Children, parents and teachers in Morocco

on the role of school in the future development of vulnerable children.

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Universiteit Utrecht

Ginny Jongen   3184900

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Begeleider: M. van Londen

Tweede beoordelaar: M. De Haan

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Abstract

Objective According to previous research, early education can be very beneficial for (vulnerable) children. **Methods** During January until Mai 2012 three primary schools in two Moroccan districts were visited. Gathering data was done by doing observations in schools, doing semi-structured interviews with teachers, and letting students, parents and teachers fill in a survey. Using data from a sample of 46 children, 68 parents and 15 teachers we examined whether school can be a good intervention for vulnerable children to provide them a better future. In this study is researched whether children, parents and teachers have the same opinion and which protective factors and risk factors can help or harm the child's further development and career. **Results** According to the participants the education is good, but can be improved if there are the right means. Education is an important mean to provide children a better future. Poverty is a big risk factor given in almost every survey. Parents are not unwilling, but most of the time they have to work to afford their children to go to school. This results in parents not being involved because of lack of time. Communication between children, parents and teachers are mentioned to be an important protective factor. Also education itself was mentioned as a big protective factor. Finally, not all schools had a good relationship with the community and this can be explained by distance. When a school is located in the same neighborhood as where people live than the people who live there will be involved, but when the children go to school in another neighborhood, the community is less involved. **Conclusion** School can be a good intervention to help children to get a better future, but the quality of education has to be good and there have to be suitable jobs. **Keywords** Vulnerable children, school intervention, parents, teachers, community, future

Introduction

One of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) formulated by the United Nations in 2000 states that by 2015, children all over the world should be able to complete one full course of primary education (United Nations, 2010b). Although the amount of children attending school increased with seven percent in the last ten years, there are still children not attending school (UNESCO, 2010). About 70 million children do not attend basic education (United Nations, 2010a).

That education is increasingly important, is also seen in developing countries (Ansell, 2005). Partly because of the colonization in the 19th and 20th century, formal education was

introduced by the West in non-Western countries. Formal education in developing countries is often based on Western concepts. People without education are thought to have worse economic prospects, worse health and less control over their lives (Ansell, 2005). Jason, De Arnicis and Carter (1978) found that preventive educational programs represent a type of intervention strategy in helping vulnerable children. Research findings of Jimerson, Egeland, and Teo (1999) indicate that early experiences are important predictors of later academic success in content areas such as mathematics. Therefore it's important that children attend school in order to get a better future.

The aim of this study is to examine whether school is a good intervention for vulnerable Moroccan children to improve their further development and career. Children, parents and teachers are asked whether they think school is a good intervention and which positive and negative factors are influencing their future development and career. How can parents, school, community and international organisations help to give the vulnerable children a better future? The following research question is formulated; **"What kind of support do vulnerable school-going children need to get a better future according to children, parents and teachers?**

Three studies have been done at three different schools in Morocco. The first study was done at a school for Deaf and Dumb. The second study took place at a school in a socio-economic disadvantaged neighbourhood Al-Mers, and the last study was executed at a school for formerly street children, Centre Fiers et Forts. All three schools have in common that poverty is the main reason why their visiting children are vulnerable, but handicap and living conditions are also important.

Moroccan context

Morocco is a country in the North of Africa. It has been under colonial rule of France until 1956. The French influence is still very present in Morocco; this is also visible in the school system that is based on the French school system (Obdeijn, De Mas, & Hermans, 2002).

That formal education in developing countries is often based on Western concepts can also be found in Morocco where the French education system has been copied. In March 1956 there was reached an agreement on full independence. Morocco had been over 40 years under the protectorate of France (Obdeijn et al., 2002).

In 2006 the Ministry for Social Affairs in Morocco had adopted the National Action Plan for children 2006-2015. In this plan is agreed that the government wants children to be

healthy, safe, and protected against all forms of abuse and have a good education. This plan has 10 goals to improve the collective well-being of children in Morocco. The Ministry for Social Affairs also said that they have made the integration of people with disabilities to policy (Gouvernement du Royaume du Maroc, 2012). The 25th of November 2011 elections were held in Morocco. This resulted in a new government and the society is still waiting to see what there will be realized of these plans, they see a bright future if the plans will be implemented (Ministère de Solidarité, 2011).

The current king, Mohammed VI, has made a part of education (almost) free of charge and compulsory until the ages of 15. In theory this means that each child can follow education. Nevertheless, many children, particularly girls in rural areas, do not attend school, and most of them drop out after elementary school. The school attendance rate is 90% in urban areas compared to only 48% in rural areas. The school attendance rate is 64% for rural boys compared to 32 % for rural girls. Among primary school students the completion rate is 60% for rural children compared to 87% for urban children. In contrast, the rate is 56% for rural girls compared to 63% for rural boys. Rural boys and urban girls outperform rural girls in math and other cognitive tests. The performance of rural girls in cognitive achievements, however, improves significantly as their educational attainment increases (Khandker, Lavy & Filmer, 1994).

The country's literacy rate reveals sharp gaps in education, both in terms of gender and location; while country-wide literacy rates are estimated at 39.6% among women and 65.7% among men, the female literacy rate in rural areas is estimated only at 10% (Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, 2012). There are different reasons to explain why children don't go to school. There are for example high transport fees causing children from rural areas not being able to visit schools. Boys will be future breadwinners of the family, as girls. often stay at home to help their mothers with the housekeeping. Sometimes children go to school if they can stay with relatives in bigger cities (Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, 2012).

Today, in most villages primary schools can be found, so each child can enjoy at least a number of years of primary education. There are also more and more girls' boarding schools in big cities. Girls stay there to go to school, because they are living far from the school or they are living in a remote village. For these girls it is impossible to travel every day back and forth just to go to school. This way they can still go to school. Despite this possibility, there are girls who don't want to study. They give different reasons to explain this. Examples are that they "will get married and then stay at home" or they "prefer to stay home to help their

mother" (Obdeijn et al., 2002).

According to the millennium goals, Moroccan children are participating more and more in primary school. In 2009 the percentage was 89,7%. The percentage children finishing school at that time was 80% and is currently stable (Millenniumdoelen, 2009).

December 15, 2010 a conference was held in Rabat,   this conference was an opportunity to investigate the economic and social cost of excluding people with special needs. The cost of marginalization of disadvantaged people in Morocco is estimated at 9 billion dirhams, or 2% of the Gross Domestic Product. This statistic was introduced at a meeting discussing the benefits of strengthening the rights of persons with disabilities, this was initiated by the Collective for the Promotion of Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The tendency is to talk much about the cost of this social category for society instead of the benefits missed because of its marginalization, therefore Moroccan society continues to see them as a burden. It's estimated that there are 1,6 million people with disabilities in Morocco, or 5.12% of the population of Morocco, this segment faces many obstacles to integrate in society (Bernichi, 2010).

Education: risk and protective factors

According to Urie Bronfenbrenner (1994), each person is significantly affected by interactions among a number of overlapping ecosystems. The individual is at the center of the model. Surrounding the individual are the different systems of support that most directly and immediately influence the individual. These systems are the microsystems. The primary microsystems for children include the family, classroom, peer group, neighbourhood, and sometimes a church, temple, or mosque as well. Interactions among the microsystems take place in the mesosystem, for instance when parents and teachers coordinate their efforts to educate the child. Surrounding the microsystems, the exosystem can been found, which includes all the external networks, for instance a community structure and schools, medical, employment, and communications systems, that influence the microsystems. Influencing all other systems is the macrosystem, which includes cultural values, political philosophies, economic patterns, and social conditions. Together, these systems are termed the social context of human development.

The balance model (Bakker, Bakker, Van Dijke & Terpstra, 1998) is based on the ecological model of Bronfenbrenner (1994), the transactional model of Sameroff (1975) and the cumulative risk models of Garmezy and Rutter (1983) on vulnerability and resilient

children and concerns risk and protective factors. An accumulation of risk factors can cause developmental problems. A distinction is made between three levels with varying degrees of influence: the micro, meso and macro levels (Moritsugu, 2010).

The transactional view has become central to current models of regulation and self-regulation that are permeating the developmental literature. Transactional models take into account bidirectional influences of parents and children on one another over time (Sameroff, 2009). The balance model is applicable to this research because the interviewees are asked about what they think are protective and risk factors in child development. In the microsystem can be seen that a handicap is a risk factor but high intelligence can help to overcome this risk factor. In the mesosystem is seen the importance of good social bonds and social cohesion. Morocco is a collectivist society where religion, and therefore the mosque still plays a big role. It is important that the mosque and the community help vulnerable children to get a better future. Education is also mentioned in the mesosystem. Condition is that the education has to be good and accessible. In the macrosystem is seen that a tolerant society is an important protective factor. Parents of vulnerable children, especially deaf children are afraid that their children are not accepted in society.

Table 1

Adjusted Balance Model for Education

Level	Protective factors	Risk factors
Micro	High intelligence	Handicap (deaf)
	Positive self-image	Negative self-image
Meso	Social support	Isolation
	Good social bonds	Lack of social bonds
	Social cohesion	Social disintegration
	Good and accessible education	Poor social services
Macro	Norms and values in accordance with	Financial crisis
	dominant culture	Unemployment
		Discrimination
	Tolerant society	Poverty
		Poor education

Socio-economical disadvantaged children

Much has been written about economically disadvantaged children. Typically, "deficit" theorists characterize such children as having intellectual lags (Hunt, 1969), below average language abilities (Bereiter & Engelmann, 1966), and motivational difficulties (Zigler & Butterfield, 1968).

Children can be disadvantaged by poor schools, crime, parental cycles of unemployment, underemployment, and employment in high-hazard occupations. They are at high risk to be further handicapped by environments where dangerous chemicals and metals have been left or are being placed or stored today. This in contrast to children who aren't socio-economical disadvantaged (Olden, 1996).

Findings from six separate studies indicate that preventive interventions effectively enhance skill development in disadvantaged toddlers. The inclusion of parents in the training programs better enables children to maintain whatever gains they have achieved after the termination of the formal program (Jason et al., 1978).

Position of children with disabilities

Children with disabilities and their families are often not involved in society (UNICEF, 2007). By some they are seen as a burden or punishment from God and are kept indoors as much as possible. Nowadays in Morocco children with disabilities are taken care of and they can go to special schools and be involved in society, despite their disability. Het Marokko Fonds (The Morocco Fund), Auris, AMES and Maroc Relief are organizations that are engaged in the development of deaf education in Morocco.

There are only 33 centers for 530,000 mentally disadvantaged children in Morocco. The same problem arises for the deaf and dumb with an amount of 64,000 children according to an inventory conducted by the Dutch Foundation "Het Marokko Fonds". This same study revealed that 68% of deaf children in Morocco, whose age is between 4 and 15 years, do not go to school, and 87% of parents of disabled children consider their disability as the cause of not participating at schools (Bernichi, 2010).

Miles, Wapling and Beart (2011) did research in Uganda among 123 deaf children. They say that research shows that early entry into intervention is associated with higher receptive language scores in the first but not the second follow up assessment. There are differences between hearing and deaf children. It is important for hearing children that parents teach them "the mother tongue" to increase and reinforce language skills that are being

thought in school.

Parents of deaf children say it's difficult for them to be involved because they don't feel capable to communicate with the children. This research also shows that many parents are initially sceptical about the value of educating their deaf children and showed more interest in the free transport and lunches provided. They later became enthusiastic once they recognized that their children were learning and benefitting from education. The children's knowledge, confidence and social interaction increased. Parents thought that it was impossible to educate the deaf children because of lack of specialist skills in main primary school (Miles et al., 2011).

Kritzer (2009) suggests the need for an early intervention program to facilitate parents' use of early mathematics concepts within naturalistic environments with their young deaf children to promote readiness for formal schooling.

Position of street children

In general, poverty, rapid urbanization and industrialization cause children to live on the streets. Urban poverty and the urban way of life cause stress within the family, family break-up and less social values. Only a small minority of children living in difficult conditions decide to leave their family. Therefore a crucial factor is undoubtedly the perception of the situation by the child, who decides to change his/her life. When referring to their pre-street experiences, street children say that they are on the street because they are victims of misunderstandings and violence (Visano, 1990).

Kudrati, Plummer and Yousif (2008) examined street children's daily lives in Khartoum, Sudan to recommend ways to improve their conditions and to successfully assist them off the streets. Over 500 children participated in qualitative group and individual interviews; and 872 current and former street children were surveyed. Their research shows that it is important that street children are integrated into society. This is more important than small-scale, expensive reception projects of NGOs or the beating and locking up of these children by the authorities. Of the children 73% told that they enjoy to get education at private schools. It also appears to be important to reintegrate children into their families or elsewhere in the family before going to foster homes.

Statement of the Problem

In this research is tried to research the living and family circumstances of the school-going disadvantaged children and to investigate which positive factors are working in their future educational development and career and what barriers they have to overcome. What future is waiting for these vulnerable children in a country where there is poverty and where opportunities are not so easily accessible? What do these children need from their school to increase their opportunities and chances for a better future and what can school, community and international organizations do to help them? In this study children, parents and teachers are asked whether school is a good intervention to improve the children's future development and career. This study is important for science because no similar study has been done in Morocco. Various studies have also shown that school can help giving children a better future (Jason et al., 1978) and not using school as an intervention can costs the government even more (Bernichi, 2010).

Methods

Data were collected at three sites in Morocco by one researcher (Ginny Jongen), who stayed at these sites for some weeks, made observations, conducted interviews and a survey with 46 children, 68 parents and 15 teachers. In table 2 a review is given on the number of different groups of respondents at the three sites, an elementary and secondary vocational school Center for Deaf and Dumb in Tangier (age 8 – 17 years) in the north of Maroc, a primary and secondary vocational school in an at-risk neighbourhood in Al-Mers near Tangier (age 13 – 23 years) and a school for formerly street children Fiers et Forts in Tamesloht, near Marrakesh in the Mid-South of Morocco.

Table 2

Total Amount of Participants

	Deaf and dumb	*Al-Mers*	*Fiers et forts*
Children	*N=24 (8-17 years)*	*N=22 (13-23 years)*	*observations*
Parents	*N=41*	*N=27*	*observations*
Teachers	*N=5*	*N=7*	*N=3*

The first study was done during a seven-week stay at the *Center for Deaf and Dumb* in Tangier, Morocco. Children from the age 8 till 17 were selected to answer a survey. Children below this age could not fill in this survey because they can't read and write well enough, but also because most of them were too young to have any idea about most questions. All 24 children who were asked to fill in the survey participated.. There were some children, mostly the younger children, who did not know how to answer the questions and therefore have not answered some questions.

The children also took home a survey for their parents to fill in and the next day they handed in the survey that was answered by their parents. There are 50 children at the school, but that day there were two absents. Of the 48 parents who received the survey, 42 (88%) answered the questions or at least a part of the questions. Some parents didn't understand the questions, because parents didn't go to school so they can't read or write or just a little. They therefore left a lot blank and also some reactions were no answer to the questions.

Because it is very important to do research anonymously in Morocco it's not possible to link the answers of the parents with the answers of the child. Six teachers were also asked to fill in a survey anonymously and 5 of them (83%) participated. Next to these surveys observations were made by the author during her stay at the school.

The second study was done during a one-week visit at the *Lalla Fatima Zahra Social and Professional Integration's Center al-Mers* in Tangier, Morocco. The older children from the age 13 until 23 were asked to answer a survey. Most of them ($n = 22$) filled in the survey directly. The younger children could not fill in this survey because they can't read and write (well enough). The parents of these children were asked to fill in the questions because it was easy to let them participate. The parents bring and pick up their children every day. All 27 parents (100%) who were asked to fill in the survey participated, this was because only the parents who know how to write were asked to participate.

The third study was done during a seven-week stay at the *Centre Fiers et Forts in Tamesloht,* Morocco. Officially only two teachers and the manager were interviewed. A lot of information was gathered through observations. It was decided not to interview the parents because they only come once in two weeks to pick up the children and most of their answers maybe not be very reliable when asked directly. Letting them fill in a survey was no option because the parents didn't go to school. To avoid socially desirable answers the children and parents were observed and questions were asked in an informal way. A lot of these children are anxious and have attachment problems because they have been neglected. Therefore it

was important not to disturb the safe environment they are in now or harm them in any kind of way.

Measures

All surveys were written and answered in Arabic. The interviews were held in the Moroccan-Arabic dialect, except for one interview that was done in Dutch with the manager of the center Fiers et Forts. Moroccan people helped with the translation of the survey. This included making the survey and translating the answers. This was necessary because some parents had answered in Moroccan dialect or the answers had to be interpreted. The surveys were first translated to English. Sometimes they had to be interpreted because they were not correctly written in Arabic but can be understood. Microsoft office excel was used to organise the data. The results can be considered reliable and valid because the questions were asked anonymously. The fact that parents gave their critical opinion about the school proves this, because it's not very Moroccan to give a critical opinion about the school. The same goes for teachers.

The surveys and interviews contained questions about family composition, school, communication, future and support. All the translations of the exact survey questions can be found in the appendix.

Results

Family composition

Table 3

Family Composition According to Children

Level	Yes	No
Parents alive	23 (95%)	1 (5%)
Live with parents	23 (95%)	1 (5%)
Deaf family	7 (29%)	17 (71%)
Parents work	17 (71%)	7 (29%)

In the *Center for Deaf and Dumb* 23 of the 24 children (95%) answered that they lived with their family, as only one child answered that someone died in his family. 2 children didn't answer this question. The most children (17 of 24) answered that their father works, 5 of them said that their mother (also) works. In 4 families their brothers worked and 1 family of them

had 3 brothers working. In 5 families the sisters were the ones that worked. All of the children in the family went to school, except for 3 of them. Some children (29%) weren't the only one deaf in the family.

Table 4

Family Composition According to Parents

Level	Yes	No
Parents alive	38 (93%)	2 (7%)
Live with parents	35 (85%)	1 (15%)
Deaf family	14 (34%)	27 (66%)
Employment	37 (90%)	4 (10%)

In the *Center for Deaf and Dumb* there was one child that didn't have a father anymore and one child didn't have a mother anymore. With one child it wasn't clear if someone died in his family. This means that at least 38 children come from complete families. Most of the children lived with their parents, only 2 of them lived with their grand-parents, only 1 lived with the mother, only 1 lived with the father, and one person didn't answer. The parents of the children who live with their grand-parents are still alive. There were 4 families were nobody worked, 1 person didn't answer, and 1 person answered that 1 person worked, but didn't tell who that person was. Except for 12 families, the father was the only person in the family who worked. In one of those families the father was very sick and in another family the father died. In 4 families the mother was breadwinner. In one family it was the son who worked because the father died and in another family only the daughter worked. In 27 families the child was the only one that was deaf. One parent filled in that the son was deaf, but they probably meant their son who goes to school.

School

Table 5

School Preferences

Level	Prefer current school	Prefer other school
Children	18 (75%)	6 (25%)
Parents	31 (76%)	7 (24%)

Teachers	5 (100%)	0

Most students preferred to go to their current school, 18 out the 24 (75%). Most of them answered that they like the education itself at school the most. Followed by their classmates, sports, ICT and their teacher. What they would like to change is a bigger playground and a white board. They also said they would like an atelier to learn a profession.

Most parents (N = 31) prefer their children to go to the *Center for Deaf and Dumb*, although 7 parents preferred their children to go to a regular school and 3 parents didn't answer. The main reasons the parents preferred the children to go to their current school is because the children are understood and can communicate with each other. They are there the same as the others and therefore accepted, according to the parents. The parents who preferred their children to go to a regular school preferred this because they think they will be more integrated and also to avoid the children talking deaf language to other children.

Parents said that they like the good behaviour with the children at school. They also said there is good management and good education. They enjoy seeing their children go to school and learn Sign Language.

Of the parents 22 of 41 (54%) answered that they don't want to change anything at the school, 6 parents (15%) answered they want better transport for the children, 6 parents (15%) answered that there should be a lower or no tuition fee. One parent answered that he would like deaf teachers in the centre. There already is one deaf teacher, but the parent is maybe unaware of that.

All teachers said that they prefer the children to go to their current school because studying in deaf schools is beneficial, it considerably helps in communication.
"Studying with non-deaf children doesn't improve communication skills."

Communication

Of the parents 19 of the 41 (46%) stated that they communicate using signs or deaf language, 16 of the parents said they knew Sign Language (36%), but 6 of them want to learn Sign Language. This means that they probably meant their own kind of signs they use to communicate with their child, but not the official Sign Language.

The students said it's very hard to communicate with people who don't know signed language. Some of them said they don't communicate with others. Others said that they write to communicate, and 11 children said that their family know Sign Language. Only 4 children had a cell phone, 3 of them used it to send text-messages.

Future

Parents see good education and a supporting stable family as positive factors working for their children's development and career. Intelligence and the will to continue were named, but also doing school trips, sport and cultural activities. Negative factors interfering with a good development and career are poverty, family problems, neglecting and teachers' bad conduct with the children. The handicap itself was only named twice.

A lot of parents ($n =19$) saw an unclear, pessimistic future for their child, but some parents ($n=8$) were optimistic and indeed did foresee a good future. Religion was important too, because others ($n=7$) answered that the future is in the hands of God and that their hope for God is great.

Most children saw themselves working in the future and had different ambitions. Jobs listed were hairdresser, doctor, stylist, sewer, painter, mechanic, teacher and so on.

The teachers saw care, solidarity, school trips and diverse activities that make them active and dynamic as positive factors working for the students' development and career. Also a good study program, teaching parents deaf language, good conditions and atmosphere for studying and good relationships between teachers and children will contribute to a better future, according to the teachers.

Negative factors interfering with a good development and career were wasting time, poverty, and lack of means. But also an inadequate study program and lack of communication between parents and their deaf children were mentioned by the teachers.

The teachers were overall pessimistic about the future. They said that the students don't have any future if current social conditions remain the same and they foresee a hard future.

Support

Parents expected the school to help by giving the children a good education, but also coaching the children and professionally integrating them.

The parents expected the Moroccan society to change the negative impression they have on deaf children as well as everything which have impact on their psychological climate for handicapped children. They should help establishing equality between deaf and non-deaf children and avoid discrimination.

The parents expected international organizations to create schools in order for them to

have full education at all levels and to help the students to have permanent jobs. Financial support was also mentioned a lot and all kinds of help and pedagogical support.

The students expected the school to learn them a profession like hairdresser or stylist. Almost all children said they expect of the Moroccan society to broaden the use of deaf language and improving communicating with them. When asked how international organizations could support, they answered that they didn't know or just didn't answer.

The teachers thought the school should help the students achieving studies, learning a profession but also to open ateliers at school such as hair dressing, cooking and styling so that they could professionally integrate in society and giving them diplomas. Following-up and monitoring of the students was also mentioned.

The Moroccan community can help through broadening the use of Sign Language and to help them integrating in society (to avoid making fun of them). Using Sign Language in public spaces was also mentioned. International organisations can help in finding solutions for this social category and taking care of them, by giving them financial and pedagogical support.

Study 2: *Lalla Fatima Zahra Social and Professional Integration's Center al-Mers*
Family composition

Table 6

Family Composition According to Children

Level	Yes	No
Parents alive	19 (86%)	3 (14%)
Live with parents	20 (91%)	2 (9%)
Employment	22 (100%)	0
All kids to school	19 (86%)	3 (14%)

In the *Lalla Fatima Zahra Social and Professional Integration's Center al-Mers* 3 children (14%) said that their parents weren't alive anymore, 2 of them (9%) still lived with their parents, so probably only one of the parents died. In most families the father is the breadwinner.

Of the children 20 of the 22 answered that they lived with their parents (91%). In every family there were people who worked. The father was the breadwinner in 12 of the 22 (55%)

families. All of the children in the families went to school, except for 3 of them. Of the children 2 of the 22 answered that not all of them go to school, just some of them.

Table 7

Family Composition According to Parents

Level	Yes	No
Parents alive	27 (100%)	0
Live with parents	27 (100%)	0
Employment	26 (96%)	1

All parents said that the children lived with their parents. In 2 families the grand-parents also lived with the parents and children. In all families except for one there were people working in the family. In most families it was the father who worked.

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School

Table 8

School Preferences

Level	Prefer current school	Prefer other school
Children	22 (100%)	0
Parents	26 (96%)	1 (4%)
Teachers	7 (100%)	0

All children preferred to go to their current school, because it's nearby, has nice teachers and the tuition fee is cheaper.

Most parents preferred their children to go to the current school, 26 out of 27 parents (96%). Of the parents 1 preferred (4%) the student to go to another school, because her brothers studied at another school. The main reasons why the parents preferred the children to go to the current school is because it's cheap and in the same neighbourhood. Parents answered that they don't want to change anything at the school.

"I like the school. I will not change it."

"We do like the school. We demand you to take care of the kids by preventing them from fighting with each other. Don't let them go with someone else except their parents."

Most of the students answered that they like the education itself the most. Following with their activities, way of teaching, pedagogical support and ICT. They didn't want to

change anything, except for 2 students who said they wanted the school to improve and they have to make more efforts, but there is no explanation given in what kind of way. Most students (n=20) say everything is okay and nothing has to be changed.

Teachers liked about the school that there were large areas and a friendly, respectful atmosphere. Activities, pre-primary school, which they said is important for kids, ateliers (such as sewing, cooking, hair dressing, ICT) were also mentioned as good and necessary at the school.

"Studying in current school is very beneficial, because other schools are far from that neighborhood and then they would probably not continue their studies."

"There is no difference between schools. Important is to take care of kids and their study progress by both teachers and parents."

Communication

15 of the 22 students have a cell phone (68,2%), 9 of them (40,9%) use it to send messages.

Future

Most students saw themselves working in the future and had different ambitions. Jobs listed were hairdresser, doctor, stylist, football player, engineer and so on. Some students just wanted to work or become someone important.

Parents saw creating appropriate conditions for study both at school and home, additional study hours, schools which could improve students' mental skills by organizing cultural activities and parents' continuous following and monitoring as positive factors working for their children's development and career.

Negative factors interfering a good development and career were too much playing outside, bad TV programs, bad friends, lack of attention to the children, divorced parents, early school dropout and poverty.

"I see a lost, bad-influenced future."

Some parents (n=7) foresee a good future (26%), but there has to be hope. Most parents (n=11) foresee an unhappy and unclear future (41%) because lack of job opportunities, others (n=2) said that education is important and it's impossible to anticipate on what coming. Religion also played a role here (n=2).

"We wish all good from God so we should accept his will. We hope they would succeed in life and the day after."

The teachers foresee an easy access to school, parents' awareness of the importance of following and monitoring the study of their kids, teachers' academic qualification and skills and assiduity as positive factors working for the students' development and career. Negative factors interfering a good development and career were inappropriate pedagogical programs, poverty, ignorance, and parents' lack of awareness.

"Thanks to education, the child could guarantee a good future. Government should make much more job opportunities to everyone who deserves it."

Support

Parents expected the school to help building their children's personalities and helping them with their studies. In general they expected the school to give their children a good education.

''Knowledge is light, ignorance is darkness, school enlightens the mind and shows the way."

The parents expected the Moroccan society to help by providing financial and psychological help and not neglecting the children. The parents expected international organizations to help by providing (financial) help and participation, but also by giving support in both education and pedagogy. The organizations should also build more centers in other neighborhoods.

"International organizations can help by giving them grants/scholarships during their studies."

"They can help by material and pedagogical support."

The students expected the school to support them and give a good education. The students expected the Moroccan society to create job opportunities or help them finding a job. Some students didn't know what to answer.

Teachers thought they could help the children get a better future by providing them good education.

Half the number of children (n=11) answered that they didn't know how international organizations could help them. Of the children 6 answered that international organizations can help through help and support, one of them answered that they can help by direct support (no

intermediary). Financial and pedagogical support and creating job opportunities was also mentioned two times.

Teachers mentioned that school plays an important role in having a good future, because it improves the students' readiness in life in the future. School also plays the main role in education and teaching them until they get a diploma according to the teachers. In addition to this, school should help by providing suitable atmosphere: areas, classrooms, teachers, books.

Civil society helps a lot according to the teachers. An example of this were teachers who came from distant places to achieve their missions (education and teaching).

"If there are enough schools and centers in the hood, society becomes ambitious and generous."

"International organizations like AIDA association help in coaching teachers pedagogically and providing schools with toys." They also support trough activities such as building schools, helping poor families and divorced women. This can be financial support, but also coaching teachers."

Study 3: *Centre Fiers et Forts*

Family composition

In the *Centre Fiers et Forts* a lot of parents were absent, especially the fathers were unknown most the time. It was not clear whether these men died or just left the mothers. In Morocco it is customary to get married and then, after marriage, have kids, but the parents of many children weren't married. Most children that lived at the center still had contact with their mother, which they see every two weeks.

School

Table 9

School Preferences

Level	Prefer current school	Prefer other school
Children	*	*
Parents	*	*
Teachers	3	0

The children said that they liked the sports they do at the school. They have karate lessons three times a week in the evening with the children that live in the center, and they also sport two times a week with all the children that follow classes at the center. They like that volunteers from all over the world come to sport with them. The children were less motivated for the education itself, they preferred to play and a few liked to follow the classes.

It was unclear whether or not the parents (mothers) preferred their children to go to the current school. Most parents seem to be happy that their child goes to school, but some of them just like the fact that their child is not at home so they don't have to look after the child according to the teachers. The parents liked about the school that it is completely free. The children can sleep there and get dinner.

Teachers liked about the school that there is a safe atmosphere, this in contrast to the children's prior homes. The alternative for most of these children is living on the streets or been neglected and beaten up at home. That there is no tuition fee is great about the center and this makes it easier for parents to send their child to the center. That the school is small scale and that teachers and children see each other as family is a positive factor too. A good development of the children is the main goal of the teachers.

Teachers said that studying in current school is very beneficial because at other schools they will just be a number. Besides that, some children never went to school before. They should first learn at the center and eventually go to the public school. The goal is to let all children participate in public school, but for some children this is just not possible, because they missed too much and started too late with following classes.

Communication

There were only 2 children who had a cell phone, but they mostly use it to listen to music.

Future

Most children saw themselves working in the future, but they didn't seem to want to work for it. Some children weren't motivated at all and they didn't seem to care about the future. Of course they were a few children who knew they wanted to become someone important, like a soccer player.

Parents lived day by day and they didn't look in the future, they were happy if they survived the day, according to the teachers. This is mostly caused by poverty and the way the parents grew up. They didn't think about the future of their children, because they didn't think

about their own future.

"The parents don't want what is best for the other, they only think about today, not about tomorrow."

Teachers said that they are a lot of good factors. Part of them is that they pay attention to each child and try to give them as much love and support as possible. Also the fact that the children have activities every day after school time makes a big difference. This way children don't get bored and this prevents them do bad things according to the teachers.

"Through education, the child could guarantee a good future. Government should make much more job opportunities and financial support the center."

Negative factors interfering a good development and career were bad friends, bad environment, but also parents who don't pay attention to the children, divorced parents, early school dropout and poverty plays a role.

Support

The children expect the school to support them and give a good education. They also expect to prepare them to have a good future. The children expect the Moroccan society to create job opportunities or help them finding a job. Some children didn't know anything about international organisations. They never thought about the fact that the center needs financial support to provide them education, meals and shelter.

Parents expect the school to educate and look after their child. The parents don't seem to have expectations of the Moroccan society or international organizations. They just expect financial support.

Religion seems to play a role only at the center, not for the parents. The teachers also use religion to teach the children good manners, to be nice to each other. They hope that the children would succeed in life and the hereafter.

Conclusion and discussion

In this study we collected data from children, parents and teachers on three very differently situated schools in Morocco for vulnerable groups: deaf and dumb children, children in a disadvantaged urban neighbourhood and formerly street children in a more rural environment.

Despite these different backgrounds, there are a lot of similarities between the schools. Most parents are satisfied about the school where their child goes to, but they are worried

about the future. Poverty and lack of means play a big role. Parents are afraid that there won't be job opportunities for their children. In general the parents are happy that their child goes to school and some think school will help them to have a better future if they get the right support and will be monitored by everyone.

In all studies the parents are the most negative about the future of the children. The major part of the parents foresee an unhappy, unclear future without job opportunities. In contrast, most children foresee a good future where they will work.

The differences between use of cell phone of deaf students and the non-deaf students don't have to be explained by their handicap. The deaf students were also younger than the students in Al-Mers, so it cannot be concluded that the deaf students use a cell phone less often because of their handicap.

The difference in the reported family composition by parents and children at the *Lalla Fatima Zahra Social and Professional Integration's Center al-Mers* can be explained by the fact that the parents who answered the survey aren't exactly the same parents of the students who answered the questions. The information on these families by parents as well as children show, that these families are mostly intact two-parent families, where the father works very hard (sometimes several jobs), and mothers and siblings work as well. Despite these working families, income seems low and poverty is experiences as a threat.

At the *Centre Fiers et Forts* it seems like the family composition is hard and different from the children at the other centers, but we don't know for sure, if this is correct. At the center more one-parent families are known, and some children are living in foster or residential care, because of a history of abuse and neglect or because of they are orphan. Maybe parents don't hide information about their family because it's a small center and people know each other, so it's impossible to hide. It is also possible that the parents at other centers didn't tell the whole truth in the surveys because it's too complicated or they just don't want to tell. All the same, the answers of the surveys can be considered very reliable, because the parents are very critical about the school and that is not custom in Morocco.

Education is also mentioned in the mesosystem of the balance model. Condition is that the education has to be good and accessible. The problem is that free education often leads to poor education. An alternative is to go to a private school, but for most parents this is too expensive. Most parents are very poor and can't afford to pay the monthly school contribution. Fortunately there are organizations that help them to pay this contribution or the community helps them. Children are not denied in the school for Deaf and Dumb when

parents cannot pay the monthly contribution and the school accepts the contribution that they give, even if it is only 100 dirham of the 600 dirham they have to pay.

Research shows that many parents are initially sceptical about the value of educating their deaf children and showed more interest in the free transport and lunches provided (Miles et al., 2011), but in the school for Deaf and Dumb the parents are very happy that their children could go to school and they really see school as a mean to provide the child a better future.

The balance model is applicable to this research because the interviewees are asked about what they think are protective and risk factors in child development. In the microsystem at a handicap can be a risk factor and high intelligence can be a protective factor. In the mesosystem we see the importance of good social bonds and social cohesion. This can be seen in all the schools, but the most in the *Lalla Fatima Zahra Social and Professional Integration's Center al-Mers* because the whole neighborhood is involved. Morocco is a collectivist society where religion, and therefore the mosque still plays a big role. It is important that the mosque and the community help vulnerable children to get a better future. Education is also mentioned in the mesosystem. Condition is that the education has to be of good quality and accessible for everyone In the macrosystem is seen that a tolerant society is an important protective factor. Parents of vulnerable children, especially deaf children, answer in the surveys that they are afraid that their children are not going to be accepted in society

Strengths of this study are that a lot of people filled in a survey because there was a good bond and people trusted the researcher and that is chosen to do a survey is also very good, because good and honest answers were given and there was no need to give socially desirable answers. This is also a weak point, because with an interview probably more data was gathered, but then the question raises again whether people gave socially desirable answers. Furthermore, a translator was used. This could have affected the reliability because of the interpretations of the translator. However, the surveys are literal translated when possible.

Several recommendations will be expelled for further research. One of these recommendations is that it's important to understand to language of research sample. During observations it's possible to make wrong interpretations because of what you see, because everybody has a (cultural) bias. Furthermore it's important to stay for a longer period that the research sample gets time to trust you. Finally, patience is the key word, especially when you are doing research in a non-Western country, everything goes just a little bit slower.

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Appendix A

Survey questions center for Deaf and Dumb, children

Are you a boy or a girl?

How old are you?

How many brothers and sisters do u have?

Are your parents still alive?

Do you live with your parents?

Are your parents still together?

Who works in your family?

Do all brothers and sisters go to school?

Are there more people deaf in the family and who?

What do you like about the school and what would you like to see changed?

How do u see yourself in the future and what do u want to become and achieve insha'Allah?

How can the school help you with this?

How can the Moroccan community help you with this?

How can international organizations help you with this?

How do u communicate with the "hearing world"?

Does your family know sign language? If not, would u like them to learn it?

Do you have a cell phone, do you use it to communicate by text messaging?

Would you like to go to your current school?

Would you like to go to another regular school?

Survey questions center for Deaf and Dumb, parents

Is your child a boy or a girl?

How old is your child?

At what age did your child go to school?

How many children do u have?

With whom does the child live?

Are both parents still alive?

Who works in the family?

Do all brothers and sisters of the child go to school?

Are there more deaf people in the family? If yes, who?

What are the positive and negative factors working/influencing in your child's future (educational) development and career?

How do u see the future of your child since there is poverty in Morocco and opportunities are not so easy accessible?

How can the school help to give your child a better future?

How can the Moroccan community help with this?

How can international organizations help with this?

Do you think that the kind of classes the children have now is good this way or do you think that mixed with other children who aren't deaf would be better? Why?

What do you think is good about this school? What has to be changed?

How do you communicate with your child?

Do you know sign language? If not, would u like to learn it?

Survey questions center for Deaf and Dumb, teachers

What are the positive and negative factors working in the children's future (educational) development and career?

What do u think is good about this school and what has to be changed?

How do you see the future of the children since there is poverty in Morocco and opportunities are not so easy accessible?

How can the school help to give the children a better future?

How can the Moroccan community help with this?

How can international organizations help with this?

Do you think that the kind of classes the children have now is good this way or do you think that mixed with other children who aren't deaf would be better? Why?

Appendix B

Survey questions Lalla Fatima Zahra Social and Professional Integration's Center al-Mers, children

Are you a boy or a girl?

How old are you?

How many brothers and sisters do u have?

Are your parents still alive?

Do you live with your parents?

Are your parents still together?

Who works in your family?

Do all brothers and sisters go to school?

What do you like about the school and what would you like to see changed?

How do u see yourself in the future and what do u want to become and achieve insha'Allah?

How can the school help you with this?

How can the Moroccan community help you with this?

How can international organizations help you with this?

Do you have a cell phone, do you use it to communicate by text messaging?

Would you like to go to your current school?

Would you like to go to another regular school in another neighbourhood?

Survey questions Lalla Fatima Zahra Social and Professional Integration's Center al-Mers, parents

Is your child a boy or a girl?

How old is your child?

At what age did your child go to school?

How many children do u have?

With whom does the child live?

Are both parents still alive?

Who works in the family?

Do all brothers and sisters of the child go to school?

What are the positive and negative factors working in your child's future (educational) development and career?

How do u see the future of your child since there is poverty in Morocco and opportunities are not so easy accessible?

How can the school help to give your child a better future?

How can the Moroccan community help with this?

How can international organizations help with this?

Do you think that the school your child goes to is good or do you think that they might have more chances if they go to school in another neighborhood? Why?

What do you think is good about this school? What has to be changed?

Survey questions Lalla Fatima Zahra Social and Professional Integration's Center al-Mers, teachers

What are the positive and negative factors working in/influencing the children's future (educational) development and career?

What do u think is good about this school and what has to be changed?

How do you see the future of the children since there is poverty in Morocco and opportunities are not so easy accessible?

How can the school help to give the children a better future?

How can the Moroccan community help with this?

How can international organizations help with this?

Do you think that the kind of classes the children have now is good this way or do you think that mixed with other children who aren't deaf would be better? Why?