not only poignantly depicts the appalling conditions of street children but also projects how the state treats its young citizens. The Brazilian movie Pixote and the American movie Kids also revolve around this theme explored within their own societal backdrop.

The plight of the young and abandoned street children like Krishna, particularly in societies wreaked by poverty and civil violence is more or less the same across the globe. The problem is much more pronounced in Afro-Asian countries. Although, the exact number of street children in the world is difficult to estimate, International Labour Organization (ILO) and United Nations International Children’s Fund (UNICEF) peg it at over 100 million (Dalglish, 1996). India has the largest population of street children in the world. At least 18 million children live or work on the streets of urban India, labouring as porters at bus or railway terminals; as mechanics in informal auto repair shops; as vendors of food, tea, or handmade articles; as street tailors; or as rag pickers, picking through garbage and selling usable materials to local vendors (UNDP, 1993: 24).
At one level, the presence of street children and oppression by the state authorities is an indictment of the failure of the state to justify its own existence as an institution of social contract. This theme is discussed in detail in Chapter 4. At another level, the problem of street children as an international social phenomenon is a slap on the face of our self-styled post-modern age. The street itself threatens our post-modernist notion of a “private place and personal space” subject to interdependent ownership and control (Harvey, 1985: 109–124). Life on the street simultaneously encourages unrestrained freedom of movement and expression, offering a source of immediate pleasure, while inflicting terrible pain and suffering by encouraging random and accidental environmental and social interaction that is violent and uncompromising.

The presence of street children further serves to contradict globalising tendencies based on modernist notions of family, class and nation state. The conditions that the street children confront underscore the socio-economic structural inequalities that challenge the essence of family as a viable capitalist productive unit, and therefore, our view of childhood are reflective of larger scale of reference. Secondly, juvenile delinquency by the uncared for street teenagers demonstrates the limitation of state's institutional effectiveness and social control thereby questioning the very legitimacy of a nation state. Blended with rampant consumerist culture which relegates interpersonal and social values in urban areas to the backburner, the plight of street children as depicted in movies like Salaam Bombay, Pixote and Kid, is a critique of institutional decay and resulting rise of authoritarianism to uphold the state’s legitimacy.

The study deals with these issues with a special reference to Delhi, the capital of India. When Salaam Bombay was made in 1988 the institution of civil society as a third sector had not yet evolved in India. The process of liberalisation and globalisation was yet to strike its roots. With liberalisation in the name of fiscal prudence and under the pressures of global capitalist system, the retreat of the state from its commanding heights has taken place. The global capitalist system and the third sector are strongly aligned on certain issues, as in the case of street children and child labour. Globalisation also led to acute scrutiny of labour by trans-national watchdogs, and this has resulted in active interest in deprived sections of society. But before I discuss these aspects, it is pertinent to dwell upon the issue of street children and the causes thereof. It is also equally important to touch upon the role of state
and the context of the emergence of NGOs and their role with regard to street children in general and girl street child in particular.

1.2. Street Children
The UNICEF (2001) defines street children as “those for whom the street (in the widest sense of the word, i.e. unoccupied dwellings, wastelands etc) more than their family has become their real home, a situation in which there is no protection, supervision or direction from responsible adults.” UNICEF has also given certain operational categories of street children. These include:

1) Children on the Street: Children who have houses and mostly return to their families at the end of the day.

2) Children of the Street: These are homeless children who live and sleep on streets. These children seek shelter on streets; they are entirely on their own seeking support and companionship from others like them on the street. They may have families but rarely are in touch with them.

3) Abandoned Children: As the term suggests these children have no ties with their families.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child– India/First Periodic Report, 1997 maintains that it is difficult to get estimates of street children in Delhi. The Indian Census also does not have separate count of street children. Out of such a large number of deprived children and girl children in particular, the most deprived are the street children. There are an estimated 100,000 street children in metropolitan cities like Mumbai, Delhi and Kolkata.

Street children suffer from destitution, neglect, abuse and exploitation. The age composition of street children in India reveals that they are in the formative years of their life. A majority of them (40%) belongs to the age group of 11–15 years, followed by the age group of 6–10 years. The majority of street children in India are boys; their number is almost twice that of girls. However, apart from the normal hazards that street children face, the girl street children are more vulnerable to the dangers of sexual exploitation. The great challenge for India as a developing country is to ensure education, nutrition and health care facilities for all these children. Given the limitations of state machinery to meet the basic rights of a child, the role of non-government organizations (NGOs) in providing facilities to the
marginalized sections of children i.e. street children, orphans, juvenile delinquents and child labourers assumes added importance.

1. 2.1. Phenomenon of Street Children – Demographic Factors

The birth of Asha in 2000 marked India’s passage into a billion plus nation-state. India with a population of more than one billion in 2000 has the largest population of street children in the world (UNICEF, 2001). Nearly one-third of its population – 328.20 million in absolute terms – are children below 15 years. About 45% of its population is below 18.

Malnutrition is more common in India than in Sub-Saharan Africa. One in every three malnourished children in the world lives in India. Here, around 46 per cent of all children below three suffer from height stuntedness and 47 per cent is underweight due to rampant malnutrition. The prevalence of malnutrition varies across states, with Madhya Pradesh recording the highest rate (55 per cent) and Kerala the lowest (27 per cent) (NIN, 2002).

Despite recent success in reduction in infant mortality, there are still 63 deaths per 1,000 live births. Most infant deaths occur in the first month of life, up to 47 per cent in the first week itself. In states like Orissa the infant mortality is as high as 101 per every 1000 (IIPS, 2000). While the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) showed a rapid decline during 1980s, the decrease has slowed down during the past decade. Maternal deaths are similarly high. The reasons for this high mortality are that few women have access to skilled birth attendants and fewer still to quality emergency obstetric care. In addition, only 15 per cent of mothers receive complete antenatal care and only 58 per cent receive iron or foliate tablets or syrup (IIPS, 2000).

Notwithstanding major improvements in literacy rates during 1990s, the number of children who are not in school still remains high. The literacy rate jumped from 52 per cent in 1991 to 65 per cent in 2001. The absolute number of non-literates dropped for the first time and gross enrolment in government-run primary schools increased from over 19 million in 1950s to 114 million by 2001. However, 190 million non-literate persons in India belong to the fairer sex. About 20 per cent of children aged 6 to14 are still not in school, and millions of women remain non-literate despite a spurt in female literacy in 1990s.

Small children instead of spending time on playgrounds have to take up the responsibility of breadwinners for their family. Many children are sexually exploited as
well. Roughly 30 per cent of the population is considered migrant, 77 per cent of whom are women and children. Out of 1.02 billion people in the country in 2001, 307 million (almost 30 %) were reported migrants by place of birth which is slightly more than what was reported in 1991 (27.4%). There has been a steady increase in the number of migrants since Independence. Whereas in 1961, there were about 144 million migrants by place of birth, in 2001 Census it was 307 million (Census of India-2001, 2003). As shown in the table below the population in slums is increasing day by day.

The migrant people land up in slums and streets, and are often at a greater risk of exploitation as they tend to accept jobs on unfair terms. Mobility usually means surviving without family and community support networks, and children tend to suffer due to disruption of their education and virtually no access to basic facilities which make up for a decent life.

Compounding the problem is the pandemic AIDS. Many children born to HIV positive parents have to cope up with the added stigma and face social exclusion (Save the Children, 2000: 1). Thus, despite India’s developmental strides, the gap between rich and poor has widened. India’s young – the future of tomorrow – languishes in poverty, toils hard and faces a brazen denial of basic rights of childhood. They are deprived of the love of mother and are anything but healthy and literate. The girl child faces a double jeopardy of discrimination of a patriarchal society with its cultural preference for son. The increasing cases of missing girl child, unacceptably high neonatal and infant mortality, denial of basic entitlements of the child, in the form of safe and careful parenting, basic nutrition and education, are among the many challenges which the girl child faces in India.

The phenomenon of street and working children is an offshoot of complex interplay of the above factors in India. The phenomenon seems to have acquired a gigantic dimension in the wake of rapid but skewed industrialisation and urbanisation. The large-scale presence of street and working children is a symptom of the disease that is widespread due to the exploitative structure, lopsided development and iniquitous resource ownership (UNESCO, 1988).
1.3. Context of the Phenomenon of Street Children: Skewed Development and Unplanned Urbanisation

While the incidence and depth of poverty is staggering in India (more than 80 per cent live without a dollar a day; 26 per cent live in absolute poverty), the fact that the problem of street children is an urban phenomenon necessitates a study of urbanisation pattern in India.

### Table 1.1 Profiles of the Urban and Slum Population in Selected Cities of India-2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>State/ Union Territory*</th>
<th>Number of cities/towns reporting slums</th>
<th>Total urban population of State/UTs</th>
<th>Population of cities/towns reporting slums</th>
<th>Total slum population</th>
<th>Percentage of slum population to total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jammu and Kashmir</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2,516,638</td>
<td>1,446,148</td>
<td>268,513</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>8,262,511</td>
<td>5,660,268</td>
<td>1,159,561</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chandigarh *</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>808,515</td>
<td>808,515</td>
<td>107,125</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Uttarakhand</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2,179,074</td>
<td>1,010,188</td>
<td>195,470</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6,115,304</td>
<td>4,296,670</td>
<td>1,420,407</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Delhi *</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12,905,780</td>
<td>11,277,586</td>
<td>2,029,755</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>13,214,375</td>
<td>7,668,508</td>
<td>1,294,106</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>34,539,582</td>
<td>21,256,870</td>
<td>4,395,276</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8,681,800</td>
<td>4,814,512</td>
<td>531,481</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>545,750</td>
<td>189,998</td>
<td>29,949</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>454,111</td>
<td>132,867</td>
<td>86,304</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3,439,240</td>
<td>1,371,881</td>
<td>82,289</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>22,427,251</td>
<td>15,184,596</td>
<td>4,115,980</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Jharkhand</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5,993,741</td>
<td>2,422,943</td>
<td>301,569</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5,517,238</td>
<td>2,838,014</td>
<td>629,999</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Chhattisgarh</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4,185,747</td>
<td>2,604,933</td>
<td>817,908</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>15,967,145</td>
<td>9,599,007</td>
<td>2,417,091</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>18,930,250</td>
<td>12,697,360</td>
<td>1,866,797</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>41,100,980</td>
<td>33,635,219</td>
<td>11,202,762</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However, the growth of urbanisation is not uniform across the country. Despite the brouhaha over the fast pace of urbanisation (as 26 per cent of India’s population lives in urban areas), there is actually a deceleration in urban growth in India in the last two decades. While in 1970s, the rate of growth of urbanization was 3.8 %, the growth rate dipped in 1990’s with 2.8% growth in urban centres. So, there is a rise in urban population in India and an actual decline in the growth of urban centres (Kundu 2003). While there is a deceleration of urban growth, the population of million plus cities is increasing. This means that that while new cities are coming up in a slow pace, there is an increase in population of big cities like Delhi. In fact the rate of growth of million plus cities was faster than that projected by Limits to Growth Malthusian theorists in 1972. In 1950s the number of one million plus cities was 86, in 2001 about 400 and in 2015 the figure is expected to rise to 500 (UNPD, 2002).1

The growth of big cities was a result of the absence of sources of livelihood in rural India. While rural India suffers from under employment and disguised unemployment, they tend to turn towards cities in search of livelihood and settle down in slums. Without adequate employment opportunities, they find that the urban laws restrict many of their activities in which they could excel. Take for instance laws on street vendor and relocation of polluting industries in Delhi (Kishwar, 2001: 8–18). Restriction on these activities severely squeezes their livelihood choices, and they remain mired in poverty, ill health and

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illiteracy. It is estimated that one third of Indians fall below poverty line due to the burden of diseases attributed to low level of hygiene, water and sanitation (World Bank, 2001).

1.4. Demographic Picture in Delhi

The urban population of Delhi has risen from 57.2 per cent in 1911 to 92 percent in 2001. More importantly, the density and the size of population have dramatically increased in the post–Independence era, and especially over last 25 years resulting in the growth of Delhi as an urban agglomeration. This skewed urban growth in selected pockets of India has led to RU (rural–urban migration) migration and growth of slums and Jhuggi Jhupudi clusters. As per 2001 Census, the population of Delhi is about 13.9 million. Of this nearly 45% population lives in unauthorised colonies, rural villages and slums and JJ clusters (Census of India, 2002). The current number of slum dwelling units is estimated at about 0.6 million and the population living in slums is about 30 lakhs. Out of 0.6 million JJ units, nearly 62,000 units are estimated to be located in the riverbed of Yamuna on both sides of its stretch. While the population of Delhi has increased seven fold since 1951, the number of jhuggis (small dwelling units) has risen by 47 fold as demonstrated by the table below:

Table 1.2. Population and Rise of Slums in Delhi Since 1951

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population (Lakh)</th>
<th>No of Jhuggis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>1744</td>
<td>12749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>2659</td>
<td>42815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>4065.698</td>
<td>62594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>6220.406</td>
<td>98709</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>9240.644</td>
<td>480929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>13783</td>
<td>600000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: Data collected from Census and MCD, Slum Wing)

One result of this deceleration in growth of urban centres and simultaneous increase in the absolute number of urban population in India is the rise in the population of the few urban centres of the country. The expansion of Delhi’s slum population as well as its total population is the result of a decline in the rate of growth of other urban centres in India. One direct result of these developments is the increase in migration of rural population to cities like Delhi, which provide livelihood opportunities. According to DMP–2001 (Delhi Master Plan), in 1981 there were about 46,000 industrial units of which 77 per cent had fewer than
10 workers and 16 per cent had between 10 and 20 workers. The number of units increased to 93,000 in 2001. The percentage share of workers in the industrial sector among the total workforce had constantly increased, and a considerable change had taken place in the industrial structure in the last three decades, more so after 1975. Two kinds of industries grew rapidly – those involving electrical and electronics goods and those involving rubber, plastic and petroleum products. In November 2000, when the Supreme Court threatened the state government for contempt of court for not relocating these non-conforming industries, the state government decided to shut down the units and relocate slums that came up following the growth of industries. Instances such as this further magnify the problem of livelihood opportunities and the agonies of their dependent children.

The problem of street children is compounded by single-parent households where survival itself is at stake. Violence and abuse in some of these settings fails to provide children with an environment where their rights are protected. Such children suffer from an identity crisis and get no social security from the family or the state. Forced relocation under conditions of distress or conflict also adversely affects these small children psychologically and economically.

1.5. Two Views on Child Rights

While many believe that children, like adults, possess certain inalienable natural rights by virtue of being part of humanity, others are sceptical of such a view. The latter believes that given the nature of rights and children, it is wrong to think of children as right-holders. One of the reasons for such scepticism is due to the demand for rights by various groups and the resultant proliferation of such rights. If you give away too many rights they may cease to have the value and significance they ought to have. A favoured metaphor in this context is monetary inflation. The inflation of rights devalues the currency of rights (Sumner 1987: 15; Steiner, 1998: 233). That an individual should possess certain basic inalienable rights is taken to be universally axiomatic. However, as possession of such rights is of great advantage to their owners, its inflations only end up in depreciating the value of rights. The view opposing child rights propounds the following propositions–

1. Rights are protected choices
2. Only those capable of exercising choices can be right-holders
3. Children are incapable of exercising choice
4. Children are not right-holders
5. Adults have duties to protect the important interests of children
6. Rights and duties are correlative

However, while such postulations shall be discussed in subsequent chapters, it will suffice to note here that there is a broad consensus on basic rights of children, and from the days of the Industrial Revolution various states have been making legislations to protect their rights.

1.6. Rights of Child

The rights of a child began to emerge in the period of the Industrial Revolutions. It is a new phenomenon in the sense that till the Industrial Revolution production was a social activity, in which every member of the family participated (Weiner, 1991). Entry of children into the work place dominated by the ideology of individualism warranted a separate set of rights for them.

In Indian context, the advent of the British in India marked an institutionalisation and codification of legal rights. The Indian Factory Act was passed in 1881 during the time of Lord Rippon to protect children below the age of 14 from working in hazardous factories. The Indian Mines Act, 1923 and Employment of Children Act, 1938 banned their employment in hazardous sectors such as coalmines. Subsequently, many acts followed to protect children from working in hazardous factories. Other legislations were enacted in the colonial and post-colonial India for the purpose of children in general and girl child in particular. In pre-Independence India certain laws dealing with the issues of adoption and guardianship of children were also passed. Important debates in the colonial period revolved around the marriage age of the girl child, their education and their sphere of domesticity and work (Chandra, 1998).

Some of the other major Acts related to children which are worth noting are listed as under:–

- The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929
- The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986
- The Children (Pledging of Labour) Act, 1929
- The Guardian and Wards Act, 1890
• The Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act, 1956
• The Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956
• The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956
• The Juvenile Justice Act, 1986
• The Orphanages and Other Charitable Homes (Supervision and Control) Act, 1960
• The Probation of Offenders Act, 1958
• The Reformatory Schools Act, 1897
• The Women's and Children's Institutions (Licensing) Act, 1956
• The Young Persons (Harmful Publications) Act, 1956
• The Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1992
• The Prenatal Diagnostic Technique (Regulation, Prevention and Misuse) Act, 1994
• The Persons With Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995


Many of these legislations came up to implement various provisions of the Constitution to protect rights of children. It also came up as a result of international obligation born out of India’s ratification of many international conventions like the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, 1948, and the Vienna Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989.
1.6.1. Provisions for the Children in the Indian Constitution

Fundamental Rights, enshrined in Part III of the Constitution specifically contain certain rights for the children. Articles 14 and 15 ensure equality before law and non-discrimination while Article 19 speaks of the right to six freedoms. Article 21A provides for the Right to Education which mandates the state to provide free and compulsory education to all children between the 6 and 14 years in such a manner as the State, by law, may determine. Article 24 states that no child below 14 shall be employed in work in any factory or mine or engaged in any other hazardous employment.

The Directive Principles of the State Policy (DPSP) enumerated in Part IV of Constitution are only recommendatory in nature. However, they act as a guideline for the governments to formulate policies as well as provide moral pressure on governments to enact legislations to implement the ideals propounded by the founding fathers of the Constitution. Article 39 states that the State shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing the health and strength of workers, men and women, and ensure that the tender age of children are not abused and that citizens are not forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their age or strength. Similarly, Article 39(f) states that children are to be given opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner in conditions of freedom and dignity and that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment.

1.7. International Covenants

While the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)* contains provisions of basic freedom and liberty of individuals, including those of children, the most comprehensive articulation of the rights of children is found in the global commitment in the form of Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) to which India is a signatory. Other international conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and World Health Organisation (WHO) cover children rights as well. These international covenants will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4.
1.8. Civil Society Institutions in India

The resurgence of civil society is one of the most distinguishing features of the post-liberalised world. The word has gained vast currency in developing and under-developing countries, especially in relation to resistance against state actions or in relation to development aid. While there is much controversy regarding the definition of civil society institution, the most operational definition is that of the London School of Economics' (LSE) Centre of Civil Society. It defines civil society thus:

The arena of uncoerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and market, though in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are often complex, blurred and negotiated. Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy and power. Civil societies are often populated by organisations such as registered charities, development non-governmental organisations, community groups, women's organisations, faith-based organisations, professional associations, trade unions, self-help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy groups (http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CCS/introduction.htm).

Although civil society has gained currency in the globalised world its idea is not new. In fact, the idea of civil society was found in the writing of the western classical writers like Aristotle and Cicero. In India, Asokan inscriptions also refer to various types of samajas, (meaning community groups in Hindi) as a form of societal organisations. Most likely the organisations existed independent of the state and parallel to the state, and therefore, Asoka exhorted against samajas. Kautilya's Arthasastra prescribed active vigil on the part of rajukas (rural officers) against these samajas (Thapar, 1985).

The notion of a civil society, however, became popular in the 19th century Europe. A host of political theorists, from Thomas Paine to George Hegel, developed the notion of civil society as a domain parallel to but separate from the state – a realm where citizens associate according to their own interests and wishes. This new thinking reflected changing economic realities: the rise of private property, market competition, and the emergence of two classes namely the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. It also grew out of the mounting popular demand for liberty, as manifested in the American and French Revolutions (Carother and Barndt,

2 Neera Chandoke, a political scientist from India, thinks that only institutions that are critical of the state are the real civil society institutions, while the rest are merely not governmental. The notion here is that not every institution is a 'countervailing power' to the state. On the other hand, scholars like Partha Chaterjee and Asish Nandy argue that civil society exists independent of state and citizenry. (Chandhoke, 1995).

3 Asokan Rock edict VI exhorts citizens to abjure samaja (Thapar, 1985).
1998: 18–24). However, the term fell into disuse in much of the 19th and first half of the 20th centuries only to be revived by Antonio Gramsci. Although Gramsci was concerned about Fascism of Italy, his *Prison House Notebooks* was a source of inspiration for people fighting communist dictatorship in Europe (Gramsci, 1971).

Suddenly in 1990s, civil society institutions became the new mantra. The global trend towards democracy opened up space for NGOs in East Europe. In Europe and America, citizens fatigued by two party systems and consumerist individualism began to find meaning in activities like going to Church which provided space for social renewal. In developing countries, privatisation and other market reforms offered civil society to step in as governments retracted their reach. And the death of distance through IT revolution provided new tools for citizens to converge and work beyond the narrow confines of nation–state. The civil society organisations (CSOs), depending upon their core competencies, have carved out a niche for themselves in many developmental activities. Many civil society institutions are also working to ensure rights of the child. Various nuances regarding the theoretical postulations and definitional issues regarding the nature of civil society and CSOs, particularly those working for child rights and street children, will be discussed in the subsequent chapters,

1.9. **NGOs in Delhi**

NGOs suffer from the same definitional ambiguities that the civil society institutions have to endure. However, credible institutions like the World Bank define NGOs as “*private organizations that pursue activities to relive suffering, promote interests of the poor, protect environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development. In wider usage, the term NGO can be applied to any non-profit organizations which is independent from government.*” (http://web.worldbank.org).

We may perceive NGOs as outfits that are generally formed by a group of like-minded people committed to an idea often weaved around social change or development. As the term suggests, NGOs work outside the government, but they usually have to get approved by, and are sometimes funded by their own, or other governments. They are not-for-profit, have a board, and can comprise any number of people. The official statistics system of India had made inadequate attempts to collect information on the sector. Non-Profit Organisations are registered either as societies under Society Registration Act of 1860
(The Societies Registration Act. 1860, 2000) or India Trust Act of 1882. However, there is no effort to collate these data by the government. They are registered in the concerned district or at the Registrar of Societies at the state or at the central level. There are some efforts to study Non-Profit Sectors by the NPOs themselves. Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) and Society for Socio-Economic Studies in collaboration with the Centre for Civil Society Studies, Johns Hopkins University (JHU), USA took up the pioneering work of mapping the non profit sector of India. They estimated a total of 1.2 million Non Profit Organisations (NPO) in India (www.pria.org).

The study does recognize the wide inter-state disparities in socio-economic and cultural backgrounds within India. Sample surveys were conducted in West Bengal, Maharashtra, Delhi and Tamil Nadu to cover the four corners of the country, and in Meghalaya due to its mountainous terrain and distinct religious and ethnic composition. Two issues were published on each sample state. The first is on the non profit sector and the second on the dimensions of giving and volunteering. Some interesting findings were that in Delhi, more than half the NPOs focus on religious affiliation services. In Meghalaya, 75 per cent donors earn less than a lakh annually. In West Bengal, 90 per cent of all persons working in NPOs are volunteers. 81.3 per cent of these are based in rural areas. In urban areas, proportion of volunteerism is highest in the youngest age group of 18 to 30. And contrary to popular belief, the practice of charity tends to decrease with age! Similarly, Development Alternatives, an organisation has published DIANET NGO Directory, which gives information about 222 NPOs of Delhi (Development Alternatives, 1998).

1.10. Review of Literature

The review of literature covers three important aspects: literature on the socio-economic conditions and consequence of deprivation on the development of child, literature regarding the State’s policies and programme on street children and finally literature on NGOs who are associated with street children. Socio-economic discriminations against the girls were parts of the patriarchal society’s discriminations against female gender and therefore, it is equally important to keep this societal perspective in view.

Studies of the role of the state and NGOs in the betterment of the conditions of street girls also entail an understanding of their structures, hierarchy, fund mobilisations. There are
very few studies on this aspect. The emergence of civil society institutions has either been hailed or criticised for letting the states off the hook, depending on the theoretical perspective adopted. Therefore, it is also important to consider the sociological explanation about the emergence of civil society institutions and their likely consequence on the nature of the State. Moreover the welfare state has adopted many policies and programmes on eradicating child labour, ensuring juvenile justice, education, etc. and there are critical assessment of these programmes and policies by authors.

A study of the sociology of organisation is also mandated as the present research deals with a comparative study of the organizational structure of NGOs working for street children vis-à-vis the institutional mechanism of the state.

1.10.1. Literature on State’s Policies and Programmes on Children

*Profile of Indian Child* (WCD: 2002) is by far the most exhaustive and exhibitive book by the government on the State’s achievements in the development of children in India. A comparison with the last Census (1991) was made to underline the achievement of the state in this regard. However, this study has little focus and thereby little material on street children.

The *Annual Economic Survey* of the Ministry of Finance (MoF) publishes data on child labour in India and progress so far made to prohibit child labour under National Child Labour Eradication Programme (NCELP) of 1987.

As discussed earlier, there are two views regarding the special rights enjoyed by children. While one view has it that children enjoy special rights, the other side expresses concern over the proliferation of numerous rights which may result in the undervaluation of rights in general. In his book *Development as Freedom*, Amartya Sen argues that development should be seen as a process of expanding the real freedom that people enjoy and the state must ensure social opportunities for children. Sen classifies instrumental freedom into five broad categories: (1) political freedom, (2) economic facilities, (3) social opportunities, (4) transparency guarantees and (5) protective security. While the importance of access to economic opportunities is widely recognized as a major factor in economic growth, Sen’s perspective requires that, in addition, we recognize the value of other instrumental freedoms in the promotion of growth as well as the contribution of economic growth to facilitating access to freedoms such as expansion of social services (Sen, 1995).
Programme for the improvement of street children is a concurrent subject in the Indian Constitution. An item in the Concurrent List calls for action by both the Central as well as provincial governments. The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is the nodal agency handling such issues at the Central level. Programme of Social Defence Division of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment brings out various reports on the conditions of the street children.

Similarly, State of Children (UNICEF, 2006), an annual report brought out by the UNICEF, also documents the country specific report on the state of the children. There exists a vast corpus of literature on the juvenile justice system in India and elsewhere. With the rise of crime in the urban centres and police atrocities against street children, there has been a great concern over the state’s treatment of children and there has been an international consensus culminating in an international Code of Conduct. The Beijing Rule of 1985 and UN Rules for Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty (1990) provide for the basic framework for framing juvenile laws in different countries.

1.10.2. Literature on Juvenile Justice System

Juvenile Justice: Process and Systems by Gus Martin, while providing a contextual grounding in the historical origins of modern process and systems of juvenile justice examines the institutions, procedures, and theories that are specifically directed toward addressing the problems of juvenile deviance and victimization (Martin, 2005).

Examining the Juvenile Justice (Child Protection and Care) Act, Ved Kumari’s The Juvenile Justice System in India: From Welfare to Rights (Ved Kumari, 2004) shows that despite the best of intentions, lack of coordination between various juvenile justice agencies causes the whole system to be dysfunctional. Ved Kumari strongly advocates the adoption of a systemic and holistic approach to juvenile justice, where each agency from the police to the rehabilitation and training institutes, is kept aware of the objectives of the system. Further, she offers a critical analysis of the factors, which have so far prevented the development of a viable and beneficial juvenile justice system in India.

One major concern is the adoption of children by foreigners. There have been allegations that the adoption laws in India are lenient leading to paedophilia and illegal trafficking through the adoption route. Adoption in India by Vinita Bhargava is an in-depth
study of child adoption procedures in India. The book challenges prevalent theories of adoption and offers fresh insights into the whole process (Bhargava, 2005).

1.10.3. Literature on the Socio-economic Contexts of Street Children – Deprivation, Child Labour and Consequences of Poverty and Deprivation

There are numerous sociological and psychological studies on the consequences of deprivation on the cognitive, emotional and other physical and psychological developments of the child. Aggression as a reaction to aversive events such as deprivation finds mention in various studies.

It is said that street children see others suspiciously and behave aggressively. Interpersonal communication of street children, especially with others is characterized by suspicion, hostility and aggression. Deprived conditions, psychosexual exploitation and domestic violence to which street children are subjected, results in viewing others with suspicion and aggression. The cognitive neo-associationists hold the view that exposure to aversive events generates a negative affect. These experiences as well as physiological reactions and thoughts or memories related to such experiences, in turn, automatically activate tendencies towards aggression and flight (Berkowitz, 1989: 59–73).

Frankfurt school sociologist Theodor Adorno gives a psychoanalytic explanation of the development of authoritarian personality. He argues that suppression of infantile sexuality and failure to cope up with childhood problems result in the development of an authoritarian streak in one’s personality. A person endowed with such a personality views others with suspicion and hostility (Adorno, 1950).

Aggression of street children can also be viewed from the social learning perspective of Bandura. Social Learning theory of Bandura emphasizes that aggression, like other complex forms of social behaviour is a learned response to the social, physical and cultural environment of the child (Bandura, 1973). Bandura’s study on aggression and the cultural context of learning has highlighted the role of socialization in child’s development and behaviour learning.

Establishing a functional relationship between deprivation and various measures of psychological functioning has been a favourite area of research by psychologists in India. While the effect of malnutrition on physical growth is a truism, its effect on psychological functioning has not been without problems. It is found that malnutrition, which occurs
during the most vulnerable period of brain development, is most harmful for the
development of intellectual functions.\textsuperscript{4} There are many studies, which also examine the
effect of deprivation on emotional development, educational achievement, low level of
achievement motivation, language development and other psychological aspects of child’s
development.

Sigmund Freud’s \textit{Totem and Taboo}, published in 1913, launched the study of
childhood, not as a cataloguing of rituals and their cultural diffusion, but as the period in
which culture has its most profound impact on the individual (Freud, 1988). Behavioural
approach to socialisation, as a process of learning society’s norms role has been challenged
in recent years. Parsonian position, influential during 1950s, viewed socialisation as a
psychological process through which the role differentiated nuclear family ensured that a
child developed human personalities e.g. systems of socially appropriate actions. These
personality systems were held to reflect the social structures, which the individual had
experienced. Parson has been criticised for presenting an over-socialised view that left little
scope for individual differences or innovations in society (Parsons and Bales, 1955). Some
sociologists like Mead reject the passive and malleable child model of the behaviourists. G.
H. Mead works explain socialisation in terms of reflexive self and puts emphases on
symbols. In order to construct and to understand the language of primary symbol system of
society the child needs to interact with others. A mastery over language equips the child to
understand himself and others (White, 1977). In 1949, Merton (1949: 71) wrote that a social
phenomenon persists “we should ordinarily... expect persistent social patterns and social
structure to perform positive functions which are not adequately fulfilled by other existing
patterns and structures. Such functionalist approach of social phenomenon argues that
poverty play s important role in reinforcing the values, norms and homeostasis of the
society.”

While these theoretical positions help us interpret certain aspects of street children in
general, it must be said that there are hardly any studies on the socialising process of street
children and girl street children.

\textsuperscript{4} However, Birch and Gussow questions this association. Other intermediate variables such as loss of learning
time, lack of attention and motivation are considered to be causes of low learning curve of the deprived
children (Birch and Gussow, 1970).
1.10.4. Socio-economic Studies on Child Labour

Interest on street children began after the UN Convention on Children in 1979. Most of the studies in India on street children were done in last 15 years which can be ascribed to two factors. First, there has been an increasing awareness and recognition of the rights of the child since 1979, which finally culminated in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989. The second reason for interest in the phenomenon of street children is due to an increase in the number of street children across Latin America, Africa and rest of Asia. This growth is partly due to the increasing but uneven growth of urbanization in the developing and under developed countries. The overwhelming presence of children on the streets, daily report of sexual abuse of these children, reports of police torture as well as pitiable conditions of observatory home turn the interest of civil society institutions including media and academia to the issue of street children.

One important aspect of the phenomenon of street children is the issue of child labour. Most of the street children work on streets as rag pickers, seller of magazines, porters on railway station or in roadside tea stalls. The issue of child labour has been in the limelight of academic and policy discussion in the last two decades and there are many scholarly works on child labour. Myron Weiner’s The Child and the State in India (Weiner, 1991) contends that a low primary education results in high illiteracy and thereby high child labour. But there have been legislative provisions since Weiner’s work. Right to Education has become a Fundamental Right under 21A. The Child Labour Prohibition Act prohibits the employment of children below 18 in at least 240 industries and professions.

Neera Burra’s work on child labour in Mirzapur’s (UP) carpet industries is an excellent book on the socioeconomic conditions of child labourers. In 2001, the ILO estimated that in India 11.6 percent of children between 10 and 14 were working. Many of

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5 World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, 2003 Washington, D.C., 2003. Estimates of the number of working children in India vary greatly, and as a result there is debate over the accuracy of figures. The Government of India maintains that the only reliable statistics on child labour are those reflected in the national census. India’s 1991 national census found that 11.28 million of the country’s children were working. The 2001 statistics on child labor have not yet been released, but the 55th National Sample Survey conducted in 1999-2000 estimated that the number had declined to 10.4 million. Approximately 100-150 million children are estimated to be out of school. Due to the high correlation that school dropouts have with child labor, many NGOs believe that 44-55 million working children is a more accurate figure. (www.usaid.gov/in/whatsnew/pressreleases/potus_child.htm). In 2000, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry estimated child labor in the organized, unorganized and household sectors to be over 100 million. See Dev, Mahendra S (August 15, 2000) “Eradicating Child Labor,” The Hindu.
them work in different industries like gems industries of Jaipur, match box and fireworks industries of Sivakasi in Tamilnadu, bidi making, carpet industry of Mirzapur, glass industries of Firozabad, etc. Many studies have been conducted on the socio-economic conditions of children and their families and suggestions and strategies advocated to bolster their education prospects and opportunities with a view to eradicate child labour (Burra, 1995; NLI, 1991 and Whittaker, 1988).

1.10.5. Literature on Street Children

Exact data on street children is not known and therefore most of the books on street children are based on sample survey. Most of these books on street children profile the socio-economic conditions of street child, their world view, their conflict with laws, trials under Juvenile Justice Act, conditions of observatory homes and violence against them in custody and other set-ups, illegal trafficking and different reformatory/preventive approaches adopted to ameliorate their conditions.

Street Children of India: A Situational Analysis by Rajendra Pandey analyses the phenomenon of street children from a functional as well as dysfunctional perspective (Pandey, 1991). Apart from dealing with the socio-economic profile of street children, he has also dealt with the etiology of the phenomenon rooted in poverty, urban migration and insecurities in urban India.

Street girls are more vulnerable to violence and exploitation. Rita Panicker and Kalpana Desai examine the condition of street girl children in Delhi. They focus on profiling the family background of street girl children, characteristics of the street girls, their perceived needs, extent of the service availed, etc (Panicker and Desai, 1993). Neglected Child: Changing Perspective by Prayas Institute of Juvenile Justice collates papers of a national conference on different aspects of the street children. It includes papers on their profile, their rehabilitation and the working of the Juvenile Justice Act of 1986 (Kanth, 1993). Many institutes, including Don Bosco, Social Defence Division of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, Butterflies and Save the Children, have also undertaken similar works.

Rehabilitation of street children involves their education and vocational training. Since many of these children are also victims of violence, custodial torture and have
disturbed family histories, their rehabilitation is a major concern of many studies. *Education for Street Children* by UNESCO looks at the problems and prospects of educating these children. Novel educational techniques like platform school and night school have been experimented in India (UNESCO–India, 2001). Similarly, Save the Children (UK) and Butterflies, two international NGOs working with street children have developed their own framework of engagement with street children which has earned them acclaim.

**1.10.6. Research Gaps in Existing Literature**

Most of the works on street children profile their socio-economic background and their world-view. However, the gender differentiation has not been brought out very clearly in these works. It is expected that cultural construction of gender will also be carried over to society’s perception of street girl children. Numerous studies have brought out increased vulnerabilities of the girl child under conditions of deprivation, be it health, nutrition, education. Some studies point out that more than 30 per cent of Delhi’s prostitutes are girl street children who were forced and coerced by racketeers into the profession.

There are few studies on the working of the Juvenile Justice Act and the Indian Penal Code in the context of children in conflict with law and the resultant violation of their rights. There is a need to study these aspects in depth and analyze the changing perspectives of the state with regard to the issue of street children and its goals to undertake future reformatory actions.

It is important to study the relationship between the state, civil society and service delivery institutions engaged with the street children. While there is apprehension that the emergence of civil society institutions will lead to withdrawal of the state from discharging its important duties, empirical evidence shows that such a thing has not happened. In fact, there has been a greater commitment on the part of the state so far as improving the conditions of street child are concerned (Gupta, 1997: 305–307)). However there has been little study on NPOs and their effectiveness as service delivery institutions. No study has been conducted so far on the structure of these organisations and motivation of their personnel. My study will attempt to explore some of these aspects.
1.11. Theoretical Perspectives

The phenomenon of the street children and institutional responses to it impinge on many social science theories ranging from developmental theories of child socialization, to developmental economics theory. It also includes the functional approach, which justifies existence of issues of child labour or street children or conflict theories of Marxism, which views the issue as exploitation of the proletariat. The World Systems theory of Wallerstein and others, which is a variant of Marxism, looks at the phenomenon from the world system of capitalism, which is engaged in the maximization of the profit of the metropolis of the world capitalist system by using the resources of the core and peripheral areas. One vital human resource of the peripheral areas of the world system is the cheap child labour, including that of the street children.

Developmental theories argue that every individual enjoys certain entitlements, the fulfilment of which is key to enjoyment of freedom and fulfilment of individual's capacities. The feminist approach looks at the problem of street girl children from the perspective of gender where it is argues that this is a manifestation of an extreme variety of patriarchal culture which has evolved to marginalise women. From a functionalist perspective, street children fulfill many manifest and latent functions. Street children are a cheap source of labour. These theoretical perspectives enrich our understanding of the phenomenon of the street children and institutional responses to it, and will be dealt in subsequent chapters. However, it is important to highlight these perspectives and their possible application to understanding the problem of street children in general and street girl child in particular. The table below summarises their application to the problem of street children.

Table 1.3. Sociological Theories and Approaches, which help understand the Phenomenon of Street Street Girls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theories</th>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Theorists</th>
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<tr>
<td>Structural/ Functional</td>
<td>View street children performing various functions. <strong>Function</strong> 1. Existence of street children makes sure that menial jobs are done which every economy has in its store. 2. Street children subsidize, directly or indirectly, many activities that benefit the affluent. 3. Street children uphold the legitimacy of dominant norms. Discovering violations best legitimizes norms themselves (Macarov, 1970: 31–33). <strong>Dysfunctional</strong> 1. Street children and homelessness is an anomic state and it disturbs the social homeostasis. Crime and</td>
<td>Durkheim, Merton (1949: 71), Talcott Parson,</td>
</tr>
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Increasing cases of violence by the domestic help, who is invariably a street child, reflects this social dysfunction and unsustainability of existing socio-economic system (Durkheim, 1933).

| Developmental theories/rights/justice | Rights, entitlement and social opportunities are key aspects of development and therefore, the phenomenon of the street children is a failure on the part of the state. The existing indicator of progress in terms per capita income and GDP (Gross domestic product) growth is not the right barometer of progress. On the other hand, capability deprivation and denial of entitlements impedes over-all and long-term progress of the nation. | Amartya Sen (1995), John Rawls (1979) |
| Marxist Conflict theory | A street child is an evidence of the exploitation of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie. Such exploitation would lead to conflict between haves and have-nots. Crime by street children is a mere reflection of this conflict between the bourgeoisie and proletariat. Laws help to perpetuate a capitalist domination by using the apparatus of the state by capitalist. Marxian structuralists like Althusser and Gramsci would argue that international fund agencies like Save the Children and others merely contain the oppositions against the existing system by channelling the fund flow of capitalist world to developing countries through the policy of aid and donation. | Marx, Engels, Althusser, Gramsci |
| World System theory | Considers the phenomenon of street children as a manifestation of the operation of capitalist world system theory, in which the multinational corporation resort to use of child labour in peripheral areas to maximize profit for the parent company. For instance Nike's use of child labour in its factory of Thailand, or use of child labour in the leather industry of Kanpur whose leather products are supplied to major multinational companies is meant to maximise profits. | Wallerstein (1974) |
| Feminism | It argues that social reproduction of gender in individuals sustains the gendered societal structure. In most societies women and men are not only perceived as different but are also differently evaluated, and these supposed differences in characteristics and capabilities justify power difference. In case of street children the perception of the street girl child is different from the perception towards street male child. | Simone de Beauvoir (1972), B Friedman |
| Organizational psychology and sociology | Looks at motivation, organizational structure, goals and institutions and interaction between important actors. | Bell's interaction process analysis, Mitchels' goal fulfilment, Maslow's motivation theory, communication theories, Weber's theory of organisation and Merton and Parsons' functions of goals. |

6 Under the Institutional Sociology predominantly six categories of goals have been identified, while some of it are manifested externally, others have internal. Parson's AGIL system speaks of four broad categories of goals (Adaptation, Goal Attainment, Integration and latency (Parson, 1937)
1.12. Objectives of the Present Study

In the light of the gaps in existing literature and theoretical perspectives to analyse the phenomenon of street girl child, the subsequent chapters will focus on: –

1. Organizational structures of NGOs, and the motivation level of their personnel and their service delivery mechanisms. The study will be confined to Prayas, Butterflies, Don Bosco, Chetna, Navestre, Save the Children and Action Aid – a few of the important NGOs working with street children in Delhi. The last two are international NGOs more involved in funding and monitoring of programmes.


3. Impact of deprivation on their health, education

4. Impact of possible violence against them and a critical review of Juvenile Justice Act, 2000 in the light of India’s commitment to ensure rights and best interests of the child under the UN convention on the Rights of the Child.

5. The role of state vis-à-vis NGOs: It is generally thought the NGOs are doing better than state bureaucracy because of their flexible organisational structure. The present study examines this notion

1.13. Methodology

In-depth interview and participant observation methods have been adopted to study the subject. Case study method is adopted to cover the socio-economic profile of the street children and their self-concepts. Fifty-two children were selected and an in-depth interview was conducted on them. The present study was conducted in various voluntary organizations that extend support to girl children. The centres from where children were picked up for interview include Butterflies, Chetna, Don Bosco, Ashalayam and Prayas.

Observation of the working of NGOs and their structure were undertaken during the study. The observations covered a wide spectrum of behaviour of the subjects. These included both verbal and non-verbal behaviour. Sometimes, the children were also observed in group situations with an aim to gather information on their lives while they were unaware. This also facilitated our understanding of the group dynamics. Structured interview with open-ended questions have been used which allows for flexibility both in numbers and
nature of questions, which fall within the limit of the area of study. The interview schedule is a collection of questions, which focuses on various aspects of the lives of girl street children. Broadly speaking, it covers the following aspects: respondents’ family background, demographic characteristics, migration aspects and reasons for leaving home, problems faced during working and living, future aspirations and expectations.

Similarly, 40 members from different NGOs (Save the Children, Action AID, Prayas, Butterflies, Don Bosco, Chetna and Navashristi) were interviewed to ascertain their motivation, organisational structure and service delivery mechanisms. Forty managerial-level respondents were selected and interviewed with the help of a structured questionnaire. In addition, directors of Chetna, Butterflies, Prayas and Don Bosco were also interviewed to ascertain in detail the functioning of their respective organisations.

1.14. Ethical Guidelines and Problems Faced During Data Collection

Ethical guidelines of Social Science research was maintained throughout the study. Learned consent of the respondents, confidentiality of their identities is maintained throughout the research period. The names of the respondents were changed in the study to maintain confidentiality of the subjects. Further, the respondents, the street Girls in the shelter or observation homes were not induced to answer queries.

One problem faced during the in-depth interview with street girls in the shelter homes or outside was that the children were too restless. They were losing concentration and interest. They were not willing to sit in one place and participate in the interview. Another problem was language. Being a foreigner, on many occasions, it became difficult for me to communicate with the children. This posed the real challenge of communication gap. Moreover, the children were not very open about their life experiences. It was felt that they were holding back their experiences.

As far as the interviews with the staff of NGOs are concerned, the most important problem was their unavailability. More often than not the staffs were busy and I had to wait for long hours till I could even give the questionnaire. Thereafter, they were reluctant to answer the questions. After repeated enquiries and lots of cajoling I managed to elicit a

7 The questionnaire is attached in Appendix 2 of the present study.
response from them. Still the NGOs did not give the financial details and did not allow participation in the Board meeting.

1.15. Chapterisation

The life on the street is a life of poverty, deprivation, coercion and violence. And both the state and NGOs are addressing these issues of deprivation and violence. But the plight of the street girl child is more vulnerable than that of boys given her greater vulnerabilities to violence and sexual exploitation. These greater vulnerabilities of the girl child are rooted in culture and society, which openly prefer the boys. Chapter 2: Status of Girl Child in India: A Situational Analysis discusses these cultural constructions of gender, including gender role. These cultural constructions have resulted in marginalisation of the girl child. Available indicators on vital parameters of the quality of life with regard to girl child have been examined in Chapter 2. The historical roots of these constructions and issues concerning girl child are discussed in the same chapter.

The problem of girl street child is not an issue born out of cultural constructions of gender alone. Poverty, skewed urbanisation, state laws and policies are major determinants of the emergence of the phenomenon of the street children. Contextual issues of the emergence of street children such as poverty, skewed urbanisation, and rural–urban migration will be discussed in Chapter 3: Socio-economic Profile of the Street Girls. Secondary data on poverty and urbanisation in the context of the study will be analysed. A primary survey of the street children will be used for constructing the socio-economic profile of the street girl child. The chapter also discusses the important findings from the primary survey, especially with regard to poverty, family background, their self-perception, their world-view, self-efficacy, locus of control and their level of aspiration.

The State has been a major actor in the emergence of the phenomenon of the street children. While some of its policies have important bearing on the phenomenon of the street children, especially the absence of compulsory education in India for children (before it became a Fundamental Right under Article 21-A of the Constitution now), the state has been in the forefront of ensuring the rights of the child. Further, the state as lawmaker and law enforcer of juvenile justice has largely determined the nature of responses. It is vital to examine the changing perception of the state with regard to rights of street children and
juvenile justice. The changing perception of the state to the phenomenon of the street children is examined in *Chapter 4: Responses of the State to issue of Street Children*.

There has been a resurgence of civil society institutions (as intermediate institutions between family and the state) in recent years. As discussed in earlier, there are many NPOs (Not-for Profit Organisations), which are working with the street children. The context of the emergence of civil society institutions, major debates on their emergence, their relation to the state, citizen and civil society institutions are explored in *Chapter 5: Role of NGOs in the Development of Street Children*. Further, the four NGOs – Don Bosco, Butterflies, Chetna and Prayas working with street children in general and street girl child in particular, are examined in this chapter. Their organisational structure, coordination between field unit and head office on one hand, and the state on the other, motivational levels and social background of the staff are explored in Chapter 5 as well. Moreover, their role as an advocacy group is also discussed in this chapter.

*Conclusion makes* a comparison between the role of the state and NGOs as well as identifies emerging issues.

**1.16. Notes on Selection of the Study Area:**

While *Salaam Bombay* brings to public consciousness the problem of street children, the phenomenon of street children is most salient in Delhi. There are numerous reasons for this. Delhi as the capital city of India has been rapidly urbanised in recent years. As shown earlier, the urban population has increased from 58% in 1951 to 92% recently. While there is no exact estimate of the number of street children in Delhi or else where in India, surveys by various organisations suggest that Delhi inhabits the largest number of street children in India. The roads of Delhi, with its pavements and red lights provide the working space for street children thereby making it a favourite place for abandoned children to fend for themselves. The relative invisibility of street girls on the streets of Delhi, growth of slums and increase in cases of sexual violence against girl child in the slums of Delhi and huge commercial sex market in Delhi make it an interesting study-area.