CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY, INSTRUMENT AND PROCEDURE

3.0 Introduction to the Chapter

This chapter describes the methodology, sample, instrument and the procedure involved in the study under six areas:

3.1 Subjects
3.2 Methodology
3.3 Description of the Shelter Home
3.4 Description of Garden International School
3.5 The Instrument
3.6 Procedure involved in the study

3.1 Subjects

The subjects were four institutionalized and four non-institutionalized children within an age range of four to eight years. This age group was selected because children in this age-group demonstrate their feelings and expressions using symbols.

The four institutionalized children were selected from the Shelter Home. As the Shelter Home housed four children between four to eight years old, all four of them were selected for the study. Another four children were selected from the Garden International School (GIS). This school had 13 eight-
year-old Chinese and 4 eight-year-old Indian girls, 2 seven-year-old and 1 five-year-old Indian boy. Out of this composition, four children were selected to match the institutionalized children on age, race and sex.

The non-institutionalized children come from intact families with both father and mother to give them proper care, love and time to develop. The institutionalized children were those who had been abused, neglected and abandoned by their natural parents and were brought in by parents, relatives or pastors to the Shelter Home. All the children were selected before the parent/guardian's consent was sought and approved for the study. All the subjects were also given a case number so as to protect their identity. This will prevent any detrimental consequences as a result of this research.

The institutionalized children comprised of Case 1, a five-year-old Indian boy. Case 2, a seven-year-old Indian boy. Case 3, an eight-year-old Indian girl and Case 4, an eight-year-old Chinese girl. The non-institutionalized children matched on age, race and sex consisted of Case 5, a five-year-old Indian boy. Case 6, a seven-year-old Indian boy. Case 7, an eight-year-old Indian girl and Case 8, an eight-year-old Chinese girl. The background of each subject is provided below.

Case 1 is a physically abused five-year-old Indian boy who attends a kindergarten and enjoys learning and reading story books. He is an only child and he was transferred from his home in a rubber estate to the Shelter Home by his mother's employer.
about two years ago. His mother, a single parent used to beat him quite violently. As a result, he has many scars on his body. The mother is a maid and seldom visits him but when she does, she brings toys and plays with him for short periods of time. She would like to take him back but is financially unsound. However, she has started a savings account for him. As for Ragu, he fears the mother and is reluctant to go back even though he enjoys her occasional visits and presents. The researcher found him to be bright and very approachable but he refused to talk about the mother. He responded well to his drawing tasks and even asked the researcher to read him a story book after the assigned tasks.

Case 2 is a neglected seven-year-old Indian boy from Penang who was placed in the Shelter Home in January 1996. His parents are both drug addicts and he has no siblings. His father had just been released from the prison and is undergoing rehabilitation under a pastor. He lived with his mother, who is living with another man, until she abandoned him in October 1995. As a result, the father placed the boy in the care of an aunt. The pastor and the father decided to sent him to the Shelter Home early last year. He does not talk about his parents nor shows an interest in going home. His parents have never visited him. The researcher found him to be reserved and quiet. He needed a lot of encouragement to complete his drawings and he did not want to reveal much information about the drawings.

Case 3 is an abused eight-year-old Indian girl from Penang who was brought to the Shelter Home in November 1995. One day, the same pastor who placed Case 2 in the Home, was
praying and had a vision of the subject. He found her in a kampung and with the mother's permission the subject was placed in the Home. Her father is a drug addict, currently serving sentence in prison while the mother is a part-time prostitute. The manager of Shelter Home, feels that this subject might have been sexually molested and/or has observed people in sexual intercourse. It was evident that she was also physically-abused (most probably by the father) as she has many scars on her body. Although the child talks about her parents, especially her mother and wants to visit her, the mother has never visited or contacted her. She is also the only child. The researcher found her to be friendly, cooperative and responsive to the drawing tasks.

Case 4 is an abused eight-year-old Chinese girl from Trengganu who was brought to the Shelter Home in December 1995. After she was born, the mother disappeared, leaving her in the care of her father. The father then sent her to a baby-sitter. Over the years, she moved from one caregiver to the another until finally an aunt placed her in the Shelter Home. She has no contact with her parents; her mother has since remarried and the whereabouts of the father are unknown. She is stubborn and the manager feels that she might have been a victim of abuse. The researcher found her to be quiet but alert and she needed a lot of encouragement to complete the drawings. She had problems understanding the instructions in English so a Chinese tutor gave the instructions and helped with the child's explanation of the drawings.

Case 5 is a well-adjusted five-year-old Indian boy
studying in Year One at the Garden International School. He comes from a middle-class family where the father is a systems analyst and the mother is a housewife. He has an older eleven-year-old brother studying in a secondary school and a younger brother of two years of age. His teacher says that he enjoys school and participates in all the activities eagerly. He also responded well to the drawing tasks and was willing to talk and explain his drawings.

Case 6 is a well-adjusted seven-year-old Indian boy in Year Two at the Garden International School. He comes from an upper-class family. His father is a lawyer and the mother is a manager of an electrical company. He is the youngest in the family of four and he has an older brother studying in the secondary section of the same school. They live in Petaling Jaya. The teacher describes him as a responsive and inquisitive boy. The researcher found him quiet but approachable. He followed all the instructions diligently and explained his drawings willingly.

Case 7 is a bright well-adjusted eight-year-old Indian girl studying in Year Three at the Garden International School. She is the youngest in the family of four. She comes from an upper-class family. Both her parents are doctors and have a private practice in Cheras. She has an older brother in the secondary section of the same school. The teacher describes her as a friendly and responsible girl. The researcher also found her to be a responsive and willing participant.
Case 8 is a well-adjusted eight-year-old Chinese girl in Year Three at the Garden International School. She is the youngest in the family of four. She comes from a middle-class family who own an electrical shop in Brickfields. Her older brother, who is twenty-one years old, is studying in Canada. She stays with her grandparents during the weekdays and with her parents during the weekends. The teacher describes her as a quiet but bright girl who strives to do her best. The researcher found her approachable as well as responsive to her assigned tasks.

3.2 Methodology

The aim of this study is to examine whether drawings can express children's thoughts and feelings by exploring the differences in the drawings of institutionalized and non-institutionalized children. To identify the differences, the subjects were asked to create two drawings: one of the family and another of a scene at the playground.

The drawing of the family provides information about the children's relationship with their families, family conflict and anxiety or support. Drawing the family would also present a more detailed form of the human figure as it is the primary topic of the picture. The second drawing of a scene at the playground reveals information about the children's peer relationship and social interactions. This drawing would also enhance the children's emotional state and mood through the use of colour.
Each subject made the drawings independently in a room with only the researcher present. The researcher first provided all the instructions and then handed out the materials. She also introduced the tasks one at a time to the subject. While each subject was working on the first drawing, the researcher recorded everything the subject said and did during the drawing task. When the subject had finished the task, he or she was asked to identify the persons, objects and other items in the drawing and the responses were recorded. The second task followed immediately after the first and the same process was repeated by the researcher.

The institutionalized children drew in the afternoon, in the television room at the Shelter Home while the non-institutionalized drew in the morning, in a classroom at the Garden International School (GIS). Instructions were given in English in GIS and the Shelter Home except for Case 4 who had difficulty understanding English. For this case, the instructions were translated by a Chinese tutor. The researcher also interviewed the manager of the Shelter Home, Mr Lim, and the class teachers to obtain the background of the institutionalized and the non-institutionalized children respectively.

3.3 Description of the Shelter Home

The Shelter Home is a non-government agency which houses abused, neglected and abandoned children. It was started 15 years ago by a group of Christians who belonged to a voluntary
welfare organization also called the Shelter. Presently, it is situated at No.4 Jalan Tinggi 6/12, Petaling Jaya. It is run by a Board of Management which works closely with a full-time staff and volunteers. It is supported by donations from the public.

The Shelter Home is a single-storey bungalow with a large well-kept garden enclosed by a hedge. The front garden contains plants, shady trees and a couple of swings while the backyard has plants, some fruit trees and clothes lines. The interior of the house is cool, tidy and lived-in. There are two sitting sets and a large dining table with a few low bookshelves containing all kinds of reading materials. There are a few paintings on the walls and even a small aquarium containing a tortoise. The two large rooms on either side of a bathroom have been converted into dormitories: one for the girls and the other for the boys. Each dormitory contains bunk-beds, wardrobes and a dressing table. The kitchen is clean and not very large which contains a refrigerator, a stove, a filter and kitchen cabinets. There is also a storeroom which stores all kinds of foodstuff donated by the public or bought by the agency. Food is prepared by three staff members and all the children have to serve themselves and wash their cutlery after meals. The children in the Home have to follow a duty roster to maintain cleanliness of themselves as well as the house.

An extension at the back of the original house contains a long dining-cum-study area with two long tables and benches as well as a few steel cabinets containing writing materials and stationary. It also houses an office, a bathroom, a television
room and staff quarters.

The Shelter Home not only provides a home for abused, abandoned and neglected children, it also trains children to take on a responsible position in society and to be better citizens. It also makes an effort to provide the children with an opportunity to be educated.

Presently, the Shelter Home houses 16 children comprising 5 Chinese and 11 Indians. Eight of them are males and the rest are females with ages ranging from four to thirteen years. The Shelter Home provides the children with the basic needs. In addition, tutors and volunteers are engaged to teach these children after school hours.

3.4 Description of Garden International School

Garden International School was founded in 1951 and is now one of the largest, private co-educational institution in Kuala Lumpur. The school moved to its new and modern campus at Bukit Kiara in January 1996 and provides state-of-the-art facilities and amenities such as a swimming pool, various sports courts, halls, computer and language laboratories, design technology and music rooms. The school caters for children between three to sixteen years in its three departments, namely early years, primary and secondary. At present the school has over a thousand students and it follows the British Education System whose medium of instruction is English. Besides academic work,
children are also taught music and swimming. With the multi-
media facilities available, the students are also exposed to
information technology.

A few years ago it opened its doors to Malaysians and as
a result there was a large influx of Malaysian children into the
school. However, now it only caters to expatriate children who
satisfy the requirements of the Ministry of Education for entry
into an international school. GIS is officially recognized and
approved by the Ministry of Education. The teaching staff com-
prises of about 60 percent expatriates and 40 percent local
teachers with overseas training. Most of the children in the
school belong to the higher socio-economic status as the tuition
fees commensurate with its vast range of facilities and ameni-
ties.

3.5 Instrument

All the drawings were scored using The Emotional
Indicator Scoring System for Human Figure Drawing (Koppitz,
1968). The children's drawings of the human figure were examined
to ascertain whether the 30 drawing characteristics listed were
present or absent (Appendix B). The total score is the sum of
all the characteristics observed in the drawing, with zero as the
minimum score and 30 as the maximum. Colour and baselining were
also used to measure emotional stress. Each drawing was inde-
dependently scored by two art specialist teachers and the research-
er. If there were obvious disparities, the raters met to re-
examine the drawing and reach a consensus. Three out of sixteen drawings were re-examined this way.

Koppitz (1968) identified thirty emotional indicators by which children's emotional state may be assessed. As a result of her research, she found that these thirty emotional indicators were more often seen in the human figure drawings of disturbed children than in the drawings of normal children. Koppitz also compared the emotional items in the drawings by groups of different clinical subjects. Despite the fact that some indicators appeared more frequently in some subject groups than others, she emphasized that the degree of adjustment or disturbance should be assessed according to the children's total number of emotional indicators.

Due to the small sample size, a t-test could not be done but the data collected was analyzed to find the means and standard deviations of the total number of emotional indicators for each of the subjects. The inter-rater reliability was also computed as each drawing had three raters. The inter-rater grade for each drawing was calculated to be 34.

3.6 Procedure

Each subject was tested individually in a closed room with furniture. The researcher started the session by saying, "I would like you to do two drawings during our time together. I will ask you to draw each drawing on a separate piece of white drawing paper. After you finish each drawing, I will ask you a
few questions about it. You may use a pencil to draw but you must colour your drawing with coloured pencils or magic pens. You may take as much time as you need and you are allowed to erase, change or start on a new paper. Are you willing to do that?"

Each subject was presented with a sheet of white drawing paper, pencils, an eraser, coloured pencils and magic pens. Each subject was then instructed to draw a picture of the family and no other instructions or explanations were provided. As each subject was drawing, the researcher recorded everything he/she said or did during the drawing task. After the subject had completed the drawing, he or she was asked to identify the persons, objects and other items in the picture. The researcher recorded all the responses before moving on to the second drawing which was a scene at the playground. The whole process was repeated by the researcher. The subject was allowed to sit anywhere he or she felt comfortable. Only the researcher was present in the room. When a subject had completed the drawings, the researcher moved to the next subject. Each subject was tested individually to eliminate copying and communication between them. The two groups of children drew on two different days.