

A comparative study of the practices of children's work in construction

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Transcription conventions for interviews

- [I] Interviewer
- [x] Initial of pseudonym of respondent
- [--] some of the transcript has been omitted

Acronyms and abbreviations

art.	article
BIT	Bureau International du Travail
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
GoI	Government of India
GoK	Government of Karnataka
KCRO	Karnataka Child Rights Observatory
KSCWWB	Karnataka State Construction Workers Welfare Board
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILO 138	International Labour Organization's Convention 138 - Minimum age (1973)
ILO 182	International Labour Organization's Convention 182 - Worst forms of labour (1998)
INSAE	Institut National de Statistique et de l'Analyse Economique du Bénin
MD	Mission de Décentralisation
MOSPI	Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, India
NSC	National Statistical Commission
NSSC	New Social Studies of Childhood
NSSO	National Sample Survey Office
NCW	National Commission of Women, India
OA	Ordre des Architectes de France
ONaub	Ordre National des Architectes et Urbanistes du Bénin
RdB	République du Bénin
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nation's Children's Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNTC	United Nations Treaty Collection

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Abstract

This thesis examines how the agency of working children relates to the nature of their work and the harm caused by it. Theorists and practitioners specialised in children's work have argued that its harms should be understood from the perspectives of working children and that efforts to improve their situation should involve them and meet the interests they express. Their approach is premised on children's capacity for autonomous and rational decision making. The thesis develops an alternative approach, by examining harm in children's work and children's responses to it with an understanding of agency as being conditioned by material and social contexts.

Its theoretical purpose is to use Bourdieu's theory to examine children's work. Its methodological contribution is that it studies children's work as a practice, rather than children's individual experiences and perspectives on their work. This involved investigation of patterns characterising forms of children's work, and exploration of why these patterns exist and how they might be changing which focuses on how children are involved and affected.

The thesis is based on empirical study of children's work in cement block construction in peri-urban localities, as apprentices in Calavi, Benin, and as unskilled workers in northern Bengaluru, in the state of Karnataka, India. Construction is recognised as a worst form of children's work by the ILO, but the work studied was locally condoned. In Calavi, apprenticeship was considered as professional training, and in Bengaluru, children's construction work contributed to family livelihoods. These are the kind of work situations that social scientists who stress children's agency have suggested are likely to be beneficial. Main sources of data were observations of construction work and interviews with workers, mostly children, as well as their direct employers.

Interviewed children did not see their work as seriously harmful, although it was found to risk impairing their physical integrity and to confirm their inequality. In Calavi, children were much more oppressed in their work than children in Bengaluru, but in both sites children acted with reasons and interests. They did not however act to change harmful work conditions. Analysis shows how their age, gender and class positions might have shaped their perspectives in ways which explain why they largely accepted them. The children's shared hope that their own children would not work as they had indicated their involvement in social change which might be undermining their work practices.

The findings confirm the importance of examining children's perspectives in attempt to understand the causes and consequences of their work. Yet they suggest that children may not always be able to identify harm, and thus the relevance of pursued efforts to develop ways of studying harm in children's work which do not assume their capacity for autonomous and rational decision making or rely primarily on their perspectives.

Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

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More than a hundred people participated in interviews. Each one has contributed to the thesis. I would especially like to thank child and adult construction workers. I feel incredibly lucky to have met them and for their willingness to speak to me. I learnt much more from them than is presented here.

My father and my partner have been unwavering in their support. I would also like to thank PhD student colleagues, whose company I enjoyed and from whom I learnt much.

The thesis is dedicated to the children I interviewed: I will never stop hoping that they are succeeding in realising the aspirations they expressed in our interviews, and new ones, and that they are happy and well. It is also dedicated to my daughter: hope that she would arrive was the reason why I started this project, and she did.

1. Contemporary approaches to children's work and working children: harms, benefits and the significance of agency

1.1 Introduction

In this thesis I examine how the agency of working children relates to the nature of their work practices and the harm caused by them. My analysis draws on Bourdieu's theory of practice and is based on empirical studies of children's work in the construction industry in Benin and in India. The purpose of the thesis is to develop a way of examining the causes and consequences of children's work with an understanding of agency as being conditioned by people's material and social contexts.

An example of the kind of situation I address is given by the case of Grégoire, a young mason apprentice in southern Benin. In this extract from our interview, he explained how he began his apprenticeship.

I: How did you start this work?

G: My father had enrolled me in school. I was living with my grandmother, we did not have much to eat. One day they asked for the school fees and I did not have enough to pay. They sent me home. My father suggested that I start learning masonry with his brother. I thanked him and I started.

I: Were you happy to start?

G: Yes, because I told myself that with this work, I would be able to look after myself in the future, and have my own little family, and eat enough and help my parents.

I: Did you have any other options?

G: I had no options, I wanted to go to school.

Interview with Grégoire, apprentice mason, Calavi, Benin, November 2010

Grégoire had started his masonry apprenticeship when he was 12. He had not been present when its terms were negotiated between his uncle master and his father, but knew that they had agreed that 100,000 *francs* cfa would be paid for his training, the equivalent of at least ten years of public school expenses at the time of my research, and that it would last four years. When I interviewed him, Grégoire had just turned 18. His training was far from finished, for he had learned few expert masonry skills. He did not know when his master would 'liberate' him. When asked about laws he knew of pertaining to construction work and workers, his only answer was: 'If you leave a master before the end of your training, other masters will pursue you, and you will never be able to work. If you finish properly, you will be well regarded by all.' To his knowledge, at least ten other boys had abandoned training with his master. According to Grégoire, this was because his master did not give his apprentices a sufficient stipend for their daily food, and sometimes gave none. On these days, explained Grégoire, he might refuse to work. Otherwise, he said that he did not work for his master on Sundays, was given one or two days holiday at the end year, and had breaks when his master had no work. During his free time, since the beginning of his apprenticeship, Grégoire earned money by helping women merchants to transport supplies to and from his village, situated on dry land in the midst of Lake Nokué, not far from the town of Calavi where my research was carried out. With money saved from his stipends and portering work, he helped pay the school fees of his younger siblings. Grégoire said he was fully committed to his construction apprenticeship and that he planned to work as a mason until his death. He said he also wanted to learn the complementary crafts of steel bending and form work. He was sure that with construction work he could realise his aspirations, which were modest: to become a master with many apprentices, marry and have children, build a house for his family, send his children to school and help support his parents and eight siblings.

Can it be said that Grégoire had made effective choices and was realising his aspirations? He certainly had opinions, a vision of his future and a positive attitude. In our interview he was thoughtful and articulate. He clearly expressed his pleasure in helping his siblings pursue their schooling. Yet his exclusion from school and his own perceived lack of alternatives puts in doubt his assertion that he had been glad to begin his apprenticeship. The decision owed more to the influence of his father and his familial relationship to his master than his own choice. It is also questionable whether it is a good thing that he was happy about his training and his prospects, given that he had worked for six years nearly

for free, will finish under debt to his master and possibly poorly trained, intended to have many apprentices in order to achieve his goals and would be working in a very competitive labour market.

If agency is understood as a given capacity of either adults or children to act purposefully and respond to opportunity, measured by words and deeds indicating satisfaction and choice, Grégoire can easily be represented as a competent agent, overcoming constraint and making his way towards a desired future. Yet the answers he gave in our interview indicated that he did not question either the adversities he encountered in his work or his disadvantaged social position, and that he intended to treat his own eventual apprentices as he was treated. The fate of his future children depends largely on whether he can secure work on profitable terms. To consider Grégoire's actions and the contentment he expressed about his situation as indication of his agency also leads to awkward comparison with other apprentices I interviewed, who perhaps showed they were more accurately attuned to their circumstances in voicing criticism of apprenticeship in construction, even if none envisaged attempt to alter it.

Children's decisions, actions and perspectives concerning their work afford great insight into their individual situations, but in themselves do not reveal directly how their perspectives and trajectories might be shaped by social positions and relations, and how their work relates to social order and change. These are issues I address in this thesis. I examine specifically how the social positions and relations and the material contexts of the children I interviewed in Benin and in India might help explain why the great majority did not see their work as seriously harmful, although I found indication that their work impaired their physical integrity and seemed to contribute to maintaining their social inequality.

This first chapter situates my theoretical and methodological purpose. I begin by reviewing contemporary approaches to understanding and responding to children's work, beginning with those of the ILO and UNICEF and the universal standards they promote. I then focus on the approaches of several prominent children's work theorists who have contested these standards. By their conceptualisation of children as 'social actors,' their work is aligned with a body of theory and research, known as the 'new social studies of childhood', which has been prevalent in several social science disciplines for the last

twenty years. I summarise recent criticism relating primarily to how children's agency features in this theory and research, and give my own reasons for judging it inadequate as a basis for understanding children's work. I conclude with an overview of the intended contribution of my thesis and its structure.

1.2 Meanings of children's work and its consequences

One of England's first labour standards laws was dedicated to protecting working children. The *Health and Morals of Apprentices Act* of 1802 stated that 'apprentices' aged 14 to 18 employed in mills and factories were to work no more than twelve hours a day, and those aged 9 to 13 no more than eight. It also made provisions for the education and care of apprentices and the cleanliness of their working environment. (Engerman 2003:36) In 1924, concern with working children was articulated in the *Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child*, the first intergovernmental human rights instrument and one of the few initiatives of the League of Nations to garner sufficient support to be formally adopted. (Cunningham 1995:161) It asserts that 'mankind owes to the Child the best that it has to give' and laid out children's rights in five articles. The first three cover the child's rights to care and the means for material and spiritual development. The last states that it must be brought up to devote its talents to 'the service of men.' The fourth article concerns work: the child 'must be put in a position to earn its livelihood, and must be protected against every form of exploitation.' (UN 2013) More recently, the 1973 International Labour Organisation's *Convention 138 - Minimum age* (ILO 138) declared the abolition of children's work as an international objective, to be achieved by signatory states through the progressive raising of the minimum age for work and employment 'to a level consistent with the fullest physical and mental development of young persons.' (ILO 138 article 1) *ILO Convention 182 - Worst forms of labour* (ILO 182), adopted in 1999, established the elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a first priority.

As indicated by these examples of laws and rights instruments, perceptions and responses to children's work have changed greatly over time. None have been fully enforced. There has never been consistent or consolidated consensus over how to see and deal with children's work. Advances in the development and endorsement of international standards have actually been matched by what the ILO has called a 'growing pluralism' in considerations of 'concepts, causation and responses.' (ILO 2006:79)

The standards presently in question are those set by the 1989 United Nations (UN) *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC), ILO 138 and 182, and by more general human rights and labour standards instruments¹. They define a child as anyone less than 18 years of age, unless national legislation specifies otherwise. (CRC art.1) Article 32 of the CRC refers to the recognition of signatory states that the child has the right:

...to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

It also indicates state responsibilities for setting minimum ages for employment and the regulation of its hours and conditions. (art.32) Article 19 refers to state responsibilities for taking appropriate measures ‘...to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation.’ (art.19)

The ILO conventions specify three prohibited categories of child work. ILO 138 sets 15 as the international minimum age for work or employment, and a provisional 14 for states whose ‘economy and educational facilities’ are ‘insufficiently developed. (art.2) Work under these ages is condemned for the risk it poses to children’s education and development. (ILO 2002: xxiii). Strict application of ILO 138 would mean no work or employment for children under the age of 12 and only ‘light work,’ not interfering with schooling, for children 13 to 15, or 12 to 14. (art.7) Work and employment on ‘family and small-scale holdings producing for local consumption and not regularly employing hired workers’ are expressly not covered by ILO 138. (art.5) ILO 182 deals with worst forms of child labour, enjoining signatory states to take measures to eliminate them ‘as matter of urgency.’ (art. 1) Worst forms identified in ILO 182 include commercial sexual exploitation and the use of children in illicit activities, as well as:

‘all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.’ (art. 3)

¹ Particularly relevant to children’s status and work are the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights and on Civic and Political Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, as well as other ILO instruments.

These ‘unconditional worst forms’ are the second category of prohibited work. (ILO 2002:xxiii). Hazardous work is the third, also designated by ILO 182 as a worst form, covering: ‘work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.’ (art.3, ILO 2002:9) ILO Recommendation 190 indicates circumstances, occupations, industries and substances associated with hazard, although by the text of ILO 182 it is up to each signatory state to define hazardous work. (art.4, ILO Recommendation 190) At present, the only member states of the UN which have not effectively ratified the CRC are Somalia, South Sudan and the United States. (UNTC 2013) Of 185 ILO members, 161 have ratified ILO 138, and 174 have ratified ILO 182. (ILO 2013a,b)

The ILO 1998 *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work* identifies the abolition of child labour as one of four categories of worker’s rights which even governments who have not signed the relevant conventions should address. As follow-up, the ILO publishes a ‘Global Report’ on child labour every four years. The last one, published in 2010, gives the ILO’s most recent estimates of the numbers of children in work and in the subsets of forms of work to be eradicated, based mostly on national household surveys conducted in 60 countries between 2004 and 2008. They are summarised below in Table 1. (ILO 2010) The table also shows the definitions used for classification, as revised in 2008 by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians. (ICLS 2008) Although new standards proposed by the ICLS include measures to include all ‘children in productive activities,’ covering those in unpaid domestic work in their own households, current estimates do not include these children, and keep to the United Nations Systems of National Accounts production boundary. (ILO 2010:6, ICLS 2008:11-13)

1. Global estimates of children in employment, labour and hazardous work, 2010

Estimated total number of children: 1 586 288 000		
Categories of child workers	Defining characteristics of work	Numbers
Children in employment	market production or production of goods for own/household use, whether paid or unpaid, in both the formal and informal economy, domestic work outside child's own household	306 million
Child labourers	- under the minimum age for work - work above that age posing threat to children's health, safety or morals, or under conditions of forced labour	215 million
Children in hazardous work	any activity or occupation that, by its nature or type, has or leads to adverse effects on the child's safety, health and moral development	115 million

Source: ILO 2010: 6-9

The United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF) has defined child labour as 'work that exceeds a minimum number of hours, depending on the age of a child and on the type of work.' The definition continues: 'Such work is considered harmful to the child and should therefore be eliminated.' (UNICEF 2009) UNICEF describes the harmful effects of children's labour as those which 'interfere with their education, drain their childhood of joy and crush their right to normal physical and mental development.' (2013a) UNICEF considers children involved in child labour to be those aged 5 to 11 and engaged in economic activity one hour per week or domestic work 28 hours a week, those aged 12 to 14 in economic activity for 14 hours per week or more or domestic work for 28 hours or more, and those aged 15 to 17 who work 43 hours per week or more in either economic or domestic work. (UNICEF 2013a) From its own sources covering the period between 2002 and 2011, UNICEF has suggested that there are 150 million children aged 5 to 14 in developing countries engaged in child labour. (UNICEF 2013b)

Both the ILO and UNICEF mark a distinction between work and labour. Child labour has historically been used to designate any kind of children's work. In recent years, it has come to be seen by some as a separate category, with children's work being that which is acceptable, and child labour that which is not and which should be abolished. (Myers 1999:22, Boyden *et al* 1999:19) Although UNICEF stresses substantive activity while the ILO details the risks of harm such activity incurs, their definitions establish clear thresholds for dividing harmful labour and unharmful work and imply that the general parameters of the causes and meanings of harm are common across contexts. The differences between their definitions, and estimates based on them, do not reflect discord

in the commitments of the two organisations, as these for both are grounded in international laws and rights and aim at eradication with priority given to worst worms.

Arguments for and against the regulation of children's work have always turned on the issue of whether, and how, it is seen as harmful. (see Cunningham 1995 and Cunningham and Viazzo 1996 for historical international comparative studies, Zelizer 1985 on the U.S.) Fyfe located the beginning of the debate about universal eradication of children's work in the 1970s (when ILO 138 was adopted), with 'protectionists' arguing that children's specific needs justified their right to be protected from harm, and 'liberationists' arguing that children were injured by not having the same rights as adults. (1989:167)

Contemporary contention, although inflected by this earlier debate, centres on whether international classifications, standards and regulation of children's work can indeed be universally relevant. Since the late 1980s, and the advent of the CRC, and especially since the late 1990s, and ILO 182, many social scientists have argued against universal norms for children's work. They include anthropologists, geographers and sociologists, of whom some are involved in international rights and development policy and practice. (see below for references). I focus on the work of these rights and development children's work specialists here.

They begin with the premise that: 'child abuse or exploitation, child work, childhood and its problems are not unitary, constant or homogeneous, they differ from place to place, from time to time and also according to gender and other factors.' (White 1999:134) In other words, any definition of childhood and approach to children's work is a 'social construction.' (Ennew *et al* 2005:28) From this perspective, international rights instruments express 'northern, especially Christian, thinking' and are used to impose a 'global model' of childhood on the South. (Boyden 1997/1990:219) The 'hegemonic' conceptualisation of childhood as non-working and segregated in schools, playgrounds and domestic spaces, is seen to exclude working childhoods, and working children, as deviant and to devalorise states and societies which do meet this norm. (Aitken 2001:125, Pupavac 2001) Moreover, tied as they are to aid and trade policies, and as justifications for international intervention in the internal affairs of defective states, standards and regulatory mechanisms of children's work are produced and instrumentalised by 'economic and political interests that have little to do with the wellbeing of children.' (Morrow 2010:439), see also Burman 1996). At best, the evolution from ILO 138 through to the CRC and then

ILO 182 represents a shift from ‘globalised Northern ethnocentrism’ to ‘a more democratic model better structured to accommodate diversity.’ (Myers 2001:53)

From this basis, since the late 1990s, some have argued that what is harmful about children’s work is not work in itself, because, as put by Bourdillon, ‘harm is relative.’ (2006:1210) What matters to these theorists and researchers is not so much the kind of work, its duration or the risks entailed, nor yet the age of the children involved, but how children experience it and themselves assess its advantages and disadvantages. (Boyden *et al* 1998:32,98) Ensuring that children are involved in judgements made of their work and in determining response is seen as a way of overcoming the inadequacies of other, overly prescriptive international norms and rights. (Boyden *et al* 1998, Ennew *et al* 2005:34, Myers 1999:14-15) Moreover, most children’s work is tolerable and most working children are fine, because: ‘work is normal to child development.’ (Bourdillon 2006:1202) The de-‘pathologisation’ (Woodhead 1999:45) of children’s work allows recognition of its possible benefits to them, like increased mental and material resistance to adversity and appreciated contributions to family wellbeing (Boyden *et al* 1998), self-esteem and a sense of identity (Woodhead 1999:27) and skills and competence (Bourdillon 2006:1202). Those who have developed these arguments have stressed that universal standards do not recognise children’s choice to work, and that their imposition can be harmful to children. (Bourdillon 2006:1220, Boyden 1997:222, Myers 2001:50, Woodhead 1999:45)

In a recent book, co-authors Bourdillon, Levison, Myers and White claimed:

... it is probably impossible, and in any case of doubtful value, to develop a set of clear, objective, and unambiguous criteria to distinguish between “intolerable,” “harmful/hazardous,” and “neutral/positive” forms of children’s work, covering all situations and contexts. (2010:178)

They recommended that specific forms of children’s work be seen as lying on a continuum between the intolerable, which should be eliminated, and the beneficial, which should be encouraged, with the caveat that high levels of benefits may not correspond with low risk, and vice versa. (2010:161) They also proposed a framework of issues to consider in assessment of children’s work, based on the classification of its physical, income and psychosocial effects as either harms or benefits according to the situation and children in question. (2010:175-176) For example, they pointed to research suggesting that child sex workers in Bangkok saw their work to be more advantageous than not, and that some child

domestic workers welcomed opportunities their work provided them. (2010:160, 165-6) Their framework draws on the one Woodhead proposed for assessing the psychosocial impacts of children's work. It stresses distinctions between hazards, their likelihood of causing harm and whether or not children are harmed, on the grounds that the effects of work depend on configurations of 'Children + Activities + Situations + Work.' (2004: 330,334) Woodhead based psychosocial wellbeing on influences like stable relationships, peer support and clear terms of work, and suggested that these be reinforced for working children. (2004:346-368)

Traina defended this approach as 'children's situated right to work.' (2011) In summary, it insists on the need to empirically ascertain whether or not harm has been caused, and that the best way to evaluate harms and benefits, and the trade-offs between them, is to understand why children work and its effects on them from the perspectives of the concerned children. (Boyden 2009, Boyden *et al* 1998) By acknowledgement of the possibly greater weight of benefits in the balance, it undermines the aim of abolition, because prevention of harm does not warrant the eradication of children's work. It also gives scope to interventions aimed at improving children's working conditions. (Bourdillon *et al* 2010)

The argument that childhood is a 'social construction' has evolved from 19th and early 20th century anthropological studies of non-European peoples. Much of this literature considered children's work as part of a cultural socialisation process. Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1961/1928) is recognised as a classic example. (Bissell 2001:69) Mead studied young people in Samoa to find out if they experienced the same tensions as adolescents in the United States, and concluded that Samoans progress smoothly to physical maturity. The idea that differences in status between children and adults are social, and not biological, was popularised in the 1960s by historical sociology. In 1960, Ariès published a seminal enquiry, similar to Mead's but over time rather than across cultures, into representations of children in art in France since the Middle Ages. (Ariès 2001/1960) He alleged that the physical and conceptual separation of children and adults was a post-Revolutionary phenomenon which emerged with new systems of economic production and social control involving the oppression of children. Mead's account has been criticised as romanticised. (Leacock 1988) It also seems not to be sure that children lived like small adults in the Middle Ages. (Cunningham 1995:7,40). But these early

theorists certainly contributed to social scientific awareness of the distinction between ‘children as human beings and childhood as a shifting set of ideas.’ (Cunningham, 1995: 2)

Because 1) attitudes towards children, as well as ways of being children and of rearing them, are not monolithic, and 2) representations and practices do not always match well, in 1982 Schildkrout declared that two approaches can be taken to the study of children’s work. They roughly follow Mead and Ariès. One is to focus on the forms of and meanings attached to childhood and children’s work. The other is to consider children’s work in terms of social and economic relations. (Schildkrout 1981:82). Schildkrout’s two approaches are still very relevant. While the ‘situated right to work’ approach considers its specific forms and meanings, a second current approach to children’s work attends to how children’s work and working children figure in processes of social reproduction and change.

Researchers and theorists in this line have looked at working children in all kinds of human development contexts. (see Mkechnie and Hobbs 1999 for the UK, Lavalette 1994 for Europe and the U.S, Schlemmer 1996, for Africa, Latin America and East Asia) They use the interviews, ethnographies and participative methods favoured in ‘situated right to work’ research, as well as demographic and economic analysis. While diverse, all have made the point that what is objectionable about children’s work is its contribution to poverty and inequality. Not all of them see children’s work as a social construction to which no universal standards should be applied, as the following contrasting examples show.

Anker (2002), who has been closely involved with the ILO, claimed that the elimination of children’s work can be justified on three principles: ‘the protection of children, the development of children and the economic and labour impacts of child labour.’ (2002:258) He called for wider recognition of all forms of children’s work as possibly harmful. For Anker, children’s work should be understood in terms of its effects on children’s physical and developmental vulnerability, their school attendance and performance and their acquisition of skills, as well as on family survival, adult wages and macro-level economic productivity and growth. (2002:264) He also claimed that there is good reason to carefully assess both the benefits and the harms of children’s work, but in his view this is

because tradition and employers are more influential in determining work conditions and their degree of acceptability than children. (2002:276)

Satz (2003) drew on Sen's capabilities approach. The framework she suggested for assessing the harm of children's work encompassed its effects on wages, employment and children's and adults' capacities for achieving wellbeing and valued ends. (2003:300) She was however more muted than Anker in endorsing abolition, proposing a middle ground between those who want to ban child labour and those who 'temporarily accommodate it,' with a 'gradualist' approach based on the distinction between work that is 'unambiguously detrimental' and that which is beneficial. (2003:305-306)

Weiner and Burra, social relational theorists concerned by children's work in India, were more explicit about exploitation. Weiner is known for his 1991 book in which he argued that at the core of the 'belief systems' of the Indian state bureaucracy, and of the Indian middle class more generally, was a view of a social order in which the children of the poor should be taught to work, and their own, to learn. According to Weiner, this distinction between children as 'hands' and as 'minds' accounted for the failure of the Indian state to extend good schooling to the poor and to address child labour. (2006/1991: 3-5,188) Burra has disputed the distinction made between acceptable work and harmful labour, arguing that is empirically difficult to make distinctions. (2005, 2006) On the basis of her studies of working children throughout India, she concluded: 'Child labour is the result of the exploitation of the weak and vulnerable and it is always the poorest sections of the society who are most vulnerable to this exploitation.' (2003:75) Both Weiner and Burra advocated for the eradication of children's work and for compulsory, good quality schooling. (Weiner 2006/1991, Burra 2005, 2006)

Social scientists who have examined the place of children and their work in social relations and who do not believe in universal norms, pointedly do not subscribe to eradication. Many articles in this vein have appeared in the last fifteen years (for relatively recent examples, see Aitken 2007, Huijsmans 2012, Orkin 2010) Nieuwenhuys' work, spanning more than three decades, is a particularly complete and consistent exemplar.

In her study of children's work in a rural village of Kerala, which she began in 1978, Nieuwenhuys found that girls' work in coir yarn spinning and boys' work in artisanal

fishing, and all children's domestic work, were a crucial part of the state's economy, in which the poorest families were entirely involved in labour intensive sectors controlled by rich and powerful merchants. (1994:201) These findings aroused her criticism of 'restrictive' approaches to children's work, not so much because they fail to acknowledge its benefits, but because at the time she undertook in her research, they referred mainly to waged employment. She claimed that this notion of work was a residue of early industrialisation which 'leaves the work routine within the family context of hundreds of millions of children unnamed and unperceived and obfuscates the contribution solicited from children of exploited adults.' (1994:204)

Nieuwenhuys' concern with the exploitation of children's paid and unpaid work did not lead her to condemn children's work. Her main target has been the hypocrisy entrenched in global social relations, by which the ideal of non-economic childhood was imposed even as structural adjustment programmes were pushing children out of school. (1996:247, 1998, 2007) She has censured those who condemn children's work for failing to appreciate how it relates to their social support systems and to recognise that efforts to ban children's employment insidiously promote unpaid, unrecognised and mostly domestic forms of work which can be more nefarious than waged work to the extent they perpetuate unequal gender roles and children's subordinate status. (1998:274-278, 2005) In her analysis, the effective banning of children's work, in contexts in which the conditions for non-economic children do not obtain, would be tantamount to denying children what little capacity they might have to negotiate the value of their work. (1996:247). Her study of girls who migrated from their homes in rural Kerala villages to fish processing jobs thousands of miles away revealed children achieving desired autonomy. Although the work was insalubrious and unpleasant, Nieuwenhuys claimed they preferred the sociability and freedom it gave them to domestic drudgery. They also seemed to improve their positions in paternalistic households once they returned to their villages. In such a case, argued Nieuwenhuys, appropriate intervention would be to assure the children good wages and working conditions, not to send them back to village kitchens. (1996:434).

This argument resonates with Elson's relatively early feminist analysis which paralleled the oppression of children with that of women. Elson took issue with Marxian approaches for complacency in taking capitalist interests as the cause of children's work. She rejected neoclassical accounts which overlook any explanation for children's work other than the

preferences of probably selfish parents. (1982:481-88) She argued that employment relations and production processes make use of children because their low status justifies low wages. She also argued that children are not born submissive but are made so through the experience of their work and the limits set on their access to education and employment. (1982:489) For Elson, as for Weiner and Burra, children's exploitation is a result not just of capitalist mechanisms of social differentiation, but of social norms of child subordination and any adult complicit in maintaining them. (1982:499) Unlike Weiner and Burra, Elson did not see solution in schooling and the abolition of children's work. She declared: 'The fundamental remedy requires the liberation of children from dependency and the dissolution of the seniority system.' (1982:494)

Nieuwenhuys' account is also close to Meillassoux's, whose Marxist economic anthropology centred on the historical specificity of economic exploitation. Meillassoux suggested that working children can be considered as a fraction of the 'international proletariat.' (1996:66) He defined a child as 'a being of one or the other sex, which is developed enough to be able to understand and act, but who, because of temporary physical weakness due to age, and its inferior status in the family, submits itself to the authority of adults.' (1996:55) His definition of exploitation is firmly Marxist: 'Relations between classes by which one controls the means of production, distribution and finance and thus appropriates the surplus production and profit of those without means, where this appropriation reproduces the exploitative relation.' (1996:55)

Whereas Nieuwenhuys asserted that economic exploitation was harmful for perpetuating inequalities, proponents of children's 'situated right to work' do not take up exploitation. White claimed that it is 'relative and subjective in nature.' (1999:141) For Bourdillon *et al*, exploitation is a 'relative term', and economic exploitation difficult to use 'operationally as a criterion for intervention.' (2010:176,178) They did not include it in their assessment framework. However, both approaches are alike in opposing universal classifications of children's work and arguments for its universal eradication. They also challenge the ILO's *Decent work agenda*, although, and rather surprisingly, children's work theorists have not engaged with it directly. The ILO, as with child labour, has used universal, normative terms to define decent work as:

....productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Decent work involves opportunities for work that is productive

and delivers a fair income; provides security in the workplace and social protection for workers and their families; offers better prospects for personal development and encourages social integration; gives people the freedom to express their concerns, to organize and to participate in decisions that affect their lives; and guarantees equal opportunities and equal treatment for all. (ILO 2007:vi)

By the arguments of Bourdillon *et al*, Nieuwenhuys and like-minded theorists and researchers, ‘decent work’ is not contingent on the abolition of children’s work and labour; rather, children should be able to engage in decent work. Many have asserted that working children themselves are demanding improved conditions and recognition of their work, not its eradication, and have described children organised in groups to do so, around the world. (Nieuwenhuys 2005, Bourdillon *et al* 2010:142:148, see also, Boyden *et al* 1998: 30, 118, Huijsmans 2008, Miljetig 2000). What is fundamentally in common between their approaches, and which sets them apart from the others described above, is the importance they place on children’s agency.

1.3 The significance of agency

1.3.1 The new social studies of childhood

Emphasis on children’s agency and the social construction of childhood puts the work of those who do not support universal eradication within the field of the ‘new social studies of childhood.’ (NSSC) This is the label given to what Prout and James identified in 1990 as an ‘emergent paradigm’ for childhood studies. (James *et al* 1998:33, Prout and James 1997/1990:3) In 1998, James *et al* mapped out four strands of social research they saw as comprising the new social studies of childhood, suggesting that they could be classed in two pairs. One investigates structural relations, the second looks at the competencies of children, and the approaches within each pair are distinguished by contrasting emphases on agency and structure, identity and difference, continuity and change and the local and the global. (James *et al*, 1998: 195-218, James and James 2004: 28,32) James *et al* bound these four strands of research together by the implications of their unified recognition of ‘the discovery of children as agents,’ and so merged Schildkrout’s two approaches to children’s work studies with a wider project. (1998:6) Whereas ‘presociological’ theories were laden with moral essentialism and biological determinism, and ‘transitional’

socialisation theories with structural determinism, according to James *et al* , the NSSC recognise the child as a ‘being’ rather than an entity in the process of ‘becoming’ an adult: ‘as a person, a status, a course of action, a set of needs, rights or differences, in sum – a social actor.’ (1998: 3-36, 207)

James and Prout anticipated that the ‘new’ paradigm’ would open up questions previously obscured by the assumption that children are ‘natural, passive, incompetent and incomplete.’ (1997/1990: x). They were right, as the last two decades have brought a wealth of multi-disciplinary literature inspired by the ideas that childhood is a cultural and structural phenomenon that varies across time and space and that children ‘must be seen as active in the construction of their own social lives, the lives of those around them and of the societies in which they live.’ (Prout and James 1997/1990:8) This literature has revealed a multiplicity of class, geographically and culturally specific practices and conditions of children and childhood. Many of its authors have stated explicitly that they work with the NSSC principles articulated by James and Prout in 1990. Journals devoted to children and childhood, and which advance NSSC empirical and theoretical work, give a measure of academic interest. These include *Children and Society* (1987), *Childhood* (1993), and *Children’s Geographies* (2003).

As indicated above, studies of working children which focus on children as social actors, particularly those conducted low human development contexts (often referred to in these accounts as the ‘Majority World’ (Punch 2003)), have brought children’s informal and domestic work into perspective. (for example, see Nieuwenhuys’ corpus, Robson 2004a, 2004b, Punch 2003, Payne 2012) It is arguable that this has fostered awareness of this work, as evidenced by ILO and UNICEF efforts to include it in children’s work statistics. These studies have also documented children’s perspectives on their work and the activities and relationships of their daily lives, which did not figure in the structural and economic analyses of children’s work which were prevalent in the decades leading up to the development of NSSC approaches. This has helped uncover the immediate reasons and contexts for decisions about children’s work, as well as its immediate consequences. (for example, see again Nieuwenhuys’ corpus, Abebe 2008, Amigo 2011, Boyden 2009, Bissell 2003, Huijsmans 2008, Payne 2012)

1.3.2 Agency in the NSSC

When Prout and James set out the ‘key features’ of the ‘emergent paradigm,’ they explained these were ‘parameters’ in need of theoretical development. (Prout and James 1997/1990:9) However, by 1997, they were referring to them as ‘tenets.’ (James and Prout 1997/1990:xiii) Although they then noted that some were coming up against limits, they also worried that ‘widespread acceptance’ of children as social actors had not sufficiently changed practices, and called for more studies revealing those which ‘constrain’ children. (1997/1990:xiv) Yet the NSSC idea of children’s agency remained, and continues to be, largely untheorised. (Bordonaro and Payne 2012, Valentine 2011: 347, Wyness 2006: 236) Tellingly, in 1998 James *et al* did not define children’s agency beyond their assertion that recognising it means understanding children as ‘social actors shaping as well as shaped by their circumstances.’ (1998:6) The closest they came was in citing Wartofsky’s claim that a child is ‘as naturally an agent as any adult, in the sense of agency that concerns the initiation of action by choice.’ (cited in James *et al* 1998:207)

The understanding of children’s agency as a personal capacity for autonomous and intentional decision-making and action figures in many studies in the NSSC field, often implicitly. (Valentine 2012) Robson’s conclusions to her study of working children in a Nigerian village give example:

Children are shown to exercise some degree of agency in relation to their work that provides them with immediate and future benefits. For ordinary Hausa children... working is a rational response to their immediate circumstances of childhood - their work is integral to a rural Hausa childhood and to what rural Hausa children are.... rural Hausa youngsters are shown to be highly capable, autonomous, dynamic individuals....(2004:208)

Similarly, Bessell claimed that the working children she studied in Jakarta:

...made decisions about their lives and the gravity of those decisions spoke to their capabilities. These children exercised agency, to varying extents and within a context of strong structural constraints. (2011: 566)

Bourdillon *et al* did give an explicit definition of agency, as follows:

Agency refers to the ability of people to make effective choices, particularly in responding to opportunities. Social structures and the physical environment limit the possibilities open to an individual, who might still exercise agency in responses

to such constraints. Agency can be limited by constraints and structures, but only in extremely debilitating cases is it removed entirely. (2010:134)

For Bourdillon *et al*, there was no doubt that children ‘have’ and ‘exercise’ agency, rather, at issue was : ‘...how to allow children to be proactive in developing their lives rather than simply reactive, how to empower them in the fuller exercise of their agency.’ (2010:134) They included the effects of work on children’s agency in their assessment framework.

These social scientists convey an idea of children’s agency that owes much to the rational action theory of neoclassical economics. Levison, a co-author of Bourdillon *et al* 2010, had earlier made this debt clear. She argued that study of children’s work needs to identify ‘the factors which truly increase children’s utility by explicitly recognising children’s competencies and taking children’s preferences into account.’ (2000:131). Neoclassical economic studies of children’s work have looked at individual, household and firm decision-making and preferences about children’s work, with the idea that free market economic growth would, or could, lead over time to the eradication of what is inefficient and consequently undesirable about it. (Basu 1999, Basu and Van 1998, Grootaert and Kanbur 1995) As Elson pointed out long ago, such accounts of social causality, which are hinged on the making of self-interested, economically rational decisions, do little to explain preferences and how these change and make implausible assumptions about the motivations and processes of decision-making. (1982)

Levison and the authors cited above also give example of how notions of agency, rationality and competence are intertwined in many NSSC accounts. Robson *et al* defined children’s agency as their competence, and suggested that indication of competence can be taken as ‘evidence’ of agency. (2007:136-138) Studies which keep with this premise tend to highlight children’s ‘practical and everyday competence’ (James and James 2004:159) in describing how they progress through their daily lives (Robson 2003, Punch 2003), with some focussing on children’s ability to cope with adversity (Boyden 2009, Kesby *et al* 2006). On a conceptual level, Woodhead stressed the effects of work on children’s social and cultural competence, defined respectively as positive social relationships and intelligence, and communicative and practical skills. (2004:326) James and James disputed U.K. legal decisions assessing children as incompetent, arguing that these decisions contravened children’s rights to self-determination: here competence refers to children’s ability to make major decisions. (2004:15-159)

Criticism of this conceptualisation of children's agency as competence and rational decision making and action has been expressed even by some who have contributed to the strands of research and theory James *et al* put under the NSSC label. (1998) Most relate to the fact that it carries universal assumptions as suspect as any about ideal childhoods. Here I summarise the considerations of several social scientists concerning three issues particularly relevant to NSSC-affiliated approaches to children's work.

The first is that the idea of the competent child has neoliberal implications. These were spelled out by Lieten:

...it transfers substantial duties from the state, (as a duty provider) to the individual citizens, (as rights claimers) and expects the people themselves, including the children, through their own active claims to turn the potential rights into reality. (2008:12)

Lavalette impugned the neoliberal logic of the ascription to children of rational decision making, by which any call for freedom, including the call for children 'to be 'liberated' into employment', is deemed 'progressive.' (2005:147, 1999:16)

The second issue concerns problems raised by trying to empirically apprehend agency defined as competence and rational decision making and action. Bordonaro and Payne suggested that 'neo-liberal normative notions of subjectivity and citizenship' have meant that agency in NSSC research is construed as: 'resourcefulness, resistance to hegemony and domination, and as something inherently positive.' (2012:367) They noted that when NSSC researchers encounter children not acting positively, they tend to qualify the agency of their research subjects by its quantity or strength. They cited references to: 'thin' 'restricted', 'limited' and 'tactical' agency,' and judged that none of these qualifications opened onto issues like 'the relationship between agency, legal responsibility and the limits of individual freedom in society.' (2012:369) Such conceptualisations of modified agency also imply that children's capacity to act rationally and competently is constrained more by external forces than their inherent abilities. This is strongly suggested by the citations given above from Robsen, Bessell and Bourdillon *et al* regarding working children's agency. Vanderbeck (2008) contended that whether there might be standards by which children could be judged as incompetent is a 'point of non-discussion' in NSSC studies, although that their authors recognise such limits is suggested by the fact that they also do not address the full implications of a politics based on children's agency. (2008:397,399)

Federle (1994) was early to pinpoint the ethical issues raised by Bordonaro and Payne and Vanderbeck. She argued that emphasis on children's competence perpetuates the premises of social contract theories by which an individual has rights to the extent that he or she has the competence to exercise them. She claimed that premising rights on powerlessness would serve to secure all disadvantaged people, including children, the means to counter discrimination (1994:345-364, see Dixon and Nussbaum 2012 for a similar argument)

Finally, there are also concerns about research methodologies which both assume and focus on children's competence and rational decision-making and action. Bluebond-Langner and Korbin perceived that studies which ascribe 'agency and competency' and are based on 'children's voices' tend to leave unclear the 'degree,' 'impact' and 'nature' of children's agency. (2008:245) They also raised the problems of taking some children as representative of many. Ansell argued that the importance given to the local scale and children's own accounts in NSSC geography studies obscures what is beyond the limits of children's individual experience and material terrain of action: as she puts it: 'children can only tell us so much.' (2009:205) Likewise, Hart, in reaction to the emphasis on child participation in development practice, asserted that it risks discounting issues affecting them but about which they have little knowledge. (2008:414) Alderson expressed doubt about the ethics of 'child-centred' research, claiming it is never fully driven by children and that the importance given by some child researchers to the idea of 'multiple subjectivities' destabilises by relativism the possibility of research validity. (2012:238) Gallacher and Gallagher took up the claim made by many NSSC researchers of the superiority of participative methods, arguing they make stretched assumptions about the authenticity, completeness and constancy of participants' perspectives as revealed by these methods, whether adult or child, as well as about its 'empowerment' potential. (2008: 501)

1.4 Agency, working children and practical adequacy

Another question raised by defining agency as rational decision making and competence, and associating this kind of agency with resistance, is that of against what children are seen to resist. The tendency to take any major or minor decision as evidence of resourcefulness against constraint has produced some trivial examples. Bromley and Mackie found the street trading children they studied in Cusco, Peru, to be: 'demonstrating agency in their

choice of trading locations.’ (2009:148) Bell and Payne presented as a major finding that the children heading households in Zambia considered their daily lives to be ‘normal.’ (2009:1041) Studies of migrating children have in particular given some contestable examples. Bastia argued that adolescents would be denied agency if considered as trafficking ‘victims’, but her case studies could be interpreted as showing children resigning themselves to ever more restricted lives. (2005:77) Huijsmans reviewed studies of children migrating from Laos to Thailand. While they all showed the children mostly engaged in worst forms of work, he stressed findings indicating that some saw their work positively. (2008, see also Iverson 2002, Whitehead 2007)

What is troubling about such accounts is that they circumscribe consideration of agency to what some children voiced about their immediate situation, or to their daily responses to this situation. They also do not address the material impacts of the children’s conditions. Boyden’s interest in children’s resilience (1998, 2009), and Whitehead’s and Bourdillon’s frameworks for assessing harm, similarly insinuate an understanding of agency as a mental as well as a physical adaptation to adversity. The emphasis on children’s socially constructed ‘being-ness’ minimises what might be very reasonable concerns about their ‘becoming,’ as well as about why they were in adverse circumstances to begin with, the extent to which they made their choices with conscious intentions and to which these intentions were realised, and the endurance of exploitative work practices.

In brief, there are two fundamental problems with the conceptualisation of children’s agency as their competence and rational decision making, and the prominence given to this kind of agency in contemporary social research about children. The first is that this conceptualisation assimilates agency to free will and structure to external conditions, and then puts agency in opposition to structure. In studies using this conceptualisation, children, as agents, are often represented as being in opposition to the adults who surround them, rather than as figuring in more complex, less visible and immediate, relations. (King 2007:206, for example see James *et al.* , 1998: 202) According to King, ‘the notion of children’s competence and potential for autonomy’ has remained ‘insulated’ in NSSC studies from ‘counter-images’ from other academic disciplines, as well as from the adults in children’s worlds. (2007:200) Perhaps indeed it is because of NSSC anathema to any kind of biological or social determinism that so many of its affiliated researchers have paid either no or little heed to a considerable body of theory dealing with the social dimensions

of agency, and which considerably problematises the possibility of agency as competence and autonomous, intentional and rational decision making. (for example: Archer *et al* 1998, Emirbayer and Mische 1998) Some have claimed to draw on Giddens's theory of structuration (eg. Bell and Payne 2009, James *et al* 1998:2002). Few of these however have dealt with dispute over its stress on 'rules and resources' and purposeful action. (Archer 2010, King 2007, Porpora 1998) Mayall has made what she called 'a brief attempt' to relate critical realism to the sociology of childhood. (Mayall 2002, 2012:352) NSSC studies have also overlooked research on the effects of children's material and social environment, although much of this is mainstream, like the work of Heckman, Nobel laureate in Economics in 2000. Moreover, much could be taken from biological research, as two examples drawing on neurological research make clear: Ruddick (2006) referred to studies indicating human brains are developing into the early twenties to question the criminal responsibility of young children, and Lahire's (2013) current work considers the implications of research showing the great capacity of humans to learn, including the very aged. The main concern attendant to this first problem of the conceptualisation of agency in approaches to working children is that the one which specifically addresses how to assess and respond to children's work, the 'situated right to work approach,' is exclusively focused on children's competence and actions, at the expense of structure, time and matter.

Secondly, and relatedly, social scientists who assert that children are effective social actors do so on the basis of partial evidence, and their arguments play out largely in the discursive realm. They do not make transparent the distinction between whether children have the innate capacity to be agents and whether all children are indeed intentionally 'shaping their circumstances,' and on which grounds they claim, on the behalf of children, that they should be freed of adult-imposed constraints. A major paradox of NSSC studies, especially evident in accounts of working children, is that universal rights standards are taken to be irrelevant to children, but a universal agency standard is used to characterise them. (Balogopolan 2011:295) The ramifications of this are given inadvertently but very clearly by Mayall (2000). In her elaboration of the aims of the sociology of childhood she suggested that the main problem faced by all children is that they are seen as 'incompetent, unstable, credulous, unreliable, emotional' and not taken 'seriously as contributors to social thinking and social policies.' (2000:246) For example, she referred to the protection imposed upon children from 'kindergarten, until they reach the age of reason' and to efforts to 'limit and regulate child labour' in social worlds 'where children's contributions

to household economies are essential,' as if both were comparable manifestations of this same problem. (2000:245-246). The idea that children's wrongs will be righted when they are all allowed to exercise their agency leaves working children in difficult circumstance much to tackle and without much investment in their progress to 'reason.' Mayall's agenda for championing children's rights to participation (and work) rather than to school is also disturbingly reminiscent of Weiner's 'hands' and 'minds' thesis. Morrow (2008) also evoked this thesis when she reflected on 'the creeping hegemony of education and the insistence that every child has to be in school', and whether this will eventually prevent children from making 'spiritual contributions' she purported to have witnessed in India, in an account of a meeting of the academic specialists editing the journal *Childhood*. (2008:302-303) By Morrow's and Mayall's view, children are doubly essentialised: first by their universal agency, second by their 'being-'ness in current social roles. Lee has argued that neither children nor adults should be thought of as 'beings,' as all are fluid 'becomings' in contemporary society, which is changing rapidly in both the Minority and Majority worlds. (2001:8-9) The possibility of social change towards conditions for greater human flourishing, and agency, is at the heart of 'human development' theory, research and practice, which NSSC social scientists have also neglected. (see Kabeer 1999, Nussbaum 2001, 2011, Sen 1999, 1995)

From sparse consideration of the complexity of agency and how it figures in social reproduction and change, and the universal ascription of universal competence and rational decision making, flow issues of what Sayer called 'practical adequacy': 'knowledge must generate expectations about the world and about the results of our actions which are actually realized.' (1992:69) Some researchers have pointed to how NSSC premises rendered their work practically inadequate. Gigengack recounted that in his first studies of children living in the streets of Mexico City, he described their inhalant use as a 'survival strategy;' after 'years of fieldwork and writing', during which many of his original research participants died, he came to understand it as 'self-destruction.' (2000:206). Levine explained how she became a 'situated right to work' proponent after listening to working children in South Africa and observing their group protests against child labour abolition. Years later, having charted 'deepening chronic hunger and childhood poverty' amongst the farm-workers she studied, she called for consideration of: 'the ways in which granting children the right to work might end up being one of the key political factors blocking more radical interventions.' (1999, 2011:272) Klocker however gives example of

a tenacious hold on the idea of children's agential competence despite indication of practical inadequacy. In her study of child domestic workers in Tanzania, she found that older ones who had left domestic work were more critical of their experience than those currently in it. Rather than consider the possibility that current workers were less able to assess and react against their position, she concluded they were 'able to present fronts in the dialogic moment of the interview' and that this 'highlights their agency.' (2012:902)

Many social scientists who have worked with NSSC principles have not been blind to the theoretical, methodological and ethical issues overviewed here. Of those who spearheaded the NSSC movement, several have either repudiated the binaries associated with Prout *et al*'s typology, or attempted to give greater precision to the different purposes of its various strands. (Prout 2004, Qvortrup 2005, James 2010) Notably, James, of the first to see a focus on children's agency as a 'political agenda to expose children's minority status vis-à-vis adults', expressed a decade later a narrowed view: '...agency, in the end, is an attribute of individual children. It is something which they may or may not choose to exercise, rather than a symbol of their minority status.' (James and Prout 1997:xiv, 2009:44) Social scientists concerned with children in the Majority World, in contrast to James, have put forward an idea of children's agency and competence as 'relational' to supersede polarisation of their competence and vulnerability (Abebe and Kjørholt 2009), of their being-ness and becoming-ness (Kesby *et al* 2009, Aitken 2007), and of children and adults. (Holt and Holloway 2006, Tisdall and Punch 2012). These responses keep the core premise of children's competence and rational decision making, and either uphold structure/agency opposition or skirt around ontological questions, and thus do not fully overcome the problems discussed above.

Bourdillon *et al* (2010) made no reference at all to these problems. The question is how their 'situated right to work approach' affects working children. Reynaert *et al* found that since the adoption of the CRC, the importance given to children's competence in academic discourse, and discourse about practice and policy, had established a norm of 'autonomy and participation rights.' (2009:522) While it is hard to judge the impact on real children of this discourse, White and Choudhury (2007) had earlier expressed concern with the trend they identified in international development practice by which the tokenistic participation of a very few children in development projects had become an end in itself. They worried that children were being called on to defend interests not necessarily their

own, in programmes prioritising participation over the ‘survival rights’ of the most disadvantaged children. (2007:547) It is also possible to see ILO 182 as a retreat to less contentious domains of intervention. Whereas ILO 138 assumes children’s work to be of direct concern to the wellbeing of children, adults, employers and governments, ILO 182 constitutes child labour as a problem of particular children, who are identified quasi-voluntaristically and who are, given the illicit nature of most recognised worst forms of children’s work, mostly beyond the effective reach of ‘insufficiently developed’ states.

1.5 Intentions of the thesis

NSSC studies have shown how important it is to consider children’s views and the interests they express in attempt to understand their situations. Yet the premise that children are competent and rational social actors, whose words can be taken to fully express their interests, is too flawed to justify continued recourse to it in research about working children. This is the starting point of this thesis.

Katz and O’Donnell Davidson are unusual among researchers concerned by working children for having examined both structure and agency in their studies, without assuming that agency is the innately positive exercise of autonomous choice. Katz explained she set out to find evidence of resistance to capitalist economic restructuring in undertaking study of children in a village in Southern Sudan. She observed ‘deskilling, community destabilization, and a reordered relationship between production and reproduction’, and responses, and deepening inequality, too ambiguous to denote resistance. (2004:259) She broke down these responses into acts of ‘resilience,’ ‘reworking’ as well as ‘resistance.’ (2004:242) O’Connell Davidson studied children working in the sex trade in several countries. She stressed their agency, but rather than conclude that their choices about working should be valued as such, argued that their significance was in revealing the children’s lack of alternatives. She also noted how widespread concern with children overshadows how adults working in the sex trade face the same disadvantages, and deflects attention from these problems with ad hoc interventions to ‘save’ children. (2005)

The intent of this thesis is to try to follow the example of these social scientists in order to contribute to alternative ways of understanding children’s work than those reviewed in this

chapter. Like Katz and O'Connell Davidson, the premise I work from is that it is possible to try both to identify objective harms of children's work and to understand how children shape and are shaped by their work practices and social relations, and to what effect. What I propose is an exploration of the potential of a sociological theory of labouring, which I have drawn largely from Bourdieu, for generating an understanding of children's work, the harm it causes and how children respond harm, in a way which neither discounts children's agency nor assumes that they are fully able to act as competent and rational social actors.

The thesis focuses on the situations, experiences, material contexts and perspectives of children working in cement block construction in Calavi, Benin, and in urban northern Bengaluru, in the state of Karnataka, India. I have used a comparative case study approach in order to try to assess whether, and how, similar processes can be considered to affect children's responses to harm in their work in similar ways. Comparative study of social processes has allowed me to move my study of children's actions and motivations beyond contrasts between local realities and ideal models of children and childhood. This has helped me to uncover indications of commonalities among the children I interviewed in Calavi and in Bengaluru, which I will argue are significant for giving explanatory insight into their responses to harm in their work. Indeed, a key finding of my study, which I anticipate here, is that that however different their work practices, social positions and material contexts, the children I interviewed in Calavi and in Bengaluru shared a conception of childhood according to which children attend school and do not work in manual labour, and that their responses to harm in their work were intricately linked to this conception.

1.6 Thesis overview

In Chapter 2, I explain my methodology. In Chapters 3 and 4, I describe the practices of children's construction work I studied in Calavi, Benin, and Bengaluru, in the state of Karnataka in India. In these chapters, I give account of how the children I interviewed perceived and responded to harm in their work, as well as of my own appreciation of its harm.

Chapter 5 presents the findings of my qualitative comparative analysis of whether differences in the social and individual characteristics of the children I interviewed in Calavi distinguish those who expressed criticism of their work from the majority who did not. It also presents the results of my QCA investigation of how the children's opinions about norms and practices contributing to legitimising children's construction work in southern Benin relate to whether or not they expressed criticism of it.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 establish the contours of the work practices of the children I interviewed. In chapter 6, I review the findings of these chapters in light of Bourdieu's concept of field, with the intent of developing an explanation of how these practices were sustained, as well as of the part children played in their reproduction. I extend this analysis in Chapter 7, in which I draw on Bourdieu's concept of habitus, to consider how the children I interviewed were involved in social change which might eventually undermine the practices of their work. I conclude the thesis with a brief summary of my findings and their theoretical and methodological relevance.

2. Methodology and methods

2.1 Theoretical and methodological questions and objectives

The question my thesis addresses is how the agency of working children relates to the nature of their work practices and the harm caused by them. Its empirical concerns are children's work in cement block construction in Calavi, Benin, and in Bengaluru, in the state of Karnataka, India. Its theoretical purpose is to examine these work practices from the basis of Bourdieu's theory. I focus on the issues of agency and harm because, as seen in chapter 1, whether or not children are considered to act competently and rationally, or to have the capacity to, currently very much determines how harm in their work is understood and what responses are promoted to children's work in international development theory and practice.

My methodological contribution is to study the practices of children's work rather than children's individual experiences and perspectives. This involved investigation of the patterns characterising these practices, and exploration of why they exist and how they might be changing focussing on how children are involved and affected. My intent has been to develop a research strategy for identifying the causes and immediate consequences of specific children's work practices, as well as the import of these practices in processes of social reproduction and change.

In this chapter, I explain my methodology. I clarify how I have conceptualised harm, my reasons for using Bourdieu's theory and my empirical concerns. I then present the principles of my comparative case study design and data collection and analysis methods, as well as ethical issues I faced and how I resolved them. I conclude with a summary of key points.

2.2 Harm

Although the original intention of my thesis was to question the suppositions of 'new social studies of childhood' (NSSC) accounts of agential children, I realised during

analysis how much I had myself relied on them in my research design. I commenced data collection with ‘sensitising concepts’ about harms likely to be experienced by children working in construction, taken from across the approaches reviewed in chapter 1. (Flick 2003:101) They are given in Table 2, below. It shows that I had expected interviewed working children to be my primary source of information about these harms. I did not make clear prior or even during fieldwork exactly why some of these issues might be harmful to children. This was because I had also expected my sensitising concepts to give way to precise specifications, as expressed by interviewed children themselves. I had anticipated that they would identify harms in their work and the importance of these harms in their lives.

2. Sensitising concepts about harm in children’s construction work used for data collection

Categories of effects	Work-related harms	source of information
Physical	Injury	child and adult workers
	Illness Treatment of illness	idem
	Poor nutrition	observations and child workers
Terms of work	Individual employment relationships: Oppressive terms and conditions Inability to discuss and review them Inability to leave work	child workers and employers
	Collective employment relationships: Non-capacity of children to mobilise to defend interests either as child workers or as construction workers	idem
	Insufficient income for daily survival and for savings, investment or spending for own interests	child workers
Learning	Non-acquisition of work skills	observations, child workers
	Non-acquisition of ‘cultural competence’: literacy, numeracy, language	idem
Social relationships	Inability to develop and maintain social relationships	idem
Labour process and system	Use of children contributing to low productivity, labour intensive techniques, low status of workers	observations, child and adult workers, employers
	Use of children having impact on income of adult workers	idem
	Economic exploitation	idem
	Age and gender discrimination: children in certain forms of work because of age and gender characteristics	idem
	Social discrimination: children in work because of other characteristics	idem

I did find in children's accounts harms that I had not pre-figured, like corporal punishment in Benin. However, although in both sites the issues listed in Table 2 affected them, in neither did interviewed children consistently and clearly identify and consider the impact of most of them. I therefore developed my own schema to frame the interviewed children's and my own appreciations of harms they risked and experienced.

It is made up of two domains, and reflects Table 2. The first includes effects of work on children themselves, covering issues identified in the first four categories of Table 2: physical, terms of work, learning, and social relationships. Most of the harms children did point to in our interviews relate to these issues. I consider these effects to be harmful for two reasons: 1) they curtail both children's well 'being' and capacity to reach their 'fullest physical and mental development' (ILO 138 art. 1); and 2) they might impair children's capacity to identify and respond to harm in their work. By well 'being', I mean their present health and command over their bodies, a concern I draw from the NSSC literature reviewed in chapter 1.

The second domain concerns harms pertaining to the labour process and system affecting both child and adult workers. The labour process is the combination of material resources and the organisation of labour used in production. (Baud 1992:1814). The labour system includes 'labour relations, modes of recruitment of labourers, class positions and social mobility of entrepreneurs and labourers.' (van der Loop 1996:19). Whether children are drawn into work and kept in certain work roles on the basis of age, gender and other social characteristics are important concerns here, with regards to how these processes involve mechanisms which turn on social disadvantage and maintain or contribute to social and economic inequality. These processes of social and class stratification in the labour process and system are referred to here as labour market 'fragmentation,' following Loop who considered that this term evokes their complexity, as well as the strategies of workers and employers, better than the more common term 'segmentation.' (Loop 1996:399)

Underlying my decision to focus on these issues is a definition of harm I have drawn from universal rights instruments, Harriss-White (2005) and Sayer (2011, 2009). Harriss-White defined destitution as a state in which people either have no assets or no control over assets, cannot access income from their own labour, do not have insurance mechanisms like savings or credit, and are not enmeshed in relationships involving social

interdependence and entitlements to the exercise of social and political rights. (2004:882-885) Sayer explained that the concept of 'contributive justice' refers to the idea that 'inequalities in the availability of work of different qualities' are as important as 'unequal distribution' in shaping social difference: an 'unequal division of labour' means some people do not have fulfilling, respected work which develops their abilities, with consequences that tend to carry over into subsequent generations. (2011:8,17) He argued that the concept clarifies the 'evaluative judgements' implicit in Bourdieu's concern with domination, oppression and inequality. In summary, harm here is considered as effects of work which impair children's physical integrity, involve or risk their destitution, confirm their own social inequality or contribute to social differentiation. Although the children I interviewed did not consistently and clearly consider how these issues might relate to their work and affect them in our interviews, many suggested concern about at least some of them.

The finding that children identified little harm in their work has oriented the content of my thesis. In chapters 3 and 4, I describe the practices of work I studied in Calavi and Bengaluru, the specific kinds of harms they entailed in reference to my definition of harm and the ways children responded. I classify these responses following Katz: 'resilience' involves adaptation to harms; 'reworking' involves attempt to change 'oppressive or unequal circumstances' and 'resistance' involves efforts to 'subvert, or disrupt' the 'conditions of exploitation and oppression.' (2004:242) In chapter 5, I examine how the situations and opinions of the children I interviewed in Calavi relate to their possible propensity to rework the terms of their work or resist the conditions which contributed to determining these terms. In chapters 6 and 7, I develop an explanation of the interviewed children's responses to harms in their work. Throughout these chapters, I examine children's work in cement block construction in Calavi and Bengaluru as practices. The next section explains this approach.

2.3 Practices, Bourdieu and children's work

2.3.1 Practice theories

According to Reckwitz (2002), three main approaches to explaining social action and order have been taken by modern social theory since its origins in late 18th Europe. 'Purpose-oriented theory' has a 'homo economicus' model of human behaviour and focuses on 'individual purposes, intentions and interests.' Rational action theory is a recent manifestation of this tradition. (2002:245) The second approach focuses on 'homo sociologicus,' who operates according to 'collective norms and resources.' (2003:245) Cultural theory is the third approach, and examines 'shared or collective symbolic structures of knowledge.' (2002:246) Practice theory is a form of cultural theory in which the unit of analysis is a practice, understood as:

a routinized type of behaviour which consists of several elements, interconnected to one other: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, 'things' and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge. (2002:249)

Practices in this sense are distinct from the idea of practice as the 'the whole of human action.' (2002:249) Reckwitz saw practice theories to decentre 'mind, texts and conversation' in the 'hypperrational and intellectualist' accounts of agency given by other cultural theories as well as by purpose and norm-oriented ones, because they consider agency as embedded in and emerging from practices. (2003:259)

Bourdieu, Butler, Foucault, Giddens, Laclau, Mouffe, Schatzki and Taylor are examples of practice theorists. (Schatzki 1996, 2001) Bourdieu stands out amongst these for having developed a theory addressing how practices relate to inequality, in which agency features importantly, which is not predicated on the malleability of practices by discourse, and which provides a methodological framework for sociological enquiry.

2.3.2 Bourdieu, agency and practice

Bourdieu laid out a theoretical basis in his early work intended to avoid the reifying anthropological structuralism of Levi Strauss and the elitist rationalism of Sartre, which polarised social science in 1950s France. (Bourdieu 2000/1972) He refined and developed

his theory over some 50 years, keeping this same intent in response to new articulations of this same opposition, which he summarised throughout his career as being between:

...mechanism, which holds that action is the mechanical effect of the constraint of external causes; and, on the other, finalism, which, with rational action theory, holds that the agent acts freely, consciously, and, as some of the utilitarians say, 'with full understanding.. (2000a:138, see also 1974:4,n3:)

According to Bourdieu, both these approaches give inadequate explanations of social bonds because they ignore:

...the economic and social conditions in which historical agents are produced and reproduced, endowed (by their upbringing) with durable dispositions that make them able and inclined to enter into exchanges, equal or unequal, that give rise to durable relations of dependence. (2000a: 200)

Bourdieu stressed that his theory was inseparable from his methodological approach. (see Wacquant 2004 for an overview) He used many methods but always combined analysis of the manifestations of unequal social relations (like differences in education, employment and consumption) and people's perspectives on their situations and practices. His purpose was to develop social scientific explanation of the import of reproduction and change in practices. (1985:734, see 2000b, 1998b, 1996, 2010/1984)

In English language social science, criticism of Bourdieu's theory has revolved around the contention that it is deterministic, weighted towards explanation by structural causality. This was a charge levied early (Jenkins 2000/1982), pursued amongst others by Butler (1999) and is upheld today in much the same terms by Archer (2012, 2007). These critics have argued that Bourdieu's theory does not accommodate either reflexivity (Archer 2012, 2007, Jenkins 1982) or communicative efficacy in social change (Butler 1999, Schatzki 2001) They tend to refer primarily to his earlier work and to consider his theoretical principles without taking into account the empirical studies on which they are based. They have however have found inconsistencies which Bourdieu never resolved, most notably ontological ones, for he did not elaborate very precisely the individual-level mechanisms at work in linking people to practices and social structure.

In Bourdieu's defence, his work centred not on individuals qua individuals, but on 'the system of relations that are independent of the populations which these relations define.'

(1992:106-107) He found again and again in his empirical studies that even as practices change, social relations of dominance, oppression and inequality tend not so much to be undermined as translated into new practices. (2000a: 151, 1998b:97, 1993:135) While Bourdieu extended his account of reflexivity in later work (McNay 2001), and he himself noted that he sought to improve with greater clarity his explanations (1992:91), on the basis of his empirical work he continued to underscore the limited capacity of agents to effect intentional social change. As pointed out by Lahire (2005), Bourdieu's literary style of writing and what might sometimes seem to be his partial rendering of empirical data, as well as the non-falsifiable nature of his results, can make it difficult to separate his theory from his findings. (Lahire 2005) Nowhere however did Bourdieu suggest that people reproduce the same practices, that the translation of old inequalities into new practices was complete, or that social relations of domination are unassailable by intentional action. (for some of his assertions to the contrary, see 2000a:215, 236, 1994/1990: 183, 1989:19, 1977:95)

Bourdieu did work towards uncovering what is necessary in a practice for it to exist. He gave primary place to agents' capacity for social change, but his conception of agency was not of the rational actor, free will against constraint kind. He did not refer to agency per se. The word has no French equivalent. This perhaps allowed him to maintain the distinction between simply acting and acting with rational intention, which is, as we have seen in chapter 1, the meaning of agency featured in NSSC accounts. He did refer to agents, rather than individuals (both words having exact French equivalents), stressing that people are people in so far as they act. However, he problematised intentionality by trying to discern the extent to which it is socially determined. His concern was to show that agents are positioned in practices vis-à-vis other agents unequally, that all agents have dispositions, interests and expectations which they bring into practices and which are also shaped by them, and that positions, dispositions, interests and expectations have a social and historical genesis, rooted in social relations in which some are dominant and flourish, and most do not. (1990:52-65)

Bourdieu argued that the causal principles of an agent's action are to be found in the interplay between his or her 'habitus' and his or her situation in a 'field.' He defined habitus as: a 'system of lasting, transposable dispositions, which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and

actions.’ (1990:50) Dispositions can be understood as people’s tendency to see the world and act in ways shaped by their social positions. By field, he meant the social relationships articulated in those practices which are particularly important as sites of reproduction and change in the broader social order. (2000a:151, 1994:190) In *Distinction*, he gives a deceptively simple formula of practices as being equivalent to this interplay. (2010/1984:95) This is perhaps best understood as short-hand for expressing that the fit between agents’ socially constituted dispositions and their resources, and the socially structured set of possibilities open to them, determines the existence and stability of the configurations of elements Reckwitz identified as comprising practices. (Bourdieu 2000a:150-151) Both field and habitus are mediating concepts, which work against what Bourdieu called the ‘short circuit fallacy’, by which terms too distant to be effectively causally related are brought together in spurious explanation, like structure and agency. (1992:69, see also 1994/1990:190)

What gives Bourdieu’s theory purchase on the attempt to understand children’s responses to harm in their work is that it neither pre-supposes that agents act in their best interests, nor disallows the possibility, but places their actions and their interests firmly in material, social, historical - and ultimately empirical - context. Methodologically, it involves giving due weight both to agents’ reasons and to the immediate forces in play in their practices, including material and bodily ones. However, it moves the stress of analysis from agents in themselves to agents in relations with other agents and as members of social groups, and to how their actions are caused by and have effect on these relations. It also makes the distinction, like Katz’ (2004) approach, between whether an agent’s doings contribute to reproducing practices, to altering them without changing social relations or to disturbing these relations, whether intentionally or not, and whether or not in his or her own interests.

A second, more general advantage of using Bourdieu’s theory for studying children’s work is that it is not based on any assumptions about the characteristics of either biological or social age. (1993:94) It is not a theory of children and childhood, but of social reproduction and change which encompasses concern with the social construction of meaning. Bourdieu once said his approach could be called either ‘constructivist structuralism’ or ‘structural constructivism.’ (1994/1990:122) Many have argued that his theoretical bridging of the subjective and the objective is fragile because his explanations cover too freely phenomenological, anthropological and structural understandings of

peoples' actions. (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1995, Reay 2004, Witz 2004). Despite these problems, it remains that Bourdieu's theory can engage with the contemporary concerns of childhood studies (agency, social roles, meanings of childhood), without being fixed on the premise that children are competent and rational decision makers. Moreover, Bourdieu's methodology examines how local and material practices relate to social structure in a way which does not make local/global distinctions, and which dismantles presuppositions of child/adult oppositions. (chapter 1) It allows for a view on the effects of children's work going beyond those experienced by individual children, which is my intention here.

Bourdieu's theories span a wide range. He elaborated on his early principles but never fundamentally changed them, and invited researchers to make flexible use of them. (2003:91, 1994/1990:4, 1992:96) In this thesis I use them selectively, and draw on the work of social scientists who have extended them. (Adkins and Skeggs 2004, Sayer 2005a) In chapters 6 and 7, I explain further the concepts and principles relevant to my analysis.

2.4 Empirical concerns

2.4.1 Children's work in cement block construction

The thesis is based on study of the practices of children's work in cement block construction, in the peri-urban localities of Calavi, Benin and northern Bengaluru, in Karnataka, India. The ILO has identified children's construction as a worst form of labour, because it is likely to involve hazards. (ILO 2011:36-38, ILO 182: art. 2, ILO Recommendation 190: art. 3)

In my research sites, children over 14 working in construction, and in Benin under 14 as well, were not unusual. Their work was largely accepted both by those most directly involved (the children, their families, other workers, employers and clients) and the general public. It was also of the kind researchers who assume children's competence and rational decision making and action tend to approve as providing access to adult employment, amenable to efforts to improve working conditions and not domestic. (chapter 1) As practices in which local norms and international standards conflicted, children's work in construction in Calavi and Bengaluru are particularly relevant to my attempt to review

some of the premises of approaches based on children's competence and rationality. Because these work practices were socially accepted and public, they were also relatively easy to study.

Children's construction work is largely carried out, as was the case in my two study sites, in the informal economy under labour contracting arrangements. The ILO report *The construction industry in the twenty-first century* suggested that international competition puts pressure on producers to reduce costs, who in turn put pressure on the construction industry, such that there has been an international, industry-wide drive towards cheap construction. (2001:25,44) In such a global context, the report claims that 'flexible labour supply', in the form of informal labour-only subcontracting, is economically too 'compelling' to be reversed. (2001:60). Wells and Wall (2003), reported that informal construction in Kenya and Tanzania can produce 'unsafe and unsanitary structures, environmental damage, 'over-design'', and that it remains essentially untaxable. (2003:335-6) They also argued that it offers 'a new model of industrial development in African countries... with wider opportunities for participation, with important implications for income distribution, poverty alleviation and human capital development.' (2003:337) Enthusiasm for small scale, labour intensive construction has been associated since the 1960s with self-help building advocates, of whom John Turner stands as the most well known. He called for resources to be supplied to poor people, so that they might use 'convivial modes of production' conducive to wise use of resources. (1978:1141)

These perspectives on optimal resource allocation, dynamic small firms, employment for the unskilled and empowered communities have promoted construction using cement blocks. Over the last forty years, cement blocks have come to be used all over the world, for all kinds of buildings. There is a widespread view that they have definite advantages, which are well captured by a review posted by an Indian construction management website, in which it is claimed:

Considering the durability, speed, simplicity and savings, construction through reinforced concrete block masonry is particularly suitable for housing and slum projects, transit camps, schools, hospitals, hotels, bungalows and industrial projects. (Projects Monitor 2013)

However, the range of quality corresponding to the range of projects indicated by this citation tends to be wide. There is no particular feature of cement block buildings that

make them durable, or pleasant, other than skilled design and techniques, which are also necessary for risk-resistance as was proved by the effects of the 2010 earthquake in Haiti. Such design and construction techniques can be expensive, and they are rarely mobilised for ‘self-help’ projects. Wells and Wall (2003) suggested that building incrementally with concrete blocks is a good form of investment for poor households, but prolonged exposure to the elements can seriously damage unfinished masonry and steel work. Moreover, questions concerning how cement block construction can be produced by very different labour processes and systems have not been addressed. Atomised processes of small-scale cement block construction often feature in situations where states have difficulties addressing social problems, as in the case of slums around the world.

In summary, there is reason to be concerned about the situation of construction workers of any age in unregulated labour markets, and the extent to which their work produces buildings that are of poor quality and costly in materials, even if cheap in labour. Children work in cement block construction in many places, but not everywhere: the reasons why children are drawn into this work and their situations in it need to be examined in context.

2.4.2 Research contexts

My reason for studying children’s work in Benin and India was to keep to the principles of comparative case study analysis. (Bourdieu 1992:234, George and Bennett 2005, see section 2.5.2) I have lived in Benin for several years and was aware of the prevalence of children working in cement block construction. I had no previous experience with India, but it is part of common knowledge that children work in construction.

Some basic social indicators relevant to children in Benin and in India are given below in Table 3. These are taken from the 2013 and the 2007/2008 Human Development reports, as well as UNICEF’s 2012 State of the World’s Children report. (UNDP 2013, 2008, UNICEF 2012) They broadly indicate similar social characteristics, but say little about the situation of sub-groups. Both Benin and India are populated by people with diverse ethnicities, religions and languages, with groups differentiated by very unequal situations.

In both countries, children's work is common, and the poorest children work the most. (BIT-INSAE 2009:47, GoI/MOSPI 2012:74) The most recent comprehensive study of children's work in Benin estimated that roughly 665 000 children between 5 and 17 are engaged in some kind of economic activity, representing 34% of all children in this age group. (BIT-INSAE 2009). In India, the 2001 Census found 12.66 million children aged 5-14 to be engaged in economic activity, or 12% of a total of 253 million children.²

3. Key social indicators for Benin and India

Indicators	Benin	India
Estimated 2012 populations, millions	9.4	1,258.4
Population under age 18, millions, 2009	4.4	447
Under-five mortality rate, per 1,000 live births: Poorest 20% / Richest 20%, 2007/2008	198 / 93	141 / 46
% Children under weight for age, children under age 5, 2003-2009	18	43
% Net primary enrolment rate: Female / Male 2005-2009	86 / 99	88 / 91
% Child labour (5-14): Female / Male, 1999-2007	45 / 47	12 / 12
Fertility rate (births per woman), 2012	5.1	2.6
Life expectancy at birth, years, 2012	56.5	65.8
% Population below \$1.25 a day poverty line, 2002-2011	47.3	32.7
% Share of income or expenditure: Poorest 10% / Richest 10% 2007/2008	3.1 / 29.0	3.6 / 31.1
% Adult literacy rate, aged 15 and older: Female / Male, 2005-2010	23.3 / 47.9	47.8 / 73.4
Human development index ranking (186 countries)	166	136

Source UNDP 2009, 2013, UNICEF 2011

(GoI/MOSPI 2008:3) Of children aged 15-19, 15 million boys and 5.5 million girls were classed as main workers, which was about 20% of this age group.. (GoI Census 2001, GoI/MOSPI 2008:3)

Benin and India have ratified the CRC. (UNCT 2013) Benin has ratified ILO 138 and 182. India has not, but has collaborated with the ILO since 1992 in efforts aimed at the eradication of child labour. (ILO 2013a,b,c) Benin has recently published, in keeping with ILO 182, a list of hazardous forms of work prohibited to persons under the age of 18, which covers any form of construction work. (RdB 2011) By India's *Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act of 1986*, rendered effective in Karnataka in 1998, construction work is prohibited to persons under the age of 14. (GoI 1986, GoK 1998)

² Note : relevant results from India's 2011 census were not available when this thesis was written.

Public primary school fees were abolished in Benin in 2006, but primary school attendance still involves contributions for school maintenance, as well as payment for school materials. (UNICEF 2009) India enacted the *Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act* in 2009, which was translated into the legislation of Karnataka in 2012. (GoK 2012) In Benin and India, primary education net enrolment rates have been rising sharply; in Benin from roughly 38% in 1989/90 to over 89% in 2008, and in India from 78% in 2002 to 98% in 2010. (ODI 2011:7, UNESCOb) However, completion of the primary cycle remains low in both countries: approximately 63% of children finish primary school in Benin, and 66% in India. (UNICEF 2011:104-105, UNESCO 2013 a,b)

More details on the research sites are given in chapters 3 and 4. However, I note that my thesis is narrowly focussed on harm in children's work and how children perceived and responded to it. I have given detailed descriptions of the work practices I examined in Calavi and Bengaluru in order to give strong basis to my exploratory interpretation of the relation between children's perceptions and responses to harm and their specific social and material situations. This was expressly to develop an alternative way of understanding the significance of working children's agency to NSSC approaches, which tend to examine children's expressed appreciations of their work and their family situations much more than their experiences as workers and their positions within broader social relations. Keeping to this purpose has meant that I have not explored in depth secondary literature relevant to working children's agency in my research sites. This includes theoretical and/or empirical studies addressing children's work, education and health, informal labour, bonded labour, politics, and gender, caste, religious and class relations in rural and urban India, produced by Indian, European and American social researchers and theorists and historians. The range and quantity of these Indian studies are further reasons for why I have not taken them into consideration here, for to have done so would have led me to give greater weight to the Bengaluru case study. However, social relational studies of workers in the informal economy, of migrant and bonded labour as well as of gender and caste dynamics, and especially studies concerning construction and brick kiln workers, have guided my analysis. (for example, Breman (1996), Breman, Guérin and Prakash (2009), Kapadia (2002a), Parry, Breman and Kapadia (1999), Picherit (2009, 2012, Herring and Agarwala (2006), Agarwala (2008), Harriss-White (2003, 2005, 2010) and Rogaly (2009)) There is very little theoretical or empirical research concerning children's agency in Benin. Howard (2012) has questioned representations of child workers in southern Benin as

trafficking victims, on the basis of NSSC principles. Research relevant to children's agency in other West African countries, some of which examines apprenticeship, could give theoretical and empirical insight into the practice I studied.

My analysis could be much enhanced by further work to frame the findings of this study as well as new research in reference to literature directly or even generally relevant to both research sites. In turn, my findings could contribute to it. These lines of development I discuss briefly in my final conclusions, in chapter 8.

2.4.3 Conceptual and empirical clarifications: children, young people, work

In Benin and India, many legal provisions define children as people under the age of 18 or concern children under 14. In lived experience categorisation is not so definite. In both research sites, I met workers in their late teens and early twenties who did not think they were fully adult, and ones under 14 who did not think they were fully children. I will discuss the importance of this in chapter 7. I follow international rights conventions and national legal definitions here, in designating under 18s as children. Although I tend to refer to people between 18 and 25 as young, I also refer to young people I interviewed as children. This is to mark that I am considering their cumulated experience as workers, most of which was before they turned 18.

I focus mainly on children aged 14 to 18, for much the same reasons as for my choice to study children working in construction. In my research sites, these children were not of primary school age, nor yet were they independent adults. They were differentiated from adults by legal and social restrictions on their work and political status. They were thus very much the kind of children many children's agency proponents believe would have much to gain from efforts to improve their status.

Children's work in construction is what Ennew *et al* referred to an 'unresolved' worst form of labour, because its effects on real children are not well known. (2005:37) Here I use the term children's work, rather than labour, but less because its effects are unknown than because I follow those, like Anker and Burra, who see the dichotomisation of work and labour as unhelpful because all kinds of work might involve harm. (chapter 1) The

practices I studied involved children in employment (although in Benin it was unwaged), but the term work captures better my concern with both labour processes and systems.

2.5 Studying children's work as a practice

2.5.1 Practices, reproduction and change

As seen in chapter 1, there has been a tendency in NSSC studies to take their words, as expressed in a research context, as 'true': example is given by Mayall who wrote: 'It is part of our new conceptualization of children...that we credit them with knowledge, rather than the relatively transient and flimsy 'perspective', 'view' or 'opinion'. (2000:107) The problem with this epistemological approach derives from what Bhaskar called the 'linguistic fallacy': it is prone to minimise the role of the researcher in the production and interpretation of children's words, and to credit children's and researchers' words with a full grasp on the real. (1989/1979:155) In contrast, Bourdieu's theory is firmly based on what Schütz called 'second-degree constructions', which are 'constructs of the constructs made by the actors on the social scene.' (Flick 2009:77) It also takes into account social structure and material conditions. This obliges a more complex approach to epistemological as well as ontological issues, but one that is also more explicit about the researcher's role in assembling evidence and interpretation.

Bourdieu did not directly address ontology and epistemology, as noted in section 2 above. Although there is debate about this (Elder Vass 2007, Archer 2012) I have found his theory and methodology to be consistent with the critical realist account of causality. Sayer explained that in the realist account, causality refers to the activation of the causal powers and liabilities of objects, such as people, things or relationships, by their relation with other objects. Causality also operates through the activation of causal powers and liabilities which are 'emergent' from these relations, and not reducible to their constitutive elements: for this reason the world should be thought of as stratified by different levels causal forces. (1992:119) Causal analysis attempts to discover the powers and liabilities which act as mechanisms to produce a certain situation or change in it. (1992:104) These are 'retroduced' through questioning what about an object and its relation to other objects could have produced the state or situation of concern. (1992:106) Regularities

occur when the properties of a causal mechanism and its external conditions remain constant. (1992:122) Social regularities are rare, because they are ‘open systems:’ they usually involve several different mechanisms and these mechanisms involve the causal powers and liabilities of people, whose capacity to learn and respond in new ways to existing conditions tends to unsettle regularities. (1992:122)

Practices appear to observers to be regularities, but as ‘open systems,’ they are also mutable and flexible. They change as a result of the actions of people engaged in them, and because they do not have fixed boundaries and relate with other phenomena. Explanation of a practice needs to identify both how its constitutive elements work together and the material and social conditions which obtain for it to exist. (Sayer 1992:111-112, George and Bennett 2005:138, Blaikie 1993:168-175)

Here I consider how children are involved in their work practices, and what it is about them and their conditions which might explain the nature of this involvement. I also consider whether the constitutive elements of children’s work practices might be changing, including in children themselves, and, although to a lesser extent, whether the broader contextual conditions of their work might be changing. (Sayer 1992:119) These concerns give the basis of my research strategy.

My first step was to establish the extent to which the children’s work activities I observed could indeed be characterised as practices. This involved data collection and analysis geared to examine the scope of commonalities and differences among the children working in cement block construction in my research sites, as to the kinds of work they did and their characteristics, experiences, relationships, opinions and ideas. It also involved effort to understand labour processes and systems and trends in supply and demand in cement block construction work. The second step was draw out on the basis of this data the broad contours of their work practices, focussing on the harms and benefits experienced by most children and how most responded. My final step was to build an account of the causal mechanisms which sustained these work practices as regularities, and those which might be undermining them, or have the potential to. Causal mechanisms here are the motivations, beliefs, and practical imperatives of the people involved in the practices of work I studied, which, following Bourdieu, I did not assume corresponded to their rational calculations of self-interest.

In the critical realist view, causality is contingent because both causes and our explanations of them are context specific: as expressed by Byrne : ‘explanation is possible, but only explanation that is local in time and place.’ (2005:97) This does not preclude objective explanation, which I am aiming for. I use the word objective in the sense developed by Morgan and Olsen (2007, 2008), akin to that used by Bourdieu (1977, 2000), as something to be valued in research. It implies recognition that subjective accounts can be used to build social scientific knowledge. This knowledge is fallible because limited by situated ‘ways of knowing the world’, but can be improved, and it helps give grounds to attempt to intervene in the world: in this sense, objectivity is a ‘lever of agency.’ (2008:108)

I suggest here that an objective understanding of the harms of children’s work in cement block construction in Calavi and Bengaluru can be built on my interpretation of interviewed children’s descriptions and my observations. I do not pretend to give a complete account of these harms, or of children’s views on their work. My focus is on harm as I have defined it, albeit in light of interviewed children’s own accounts of their work and their concerns. What they said, and did not say, during our interviews and how closely what they said matched what they think and have experienced is a reflection of the quality of my approach to each one. Their answers might have been influenced by cultural practices I am ignorant of relating to how the issues I raised might be discussed with a stranger. My respondents, both adults and children, had not been interviewed about their work before, and they probably had not thought about it in ways corresponding to my questions. Their answers might have been different had they had more time to think, or in other contexts. Moreover, their appreciations of their work were likely to change over time. Examining their work as a practice has allowed me to a certain extent to control for these issues. My comparisons between children in each research site were of summarised and specific attributes, taken from the interviewed children’s answers. My observations of labour process also focussed on similarities and differences. For Calavi, comparisons were made across a relatively large number of children and established clearly which attributes were mostly common to respondents, and where there was diversity among them. In the Bengaluru case, even though I interviewed a much smaller number of children, points of commonality and diversity also emerged. My observations in both sites revealed consistencies in labour processes and systems. As my findings were not dependant on individual children’s accounts, and showed strong patterns, I feel that they do give some objective insight into the practices I studied, their harms and the children’s responses to

these harms. My use of the term objective implies that the objective and subjective nature of reality overlap, so I do not mean to suggest by this that the children's subjective accounts are in any way 'unreal'.

2.5.2 Comparative case study design

I have tried to achieve a balance between being able to closely examine children's individual experiences and perspectives on their work, as well as the perspectives of other people involved in it (employers, fellow workers and in Bidar, parents of working children), and having enough observations to be able to establish whether patterns exist which characterise work practices. I also hoped to discover what similarities and differences might exist between the practices I studied in Calavi and in Bengaluru, because they belong within contexts which are alike in some structural features, but very different in geographical, institutional and social characteristics. For these reasons, and to keep with critical realist principles about causality, I have used a configurational comparative case study design. As defined by Rihoux and Ragin, configurational comparative methods are an ensemble of methods designed 'to allow systematic cross-case comparisons while at the same time giving justice to within case complexity, particularly in small and intermediate-N research designs.' (2008: xix)

Yin uses the term 'embedded' to describe case studies which cover more than one unit of analysis, these units being embedded in the overall case. (2003:42) In this study, cases are the practices of children's work in cement block construction in my research sites, while each interview respondent is a case 'sub-unit.' I followed George and Bennett's 'method of structured, focussed comparison' in data collection and analysis. (2005:68) The data collected was structured by my collection of similar information about each case and each case sub-unit. It was focussed, in dealing only with certain aspects of the children and their work, most notably those related to my schema for understanding harm and children's responses to it. This ensured that in analysis, it was possible to systematically compare and cumulate findings about each case and each case 'sub-unit.' (George and Bennett 2005:68)

One way to characterise this design would be to say it lies between qualitative and quantitative ones. In this PhD study, a survey would have been unfeasible because of the numbers of children working in construction, their mobility, their scarce free time and the

time needed to ensure their meaningful consent to participate, issues relevant in both my research sites. Qualitative methods would have involved number of children too small for me to attempt to identify structural patterns. It would also have been logistically difficult and ethically questionable in this research to attempt to develop the meaningful relationships on which most qualitative methods used in research which children are based. Comparative case study of children's work practices allowed me to take into consideration children's own words and my observations of their daily lives to examine how harm in their work, and their responses to it, related to their social situations.

My sample sizes were small, particularly in the Bengaluru study. Yet my findings of commonalities among the interviewed children have had great significance in the analysis of my results, as well as for the relevance of my findings. (George and Bennett 2005, Berg-Schlosser et al 2008:11) Within the two practices I studied, commonalities were consistent and important enough to justify tentative claims about causal regularities which might help explain how the interviewed children's social positions relate to their responses to harm in their work, and which might be generalisable to other children in similar circumstances in the same, or similar work practices. (chapter 6) I also found that across the two practices I studied, indication that similar causal mechanisms, most notably interviewed children's own conceptions of childhood, might help explain their views on their work and their responses to it. (chapter 7) These findings were unanticipated, as I had assumed that the differences both between individual children within each practice and across the two practices would be too great for strong commonalities. They warrant further research intended to test whether and under what conditions generalisation might be accurate.

The possibility of building evidence for generalisation is inherent to a 'structured and focussed' comparative case study design, and is coherent with Bourdieu's methodology. He recommended a comparative case study approach as a way to avoid both the extreme detail of 'empiricist idiography' and artificial, empirically baseless generalisation. (1992:233-234) He argued that comparison helps researchers consider each case as a 'particular instance of the possible' but allows for the discovery of 'the invariant properties that it conceals under the appearance of singularity.' (1992:234) He also argued that comparative methods favour careful data analysis because they help reveal researchers' own preconceptions about categories and social processes. (1992:234)

A comparative case study did indeed help me be attentive to contextual specificity: the differences between the sites reminded me not to take ideas, norms and practices pertaining to children and children's work in either site for granted, or my own. My choice to study very different cases was partly made with this intention, and as well as being motivated by my desire to premise my study on the complexity of practices and to avoid setting too simplistically children's lived experience in opposition to ideal models of childhood and children. However, because I compared cases belonging not just to different countries but to different continents within the fixed boundaries of a PhD programme, and was entirely unfamiliar with India, I did not attain ethnographic depth in field research. This was not detrimental to my ability to focus on children's material situations in their work, which was a main interest of my design strategy, but it was to my ability to gain understanding of their work, family and wider social and political relationships. For example, study of the experiences of the children I interviewed in both Calavi and Bengaluru in their home villages would have helped give greater precision to my analysis. I was also unable to study language and discourse, and to apprehend change over time. Furthermore, I did not examine how the practices I studied might compare with other local construction and children's work practices, or with the practices involved in keeping children out of work and in school. The time and effort I needed to research and develop analysis of the two cases, as well as the number of pages I have used here to recount results, also restricted my engagement with secondary literature.

2.6 Data collection and analysis

2.6.1 Sources

Fieldwork in Benin was conducted in Benin between November 2010 and April 2011. Fieldwork in India was conducted over three visits: January 2010, April-June 2010, May-June 2011. Several forms of data collection were used.

Observations and a survey

Observations were made of construction sites and the built environment. In a first stage, I distinguished different construction systems, as prevalent configurations of types of project

and labour processes, and identified those involving children and cement blocks. I focussed on urban construction, because in both sites concrete blocks were more commonly used in urban areas. In Benin, my choice of construction system to study was straightforward, as in the locality of my research, there was one dominant one, and it very much involved children and cement blocks. I chose to do research in Bengaluru because I found that cement blocks were used there more than in other cities I visited, and the city was small enough for me to visit most areas. In the periphery of Bengaluru, several systems were observed. Workers moved between them, doing the same kind of work. Accordingly, I focussed on forms of unskilled work in which children's work figured most prominently. Children's activities in these different forms, and their characteristics, were uniform enough for me to group them together as a broad practice. I conducted research in peri-urban areas, as in each site their low density meant it was possible to approach workers and employers without provoking public attention in a way which might have been compromising to them.

I observed construction sites throughout my research, in order to learn about children's situations in construction labour processes and systems in my research areas.. In Calavi, with the help a small team of students, I conducted a survey of active and inactive construction sites and the workers on them, which covered the kind of project, stage of completion, numbers, tasks, status and ages of workers. Results gave the basis of my analysis of the importance of children's work in labour market dynamics in cement block construction in Calavi, and contributed to my examination of its characteristics. These issues are addressed in the next chapter concerning harm in the practice of children's cement block construction work in Calavi and children's responses to it. The chapter presents in more detail the survey and its results. I was unable to conduct a similar survey in Bengaluru, for reasons of difficult access. This prevented me from establishing with precision different forms of children's work in cement block construction, the numbers of children involved and their relations to adult workers. However, observations allowed me to make estimates and identify broad categories of children's work situations in my research area. I discuss my access difficulties and observation findings in the subsequent chapter, which deals with harm and children's responses to it in their work in unskilled cement block construction in urban northern Bengaluru.

Secondary sources

National and state statistics, governmental and non-governmental reports, newspaper and journal articles and other documents provided information regarding structural and institutional conditions relevant to children's work in cement block construction in Calavi and Bengaluru.

Interviews

The thesis is nearly entirely based on semi-structured interviews with child and young workers. In Calavi, I interviewed 39 boys aged 20 and under, as well as two young men aged 25. I interviewed nine boys and three girls in Bengaluru.

In Calavi, I also interviewed 25 adult workers, including 20 'master' construction workers and two representatives of construction worker associations. In Bengaluru, I interviewed 15 adult workers, five labour contractors, two site supervisors and four owners of cement-block making enterprises where children worked.

In Calavi, child and adults workers were contacted on construction sites. For ethical reasons, before proposing interviews to children, I asked permission from their direct employer, invariably apprenticeship 'masters' on whom the children depended almost entirely. In most cases, I interviewed masters before doing so. Response was nearly entirely positive; those who refused said they would be changing location and therefore unavailable. I could not be fully purposive in my sampling, because interviews depended on whether I could contact masters (who often left child workers alone on work sites) and children's availability out of work hours. I did however interview children of a range of ages and situations, in keeping with the intention of looking for possible commonality in their diversity. In Bengaluru, it was much more difficult to reach child workers. Their employment relationships were more diffuse, and they mostly lived with families. Before approaching workers on construction sites and in cement block making enterprises, I secured permission from employers. Mostly I approached people out of work hours on their way home from work, or people living in tent colonies, who in my research locality I found were all unskilled construction workers. In Bengaluru, before proposing an interview to a child I first interviewed a parent, in the cases of families working together,

or asked permission from the labour contractor of children working independently. Workers in Bidar were available for interviews only on Sunday mornings. For these reasons, the children I interviewed were few in number, but as in Calavi they were diverse in situations and characteristics.

For adult and child workers, in both Calavi and Bengaluru, I used the same core, semi-structured interview schedule. The interview schedule for children included fewer questions about work experiences, in order to keep these interviews brief. The schedule was refined in the first weeks of data collection with the help of research assistants. (Appendices 1 and 2 give the versions used in Bengaluru). Most questions were meant to be open, and topics were broached with several questions, so that respondents had opportunity to modify the information they gave over the course of the interview. Interviews were recorded with the permission of respondents.

Governmental and non-governmental child protection and labour officers were also interviewed in each site. (representing 12 agencies in Calavi or Cotonou, Benin's capital, and 12 agencies in Bengaluru, see Appendix 7) Although the information collected in these interviews hardly appears in the thesis, primarily for lack of space, it helped guide my thinking throughout data collection as well as analysis.

2.6.2 Research assistance and translation

In Calavi for interviews with child and adult workers, none of whom spoke French, I relied on my research assistant, a man who lived near Calavi I have known for many years. Before commencing, I reviewed with him qualitative interview techniques, referring mostly to Kvale's guidelines (2008), as well as the principles of ethical research with children and the theoretical purpose of the thesis. We conducted all interviews together. While he asked questions, I took observation notes and answered respondents' questions as they arose. He was comfortable in most local languages of the region and fully fluent in French. He was a considerate interviewer, and I feel sure his qualities helped make the interview an interesting and agreeable experience for all respondents

In Bengaluru, I recruited two assistants with the help of a sociologist at a local university institute. One was a current PhD student, researching rural inequality, and the other had

recently abandoned a similar PhD project. Both were men in their late 30s, from rural villages in southern Karnataka. They spoke Kannada, Telugu and Tamil fluently, the languages used by most workers we approached. They did not speak Hindi very well, so we did not interview several workers approached who were from Northern India. They were also not very fluent in English, which meant we had to take care in our exchanges to make sure we understood each other. I trained these researchers as I had trained my Calavi assistant, and we conducted interviews together in the same way. They were used to quantitative methods and the concept of research ethics was entirely new to them. This was detrimental to the quality of early interviews, as I found I had to insist that they fully explain research objectives to participants and to encourage them to formulate their questions to elicit open response. However, both were respectful interviewers, and interviews were conducted in a relaxed and informal way.

Interviews were translated by these assistants, as well as two other people specifically engaged for this work in both Benin and Bengaluru. I provided a translation protocol, in which I asked that the translations be faithful to the original language and wording, and include non verbal vocalisations and pauses. In both sites, several interviews were translated by several assistants. This helped me verify that there was not systematic discrepancy in their translations.

2.6.3 Data analysis

Translated interviews were first analysed with Nvivo. I used thematic coding and then reviewed material by these themes. With Excel, I constructed a data table including all children interviewed, and nearly fifty columns referring to their characteristics, relationships, work terms, experiences and opinions. This helped me identify similarities and differences between them.

I used Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) to give depth to my examination of the perspectives of child workers in Benin on their work. As a configurational comparative method, QCA involves examining cases as configurations of conditions relevant to an outcome. (Rihoux and Ragin 2008:182) I used QCA as an analysis technique to try to identify patterns in the children's situations, experiences and opinions and the outcome of whether they or not they were critical of the practice of construction apprenticeship. I had

planned to interview at least 30 children in both research sites with the intent of using QCA to identify patterns in their personal characteristics and their work situations. My empirical findings, and the fact that I interviewed a small number of children in Bengaluru, incited me to restrict my use of QCA to investigate patterns in the characteristics of child workers in Calavi related to the criticism they expressed of the practice of their work.

2.7 Ethical concerns

My research involved the direct participation of children, and of adults, likely to be particularly vulnerable because of poverty and possibly difficult and exploitative employment relationships. It was possible that it might uncover instances of forced adult or child work or extreme abuse. For these reasons, it was reviewed by the University of Manchester's ethics committee. Because of the possible vulnerability of intended participants, I aimed to respect the 'do no harm' research principle. (Schenk and Williamson 2005:2)

I explained my research objectives to all participants. However, explanations given to construction workers were partial: I said I was interested in children's work in construction, rather than children's agency in their work. Potential respondents were given information sheets about my research and the topics of interview questions, in French in Calavi and in Kannada, Karnataka's main language, in Bengaluru. Few respondents spoke or read these languages, but it was probable they knew someone who could. Whenever an interview was proposed, at least five days passed before potential respondents were asked if they accepted. I was very careful to ensure that children accepted voluntarily, mostly, as explained above, by giving them opportunity to observe an interview with an adult, or at least to know that adults who had participated did not object. At the outset of the interview, I gave each participant written detail of how I would use the information they provided and preserve confidentiality, and how to reach me if they decided they wanted to retract. (Appendix 5) This was signed by research assistants and myself. I believe this was less invasive than asking written consent, especially as most construction workers were not literate, but it still served to formalise my obligations to them.

I remunerated all construction worker respondents. They were given the equivalent of nearly half a day's wages of an adult unskilled male worker, in both Calavi and Bengaluru, for interviews which lasted between an hour (for most children) and three hours or more (with people who enjoyed talking and had time). For some, this was a symbolic gesture, for others, especially children, it was much appreciated. I paid respondents because they were giving me their time and to acknowledge to them that our interview would bring no other benefit. In Bengaluru, many workers said they did not have time, regardless of the remuneration, and in Calavi, I felt comfortable that interviews were arranged in ways which did not inconvenience participants: I had no reason to believe that respondents participated only because of the indemnity

Interviews were conducted in public places chosen by respondents. I made no attempt for privacy, which would have contravened child protection practice. In Calavi, some interviews with children were held in their masters' homes, and several adult workers were interviewed in their own homes. Most interviews took place on worksites, often during work hours with masters, and in the early evenings and Sundays with child workers. In Bengaluru, interviews were conducted in children's homes or temporary living places. I did not discourage people from observing the interview, for fear doing so might raise suspicions about my intentions. Highly sensitive subjects were not raised, and emotions and feelings were not probed. It was agreed with my research assistants that questions which might be difficult for a child to answer would be asked only when no one else was listening. (eg: What do you think is good/bad about your apprenticeship?). Respondents were encouraged to ask questions at any point.

Each respondent was asked to give a pseudonym at the beginning of the interview. These pseudonyms were the only names attached to electronic data, and are used here. I have also given pseudonyms to my research locations in Calavi and Bengaluru.

While these procedures are relatively straightforward, much less so are the broader ethical concerns of research with children. Major issues in academic literature are how to acknowledge power differentials (Christenson 2004, Valentine *et al* 2001) and child appropriate methods (Punch 2002, Skelton 2008). Much of this literature recommends a 'rights-based approach' whereby children participate in all stages of research, which is meant to ensure that the process is empowering and its results beneficial to them. (Beazley

et al 2009) Ethical issues are further complicated when research is cross-cultural and involves disadvantaged children. (Abebe 2009)

I tried to ensure that consent was voluntary that my research assistants and I kept a neutral, respectful demeanour in order to communicate that we had no particular expectations of respondents or judgements on their words. My use of 'adult' interview methods was justified by the fact I interviewed mostly children 14-18, and did not interview children under 12, although some very young children were observed working in cement block construction in both sites. This was because I felt my research question could be addressed by focussing on older children and because I was doubtful about the possibility of informed consent from young children. I took care to ensure that my assistants explained that we asked the same questions of children and adults, but did not expect anyone to know all the answers, which helped put child respondents at ease. I also tried to ensure that assistants gave children time to reflect and speak, as most did indeed express themselves more hesitantly than most adults.

My research was not based on child participation. This is because its main subject – the theoretical conceptualisation of working children's agency – is an example of an issue which does concern them, even if distantly, but about which the children I interviewed had little knowledge. (Hart 2008) This is also why I did not explain to respondents my interest in children's agency, and gave worker respondents an indemnity. The fundamental ethical dilemma I faced was the tension between my aim to question how the children I interviewed perceived and responded to harm in their work, and the irrelevance of my answers to them. This however is also a motivation of my research, as I am concerned that the premise of children's competence and rational decision making and action is not necessarily in the interest of many working children.

More than the literature on research with children, literature on feminist research methodology has helped me clarify the ethics of my research practice. (particularly Letherbury 2004, 2003) I turned to this literature because I found little consideration of questions about how researchers affect and are affected by research within recent literature concerning methodology in childhood and children studies, but these questions emerged strongly during my project. In respect of the ethical principles of feminist methodology, which does foreground attention to researcher subjectivity, it is important for me to record

how my personal circumstances during my research, and my reflections on these circumstances, affected data collection and analysis, specifically in relation to my access to and interactions with respondents. (see Doucet and Mauthner 2008, Edwards and Mauthner 2002 for overviews of interview-based qualitative research issues addressed by feminist theorists)

My ability to access child and adult construction worker respondents in Calavi, and to easily establish good rapport with these respondents as well with the child and adult workers in Bengaluru who agreed to an interview, owes much, as noted above, to the skills of my research assistants as well as to the licit nature of my subject and the non-sensitive and non-probing nature of my questions. I feel strongly however that it was also due to the fact that I was either heavily pregnant or accompanied by an infant daughter in nearly all my exchanges with respondents and potential respondents. This helped me explain why I was doing research in the first place (it was for me an activity amenable to pregnancy and infant care). I also think my evident motherhood helped my respondents understand my interest in children. More significantly, conversations with respondents, male and female and of all ages, about children and childcare, when we proposed an interview, before it, during it and after it, helped establish grounds for communication that were at once personal and neutral. It gave me the chance to make myself better known to respondents and set the informal, friendly tone of the interview.

In Calavi, adult construction workers, their partners and I discussed breastfeeding, teething and how to develop motor skills. In Bengaluru, breastfeeding was a very private matter, but respondents and I asked each other questions about our beliefs about child care and nutrition. The differences between my exchanges about motherhood and children in Calavi and Bengaluru helped keep me aware of the differences in child rearing practices between the two sites and between these and my own Canadian/English practice, as well as of commonalities. It was very clear to me that in common was a general, demonstrable, caring interest in children, especially young ones.

I enjoyed these interactions greatly and learnt much from them, and felt respondents did too. But they are of ethical concern, for two main reasons. 1- having a baby may have given me better access more easily and quickly than most researchers could hope for in my research contexts; 2- I am ambiguous about whether some of my actions could be

considered to be the instrumentalisation of my child, or even the manipulation of my respondents. For example, more than a few times I deliberately put her in the arms of child respondents in Calavi who seemed to want to ask to hold her: invariably this seemed to give them pleasure, but it also seemed to help them talk more fluently, and their play with my child revealed something of their unguarded, intimate selves, which they might not have chosen to demonstrate deliberately. I also note that I used to ask child worker observers to play with her in order to gain privacy at critical interview moments. The implications of these concerns are that I must make it clear that while I advocate the use of comparative case study in order to favour the accumulation of (contextual, fallible) knowledge, I am not suggesting that my research project, or indeed any research project, is fully replicable. I also want to acknowledge that I was able to shape the nature of my interactions with respondents because of my specialised knowledge of interviewing techniques, which helped me realise how I could use the opportunity of my child to facilitate interviews, and which respondents did not have at their disposal.

My opportunity to improve communication with respondents through exchanges based on my motherhood and the child herself was very context specific. Anthropologists van Tilberg and (1998) and Sutton (1998) give examples of how pregnancy and small children can seriously complicate communication with research subjects. But when I realised I had this opportunity, I felt my investment in these exchanges to be an ethical choice more than a data collection strategy. It derived primarily from my values of politeness and sociability on the one hand, and on the other hand and more weightily, from my commitment to trying to dismantle divisive social differences in whatever ways possible, including small instances of respectful communication. But in the case of this particular project, I could not help feeling that it was also hypocritical. The presence of my daughter during interviews was a constant demonstration of inequalities which will never be diminished by a pleasant conversation: she was much better nourished than the children I met in Benin and has the prospect of at least 15 years of education before her, health care and familial financial support as needed indefinitely, and I do not foresee that either she or I will have to fight for these conditions. They are advantages my respondents made clear they wanted very much for their own children. Furthermore, seeing how quickly child workers in Calavi shifted from a grave manner in our interviews to unrestrained delight in their play with my daughter, made me very sensitive to, and pained by, their limited opportunities for warm social contact and play.

The disparities between my daughter's situation and that of the children I interviewed were of benefit to the research process. They forced me to consider constantly the ethical consequences of different approaches to children's work, as well as to clarify my own difficulties in trying to study situations of poverty and inequality while being unable to affect them and questioning whether I was imposing on analysis my own (liberal, middle class, Western) moral values about childhood. I have tried to resolve these difficulties by attempting to be transparent about my commitment to equality of capabilities (Sen 1999, Nussbaum 2011), to give detailed account of empirical data and to keep my analysis firmly connected to it. I remain however deeply troubled by the ethical contradictions which come with being in a position of privilege and security while conducting research about children in difficult situations.

2.8 Conclusions

In brief, the methodology I have developed aims to provide an alternative explanation of children's response to harm in their cement block construction work in Calavi and Bengaluru to the one which would be advanced by the premise of their competence and rational decision making and action. It uses Bourdieu's theory to build an account of children's work as a practice, on the basis of his understanding of agency as being conditioned by material and social contexts. My study is limited because I was not able to develop ethnographical, socioeconomic and historical analysis. It is also limited because I have not addressed secondary literature. It is biased by my values and personal circumstances. As I did not interview many children, I do not claim to give a complete account of their work practices, or of children's different forms of work in concrete block construction in Calavi or Bengaluru, or of children's responses to harm in these practices. However, my intention was to examine children's agency in their work, rather than to provide a fully comprehensive study of their work practices. Although my results cannot be directly generalisable, they could be used to lay the basis for further research aimed at stronger generalisation. To the extent that I give a plausible and defensible account of harm in the interviewed children's work, how they responded to it and how their social positions and material contexts can help explain their responses, I hope to have substantiated my main argument, that children's competence and rational decision making and action should not be assumed in the assessment of harm in children's work.

3. The practice of children's work in construction in Calavi, Benin: the apprenticeship system

In this chapter I examine children's work in cement block construction in Calavi, Benin on the basis of my field research. I describe the labour process and system, and then the situations and experiences of child apprentices, who were by far the most numerous children involved in cement block construction in Calavi. My purpose is to establish the characteristics of the practice of their work. At the end of the chapter, in reference to the definition of harm I explained in chapter 2, I clarify how construction apprenticeship caused or risked causing harm to children and how interviewed apprentices responded. In this chapter and the next, in which I describe children's work in unskilled cement block construction work in urban northern Bengaluru, I lay the basis for my analysis of how these harms and risks are generated and children's responses to them, which is developed in the following three chapters.

3.1 Construction work and workers in Calavi

3.1.1 Construction workers in Benin

There is little available information about child or adult construction workers in Benin. A national study of working children conducted in 2008 found that 7000 children aged 5-17 were working in construction, with boys aged 14-17 counting for approximately 55%, those aged 5-11 for 15%, and those aged 12-13 for 13%. 16% of child construction workers were estimated to be girls, most aged 5-11. The study's results also showed that approximately 60% of children working in construction were in urban areas. These 7000 children represent about 1% of those aged 5-17 found to be engaged in economic activity, a population counted as around 665 000 children of a total of nearly 2 million in this age group. The study showed that most working children were involved in agriculture (62%), followed by commerce and restaurant work (20%). (BIT/INSAE 2009:73,84)

These figures indicate that children make up about 10% of the construction workforce. The published results of the last census, conducted in 2002, showed that Benin's workforce of

2,8 million workers aged 10 and over included nearly 70 000 construction workers. By far the majority of enumerated construction workers were male: females counted for fewer than 1500. The 2002 census results also found that 95 % of all workers were in the informal sector, and 5% were apprentices. If this percentage applies to construction workers, nearly 67000 construction workers were in the informal, 'artisanal' sector, and 3500 were apprentices. (RdB-INSAE 2002a:23,24)

A legal code for artisanal production covers construction crafts. (RdB 2001) It defines an artisanal craft as one in which expertise is acquired by practice and is exerted in enterprises with ten or fewer qualified workers. Artisans are supposed to register with a governmental agency. Its representatives explained to me that this provision is not enforced and that information on registered workers is not collated. There were at the time of my field no laws specific to the health and safety of construction workers in Benin.

In the next two sections, I describe artisanal construction work in the locality of my study. The information given comes from a survey of construction sites, observations and interviews with workers.

3.1.2 Cement block construction in Abomey Calavi

The commune of Abomey Calavi lies to the north of Cotonou, Benin's economic capital and largest city. Its population more than doubled between the census surveys of 1992 and 2002, rising from 127 000 to 308 000. (INSAE 2002b:10) By 2006, Abomey Calavi had a population estimated at 377 000 and it is expected that it will almost double again by 2020. (RdB-INSAE 2006, Chabi 2010:107)

Abomey Calavi's growth can be accounted for by its proximity to Cotonou. With an area of 539 km², its density stood at 571 people per km² in 2002, whereas Cotonou, which covers 79 km², had a density of 8420 in 2002. (RdB-MD 2006: 8, RdB-INSAE 2002b) To the east of Abomey Calavi are marshy plains and the Lake Nokoué, but its western and northern areas are made up of wide swathes of firm land, on which agriculture is giving

way to building. A 500 m² lot could cost more than 100 million *francs cfa*³ (*francs*) in the centre of the Cotonou in 2010, but anything between 50 and 100 times less in Abomey Calavi. (Chabi 2010:108) The road between the commune's capital, town of about 70 000 people also called Abomey Calavi, and Cotonou was improved between 2007 and 2012, meaning that now it is possible to cover the 17km distance in half an hour during peak traffic, whereas it used to take as long as two hours. (RdB-MD 2006:8)

My study took place in this town, referred to generally as Calavi. It was visible that cement block construction was the main kind of construction work in Calavi, but to gauge the general features of its labour process and employment system, I surveyed construction sites and workers in two areas of about 5km² each. Most interviewed workers were first approached in these areas. This was because in both there were many 'active' sites - on which construction work was actually being carried out - during the period of data collection.

I refer to these localities with the pseudonyms Dassa and Savè. In each, construction sites were counted, with record taken of stage of completion and the numbers, ages and crafts of present workers, in February and then again in April 2011. In total, 85 construction sites were found in Dassa and 53 in Savè.

In both areas, cement blocks were used on every site. Construction was nearly entirely for housing. It was also of the same basic type, using concrete structural columns and beams, walls made of cement blocks and either slab concrete or sheet metal roofs. In Dassa, by far the most frequent type of construction was for large, villa style houses, covering more than 70m² per floor. Nearly all were being built to have slab roofs with at least two floors, and 13 were being built to have more than two floors. In Dassa there were also several projects for multi-storied apartment buildings. In Savè, most construction was for single story houses of less than 50m² and buildings comprising several two-room, very basic apartments intended for rental. Half were to be roofed with sheet metal, the rest with slabs. On some sites, blocks were made with a cement/earth mixture, whereas in Dassa all blocks were made with gravel, sand and cement.

³ At the time of my field work, 1 GBP was worth 765 *francs cfa*.

These differences show that Dassa attracted more affluent builders than Savè. They are also relevant to construction techniques. Multi-storied, slab-roofed buildings are more complicated to build than single story buildings, as they must be conceived to ensure that the support structure can bear heavy loads. They also require extensive form work and steel bending for the preparation of support columns, beams and slabs.

Although presently dominant in Calavi, concrete structure/cement block wall construction is a relatively new and particularly urban way of building. The 2002 census results showed that 83 % of dwellings in the department of the Littoral – which comprises Cotonou, and 41% in the Atlantique department, which includes Abomey Calavi, had ‘brick walls’, which include both earth brick and cement block walls. The national average was 32%. (RdB-INSAE 2003:8-9) Buildings with cement slab roofs are rarer. The census showed that while 2,2% of all Benin’s dwellings had a slab concrete roof, most of these were in Cotonou, with a percentage of 8,6%. The department of the Atlantique had only nearly 1% of dwellings roofed with concrete whereas 79% were roofed with sheet metal and 18% with straw. (RdB-INSAE 2003:8-9)

Of the total 137 building sites, only 50 were active on the days of the survey. 57 inactive construction sites were inhabited although the building was not finished. On the basis of vegetation growth, many unoccupied sites seemed to have been inactive for at least a year. In Dassa, about a quarter of the inactive sites consisted of no more than a cement block enclosure, a pile of blocks or the beginnings of foundations. This suggests that many builders in the survey were indeed using their projects for long term investment. (Wells and Wall 2003) The large number of arrested construction sites as well of inhabited dwellings under ongoing construction also pointed to the sporadic nature of cement block construction work in Calavi.

3.1.3 Construction workers in Calavi

Over the two survey expeditions, a combined total of 237 workers were found working on the 50 active sites. All were men, save for ten women working to carry water with a team of slab makers. A few of these sites were active on both of these expeditions, but this does not alter the usefulness of the findings in showing how labour was organised. The

breakdown of workers by craft is given in Table 4, and indicates the importance of structural work and the prevalence of masons among all workers.

4. Numbers and crafts of workers on active construction sites in Dassa and Savè (pseudonyms), Calavi, February and April 2011

Category	Craft	Number of workers
Structural work	brick makers	6
	concrete pourers for roofs	20
	septic tank or well diggers	7
	form workers	12
	steel benders	22
	masons	149
	Total workers	216
Finishing work	carpenters	6
	electricians	2
	plumbers	6
	tile layers	3
	painters	2
	glaziers	2
	Total workers	21
All workers		237

Source: survey construction sites, Calavi, 2011

Structural work in cement block construction covers:

- block making;
- making poured concrete slabs for roofs and floors;
- form work, which involves setting frames to contain and support poured slabs, beams and columns as well as making scaffolding;
- steel bending, which involves making steel bar reinforcements for columns, beams and slabs;
- masonry, which includes making foundations, building walls and laying coating
- septic tank and well making, which involves both digging and making containment structures.

I found in Calavi workers specialised in all these kinds of work. I consider in this study only masons, form workers and steel benders, as these crafts involved children systematically, and were most central to cement block construction. The few children I observed in slab making, block making and well making were mason apprentices, or were working on a very casual basis.

Interviewed workers explained that a client might identify and contract directly with different artisans, especially if he or she was building in increments and had connections with workers, but masons could be contracted for hiring all other structural workers and sometimes finishing artisans as well. Sometimes a master mason subcontracted part or even all of a contract to another master or worker, taking a cut of the pay. It was also reported, and confirmed by my observations, that many masons undertook block making, form work and steel bending, and built septic tanks and wells, especially for simple projects. Interviewed workers agreed that it was financially advantageous to contract directly with clients and that contracts covering work from foundations to finishing were more profitable than contracts for small stages. While form workers, steel benders and finishing workers were involved for only part of a project, and were required mainly for complex projects, masons worked over the entire structural phase on all types of projects.

Another mason's advantage was that some could design simple projects. More complex projects – anything over one story and with irregular morphology - were designed by trained engineers and architectural draftspeople referred to as 'technicians'. Architects are by law supposed to be responsible for the designs of buildings over 150m in Benin, but were few in number. Only 128 were registered with the Benin's order for architects and urban planners in 2012. (ONaub 2012). This gives an approximate ratio of 1.5 architects per 100 000 people in Benin, whereas the European average is 85. (OdA 2013)

On construction sites for villas and multi-storied buildings, work was supervised by technicians as well as by clients or their proxies. On most one story, sheet metal roof projects, and for minor works like building of enclosure walls, no technician was involved.

I found four categories of workers in form work, steel bending and masonry. These derive both from qualification and relation to client. A *maitre*, or master, had completed an apprenticeship and was working under direct contract, however small, with a client, or in the case of steel benders and form workers, a client or a main contractor master mason. Most had apprentices. An *ouvrier* was a skilled worker working for a master. *Ouvriers* encountered were in two situations: apprentices who had completed training but had not yet obtained their '*libération*' (liberation), by which a master formally designated an apprentice as qualified; and qualified, 'liberated' workers, with or without apprentices. A *manoeuvre* or *aide maçon* was an unskilled, ad hoc worker. *Ouvriers* and *manoeuvres*

were called on as needed often for just a few days' work. An apprentice was in training under a master, who in this relationship was referred to as his *patron*.

These categories correspond to those given in the *Code de l'artisanat*. (RdB 2001) It defines an artisan as a professionally qualified self-employed person exercising an artisanal craft. Qualification is attested to by recognition in the '*milieu social*' (social environment) and completion of an apprenticeship, or of a formal technical course plus a year's experience. Only two of 25 adult workers I met with had trained in a technical school, of whom one had also apprenticed. According to the *Code*, a master artisan (*maitre artisan*) is recognised as such by his or her social environment, has several years experience, and can train apprentices, who are engaged by written or verbal contract to learn the craft '*par la pratique*' (by practice).

The advantages ascribed to masons attached only to masters, and only a very few worked as masters, as is shown by Table 5 which gives the distribution of workers by status found in the survey. In total, of the 183 workers in the three main structural crafts, there were 59 masters, 41 *ouvriers* or *manoeuvres* and 83 apprentices. The survey did not distinguish between *manoeuvres* and *ouvriers*, so these categories are conflated here.

5. Numbers and status of workers in main structural crafts, on active construction sites in Dassa and Savè (pseudonyms), Calavi, February-April 2011

Craft / Status	Apprentice	Manoeuvre / Ouvrier	Master
masons	69	33	47
form workers	5	3	4
steel benders	9	5	8
Total	83	41	59

Source: survey construction sites, Calavi, 2011

On seven of the 50 active sites, master masons were present alongside their apprentices. On eight, master masons were working but no mason apprentices. On four sites only mason *ouvriers* and *manoeuvres* were working. On 23 sites there was no master, just apprentices, *ouvriers* and *manoeuvres*. Of these, on 13 sites only apprentices were found, including five on which they were all under 18. On a total of 26 sites, there were apprentices working without a master in their own craft.

The apprentices' stated ages varied between 9 and 26, the *ouvriers*' and *manoeuvres*' between 17 and 44 and the masters' between 28 and 55. As shown by Table 6, 54 were

under 18, including six under 14, as well as two *ouvriers* who were 17. This represents nearly a third of the 183 structural workers. A further thirteen *manoeuvres* were between 18 and 20.

6. Ages of apprentices and young workers in main structural crafts, on active construction sites in Dassa and Savè (pseudonyms), Calavi, February-April 2011

Apprentices				Manoeuvres and ouvriers	
Aged under 18		Aged 18-26		Aged 17-20	
Age	Number	Age	Number	Age	Number
9	1	18	14	17	2
12	2	19	7	18	5
13	3	21	8	19	3
14	5	22	3	20	5
15	12	23	3	17 – 20	15
16	13	24	1		
17	18	25	2		
Under 18	54	26	2		
		18-26	40		

Source: survey construction sites, Calavi, 2011

Irrespective of age, apprentices counted for very nearly half of the main structural workers on the sites surveyed. This is of economic importance as their work was basically unpaid. At the time of field work, a mason *ouvrier* was paid between 2500 and 3000 *francs* for a day's work, usually of about 9 hours. Form work and steel bending *ouvriers* were paid 2000 to 2500 *francs* a day. *Manoeuvres* were paid between 1000 and 1500 *francs* a day. Apprentices were given '*argent pour manger*' – stipends for food. Younger apprentices in their first years of training were commonly given between 200 and 400 *francs* a day, older, more experienced ones between 400 and 600 *francs*. (see section 3.3.3)

The broad age range of the *ouvriers* and *manoeuvres*, who made up a third of those surveyed, suggests that many qualified workers, even experienced ones, were not well established as master masons contracting directly with clients. Given the undependable nature of their work, workers who relied on their *ouvrier* and *manoeuvre* earnings might well have been struggling to meet the official minimum wage of 31 000 *francs* per month in 2011. (RdB 2011) It is very probable that the younger *ouvriers* were working to pay their apprenticeship and liberation fees. (see section 3.2.3) I will discuss the different situations of different kinds of workers further in chapter 6.

It is difficult to estimate the income of masters. By leaving most construction work to apprentices and hired workers, they could take on several contracts at once, prospect for new contracts, engage in other kinds of work or not work altogether. Interviewed master masons said that a contract for building a small house, work lasting about a month for three or four workers, paid about 400 000 *francs*. At the time of my fieldwork, the salary of skilled machinist in metal working factory was about 100 000 *francs*. However, while several masters had two or three ongoing contracts, others had only one and did not have new work planned. Several said they had to take on contracts which were badly paid in order to get work, and all said they had had problems with clients over payment.

The survey indicated that almost-unpaid apprentices make up the bulk of labour in cement block construction in Calavi. Most apprentices were children. In the next section I give account of the work of the apprentices I interviewed and what they thought about it.

3.2 Children's work in cement block construction

3.2.1 Interviewed children

The information given here is drawn from interviews with apprentices and observations. I interviewed 41 apprentices, mostly boys apprenticed in masonry. Four form worker and three steel bender apprentices were also interviewed. This choice was supported by the survey results, which showed that apprenticeship of boys in masonry, and to a lesser extent in form work and steel bending, is the most prevalent work practice for children in cement block construction, which is itself the most prevalent kind of construction in Calavi. I have never seen girls work in construction in southern Benin, although they do work in the nearby Lake Nokoué district transporting river sand used for construction. It is possible that the girls working in construction found in the study referred to above were mostly involved in techniques using vegetable fibres, common in northern and rural Benin.

Table 7 shows the distribution of the interviewed apprentices' ages. 39 of 41 were between 12 and 20, two others were 25. I did not attempt to interview children under twelve, and tried to interview a proportionately greater number of children between 14 and

18. (chapter 2) I also tried to interview many 14 and 15 year olds, in order to explore whether there might be differences between them and older children.

7. Ages of interviewed apprentices

Age range	Age	Number interviewed	Total by age range
12 - 13	12	3	6
	13	3	
14 - 15	14	4	13
	15	9	
16 -17	16	3	7
	17	4	
18 - 20	18	3	12
	19	4	
	20	5	
25	25	2	2

Source: interviews with child workers, Calavi, 2010-2011

Five apprentices were unsure of their ages or contradicted themselves in their answers. In these cases, ages were adjusted slightly to better fit their narratives, and in keeping with their appearance. An unknowable number may have been unsure of their age without saying so. If sometimes approximate, the ages given here are not too far off the mark.

It is important to repeat that the sample was designed to capture both commonality and divergence among the apprentices. (chapter 2) Given that very nearly all approached acquiesced to an interview, and the similarities found between them, I believe that it is representative, if not of working children, of their work practice.

3.2.2 Origins and characteristics

Most of the interviewed apprentices had migrated for their apprenticeship from rural localities in southern Benin. Nearly half were from villages within 60 km of Abomey Calavi. The second largest group counted 14 apprentices from villages near Porto Novo, Benin's capital, between 60 and 100 km distant from Calavi. Just three were originally from further away. Only five had been living in or near major towns.

24 of the apprentices spoke Fon, the mother tongue of approximately 24% of the population and the most common native language of Benin. (INSAE 2012) The others

spoke languages of their locality of origin. Most of these could understand Fon but could not speak it. None of the apprentices spoke or understood more than a few words of French, the official language of Benin. This is not surprising, given the limited schooling of all apprentices.

Nine had never been to school. 15 had attended less than three years, eight between three and five years and six for six years. 3 had been for longer. However, only two apprentices of the 41 had finished the six years of the primary cycle and passed the primary certificate test. 29 said they could neither read nor write; only three said they could. Nine said they could read a little.

17 apprentices explained they left school mainly because they were failing. 19 said they did not have the financial means to enrol or to pursue. Two said they chose not to go at all and two said they left voluntarily.

26 of the apprentices had both parents living together. Three were orphaned by the death of both parents, and were in the care of siblings and grandmothers. Seven were orphaned by the death of their father and two by the death of their mother. This is higher than the national average of 11% of children 10-14 and 14% of children 15-17 orphaned by the death of one or both parents. (RdB/INSAE 2007:294) Adult mortality is high in Benin, with an estimated rate of nearly 6% for women and 9% for men aged 45-49. (RdB/INSAE 2007:215) A further three apprentices said their fathers had left their mothers and did not keep contact.

Few came from small families. 15 said they had between four and six siblings, and 12 between seven and 12. The question was not pointedly asked of all children, but of the 25 who were asked, 18 had fathers with two or more partners. The national percentage of polygamous households is 27%. (RdB/INSAE 2007:83). In my experience, polygamous unions were mostly arranged between a widow and a relative of her late partner, with the declared purpose of formalising the responsibility of the partner's family for supporting her and her children. Households were described by most children as nuclear, but when asked about their siblings, the apprentices usually counted all the children of their father.

Very nearly all the children said their mothers worked in commerce, most selling clothes, prepared food or produce. Eleven had fathers and six had mothers mostly working in agriculture. 16 fathers were engaged in some kind of artisanal craft, including carpentry, auto mechanics, tailoring and alcohol-making; one was a mason and another a retired one. Among other fathers, there were three taxi drivers and a porter, and two described as doing nothing. 13 said one or both of their parents had been to school, but no parent was said to have finished the primary cycle.

All had at least one working parent or caregiver, but in a context of widespread poverty, polygamy and high mortality, their income might be very inadequate. The apprentices' reporting of household resources and dependants may not have been fully reliable. Therefore, a number of indicators were used to construct a rough measure of poverty: the presence and occupations of parents; number of siblings and whether they were dependant, contributed to household expenses or in school; family resources; whether the apprentices expected family members to pay apprenticeship fees; reasons given for leaving school. By these indicators, I classed 21 apprentices as being extremely poor. Extremely poor indicates here situations in which there seemed to be no possibility for pursued education. Only three came from apparently comfortable situations, in which all siblings had been or were going to school, both parents worked and household resources seemed secure. The rest seemed to be in situations in which parents might have been able to support further schooling, although this is conjecture.

Although religion was important in their personal lives and the relations of their work, particular faiths did not seem to make a difference to these questions. A majority of the apprentices said they belonged to evangelical Christian churches. Seven said they were catholic and two said they were of *vodoun* faiths. Four were unable to identify their religion and three said they had none, although even these referred to god in our interviews.

3.2.3 Choice of apprenticeship and conditions of entry

Eight children had begun below the ILO standard for light work. Five apprentices said they began training when they were between 10 and 11, three claimed to have started between 6 and 9. 16 said they had started between 12 and 13. Eight said they had begun between the

ages of 14 and 15, a further three between 16 and 17. Six said they had begun between 18 and 22.

I found no correlation between age of entry and poverty. Only two of those who had started under 12 indicated that they came from extremely poor households. Only four of those who had started late came from well off households.

19 had begun more or less directly on leaving from school. Ten said they had been doing nothing at all. 12 had been working: seven in agriculture, on family land, and the others variously helping father or brother artisans or in fishing. Six of those who had been working were over fourteen and six under. Five had begun and abandoned other apprenticeships before beginning their construction training.

21 interviewed apprentices said they chose to begin an apprenticeship. 13 of those who did not explained that their family was lacking in means at the time, and the other seven said that it was circumstance and family choice that explained why they had begun without wanting to. Whether or not they chose themselves to apprentice, nearly all the apprentices described their parents or caregivers as being involved in the decision, either by proposing construction or identifying a master.

27 interviewed apprentices had not wanted to apprentice in construction, including many who had wanted to apprentice. For 26, the choice was made by close family members, primarily by fathers or both parents, elder brothers and uncles. One said he had chosen himself having no other option. Only 13 unambiguously claimed to have independently chosen to embark on their construction apprenticeship, of whom nine also said their families lacked means at the time. Four of these 13 said that in doing so they gone against the wishes of their parents, who had wanted them to continue in school (2), help in the family fields (1) or choose another craft (1).

19 apprentices were related to their masters: these included a father, eight uncles, six cousins, two brothers, as well as two more distant in-laws. Seven masters were friends of a brother, seven friends of the apprentice's father or an uncle. Three were neighbours, two were members of the same church. Three were strangers. Five children were with a second construction master at the time of the interview, one because his father-master went

to Nigeria, three because they had been abandoned or mistreated by a first one, and one because his first master was discovered to be unqualified.

Masters were mostly identified by parents, brothers or uncles. Eight apprentices, all of whom who had started at 12 or under, expressly said that their master had proposed the apprenticeship. This may also have been the case for children whose family members decided on the apprenticeship. Only five apprentices said that they had themselves identified their master, all of whom said they had chosen a construction apprenticeship.

The apprenticeship arrangements were initiated in discussions between masters and parents or caregivers. Only four apprentices said they had been present. Eight claimed no arrangements at all had been made. Even those who said there had been some kind of discussion and those who had been present purported to know very little about its terms and conditions. 21 did not know how long their apprenticeship would last. Two of the 24 children who had started under 14 said it would last 12 years, another two said 7, the rest said between 3 and 7. One said three years but had done four already, another said five years but had already completed 6. Of the 17 children who had begun aged 14 and older, 12 thought it would last between 4 and 7 years, the others did not know.

With the exception of an apprentice training with an uncle, all said they would be paying apprenticeship fees to their master, even children apprenticed to brothers. One was told in the beginning that his training would be free, but subsequently his master changed his mind. 27 children, in equal proportions for those who had started under and over 14, said they did not know how much the fee would be. Most said their fees would be between 30 and 60 0000 *francs*, although one claimed an unlikely 500 000, and one said 120 000 and another 100 000 *francs*. Most planned to pay after the end of their training period, as soon as they could amass the sum needed. The two 25 year old apprentices and an 18 year old had paid half the fee, and a 19 year old and 18 year old had paid a small part. 27 apprentices expected their parents to pay, of whom five planned to contribute half. Ten said other family members would pay and that they would contribute. Four said they expected to pay entirely themselves. Although some said that fees for masonry training were higher than for steel bending or form working, this was not confirmed by their cumulated answers.

When masters decide that training is finished, apprentices in all crafts begin a period referred to as being '*en congé*' ('on leave') during which they work to earn the funds for their apprenticeship fees as well as those for their '*libération*'; which masters require in order to designate apprentices as fully qualified. None of the apprentices knew for certain how much their liberation fee would be, and just few could give an estimate, saying it would be about 30 000 *francs*.

27 children said they were happy about their apprenticeship when it started, including 17 of those 27 children had not specifically chosen construction. Reasons given centred on the anticipation of making their own living. The other 14 said they had been unhappy because they had wanted another craft or to continue in school, with four saying they had found the work difficult or missed their families.

3.2.4 Work, skills and working conditions

Three apprentices lived on a regular basis with their families. All the others had left home to live under the care of their masters at the outset of their training. The lives of all were nearly entirely given to work. They worked six days a week, with Sundays off. Some holiday days were given at Christmas and New Year. Working days mostly corresponded to sunlight hours, beginning at 7:30 or 8:00 and ending at 18:00 or 19:00.

The apprentices began their training by serving others: fetching tools, moving materials, mixing cement. They soon took on more operational tasks, like laying blocks for walls for masons, setting up bamboo braces for form workers, cutting steel rods for steel benders.

12 had begun working without their master's direct supervision within a year of commencing their training. 13 began working alone in their second year and the rest in their third. Here there seems to be a relation with age: all nine children who said they usually worked with their master were under 15.

Masters mostly supervised and did not attend the site for the whole day. Only three of the total 14 masters of interviewed apprentices were participating in work when they were first approached on constructions sites. Some rarely visited their work sites. Many observed were not dressed in work clothes.

Masters often assigned oversight responsibilities to the apprentice with seniority of experience. Other apprentices were expected to defer to this apprentice, referred to as the *sous-patron*. Several apprentices said they were learning from the *sous-patron* rather than from their master.

Even though they worked without supervision, most interviewed apprentices had limited skills even after several years experience. They were asked whether they could undertake independently the following tasks: 1- read a plan, 2- begin work independently by laying out measures for foundations (masons), the grid of a slab (steel benders), or assess requirements for bracing and formwork (form workers), 3- draw a plan, 4- build a two storied structure (masons), prepare its steel reinforcement structure (steel benders) or place its form work (form workers) and 5-prepare a bid for a contract. Only seven said they were able to do four or all five of these things. Five of these seven were between 18 and 20, and the other two, aged 15 and 16, had been in apprenticeship five years. Seven apprentices with over five years training said they had not yet learnt these tasks, and that their master or *sous-patron* undertook them. The ten apprentices interviewed who had been in training less than a year were familiar with none of them. 26 of the 41 apprentices said they did not expect to learn all fundamental skills during their apprenticeship, but that they would after their liberation. Several explained they would seek help for preparing bid estimates and reading plans from more able friends.

20 apprentices said they had worked on a site where a cement mixer was used, but only seven said they had done so more than twice. Four had been on sites where a vibrator was used to set poured concrete. No other on-site machine was mentioned. Although they facilitate work and help to improve the quality of poured concrete elements, steel form work frames were seen only on a few sites, and were used only for making round columns. On about half observed sites, blocks had been made by specially hired teams, on the rest apprentices had made them. A very few apprentices mentioned working on sites where blocks had been bought from a company who made them with a machine.

Tools used were simple and for the most part hand held, many were made by local artisans. Mason apprentices used levels, cords, tape measures, equerries, hammers, pliers, trowels and shovels. Steel bender apprentices mostly used steel clippers, metal saws and pliers and form worker apprentices use saws, tape measures and crow bars. Most tools used by the

interviewed apprentices were owned by their masters, but very nearly all had some they had bought themselves. Three had been given trowels by their master, and two had had parents buy them these relatively cheap tools. A few had made their own smoothing trowels. Four had been asked by their master to equip themselves with some tools before beginning. One apprentice said his patron had told him in the first months of his training that he had to buy a trowel if he wanted to start making walls rather than just serve others. A good hammer was the most expensive equipment owned by many of the apprentices, priced by them at 3000-3500 *francs* cfa, though most had bought poor quality ones at half that.

Other than specialised tasks like reading plans and preparing bids, work was very physical and was usually undertaken by small numbers of workers, mostly apprentices. Between three and six structural workers were engaged on most sites. Concrete was mixed by hand: one worker brought water, while another took sand and gravel from heaps deposited in a corner of the site, added cement, and mixed with a shovel. To make walls, one worker fetched dry blocks, carrying them one by one while in his arms or on his head, while another set them. Steel was bent manually on a stand of cement blocks. Apprentices were observed carrying bags of cement weighing 50kg or dragging lengths of wood 20 metres long, with evident difficulty. An exception to individual or pair work was the making of slabs, for which specialised teams of at least ten people were contracted for the day.

Slab-making needed to be done quickly, to ensure that it was poured uniformly. Otherwise, the pace of work was very slow but workers were constantly occupied. Apprentices' work involved efforts to cut costs. I saw a form work apprentice spend several hours hammering a bucket of used nails straight. I also saw a very young mason apprentice take more than an hour to scrape concrete off a small piece of dismantled formwork. Another apprentice mason used a broken wheel barrow to transport blocks – although it tipped over every few metres, he explained it was easier, if not faster, to move them this way than to carry them by hand. Often water was seen being carried by apprentices in plastic cooking oil containers, impractical to the purpose.

At the time of the interview, nearly all the interviewed apprentices were working on the kind of housing described in section 3.2.2: villas, smaller houses, low-rent apartment units. Three were working on a large administrative building funded by foreign donors, with

construction under contract to a registered company. This project involved several dozen workers, made up of masters and apprentices, as well as machinery and constant oversight. Asked about the types of buildings they had worked on, 22 apprentices said they had mostly worked on small houses and low rent apartments – buildings of one floor with a slab, sheet metal or tile roof. 11 had mostly worked on multi-story slab roofed buildings and eight said they worked on both kinds of houses about equally. 14 had also worked on public infrastructure, including schools, churches and health centres. Most masters and apprentices said such work was of dubious advantage: although usually long-term, it rarely paid well.

Because the question was badly phrased, the apprentices' answers about how often their master contracted directly with clients were unclear, but most indicated that this was at least sometimes the case. Some apprentices said they had worked on over 50 sites and others under five, most around 20. The duration of the work varied between a few days and over a year, so number of sites did not correlate neatly with years of experience.

They were also asked about the employment of their clients. In many cases, they did not know, but when they did they said that the clients of large houses were customs officials, university professors, policemen, lawyers and businessmen. For smaller houses and low rent housing, the apprentices said the clients were merchants, policemen and teachers.

These answers suggest the likelihood of sub-markets for structural workers, which was also indicated by my interviews with masters. These sub-markets seemed to correspond to the degrees of masters' affluence. The ones who were the most successful had steady work contracting to build complex projects from foundations to finishing, with clients who had enough money to build in one stretch. These masters owned their homes and either had other houses they rented or property they meant to develop. They also had motorcycles. They had at least three apprentices. The success of form work and steel bending masters depended on their access to work on these projects. The two I interviewed did not have steady work or own their own homes. Most had two apprentices. Unsuccessful master masons mostly sub-contracted, or contracted for small, short jobs, like coating. They had one apprentice, or none, and did not own their homes. Those in the middle range worked on smaller houses directly under contract with the client. They owned their homes and had a motorcycle, but no investments. They usually had two or three apprentices. Some

however seemed on their way to being successful: these were under 40, and they worked mostly on larger and complex projects, whereas older middle range masters worked mostly on one story houses.

Given the number of buildings most interviewed apprentices and masters had worked on and the fact that very nearly all had worked on both complex and simple projects, these sub-markets did not seem to tightly contain workers. However, it is likely that those 11 apprentices who mostly worked on complex projects had greater opportunity to acquire the skills necessary for them to move into the most advantaged labour market position as qualified workers. 15 of the children interviewed were apprenticing with successful master masons, 18 were apprenticing with middle range masters, and one who was with an unsuccessful master, along with the seven form work and steel bending apprentices.

It was clear that a majority of the interviewed apprentices' masters, even successful ones, were unable to secure sufficient work. All said their master had had periods of no work when a client had run out of money without notice, or had had gaps between contracts, especially during Benin's two rainy seasons. During these periods, the apprentices sometimes stayed at home with their master, or, more rarely, returned to their families. One child said he worked in his master's fields. It was most common however for a master lacking work to send his apprentices to work with other masters. For this, the lending master received from the receiving one wages for the apprentices equivalent to those of a *manoeuvre* – about 1500 *francs*. The children were given their usual daily stipend, usually directly from their own master. Six children, who had been working more than a year, said they had not worked for other masons. 11 did so rarely, the rest very frequently.

No children used safety equipment or protective gear of any kind. 38 of the 41 interviewed apprentices wore plastic flip flops; the other three wore much worn canvas shoes. Only on the administrative building site were hard hats in evidence; the three apprentices interviewed there did not use them but said they could. Two children said their master gave them a potion to drink to protect from accident. No others said they took any other kind of precaution, although 16 said that as Christians, they prayed for protection.

17 of the 41 said they had had a serious injury, six having fallen from scaffolding, six having had a block fall on them, the rest having had wounds from stepping on nails or fingers crushed by blocks or a misplaced hammer stroke. A further 11 had witnessed a serious accident. One spoke of an apprentice who had fallen from scaffolding and died. Another said he knew an apprentice whose wound from stepping on a nail was left untreated and become so badly infected he gave up his apprenticeship. However, most injured apprentices said they had received medical treatment, paid for by their master, sometimes as well by the apprentice's family. In eleven cases, the apprentices said the client contributed to care costs.

Small injuries were constant threats. All the interviewed masons had scrapes and bruises on their arms and legs. All said they had had minor cuts and wounds, and some had scars. Seventeen said they had stepped on nails, but that the injury was slight enough for them to treat themselves. Treatment involved hitting the wound until bleeding stopped, then applying *sodabi*, a palm sap alcohol, or hot palm oil, or a flame. A few had patches of hair missing, which they attributed to carrying blocks on their head. Cement is corrosive; five interviewed apprentices had large patches of grey, scaly skin on their arms and legs which comes from cement if it is not washed off quickly.

All the apprentices said they received a stipend from their master. It was given daily, weekly, or at longer intervals if their master rarely visited the work site. The stipend was meant to cover food and self care costs for working days. It was not given on Sundays and rarely on days apprentices stayed and ate with their masters. The lowest reported allowance was 200, the highest 800, with 12 receiving over 500 *francs* a day. The youngest received the least, but many were fed in the evenings by their master. Several apprentices said the amount they were given depended on whether their master was earning well, and many said on some working days they had not received any stipend.

To supplement incomes, the interviewed apprentices worked on Sundays, and sometimes on work-day nights, doing small 'jobs' (the English word was used) in the vicinity. The three apprentices who were living at home had regular supplementary economic activities in agriculture and transport. The rest said they did casual, construction-related work. Prospective clients usually approached them on work sites to offer work like clearing empty lots, repairing walls and digging foundations. The apprentices negotiated pay,

proposing about twice or a third more than what they hoped to receive. Some said they did not tell their masters about this work, others said they did and a few said their masters sometimes helped them find jobs. Usually, the whole group of a master's apprentices worked together on a job. The apprentices reported earnings from this work higher than their daily stipend – as much as 1000 *francs* for a day's work, usually amounting to between 1000 and 8000 *francs* a month.

The interviewed apprentices said that most of their work was in the commune of Abomey Calavi and in Cotonou. They usually lived on the construction site for the duration of the work. Of 41 children, 30 were doing so at the time of our interview. They explained their master did not have the means to pay for their daily transport to his home. Usually they slept in the building under construction, or in huts made for stocking equipment and materials.

All but two recently arrived apprentices reported being beaten by their master, and these two said their master hit other apprentices. Apprentices said they were beaten for doing work badly, for not obeying or being slow to obey orders, for not understanding explanations, as well as for fighting amongst themselves or being caught idle. Most said they had been beaten at least once a year, four said they were hit very often. Being hit on the hand with a piece of wood was most common, although some spoke of being hit with hands, small whips and trowels, as well as on the body.

18 had been obliged to pay for lost or damaged tools, of whom three had also been made to replace materials they had used for work which did not correspond to the building plan. Their masters had deducted small amounts from their stipends over several months. Six said that had been told by they would have to replace tools, but that the threatened punishment was forgotten.

As reward for work well done, 35 apprentices said their master gave them a bonus, ranging from 100 to 1500 *francs*. Some were also given food. Six said that their patron gave them a '*tenue*' at the end of the year. A *tenue* is a tailored outfit of pants and shirt made from printed cotton, and is the most usual way of dressing for men in Benin.

3.2.5 Knowledge and experience of regulation

The apprentices worked under the authority of their masters and followed their directives. In no case were apprentices registered in any way as workers, even on the project under contract to a registered company, and despite labour and apprenticeship legal requirements for this. They were not formally linked to clients, although they sometimes had exchanges with them, and many spoke appreciatively of having received a few hundred *francs* from clients on some sites. They did not participate in discussions between their masters and clients or supervising technicians. No interviewed apprentice related having witnessed the monitoring of a site by local authorities or labour inspectors, or NGOs.

Only one apprentice could accurately report a law relating to construction or construction workers. Interestingly, he said he knew that children under 14 were not supposed to work, although he himself had started his apprenticeship at the age of 11 and was just 14 at the time of the interview. Another said there was a law stating that children should not work but if they could not go to school they must work. 24 said they had no knowledge at all. 15 gave answers related to the craft's unwritten moral code, including: don't steal, be on time, don't take another construction worker's contract if he is in conflict with the client. Those who cited any kind of legal or moral law said they knew of no measures for enforcement, other than construction worker associations.

22 said they knew that such associations existed and said their masters were members. Eight said the purposes of association were specifically professional, and mentioned sharing advice, making sure that apprentices who had abandoned training did not work as masters and grouping successful masters. The others said the association functioned as a '*tontine*', an informal savings system by which members pool contributions, each in turn taking a large lump amount. Six apprentices assimilated the *tontine* with insurance, saying that it served in case of accident or other problem. The others said they had no knowledge of insurance for workers.

Most apprentices said their master had been in conflict with a client at least once. Reasons included clients' delay in payment, complaints over work, expectations of extra work, as well as discrepancy in materials bought by clients and masters' specifications. Three said they had known clients to be angry about finding only apprentices on his or her work site.

All said that disputes were settled with some kind of compromise. No apprentice, master or *ouvrier* mentioned any kind of formal conflict resolution mechanism between clients and construction workers.

3.2.6 Social relationships, leisure and personal care

It was not easy to discern the kind of relationships which held between the apprentices and their masters, because they were rarely seen interacting. It seemed that most masters kept an authoritative distance and did not intervene in apprentices' free time or how they cared for themselves. 21 interviewed apprentices, including 13 aged 15 and under, were observed living on their sites for several weeks, some more than a month, working nearly always alone. I often passed by on Sundays to say hello and found them talking amongst themselves, washing clothes or cooking. Another eight spent most nights in their masters' house, but although they were seen playing with his children, they kept away from adults. Several expressed that they were comfortable in their master's house, others said it was complicated for them to eat and they were given too many chores. Four apprentices between 15 and 18 lived, when not staying on a work site, very independently in an abandoned construction site. Only three were seen talking easily with their patrons, in relaxed moments after work.

The apprentices' own families did not figure in their daily lives. With the exception of the three who lived most of the time with their families, few returned home regularly. 23 said they had not seen their families for more than two months and planned to go at least another three without visiting. Another five said they saw their families once a year, for end of year holidays. Ten said they visited weekly or monthly, and could ask their master permission to go at any time. Some said their parents or relatives visited every few months. About two thirds were given on the occasion of visits home, or by visiting relatives, some money and food which they shared with their masters. 12, including seven of the 23 who rarely visited, said they phoned home every few weeks.

In the absence of adult involvement, the apprentices looked after themselves. Their stipends were spent on basic needs - food, clothes, haircuts and tools. Several sent some money to help their families and one had enough to invest in livestock in his village.

When staying with their master, apprentices would eat at least one meal a day in his house, but the rest of their food they bought or prepared themselves. The bulk of food consumed consisted of boiled dried manioc and *pâte*, porridge made with corn, manioc or yam. Proteins were consumed between four and six times a week, fish most frequently, followed by beans and sometime peanuts. Meat, cheese (a local cheese being widely available) and eggs were said to be too expensive. Most often, they bought prepared food from women merchants, which is a very common way to eat in Benin. A prepared serving of *pâte* with a little sauce cost less than 100 *francs* in 2011, a portion of fish between 100 and 200, and an egg, 75. When staying on construction sites, sometimes apprentices prepared their own *pâte*. The apprentices explained they usually drank water from the national network, taken from the construction site or bought from a neighbouring house.

All said that their food was insufficient. Several complained of being too hungry to work on occasion, which happened especially when their master had failed to give their stipend. They said they might then refuse to work. The apprentices appeared healthy although most were slight and five looked too small for their age.

No evidence was witnessed that any apprentice interviewed consumed alcohol regularly, smoked or took drugs. It is likely that even if they were so inclined, they would not have had the means. Nearly all the apprentices were dressed in dirty and tattered work clothes consisting of old *tenués*, or shirts, shorts or pants. By their dress they were identifiable as construction workers. About three quarters said they had a clean non-work outfit. Apprentices washed their own clothes. They washed themselves with bucket showers, usually everyday but some definitely had not showered for several days when I met with them.

31 apprentices said they had been seriously ill at some point in their apprenticeship. Most could not name their ailments, ten said they had had malaria and four stomach pains. Masters mostly provided medical treatment. Six had been taken to a hospital for treatment, but most said their master had given them pills they could not identify. A few said they treated themselves with pills bought from a pharmacy, and one was cared for by his family. Ten of these 31 said they had been given leave to recuperate, some had returned to their families. The rest said they had been given a day off. When mildly sick, the apprentices

continued to work. Only three said they slept with mosquito nets or anti-mosquito spirals, which had been provided by their master.

In their non-working hours, apprentices were quite free. Indication of this is given by the interview arrangements. Although in all cases the master was first asked permission to propose an interview, invariably they left the decision to the apprentice.

On Sundays, 'jobs' were a first priority. If none came up, the apprentices said they rested and washed their clothes, and many went to church. Several of those staying on a site explained they did not go to Sunday services because they did not know where to find their church. Less than half said they watched television or films or listened to the radio regularly, at their masters' house or in street stalls, a few said they played foot ball with neighbourhood boys or went strolling.

Asked about any kind of social group they might belong to, 12 apprentices, all aged fourteen and older, said they participated in *tontines*, to save to buy tools. With the exception of one who lived at home who was a member of a choir, the others said they were not associated with any group.

11 were very confident speakers, in our interviews, talking with humour and ease, 13 were more reserved and restrained, and 17 were hesitant and shy, but still articulate and clear-spoken. 15 of these 17 were under the age of 14, whereas 10 of the 11 most confident speakers were 18 and over.

Thus apprentices interacted between themselves most of the time. Save for a lone apprentice with an unsuccessful master, all those interviewed had at least one co-apprentice, the majority two or three. One master interviewed said he had nine apprentices, another said 12, but as I did not meet them I could not verify this. The relations between apprentices appeared friendly and collaborative. Although eight claimed always to get along with fellow apprentices, the rest spoke of frequent small fights, arising because of work, like the theft of materials or badly done work for which all apprentices would be held responsible or objection to the *sous-patron's* orders, as well as because of personal and domestic issues, like mockery, borrowed money and rights to sleeping mats.

Children living among themselves, often hungry and broke, is a situation which gives cause for concern about their vulnerability to sexual exploitation, by adults and also amongst themselves. Because of the sensitivity of the question, it was raised only with a very few of the older apprentices who were met with several times. They said they had never known of any instances, but I could not examine the issue further.

3.2.7 Apprentices' perspectives on construction work and their future

Only nine of the interviewed apprentices firmly stated that they liked their work, but only six firmly stated they did not. The rest were ambiguous, explaining that it was difficult, but they were used to it, or that they thought it would give them a future. Nearly all had a hard time answering the question of what tasks they enjoyed. 24 of the 36 mason apprentices said coating and finishing work, because it was easy and proved their skill, others said building walls or making blocks was pleasant. All mentioned physical difficulties, with most referring to the troubles of heavy loads and working in the sun.

12 of the interviewed apprentices stated that they did not see construction workers as being in a good situation because of unstable work and low pay. 17 were equally emphatic in claiming that there was a lot of work and that it was mostly profitable. 11 said some do succeed, some don't, and one said he did not know. Younger and older children were mixed in opinion. Most of those who said construction workers were in a good situation, or who expressed ambivalence, ascribed success to hard work and judicious management of money and clients. Nearly all referred to apprentices as being necessary for success.

Nearly half said they could think of no change that might improve the situation of construction workers. A few said better tools would help, but their specifications were modest: they wanted more wheel barrows, better scaffolding, machines to make blocks, drainage pumps and cement mixers. Seven said construction workers could force clients to improve pay and buy good materials if they were better organised. Three said the state should intervene; two saying it could impose good rates of pay and one that it could lower the price of cement to encourage more building. Others had vaguer answers, suggesting that masons need to work better or that clients should be kinder. A few were pessimistic, saying that clients would continue to lower remuneration and there would be too many masons for the work available, but most saw no change forthcoming.

Even without knowing the amount, fifteen of the interviewed apprentices were confident that they would be *en congé* for less than six months. Yet fourteen planned to be *en congé* for between one and two years. The rest said they could not predict, as it depended on the work they might find.

Long *congés* were expected even when job prospects were tangible. Half had close family members in construction and said they would work with them. Two thirds said they counted on the help of their masters to find work during their *congé*, and/or work for them. Of the 35 who were asked, 28 said they believed their masters would help them find work even after liberation. But the other seven said that their master had too little work themselves to do so. Nearly all the apprentices said they expected finding work during their *congé* and after liberation would be difficult.

Despite these indications that they had some worries about their work prospects, a majority of interviewed apprentices also declared confidence in their own eventual success, including fourteen of those 24 who were ambivalent or negative about the situation of construction workers.

20 said they planned to keep working in construction beyond their forties. Seven of these 20 did not plan to be fully committed themselves, explaining they would sub contract or have apprentices do the work, and some said they would develop other activities, including renting houses and selling construction materials. Eight said they would leave construction in their thirties, having saved enough to start another activity, some saying they might continue to take construction contracts but would leave the work to apprentices. Five wanted to leave after five or six years to take up another activity, and the rest said they would wait and see how things turned out. Some, even of those who planned to continue, said that the physical toll of construction work was too heavy to allow active work into old age.

14 said they wanted to begin another apprenticeship after finishing construction training. Many of these wanted to learn a complementary craft like painting and carpentry. Others wanted to learn a very different one, like tailoring or electrical repairs. A further eight wanted to learn how to drive in order to work as taxi drivers to supplement construction

income, and another six said they would take up another income generating activity but had no firm project. All in all, 30 of the apprentices said they meant to diversify.

Eighteen apprentices said they planned to pursue their general education in specialised adult classes, most because they felt this important for their work, and some for personal interest.

3.3 Harm and the practice of apprenticeship

3.3.1 Apprentices' perceptions of harm

It is possible that the interviewed apprentices were wary of speaking too frankly about what they saw as harmful in their work for fear of repercussion. This is however unlikely because they did speak easily about some harmful aspects. What they mostly pointed to were physical detriments. Most apprentices readily explained that they suffered when they were hungry. They also voiced worry about accidents. They found the work difficult. Unsurprisingly, they did not like being beaten or having to replace tools. Many too expressed unhappiness about beginning apprenticeship in construction against their own wishes. They did not refer to possible long-term consequences of the harms they did identify, other than the difficulties of active work in old age.

14 expressed strong criticism of construction apprenticeship, saying that children should be in school, apprentices suffer too much and masters profit too much from them. 19 expressed milder criticism, saying only that in the advent of free schooling, no or few children would want to apprentice. Eight expressed no criticism at all. Yet every apprentice interviewed said they intended to have apprentices, including those who said they wanted to leave construction work and those who expressed strong criticism. When asked whether they would treat them differently than they were themselves treated, four said they would explain work better, would not beat them, and/or would be more caring. Nine said they would change nothing, while all the others spoke of raising the amount of the stipend, but only slightly – at the lowest end of the scale from 300 *francs* a day to 350, and at the highest from 4,800 *francs* a week to 6000.

However, over three quarters of the apprentices said that in the advent of free and accessible schooling, no or very few children would apprentice in construction and all but six said they would themselves have continued had it been possible. These answers strongly suggest that a majority considered construction apprenticeship a second best option.

3.3.2 Physical integrity, destitution and inequality

In chapter 2, I explained my definition of harm in children's work as effects which impair children's physical integrity, involve or risk their destitution, confirm their own social inequality or contribute to social differentiation. I related harm to how children's physical integrity, development and capacity to identify and respond to harm might be impaired by the physical effects, terms, quality of learning and the nature of the social relationships of their work. I also related harm to how the labour process and system might articulate and contribute to social and economic inequality. In reference to this definition, I summarise in this section the harm of children's apprenticeship in cement block construction in light of the account I have given above.

Physical: There was good reason to suspect that all were malnourished, which might have had effect on their physical and mental development, as well as their day to day capacity to reflect and act. Safety precautions were limited to individual workers' efforts to avoid accident. Accident could result in disability, or death.

Terms of work: Apprentices were not destitute. But their stipends were just sufficient for daily survival, and not for adequate nourishment. Their access to the means of daily survival and care in the event of accident or illness depended nearly entirely on their masters, and entirely for those whose parents or caregivers did not intervene. Infraction in meeting masters' expectations could justify prolongation of training, or corporal punishment. The more time an apprentice spent in training, the greater the opportunity cost of leaving. These factors might have countered their ability to discuss and review work terms with their masters, as indicated by their unspecified fees and durations of training. Constantly mobile, isolated on work sites, and without external support, apprentices could not organise, and were excluded from professional organisations. No external mechanism, like governmental labour regulation or child protection agencies,

reached them. Interviewed apprentices did not indicate that their parents or caregivers influenced how they were treated. However, representatives of two construction worker organisations explained in our interviews that they were often involved in settling disputes between apprentices and masters, and sometimes arranged for an apprentice to pursue with a new master if resolution could not be reached. The children I interviewed did not express awareness of this.

I have noted that the youngest children were the most hesitant and shy in our interviews. They might have been quite different in their interactions with their masters. That older children were more confident suggests that children's growing social ease was not prevented by their work. However, the lesser confidence of younger children in our interviews still raises the possibility that this was an age-related characteristic. This might have meant that it was particularly difficult for children under 15 to contest their work terms.

Learning: Skills learnt depended on an individual master's own skills and efforts to teach them, whether himself or through a *sous-patron*, as well as the kind of work he obtained. I found indication that most apprentices were not becoming proficient in specialised skills. Literacy, numeracy and language were not learnt in construction work, or out of working hours. These general skills were desired by apprentices: all but five said they would have preferred to continue their schooling had this been possible. Literacy and numeracy were necessary for most specialised construction tasks. Given their number, proficiency in several languages is important in southern Benin for construction workers to be able to communicate with the greatest number of prospective clients possible. However, the apprentices were able to speak articulately in our interviews, even if many spoke hesitantly.

Social relationships: The apprentices had restricted contact with people outside of their work, little opportunity to develop other relationships or interests and little exposure to information, either relevant to their work (activities of professional organisations, laws) or more general (political, cultural). Most apprentices were also under heavy social obligations. Only 37 of 41 apprentices said their parents or caregivers would have preferred they continue school, and most had family members who intended to contribute to paying training fees. They were also mostly training with family members or people connected to their families

Labour process and system: The prevalence of nearly-unremunerated children in the labour force seems to account for the extremely laborious nature of construction work in Calavi, and its low productivity. With many clients little pressed by time, and given their low remuneration, apprentices could be put to painstaking efforts to cut costs. By the oppressive terms of work noted above, masters could expect apprentices to work well without oversight, but this also was facilitated by the fact that most of their tasks required little skill. Apprentices' working conditions, like the absence of safety measures and protective clothing and uncomfortable sleeping arrangement, also marked little regard for their dignity.

The use of nearly unremunerated apprentices contributed directly to the low overall costs of labour in construction as well as a tendency to further reduction. Recruitment was not based on construction market demand. With apprentices, masters could put out low bids and take on multiple contracts. Masters without apprentices, especially those trying to earn to pay the fees needed for their qualification as masters – by which they could take on apprentices - could compete only by underbidding, devaluing as far as possible their own work. Without steady work, they could not take on apprentices. Even by their Sunday jobs, apprentices brought down labour costs, doing work which would, if done by adults, have cost a client more. Moreover, many apprentices seemed set to finish training with only their Sunday job experience in dealing with clients, so were likely to be weak negotiators. I found no evidence that construction techniques were evolving in ways beneficial to workers. This might have been because there was little incentive on the part of clients and construction workers themselves to invest in measures that would improve conditions of work or its productivity.

It would not be accurate to describe the master / apprenticeship relationship as exploitative, in Meillassoux's Marxist sense, as masters did not control 'the means of production, distribution and finance.' (1996:55) It might be more apt to say that client / construction worker relations were exploitative, given clients' control over construction work, and the fact they were more easily discernable as a separate class by their education and employment. However, the construction labour market was very fragmented by age, and it can be suggested that child and young apprentices experienced the highest rate of exploitation. It also seemed to be increasingly fragmented into submarkets, which might relate to worker characteristics like their literacy, numeracy and language skills and their

contact with wealthy clients. Why children entered construction apprenticeship, and its terms, related to their poverty and limited schooling, common to all those interviewed although to varying degrees. Furthermore, most rural households of origin of most of the apprentices were subsidising apprentices' work, by payment of apprenticeship fees, and in some cases, food, money and health care.

The most evident benefits of apprenticeship also related to the poverty and access to schooling of the apprentices. It allowed young boys who had failed or could not pay for school to undertake professional training on credit. It helped alleviate the destitution of some households and buffered better off ones from destitution, by putting children into economic activity and lessening the dependency ratio of poor and numerous households. It also served as a mechanism for economic restructuring, giving young people job prospects not available in the economies of their rural villages. However, I found little to suggest that construction apprenticeship protected against future destitution, because evidence indicates that most adult construction workers had no assets other than their labour and did not have sufficient construction work. Those who were not doing well did not participate in insurance and credit mechanisms like *tontines* or associations. No child or adult worker referred to political action they were engaged in or that was directed towards them.

3.3.3 Apprentices' responses to harm

Although the apprentices did not refer to the harms summarised above as either immediate or long term problems, they did describe in our interviews what can be considered as responses to them. Taking on small jobs in their free time was a way of making money for food, self care and investment in tools. They were extremely economical in their spending, although this meant their nourishment was poor. Saving in *tontines* was a way some tried to improve their financial security. By working assiduously, they maintained good relations with their masters, and this might have helped them be liberated as soon as possible, and be able to seek masters' assistance in finding work afterwards. They built good relations with fellow apprentices. These relationships were often caring and helped make their daily lives agreeable. They also might be helpful to future efforts to find work, as might be the friendly relations they had with other workers on their construction sites. They attended religious services, visited their families and watched television when

possible, and so kept active as they could social ties beyond their work. They said they intended to join construction worker organisations when they were qualified, and most spoke of their intent to diversify their economic activities and pursue adult education: such actions might help them achieve security.

They also refused to work when hungry and their stipends had not been paid. A few apprentices mentioned that some stole materials to sell them, but I could not verify how common this was. The most active form of contestation was '*la fuite*' (running away) which in some cases meant the end of the apprenticeship. Nearly all children said they knew of at least one apprentice who had run away and not resumed training, and a quarter said apprentices had abandoned training with their master. I interviewed a 19 year old, who began his apprenticeship aged 12, whose master 'fired' him for his attempt to arrange himself a contract. The master refused to take him back despite the entreaties of his parents, and he began working as a *manoeuvre*.

These responses did not contribute to changing the practice of apprenticeship, and with the exception of '*la fuite*' and hunger-motivated strikes, mostly entailed apprentices' efforts to comply with it. The apprentices were in no way passive, but their actions are better described as resilience, or as adaptation to their situation, than as efforts to rework their circumstances or resist the conditions which gave rise to them.

3.4 Conclusions

My detailed description of children's work as apprentices in cement block construction shows that it was a consistent practice in Calavi. The harms I have identified related to this practice – how apprenticeship involved certain kinds of children, doing the same kinds of work under same conditions and with similar terms, as well as with similar understandings, and not to the individual circumstances or characteristics of apprentices. Although individual circumstances and characteristics lessened or augmented their impact, these harms were experienced by all apprentices, and related to their particular status as child workers. Those pertaining to the labour process and system affected all workers.

By a conservative estimate, apprentices made up close to a half of the work force and children under 18 nearly a third, with most having begun under 16, and many under 12. Their nearly unpaid work fundamentally structured the labour market of cement block construction in Calavi. By the extent of their working area, it is possible to suggest it structured the labour market of artisanal construction in southern, urban Benin. The practice of apprenticeship was found to have a self-amplifying character, as each new generation of qualified masters sought to take on apprentices. Apprentices were not acting to change the practice of apprenticeship, or the harms it caused them. Many qualified adult workers were not able to secure steady and well-remunerated work.

As explained in chapter 2, it was beyond the purpose and feasible scope of my study to take into account secondary literature related to children's agency in their work in Benin, Western Africa or Africa more broadly. It is however worth noting here that development agencies and theorists, as well as the ILO, have recently produced theoretical, empirical and policy-oriented literature which contends that apprenticeship in West Africa is a promising means of providing youth with training and employment perspectives, like the ILO's (2012) resource guide for 'upgrading informal apprenticeship in Africa.' (see also Walther 2007, ILO 2008, Nübler 2008, Ahadzie 2009) My findings call into question the central premise of this literature, namely that apprenticeship can be considered in ahistorical, uncontextualised terms as a mutually advantageous economic contract between master and apprentice. The relations of dependence, social obligations, lack of other options and very uncertain job prospects of the apprentices I interviewed in Calavi mean that my findings resonate better with Morice's (1987) much earlier Marxian analysis of apprenticeship in Western Africa as a system of exploitation.

Although all interviewed apprentices were poor and little-schooled boys, mostly from rural backgrounds, and had very similar experiences in their apprenticeship, I found a range of individual characteristics, experiences and perspectives among them. I will examine how these individual attributes relate to the degrees of criticism they expressed about the practice of apprenticeship in chapter 5. In chapters 6 and 7, I review the account given in this chapter, and that of the next concerning children's construction work in Bengaluru. I will attempt to answer the central question raised by my study of construction apprenticeship in Calavi: how can the apprentices' perceptions and responses to harm in their work be

explained in way which both acknowledges the objective existence of the harms I have identified and takes into account their agency?

4. The practice of children's work in construction in Bengaluru, India: unskilled work

In this chapter I present my findings on children's work and its harms in cement block construction in the northern periphery of Bengaluru. As in the preceding chapter, I give a detailed description of cement block construction work and how children figured in it, in order to show how their work was constituted as a practice. I then discuss how children were harmed or risked being harmed by their work, as well as children's responses.

4.1 Construction work and workers in Bengaluru

4.1.1 Local and national characteristics of construction work and workers

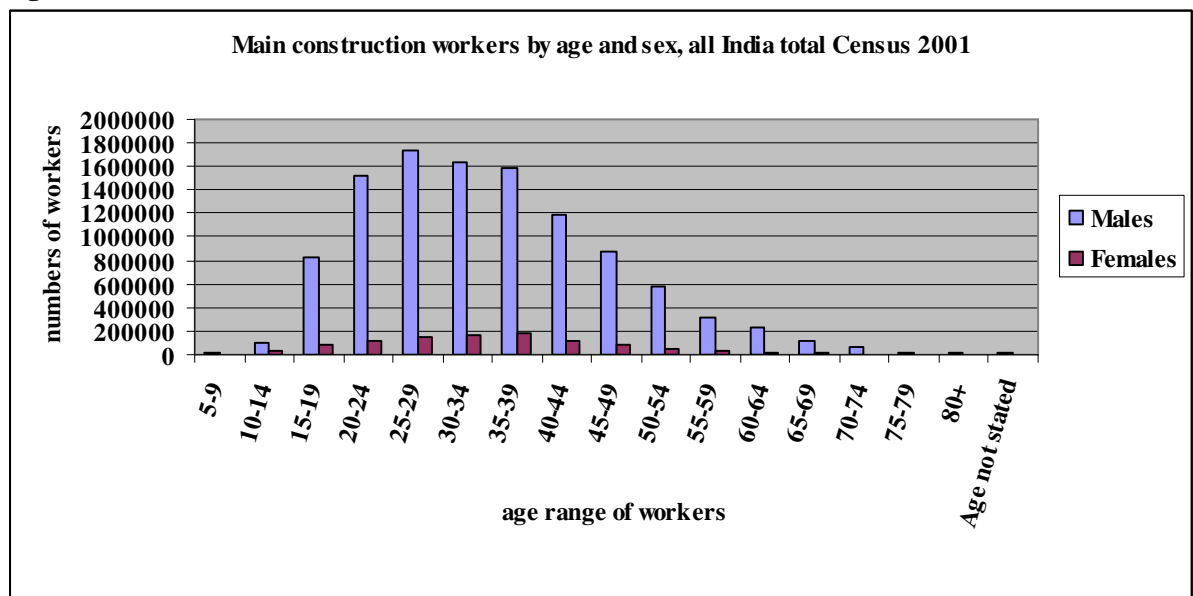
Bengaluru, capital of the state of Karnataka, is located in the centre of southern India, at the south eastern edge of Karnataka near the borders of the states of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. It is the third largest city in India. By 2011 census results, the population of the Bengaluru urban district, an area of more than 2000 km², was 9,6 million. It grew by 35% between 1991 and 2001 and again by 47% between 2001 and 2011. (GoI Census 2012)

Construction workers, necessarily, have been integral to this growth. In 2012, the state Minister of Labour said that there were one million people employed in construction in Karnataka, in 2010 the general secretary of the Karnataka State Construction Workers' Central Union said 1,2 million, with half working in Bengaluru. (Staff reporter, The Hindu 2012, Krithika 2012) In 2009, the Karnataka State Construction Workers Welfare Board (KSCWWB), a specialised Ministry of Labour agency, gave an estimate of 1,5 million. (Bageshree 2009) These different figures suggest the difficulty of accounting for a labour force including migrants from within Karnataka and as well as from near and distant states, who frequently move between Bengaluru and their places of origin and between construction and other work. (GoI 2012a: 363) The 2001 census enumerated an Indian

total of 9,4 million migrant construction workers⁴. (GoI Census 2001a) Fluctuating estimates also relate to fluctuating construction output.

Figure 1 shows 2001 Census results giving the all-India breakdown of workers employed six months or more in construction by age and sex. (GoI Census 2001b) Women made up 9% of main workers, which is a high rate of women's participation by global comparison. (ILO 2001:13) They made up 18% of those employed less than six months. (GoI Census 2001c) The 2001 Census also found young people in construction in high numbers. Those aged 14 and under made up only 1% of workers who declared construction as their main occupation. However, 8% of main construction workers were children and young people between 15 and 19, and 14% were aged 20-24: very close to a quarter of the work force was, and surely still is, under 25. (GoI Census 2001b)

Figure 1



Source: GoI Census 2001 Table B - 4: Main workers classified by age, industrial category and sex

Women and child workers are nearly entirely engaged in work classed as unskilled. (NCW 2005: 19) This is arguably why women's employment has increased in construction even as it has recently been declining overall and why so many young people are employed, for most new construction jobs are unskilled. (Thomas 2012) Unskilled workers have

⁴ 2011 Census results of workers' occupations, ages and sex are not presently available.

consistently made up about 83% of the construction workforce since 2005, and have been estimated at 34 million in 2012. (GoI 2012a: 363)

Should the all-India age, sex and unskilled percentages of unskilled workers hold and on the basis of a conservative estimate of 500 000 Bengaluru construction workers, there are more than 400 000 unskilled construction workers in the city, and approximately 3000 boys and 1000 girls under 15, and 26 000 boys and 3000 girls between 15 and 24. By my fieldwork observations, these figures are low, although working children under the age of 14 were not visible in great numbers. In 2008, an NGO working with construction workers estimated that approximately 100 000 children of construction workers were living in Bengaluru, with most spending all their time at construction sites and many working. (KCRO 2008:5)

The likelihood that construction workers comprise over 5% of Bengaluru's population is consistent with the fact that construction is largest employment sector in India after agriculture. More than 44 million people were working in construction in 2011, up from 17,4 million in 1999/2000, and it is estimated that by 2022, 92 million people will be. (GoI/NSSO 2011, GoI 2012a: 54, 363, GoI 2011a: 123,124) On the basis of National Sample Survey data, Thomas found that construction accounted for 81% of all new Indian employment in the second half of the 2000s. (Thomas 2012: 46,51)

The sector contributed 8% to India's gross domestic product every year between 2006 and 2010/11. (GoI 2012a: 362) Thus there is discrepancy between the numbers of people working in construction and the sector's economic weight, and even more between the growth of employment in construction over the last decade and its stable contribution to the economy. This is especially marked in the unorganised sector, equivalent to the household sector and distinct from public and private corporate sectors and cooperatives. (Kolli 2011:9) The unorganised sector was estimated to account for only 56% of the total of India's construction gross value added in 2008/2009 even though it included more than 92% of workers. (Kolli 2011:13, GoI/NSC 2012: 26, GoI 2012b: 43) By Planning Commission estimates, value added per construction worker in the year 2004/2005 was about 39 000 rupees in the unorganised sector and 568 000 rupees in the organised sector; value added per worker was estimated at 880 000 rupees in the organised private tertiary sector. (GoI 2012b: 56)

Informal construction work falls under labour legislation geared to protect casual, migrant and contract workers, but only in certain conditions related to the number of workers employed. The most significant labour legislation for construction workers in Karnataka is the 2006 *Building and Other Construction Workers' (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) – Karnataka Rules, (Karnataka Rules)* which brought into effect the national 1996 *Building and Other Construction Workers Act*. (GoK 2006, GoI 1996) It stipulates social services to be provided for construction workers and sets standards for conditions of work, but only applies to projects employing more than 20 people.

Construction employment for children under 14 is illegal by the 1998 *Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) (Karnataka) Rules*, which translated the national 1986 *Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act* of 1986 into state law. (GoK 1998, GoI 1986) The work of children over 14 in construction is not illegal in Karnataka, but it is affected by laws for worker registration and certification designed to prevent the employment of children under 14. My field work findings showed this legislation was not systematically respected, or enforced. At the time of my research, one labour inspector was responsible for an area of about 200 km² which included my research locality, and rarely left his downtown office for want of transport.

As in Calavi, cement block construction is growing in Bengaluru. In the Bengaluru urban district, 20% of households enumerated in the 2011 census lived in dwellings with cement walls, compared to 9% of Karnataka's total and 3,5% of the all India total. (GoI Census 2011) 2001 census results showed only 4,3% of Karnataka's households living in cement walled dwellings. (GoI Census 2001d) The incidence of households with concrete walls in Bengaluru in 2011 was comparable to that of Mumbai, a district with 22% of households living in dwellings with concrete walls, but far greater than that of either the National Capital Territory of Delhi and the urban and suburban districts of Kolkata, each with 6%. (GoI Census 2011) Housing walled with burnt or unburnt/mud bricks is in general more prevalent in India, accounting for 71% of the national total. (GoI Census 2011) In my research locality, interview respondents claimed that blocks only appeared in the early 1990s, but now they are the most common material used for larger works and buildings.

4.1.2 Types of cement block construction involving children in Bidar

Bengaluru's population growth as well as congestion, pollution and expensive real estate in its centre have propelled development of its extremities. The city has progressively absorbed outlying villages and agricultural lands. Bidar (pseudonym), my study area, was entirely rural only two decades ago according to residents.

Bidar is an area of about 40 km² roughly 15km to the north of central Bengaluru, covering several administrative zones. At the time of my fieldwork, much of it was still rural in aspect, with cows grazing on broad stretches of pasture, cultivated fields and copses of trees. However, there were scores of office and housing complexes, private housing and commercial buildings under construction during the period of my research. The variety of construction projects along with relatively easy access to construction workers determined my decision to focus on this area.

It was perhaps an indicator of non-respected labour laws that my advances in the city centre were met with wariness on the part of both workers and site supervisors. The frontage of most central construction sites were covered with tarpaulin. This was ostensibly to protect passers-by from debris, but it also masked working conditions. Access to all but the smallest projects was deterred by security guards. It was however always possible to see that workers' security and living conditions did not conform to existing legislation. On larger sites, many workers wore hard hats, but never all and I saw no use no use of individual precautions required for working at heights, nor even of other basic protective gear. Workers were observed living on many sites along with their children, sometimes in colonies of temporary sheet metal rooms but often in makeshift tents or shelters in the unfinished buildings, without stipulated social or sanitary facilities. Children of all ages were seen on nearly all sites, although only on smaller, more informal ones did I see children working who seemed to be under 14 and never did I see children working who seemed under 12 or 11. Most visible children seemed to be under 7 or 8 and were playing or sleeping while work was carried on around them. These same conditions mostly prevailed on construction sites in Bidar, but they were less concealed.

I did not arrange a survey of sites and workers as in Calavi. In Bengaluru supervisors and clients wanted to discuss at length my purpose and credentials before giving me permission

to approach workers. On three sites, although young children were working in front of us, supervisors insisted that no one no under 18 worked on their site. I therefore could not rely on research assistants to initiate contact and even had I undertaken a survey myself, it would have been impossible to give credence to supervisors' answers about workers' characteristics and very difficult to meet them directly. The area was vast, as were many of its construction projects and the numbers of workers employed on them, and major projects were enclosed by high walls. Consequently my description of the labour process and system of cement block construction involving children in Bidar is based on the observations I could make and interviews with workers, labour contractors, site supervisors and block making entrepreneurs.

I found children working in two different cement block construction systems: 1- ten or more storied apartment blocks and housing complexes ('major projects') ; 2- large houses, schools and commercial buildings ('intermediate projects') I also found children working to make cement blocks in small production units. Although separate from building, this work was part of the economy of construction. Table 8 summarises major differences in these three different kinds of work. I have distinguished between two kinds of workers in intermediate projects: construction workers employed over the duration of the project and those doing short term, group work because their situations were very different.

8. Characteristics of cement block construction work involving children in urban northern Bengaluru, 2010-2011

Types of work Characteristics	Major projects	Intermediate projects		Cement block enterprises
	Gated housing	Structural work	Moulding and digging	
# active sites observed	13	40	20	12
Building types	- Apartment complexes: several buildings, 10 + stories - 'Luxury' estates: 20+ individual row houses or apartments, 2 or 3 stories	- Houses of eight rooms or more, - Private schools or school extensions - a small commercial complex, all 2+ stories		--
Builders/ developers	Real estate development companies	Owner builders		Entrepreneurs, with other activities
Intended users	Affluent workers	Private owner builders, mostly wealthy		Builders intermediate projects and some major projects

continued				
Types of work	Major projects	Intermediate projects		Cement block enterprises
	Gated housing	Structural work	Moulding and digging	
Characteristics				
Duration of work	2,5 – 5 year	6months – 1 year	Days, week	Unlimited
# of workers	100-300	5-40	10 – 20	10-20
Male / female %	75% / 25%	70% / 30%	50 % / 50 %	50% / 50%
Age range %	14 – 18: 5% 18 – 30 : 50% 30 – 50 : 30% 50+: 15%	14 – 18: 5 - 10% 18 – 30 : 50% 30 – 50 : 35% 50+: 10%	14 – 18: 20% 18 – 30 : 30% 30 – 50 : 40% 50+: 10%	14 – 18: 20% 18 – 30 : 30% 30 – 50 : 40% 50+: 10%
Worker's origins	Migrants from distant states: Bihar, Jharkand and West Bengal and mostly Hindu-speaking. Migrants from northern Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu	Migrants from northern Karnataka and neighbouring states: Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, established in Bengaluru on either a long term basis or intermittently		Migrants from distant states, mostly Hindu-speaking. Migrants from northern Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu
Recruitment	'Major' labour contractors working regularly with development company On site prospecting by workers	'Minor' labour contractors On site prospecting by workers		'Minor' labour contractors On site prospecting by workers
Payment	Per day rate, weekly or bi-weekly payment	Per day rate, weekly payment	Per job or piecework, daily payment	Piecework, weekly payment
Safety measures	Safety helmets and gloves occasionally,	Gloves very occasionally and head towels		Gloves very occasionally and head towels
Use of machines	Cement mixers, ready made concrete, cranes, etc.	Small cement mixers Vibrators	Small cement mixers	Cement mixers and block making machines
Supervision	Labour contractors Site supervisors	Minor labour contractor Owners		Owners (sporadically)
Site security	Private security guards Site enclosures	None		None
Living conditions	On site worker colonies: complexes of sheet metal housing; water, electricity provided; communal toilets and washing facilities	Independent: rented rooms and tent colonies		On site in basic cement block buildings, water and electricity provided

Source: observations and interviews with workers, labour contractors and site supervisors, northern Bengaluru, 2010-2011

4.1.3 Labour process and system in cement block construction involving children

The most notable differences between the four types of work shown by Table 8 are in the labour system ('labour relations, modes of recruitment of labourers, class positions and social mobility of entrepreneurs and labourers' (van der Loop 1996:19)) Interviewed labour contractors on large projects I refer to as 'big' contractors. They explained that they recruited from a pool of regular workers several hundred strong, who they could easily contact or who would contact them, and that these regular workers (probably contractors in their own right) could enlist other workers as needed. They recruited in this way workers from northern Karnataka and neighbouring states, but mostly from northern states. They might also recruit strangers who presented themselves at the worksite. Major contractors might have provided workers for several projects at a time. On some sites, several labour contractors supplied workers, sometimes under successive levels of subcontracting. Site managers, mostly engineers trained in university and technical programmes, gave their work orders mainly through labour contractors, who supervised their workers and did not engage in construction work themselves. Construction workers on major projects were paid a daily rate, at weekly or bi-weekly intervals, negotiated between the building company and the major contractors, who sometimes paid workers directly. They were expected to work for the duration of the project, often several years.

Labour contractors interviewed who worked on intermediate projects, who I refer to as 'minor' contractors, hired local residents and migrants from northern Karnataka and neighbouring states already present in Bengaluru: they did not instigate migration. They hired certain workers regularly, or workers identified by colleagues and relations of workers they already knew, as well as workers who approached them directly. Minor contractors managed most aspects of work and participated in it, usually as skilled masons. They tended to work full time on one site and had a smaller group of workers to call upon than big contractors. They found work through referrals from clients and engineers and usually contracted with owners and sometimes with the designing engineer. Minor contractors negotiated the total amount to be paid for the work undertaken with the owner builder, and then negotiated rates of pay with workers. Negotiations with worker included reference to how long the work would last, which was usually several weeks or even months.

Workers in teams known as ‘gangs’ were hired by these minor labour contractors, or directly by the building client, for the short term, very pointed work of making and pouring cement to fill floor, roofs and support columns, which was referred to as ‘moulding’ (the equivalent of slab-making in Calavi), as well for digging shallow foundations. I found that teams mostly included several families consisting of parents and some or all of their children, both under and over 18, originating from the same rural area and often closely related. Moulding teams usually finished their work in a day, although they might be called several times for different stages of building, and several teams might be engaged if the work was too much for one to do. The duration of diggers’ work varied, but was rarely longer than a few days on intermediate projects. These teams were headed by a contractor-worker. Moulding workers were paid per job, and diggers by a piece rate corresponding to the amount of earth cleared. The amount of payment was negotiated between the contractor-worker among them and the builder or minor contractor, but the contractor-worker consulted with adult team members. Individual earnings were shared out on the basis of established agreements between workers. Moulders and diggers also sometimes did helping work on major and intermediate projects.

Block making enterprise owners explained they recruited through labour contractors or directly through friends and prospecting workers. One had travelled to northern Karnataka to recruit. For a small fee, labour contractors identified workers, in some cases haphazardly by proposing work to strangers. They participated in negotiations but subsequently were not involved in work. The only instance of a female labour contractor mentioned by correspondents was one who limited her intervention to the identification of block makers. Block workers were paid per ‘punch’ of blocks, with all inputs (machines, electricity, water, raw materials) supplied by the unit’s owner. Workers in the enterprises I approached were also in family groups including parents, children and sometime grandparents. I found between one and three family groups in these enterprises, who often but not always originated from the same rural area and were closely related. Workers were employed indefinitely. The amount of their work was determined by the success of the enterprise owner in finding clients. They were not closely supervised, although in some cases the enterprise owner or a part time manager worked on the site several hours a day to order materials, organise deliveries and meet with clients.

Major projects were enclosed by high walls, and were guarded by private security guards. Surveillance cameras covered every part of one site I visited. On these sites, workers were mostly housed in colonies, also enclosed and usually adjacent or within the main work site. However, workers seemed to come and go freely out of work hours. One major project I observed, and on which I interviewed several workers, was exceptional as a city council project for an apartment complex meant to house people displaced by slum destruction. There were no enclosures on this site, although there was an independent single security guard. No kind of containment measure of sites or workers was in evidence in the other kinds of work.

On major projects, colonies housed several hundred workers. They consisted of long rows of rooms constructed with sheet metal. Each room had a door, but rarely a window. The provision of accommodation is required by the *Construction Workers Act*, although it does not give standards. (section 4.1.1) On the three major sites that I visited, water and washing facilities were provided free of charge, in keeping with legislation, as well as installations for lighting the rooms. Crèches are also required on sites employing more than 50 women. I found only one, run by a child protection NGO. In the housing colonies on these sites, there were many young children, from infancy to around 6 or 7 years. They were mostly kept away from the building site, cared for by women who sometimes also did construction work. On the city council project, workers stayed in unfinished apartment units, and no other legislated facility was provided.

Block making workers fall under legislation for manufacturing rather than construction, even on units employing fewer than ten workers as the process involves the use of power. This legislation does not cover accommodation requirements. (GoI 1948) They were however in all observed enterprises in Bidar housed by their employer, and provided electricity and water for personal use free of charge. Housing consisted of a long concrete block building divided into rooms, each with a separate door and sometimes a window. In workers' colonies on major projects, rooms were allotted to a family or a group of 2 or 3 men, usually friends. In block making units, rooms were allotted to families. In both types of housing, rooms were about 12m². Cooking was done inside, near the door, or in front of the room.

Intermediate project construction workers, moulders and diggers found their own accommodation, or made it. Local residents and some relatively recent migrants who had decided to establish themselves on a full time basis in Bengaluru lived in rented rooms. Some migrants who continued to return intermittently to home villages lived together in tents made by covering a wooden frame with tarpaulin, in small colonies built on empty land with permission of owners. I found about ten of these colonies in Bidar. I met with some workers living in tent colonies who moved frequently, and but also interviewed workers who had been staying in the same colony for several years, leaving it erected when they returned to their villages.

Despite differences in labour systems and the living conditions of workers, there was similarity in the labour process in the four types of cement block construction work in which I found children. A first point is that no observed site met the extensive provisions for worker security established by the *Karnataka Building and Other Construction Worker Rules*. On major projects, some workers wore hard hats and there was usually a barrier in place to prevent workers on higher stories from falling. These measures were not taken on smaller projects, but there was comparatively reduced risk because of lower building heights and absence of machinery. Some but not all workers in all the kinds of work wore gloves, or protected their heads with towels when transporting materials, but none wore protective footwear or clothing.

On major projects, machinery was used for mixing small quantities of cement, lifting loads to high stories and vibrating poured concrete. Large quantities of ready made concrete for pouring floors and roofs were supplied by external companies. Machines were operated by adult men, with the exception of small cement mixers, which on a few occasions were seen to be operated by women. For these reasons, major projects employed a greater number of skilled male workers. But there was little difference between most structural work on both major and intermediate projects. Only adult men were employed in tasks qualified by a specific occupational title and considered as skilled or semi-skilled by workers, labour contractors and supervisors, as well as by state classifications for occupational minimum wages. (GoK 2012) These included the same occupations found in Calavi: ‘bar bending’ (steel bending), masonry (mounting blocks for walls and ‘plasting’ – the application of cement coating) and ‘centring’ (form work). Other tasks were less differentiated and undertaken by men, women and girls and boys designated as ‘helpers’. Their work

consisted mostly in transporting materials and making small quantities of concrete or mortar. The main difference between helping work and that of a *manoeuvre* in Calavi, was the use of electric mixing machines to make concrete and mortar, and that helpers also sometimes did plastering.

Moulding work involved making concrete with an electric mixer and transporting it to pour into slab and support structures, and was thus not very different from 'helping' work, although women moulders were more frequently observed running the cement mixing machine. Helping and moulding work, because they involved mostly the transport of materials, were similar to digging work, which involved digging foundations and clearing away earth and debris. On major and intermediate projects, the men, women and children over 14 who dug foundations were either engaged as 'helpers' or specifically for this work. Mixing cement and transporting materials also made up the largest part of cement block making work. To make blocks, a couple of men worked the block 'punching' machine, which laid a row of four to eight blocks at a time, depending on the machine and block dimensions. Other men, women and children 'loaded' the concrete mixer, pouring in fine gravel, cement and water, and filled the punching machine with the mixture.

Children between 14 and 18 made up a very small, albeit noticeable part of the visible work force on major projects I observed. They were engaged in 'helping' work: carrying water and materials, moving wheelbarrows. On one site, I met a couple and their 15 year old daughter, who said they had just been fired both because the girl was deemed too young to work and also because she had no work partner: they had been hired to dig foundations, and in this work it is usual that a man digs and a woman carries away the earth. On the intermediate sites I observed repeatedly, out of an estimated total of about 130 workers, 12 children between 14 and 18, and none younger, were observed working as helpers and doing plastering. Of the 12 occasions I observed moulding work, ten involved between three to five boys and girls between 14 and 18, and in the majority of cases at least one seemed to be under 14, suggesting children made up something like 20% of moulding workers. Children made up a similar proportion of block makers; those aged 14-18 were counted as workers by the owner of the enterprise, younger children were seen working but were not counted.

Table 9 shows that daily wages across the four types of cement block construction work involving children were similar for each category of low or unskilled workers. Interviewed workers said they worked for about nine hours a day and that they took breaks, which was in conformity with state legislation. Moulders, diggers and block makers also had nine hour work days and breaks, even though they were basically independent workers. Some variation in wages across types of work might signal a trade-off between housing and stable employment and fuller independence. I found in interviews that many who worked as block makers and on major sites were attracted by free living arrangements, however basic, and also that these workers had the fewest resources. In explanation of its higher wages, correspondents said that that digging work is recognised as particularly difficult.

9. Daily remuneration in rupees⁵ reported by construction workers, urban northern Bengaluru, 2010-2011

Wages	Construction work	Moulding work	Block making	Digging
Skilled man	400-450 mason, bar bender and centring worker	--	--	--
Semi-skilled man	300-350 mason, centring worker	300-350	--	--
Unskilled man	200-300 helper	200-300	200	300
Woman	120-150 helper	150-170	150	150 for carrying 200 for digging
Boy - aged approx. 14-16	120-150 helper	120-160	100-150	150 for carrying 200 for digging
Girl - aged approx. 14-18	120-150 helper	110-150	70-110	150 for carrying 200 for digging

Source: observations and interviews with workers, labour contractors and site supervisors, northern Bengaluru, 2010-2011

Within types of work, Table 9 shows gender and age discrimination: unskilled women and young workers were paid about half the wages of unskilled males, and much less yet than skilled males. Workers interviewed claimed that when a young man appears to be over 16 (some said over 18 or over 21), he received adult male wages. Higher wages were understood by interviewed workers to reflect the greater capacities of adult males. However, women and children were observed to undertake many of the same tasks as men. In block making, their work was more strenuous than operating the punching machine.

⁵ At the time of my field research: 1 GBP = approximately 75 INR

Age and sex differences in wages indicate the fragmentation of the construction labour market in general: although men worked in equal or greater proportions in helping, moulding, digging and block making, women and children were confined to this work. The high proportion of both young and women workers on intermediate project and especially in moulding digging and block making work as compared to major projects, was related to the greater numbers parent-children families in these kinds of work. But broad similarities in wages rates and labour processes across all four kinds give grounds for considering them to comprise a broad fragment in the construction labour market. Despite indication that workers were engaged in these different forms of unskilled work on the basis of their particular origins and migration status through a combination of worker and employer strategies in recruitment processes, most interviewed workers moved between them.

Workers interviewed also stressed the freedom they exercised in their choice of work. Devendramma, a migrant construction and moulding worker, said she would refuse work paying under 150 rupees per day, as did Lakshmi, a 16 year old construction helper migrant. Venkatesh, a local mason in his 60s, said that if he found conditions to be wanting, he would simply abandon the site. Block making workers changed employers at will and without notice in search of better conditions, like more clients or a steadier supply of electricity for running the mixer. One group of block making workers I met with, young men and boys from the state of Bihar, moved from one enterprise to another three times over six months.

That the workers I interviewed said they could choose work suggests they had an important degree of control over their own lives and were not obliged to work at any price. The opportunities they had to change employment also suggest that it was a worker's labour market: very unlike the situation in Calavi, my interview respondents in Bidar indicated that competition between them was not acute. The wages of the interviewed workers were generally higher, at least for men, than the minimum wage in construction fixed by the Karnataka state government, which was 132 rupees per day for an unskilled and semi-skilled worker of either sex and any age in 2010-2011, only a few rupees lower than that for skilled workers. (GoK 2013) Interviewed workers explained that their daily wages rise by 10-20 or more rupees per year, but complained that this does not cover rising living costs. Radha, a block making woman, said: 'Now the cost of rice per kilo has gone up to

36, 38, 40 rupees, how can we live?’’ Monthly payment for block making enterprise managers, who worked a few mornings or afternoons a week, was reported by owners as 6000 rupees, considerably higher than that for workers.

Similar wage levels go some way towards explaining why workers did not feel particularly loyal to employers. They said that they were not under written contract. Were they bonded through an advance system, by which they are given an important part of future earnings on recruitment such that they work under obligation to repay, and which has been found to hold for many migrant workers? (Bremner *et al* 2003) Because I did not interview many, I could not ascertain this for workers housed on major projects. It is certainly possible. Many helpers on intermediate projects and block making workers said they received advances from contractors, employers or both, mentioning figures ranging from 500 rupees to several thousand. Contractors and supervisors interviewed on both large and intermediate projects and block making entrepreneurs complained of workers absconding with advances; several said they had decided to refrain from giving them. Thus advances appeared not to help employers secure workers, whose unreliability they decried. Yet while workers may not have been egregiously indebted to employers, without exception the ones I interviewed were or had been in heavy debt. This is an issue I will address in my account of the situations, experiences and perspectives of interviewed child workers.

What I hope to have shown so far is that although children in cement block construction in Bidar worked on different kinds of projects, in very different employment relationships, the kind of work all did was similar, and similar to that of adults working alongside of them. Their work entailed transporting materials and for most mixing concrete, and was classed and remunerated as unskilled. Children and their families moved between different kinds of cement block construction work and changed jobs frequently. The great majority were migrants, strongly attached to their home villages. Because of these commonalities, I have considered children’s helping work on major and intermediate projects, moulding, digging and block making to comprise a general practice of children’s unskilled cement block construction work. I will now examine this practice, on the basis of working children’s own accounts of it.

4.2 Children's work in cement block construction

4.2.1 Origins and characteristics of interviewed children

Access issues and ethical concerns determined which children participated in interviews. My five months of fieldwork included only 20 odd Sunday mornings, when workers were available. It was also difficult to gain permission to interview children on major worksites, as permission had to be given by the development company's head director. On several sites, I was refused. On one where I did obtain permission, the major labour contractor I interviewed evaded my attempts to reach workers. I did however interview children of different ages in different kinds of work and personal situations. As in Calavi, I found much similarity between them.

I interviewed eight boys and two girls aged 15, 16 or 17 according to their own answers or that of their parents, and whose appearance was in keeping with their given age. I also interviewed a boy and a girl who said they were 18 but were unclear about their age and appeared younger. Other than Dikshit, all had been working in construction at least a year. Just three said they had started under the age of 14. Table 10 lists the interviewed children and young people by their pseudonym, occupation, age at the time of the interview and at commencement of work, and origin.

10. Child and young worker interview respondents, January 2010-June 2011

Kind of work		Pseudonym	Age	Age at start of work	Origin
helper work	major apartment buildings	Chandpasha	17	12	Tamil Nadu
		Dikshit	16	15	Bidar
	intermediate buildings	Arjuna	16	14	Northern Karnataka
		Raj	17	12	Northern Karnataka
moulding work, as well as helping work on intermediate and major projects		Bheemappa	17	13	Northern Karnataka
		Mallappa	16	13	Northern Karnataka
		Lakshmi	16	13	Northern Karnataka
digging work		Svati	18	16	Andhra Pradesh
block making		Chandru	17	14	Bihar
		Vinodh	18	15	Bihar
		Viresh	17	16	Andhra Pradesh
		Yellamma	15	13	Northern Karnataka

Source: interviews with child workers, northern Bengaluru, 2010-2011

Most had come from Northern Karnataka and nearby localities in adjacent states. Dikshit was a local resident. Those from furthest away were two block making boys from Bihar, a state in the North East. The boys from Bihar spoke Hindi and Bihari, but had not learnt Kannada. Those with roots in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh spoke their native languages – Telugu and Tamil, and most had learnt enough Kannada to communicate clearly. Those from Northern Karnataka only spoke Kannada.

Only the boys from Bihar were separated from family members. Chandpasha was working with an uncle on a major project, and was staying with him in the site's worker colony. Arjuna worked with an older brother and friends during school vacations and was living in the small commercial building he was working on. The others were with their families, which mostly included their mother, father and siblings. Bheemappa's father had remained in his village and Svati's mother had separated many years ago from a hard-drinking man, whose family had tried to extract from hers more than the agreed-upon dowry. Bheemappa and Mallappa, were from the same village and were part of the same gang, as was the case for Lakshmi and Raj. These four children lived in a tent colony. Svati lived with her mother Shanti and Dikshit with his parents in rented rooms. All the others lived in blocking making enterprise accommodation.

Dikshit was born in Bengaluru and his parents had few attachments to their native village in Tamil Nadu. The parents of the rest of the interviewed children had been born and grown up in agricultural households, as had at least partly their children. As families, they kept close ties to their native villages. Only Svati, Yellamma and Viresh said that their families had no current agricultural activities, because they had no land. Svati's mother Shanti explained that girls in her area of Andhra Pradesh could not inherit it, Yellamma's and Viresh's families had lost theirs. Shanti and Viresh's mother hoped to return to their villages to open shops, Yellamma's mother just wanted to move back. These three families derived all their revenues from construction work. The families of the other children, and the children themselves, remained involved to greater or lesser extents in agriculture. Raj and Arjuna said their families had leased out their respective acres, explaining there was no rain and thus no point to farming it themselves. Arjuna lived mostly in his village while Raj went only for holidays. Vinodh's and Chandru's parents worked full time in agriculture, on their own and other's fields. Both boys returned to Bihar at every six months to help them. Arjuna's parents were also full time agricultural labourers.

Lakshmi's family had an acre with a borewell, funded by a sold cow. Mallappa's and Bheemappa's families possessed more than five acres as well as livestock. They alternated agricultural work with their moulding work in Bengaluru. Most of interviewed children's families owned houses in their native villages, built with mud and thatch. They all had ration cards, issued by state governments to poorer households for some consumption basics like rice, sugar and oil, which had been left to the use of other family members.

Debt was often incurred for village expenses. Some loans were used for agricultural investment, which could be risky. Bheemappa's family had borrowed to dig a bore well, which was successful. Yellamma's family had lost their land when they could not pay off a loan used to buy a tractor. Svati and her mother had taken a loan to cover the costs of a failed vegetable selling business in their village, Raj's parents had built a house.

Nearly all interviewed children said their families had borrowed to pay for the marriages of older children, as well as medical and care expenses. Viresh's family had lost their land because of overwhelming loans used to care for an ill grandfather. Lakshmi's family had gone to Bengaluru to find construction work because they could not repay 50,000 rupees borrowed for the treatment for her mother, who had been seriously ill.

Only Svati and orphaned Vinodh said their households were at the time of the interview free of debt. Bheemappa's and Mallappa's familial debt portfolio covered marriages, farming activities, children's education as well as medical care. Its heaviness might indicate confidence in being able to repay, but it might also indicate pauperisation, as was suggested by Mallappa's take on family debt and migration: 'Take land and cultivate land. Due to crop loss people will migrate to Bengaluru. After earning money in Bangalore once a year, go to native village. After finishing, come back to Bengaluru.' Yellamma's and Viresh's family debts had been ruinous, with both children attributing unpaid loans to their fathers' drinking. However, repaying heavy loans was not impossible. Svati and her mother had repaid theirs, and Mallappa's family had, over several years, paid back about 110 000 rupees. Most debts were reported to be around 20 000 rupees, cumulating smaller loans from formal institutions, self-help groups and money lenders. No child or parent said that a loan was used for food.

The interviewed children's schooling also illuminates family access to and deployment of resources, including that of children's work, as well as child/parent attachments and

obligations. Svati's mother had wanted her to finish at least the first 10 year primary/secondary cycle, but Svati left in the 7th year to join her mother working in Bengaluru. She said she was lonely in her village because everyone had gone to Bengaluru. Bheemappa had also decided to leave during his 7th year because he was hungry and alone in the village hostel where his parents had placed him when they went to work. Both are, compared to their peers, well educated, but were not as fortunate as Arjuna and Dikshit who worked only during their long school holidays, in April and June. Dikshit had completed the first ten year cycle, Arjuna was in his 9th year and both planned to continue. Lakshmi had a year of schooling and Chandru a year more. Both claimed to have left because of beatings. Chandpasha had never been. The rest had been pulled out. Although Mallappa's family appears to be better off than the others, his parents took him out of school in his second year to care for a younger brother while they worked their fields. Yellamma and Viresh respectively reached the 4th and the 5th year before their parents put them into work to help pay debt, although Yellamma's father had promised her she could return to school when this was done. Raj left when he was in the 5th year, after his grandparents died and his parents called him to Bengaluru, and Vinodh in the 4th because his family had no money. Chandpasha, Chandru, Lakshmi and Mallappa said they could not read or write, although a more schooled friend of Lakshmi was helping her learn. The other children interviewed all said they could read and write.

The school experience of these children was not that of their siblings. The scholarly Arjuna's older brother had left in his third year to work in construction, while the unschooled Chandru's younger sisters attended in Bihar. Lakshmi's and Raj's youngest siblings went to school in Bidar. Yellamma had been to school, but not her younger brother, aged about 9: he was of school entrance age when the family came to Bidar but his parents did not enrol him. As in Calavi, these different situations indicate ebbs and flows in family fortunes and variable commitment to children's education, along with the consequences of school expense and violence.

The children's immediate households were not large, and consisted of parents and children. This is why I refer to them here as families. Svati and Viresh were only children, Dikshit had a brother, the rest two or three siblings. Care responsibilities however were extended: several children explained their families supported grandparents, aunts and uncles in native villages.

With the exceptions of Arjuna and Dikshit, the children I interviewed and their families were all dependant on combined family construction incomes. The families of Svati, Yellamma and Viresh depended entirely on them. In general, children and their parents with land claimed agriculture provided 20% of family income at best.

It was difficult for me to examine with precision whether varying circumstances among workers reflected caste inequalities. I asked worker respondents which caste they belonged to, and whether they felt caste influenced employment in construction. Most, but not all, were from 'Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes' (SC/ST) recognised as disadvantaged by the Constitution of India, as well as from 'Other backward classes' (OBC), a revisable national list of disadvantaged groups. Some were from non-scheduled farming and agricultural castes. Interviewed children and their parents, all practising Hindus, said that people of any caste could do and did construction work, but in giving examples they mostly referred to SC/ST and OBC castes. Some said that debt, poverty and lack of village opportunity brought people to it, not caste. When asked why many people from her Northern Karnataka area came to Bengaluru for construction work, Viresh's mother Radha answered: 'We do not have any caste prejudices. Only those who are in distress come to do this work. Otherwise why would one come all the way to work here?' One major labour contractor, in his 50s at the time of the interview, explained that his parents had objected to him beginning work in construction as a young man because they saw it as work for lower castes, which suggests that the labour system in construction might have worked to break down some caste barriers.

Although respondents did not suggest their livelihood problems were related to caste, the genesis of them might be. This I could not investigate given the brevity of respondents' answers to questions about caste. I note here too that my research assistants were very reluctant to ask these questions for fear of offending. An interviewed representative of an NGO very concerned with construction workers explained that most unskilled construction workers are of SC/ST and OBC castes, and that one of the reasons they like construction work is that it frees them of caste restrictions which are more oppressive in rural areas. A hint at the possible importance of caste was given by Mallappa, who explained that members of his caste 'were not interested in working with SC/ST castes.' While individual situations may have been shaped more sharply by caste discrimination than I was able to apprehend, in general I can say that the children I interviewed were mostly of disadvantaged castes.

4.2.2 Beginning construction work, finding work and negotiating terms

Dikshit and Arjuna had expressly chosen to do construction work. Dikshit had passed his previous school vacation working with his mother loading stones into lorries at a quarry, and he had not liked it. He asked his mother to find him work on the nearby major site. The site manager refused at first because of Dikshit's age (16), but relented when she said he needed the money for school. He did not really, but he did not want to stay idle and his mother did not want him getting into mischief. Arjuna wanted to make money for school clothes and books, and went to work with his parents' consent. As we have seen, Svati and Bheemappa decided to leave their studies in their home villages because they were lonely and wanted to join their families; they also said they wanted to make money. Viresh explained that he decided to join his parents making blocks in Bengaluru because he found no work in his native village and wanted to make sure that his family repaid loans. He said he had convinced both his parents to continue block making work when they had wanted to return to their village. Raj was called by parents to join them in their work as construction helpers, but he also said he wanted to come as he had no work in his village and wanted to help in paying debt. Vinodh had been working on his own and others' land in his village in Bihar, making 50 rupees a day, so decided to join a gang of young men doing construction work in Bengaluru to help his widowed mother. Chandru had run away to work. He explained he had wanted to leave school against his parents' wishes, so went to join Vinodh's group without telling them. He contacted them once he was settled in work, weeks later. They had looked everywhere for him in his absence and disapproved of his choice but were, said Chandru, glad of the money he immediately started sending back to help with their farming activities.

Thus eight out of the twelve children I interviewed recounted having made their own decisions about entering construction work: two for experience and some help with school funds, two to be with their families and make money, four because of a desire to contribute to family incomes and a lack of other or well remunerated activities in native villages. Parents' decisions determined the entry of the other four. Chandpasha, the only unschooled child, had started work under the age of 10 (he said 7, but was unsure), working for four years as a helper with a relative in rural Tamil Nadu before starting in Bengaluru with another relative. His said his mother sent him to work because she did not want him 'roaming' when not doing agricultural work. The three other children were all

pulled into work by parents trying to pay debt. Mallappa had been looking after the family cow when his mother asked him to go with her to Bengaluru with his siblings to join his father in a moulding gang; he said: 'I did not come. They brought me.' Lakshmi had been doing domestic work in her village when her father took her and her siblings to Bengaluru, where he and her mother were already working as moulders and helpers. Yellamma had been happily in school when her father decided to move the whole family to Bengaluru to work off debt. Albeit surprisingly, these children like their peers said they had been at least reasonably happy when they began to work.

Arjuna had found construction work by contacting Bengaluru minor labour contractors referred to him by village acquaintances and his brother. He had himself negotiated the terms of his first job, and subsequent ones, directly with contractors but with the experienced assistance of his brother. The other children did not usually participate directly in finding or negotiating work, but they were often present. Lakshmi said her family would approach building sites directly to ask for work, while Raj's family found work through village relations also working in construction or prospecting via unknown workers on new sites; he often did this independently. A mason relative kept Chandpasha and his uncle him informed of opportunities. The other children depended on contractor-workers in their teams. Svati and her mother Shanti found work through Shanti's brother, a digging contractor-worker. Bheemappa's family found work through a cousin. Yellamma's uncle had found the block making enterprise her family worked. Less close to negotiations were Vinodh and Chandru, who relied on the contractor-worker leader of their block making group to find work.

The children's work terms were negotiated by parents with contractors, exceptions given by those who were without their families. Bheemappa, Mallappa and Raj sometimes worked independently of their families, but nearly always along with workers from the same team in work negotiated by its contractor-worker members. Terms usually covered the collective family. Remuneration, according to the interviewed children, had to meet a minimum. If lower rates were offered, they said employment might be refused. Block making workers negotiated directly with enterprise owners, sometimes along with the contractor who had proposed the work to them. All contractual arrangements were verbal. Children and adults working as helpers on intermediate projects, moulders and diggers said terms covered possible duration and wages only and were quickly agreed. Block making

workers and Chandpasha on a 'luxury' apartment project discussed housing as part of work terms. Block making workers also reviewed electricity, machines and production expectations with enterprise owners. They said they had been cautioned that they could be charged for misused machines and materials, although none reported experiencing this problem.

Some issues seemed to be subject to tacit agreement and general work practice. Children, and their families, neither owned nor were required to provide their working equipment, with the exception of Svati and Shanti, who brought their own shovels and basins for digging work. Lakshmi said some construction sites provided daytime meals, which were unappreciated because food was deducted from wages. Children and adult workers did however expect contractors to provide advances. Work days were regular, falling between 8:00 and 18:00. Helpers, moulders and diggers knew they had to arrive promptly or risk being refused work for the day, or being told not to come back at all. For helpers working on major and intermediate projects, breaks for meals and rest were scheduled and overtime was remunerated. Moulders and diggers, working on piecework rates, scheduled their own breaks according to progress. Block making workers had no set schedule imposed on them. Even as pieceworkers, they had overtime pay: if the enterprise owner had an urgent order, he gave a premium for evening work. The child workers, and their interviewed adult co-workers, did not expect to be supplied with safety equipment.

Only Arjuna and Chandpasha stayed overnight on their worksites. The families of the other children refused work too far away for easy return to their homes. Viresh's family had worked in construction before taking up block making; his mother Radha seemed slightly offended when asked if they had then slept on work sites: 'We are not used to such jobs. Why should we go over to others' places? We have to remain in our own place.' Svati and her mother had stayed on site when they worked on Bengaluru's new airport, but unwillingly: they said that colony conditions were unhealthy and also dangerous for women because too many men were drunk at night. They were very happy to have been able to rent a room for themselves.

An implication of living at home, be it a tent or a rented room, is that it limited family work to the greater Bidar area, a radius of about 10-15 kilometres, even though many had difficulties finding work. Svati said she and her mother spent a week at home every month

hoping for digging work and Raj said he might look for construction helping work several days a week.

4.2.3 Work, skills, and regulation

The boys I interviewed who worked as construction helpers and moulders were earning adult male wages, varying between 200 and 250 rupees, with the exception of Dikshit, who made 120 rupees a day as a helper on the city council project, a wage equivalent to a woman's and below the state minimum wage. The block making boys from Bihar made much less: their contractor/co-worker gave them 100 rupees per day, with an unknown amount deducted for food. This suggests under-handedness, for their wages were much lower than Viresh's, who claimed to make between 250 and 300 a day making blocks. However, Yellamma, who worked in the same block making enterprise as Viresh, made only 70 rupees a day. Svati, a digger, did not know how much she made, as her income was controlled by her mother, who said it was 200 rupees a day, while Lakshmi earned between 120 and 150 rupees for a day's moulding work.

These wages did not reflect the kind of work the children did. The boys and girls I interviewed, both younger and older, performed the same kind of work. All transported materials. They also all used the same basic equipment: buckets and basins, shovels, wheelbarrows. Helpers, moulders and block makers supplied materials to other workers and loaded cement mixers and ran them. Helpers and block makers carried blocks by hand and on their heads. The only notable difference observed between boys and girls was that girl moulders did not carry loads of mixed cement up makeshift wooden stairs for pouring slab floors and roofs. Construction workers and block makers, girls and boys, also referred to their work titles in the same ways, as helpers or cement workers. Furthermore, the children who worked at block making had previously done construction helping work, the children who worked primarily in moulding teams sometimes had helper work and some helper children had also done digging work. There was little difference between the work of child and young workers and adults, for they worked alongside adults in teams and so necessarily at the same pace and for the same hours.

The children had learnt their work mostly by example. Digging, transporting and supplying required no particular training, although proficiency in this work, as in any other, could be

enhanced by practice. The children spoke of having first felt the work difficult, and then adjusting to it. Loading the right proportions of materials and operating cement mixers is a skill, but was easily and quickly acquired by the interviewed children. Arjuna, Chandpasha, Mallappa and Raj had learnt to mix cement from brothers, cousins and uncles, Lakshmi, Yellamma and Viresh from their fathers. The block making boys from Bihar had learnt from co-workers. Learning other skills was a matter of chance and volition. Arjuna had been taught plastering by his brother, who had been working in construction for many years. Dikshit had learnt a little of mounting walls when helping to build a neighbour's house. Bheemappa said that he planned one day to borrow some masons' equipment while they were relieving themselves, in order to do work to prove his interest. He said that if his work was good, he might be given an opportunity, and that if it was bad, he hoped they might teach him. Lakshmi said that if a boy or girl helper was a very good worker, a skilled minor contractor might offer to teach him or her. I did not encounter anyone else who said girls could become skilled workers. Both Lakshmi and Raj said that being taught by a skilled contractor depended on offerings of tea, alcohol, small gifts and money. Raj explained he had been doing the same construction helping work for five years because he had had no chance to learn new skills.

On the worksites I observed, all workers, while working, were fully occupied. Child and adult helpers moved quickly and determinedly, whether digging, transporting materials or mixing with cement. Block makers, as explained, organised their own schedule, depending on demand, and sometimes worked only in the mornings.

If they were slack or careless, the children said they might be scolded by contractors or parents, but never worse. They also said they had never been in direct conflict with employers, although on rare occasions wages given had been less than agreed and their parents had decided the family would abandon the job. More commonly reported were conflicts with other workers. For moulding gangs, this could happen when they worked alongside another one: each might accuse the other of not doing a fair share. Raj said on construction sites some workers, out of work hours, might fight and even steal from each other, and Svati said that in the colony she lived in there were many fights between drunken men at night.

Some felt that there was nothing dangerous about their work. Most of these had not had experience of accident. Chandru worried about getting hurt carrying and stacking blocks and thought construction work was dangerous; one his colleagues had seriously injured his leg when blocks fell on him. This had also happened to Viresh's father. Bheemappa said the work was dangerous: a metal form work sheet had fallen on him and he had spent several days in hospital. In these cases, block making enterprise owners and the contractor and client had not helped with medical care. Viresh's family engaged themselves at another block making enterprise in order to take an advance to pay for his father's care. The interviewed children spoke of serious accidents on major projects. Raj said he had seen four people fall to their deaths on a major project. Svati's first digging work was occasioned when her team replaced one which had quit after a digger was smothered by the collapsed walls of a foundation column. Both Raj and Svati said that compensation had been paid to the bereaved families of between 100 and 200 000 rupees. Raj added that those responsible for the project had also paid a fine and had subsequently hired a safety officer, which is a requirement of the Karnataka rules for worksites with over 500 workers. Raj had once been given a length of cord to tie round his middle when he worked on a building several stories high. Otherwise the children only used gloves and towels on their heads for carrying blocks to protect their skin from cement and concrete. These they supplied themselves.

The interviewed children were not familiar with safety and protection laws, insurance plans or governmental or NGO construction worker welfare schemes. Workers who made over 600 rupees a month in construction were eligible for insurance and welfare benefits administered by the KSCWWB, the agency responsible for the application of the *Karnataka Building and Other Construction Workers' Act*. However, registration was onerous, eligibility depended on paying regular fees and 18 was the minimum age for registration. Adult and child workers, as well as interviewed major and minor contractors and site supervisors, said they were unaware of these services. The children did have some experience of work inspections on both large and intermediate projects, but these were concerned with building quality. As described by Bheemappa: 'People come in a car, they will ask how is this room built and how is that room built, they will say it is very nicely done and they will go;' he did not know the professional status of such inspectors. On major projects, the children said that their contractor ensured they were listed in attendance sheets along with all workers, for payment and not age verification purposes.

When asked about general laws for workers, the better-schooled Arjuna said that children under 18 were banned from working, which is not true, and the better-schooled Dikshit talked, rather vaguely, about bonded labour and limits on work hours. Raj mentioned work principles: be there at 9:00 and bring lunch, and the other children said they knew nothing.

4.2.4 Social relationships, leisure and personal care

Most of the interviewed children lived with parents and siblings and worked with them almost daily, and if they did not, they returned to their families for some if not most of the year and joined them in agricultural activities. Many children I interviewed were also close to extended family members who lived or both lived and worked with them.

Dikshit and Arjuna worked to help pay for their schooling. The other children contributed to family upkeep and to paying family debt. They did not express resentment. Lakshmi, Svati and Yellamma never saw their own wages. The boys received payment in their own hands, but either sent most of it to their parents, in the case of those who did not live them, or gave it directly to their mother or father. Viresh gave his mother his money to prevent his father spending it on alcohol, but he was alone in expressing concern over how it might be used. The others children expected their earnings to go to household expenses and debt payments. In return, parents gave the children small allowances for sweets and, for boys, Sunday entertainments. Only Raj kept a substantial part of his income, which he put in a village chit fund, the equivalent of a *tontine* in Calavi, towards the driving lessons he hoped to take and spent on a gym membership.

Girls were further tied to families by domestic duties in their off work hours. They helped mothers with cooking, collecting firewood, getting water, washing clothes and housecleaning. Bheemappa and Mallappa also fetched water, but otherwise no boys mentioned doing housework. On Sundays girls did have some free time, during which they walked with friends or watched television in local viewing boutiques. Boys and went 'roaming' for the whole day, going as far as the leisure parks of central Bengaluru. All the children also said they used Sunday leisure time to catch up on sleep. Some boys said they smoked cigarettes sometimes. The question was not asked of them, but I saw no evidence of construction working children drinking or taking drugs.

No child said they were ever hungry and all ate a healthy, if protein poor, diet. Children with families ate meals with families, prepared by mothers and sisters. For correspondents from Southern India, meals consisted of *sambar* – a soupy vegetable curry, rice, *chapathi*, sometimes lentils and very rarely mutton or chicken. I neglected to ask respondents if they were vegetarian, and if so whether it was for caste or religious principles, which might explain why so few spoke of eating meat. Chandpasha and Arjuna, without mothers and sisters, either bought food or prepared it themselves. The block making boys from Bihar were accompanied by a very young boy – I was told he was twelve – whom they paid to prepare food and do washing.

The children looked and claimed to be healthy. This is more cause than effect of their working conditions, for several had siblings who were either sickly or mentally disabled who had been left behind in native villages, and Mallappa's family brought to Bengaluru a younger brother too chronically ill to work. Mallappa and Raj had both suffered from protracted debilitating fevers since they had started working. Both complained that the treatment they had paid for in hospitals had not helped. Otherwise the children said they had had minor, easily treated ailments, but rarely. Only Raj was slight, and he had joined a gym to address this. However, the parents I met with were short and very slender. All the children interviewed were clean and neatly dressed, and on Sundays dressed in special, if inexpensive, clothes: boys in pants and shirts, girls in bright saris.

The interviewed children did not have strong relations to people beyond their own community. As noted, Raj participated in a chit fund but no others said they participated in any kind of social group. Raj was yet again an exception in expressing familiarity with political parties and issues. The children did not socialise with employers or labour contractors. However, construction helpers, moulders and diggers made new acquaintances among workers and contractors at all the sites they worked on.

4.2.5 The children's perspectives on construction work and their future

Many interviewed children said they liked their work. Reasons given related mostly its physical nature: some said it was easy, or at least easier than agricultural work, or even fun. Lakshmi was glad that Bengaluru was cooler than her village, Viresh said there was a thrill in lifting stones, Chandru liked making cement and Arjuna took pleasure in plastering. But

they also acknowledged that the sun was harsh, loads were heavy and they were very tired at night. Many children were happy to be paying off family debt with their work and several were happy simply to be with their families.

Many also indicated that they saw their construction work to help them prepare their futures. Several boys planned to continue in construction, but were aiming for better terms. Mallappa, Viresh and Chandpasha wanted to become skilled enough to become construction minor labour contractors and continue some farming work. Viresh also wanted to open a village shop. Arjuna, Dikshit and Raj also thought of becoming minor labour contractors, but mostly to have work to fall back on if needed. Arjuna and Dikshit helped fund their studies with their work. Arjuna wanted to pursue his studies as far as possible, and indicated he wanted to be teacher but was unsure of his plans. Dikshit said he planned to be a software engineer. Raj wanted to be a taxi driver, and thought that in three years, he would have enough to pay for driving lessons with some left to make a start in his village.

Both Bheemappa and Svati wanted to be tailors. Bheemappa hoped to learn after clearing family debts and returning to his village. He was interviewed in 2010 and again in 2011, and had maintained this aspiration: he figured it would take another half year to repay a remaining 20 000 rupees, and then he would start. Svati's mother was teaching her on a newly acquired sewing machine. Svati's mother had also bought a plot in their native village and they were saving together to build a house.

Chandru and Lakshmi did not plan significant change. Chandru simply wanted to go on making bricks, but preferably closer to central Bengaluru, where no such enterprises exist. Lakshmi said she thought she would continue to work in construction in the same status. Yellamma and Vinodh expressed aspirations which were not supported by their construction work. Yellamma said she wanted to be a bus driver, but the likelihood of her being able to pursue her schooling to do so was improbable, given her family's debt and her father's heavy drinking. Vinodh said he hoped to find work in a factory in Mumbai, but was not sure of when or how he would do this.

Most interviewed children considered that the situation of unskilled construction workers was in general good because it allowed those determined to do so to improve their lives.

‘They can become rich’, said Viresh, ‘unless they drink and spend all the money.’ Mallappa said that workers could save money if they managed it well in a bank account. According to Svati: ‘Everyone has improved. They earned here and went back to native villages, back to build their houses, back to farming after improving their financial situation, a few of them got married.’ There were some exceptions, like Lakshmi, whose family was not succeeding in clearing debt, and Raj, who figured that as long the Bharatiya Janata Party remained in power, wages would go down as prices went up.

Only Raj had suggestions for improving the situation of construction workers, and he thought only of machinery and free housing for workers in all kinds of work. None of the children foresaw any change in the kind of work they did. This contrasts with the views of labour contractors and engineers on larger and intermediate projects who anticipated that increasing mechanisation of construction work, associated with the increasing use of cement blocks, would entail increasing demand for skilled workers.

4.3 Harm and practice of children’s unskilled work in cement block construction

4.3.1 Children’s perceptions of harm

Most interviewed children voiced dislike of the hardships of manual labour in the sun, and a good number worried about their safety. A few of them, and several of their mothers, said they worried about the long term impact of work on their bodies. Like the apprentices in Calavi, they did not voice either strong complaint about their work or dejection about the prospects it afforded.

However, the interviewed children expressed resignation about debt and lack of alternatives in explaining why they worked, which the apprentices in Calavi did not.

When asked if his parents were happy about his work, Chandpasha explained:

I have to start a shop, they want me to. What I am saying is that they are not happy, because I am working hard here. I have lands, I can cultivate and have a shop and earn my living, they say this, but what about the debts?

In the words of Lakshmi: ‘If we have to work than we have to, for food for stomach and some clothes, so for that we are doing this work. However many days it might be, I will do

this work.’ Svati, when asked if there was any other reason than need for money for her work, replied: ‘No other reason. Only because work is not available in our village, we had to migrate here.’ Bheemappa said: ‘The pay is less in our village. Even the government is not providing work. In our village there is work in farms, so we have to borrow money to work on the farmland and then there is loss of money.’ Yellamma and Viresh simply pointed to debt. Said Yellamma : ‘We borrowed money, that is why I have to work.’ They also were fatalistic about working in construction. When asked if he had other work opportunities, Chandpasha answered: ‘If they tell of other work I will do it, or else I will do this work only. No, we never had any other opportunities.’ Lakshmi said that having learnt construction, there was nothing else she could do or learn. Svati said she had never thought of any other work and Viresh explained: ‘Now that I am in this work I have to see it in my future.’

4.3.2 Physical integrity, destitution and inequality

By my definition of harm in children’s work, children’s unskilled cement block construction work in Bidar was less harmful in its direct effects on children, and more beneficial, than apprenticeship in Calavi.

The children I interviewed were healthy and well-grown. Their working hours were fixed and allowed for some leisure. They had play activities and did not see their work as entirely unpleasant. As in Calavi, they all were articulate in speaking to me and my research assistants about their work.

The ease of entry into unskilled construction work and its availability meant that children with few years of schooling could be economically active. They were making money valuable for their families’ well being, which kept them enmeshed in reciprocal family relations and accorded them a certain status as contributing members. As in Calavi, construction employment in Bidar entailed economic restructuring, but in Bidar this included helping workers pursue or develop rural livelihoods. The earnings of several children helped support the maintenance of family agricultural activities and assets, and sometimes investment in them. Families who were entirely dependant on construction work would have been in more difficult situations had the children not worked.

Construction work helped a few children to overcome disadvantage. Svati and her mother Shanti had cleared debts, moved from a tent to their own rented room, and bought land and a sewing machine as an independent mother-daughter household. Chandru and Vinodh had broken away from unprofitable agricultural work in Bihar, one of India's poorest states, and were enjoying their experiences of urban life. Construction incomes might have been helping Bheemappa, Chandpasha, Raj and Viresh to realise their aspirations to develop non-manual economic activities. They contributed to Arjuna's and Dikshit higher education. More indirectly, perhaps Raj's and Lakshmi's younger siblings would not have been in school had not elder children in their families taken up construction work.

However, other effects on working children were harmful. These effects were also experienced by adult unskilled workers. Here I review major issues.

Physical: As in Calavi, safety measures were limited, but in Bidar more children were working with machinery and at heights. Many children I interviewed had experienced an accident, or had known of serious and fatal ones.

Terms of work: Child and adult unskilled workers did not have employment security. Most workers explained that most contractors and/or end employers would pay medical costs for worksite accidents, but also said that sometimes care was covered either partly or not at all. Employers did not provide support in the case of illness. Younger boys and all girls working with families did not decide upon work terms. Although adult workers and some independent boys said they could leave their work at will, they did not try to discuss or review its terms with labour contractors, or clients, with whom they had no or little contact. This might be because workers were easily replaceable. The mobility of many workers made it difficult for workers, whether adult or child, to collectively mobilise. The dispersion of worksites and worker residences also curtailed the efforts of labour organisations and state and NGO's providing services for worker welfare to reach them. On major projects, it is possible that workers, subject to surveillance, were not free in their movements. They were however easier to reach by regulation and welfare services. That few children were working on these projects might be indication of this, as was the crèche I found on one site, but most legal provisions for worker safety and amenities were not respected.

Workers' freedom in choosing and changing employment might have contributed to keeping wages relatively high for all unskilled workers, but construction incomes, even when combined between family members, were inadequate to cover basic reproduction. Medical costs incurred debts which took some families years to pay. Marriage costs also necessitated outlays that could only be met by debt; according to respondents, whether for a boy or girl, they involved expenses of over 100 000 rupees for gifts and the purchase of land for the new couple and new in-laws. Although primary schooling was nominally free, and most public schools provided free midday meals, parent incomes were not enough to support more than a few children in school. Elder siblings helped keep younger ones in school.

It is possible that a tendency of workers established in Bengaluru to refuse work and change employment helps explain why big labour contractors sought to recruit workers from distant states. These workers might have been in worse circumstances than those I interviewed, all of whom had come to Bengaluru independently.

Learning: Employers took few or no measures to train workers. Learning skills depended on individual efforts, and opportunity. Women and girls had little opportunity to learn skilled work. Children who had stayed in school longer than three years could read, and write a little as well, but no child learnt or improved general literacy and numeracy skills in their construction work. Some out of state migrants learnt Kannada, which was probably through their work, as most spent most of their time on work sites.

Social relationships: Children in cement block construction had a restricted sphere of social relationships when working in Bidar. In moulding, digging and block making work, child and adult unskilled workers had little contact with skilled workers. Workers living in enclosed major work sites were segregated from the general population of Bidar, and many of those living in tent colonies and block-making enterprise housing were spatially isolated. While they frequented many other construction workers, and construction workers seemed to be solidarity-minded enough to tell even strangers about work prospects, the children did not have much contact with people from other walks of life.

Although I have stressed that most children were working and living with their families, the situation of the independent boys I interviewed indicates that many others might also

be separated from their families, some by long distances. It is possible that some had broken ties with them. In both cases, independent boys might not experience caring relationships in their daily lives, or be able to depend on family support in the case of injury or illness.

Labour process and system: Children's work was monotonous and laborious. This was not specific to children, but to unskilled work in cement block construction in general in Bidar. On major and intermediate projects, because they made up a marginal fraction of the workforce, children's work did not have great impact on the overall costs of labour, or on labour processes. They did figure in moulding, digging and block making work in numbers important enough to suggest their work helped kept the costs of construction low for intermediate projects. In all the kinds of work I have examined here, a more important influence on labour costs were the low wages of women, who made up a between a quarter and a third of the work force on major and intermediate projects, and half of the workforce in moulding, digging and block making work. The prevalence of lower-paid women along with child workers might have contributed to sustaining labour intensive construction techniques. These methods not only entailed the monotony and laboriousness of unskilled work, but the easy replaceability of unskilled workers. Given that workers were not under formal contract and could easily be fired, this might be another factor in preventing them from being able to collectively mobilise to improve their working terms and conditions. Lower wages also marked the subordinate status of young workers of both sexes and of women, confirming women's and children's wages as being auxiliary to men's and the principle that men, women and children work as members of family units. Had mothers been better remunerated, their children's incomes might have been less important to family livelihoods.

The families I interviewed sometimes quite literally ploughed construction incomes into rural development, with proceeds usually too scanty to free them from needing to continue to work construction, or even negative. They had access to credit, but for some the inability to repay it had led to the loss of their land. The need for repayment cash was what precipitated most children into work. Construction work allowed some families to manage debt and have continued recourse to it, but not easily to repay it. It did not provide workers directly with insurance mechanisms. The main one they depended on in the case of injury or illness was family support, but this support sometimes was in the form of family help in

paying loans taken for medical care. Svati's and Shanti's achievements might be partly due to fact they had no dependants. With the exception of Svati, I found no definite proof that construction incomes would ensure the realisation of the other interviewed children's aspirations. For most of those I interviewed, and their families, construction work helped either maintain or improve slightly family assets and pay for marriages, or stave off destitution, but not to significantly alter their precarious situations. As indicated by the fact that they were able to maintain family unity and avoid living in major project worker' colonies, many of the children and parents I interviewed in Bidar might have been in relatively better positions than construction workers on major projects and in the city centre. But their near destitution strongly suggests that their work was exploitative: it could be said to be subsidising Bengaluru's thriving construction industry, to the advantage of affluent real estate developers and private clients.

4.3.3 Children's responses to harm

As in Calavi, although the children I interviewed did not refer to the issues summarised above in ways indicating that they saw them as harms, they did refer to actions which can be considered as responses to some of them. The most evident relate to their efforts to contribute to family dignity. Although no worker interviewed referred to anything like dignity directly, in interviews children and their parents did suggest the importance of having control over their movement and choice of jobs, of keeping their own living spaces and of preserving family relationships. These relationships were preserved partially because of the nature of their work practice: it was possible for children and parents to work together and live together, even for those who could not afford independent housing. They also were preserved in spite of it: the active efforts of children and parents to maintain family unity worked against the dividing forces of migration and wage differentials.

Children's participation in family livelihoods mitigated family insecurity and poverty. Yet had construction work given adults access to insurance mechanisms and higher incomes, this participation might have been less important. Had children been paid better, their help would have been more effective. Neither children nor adults interviewed were acting to change the terms and conditions of their work. On this basis, it could be said that the children were resilient in accepting them. It can also be said that by their construction

work, the children and their families were trying to rework the circumstances that had brought them to it. They were trying to secure or develop other independent livelihoods, pay for marriages, which, like schooling, ought to last lifetimes and are no less decisive for individual fortunes, support dependant relatives and invest in the schooling of younger children. Few however were successful. A less positive but equally apt way of framing the children's contributions would be to say they acted in conformity with family expectations, and that this meant they could rely on family support.

4.4 Conclusions

As in my account of the harms experienced by apprentices in Calavi, the harms I have identified related not to the individual situations of children, but to the nature of their work practice. Perhaps the most notable was the lower wages they received because of their age, and for girls also because of their gender. Discriminatory wages were also given to women. A significant difference between children's work in cement block production in Bidar and Calavi was that harms experienced by children in Bidar were mostly the same as those experienced by adult workers. Child and adult workers were not acting to change their work practice, although it can be suggested that they were using their construction incomes to try to improve their social and economic situations.

Harms directly affecting children were less extreme and benefits more apparent than in Calavi. Yet I found in unskilled cement block construction in Bidar what many researchers concerned with Indian labour have found well before me: poor workers moving between rural self-employment and urban casual and unskilled waged labour, tied by debt if not to employers to employment, fragmented by gender and age, and as a group by caste, origin and levels of precarity, providing employers a flexible supply of labour cheapened in part by workers' own efforts to maintain dignity by resisting proletarianisation. (Breman *et al* 2009, Harris-White 2003, Kapadia 2002, Parry *et al* 1999) But my findings also are in keeping with very recent accounts which consider the extent and effect of construction workers' agency in processes of social change. Picherit (2009) showed how caste relations were changing in a rural district in Andhra Pradesh as lower caste members found and took up opportunities to act as construction minor or worker-contractors. Picherit (2012) focused on how construction workers in this district

chose to invest in struggles over their village outcomes, rather than over their construction work situations. Pattendon (2012) examines how specific circumstances help explain why some migrant workers from a rural district in northern Karnataka could make social and economic gains from their intermittent construction work in Bengaluru. My findings could be used to take up similar questions with greater detail pertaining to the situations of women and child construction workers. This points to the interest of developing my study further by specifying more completely how it corresponds with, complements and contrasts with empirical and theoretical studies of labour relations and social change in south India.

I will review the findings of this chapter in chapter 6 and 7, in which I develop an explanation of why the children I interviewed saw and responded to harm in the ways they did. In the next chapter, I present the results of my QCA analysis of how the characteristics of the Calavi apprentices relate to their criticism of their work.

5. Qualitative Comparative Analysis of the significance of apprentices' criticism of construction apprenticeship

In this chapter, I present the findings of my use of Qualitative Comparative Analysis to explore patterns in the individual characteristics of the apprentices I interviewed in Calavi in relation to the greater or lesser criticism of construction apprenticeship they expressed in our interviews. My aim is to consider what the results of this exploration might reveal as to the reasons and implications of the interviewed apprentices' propensity to express criticism.

5.1 Apprentices' criticism of the practice of their work

In chapter 3, I suggested that apprentices' dependence on their masters for both the means of daily survival and for obtaining the training and qualifications they needed to become masters themselves, along with the threat of corporal punishment, had the effect of limiting their capacity to act to change the conditions of their work. I also suggested that their familial relationships had the same effect, for their parents and caregivers approved of their apprenticeship and most would be paying for it. Many were connected to their masters by family or other social ties. They were also isolated on worksites. On the basis of my definition of harm, I characterised these limits on the apprentices' capacity to act to change the conditions of their work as harmful. I also found the practice of apprenticeship to be harmful in many other ways. Harms directly affecting apprentices included their malnourishment, the erratic nature of the quality of their training and their indebtedness to masters upon finishing training. Nearly unpaid apprentices made up an important part of the workforce (nearly half by the findings of my survey), which was likely to contribute to difficulties of many adult qualified masters and *ouvriers* to make a minimum wage from their construction work. Only masters with more than three apprentices were prospering.

No apprentice expressed recognition of all the harms I identified. Those interviewed I considered to be resilient in their ways of dealing with them, including the hunger and physical hardships most did acknowledge. However, I found that some apprentices had critical opinions about the apprenticeship system, although the criticism they expressed did not correlate with individual variation in any single attribute.

In this chapter, I attempt to apprehend the significance of the different degrees of criticism the apprentices expressed about construction apprenticeship in our interviews. I examine whether patterns in their situations and experiences distinguish those who expressed criticism from those who did not. This is in order to ascertain whether combinations of certain social or individual characteristics might be prevalently associated with the disposition to be critical, or not, of the practice of apprenticeship. Then I investigate possible patterns in the apprentices' opinions about construction work, children's work and education in relation to their criticism of apprenticeship, in order to clarify the depth and extent of the apprentices' criticism of the norms and practices which helped legitimate the practice of their work.

These two separate QCA analyses relate to Bourdieu's theory of social change. He argued that agents tend to act in keeping with their social positions because:

‘...perception of the social world is the product of a ‘double structuring’ : the objective properties of a social order (distributions of capitals, of probable experience) and the subjective schema which legitimate these properties combine to produce ‘common sense, or, at least, a minimal consensus on the social world’.
(1990/1994:132-133)

When a social order's ‘objective properties’ and the subjective schema with which agents understand these properties fully correspond, he claimed they produce a ‘prereflexive’ or ‘doxic acceptance of the world’ by which agents ‘recognise’ their world as natural, and ‘misrecognise’ its relations of domination. (1992:74,168) According to Bourdieu, when people oppressed by unequal social relationships question ‘common sense consensus,’ which he referred to as ‘doxa’, this can constitute a first step to their possible efforts to try to change the relationships which structure their positions. In chapters 6 and 7, I examine in detail children's engagement in cement block construction in Calavi and Bidar, and their responses to harm in their work, in light of Bourdieu's theory. My intent in this one is to examine apprentices' criticism as a possible mechanism of change in the practice of construction apprenticeship.

5.2 Qualitative Comparative Analysis

QCA is a configurational comparative method which involves looking at a social phenomenon (a case) as a configuration or ‘a combination of conditions relevant to a given outcome.’ (Rihoux and Ragin 2008:182) It is used to facilitate comparison of cases with similar conditions and/or similar outcomes. The purpose of QCA analysis is to derive ‘solution terms,’ consisting of the outcome and the combinations of conditions whose presence or absence are found to be necessary or sufficient for it to occur. (Berg-Schlosser *et al* 2008) Each solution term is a simplification of a number of configurations, which in turn correspond to empirical cases. (Rihoux and de Meur 2008: 57)

QCA is based on set theoretic, Boolean logic. (Ragin 1987:99) When comparison shows that certain conditions in either their present or absent values, or combinations of present or absent conditions, consistently figure in cases in which the outcome in question occurs, this gives support for the claim that they are necessary for the outcome. When the outcome is found to occur consistently with certain present or absent conditions or combinations of them, but is also found to occur with other present or absent conditions and combinations, this is evidence that these conditions are sufficient. A present or absent condition might also be a necessary part of a sufficient combination. (Ragin 1987:99)

QCA is usually used to clarify and test causal relationships. (Berg-Schlosser *et al* 2008: 10) I have used it as a technique to produce what Rohwer has called ‘descriptive generalisations’ about the apprentices interviewed. (2012:2) This is primarily because the conditions and outcomes I have examined relate to empirical observations rather than theorised causal processes. However, my exploration of patterns in these empirical observations was meant to discover whether any might point to possible causal processes. I have followed the main principles and procedures of crisp set QCA, using fsqca software. (Ragin and Davey 2009) I summarise them here.

My cases are the interviewed apprentices. I examined their situations and experiences, and then their opinions, in relation to the ‘outcome’ of whether or not they expressed strong criticism of the practice of apprenticeship. I began by specifying the conditions relevant to the outcome, or the two ‘models’ to analyse. (Rihoux and de Meur 2008) I operationalised

these conditions and the outcome by deciding how to measure them, turning them into 'variates.' This term is used by some QCA researchers rather than 'variable,' following Byrne who argued that it evokes the relation of the condition to the case rather than the condition's independent ontological status. (Byrne 2002) I then fixed the criteria by which to judge whether the condition is present in a case. In QCA, the threshold between whether the condition is assessed as present or absent refers to the theoretical, disciplinary and empirical concerns of the study. (Rihoux and de Meur 2008) Means and medians in QCA are useful only to gain a sense of distribution of membership values.

QCA has three variants: crisp set, multi value and fuzzy set. In crisp set analysis, cases are dichotomised as either fully in the condition (the value of the variate is 1) or fully out (the value is 0). In fuzzy set analysis, variate values can be any between 0 and 1. Multi value QCA is meant to overcome the limitations of dichotomisation without the complications of fuzzy sets, through the use of 'dummy variables.' (Cronqvist and Berg-Schlosser 2008) I used crisp set analysis because the modelled conditions and outcome could not be meaningfully measured by fuzzy values. (Ragin 2008) As I was interested in patterns among many variables, multi value analysis was not appropriate.

Once I summarised cases with 0 or 1 scores on each variate and the outcome, I tested whether any conditions were necessary for the outcome. This involved checking whether there were conditions present or absent in every case in which the outcome was also present. I then investigated conditions or combinations of conditions sufficient for the outcome. This entailed creating a 'truth table', listing all possible combinations of conditions in their present and absent values. These are referred to as 'logically possible' arrangements of causal conditions, as they might not represent empirical cases in the data set. (Ragin 1987:87) A truth table has 2^k terms, with k standing for the number of conditions. In crisp set analysis, the set relationship is clear: with variate values of 1 or 0, a case is a member of only one row of the truth table. (Ragin 2008:122)

On the basis of the truth table, I evaluated the empirical relevance of each row of the truth table according to number of cases it represented and the degree to which these cases shared the same outcome. The measure of consistency refers to the proportion of cases in a configuration that have membership in the outcome. Binary values mean that the consistency of crisp set terms is easily calculated as the number of cases with the outcome

divided by the number of cases represented by the configuration. (Rihoux and de Meur 2009:47) Several or many cases, just one, or no cases at all might be members of truth table row. In QCA analysis, the researcher chooses how many cases each must represent for it to be relevant to analysis. I have included rows representing single cases. When a term represents more than one case, it might be that all have the same outcome, but is more likely that some have an outcome value of 1 and some of 0. These are called 'contradictory configurations', because the conditions do not indicate consistent relationships to the outcome. (Rihoux and de Meur 2009:48)

Coverage is the second 'descriptive' measure of the 'empirical support' for the claim that there are associations between conditions and outcomes. (Rihoux and de Meur 2008:64) The coverage of a sufficient term refers to the degree to which instances of an outcome are accounted for by a condition or combination of conditions. It is measured as the proportion of cases in a solution term among all cases displaying the outcome, or in other words, how much the set of cases with the outcome is composed of the subset of cases represented by the solution term. In crisp set analysis, this proportion can be directly calculated.

Once the truth table was established, I 'minimised' the terms assessed as being relevant because they represented at least one case. Minimisation in QCA involves ascertaining whether there are instances of two configurations which share all conditions save for one which is present in one term and absent in the other. This condition can be judged to be irrelevant, as it does not affect the presence of the outcome. Minimisation produces solution terms, usually several of them, each made up of the present and absent conditions which are necessary and/or sufficient for the outcome to occur. For both models, I also ran these analysis procedures on configurations representing children who did not express criticism of the practice of apprenticeship. (Rihoux and de Meur 2008)

The usefulness of QCA for causal analysis is that it allows for equifinality, causal heterogeneity and causal asymmetry. Equifinality refers to the possibility that more than one causal condition or combination of conditions can be sufficient for the outcome to occur. 'Causal heterogeneity' is the possibility that in one combination, a certain condition might be found to have the opposite effect to what it has in another. (Ragin 1987: 164) By the principle of causal asymmetry, should a condition or a combination of conditions be

assessed as either necessary or sufficient for the outcome, it does not follow that its absence implies the absence of the outcome. QCA's ability to uncover various kinds of associations between conditions and outcomes is also pertinent here, although I was concerned to discover empirical patterns rather than causal processes per se.

In the next sections, I present the analysis of the two models. For each, I explain the conditions I have included and how I measured them. I also give detail about each step of analysis, in keeping with QCA good practice. (Schneider and Wagemann 2010) I then discuss my interpretations of results.

5.3 Criticism of construction apprenticeship and apprentices' situations and experiences

The outcome I have examined in both analyses refers to whether or not apprentices expressed strong criticism of the practice of apprenticeship. To measure this outcome, I first classed the apprentices in four groups, on the basis of their answers to the questions of what was good or bad about their work, how much schooling they thought children should have, what advantages they saw in construction apprenticeship for apprentices, parents, masters, other workers and clients, and what the impact of free schooling might be on construction apprenticeship. From the most to the least critical, these groups are as follow:

- Seven apprentices said that masters profit unduly from their apprentices; all children should be in school; construction work was too difficult for young people, badly remunerated and/or the punishments too extreme; in the advent of accessible free schooling, there would be no children ready to work as construction apprentices.
- Seven said that all children should be in school **or** that construction work was too difficult, badly remunerated and/or the punishments too extreme; and that in the advent of accessible free schooling, there would be no children ready to work as construction apprentices.
- 19 apprentices said only that in the advent of accessible free schooling, there would be no children ready to work as construction apprentices.
- 8 apprentices expressed no criticism at all or saw only advantages in apprenticeship.

To distinguish apprentices who were strongly critical from those who were not, I have set the cut off point at those who likened school to a right or who said apprenticeship working conditions were difficult. This is because although 33 apprentices said that children would not apprentice if they could attend school, relatively few expressed stronger criticism. No criticism stronger than the points made by the first seven ‘most’ critical apprentices were expressed by any one apprentice.

Here is the summary of the conditions related to apprentices’ social and personal characteristics which I considered relevant to whether or not they expressed strong criticism of the apprenticeship system, which I refer to as the outcome ‘critical.’

Model 1: Criticism, situations and experiences

Model 1: Criticism, situations and experiences									
Conditions							Outcomes		
Age	Age at start	Wealth	Family unity	School level	Experience of school		Relation to master	Critical	Uncritical
					Did not fail	Had the means to continue school			

These conditions refer to material experiences and situations, and are based on the apprentices’ interview answers. They relate to their social position, and indicate relative social advantage. They can be understood as the contextual conditions in which causal mechanisms are activated. (Pawson and Tilley 2004:69). I did not anticipate how these conditions might individually or in combination tend to affect the apprentices’ ability to identify harm in construction apprenticeship, and to express criticism of the practice in our interviews. It was, for example, conceivable that apprentices with a relatively high level of schooling were as proportionately critical as those with a lower level of schooling. It was also conceivable that of apprentices with more schooling, only those who began apprenticing over the age of 14 were critical, or again that none orphaned by the death of both parents were.

A brief explanation of the conditions I examine follow. All were chosen in order to ascertain how they might figure in prevalent combinations of conditions distinguishing critical and uncritical apprentices. Individually, none were clearly associated with being strongly critical, and in pairs none were co-linear.

Age at the time of the interview: I have set the threshold between older and younger children at 16 for two reasons: 1- I only interviewed children over 12, so the higher cut-off point captures better the range of their ages, and 2- apprentices over 16 seemed more confident and easy in manner in our interviews.

Age at start of apprenticeship: I have separated the apprentices into older and younger groups at the age of the start of their apprenticeship at the threshold between 13 and 14, in keeping with the ILO international minimum age for work. By setting the cut-off point at 14, I was able to investigate whether there were significant differences between the two groups.

Wealth: I have measured wealth in relative terms. The condition 'wealth' indicates apprentices who expected their parents or relatives would pay for their training. This help would give them an advantage in the beginning of their career as qualified masters, and the expectation of it might have affected their views on construction apprenticeship in general.

Family unity: Not all the apprentices who were orphaned by the death of one or both parents were also among the poorest and less schooled. However, some apprentices indicated that the death or absence of one or both parents increased either the desirability or the necessity of becoming independent and gaining a livelihood.

Schooling: This condition refers to how many years an apprentice spent in school. Given that apprentices with more than four years of schooling said they could not read or write, the level reached is less an indication of academic intellectual development than of the widening perspectives and opportunities continued schooling might have opened to the apprentices. I have set the cut of point at three full years, as in their third year children are expected to have learnt to read and write a little, so those who had reached this level and more might have been at least beginning to do so.

Experience at school: I have used 'dummy' variables to indicated whether an apprentice left school because it was unaffordable or because of failure, or both. Failure excluded the apprentice definitively from formal education, and was indicated in interviews, set a limit on how both he and his entourage evaluated his capacities. Leaving for lack of means was likely to have involved no self-deprecation, but might have raised awareness of the

inequalities of the school system. Apprentices who said they left school because of lack of means but were also relatively well-off lacked family support for schooling.

Relation to master: I have distinguished between apprentices who were apprenticing with direct family members and those apprenticing with more distant family connections, neighbourhood acquaintances and strangers. Some of the former had little choice in being put into apprenticeship with family relations, although others had wanted to follow in their footsteps. Some of the latter had deliberately sought a master, others were purposively approached by strangers. I have included this condition to try to identify how it might be associated with conditions indicating more clearly advantage and disadvantage in ways which might indicate the effects of these different situations.

The details of how I measured these conditions are given in Table 11. The table also gives the abbreviated variate names which I use to express solution terms. To indicate the extent of variation among the apprentices, I show in the table different levels of membership in the present and absent values of the condition, and noted how many apprentices figure in each level.

11. Variates for Model 1: Criticism, situations and experiences

Value	Condition and measurement, variate name	frequency
Age at the time of the interview = 'older'		
1	20+	6
	18, 19	9
	16, 17	6
0	14, 15	14
	Under 14	8
Age at start of apprenticeship = 'agest14+'		
1	18+	6
	16, 17	3
	14, 15	7
0	12, 13	17
	Under 12	8
Wealth = 'wealth'		
1	- two working parents, siblings all or mostly in school or working, dwelling ownership of secure entitlement, some resources: livestock, a motorcycle or farming or housing land; - expected parents or relatives would pay for apprenticeship	9
	- two of the following: two working parents, siblings all or mostly in school or working, dwelling ownership or secure entitlement, some resources: livestock, a motorcycle or farming or housing land; - expected parents or relatives would pay for apprenticeship	11
0	- two of the following: two working parents, siblings all or mostly in school or working, dwelling ownership or secure entitlement, some resources: livestock, a motorcycle or farming or housing land; - did not know who would pay for apprenticeship or hoped relatives would help	13
	- had no family resources - planned to pay most or all apprenticeship fees themselves	8
Family unity = 'family'		
1	- parents alive and living together	26
0	- parents alive but separated or one parent dead	11
	- parents dead	4
School level = 'schlev'		
1	- had completed primary cycle or more	9
	- 5th or 6th year (did not complete primary cycle)	5
	- 4th year	3
0	- 3rd year	9
	- 1st or 2nd year	6
	- had never attended school	9
Did not fail school = 'schnotfail'		
1	- did not leave because of having failed	20
0	- left because of having failed	21
Means to continue school = 'schmeanscon'		
1	- had the means to continue school	23
0	- left because of not having the means to continue	18
Relation to master = 'master related'		
1	- direct relation: father, uncle or brother	12
	- more distant relation: cousin, nephew or relation by marriage	5
0	- friend of a family member	18
	- living in the same neighbourhood or a total stranger	6

Testing for necessity showed that none of the conditions was in itself always or mostly always present along with either the presence or the absence of the outcome. This shows that there is no definite relation between the modelled conditions and the outcome ‘critical.’ Testing for sufficient combinations began with creating the truth table.

As it covers eight conditions, the truth table includes 256 (2^8) rows. 34 of the configurations represent empirical cases. Table 12, below, lists them. Ten are (1) configurations (positive on the outcome) and 22 are (0) configurations (negative on the outcome). Only five represent more than one case, only of which is positive on the outcome. The column labelled ‘consistency’ shows the proportion of cases which have the outcome critical. With most configurations representing only one case, it is unsurprising that consistency values are mostly 1 or 0. Two configurations are contradictory, and are indicated by their .5 consistency score.

Including eight conditions did not inevitably imply a high number of empirical configurations. I had expected to find a smaller number of them, as I had expected that apprentices had more in common in the characteristics I analysed. As a basic step in trying to uncover patterns, I have added the column ‘number of conditions’ to the truth table generated by fsqca, giving the sum of present conditions for each configuration. This shows that the apprentices are not distinguished by the weight of their relative advantages: the average is three present conditions for those who were critical, and four for those who were not.

12. Truth table for model 2: Criticism, situations and experiences

older	age 14+	wealth	family	schlev	sch not failed	sch means con	master related	number of conditions	number of cases	critical	consistency
1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	4	1	1	1.0
0	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	4	3	1	1.0
1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	5	1	1	1.0
1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	1	1	1.0
0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1.0
1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	3	1	1	1.0
0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	1	1	1.0
1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	1	1	1.0
1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	1	1	1.0
1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	5	1	1	1.0
1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	6	2	0	0.5
0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	3	2	0	0.5
0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	3	1	0	0.0
0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	3	1	0	0.0
0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	5	1	0	0.0
0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	0.0
0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	6	1	0	0.0
0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	3	1	0	0.0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0.0
1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	4	2	0	0.0
0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	3	0	0.0
1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	0.0
1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	5	1	0	0.0
1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	6	1	0	0.0
1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	1	0	0.0
0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	3	1	0	0.0
0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	3	1	0	0.0
0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	4	1	0	0.0
1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	6	1	0	0.0
1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	5	1	0	0.0
1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	6	1	0	0.0
1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	5	1	0	0.0
1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	5	1	0	0.0
1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	7	1	0	0.0

Minimisation produced nine solution terms for the positive outcome 'critical': the truth table configurations were only reduced by one. Thus the solution terms remain complex and descriptive of individual cases. Because they could not be reduced through minimisation, the coverage of the terms is high at 0.857, which means they represent 12 of the 14 critical apprentices. The remaining two are represented by the contradictory configurations.

Table 13 shows solution terms, along with the pseudonyms of the apprentices they represent. To facilitate the readability of the terms, I simplified them by grouping conditions shared by more than one term. The first column begins with the values for the conditions of age at the time of the interview and age at start of apprenticeship. This highlights how age figures in the different solution terms. The first column also includes any other condition shared by apprentices with the same age-related variate values. The next columns are organised to show conditions shared by a more restricted number of similar solution terms, in which I have tried as far as possible to move from conditions indicating social characteristics (wealth, family unity, school level) to more personal/individual ones (experience at school and relation to master). The table is still not easy to read because of the non-reducible complexity of the terms.

13. Solution terms for the outcome ‘critical’ - Model 1: Criticism, situations and experiences

Model: critical = older, age14, wealth, family unity, schlev, schnotfail, schmeanscon, master related

Rows: 34

frequency cutoff: 1.00 consistency cutoff: 1.00

solution coverage: 0.857 solution consistency: 1.00

~older *~agest14+ *~master related	*wealth *family *schlev *~schnotfail *schmeanscon			Florentin, Cyril, Constant
	*~wealth *~schlev	*family *~schnotfail *schmeanscon		Albert
		*~family *schnotfail *~schmeanscon		Aimé
older *~wealth	*~agest14+ *~schmeanscon	*family *~schlev		Grégoire, Mathieu
		*~family *schnotfail	*~schlev	Darius
			*schlev	Dossou
	*agest14+ *~master related	*family *schlev	*schnotfail *~schmeanscon	Richard
			*~schnotfail *schmeanscon	Eric
		*~family *~schlev	*schnotfail *~schmeanscon	Julien
Key				
* indicates Boolean addition				
~ indicates absence of condition				

The simplified solution terms show three broad groups of critical apprentices. The first includes five who started to apprenticing aged 13 and under, were 15 or younger at the time of the interview and were not related to their masters. Three were relatively privileged by family resources, a high school level and living parents, but had failed at school. Two apprentices came from relatively poor households and had a low school level. The three terms covering these five apprentices do not indicate a prevalent path to the

outcome 'critical.' There is a perplexing mix among them in their scores on wealth, family unity, school level and school experience.

Four conditions are common to the next group of four critical apprentices: they were 15 and older at the time of the interview, had started young, came from relatively poor households and left school for lack of means. This indicates more clearly a possible causally relevant combination of contextual conditions, especially as just one apprentice who was not critical is a member of this combination. What it seems to indicate is that apprentices who felt they had had no choice when they began to apprentice and who were older when interviewed were likely to be critical. Review of the interviews confirmed that none of the four critical apprentices in this group chose to apprentice in construction, and only Dossou had wanted to apprentice.

The third group includes three apprentices who started over the age of 14 and were older at the time of the interview. They also came from poorer households and were distantly related to their master. Two had living present parents and had reached a high school level, the third the reverse. As with the first group, the solutions terms do not show a clear combination of conditions common to several apprentices leading to the outcome 'critical'. Julien looked for his master and had wanted to apprentice, having never been to school and finding his agricultural labouring work unprofitable. Richard and Eric had not wanted to apprentice. They had both been obliged by family decisions, one pulled out of school for lack of means and the other for having failed, and apprenticed with friends of their brothers.

At the very least, the solution terms reveal interesting patterns of non-necessity and non-sufficiency. Apprentices younger and older at the time of the interview and younger and older when they started apprenticeship had critical opinions about construction apprenticeship and expressed them. Henri and Julien had started over the age of 20, and Eric and Richard at 17 and 16 respectively, but the other critical apprentices had started under the age of 14. This shows that the limits put on their experience of the world by early apprenticeship did not prevent those who had started under 14 from being critical. It is also notable that all but Albert of the group of five children who started under the age of 14 and who were under 16 at the time of the interview were among the seven apprentices who expressed the strongest criticism. The terms also show that limited schooling did not forestall critical opinions or the ability to express them, nor does failing school or not

having the means to continue figure in consistent patterns with other conditions, although the three critical apprentices who were classed as relatively wealthy also had in common a high level of schooling.

Analysis of the (0) configurations produced 18 solution terms, covering 25 of the 27 apprentices who were not classed as being critical of the apprenticeship system. The simplified solution terms are presented in Table 14, below. What is striking about them is their dissimilarity. Each one is matched by its opposite, or near opposite.

The difficulty of interpreting these complex solution terms is compounded by the fact that several of the (0) and the (1) solutions terms are very similar. Closer examination of the cases does not help illuminate other commonalities or explain the different outcomes for the similar terms. Among those who were and were not critical, there was a mix of severe masters and kinder ones, as well as more successful and less successful ones. The range of daily allowance was similar between the apprentices of the two groups. There is no relationship between time already passed in apprenticeship and being critical of it, with a median of 3 years for those who were critical and of 3,5 for those who were not. Indeed, the only clear difference is that most of those who were critical had wanted either to pursue school or another kind of training. Review of the interviews shows that of the critical apprentices, only Florentin, Constant and Julien said they had chosen to apprentice in construction. The others had very clear other preferences. Nine out of the 25 apprentices who were not critical also said they had other preferences, but stressed that they were nonetheless happy about apprenticing in construction.

14. Solution terms for the outcome ‘uncritical’ - Model 1: Criticism, situations and experiences

Model: ~critical = older, agest14+, wealth, family, schlev, schnotfail, schmeanscon, master related Rows: 34 frequency cutoff: 1.00 consistency cutoff: 1.00 solution coverage: 0.925 solution consistency: 1.00						
~older *~agest14+	*wealth	*family *~schlev		*~schnotfail *master related	Isaac, Marcellin	
				schnotfail~schmeanscon *~master related	Germain	
		*~family *schmeanscon *schlev		*~schnotfail *~master related	Mathias	
				*schnotfail*master related	David	
	*~wealth	*family*schlev*~schnotfail*schmeanscon *~master related				Jesugnon
		*~family	*schlev*schmeanscon*~schnotfail *master related		Clementin	
			*~schlev *~schmeanscon	*~schnotfail*~master related	Roland	
				*schnotfail *master related	Donatien, Firmin, Gildas	
~older *agest14+	*wealth *family *schlev *~schnotfail *schmeanscon *master related				Isidore	
	*~wealth *~family *~schlev *schnotfail *~schmeanscon *~master related				Alfred	
older *~agest14+	*wealth *family *~schnotfail *schmeanscon *master related				Sunday, Nougblénou	
	*~wealth *~family *~schlev *schnotfail *~schmeanscon *~master related				Clement	
older *agest14+	*wealth	*family *~schnotfail	*schlev *~schmeanscon *~master related		Jérôme	
			*~schlev *schmeanscon		Christian, Emile	
		*~family	*~schlev	*schnotfail *~schmeanscon *master related	Basile	
	*~wealth *~schlev *~master related	*family *schnotfail *~schmeanscon				Nonvidodé, Wilfrid
		*~family *~schnotfail *schmeanscon				Thibault
	*family *schlev *schnotfail *~schmeanscon *master related				Gandjizo, Djougdele	
Key						
* indicates Boolean addition						
~ indicates absence of condition						

Table 15 lists the two contradictory configurations, along with the pseudonyms of the apprentices they cover and their score on the outcome: (1) indicates ‘critical’, (0) indicates uncritical.

15. Contradictory configurations for Model 1: Criticism, situations and experiences

older	agest 14+	wealth	family	schlev	schnot fail	schmeans con	master related	number of conditions	number	pseudonym
1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	6	2	Augustyn (1), Romain (0)
0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	3	2	Henri (1), Bienvenu (0)

Again, there is nothing evident in the interviews with these apprentices which might explain their different outcomes. They indicate, like the similar (1) and (0) configurations, that the conditions included in the model, separately or in combination, neither consistently favoured nor prevented the criticism apprentices expressed in our interviews.

5.4 Criticism of construction apprenticeship and apprentices' opinions regarding construction work, children's work and education

My second model addresses whether the apprentices who expressed strong criticism of the apprenticeship system held other opinions and beliefs which suggest they questioned some prevailing norms, circumstances and practices related to the 'common sense consensus' legitimating the practice of construction apprenticeship.

Model 2: Criticism of construction apprenticeship and apprentices' opinions regarding construction work, children's work and education

Conditions								Outcomes	
Chose to apprentice	Belief that children work for their future	Other work plans	Aware of labour market difficulties	Belief that construction work promises a good living	Belief that children should attend school beyond the primary cycle	Belief that children should start apprenticeship over the age of 14	Ideas for improving situation of construction workers	Critical	Un-critical

An explanation of the conditions follows. Table 16 shows how I measured them. The condition 'chose to apprentice' was positively associated with expressing criticism in cross-tabulation, and belief that children work for their future negatively. It was still important to investigate how these conditions figured in combination with the others. No other pair of conditions was correlated.

Chose to apprentice: In light of the results of the preceding analysis, I have included in this model whether apprentices chose to apprentice or not.

Reasons for children's work: for the future or because of lack of means: The apprentices were asked why children work, with children being defined as anyone under 14. Their answers were remarkably similar, and fall into two main categories. A majority said it was because of family poverty, just less than a third spoke of it as a way of building a future. These views differentiate those that see work at a young age as the beginning of a promising avenue, from those who see it as the end of one narrowed by constraint.

Other work plans: More than any other, this condition indicates agency in its competence and rational decision making sense. As seen in chapter 3, 30 apprentices said they had plans to diversify in some way. Having such plans indicates awareness of the possible precarity of their future in construction work, as well as of the existence of other opportunities and of the ability to take them up. However, this condition can not stand on its own as an indicator of agency, for not having other plans does not signify in itself a lack of wilful purpose and the majority of apprentices had other work plans.

Awareness of labour market difficulties: In their answers to whether they thought construction workers made a good living, many apprentices pointed out that there are more and more construction workers and that competition between them compromises the ability of all to find work on good terms. Others said that construction work was becoming unprofitable because clients pay badly, which is also some acknowledgement of competition and its effect of giving clients power in setting the terms of work. Those who did not talk of labour market saturation attributed the difficulties of some construction workers to their individual vices: dishonesty, laziness or bad workmanship. Others simply assured me that construction workers make a good living. Awareness of the effects of growing numbers of construction workers indicates whether an apprentice might have thought the broader practice of construction work in Calavi needed to change if the livelihoods it afforded were to be improved.

Construction promises a good living: This is a similar, but less pointed condition than the preceding one. Some children staunchly expressed their belief constructions workers do well, others said that they do well if they work hard. I have distinguished these apprentices from those who said success is not assured or is difficult to achieve. This condition and ‘awareness of labour market difficulties’ are to some extent substitutable, but they are not correlated, as many thought they would succeed despite labour market difficulties, and many thought construction work was not promising even if they did not identify these difficulties.

Belief that children should attend school beyond the primary cycle: When asked how long children should stay in school, a few apprentices said that it should be for as long as possible, while at the other end of the range, there were apprentices who set a minimum below the six years of the primary cycle. I have distinguished between those who thought

children should complete more than the primary cycle, and those who thought the primary cycle or less was sufficient, to mark those most clearly objected to limited schooling, which was common to nearly all apprentices.

Belief that children should start apprenticeship over the age of 14: The apprentices were asked at what age they thought children should take up an apprenticeship, regardless of craft, as well as at what age they thought it was suitable to begin apprenticing in construction work. Their answers rarely reflected their own experience and rarely matched. Some thought construction apprentices should begin older than other apprentices, because the work was physically demanding, while others thought they should start younger in order to finish quickly. I have included as a condition their opinions about the right age to start apprenticing in construction, as they are more relevant to their own situations, and most (25 of 41) started under the age of 14. The cut-off point is at age 14 to reflect national law and international standards.

Ideas for improving the situation of construction workers: The apprentices were asked if they had any ideas about how to improve the situation of construction workers, in any way. I have distinguished between those who spoke of the potential of worker organisation or legal reform or who thought of machines and equipment, and those who had no ideas at all. Having ideas gives indication of whether the apprentice conceived of change in the practice of construction work.

16. Variates for Model 2: Criticism of construction apprenticeship and apprentices' opinions regarding construction work, children's work and education

Value	Condition and measurement, variate name	frequency
Chose to apprentice = 'chose'		
1	- wanted to begin an apprenticeship in construction	10
	- wanted to begin an apprenticeship, regardless of craft, but did not choose construction	11
0	- did not want to begin an apprenticeship, regardless of craft, but was happy with the decision made for him	3
	- did not want to begin any kind of apprenticeship and was unhappy about the decision made for him to apprenticeship in construction	17
Children work for future or for lack of means = 'future/lackmeans'		
1	- said children work to have a good future	9
	- said children work because of some adverse circumstance (school failure, idleness) in order to have a good future	4
0	- said children work in order to deal with adverse circumstances	12
	- said children work because lack of means or school failure allow no other choice	16
Other work plans = 'otherplans'		
1	- planned to pursue education and other economic activity	18
	- planned either to pursue education or another economic activity	12
0	- planned to leave construction work within ten years or to learn another craft, but without any plans of what to do or learn	4
	- no other plans	7
Aware of labour market difficulties = 'awlabmardif'		
1	- said there are too many workers and not enough work	14
	- said clients pay badly	7
0	- said unsuccessful workers have themselves to blame	8
	- said there are no difficulties in making a good living	12
Construction a promising career = 'constpromise'		
1	- made unqualified assertion that construction workers are prosperous	15
	- explained that success depends on constructions workers' qualities	6
0	- said that some construction workers do and some do not succeed	9
	- said that in general it is hard to succeed in construction work	11
Belief that children should start apprenticeship over the age of 14 = '6+school'		
1	- said children should complete the secondary cycle	3
	- said children should complete more than the primary cycle, less than the secondary	16
0	- said children should complete only the primary cycle	12
	- said children should complete anything less than the primary cycle	10
Belief that children should start apprenticeship 14+= 'constapp14+'		
1	- said children should start 16 +	8
	- said children should start at 14 or 15	9
0	- said children should start at 12 or 13	18
	- said children should start under 12	6
Ideas for improving the situation of construction workers = 'ideas'		
1	- identified possible reforms at the institutional level to improve the situation of construction workers: worker organisations or legal reform	8
	- spoke of unspecified institutional change or identified a worker led initiative to improve the situation of construction workers	7
	- identified one or several machines to facilitate work	7
0	- had no idea to improve situation of construction workers	19

In brief, believing children work primarily because of family poverty, having other work plans, being aware of labour market difficulties and the challenges of making a good living in construction, approving a high level for minimum schooling and a high age for entry into construction apprenticeship, as well as having ideas about improving the situation of construction workers are taken to indicate criticism of children's work and the broader practice of construction work in Calavi. Like the outcome of expressing strong criticism of the practice of apprenticeship, these conditions refer to opinions and beliefs and do not imply resistance, or even an eventual likelihood of it. They do intimate a questioning of 'common sense consensus', which would be necessary if the apprentices were to begin to try to change the relationships which structured their positions in work and in the social order more generally, or, in Katz' terms, to move from resilience to harm in their work to efforts to rework their circumstances, or further yet to efforts to resist the conditions giving rise to these circumstances. (Katz 2004:242)

The first step of analysis, testing for necessary conditions for both the presence and the absence of the outcome, reveals two consistent relationships and these are important. The negated variate 'future/lack of means', representing the apprentices' explanation that children begin to work because of poverty, is consistently present with the outcome 'critical' with a measure of 0.86: all but two of the fourteen apprentices who were critical also believed children work primarily because of lack of resources. Not having chosen to begin apprenticing in construction also has a high consistency measure, at 0.79: all but three critical apprentices had not chosen. This supports my interpretation of the association between having no choice in beginning apprenticeship and expressing criticism found in the preceding analysis. Together these relationships suggest that apprentices who felt that children had no choice about beginning construction apprentice, including themselves, were likely to express criticism of the practice of apprenticeship. Allowing for the possibility that some apprentices may have forgotten or minimised other preferences they might once have had, or not have spoken about them or their critical opinions in our interviews, these relationships still show those apprentices who did express criticism also indicated in our interviews that they felt that they had not had control over the course of their lives.

Of the 256 logically possible configurations produced by the eight-condition model, 37 represent empirical cases. Table 17 lists them. The very high number of empirical

configurations shows that the apprentices were as diverse in their beliefs and opinions as they were in their personal situations and experiences. 12 are (1) configurations, 24 are (0) configurations and just one is contradictory. Again in order to give a broad measure of the differences between the (1) and the (0) configurations, I have added the conditions indicating criticism of children's work and the broader practice of construction work, which involved negating the scores for 'chose', 'future or lack of means' and 'construction a promising career'. As in the preceding analysis, this measure does not make manifest clear differences: those who were critical had an average of 4.8 positive scores; those were not an average of 4.0.

17. Truth table for Model 2: Criticism of construction apprenticeship and apprentices' opinions regarding construction work, children's work and education

chose	future/ lackmeans	other plans	awlab mardif	const promise	6+ school	constapp 14+	ideas	number conditions	number cases	critical	consis- tency
1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1.0
0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	4	2	1	1.0
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	1	1	1.0
0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	1	1.0
0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	4	1	1	1.0
0	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	6	1	1	1.0
0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	6	1	1	1.0
0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	7	1	1	1.0
0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	5	1	1	1.0
1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	7	1	1	1.0
0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	7	1	1	1.0
0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	5	1	1	1.0
0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	0	0.5
0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	5	1	0	0.0
0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	5	1	0	0.0
0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	4	1	0	0.0
0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	4	1	0	0.0
0	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	5	1	0	0.0
1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	5	2	0	0.0
0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0.0
1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	0.0
1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0.0
1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0.0
1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	0.0
1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	5	1	0	0.0
1	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	6	1	0	0.0
1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	5	1	0	0.0
1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	6	1	0	0.0
1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	5	1	0	0.0
1	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	6	1	0	0.0
0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	1	0	0.0
0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	5	1	0	0.0
1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	3	1	0	0.0
1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0.0
1	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	4	1	0	0.0
1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	4	1	0	0.0
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	4	1	0	0.0

10 solution terms are derived by minimising the 12 (1) configurations, with a combined coverage of 0.93: they do not represent only one critical apprentice. I present them in Table 18. I have simplified them by arranging them first by the conditions of whether or not they chose to apprentice, then by 'future/lack of means' and 'other work plans.' The analysis of necessary conditions and the results of the first model showed these conditions are consistently associated with the outcome. Opinions about construction work, school

and work for children are grouped together in order to facilitate comparison between them. I have put ‘ideas’ last because few apprentices had ideas of institutional change.

18. Solution terms for the outcome ‘critical’ - Model 2: Criticism of construction apprenticeship and apprentices’ opinions regarding construction work, children’s work and education

Model: critical chose, future/lackmeans, awlabmardif, 6+school, otherplans, constapp14+, constpromise, ideas								
Rows: 37								
frequency cutoff: 1.00 consistency cutoff: 1.00 solution coverage:0.928571 solution consistency: 1.00								
chose *ideas	*future/ lackmeans	*~otherplans *~awlabmardif *constpromise *~6+school *~constapp14+					Florentin	
	*~future/ lackmeans *~constpromise	*otherplans *awlabmardif *6+school *constapp14+					Julien	
		*~otherplans *~awlabmardif *~6+school *~constapp14+					Albert	
~chose	*~future/ lackmeans	*other- plans	*awlab- mardif	*ideas	*constpromise *6+school	*constapp14	Dossou	
					*~constapp14+		Aimé	
					*~constpromise *~6+school *~constapp14+		Henri	
					*~constpromise *6+school		Darius	
				*~constapp14+ *~ideas	*~6+school	*constpromise	Mathieu, Constant	
						*~constpromise	Eric	
					*~awlabmardif *constpromise *6+school *~constapp14 + *ideas		Cyril	
		*~otherplans *~awlabmardif *constpromise *~6+school *constapp14+ *ideas					Grégoire	
		*future/ lackmeans	*otherplans *~awlabmardif *~constpromise *~6+school *~constapp14+ *~ideas					Augustyn
		Key						
* indicates Boolean addition								
~ indicates absence of condition								

Table 18 shows that not choosing to begin, believing that children’s work is caused by poverty, having other plans and being aware of labour market difficulties is a combination of conditions common to seven of 14 critical apprentices. All these conditions but that of not having chosen to apprentice in construction are also shared by Julien. Otherwise, this total of eight apprentices were mixed. Four said they thought construction work could provide a good livelihood, four thought children should attend school for less than six years, and four had no ideas about how to improve the situation of construction workers. Rather remarkably, six of the eight thought that children should begin construction apprenticeship under the age of 14.

The other solutions terms are more varied. It is striking that Florentin, Albert and Augustyn, expressed criticism about the apprenticeship system. They said they believed school should end and apprenticeship should start when children are young. Although Albert did not think it was a promising career path, none of these three pointed to the difficulties of finding work in a competitive labour market. Florentin said that he thought children should not work very hard and that any advantage of apprenticeship accrued mainly to masters in the form of free labour. He also claimed that construction workers succeed, so long as they work devotedly. His criticism of apprenticeship might be attributed to having been hit several times by his master and his high school level. Yet although he himself had reached the end of the primary cycle, he thought that children in general need only attend until they have the wherewithal better to assimilate their professional training. Augustyn was adamant in saying children make docile workers and the work is very difficult for them. He himself said he had started aged 9, and had failed school at an early level. Albert believed that masters make their money thanks to apprentices and that it was not good to make children work. Yet Florentin, Albert and Augustyn all planned to have apprentices themselves: as put by Augustyn, without apprentices, a master 'goes nowhere.'

Julien expressed the most consistent criticism of children's work and the broader practice of construction work. Henri was consistent in his censure of the broader practice of construction work, but set a low minimum for schooling and for age which children could start construction apprenticeship. Both were also unusual among the apprentices, as they were 25 at the time of the interview, five years older than the next eldest apprentice interviewed, and had started apprenticing at the ages of 21 or 22. Both had left agricultural work to apprentice. The other critical apprentices, as shown in the preceding, were mixed in age at the time of the interview and ten had started under the age of 14.

What characterises the other 12 critical apprentices is the ambiguity of their beliefs and opinions. Of the five apprentices who said they had no ideas about how to improve construction worker's situations other than machinery, four also indicated awareness of labour market difficulties. Dossou, Aimé, Darius and Eric were coherent in their acknowledgement both of the labour market difficulties and of the challenges of making a living from it. Yet Florentin, Cyril and Constant recognised neither, the rest either one or

the other. Only Julien and Dossou said they felt that children should stay in school beyond the primary cycle and start apprenticeship over the age of 14.

Eight critical apprentices who had other work plans indicated that they aware of labour market difficulties and said that the primary cause of children's work is poverty. However, having other plans and being aware of labour market difficulties did not characterise the other six apprentices. This might indicate that for these six apprentices, their criticism of construction apprenticeship owed more to personal experience as apprentices than contestation of the practice of construction work. The five apprentices who did not have ideas about how to improve construction workers' situation also set a low age for beginning apprenticeship in construction, and four of them a low minimum level of schooling. This also indicates acceptance of the status quo in the practice of apprenticeship and of construction work.

Minimisation of the configurations representing the uncritical apprentices produced 18 solution terms, covering 26 of the total 27. The simplified terms are presented in Table 19. 18 chose to apprentice, eight did not. These two groups each divide evenly into those who felt children work primarily for their future, and those who felt they work because of poverty.

19. Solution terms for the outcome ‘critical’ - Model 2: Criticism of construction apprenticeship and apprentices’ opinions regarding construction work, children’s work and education

Model: ~critical = chose, future/lackmeans, awlabmardif, 6+school, otherplans, constapp14+, constpromise, ideas						
Rows: 37 frequency cutoff: 1.000000 consistency cutoff: 1.00						
solution coverage: 0.962 solution consistency: 1.00						
chose	*future/ lackmeans	*otherplans	*awlabmardif	*constpromise *6+school *constapp14+ *~ideas		Basile
				*~constpromise *~constapp14+ *ideas		Germain, Christian, Sunday
			*~awlabmardif *constapp14+ *~ideas	*~constpromise *6+school		Wilfrid
				*~6+school		Nonvidodé, Gandjizo, Emile
	*~otherplans *~awlabmardif *constapp14+ *~ideas		*constpromise *6+school		Clementin	
	*~future/ lackmeans	*otherplans	*awlab-mardif	*~constpromi se *~6+school	*constapp14+	Donatien, Isaac
					*~constapp14 + *~ideas	Jérôme
				*6+school *~constapp14+*ideas		Djougdele, Clement
			*~awlab- mardif *~6+school *~constapp14+ *~ideas	*~constpromise		Marcellin
				*constpromise		Mathias
				*awlabmardif *~constpromise *6+school *constapp14+ *~ideas		
~chose	*future/ lackmeans *~awlabmardif *constpromise *~6+school *~ideas	*otherplans	constapp14+			Bienvenue
		*~otherplans	*constapp14+			Firmin
	*~future/ lackmeans	*otherplans *~awlabmardif *constapp14+ *~ideas	*constpromise *6+school			Jesugnon
			*~6+school			Alfred , David
		*~otherplans *awlabmardif *~ideas	*constpromise *~6+school *constapp14+			Nougblénou
			*~constpromise *6+school *~constapp14+			Roland
		*~otherplans *~awlabmardif *constpromise *6+school *constapp14+ *ideas				Isidore
Key						
* indicates Boolean addition						
~ indicates absence of condition						

Of the eight apprentices who were not critical about construction apprenticeship and did not choose to enter into apprenticeship, only Isidore had any ideas about possible improvement in construction workers’ situation. Roland was alone among this group in his acknowledgement of labour market difficulties, and only he and David felt construction

work did not promise a good future. Three set high a minimum for school level, and three had other work plans.

The 18 uncritical apprentices who chose apprenticeship were very different. 16 of them had other work plans. Those who felt apprenticeship was a means to a future for children and those who felt it was the consequence of poverty, are not easily distinguishable. Two apprentices in each group believed in both prolonged education and a minimum age for construction apprenticeship at 14 or over; three in each were aware both of labour market difficulties and the challenge of making a living from construction work.

The frequency of other work plans in this group of uncritical apprentices who chose apprenticeship sets them apart from both uncritical apprentices who did not choose and from critical apprentices. Only nine of the 14 critical apprentices had other work plans. However, eight of these nine were also aware of labour market difficulties, compared to 11 of the 16 uncritical ones with other work plans.

In total, seven of the 27 apprentices were not critical had ideas for improving the situation of constructions workers. Six of these seven also expressed awareness of labour market difficulties and had other work plans. This combination of conditions is found with four of the 14 critical apprentices: the proportion is not greatly different. A more basic comparison shows that only five of the 27 uncritical apprentices had ideas, compared to eight of the fourteen critical ones. Although the association was not strong enough to show necessity, it is strong enough to suggest that not having ideas for improving the situation of construction workers characterises most uncritical apprentices. It is however difficult to interpret this. Proportionately fewer uncritical apprentices said they thought that construction work promises a good living compared to critical ones: 8 out of 27, compared to seven out of 14. It might be that uncritical apprentices, especially the six who had other work plans and were aware of labour market difficulties, were out of all of the 41 apprentices the most optimistic in their ability to deal with the difficulties of their work by diversifying, even if most did not express that they imagined improvement in their work practice.

Seven of the 27 uncritical apprentices expressed support for children's education beyond the primary cycle and late entry into construction apprenticeship. This proportion is actually higher than for the critical apprentices, of who only two shared these views.

Two very similar terms can be identified in the simplified (1) and (0) solution term tables. Julien, who was critical, set a high minimum for school attainment, but otherwise shared the same scores as Donatien and Isaac, who were not. Perhaps Julien's age, his experience and greater independence from his master help explain his opinions. Donatien and Isaac had started respectively at the ages of 10 and 12, and were 15 at the time of the interview; both were quiet and restrained in the answers. They were also both orphaned by the death of one or both parents, and particularly dependant on their masters.

The example of Donatien and Isaac shows that not criticising apprenticeship does not consistently denote confidence or optimism. I found no clear relationship between the apprentices' physical demeanour and their expression of criticism in our interviews. Five of the 11 apprentices who appeared healthy and strong and spoke without hesitation expressed strong criticism. 14 of the 20 who were slight and/or who were reserved or hesitant in speaking did not.

The one contradictory configuration in the analysis of Model 2 is shown in Table 20. It is surprising, for it would seem to provide little indication of any pointed aversion to children's work in construction, although it also includes not having chose apprenticeship work and believing children's work to be an effect of poverty.

20. Contradictory configurations for Model 2: Criticism of construction apprenticeship and apprentices' opinions regarding construction work, children's work and education

chose	future/ lackmeans	otherplans	awlab mardif	const promise	6+school	constapp14+	ideas	pseudonym
0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	Richard (1), Gildas (0)

Richard was comparatively much more advantaged than Gildas. Richard had started apprenticing at 16, had came close to finishing the primary cycle and his parents were alive. Gildas had started at 12, had not completed the first year and both his parents were dead. These circumstances, like the differences between Julien, Donatien and Isaac, suggest that

in some cases, there was indeed a link between advantage and expressing criticism of construction apprenticeship.

In summary, the solution terms for the model do not show that children who criticised the practice of construction apprenticeship also held critical views about children's work or the broader practice of construction. Although there is a clear combination of conditions which covers half of the critical apprentices, it does not include the conditions of having expressed in interviews awareness of the difficulties of making a living in construction, commitment to children's education or objection to children working under the age of 14. Results also show that very nearly all critical apprentices had not chosen to apprentice in construction, and felt that children work because they are obliged by poverty. Yet only one critical apprentice expressed consistent criticism about children's work and the broader practice of construction work in Calavi. One other apprentice was similarly critical about construction in Calavi, and another one about children's work. The analysis has also shown that a greater proportion of critical apprentices had ideas on how improve the situation of construction workers than uncritical ones.

The solution terms representing uncritical apprentices indicate that there might be two categories of uncritical apprentices. A first group shares conditions which suggest they were optimistic about their own ability to do well in their future, even if aware of difficulties. These apprentices had chosen to apprentice. In contrast, uncritical apprentices who had not chosen share in conditions which indicate they were less critical either of children's work or the practice of construction work in Calavi, and fewer had ideas or other work plans compared both to apprentices critical of the practice of apprenticeship and uncritical ones who had chosen apprenticeship.

5.5 Conclusions

The key finding of my investigation of patterns distinguishing apprentices who expressed criticism of the practice of apprenticeship from those who did not is the extent of diversity among them in the conditions I modelled. This diversity meant that I did not find combinations of conditions common to many apprentices. Very few combinations of more

than four conditions covered more than four apprentices, in either the critical or the uncritical group.

Because of this diversity, I could not establish prevalent patterns in material situations and experiences associated with whether or not they expressed criticism of construction apprenticeship. I did not discover any broad trends indicating a group of apprentices more likely to rework or resist construction apprenticeship, or the practice of children's work and construction work more broadly. What results do suggest is the unlikelihood of this, which is also indicated by the plans of all to have their own apprentices. Only three of the fourteen voiced consistent criticism of children's work or construction work in Calavi. Most critical apprentices said they had not chosen to apprentice, and considered children's work to be the result of constraint rather than an opening on the future. This suggests that critical apprentices felt they had been powerless over the decisions and circumstances that brought them into construction apprenticeship. Results also show that apprentices could be critical regardless of age, wealth, family unity, schooling and relationships with masters.

The diversity I found among the apprentices' social characteristics and opinions contrasts with the homogeneity of their situations and experiences in their apprenticeships, as described in chapter 3. In the next chapter, I examine how the practice of apprenticeship as well as of children's unskilled work in cement block construction in Bengaluru, might be explained. I will address what might account for the apprentices' acceptance of harm in their work, and the findings of this chapter which show no strong indication that apprentices were inclined to change the practice of their work. In the subsequent chapter, I examine possible implications of the inconsistencies I found in most apprentices' opinions about the right age for starting work and for leaving school.

6. Children's agency and the practices of their work

In this chapter, I draw on Bourdieu's concepts of fields, capitals and symbolic violence to develop an explanation for the responses to harm in their work of the children I interviewed, described in preceding chapters. This is in order to develop an account of how their age and gender-specific positions in their work and in their families might help explain how they viewed their work and the nature of their involvement in it. I also examine how the children's involvement in their work was related to their aspirations.

6.1 Introduction

In chapter 3, I argued that harms having a direct impact on apprentices in Calavi were severe, including hunger, risk of injury, ailment, isolation, physical punishment or its threat and monotonous and laborious work. In Bidar, the children I interviewed were engaged in dangerous, laborious and monotonous work, but they were not hungry, overworked or separated from caring relationships. The Calavi apprentices could mitigate some harms they faced, but their actions did not affect the nature or the terms of their work. In Bidar, children I interviewed or the adults who made decisions about work for them were able to choose and change jobs, so could at least potentially avoid poor working terms. In both Bidar and Calavi the children's choice to enter work was based in the first instance on their lack of alternatives, most notably the feasibility of pursuing schooling, which were restricted because of family problems, mostly financial albeit with variation amongst them as to degree of destitution and family support. In neither site did I find children inclined to question, let alone challenge, either the conditions of their work or the conditions which brought them into it. The harms they experienced in their work might have discouraged them from doing so. Most only partially expressed recognition of even the more obvious aspects which cause harm (broadly speaking, in both sites, low remuneration, employment insecurity and safety). The children did not express concern about how their work might have been confirming their inequality, either as workers or as children, or, in the case of Bidar, as girls. In general, they also did not suggest that they felt their work might be unable to secure them present or future livelihoods, whether in or out of construction, although I found strong indication that it might not. Children who

intended to pursue construction work as masters and labour contractors (boys in Calavi and Bidar) or as helpers (girls in Bidar) were intent on sustaining the practices of construction work as they knew them and, by extension, the practices of children's work in construction and the harm these practices caused.

In chapter 5, my QCA analysis did not discover patterns suggesting that apprentices who expressed criticism of apprenticeship also objected to children's work or construction work practice, or that commonalities in their social and personal characteristics might point to a group among them inclined and able to try to change construction apprenticeship.

What then do these findings tell us about working children's agency and how it relates to harm in their work? Should I end my account here, I would be obliged to have recourse to the prevailing conceptualisation of children's agency as a calculation of their ability to act against the forces of structural and institutional constraint. I could answer this question by privileging the interviewed children's perspectives, which might lead me to conclude their work was not very harmful because the children saw little harm in it. This would however deny the evidence I found of harm their work caused them and its relation to their social inequality. I could also find plenty of structural and institutional proximate and remote causes combining to over-determine the children's resilient responses to harm in their work: their status as children, family poverty, debt and dependency ratios, lack of alternatives for work, schooling and training, decline of rural livelihoods and expansion of the construction sector, but this would not help explain why so many children were content with it, and so few critical of it. While the harms I identified can be seen to be of a nature likely to have constricted the children's capacity to act against them, they do not necessarily account for children's limited recognition of them.

My attempt to understand their work as a practice was made in order to open an avenue of enquiry where such accounts of children's work would close. In this chapter, I will consider how Bourdieu's theory helps give answers to two questions central to my attempt to understand working children's agency, and all the more so given my findings of children's acceptance of harm in their work : 1) why did the interviewed children react as they did - and not otherwise - to harm in their work? and 2) what (if anything) was particular about the children, as children, in both their involvement in work and their considerations and responses to it ? The premise of this chapter is that Bourdieu's theory

provides the analytical means to mediate between the children's subjective evaluations and the objective circumstances of their work, by clarifying the social character of their agency.

6.2 Children and the meaning of work

6.2.1 The concept of field

Bourdieu's concept of field refers to the system of relations which establish a particular 'social space' within the wider social space. Like many of his concepts, a field is given as real, in the critical realist sense. (Manicas 2006, Sayer 1992 5-6). It is an entity which is not immediately apprehendable, but which has causal powers exerted between fields, on social structures and on agents. Although it depends on agents, it exists independently of them. A field, also like many of Bourdieu's concepts, is also an analytical device, a 'mode of construction of the object.' (1992: 95-102,110) Herein lie some ontological and related epistemological difficulties, for Bourdieu did not address the challenges of trying to maintain a field as real and as a research construct, although he acknowledged the difficulties of charting the historical and relational boundaries of fields. (1992:232, see Warde 2004 for a critique) He did however make it clear that the concept was meant to be both open and systematic, its content definable only through empirical study and in conjunction with his other central concepts, habitus and capitals. (1992:95-96). He also gave clear indication as to what he called 'the general laws of fields', which he held to be universal and transhistorical. (1993:72)

A field exists because there are agents, people or collective entities (like firms in Bourdieu 2005) who are prepared to play its 'game', understanding how to participate in the field and attaching value to stakes in play, or capitals. (2000a:135,183) A field is structured by both the existing and potential distribution of capitals amongst the agents engaged in it. Capitals in Bourdieu's theory are resources which determine the power relations between them. In a field, with varying advantage given their existing various kinds and quantities of capitals, people attempt to preserve or improve their set of capitals, and thereby their position in the field or in the social order more generally. (1993:72-74) Bourdieu called agents' interest in the game of the field 'illusio' (from the Latin *ludus*, or game) to mark that the values of capitals are field-specific. (1992:116, 1998a:68)

Bourdieu distinguished between three kinds of what can be called principal capital, which take form in material, knowledge and relational resources. (1986) Economic capital is wealth as it used in a field (1977:184). Economic capital has the property of being 'immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights.' (1986:243) Cultural capital in its 'objectified' state consists of works of art, materialised information, machines. (1986:243) In its 'embodied' state, it exists as culture, in a wide sense as dispositions and tastes, as well information and skills. Embodied cultural capital takes time and effort to absorb and transmit, but it can be institutionalised and its worth safeguarded, for example, in the form of qualifications. (1986:243, 1977:243) Social capital is 'the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relations of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group.' (1986:248) It also can be institutionalised, for example, by titles or names. Economic capital can be converted into cultural capital (paying for private schooling) and social capital (all the various forms of instigating and sustaining social contact), just as social and cultural capital can be converted into economic capital, by providing direct leverage for attaining and securing it. (1986: 253-255) Symbolic capital is: 'the form in which the different forms of capital are perceived and recognized as legitimate'. (1985:724) In other words, capitals tends to be 'misrecognised' as 'a power or capacity for (actual or potential) exploitation' in so far as they have 'symbolic effects' to which agents are sensible by their socially structured dispositions, positions and schemes of classification. (2000:242, see also 1999:336-338)

Bourdieu referred to the temporal sequences of actions by which agents try to secure capitals as strategies, stressing that fields are organised by these strategies and not by rules. (1977:4, 2000a:138) His strategies are however not synonymous with strategic intent, being creative but primarily generated by habitus, dependant on capitals and limited to the extent agents are committed to maintaining their engagement in a particular field: depending on the relations which obtain in it, too much subversion might lead to exclusion. (1993:74, 1994/1990:74-75, 1996:272, 2005:194) Strategies determine the dynamics of change and reproduction in a practice, because agents struggle against each other in the field – the relations which obtain in practices - to accumulate and restrict access to capitals, and, on the symbolic level, to fix the values of capitals and the rate of their convertability. (1980:210, 277, 1996:272, 2010/1984:243) Considered as strategies for the acquisition of

capitals, actions can be understood as reasonable in terms of ‘practical logic’, even ones which, in the restricted terms of economic rationality, do not maximise monetisable profits. (1993:72-74, 1980:203) Fields interpenetrate, and agents engage in different fields, although not every human activity should be considered a field. (2000a:102) They are also nested hierarchically. Bourdieu studied fields of artistic production (1992), education institutions (1996), house building firms (2005) among others, and claimed that all were subordinate to an overall field of power, in which a social order’s dominant agents establish its over-arching principles, either harmoniously, or in struggles between fractions with different interests. (1992:104-105, 2005:216). Each broad class group can function as ‘a relatively autonomous’ field, being constituted in relation to other class groups and also having internal dynamics which give it unity, but which also entail struggles between class fractions. (2010/1984:242)

Albeit succinct, this summary of the concept of field is sufficient to allow me to develop my account of the children I interviewed in Calavi and Bidar in the field of their work. Before doing so, two points about fields should be underlined. The first is that fields of work are particularly important because social positions, identities and knowledge of the world are so definitively constituted in work and, as put by Sayer: ‘human life depends on it.’ (1992:18) Bourdieu situated people in social space by their occupations and referred to their daily work activities in analysis of field and habitus. (2010/1984:438, see also 1993, 1996) Secondly, as noted in chapter 2, the logic of fields does not give pre-determined place to children, or to adults: agents’ positions and strategies in a field are empirical questions.

6.2.2 Children in the field of work

Analysing a field involves establishing it as a ‘network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions’ which is co-terminous with the people who have an interest in engaging in the field, or, from another angle, with the field-specific capitals that are meaningful to them. (1992:98-99, see also 2000a:183). For practical purposes, the broadest way to define a field of work is by the relations between people who have an interest in maintaining its existence. In its widest possible scope, a field of construction work includes builders and end-users, the firms and people who produce and supply construction inputs and the political interests affecting finance and regulation. These

agents play an important part in reproduction and change in children's construction work practices, but here I restrict attention to relations between workers and their direct employers, either masters or labour contractors. This is appropriate because of my concern with how children respond to harm in their work. The children interviewed had little or no contact with agents in the wider field of construction work, and their direct employers had immediate control over the labour processes and systems which constituted the broader practices of cement block construction work in Calavi and Bidar. By this I do not mean they determined it. Like all practices, construction work in Calavi and Bidar had a genesis and was realised in contexts independent of any one agent, and Bourdieu's theory of field implies that it is the relations between agents involved in them, as well as beyond them, which shape them. Another reason for focussing on the relations between direct employers and children is that most of the children I interviewed aspired to be masters or labour contractors.

A rendering of what Bourdieu called a 'topology' of worker and employer positions by capitals which differentiate them is given in Table 21 (1985:723, 1992:230) The table also shows aspirations expressed by those I interviewed as to their work, with indication of whether or not they hoped to move out of it. I have rated quantities of capital as none, very low, low, medium, high and very high, with workers and employers in Calavi and Bidar on the same scale. Although my measures are approximate, the table gives some key points of comparison between children, adult workers, masters and contractors.

21. Positions in the field of construction work in Calavi and Bidar

Position	Equipment and money	Skills in construction	Skills in negotiating, estimates, calculations	Experience of work	Good relations with workers	Good relations with clients	Completed projects in own name	Physical appearance	Qualifications	Aspirations
Successful mason	high	very high	very high	high	medium	very high	very high	very high	completed apprenticeship	Maintain status, invest in other projects
Unsuccessful masons	low	medium	medium	medium to high	medium	low to medium	low to medium	low to medium	completed apprenticeship	Access to clients, equipment
Apprentices	very low	low	very low	low or very low	low	very low	none	low	none	Qualification, equipment, access to clients, leave construction work
<i>Ouvriers</i>	low	medium	low to medium	v.low -high	low to medium	low	low	low to medium	completed apprenticeship	Access to clients, equipment
Big labour contractors	very high	very high	very high	very high	very high	very high	high	very high	none	Maintain status, invest in other projects
Minor labour contractors	high	high	high	high	high	high	medium	high	none	Access to money and clients
Unskilled men	none	low	very low	v. low -high	medium	none	none	very low	none	Become a labour contractor
Unskilled women	none	very low	very low	very low to high	medium	none	none	very low	none	Secure work leave construction work
Unskilled boys	none	very low	very low	low	low	none	none	medium	none	Become a labour contractor, leave construction work
Unskilled girls	none	very low	none	low	low	none	none	low	none	Continue in same work, leave construction work

The most basic similarity between Calavi and Bidar is that the scope of positions is limited and largely equivalent, although being a big labour contractor in Bidar required more technical, economic and social capital than that needed to be a successful master mason in Calavi. In both sites, workers were differentiated by varying levels of economic capital and skills, a form of cultural capital easily converted to economic capital. The difference is of course that children in Calavi were learning skills meant to qualify them as independent masters, and were not paid, while children in Bidar were paid, but learnt and exercised only limited skills, which did not guarantee advancement. In neither Calavi nor Bidar, did the children I interviewed have much in the way of money. While the acquisition of the ultimate possible level of skills was crucial to being a successful master and a big labour contractor, it was not necessary for the Bidar boys aspiring to become minor labour contractors. Money was needed to secure workers and to provide them with equipment, whereas boys in Calavi did not need to anticipate such outlays as newly qualified masters given that contracts involved advance payments and workers had their own basic, inexpensive tools. It was however impossible for an apprentice to become a master, with whatever degree of success, without finishing his apprenticeship. Length of time, spent in construction work, which implies accumulated experience, was meaningless in both Calavi and Bidar, being inconvertible into capital in Calavi, as is indicated by the stagnant position of most *ouvriers*, and nearly so in Bidar. Workers were however distinguished by age, through age specific wages in Bidar and the reservation of apprenticeship to the young in Calavi. I note that this reservation is not universal; I have found in Haiti that it is common for men in their 20s and 30s to apprentice in construction. (Wardle 2010)

Beyond money and skills, for children in Calavi and in Bidar social capital was necessary for improving their position in construction work. In both sites, social capital was chiefly of two kinds: relations with other workers, and relations to possible employers. Bourdieu located social capital firmly at the level of individuals, but noted that it can be pooled among agents without being reduced. (1996:293, see Portes 2000 for a critique of community-level versions of the concept) In Bidar, important social connections were lateral: there was the great importance of immediate family relations, and unskilled workers also relied on friends, distant relative and even strangers in similar social and work positions to find employment. This belonging to a social group was what allowed the Bidar boys to envisage being able to mobilise workers and purvey work as labour contractors. Given high demand for workers and room for sub-labour contracting, they

could consider prospecting for work and applying to known and even unknown big labour contractors as promising ways of finding contracts. Among the children in Calavi, in a much more competitive labour market in which relations between masters and builder clients were direct, apprentices also planned to pool social capital: the most well-positioned said they would find work with brothers, cousins, uncles established in construction. The more disadvantaged spoke of the viability of finding work in teams with fellow apprentices, like Isaac who said: 'What I am going to do is follow my *sous-patrons*, if they want to do a job, I will tell them I can do it, then I'll do it, and like this I can accomplish everything.' But the most successful masters and big labour contractors relied not, or no longer, on pooling between peers. They were distinguished by their ability to find clients among broader and richer social groups: in Bidar, through established connections with building firms and engineers, in Calavi through religious affiliation, links with engineers, references from clients and example of their work, these last two means depending on having completed projects in their own name. In Calavi, successful masters did not need to invest in relations with workers. In chapter 3, I noted how the choice of apprenticeship masters was adjudicated less by considerations of his success than by ability to pay apprenticeship fees, proximity in familial or relational entourage or fortuitous opportunity. It was also easy for successful masters to recruit trained *ouvriers* and unskilled helpers, given their sheer numbers and ubiquity in both village and urban neighbourhoods, along with a dearth of work. Big contractors were solicited for work, sub-sub contracted and had developed networks which allowed them to draw workers from far away, but they had to offer regular payment, prevailing wage rates and advances in order to maintain workers.

The particularity of social capital in securing access to clients in Calavi and Bidar is that it was closely linked, and a largely product of, cultural capital, in the form of religious affiliation but primarily in literacy, numeracy and language skills. These skills were necessary for reaching the highest level of skills and in negotiations with clients, and thus to be a successful master or big labour contractor. In Bidar, however, where employers expected only unskilled work from unskilled workers, and rates of pay were widely consistent and often calculated on a piece work basis, such skills were not so necessary for minor labour contractors, and languages, less diverse than in Benin, not so much an issue.

I have included physical appearance in Table 21 because it was a characteristic which strongly differentiated workers, as noted in Chapter 4 and 5, and can be assimilated to social capital. The big labour contractors and successful masters I observed and interviewed were all dressed in clean and pressed pants and shirts, or *tenues*, some wore jewellery. All were well built and most rather portly. Their appearance declared them as exempt from physical exertion, giving a gauge of their success. It might be that flagrant physical well being helped set a new master mason on the road to prosperity: the apprentice Dossou explicitly referred to this as the ‘luxury criteria’ by which clients favour successful masons. Less successful masons and minor contractors worked alongside their workers, and gave all the signs of it in clothes, dustiness and thinness. The Calavi apprentices were vary varied in appearance, but many of them were thin and even the more muscular were mostly short for their age. In Bidar, the situation was much different. Raj (the body builder) and the block making boys from Bidar were small, but otherwise the children I interviewed were taller than their parents and gave the appearance of good health: they could foreseeably attain the bearing of a big contractor, whereas their parents were far from it.

The girls in Bidar were distinguished simply by being girls, with attendant serious disadvantages. They were most limited in their capitals, and could do little to enhance them: they did not participate in work negotiations, have opportunity to further their skills or even to broaden their social connections by ‘roaming’ like the boys.

In *Distinction*, Bourdieu explained that the social space of a field is structured by ‘overall capital and dominant/dominated capital’, which distinguish, as most mobility studies do not, vertical movements up or down the hierarchy of a same field, and horizontal, upward or downwards movements into other fields. (2010/1984:126) Evidently, the children planned mostly vertical upwards movements, mostly in construction. Boys in Calavi said they wanted to work as masters at least some years, although most wanted to move, horizontally, into other crafts or taxi work in later life to complement or substitute construction work. Most boys in Bidar said they hoped to move up quickly in construction to become contractors, and/or, horizontally and upwards into other more skilled, less manual occupations. The well-schooled Arjuna and Dikshit hoped for highly skilled occupations, respectively as a school master and a software engineer. Svati and Yellamma

also hoped for upwards horizontal movements, respectively by becoming a tailor and bus driver. Along with Lakshmi, they also expected to move into caring work.

What Table 21 largely confirms is the fit between the children's capitals, the capitals at stake in the field and their strategies - in the strategic intent sense - for advancement in construction work. It defines the 'scope of the possibles' (Bourdieu 1980:90) as perceived by the children themselves. Bidar boys did not aspire to become big contractors. Their interest in skill development was with a view to becoming minor contractors, rather than machinery operators. This suggests the gulf between their current situation in helping, moulding, digging and block making work and their opportunities for learning professional skills, as well as the relative ease with which they felt they could draw on their social relationships. The Bidar girls could not marshal any means to go further: construction work opportunities fixed them in the status of helpers for life, and the low wages of girls and women did not favour independence from fathers, husbands and children. For the Calavi boys, most had considerable work ahead of them to secure the capital needed to succeed, and knew it. With the exception of one boy who wanted to abandon, all were striving towards their liberation, trying to garner the tools and skills needed to work during their *congés*. They were aware of the importance of social/cultural capital. According Wilfrid:

Masons make money, at least those who get big contracts and who know how to get ahead, because they manage quickly to make friends who put them in contact with clients. Those who know French can get major contracts.'

Many planned to pursue adult education courses. The boys I interviewed did not express concern about their physique, but they did care about their appearance (spending money on haircuts and clothes, keeping separate good clothes). In Bidar the children also cared about their physical appearance, and several children and parents expressed concern about the effect of construction work on children's bodies. The following exchange makes clear both my research assistant's and a child's awareness of the low social capital of bodies warped by work:

R: If we lift the blocks we will stay the same height, for many this has happened. We will be short, if anyone sees us what will they say?

I: They will not give the daughter for marriage? (laughs)

R: If the girl is short, she will get a short groom. (laughs)

Pointing out this fit between the children's capitals and their strategic intents would be anodyne if it did not also put in evidence the fit between the children's interests in the field of construction and the practices of work which counter them. These can be likened to strategies in the Bourdieuan sense of the dominant trying to maintain their advantage. Not only were these strategies effective, but I found no indication that they were operationalised with conscious intent to limit the children's trajectories, and they were generalised, and not the vagaries of individual masters in Calavi or individual big and minor labour contractors, block making enterprise owners and builders in Bidar. Here I note that Bourdieu argued not that people deliberately struggle to distinguish themselves against others in a field, but rather that distinction between agents is the effect of their efforts to maintain or improve their field positions, which usually consist in the dominated trying to obtain the capitals held by the dominant and in the dominant trying to restrict access to them, and sometimes in both the dominant and the dominated trying to undermine the value of existing capitals or create new guises of field-relevant capitals. (1998a:9)

The master and employer strategies limiting children's access to work-relevant capitals all relate to the harms I identified in chapters 3 and 4. In Calavi, it was seen that the apprentices were given little help in acquiring advanced skills, did not participate in negotiations and were not informed of the activities of professional organisations. In contrast to Calavi, in Bidar a man with sufficient skills and money could potentially become a labour contractor at any point in his life. However, the practice of paying what were in effect individual wages measured by age, gender and class attributions, meant that only when combined, could wage incomes surpass a family's survival needs. Older boys had an advantage, being paid the same as their fathers but unlikely yet to have direct dependants (non-working wives, children, and aged parents). While acquiring economic capital for the Bidar boys and men was not impossible, it was very difficult for those who were involved in paying family debt, health expenses and land investments. Opportunities for learning advanced skills were severely restricted by the cantonment of unskilled workers into work performed spatially and temporally separately from skilled workers.

For the Calavi apprentices, needing to devote what little free time they had to rest and Sunday jobs meant the apprentices did not regularly attend religious services, or any other social activity, or even maintain close family contact, and thus could not develop social connections with possible clients. However slow the pace of work and numerous the gaps in it, they were given no possibility to attend informal education courses, which certainly existed. Most significant was their under-nourishment. Small increases in their daily stipends would have made a tremendous difference in improving at least the calorific quality of the children's diet, even if perhaps not the nutritional given their lack of nutritional knowledge. Larger stipends might also have made Sunday work less compulsory. Presumably, better remuneration would have been equally advantageous to masters, by having the effect of preventing hunger-motivated strikes and promoting mental and physical aptitude, and possibly even gratitude. Here it should be remembered how so many of the boys purported that with what would seem to be very minor rises on their own stipends, they would be greatly improving the conditions of their future apprentices. The payment of training and liberation fees meant that the apprentices were also obliged to work in construction perhaps for years as *ouvriers* because not yet fully qualified, and while doing so would be unable to compete with masters. Once liberated, the new masters would begin their careers with limited capitals, unable to diversify even if they wanted to (and probably ill-set to devote time and money to learning French). In Bidar, opposition to the workers' advancement was more remote, for relations between contractors and workers less fixed, and unskilled workers were not dependant on individual contractors. But it was also evident that building projects were designed to make the greatest possible use of unskilled, easily replaceable workers. The rapid ascendancy of concrete and concrete block making construction in Bengaluru had not changed the work of armies of unskilled construction workers, who even on the largest and most complex projects still moved materials by hand, on heads or at best in wheelbarrows, and still were subjected to physical wearing and tearing .

Table 21 also shows that big labour contractors and successful master masons were happy to go on as they were, having the capital enabling them to rely on construction work and plan and realise investments in different fields (examples from interviews include building houses for rent in Calavi, founding charitable enterprises in Bidar). At the other end of the scale of work capitals, and unlike so many of their children, the Bidar children's parents also had no aspirations to advance in their construction work status. As much as the

employer strategies working against them, this stark difference between Bidar boys and their parents raises doubts about the probability of the boys achieving success in construction.

The question posed at the outset of this chapter can be given greater specificity: why did so many of the children express contentment with their situation in work, with the majority of the boys committed to pursuing it, when in Bidar the children were so little different from their parents (uneducated, subject to the same need for credit, partly tied to their villages) and in Calavi, they must anticipate so much struggle, and in both sites so much was working against them? Why did the girls in Bidar express no intimation of feeling short-changed, when their prospects in work were so narrow? Keeping to the field and before turning to habitus in the next chapter, Bourdieu's theory offers steps towards apprehending this question which turn on two related premises about how practices are sustained, by which many of the children's actions and reasonings can be understood in terms of strategies, in the Bourdieuan sense.

6.3 Strategies, positions and views in the field

The first is that an actor's position in the field determines his or her view on the field. (1994/1990:131-134, 1992:101, 2000a:189) Here is a crucial difference with the idea that children are competent actors who know what is best for them, for in Bourdieu's relational schema, people may be experts in their own lives but they also know only what is knowable to them in their position in fields and their social worlds. The employer-driven impediments to children's strategies for improving their capitals noted above also limited access to knowledge which would help them assess the field and their objective chances in it. Moreover, the place of the children I interviewed was one of disadvantage in the general social order: beyond their immediate fields (families, religious affiliation, villages - I am less sure that urban neighbourhoods, with their diffuse relations, constitute fields), they were not engaged in others which might afford them capital nor had they inherited capital which would be useful in construction work. In effect, it could be said that by what Bourdieu called 'practical sense,' their limited view gave them the 'sense of place' allowing them to consider their existing capitals and intents as suited to the field. (1980:111, 2000a:185) Bourdieu's practical sense implies 'practical acceptance... of the

possibilities and the impossibilities inscribed in the field' as well as recognition of 'the structure of differentiated chances for profit', by which people adjust their strategies, and expectations, with their capitals. (1996:276, 2000:112,185)

Impediments to children's strategies also checked whatever the children might have imagined as different in their work. As we have seen, very few children had ideas on how to improve the collective situation of construction workers. Considered from their view on the field, their answers are understandable not just as enforced ignorance, but as risk-aversion, or in other words, as a strategy of conformism. There are good reasons for this strategy: Radha, Viresh's mother, when asked if she had ideas on how to make her block making work easier, answered:

'We don't wish for any such changes and developments. If any work can be done in a less complicated way with the help of machines then the employers would prefer to do the work by themselves and nobody would hire us at all. Then from where would we get jobs to do and earn a living?'

Even if the children did not demonstrate Radha's acuity in our interviews, it is possible that even slight shifts in the labour process or system would profoundly destabilise the value of their existing capitals and chances to improve their prospects in construction work. They might have been aware of this, or simply attuned by practical sense. Either way, their engagement in their work kept with the existing 'rules of the game', and the endeavours of boys in Calavi and in Bidar for advancement in it were based, although not purposively with this end, on keeping workers in the status quo.

Here we can see the struggles in the fields of construction work in Calavi and Bidar included the workings of class fractioning, by which masters could depend on less fortunate workers to carry out both skilled and unskilled work, and labour contractors rally unskilled workers for unskilled work. Although I have stressed the shared interests of the Bidar unskilled workers, there is no denying that those who were richer by village assets, smaller debt and families composed of sober men and few recently or about to be married members, were the best positioned. They were the most able to exert choice in taking work and also to accumulate cash and act as contractors, certainly the most desired position for a relatively unskilled worker. So too in Calavi was it clear that the best schooled children with the best social contacts and the most supportive and solvent, small

and non-polygamous households were the most likely to succeed, at the expense of the *ouvriers*, *manoeuvres* and apprentices they would put to work.

The question at hand however, is how the child-specific positions of the children interviewed structured both their view on the field and the field itself. A field being constituted by all the relations which it contains, the positions of children were an integral part of the field of construction work in both Calavi and Bidar. But by gender, family, class as well as work dimensions, these positions were differently shaped in each site, with different implications for work relations.

Gender positions were fixed and fundamental in Calavi and Bidar. In Bidar, girls and women were in no way positioned to compete with boys and men for higher status in construction work. In discussions about work between labour contractors and adult workers, as well as at the level of individual nuclear families, I found that adult women did fully participate and that some men were disqualified by alcohol abuse. I also found two women in their 60s who seemed to be the chief decision makers in their families about work. I did not however find evidence of women working in positions other than that of helpers, although some respondents reported hearsay about women engineers and I have mentioned the experience of some block makers with a woman contractor. In Calavi, girls and women were simply excluded from the crafts of construction work. The children I interviewed entirely accepted the limits and exclusions faced by women in construction work, in both sites on the grounds that women are weaker and less capable than men, although this belief was incongruous with practice. Girls and women performed demanding work as helpers in Bidar, and mostly it was the same as that of boys and men, to an extent that indicated that their relative productivity was too great to justify their considerably lower wages. Girls and women transported heavy loads of river sand for construction very near Calavi. Respondents in Bidar also referred to distinctions in tasks, which did not always match practice, which justified their women's lower pay and established a kind of symbolic gender difference. Women were not expected to use machines or have control over matter, as indicated by Raj, who said: 'they only carry cement but we have to mix the cement by our hands' (even though many women did mix cement) and Shanti who explained that it is more seemly for women to carry earth while men dig.

The subordinate status of children in block making, digging, gang and helping work was also fundamental in Bidar. The children I encountered were mostly mustered into jobs directly by near or distantly related worker-contractors, or through the mediation of parents and close relatives with minor labour contractors. Work discussions, even within families, took place between adults. Parents or related adults guided the labour deployment even of their older children, although less and less as boys grew older as indicated by Raj's independent efforts to find work. Both children and employers considered parents to be children's legitimate representatives and managers. In the case of the parent-less team of Bidar block making boys, the labour contractor among them was, at 25, the most aged, and he did not consult with the others.

If children working on large, complex and long term projects were rare, this not only indicates the reactivity of larger firms to labour laws and public opinion, but highlights that children's work was not necessary to the economy of construction, for other unskilled workers were available. On the other hand, the proportional significance of children in short-term, ad hoc unskilled work suggests these forms of work were not subject to public scrutiny (even if highly visible), and that piece work terms accommodate well the work of family groups. In all these forms of work, the subordinate status of children was a necessary point of fixture, not in their work per se but in their families, and their family relationships framed their work relationships and their view on them. The children were doubly bound, for respecting the terms of their work meant respecting their age and gender specific familial positions. That they did respect their work terms and keep to their specific familial positions can also be considered as practical sense. Several voiced awareness of the resulting particular productivity of children. Mallappa explained that his parents and related labour contractor said to prospective employers: 'The children are good, their work is good, they have come to work permanently.' Dikshit said children: 'will do any work given them.' Raj claimed: 'Children work very well, old people will not work, they will ask for breaks but children will not.' It is interesting that when asked about how they would find workers, none of the aspiring minor labour contractor boys said they would look for children, but they did emphasise the payment of advances. This can be taken to imply that the prospective workers they were thinking of would be much in need of cash, and thus not unlikely families in situations like their own, and in which their financial contributions were valued. Whatever the future might bring, in the field of

unskilled construction work in Bidar, children's view on work and place in work was closely linked to their family and social class positions.

As seen in chapter 4, construction work in Calavi was essentially structured by the largely unpaid work of child and young male apprentices (remember my estimate that they make up a third of the work force). This is a major difference with the situation in Bidar, in which unskilled but paid children could be replaced by adult unskilled workers without threatening much in construction organisation and its economy, although this would certainly have threatened families living on construction wages. It is indeed arguable that they largely had been replaced on major projects, which would help account for the recent rise in women construction workers.(chapter 4) In Calavi, removing children from construction work would obliterate the practice of construction as I found it. Although family members did not figure immediately in the field of their construction work, the apprentices' views on their entry into apprenticeship and their work positions were oriented by their family positions as children, as well by their class positions as poor and uneducated workers, as in Bidar. Yet to a much greater extent than in Bidar, in Calavi the maintenance of children in work and in their subordinate status was necessary to the relations of the field itself. Phrased another way, a minor labour contractor in Bidar did not so inevitably have to rely on child workers to make a labour contracting living, as it is at least demographically possible that he could find men and women poor and/or single and childless enough to work independently for low wages. They might well, in so doing, be leaving dependant children in what could be much worse situations than those of the children I interviewed, but the economy and labour process of construction work would not be greatly affected. In Calavi, the labour process seemed to owe much to the nature of children's work, and the construction economy fundamentally depended on it. Success without apprentices was inconceivable to the workers I interviewed in Calavi.

Social class is not specific to children, but family and work positions and relations are. I will address class positions in my discussion of the children's habitus, in the next chapter. The question I now turn to, still with the intent of understanding why children accepted their work, is what made their child-specific positions legitimate for parents and employers, and acceptable to the children themselves. This takes us to the second premise by which Bourdieu explains the relative endurance of practices.

6.4 Children, doxa, and symbolic violence

Bourdieu claimed that *illusio*, people's willingness to respect the rules of game and to value its stakes, is underpinned by *doxa*, their presuppositions about how the world works. (1980:111,113, 1992:99, 2000a:102) Bourdieu explained *doxa* as the state of acceptance of the way things are. It is largely unquestioned when there is a 'quasi-perfect correspondence between the objective order and the subjective principles of organization.' (1977:165). *Doxa* masks the arbitrary, in the sense of what is the socially and historically contingent nature of a given social order, the 'lateral possibles' of what might have been otherwise. (1977:169, 2000a:173) Some *doxic* principles compass whole social orders. (2000a:68) There is also *doxa* specific to each field. (2000:10) As belief in the established order, *doxa* confirms the advantage of the dominant, such that it is in the interests of the dominated to disrupt it. (1977:168-169) As noted in chapter 5, according to Bourdieu the questioning of *doxa* can be a first step in agents' efforts to rework or resist their social positions. They are more likely to question *doxa* when correspondence between subjective principles and the objective order break down. This gives rise to (and can be caused by) struggles over *doxa*: the dominant try to re-establish their privilege by articulating and imposing what had been taken for granted (orthodoxy) against emerging discourses carrying competing alternatives (heterodoxy). (1977:164, 2000a:184)

For Bourdieu, all social classifications figure as *doxa*, for they work to impose and maintain divisions of power, and can engender conflict over the principles of classification. He was specific about the *doxic* nature of social, as opposed to biological, age. In an interview in 1978, he explained: 'Classification by age (but also by sex, and of course, class...) always means imposing limits and producing an order to which each person must keep, keeping himself in place.' (1993:94) If the relations and positions of social age constitute a field in themselves, he also claimed to have shown in his empirical studies that 'each field also has its specific laws of ageing.' (1993:95)

What is questionable about Bourdieu's concept of *doxa* is that it exists both in common sense understandings of the ways of the world and in values, feelings and emotions, including caring ones: when they correspond, that which makes life worth living is also that which sustains and reproduces a social order. Familial affiliations, and taking on family roles, give good example of this bind. Apprehending values in terms of capitals and

struggles for them is morally complex, and involves the risk obscuring how values motivate people to pursue altruistic ends. (Sayer 2005a, Fowler 2003, Reay 2004) Bourdieu was everything but against caring relationships, but was very concerned by the extent the relationships he studied were colonised by social inequality and material constraint, and how 'ethical precepts' justify limitations people impose both on others and on themselves. (1977:77, 1998a: 116-119, 1998b:75-91, 2000a, see also Fowler 2003) Moreover, he maintained that the very power of doxa, and its difference from the concept of ideology or false consciousness, is that it lies in embodied feelings, values and commitments. (1993:86) In this section, I will consider how doxa and the concepts of symbolic capital and violence can help explain some of the more perplexing issues raised so far about why the children I interviewed accepted their positions in their families and the terms of their work.

I discussed in chapter 4 the attachments the children in Bidar had to their parents, and the extent to which these determined their entry into work. I also noted how their constant involvement in caring family relationships made their daily lives happy and secure, and that even wider family members might be expected to help in the case of misfortune. These same affiliations closed prospects to girls, imposing the limits of domestic responsibilities and an ill-valued work status. They curtailed the chances of the boys of collecting the wherewithal to succeed in construction work. I note here that all the children interviewed said they planned arranged marriages, and none questioned the onus of marriage payments. In Calavi, all but three apprentices very clearly said that children work to help their families. Augustyn expressed some resentment about this: asked about the advantages of apprenticeship, he answered: 'To become something for their parents. That's all. To bring them money or bread for the rest of their lives.' Germain pointed to the link between income and status in the family: 'If a child works well, he becomes important in his family, he has money to support them'. Clement and Darius voiced caring concern, both being worried about providing for their single mothers. Gandjizo spoke of upholding the family lineage. Even the orphaned and very alone Gildas said that children work to support their parents. What is notable is that all, including Augustyn although with the exception of Gildas, indicated that they intended to meet the expectation that they would contribute to family care, and most mentioned this prospect was what made them happy to enter apprenticeship. Noteworthy also were those who chose construction specifically in order to work with elder mason, steel bender or form worker brothers. The

relevance of the concept of pooled social capital, as well as of conflicting economic interests, emerges in both sites.

According to Bourdieu, as sites of accumulation and transmission of capitals, and of both social and biological reproduction, families can be considered as fields. (1998a:68-69). As with all fields, the structure of a family's capitals, and the mechanisms of accumulation and transmission, are historically and socially specific, and can change rapidly. (for his analyses of such change, see his studies of Béarn peasantry: 1962,1989, 2002) He claimed that the principles of the family field tend to be ultimately doxic, because a family is an 'arbitrary social construct' which 'seems to belong on the side of nature, the natural, the universal.' (1998a: 67)

He broadly distinguished societies in which strategies for reproduction are based mostly on the family, and those in which institutional mechanisms play a larger part, like schools or welfare systems. (1977:183, 1994, 1996) The social orders of Calavi and Bidar figure close to the family side. The primary relationships of the children I interviewed were familial and their strategies were directed to family well being, with varying degrees of urgency. It is not family relationships which indicate doxa so much as the very reasonable belief that their preservation is the surest way to guarantee survival. There was not much room for heterodoxy in this belief among the apprentices and unskilled workers I interviewed in both Calavi and Bidar, given their lack of other insurance mechanisms. More importantly, however, these family relationships were predicated on children. This is not as tautological as it sounds, for it is possible consider that for the construction workers I interviewed, children themselves were a form of capital with strongly symbolic dimensions.

If the children's immediate economic importance in their families was fairly evident in both Calavi and Bidar, this worth was couched in symbolic terms: no one said that children were of economic interest. It also unsurprising that these symbolic terms revolved around hopes for children's futures: the end to which the children I interviewed and their families strived was success and happiness for children. The unskilled adult workers interviewed in Bidar had few major concerns for themselves: they wanted to pay debt and return to their villages if migrants, and otherwise, in the words of Basappa, 'we get income only for survival'. But all parents were hoping heavily for their children, and many pointedly said

they did not want their children to suffer. Radha was bitter about having pulled her son Viresh out of school:

‘Now we have asked even our son to work along with us so he gave up his schooling, now that he too is working, the life we are leading and our position is not that good, we have bad times’.

The same Shanti who said ‘We can’t get any other work. We are stuck in this work’ could say in regards of her daughter Svati: ‘I am doing this work, why should she do the same?’ Others seemed more resigned about their children’s work and futures: ‘I have already allowed them to work in construction. It is according to their fate that has been written by god’, said Lakshman, and Bheemanna said difficulty for her children would arise not because they were unschooled, but if they could not work. Both however were working to pay for their children’s past or forthcoming marriages. Parents in Bidar in such answers expressed more concern about the harms of work on their children than the children themselves. Parents in of the Calavi apprentices might have also worried about their children being harmed by their work, even if they did not intervene in it. The evidence I have does suggest that they were concerned with their children’s futures: however irregular the contact between them, most apprentices expected parents or familial caregivers would pay important sums for their training.

What was yet more striking is that all of the apprentices, without exception, said that they were happy in work because it would allow them to support their own future families. Also without exception, their aspirations for themselves were modest, and conventional: a wife working in hairdressing, tailoring or commerce, a house, means of transport, children in school. The homogeneity of this core answer was startling, as was the homogeneity of the non-plebeian aspirations they expressed for their own future children. Again without exception, they wanted their children to go to school for a long time. Only four of the 41 said that they wanted their children to pursue any kind of manual work. All the others said they wanted their children to be policemen, teachers, doctors, lawyers, engineers and civil servants, with Augustyn, rather ironically, specifying in his answer the highest sights: his children would be nurses, teachers or government ministers. Many added to their answers that they did not want their children to suffer as they themselves had, and wanted their children to have opportunities they had not had. The Bidar children articulated vaguer professional hopes for their own children, most saying that they would let their children decide for themselves. This difference may be because apprentices were thinking

of building clients, and were more fully divorced from rural livelihoods than the children in Bidar. But children in Bidar also insisted that their children would pursue their schooling at least through the secondary cycle.

In Bidar, consideration of families as the sites of transmission and preservation of basic capitals helps explain village attachments. Most of adults interviewed had some kind of village capital that could be transmitted to children (land, or failing land, social relationships). The importance of children in the preservation and maintenance of capital, and their symbolic value, also goes a long way towards explaining the girls' acceptance of limitations on their construction work prospects, for it allows recognition of bearing children and caring for families as work transmitting and producing valued social and symbolic capital, a point Bourdieu made about women's work in rural Algeria in the 1950s. (1998: 54) The premise of the symbolic capital of children, children as hope for a better future, is however most relevant here for how it might help explain not only why children accepted their positions in their families and in work, but what made their work acceptable to them, and bearable or acceptable to their parents.

While it is trivial to say that children in general represent hope, I suggest it is less so to point out that hope in children has significance, in the context of the fields of construction work in Calavi and Bidar, in placing the ends of work out of work itself. Sayer argued that Bourdieu's concept of capitals does not accommodate what McIntyre called 'internal goods' which are particular to a practice and can only be obtained by it, are meaningful in themselves, non-limited, and non-individual (like proficiency in playing music), as opposed to 'external goods' which are 'contingently attached' to practices, in that they are goods that can be achieved in other ways, like 'prestige, status, money'. (Sayer 2005, McIntyre 1986:188) Others have similarly noted that Bourdieu's capitals do not specify the difference between use and exchange values. (Skeggs 2004:88-89, Dufour 2010:187). The point remains that manual construction work, in both Bidar and Calavi, conferred workers neither internal goods and nor symbolic capital, being constituted in near skillless labouring and the near infinite replaceability of workers. Manual work was mainly supported, and supportable, because it made possible, as least subjectively, the accumulation of external goods (money), which could be invested in the internal goods of family, or more specifically, children's wellbeing. Raj gave indication of this strategy and why the higher social and symbolic status of labour contractor was valued among the boys

I interviewed in Calavi, in explaining why he wanted to be a labour contractor - the 'we' he refers to is significant:

'In our village if I say I am doing helper work or mixing cement work they will not respect me, even when we try to borrow money; if I am a labour contractor they will give money, if I am just a helper then they will scold and will not give money.'

Hope for children gave meaning to work, but in Bidar and Calavi, in so doing it also gave basis to the acceptability of the conditions of work. The use of symbolic capital to elicit the submission of the dominated Bourdieu calls symbolic violence, for it is not perceived as violence, and is based on ' "collective expectations" or socially inculcated beliefs'. (1998a:103) The fairly limited aspirations of the apprentices interviewed suggest that there is such violence at work in sustaining their belief that the future will be better for their children, and by extension their commitment to construction work. By the measure of apprentices' hopes for themselves, their high hopes for their children seem discrepant, for their limited personal aspirations signal recognition that construction work would only go so far in producing material ends. Hopes for their children also displaced the importance of the gains of work from the present to a relatively distant future: an apprentice might be working for his children, but he will not know that he has succeeded in giving them opportunities for other 10, 15 or more years. Moreover, before taking children's optimism in their children's futures at face value in either Calavi or Bidar, there are troubling questions related to the material mechanisms at hand which might secure, or yet endanger, the realisation of the children's aspirations for themselves and for their children. In addition to those related to the limits on their strategies to advance in construction work or move into other work, discussed in the preceding section, these questions include: At what point did the Bidar adults let go of hope for themselves, and place it in their children? Why were so many Bidar men heavy drinkers, and what will prevent the boys I interviewed from falling into the trap? At what point did family responsibilities become too much to shoulder and large debt became necessary, and debt become so crippling that families had to pull their children out of school and flee their villages? Why did the children in both Calavi and Bidar believe so much in school for their children, when so few had had good experiences of it and even those who had attended several years could not read and write?

Symbolic violence is also suggested in considering that in Calavi, if parents chose construction apprenticeships for their children, and children either acquiesced or themselves made the choice, it was with the belief that being a master would surely bring material success. The children I interviewed were explicit about this. Isaac gives example:

‘I wanted to be a tailor, or a mechanic. My father refused, he said such work doesn’t bring enough money, that in masonry there is lots of money, just look at my master, he has houses and a car, he said if I start masonry I will be able to have all that.’

Richard had a down-to-earth analysis, which exposes the importance of external, rather than internal, goods in construction work: ‘I’m not lying to you, masons make a good living. Otherwise no one would do it.’ Belief in the good livings of construction work was however inspired by the example of masters of earlier generations, who guarded close the means to stay at the top even though the premise of apprenticeship is the transmission of these means.

Bourdieu uses the concept of hysteresis to describe situations in which subjective expectations are no longer matched to objective chances: it applies well to the situation of the Calavi apprentices. (1980:104, 2010/1984:138) But even those apprentices who identified labour market problems were committed to pursuing it, having hopes for advancement and success. Hysteresis may also apply to the situations of the Bidar boys. Given that I found unskilled children’s construction work in four kinds of work, I did not interview enough minor contractors to ascertain whether it might be more difficult, and perhaps increasingly so, for the unskilled boys to become successful minor contractors than they indicated. As it was, it would already be difficult for them to acquire the technical skills needed, even if these were lower than those of big contractors.

There was also a very specific doxic dimension to Calavi apprenticeship, which also turned on the apprentices’ specific work positions as children and their hopes for the future, by which suffering was posed as a condition for success. Darius explained his difficult beginnings in apprenticeship: ‘In the beginning, I understood nothing, and my master had left me alone, and I told myself ‘I am a man and man refuses nothing in life, I have to attach myself to this work.’ He would have been at most 10 at the time. He also said that he would expressly make his apprentices suffer, but not as much as himself, and would explain to them that hard work would allow them to ‘become someone in the future.’

Dossou said: 'I like everything in this work. Because a man has to be ready for anything,' after having said 'everything about this work is difficult, if you aren't courageous, you will abandon it.' Nonvidodé also prided himself on his endurance, for being one of three apprentices who stayed with his master, when at least ten others to his knowledge had abandoned. Key is the point made by Jérôme, when he answered the question of why children stick with apprenticeship when it is so difficult: 'We can do nothing. Anyway, it is only temporary.' This belief in hard work and its temporality, and in the associated values of manliness and endurance, helps explain why the apprentices I interviewed did not revolt more often or more completely, and also gives insight into the difference between them and apprentices who had fled, perhaps to better situations, perhaps not. The sufferings of the children would have been unendurable, I believe, if they had not been seen as temporary, and were not associated so directly with the promise of success. These principles justified harsh treatment and low stipends, in the eyes of both masters and apprentices. In the words of Nonvidodé: 'It is for our own good'. Many masters claimed they themselves had suffered worse as apprentices. Whether or not they had is non-verifiable, but it remains that suffering was seen by all as central to apprenticeship. By the same logic, it would have been impossible to subject adult workers to such treatment, for it was premised on shaping children into prosperous and responsible men. This logic also helps reveal the symbolic importance of the exclusion of women from construction work: the hardship necessary to turn boys into men would have had no meaning if girls also sustained it.

In Bidar, the employers I interviewed approved the banning of children under 14 in construction work, and most said that 18 and above was the right age for children to begin, explaining that at this age young people are strong, and until it they should be in school. All noted that the number of children working in construction had fallen drastically over the last 10 to 15, years, attributing this to schooling and government help schemes. None voiced complaint, which supports my contention of the relatively easy substitutability of children. They also all pointed to poverty as the primary reason children work. But as seen in chapter 5, some of these employers had children working on their sites. I would like to suggest that they were not driven by a desire to exploit, but could rationalise their work on the grounds of the livelihood it afforded, also for the children's good, and on the basis of the doxa (or orthodoxy) that there were no alternatives. This speculation is supported by the block making entrepreneur who said: 'A boy about 13 years old, a son of

a worker, is working in our unit, because the family cannot afford private school expenses.’ It is also supported, from the supply side, by Mallappa who explained: ‘Employers say to children: Why do you work at a young age? You go to school. If the children say ‘we have family problems’, then they will ask us to work.’ However, I note that Raj spoke warmly of a building owner he had worked for because he had organised the admission of two children of workers on his project into a public primary school.

In conclusion to this section, while my interpretations of the doxic and symbolic basis of children’s commitments in work and in families are speculative, they help provide an explanation of why children did not recognise, or accepted, some of the harms I identified in chapters 3 and 4. My interpretations are supported by the very fact that, as with the strategies of employers which confront them, I found so much homogeneity in the perspectives, opinions and aspirations of the children I interviewed in Calavi and Bidar, despite the particularities of their individual circumstances. This suggests that differences in their social situations were not so great as to warrant my QCA attempts to distinguish the apprentices by individual characteristics. Such homogeneity also underscores the very coherent, and non-heterodoxic, basis of the beliefs which bring and keep children in construction work, despite its adversities.

6.5 Conclusions

My exploration of possible explanations for children’s involvement in the practice of their work, and their acceptance of its harms, using Bourdieu’s concepts of field, doxa and symbolic violence, suggests that that the children I interviewed were not just ‘small working people’, but were ‘becoming people’, aware of themselves as such. They were invested with hopes for the future for themselves and for their children, and this crucially shaped their place in the fields of their work and their ability to recognise and counter its harms. It is possible, even probable, that some of the children I interviewed will succeed in realising their aspirations, either in or out of construction work, or will develop new aspirations and realise them. But my examination of the dynamics of their work practices and social situations also suggests that it is unlikely that most will.

My main point however is that this Bourdieuan analysis shows that while the children I interviewed were certainly agents, actively engaged in social relationships and making decisions with reasons and reflection, this did not mean they were able to identify harmful or potentially harmful aspects of their work, including the ones I identified. As described in chapters 3 and 4, their work caused or risked causing serious harms, and only very contingently allowed workers to ensure even basic social reproduction. In Calavi, the children experienced extreme hardship, and many acknowledged this hardship, even if they did not question it.

The children I interviewed had a limited ability to change their work practice to the advantage of themselves and those in similar positions. This is in part because of their limited resources (or capitals). They also shared collective beliefs and had values which underpinned their acceptance of their work. Many of these beliefs and values can be connected with their age and gender specific social positions and relations, especially in their families. Their positions and relations could be said to be determined by social structure, and the children's acceptance of them to reproduce it, but their beliefs and values were a part of the children and important to them, and they help explain their perceptions and responses to the harms I found in their work.

This is not to say that change of advantage to the working children I interviewed, or those who have by now replaced them, is not possible. In addition to workers themselves and their resistance to oppression and exploitation in their construction work, other means of possible change, both in or out of the field of construction, include technological change and competition between firms, what Bourdieu called 'morphological transformation' ensuing from an increased supply or demand for workers (2010/1984:126,129), civil society movements, politics. The symbolic investment of hope in children, a hope by which children's futures would not be fixed in the grind of manual construction work, and which was generalised across the two sites, might also lead to transformations in the situations of disadvantaged construction workers in both Calavi and Bidar, in time.

At the very least, the children in Bidar and Calavi had, when I interviewed them, posited in their aspirations for their children a 'possible' very different from their own situations. That the children I interviewed wanted their children to attend school and work in well paid, non-manual occupations points to the great ambiguity of the children's acceptance of

their construction work, for it indicates the extent to which what they saw as desirable, for children and for adults, was very different from their own experience. Another, and telling, point of commonality is that very nearly all the children I interviewed wanted only two children, in order to care for them well, and in Calavi, apprentices mostly anticipated having children later than their parents and not having multiple wives. At the risk of sounding Malthusian, if they have few children, this might indeed make a difference, not only by making it easier to invest in them, but by reducing the number of children available for early work.

While the optimism the interviewed children demonstrated with regards to their aspirations for their own children might be taken as indication that they had no grasp on the reality of the present, it is also a step in making these aspirations more probable. (Bourdieu 2000a:221, 234-235) How great a step? This question I address in the next chapter, in which I examine how Bourdieu's theory of habitus can help further explanation of the interviewed children's responses to harm in their work.

7. The conditions of agency

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I extend the analysis of the previous one by exploring how Bourdieu's concept of habitus can help draw out in further detail an explanation of why the children I interviewed accepted their work. I use this concept to examine two questions : 1) What can be understood about the nature of the ways of thinking, dispositions and propensities – the habitus – of the children I interviewed and is there anything about their habitus which is particular to them as children? and 2) How does their habitus relate to their perspectives on harm in their work and their ability to affect its terms, and their perspectives on the future and capacity to realise their aspirations? In concluding the chapter, I briefly consider the implications of my analysis of the field of their work and their habitus for possible development interventions aimed at helping the children I interviewed.

7.2 Children's perspectives on childhood and the future

My account of the interviewed children's perspectives on their work so far has focussed on the reasons which brought them to construction work, their appreciation of its harms and benefits and the place they gave their work in the realisation of their hopes for the future. The analysis in this chapter builds on two findings alluded to in this account. The first is that very nearly all the children and young people I interviewed, in both Calavi and Bidar, expressed contradictory opinions in answers to questions concerning their understandings of childhood and children's work. The second is that the children articulated their plans for their future work future hazily, or were unsure of how they would realise them, or had no plans other than pursuing their construction work, and/or agricultural work for the Bidar children. To try to establish how the children felt about their work implied serious epistemological issues, discussed in chapter 2 and including whether their interview answers matched their opinions, and whether their opinions might be very changeable. However, contradictions concerning ideas about childhood and work and thin projections about their futures in work, expressed by the 53 children interviewed in both sites, were

too generalised to be attributed to method alone. In this section, I draw on the interviews to give example of what I refer to as the children's indeterminacy.

7.2.1 Childhood, school and work

In both Calavi and Bidar, the children expressed a great range of understandings of childhood and appropriate ages for school and for work. With just a couple of exceptions, these understandings were conflicting.

Table 22 shows inconsistencies in the apprentices' answers concerning the norms and practices underpinning children's work in construction, which I examined in relation to their criticism of apprenticeship in chapter 5. The table lists all 41 apprentices interviewed and whether they expressed during our interviews awareness of labour market difficulties, the belief that construction promises workers a good living and the opinions that children should stay in school beyond the six years of the primary cycle and begin construction apprenticeship over the age of 14. I have grouped apprentices sharing the same configuration of values on these conditions. Values are those used in the qualitative comparative analysis of chapter 5, with '1' indicating 'yes', and '0', no. To indicate the diversity among apprentices, the table also shows their age at the time of the interview and at the start of their apprenticeship, as well as whether they chose apprenticeship or not, and were critical or not of construction apprenticeship. Coloured highlights indicate each of the 15 configurations, and grey highlight show children who were critical of the apprenticeship system. There is no ranking to the list.

The first nine apprentices believed children should start apprenticeships under the age of 14, but also believed they should pursue secondary schooling. The next eleven said children should start apprenticeship at various ages over 14, but not did not need to complete the primary cycle. Despite believing either in prolonged schooling or late apprenticeship, only five of these 20 children voiced criticism of the apprenticeship system. The following thirteen children said children need only a few years of school, and should start apprenticeships early. Yet seven of these children were also critical of the apprenticeship system, although it is based on the early entry of unschooled children. Of the other six, Marcellin could not explain why he thought constructions work does not promise a good living, and Jérôme and Christian said there were too many workers and not

enough work, but also condoned the apprenticeship system which largely gave rise to labour market saturation. The final group of eight children includes apprentices who said children should start apprenticeship late and continue school beyond the primary cycle, but of these, only two were critical of the apprenticeship system. This leaves only five children who gave answers which appear to hold to a consistent reasoning: Julien and Dossou, who believed in late schooling and apprenticeship, and were aware of labour market difficulties, and critical of the apprenticeship system, and Bienvenu, Gildas and Mathias who held opposite views. It is noteworthy that Bienvenu and Mathias were only in the first year of their apprenticeships, and that Mathias and Gildas were quite young, while Dossou and Julien were among the oldest of the apprentices I interviewed and been in apprenticeship longer. However, the table shows, as did my QCA findings, that the apprentices' answers are not patterned by either age or duration in apprenticeship.

22. Apprentices' characteristics, attitudes to work and school

Pseudonym	Age at interview	Age start of appr.	Aware labour market difficulties	Construction gives good living	Apprenticeship should start at 14+	Children should stay in school 6+years	Chose apprentice	Critical of the appr. system
Clement	12	12	0	1	0	1	1	0
Cyril	13	12	0	1	0	1	0	1
Clement	20	13	1	0	0	1	1	0
Germain	15	13	1	0	0	1	1	0
Roland	13	9	1	0	0	1	0	0
Sunday	17	12	1	0	0	1	1	0
Darius	16	5? 10?	1	0	0	1	0	1
Djoungdele	20	18	1	1	0	1	1	0
Aimé	15	12	1	1	0	1	0	1
Nouglénou	16	11	1	1	1	0	0	0
David	13	11	0	1	1	0	0	0
Firmin	12	12	0	1	1	0	0	0
Gandjizo	19	18	0	1	1	0	1	0
Nonvidodé	20	18	0	1	1	0	1	0
Grégoire	18	12	0	1	1	0	0	1
Donatien	15	10	1	0	1	0	1	0
Isaac	15	12	1	0	1	0	1	0
Henri	25	21	1	0	1	0	0	1
Alfred	15	14	0	0	1	0	0	0
Emile	17	15	0	0	1	0	1	0

<i>continued</i>								
Pseudonym	Age at interview	Age start of appr.	Aware labour market difficulties	Construction gives good living	Apprenticeship should start at 14+	Children should stay in school 6+years	Chose apprenticeship	Critical of the appr. system
Marcellin	15	12	0	0	0	0	1	0
Albert	15	13	0	0	0	0	1	1
Augustyn	12	9	0	0	0	0	0	1
Bienvenue	17	16	0	1	0	0	0	0
Gildas	14	12 ?	0	1	0	0	0	0
Mathias	14	13	0	1	0	0	1	0
Florentin	15	13	0	1	0	0	1	1
Richard	19	16	0	1	0	0	0	1
Christian	19	18	1	0	0	0	1	0
Jerome	19	15	1	0	0	0	1	0
Eric	18	17	1	0	0	0	0	1
Constant	14	13	1	1	0	0	0	1
Mathieu	19	12	1	1	0	0	0	1
Wilfrid	18	15	0	0	1	1	1	0
Isidore	15	14	0	1	1	1	0	0
Jesugnon	14	11	0	1	1	1	0	0
Basile	17	14	1	1	1	1	1	0
Dossou	20	12	1	1	1	1	0	1
Romain	15	10	1	0	1	1	1	0
Thibault	18	15	1	0	1	1	1	0
Julien	25	22	1	0	1	1	1	1

Source: interviews with child workers, Calavi, 2010-2011

The inconsistency summarised by the table was very plain in their interviews. Here follow extracts from interviews with four apprentices regarding their opinions about age, school and work.

Jesugnon (14, mason apprentice)

I: Why did you begin your apprenticeship?

J: I was going to school, I was in the CE2⁶ class, but I understood nothing then my father said I was to learn masonry, and he put me with my master. He said that this work, if one learns it well, finishes by bringing many things in the future.

I: And when you started where you happy?

⁶ The fourth year of the primary cycle

J: Yes.

I: Why?

J: Because they say this work makes money, that's why.

I: So it was your parents who decided?

J: No it also was me who said to my father and mother that I wanted to learn masonry, and they asked if I could, and I said yes so they put me into it.

I: Did you parents want you to learn something else?

J: My father wanted me to learn welding, but I refused.

I: Why?

J: Because they say that you need to go to school a bit and 'understand paper' a bit before doing welding, and because I understand nothing in school I thought I should do masonry.

I: And you don't need to understand paper to learn masonry?

J: No.

I: Who told you this?

J: It's that I see people in masonry and they understand nothing in school.

I: Do you know of any laws that cover apprenticeship?

J: Yes. It says no child should be in apprenticeship.

I: And how old are you?

J: I am beginning my 14th year.

I: You are in your 14th year.

J: Yes.

I: They say that no children should begin apprenticeship but you started?

J: *Long pause*

I: If you see someone, tell me how old they have to be for you to call them a child?

J: 8 years.

I: Why do you say 8?

J: Because at 8 he is still a child.

I: What is the difference between a child and an adult?

J: The age of an adult is greater than that of a child.

I: And you, how do you see yourself?

J: I am a child.

I: But you are older than 8?

J: *Long pause*

I: According to you, how old should one be before starting apprenticeship, in any craft? What is the minimum age?

J: 12 years.

I: Why 12?

J: Because at 12 one is already mature.

I: And for construction?

J: One should be at least 15.

I: But you aren't even 15 yet?

J: When one starts masonry, the beginning is difficult.

I: The beginning is difficult?

J: Yes, and a child can't do it.

--

I: Why do you think children enter apprenticeship?

J: It's because when they go to school...

I: Yes?

J: Well they refuse to go.

I: The government has said recently that everyone must go to school and primary school is free. What do you think of this? Do you think that children will still want to apprentice?

J: No.

I: And what will masters do?

J: They will have to abandon work.

I: To do what?

J: They will go to school.

I: And what would you have done if school was free when you started ?

J: I would have continued school.

Darius (16, mason apprentice)

I: Can you tell me about how you started this work?

D: I was five years old when the person who brought me here, my first master, abandoned me and left for Parakou⁷. When he left, this one, my master now, took me up and promised to take care of me until I learn.

I: Were you happy to start?

D: Yes.

I: Why?

D: So I can evolve in the future, after I learn how to do this work well.

I: Did you have other options?

D: I did not intend to learn masonry, I wanted to lean formwork or to be a glazier.

I: What did you parents think?

D: Only my mother is alive. She was happy because she was alone in taking care of us, and my leaving for apprenticeship was for her a relief.

--

I: Who do you think one can call a child?

D: Someone who is at most 2 or 3 years old.

I: Why?

D: Because at this age, he is still little and doesn't speak. But me myself, I am also a child.

I: How old are you?

D: I am 16.

I: Where do you put yourself, between being a child and an adult?

D: I am becoming an adult.

I: And what is the difference between a child and an adult?

D: An adult is someone who is older than a child, who can give him advice.

I: How old should one be before beginning an apprenticeship?

D: 15 or 16.

I: Why?

D: Well, first the person should go to school.

I: And for masonry?

D: One can start at 10.

I: You just said that one should be 15 to start?

⁷ A small city 700km north of Calavi.

D: It depends on the situation of each person, if someone does not have help, they have to start early.

--

I: You said you think children should go to school? Until what age?

D: They should at least finish secondary school⁸ before deciding to learn a craft, if that is what they want, or becoming a policemen or something else. They can even take recruitment tests for the government.

Mathieu (19, mason apprentice)

I: Why did you begin your apprenticeship?

M: My grandmother had died, and she was the one who looked after me. So I started welding with my cousin but I had problems with my eyes, so I had to stop after two years, I was close to my liberation. My father advised me to start masonry.

I: Were you happy about starting masonry?

M: No, I wanted more than anything to go to school but I couldn't.

I: Why?

M: I did not leave school willingly, it was because I couldn't follow anymore and my results weren't good. So my father wanted me to stop, but I wasn't happy to.

--

I: Who for you is a child?

M: A child for me is someone who is 20 years old.

I: Why?

M: It happens often if you bother an older person, he will say 'children today don't respect anyone' so there is no age for being a child or an adult.

--

I: To learn a craft, how old should one be?

M: One should be at least 15.

I: And for construction?

M: One should be at least 10 or 12.

I: Why?

M: The sooner one starts, the sooner one finishes and is independent.

⁸ The primary and secondary cycle in Benin add up to 12 years of schooling

I: What do you know about the rights of children?
M: I know it is not good to make children work.
I: But you said that to begin an apprenticeship in construction one should be 10 or 12, and that a child is 20 years old?
M: I will not take a child for an apprentice because all children should go to school.
I: For how long should they go to school?
M: They should finish CE2.

Wilfrid (18, mason apprentice)

I: Who can one call a child, according to you?
W: Anyone between 8 and 18 years old.
I: Why ?
W: At this age children don't yet have the capacity to look after themselves like adults and they only play.
I: So what is the difference between an adult and a child?
W: A child is not yet mature enough to work, and doesn't have the knowledge needed to face life.
I: Are you an adult or a child?
W: I am a child.
I: How old are you?
W: 18.
I: But you just said children are between 8 and 18?
W: Yes, I am a child, but for me it is different, I know that for me to be an adult, I have to be at least 25.
I: At what age do you think children can begin apprenticeship?
W: At 15.
I: Why 15?
W: Because most apprentices start at 15.
I: And for masonry?
W: At 15.

I: According to you, should children go to school?
W: Yes.
I: And until what age?

W: They should start in their earliest years.
 I: And when should they stop?
 W: They should be 20 years old before leaving.
 --
 I: Have you been to school?
 W: No.
 I: Would you like to go?
 W: Yes, to know how to read and write.

Contradictions were also expressed by the children I interviewed in Bidar in their answers about childhood and the right age to begin work and leave school. Here are examples from interviews with Chandru and Yellamma.

Chandru (17, block maker from Bihar)

I: How do you think of yourself, do you think you are a child or an adult?
 C: I am a child now.
 I: You said you're a child, is there anything specific about children different from adults? Do you know of any rights for children?
 C: If I was a small child I could have been playing, now it's time for work not for playing.
 --
 I: At what age should children start work?
 C: Their age should be 20.
 I: Why?
 C: Because they can study until they are 20, then when they come out they can start earning.

Yellamma (15, helper in a moulding team, from Northern Karnataka)

I: Who do you call children?
 Y: Children means children of my age.
 I: Until what age?
 Y: Until 10 or 11 children, after they will call us big children.
 I: Why do you say that after 11 they become big children?
 Y: For my friend, she got engaged.

- I: How do you differentiate between children and adults?
- Y: Adults are big and we are small, they will not listen to children but children have to listen to them.
- I: Are you now a grownup, or a big child or a small one?
- Y: I am a small one, mine is small age.
-
- I: Until what age the children should study?
- Y: Until they are 12.
- I: Why?
- Y: Then they get anything.
- I: What?
- Y: Any kind of work.

7.2.2 The future

While hardly any two children had the same ideas about childhood and ages for beginning school and work, in both Calavi and Bidar they were more uniform in expressing imprecision in their planning for their future.

34 of the 41 Calavi apprentices referred to their god. I do not use a capital because they professed themselves as adhering to *vodoun*, catholic and a multitude of evangelical faiths which conceptualise god differently, and because the children in Bidar had their own understandings of the concept. Many apprentices, when asked if they took safety precautions, explained that they prayed. But most strikingly, they referred to god's importance in the unfolding of their working futures. Here are some examples:

Roland and Clément spoke of god when asked whether they thought they would make a good living in construction work:

- R: I see my future in my work because I know that each day god makes people want to build, so we will have lots of work and I won't be idle.
- I: Do you think you will have difficulties in work after your liberation ?
- C: No!

I: Why?

C: I believe in god.

Sunday and Basile referred to god in talking of their desire to leave construction work:

I: Are you thinking of stopping this work?

S: Yes! This work is difficult.

I: In what circumstances will you stop?

S: If god gives me money.

I: Do you think you will grow old in this work?

B: If eventually god offers other opportunities, I will leave it.

Constant, David, Marcellin, and Romain spoke of god when asked about how they saw their situations in ten or 15 years:

C: I will ask god to help me have good health and to progress well in my life.

D: I will ask god to keep me alive and to help me finish my apprenticeship and most of all to give me the means to care for my family and my future children.

I: Would you like to be married?

M: I will marry after my liberation, when I am about 25. My wife should be at least 20. She will sell things, or work in a boutique. I will have two children who will be educated. They will be teachers, but it is god and themselves who will decide.

R: First, I hope to be alive, because everything depends on god, and for the rest, I will see, I would like god to give me the means to find work and have money.

Even Dossou, who claimed he did not practice any faith, spoke of god when in answers about the future, as did Julien, who said he had none. When asked if he could think of anything that might change the situation of construction workers, Dossou replied: 'Only god decides. And we don't know what the state will do.'

Of the seven apprentices interviewed who did not refer to god or prayers, all planned to work many years in construction. Three spoke of other work they would like, but said they would leave construction only if it did not make them money.

Children in Bidar did not refer to god or religious beliefs frequently, and had more diverse plans for their futures in work. Yet most seemed not to have thought through how they would realise them. Here are examples from Dikshit, Vinodh, and Viresh.

Dikshit (16, helper during school vacations, from Bidar)

I: What do you want to do in the future? What would you like?

D: In the future I want to be an engineer. I have to do my Pre University College.

I: What is your percentage?

D: 45.

I: What kind of engineer do you want to be?

D: Software engineer.

I: Why?

D: If I do this people will recognise that I am an engineer.

I: Why do people recognise only software engineers, why not others?

D: *Long pause*

I: There must be some reason?

D: Don't know.

I: Now you are 16. When you are 30 how will you be? Will you be married or not? Where will you be working? Tell me about these things.

D: *Long pause*

I: Think about it, no problem. Think for a minute and tell slowly, no problem.

D: *Long pause*

I: Did you understand the question?

D: In the future, what we will be, we can not know.

I: We will not be knowing, only god knows but we can think about it. Have you thought?

D: In the future, whatever work I will get I will do it.

--

I: You said want to become an engineer and you also said that you will do any work you find. Do you want to become engineer or is any work ok with you?

D: No, I want to become an engineer.

I: In what kind of company?

D: If it's small company it is ok.

I: Why?

D: If it's a big company there will be lots of risk and if it's a small company there will be less risk.

I: How will there be risk in big company?

D: There will be lots of things, they will give big headaches and they will give problems often. If it's a small company there will fewer problems, there will be no headaches and there will be fewer people.

Vinodh (18, block maker from Bihar)

I: Are you thinking of leaving this work?

V: Not now.

I: If you think of leaving, what job would you like to do?

V: If I leave here I am thinking of working in a factory.

I: So you want to learn another job?

V: Yes.

I: What factory work?

V: Any factory work I would like.

I: Why?

V: Why? Because in a factory you need not work in the hot sun, you can work inside.

I: What kind of factory would you like?

V: Until now I have not gone to a factory, that's why I think factory work is good.

I: Do you know anybody working in a factory?

V: No, here I don't know. I am thinking of working in Bombay

I: Why Bombay?

V: Because it is a nice place and a big city.

Viresh (16, block maker from Northern Karnataka)

I: In the future what are you thinking to become?

V: In the future I want to first clear the loan and then I should become rich.

I: After becoming rich?

V: After becoming rich I have to look after my parents.

- I: How will you become rich? Just sitting you cannot become rich?
V: We have to work hard to become rich and we have to gather money for that.

Arjuna said he wanted to be a school master in sociology so that he could learn engineering. Bheemappa wanted to be tailor and Yellamma wanted to be a bus driver, but did not know how they might learn. Raj was clear about how he would learn to drive and that he would save money to buy a car, but it had taken him two years to collect only part of the sum needed for driving lessons. Chandpasha, Mallappa, Lakshmi, in contrast, had no plans for significant change, with Chandpasha and Mallappa hoping to pursue farming work and perhaps construction work as minor contractors, and Lakshmi expressing no particular interest:

- I: Do you want to learn any other work?
L: I don't want to learn any work other than this construction work.
I: In construction work, you give water and carry cement , do you want to learn anything else?
L: Not interested.
I: Why?
L: I don't know.

I: What work will you do in the future?
L: In the future I will do this construction work.
I: If there is no work?
L: Then I will go to my village, work there and live there.

But even Lakshmi, who she said she had chosen to leave and did not want to return, said wanted her children to go to school:

- I: What will you do with your children?
L: I want to send them to school, I didn't go to school, let them go to school.

7.2.3 Collective indeterminacy

Regarding views on age and work, individually, their answers give a troubling view on the children cited. Jesugnon was taken out of school but also said that children apprentice because they do not want to go, and was unclear about whether he himself had chosen to apprentice. He said that young children should stay in school, but in other parts of the interview was very positive about apprenticeship, although his master gave some of the lowest stipends and was of the most abrasive in his interactions with his apprentices of all those I encountered. Darius spoke of children's right to parental care but had himself been put into apprenticeship very young with a less than reliable master. From his account of his working experience, he had started closer to 10 than 5, but his memory of himself at the outset of apprenticeship was as a very small child. We saw in the last chapter however that he steeled himself to his work by telling himself he was a man. Mathieu claimed to like everything about apprenticeship, but also said he did not want his children to suffer as he was suffering. He had only been in his second year when he had been taken out of school for not doing well. Although he wanted to pursue his schooling very much, he thought just four years were sufficient for children. Chandru and Yellamma thought of themselves as children, although Chandru was living entirely independently and Yellamma thought at 12 one could be ready for any kind of work, and she herself wanted to continue secondary school to be a bus driver. What comes into sight collectively is that although each gave a different definition of a child, all indicated some incoherence in relating this definition to their own status, as well as in explaining when a child should begin work and leave school.

In preceding chapters, I have differentiated the children I interviewed by whether or not they had plans for work other than construction. My QCA results showed that of apprentices who had other work plans, those who were critical of the apprenticeship system also demonstrated awareness of labour market difficulties and saw children's work to be a problem of poverty, not a solution. Many of those who were not critical had other work plans. This indicates that the meaning of having other plans varied significantly between the two groups, implying misgivings about the practice of construction work for those who were critical, and perhaps optimism in their ability to successfully diversify for those who were not. In Bidar, the children I interviewed were much more varied in their professional plans than those in Calavi, and the majority had plans for change, even if they also said they would continue construction work, or fall back on it if necessary. Whether

or not the children in Calavi and Bidar had other plans than construction work, they all imagined the future in some way. It would however be a considerable leap to suggest that they either had, or even felt they had, control over it, whatever their degree of optimism. This I hope is made clear by the citations above regarding their futures.

I have presented lengthy excerpts in order to capture the range of opinions and circumstances between the children I interviewed, both within and across the two sites. But the children cited were not exceptional. Contradictory answers about childhood, children's work and school can be found in very nearly every interview, as demonstrated by Table 7.1 for the Calavi apprentices. None of the children interviewed in Calavi and Bidar indicated in our interviews that their aspirations were buttressed by firmly formulated, pragmatic planning.

In chapter 6, I suggested that in Calavi, the limited hopes the apprentices had for themselves, and in both Calavi and Bidar, the children's hopes that their own children would be educated and work in non-manual professions, reveal shared beliefs of what is possible and desirable shaping their expectations of and perspectives on their work. I also suggested that the homogeneous beliefs and values they expressed can be considered as a commonality which distinguishes them as a group across the two sites, despite great differences between Calavi and Bidar and the diversity which I found in their individual situations and in many of their opinions. Their answers concerning childhood and the future also distinguish the children as a group. They indicate both an individual and a collective indeterminacy in their views on childhood, children's work, school and the future. In the next section, I will explore how this indeterminacy might give insight into their habitus in a way which might help explain the children's acceptance of their work, and give grounds to an interpretation of the significance of their hopes for their children.

7.3 Children's dispositions

7.3.1 What is habitus?

Bourdieu's concept of habitus consists in acknowledging that people think and act on bases established by their material conditions and their experiences, and that these are

determined by their positions in the social world. He defined habitus, in one of his more concise versions, as: 'a system of acquired dispositions functioning on the practical level as categories of perception and assessment or as classificatory principles, as well as being the organizing principles of action.' (1994/1990:12) These dispositions are acquired through 'lasting experience of a social position': the 'cognitive structures' implemented by an agent are 'the product of incorporation of the structures of the world in which he acts.' (1994/1990:131, 2000a:136)

This conceptualisation of habitus and social action has spurred the criticism that Bourdieu's theory gives a poor understanding of agency. Emirbayer and Mische argued that agency involves 'the interplay of habit, imagination and judgement' in actors' 'interactive response to the problems posed by changing historical situations.' (1998:972) They claimed that Bourdieu focussed too much on actors' reference to the past, or the 'iterational dimension' of agency. (1998:971) They also claimed that by his emphasis on 'low levels of reflectivity' and his disregard for how action can be 'reformulated', Bourdieu had a limited grasp of actors' capacity to imagine the future and to make 'practical and normative judgements' in decisions over action, which they termed respectively as the 'projective' and 'practical-evaluative' dimensions of agency. (1998:971,983) Sayer's point that moral commitments can incite people to effect social change more than Bourdieu's theory seems to allow echoes Emirbayer and Mische's criticism that he paid deficient attention to the 'practical-evaluative' element of agency. (Sayer 2005) Archer charged Bourdieu with 'central conflationism,' asserting that he rendered habitus and structure as analytically 'mutually constitutive', thereby discounting reflexivity and its importance for people's capacity to effect intentional social change: denied reflexivity, the subject also loses the powers of 'consciousness, accountability and intentionality.' (Archer 2007:41-42)

While these critics have great merit in articulating complex and nuanced accounts of agency, it is possible that they, and others who find determinism in Bourdieu (chapter 2), have confused habitus with habit and routine action. Both Archer and Emirbayer and Mische implied they are synonymous (Emirbayer and Mische 1998:963, Archer 2007:44-52, 2012:47-86) I would like to suggest that Bourdieu's use of the concept habitus is much more nuanced, and does give place to conscious intention.

For one, habitus is not equivalent either to either habit or structure. Conceptualised as a ‘a system of lasting, transposable dispositions’ or a ‘matrix’ habitus gives an analytical handle on how socially determined cognitive principles bear on an agent’s response to his or her current situation. (1977:82-83) Habitus mediates agents’ social experience into their activity, with fields constituting the arenas in which agents articulate, rework and possibly transform their social relationships. (1994/1990:118) This is not conflation, but what Bourdieu called the ‘ontological complicity’ between habitus and field and ‘the social world’. (1998a:79-80, 1994/1990:12). The analogy of activity in a field as a ‘game’ rests on Bourdieu’s contention that habitus is creative, an ‘endless capacity’ to engender ‘thoughts, perceptions, expressions, actions’ but these nonetheless correspond in some way to, because they are limited by, the ‘historically and socially situated conditions of its production.’ (1977: 95, see also 1994/1990:63) There is ‘regulated uncertainty’ as well as ‘conditioned and conditional freedom’ in agents’ engagement in fields: the outcomes of the game are unknowable, but still fixed by the habitus, capitals and strategies of all of its players. (2000a:213, 1977:95, 1990:55, see also 2005:130) The relation between a particular habitus and a particular field or a social order is an empirical question. (1994/1990:91, 2000a:139) When the strategies generated by a habitus are exercised in conditions that are the same or similar to the conditions which produced that habitus, they are adjusted to the field, and effective in it, which can mean resignation with these conditions however difficult they might be. (2000a:217) When the workings of the field change, or social order more widely, especially in the context of broader social change and crisis, habitus is no longer effective in generating appropriate action, and agents might flounder, or they might reform their habitus, or they might try to change the social order, beginning with the articulation of heterodoxy, or alternative principles for understanding self and the social world. (2000:160-161) Whether they are able to do so depends on the degree to which they have ‘social authority’ and propose a vision ‘founded in reality’, or in other words, are able to command recognition (1989:23, see also 2000a:151, 160-161, 1994:116)

Thus habitus is durable, but not immutable. It changes ‘constantly in response to new experiences’ as well as because of ‘gaps’ between ‘expectations and experiences.’ (2000a: 149,161, 2010/1984:164) Depending on ‘the social conditions of its formation and exercise,’ habitus can be ‘systematic’ and ‘constant’, or ‘divided and contradictory’ and ‘fluctuating and variable.’ (2000a:64) Bourdieu also claimed that ‘constancy and

variation' in habitus 'varies according to the individual and his degree of flexibility or rigidity.' (2000a:161) Revisions and rejections of 'organizing principles of action' are unlikely if later experiences reinforce those acquired in earlier ones, and, when they do occur, build on the original habitus. (1977:87, 1990:60)

A third point is that habitus is not agency, but an ensemble of attributes (dispositions and principles of action) which inform action , distinguishing people by their 'situated and dated social experience,' most notably as members of groups of people who have had and continue to have similar experiences and, consequently, attributes. (2000:137) Agents are unique, because their dispositions are shaped by their individual trajectories, but Bourdieu saw '*each individual system of dispositions*' as a '*structural variant* of all the other group or class habitus...' (1977:86, italics in original) He explained :

Habitus understood as an individual or a socialized biological body, or as the social, biologically individuated through incarnation in a body, is collective, or transindividual.... (2000a:137, see also 1994/1990:91)

The concept of habitus stresses the content of the experience of being in social relations, and links this content to people's greater or lesser capacity to realise what, in reference to the 'inhuman social conditions of existence imposed upon proletarians and subproletarians,' Bourdieu called 'the full accomplishment of their human potentialities.' (2000b:139)

Finally, to the question of 'the relative weight, in the determination of practices, of the dispositions of habitus or of conscious will', he suggested that there is always some interplay between the two, and that 'the degree to which one can abandon oneself to the automatisms of practical sense obviously varies with the situation and the area of activity, but also with the position occupied in social space.' (2000a:163) His main point with regards to conscious intention is that habitus, 'dispositions durably inculcated by objective conditions' orient both practices and aspirations, such that the possibility of people acting with economic rationality is socially and historically contingent: 'the probability of achieving 'rational' action... depends on the social conditions of production of dispositions , and on the...social conditions of their exercise. (1977:77, 2000a:63, chapter 2)

To grasp *in fine* the principles of categorisation and experiences it implies, thorough familiarity with an agent's place in social space, and common language, is required. Moreover, agents have dispositions particular to their individual trajectories. But the principal theoretical purpose Bourdieu gave habitus centres not on individual variation but its collective dimensions and import in social relations. It draws attention to the general conditions of production of an agent's dispositions, and thus to their contingency on these conditions. The concept also invites consideration of the extent to which dispositions are in accord with a field or social space, and the implications of the degree of this accord and of possible points of rupture. It is for these reasons that the concept is relevant here. Without pretending to a full analysis of the children's collective habitus, I now consider how the situations and experiences of the children I interviewed help explain their collective indeterminacy.

7.3.2 Understandings and experiences of social place

My first suggestion is that the children's indeterminacy in their answers about childhood, children's work and school relates to the indeterminacy of their own positions. They did not see themselves fully as children, nor were they treated as such: earning wages and learning a craft were incompatible their ideas of children as small dependants. They also associated childhood with school attendance, and they did not go to school. On the other hand, they did not have the status of adult workers because they were in fact dependant on parents and masters, even the boys in Bidar who earned adult wages. It is a principle of new social studies of childhood, and one which fits with Bourdieu's theory, that in all societies, in all times, there have been more or less codified, and contested, distinctions between childhood and adulthood. (Bourdieu 1993:94-96, Jenks 2005, Qvortrup 2009:28-30,) Although the analysis of the last chapter did not find that they themselves were contesting their positions either as workers or as children, as shown in the preceding section there is indication that the children were having difficulties in reconciling the contradictions of their positions as working children.

Of all the children interviewed in Calavi and Bidar, all but eight apprentices in Calavi and one child in Bidar had had some experience of school. Of the eight apprentices, five were over 18, and might not have had the same kind of access younger children had had, which is suggested by the fact they had younger brothers or sisters who had or who were

attending. However, only a very few parents had been, and only very briefly. I have noted in preceding chapters that all but five of the 41 apprentices said they would have preferred school to apprenticeship, and that the apprentices and the children in Bidar knew that non-manual occupations required more than the primary cycle and wanted their own children to pursue secondary education, at least. Just as importantly, all the children interviewed believed that all children should have at least some schooling. They were also aware that other children their age were going to school. While their situation broke with that of their parents, who were mostly unschooled and had mostly grown up in villages, in or close to agricultural work, the break was not deep enough to put the children I interviewed on an equal footing with peers in their villages, children of masters and building clients, even the children attending the schools they were building, who provided constant reminder of their own exclusion. From their answers about school for their own children, it can be said that they perceived school as a more promising route towards desired ends than their construction work. This observation helps explain the paradox that even those who had had dismal experiences placed great hope in education for their own children. As noted in Chapter 7, it also suggests their ambiguity about their work, even if most did not criticise overtly.

An alternative interpretation might find that the understandings of childhood expressed by the children I interviewed confirm that these understandings have little in common with the Western version considered hegemonical by many sociologists concerned with childhood in the Majority World. (Aitken 2001:125, Morrow 2008, Pupavac 2001, chapter 1). However, this would slight the importance the children gave to school. Even if they had had little access to it, and the experiences of many had been unhappy, their own understandings of what it means to be a child incorporated school attendance. This might indicate an important distinction between them and their parents. While education has always served to established social distinction, it may be that the children's parents had grown up in contexts in which unequal school access had been more of a prevailing norm than that of their children. In Bidar, this norm seemed to be breaking down: many parents expressed that they had been reluctant to put their children to work and continued to send younger ones to school, and, in the case of Dikshit and Arjuna, supported their attendance. In Calavi, there is good indication that the value the interviewed apprentices gave to school indicates a very recent heterodoxy: although 36 out of 41 apprentices said they would

have preferred to pursue their schooling, only two said their parents would have preferred this too.

My second suggestion is that the living conditions and experiences of the interviewed children did not favour what Emirbayer and Mische call the 'projective' and the 'practical-evaluative' dimensions of agency. (1998) An important issue is the basis from which they could draw their 'practical-evaluative' principles of action. The apprentices' references to god call attention to the fact that a main set of systematic notions about causality to which they were exposed originated in religious discourse. In *Distinction*, Bourdieu maintained that there are three 'modes of production of opinion' about political questions: opinions can be based on an 'ethos' associated with social position, stem from adherence to 'a system of explicit, specifically political principles', or drawn from a programme advanced by an organisation. (2010/1984:419) In an earlier work he defined ethos as 'dispositions with an ethical dimension' or values, explaining the concept of habitus encompasses that of ethos. (1993:86) Because the apprentices and the children in Bidar had little to refer to in their reasonings other than their own experience and people in their entourage, it can be suggested that the principles informing their opinions were largely derived from their social ethos. Following Bourdieu's analysis of the implications of this suggests their opinions were more likely to be informed by common sense - to be 'prereflexive' - than opinions produced by adherence to political principles or to an organisational agenda, which imply a conscious act either of formulating or accepting opinions. (2010/1984:420-421) Moreover, their working conditions and experiences were particularly likely to have shaped their ethos (and habitus), because work was their main activity. The Calavi apprentices generally spent more than 65 hours a week working, and the Bidar children more than 45. The demands of their work also bore on the time out of work of all the children interviewed. Although many in Bidar spent long periods in native villages, doing so was a corollary of money earned in construction work. The apprentices in Calavi were also isolated by their work, and mostly interacted with fellow-apprentices. In Bidar, the children I interviewed worked and spent their free time mostly with family members, and I have noted that their families tried to establish their own private living spaces. Example of an ethos mode of opinion forming is given by the apprentices' references to the unwritten ethical rules of their work, like not taking over work someone else had contracted, or not abandoning apprenticeship, when asked about the laws covering construction work. An ethos mode of opinion forming also helps explain why many

apprentices accounted for the success of masters by their personal qualities or shortcomings, and children in Bidar thought that unskilled workers could do well if they managed their wages properly, without taking into consideration threats like the illness or injury of family members.

There are evident material reasons why work conditions and experiences might have discouraged the interviewed children from being 'projective' about their futures. The children were very aware, and consciously, of the frailty of bodies and the value of health, as indicated by several of the apprentices' citations in section 7.3. In Calavi and Bidar the children had experienced themselves or known family members to have suffered serious illness, and had first or second hand experience of worksite accidents. They also knew that illness and accident could impair the ability to work, or result in death. In their contexts, the future depended on health, which itself depended on a good deal of luck in avoiding illness and accident. The children also experienced daily work-related circumstances. Rather surprisingly, Bourdieu did not attend very explicitly to the physical consequences of the embodiment of social difference: in comparison with the symbolic, it hardly features in his work. He mostly wrote of how habitus relates to 'bodily hexis', or ways of holding and using the body. (1990:69) He did however stress that the degree of 'urgency' in enacting practice is what gives wider or lesser scope to critical distancing and projections of the future. (1990:82) In Calavi, a lax apprentice was likely to meet with a beating, and running away likely to jeopardise his relations with his parents as well as his future prospects. In Bidar, children were required to work by their families, or, more indirectly, by their family's debt and lack of livelihood alternatives. In both sites, there was urgency in practice. The work of the Calavi apprentices also involved hunger, poor nutrition and sleeping on worksites, usually without mosquito nets; they were also fully responsible for their self-care. In Bidar, although hardships of work were much less extreme, children and parents were apprehensive about its physical consequences for children. In both sites, the children's work was oppressive: laborious, routine, devoid of significant personal satisfaction (or internal goods), performed usually in extreme heat and under a burning sun, and without safety measures or much too ease its brunt. It might be assumed these material conditions and experiences both heightened their awareness of bodily frailty and eroded their physical and mental capacity to plan for the future.

These material conditions and experiences also point to deeper reasons for the children's indeterminacy about the future. They were aware of people in worse situations, which might have had the effect of obliging or reinforcing recognition that apprenticeship and work lay between them and destitution. In their work, they were brought into more or less close contact with technicians and engineers, as well as with skilled workers in Bidar, who were in working and living conditions much more secure and comfortable than their own. It involved building for clients with capitals far surpassing their own. Not only was their work performed in the interests of people much better situated, but it was ill-valorised, literally unvalorised for the Benin apprentices. It was also servile, consisting mostly in assisting more skilled workers by transporting materials, or simply in the rudimentary tasks of mixing and pouring cement, punching blocks, and digging. It is hardly surprising that apprentices enjoyed coating more than any other work, for it is comparatively easy and leaves a visible mark of an individual touch.

What I am suggesting is that it was extremely difficult for the children to make detailed plans for the future because they were in a social order which too thoroughly enforced their disadvantage and inequality, one might even say their unimportance. They were living in worlds in which not only the meaning of childhood implied going to school, but in which social advantage, although it might have originated in a multitude of ways (for example, caste differences and control over productive land,) was associated with extensive education. The children were immediately involved in social change, but people with wealth and education were the impetus of this change. In building for doctors, lawyers and government officials in Calavi, and for software engineers and other professionals in Bidar, the children constructed the material manifestations of their own inequality. While living in cramped, spare and sometimes very unpleasant conditions on worksites or in sheet metal and tent colonies or cement block rooms, they were constructing spacious homes, offices, schools and shops for the advantaged. They were mostly unable to secure their own livelihoods in doing so, and risked the depletion of their bodies.

A terrible irony of concrete block construction is that although it is a relatively new way of building, it is still based, although in very different ways in Calavi and Bidar, on manual, largely unskilled labour, while the importance of education is increasingly evident in social mobility and in the transformations of daily life through technological change. I discussed in the last chapter the premise that change in practice could undermine the

children's strategies for advancement in their work. Here I further this suggestion, by noting that children who wanted to pursue construction work were largely locked into sustaining its laboriousness even though they were dependant on the demand of clients with a level of education far surpassing their own (one could revise Roland's citation by saying cultural capital, not 'god' drives demand). Having neither money nor education themselves, but living in worlds in which they saw that money and education created opportunities, it is understandable that they were hesitant, even inhibited, in elaborating their plans for the future, and all the more so because they were disadvantaged by the necessity of their work and the physical consequences of its conditions. It is also understandable why they invested so much in family relationships, which were the main ones which gave meaning to their lives, and desired that their own children would be educated, which, more than simple money, might have seemed to them to promise more meaningful work and more comfortable and secure, and happier, lives.

7.3.3 Fractured habitus?

In brief, the conjecture I would like to advance is that interviewed children's positions as children working in construction in a broader social field in which wealth and education give sway over the future (or at least could be seen by them to do so), meant they shared dispositions and principles of perception and action which fitted uneasily with their social worlds. It could be said they had a collective 'fractured' habitus. I take the term 'fractured' from Archer, because she used it in a similar sense, in her classification of four principal 'modes of reflexivity,' to designate the mode in which people's 'internal conversations' do not produce 'purposeful courses of action'. (2007:93) The conditions giving rise to this 'fractured' habitus were not particular to them as children: being unschooled and working for educated and wealthy building clients also characterised *ouvriers*, *manoeuvres* and unsuccessful masons in Calavi and unskilled workers in Bidar, of all ages. Simply as children in their social contexts, much was still unfixed for them, like future relationships with life partners, but this applies perhaps more seriously to adults, who worried about children's futures and had obligations to provide for dependents without being sure of the means to do so. However, there are grounds for contending that what was different for children was that most had relatively recently left school, or were still of school age, which was evoked in our interviews by the sensitivity of most to their exclusion. It was also more common for children to attend school than it was when their own parents were

children. Primary school attendance has been increasing exponentially in both Benin and India over the last 20 years. In Benin, gross enrolment rates have risen from 60% in 1991, to 129% in 2011- a ratio which shows the large numbers of children enrolled who are over the age of primary school attendance. (UNESCO 2013a) Gross enrolment ratios in the upper primary level rose from 59% in 2005/2006 to 75.8% in 2009/2010, and nearly 100 000 primary schools were built in the same period. (GoI/SMOSPI 2013:64-65) This might have made the children particular aware of how their exclusion set them apart from more advantaged children, and they definitely expressed awareness of the opportunities it could bring. Following Bourdieu's account of habitus, what is also specific to them as children is that the conditions and experiences of their first years of work were particularly important in constituting a first extension of dispositions and ways of seeing the world acquired in their earlier childhood. The premise of habitus is that it is disproportionately weighted towards early conditions and experiences which form, in Bourdieu's words, 'the basis of perception and appreciation of all subsequent experience.' (1977:78, 1990:54)

What can be inferred from my conjecture of the fractured nature of the children's habitus as to their perspectives and responses to harm in their work? The answer to this question has already largely been given: I have not found that the children were inclined to change aspects of their work which they considered onerous or harmful, and did not express in our interviews concern with many other aspects I considered harmful. If their vagueness about how they would realise their aspirations can be explained by their perceptions of their own relative powerlessness as unschooled and unwealthy children, these perceptions might also explain why they did not question the practice of their work or imagine effecting change in it. They also might explain why those who intended to continue working in construction indicated that they were planning on sustaining it. Although a few apprentices in Calavi had ideas about labour organisation, state intervention and machinery improvements, in general they indicated that where they felt they had power in their work was in keeping to the existing 'rules of the game' of construction work, in exercising ethics according to which individual suffering, hard work and honesty result in success. Similarly, although children and other unskilled workers in Bidar said they could refuse jobs with bad terms does, they were still dependent on waged construction work. My findings of the children's disinclination to envisage purposefully changing the conditions of their work indicate that their dispositions, which I have suggested where

largely acquired in and reinforced by their work, were indeed in accordance with their disadvantaged positions in it.

Of those boys who planned to continue construction work as masters and minor contractors, it can be said that their moderate aspirations for themselves were more or less adjusted with the chances their positions offered, according to the degree of their individual advantage and disadvantage. However, given the analysis presented in Chapter 7 as well as possible morphological change, especially in Calavi where there is evidence of hysteresis in expectations of construction work, further study of trends of change in construction labour processes and systems, as well as demand, would be required to assess the likelihood of their achievement of success. As to the prospects of the children I interviewed in Calavi and Bidar who had plans to leave construction work, also given the challenges facing them, it would seem that the execution of strategic planning and the absence of all contingency would be needed to realise them, and the point here is that they were not planning and were very unlikely to amass the resources for realising their plans. An exception perhaps is Vinodh, because finding factory work might have depended more on luck. Only Svati's plans to be a tailor seem to have been in progress and realistic, and she was a notable exception among all the children interviewed, as she and her mother made up a tiny, dependentless household. But it should also be noted that these plans were not so much hers as her mother's, who had separated from a drinking husband and worked hard to give her daughter the means of an independent livelihood. Lakshmi, who had no plans for change, and the three apprentices who were aware of labour market difficulties, did not assume construction work gives a good living and were relatively advantaged by family wealth and schooling, and planned to continue construction work (none of whom were critical of the apprenticeship system) seem to have expectations reflecting a pessimistic view on their chances of doing other work.

Of the high aspirations the interviewed children had for their own children, from my analysis of habitus, it can be suggested that their perceptions of their powerlessness, combined with their limited capitals and constricted strategies, undermined their objective probability. By the analysis of chapter 6, I have also suggested that hopes for their own children might have contributed to eliciting the commitment of the children I interviewed to their work. Yet had the children put forward definitions of childhood which mirrored their own experience, and not had any aspirations at all, their habitus would have been much more in

harmony with their positions and relations. This is what I meant by qualifying their habitus as fractured.

Bourdieu incorporated in his theory the distinction made by Husserl between project and protention: ‘...the *project* as a conscious aiming at the future in its reality as a contingent future must not be conflated with *protention*, a prereflexive aiming at a forth-coming which offers itself as quasi –present in the visible...’ (2000a:207, italics in original) It would seem that the children I interviewed, did not have projects, so much as undeveloped hopes. But their hopes seemed to relate to their adherence to the idea that children should attend school, a conceptualisation of childhood which, if not emerging in either Benin or India, had begun to take hold in their social class in which schooling was beginning to be generalised. The interviewed children’s expressed belief that schooling would allow their future children to be and achieve what they themselves could not, can be doxa for it implies possible symbolic violence by giving grounds to unrealistic hopes. Their hopes their children would be well schooled can also be seen as a strategy of the dominated scrambling to catch up with the dominant, who might in the meantime find new ways of closing access to opportunities. However, Bourdieu’s understanding of social change also indicates how these hopes for their children’s schooling can also be seen to hold symbolic power. According to Bourdieu, by the ‘positing of more or less improbable possibles – utopia, project, programme or plan - which the pure logic of probabilities would lead one to regard as practically excluded’, symbolic power, or the power to propose these ‘possible’, opens ‘a space of freedom’: ‘The belief that this or that future, either desired or feared, is possible, probable or inevitable can, in some historical conditions, mobilize a group around it and so help to favour or prevent the coming of that future.’ (2000a:234)

Here it is relevant to consider the question of the reflexivity of the children interviewed, given the place it has in accounts of agency as deliberated action. Bourdieu’s understanding of reflexivity implies ‘desubjectivism’, or sufficient distance from practice, and practical urgency, to be able to critically put it into question, and to question one’s own dispositions and scope of reflexion. (2000a:119-120, 1990:82, McNay 2001:142) This is his most important difference with Archer, who defined reflexivity as ‘the regular exercise of the mental ability, shared by all normal people, to consider themselves in relation to their (social) contexts and vice versa.’ (2012:1) She argued that contexts of social change (‘morphogenesis’) promote the practise of reflexivity, especially ‘meta-reflexivity’, which

means being ‘critically reflexive’ about ‘effective action in society.’ ‘Meta-reflexivity’ enables people to respond to the ‘situational logic of opportunity’ entailed by ‘contextual incongruity’ (which arises when change in structure and culture means they are not mutually reinforcing), by defining their concerns and transforming them into projects and practices. She also suggested that in contexts of social change, because young people know little about themselves and changing opportunities, ‘self-critique is intrinsic to the very formulation and endorsement of a project,’ as is critique of the social order in their deliberations of plans to realise it. (2012:41-43) She did not consider what happens in contexts of contextual incongruity when people’s internal deliberations (their ‘internal conversation’) are shaped mostly by the influence of other people and social norms (what she calls ‘communicative reflexivity’ and what Bourdieu calls an ethos mode of opinion-forming). (2012, 2007) This would seem to be the situation of the working children I interviewed. While Bourdieu was inconsistent about what triggers the reflexivity needed to question common sense consensus over his career (crisis had a greater place in 1977, reformism and symbolic struggle in 2000a), he consistently maintained that both ‘material and symbolic means’ are necessary: neither contextual incongruity, nor symbolic power, are sufficient. (1977:169, see also 2000a:225)

By Bourdieu’s understanding of reflexivity, the children I interviewed were not reflexive. They had concerns and interests, and it is highly unlikely that they did not practice ‘internal conversations’, but this does not mean they were able to apprehend themselves accurately in relation to the world, to think critically about it, and imagine it otherwise. I suggest that it was difficult for them to begin to question their work and social positions and the relations which structured them, because their knowledge of the dynamics shaping the field of their work and the social order more generally was too restricted, their awareness of the limited power afforded them by their capitals too great and material urgency too pressing. Here it relevant to remember that although not choosing to apprentice, which can be seen as a break between expectations and outcomes, emerged as a necessary condition for being critical of the apprenticeship system, even those who were critical did not think of changing it. However, I also think their indeterminacy about the idea of childhood as well as their explicit hopes for their own children indicate that they were close to being reflexive, individually and collectively disposed to mobilisation around a ‘project’ to ensure their children would be well-schooled.

In Bourdieuan terms, this hope in school can be called symbolic power. Following Sayer, one could also call it a moral commitment, or following Archer, one could call it a concern. (Sayer 2005, Archer 2012) By any of these terms, it points to the importance of values in giving grounds to changing understandings and practices of childhood. (Zelizer 1985)

7.4 Conclusions

To change the world, one has to change the ways of world-making, that is, the vision of the world and the practical operations by which groups are produced and reproduced. (Bourdieu 1989:23)

During the period of my field research, many actions and services aimed at helping working children were being initiated or had been established by governmental and non-governmental agencies in Calavi and Bidar. None of the children I interviewed were aware of these efforts, with the notable exception of informal education classes for children and adults in Calavi, in which many apprentices wanted to participate. Should these efforts effectively reach all working children, much might change, but this would require enormous investment, which was not in evidence. Here are some examples, based on the kinds of interventions that representatives of these agencies told me of. In Calavi, credit would have helped the apprentices *en congé* pay their liberation fees and equip themselves, but only if it was on such terms as few credit institutions can offer: low interest and repayment over many months or several years. Credit on good terms might have helped a Bidar boy become a labour contractor, but here the question is whether yet more debt would have been helpful for the child and his family. A better offer of options for continued ‘informal’ schooling of very good quality (covering nutrition in Calavi, and pedagogically sound) might have helped, but would have had to take into account that the children I interviewed were very dispersed and even in Bidar, often moved frequently, had very little free time and freedom and themselves might prioritise work. It would also have had to include measures to oblige masters to allow apprentices to attend. Better regulation of the content, duration and terms of apprenticeship, would certainly have helped the apprentices, provided measures to oblige compliance. Formal technical training might have helped all the children, but would have had to have been wholly subsidised to be truly

accessible, and include measures to secure entry into work. Finally, efforts to mobilise children on the basis of their collective interests as child workers would have to consider the same constraints as those posed to continued schooling, and the fact that their interests lay not with other children so much as with their own (present and future) families. I note that I did not come across efforts to try to improve stipends or wages for boys, girls and women.

What my analysis has pointed to is that while some of these interventions might have had effect on practice, by improving conditions in work or delaying entry, they would not have destabilised either unequal relations in the field of construction work or the reasons bringing children into it, even if executed on a major scale. Moreover and most importantly, interventions restricted to the field of work appear to be less likely to help the children to reach their desired ends (and to change the world), than interventions aimed at improving their social situation, in general. More than anything else, free and obligatory schooling of good quality (meaning free also from the practice of physical violence, and providing support for those falling behind) would have helped the children I interviewed in both Bidar and Calavi, for what most had really wanted was to advance in their studies. Had it existed before the children started work, the entrance of many into construction work might have been prevented, or at least delayed. But it is not too late for such schooling to have major impact on their lives, as it was what the children wanted for their own children, and for their younger brothers and sisters: the more it exists and is effectively free, the more likely the children I interviewed, and the young adults many have since become, might feel like that they had a grasp on the future.

The practice of attending primary school is becoming generalised in Benin and India, with more children attending and for longer, and should increase, given the relatively recent passing of laws in both contexts for universal, free access to primary education. (chapter 2) However, what has emerged from my study as a major issue is its quality. From a Bourdieuan perspective, there is a second reason why school is important. He wrote:

Learning in school, which, because it is freed from the direct sanction of reality, can offer challenges, tests and problems, similar to real situations but leaving the possibility of seeking and trying out solutions in conditions of minimum risk, is the occasion to acquire, in addition, through habituation, the permanent disposition to

set up the distance from directly perceived reality which is the precondition for most symbolic constructions. (2000a:17)

This disposition is a condition of the kind of reflexivity liable to help agents succeed in pursuing 'rational action.' The schooling the interviewed children had known did not encourage this disposition. For many their school experience had had the reverse effect, convincing them that if not altogether incapable, they were not good at academic learning. Much needs to change if school is to keep the promise the children I interviewed saw in it. In other words, for the promise of schooling not to be symbolic violence, the children I interviewed need all the help they can get in order to improve school quality and universality, which would be in the interests of their own future children, as well as that of future, potential working children. While it is too late for the children interviewed to attend formal school, efforts to provide opportunities for continued adult learning, along with efforts to ensure at the very least that children put into work have obtained socially recognised school qualifications and can read, write, and count, such that adults and children are equipped to learn independently, would not only meet the concerns the children articulated during our interviews, but would allow them to develop capabilities needed for generating effective action in their social worlds.

8. Conclusions

In this concluding chapter I briefly summarise key findings, and their theoretical and methodological relevance.

In chapters 3 and 4, I gave detailed descriptions of children's work in cement block construction in Calavi, Benin, and urban Northern Bengaluru, India, on the basis of children's accounts of it, accounts of adult workers, my observations and some secondary sources concerning trends in construction employment. By interviewing a relatively large number of people, I was able to examine commonality and diversity in the children's situations and experiences. This allowed me to characterise their work as practices, involving poor and uneducated children doing work in similar ways, in similar conditions and under similar terms. The harms I identified, on the basis of the definition given in chapter 2, I related to these practices. The children interviewed were very different from one another in social characteristics, experiences and opinions, but they experienced the same harms in their work. They were alike in expressing acceptance of it. In chapter 5, my QCA analysis suggested that even children critical of construction apprenticeship in Calavi did not question some of the norms and practices which helped make it a common practice, and no one group among them seemed disposed to initiate change in it. In chapters 6 and 7, my analysis on the basis of Bourdieu's theory showed how these harms were related to the children's positions in their work, in their families and in the social order more generally. The children's work and social positions also help explain why they expressed in our interviews neither an inclination to consider their work as harmful nor the intent to rework its terms, let alone resist the circumstances and relations which determined their entry into work and place in it.

This account produced some surprising empirical findings. For example, in Calavi, it was shown how the children interviewed believed that suffering was part of the process of their training. In Bidar, it was shown that workers who might seem to be the most precarious - those living in tent colonies - could be better off in village resources than workers who lived in worksite housing, and that they preferred living independently and short term work because it allowed them to maintain their dignity as well as their village agricultural activities. These examples show how people's situations in work, and the choices they

make about it, can vary according to individual and family circumstances. They also show the importance of how people's – adults' and children's - values affect their decisions about work and their perspectives on it.

This finding has theoretical significance. In both Calavi and Bidar, the children I interviewed, in keeping to their subordinate age and gender roles, could be said to be exercising beliefs and values, rather competence and rational decision making, in their acceptance of their work and social positions and their accommodation of harm in their work. They did not have resources which would have helped them to question or challenge their work and social positions. This was in part because of the nature of their work. Children's work in cement block construction in Calavi and Bidar did not favour the acquisition of learning or opportunities for individual or collective efforts to improve terms and conditions. In the labour process and system, their work was of low economic value, and its conditions made manifest their low social value. But if the children did not complain, this could be said to be because their beliefs and values helped give their work meaning, and put its purpose beyond the context of work itself. All the children interviewed, in both Calavi and Bidar, hoped that their own children would attend school at least into the secondary cycle, and most through to tertiary education. This indicates how the children's values might have been affected by broader social change. Their conceptualisation of what it means to be a child also indicates how they might play a part in social change by ensuring their future children are well schooled.

My account has shown that using a conceptualisation of agency which is premised on the principle that structural factors, rooted in the past, do influence people's present social action, does not need imply that people are passive, and their actions determined. Indeed, my account arguably makes a stronger argument for children to be considered as 'social actors shaping as well as shaped by their circumstances' than most NSSC studies. (James *et al* 1998:6). In interweaving concepts drawn from Bourdieu and empirical findings, I have been able to consider how the aspirations of the children I interviewed for their own children are far more likely to lead to social change in the interests of poor and disadvantaged children than their acceptance of and contentment with their work. In other words, the children's expressed contentment may be much less an indication of their values and ability to significantly shape their circumstances in keeping with them than their aspirations for their children. This analysis underscores how some actions are more

strategically important to achieving valued ways of living than others and that it is crucially important to examine whether ways of being and doing confirm social norms, or are successfully realised in opposition to them. (Katz 2004, see also Kabeer 1999:447-48) It is my most substantial contribution in relation to my criticism of NSSC approaches, which rarely examine the effects of children's agency. (chapter 1)

These findings show that while children may have positive appreciations of their work, this does not preclude the possibility that their work is objectively harmful. For one, children might not have a scope of reference allowing them to identify harm. In my study it seemed that this was largely the case for both adults and children, but the important difference between them was that children were subordinate in both their work and family positions, which meant they saw harm and were able to react to it in ways different to adults. Secondly, close analysis of the children's interview answers has shown that even if they did not criticise their work, and many claimed to be glad of the perspectives it afforded in Calavi, and the incomes it generated in Bidar, all children indicated a deep ambivalence about it. This was suggested by their hopes that their own children would attend school, the regrets the Calavi apprentices expressed about not pursuing formal education and the resignation expressed by the Bidar children about the necessity of their work.

The possibility that children, and adults, are not necessarily well positioned to identify harm, let alone react to it, points to the importance of using a definition of harm in analysis of children's work. In agreement with Bourdillon et al (2010), I suggest that there can be no universal definition of harm in children's work, but in my view this is because there should not be closure to a definition. My own definition of harm as effects of work which impair children's physical integrity, involve or risk their destitution, confirm their own social inequality or contribute to social differentiation was meant to overlap with, rather than discount, children's perspectives. Definitions of harm can evolve: my findings show that my definition should be extended to take into account more specifically whether the children's work was helping them realise their aspirations. But had I undertaken analysis without any definition and relied only on the interviewed children's accounts, I would not have identified how their work might have been affecting their present and future well 'being', and how it might have been contributing to maintaining them in unequal social positions. I hope to have shown that there is ample evidence of these harms. The suggestion that I would like to make is that while definitions of harms reflect subjective

values, they can still give basis to objective accounts. Empirical research can show the degree of correspondence between the values of researchers and research participants, but care must be taken in the interpretation of children's and adults expressed ideas about harm in their work.

An implication of using Bourdieu's approach is that no single causal mechanism is recognised to operate deterministically. This has ramifications for interventions aimed at improving the situation of working children. Interventions aimed at improving children's status in work and working conditions, might not have helped the children I interviewed to contest by themselves harm in their work, to rework their circumstances or change their social situation, given the complexities of the reasons which might explain their perspectives on their work and acceptance of it. On the basis of my findings, ensuring their access to good quality education, as children, adolescents or even as adults, and helping them be sure of good quality schooling for their own children, would be the greatest help to the children I interviewed. This is because this was what the interviewed children expressed was important to them and also because education might help them to imagine social change and to work towards it. Many also hoped for the means and opportunities to diversify economic activities and change employment, which is further indication that children's interests might lie beyond the field of their work. Using Bourdieu's framework helped me uncover these interests: more accounts of children's work using his or other understandings of agency as being shaped by material context and social positions might further call into question the idea children are limited in their responses to adversity only by external constraint. I note that Bourdieu's conceptual language, perhaps too dense to be palatable in some research situations, can easily be adapted.

A limitation of my study is that I have not been able to apprehend change over time. Some situations I have referred to concerned only a few of the children I interviewed, but might signify change in practice having connections with children's agency. Further study of children's characteristics and experiences and of the dynamics of construction employment, over time, would illuminate whether individual situations are becoming trends, the possible import of such trends for children and the part children play in them. Assessment, for example, of whether beginning over the age of 16, being required to supply tools, or having had a master who initiated apprenticeship are increasingly common

experiences in Calavi, could help show how, and in whose interests, the practice of construction apprenticeship might, or might not be, changing. This would be of great relevance to theories and development initiatives promoting apprenticeship as an efficient and effective means of skills training and employment creation for young people in Africa. (ILO 2012) In Bidar, evidence that boys aspired to be minor labour contractors, while girls did not, may indicate that widening economic opportunities for poor workers are connected with new articulations of unequal gender relations. (Kapadia 1999)

This limitation is in part due to my failure to sufficiently recognise the relevance of change over time at the outset of my study. It is also due to my decision to compare very different cases of children's work practices in a relatively short amount of time and with few resources. Moreover, these limits of time and resources prevented me from interviewing many children and thus being able to establish more accurately variations in the practices I studied, and to make generalisations. They also prevented me from developing ethnographical analysis, studying different practices of children's work and of child rearing in the research sites and examining secondary literature. This was particularly compromising to my analysis of children's responses to harm in their work in Bidar, for it meant that I could not grasp how caste relations might have influenced their involvement in and views on construction work. While my results hint at those found by Picherit (2009, 2012) about how construction work opportunities, especially for male workers, both result from and support changing caste relations, further research would be required to investigate whether such changes are also the experience of people working in unskilled cement block construction in Bengaluru, what might explain variation among them and how children and women figure in these changes.

The above limitations might have been at least somewhat reduced by reference to indicators of social change over time, as well as to empirical and theoretical studies of social relations relevant to my research sites and theoretical interests. In light of findings common both to the Calavi and the Bengaluru case studies, a particularly interesting possibility for developing their analysis which is also particularly relevant to current literature is the further examination of why children's and families' conceptualisations of childhood were changing, especially as I found little evidence that they were directly influenced by Western discourse on child rights. A starting point of such a study might be Kapadia's (2002b) suggestion that there are 'complex modernities' emerging in India

which do not necessarily refer to ‘Western norms and values,’ and that these shape workers’ values and aspirations. (2002b:144, see also de Neve 2003) This suggestion runs contrary to the premises of most NSSC studies, which tend to reify cultural practices and set them in opposition to what they consider to be normative Western hegemony, without considering other influences on changing conceptualisations of childhood. (chapter 1) How children are involved in processes of class fragmentation is also a question raised by findings in both research sites which invites further study. This could be specifically in reference to literature concerning ‘neo-bondage,’ migration and the aspirations of poor (and low caste) workers. (eg. Breman *et al* 2009, Rogaly 2009)

I consider that the most important contribution of my study is methodological. My comparative case study design had some advantages of both qualitative and quantitative research. Interviews and personal exchanges with children produced data rich with detail, but by interviewing many children I was also able to apprehend the broad contours of their work practices, and of the social relations which structured them. QCA allowed for keeping close to the individual situations of child ‘cases’, while looking for patterns among them. The weaknesses and limits noted above are not inherent to my methodological approach: structured, focussed case comparison is a flexible method which can address a broad range of concerns. While QCA does not lend itself well to the inclusion of many conditions, it is extremely useful in comparative case study as way to reveal and/or test hypotheses about possible connections between conditions, combinations of conditions and outcomes.

My methodology supports my suggestion that it is possible to develop ways of objectively assessing harm in children’s work, as it did not depend on the accounts of a few children, nor did it oblige the use of a rigid definition of harm which might have overlooked their concerns. This methodology is particularly appropriate for research about children’s work, and especially ‘worst forms.’ Working children can be hard to reach, and relations difficult to establish with them for both ethical and logistical reasons. Single case studies of children’s work practices using the kind of methodology I have developed here could complement ‘rapid assessments’ of children’s work, by giving depth to analysis of the nature of the work in question, and of the characteristics of the children involved. (ILO 2005) They could also be used to complement studies of children’s wellbeing, giving local

specificity to the results of national and international surveys, and structural scope to the results of participative studies. (Camfield et al 2010, 2009)

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Appendix 1

Semi-structured interview schedule with young construction workers, Bengaluru

Introduction

- ☐ The interview is for Elizabeth's research for obtaining a degree in social research. She is comparing how construction is changing in certain places in Benin and in India.
- ☐ In the interview we will ask you to tell us about different work experiences you have had. We will also ask your opinion about construction work. Then we will ask you some questions about yourself.
- ☐ The interview is confidential, we will not share this information without disguising your identity.
- ☐ The information you share with us will be used in some documents for academics and policy makers, and maybe a book, to be published on the internet and in paper form.
- ☐ You do not have to answer a question should you prefer not to.
- ☐ You can interrupt at any time to ask us questions or to take a break.
- ☐ The interview will last about one hour to one hour and a half hours.
- ☐ We would like to tape record the interview so that it takes less time, if this is ok with you. We will take notes from the tape later and then destroy the recording.
- ☐ You can reach us after the interview if you find you have questions
- ☐ Do you have any questions for us before we begin?

Interview details

Reference	
Place	
Date	
Time started	
Pseudonym	
Professional title	

To begin with, can you tell us about yourself ?

How did you begin to work in construction ?

Why did you choose this work ? Were you happy to start this work?

Would you have preferred something else? What?

Why yes/no?

What other options did you have ?

Were your parents, your family happy with this work for you ?

Why yes / no?

Would they have preferred something else ? What?Why?

Now we would like to talk about your work experience in construction?

Can you tell us about your very first job experience in construction? Even if it was unpaid?

How did you find it?

Who was your direct employer?

How did you arrange the conditions of work (tasks, wages, working hours, duration...)

How old were you at the time?

What kind of project was it?

Did you know anything about the client?

What did you do exactly?

What did you learn?

Who taught you?
Did you use tools? Which ones? From where did the tools come from?
Did you own them, and if so who paid for them and how much for each tool?
or Who provided them? Were they rented, at what cost?
Did you receive payment? How much did you earn?
How did you receive payment?
What was done with the money you earned?

Can you tell us about your last/present job?
How did you find it?
Who is/was your direct employer?
How did you arrange the conditions of work (tasks, wages, working hours, duration....)
How old are/were you at the time?
What kind of project is/was it?
Do/did you know anything about the client?
What do/did you do exactly?
What do/did you learn?
Who teaches/taught you?
Do/id you use tools? Which ones? From where do/did the tools come from?
Do/did you own them, and if so who paid for them and how much for each tool?
or Who provides/d them? Are/were they rented, at what cost?
Do/did you receive payment? How much do/did you earn?
How do/did you receive payment?
What is done/will be done/was done with the money you earn?

Now we would like to talk about your opinions on the conditions of construction work.

Are there laws concerning construction and construction workers ?
What do you know of these laws? / What can you tell us about these laws ?
What measures are taken to apply these laws?

To your knowledge, have your employers and/or the clients of the construction work you have done ever registered you for any kind of purpose ?
If yes, for what exactly?

Is there insurance for construction workers?
If yes, please tell us what you know.
If not, would you be ready to pay to participate in a medical and accident insurance programme?

Are there any 1-unions, 2-organisations or associations, 3-private 4-and/or state programmes working in the interests of construction workers ?
If yes, what are they?
What is their mandate?
Are you involved, or anyone you know?
Would you like to be involved? Why?
Do you intend to be involved? Why?

In your own experience, has any person or organisation come to a construction site you have worked on to check the site and the situation of workers ?
For example, architects, engineers, labour officials, land control authorities, etc.
If yes, who?
How many times ? On what construction sites?
What did they do exactly ?
What do you know about them?
Did you yourself talk to them?

In your experience, have you known any conflicts on a work site, between
client and maistri?
maistri and architect or engineer?
maistri and workers?
workers ?
other ?

What were the conflicts about, and how were they resolved ? please give 2 examples.

According to you, have there been dangers and risks on the construction sites you have worked on ?
What are they ? Please give two examples.
What measures are taken for the security and protection of workers ? Please describe.
Is there anything you can do personally to improve your safety? Do you take these measures?
Do you perform any ritual to help you be protected ?

Have you ever been hurt on a construction site ? How ?
How did you recover ?
Have you known others to be hurt? How many? How were they hurt?
How were they cared for, and who paid for their care?

According to you, in general, is the social and economic situation of workers and the conditions of work in construction getting better or are they getting worse ?
What is getting better?
What is getting worse ?
What are the causes of this change ?
What do you think will be the consequences for workers of these changes?

Can you think of any change – any change at all, whether in the laws, in the organisation of work, in equipment, building materials, etc....- that might improve the situation of construction workers ?
If yes, what are the priorities ? Please explain your answer.
Do you think these changes are possible ? Please explain how could they become reality, or why you don't think they could become reality.

What changes in construction work, be in materials, techniques, the organisation of work, the workers and the training of workers, do you anticipate over the next ten years?
What do you think the impact of such changes will be for construction workers?

What do women do in construction? Why do they not do all the same work as men and for the same wages?

Do you think caste, religion and/or social background has any influence on the different kinds of work people do in construction? Eg are there more construction workers from certain places?
Why yes/no? - please explain your answer.

Now we would like to talk about your own situation as a construction worker.

What kind of construction work do you like to do best?
What do you like best about the carrying out of the work?
Why?

What kind of construction work do you like to do least?
Why?
What is particularly difficult physically about carrying out the work?
What are the overall advantages and satisfactions of your work ? Please explain in detail.

What are the disadvantages, the problems you encounter overall in this work?

Can you do anything about these disadvantages and problems?

What?

Please give us a couple of examples of things you have wanted to change, and if you have been able to change them, and how.

What would you most like to change? Why?

On what kind of construction project (small houses, big houses, schools...) do you like to work best and what kind do you dislike the most? Please explain your answer.

How many construction jobs have you worked? If you don't know please give approximate number.

Please give us some detail of the jobs you have had these last two years.

Type of construction	Kind of work done/tasks	Duration of work	Location	How many other workers	Profession of the client

How do you usually find work?

How were the conditions of your work arranged? (tasks, wages, working hours, duration....)

Who arranged these conditions?

Have you ever had a written contract with the employer? Why yes/no?

How many of your constructions jobs, and for what total duration of these last two years, have you slept away from home?

What is good and what is bad about sleeping away from home/migrating for work? Do you miss anything about home?

How many times have you moved your living place for your work, for construction or other work?

In what places have your worked?

Do you like moving for work? Why yes/no?

What do you know how to do in construction? How did you learn these skills?

Is there anything more you would like to learn? Do you plan to? How? Why?

What tools do you own? Are there any tools you plan to acquire? Why ?

Please can you describe a working day with an example from last week, beginning with when you wake up, everything you did that day.

What is the best part of your usual day? What is the worst part?

What did you eat yesterday? Please tell us everything you ate.

Who prepares your food?

Are you happy with what you eat?

What water do you drink, at home and on the construction site?

What other kind of work do you do, or have you done ?

Do you have any other income sources of any kind?

Please tell us in percentage points how important the revenue from construction work is in relation to your other work and/or sources of income (eg 60% farming, 40% construction in a period of one year)

Is there another kind of work you would like to do ?

If yes, why ?

Will you be able to do it one day ?

Please explain how will you make this dream happen, or why you think it will be difficult to start this other kind of work.

How long will you continue to do construction work ? When will do you plan to stop?

Why will you stop?

What will you do afterwards?

Is there an age at which it is necessary to stop working in construction work/ construction work as a building labourer ?

What age? Why?

Now we want to ask you what you think of work for children. We ask these questions because there are many children in Benin working in construction in apprenticeships, and this is a very big difference with the system here.

How do you define what is a child ?

On what basis do you make this definition?

What is the difference between a child and adult?

Is it the same for boys as for girls?

According to you, are you an adult, a child, or something else ? What ? Why?

What is the right age for boys and girls to start working ?

And in construction work, what is the right age for boys and girls to start working? Why?

Is there a difference for boys and girls?

Please explain your answers.

Do you know anything about the rights of children, or programmes / actions in place for the rights of children ? Please explain to us.

(what are these rights, where does the concept come from, why people work to meet children's rights, etc...)

Where/how did you learn about these rights?

According to you, why do children work ? Are there advantages, disadvantages ? Which ones?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of children's work in construction, for :

	Avantages	Disadvantages
for the children		

for their parents, families or those who look after them		
---	--	--

for adult workers		
-------------------	--	--

for maistris/employers and clients?		
-------------------------------------	--	--

A child should go to school until what age, according to you ?

How do you think free schooling will change children's work ?

Would it have changed something for you?

Now we would like to ask about you and your family.

What do your parents do?
 (Are your parents alive?)
 Did they go to school? If yes, until what level?
 Can they read and write?

How many people are actually in your household?
 Who contributes to your household's revenue?

relation	age	Activity, type of work or source of revenue	Amount contributed, in % of total hh revenue if easier
----------	-----	---	--

How many brothers and sisters do you have? Did they all go to school?
 Can you tell us what they are doing, what they do for a living?
 Are they all working?

Do you go to school?
 Do you like it?
 What level are you at?
 How much more do you think you will study?
 What subjects interest you the most?
 Are there any kind of specialised studies you would like to do?
 Why will you stop?
 If not
 Have you been to school before?
 Did you like it?
 What level did you reach?
 Why did you stop?
 Would you like to continue?
 Do you have any plans to?
 What exactly would you like to study?

Or
 Would you have liked to go to school? Can you explain why yes / no?
 Until what level would you have liked to have studied? What would you have liked to study?

Can you read and write? In what languages? Do you practise reading and writing? How?

What languages do you speak?

How old are you? Can we ask what caste and religion you have?

Do you have a birth certificate, or any proof of age, or any other identity document?

Where were you born? What is your principal place of residence?

Where have you lived? Why did you move? (other than for work which we have already asked)

Do you or your family have any kind of land or other resource?

Please list with details on quantity and quality

land	motorcycle	
house	livestock	
other	other	other

To whom does your house belong?

(profession of the person who rents it or identification of the family member/s who owns it and their profession)

What kind of house is it?
How many rooms and floors?
Type of roof, floor, walls
Water and electricity?

Do you or your family have a ration card? What does the ration card entitle you to?

Do you have any dependents, or the need to contribute to the resources of your household right now?

Are you able to meet these responsibilities? Please explain your answer.

Do you or your family have any debts right now?
How much?
To whom?
For what was the money used ?
When will the debt be paid off?

What do you like to do best during your free time?
What do you actually do generally during your free time?
On Sundays, when you don't work, what do you do?

Are you a member of any social, religious, political or other organisation?

How is your health? Are you ever sick? What with? How do you treat your illnesses?

What is good in your personal and family situation, what is not good?

What do you hope to do in the future? What kind of work do you hope to have? Where do you want to live? What kind of house would you like?

Do you have any plans to get married?
If yes, when and with whom?
What are you waiting for to get married?
If not, at what age would you like to marry?
How will you arrange marriage? What kind of spouse would you like? (age, what kind of work for the spouse, etc...)
Are there any obstacles to your marriage plan?

How many children do you have / would you like to have? Why this number?
When are you planning to start having children?

What would you like your children to do for work?
Would you like your children to work in construction?
Why yes / no?

In general, in your own situation, what is good about working, and what is bad?

Any comments or questions about the interview? Did you enjoy it? What parts did you like, and what parts did you not like? How can we improve the experience for other participants?

Circumstances ie anyone watching, manner of participant, what was easy, difficult for him/her, etc
Time ended

Appendix 2

Semi structured interview schedule with adult construction workers, Bengaluru

Checklist

- ☐ The interview is for Elizabeth's doctorate research. She is comparing the place of young people in construction work.
- ☐ The interview begins with a discussion about your work history, we will ask you to tell us about different experiences you have had. Then we will ask you your opinions about the nature and conditions of construction work, as well as your opinions about how young people in construction. Finally, we will ask some basic questions about your background- education; family etc.
- ☐ The interview is confidential, we will not share this information with anyone without disguising your identity.
- ☐ The information you share with us will be used in some documents for academics and policy makers, and maybe a book, to be published on the internet and in paper form.
- ☐ You do not have to answer a question should you prefer not to.
- ☐ You can interrupt at any time to ask us questions or to take a break.
- ☐ The interview will last about two hours.
- ☐ You can reach us after the interview if you find you have questions
- ☐ Do you have any questions for us before we begin?

Interview details

Reference	
Place	
Date	
Time started	
Pseudonym	
Professional title	

1. Entry into construction work

1.1**	How did you begin to work in construction? (M- notes)
1.2**	Why did you choose this work? Were you glad to begin in this kind of work? Why? (S- cite verbatim if possible)
1.3	What other options did you have? (S- cite verbatim if possible))
1.4**	Were your parents, family glad about your entry into construction? Would they have preferred something else? Why? (S- cite verbatim if possible)

2. First contract

Can you tell us more about your first contract? (M- fill in any answers given to below points, then ask specifying, direct questions)	
2.1	Location (S)
2.2	How did you find the job? Were you a migrant worker? (M- notes)
2.3	Age at the time / date of birth (S)
2.4	What was your relationship with direct employer/the person who hired you? (S- family acquaintance, family member, maistry from native village or who came to village, friend, etc- specify if relationship is ongoing or not)
2.5	Did you have any relationship with the client/the person who will use the building? (S- yes, no, met once, saw from a distance, etc.)

2.6	What kind of project / building was it ? (S- house/apartment/offices/shop/warehouse/other- specify, how many stories/rooms)
2.7	Was the project begun and finished in the same stretch? Or was construction separated in stages? (S)
2.8	How are stages of building project usually defined? (don't give list, make sure the person makes list him or herself, add whatever is missing below, strike off whatever is not mentioned) empty site foundations structure walls/floors roof plasting secondary work – windows, doors, electricity, water, tiles, etc other other?
2.9	What stages were finished in this particular phase of building? (S- just mark √, add detail if needed) empty site foundations structure walls/floors roof plasting secondary work – windows, doors, electricity, water, tiles, etc other other
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2.11	What were your exact tasks? (M - notes)
2.12	Was there a written contract? (S- yes, no)
2.13	What were the terms of employment? If migrant worker, did you live on the site? (S, note whatever terms the interviewee mentions)
2.14 **	How did you negotiate the conditions of the job? (M to L, ask for details of how contract negotiated- who negotiated, what was discussed, what changed during negotiations)
2.15 **	Were you happy with these conditions? What was good and what was bad about them? (S- cite verbatim if possible)
2.16 **	If you weren't happy with the conditions, why did you decide to take the job? (S- cite verbatim if possible)
2.17	How were you paid? What were your terms of payment? (S- fill in any answers given to below points, then ask specifying, direct questions)

	<p>Piece work / hourly / daily / weekly / other, specify (S)</p> <p>How many hours per day worked, how many days a week?</p> <p>Amount per payment, or average per day (S)</p> <p>Frequency paid (S)</p> <p>Any payment received for food, housing, other? (S- specify for what, how much)</p> <p>Any payment given for food, housing, other? (S- specify for what, how much)</p> <p>Any fines or penalties charged? (S- specify for what, how much)</p> <p>Did you get paid time off for sickness, holiday? (S- specify for what, how much)</p> <p>What other services or benefits did your employer offer? (S- specify for what, how much)</p>																																																																																																																																					
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2.40	<p>Were you a member of any workers' group at the time? (S- list)</p>																			
2.41	<p>Did any of these organisations help the workers in any way during the work? M- notes on detail</p>																			
2.42	<p>Were there any conflicts during the course of the job that you knew of? Between workers, or between workers and employers? What were they about, how were they resolved? (M- notes on detail)</p>																			
2.43	<p>Did you have any other occupations or sources of income? Did you have any other resources? (S- list, with detail ie make a pie chart of all forms of revenue of interview participant)</p>																			
2.44	<p>Did you have any debts at the time? (S- notes on detail, specify whether formal or informal debts)</p>																			
2.45	<p>Did you have any dependents, or need to contribute to household resources at this time? Were you able to meet these obligations? (M- notes on detail)</p>																			

2.46	How many people in your household at the time? Who contributed to your household's income? (S- list)			
	relation	age	Activity or kinds of work and/or source of income	Amount, in % if easier
2.47	Did you have work planned for after this job? In construction or something else? (S- list)			

3. Last / present contract

Can you tell us more about your present contract? (M- fill in any answers given to below points, then ask specifying, direct questions)	
3.1	Location (S)
3.2	How did you find the job? Were you a migrant worker? (M- notes)
3.3	What is your relationship with direct employer/the person who hired you? (S- family acquaintance, family member, maistry from native village or who came to village, friend, etc- specify if relationship is ongoing or not)
3.4	Do you have any relationship with the client/the person who owns the project? (S- yes, no, met once, saw from a distance, etc.)
3.5	What kind of project / building (S- house/apartment/offices/shop/warehouse/other- specify, how many stories/rooms)
3.6	Is the project begun and finished in the same stretch? Or is construction separated in stages? (S – Y / N)
3.7	What stages are being finished in this particular phase of building? (S- just mark √, add detail if needed as well as stages identified 3.8) empty site foundations structure walls/floors roof plasting secondary work – windows, doors, electricity, water, tiles, etc other
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3.9	What are your exact tasks? (M - notes)
3.10	Is there a written contract? (S- yes, no)
3.11	What are the terms of employment? If migrant worker, do you live on the site? (S, note whatever terms the interviewee mentions)
3.12 **	How did you negotiate the conditions of the job? (M to L, ask for details of how contract negotiated- who negotiated, what was discussed, what changed during negotiations)

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3.26	What actions and equipments are in place for workers' safety? (M- notes)						
3.27	Has anyone come to check the worksite and the situation of the workers? What do you know of them? (S to M- notes, probe whether NGO, labour inspector, building inspector)						
3.28	Are there any workers' organisations connected in any way to the workers or to the worksite? (S- list)						
3.29	Are you a member of any workers' group? (S- list)						
3.30	Have any of these organisations helped the workers in any way during the work? M- notes on detail						
3.31	Are there any conflicts in the job that you know of? Between workers, or between workers and employers? What are they about? What steps have been taken for resolution? (M- notes on detail)						

4. Conditions and competence and labour market

4.1	What are your most valuable working skills, generally? And in construction work? (M- list)
4.2	How did you learn them? (M- notes, even if not related to construction work)
4.3	Are there any skills in construction work that you would like to have? (S- list)
4.4	Is it possible for you to acquire these skills? How, and do you plan to do so? (S- notes)
4.5	What equipment do you own? What of these equipments is your most valuable equipment? (S- list)
4.6	Is there any equipment would you like to have? (S- list)
4.7	Is it possible for you to acquire this equipment and do you plan to? (S- notes)
4.8	How much of the last year have you spent working in construction? How much time have you spent looking for construction work and waiting for projects that have stopped temporarily to start again? (S- in days; weeks or month, draw a pie chart if it helps)
4.9	Do you have work planned for after this job? In construction or something else? What ? (S- list)
4.10	How do you usually find work? (S to M- notes)
4.11	Have you ever used early morning labour markets to find work? What are the advantages and disadvantages of these? Are there fewer these days? Why do you think there are more/fewer? (S to M- notes)
4.12	How many maistries contact you for work for right now? How long have you worked for them? (S- list) <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>1. years</div> <div>4. years</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>2. years</div> <div>5. years</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>3. years</div> <div>More?</div> </div>
4.13	What is the role of maistry? Please define the characteristics of a good and just maistry and the characteristics of a bad and unjust maistry. (S- notes)
4.14	What do maistries expect of the workers they hire regularly?
4.15	How do maistries keep workers loyal to them? (S - notes)
4.16 **	What do you do if you don't like the conditions of your work? Please give an example. (S to M- notes, cite verbatim if possible)
4.17	What are the characteristics of a good client and the characteristics of a bad client? (S- notes)
4.18	Do clients ever check re the wages and conditions of workers? How many times in your own experience? In your opinion, why or why not do clients take an interest? (S - notes)
4.19	What kind of clients and projects do you like to work for the most? a) <input type="checkbox"/> For big companies <input type="checkbox"/> For direct owners <input type="checkbox"/> For contractors b) <input type="checkbox"/> For small houses <input type="checkbox"/> For big houses <input type="checkbox"/> For small office or commercial or apartment

	<p>buildings</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> For big office or commercial or apartment buildings <input type="checkbox"/> other</p> <p>Please explain why? For a and b. (S – notes)</p> <p>What is the biggest project you have worked on? How many floors, how much space?</p>
4.20	Have you ever been hurt on a construction site, or unable to work because of injury? Can you tell us about it? (one example) Were your care and wages provided? If so, by who? (M- notes)
4.21	Have you known of anyone who has been hurt? How many? In general, what are most common injuries? Is care and payment generally provided? By who? (M- notes)
4.22	What are the advantages and disadvantages of temporary migration for work? How much of the last five years have you spent in places away from home for work? (give % or number of months) How much of this time in migrant work has been with family? (specify who – probe for children) (M- notes)
4.23 **	What do you like about your work? What are its advantages, its satisfactions? (M- cite if possible)
4.24 **	What do you dislike? What are its disadvantages, the things that are difficult about it? (M- cite if possible)
4.25	Will you go on doing this work? What will stop you working? (S- notes)

5. State of construction work: laws and regulation, kinds and quality

5.1	Are there laws regarding construction work and workers and other building workers? What do you know of them? (M- list and notes)
5.2	How are they enforced? (M- notes)
5.3	Do you know of any unions, organisations or programmes for construction workers? What about the Karnataka Construction and Other Building Workers' Welfare Board? Are you a member of any of these worker's organisations or associations?(S- list, and mark if member)
5.4	What experience have you had of them? Are they effective at what they are supposed to do? (M- notes)
5.5	To you knowledge, as any employer registered you officially for the job you were doing? If yes, how many times? (S – notes)
5.6	Do you know of any insurance for construction workers? Please explain your experience. (S- notes)
5.7	How can you tell when a building is of good quality? (M- notes)
5.8	Do you think that the projects you described where you have worked were of good quality? (S- yes, no)
5.9 **	Has construction work changed since you first began working in it? How so? Why do you think these changes have taken place? Please give example. (M- notes, prompt and probe and ask for specific examples, especially on techniques, skills)
5.10 **	What have these changes meant for workers? (M- cite if possible)

5.11	Has quality changed? How? Why? Please give an example. (M- cite if possible)
5.12	There seems to be much more building using cement blocks now. Why do you think this is so? (M- notes)
5.13	Have you worked with both bricks and cement blocks? Which do you prefer? Why? (S to M- notes)
5.14 **	In general, are things getting better or worse for you as a construction worker? For construction work in general? Please explain. (S to M - cite verbatim if possible, notes)
5.15 **	Can you think of any changes at all – in law, in organisation of work, in equipment, other that would improve construction and the situation of construction workers ? If yes, what are priorities, and do you think these changes are likely to happen? (S to M- notes)
5.16	Do you know of any formal training programmes for construction workers? Why do you think there are so few? If you do know of any training programmes, what is good and what is not good about these programmes? (S to M- notes)
5.17	What kind of changes in practices- materials, ways of building and organisation of workers- do you anticipate over the next decade or so? (M- notes, prompt especially on techniques, skills and backgrounds of workers?)

7. Young people and construction work

7. Young people and construction work		
6.1 **	Have you noticed that there are more or less children working in construction since when you were young? How do you explain this? When did things start to change? (M- notes, cite verbatim if possible)	
6.2	For you, how do you define a child? Why, on what basis? (S- cite verbatim if possible)	
6.3	Who are the children working now, what is their social and family situation? (S to M- notes)	
6.4	Why do you think children work? (M- cite if possible)	
6.5 **	When is the right age for people to start work? Why? (S- give detail of any explanation given with answer)	
6.6	What is the legal age in India for children to start working? (S – notes)	
6.7	What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of children working (M- cite if possible)	
		Advantages
		Disadvantages
6.8	What would happen if the law against children's work for those under 14 was fully enforced? (S cite if possible)	
6.9	What would happen if work for children under 16 was banned and the ban enforced? (S cite if possible)	

6.10 **	Do you think there are more or less women working in construction now then when you started? Why do you think this is so? Is this good or bad? (M- notes)
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7. Status and resources

Could you tell me more about yourself? Proceed with specific questions	
7.1	What did your parents do? (S)
7.2	How many people in your household when you were growing up? (S)
7.3	How many brothers and sisters do you have? (S)
7.4	Can you give us example of what some of them do? (S- list three examples)
7.5	Do all your sisters work? In what kinds of work (S- Half, all, list three examples)
7.6	Did you go to school? (S- yes / no)
7.7	For how long, and what level did you reach? (S)
7.8	What was it like? Did you like it? (S to M- notes)
7.9	Would you have liked to have gone? Can you explain why yes or no? (S to M – notes)
7.10	Caste
7.11	Religion (S)
7.12	Languages spoken (S)
7.13	Place of birth (S)
7.14	Main residence ie where majority of time is spent (S)
7.15	Places lived (S)
7.16	Why did you move? (S to M, notes)
7.17	Do you have any other professions or sources of income? (S- list professions, occupations, other sources of income, with detail ie make a pie chart of all forms of revenue of interview participant)
7.18	Do you have any land or any other kind of resource? (S- list with detail ie how much, dry or irrigated land, etc) Land: anything else cited: House(s): anything else cited: Livestock: anything else cited: Motorbike: etc.
7.19	Age when married (S – for both spouses)
7.20	Current occupation (s) of spouse (S)
7.21	How many children do you have? (S- list with age and sex, current activities ie school, work in agriculture, training school, etc)

	Girl or boy	age	In school Y/N	level reached or training acquired	Working Y / N	What kind of work	Living in household Y/ N	married, Y / N	
7.22	Do you have any other dependents, or further need to contribute to household resources at this time? Are you able to meet these obligations? Please explain. (M- notes on detail)								
7.23	How many people in your household at this time? Who else contributes to your household's income? (S- list)								
	relation		age	Activity or kinds of work and/or source of income			Amount contributed, in % if easier		
7.24	Do you have any debts at this time? (S- notes on detail, specify whether formal or informal debts)								
7.25	Are you a member of any social, religious, political organisations? (S to M, list and any detail)								
7.26	Are you glad that your children do / Would you like / would you have liked you your children to do construction or quarry work / to continue doing this kind of work ? Why? Why not? (M- cite if possible)								
7.27	What do you hope they will do / What would you have wanted that they do ? (M- cite if possible)								
7.28	How do you think your situation might change over the next five or ten years? (M- cite if possible) Professionally –new kinds of work, or conditions, or status etc In family situation – marriage, marriage of children, migration, etc Personally- own projects? Like travel?								
7.29	What would you like to change the most? (M- cite if possible)								

8. Close

Any comments or questions about the interview? Did you enjoy it? What parts did you like, and what parts did you not like? How can we improve the experience for other participants? M- notes

9. Comments

Circumstances ie anyone watching, manner of participant, what was easy, difficult for him/her, etc

Time ended

Appendix 3

Protocol for interviews with children

At the outset of the interview, introduce yourself with some personal detail. Introduce Elizabeth and give her time to explain who she is.

Review the points in the child's information sheet and give the child the signed 'obligations to participants' sheet.

Ask the child to invent a pseudonym; ask also for his / her real first name and mark this on a separate sheet, so that we can find him / her again if needs be.

We will pay the children the same amount as adults.

We will debrief after every interview, whether with adult or child, to see if any further action should be taken.

Interview guidelines

You always have to think hard when working with children – remember that there are no guidelines that can cover all situations. You are responsible for reacting to new situations and concerns to ensure that the children you approach and interview are safe and that their interests are protected.

Never single children out for focused attention, make sure that you are seen to be interested in all kinds of workers.

The interview should take place somewhere relatively private, but the interviewers should never be alone and out of public view with a child.

It is ok to carry out the interview in the presence of the child's caretakers or parents, or even friends, especially if this makes the child more comfortable. But you must check the relationship with observers before proceeding, and assess whether you think the child is truly at ease in front of witnesses. If you have doubts, ask some simple questions – ie what you like about construction, what you don't like, what do you hope to do, professionally and personally, in the future - and then put an end to the interview.

If others insist on being present for the interview and you are unable to verify their relationship with the child, do the same – even if everyone seems comfortable: ask some simple questions and then put an end to the interview.

Take care that the child and people who are legitimately present are at ease before commencing the interview. Check words, expressions and body language to make sure that they continue to be at ease.

Use open questions and ask the child to rephrase what you have said to check that he / she understands what you are saying, and you understand what he / she is saying. Ask the child if she / he has any questions. Do this throughout the interview.

Do not ask the child for detail of very difficult experiences – simply take note and move on.

Do not push for detail if the child seems unwilling to answer, or seems to have forgotten the answer. Tell him / her in a reassuring way that the question was not important and move on.

If the child seems not to know they answer, explain that we ask the same questions of adults and children and do not expect either adults or children to answer all questions.

If at any point the child seems bored, lacking in attention, fidgety, bring the interview to a quick end. Ask only remaining questions that are especially important.

If the child seems upset, end the interview quickly but naturally, without showing that you are making the interview shorter. Make sure you end on a meaningful and appropriate positive note, for example, by praising the child for his / her good memory or use of language, by explaining that the information he has given us is very very helpful.

If the child tells you about a situation she / he has or is experiencing that is extremely exploitative, abusive or violent, listen attentively but do not say you will anything. Try to take notes and get sufficient detail to explain the case to a child right's organisation. Do not however press the child to talk about the experience and do not show that you are particularly interested. Make sure to end on a positive note.

Save time at end of interview to talk with the child about what she / he thought of the interview. Ask what she / he like and did not like, what she / he thought was interesting, what she / he would have asked if she / he were doing an interview, ask what we could have done to make the interview better.

Never make promises of any kind to children interviewed – not even promises that you think you can keep.

Avoid any language that reinforces discrimination between rich and poor, between men and women.

Avoid interrupting a child, let him / her talk. If he /she has difficulty talking, do give prompting, but with simple, neutral, questions. The nature of the questions is such that the child him / herself can decide whether to give a short or long answer.

If the interview time is over and not all questions asked, and the child seems comfortable, we can try to arrange for a second interview.

The interview should be kept short.

Appendix 4

Observation schedule for construction sites, Bengaluru and Calavi

Location	
Date	
Time and duration of observation	
Weather conditions	
Major tasks being undertake	
Materials on site	
Equipment on site	
Oversight and control	
Protection and hazards	
Conditions: access to food and water, breaks, sanitation, other	
Presence of children not working?	

Workers present / roles	Number	Ages	Sexes	Physical characteristics	tasks	Use of material and equipment	Comments
Total men		Total women		Total children working under fourteen/under 18		Total over 50	

Notes on any discussions
To check next visit
Interesting points, comments
Reactions to observations

Appendix 5 Consent form proforma

Participant Information – pro forma Benin and India

A comparative study of construction practices in Benin and India

Purpose of the research

This project concerns cement block construction. Its purpose is to find out about the history of this kind of construction, how it is organised differently in different places, and what is the situation of workers who are involved in it. We have noticed that many young people are working in this kind of construction, and we are particularly interested in how they come into this work and their situation and skills. We hope the research helps policy makers and researchers better understand about urban construction, labour markets and development.

The research team

This research project is undertaken by Elizabeth Wardle. She is a PhD candidate at the University of Manchester. She is Canadian and has lived or worked in Canada, Morocco, Benin, the RDC, Haiti, France and England. She speaks English and French. She has funding from the University of Manchester Alumni Association.

XXX and XXX are research assistants. They work with Elizabeth to make sure that interviews can be held in the xxxxx language.

Why we would like to interview you

We are interviewing construction workers who are involved in any way with building with cement blocks, members of their families, their employers and construction clients in Benin, Haiti and India.

We would like to interview you as we feel that you could provide us with very interesting information relevant to the purpose of the research: the history of cement block construction here, how it is organised, and the situation of workers and how young people begin to work in it.

How long will the interview last? Where will it be held?

We would like to talk to you for about an hour. We propose that we talk when you are not working, somewhere where you are comfortable.

Remuneration

We will defray your costs of participation by giving you xxxx for the interview.

What happens to the data collected?

If you choose to participate in an interview, we would like to tape record our talk so that we translate what you say into English. We would also like to take notes.

These transcriptions and notes we will put into a computer in order to study them. The information you provide us will be compared with information obtained from other participants, both here and in the two other research sites.

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?

It is entirely up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be asked to sign this form in two copies, which the researchers will also sign. One is for you, one is for the researchers.

If you do decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.

What we would like your permission for

If you do choose to participate in an interview, we would like your express permission:

- to make a recording of the interview
- to put the information into electronic format
- to be made anonymous in electronic data and in any electronic record of your participation – it is important to us that your privacy be protected and we would not want anyone who sees the data to be able to identify you. However, we realise if you are working with the government or an NGO it might be possible to identify you from reference to your position, and we would like to make sure that you aware of this.
- to have your words translated into English and quoted in a PhD thesis and perhaps some academic and professional journals and magazines, and maybe a book. It is also possible that some of this material may be published on the internet.

That research participants are given details of the procedures and purpose of the project is part of good research practice. We would like you to sign the form so that the University of Manchester has a record of your consent. Elizabeth will also leave a copy of the form with you with her signature so that you have your own record of the information and the obligations of the researchers to protect your personal information.

How will we maintain confidentiality?

We will change your name in the study and will also change the names of locations. We will share the information in its anonymised electronic form only with other trained researchers.

How will the outcomes of the research be published?

The findings will be published as a thesis. I also hope to publish some articles in journals specialised in development and social policy. This kind of journal is read mostly by academics at Universities. For policy makers, I plan to write short articles about workers' perspectives on employment in the construction agency. I might one day write a book using this research on construction and workers. Some of these works may be available on the internet.

Contact for information

Elizabeth Wardle

Phone number: xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Email address: Elizabeth.Wardle-2@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk

You can contact Elizabeth or the research assistants at any time until May 2011 if you have any questions at a later date or if you change your mind about your participation in the project.

If you want to change your mind

You can change your mind about participating even after the interview. Just contact Elizabeth and tell her that you do not want your information to be used in her study. She will then destroy whatever information you have given her.

Many thanks,

The researchers

Elizabeth Wardle, main researcher

Date

Signature

Research associate

Date

Signature

Appendix 6 Participant information, in Kannada

ಸಂದರ್ಶನವನ್ನು ಎಷ್ಟು ಸಮಯದ ವರೆಗೆ ನಡೆಸಲಾಗುವುದು? ಅದನ್ನು ಎಲ್ಲಿ ನಡೆಸಲಾಗುವುದು?

ನಾವು ನಿಮ್ಮನ್ನು ಎರಡು ಗಂಟೆಗಳ ಕಾಲ ಮಾತನಾಡಲು ಇಚ್ಛಿಸುತ್ತೇವೆ. ನಿಮ್ಮ ಕೆಲಸದ ನಂತರ ಬಿಡುವಿನ ವೇಳೆ, ನಿಮಗೆ ಅನುಕೂಲವಾಗಿರುವಂತ ಸಮಯದ ವೇಳೆ ನಿಮ್ಮನ್ನು ಮಾತನಾಡುತ್ತೇವೆ.

ಸಂದರ್ಶನ ಶುರುವಾದ ನಂತರವೂ ಯಾವ ಸಮಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಬೇಕಾದರೂ ನೀವು ಮುಕ್ತಾಯಗೊಳಿಸಲು ನೀವು ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣ ಸ್ವಾತಂತ್ರ್ಯವನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರುತ್ತೀರಿ.

ಸಂಬಾವನೆ

ನೀವು ಸಂದರ್ಶನದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಾಗವಹಿಸದಲ್ಲಿ ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂಬಾವನೆಯನ್ನು ನೀಡಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಸಂಗ್ರಹಿಸಿದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯು ನಂತರ ಏನಾಗುತ್ತದೆ?

ನೀವು ಸಂದರ್ಶನದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಾಗಿಯಾಗಲು ಒಪ್ಪಿದಲ್ಲಿ ನಾವು ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆದುಕೊಂಡು ನಂತರ ನೀವು ಹೇಳಿದ್ದನ್ನು ಆಂಗ್ಲ ಭಾಷೆಗೆ ತರ್ಜುಮೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತೇವೆ.

ಪಡೆದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಅಧ್ಯಯನ ಮಾಡಲು ಕಂಪ್ಯೂಟರ್ ನಲ್ಲಿ ಇಡಲಾಗುವುದು. ನೀವು ನೀಡಿದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಇತರ ಸಂದರ್ಶನಕಾರರು ಇತರೆ ಮತ್ತು ಈ ಸ್ಥಳಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನೀಡಿದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯೊಂದಿಗೆ ಹೋಲಿಕೆ ಮಾಡಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಗುಟ್ಟಾಗಿ ಹೇಗೆ ಕಾಪಾಡಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ

ನಿಮ್ಮ ಖಾಸಗಿತನವನ್ನು ಕಾಪಾಡುವುದು ಮತ್ತು ನೀವು ನೀಡಿದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಯಾರಾದರೂ ನೋಡಿದಲ್ಲಿ ಅವರು ಗುರುತಿಸದಂತೆ ನೋಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತೇವೆ. ನೀವು ನೀಡಿದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಗುಟ್ಟಾಗಿ ಇಡಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆಂದು ಬರವಸೆಯನ್ನು ಕೊಡುತ್ತೇವೆ.

ನಾವು ನಿಮಗೆ ಬೇರೆಯ ಹೆಸರನ್ನು ಹೇಳಲು ತಿಳಿಸುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಈ ಆಧ್ಯಯನದಲ್ಲಿ ಅದನ್ನು ಉಪಯೋಗಿಸುತ್ತೇವೆ. ನಾವು ಸ್ಥಳಗಳ ಹೆಸರನ್ನು ಕೂಡ ಬದಲಾಯಿಸುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಈ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಅನುಬವವುಳ್ಳ ಸಂಶೋಧಕರ ಮೂಲಕ ಕಂಪ್ಯೂಟರ್ ಪಾರ್ಕ್ ನಲ್ಲಿ ಇತರರಲ್ಲಿ ಹಂಚಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ನಾವು ನಿಮ್ಮ ಬಳಿ ಬರೆದು ಕೊಂಡ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಹಾಳು ಮಾಡುತ್ತೇವೆ.

ನೀವು ಒಂದು ವೇಳೆ ಸಂದರ್ಶನದಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾಲು ಗೊಳ್ಳಲು ಇಷ್ಟವಿಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಥವಾ ನಿಮ್ಮ ಮನಸ್ಸನ್ನು ಬದಲಾಯಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಲ್ಲಿ

ಸಂದರ್ಶನದಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾಲುಗೊಳ್ಳುವುದು ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿ ನಿಮಗೆ ಬಿಟ್ಟದ್ದು. ನೀವು ಪಾಲು ಗೊಳ್ಳಲು ನಿರ್ಧರಿಸಿದರೆ ನಾವು ನಿಮಗೆ ನಮ್ಮ ಜವಾಬ್ದಾರಿಯನ್ನು ಒಳಗೊಂಡ ನಮ್ಮ ಸಹಿಯನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿದ ಪಾರ್ಕನ್ನು ನೀಡುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಸಂದರ್ಶನದ ಯಾವುದೇ ಸಮಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವುದೇ ಕಾರಣವನ್ನು ನೀಡದೆ ನೀವು ಹಿಂದೆ ಸರಿಯಬಹುದು.

ಯಾವುದಾದರೂ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಗೆ ನೀವು ಉತ್ತರಿಸಲು ಇಷ್ಟವಿಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದರೆ

ನಾವು ಸಂದರ್ಶನಕಾರರ ಬಳಿ ಕೆಲವು ಸ್ವಂತ ವಿಷಯಗಳ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಕೇಳಿ ತಿಳಿದುಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಇಚ್ಛಿಸುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಒಂದು ವೇಳೆ ನೀವು ಉತ್ತರ ಹೇಳಲು ಇಷ್ಟವಿಲ್ಲದ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆ ಇದ್ದರೆ ಅಥವಾ ನಿದುಗೆ ಉತ್ತರ ಗೊತ್ತಿಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದರೆ, ಮತ್ತು ಯಾವುದಾದರೂ ವಿಷಯ ಚರ್ಚಿಸಲು ಇಷ್ಟವಿಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದರೆ, ಏನೂ ತೊಂದರೆಯಿಲ್ಲ. ನೀವು ವಯವಿಟ್ಟು ಮುಂದಿನ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆಯನ್ನು ಕೇಳಿ ಎಂದು ನಮಗೆ ಹೇಳಬಹುದು.

ನಾವು ಯಾವ ವಿಷಯಕ್ಕೆ ನಿಮ್ಮ ಒಪ್ಪಿಗೆಯನ್ನು ಕೇಳುತ್ತೇವೆಂದರೆ

ನೀವು ಸಂದರ್ಶನದಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾಲು ಗೊಂಡಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವ ವಿಷಯಕ್ಕೆ ನಾವು ನಿಮ್ಮ ಒಪ್ಪಿಗೆಯನ್ನು ಇಚ್ಛಿಸುತ್ತೇವೆ ಎಂದರೆ,

- ಸಂದರ್ಶನದ ಸಮಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಕೆಲವು ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ನಿಮ್ಮ ಉತ್ತರವನ್ನು ಇನ್ನೊಮ್ಮೆ ಹೇಳಿ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಹಾಗಾಗಿ ನಾವು, ನೀವು ತಿಳಿದ ಉತ್ತರವನ್ನು ಸರಿಯಾಗಿ ಬರೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಸಹಾಯವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.
- ನೀವು ನೀಡಿದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಕಂಪ್ಯೂಟರ್ ನಲ್ಲಿ ಬಳಕೆ ಮಾಡಲು
- ನಾವು ಯಾವುದೇ ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ, ಕಂಪ್ಯೂಟರ್ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯಲ್ಲಿಗಲಿ ಅಥವಾ ಅಧ್ಯಯನದ ರಿಪೋರ್ಟ್ ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನಿಮ್ಮ ಹೆಸರನ್ನು ಗುರುತಿಸದಂತೆ ಮಾಡುವುದು
- ನೀವು ನೀಡಿದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಆಂಗ್ಲ ಭಾಷೆಗೆ ತರ್ಜುಮೆ ಮಾಡಿ ಅವುಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸುವುದು.

ಸಂಶೋಧನೆಯ ಪರಿಶೀಲನೆಯನ್ನು ಹೇಗೆ ಪ್ರಕಟ ಪಡಿಸಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ಪಡೆದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಪಿ.ಹೆಚ್.ಡಿ. ಪ್ರಬಂಧ ಲೇಖನದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟ ಮಾಡುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಎಲಿಜಬತ್ ರವರು ಕೂಡ ಕೆಲವು ಪುಸ್ತಕಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಲೇಖನಗಳನ್ನು ಬರೆಯುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಈ ಲೇಖನಗಳನ್ನು ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯವಾಗಿ ವಿಶ್ವ ವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿರುವವರು ಓದುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಸರ್ಕಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರ್ಣಾಯಕಗಳನ್ನು ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುವವರಿಗೆ ಎಲಿಜಬತ್ ರವರು ಕಟ್ಟಡ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣದಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಕಾರ್ಮಿಕರ ಅಭಿಪ್ರಾಯಗಳ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಚಿಕ್ಕ ಚಿಕ್ಕ ಲೇಖನಗಳನ್ನು ಬರೆಯುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಎಲಿಜಬತ್ ರವರು ಮುಂದೆ ಈ ಸಂಶೋಧನೆಯನ್ನು ಬಳಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಒಂದು ಪುಸ್ತಕವನ್ನು ಬರೆಯಬಹುದು. ಇಂತಹ ಕೆಲವು ಲೇಖನಗಳು ಇಂಟರ್ ನೆಟ್ ನಲ್ಲಿ ಸಹ ನೋಡಬಹುದು.

ಎಲಿಜಬತ್ ರವರನ್ನು ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಲು

ಎಲಿಜಬತ್ ವಾರ್ಡ್

ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ : (91) 966 360 8257

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ನಿಮಗೆ ಯಾವುದಾದರೂ ಪ್ರಶ್ನೆ ಇದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಥವಾ ಈ ಅಧ್ಯಯನದ ಪರಿಶೀಲನೆಯನ್ನು ತಿಳಿಯಲು ಎಲಿಜಬತ್ ರವರನ್ನು ಡಿಸೆಂಬರ್ 2011 ರವರೆಗೆ ಯಾವಾಗ ಬೇಕೆಂದರೂ ಅವರ ಇ-ಮೇಲ್ ವಿಳಾಸದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದು.

ನೀವು ನೀಡಿದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಈ ಅಧ್ಯಯನದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಳಸದಿರುವಂತೆ ನಿಮ್ಮ ಮನಸ್ಸನ್ನು ಬದಲಾಯಿಸಿದಲ್ಲಿ ನೀವು ಮೇ 2011 ರವರೆಗೆ ಅವರ ಇ-ಮೇಲ್ ವಿಳಾಸಕ್ಕೆ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದು.

ನೀವು ಎಲಿಜಬತ್ ಅವರನ್ನು ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಅಥವಾ ಇ-ಮೇಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಏಪ್ರಿಲ್ 20, 2010 ರವರೆಗೆ ಎಲಿಜಬತ್ ರವರನ್ನು ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬಹುದು.

ನೀವು ನಿಮ್ಮ ಮನಸ್ಸನ್ನು ಬದಲಾಯಿಸಲು ಇಷ್ಟಪಟ್ಟರೆ

ನೀವು ಸಂದರ್ಶನದ ನಂತರವೂ ನಿಮ್ಮ ಮನಸ್ಸನ್ನು ಬದಲಾಯಿಸಬಹುದು. ನೀವು ಎಲಿಜಬತ್ ರವರನ್ನು ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಿ ನಿಮ್ಮ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಅಧ್ಯಯನದಲ್ಲಿ ಉಪಯೋಗಿಸಬಾರದೆಂದು ತಿಳಿಸಬಹುದು. ಆಗ ಅವರು ನೀವು ನೀಡಿದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ನಾಶ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾರೆ.

ಧನ್ಯವಾದಗಳೊಂದಿಗೆ,

ಸಂಶೋಧಕರು.

Appendix 7

Interviews with representatives of governmental and non governmental agencies concerned with children and construction work

Note

All interview correspondents were promised anonymity and confidentiality. I have given this list as summary indication of interview correspondents, but can not give the name of the organisation they were working for.

Bengaluru, India

January 2010

representative of child protection and construction worker welfare NGO
university professor concerned with labour and social change
university professor concerned with labour and social change
representative of NGO working to offer construction workers welfare services
representative of a child rights NGO

May 2011

representatives of child protection and construction worker welfare NGO
representatives of child protection and construction worker welfare NGO
representatives of constructions workers' union
representatives of child protection organisation running a crèche on a major worksite
representatives of a child protection NGO
representatives of Department of Labour official responsible for construction worker welfare services
representative of Department of Labour representative responsible for labour inspection
representative of child rights NGO
representative of child protection NGO

Cotonou and Calavi, Benin

November 2010

representatives of child rights INGO
representative of labour rights INGO
representative of Ministry of Labour

December 2010

representatives of child protection NGO
representative of child protection NGO

January 2011

representative of child rights NGO working to organise working children
representative of child rights NGO

March 2011

representative of police services for children
representative of Ministry of Labour responsible for children's work regulation
representative of Ministry of Labour responsible for health and safety policy
representatives of Ministry responsible for regulation of artisanal crafts
representative of Ministry responsible for regulation of artisanal crafts, 2nd meeting
representative of local authority responsible for registration of apprenticeship